



3 CHOICES FOR
FULFILLMENT & BREAKTHROUGH

AM I HAPPY?

MARK MC MINN
REAL ESTATE



At the McMinn house, we love Chick-fil-A. Most every Friday morning I head there to get breakfast for my family. I get the chicken biscuit with egg and cheese and a large diet Coke (with light ice obviously...yes, I want my penny's worth). After nearly a year of this, it's as much of a staple and tradition as Christmas morning. Now, as of recent, my son has been calling an audible. Our house is less than a mile from our local Chick-fil-A but on that short drive, we pass a McDonalds. In that McDonalds, they sell these god-forsaken things called Happy Meals which hold a demonic idol called a Happy Meal toy. These toys have led my son to "need" a Happy Meal for breakfast - and I let this slide (because they're cheaper) with the caveat that he actually eats the food. When we get home, we all gather around our farmhouse table for a family meal and the rest of my sane crew enjoys their Chick-fil-A while my wired little man shreds the plastic bag encasing the Happy Meal toy as if he was the Hulk opening a birthday present. He holds that little 2 cent toy (which currently happens to be mini beanie babies... 1997 anyone?) with as much happiness as his body can handle...for all of 30 seconds. Then, just as quickly as he'd ripped into that Happy Meal box, the happiness fades and he's left with some chicken that's been shredded and reformed into a "nugget" and fries that will still be photo perfect 2 millennia from now - reality can be tough huh little guy?! So how do we avoid the trap of "Happy Meal moments"...***a better question, a truer guide, and a deeper reality.***

• **A Better QUESTION - "How (and when) will you define happiness?"**

So now that we've had fun with this little story and picked on McDonalds a bit, let's sober up and realize that we're not much different than my son. Let me share that truth a different way that maybe we as adults (and football-loving Americans) can understand. Last year, my Falcons played in the Super Bowl (yes, I'm going there - yes, it still hurts). At halftime, we (yes "we"...I'm on the team, duh) were up 21-3. I distinctly remember watching this game and searching online to see when in the week Super Bowl victory parades were held - the game was over in my head...but not for Tom Brady (yes, he's the G.O.A.T.). Brady and Belichick led the Patriots back until they eventually tied the score to send the game to overtime where they'd later win by a field goal. So why do I bring up this gruesome, awful, devastating moment in history? Because it highlights our propensity to see the halftime score and think it's the end-all and be-all. Happiness is no different - wait until the final buzzer. Don't trade what you want most for what you want now! Decide what is greater and stick to your guns! Do want the halftime celebration or the Super Bowl victory?

• **A Truer GUIDE - "You choose your Yoda. So, who are you going to choose?"**

Jay Walker-Smith, the President of the marketing firm Yankelovich, says we've gone from being exposed to about 500 ads a day back in the 1970's to as many as 5,000 a day today.

"It seems like the goal of most marketers and advertisers nowadays is to cover every blank space with some kind of brand logo or a promotion or an advertisement," Walker-Smith said.

Marketers have found a way to use parking stripes, postage stamps and floors, even buses and buildings, like a target ad which practically engulfs an entire New York city block. Walker-Smith says *it's all an assault on the senses.*

Well, now that you know you're under assault (sheesh), can you see why it's so important to have help getting through all the muck and the noise. It's that inner true north which helps center us and bring light in those dark moments. If, like me, you're a person of faith, then lean into that and allow it to bring you access to the deeper truths and meaning in life. If not, find the people, missions, and movements that align with the good you see in the world and join in! We need a guide and without one...well good luck!

• **A Deeper REALITY - "Stuff is never enough."**

The better life, the fulfilling life isn't anti-stuff. Half of you men (okay let's be honest the only men who've read this far are doing so because they have some time to burn while sitting on

their “royal throne” - I’m one of you I understand guys) reading this may have been thinking I was against your bass boat, your Harley, or your subscription to NFL Sunday Ticket...not a chance! I’d love a boat and you can guarantee that before I’m six feet under I’ll be driving on 2 wheels (although, to be honest, I’m more of an Indian guy). Here me when I say our “stuff” does bring enjoyment. Just like when I take my son to McDonalds – I enjoyed him enjoying himself. It provided FUN - *but that’s different from fulfillment.*

I remember my dad and I had many conversations around not letting “stuff” be your source of happiness...now, I have those same conversations with my son. And I even prove it to him by asking where is his Happy Meal toy from last week? And his answer, “I don’t know...” - and what he really means is “don’t care dad” – bc it’s meaningless. And yet, he wants ANOTHER ONE...why? Because the nature of “stuff” is that it’s never enough. The more adult-level conversation comes through people like Eric Hofer who says,

“You can never get enough of what you don’t need to make you happy.”

So are you happy? If not, maybe today you’ll leave these few minutes of reading with a better question, a truer guide, or a deeper reality which could unlock the life you’ve been longing for. Either way, head up today and remember...

THE BEST IS YET TO COME!

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