

CHAPTER 39

PURSUIT AND FULFILLMENT

Once we understand that we have to rely on coincidental methods to maintain and improve our happiness, our ideal of happiness as the absence of pain seems to become unreachable. The insecurity connected to them is bound to give rise to periods in which the fulfillment of our needs is not provided to our satisfaction. The continued perfection of our satisfaction appears to be a far-fetched dream that may not be obtainable until we achieve ultimate insight and power and consummate our cooperation with other humans. More than that, the expansionary drive of our needs does not appear to permit us much reprieve. States without pain are at best momentary and we quickly find ourselves oriented toward further objectives. This unrest appears to be necessarily implied in the purpose of our needs. As a live organism, we cannot remain static. Our needs are a function of the mechanisms that keep us personally and our species surviving and thriving. These mechanisms are characterized by growth and decay, by consumption and transformation, by change and adaptation. To secure and optimize our individual and our collective survival and thriving, we must not be lulled into complacency by satisfaction. We may regard the experience of happiness as a lure that keeps us committed to meet our ever-renewing or continuing requirements. To maintain the attraction of that lure, the happiness we incur from the fulfillment of a need cannot last too long. To effectively meet the recurrence or persistence of requirements in support of our existence, we have to be timely motivated to engage in the pursuit of means. That motivation cannot arise as long as we are fully satisfied. It can solely arise from a position of dissatisfaction that affords the necessary repulsion from pain and attraction to pleasure.

Any period in which we are satisfied is unproductive. Maximizing our ability to meet our needs requires that the state of satisfaction about the fulfillment of a need does not interfere with the pursuit of other needs. It further requires noninterference with the time it may take to provide for the subsequent fulfillment of the same need. The point in time at which subsequent fulfillment is necessary may not always be calculable. Moreover, it may be difficult to forecast correctly how much time it will take to produce the required means. We might need all the time we can muster to prepare for the future fulfillment of our needs. Meeting the requirements of our needs may dictate that we keep our experiences of satisfaction upon their fulfillment as short as possible so we can maximize preparations for their future fulfillment. Any pause may have existential repercussions or at least lower the lev-

el of fulfillment. The ephemeral nature of happiness seems to be a direct function of this requirement. If we want to secure our future happiness, our present happiness cannot last. There does not appear to be anything we can do to hold on to happiness, to keep it from slipping away. Keeping happiness alive, maintaining it, seems to be impossible. When we look closely at the mechanisms that we engage to maintain happiness, we mostly seem to re-create rather than sustain past events of happiness. These separate occasions may combine in our awareness because we might manage to fulfill these needs every time they arise without any problems or delay. As long as we can meet our needs, the regular succession of events gives us the appearance of continuity.

Our awareness that our happiness is confined to a small, unstable, and fleeting space in our experience may induce us to ask how we can possibly be successful in becoming and remaining happy. It would appear that if we want to be happy, we must fill our existence with a constant stream of ever-new occasions of fulfillment. The requirement to provide an uninterrupted supply of happy occurrences seems to be the reason we are constantly developing new wishes, new modulations for the fulfillment of our needs. When incidents of fulfillment we have reached no longer provide happiness, producing more of the same incidents may not suffice. Our needs may not have reset to where we are incentivized to repeat a pursuit. We may find ourselves in a condition where the pleasure of fulfillment has subsided but the fulfillment that caused it has not. To maintain the flow of happy occurrences, we may have to reach higher stages of fulfillment. This demand finds a match in the facilities of our imagination to give rise to ever-new wishes. Our never-ending supply of wishes takes command of our pursuits. Whatever we may have accomplished, we always identify something else to achieve. We must unremittingly set new targets in the hope that they can supply more experiences of happiness. It seems that if we want to experience happiness at a stable rate, we have to learn how to maximize the frequency of happy incidents. This forces us to engage in pursuits even if they give us diminishing returns. It may be the main reason we invest in coincidental pursuits even if we should be content.

Providing a steady supply of occurrences of happiness may appear as a near impossible task if we were to derive our entire supply of happiness from occasions of ultimate fulfillment. Even if we consider that such occasions might be spread through time because they occur for a diversity of needs, we still might miss a sense of happiness with regard to particular needs. There appear to be unavoidable interludes between moments of fulfillment during the times in which we pursue fulfillment. For every need, we would have to bridge a dull and painful

implementation phase during which our wishes are being realized until we can eventually experience pleasure at its conclusion. Despite our best efforts to define new modulations, we could not seem to prevent significant interruptions of happiness. During the construction phase for the fulfillment of a need, pain originates from the reality of relative deprivation and imperfection compared with the result we desire from which we are endeavoring to distance ourselves. That pain lingers until we ultimately succeed in fulfillment. Meeting the requirements for a steady supply of happy events would appear impossible under these conditions. But this pain of deprivation and anxiety regarding the ultimate fulfillment of our needs is not exclusively what we experience in transit. We have impressions of pleasure as well. Although nothing seems to be quite like the euphoria that we feel when we finally fulfill a need, we feel a degree of satisfaction when we are making progress. With the pursuit and fulfillment of each step along the way, we experience pleasure. An installment of happiness accrues to us every time something goes our way, every time we advance toward getting what we want, and every time we make an effort to advance. This renders it possible for us to derive at least some happiness before we have completed wishes or needs, and without ever completing them. As long as we progress, we can be happy to some extent. Eventually, we will have to obtain fulfillment of our needs to prevent falling into desperate situations of deficiency. Still, an essential part of our happiness seems to develop on the way. We can generate happiness from a pursuit as long as we have the impression that the steps we take may help us advance toward fulfillment. Regardless of how small our successes and how futile our efforts might ultimately turn out to be, we seem to be able to wrestle increments of happiness from our struggle. This aspect of how we generate happiness may assist us in developing our capabilities to overcome great obstacles. It may be a substantial cause for the success of human development and for the persistence of our species.

Given this incremental source for happiness, we might become confident that, with sufficient planning and effort, we should be able to secure a sufficient supply of happy events to build and maintain an adequate level of happiness. Our need to generate a steady stream of happy occurrences requires us to plan and to focus our efforts on arranging our future. We have to determine how we can best fulfill our needs with the production of a steady stream of advancements. The objectives of ultimate fulfillment and of incremental fulfillment seem to be generally linked and aligned. We do not derive pleasure from intervals that are not serving our objective of attaining ultimate satisfaction. We further derive increased pleasure from intervals that promote

reaching ultimate fulfillment more than other steps. The development and implementation of strategies that maximize happiness during and at the end of our pursuits may call for extensive efforts of investigating our needs and circumstances and how they translate into wishes and means. We may have to make arrangements in advance of incidents of deprivation to reach the best effectiveness and efficiency. If we would merely address our immediate needs and work with circumstances as they present themselves, we might miss opportunities for success because we might not render the most advantageous assessments under pressure. Moreover, our selection of available resources as well as our awareness of their availability might be limited at that time. We must conceive and find or create the necessary means in time to join the requirements of our pursuits when these means are needed. Yet, aside from such substantive provisions for our needs, we must also schedule events of happiness in sufficient frequency to uphold our level of satisfaction. We thus may serve two not always congruent objectives.

The supply of incremental happiness through prudent planning and management seems to be able to make our happiness increasingly secure. But the pressure of having to create a never-ending supply of increments can create negative consequences as well. We may become so preoccupied with producing incremental rewards that we lose sight of larger strategies in the service of a need, the need itself, or the requirement to coordinate pursuits of all our needs into a reconciled total. Additionally, our focus on the uninterrupted production of happiness from oncoming incidents may cause us to lose sight of the present as the point where we experience happiness. Our mind may be focused so much on planning and implementing future events of happiness, on what is next, that we are incapable of registering, valuing, or enjoying current incidents of happiness. Our concentration on securing the flow of events may cause us to view the present as a mere staging ground for the future. We may be so preoccupied with inventing, building, keeping up, and increasing the quality and quantity of production of our happiness that we may discount the present experience of happiness and might even lose the ability to experience happiness. We may be so possessed by our concerns regarding our future rewards that we may never be content with what we have achieved and never be at peace. We may live in fear of not being able to provide the future fulfillment of our needs. We may be burdened with the pain of a perennial struggle for our happiness. The procedures of planning and implementing happiness may interfere with the happiness we seek with these efforts. The undertaking that causes happiness might then also intrinsically prevent or impede our enjoyment of that happiness.

Our discernment of this adversity is based on the concept that happiness moves in two distinct phases of accumulation of means and their enjoyment, of activity and rest. We experience moments of rest at the instant our needs are fulfilled and their deprivation is dissolved in pleasure. These moments appear to be reserved to occasions when the quality of fulfillment meets or sufficiently closely approaches our imagined ideals of fulfillment. We treasure the experience of such incidents of repose, of unproductive enjoyment, of calm and peace. We treasure these moments because we are so consumed in an emotion of pleasure that we can ignore the past, present, and future pain and fear in our existence. We can excise these moments and completely envelop ourselves in the sensation of accomplishment. They are samples of perfection. We are united with an idyllic state of happiness we idealize. We are wrapped up in pleasure as our sole sensation. We want to hold on to this state of happiness as long as we can. To enjoy this happiness, we must free ourselves from regrets and nostalgia for the past, present incompatibilities or pressures, and hopes and fears concerning the future. We have to quiet our mind. We cannot let past, present, or future disharmony between reality and our needs encroach upon our impression of present harmony between a particular need and reality. We have to rest our mind in the instant when we complete the pursuit of a need. Only, this phase of basking in our accomplishments cannot endure because other needs and wishes and eventually the same need and wishes again require our involvement in their pursuit. If we would remain arrested in this phase, we could not exist. We must wake from our bliss and focus on what is still or again amiss with our needs. We must immerse ourselves in the awareness of pain to let it inspire us.

While there appears to be a partial truth in this viewpoint, our experiences of happiness during our pursuits refute a phased concept of happiness in other parts. That our experiences of happiness are not separated from the phases of pursuit seems to suggest that there must be an additional source of happiness that is inherent in the production process. That source may appear mysterious because it is not immediately obvious to us how impressions of happiness can originate during the pursuit of our needs. Even if we accomplish an intermediary step short of the fulfillment of the related need, there is no direct effect yet on the fulfillment of the correlated need. We remain occupied in the implementation period leading up to it. The conditions triggering satisfaction have not yet been created. If anything, we should sense more pain because our anticipation of impending fulfillment heightens our awareness of our present disconnection from that point. In the fulfillment of a need, we incur happiness as an automated physiological re-

sponse in our body because certain conditions that satisfy its requirements are met. In the absence of these conditions, that physiological response is absent. If it would arise from partly successful pursuits, we would eliminate or at least reduce the motivating impact of its anticipated emotional release. But such a reduction does not occur. Experiencing happiness along the way of a pursuit does not appear to lower our desire. Consequently, the source of our happiness during our pursuits must differ from the mechanisms triggered upon fulfillment. We might derive some happiness in the course of pursuing a need because other needs that are interested in the pursuit derive fulfillment at earlier stages during its pursuit. While this may explain many intermediary experiences of happiness, it fails to explain all of them. We enjoy the accomplishment of steps even if we are merely pursuing a singular need and no other needs are interested in the manner of its pursuit. The reason we experience happiness during a pursuit seems to be that we approach the stage of fulfillment. This emotion seems to be closely related to the anticipation of pleasure that we define as desire. However, while desire describes our feelings about the absence of pleasure, about our remoteness from it, approximatory happiness is different in that it describes satisfaction about the headway we are making toward pleasure. We appear to generate pleasure through the increased likelihood that we will achieve ultimate pleasure. Although that pleasure seems to be related to the pleasure we experience upon fulfillment, it seems to exist separately because it does not detract from the ultimate pleasure that arises when fulfillment is reached. Approximatory pleasure appears to have its counterpart in approximatory pain of fear that we sense when we presume to approach an event of pain. Here again, the emotion springing from approximation is closely related but does not combine with the pain that might be experienced in the future. In both instances, we generate present emotions in derivation of our imagination of future emotions. This may make us reconsider the correlation of desire and pleasure as a parallel of fear and pain. It appears more appropriate to pair approximatory pleasure with pleasure. While desire is a form of anticipation of pleasure, its yearning toward something that is not denotes an emotion that is closer related to pain.

Approximatory pleasure appears to be derived from the understanding that the materialization of a step assists in approximating the ultimate fulfillment of a need. To be happy about an intermediary accomplishment, we have to find it useful. This requirement carries material implications for our production of means. To maximize our happiness, we have to maximize the utility of our intermediary objectives. The intensity of our perception of happiness about intermediary steps

might depend on our awareness of how effective and efficient reaching a current objective might be in the overall projected scheme of a pursuit. Ultimate accomplishments might as well derive an additional dimension of pleasure as intermediate steps because the circumstances of accomplishment that designate the fulfillment of one need regularly form contributory conditions for the pursuit of other needs. Even the fulfillment of our most important needs derives much of its value because we can employ it in the pursuit of further happiness. Accordingly, each increment toward fulfilling a need and each fulfillment of a need has the potential of serving as a link in ongoing mechanisms of utility. By expending the result of a prior stage as a means for another stage, we realize its potential for the generation of happiness. We do not only derive happiness when we use potential to advance dedicated pursuits. We feel it when we build or acquire potential or save it. But this is also part of our pursuits. Because all these activities advance us, they consolidate in the production of approximatory pleasure.

We may then conclude that the pursuit of happiness generates a happiness of pursuit for us. Although such a dynamic experience of happiness arises from the approximation toward fulfillment, it appears to remain antithetical to the concept of ultimate fulfillment. We sense happiness we would like to keep about the fulfillment of a need on its own account. Yet we also sense happiness upon its fulfillment because of its utility for other needs. This utility appears to be the underlying reason that we possess needs, seek their fulfillment, and sense happiness about their accomplishment. The experience of these viewpoints appears to confirm the separation of happiness into the two states of motion and rest, of production and enjoyment, of tension and relaxation. Dynamic happiness derives from activity, from change, from the succession of states, from looking forward. We become impatient with stagnation and perceive it as wasteful. Focusing on happiness in that manner causes us to oppose a state of rest because we concentrate on what is to be accomplished. When we focus on happiness as a relaxed state of accomplishment, we tend to criticize our forward-looking motivation and we become arrested in the moment. We may view the requirements of pursuit as disturbances of our happiness or as unavoidable necessities in securing fulfillment of our needs. This static type of happiness seems to be disturbed by our concern for the production of happiness although it is supported by that function. Even as we derive pleasure from the forward movement of pursuits, we might wish that we could stop at least for some time and enjoy accomplishment on its own terms. We may wish for a reprieve, that we could step back from the condition of unending activity and rest before we must go on.

As much as these aspects appear to contradict each other, each fulfills an important function in the production of happiness. The reward of ultimate satisfaction of a need incentivizes constructive activities because it gives them purpose. We engage in pursuits to fulfill our needs principally on account of the emotional distance that underlies our pain-pleasure mechanism. But positive rewards upon the achievement of steps along the way help us to focus our dedication on practical steps. To make them work, however, there has to be an anticipated phase of ultimate reward whose experience is separate from accumulated incremental rewards. There has to be a hierarchy that reserves a sufficiently precious portion of satisfaction to ultimate fulfillment. The building intensity of experiences of happiness along the way culminating in an ultimate sensation of satisfaction delivers that hierarchy. Because our satisfaction at the occasion of fulfillment is characterized by the release of a need, that culmination point holds the most impressive position among our rewards. It constitutes the most complete experience of happiness because it empowers us to leave all our tribulations and anxieties of pursuing that need behind. We can, at least for that moment, concentrate on the sensation of a profound satisfaction over the perfection that is inherent in the fulfillment of a need.

Although such a sensation may only be momentary, the radical impression of actual release is bound to loom more powerfully in our mind than the totality of its approximations during its pursuit. The installments of happiness we derive during pursuits are weaker because they are mere foreshadowings of happiness we hope to experience upon fulfillment. The failure of these increments of happiness to represent an autonomous source of happiness makes them appear less real and less valuable even if they provide temporary emotional benefit regardless of ultimate fulfillment. They remain under a shadow of concerns that arise from the insecurity of outcome. The preliminary air of happiness they give us might ultimately be met by pain if the objective of a pursuit remains unfulfilled. Because our happiness during a pursuit is an advance on happiness to come, we receive a countervailing liability of pain if that happiness is not realized. It seems that the impression of happiness we sense during a pursuit will only survive if we can fulfill the need we pursue. Moreover, our impression will only be secure from revisions if we can experience fulfillment in the imagined splendor. The fact that the intensity of our happiness on the way depends on our expectation of the ultimate satisfaction may tempt us to build the imagined impressiveness and consequences of reaching our objectives to unrealistic heights. We may tell ourselves that our existence will be dramatically different after we achieve a certain goal, that

we will reach a higher plateau of happiness. However, if the happiness we imagine to be achieved by reaching an ultimate objective does not correspond in intensity and duration with our idealized expectations, we ultimately pay for our exaggerations with a pain of disappointment that may equal or exceed the ill-founded advances of pleasure.

The apparently derivative and potentially illusory nature of the happiness we accrue during our pursuits may cause us to discount the process of pursuit as a source of happiness and to focus on results. But concentrating on the value of ultimate fulfillment binds our emotional state to very temporary incidents. This may prompt us to overestimate the magnificence of fulfillment events as well and to suffer similar effects of disappointment. Even if we should succeed in such fulfillment of our needs, our points of enjoyment would be few and far apart occurrences. Facing such a deficit may prompt us to aggravate our situation. We may maximize our efforts to create the highest possible level of ultimate fulfillment. We might hope to obtain stronger and longer-lasting ultimate experiences of happiness with the satisfaction of riskier or more elaborate strategies. Yet additional risk and cost may work against our attainment of higher levels of happiness. If we choose pursuits that involve higher complexity, we must manage the confluence of more conditions. We are more challenged to produce and assemble the necessary means to a higher result. Venturing into less known terrain compels us to rely more on coincidental factors to succeed. These complications may expose our objectives to intervention by unknown or uncontrollable circumstances. We might incur an elevated threat of hindrance in reaching the fulfillment stage. Even if we achieve the expected higher level of happiness, we might experience longer or more intense periods of deprivation. Further, the additional cost of pursuits will have to be deducted from the ultimate accomplishments. The aggravations we suffer along the way may make the fulfillment seem diminished or hollow. They may cause the big moments of happiness at the completion of our pursuits to happen at lesser amplitudes than we expected. Hence, intensified exertions in deriving happiness exclusively or predominantly from our ultimate objectives may not improve our happiness or may even effect the reverse and weaken or destroy it.

Our derivation of happiness may also suffer because an emphasis on our ultimate fulfillment may cause us to underestimate the importance of our existence before and until we finally succeed. We may regard our time and efforts between the highlights of ultimate fulfillment as resources for future happiness. We may devalue the interceding period until we arrive at what we imagine to be our event of happiness. We may fail to recognize the separate significance of our exist-

ence on the way of fulfilling our wishes. We may hope to pass it as an inconvenient period that we regard to be required for the buildup but worthless in itself. The view that our pursuits are purely instrumental and carry no value of their own may have material consequences for the particularities of means and strategies we choose. We may build, accumulate, and save so we can eventually enjoy the fruits of our labor. We may ignore intermediary objectives that our needs command. We may be more willing to suffer unhappiness on the way to an imagined better fortune. We may accept that denial and hardship are necessary to achieve our dreams or endure them as coincidental burdens. We may bear unpleasant pursuits in a hope that the results will compensate for the deferment of our happiness and for the unhappiness we suffer during their pursuit. We may expect that the destination will be worth our sacrifice. We may expand this concept of sacrifice to include other humans and our environment generally. If we believe that we experience happiness solely when we reach the culmination of our efforts, we may neither care what we have to suffer nor what we might have to do to succeed. We may perceive freedom in devising the best means to reach ultimate objectives because we are not encumbered by having to satisfy concerns of happiness along the way. We may form a conviction that the result justifies the means. Although we may try to pursue all needs we deem valid to fulfillment, we may phase their pursuits according to their priority, giving precedence to the most pressing priorities at the time and excluding all others until their turn.

Our needs tend to counteract such attitudes, at least if they are reconciled. They may be too defined by themselves, entwined with the other objectives we carry individually, and arranged with the pursuits of other individuals to permit pursuits that are purely concentrated on reaching fulfillment without respect to the manner in which they succeed. Pain may accrue because such pursuits may not care about preserving resources that will be necessary to fulfill the same need in the future or about the procedural requirements for the fulfillment of the need they serve apart from concerns of ultimate effectiveness and efficiency. Further, they are bound to apply sequences that are incompatible with and harmful to other needs. Finally, our coexistence and relationships with other individuals may expose their pursuits to our inconsiderate behavior. Considerations within the same need may leave us torn and regretful and other needs and individuals may engage in defensive activities. The initial disharmony and resulting conflict may disturb the intended pursuit or the enjoyment of its products, or may prevent it entirely from succeeding. It may also negatively affect other needs even beyond the needs originally affected. Even if concerns and

defenses would not agitate against inconsiderate behavior by a need, its single-minded pursuit strictly under considerations of utility for its ultimate fulfillment is relatively ineffective and inefficient. That is because it may restrict the nature of that need and because it fails to participate in the overall maximization of happiness through our council of traits. The incidents of pain we suffer by its actions alone are likely to turn the balance of our happiness and unhappiness negative. Even for the need we single-mindedly pursue, the detrimental circumstances under which its means are being created threaten to extinguish the enjoyment we derive from fulfilling it and to leave us with a deficit. If we include the detrimental consequences of resulting agitations within the inconsiderate need, by other needs, and from other individuals, the balance is overwhelmingly likely to become negative. The multiple sources of repercussions, and even just one source, may cause unhappiness that surpasses the happiness we receive from the advancement toward and the achievement of an ultimate objective. The greatest occasions of ultimate fulfillment for single needs may then stay far from yielding the greatest happiness. Still, inflated expectations of attaining rewards in ultimate events of fulfillment may blind us to these odds.

Ambitious projects may be of essential importance for our individual and collective survival and wellbeing. Prosecuting them may be necessary in spite of the high costs and risks they imply. The potential and actual ultimate reward of a pursuit may be sufficiently powerful to incite and to direct us past concerns about increments of happiness or unhappiness we experience along our path. Yet such constellations are limited beyond situations of existential threat, and few if any sanction all sacrifices. The difficulties in achieving ultimate fulfillment, the pain we must suffer during its pursuit, and its short-term character and fragility make it an unreliable and ephemeral source of happiness. Events of ultimate fulfillment are therefore unlikely sources to supply all the happiness that we require to create and keep a sufficient positive balance of happiness over pain. Achieving such a balance appears to be a continuous challenge to which the ultimate fulfillment of needs seems to be a potentially inadequate response, even if it should succeed. We may wonder whether it is possible to accomplish more happiness than pain even if we include the derivation of happiness during pursuits into the equation. Despite all our efforts, we may struggle toward breaking even, let alone winning. We may question whether we can count procedural happiness as anything more than self-delusion. Arguably, our pain of deficiency and fear that we will not be able to overcome it are so unbearable to us that we have to deflect them by an emotional mechanism that imagines fulfillment and generates pleasure from our

advances and the consideration that further advances might be possible. But we may contrive this anticipatory source of happiness not only to overcome topical pain and fear. It may also assist us to counter a broader menace of despair about the realization that our existence is characterized by pain as its fundamental condition. Imagining fulfillment while we are progressing in accomplishing it may keep us sufficiently motivated in spite of our insight that our satisfaction is fleeting and that fulfillment might never come, only come at a high cost, be compromised by imperfections, and be insufficient to make us happy. To counterbalance the threat of overwhelming pain, it appears necessary that we derive all the happiness we can from the advancement of subordinated wishes. Our ability to develop happiness from incremental advancement toward fulfillment may be an essential source of our motivation to undertake pursuits despite their potential futility. Then again, we do not appear to have a choice whether to pursue our needs. They appear to force us into their pursuit regardless of our chances of success. The pain of deprivation and desire to attain our ultimate objectives seem sufficient to compel us to take action. That we feel happier during our pursuits because of increments of approximatory happiness may be subjectively important. But it might not make a difference in how well we ultimately pursue our needs and how well we survive or thrive. That we feel better during pursuits may seem to make our pursuits more bearable without providing objective benefits.

However, as we look closer, we find multiple objective benefits. Without procedural happiness, our desperation might intensify to levels that might have us trying to withdraw from our existence. The procedural happiness we experience provides us emotional resources. Satisfaction about a step or stage during our pursuits can serve as an indication whether our activities conform with our needs. Together with complementary installments of approximatory pain, continual impressions of approximatory pleasure represent a useful and possibly essential mechanism to reconcile our pursuits in ourselves and with others. Beyond that, our impression that small steps can provide us with happiness assists our planning and implementation of happiness in a stable, reliable manner. Because small steps are easier to achieve and we possess more opportunities to create happiness, we are more prone to pursue all our needs. The minor investments of resources required to advance our needs in increments permit us to draw happiness from a wider variety of incidents regarding the same need and in the concurrent pursuit of multiple needs. Consequently, our derivation of happiness from intermediate steps appears to be justified because they and our awareness of them have nonredundant merit. Yet, notwithstand-

ing such merit, procedural happiness will come to be illusory if it does not merge with the ultimate success of a pursuit. We cannot count it against pain until then because we stand to lose it in disappointment if we fail to reach ultimate fulfillment. But awareness of our potential of generating happiness procedurally takes part of the sting out of our failures. As long as we can do something to improve our situation, can rebuild or engage in an alternate pursuit after failure, we can produce more happiness and instantly begin to remove the deficit we have suffered. The mere prospect of being able to create more events of happiness appears to arouse approximatory happiness in us. This happiness of hope may carry us through periods where advances toward the fulfillment of our needs stall or fail. We might be able to keep a happy attitude and generate emotional resources if we have reason to believe that we can recover from disappointments by engaging in future pursuits. The ability to sustain hope and immediately generate happiness by moving on in the face of defeat may be not only an invaluable subjective asset. It may also be an objective benefit because it places us on track to resume pursuits without deferral. This reduction of downtime after failure may give us a critical edge in our individual and collective survival and thriving. Our ability to develop procedural happiness may be a vital aspect of our resilience. This resilience may be the most important feature of our capacity to generate procedural happiness, and our happiness about it lasts regardless of our ultimate success.

We may then conclude that our ability to draw happiness from our pursuing of happiness appears to be an indispensable or at least a helpful accompaniment for the ultimate purposes of our pain-pleasure mechanisms. Together with the ever-renewing mission of bridging the differential between pain and pleasure, our concentration on producing happy increments imposes a mechanism where our happiness is in flow and is derived in movement. Although happiness may move in cycles of construction and decline upon attainment, its defining characteristic is its forward motion in producing the means for the fulfillment of our needs. States of ultimate achievement and an expectation of rest connected to them are part of our experience of happiness. Only, these states may be too rare and transitory to provide sufficient satisfaction to balance and exceed our pain. Procedural happiness might fill that deficit by generating happiness from restlessness. Then again, the happiness we enjoy in moments of fulfillment is similar to procedural happiness. Our enjoyment of accomplishment is the celebration of the culminating final step in a sequence. The happiness we develop stems from our arrival, not from staying. The idea of happiness as rest seems to be in part a wish to recover, which constitutes a step in our

pursuits as well. Beyond that, it seems to be a wish to extend moments of satisfaction. But when we contemplate such a state, we understand that it cannot last if we are to secure our needs. Even if we could prolong a state of satisfaction, unhappiness about our failure of pursuing the fulfillment of other requirements might still impress us to destroy that state, or, if such a stimulus failed, we would not uphold our existence. The equation of rest with fulfillment seems to be a myth we tell ourselves to motivate ourselves, to soothe pain during pursuits, and to disguise our subjection to needs that spur us on ceaselessly in cyclical and continuing demands. When we are confronted by rest beyond recuperation, a sense of reality sets in. We comprehend that, as imperfect and arduous as our pursuits might be, the alternative of inactivity promises to be even more painful. We realize that when we stand still, we stop generating happiness. To be happy, we have to advance.

With insight regarding the nature of fulfillment, it becomes apparent that the two phases of pursuit and achievement become reconciled in our motivations to advance. They constitute mutually causative aspects of our activities. The value we attribute to reaching an ultimate objective makes us languish for the completion of our pursuits. Conversely, our appreciation for the happiness we incur from intermediary objectives makes us wish that we could leave our achievements behind and move on to new pursuits. That one part of our happiness is generated from departure and another from arrival subjects us to an alternating mindset. Wherever we are in a production cycle, a constituent of our happiness is always missing. Trying to catch up with the aspect that is missing at the time can cause us to engage in unending and possibly accelerating cycles of pursuit and accomplishment. The pain of disconnection from our destination and the troubles of pursuit propel us to arrive. Yet, after we arrive, the pain of fading satisfaction and the absence of procedural satisfaction pushes us to move on. This pattern can make our existence an impatient oscillation between the aspects of objectives and their pursuits. We desire the aspect we lack at the time, and we switch our desire when we attain it. Our focus on purposes makes us wish that intervening travels between our destinations would go by. Our focus on motion makes us wish we could leave our objectives behind and travel on. We haste from one aspect to the other, wishing that each phase would pass until our existence ceases. The nature of happiness seems to curse us to never being satisfied.

We might be able to evade such a mentality somewhat if we acknowledge that each step we take can be a source of happiness regardless of where in our pursuits it is located. We can further improve our happiness if we incorporate the potential of taking these steps in our

emotional consideration in the form of hope. Accordingly, every moment in which we proceed or know of our potential to proceed can be a moment of happiness. But to maintain the stream of happiness, we must continue to travel to the destinations of our needs. To keep traveling, we must be sufficiently dissatisfied. For that reason, deficiencies in the fulfillment of our needs must remain. This may become a problem as episodes of fulfillment and pursuit alternate. While the fulfillment of needs may abate and give rise to deficiencies, these may not arise in time to derive happiness from the process of pursuit. Our production of happiness appears to be interrupted if our happiness about accomplishments does not last until fulfillment has receded enough to make the production of happiness from pursuit feasible again. Achieving sufficient durability of happiness is already challenging in general. Yet it becomes even less likely when we succeed in endeavors to maximize our ultimate happiness. At this purported high point of our pursuits, the derivation of happiness from pursuit and attainment may be blocked because a sufficient supply of resources is secured and applied to satisfy our needs. It appears unavoidable that we would sense pain if our forward movement were arrested in perfection and we no longer had the ability to produce happiness. After our fleeting joy of accomplishment over ultimate objectives fades, we would fall into despair if objective conditions of fulfillment were to continue. Our need to generate a steady supply of happy events may then seem to have as much of a shortcoming in providing us with happiness as reaching ultimate fulfillment. Once we master procuring sufficient resources to meet our needs, this conundrum becomes a formidable threat to our happiness.

We appear to possess no other constructive choice than to keep struggling for ever more happiness regardless of the fulfillment status of our needs. To remain happy, we may need a never-ending supply of unmet wishes. But sustaining the necessary growth of new objectives that deliver increased levels of satisfaction may become more difficult and perhaps impossible as we progress and as our wishes succeed. The development of our knowledge, the perfection of our pursuits, and diversionary refinements may meet limits in producing attractive additions or alternatives to pursuits. The possible increments for growth in our satisfaction may become progressively smaller. While our motivation to keep advancing may be useful and essential during a period of undersupply, a continued growth in means after we have become able to securely fulfill all our needs may seem pointless and possibly counterproductive. Saturation may infuse unnecessary pain and uncertainty at a time when we might consider it appropriate that we enjoy ourselves. The next chapter explores the consequences of such a state.