Finding happiness in all places and the right faces

As Singapore's happiest person hits headlines, Youthlink writers talk about what gives them joy

The joy of work

SINCE industrialisation, the invention of time-saving devices has sought to liberate people from the drudgery of chores.

We now have more time than ever to find happiness in our otherwise mundane lives.

But in a world of competing demands, most of us are putting that time back into our work.

After all, more work means more money and that is the beginning of what some may consider a vicious circle: a competition to see how much wealth-generating work one can complete within a day's given hours.

The common perception is that if a person works really hard, then he or she can't possibly be happy.

Since when did working hard preclude a happy life?

I think that the pursuit of success in one's career is intrinsically a quest to discover happiness, too.

Eef Gerard Van Emmerik, 19, has a place to read law at the Singapore Management University (SMU)

Happiness is earned

TODAY marks the first Monday in five months that I don't have to wake up early to go to work at Raffles Place.

My banking internship has ended.

I am officially a student again.

Many friends doubted my decision to take a semester off school to pursue an internship.

The sacrifices I made were costly, they cautioned. A delayed graduation, lost job opportunities and a later start to financial independence.

I can't say that every moment at work has been good. But what is hard to bear is also sweet to remember.

For me, happiness is having the determination to see the hard times through.

It's a personal benchmark you've met that leaves you smug and armed with bragging rights for accomplishing the feat.

What I've learnt is this: Each person's idea of happiness may be unique, but the common thread is that it has to be earned.

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