



RILEY'S RAINFOREST

“Send down... from the clouds of Thy mercy the rains of Thy healing...” –Bahá'u'lláh

Can Money Buy Happiness?

If you won a million dollars, would you be happier? It may depend on what you do with the money. Studies show that wealth can't buy happiness.

People often imagine that if they could have more stylish clothes, a better computer, or a bigger house, they'd be more satisfied. But research shows that after a comfortable level is reached, more money doesn't lead to greater happiness. One reason may be that people get used to having more money over time, so the joy doesn't last. Also, being able to afford more expensive things may make it harder to enjoy life's simple pleasures.

What *can* make a difference is *how* we spend money. Scientists find that sharing makes people happier. In one study, college students were given cash; some were asked to spend on themselves, and some were asked to spend on others. Those who helped others were happier. Also, using money



to travel or learn something new—instead of buying stuff—makes people feel more content.

Sometimes, a high-paying job is seen as a path to happiness. But a study showed that being treated with respect matters more. People who felt admired and valued by friends and coworkers were happier, even when they made less money than others. Also, many people are satisfied with lower salaries when their work is meaningful.

It can be fun to dream of riches, but true wealth comes from things like good relationships, uplifting experiences, and generosity. You can't buy happiness—but you *can* create it yourself.

Canopy of Questions

What do you want to know about staying healthy and happy? Health can involve your body, mind, emotions, and spirit. Send your questions to brilliant@usbnc.org. Responses are given by a health professional.

“How do you stop worrying about what others think of you? How do you accept the fact that not everyone will like you?”

—Taylor, age 14

Dear Taylor,

We all want to be liked and have many good friends. We also have a responsibility to be our own best friend and be proud of ourselves. You cannot make everyone happy, but real friends will appreciate you for being yourself.

Choose friends who care about others, tell the truth, and show respect for people. If any so-called friend asks you to disregard the good of others or do something that is against your principles, that person is not being a true friend. Be strong and firmly say no.

Each of us is like a candle shining with our own unique light. Try not to be concerned about the opinions of those who are negative and critical. Say prayers. Read stories of heroes and heroines from your faith for inspiration. Focus on the positive qualities in yourself and others, and let your light shine brightly.

Wishing you joy,

Keyvan Geula

Licensed Family Therapist



Explore & Soar: Love Life Every Day

Happy people savor life's joys, large and small. Try these tips:

- Tell your mom, dad, or siblings what you love most about them.
- Go outside and draw a picture of something in nature.

- Put your hand on your heart. Feel the beat—it's what gives you life!
- Watch the sun set.
- Eat your favorite treats slowly to enjoy the flavors.