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**THE MAYANS**  
**SAN ANTONIO,**  
**TEXAS**

Degree 8 - 9

Number 234

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# Ways To Happiness

## Mayan Revelation Number 234

The Goal

The Appreciative Attitude

Adjustment

Creative Interest

Growth

Planting Happiness

### Build Happy Situations

Beloved Centurion:

As you can see, the title of this lesson is "Ways to Happiness", and I think perhaps all of the many hundreds of requests we receive for help start off with the query, "How can I find happiness?" or "I am in deep turmoil," or "I am emotionally upset," or perhaps someone else will say, "I have tried and tried to find happiness but I am not able to do so."

Only this morning, I had a long-distance call from a lady who was deeply upset emotionally, a state of mind that had existed for quite a few years. Underneath it all, her trouble was that happiness was eluding her. As I looked into her story, it was quite simple for me to see why she was unable to find happiness, for happiness cannot be built except on virtue, and it must of necessity have Truth for its foundation. She was seeking happiness in the wrong direction. She was in love with one who belonged to someone else and, of course, could not possibly find happiness under conditions such as those, for she was not entitled to happiness through taking that which belonged to another. I think perhaps I convinced her of this. I hope so, for I am sure that if she eliminates this manner of pursuing happiness, she will come nearer finding it in some other way. As a matter of fact, one of her first steps in finding happiness is in not seeking it in the wrong direction.

I am convinced that our happiness or unhappiness depends on the way we go about seeking it, the way we meet the events of life rather than the nature of the events themselves. Another fact of which I am thoroughly convinced is that it is not the place or condition, but it is our mind alone that can make us happy or miserable.

To be happy, one must forget oneself and think more of others. There is

very little pleasure and very little happiness in this world in which we live that is as important as doing our duty to others and helping someone else whenever we see a need. As a matter of fact, we do not need to have the opportunity - we must seek it. It is always there, and I know of no greater happiness than to know that one is needed. The person who is not needed is usually not very happy.

The subject of finding happiness is such a great one. I would like to write a book on it, but the lessons that must be prepared for you, our Member, and the other activities of your Mayan Order make this impossible at this time.

Perhaps some of you feel that when youth has left, happiness is gone forever, but believe me this is not true. That the "flower of youth" is the happiest time of life is really a fallacy. The happiest person is the person who is able to think interesting thoughts and is able to enjoy time. We grow happier as we grow older if we have cultivated our thinking and have control over our thoughts and minds because, as I have already said, the mind contributes more than anything else to our happiness.

"What is happiness anyway?" some may say. Well, I can tell you some of the things that can make me completely happy. For instance, when Spring comes and in the soft air the buds are opening on the trees and some are covered with blossoms, I think, "How beautiful Spring is!" When Summer comes and covers the trees with its heavy green foliage and the birds are among the branches of the trees, I think that Summer is the most beautiful. And then comes Autumn with its golden fruit and its leaves brilliant with the color that frost brings, and I think, "How beautiful is Autumn!" And then comes Winter, when we have no foliage, no fruit, no flowers, and at night through the bare branches I can see the stars shining, and I think, "How beautiful is Winter!" The observances of these changes of season bring true, deep-rooted happiness to me, and I know all of you who love Nature have experienced this great happiness that comes from within. To others, it might be meaningless. Each person has a different evaluation of what the state of happiness really is.

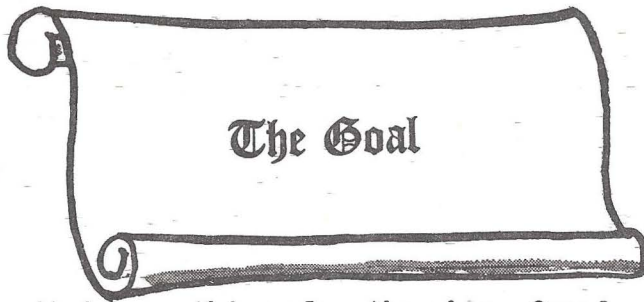
The state of happiness is something that is more often than not misunderstood. How to get it is also something we must learn, and in the pages that follow we have endeavored to tell you some of the ways to obtain happiness. We hope you will study them well and that you will benefit from them.

We need to pray every day that we may know how fortunate we are in what we have. Let us now ask our Heavenly Father to help us as we say the words of the following prayer:

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help me not only to find and understand the ways to real happiness, but to walk in them and help others to do the same. Amen.

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We are all seekers of happiness. Even if we say we are seekers of something else we seek that something because we think it will make us happy. We walk many roads, but we choose them all because we think they will bring us to that common goal which we rightly or wrongly call happiness. Some think they have found happiness when

it is something else they have found, and some think they have missed happiness when they are really happier than they know.

Even those who think they are approaching happiness and those who really are doing so may be traveling in the same direction, but by two different roads, one broad and easy and the other narrow and straight. The road to anything desirable is likely to be exacting. We do not attain happiness in a road where we can shift about at random. The difference between the two ways is like that between a river and a swamp.

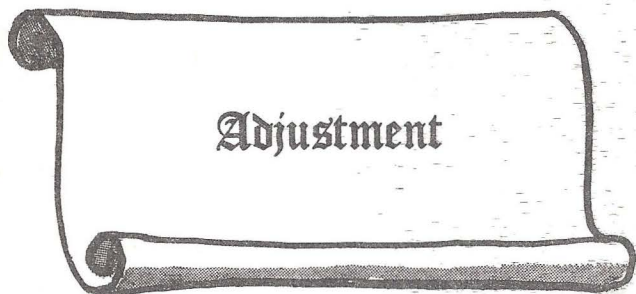
Most of the people who do not attain happiness were seeking it and thought they were going to find it. They are fortunate if they discover this in time to get out of the wrong road and into the right one. Some of those right ones, or different phases of the one right one, are to be suggested in this lesson. There is nothing misleading about them for they are all commended by both the wisdom and the experience of the human race.

One great reason many people do not find happiness or even the right road to it is the fact that they do not know what happiness really is. Some things that look joyful are only wasteful, futile, and exhausting. Happiness is not a special kind of behavior, but a certain kind of condition of the heart. It is the feeling of the heart that has found its haven, the soul that has nothing to fear.

Happiness is not hilarity and self-indulgence. These may be signs of momentary joy, but they are not strong, sure, dependable happiness which is the blessedness of being right. It is the portion of that wise and self-controlled person who has found life good and is engaged in keeping it so. People who have arrived here are not complaining that they missed the way or regretting that they did not manage the quest differently.

Many also miss happiness by the mistake of seeking it directly and for its own sake. The fact is that it is more often found when one is seeking something else altogether, or appears as a by-product of something one is doing for some other reason or for its own sake. To make the finding of happiness one's central aim has an element of selfishness in it, and self-seeking and happiness are mutually exclusive. In the field of service, kindness, forgiveness, and the like, happiness blooms like flowers that come up volunteer.

This brief preliminary glance has, let us hope, prepared us for brief looks at some of the ways, or some of the phases of the way, to happiness. They are all open roads that anyone may travel.



The first one we will take up and consider is the way of adjustment. A machine working in perfect adjustment and with the harmony of all its parts reminds one of a happy person, and an unhappy person reminds one of a machine out of adjustment with friction and chatter in the parts that should be working quietly and in order. Anyone with frictions developing here and

there in his life is simply out of order, and vice versa.

No matter what work one may have to do, or what relationships he tries to sustain, he is not happy unless they are in adjustment. One who is not adjusted to his companions, his neighbors, his work, his environment, and his times, is conscious of friction. He is out of order, and not happy. Even if his work is exacting and has problems, if all these adjustments are normal he has a right to call himself happy.

Adjustment with some things, environment for instance, is not so easy because they are multiple in nature. They have many elements and phases. Environment includes one's surroundings, associations, everything he knows and to which he makes any emotional response; even himself, because one has also to keep in adjustment with himself, especially the spiritual phases of his life.

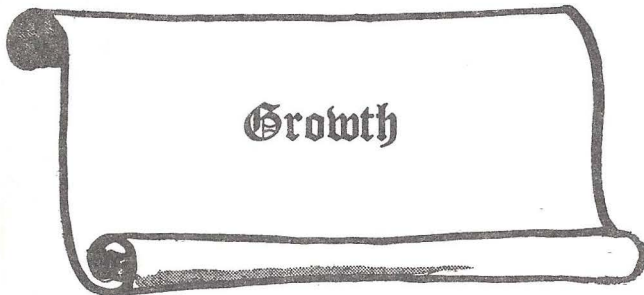
In water if one adapts himself to it he finds that it bears him up, but if he panics or becomes angry and starts fighting it he finds that it fights back and quickly bears him under. Many a person has had a good fright, and some have even lost their lives because they did not understand this principle of adjustment or harmony. Even in nature cooperation is much better than competition.

This principle very quickly appears in our relations with people and things. Everything helps him when he works with it, and antagonizes him when he works against it. It is not surprising that people will do this, but even the inanimate world is no exception. It seems to recognize a friend or a foe as quickly as an animated being does, and its reactions may be much stronger, like that of the ocean for instance. The result is happiness or unhappiness. We do well or we do not do well according to our adjustments.

We read in the Old Testament of Sisera, the Philistine chief, dead in the tent of Jael (Hebrew for Lord God). Sisera's days of favor with fate had ended, and the very universe had apparently turned against him. In the poetic language of these old books it is expressed thus, "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera". They will do it if we fight against the One who made them, which is only another way of saying that harmony is the secret of happiness, and discord that of unhappiness and defeat.

Watch your adjustments. Maintain your harmonies. Give attention to friction that develops at any point, within or without. Keep yourself rightly related to forces and things. That is one of the ways to happiness.





Another path to happiness is growth or development. In its true sense this is not something forced and artificial, but the natural thing. Everything develops if it is normal and the condition is healthy. Without growth of some kind anything perishes, and no perishing self is happy or makes for happiness. This world and even the universe is developing.

So are human conditions, and so is each of us, or should be.

A time comes when the body stops growing, or seems to; but even then it goes on developing and maturing in certain ways. But since man is a spiritual being, his total self need never stop growing. Even when his height stops increasing he continues to change as a person. Either he slips backward, or he goes forward, or he solidifies into something like a mental and spiritual mummy. In any case it is change, and we have our choice of the three forms it may take.

We can develop and unfold a little more each day we live. If we do anything at all we will naturally develop a little, but if we make some constructive conscious effort we will advance better and faster. This is one of life's happy experiences. It is good to know that we are becoming more adequate people with the passing of each day. It makes life harder in that we will undertake more, but it makes it easier in that we can do that more better and with greater facility.

This is not merely a matter of youth, though youth can put more vigor into the process. There are old people who, all their lives, have never ceased having some kind of study, or skill, or enterprise to work on that meant growth for them. People who were given only so long to live have been known to take up new studies or endeavors in spite of it. You see, they expected to live forever, and they knew there was something they could take with them. Any life, anywhere, at any time, finds increased happiness in an ever wider outlet of expression.

Thus the constantly enlarging personality adds constantly to one's capacity for happiness at all other points. Great souls can maintain better adjustment to their worlds and everything in them. They know how to get along with people, conditions, and things, and what is that but happiness?

For instance, a great soul is always magnanimous, unselfish, forgiving, and wise. At the end of the day, therefore, he has much to be grateful for, and little to regret. How great a happiness this is can be understood fully only by those who have missed it. Those who have met these conditions are at peace, not because they have no consciences, or because they do not let their consciences disturb them, but because they have met the requirements.

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As we have said, this growth is no problem. It takes place more or less automatically. Gain every day a little soul stature, a little clarity of outlook, a little understanding,

a little large-heartedness; do a little more, think a little more, and do them better. That is the planting, and the harvest will grow.

Practice maturity in your thinking, choosing, and deciding. Build it into your plans, endeavors, and relationships. Then you need not worry about growth. It is taking care of itself, and its by product is happiness.

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A way to happiness that none of us should overlook or fail to use is the appreciative attitude. It is to our lives like yeast is to mixed batter. It sets to growing everything good, and happy, and healthy.

Appreciation is, of course, the opposite of depreciation. The one builds up where the other tears down, helps where the other hinders, warms where the other chills, encourages where the other discourages. Depreciation takes things, events, and people, at their worst. Appreciation takes them at their best. Depreciation looks through blue goggles. Appreciation looks through rose-colored glasses.

As stocks, assets, and prices, appreciate and depreciate, that is, so they go up or down in value, so our human attitudes and viewpoints either encourage and help or wither and waste. No one whose presence, talk, and attitude is negative and discouraging, is happy. No one whose spirit, talk, and action, has uplift in it, is unhappy. He may have his problems as other people do, but he is master of them and lives above them.

The gist of the appreciative attitude is to think as well as you can of everyone and everything, including what happens to you along your way of life. You do not need to make false estimates. Just make them as good as you can. In the case of people, it is well to remember that you do not know all the circumstances in their lives, and add a little touch of personal charity. You may even find that you did not add enough. You will find, too, that all this good will comes back to us with added interest. That is where the happiness comes in.

Be grateful for all the good that comes to you in any form, and always look to see if you missed anything. Appreciate as much as you can of what you have and what you experience. It is well to add a word of thanks for what you have overlooked. You will ultimately find that almost everything in life is thankworthy, and what seems not to be probably teaches a lesson that is worth something.

This practice may take a little watching and will power at first, but it will grow constantly easier and more automatic till it becomes a habit. When that

happens you can begin to think of it as an attitude, because it will have become a part of your very nature. You will do it as naturally and as unconsciously as breathing. Everything in life will then be worth more to you because you will have made a more correct appraisal and will see more in it.

The great value to ourselves of the appreciative attitude is in the fact that it is positive and not negative, that it is increasingly alive and not decreasingly so, and that it is enriching and not impoverishing. This is all in addition to its value to others to whom we always give the benefit of the doubt, usually finding that we are so right that we can take all the doubt out of it.

All this is all the time weaving the fabric of your happiness in the true sense of the term. The more respect one has for the world and everything in it and for life and everything it includes, the happier and richer he becomes.



### Creative Interest

A very highly important road to happiness is having, cultivating, and using a creative interest. Bringing worthwhile things to pass, making in one way or another changes for the better, carrying on a program of improvement of some kind, are very effective chasers of gloom. They eliminate unhappiness by simply crowding it out, by just not leaving any room for it. A great deal of so-called unhappiness is only a sense of vacuum. The answer is to change the empty life into a full one, and let the fullness be something worth-while.

Building things, conditions, interests, anything that changes our surroundings or ourselves for the better, offers payment in satisfaction and content. It gives us something interesting to do and the feeling that we have done something to justify our existence, to say nothing of the improved situation itself. It is pleasant to see something worth-while and have the feeling that we created it.

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Creativeness relates us to God. He is the Prime Creator, and we are made in His image. That is, we are born with the family likeness. You can see not only what God has wrought, but you can see Him at work all the time building the new world order, and seeing Him at work you can take pattern from Him. A long while ago He was at work on the earth and the firmament, then He was at work on Man, and now He is at work improving both of them into something more like the pattern He really had in mind. You can find a part in that to take and carry on with the satisfaction of real usefulness.



Where in your life, your days, your home, your community, or something else is a place where you can see that something needs doing, building, or improving? If you make a survey you will probably find more than you can undertake all at once, so you will have to choose the neediest, the nearest, or the one to which you are best adapted. In any case, there is your challenge and opportunity. There also is a large measure of your possible happiness. It is all ready and waiting for you. If you wait the whole situation may get beyond your power.

This gives us a hint as to why we are in the world at all. None of us just happened into a certain place, at a certain time. There was purpose and design in it. God is bringing up a very large family of us, and like any good parent He assigns tasks to each of His children to give them training and practice in responsibility. To each has been assigned his appropriate task.

The most unhappy of all people are those with the unhappiness of an empty life, the feeling of not being necessary, the realization that one is merely a kibitzer who has no part in the game because he has taken none. Probably everyone has had some worthy creative urge, and still has if he hasn't covered it up with idleness and triviality. He may still go through the motions of some work, but his heart may not be in it. The difference between drudgery and achievement is a constructive purpose. Dedication can turn a job into an art.

Do not be baffled by the distant or the difficult. Many of us miss our opportunities by the enchantment of distance. Your work for now is probably very well within reach. The nearest thing within your power that needs doing is your starting place. Where it may lead you later is another matter.

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### Planting Happiness

As we have said, everything that is alive must grow and spread. Just to find or build happiness for one's self means only a dead and static situation. He is happy, or thinks he is, so what? If this is to be a happy world we must plant happiness like any other crop and keep growing it till there is an adequate world supply.

We have no right to be content, and we are not dependably happy unless we are doing something to make others happy, that is unless we are adding to the area of our field.

We must do it as the farmer extends the supply of grain in his bins. Being a good farmer he seeks to have not merely enough for his own immediate necessities but enough to share with others and to keep planting more. We best insure our own happiness by helping to make others happy.

Some of the needs you can meet, and thus scatter happiness. Some are of the body, some of the heart, some of condition, and some of the mind. Some of them are

evident, and some are hidden. Some are spoken, and some are unconfessed. The silent ones are likely to be the ones that lie deepest of all.

These are all places where the ground of life needs to be made more productive and where the flowers of happiness and peace especially need care and cultivation that they may multiply and attain a farther reach. Remember when you are trying to let more sunshine into someone's life you are doing more than to bring greater cheer to one person. You are adding something to the sum total of the happiness of the world, and to that of time. You are really filling a large order.

Whoever can know as he goes to rest at the end of a day that there are lighter hearts and better conditions somewhere because of something he has done, is likely to rest well. He has happiness of a very choice kind, and he deserves it. There would be much more of this kind of thing done if more people would give it just one try. They would discover, perhaps for the first time, exactly what was meant by the first person who remarked that it is more blessed to give than to receive. To have everything one can wish for and be unconcerned about the happiness of anyone else would be something less than real happiness. It would be happiness with an empty ache at its heart. Some have this ache without ever realizing what it is, what caused it, and what would cure it. As the farmer wants to scatter seed over wider fields, the heart wants to scatter happiness farther out into the world.

What has been said about bread cast upon the waters returning after many days is true here also. Happiness is, after all, the bread of the heart, and the supply without which life is something less than satisfying. All you plant will grow and bloom. All you give will come back to you, perhaps in some "distant, doubtful moment" when you want and need it very much. You will draw interest on the gift.

It would take much less to make the world of good will the angels sang about the night of the Nativity. It would not require the reorganization of governments, but only a world full of people trying to make each other happy.

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**Build Happy  
Situations**

In this closing section of our lesson we are referring to something much like the immediately preceding, but not quite the same. There we were calling attention to planting happiness and producing increasing crops. Here we refer to establishing happy situations that will stand and exert an influence for happiness where they are upon every person and thing

that comes that way.

Of course a happy situation is one in which happy people predominate and

exert the chief influence. Happy people, in turn, are people who have met the standards indicated for happy living, or their equivalent. We now propose to show you that they have equivalents, and that people who are giving careful thought to the laws of happiness arrive at conclusions very close to each other the ages through and the world over.

After writing all the foregoing parts of this lesson the writer happened to discover in the writings of Tolstoy his set of rules for happiness, five in number. The writer of this lesson read them for the first time after having written the foregoing portion of the lesson. You can see for yourself how near two people, widely separated in time and distance, will see much the same lights shining on the same subject. Here then are Tolstoy's five rules for happiness, omitting his amplification and giving merely the rules themselves:

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1. A life in which the link between man and nature shall not be severed; that is, a life under the open sky, in the sunshine, the pure air. Communion with the earth, animals, plants.
2. Work: first, congenial and free work; physical work which gives an appetite, and tranquil and sound sleep.
3. The family. But the more men are enslaved by worldly success, the less do they obtain this happiness.
4. Sympathetic and unrestricted intercourse or dealings with all classes of men. And the higher a man is placed in the social scale, the more certainly is he deprived of this essential condition of happiness.
5. Bodily health and a painless death. And once more, the higher men ascend the social scale the more they are deprived of this condition of happiness.

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Poor Tolstoy, however, never quite achieved what he thought he wanted, for his sympathies and interests were out of reach of this world and its affairs. His son, Ilya, once told the writer how in childhood his father and his playmates talked about finding a "little green stick" which was a symbol of the happiness of having found the right goal in life. When the old man stole away from home on what was to be his last journey, and they found him sick and helpless on the way, they asked him why he had wandered off in such a way. His tired voice managed to reply that he was looking for "The little green stick". After a lifetime of searching he had not found it, or was it that he had found it without recognizing it? Some people do.

You will not find it if you are looking for it in earthly satisfactions

and gains. But if you know the laws of happiness and live according to them, building a normal life in God's way, you will find it; and at the end you will not have to confess your failure. All success to you in the quest of your "little green stick".

AFFIRMATION

With the help of God I keep the laws of happiness as they are revealed to me, and I am happy.

Blessings,

YOUR INSTRUCTOR.