



# 美國華聯商會

Peninsula Chinese Business Association

50 Victoria Avenue Suite # 208, Millbrae, CA 94030

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Dear Members and Friends,

Happy New Year!

I am thrilled and humbled to be re-elected for another year as president. I thank the Board of Directors for their trust, and I look forward to working with them to continue serving the community.

I apologize that there is no Chinese version as my translator is no longer translating. I promise to resume as early as possible once I find a replacement.

January is the time to set resolutions for the upcoming year. In a social event last year, I asked a group of young professionals how their experience with COVID interfered with their New Year resolutions. Most of them showed resilience and shared their plans to achieve more successes than before COVID. No doubt, they're preparing to welcome an era with plenty of opportunities. In my follow-up questions, I asked what they meant by "more successes." The conversation suddenly paused for a few seconds, followed by chuckles. One replied, "There is no straight answer without batting an eye. Everyone measures success differently."

If success is measurable, then how is it measured? I reckon it is "you get what you want and feel happy from what you get." To get what you want is a goal that you can plan for. But feeling happy from what you get is unpredictable; it comes naturally from deep inside.

Additionally, no matter how hard you work to succeed, you can only partially contribute to your happiness. The other part comes from the living quality provided by the place you live. So, are you feeling happy in the country you are living in?

In 2019 the United Nations named Finland the happiest country in the world. The Finns explained the meaning of happiness as "satisfaction with the way one's life is going." Makes sense, but what are the materials for building life satisfaction? The Finnish people believe "balance" is the formula for happiness.

You don't have to be super-rich to be happy. The Finns discovered that chasing money did not lead to a more comfortable lifestyle. As philosopher Aristotle said, you must have a "balance between excess and deficiency."

Finnish people work far fewer hours than other countries like Japan, and they spend more time with family. On average, a Japanese worker works 1700 hours more per year.

A satisfying relationship is another fundamental factor in how the Finns reinforce happiness. They have someone they can rely on in times of need and share their hopes and worries with.

So, how did the Finnish government build the country to become the happiest place in the world to live? They focus on well-being as an essential ingredient for a balanced life. They measure happiness by the following:

- **GDP per capita**
- **Life expectancy**
- **Freedom to make life choices**
- **Social support**
- **Generosity**
- **Absence of corruption**

People tend to compare themselves to one another and believe they will be happier if they have "more." For example, a sibling may seek a higher income than their brothers and sisters, or the owner of a Tesla may feel like they are better than their neighbor who drives a Lexus. Some workers are gleeful when they have more travel experiences than their peers. However, chasing goals for the sake of having more than others or feeling better than them can prevent you from achieving your dreams. Besides, the ambition to stay in front of everyone is stressful.

I measure success in my ability to derive happiness from experiencing the meaning of life, finding pleasure in day-to-day routines, and feeling overall satisfaction. It is critical to choose joy instead of chase it. Choose to live your life meaningfully. Furthermore, you feel more satisfied when you are generous.

I wish you all a prosperous year, and don't give up fighting COVID.

*Johnny DaRosa*

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