

POSITIVELY BLACK**What is Your Idea Of True Happiness?**

By Junious R. Stanton

Are you happy? What is your idea of happiness? What would it take to make you really happy? A new car, money in your pocket, a fat bank account, a palatial home or adoring fans? Ironically in this country there are many people who have all this and are still miserable.

Happiness means different things to different people. Happiness is defined as the state of being content, pleased or delighted. What might make one person ecstatic may be totally boring to another. Some children have more fun playing with the boxes they come in than the toys you give them.

BANKS*(Continued from Page 15)*

"We had to vote during the judicial simulations. I like just actually doing things. That's why I liked the simulations," said Banks visibly proud of that effort.

The mock Congress was held the next day, Banks had to take the ACT.

"The actual mock Congress was just a lot of voting," said Banks. Though he enjoyed his experience, Banks admits at first he felt a little overwhelmed by the pace of it all.

"Wow. I've got a lot to do," he recalled saying to himself when he first arrived. "So, I dug in and did it one step at a time. As it went on I found myself getting more interested. By the end of the second day, I found myself getting more involved."

Though Banks, still doesn't consider himself an expert on Washington, the trip did inspire him to learn more about government.

Before I went "I was ignorant about many government issues," said Banks. "I still am, but now I want to learn more about it."

Banks said he would encourage everyone to participate in this conference held several times throughout the year.

"For me, I definitely had to get put into the position, even if it is just simulations," said Banks.

The biggest lesson Banks discovered had to be the importance of behind the scenes wheeling and dealing. He learned from the experts what really happens behind closed doors, and it permanently changed the way he looked at the government.

Banks still doesn't believe he would ever be a politician, but...

"It might be interesting to work around the Hill for a while," he said.

The one thing I do know is that true happiness is from the inside out and is not dependent on outer circumstances or happenings.

We can control our feelings better than we can the outer world, although we are not taught how. The outer world is transitory. Life is full of change. We don't want to get old, we want our loved ones to remain the same. We want to play it safe and not take any risks. Life is about change.

If your happiness is based on your brand new car, in due time it will get old and depreciate. Then what? Fame is fleeting. You can be cheered as a

champion today and booed as a bum tomorrow. If your happiness is based on your job, what happens if you get laid off or retire? If your happiness is in a personal relationship, what happens when the other person disappoints you or you have a disagreement?

We need to take a serious look at what we think makes us happy. When we change our perceptions, definitions and expectations we will experience more joy in life. I'm a firm believer in self-love. You are with yourself all the time so it makes sense to really like who you are. If you hate yourself, you can't be truly happy no matter what you have or where you are. When you love yourself unconditionally living becomes easier.

No one can promise you that you will be exempt from disappointments, challenges or setbacks. No one escapes the trials and tribulations of living. No one is immune to the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" and you will never get out of here alive. That being the

CASTLE*(Continued from Page 2)*

How were the breeding of these mulattoes conducted? "When one visits the castle, one is shown the courtyard that contains a manhole. This manhole gives access to the cistern built by the Portuguese and near where female slaves, awaiting shipment were kept. On top of the courtyard is the Governor's balcony. From this balcony, the Governor watches the slave women as they take their bath, when it is allowed, or fetch water in their nudity. If he is satisfied with the look of the woman, he instructs that she is sent up to his room.

"There is a flight of timber stairs under the porch that leads to a vault which opens on the balcony floor and leads to the Governor's bedroom. After raping the women, they are then taken back to their slave dungeon through the same route. Those who resist the insult by the governor are punished by being chained arms and feet to an immovable iron ball going round their neck. They are to remain in this position with no water or food until they either submit, die or the slave ship arriver (whichever comes first).

"If those who agree to the beastly desires of the governor becomes pregnant, he sends for them and ask them where they come from. Those who are able to tell the name of their town or village, are then taken back there with an instruction for the governor to be informed of when they deliver. The governor then sends a representative or goes there personally to name this child after himself. Through this rape and insult, one finds such names as Guggisberg, Dos Santos, Olympio, Vanderpuiye, Nelson, Vandyke, Portuphy, etc., in West Africa, particularly, Ghana.

"Those who could not identify their villages or towns were kept in a house near the hills of Fort Jago." The building is now in ruins but the foundation, with the exception of the roof, was intact.

At this same castle, one will find the Portuguese church. The church, served a paradoxical function. Church service was held on the top floor while the ground floor served as a slave warehouse and trading hall. A small cubby hole to the left of the door helped to keep watch on the proceedings.

There is also a Dutch chapel on the left side of the bay to the North. Above the internal section of the door, one reads the following inscription: ZION IS DES HEEREN RUSTE DIT IS SYN WOONPLAETSE IN EEVWIGHEID PSALM 132 ("For the Lord hath chosen Zion to be a habitation for Himself: it is his dwelling place forever"). One will wonder if the Zion referred here is Africa and if the Lord refers to Europeans. This interpretation will not be surprising bearing in mind the white-painting of Jesus and the impression created by God being white and the devil and anything evil associated with black.

The visitor is also taken up a staircase that rises to a broad roof

case, you might as well decide to be happy no matter what!

When you decide that you and you alone will determine your happiness you have taken a major step in the right direction. When your serenity and happiness are related to what's going on inside of you and not what's happening around you, they will become more lasting. Don't allow anyone or anything to steal your joy. Face life on your terms and don't be too judgmental. That personal disaster in your life may be an opportunity in disguise.

Once you decide to determine your own happiness and you begin to experience life on your terms, you will feel better about yourself and more in control. This is paradoxical because there are so many things in life you have absolutely no control over. Yet by determining how you respond and react to life, you have all the control you need.

Learn to love yourself, relax, expect the best for yourself, don't worry. Be happy.

POET'S CORNER*Good Morning To Father And Son*

By Keith A. Brantley (Izulu Poets)

As the young son sees in the morning,
a new day is born
and that big man rises
and smiles at him from across the table.
He does "daddy" things.
Some things go unseen
but all things matter.
Simply being there is a source of pride.
Father is strength and love;
Sometimes in a silent way
But all ways matter.

As father rises in the morning,
he sees young son.
He sees his own reflection
and upon glancing inspection...
his pride shines through.
His son, his smaller self,
there is nothing he would not do.
His heart knows this boy
and it longs to insure
that his child is given
the strength to endure... the thrive... to excel.
His is the manifestation of love and continuance.

As they rise in the morning
their eyes meet.
There is a bond, undeniable.
There is spirit shared.
Spirit which will grow and must change
yet it ever remains
the spirit of love and respect.
As the past lends to the future,
father and son become one
to make the present so very special.
.....GOOD MORNING.

which runs around three sides of the castles courtyard. On the east corner of which is a small square tower known as Prempeh's tower. This is named after the Asantehene, (King of Asanteland), Nana Agyeman Prempeh 1. He was imprisoned here from 1896-99, after the Asante-British wars of 1824, 1826 and 1874 respectively, before being exiled to the Seychelles Island. The Asantes had defeated the British in the first war and killed the British governor, Charles MacCarthy. (We hope to write about these wars sometime.)

There are two main rooms on the opposite sides of the tower. One housed the king while the other housed the queen. It is said that the king was never allowed to see his queen throughout the three years of incarceration at the castle, and that she was continuously abused by the then governor.

The Elmina castle was for over 200 years, 1637-1872 controlled by the Dutch. They had earlier built a fort at Mouri, 12 miles to the east of Elmina in 1612. After invading Brazil in 1624, they made an attempt in the same year to capture Elmina. They first seized the hill of St. Jago from where they conducted a continental bombardment of the castle, under the command of Col. van Koin, until the Portuguese were forced to surrender on August 29, 1637. When the profits of the castle was superceded by the cost of maintaining it, they sold it out to the British in 1872 and pulled out of West Africa.

The Dutch built Fort St. Jago as a security post to Elmina castle. This fort became a fully fortified garrison post by 1666. Its original name, given by the Dutch, is Coenraadsburg. It lies on the left side of the castle, across the bridge on the Elmina river up a steep hill on a narrow road. It was the most important security post of the castle. Other relics of colonial presence in Elmina are a Catholic mission, the Dutch Reformed Church same as in South Africa, which is now the Methodist church and a Dutch cemetery.

By 1807 when Britain declared the slave trade illegal, slavery had become the principal export of Elmina. The Asante in the hinterland were the principal slave traders from the interior. They would get the slaves from such Muslim towns as Salaga and Yendi in Northern Ghana and transported them to the coast. On the coast the Fantes acted as the middlemen between the Asante and the Europeans. With the abolition of this inhuman trade, this effective tripartite trade relationships collapsed. With the collapse came the apogee of the prestige and importance of the Elmina castle.

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