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Q3

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

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2024 · Essay · 125 marks · Philosophical and ethical quotes

Philosophical and ethical quotes

Core demand of the question

- **Two clauses:** no path to happiness; happiness is the path
- **One stand:** a life or republic obsessed only with arrival becomes cruel; a path without water is a lie
- Move through self, work, policy, faith. Keep one honest counter
- Close on means as ends, not a poster of smiles

Revision summary

Not a full essay - a map.

- **Open with clerk vs gardener. Stand:** live the hour; keep a floor for the poor.
- **Headings:** self, work, society, state, then one counter.

Earn **Buddha** or **Gandhi** once. Peg a public good, not a happiness index dump.

Close on means as ends.

Note

This is a map, not the full 1,000-1,200 word essay.

Anecdote

A clerk counts the years to a promotion as if joy were a station after the last transfer. A gardener on the same campus waters a neem every evening and is already somewhere. The line says the gardener has understood what the clerk has postponed.

One stand

Happiness is not a trophy at the end of GDP or rank. It is how the day is lived - if the road has water. Write to refuse both the rat-race and a sermon to the hungry.

Heading map**What the line is asking**

- **Path to:** happiness as a destination (marks, house, "settled", Viksit date).
- **Is the path:** practice, attention, dharma of the next hour - Buddhist / Gandhian cousin.
- **Stake:** hold goals; stop postponing decency until the goal.

Self

- Comparison is a path that never arrives.
- **Habit, sleep, a walk:** cheap path-work. Addiction sells a destination.

Work and education

- Coaching as only-destination turns a young mind into a war.
- **Craft, teaching, nursing:** the work is the meaning if the wage is just.

Society and faith

- Festival as performance vs festival as shared time.
- Santosh is not dullness; it is not being owned by the next thing.

State

- **Welfare, parks, clean air, a bus that comes:** public goods that make a path livable.
- A growth target that excuses today's queue is the clerk's error at national scale.

The counter

Hunger, a waiting list for surgery, a delayed FIR - these are destinations that must arrive in a lifetime. Do not tell the landless that happiness is the path while the path has no water. The line rebukes obsession, not justice.

Last paragraph

- **Close:** name the shrine, and still pack water for today. Gandhi's means-as-ends is the civic translation. Expand each heading; this page is only the map.

Facts & figures

Buddha

The eightfold path - practice, not a stamp of arrival. One line in a scene.

Gandhi

Means are ends in the making - happiness as how we walk, not only where.

Bhutan GNH

A reminder that GDP is not the only scoreboard - use once, do not romanticise a kingdom.

Public goods

Parks, primary health, a reliable bus: the path made walkable.

Art. 21

Life with dignity - a legal destination that must still be a daily path.

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