

Money Is Not An End. Gross Happiness Of Members Matters.

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Credit Union Members Can Give Happiness by Sharing

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The entire Credit Union Story is a story of Sharing and Caring. It is a reality; a practice of the brotherhood of man; not an ad.

In the speech of Edward A. Filene, the founding father of the American Credit Union Movement, "The Money Power and the Power of Money" delivered on Jan. 23, 1933, I found these words," Money is a medium of exchange. That's all. The sole purpose of money is to facilitate exchange. So long as money serves that purpose, everybody is benefited. When it is once diverted from that purpose to serve some other purpose, somebody may possibly be benefited for a time, but only at the expense of somebody else; and when a sufficient amount of money has been diverted from its rightful purpose, exchange becomes so interrupted that everybody suffers loss." Money has no value by itself. It is not wealth but only a symbol and measure of wealth. It is often said that wealth consists of things which people want. But that is not a complete statement. There might be gold in some of the stars in the universe, and we might want it. But we cannot count it as wealth until we find some way of getting it. Wealth consists of things which people want which have become available to those who want them. In a credit union, people pool their resources together to help each other. Money, then, plays a vital part in the process of the production of wealth and because of this, money has value.

For the past twenty years, I have been teaching values and ethics in China and in quite a few places in the world. And one of the values taught is happiness. In teaching the value of happiness, the following reflection points are usually given:

- Give happiness and take happiness by sharing.
- When there is love and peace inside, happiness automatically grows.
- When there is a feeling of hope and purpose, there is happiness.
- Having good wishes for everyone gives happiness inside.
- Happiness cannot be bought, sold or bargained for.
- Happiness is earned through pure and selfless attitudes and actions.

- Happiness of mind is a state of peace in which there is no upheaval or violence.
- Kind and constructive words create a happy world.
- When one is content with oneself, happiness comes automatically.
- Lasting happiness is a state of contentment within.
- When all resources are focused on socio-economic infrastructure at the expense of the development of the character, then priorities in life are misrepresented and there is a gradual erosion of happiness.
- Values help people assess priorities and allow for active and preventive measures to take place at opportune moments.

#### Ten Principles of Happiness

Pursue your dreams

Give happiness

Be kind.

Laugh-with others and at your self

Allow yourself some relaxing time

Think deeply about what matters to you

Accept yourself

Accept others

Believe in yourself

Enjoy the present

In a materialistic world such as ours, it would seem all but hopeless to ask for a widespread understanding of money and happiness. Fortunately, a great school of finance has come into being. It is not located in the world's financial centres. It is not connected with any of the leading universities and it does not call itself a school of finance or a values education institute. It is called the credit union movement where all the above reflection points and the principles of happiness, gross happiness, are being put into practice! A credit union is a school of the average people. Its members have learned finance, not from financial traditions or from academic theories, but from hard and necessary experience in savings together, in borrowing and lending money. Again, as Edward A. Filene put it, "They have learned the nature of money. They have learned what money is for. They have learned how to make loans profitable to borrower and lender. They have learned that the greatest and safest security in the world is the security of constructive helpfulness; and mutual understanding; and the best and greatest thing about this practical schooling which they have received is that it has not taught them so many things that are not so."

A Poem----"The Happiest People Are the Credit Union People"

The happiest of people

Don't necessary have the best of everything,

They just make the most of everything

That comes along their way.

Happiness lies for

Those who save regularly,

Those who borrow wisely,

Those who repay promptly

And those who care for others

For only they can appreciate the importance of people

Who have a purpose in life.