



If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail.

In a small village in North East India, a young man had a dream of representing India at the international level in his field of sports — High jump.

Poverty, lack of opportunity and no space to practise made him give up his ambition.

Years later, his daughter Pooja, had the same vision as ~~her~~^{her} father. She wanted to play nationals but faced the same obstacles — no training institute, no coach and no equipments. She, however, adopted a different approach.

She prepared a mattress made of hay, used bamboo sticks of her field to create rods and took help of her school P.E teachers to coach her. She went on to represent and win a silver medal for India at the Asian Games in the under 20 category.

How did she manage it? Simply

add a better intro
- more reading, new examples
- keep on going back to the topic

good example but as topic is not motivational, look for more relevant example from Political or social field

by changing her solution to the problem, she did not rely only on the tools she had — she created new ones. → good

good

An overreliance on any object or ideology can be a significant hindrance to one's growth. If we have only one view and rely on it excessively, we will be unable to solve dynamic problems.

In this essay, we will see how and why overreliance is an issue and why there is a need to keep on changing according to situations.

The hammer is not the only tool in our closet.

→ Good, bring home the point repeatedly

A journey through history highlights the importance of not being completely dependent on any single strategy. It will create a fossilised cognitive process leading to damage.

For instance, kingdoms sought glory through wars. Winning or losing was the only thing that



mattered. However, an overreliance on war has destroyed kingdoms too. Magadha empire, one of the greatest empire was destroyed by the Mauryas easily. Magadha's dependency on elephants, following old strategies — all led to their demise.

Good example of simple.

Mauryas on the other hand were agile in their approach. They used horses, new instruments and planning to solve the situations at hand. (Kautilya's Arthashastra is a testimony to the fact that holding only one view can lead to destruction. A multiple point strategy is needed. Viewing every tool as hammer will make every problem a nail.)

Similarly, in India's Independence struggle, we witnessed multiple groups having their own strategy for independence. Earlier groups were replaced by new ones — Moderates replaced by extremists. Why? They did not change their



solutions. Their strategy became ineffective.

Even Mahatma Gandhi understood that world view has to change with time. He used multiple tools — non cooperation, committees, hunger strikes — to achieve independence. An ardent follower of non violence, he gave a cry for "Do or Die" in the final years. He did not rely excessively on any single method which helped his case.

On similar lines, we can see entire systems operating. According to Karl Marx the "seeds of destruction of a system in present within the system itself." Systems continue to rely on only one object or ideology even when problems become dynamic.

For instance, feudalism continued to rely on serfs even when industries started to develop. They continued to focus on land and on controlling the serfs during industrialisation.



This created a revolution by the seefe who overthrew the feudal structure and joined the factories. It was inevitable as the only tool that lords knew was force and they viewed capitalism as a problem to be solved by forced too. The same ideology that worked in the 14th century was redundant for the 15th century.

With changing times, one should change the approach as well.

We have witnessed a shift from religious thought to rationality.

Religion was unable to solve modern day problems and situations. It was unable to answer questions on existence. The only answer it had was "will of God".

An overreliance on metaphysical realm led to its own sidelining. People turned towards scientific thinking and logical reasoning to find solutions.

An extreme dependency on science might lead to its displacement as well.

Be flexible
with
historical
approach
- Need not
follow all
postions of
history

Unless we adopt a dynamic basket of tools, we will continue to see every problem in a similar manner. This can lead to a fossilized society, devoid of change and struggling to combat with changing times.

For instance, LGIBTQIA+ community for their progress solely relied on the mercy of the government, in earlier times. Today, they have changed their approach. A plethora of tools is used by them to assert themselves — from awareness to legal changes to holding Pride March. They have changed the way they viewed their issue.

Unless we reduce our reliance, our development will be stifled. The multiple discoveries, inventions and innovations are a testimony to the above idea. This is clearly witnessed in India's approach in its space programme.



India, during the Chandrayaan mission, failed continuously to launch the satellite via the traditional routine model. India was unable to develop its cryogenic engine leading to failures. The scientists of ISRO changed their strategy.

Instead of using the GSLV, they did something that was never done before — used PSLV. India successfully launched the satellite and went on to become the first country to achieve a landing at such low costs and less time. Had it stuck to its traditional tool — India would still be struggling.

This shows an overreliance can make transitions difficult. Unless we expand our roots, we cannot solve new problems due to our limited thinking. During COVID 19, when the world came to a halt, people were quick to adapt to the new situation.



The world was connected physically before this. If we had relied on it, isolation would have increased depression. Instead, we saw a quick, though problematic, transition from physical to the digital world. Had we not shifted to the digital arena, unimaginable losses would have occurred.

Discouraging
of COVAXIN,
China
Postcard.

Today, there are talks about COVID = Hammer
= Nail
diversification - diversifying supply chain,
bilateral relations and trade routes.

The Russia - Ukraine war further showed the necessity to reduce over dependence on any one country. Today we talk about a global world order characterized by multipolarity.

An over reliance on trade routes of Europe caused inflation, food insecurity and trade barriers.

The world was quick to develop and find new alternatives. If we kept on viewing 'the route' as the only



say out, doomsday would be close.

Even within our inner self, we should not stick to our ideology. Dependence on any single object can create addiction. To nurture ourselves, we need to broaden our horizon.

When Sudha Murthy was asked how did she develop such a great personality, she replied - "I see every situation as an opportunity to learn". She meant that knowledge and wisdom cannot be achieved solely through books. Societal interactions, experience and learning — all were needed to adapt to situations. Simply relying on any one source can make us limited and stifle our's flight of imagination.

However, is overreliance always destructive? Can it not help in any situation? Of course it can. For students engaged in competitive examination, they have to solely



rely on their books. For them, studying is a solution to all the problems.

But even here, there should not be a complete dependence on physical books.

Focus should be on knowledge.

It can come from physical books, movies or the social media. One should be adaptable to the methods of learning.

Sometimes over reliance can also help in continuing our struggle in the face of adversity. For instance, Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam relied solely on learning to achieve his dreams. His rise from a low class boy to India's President was aided by education.

However, he did not view only schools as agents of education. He considered the world as his institution of learning.

A famous quote by Bob Dylan explains the need to change views

"Come gather around people of the world, wherever you roam

Against
the topic
has been
dealt
widely.

For the seas are rising,
Unless you learn how to swim
You will sink like a stone,
For the times, they are changing".

Seeing every opportunity in
the same way can stifle us. If we see
ourselves as only having hammer as a
tool, we will view every problem as
a nail. If we imagine ourselves as
having the entire toolkit, no problem
will be unsolvable.

1) you are preparing for civil service,
talk more about political or administrative
challenges of how some bureaucrats
only use hammer as a tool and see
all problems as a nail whereas
some are coming up with new
tools & techniques and has
a vibrant view towards problems.

2) Understanding is clear however
these need to be more dimensional.



There is no path to happiness. Happiness is the path.

The story of Sindbad the sailor is very well known. An ambitious voyager, he went on 7 journeys to achieve his ultimate source of happiness — gold and riches.

His first journey was filled with dangers and hurdles that could cost him his life. He did not give up and discovered treasures. It made him happy. But soon he lost this sense of victory and happiness. He went for another voyage and emerged victorious. But again, it was not long lasting — his sense of victory.

Every time he overcame the obstacles, got what he wanted, he was left wanting more. This made him undertook seven deadly voyages but never made him content. He soon realised that it was not the destination that made him happy, rather his

achievements were the voyages that he undertook - his journey. itself.

This leaves us with the question - what is happiness? Can it be ever truly achieved, and if yes is there a definite path? Is happiness the goal or the process to achieve that goal? These questions leave everyone perplexed.

There can be no definite path to happiness - history has taught us this. The great famous philosophers and thinkers view happiness not as an end, but rather it lies in the means to achieve those ends. It is not a destination, it is the road to that destination.

Gautama Buddha, when wondering about the ways to solve worldly issues, propounded the idea of Four Noble Truths and an Eight Fold Path. This path was to be followed to reduce problems and



suffering. It was not a path to achieve ultimate happiness. but rather only a means to ameliorate sufferings.

This was because Buddha never viewed happiness as an end that could be achieved. According to his philosophical views, following this path would give us happiness by curbing our desires. It would be futile to search for happiness as an end goal without enjoying the process itself.

Even today, we hear phrases as 'do what makes you happy'. It is a positive, encouraging thought. There is no single aspect that can make everyone happy. Different people desire it in different ways — for some career achievement is happiness while for many others simply enjoying nature's bliss can lead to joy.



However, the problem lies in when happiness is ^{sought} seeked in objective manifestations. "Man is a perpetually dissatisfied animal" - Marxist thoughts claim. It begs the question that How much is enough to make someone happy?

For instance, the number of suicide cases among students are at an all time high. Academic pressure and a goal oriented approach defers happiness until the goal is achieved. The process of learning which itself should have been a pleasant experience, ends up becoming means to a goal - academic excellence which is seen as the ultimate source of happiness.

"I am grateful for this opportunity to learn" - said a 90 year old woman in Kerala who appeared for her class 10 board exams at

the age of 90. For her, it was the journey that gave her satisfaction and elevated her experience, rather than the marks scored by her.

Setting up a goal and hoping that following a fixed path to it will lead to joy is problematic. Today, anxiety and isolation levels are highest among the corporate class. They are "well settled" and have almost everything that could be desired. Yet they feel incomplete.

Good

This is because they are alienated — not only from their goals, but from the entire process as well as themselves. They followed the success recipe to achieve material well being, they forgot to enjoy the path that led to it.

Similarly, in the current societal scenario, we see multiple issues like corruption, greed, dishonesty etc.

Many social workers and civil society members dedicate their life to improve society and do such evils. More often than not, they are unsuccessful and are only capable of solving the immediate issue at hand.

(For instance, Kailash Satyarthi was able to stop a few cases of child trafficking. He was however unable to expose the entire racket and people involved. Nonetheless, he celebrated his relievements. If one waits for the ideal world before celebrating some happy event, people would forget how to smile.)

It is imperative to understand that small steps are the key to happiness.

"बुंद बुंद से ही सागर बनता है"

(small drops form a huge ocean)

If we defer our happiness, delay it unless we achieve the end,

Good example



we are losing the happiness experienced during the process. Becoming a billionaire and opening an NRI for the poor might give us joy, but so will a small donation in the process of doing so.

Happiness, contentment, joy - all cannot be attributed to a final destination with a fool proof means to achieve it. The journey itself is the source of all this.

It is easily understood in the struggle of J K Rowling. She had a love for writing. Her famous "Harry Potter" series was however rejected multiple times. It did not stop her for writing as for her writing was the very act that made her happy, rather than getting the book published. She did not make happiness as her destination, she enjoyed the path.

On the other hand, we witness people struggling to achieve

their goal. They push themselves by repeating the mantra "the goal is near". And on non achievement, they experience mental agony. They deny themselves the basic pleasures in life.

They suffer as they imagined happiness would be ^{have} the face of their ambitions. They see the process and learnings as struggle. They themselves become the masters while being their own slaves - imagining their paths pitilessly blocked.

A recent study by the Psychiatric Laboratory in an American University conducted psychological analysis to show that it is the journey that is filled with happiness rather than the destination.

They conducted a neurological analysis along with a survey. They asked rich old men and women who



were successful in their respective areas a simple question — "What is the one thing that you regret?". The most common responses were:

"I wish I did not work as hard as I did" and the other being "I wish I had enjoyed my life's journey".

These were responses from people who were deemed to have achieved their goals and were apparently content and happy. The reality is however not so simple. It is the moments in life that give us happiness and not monumental achievements. Achievements will surely add to our cheer, but it is not the only sole reason.

People make compromises and sacrifices to achieve societal standards.

The increasing pressure to have a "well settled job" as it offers a secure future and will give us a safe and happy life, has shifted



many dreams.

There is a need to change our perception. Having a secure future is not the ultimate goal. Instead, following one's heart and will can lead us to a path of happiness. The presence of adventure sports industry exemplifies this. People who engage in such activities like sky diving, bungee jumping etc follow their path of happiness. Their journey is their joy rather than any abstract destination.

Wise thinkers and great philosophers have always been questioned as to how to achieve happiness. Multiple solutions have been proposed — learning, helping others, working hard etc. But one aspect has been constant throughout history. It is not

an end goal, not a destination but rather the process of what you do should make one happy.

" I wish everyone achieve ~~what~~ whatever they want in life, so that they can understand that achieving goals will not make you happy forever"

— Bob Marley

These words hold true even today.

It is to be understood that happiness is the path not the destination.