Rosakon Chawanangkun

Ms. Sutton

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The Extent of Happiness

            The world is filled with unhappy people. People that are not satisfied with their job, appearance, or status can be found everywhere. If one were to randomly ask someone on the streets, that person could probably give a long list of things that do not meet his satisfaction. In this type of society, where are the happy people? We all aim to better ourselves so that in the end, we can end up happy. We strive to be the best version of ourselves to reach a level of happiness. The truth is, there are no levels to happiness. One is either happy, or not. The documentaries *The Human Experience*, *Happy*, and *I Am* thoroughly explore what happiness truly means. However, the media and other external sources have fooled people into thinking that obtaining a higher level of happiness is possible through the purchase of materialistic objects and other unnecessary items.

            In the documentary *The Human Experience* by Charles Kinnane, the producers conveyed that no matter how little a person has; he/she will always find the chance to obtain happiness. The documentary showed a Leper colony filled with elders who were exiled because of their condition. Not only did they lose the love and support of their families, they lost many limbs, which made survival difficult. However, when asked about the well being of these people, they were genuinely happy. They found each other’s companionship, and helped one another survive on the resources available to them. They did not need anything other than the things that nature provided them. Despite all their hardships, these people managed to obtain happiness because they maintained a positive outlook and were unexposed to the persuasive advertisements that exist in the U.S.

            Happiness is best explored through the documentary *Happy* by Roko Belic. The film explains how happiness can be obtained by the simplest of acts, such as showing gratitude. Happiness is a skill that humans must practice. By showing gratitude, humans are deeply thinking about every little thing they have. Often, we realize that the little things a person often overlooks are actually the things that people should be most thankful for. This reflection can be practiced daily, and in time people will learn that they really have all they need in life. No addition of materialistic items will greatly increase the level of content and happiness that they feel. Once they remove themselves from the outside world and focus on the basics, they will learn to be grateful for all that they have.

            In order for humans to realize that happiness is so easily attainable, we must realize that we are the problem, and we are the solution. These two ideas are presented in *I Am* by Tom Shadyac. Humans create this noise around them that only causes the problem to worsen. The media feeds us with the idea that we need useless objects but we respond by giving in and buying these products. People essentially drive their own problems deeper and deeper. Although this seems like a never-ending cycle, we can put a stop to it. The only thing that can stop the problem humans created is a human himself. The moment we realize that happiness is attainable in any circumstance as long as we practice gratitude, we will be able to grasp it.

Works Cited

The Human Experience. Dir. Charles Kinnane. 2010. DVD.

Happy. Dir. Roko Belic. 2011. DVD.

I Am. Dir. Tom Shadyac. 2010. DVD.