



Learn About Flow

Find your flow, find your success

“What does happiness really mean?”

A Learn About Flow QuickStudy Article

by

David Leigh Weber

I read an article a while back that said, historically, economists and others who studied human behavior firmly believed that if workers were able to earn enough money they would have more free time and therefore be able to enjoy life more. And people did make significantly more money in most western societies, especially after World War II. In America, people bought homes, attained college degrees, and achieved other goals previously impossible on a mass scale.

But, much to the economists' disbelief, happiness did not occur as intended. Rather than enjoying life as predicted, people simply used their new-found wealth to accumulate more goods. A few years ago I did some market research on the baby boomers (defined as those born between 1946 and 1964). 3/4's of baby boomers grew up in a two-bedroom, one-bath 900 square foot house (a statistic that did not vary on family size) with one car, if that. Yet few at the time would say they were really "suffering" by living in such a small house or only having one car.

Today, of course, things are radically different and what people consider necessities for life have changed. My friend's young daughter considers it a punishment if they don't ride in their SUV with the video screen in the back. Few Americans would consider buying a home with one bathroom, and most insist that every child have his/her own room. The average family eats out at least five times a week (although this may be changing with higher food prices), and many home meals are microwaved out of the bag instead of made from scratch. The old joke about how does a Beverly Hills housewife call her kids to dinner (Answer: "Come on kids, get in the car") now applies to any town, anywhere.

But are people happy? In a nutshell, no. All the wealth generated for decades has created a demand for more material goods, not more free time to enjoy life. Want to know one of the best investments of the past 20 years? Storage companies. The demand for storage has exploded, with people not only buying bigger homes but rental huge lockers to store even more of their stuff. So people end up working more to "afford" more things. Now it's easy to blame this all on marketers, but the reality is no one can make you buy something you don't want.

What's happening is that people are feeding their flow blockages (things that prevent success) through wealth. Rather than removing blockages and finding happiness they simply act like a television ad – if they buy the product their lives will be so much better. This includes one of the most expensive products out there – weddings. The current US divorce rate is somewhere around 65% and I believe the average couple stays together less than five years, yet the average wedding is something

north of \$10K yet the average household income in America is \$40K to \$50K per year.

Now don't get me wrong. Material goods, including weddings, are like money itself — they are neutral and only take on a good or evil nature based on use (see separate money article). If you like fast cars (like I do) then owning one is part of your flow and denying yourself one can actually be a blockage. But if you are buying a 4,000 square foot home or outfitting your seven-year old in Versace just to prove to your friends and family you are somebody then something is wrong.

By understanding and following your flow, what makes you your most successful, you can avoid the “pursuit of happiness” and actually have it 24/7!

David Leigh Weber is an author (My Life Has No Purpose), speaker, lecturer and trainer in the personal development industry through his company Learn About Flow. He can be reached at David@LearnAboutFlow.com.