



The President's Corner

Mrs. Harvey Noblitt,
President the Federated
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As this new year of 1973 dawned we merrily exchanged greetings of "Happy New Year" with those we met whether they were friends or acquaintances. I believe that we truly meant what we said; we did hope that they would be happy; we could not wish them more.

Yet more and more in today's society people are finding it difficult to be happy. Many of the young, at a time when they should be most joyous, are rebellious, demanding, unappreciative and without apparent ambitions or goals. Despite this there never was a time when youth was offered so many opportunities — opportunities to become educated, to travel, to enjoy recreation and they say, "to do their own thing."

Many older folk view with fear and frustration the gradual breakdown of the moral fabric of a society they disciplined themselves to mould. The pennies they saved through hard physical labour have gradually dwindled in value, and the feeling of security, for which they strove, has vanished leaving them bereft of their independence and having to rely on provisions of the government — not their idea of happiness!

Many in between these two age groups are so busy striving for material possessions and a place in their world that they have scant time for the little things that bring happiness.

Happiness is not a myth. Nor is it something you can define, for if you try to analyse it, you begin to endanger it! If you are truly happy you are not introspective enough to know why you are. Happiness can only come from being concerned about what you can do for others and forgetting about yourself.

A professor of psychology once decided to study the happiest men and women he could find. He chose them from all walks of life. He found, though they were ordinary men and women, they had that extra faculty of being able to use themselves fully. They were all

committed to jobs **outside** themselves; they were people who could accept themselves and others for what they were; people who were not discouraged with the world they saw and knew it could not be changed overnight; people who had the ability to appreciate the simplest everyday things — a beautiful sunset, or sunrise, a good meal, flowers, birds, a visit from a friend or a good story.

None of these things is beyond the capacity of any of us. If a person is unhappy the only one who can really make her happy is herself. Sympathy, medical attention, outside attractions may help, but **she** really holds the key. It fits the door that leads to the world beyond herself, where, buoyed up by faith, and without criticism, intolerance or hatred, she feels happy and filled with good will to all.

To help develop happier and more useful citizens is one of the objectives of the Women's Institute. What are some of the ways in which we can accomplish this? If the psychologist is right, the wholehearted participation in our organization should bring happiness. How much more enjoyable a meeting is when everyone is happy and agreeable; when each member accepts her fellow member for what she is; praises her efforts; gives her confidence to participate; helps her in playing the best part she can play as a member! Once again, I express the opinion that the President is in a particularly favored spot to set the mood of the meeting. She can create an atmosphere of happiness if her meeting is well planned and lively. Then she will be relaxed and all will probably go well. If we can find our members home happy they will most likely return to the next meeting eager to take a part and to make it an enjoyable and productive experience for all.

Yes, in 1973 we do wish our fellowmen the gift of happiness — the gift of being able to accept what they cannot change and of going of themselves freely and joyously and in return reaping a harvest of inner contentment and peace.

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A PRAYER FOR PEACE

Let's all pray in our own way that the next year will truly be a happy one, a year which will further the prospects of peace, and the ideals and opportunity of all.

—From the 1969 British Columbia
Women's Institute News

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