

NEN 202: The Science of Happiness

Man's eternal quest and hunt for happiness is the driving force behind all his actions and pursuits. Yet, all that most of us would have experienced in the name of happiness are no more than mirages. The short-lived pleasures that we experience after fulfilment of our desires fade away rapidly once attained, leaving us racing for more. The questions we all seek answers to are - Can happiness be ever-lasting? Is there a source of permanent happiness? If yes, where to look for it and how to connect to it?

In this course we shall explore happiness systematically and scientifically, touching upon the more recent body of knowledge on happiness (derived from experimental studies in disciplines such as psychology, philosophy and neuroscience) as well as the ancient treasures of Yoga and Vedanta. This course will cover the following concepts through self-introspection and discussions:

- Understanding and defining happiness
- Classifying and quantifying happiness
- Lasting happiness
- Refining the search for happiness
- Identifying sources of lasting and permanent happiness amidst ever-changing situations
- Finding happiness through cognitive control of emotions

Some important points:

- We shall have a maximum of 50 students enrolled.
- The final year students will be given preference for enrolment in the workshop; only if vacant seats remain will they be offered to other students. However, all those who are interested need to fill in the registration form.
- The candidates will be screened based on their performance in a test to be conducted during a contact session before the commencement of the workshop. The test will be based on the lecture at the following link:
https://youtu.be/A_uDAkb_6RI
The interested candidates are therefore required to go through the lecture.
- Only the first 200 registrations shall be invited for the contact session. Other candidates may be contacted later depending on the availability of vacant seats.
- The workshop sessions would be conducted as per the following schedule:
 - (i) Tutorials/activity sessions to be conducted on Tuesdays and Fridays from.....
 - (ii) Sessions for deeper understanding of concepts through dialog/discussions to be held on Saturdays from 10 am to 11:30 am.
- Regular assignments will be given which may comprise watching online videos and/or other activities.
- Participation in the workshop shall be converted to non-graded units only in case of 100% attendance and regular submission of assignments.
- Those having internet issues may kindly not register as they would find it difficult to meet the completion criteria.

Resource persons

Pravrajika Divyanandaprana is a monastic member of Sri Sarada Math currently stationed in Ramakrishna Sarada Mission, New Delhi. She served as the principal of Nivedita Vidya Mandir school in Hauz Khas for many years and is currently the editor of Samvit journal. She has been taking courses at IIT Delhi, such as ‘Science of Happiness’, ‘Introduction to Karma Yoga’ and ‘Discovery and Management of Self’. You may visit the following links for a glimpse of these courses:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFmQ3Upk_iK7jIseTEIuGUWqz6oY0e02D

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFmQ3Upk_iK55JLEWyzFagPLbDAv_bpDY

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFmQ3Upk_iK7ZcRrClO0DgzsvQHD2BIaE

Dr. Sonika Thakral is a post-doctoral fellow at NRCVEE, IIT Delhi. She is a Ph.D. in theoretical computer science, and is interested in exploring the science of yoga and spirituality through research. Her research interests include theoretical computer science, yoga and meditation, cognition and functional neuroimaging. Her goal is to apply the ancient science of yoga for the betterment of education and overall development of children.