

HAPPINESS IS WHERE YOU ARE

THE LITTLE FISH

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Intent of this Fable

- ✓ *To realize that all of us are born to be happy.*
- ✓ *To become aware that happiness is not found in the place of our choice, or in the work we do, or in any other circumstances of our life but in the place God placed us.*
- ✓ *To disabuse ourselves of the fallacy that we have to search for happiness.*
- ✓ *Happiness is everywhere, just within us just for us to enjoy!*

THE STORY

Narrator: There was a little jolly fish. He was happy and free in the sea. He could swim and frolic in the vast limitless expand of the ocean. That was his home with all the treasures of the deep to enjoy.

He was born to be in the sea. And he was not alone...Oh No. He had the company of many other little fish like him to play with day and night. No worries about anything. No anxieties about tomorrow. It was fun 'N food for all the time. How could anyone not be happy like that? And he was happy!

It happened that one day, perchance, the little fish came close to the surface of the sea and peeping over the water he discovered the large world outside. Then he said to himself.

L. Fish: Let me see what it must be to live outside the water? O....O....O...hhh ... What's this I see? How wonderful....Something new...It looks great.

Narrator: He spent the next few days trying to find a way to stay longer outside the water and see more.

L. Fish: I know what to do.... I'll jump as high as I can.

Narrator: And that was what he did. He jumped as high as he could.... And this time the sun was up. He exclaimed:

L. Fish: How warm and nice I feel! See how it shines! I've never felt warmth like this in my life ever. How wonderful if I could feel I like this for ever.

Narrator: Then he was back again in the water and said:

L. Fish: It's so cold and gloomy here....

Narrator: So, it was not long before he tried again. He shouted:

L. Fish: Vow! What a beautiful beach, lovely green trees, colorful flowers.. What a sight! ...even fruits...I wish I could have all that right down with me here in the deep.

Narrator: Now, our little fish felt that he had nothing but the inhospitable sea. He hated being condemned to be a prisoner in the deep ocean.

From that day on, the little fish forgot about all that was around him: The vast sea and mighty ocean, the fun 'N' food and his companions. No more swims, no more play and frolic. He wailed:

L. Fish: I'm not free here. How can I be happy while in the Sea? The day I'll get out of this water, I'll be free. I'll be able to enjoy life like all the birds and animals. I'm convinced...I've made up mind and there's no changing it...I'll be happy only when I get out of the sea.

Narrator: There was no time to lose and the little fish pursued his new found course to be happy. He swam like he never did before...full speed...towards the beach...Nothing could stop him from attaining the happiness he longed for. He had proof of it... He knew exactly where he was going. When he came close to the beach...with one big leap and dash, he skimmed over the water and landed on the sand....finally he was out: He yelled with delight.

L. Fish: UUFF... This is wonderful, so good to be free...such pure air....how warm I feel, now I'll have fun with my new friends; the trees, the flowers, the birds...everything around will bring me the happiness I've always longed for.

Narrator: No sooner had he said that, something very strange happened to the little fish...he got a pain in his chest...he couldn't breathe... He moaned:

L. Fish Oh no... I exerted myself too much.... I need a rest. Oh! Oh! But I am gasping...Ahh ahh.... ahh....What's choking me? Auch! Auch!....Lord, this is terrible! I can't bear it!....Uh... uh...I am dying.....

Narrator: A few minutes later, the little fish was dead on the beach.

THOUGHTS F OR REFLECTION

- God made all of us for happiness.
- Happiness is a mind-set, not a set of circumstances.
- Happiness is an inside job.
- Happiness is in what you are and where you are to be.
- Happiness cannot be found in one place only, it's everywhere.
- You can be as happy as you wish to be..
- Everybody can find happiness in this world, but only in the place God has placed him.
- Our place is the place given to us through the circumstances of our life.
- We need not go out or far away to find happiness.
- We have to be contented and satisfied with what we are and joyously accept our limitations.
- To search for happiness where it is not found, spells disaster
- If you cannot have what you want, want what you have. .
- We have to love and price what we have, much or little.
- If you cannot do what you like, like what you do
- Pining away for what we do not have or what we are not supposed to have, deprives us from what we actually have.
- Be what you are. If a little fish, a little fish; if a bird, a bird;
- We ma try to change the things that can be changed, but we ought to accept the things that can't be changed!

- For a husband, for a wife, for a child, happiness is in the home. For a student, happiness is in the school and in his books. For a worker, happiness is in his work.
- All of us are limited, yet happiness is unlimited for all.
- One of the greatest dangers to happiness lies in irrational expectations namely, expecting to be or to have something beyond our reach. If you expect the moon, you can say bye, bye to happiness for ever.
- We make people unhappy by thrusting on them our expectations.
- Let everyone be free to be himself/herself
- Being yourself, you will be always unique and different. .
- You are the only person who can make you happy or unhappy.
- Be and let be is the key to happiness..
- Parents, superiors, teachers, friends, should not ‘expect’ their children, or subordinates to be like them or like someone else.
- Models are challenging, but not duplicable
- Each man is unique! Do not compare yourself to anyone else.
- No one is superior or inferior in the eyes of God. Everyone is unique! Incomparable!
- Each one of us is irreplaceable!. Surely, not interchangeable!
- After fashioning each one of us, God broke the mould!
- Advertisements and commercial propaganda blazoned across our cities corrupt the happiness of our world!
- They want to make us believe that in order to be happy we should be like this or that, to have this or that, dress like this or that.
- The world of advertising wants us all to be alike, otherwise things would not sale.
- Since all of us are not alike, advertisers are the greatest sellers of unhappiness.
- Be true to yourself! Stand for your conscience.
- Dare to be yourself, do not be what the world and others expect or want you to be.
- Only in being yourself you will find genuine happiness

FANTASY

- Imagine that you hear a dialogue or an argument between the Little Fish and the Sea. In fantasy, listen very attentively the reasons they bring forward convince one another,
 - ✓ The Little Fish in order to be happy wants to get out of the water ...
 - ✓ The Sea tries to dissuade the Little Fish from doing so....
- Finally, you yourself, try to dissuade the fish from jumping out of the sea into the beach.

Self-examination.

1. Are you happy with yourself? Yes/no. How much? Why?
2. Are you happy with your studies, work or occupation? Yes/no. Why?
3. Are you happy with your talents, abilities and qualities? Yes/no/ Why?
4. Are you happy with your physical appearance, your body? Yes/no/ Why?
5. Are you happy with your parents, brothers, sisters and family members?
Yes/no/ Why?
6. Is there anything lacking for you to be happy? What's that?
7. Is there any enticing beach you feel like to jump into?. Which? Why? What should you do?

Dramatization by ‘ Role playing’ or ‘ Puppetry’

- Ask the groups to express the main ideas or lessons of the day by dramatizing some events or instances taken from real life. For instance:
 - ✓ A married man looking for happiness in joints or pubs.
 - ✓ An adolescent searching for joy in drink and drugs.
 - ✓ A youth running after girls for sex and kicks.
 - ✓ A married woman looking for joy in ‘bridge-parties’ and in ‘gossiping’ in neighbors’ houses.
 - ✓ A college student looking for fulfillment in college dances, dates with his girl friends and in wasting his time in the college Canteen.
 - ✓ Someone aping others’ styles and mannerisms to feel accepted in society.
 - ✓ A girl overspending on cosmetics to be admired by all.
- After assigning the activities give the group’s time to complete their task, say, 30 to 60 minutes, according to the nature of the activities.
- By turns each groups will present his activity.
- After each presentation, a short analysis and evaluation will follow.

APPENDIX TWO A Closing Prayer

- Quiet down.
- Some relaxing or awareness exercises will help.
- Read and sing the hymn: “Happiness is where you are.”
- A prayerful reflector on some of the points touched today may be called for:
 - Am I happy with **what I am?**
 - Am I satisfied **with what I have?**
 - Can I improve my happiness? How?
 - What things do upset me most in life? Do they take away from me true happiness? What can you do about them?
 - Do I accept the things I cannot change? Which? How?
- Close with The Our Father and a hymn