

# A Powerful Animated Guide About Where Not to Seek for Happiness

Earlier this year, nearly one-quarter of all Yale undergraduates enrolled in a course on how to be happy. “A lot of us are anxious, stressed, unhappy, numb,” a freshman taking the course told the [New York Times](#). “The fact that a class like this has such large interest speaks to how tired students are of numbing their emotions—both positive and negative—so they can focus on their work, the next step, the next accomplishment.”

Good luck to them. Everyone wants to be happy, but more of us know what happiness isn't than what it really is. As the lecturer, a psychology professor, says, “our intuitions about what will make us happy, like winning the lottery and getting a good grade—are totally wrong”.

The cartoon below is a brilliant illustration of this dismal truth. The artist is [Steve Cutts](#), a British illustrator who specializes in devastating critiques of our consumer society. It's dark, but it makes its point powerfully. (Thanks to [Chiara Bertoglio](#) for the link.)

So what is happiness? It's not addressed in the cartoon, but then cartoons are not a medium for comprehensive [answers](#). A *MercatorNet* contributor, J. Budziszewski, points in the right direction in his recent book, [How and How Not to be Happy](#):

*[It is a] paradox that those who are always asking, “How can I be happy?” are the very ones least likely to be happy. This is quite true, but why is it true? Because obsession with my happiness focuses my attention on myself, but my happiness*

*lies in something outside myself, in the vision of God in His own being.*

However, knowing what not to pursue as a goal is a good start.

Most of Steve Cutts's cartoons deal with how consumerism damages the environment. However, this one is [a gem about addiction to smartphones](#). Check it out.

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