

Are You Happy by Gabriel Hughes

Are you happy? Legitimately? Can you hold your head high and say “yes, despite everything, I am 100% Happy”?

Another question, are you getting your recommended 8 to 10 hours of sleep? Yeah, 8 is the recommended minimum, the bottom of the barrel for being a completely functional person.

Ok, another, are you eating right? Maybe you are, hope so. But can you eat right easily? Or do you have to always consciously be aware just because its so easy to eat trash?

Another question, do you feel safe? Do you feel as though the world around you is a healthy, happy, and wholesome place to be? Or instead are you constantly afraid and anxious, knowing that there are terrible people out there just waiting to destroy you? And maybe you’ve had some experiences which back that up. Proof that the world is big and scary and out to get you.

Last one, Do you feel confident about your future? That the world, or your life, or your opportunities are improving? Or instead do you believe that everything is getting worse, that the world is falling apart as never before, that the situation is hopeless?

Lets address that last one first. There is a term, “Millennialism” and no, it doesn’t have anything to do with our generation. Its an old word to describe a belief that a time of peace and love are coming AFTER the world ends. The Christians are Millennialists, so are some Buddhists, so are Muslims, and quite a few Pagans too. Looking forward to the coming age, and by extension looking forward to the end of this one, the end of the world.

But there are some groups who use this idea to control their people, to make them afraid or to use it to separate their people from the rest of the world. Telling them they’re “God’s chosen” or that they’re in reality the souls of space aliens, or that there is some other thing which the end will show, and soon. And they’re on the “inside” with the truth. And everyone else? They’re lost, on the outside, not worth talking to. Are there people your views tell you aren’t worth talking to? That are completely lost?

That leads well into the next one, feeling safe. Assuming you answered to the negative, when was the last time you felt safe? Last week, years ago, September 10th 2001, never? If you pay attention to the news, do you always feel like things are getting worse and worse? That there are unimaginable terrors out there, just waiting to get you? Extremists of every color and creed waiting to pounce on you and destroy what meager safety or security you’ve gathered?

Those groups I mentioned earlier, they do that too. The outside world, the people in it, are dangerous. Don’t talk to them, or about them, or read what they say. They’re dangerous and want to kill you. Just look at what they did here, or there, or that other place. They’re monsters, demons, be afraid of them and stay here where its safe and we can protect you. Stay where we put you, inside your box, and we will give you everything you need. Disconnect.

And safety is one of the items on Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, the second level from the bottom. But it is ultimately less important than the next two I asked about, food and sleep. Food is hard, and speaking as some one who has begun to try to take my health into my hands, you don’t even realize how much your diet affects your mood until you change it. I’m not going to tell you what you should do for your health here. But doing something is better than nothing, and when you stop eating like crap, you can potentially begin to see all the other crap you take in too. And to check in with those groups I mentioned

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again, a malnourished group is an easy to control group, doesn't matter if it's rice and beans or doughnuts and cake.

But lets talk more seriously about sleep. How many of you spend the last hour or more laying in bed, light pollution pouring in your window, your phone screen bright and glued to your face, trying to "wind down"? Now I'm no Luddite. I love technology, I'm guilty of this too. But I think there is something to be said for the dangers of these little glass and metal telescreens in our pockets. And I don't think, despite my 1984 reference, it is because "Big Brother is watching" but because of a huge issue which effects all the others that starts with your sleep. As I said, you're supposed to get 8 to 10 hours of sleep, every single night. Do you know what happens to people who are sleep deprived for long periods of time? Those groups I mentioned do. With less sleep, your critical thinking skills drop, you are more susceptible to suggestion, you begin "feeling like a robot" often because that's what you become. You become dependent on those things which are the problem. And you do that just to get a little extra time, a little extra freedom. A little more time where you're still the master or mistress of your own life, dreading the morning,

And because of that you aren't happy. Because you're barely anything at all. Everything is a copy of a copy, washed out, unreal. And so you're willing to do anything which makes you feel something, you'll do anything to experience something real for a little while. Eat whatever is given to you, believe anything about the outside world which is told you to, prepare for the end.

And those groups, the ones I've been mentioning this entire time? Those are cults. I hope that every time the ways you aren't taking care of yourself, the way society is set up right now which disincentivizes you taking care of your needs, made you uncomfortable. Because this is an intervention, an attempt at deprogramming. You're in a cult, the cult of the "modern world." Your mother and father are very worried about you and want you to come home.

That's a weird thing for me to say isn't it? A small religious leader who believes and preaches about a universal root religion. Who can tell you exactly when it was founded because he founded it. Saying that all the ways the world makes you not take care of yourself are exactly the warning signs of a cult, and are just as dangerous because everyone else is doing it too.

But when I speak, I try to do so only from my own experience. I believe there are six Gods who inspired every faith and pantheon, but I don't expect you to. I believe that Builder has given mankind order and inspiration, and expects us to make the world a better place in any way we can. I believe Healer has given humanity the ingenuity to solve all of our problems, and expects us to study and learn so that we can be the best members of the human species we are capable of being. I believe Nurturer has given us the wonder and love for the universe which surrounds us so we are drive to explore and discover, and expects us to live a life full of joy. I believe Trickster has given us the stubbornness and guile to make the best of even the worst situations, and expects us to always get back up when we've fallen no matter how hard it is. I believe Death has given us an understanding of our own mortality and so an appreciation for every day, and expects us to remember the lessons of the past while making lessons for those in the future. And I believe in Destroyer who gave us a freedom of thought which drives humanity to seek out the truth, leave behind falsehood, and remember that we are more than what we were, and who only expects us to see that under it all we each carry our own burdens and that we can all choose to let them go and be free.

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But I don't expect you to believe those things. I'm not asking you to convert to Verity, I believe the Gods are whether you believe in them or not. I believe you have value whether we are brothers and sisters in faith or not. I believe that just as the Gods are male and female, three each, we are all equal and necessary, and none inherently above or better than any other.

So yeah, it's kinda weird for me to call the modern lifestyle a cult when some people call any alternative spiritual beliefs cults. But I do, because I believe the Gods guided me to see how unhappy I was because of the life I was living, and have been guiding me to make choices to improve my happiness. In that way, it feels like how a lot of people describe realizing they needed to escape, that some one caused them to wake up.

I don't expect you to believe as I believe. I'm not asking you to accept anything I say on faith, I'm just a guy. I'm asking you to stop assuming things just have to be the way they are, I'm asking you to go out and find out what you believe, find ways the world is getting better or how you can make it better, get more sleep, eat better, and above all else, be happy. Find your happiness and live it, and make the world better for those who come after you. Don't hate, do protect the innocent, find joy.

Because the world is not ending. We are all part of it and we will continue on despite all odds, forever and ever.

Amen.