



HAPPINESS IN TRAVELLING

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The gladdest moment in human life, is a departure into unknown lands.

Sir Richard Burton- welsh actor

Most people want to be happy and seek ways to become happier than they are, probably more so than ever in today's life style (Schwartz, 2004). Happiness depends partly on how we spend our time. Choice in that matter is limited in various ways, much of our time being occupied by obligations such as work and childcare. Yet we have more control over what we do in leisure time. Hence, it is worth knowing how leisure affects happiness. Contemplation about happiness began hundreds of years ago. The ancient Greeks in particular were interested in happiness. Aristotle thought of happiness as 'living according to reason'. In his view, leading a happy life meant leading a virtuous life (McMahon, 2006). Since the 1960s happiness has become a subject of empirical research in the social sciences. The concept of happiness in these empirical studies is different from Aristotle's view. Rather than leading a morally good life, happiness is regarded as leading a satisfying life. In this dissertation I focus on that latter meaning of the word 'happiness of travelling'.

Travelling helps us to feel like our best selves because we were more willing to receive the world's many lessons, no matter their shapes and size. Travelling helps us to recognize our shared humanity with others while dissipating fear or misunderstanding. After all, it's way more fun to love the world than to be afraid of it.

Travelling improves your mental health by helping us to feel calm. Taking time from work to see new places releases the stress we've been holding on to, so much so that the feeling can only be described as feeling alive. Studies have shown that we value our experiences more than any material possessions we may own. Spending money on a new experience is more important than buying something new because the experience stays with you forever and you can take it with you wherever you go. This is why when people are reminded of the good experience they had before, they instantly become much happier. As we age, this phenomenon only increases. Our overall satisfaction with experiences increases while the joy and satisfaction we get from buying new things reduces.



The best alternative to gaining knowledge from a book is travelling. According to neuroscientists, when we travel, we rewire our brains. This is because new experiences are the key to building new neural pathways in the brain. By rewiring your



brain, you become more creative and accepting of new ideas. This is why travel makes you happy.

The happiest people are the ones with the strongest connections to others, be it family, friends or the general community. One of the best ways to improve these relationships is by travelling together and experiencing new things together.

We will find that it creates an opportunity to have some of the most important memories of your life, and this level of connection does wonders for relationships. The pleasures of discovering new things and the joy that comes with meeting new people or the thrill of eating new foods all come together to create a feeling of happiness in any traveler.

Some of the reasons why travelling makes us happier

- Being away makes us appreciate home and family: Being away from things we often take for granted family, close friends, home makes us appreciate them more.
- We find self-confidence by dealing with unexpected situations: There comes a time when everyone must deal with an unexpected situation when they are on the road. Whatever happens, there is a way around the problem and knowing that you can deal with these situations is a big boost to self-confidence and therefore your happiness.
- We can make new friends: It's much easier to make new friends on the road than it is at home, where people are less inclined to chat to

strangers on a cab or strike up conversation in a coffee shop. When people are away from home, there seem to be fewer boundaries to cross and making friends becomes much easier.

- Getting some 'you' time: Our breathing space is often lost in our usual day-to-day existence. Travel helps revive that space. Having a moment to take advantage of peace and quiet and to simply 'be' allows us to let go of stress and tension and just enjoy being in the moment.

- Sunshine while travelling generally puts us in a better mood: You enjoy and feel sunshine more when you are travelling. And of course, sunshine and warmth generally place us in a much better mood. Though, this is more of a short-term boost, but a healthy glow makes everyone feel better and that lasts for a few weeks even after the trip is over.

So aside from making you happier in the short-term, travelling can make you a much more contented and relaxed person in the long run, too. Past travels leave us with the memories and personal skills such as confidence, broad-mindedness, friends and a more worldly perspective and that's exactly the reason why travelling makes you a happier person.

