Chapter 1

Introduction
Human body is the platform for all pleasure and pain at the sensory level. At the same time, it has a sophisticated mind, which keeps track of things at the psychological level. Today’s materialistic world is a product of technological change and development that has made people to become more self-centered. This might led to isolation and creation a vacuum around the people. In mindless pursuit of worldly possessions negative emotions like greed, jealously and hatred have overpowered our mind, creating tensions, leading an individual to a less satisfied life and adopting negative approach towards it.

We have been blessed with the capacity to discriminate. We are equipped to take decisions using our intellect and by applying acquired wisdom. We have vast potential, but because of our ignorance of Self, these potentials remain largely untapped i.e. all wise men have exhorted to try and attain Supreme Knowledge of the Self.

According to ancient Indian sages human being are comprised of both matter and spirit. Our physical body, mind and intellect are the matter components while our soul is the spirit – the real self – that radiates and drives the matter components.

SPRITUALITY

Spirituality is the process by which one unites to the Self, the godhead within. A human being is separated from his true self – atman or godhead by a mass of desires. He needs to slowly overcome his desires and reveal that Self.
A systematic attempt to achieve this, makes one truly spiritual. Spiritual experience is the goal of a deeply religious person whereas a major discovery or an intervention is the goal of a scientific mind. If both the aspects are unified, we can transcend to that level of thinking in which unity is cohesive concept. For this science and spirituality have to interact.

Throughout history, spirituality has been a major divine force in all religions of the world, cultures and traditions. At the turn of the 20th century, spirituality has comeback again. For transpersonal and existential psychologists, spiritual issues and matters are old and familiar domains. As psychology matured, spirituality and treatment diverged. However, the field of spirituality in turn is relatively isolated from psychology. The emergence of interaction between psychology and spirituality, each informing the other, seems to be the fascinating discourse.

Traditionally, thoughts on the soul and spirit were discussed either with priests or with God in private. Recently there is awakening of the motion of spirituality in broader context of living well in society. An Australian philosopher, Raymond Gaiter (1998), has summarized “People are increasingly attracted to an abstract spirituality, to the kind of religion i.e. identified with the God of the philosophers in a contrast ... to ... the God of religion except they would prefer to keep God out of it all together”.

Spiritualism is the most integrated and comprehensive psychological world view. It implies that although human beings are by nature restless, unstable, greedy, selfish, impulsive and so on, they can have inbuilt –
disposition towards self – transformation by acquiring finer subtler qualities of spiritual nature (Roland, 1998) which they can realize by cultivating an observer' (drashta) in their mind.

Spirituality is used to denote “certain positive inward qualities and perceptions” avoiding implications of “narrow, dogmatic beliefs and obligatory religious observances” (Wulff, 1996, p.47). Spirituality helps in alleviating all types of distress viz. mental, emotional and physical caused due to lack of appropriate relationship with the ultimate reality reflected in the appropriate relationship with other people and thing. It is an attitude, a posture of one’s very being that allow seeing not different thing but everything differently (Edwards, 1755/1960; Holifield, 1983, p.88).

Spirituality measures four dimensions i.e. unifying interconnectedness, transcendence, purpose and meaning in life and innerness. Unifying interconnectedness is defined as the feeling of relatedness or attachment to others, a sense of relationship to all life, a feeling of harmony with self and others and a feeling of oneness with the universe and /or a universal element or Supreme Being.

Purpose and meaning in life is defined as the process of searching for or discovering events or relationships that provide a sense of worth, hope and/or reason for living/existence.

Innerness, or inner resources, is defined as the process of striving for and/or discovering wholeness, identity, and a sense of empowerment. Innerness or inner resources are manifested in feelings of strength, in times of crises,
calmness or serenity in dealing with uncertainty in life, guidance in living, being at peace with one's self and the world and feeling of ability.

Transcendence is defined as the ability to reach or exceed the limits of usual experience, the capacity, willingness or experience of rising above or coming bodily or psychic conditions; or the capacity for achieving wellness and/or self-healing.

The four dimensions are being interrelated. Broken lines connect the four concepts to show interrelatedness. They are conceptualized as occurring in no particular sequential order, but rather are believed to covary with one another. Relationships in the model are depicted by solid lines and by arrows indicating the direction of the relationships.
To define spirituality is not an easy task. It is a complex phenomenon and is an attribute of individuals. Spirituality means the development of self-consciousness and the cultivation of one’s own inner resources through requiring personal effort and personal choice. It makes the transition from the narrow individual life to the truly free and truly personal life in which harmony is attained through the union between the individuals. Above all, it is very humble and harmonious and can affect each other. Spirituality is a part of life and it guides our behaviour as to how to adapt to the internal environment, just as a human being is adapted to live in the external environment. Spirituality prevents us from feeling self-important.

The social science literature emphasizes the importance of spirituality in relation to the fields of social work, counseling, occupational therapy, psychiatry and nursing. Specifically, many in the field of social work have written on the importance of spirituality in practice and the education or training of practitioners. Carr and Morris (1996) proposed that “spiritual assessment and appropriate interventions can be integrated regularly into practice (p.73)”. Cornett (1992) stated that the ecological approach should be inclusive of the spiritual aspects of the individual in their environment.

Though it is difficult to define spirituality but some of the conceptions about spirituality had led to various critiqued definitions.
Canda’s Conceptualization

Canda is possibly the most prolific social work authors on spirituality (1986, 88a, 88b, 1990a, 1990b, 1990c, 1995, 1997). Canda attempts to conceptualize spirituality:-

“Spirituality is the gestalt of the total process of human life and development, encompassing the biological, mental, social and spiritual aspects. In particular, spirituality is concerned with the distinctively spiritual aspects of human experiences as it is interwoven with all the other aspects. The spiritual aspect refers to experience of a quality of sacredness and meaningfulness in self, other people, the non-human world and the ground of being (as conceived in theistic, non-theistic, or atheistic terms, (1988a, p.43).

Green’s Conceptualization

[Spirituality]... “is a striving for the presence of God and the fashioning of a life of holiness appropriate to such striving...” (Green, 1987, p.903). This definition focuses on the activity of relating to God. It is unclear as to what the presence of God is or how or what a ‘life of holiness’ is.

Frame’s Conceptualization

Spirituality refers to the ways clients construct meaning in their lives (Frankl, 1963) or their “inner attitude that emphasizes energy creative choice, and a powerful force for living” (Booth as cited in Frame 1996, p.17).

Spirituality as Connectedness

Many conceptualizations of spirituality involve the term ‘connectedness’. Connectedness is a fairly abstract term that implies a linkage
or a feeling of relatedness between people and object where there is no apparent connection.

Shafranske (1984, p.233) states “spirituality is the courage to look within and to trust – what is seen and what is trusted, appears to be a deep sense of belonging, of wholeness, of connectedness and of openness to the infinite”.

Zumeta (1993, p.26) states “spirituality is an awareness of the connectedness of all things. Specifically, when people are fully in a spiritual place, they feel connected with themselves, clients, students, their town, state, country, planet and the universe. Spirituality removes barrier between ourselves and others”.

**Spirituality as Transcendence**

Many definitions of spirituality contain references to a transcendent or a non-material dimension.

O’Brien (1994) stated, “Spirituality... is the experience of the transcendent, the infinite, the supreme, the source of all beauty, goodness and existence (p.72).

Jenkins (1995) stated “Spirituality involves efforts to consider metaphysical or transcendent aspects of everyday life as they relate to forces, Supernatural and otherwise, that exist outside the person” (p.52).

**Multidimensional Definition of Spirituality**

While there appears to be no agreed definition for spirituality in the literature several authors seem to use similar conceptual definition. A strong common
theme that spans the literature is the principle of a multidimensional interconnectedness, a belief that “All living beings are vitally connected” (Scudder, 1937). Burkhardt (1989) conceptualized spirituality to involve a harmonious interconnectedness with environment.

Browen et al. (1988) constructed a behavioural/cognitive model of spirituality for working with individuals in addiction recovery. They defined spirituality in terms of Dollard’s three dimensions. First, they included behaviours in relationship to ourselves (e.g. honesty, self-evaluation, imaging, exercising, positive thinking, etc.). Second, they included behaviours in relationships with others example forgiving honesty, risking, touching, etc. Last they addressed behaviours in relation to a higher power (e.g. self-evaluation, meditation, all aspects of communication; Dollard, as cited in Brown et al., 1988, p.159).

The above definitions of spirituality can be summarized as:

a) **Inner strength** which manifests joy, peace, awareness; possess ability to be centered;

b) **Unfolding mystery** which indicates meaning and purpose in life; relates to mystery with peace and comfort, has ability to see beyond the present reality; and

c) **Harmonious interconnectedness** which states experience of harmony in relationships with self, others and environment.
Spirituality and Related Disciplines

Spirituality has also been discussed as an important component of therapy in the areas of psychology, marriage or family and hospice care. Miller (1990) states that psychologists should consider some spiritual dimension of life as legitimate concerns of psychosocial rehabilitation. Potts (1996) states that the willingness of therapists to address the spiritual dimensions of cancer may greatly enhance therapeutic relationships and the efficacy of psychosocial interventions.

Marriage and family therapists have shown an increased interest in spirituality (Anderson & Worthem, 1997). Nathanson (1995) conducted a study examining the effects of spirituality on divorce recovery. It was found that 83% of the sample found spirituality to be a major source of support. Prest and Keller (1993) conclude that therapists should, “attend to the spiritual belief systems of their clients if they are to understand better the people with whom they work” (p.137).

Spirituality and Psychobiological outcomes

There are several studies supporting a positive relationship between the ability of the mind to modulate mental and physical illness. The field of psycho-neuroimmunology, which emerged in the 1940’s, has established that there is a brain-body connection in which the mind can impact the immune system in its fight against the body’s foreign invaders (e.g. bacteria, viruses). Psycho-neuroimmunology explains a brain-body connection in which the limbic-hypothalamic system of the brain converts electrical neural impulses
into the hormonal messengers of the body. The hypothalamus is the brain’s control center for all the major regulatory system of the body, the autonomic, endocrine, immune systems, and the neuropeptide psychosomatic network (Rossi, 1988). Thus psycho neuroimmunology offers one possible explanation for the link between spiritual beliefs and psychobiological phenomena such as consciousness, emotions, moods and memory.

**Spirituality and Physical Illness**

Simonton et al. (1978) demonstrated a relationship between spirituality and physical illness among a group of patients diagnosed with medically incurable malignancies.

**Spirituality and Severe Mental Illness**

A qualitative study by Sullivan (1993) examined the relationship between spirituality as associated with relapse and recidivism rates among individuals with severe mental illnesses. Koss (1987) compared the effects of community mental health services in Puerto Rico to that of a spiritual healer in the treatment of patients with mental health complaints. She found that the outcome rating of the spiritualists patients were significantly better than those of the therapist.

**Spirituality and Religion**

All creatures big and small are beautiful creations of God. Very often however, we tend to either ignore the ‘small’ or ‘exploit’ them for selfish reasons. This is where religion and spirituality can help to restore to us a holistic perspective.
Spirituality is a unified quality of mind, heart and soul. It is concerned with individual subjective experiences, sometimes shared with others. Using a fruit analogy, the relationship between religion and spirituality can be explained. Religion is walnut skin and spirituality is the seed of the walnut. Similarly, religion is the apple’s skin and spirituality is the pulp of apple. Spirituality does not necessarily involve religion. For Smith (1994), the exploration of spirituality is one holistic purpose of world religions. Thoresen (1998) suggested that some characteristics between spiritual and religions perspectives are shared, such as a search for what is sacred or holy in life, coupled with some kind of transcendent (beyond the self) relationship with God or higher power or universal energy.

Religious thought and spirituality serve a larger purpose only when they find a positive expression in action. Theory without implementation is of no use. The concept of religion and spirituality are being hijacked by humans for their own selfish purposes, leaving out all the other, equally if not more valid forms of life. Throughout the history of scientific psychology, spirituality has held an ambiguous status, traditionally relegated to the realm of religion and religiousness, and often being perceived as a construct that is not accessible to empirical research methodologies and/or indicative of pathology. (e.g. Ellis, 1985, 1986; Ellis & Yeager, 1989; Freud, 1985; Grof, 1985; Hill & Smith, 1985; Hoje, 1996; Jones, 1994; Leuba, 1925; Skinner, 1953; Walsh & Vaughan, 1991; Wilber, 1990; Zinnbauer, et al., 1997). Nevertheless, in recent years an increasing amount of theoretical scientific and professional literature has appeared that is concerned with the conceptualization and/or measurement
of spirituality (e.g. Hood, Spilka, Humsberger & Gorsuch, 1996; Ingersoll, 1994) as well as with the psychology, medicine and counseling (e.g. Kelly, 1995, Krippner and Welsh, 1992; Lawlis, 1996; Richards & Bergin, 1997; Scotton, Chinen & Battista, 1996; Shafranske, 1996).

Religion and spirituality are universal threads in the fabric of human experience. Although each culture and religion provides different revelation and ritual for explaining and defining this “meaning ultimacy” (Verbit, 1970), there is amazing consistency regarding its theme: that there exists a broader paradigm for understanding existence that transcends the immediacy of our own individual consciousness and that binds all things into a more unitive harmony.

Although religion and spirituality are venues that certainly attract those with a strong sense of transcendence, there are other way this motivation can find expression in patriotism, self-sacrificing, altruism, nationalism, etc.

Spirituality is clearly different from religiousness (Zinnabauer, Pargament & Scott, 1999). The former emphasizes a personal search for connection with a larger sacredness while the latter provides a more social emphasis on encountering the divine. Although Zinnbauer et al., (1997) argues that spirituality is one component of religiousness. It represents a broad domain of motivation that underlie strings in both secular and religious contexts, and this is what distinguishes it from other similarly named constructs.

The studies suggest that there is a connection between spiritual beliefs and related disciplines. However, more studies are needed in order to explore the structure of spiritual beliefs and process by which spiritual transformation
can take place. An obstacle to rigorous research in area has been the lack of an agreed upon conceptual definition of spirituality. Also lacking is a standardized psychometrically sound measure of spirituality (Jenkins, 1995).

**Islamic Spirituality**

The spirit manifests itself in every religious universe where the echoes of the Divine word are still audible but the manner in which the manifestations of the spirit take place differs from one religion to another. In Islam, the spirit breathes through all that reveals the one and leads to the one, for Islam’s ultimate purpose is to reveal the unity of the Divine Principle and to integrate the world of multiplicity in the light of that Unity. Spirituality in Islam is inseparable from the awareness of the One of Allah, and a life lived according to His Will.

The principle of unity (*al-tawhid*) is at the heart of the Islamic message and determines Islamic spirituality in all its multifarious dimensions and forms. Spirituality is tawhid and the degree of spiritual attainment achieved by any human being is none other than the degree of his or her realization of tawhid.

The central theophany of Islam, the *Quran* is the source par excellence of all Islamic spirituality. It is the word manifested in human language. Through it, knowledge of the one and the paths leading to Him were made accessible in the past of the cosmos which was destined to become the abode of Islam. Likewise, the soul and inner substance of the Prophet (S.A.W.) are the complementary source of Islamic spirituality hidden outwardly but living as presence and as transforming grace within the hearts of those who tread the path of realization. Moreover, it can be said that both the created order and man
himself are also marked by the imprint of Divine Unity which must be taken into consideration in any study of Islamic spirituality.

Related to Islamic spirituality are all the doctrines that speak of the One, all the artistic forms that reflect the principle of Unity, and all human actions that issue from the inner man as a theomorphic being. To live by the Will of God who is one and to obey His Laws is the alpha of the spiritual life. Its omega is to surrender one’s will completely to Him and to sacrifice one’s existence before the one who alone can be said ultimately to be. Between the two stands various levels of correct and ever more interiorized action and above the plane of action stand the love of God and finally knowledge of Him, the knowledge that is summarized in the testimony (Shahadah) of Islam La ilaha illa’Llah (There is no divinity but God, but Allah the one). All that one needs to know and can know is already contained in this testimony. To accept it along, with the second Shah’adah Muhammad ur rasul Allāh (Mohammad is God’s messenger) is to become a Muslim. To realize its full meaning is to reach the highest degree of spirituality, to act perfectly according to His Will, to love only the Beloved, and to know all that can be known. It is to gain sanctity and attain the crown of spiritual poverty. It is to become a friend of God, Wali Allah, the term that Muslims use for saint. In a profound sense, Islamic spirituality is nothing other than the realization of tawhid. Its study is nothing other than tracing the impact in depth of tawhid upon the life, actions, art, and thought of that segment of the human race which makes up the Islamic people or ‘ummah’. Islamic spirituality concerns itself primarily with what leads to inwardness and the world of the Spirit. It deals with the outward
elements of the religion to the extent that they serve as vehicles for the life of
the Spirit.

The term “Spirituality” in Islamic Languages

Since the term “spirituality” as used in English language has obviously
strong Christian connotations, some may raise the question: What does
spirituality mean in the context of the Islamic tradition itself? The answer could
best be found by turning to the term ‘Spirituality in the major Islamic
languages such as Arabic, Persian and Turkish. The terms used for
“spirituality” are ruhaniyyah (Arabic), ma'nawiyyat (Persian), or their
derivatives. Both terms are of Arabic origin, drawn from the language of the
Quran and the Islamic Revelation. The first is derived from the word rāh, 
meaning spirit, concerning which the Quran instructs the Prophet (S.A.W.) to
say, when he was asked about the nature of spirit. “The spirit is from the
command of my Lord” (XVII, 85). The second is derived from the word malnā, literally “meaning” which connotes “inwardness”, “real” as opposed to
“apparent” and also “spirit” as this term is understood traditionally-that is
pertaining to a higher level of reality than both the material and the psychic and
being directed related to the Divine Reality itself.

In summary, these terms refer to that which is related to the world of the
spirit, is in Divine Proximity, possesses inwardness and interiority, and is
identified with the real – and therefore also, from the Islamic point of view –
permanent, and abiding rather than the transient and passing. Taken together,
these meanings reveal aspects of Islamic spirituality as it is understood by
traditional Islam and from the Islamic point of view.
There is also another dimension to the meaning of “spirituality” as used in Islamic languages. When this term is employed, there is always evoked a sense of the presence of the barakah, or that grace which flows in the view of the universe and within the life of man to the extent that he dedicates himself to God. There is, in addition, the sense of moral perfection and beauty of the soul as far as human beings are concerned. There is also a “presence” which brings about recollection of God and paradisal world when ideas, sounds and words and, in general, objects and works of art are involved. In all these cases, the term “spirituality” evoked in the Muslim mind a proximity to God and the world of the Spirit.

Science Vs Spirituality

There is a wide spread myth that science and spirituality are different from each other, that science is “scientific”, while spirituality is “superstition”, that science is “logical”, while spirituality is ‘irrational’, that science is useful in our daily life while spirituality is something esoteric and that science should be learnt while spirituality should be unlearnt.

All this stems from a misunderstanding of both science and spirituality. The truth is that science explores the outer world and spirituality the inner realm. Science works at the things that are measurable, physical, palpable, amenable to the senses. Spirituality looks at consciousness, thoughts, emotions, attitudes, values, character – all these are immeasurable, mental, not apparent to the senses Science, gets us physical comforts, while spirituality bring us mental calm. A study of both is required right from the time a human being is
born, if he wants to develop himself into a balanced, integrated and holistic person.

**How to become Spiritual?**

There are the following few steps, as to how to become a spiritual person. One should

(i) Stop criticizing each other’s religion.

(ii) Stop converting people of other faiths to one’s faith.

(iii) Stop believing that his/her religion is the true religion.

(iv) Respect for all super-conscious beings to which ever faith seems to belong.

(v) Believe in the existence of universal consciousness permeating the cosmos.

(vi) Be clear in one’s mind that science does not disprove religion.

Summing up, the time is ripe for moving away from traditional faiths and inaugurating a new universally acceptable, single, common science of spirituality, encompassing the truths of all religions. One should be simultaneously scientific and spiritual. That is the future of humanity in the 21st century.

**LIFE SATISFACTION**

It is a fact that ours is a machine made civilization; life is dominated by the machine. We get up by the alarm clock, clothe ourselves in machine-made stuff, eat a patent breakfast. We then rush to the time of gas or compressed steam, to factory, shop, office or field where we manipulate one’s mind of tool,
implement or appliance or other all day long. That is our life. The hectic schedule of life has made lost the beauty of nature. Are we satisfied with this life? – Obviously not.

The story of man’s quest for happiness and satisfaction begins at the very beginning of time. Milton in his “Paradise Lost” depicts how Adam, though residing amidst the boundless joy and pleasures of Eden, experience a vague restlessness and dissatisfaction.

The striving for happiness, satisfaction has so inextricably woven into the very deep core structure of the human psyche, that its existence has from the beginning been accepted as an inevitable reality of human life. Satisfaction is both a physiological state of contentment of the organism as well as a state of psychological well being, not essentially a consequent of the physiological situation at least among the humans. Satisfaction with life is one’s own perception that all’s well with him in relation to his environment and others view of him, that he enjoys the bliss of well-being and of being at home in the world. What is central to satisfaction is need fulfillment and experience of wholesome, pleasant and comforting state of affairs with one’s being on attaining equilibrium by getting the needed. The deprivation of which motivates the organism to pursue a goal in that direction.

“Satisfaction in the human context is not merely a concept of need fulfillment, it is much more complex, involving a number of explicit and implicit parameters physical, social and psychological – while the importance of drive reduction and need fulfillment can hardly be overemphasized in
satisfaction, which are ultimately connected with survival itself”. Satisfaction, among human being, is a multiplicative function of numerous factors, the upper most being the felt psychological experience, which is unique with each human being, his idiosyncratic experience of inner well-being and tranquility, aspirations, hopes, fears and apprehensions.

Some limited aspects of the all pervasive phenomenon of satisfaction in psychological literature may be found in such concepts of homeostasis. Cognitive dissonance and so forth, but none of these is adequate to explain psychological situation contained in life satisfaction. Cantrill’s (1965) is perhaps the most acceptable conceptualization, close to what satisfaction consist in. For him, it is typically human-like to be capable of experiencing satisfaction coated with lives of values. This enables him to explore experiment and extend the range of his behaviour to expand and elevate his value satisfaction along with ensuring the recurrence of satisfaction state. Polyani’s (1959) observation on the subject seems to be quite relevant. Here as he speaks of “desire for tension” the craving for mental dissatisfaction and the essential restlessness are the byproducts of the in built desire of human beings to enrich the possibilities of satisfaction in life and giving vent to man’s innovative and creative potentials. Studies on the role of personality factors and distinctive human characteristics in the satisfaction-dissatisfaction are not many. In one study, for e.g. (Blishen and Atkinson 1980), such factors as age, language and income were found to be related to life satisfaction. Satisfaction increased with income as well as with age besides certain socio-cultural factors contributing to it.
“Satisfaction with life” has emerged in recent years as dimension of fairly great psychological import in personality studies, referring to what may be termed as a feeling of subjective well-being (Diener, 1984). The concept has been delineated from various related concepts, the three components – positive-affect, negative-affect and life-satisfaction contributing to it. The first two refers to the affective emotional aspect of the construct and the latter to the cognitive, judgemental aspects. Shin and Johnson (1978) define life satisfaction “as a global assessment of person’s quality of life according to his chosen criteria”. Judgement of satisfaction has to do with a comparison of one’s state of affairs with what is perceived as an appropriate standard, no matter it is at variance with standards at large. One important dimension that seems to bear conceptual relevance to life satisfaction is alienation, which too is to be defined in terms of the “satisfaction – dissatisfaction”, perceived or felt in one’s own being; vis-a-vis the global standards of satisfaction. Persons lacking in self-confidence perceived themselves as socially incompetent, unsuccessful, dissatisfied, pessimistic, anxious and in general, as having negative feeling and self-evaluation.

**Causes of Satisfaction**

There are many factors that contribute to an individual’s happiness or satisfaction with life, and these factors rather than age, impact the person’s perceived quality of life in the later years. Research has demonstrated that locus of control, health, housing, social-support and sources of reinforcement has impact on individual’s happiness and satisfaction.
The most obvious cause of satisfaction is the real satisfaction of needs by the objective conditions of life. And in fact a number of factors are found to be predictive of happiness – income, health, interesting and high status work, marriage and other social relationships and satisfying leisure (Argyle, 1987). The condition of people winning football pools or lottering is quiet interesting. Some of them are a little happier than before, but their lives are often seriously disrupted – as a result of giving up jobs, and moving house to more prosperous neighbourhood, where they are not accepted. So their objectives conditions of life have not really improved much. Though it is widely believed that wealth is one of the main causes of happiness but in the case of winners, it has little effect on happiness (Kamman and Campbell, 1982).

Strack, et al. (1985) found that subjects reported satisfaction levels of 7.27 after thinking of three particularly unpleasant events in the past, but 6.85 after thinking of very happy events. A Cambridge study found that British manual workers in the top third of British incomes were more satisfied than non-manual workers with the same salaries – because the manual workers compared themselves with other manual workers, most of whom were paidless while the non-manual workers were paid less, than many other non-manual workers (Runciman, 1966). In fact this is one of the main areas where comparisons are important: industrial workers are very concerned about fair payment, and what other workers are being paid. Such comparisons are a major source of pay satisfaction (Berkowitz et al. 1987), and there are several cases of
workers choosing to lose their jobs entirely rather than be paid less than another group.

The gap between aspirations and achievement predicts satisfaction quite well typically 0.50 in a series of studies (Michalos, 1986). The Michigan model states that the goal achievement gap is partly based on comparisons with past life, partly on comparisons with 'average folks'.

It is normal for us to have hopes and aspirations, and to raise them upward if they are attained – like a high jumper raising the bar. However, over high aspirations can be a threat to happiness and therefore happiness therapy is sometimes suggested for persuading people to lower them.

People can get used to almost anything, and one theory of satisfaction is that they do, and only respond to recent changes in conditions. This was given some support from the reported finding that accident victims who become para and quadri-plegic becomes nearly as happy as other people. However, as Veenhoven (1990) has pointed out these patients were in fact less satisfied than controls, and they were interviewed face-to-face, while controls were telephoned. It is found that higher satisfaction is reported in face-to-face interviews. Furthermore, other kinds of victims report quite low levels of satisfaction.

One group of people who believe have not adapted to their situation are those suffering from depression. There is one very striking example of adaptation, however, and that is to the weather. Although, people are happier
and more satisfied on sunny days, there is no general effect of climate on satisfaction, presumably because people get used to their weather.

Do the different domains of satisfaction produce general satisfaction, or does a more basic personality trait of satisfaction lead to satisfaction with particular domains? There is evidence that both directions of causation work, especially for broad and important domains like work. It has been found that there is a top-down effect for satisfaction with social activities, perhaps due to extraversion, and a bottom-up effect for marital satisfaction (Lance et al., 1989).

**Satisfaction and Interrelationship**

A study of satisfaction in a number of relationship was carried out. Three dimensions of satisfaction was found namely – material, tangible help; emotional support; and shared interest. It was found that the spouse is by far the greatest source of satisfaction, next is close relatives and friends and at last are work-mates and neighbours. Many studies have confirmed the effect of marriage on happiness. The relationship is still found when other various, such as age, occupation and income are held constant. Satisfaction with home life is quite a strong predictor of happiness, but women with children experiences negative emotions like boredom aggression and loneliness. (Harding, 1985). Happiness causes marriage, as well as marriage causes happiness. It is found that happy people are found more attractive (and possibly more marriageable). The effect of ending marriage by death or separation on divorces is very strong, as something has been lost. Human being are basically sociable and
cooperation; many things cannot be done alone – sex and family life, most work, most leisure. Since various forms of cooperation are so important for human life, cooperator has acquired rewards to motivate it, as in the case of sex and friendship. Living alone derives those rewards, and so life is felt as incomplete and less meaningful (Argyle, 1991).

Other relationships also contribute to satisfaction. Friends certainly do, particularly to satisfaction from shared interests, for which they are rated most as the same as spouse. Kin, especially parents and sibling are important, especially as sources of material help. Other studies have found that work mates can be a greater source of satisfaction.

Relationships can also be a source of conflict. Young lovers have to work through a lot of early disagreements. Marriage is the greatest source of conflict as well as of satisfaction; parents often have a lot of trouble with their children especially, when they are adolescents. Nevertheless, relationships continue to provide the greatest single source of happiness (Argyle, 1987).

People’s feelings of happiness and satisfaction are no doubt a function of the affective quality of their every day experiences. The nature of this relation, however, is not as straight forward as one might expect e.g. whereas negative experiences do frequently decreases individuals perceptions of their quality of life (Zantra & Reich, 1983), some finding indicate that negative events may also increase subjective-well-being (Elder, 1974). In fact, even events of extreme, hedonic values seems to be poor predictors of individual’s well-being e.g. Brickman, Coates and Janoff – Bulman (1978) found in their
study that people who won a million dollars in a lottery were generally not any happier than the control subjects. They were less able to enjoy more mundane events.

It is very important to consider the psychological mechanism that mediate between the external event and individual's happiness and satisfaction. For e.g. it seems reasonable to suppose that the influence of objective life circumstances on judgement of happiness and satisfaction depends in part on whether these events are actually thought about at the time the judgement is made. The influence of the life events one think about may not only depend on their hedonic relevance but also on the way the events are thought about. e.g. Thinking about an event that has recently occurred may lead to a more positive evaluation of one's life if the event is positive than that if it is negative. This may be partly because the recalled events is considered representative of other events that occur in one's present life. (cf. Tversky and Kahneman, 1982). Hedonically relevant events can affect individual's current mood state, and this positive or negative mood might influence life satisfaction independently of the conditions that gave rise to it. For e.g. Schwarz and Clore (1983) had subjects recall their pleasant or unpleasant past events and the feelings associated with it. They found that subjects who described negative past events were in a more depressed mood and reported lower life satisfaction, than subjects who described positive events.
Models

Theories of relations between global and life facet satisfactions have proposed either “top-down” or “bottom-up” influences. “Bottom-up” theories proposed that perceptions of structural aspects of the environment lead to satisfaction within various life domains. Social indicators research (Glatzer and Mohr, 1987) has proceeded along the lines of bottom-up theories, under the rationale that changes in overall life satisfaction can be affected by addressing social concerns within specific domains of life.

“Top-down” theories on the other hand (Diener, 1984; Liang, 1984; Liang & Bollen, 1983; Staw and Ross, 1985; Stones and Kozma, 1985), propose that global satisfaction determines satisfaction with specific life facets. Social interventions may effect changes in satisfaction with specific aspects of life.

A third “bi-directional” or “reciprocal” model proposes that global life satisfaction both determines and results from satisfaction with specific domains of life. (Diener, 1984). Michalos (1980) for example suggested that satisfaction in several life domains may contribute to overall life satisfaction and that satisfaction with life in general influence individuals satisfaction judgements in various life domains. Thus, the bi-directional model acknowledges the importance of both (a) stable dispositional influences on global and domain specific satisfaction judgements and (b) the impact that life facet satisfactions have on judgements of overall life satisfaction.
Research in this area has demonstrated positive association between overall life satisfaction & satisfactions in several life domains (e.g. Andrews & Withey, 1974; Headey et al., 1985; Iris & Barrett 1972; Kopelman et al. 1983; London, Crandall & Seals 1977; Mastekaasa, 1984; Mc Kennall & Andrews, 1980; Michalos 1980; Near et al. 1978, 1983; Rouseau, 1978) and among satisfaction in various life domains (e.g. Headey et al. 1985; Hulin 1969; Kopelman, et al. 1983; London et al., 1977). However the simple co-relational approach taken by most of these studies precludes conclusion about the direction of the caused relation, if any, between global life facet satisfaction.

**EXPLANATORY LIFE STYLES**

Explanatory life style is a stable trait, a relatively constant aspect of a given individual's personality. Explanatory life style is a prime candidate as psychological precursor of good or bad health because it affects the severity of deficits following uncontrollable aversive events (Peterson & Seligman, 1984a). It emerged from the reformulation of the learned helplessness model as a way of accounting for the diversity of people's response to uncontrollable bad events (Abramson, Seligman & Teasdale, 1978). Explanatory style is the habitual way in which people explain the bad events that befall them (Peterson & Seligman, 1984a). Various explanatory life styles are developed among human beings. The two most important styles have been discussed in this chapter i.e. (i) Optimism and (ii) Pessimism.
Optimism

“The Optimist sees the doughnut, the pessimist sees the hole”. (Anonymous).
“The fuel of heroes, the enemy of despair the creator of the future”.
“A man who is healthy, has an optimistic view and who has optimistic view, has everything”. (Arabian Proverb).

Optimism has come from the Latin word “optimus” meaning “best”. It may be understood best as a metaphysical theory, or as an emotional disposition. The term became current in the early part of the eighteenth century. Optimism can be defined as inclination to anticipate the best possible outcome for actions or events. It exemplifies life view where one looks upon the world as a positive place. Optimists generally believe that people and events are inherently good. They have a so-called “positive” outlook on life, believing that things will work out in the end.

Philosophers often link the concept of optimism with the name of Gottfried Leibniz, who held that we live in the “best of all possible worlds”, a theodicy which Voltaire famously mocked in his satirical novel Candide. The anarchist philosopher William Godwin demonstrated perhaps even more optimism than Leibniz. He hoped that society would eventually reach the state where calm reason would replace all violence and force, that mind could eventually make matter subservient to it, and that intelligence could discover the secret of immortality.

The antithesis of optimism is pessimism. Between these extremes there are all shades of opinion, so that it is at times hard to classify philosophers.
Those, however, are to be classed as optimist who maintain that the world is on
the whole good and beautiful and that man can attain the state of true happiness
and perfection either in this world or in the next, and those who do not maintain
the same are pessimists. The term optimism, as thus extended, would also
include “meliorism”, a word first used in print by Sully to designate the theory
of those who hold that things are, indeed, bad, but that they can be better, and
that it is in our power to increase the happiness and welfare of mankind.

Kubzansky used that concept of “explanatory style”, formulated by
Martin Seligman, as identified by the MMPI, to define optimism and
pessimism. The optimists explain negative events in their lives as due to
transient, external factors that are specific to the immediate circumstances.
Some theorists consider optimism as an emotion (e.g., Tiger). It seems to be
more of an explanatory style than an emotion. Scheier and Carver (1985)
define optimism “as a generalized expectancy that good, as opposed to bad,
outcomes will generally occur when confronted with problems across
important life domains”. (Franken, 1994). In general, optimism is used to
denote a positive attitude or disposition that good things will happen
independent of one’s ability.

Lionel Tiger argues optimism to be a biological component. In his book
“Optimism: The Biology of Hope”, published in 1979, he reasoned that since
the principles of learning tells us that humans tend to abandon tasks associated
with negative consequences, it was biologically adaptive for humans to develop
a sense of optimism. Tiger reasoned that it was biologically adaptive for our
ancestors to experience positive emotions instead of negative emotions when they were injured because it would reinforce their tendency to hunt in the future. Therefore, Tiger reasons, optimism is a biologically induced state. (Franken, 1994).

In fact, many personality theorists consider optimism as a personality trait and not an emotion. They believe that optimism may be an inborn temperament: some people are by nature, either optimistic or pessimistic.

Several researchers have come to the conclusion that optimism is a thinking style that can be learned. In fact, that is what Martin E.P. Seligman’s book Learned Optimism professes. Seligman’s method of teaching optimism relies heavily on active thought processes, which is more of cognitive activity.

Some researchers such as Snyder feel that optimism differs from hope in that it contains a proactive component called planning (Franken, 1994). Additionally, optimistic statements are usually based on logical, concrete facts. Both of these concepts (planning and logic) implies some sort of cognitive activity.

Optimistic claims are usually based on evidence that can be judged or evaluated in terms of rational criteria. Like hope, optimism is also a great motivator. According to Miller’s Model of Hope (1983, 1982) optimism is essential for hope. It states that hope is a complex multidimensional construct. It is more than goal attainment and encompasses a state of being. Hope exists at three levels. The first level focuses on superficial wishes characterized by
shallow optimism, requires little psychic energy to maintain and produces no despair when it is not actualized.

The second level focuses on hoping for relationship, self-improvement and personal accomplishments and involves greater psychic energy than the first level. If these hopes are not actualized, anxiety results.

The third level is related to a desire for relief from suffering, personal trait or entrapment and involves a total dedication of psychic energy. Freedom is the ability to recognize that the individual can impact on an outcome and maintain a positive attitude. Reality surveillance involves cognitive tasks designed to obtain information that confirms the reality of the hope. Therefore, if one is optimistic, he may have a hope of having, or doing or achieving something.

The common-sense notion of optimism can be expressed in statements such as “I’m always optimistic about my future”, a sample item taken from a psychometric scale developed by Scheier and Carver (1985). In contrast to explanatory style, this view of optimism explicitly pertained to expectancies and reflects a positive outlook on the future.

Interest in dispositional optimism was fueled initially by a general model of behavioural self-regulation derived by Carver and Scheier (1981) which assumes that goal-directed behavior is guided by a hierarchy of closed-loop negative feedback systems. People strive for goals as long as they see them as attainable and as long as they believe that their actions will produce the desired outcome. Expectancies can be generalized across a variety of situations.
and can remain stable over time. Therefore, the label “dispositional optimism” was chosen. It is defined as a stable tendency to believe that one will generally experience good outcomes in life. People who have a favourable outlook on life are considered to cope better with stress and illness, to invest more effort to prevent harm, and to enjoy better health than those with negative generalized outcome expectancies.

Indeed, there is ample evidence that dispositional optimism is associated with improved coping. It is commonly held that positive thinking can help a person triumph over adversity, recover from illness, endure a personal hardship overcome whatever obstacle may be confronted (e.g. Cousins, 1977; Peale, 1956).

In this regard, Scheier and Carver (1987, 1985) have suggested that dispositional optimism may have important implications for the manner in which people deal with the stresses of life (cf. Lazarus, Kanner & Folkman, 1980; Reker & Wong, 1985).

People who see desired outcomes as attainable continue to exert their efforts to attain those outcomes, even when doing so is difficult or painful. When outcomes seem sufficiently unattainable, whether through personal inadequacies or through external imposed impediments, people reduce their efforts. Thus, outcome expectancies are viewed as a major determinant of disjunction between two classes of behavior: continued striving versus giving up and turning away.
The kinds of problems encountered by people during the course of their daily living are often genial in scope, or are multiple determined. In addition, new problems always seem to arise, often before specific expectancies can be developed. Finally, many problems unfold themselves slowly, over a long period of time, making it difficult to know how things will work out in the end. In all of these cases, focusing on expectancies that are specific in nature may be impractical as well as unwise, if not possible. For such situations, it may be more profitable to focus attention on expectancies that are more global in scope (cf, Rotter, 1954). Therefore, Scheier and Carver (1985) used the term “dispositional optimism” to refer to generalized expectancies of this sort.

A number of studies have not explored the impact of dispositional optimism. Considering, for example, a study by Scheier and Carver (1985, study 3). College undergraduates were asked to complete a measure of dispositional optimism and a checklist of physical symptoms at two different times, presumably marking a particular stressful period in the students lives.

In a 70 year longitudinal study, it was found that children who were optimistic in childhood actually died younger than their more pessimistic age-mates (Friedman et al. in press). The measures of optimism used in that study were different from those used today, so this result should be interpreted with caution.

People who tend to think of stressors as temporary and who do not always blame themselves for the onset of stressors appear to be harmed less by them. This cognitive stance can be quite adaptive especially when combined
with a challenge orientation. Its benefits can also be seen, however, among many devout people whose religious beliefs prompt them to think of poverty, disease and other objective stressors, not as challenges to overcome, but as temporary conditions to be endured until their suffering is rewarded.

A prospective inverse association between optimism and symptom reporting was found, which remained significant even when initial symptom levels were partialed out. (Carver & Gaines, 1986; Humphries, 1986; Reker & Wong, 1983; Scheier & Carver, 1985; Strack, Carver & Blaney, 1986).

While these studies have begun to document the beneficial effects of optimism on the outcomes that people receive, other research has begun to explore underlying mechanisms by which the effects may be mediated.

One possibility is that the differences in well-being between optimists and pessimists derived from differences between them in the kinds of strategy they use to deal with stressful encounters. Researchers have found that problem-focused coping is more likely in situations that seem to be amenable to positive change (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; McCrae, 1984). It is also more likely among persons who expect to see positive change, where something constructive can be done. It is predicted that optimism would be associated with active attempts to deal with stressors in a problem-focused way.

Emotion-focused coping is more likely when people believe that the situation is one that must be endured (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; McCrae, 1984). Prediction with regard to emotion-focused coping suggests that pessimism may be associated with a tendency toward emotion-focused coping.
It is often assumed, that emotion-focused coping occurs in the service of problem-focused coping. This would seem to suggest the opposite prediction that optimism would be associated with the use of this strategy. It may well be said that optimism is positively associated with certain subclass of emotion-focused coping (e.g., emphasizing the positive aspect of a situation) and is inversely associated with others (e.g., denial).

Optimism is a vital ingredient of life i.e., creative, productive and enjoyable. Research shows that optimists live longer, enjoy better health and do better in relationship, work and sports. For some optimism comes naturally. For most it is a positive attitude towards life that must be learned and cultivated.

**Pessimism**

"*No amount of positive thinking can lead to positive results as long as negative patterns exists*".

In proper language the term, pessimism, generally, describes a belief that things are bad, and tend to become worse; or that looks to the eventual triumph of evil over good. It contrasts with optimism, the contrary belief in the goodness and betterment of thing generally.

The term pessimist is applied to persons who habitually take a melancholy view of life, to whom painful experiences appeal with great intensity, and who have little corresponding appreciation of pleasurable ones. Such a temper is partly due to natural disposition and party due to individual circumstances.
As a philosophical system, pessimism may be characterized as one of the many attempts to account for the presence of evil in the world. Gottfried Leibniz held that “metaphysical” evil is necessarily involved in the creation of finite existences, and that the possibility of sin and consequent suffering is inalienable from the existence of free and rational creatures. With Schopenhauer, the originator of Pessimism as a system, as with those who have accepted his qualitative estimate of the value of existence, evil in the full sense is not merely, as with Leibniz, a possible development of certain fundamental principles of nature, but itself the fundamental principle of the life of man. The world is essentially bad and “ought not to be”.

Different Views of Pessimism

Arthur Schopenhauer’s pessimism comes from his elevating of Will above reason as the mainspring of human thought and behaviour. Schopenhauer pointed hunger, sexuality, the need to care for children, and the need for shelter and personal security as the real sources of human motivation. Reason, compared to these factors, is mere window – dressing of human thoughts; it is the clothes of our naked hungers to put on when they go out in public. Schopenhauer sees reason as weak and insignificant compared to Will; in one metaphor, Schopenhauer compares the human intellect to a lame man who can see, but who rides on the shoulders of the blind giant of Will. The prognosis of either pointlessly continuing the cycle of life or facing extinction is one major leg of Schopenhauer’s pessimism. He moreover considers the desires of the will to entail suffering because they are desires; because their objects are
always limited resources. And the consciousness of this perpetual unfulfilled desire is pain.

Pleasure is merely an exception in human experience, the rare and brief cessation of the striving of the will, the temporary absence of pain. This theory recalls that of Plato and is nearly identical with the Buddhist notion that conscious existence is fundamentally and necessarily evil. Hence further, comes the Ethical Theory of Schopenhauer, which may be summed up as the necessity for “denying the will to live”. Peace, can be attained only in proportion as man ceases to desires; thus the pain of life can be minimized only by the renunciation of the search after happiness, and can be abolished only by ceasing to live.

Von Hartmann endeavoured to improve upon Schopenhauer in taking the unconscious as the foundation of reality. According to him, Man is “to make the ends of the unconscious his own ends”, to renounce the hope of individual happiness, and so by the suppression of egoism to be reconciled with life as it is. Von Hartmann claims to have harmonized optimism and pessimism, by finding in his own pessimism the strongest conceivable impulse to effective action. With Von Hartmann life is not as with Schopenhauer, essentially painful; but predominates greatly over pleasure; and the world is outcome of a systematic evolution by which the end of the unconscious will eventually be attained in the return of humanity into the peace of unconsciousness.
Bochme, representing the pessimistic aspect of the actual world said that both Schopenhauer and Hartmann rendered some service by emphasizing the perpetual contrast between desire and achievement in human affairs, and by calling attention to the essential function of suffering in human life.

The view to be taken of the contention of pessimism depends mainly on whether the question can be settled by an estimate – of the relative amount of pleasure and pain in average human life. Such a calculus is impossible.

Life, it is contended, may still be happy, even though its pains may exceed its pleasures; or it may be worthless even if the reverse is the case. The true pessimistic estimate of life, would be that it is rather unhappy, because it is worthless, than worthless because it is unhappy.

According to Caro, pessimism is especially prevalent in periods of transition, in which old ways of thought have lost their hold, while the new order has not yet made itself fully known, or has not secured general acceptance for its principles.

Metchnikoff attributes the pessimistic temper to a somewhat similar period in the life history of the individual, viz: that of the transition from the enthusiasm of youth to the calmer and more settled outwork of maturity. It may be admitted that both causes contribute to the low estimate of life which is implied in the common notion of the pessimistic temperament.

People develop depression if they acquire a depressive attributional response style (Seligman, 1991). This style is composed of three dimensions: focus of control (internal versus external), stability (stable versus variable) and
Pessimists had poor health in early adult hood. Kamen-Siegel, Rodin, Seligman and Dwyer (1991) have studied the relationship between explanatory style and immune response in older adults. They found that pessimistic explanatory style was related to poorer immune function. Health behaviours, however, were almost uncorrelated with explanatory style. This result points to the possibility that the missing link between optimism and health might be rather of a physiological than a behavioural nature.

Weinstein (1984, 1983) suggested that one of the reasons why people continue to practice unhealthy behaviors is due to inaccurate perceptions of risk and susceptibility – their unrealistic optimism or of being pessimist. He asked subjects to examine a list of health problems and to state what “compared to other people of your age and sex, are your chances of getting problem greater than, about the same, or less than theirs”? The results of the study showed that most subjects believed that they were likely to get the health problems.
Weinstein called this phenomenon “unrealistic optimism” as he argued that not everyone can be less likely to contract an illness.

Studies that have used pessimistic explanatory style as a measure of pessimism have also uncovered relations to health. Pessimistic explanatory style was associated with lower levels of two measures of cell-mediated immunity in a sample of elderly men and women (Kaman-Seigel, Rodin, Seligman & Dwyer, 1991).

A study of Harvard University graduates assessing pessimistic explanatory style at age 25 found that these men had significantly poorer health or more likely to have died when they were assessed 20 to 35 years later (Peterson, Seligman & Vaillant 1988).

Conceptually related findings are also reported by Antoni and Goodkin (1988), who found that among women with a typical neoplastic cervical growth, those who were pessimistic (assessed on Millon Inventory) were more likely to have severe disease. Hopelessness has also been linked to all – cause mortality and cause – specific mortality (Everson et al., 1996). Individual differences in generalized outcome expectancies play a central role in several conceptual approaches to self-regulation and adjustment (e.g., Bandura, 1977; Carver & Scheier, 1982; Kaufer, 1977; Rotter, 1954).

Presumably, when faced with a new and potentially difficult situation, individuals with generally positive expectation about the likelihood of future success (optimist) are likely to persist in their goal-oriented efforts. In contrast, people with more negative expectations i.e. pessimists are, likely to persist.
Thus, individual differences in optimism versus pessimism are in theory related to distinct types of coping exhibited in stressful situations (e.g., attempts at mastery or control vs withdrawal or avoidance) as well as any physical or emotional consequences of these adjustment or self-regulation process perspective.

According to the Control Theory by Carver & Scheier (1981), pessimists individual adopt more passive and fatalistic approaches to problems, whereas optimist would attempt to solve or cope actively with the problems they encounter. Scheier and Carver (1987) argued that the more effective coping of optimists would reduce any potential negative effects of stressor on physical and emotional health.

The reformulated Learned Helplessness Model (Abramson, Seligman & Teasdale, 1978) suggests that individuals confronted with negative event try to explain those events. According to this model, causal explanations can be analysed along three dimensions. Those individuals who characteristically make internal, stable and global explanations for negative events will be at greater risk for depressive deficits in the face of those events. In other words, people who blame themselves and who believe that bad events will endure in time and will affect many areas of their lives are more likely to become depressed.

A recent meta-analysis of 104 cross-sectional studies involving 15,000 subjects supports this model. Sweeney, Anderson and Bailey (1986) reported a highly reliable relation of modern size between the postulated pessimistic
explanatory style and depression. In addition, there are an accumulating number of longitudinal studies that examine the possibility that early pessimistic explanatory style may be a risk factor for later depression, health and achievement problems. (see Peterson & Seligman, 1984; Seligmen, Kamen & Nolen-Hocksem, 1988, Peterson, Seligman & Vaillant 1988; Seligmen & Schulman, 1986). These studies used two techniques for assessing explanatory styles -- Attributional style Questionnaire (ASQ) and Content Analysis of Verbal Explanation, and found that depression but not anxiety is associated with a characteristic explanatory style.

Using 99 members of the Harvard classes of 1939-45, Peterson et al (1988) found that explanatory style at age 25 predicted health at ages 45 and 65, partialing out health at age 25. The more pessimistic the individual's style at age 25, the poorer his health at age 45. The result of this study and Seligman and Schulman's (1986) study of explanatory style and achievement suggest that having a pessimistic explanatory style may have pathological consequences even in normal (non-depressed) populations.

Defensive pessimism is a cognitive strategy that involves setting unrealistically low expectations and thinking through worst case outcomes of an upcoming achievement situation even though success has been experienced in the past (Norem & Cantor, 1986b). It has been suggested that setting low expectation serves to prevent a loss of self-esteem should failure occur (Norem & Cantor, 1986a; Showers, 1992) and that the defensive pessimist uses his/her
anxiety about potential failure to fuel effort to do well (Norem & Contor 1986b; Showers, 1992).

Defensive pessimism is positively predicted by uncertain personal control over performance outcomes and negatively predicted by a general task-focused orientation (Martin, Marsh & Debus, 2001). It has been speculated that other antecedents have not been tested empirically. Some research suggests that defensive pessimism does not undermine performance outcomes and that interfering with the strategy can result in performance decrements (Norem & Contor, 1986b; Norem & Illugsworth, 1993).

**Characteristics and Attributional Styles of Optimism and Pessimism**

Recent research in the field of positive psychology confirms several characteristics of optimism and pessimism. Optimistic individuals have better social relationships. They have higher levels of physical health, academic and athletic performance, recovery from illness and trauma. They have higher levels of pain tolerance, self-efficacy and flexibility in thinking. Optimists see adversity as a challenge, transform problems into opportunities, persevere in finding solutions to difficult problems, maintain confidence and rebound quickly after setbacks. Optimists are easily motivated to work harder, have higher morale, set challenging goals. They see personal setbacks as temporary and tend to feel upbeat invigorated both physically and emotionally.

People who are pessimistic show these characteristics. Firstly, they are more susceptible to depression. When bad events happen to them, they are more likely to get depressed and stay depressed for longer. Second, pessimistic
people are likely achieving less than their talents allow. They are achieving less, because they do not believe they could achieve more, and are less persistent when faced with difficulties. Third, the health of pessimistic people may be at risk, because of their pessimism, and that risk increases with age.

Fourth, pessimistic people are probably not experiencing life as pleasurable as they could be. They believe that success is temporary and has isolated causes other than themselves, so they are not as much pleasure out of those success as people who think of success as permanent, global events that they caused. In short, it is far better to be optimistic than pessimistic.

Different attributional styles are possessed by the individuals who are optimistic or pessimistic. Optimists explain the events in their lives in a particular way. When optimists experience negative events they think “It’s temporary, and it’s only for this particular event, and I’m not the cause of it”. Not all people are optimists. The opposite of optimism is pessimism. Pessimistic people explain their life events in the opposite manner to optimists. So, when pessimists experience negative events, they think “It’s permanent, and it’s for all life events, and I’m the cause of it”. When they experience positive events they think, “It’s temporary and it’s only for this particular event, and I’m not the cause of it”.

Seligman developed three attributional styles in the analysis of optimism. The first dimension he called as personalization. This is an internal and external dimension, where the cause of an event is explained as being within oneself (internal) or outside of oneself (external).
The second dimension is performance. This is a stable and unstable dimension, where the cause of an event is explained as being unchanging (stable) across time or changing (unstable) across time.

The third dimension, he added is pervasiveness. Here, the cause of an event is explained as being universal throughout one’s life (global) or specific to a particular part of one’s life (local).

Optimists and pessimists differ in that they explain life events differently. An optimist explains the cause of Good Life events as being stable, global and internal (e.g, I succeeded because I’m good), and the cause of Bad Life events as being unstable, local and external (e.g., I failed because that assessment was only examining one part of my ability and it was too difficult).

Pessimists pattern of explanations for life events is the reverse of optimists explanations, so pessimists explains the cause of Bad Life events as being stable, global and internal (e.g., I failed, because I’m bad) and the cause of Good Life events as being unstable, local and external (e.g., I succeeded, because that assessment was only examining one part of my ability and it was easy). The more pessimistic people are the more likely they are to suffer setbacks when bad things happen in their lives. Bad events will hit pessimists harder than optimists and pessimists will suffer longer after experiencing a bad event than optimists.

Optimism Vs Pessimism or Types of Optimism and Pessimism

Optimism, the opposite of pessimism, exemplifies a life view where one looks upon the world as a positive place. A common conundrum illustrates
optimism versus pessimism with the question, does one regard a glass 50% filled as half full or as half empty? Conventional wisdom expects optimists to reply with *half full* and pessimists to respond with *half empty*.

Two major types of optimism and pessimism have been discussed.

- Emotional Disposition optimism and pessimism
- Realistic Ecological optimism and Unrealistic Ecological pessimism

The emotional disposition is one that depends upon internal organic conditions rather than external good fortune. To what extent the emotional disposition has influenced the opinion of philosophers cannot be decided off hand. As an emotional disposition optimism is the tendency to look upon the bright and hopeful side of life. Whereas pessimism gives a dark colouring to every event and closes the vistas of hope.

Emotional disposition optimism declares that defeat is a temporary setback or a challenge and that a better future is predisposed, since there is always a possibility to bring reality to its ideal state. While in the case of emotional disposition pessimism it is reversed.

Ecological optimism is a part of the optimistic philosophical tradition. It accepts the concept of progress and recognizes progressive stages in evolution. It reflects a positive side of the complex and difficult relationship between man and nature. It states that a harmonious relationship with nature is possible and it confirms that there always is a way out of any hopeless, desperate situation.

Unrealistic Ecological pessimism is based on the position that a fatalistic environment prognosis is a mistake, a wrong estimation, an incomplete or
deficient evaluation. An interesting example of unrealistic optimism is described in the very provocative book, A Moment on the Earth: The Coming Age of Environmental Optimism by Gregg Easterbrook (Viving 1995), a founder of new environmental approach called eco-realism.

Realistic ecological optimism, on the other hand represents the practical embodiment of a long-term harmony between man and nature on a global level: The Tibetan approach demonstrates how a philosophical position can blend with a cultural mode to form a great environmental tradition.