

GPS FOR A NEW GENERATION

Moses Ida-Michaels



Copyright © 2021 by Moses Ida-Michaels Pubished by FreeState Publishing

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise, except as permitted by the author. Request to the author for permission should be emailed to author@collidecentral.com

Limits of laibility/disclaimer of warranty: while the publisher and author have used thier best effort in preparing this book, they make no representations or warranty with the respect to the accuracy or completeness of the content of this book and specifically disclaim any implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose.

Company, quotations and names mentioned herein are the trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners.

Cover Design: Victory James Ugwudike Layout: Witts & Stratts – www.wittsandstratts.com Author's Image: Tope Adenola

COLLIDE -The GPS of a new generation ISBN - 978-978-987-915-1

Subject: Self-Help, Inspiration, Mind-Shift

Printed in Nigeria

GPS FOR A NEW GENERATION

Contents

OI Chapter One Identity Theft

Is there a Dreamweaver?

Someone to frame who we are

The Pursuit of Happiness

Why give all away to pursue happiness: then sell happiness for the buy-back.

44 Chapter Three

The Battle For The Soul

In the unspoken war for control, there are no demilitarised zones.

66 Chapter Four

What is your Diet?

Will you consume junk food all day, and hope for the best?

86 Chapter Five

Mental Health, Pain, Depression & Suicide

Must pain be woven into every shred of endeavour?

IIO Chapter Six

Netocracy: The Internet Sugar & Spice

How is a hug better than a tweet? Is Social Media really social?

136 Chapter Seven

Finding Your Voice

The greatest deception men suffer is from their own opinions - *Leonardo Da Vinci*.

162 Chapter Eight

Millennials: Generations Collide

Can another generation define a new legacy?

186 Chapter Nine

Invictus: Self Help, Motivation & Atheism

Am I the master of my destiny? Am I the be all and know all?

208 Chapter Ten

The Journey of Transformation

Broken things can be fixed. Begin the journey here.

230 Index

Dedication

To my late Dad, Ida-Michaels Your work on earth is done. We are still here, God is working ours out.

Acknowledgement

have been writing this book for many years. The main credit is for my wonderful wife Hadiza, she let me write while she sorted many things out. I owe this work to her resilience. Dad's angels; my four wonderful daughters; Onahi, Adia, Talia-Imani and Zebida, thank you for your love. To my siblings, Ebenezer, Isaac, Grace, Joy and John. Mercy always.

These radical men are key influences and under-web of my make-up: Emmanuel Kanos, Tony Rapu, and the legendary Ida-Michaels. My friend-sourced proofers; thank you for making the time, testing and challenging each idea.

Forward

eason. Religion. Culture. Transgeneration. Philosophy. Transcendence. Big words of life.

Collide – the book is a philosophical excursion of the inner wirings of the mind, and the making sense of outer phenomena.

The old order was divergence. Separation of church and state, culture and religion, philosophy and the "real" world. But divergence is out. Convergence is in. Convergence is the new black.

Collide shows us why. And how. And what.

Life is not a surface reality. Thoughts Collide.

- Leke Alder

Preface

Everyday two worlds collide.

here is an on-going war fought in business as well as flea markets, in rural communes as in sky-scrapers. Each day people ride in buses, drive in cars, drop off kids at school, execute in board rooms and on shop floors, attend parties or get to worship, there is this extanct war. It is the collide of the old and the new worlds. When the day is done, people relax at social or golf clubs or scurry home to rest, with a snag, a feeling, yearning for something more: Like Meaning. Purpose. Impact. As young men and women come of age, they want to make their lives count. When young people settle down to a family they measure their decision after the party is over and real living begins. The questions come in: "Is this what I want? Am I a cultural slave? Is my life a lie?"

As people climb the career ladder thoughts rage on: Does my life measure up? What is the measure of a good life? Why climb a ladder that is fraught with failure? Why get new knowledge that baits, or skills that make you the prey? The answers to these many fulfilments is down to what can be called elements. These elements drive today's culture and sit at fault lines of a dying but powerful world and a new nascent paradigm. These worlds constantly collide. Whether you subscribe to status quo, or you'd rather have radical changes

Collide is about you if you live on earth and ponder the clash of perspectives that dog every conversation on marriage, work, politics, gender, God, generations, pain, success and failure.

you collide inevitably.

66

Collide is about you if you live on earth and you wonder why clashing perspectives dog every conversation on marriage, work, politics, gender, morality, pain, success and failure.

This book makes big claims, not to superior thinking, but to everyone's experience. Big colliding topics pique conversations of the millennial, digital native against older generations. In my work as a pastor-counsellor and foray in the tech business corridor, I gleaned lots. I've had the privilege of extreme moments carving insightful nuggets out of complicated human scenarios. This book "Collide" is a perfect outlet for sharing and uncomplicating hot tectonic social elements. If you are a student in the school of life, this book is your enquirers mind-expanding question.

The in-thing is refusal to trade ideas and fear of selling out one's version of truth. You listen to this at commencement speeches at Yale and Princeton, watch on Oprah: "...everyone should own their version of truth and stick

66

"Political Correctness" is the new queen. She collides with anyone with a different opinion to it." How can the truth have versions? There can only be one truth!

The world has changed. Aggressive, unbelievably unhinged thoughts drive this century and truth is up in the air. A new generation rises as the most vocal in history. Despite advancing freedoms, confessions and affir-

mations, people are not happier. Mental health malaises are on the rise. This is the "collide" driving a new generation adrift.

"Political Correctness" is the new queen. She collides with anyone of a different opinion. Atheists, feminists, abortionists, LGBTQ, blacks, whites, the Tea Party, Christians, Muslims, the bourgeoisie, Republicans, Labour, Democrats, Greenpeace survive for their agenda. Each of these societal elements are working themselves into fiefdom. You must offend no one. This is a nice but impossible idea

For all the boast of a new world, people are hurt and impeded. The new world is as the old. Depression is everywhere, competition is insane, people are loosing their lives to novel pressures. To exist above impediment and define purpose, you need a compass. A GPS, to track new territory and beat your way to your true essence amidst the cacaphony, the collide of a new world.

"Can we change the way we think?"

If you want to learn about transformation, then you have come to the right place. Collide will challenge your status quo and administer truth. Truth transforms, and transformed people change their world.



Chapter Two

The Pursuit of Happiness

Why give all away to pursue happiness: then sell happiness for the buy-back.

Shared Human Quest

e all want to be happy. In shared humanity Sikhs, Hindus, Animists, Buddhists, Christians, Muslims, or pagans, regardless of religion, background, or delineation, all want the same things out of life: "happiness". Continents do not hold back desires. Africans and Europeans, Asians and Americans, Arabs and Australians, everyone, everywhere yearn for the right of self-determination, freedom and the pursuit of happiness. The desire to live, improve oneself, accomplish things in life and die in dignity. This is the basis of the United States Constitution.

"... in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, ensure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity... do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

"Happiness means different things to people ... it means working to end conflict, poverty and other unfortunate conditions in which ...fellow human beings live..." — Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary General.

⁹ This is the opening line of the Constitution of the United States of America in paraphrase.

¹⁰ http://www.un.org/en/events/happinessday/... This was the UN Secretary-General's Message for 2014

Emma Lazarus (1849 to 1887) the poetess is best known for her poem about the Statue of Liberty. She described the American ideal of open immigration in her poem, "The New Colossus". People say it is the accurate description of the "American dream". Emma points to the shared quest for freedom in everyone. Like the statue of liberty is saying:

"... Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me...¹¹"

The "American dream" is that people, regardless of origin, class, or creed can aspire and become what they seek to be. Through hard work and focus, anyone can break into fortune. This place in the entire world is open to those who yearn. In the US Elections of 2016, "freedom" collided with American reality of a Donald Trump presidency whose conservatism was fostering an introvert nation. This was one of the wrestling points between Democrats and Republicans in the 2020 US Elections as well. The fight goes on.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are

¹¹ https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/new-colossus

created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

12

This same thinking enables the growth of big cities around the world. You may criticise rural-urban migration, but people from remote hamlets and villages will continue to press into cities. Their desire is to get educated, find jobs, and improve their lives. Obviously, some rural-urban migration may be misguided and Utopian. Pressure on cities increase competition between equally competent people. Broken dreams are a reality in city hustle.

The Most advanced cities in the world; New York, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Kuala Lumpur, Mexico, Lagos, London, Moscow, Tokyo, Seoul, New Delhi, Dubai, Los Angeles, Paris, Rio de Janeiro and many others, carry a certain romanticism as aspirational capitals where people go and make dreams come true.

Parents pray and work hard to end poverty in their

¹² The US Declaration of Independence as held in government archives: http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html

generation, and so liberate their posterity. They hope to bequeath their children a legacy of abundant wealth and a bold new world. When this is impossible due to simple economics, pain and a sense of failure trail this fallout.

Let me tell of a personal journey. I grew up on imaginations. I nursed dreams to conquer the "world", to control lands, and run things. I am still a big dreamer. I followed the James Bond 007 movie series and romanticised with "The World is not Enough". I'd sit for days on end and dream, dream, dream. I would think of empires yet un-built, flying saucers, outer space, and bodysuits. A time when men would need no roads or highways as everyone could fly. I dreamed of nations battered by wars being reformed as hate is washed away and forgiveness and peace returned. I would dream of children, born in remote villages and hamlets, breaking out of their limitations, finding opportunity, education, and transformation. I dreamed of a world where collective effort fights global disease. What will it be like to cure chronic afflictions like malaria, tapeworm, tuberculosis, polio, meningitis, and HIV/AIDS? These diseases were all commonplace in the village I grew up. Crushing them still seems like a pipe-dream. I also reckon pioneers can make great things happen. Some wild dreams come true. I was born dreaming, and I can connect with all dreamers out there.

Nations battered by wars are reformed as hate is washed away and affection and peace return



Context: I Woke up to Dreams

I remember this little five-year old boy in the remote village of Adum-East, Ito, Benue State, Middle-Belt Nigeria. Tribe, "Igede" One of the smallest, - a minority of Nigerian minorities. They were surrounded by the "giant" Idomas and Tivs: which, in the larger context of Nigeria, are marginalised themselves. What great "misfortune" then, to dream of anything above owning a farm like my peers, or their parents before them. Everyone around was a subsistence farmer, palm-wine tapper, hunter, goatherder or petty-trader. Therefore, those who even thought of travel to the city were deemed proud and attempting to lift themselves above their estate. This was the kind of conversation you are privy to in local gin and palmwine gazebos. The men who had gathered enough yams at harvest made a point to mock all who sought education as lazy imbeciles who could not farm, or disingenuous in hunting.

It was unheard of for girls to go to school in many families, as that made them "promiscuous and proud". Many 13 -14 year olds were snatched and forced into early marriages. I did not know of any doctors, engineers, lawyers, or professionals who were from my tribe until I was maybe twelve. Things are significantly different now.

The neighbours of the Igede were the Idoma on the northwest, the Tiv on the northeast, and the Ogoja of

Cross River state on the southern border. They each had derogatory names for the Igedes; names like "udam" and "egede" that fit into the same box as racial slurs.

For some reason however, that little Igede boy stepped above mindsets. He dreamt, anticipated, and believed that life had more to offer. There was no validation then, I am still amazed today that I might have been accurate. Many Igede boys and girls have since dared higher dreams and are some of the finest leaders of Benue State in science, agriculture, education and medicine.

Every night, I peered at the skies and wondered where the stars came from.

Where does the moon disappear to at sunrise, only to return another night? I imagined other worlds and created beings, before I understood a thing about cosmology, the planets, stars, or life forms beyond earth. I was constantly expanding my mind and immersed in fantasy, all day and all night.

In our particular hamlet of Ojuo, homesteads were made of mud bricks, roofs of bamboo, forest twigs and grass thatch from the local savannah. I have a recollection of the 'pride' I felt when my Dad out-paced our villagers.

Could there be a world where genuine love and right purpose conquer hate and discrimination?

#collide happiness



He built a house of mud bricks mixed with cement, and covered it with corrugated iron sheets. Yes our own "zinc" home! We were first in many ways when he again bought a black and white TV and a petrol powered generator. He would set the TV outside every evening on the "frontage" of our house. The motley crowd of village kids convened to watch from 4:00 pm. The only TV station our feeble antenna could pick up was "NTA" Enugu (the then Eastern Nigeria Capital, seventy-five miles away), which only started at 5:00 pm. As the pre-opening monotone died and the national anthem played, we "died" with anticipation. What rave programs like "Sesame Street", "Tom and Jerry", "Popeye" and "Icheoku" we were enthralled by. Time whizzed past quickly, as 9:00 pm soon came, when parents drove the kids away. It was their turn to consider important matters on the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Network News. Power soon went out at 10:00 pm exactly, and I retreated into dingy room shared with brothers and cousins.

I remember setting my eyes many times on the silhouette of the stars and the moon from those rural windowpanes. Was that image in the moon a mother carrying a baby, an angel with a bow, or God poring over His Earth? One thought would lead to another, but almost always another great fantasy of the night. These continued until sleep wafted in. My sub-conscious thoughts took over. I laid there visualising in dreamland. This was my fantastic and happy world, well into my teenage years.

My dreams were not all make-believe. I also had dreams of the human condition. I started to listen and apply my ears to a short-wave radio. In that rural village hundreds of miles from civilization, I learnt about international politics: the Cold War, perestroika and glasnost, the threat of nuclear annihilation. The news recounted how discrimination had brought mankind to world war twice and how the Middle East was at the brink of plunging all into a Third World War. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the proxy wars in Africa and the divide between communist and capitalist Africa connected to a night time "imaginatarium". Could there instead be a world where genuine love and right purpose conquer hate and discrimination?

These dreams became a driving force through school, even when I struggled with grades. I feared the familiarity of mediocrity. Education, I thought, was my license to participating in the future world. I was right, and I was wrong.

Since dreams remain my platform for inspiration, I easily relate to the pursuit of happiness and desire for self-actualisation around the world in every shade, form or colour. Wherever I see "hungry" people holding on to the promise of a better future, something jumps in me. In my own experience, the pursuit of happiness kept me on a quest: get this and pursue that. Nothing still guaranteed happiness. I wanted more, always.

Despite the outbursts of violence and religious fundamentalism, liberty still collides with draconian ideas.



Old World, New World Collide

These are the times when two worlds collide in the pursuit of happiness. A generation fights another, the Christian world against the irreligious agnostic, the Islamic militant agenda against free western societies. When we imagine historic mayhem, wars and cruelty, they seem old fashioned. The cruel, savage and bitter legacy of feeding men to lions, holding slaves, and imperialism. However, this generation is proving no different in producing social tension,war and tragedy. These are travesties about the pursuit of happiness.

The Protestant Reformation, the age of the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution transitioned Europe from a feudalistic to an industrial society. Production, science, and great inventions became the hallmarks of man. Though the Renaissance helped create a "better world," it also activated great upheaval and change. The abolitionists denounced the Slave Trade in parliaments and on city-streets against obstinate Europeans. Many parliaments did not stop the slave trade until it turned out uneconomical. Machines could now undertake what an army of slaves were needed to accomplish.

At that time, men pursued freedom of thought, questioning age long beliefs about the world and philosophy. Educational reform promoted the science of inventions, physics, biology, agricultural technology, aerospace, steel-

66

Today's global citizens do not understand why they cannot choose to belong wherever they please.

driven mechanization and industrialisation. This was the new pursuit of happiness.

Modern man operates the radical new times. Technology is ubiquitous, national boundaries are increasingly invisible. People are redefining their labels in the world. The general perception is that the old world held people back: in the factories, farms or trade,

and within national boundaries. Today's global citizens do not understand why they cannot choose to belong wherever they please. Despite the rise of violent nationalism in the US, the UK, Germany and France, the world is more open. Freedom to be anywhere is happiness. Fundamentalism shows how liberty still collides with draconian ideas.

National allegiances are fast losing their appeal as people seek new barometers to define themselves. Indians call many non-traditional places home - from the UAE, Mauritius, South Africa, Europe, and the US, Indians are adopting new nationalities. So are Europeans: the average European teen wants to be free to live in Madrid, Copenhagen, Paris, Prague, London, or New York. They know where they are from; but that should not matter. Nationality is important but, happiness should be the larger intent. The pursuit of happiness is the global ideal.

The Nation Brand



Nationalism alone is not enough. Nations now open their windows to qualify themselves in the global branding competition. Brands such as tourist havens, cash havens, oil capitals, sunshine cities, capital havens, and entertainment havens abound. Different kinds of dreams and ideologies thrive in these centres.

"Incredible India" delights the world with its mysticism. Malaysia "Truly Asia" is the real Asia of lakes and fun. "Wonderful Copenhagen" is the Danish hub for Scandinavian hospitality. Dubai is the bold commercial jewel of sand dunes and gold souks in the Arab world. Cape Verde and Mauritius are known for deep blue seas. The Swiss bank money, gold bars and offer the best views from the Alps. Rio is the place to go for swanky beaches and sun. The Bahamas, Trinidad and the Caribbean islands have the crystal, green and blue seas and nature views to die for. Germans are known for efficiency and precision engineering. China is the manufacturing and big market centre of the world.

Some enterprising countries have been listed as the Future 15 Countries, pushing for greater happiness for their people. They are:

"... Countries on the rise, ... polishing their brands and emerging across six key future drivers: governance (the government's ability to protect people and have a solid legal framework), investment, human capital (strength, productivity, health, and happiness of citizens), growth, sustainability (financial management, resource dependence, and sticking to international norms), and the ever-elusive influence (economic, political, and cultural). 13

In a connected world, reviews and perception index rules. When a nation ticks off the boxes of service excellence, security, economic viability of markets and open-

¹³ http://www.fastcoexist.com/1680768/the-15-leading-country-brands-of-the-future

ness, people everywhere automatically flock there for opportunity. Investors seek assurance of sustained fiscal discipline in the public sector, free private sector competition and safety for their wealth. Investors measure their risks of expropriation, nationalization and armed belligerence before investing (i.e. FDI)¹⁴.

The United Nations, the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) were designed to foster cooperation and happiness. New country groupings are emerging. BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) and MINT (Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Turkey) are countries to watch for their economic prosperity but also for their pursuit of happiness.

In today's violent world, it seems beyond the United Nations to tame inter-state terrorist organisations such as the Islamic State (ISIL), Al-Shabab, AlQaeda and Boko-Haram. Traditional upheavals loom in Libya, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Ukraine. Trouble spots remain: North Korea, the South China Sea, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Central African Republic among a host of troubled territories.

Even in volatile nations and right in the heart of extremist al-Qaeda, Al-Shabab or Boko Haram loyalist, there is a desire. It is the quest for a brand of future happiness in paradise. Something in their misguided psyche anticipate their violence and terror will pave the way for

¹⁴ FDI is the acronym for Foreign Direct Investment.

66

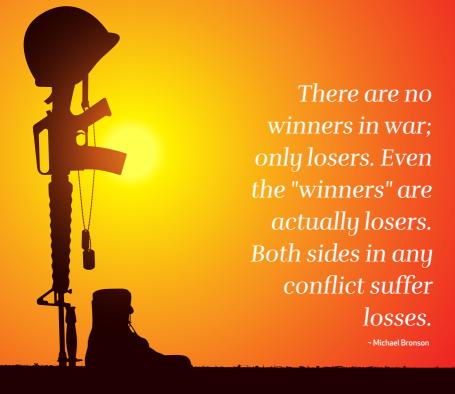
Everyone, everywhere is in pursuit of some brand of happiness. a more "holy" world. Their idea is to die killing the people who "pollute" the earth, and so bless the world with "peace". Though sick, this is their version of happiness. Everyone, everywhere is in pursuit of some brand of happiness.

Geo-Politics of War and Happiness

Many national boundaries today were drawn after wars for self-determination. The great and shameful slave trade in human beings that drove 800 million Africans across the Americas and most of Western Europe was largely egged on by a selfish pirate mentality. Cheap labour for European and American feudal interests was the object. Snitching, greedy Africans sold their kin for mirrors, gin, and the attractions of the "white man". The European pursuit to be big, powerful and pre-eminent spurred them to the ends of the earth. Their expeditions uncovered "closed" territories and brought home great resources that perpetuated happiness for their people.

The reason for the mass migration of the Irish, English, and other Europeans into Native American territories that forms today's United States is the pursuit of happiness.

The Native Americans did not just cede their lands to the immigrants. They fought valiantly but were crushed



by the superior fire-power of the arriving Europeans as they did also their to kin across the Atlantic who wanted to control their new found joy. This was also termed the American Revolution.

"American Revolution: The war of independence waged by the American colonies against Britain ... as a fledgling, largely disconnected nation won its freedom from the greatest military force of its time."15

¹⁵ http://www.history.com/topiacs/american-revolution

The psyche of the soviet leaders was the pursuit of happiness for the greater number. They were not successful in this ideal, arriving instead at an uneven bourgeois-controlled system

As they left behind the wars of Europe, the new "Americans" hoped to create a new world full of opportunity and happiness. After so many wars; American Civil War, 1861-65, the war with Britain (1812-15), Mexico (1848), Spain (1898-99 and the revolutionary war, they settled down to the business of nation building.

The premise of the Protestant work ethic is to teach how labour elevates man. They sought to establish the right of self-determination even in a feudalistic system. They

acceded to the "magna carta", one of the pillars of English law that espoused the principle of fairness and happiness.

The former Soviet Union was driven on by an idealistic dream from Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels for their people, the collective is superior to the individual. The psyche of their leaders was the pursuit of happiness for a greater number (socialism). They were not successful in this ideal, arriving instead at an uneven bourgeois-controlled system. The labouring proletariat lost their dreams and socialism is yet to thrive anywhere in the world.

The Greeks and Turks are daggers drawn following their territory sharing arrangement from their joint existence in the former Ottoman Empire.

Alternating periods of mutual hostility and reconciliation has marked the relations between the Greek and the Turkish states ever since Greece won its independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1821. Since then, the two countries have faced each other in four major wars—the Greco-Turkish War (1897), the First Balkan War of 1912 to 1913, the First World War (1914 to 1918) and finally the Turkish War of Independence.¹⁶

At the end of the Balkan wars, Christians moved into Greece, 1.5 million of them while the Muslims moved into Turkey, half a million of them. This refugee nightmare 17 redrew the map of the Christian world. After these wars, the Greeks had enough and sought to build a nation to pursue peace and happiness, so also the Turks.

Palestinian and Israeli attempts to recover their misappropriated identities in a modern world continues to create a huge conflict, disequilibrium, and sustained anarchy in the Middle East. This one struggle gives a snapshot of what the pursuit of happiness looks like to the Arab race. The Palestinians claim the Israelis are occupiers of their territory. This has been their ancestral heritage for hundreds of years when Israelis were not here. Israelis conversely hold doggedly to their "undisputed" ancestral ownership to lands on which the Palestinians

¹⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek%E2%80%93Turkish_relations

¹⁷ http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/misc/5gke3d.htm

currently live, and do not consider it illegal to build new settlements. This is a long war sparking proxy insurgencies around the middle East and Islamic terrorism against nations that back Israel. This war is predicated on the idea of liberty and the pursuit of happiness. A BBC review puts it thus:

"For the Palestinians the last 100 years have brought colonisation, expulsion and military occupation, followed by a long and difficult search for self-determination and for coexistence with the nation they hold responsible for their suffering and loss.

For the Jewish people of Israel, the return to the land of their forefathers after centuries of persecution around the world has not brought peace or security. They have faced many crises as their neighbours have sought to wipe their country off the map." 18

Arab nations continue to battle Israel, which they describe as a hostile ideology imposed by the West and no nation at all. Israel itself continues to battle historical enmity going back thousands of years. Both spare no strategy, rhetoric, and alliances. Across global lines, diplomacy and political campaigns continue to track the stalemate. Most moderates on either side of the divide seek peace, economic prosperity and the pursuit of happiness. As

¹⁸ http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/middle_east/03/v3_ip_timeline/html/

the Jews, so the Palestinians, Lebanese, Syrians, Iranians, Iraqis and Saudis, all chasing happiness.

Nigeria's history is incomplete without defunct Biafra and its self-determination pursuit. The attempt to carve another nation out of the newly independent Nigeria 50+ years ago, was brutally crushed by Nigerian troops backed by international forces. To this day, there is a covert nightmare history of starvation, naked street demonstrations with human body parts in the Igbo psyche.

Time will fail to detail the wars men have fought to find self-determination around the world. Of the worst ethnic cleansing of Kosovar Albanians by Serb forces and the death of the Serbs during the NATO intervention of 1999.19 Of India and the Punjab, the wars of Northern Ireland, the Spanish Basque Country, and Catalonia, Northern Sudan led from Khartoum and the South now led from Juba. These are not wars just because people were evil and mean. These represent the agitation and heart cry of a people for self-determination. They are 'just wars' 20 (The war or the conflict you engage in to acquire happiness or freedom). Happiness is truly a powerful idea.

¹⁹ http://philosophyfaculty.ucsd.edu/faculty/rarneson/phil267fa12/BUCHchap9.pdf

²⁰ Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination: The Accommodation of Conflicting Rights, Hurst Hannum, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011

Illusion: Is Happiness Worth it?



The Happiness Matrix

Happiness and its pursuit can be an illusion and mirage of the highest sort. People struggle all their lives to own the latest car, house or business. As soon as they have it, the insane craving ends. The object loses its appeal. A new attraction takes over. Nations struggle to arrive at a peace accord and people labour to build nations after war, only for another faction to hijack the peace, wrecking the purpose of it all.

Imagine Iraq: hundreds of thousands of lives lost, thousands of allied forces dead, trillions of dollars spent; old enemies coming back together to build a government. No winners. In most wars, nobody wins. What then, was the point of that war in the first place?

Picture Greece's economic malaise today: would you believe this to be the nation for which millions died in

Happiness and its pursuit can be an illusion and mirage of the highest sort.

#collide_happiness

needless wars? Consider India, Pakistan, and the enmity that broke those two brothers: was this necessary? Consider Israel and Palestinian Territories; is the tension in which these nations are run worth it?

The black African nations agitated for independence from their colonial masters

33

Nations struggle to arrive at a peace accord after war, only for another faction to hijack the peace

for decades. Now seven decades post independence most show little progress. Post colonial Africa is unable to match the economic self-sufficiency of the pre-colonisation era. Africa is still being exploited and robbed. In spite of huge natural deposits across Africa, its' leaders seem unable to create utilitarian wealth or increase opportunity. They continue to blame past "colonial masters" for corruption, leadership, and appalling lack of organisation!

Here is a controversial paradigm: Is Africa really better-off with "Freedom" or independence? This in no way makes a case for oppression. With historical antecedents, we can query whether African agitation has necessarily created a happier society.

In Darwin's view, emotions like happiness are mere genetic adaptations. These are evolved to propagate genes. Pleasure, happiness, sadness, emotions and desire are biochemical-based illusions. They are the evolutionary tricks promoting the survival of our ancestors.²¹

The foundation of philosophy and psychology from Freud, Nietzsche and Emerson all point to happiness as

²¹ http://forums.philosophyforums.com/threads/happiness-is-an-illusion-50853.html

an illusion and life as futile. Why is the global ideal of happiness not enough for individual mojo.? It is because happiness is fleeting and fickle, no one can conserve it.

In a spiritual sense, you can locate things via an internal compass. Man's connection to his Creator enables him to cultivate, nurture and renew life. Whether man sinks or swims, the season is summer or winter, days are dark or bright, with a lot or with a little, this Divine connection is the purpose that breeds joy.

"These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.²²

Joy comes from knowing and understanding the meaning of life. Learning how you are here to serve. Activating the mandate of living by impacting others.

Happiness conversely, is a product of temporary highs. Material acquisitions, accolades of important society caucuses may prop up like a temporary pep drug. Many lose the "happy" emotion when challenges assail. With failure, an estranged spouse, an armed attack, business ruin, or death of a close ally comes loss of happiness.

Joy is the way to access life beyond the grind.

²² John 15:11 [NASB] / http://biblehub.com/john/15-11.htm

Joy launches us onto our very spot on the cosmos. In an agricultural economy, happiness was based on the quality of harvest, an old prophet stumbled upon an insight. This is what he had to say:

"Though the cherry trees don't blossom and the straw-berries don't ripen, though the apples are worm-eaten and the wheat fields stunted, though the sheep pens are sheepless and the cattle barns empty, I'm singing joyful praise to God. I'm turning cartwheels of joy to my Savior God. Counting on God's Rule to prevail, I take heart and gain strength!"²³

This prophet stumbled on something bigger than the pursuit of happiness. He found something more than a circumstantial "high" built on attainments of his agricultural resources in bloom. He found a soul fruit. One that can be planted, watered, watched over, and harvested within. The fruit of joy.

Deep joy can be found among the sick or the healthy, in

²³ Habakkuk 3:17-19 [NIV] / http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Habakkuk+3%3A17-19&version=NIV

grieving as well as happy homes, among the poor as with the rich.

Though all men advance heedlessly in the pursuit of happiness, we should stop and think. Is there more? Are we obliviously chasing happiness, when joy is what we truly require?



Get The Full Book

www.collidecentral.com