

# "the ends of happiness" by karl giberson essay sample

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## **“ The Ends of Happiness” by Karl Giberson Essay Sample**

“ The Ends of Happiness” was written in 2006 by Karl Giberson, Editor-in-chief of Science and Spirit. Giberson (2006) argued that the way to being happy is to “ do, rather than possess, things that make you happy.” (Para 8). Giberson (2006) noted that adults are able to delay gratification to maximize happiness even if the means are unpleasant (Para 6). Giberson (2006) claims that Americans “ have lost a clear sense of what actually makes them happy.” (Para 11) because they are so caught up with accumulating wealth that they mistakenly view the possession of wealth is what makes them happy. Giberson makes a valid argument that the way to being happy is to do things that make one happy. However, despite quoting renowned philosopher Aristotle, Giberson’s substantiations are still unconvincing because of his poor choice and organization of evidences. The evidences he proposed are mostly personal experiences, they contradicted each other and even contained flawed assumptions. Giberson (2006) asserts that as Americans aggressively pursue materialistic desires, they “ have lost a clear sense of”(Para11) what makes them happy.

However, he has failed to provide reliable evidences such as surveys to substantiate his point. Giberson (2006) then argues that the happiness derived from spending time with friends and family is greater and longer lasting than achieving materialistic goals. He justified his claim with his own personal experience; “ I have but the foggiest recollection of getting my first car, cashing my first paycheck.”(Giberson, 2006, Para 14). The absence of reliable evidence and extensive use of personal experience renders his

arguments nothing more than just personal opinions. Giberson used contradictory evidences in his argument. He mentioned that adults are able to " delay gratification ... for the promise of an enlarged future happiness." (Giberson, 2006, Para 5). If this was the case, then would it not justify American's efforts to pursue " affluence and accumulation" (2006, Para 11) as they are working hard now to reap the fruits of their own labor in time to come?

This use of contradictory evidences confuses readers and gives the impression that Giberson has lost focus of his argument. Giberson makes an unfair assumption when he argued that people should do things that make them happy. He failed to acknowledge that people must first possess the financial means before they can spend on doing things that make them happy so as to be " living well and doing well". (2006, Para 8). How can one in financial difficulty spend " enormous quantities of time in something with no tangible payback" (2006, Para 13) and still love it? Here, Giberson unknowingly makes an invalid assumption that people are all financially well off enough to sacrifice substantial amounts of time away from work. This is not the case especially for families where their paychecks could hardly cover the costs of basic necessities.

Giberson has raised much needed attention on this matter of the search for happiness but he should have established more convincing empirical evidences as personal experiences do not count for more than mere opinions.

## Reference

Giberson, Karl. (2006, Mar/Apr), " The Ends of Happiness." Science and Spirit, Vol. 17 Issue 2, p6-7