

# The Patterns in Our Personalities

## *Our Eleven Primary Emotions*

<b>Happiness</b>	the emotion caused by the fulfillment of a desire
<b>Unhappiness</b>	the emotion caused by the nonfulfillment of a desire
<b>Passion</b>	the emotion caused by the anticipation of happiness
<b>Fear</b>	the emotion caused by the anticipation of unhappiness
<b>Love</b>	the emotion caused by the attraction to beauty
<b>Hatred</b>	the emotion caused by the repulsion from ugliness
<b>Trust</b>	the emotion caused by the perception of virtue
<b>Distrust</b>	the emotion caused by the perception of vice
<b>Patience</b>	the emotion caused by the acceptance of reality
<b>Anger</b>	the emotion caused by the rejection of reality
<b>Surprise</b>	the emotion caused by an unanticipated experience

Our other emotions are either a specific form of one of these primary emotions (such as confidence, a specific form of trust), or a **Blended Emotion** (such as envy) where primary emotions are experienced blended together. Emotions are our completely passive mental reactions to our experiences. They can only be indirectly controlled. Their quality is crucial to how much we enjoy life.

## *The Quality of Our Desires*

The quality of our desires (which directly affects the quality of our emotions) depends upon whether those desires are (1) productive or destructive and (2) independently fulfillable (or not). The categories of desire quality, in descending order, are:

<b>Independent Productive Desires</b>	their goal is productive and fulfillment is within our personal control
<b>Dependent Productive Desires</b>	their goal is productive but fulfillment is dependent on others or on natural laws
<b>Dependent Neutral Desires</b>	their goal is neutral and fulfillment is dependent on natural laws
<b>Dependent Destructive Desires</b>	their goal is destructive and fulfillment is dependent on others or on natural laws
<b>Independent Destructive Desires</b>	their goal is destructive but fulfillment is within our personal control
<b>Impossible Desires</b>	their fulfillment is literally impossible

Key Concepts: desires are active mental decisions made in the pursuit of happiness, we have **Free Will** (restricted by reality, let loose in dreams), **Contingent Desiring**, **Transcending Cruelty**, **Motives** are our more fundamental desires (but many should be dropped), and **Intelligent Desiring**: we can change what we desire, which leads inevitably and immediately to changes in our emotions.

## *Our Attitudes*

Key Concepts: our attitudes are far more fundamental than our religious beliefs, **the Importance of Being Important** can hardly be overstated, how attitudes change, and **Perspective**: the mature recognition that we are one of billions, not the center of the Universe.

## *Our Personalities* (essay excerpt)

In our pursuit of happiness most of us entertain thousands of desires based on hundreds of motives. Our experiences of happiness and unhappiness, pleasure and pain, reinforce some of those desires and discourage others. Over time these various experiences of success and failure build up our attitudes towards life, our fundamental beliefs about what life is really like.

There is a problem, though, with many of our experiences — they are either deceptive or inadequate teachers. That is because even on those rare occasions when the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of a desire is clearly perceived, the more fundamental desires at work (the motives for that desire) are often ignored. Since each of these ignored motives plays a profound role in the production of the quality of the happiness that results from the fulfillment of that desire, or the quality of the unhappiness that results whenever that desire is left unfulfilled, the lessons of even our clearest experiences can still be garbled.

This distortion of reality, caused by the way we understand ourselves, by the way we perceive our experiences, has led to many conclusions about happiness which severely handicap us in its pursuit. We are sometimes so confused that we even conclude that that pursuit itself is the cause of all our suffering, that it is inherently not worthwhile, or, if we are in a somewhat lighter mood, that that pursuit is at best a superficial, vain or indecent distraction from the real goal of life.

The irony of these conclusions about the purpose of life is that they strengthen the same beliefs which make our experiences so incomprehensible. And yet, no matter what we believe about the value of the pursuit of happiness, it is an inescapable part of all our lives.

The proof of how unavoidable that pursuit is can still be seen, even when buried under contrary imagery, in those confusing conclusions which reject happiness as an unworthy goal for our lives, because the reason always given for that rejection is that it is required in order to attain a future state of grace — that is, a future state of profound, if abstract, happiness.