

Happiness is the Truth

Putting aside all the unhappiness over politics and social disagreements, all Americans should understand the concept that divides us. It is “the pursuit of happiness.”

But what’s that? Well, it’s in the Declaration of Independence right after “life, liberty.” Those concepts are self-evident, the Founders wrote. But the pursuit of happiness deal is a bit trickier.

Essentially, it comes down to this: government must set up a system whereby all citizens have an equal opportunity to develop their talents and seek success without hurting anyone else.

Therefore, the people have a good chance to live a prosperous life.

British philosopher John Locke developed the pursuit of happiness concept way back in 1689. Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and Benjamin Franklin bought Locke’s vision and incorporated “happiness” safeguards into the Constitution.

But many Americans are now unhappy with the pursuit situation.

That’s because there are many false roads on the happy map. Today, progressive and some liberal Americans believe the government should “guarantee” happiness by giving folks stuff. But in order to do that, the powers-that-be have to take from other citizens.

That causes angst which is in opposition to happiness. The federal government now spends trillions on giveaways and wants more.

Traditional Americans believe it is the individual who is responsible for using our freedoms to succeed. With protections in place by law, conservatives do not think the

government should make life harder for some groups by showing favoritism to other groups.

So, the left and the right face a huge chasm.

A minority of Americans say the USA is an unjust country and always has been. They want a complete overhaul. That fight has become bitter.

Your humble correspondent believes America is a noble nation, but significant corruption is affecting our collective happiness. There are too many fanatics among us, and their actions can lead to oppression and suppression. Those things badly damage the happy pursuit.

The solution is for good people to work together in order to provide fairness and opportunity. But in order to do that, we have to see things clearly.

Recently, I gave the keynote address at a benefit for Geraldo Rivera's charity, Life's WORC. For 50 years, Geraldo has raised money to help Americans with autism. If a person has autism, they obviously cannot pursue happiness at the same level as others.

Geraldo and I believe different things. But we worked together to raise nearly a million dollars to help Americans who need help.

The government was not involved.

If more Americans grasped the concept of individuals helping individuals, our country would rise in power and prosperity. Our collective happiness would be enhanced.

That is undeniably true. And, as Pharrell Williams sings, happiness is the truth.