

Himalaya Film Festival 2010 New York

BHUTAN – TAKING THE MIDDLE PATH TO HAPPINESS

Bhutan – Taking the Middle Path to Happiness is a documentary film featuring the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan and the government's effort to bring 'Gross National Happiness' to its people.

Imagine a country where happiness is the guiding principle of government. Imagine a people who see all life as sacred and the source of their happiness, a place with an abundance of clean and renewable energy, a nation committed to preserving its culture. Imagine a kingdom where the king lives in a simple wooden cottage and judges his progress by the country's 'Gross National Happiness'. Where is this Shangri-La?

Bhutan. But can a place like Bhutan really exist? Can such ideals be realized? Can this small, geographically isolated country, tucked away in the Himalayas, truly protect its environment and culture as it opens its doors to the West?

The concept of taking 'the middle road' is one rooted in the Bhutanese view of the world, anchored in Tantric Buddhism and animistic Bon. Buddha shared a simple message: happiness lies in the middle path. Neither overindulging in the world's pleasures nor rejecting the world's goodness can lead to enlightenment. Happiness can only be found by taking the middle path – the path that balances the needs with the powerful spirits of nature.

Tom Vendetti, John Wehrheim, Robert Stone
Duration: 57 minutes

