I am happy about the war.

I am happy about the war. Yes, there are many things that make me happy! It's not all sorrow and tears—there are many things that delight the soul and illuminate the heart, even amid the darkness of the nights we live through.

Discovering new meanings of life makes me happy. Discovering the value of things makes me happy. Gaining new experiences—learning things no one else in the universe could understand except those who lived in Gaza during the war—makes me happy.

Priorities have been completely rearranged.

For example:

You discover that the most precious thing you own personally is time—your remaining years, the days that have passed, the hours and minutes that slip away in vain.

More than two years into the heart of war, and we remain in a state of waiting and anticipation for it to end. Months and years pass, and we lose our lives in vain without doing anything meaningful. I wake up every morning and realize that I am still in the midst of war. I tell myself, *We've survived another day—we must live it to the fullest.*

But then I also wonder: what does *"living to the fullest"* even mean? Maybe it means being as kind as possible to yourself and to others. Who knows—this might be our last chance at life in this ongoing massacre.

To delight your soul with the little things you know bring you joy. Believe me, there is an overwhelming happiness I find in simply playing with my grandchildren.

Sitting with family under any circumstance. Browsing Facebook walls. Watching the latest TikTok trends. Bringing joy to others—especially those who deserve our care.

There are so many things that push us toward past memories—some filled with regret that must be forgotten, because they were of no real value. They were just a series of continuous losses—just like people whose loss becomes a pure gain, because they never deserved all that attention.

In the midst of war, vision becomes clearer for those with a pure heart. You try as much as possible to distance yourself from anything or anyone that irritates you. That's become a way of life. I can no longer cope with annoying people or anything that disrupts my peace or brings negativity. We have better things to do with the remaining days of our precious lives.

The war revealed people's true nature with absolute clarity. Some you thought were like gold truly proved to be so—shining even brighter. Others you thought were gold turned out to be tin. And some who you thought were tin revealed themselves to be pure gold.

It’s a blessing to discover the value of things during war and famine. To know the value of half a clove of garlic. The worth of a slice of onion. The meaning of getting a single loaf of bread to get through your long, exhausting day. Your sense of smell becomes enhanced—like that of a trained tracking dog. You discover that raw almonds have a scent. Even molokhia leaves (jute mallow) have a sharp aroma—so strong that if you focus on the smell at the market, you can pick the highest quality batch by its freshness. For things that naturally have a strong scent, your perception multiplies. The smell of fried fish, for example—you could detect it from distances you'd never imagine possible.

It seems the human body adapts its senses automatically based on urgent need. And during war, your need for every sense intensifies. Taste, for example, takes on completely new meanings and emotions. If you taste meat after a long absence, the first bite hits you like a shock to the brain. You need a moment to process this new kind of happiness—a joy you've never felt before. It might even make you laugh uncontrollably, along with everyone eating with you. Anyone who lived through the war and got to taste foods they had been deprived of for months will know—the first thing they say after tasting it is:

“The flavor hit me in the head!”
Whether it's meat, chicken, nuts, or fruit—everything gains a new and different meaning.

Yes, everyone who has lived through the war has experienced fear, anxiety, insecurity, deprivation, betrayal, and psychological traumas so heavy that even mountains would collapse under them.

But all of that will eventually fade once the war ends.

I know the war will leave its mark deep within us, and some scars will never disappear—but it will produce a new kind of human—one forged in the fire of tragedy, with patience, endurance, and deprivation. A person who knows how to rise again—like a phoenix—stronger, more resilient, unbreakable.

Ali Aby Yasin

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