What Makes People Happy?

Presented by:
John C. Simoneaux, Ph.D.

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What Determines Happiness


Lyubomirsky asserts that 50% of the differences among people’s happiness levels can be accounted for by their genetically determined set points. Research done with identical and fraternal twins suggests that each of us is born with a particular happiness set point that originates from our parents. This is a baseline or potential for happiness to which we are bound to return, even after major setbacks or triumphs. This is similar to a set point for weight. The implication of this finding is that, like genes for intelligence, the magnitude of our innate set points governs to a large extent how happy we will be over the course of our lives. Only about 10% of the variance in happiness levels is explained by differences in life circumstances or situations – that is, whether we are rich, poor, healthy, beautiful, plain, married, etc. Studies demonstrate that the richest Americans report levels of personal happiness only slightly greater than those they employ. Married people are happier than single ones, but the effect of marriage on personal happiness is quite small. After taking into account genetically determined personalities, and the circumstances of our life, 40% of the differences in our happiness levels are still left unexplained, and is probably accounted for by our behavior. Thus, the key to happiness lies in our daily, intentional activities. Forty percent of our happiness is potentially within our ability to control.

Thinking and Behavior Patterns of Happiest People:

- They devote a great amount of time to their family and friends, nurturing and enjoying those relationships.
- They are comfortable expressing gratitude for all they have.
- They are often the first to offer helping hands to coworkers and passersby.
- They practice optimism when imagining their futures.
- They savor life’s pleasures and try to live in the present moment.
- They make physical exercise a weekly and even a daily habit.
- They are deeply committed to lifelong goals and ambitions.
- They have poise and strength in coping with challenges and crises.
Happiness Web Sites

- http://www.thehappyguy.com/
- http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/happiness
- http://www.happiness-project.com/
- http://www.happiness.com/web/
- http://www.wisdomquotes.com/topics/happiness/
- http://www.yoursuccessprinciples.com/
- http://30secondgift.com/
- http://www.thewaytohappiness.org/#/precepts
- http://www.pathwaytohappiness.com/happiness/
- http://www.happinessclub.com/
- http://www.quotationspage.com/subjects/happiness/
- http://www.facebook.com/pages/Happinessorg/155254344515925
- http://www.facebook.com/pages/Happinessorg/155254344515925
- http://www.philosophytalk.org/pastShows/Happiness.htm
- http://www.pbs.org/thisemotionallife/topic/happiness
- http://www.trackyourhappiness.org/
- http://www.happinessprojecttoolbox.com/
- http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07131b.htm
- http://www.projecthappiness.com/
- http://thinkexist.com/quotations/happiness/
- http://www.alexshalman.com/happiness-project/
- http://www.findhappiness.org/
- http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/
- http://zenhabits.net/handbook-for-life-52-tips-for-happiness-and-productivity/
Positive Psychology: A Critique

Adapted from:

The Positive Psychology movement has sought to replace a disease-remedy model of human functioning with a wellness-enhancement model, with an underlying assumption of human goodness and excellence as authentic foci of scientific inquiry. Kristjansson suggests that the present iteration of positive psychology is the “third generation”.

1. First Generation -- The self-fulfillment agenda of humanistic psychology
2. Second Generation – The intelligence and adaptability approaches prevailing at the close of the 20th century, as well as current versions that place less emphasis on authenticity, meaning and morality, and more on subjective well-being
3. Third Generation – Retains the constructive thrust of late 20th century approaches while meliorating their moral gap and providing more depth and meaning.

Some in the psychology community have criticized the positive psychology movement by suggesting that scientific rigor is lacking and that positive psychologists have a narrow understanding of science. Mainstream psychologists have also complained of being viewed as “negative” and as being preoccupied with human tragedy and pathology. It is argued that negative human experiences are studied because there is hope to make those experiences more positive.

Critics have posited that proponents of positive psychology actual promote a disguised ideology of conservative political individualism. Further, the movement reportedly completely neglects the effects of gender, class, ethnicity, and power relations. Social factors are rarely mentioned, and when they are, the treatment is naive.

Positive psychologists use the terms “happiness” and “well-being” interchangeably – but happiness is the preferred label. Three main descriptions of happiness have been offered historically:

1. Hedonistic accounts – happiness is identifiable with pleasure as a raw, undifferentiated, subjective feeling.
2. Life-satisfaction accounts – People’s perceptions of how satisfied they are gauged with their accomplishments over an extended period of time (how close their lives are to their ideals).
3. Eudaimonistic accounts suggest that happiness can and must be objectively measured. Referred to as “objective-list accounts.”

It is commonly charged that despite their declared accommodation of objective criteria for happiness, the measures that are used are simple, subjective, self-reported pleasure or life-satisfaction tests. Proponents retort that these are a natural starting point for studying happiness.
Satisfaction with Life Scale

Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1 – 7 scale below indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding. Note: The Satisfaction with Life Scale is in the public domain (not copyrighted) and so can be used without permission and free of charge.

7 – Strongly agree
6 – Agree
5 – Slightly agree
4 – Neither agree nor disagree
3 – Slightly disagree
2 – Disagree
1 – Strongly disagree

____ In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
____ The conditions of my life are excellent.
____ I am satisfied with my life.
____ So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
____ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Add the numbers you wrote beside each of the five questions to get a total. See below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31–35</td>
<td>Extremely satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26–30</td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21–25</td>
<td>Slightly satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15–19</td>
<td>Slightly dissatisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–14</td>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–9</td>
<td>Extremely dissatisfied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References:

Oxford Happiness Questionnaire

The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire was developed by psychologists Michael Argyle and Peter Hills at Oxford University. Take a few moments to take the survey. This is a good way to get a snapshot of your current level of happiness. You can even use your score to compare to your happiness level at some point in the future by taking the survey again.

Instructions

Below are a number of statements about happiness. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each by entering a number in the blank after each statement, according to the following scale:

1 = strongly disagree
2 = moderately disagree
3 = slightly disagree
4 = slightly agree
5 = moderately agree
6 = strongly agree

Please read the statements carefully, because some are phrased positively and others negatively. Don’t take too long over individual questions; there are no “right” or “wrong” answers (and no trick questions). The first answer that comes into your head is probably the right one for you. If you find some of the questions difficult, please give the answer that is true for you in general or for most of the time.

The Questionnaire

1. I don’t feel particularly pleased with the way I am. (R) _____
2. I am intensely interested in other people. _____
3. I feel that life is very rewarding. _____
4. I have very warm feelings towards almost everyone. _____
5. I rarely wake up feeling rested. (R) _____
6. I am not particularly optimistic about the future. (R) _____
7. I find most things amusing. _____
8. I am always committed and involved. _____
9. Life is good. _____
10. I do not think that the world is a good place. (R) _____
11. I laugh a lot. _____
12. I am well satisfied about everything in my life. _____
13. I don’t think I look attractive. (R) _____
14. There is a gap between what I would like to do and what I have done. (R) _____
15. I am very happy. _____
16. I find beauty in some things. _____
17. I always have a cheerful effect on others. _____
18. I can fit in (find time for) everything I want to. _____
19. I feel that I am not especially in control of my life. (R) _____
20. I feel able to take anything on. _____
21. I feel fully mentally alert. _____
22. I often experience joy and elation. _____
23. I don’t find it easy to make decisions. (R) _____
24. I don’t have a particular sense of meaning and purpose in my life. (R) _____
25. I feel I have a great deal of energy. _____
26. I usually have a good influence on events. _____
27. I don’t have fun with other people. (R) _____
28. I don’t feel particularly healthy. (R) _____
29. I don’t have particularly happy memories of the past. (R) _____

Calculate your score

Step 1. Items marked (R) should be scored in reverse:

If you gave yourself a “1,” cross it out and change it to a “6.” Change “2” to a “5” Change “3” to a “4” Change “4” to a “3” Change “5” to a “2” Change “6” to a “1”

Step 2. Add the numbers for all 29 questions. (Use the converted numbers for the 12 items that are reverse scored.)

Step 3. Divide by 29. So your happiness score = the total (from step 2) divided by 29.

INTERPRETATION OF SCORE

1-2 : Not happy. If you answered honestly and got a very low score, you’re probably seeing yourself and your situation as worse than it really is.
2-3 : Somewhat unhappy.
3-4 : Not particularly happy or unhappy. A score of 3.5 would be an exact numerical average of happy and unhappy responses.
4 : Somewhat happy or moderately happy. Satisfied. This is what the average person scores.
4-5 : Rather happy; pretty happy.
5-6 : Very happy. Being happy has more benefits than just feeling good. It’s correlated with benefits like health, better marriages, and attaining your goals.
6 : Too happy. Recent research seems to show that there’s an optimal level of happiness for things like doing well at work or school, or for being healthy, and that being “too happy” may be associated with lower levels of such things.

Reference

Person-Activity Fit Diagnostic


Instructions: Consider each of the following 12 happiness activities. Reflect on what it would be like to do it *every week* for an extended period of time. Then rate each activity by writing the appropriate number (1 to 7) in the blank space next to the terms *NATURAL, ENJOY, VALUE, GUILTY, and SITUATION*.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
not at all Somewhat very much

**NATURAL:** I’ll keep doing this activity because it will feel “natural” to me and I’ll be able to stick with it.

**ENJOY:** I’ll keep doing this activity because I will enjoy doing it; I’ll find it to be interesting and challenging.

**VALUE:** I’ll keep doing this activity because I will value and identify with doing it; I’ll do it freely even when it’s not enjoyable.

**GUILTY:** I’ll keep doing this activity because I would feel ashamed, guilty, or anxious if I didn’t do it; I’ll force myself.

**SITUATION:** I’ll keep doing this activity because someone else will want me to or because my situation will force me to.

Expressing gratitude: Counting your blessings for what you have (either to a close other or privately, through contemplation or a journal) or conveying your gratitude and appreciation to one or more individuals whom you’ve never properly thanked.

______NATURAL _______ENJOY _______VALUE
______GUILTY _______SITUATION
1. Cultivating optimism: Keeping a journal in which you imagine and write about the best possible future for yourself or practicing to look at the bright side of every situation.

_____ NATURAL   _____ ENJOY   _____ VALUE
_____ GUILTY   _____ SITUATION

2. Avoiding overthinking and social comparison: Using strategies (such as distraction) to cut down on how often you dwell on your problems and compare yourself with others.

_____ NATURAL   _____ ENJOY   _____ VALUE
_____ GUILTY   _____ SITUATION

3. Practicing acts of kindness: Doing good things for others, whether friends or strangers, either directly or anonymously, either spontaneously or planned.

_____ NATURAL   _____ ENJOY   _____ VALUE
_____ GUILTY   _____ SITUATION

4. Nurturing relationships: Picking a relationship in need of strengthening, and investing time and energy in healing, cultivating, affirming, and enjoying it.

_____ NATURAL   _____ ENJOY   _____ VALUE
_____ GUILTY   _____ SITUATION

5. Developing strategies for coping: Practicing ways to endure or surmount a recent stress, hardship, or trauma.

_____ NATURAL   _____ ENJOY   _____ VALUE
_____ GUILTY   _____ SITUATION

6. Learning to forgive: Keeping a journal or writing a letter in which you work on letting go of anger and resentment toward one or more individuals who have hurt or wronged you.

_____ NATURAL   _____ ENJOY   _____ VALUE
_____ GUILTY   _____ SITUATION

7. Doing more activities that truly engage you: Increasing the number of experiences at home and work in which you “lose” yourself, which are challenging and absorbing (i.e., flow experiences).

_____ NATURAL   _____ ENJOY   _____ VALUE
_____ GUILTY   _____ SITUATION

8. Savoring life’s joys: Paying close attention, taking delight, and replaying life’s momentary pleasures and wonders, through thinking, writing, drawing, or sharing with another.
9. Committing to your goals: Picking one, two, or three significant goals that are meaningful to you and devoting time and effort to pursuing them.

______NATURAL   ______ENJOY   ______VALUE
______GUILTY    ______SITUATION

10. Practicing religion and spirituality; Becoming more involved in your church, temple, or mosque or reading and pondering spiritually themed books.

______NATURAL   ______ENJOY   ______VALUE
______GUILTY    ______SITUATION

11. Taking care of your body: Engaging in physical activity, meditating, and smiling and laughing.

______NATURAL   ______ENJOY   ______VALUE
______GUILTY    ______SITUATION

How to calculate your “FIT” score and determine your set of best-fitting activities:

STEP 1: For each of the 12 activities, subtract the average of the GUILTY and SITUATION rating from the average of the NATURAL, ENJOY, and VALUE ratings. In other words, for each of the 12 activities:

FIT SCORE = (NATURAL + ENJOY + VALUE)/3 – (GUILTY + SITUATION)/2

STEP 2: Write down the four activities with the highest FIT SCORES:

1. __________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________
4. __________________________________________________________

Date: ____________________
# Avoidance/Revenge Scale


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree (5)</th>
<th>Disagree(2)</th>
<th>Neutral(1)</th>
<th>Agree(4)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagreed(1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I’ll make him or her pay</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I am trying to keep as much distance between us as possible</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I wish that something bad would happen to him/her</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am living as if he/she doesn’t exist, or isn’t around</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I don’t trust him/her</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I want him/her to get what he/she deserves</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I am finding it difficult to act warmly toward him/her</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I am avoiding him/her</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I am going to get even</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I cut off the relationship with him/her</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I want to see him/her hurt and miserable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I withdraw from him/her</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Avoidance:**
Total your scores for the 7 “avoidance” items (2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 12). _________________
The average of American adults is around 12.6.
A score of greater than 17 is in the most avoidant third of the population
A score greater than 22 is in the most avoidant 10%.

**Revenge:**
Total your score for the 5 “revenge” items (1, 3, 6, 9 and 11). _________
A score around 7 is average
A score of 11 or above is in the most vengeful third.
A score above 13 is in the most vengeful tenth
The Gratitude Survey


Using the scale below as a guide, write a number beside each statement to indicate how much you agree with it.

1 = Strong disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Slightly disagree
4 = Neutral
5 = Slightly agree
6 = Agree
7 = Strongly agree

_____  1. I have so much in life to be thankful for.
_____  2. If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list.
_____  3. When I look at the world, I don’t see much to be grateful for.
_____  4. I am grateful to a wide variety of people.
_____  5. As I get older, I find myself more able to appreciate the people, events, and situations that have been part of my life history.
_____  6. Long amounts of time can go by before I feel grateful to something or someone.

Scoring Instructions:
1. Add up your scores for items 1, 2, 4, and 5.
2. Reverse your scores for items 3 and 6. That is, if you scored a “7,” give yourself a “1,” if you scored a “6,” give yourself a “2,” etc.
3. Add the reversed scores for items 3 and 6 to the total from Step 1. This is your total GQ-6 score. This number should be between 6 and 42.

Interpretation:
- Less than 35 Bottom one-fourth of the sample in terms of gratitude
- Between 36 and 38 In the bottom one-half of people who took the survey
- Between 39 and 41 In the top one-fourth
- 42 In the top one-eighth

Women tend to score slightly higher than men and older people score higher than younger people.
Seligman’s 24 Strengths


Seligman opines that, to be virtuous, a person should willfully display at least most of the six “ubiquitous virtues”:

- Wisdom
- Courage
- Humanity
- Justice
- Temperance
- Transcendence

The way to display these virtues is through strengths which are measurable and acquirable, according to Seligman. These strengths are ubiquitous across cultures.

Characteristics of strengths include:

1. A strength is a trait, a psychological characteristic that can be seen across different situations and over time.
2. A strength is valued in its own right, often producing good consequences. A strength is valued even in the absence of obvious beneficial outcomes.
3. Strengths can be seen in what parents wish for their newborn. Strengths are states we desire that do not require any additional justification.
4. Strengths often elevate and inspire onlookers. Strengths are often enacted in a win-win situation.
5. Strengths are supported by institutions, rituals, role models, parables, maxims, and children’s stories.
6. Strengths are illustrated by role models and paragons in the culture. The models may be real or mythical.
7. Some strengths have prodigies.
8. There exist idiots with respect to a strength.
9. Strengths are ubiquitous, valued in almost every culture.

List of Strengths:

1. Wisdom and Knowledge
   a. Curiosity/Interest in the World
      i. Openness to experience
      ii. Flexibility about matters that do not fit preconceptions
      iii. Enjoy ambiguity
      iv. Not easily bored
   b. Love of Learning
      i. Love learning new things
      ii. Look for opportunities to learn
   c. Judgment/Critical Thinking/Open-Mindedness
      i. Typically thinks through things and examines them
ii. Do not jump to conclusions
iii. Rely only on solid evidence for make decisions
iv. Able to change your mind
v. Sifts information objectively and rationally
d. Ingenuity/Originality/Practical Intelligence/Street Smarts
   i. Find novel but appropriate behaviors to reach a goal
   ii. Rarely content with doing things the conventional way
   iii. Creative
e. Social Intelligence/Personal Intelligence/Emotional Intelligence
   i. Knowledge of self and others
   ii. Aware of the motives and feelings of others
   iii. Notice the differences among others
   iv. Access to own feelings
   v. Good niche finding ability for self
f. Perspective
   i. Others want experience to help solve problems
   ii. Looks at the world in a way that makes sense to others

2. Courage
   a. Valor and Bravery
      i. Do not shrink from threat, challenge, pain, or difficulty
      ii. Willing to take stances that are unpopular, difficult, or dangerous
      iii. Moral courage
      iv. Psychological courage
   b. Perseverance/Industry/Diligence
      i. Finish what is started
      ii. Takes on difficult projects and finishes them
      iii. Flexible, realistic, and not perfectionistic
   c. Integrity/Genuineness/Honesty
      i. Lives life in a genuine and authentic way
      ii. Down to earth
      iii. No pretense
      iv. “Real” person
      v. Represents self in a sincere way

3. Humanity and Love
   a. Kindness and Generosity
      i. Never too busy to do a favor
      ii. Enjoy doing good deeds for others
      iii. Takes the interests of others seriously
      iv. Empathic
      v. Sympathetic
   b. Loving and Allowing Oneself to be Loved
      i. Value close and intimate relations with others

4. Justice
   a. Citizenship/Duty/Teamwork/Loyalty
      i. Excel as a member of a group
      ii. Loyal and dedicated team-mate
iii. Always do your share
iv. Respect those who are rightfully in positions of authority

b. Fairness and Equity
   i. Do not let personal feelings bias decisions about others
   ii. Give everyone a chance
   iii. Guided by larger principles of morality
   iv. Take welfare of others seriously
   v. Easily set aside personal prejudices

c. Leadership
   i. Good at organizing activities and making sure they happen
   ii. Maintain good relations among group members
   iii. Handles intergroup relations well

5. Temperance
   a. Self-Control
      i. Easily hold your desires, needs and impulses in check
      ii. Regulate emotions when something bad happens
      iii. Repair and neutralize negative feelings on your own
      iv. Makes self feel cheerful even in a trying situation
   b. Prudence/Discretion/Caution
      i. Careful
      ii. Do not do things or say things later regrets
      iii. Good at resisting impulses for short-term goals
   c. Humility and Modesty
      i. Do not seek the spotlight
      ii. Allow accomplishments to speak for themselves
      iii. Do not regard self as special
      iv. Recognized and valued for modesty
      v. Unpretentious

6. Transcendence
   a. Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence
      i. Appreciate beauty, excellence, and skill in all domains
      ii. Capable of awe and wonder
   b. Gratitude
      i. Aware of the good things that happen to you
      ii. Do not take good things for granted
      iii. Always take time to express thanks
      iv. Appreciate someone else’s excellence in moral character
      v. Wonder, thankfulness, and appreciation for life itself
   c. Hope/Optimism/Future-Mindedness
      i. Expect the best in the future
      ii. Plan and work in order to achieve the best
      iii. A positive stance toward the future
      iv. Expectation that good events will occur
   d. Spirituality/Sense of Purpose/Faith/Religiousness
      i. Strong and coherent beliefs about higher purpose and meaning
      ii. Beliefs shape actions and are a source of comfort
iii. An articulate philosophy of life
e. Forgiveness and Mercy
   i. Forgive those who have done you wrong
   ii. Always give people a second chance
   iii. Guiding principle is mercy, not revenge
f. Playfulness and Humor
   i. Like to laugh
   ii. Bring smiles to others
   iii. Sees the light side of life
g. Zest/Passion/Enthusiasm
   i. Throw yourself into activities you undertake
   ii. Wake up in the morning looking forward to the day
   iii. Infectious passion
   iv. Feels inspired
The List of Personal Strengths

Strengths of Wisdom and Knowledge: Cognitive strengths that entail the acquisition and use of knowledge:

1. Creativity [originality, ingenuity]: Thinking of novel and productive ways to conceptualize and do things.
2. Curiosity [interest, novelty-seeking, openness to experience]: Taking an interest in ongoing experience for its own sake; exploring and discovering.
3. Open-mindedness [judgment, critical thinking]: Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; weighing all evidence fairly.
4. Love of learning: Mastering new skills, topics, and bodies of knowledge, whether on one's own or formally.
5. Perspective [wisdom]: Being able to provide wise counsel to others; having ways of looking at the world that make sense to oneself and to other people.

Strengths of Courage: Emotional strengths that involve the exercise of will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition, external and internal

6. Bravery [valor]: Not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain; acting on convictions even if unpopular.
7. Persistence [perseverance, industriousness]: Finishing what one starts; persisting in a course of action in spite of obstacles.
8. Integrity [authenticity, honesty]: Presenting oneself in a genuine way; taking responsibility for one's feeling and actions.
9. Vitality [zest, enthusiasm, vigor, energy]: Approaching life with excitement and energy; feeling alive and activated.

Strengths of Humanity: Interpersonal strengths that involve tending and befriending others:

10. Love: Valuing close relations with others, in particular those in which sharing and caring are reciprocated.
11. Kindness [generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, altruistic love, "niceness”]: Doing favors and good deeds for others.
12. Social intelligence [emotional intelligence, personal intelligence]: Being aware of the motives and feelings of other people and oneself.
Strengths of Justice: civic strengths that underlie healthy community life:

13. Citizenship [social responsibility, loyalty, teamwork]: Working well as a member of a group or team; being loyal to the group.
14. Fairness: Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice; not letting personal feelings bias decisions about others.
15. Leadership: Encouraging a group of which one is a member to get things done and at the same maintain time good relations within the group.

Strengths of Temperance: strengths that protect against excess:

16. Forgiveness and mercy: Forgiving those who have done wrong; accepting the shortcomings of others; giving people a second chance; not being vengeful.
17. Humility / Modesty: Letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves; not regarding oneself as more special than one is.
18. Prudence: Being careful about one's choices; not taking undue risks; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted.
19. Self-regulation [self-control]: Regulating what one feels and does; being disciplined; controlling one's appetites and emotions.

Strengths of Transcendence: strengths that forge connections to the larger universe and provide meaning:

20. Appreciation of beauty and excellence [awe, wonder, elevation]: Appreciating beauty, excellence, and/or skilled performance in various domains of life.
21. Gratitude: Being aware of and thankful of the good things that happen; taking time to express thanks.
22. Hope [optimism, future-mindedness, future orientation]: Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it.
23. Humor [playfulness]: Liking to laugh and tease; bringing smiles to other people; seeing the light side.
24. Spirituality [religiousness, faith, purpose]: Having coherent beliefs about the higher purpose, the meaning of life, and the meaning of the universe.

How to Raise Happiness Levels


To raise your level of happiness over the long-term, consider doing the following:

- Live in a wealthy environment
- Get married
- Avoid negative events and negative emotion
- Acquire a rich social network
- Get religion

The following will probably not help:

- Make more money
- Stay healthy (subjective health is more important than objective health)
- Get as much education as possible
- Change your race
- Move to a sunnier climate
- Live in an impoverished dictatorship

The bad news is that even if you could change all of the external circumstances listed above, it would not do much for you. Altogether, these factors probably account for no more than 8 to 15 percent of the variance in happiness. The good news is there are quite a number of internal circumstances that will likely work for you.
Strategies for Coping and Becoming Happier


Expressive Writing – Pennebaker performed research that found that expressive writing about a traumatic or upsetting experiences could improve people’s health and well-being. In this case, the individual is simply asked to write about one of his/her most distressing or painful life experiences and urged to describe the experience in detail and explore personal reactions and deepest emotions fully. The individual is asked to write for fifteen to thirty minutes and to come back and continue writing about the experience for three to five consecutive days. Compared with control groups, people who spend three days in this activity:

- make fewer visits to a doctor in the months following the writing sessions,
- show enhanced immune function,
- report less depression and distress,
- obtain higher grades, and
- are more likely to find new jobs after unemployment

This does not seem to be a product of catharsis, but the critical mechanism is in the nature of the writing process itself. It seems to help people find meaning in the trauma. Lyubomirsky argues that writing forces you to organize and integrate your thoughts and images in a coherent narrative, since language is highly structured. It prompts you to think in causal terms. It has been found that more people use causal words, such as because, infer, cause and insight words (e.g., understand, realize, see) over the course of writing sessions. Use the following instructions:

For the next four days, I would like for you to write about your very deepest thoughts and feelings about the most traumatic experience of your entire life. In your writing, I’d like you to really let go and explore your very deepest emotions and thoughts. You might tie your topic to your relationships with others, including parents, lovers, friends, or relatives, to your past, your present, or your future, or to who you have been, who you would like to be, or who you are now. You may write about the same general issues or experiences on all days of writing or on different traumas each day. Spend at least 15 minutes writing each day, and write for several days in a row, for as long as needed. Consider starting a blog. Be patient and persistent – you will see benefits.

Finding Benefit in Trauma Through Writing or Talking – This involves journal writing but in a more guided form. This also can be done through conversation with a supportive friend. There are three general steps suggested by Lyubomirsky:

1. Acknowledge that your loss or trauma has caused you a great deal of pain and suffering
   a. Consider what you have done during your loss or in response to it that you are proud of.
b. Consider how much you have grown as a result of your loss

c. Think about how the trauma has positively affected your relationships

**Coping Via Thought Disputation** – This is a strategy that has emerged from cognitive therapy for depression. It involves disputing or challenging your own pessimistic thoughts. Typically the individual is asked to follow, in writing, the ABCDE method for disputation:

A. Write down the nature of the Adversity, the bad event or problem being faced.
B. Identify any negative Beliefs triggered by this problem.
C. Record the Consequence of the problem – how you are feeling and acting as a result
D. Dispute the negative believe, challenge it, think of other possible reasons for the problem.
   a. Questions to ask include:
      i. What specific evidence do I have for this belief?
      ii. What alternative explanations are there for my recent behavior?
      iii. Even if my belief is true, what are the implications?
      iv. What is the worst possible thing that could happen and how likely is it to happen?
      v. What is the best possible thing that could happen, and what is the likelihood of that?
      vi. What do I honestly think is the most likely outcome?
      vii. Is this belief useful to me? What do I get out of having it?
      viii. What do I plan to do to address this problem?
E. Consider the more optimistic explanation for your problem and Energize yourself.

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Flow


“Flow” is a term that was coined by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (chick-SENT-me-hi). He defines it as a “state of intense absorption and involvement with the present moment.” He argues that a happy life is characterized by “flow”, and that the key to creating flow is to establish a balance between skills and challenges.

Flow is good for you for several reasons:

1. It is inherently pleasurable and fulfilling, and the enjoyment you obtain is generally of the type that is lasting and reinforcing.
2. Because flow states are intrinsically rewarding, we naturally want to repeat them. As we master new skills our experience of flow diminishes because the task at hand is no longer stimulating or demanding. To maintain flow we continually have to test ourselves in more challenging activities.
3. The experience of flow leads us to be involved in life, to enjoy activities, to have a sense of control, and to feel a strong sense of self.

Increasing Flow Experiences:

- **Control Attention** – Become fully engaged and involved. Attention should be directed fully to the task at hand. When you are intensely concentrating on doing something, you are directing your attention to the task as opposed to other things.
- **Adopt New Values** – Happy people are able to enjoy their lives even when material conditions are lacking and even when many goals have not been reached. They do this by being open to new and different experiences and by continuing to learn.
- **Learn what flows** – One of the first steps is to establish the precise time periods and activities during which you find yourself in flow and multiply them.
- **Transform routine tasks** – Even boring and tedious activities can be transformed into something more meaningful and stimulating. It is suggested that you created microflow activities with specific goals and rules.
- **Flow in Conversation** – During conversations, focus attention as intensely as possible on what the other person is saying and your reactions to the words. Do not be too quick to respond. Give the person the space to expand on thoughts and prompt with brief follow-up questions. Try to learn more about the speaker.
- **Smart Leisure** – Consider the hours of the day during which you are free of obligations and have freedom to choose what you want to do. Try to maximize the percentage of
leisure time during which you are truly concentrating, using your mind, or exercising your skills.

- **Smart Work** – People tend to see their work in one of three ways:
  - A job – work is a necessary evil, a means to an end. The job is not seen as something positive or rewarding.
  - A career – a job with advancement. The individual does not see work as a major positive part of their lives, but they have opportunities or ambitions for promotion and invest more time and energy in their work because they may be rewarded with higher social status, power, and self-esteem.
  - A calling – Report enjoying working and find what they do to be fulfilling and socially useful.

- **Strive for Superflow** – This is when you are not only completely absorbed and unselfconscious, but absolutely transcendent.

It is important to note that these activities can become addictive. If you notice yourself consistently ignoring the needs of people close to you, be warned.

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Savoring


Savoring is a concept similar to mindfulness, and promoted by Fred B. Bryant and Joseph Veroff of Loyola University. Savoring is defined as the awareness of pleasure and of the deliberate conscious attention to the experience of pleasure. Five techniques have been listed that promote savoring:

1. **Sharing with others** – Seek out others to share the experience. Tell others how much you value the moment.
2. **Memory-building** – Take mental photographs or even a physical souvenir of the event. Reminisce about it later with others.
3. **Self-congratulation** – Take pride in your participation in the activity. Remind yourself of how proud you are. Reflect upon how long you waited for this event to happen.
4. **Sharpening perceptions** – Focus on specific elements – block out other, extraneous elements.
5. **Absorption** – Allow yourself to get totally immersed. Try not to think, just sense. Do not think about other things you should be doing. Stay away from thinking about what comes next. Do not consider the ways in which the event could be improved upon.

The authors suggest four kinds of savoring:

- **Basking** – receiving praise and congratulations
- **Thanksgiving** – expressing gratitude for blessings
- **Marveling** – losing the self in the wonder of the moment
- **Luxuriating** – indulging the senses
Savoring Joys


My advice to you is not to inquire why or whither, but just enjoy your ice cream while it’s on your plate

Thornton Wilder

The ability to savor the positive experiences in your life is one of the most important ingredients of happiness. Savoring has a past, present, and future component. The past is savored by reminiscing about the good old days. You savor the present by wholly living in, being mindful of, and relishing the present moment. The future is savored by anticipating and fantasizing about upcoming positive events – this involves optimistic thinking.

Savoring is defined as any thoughts or behaviors capable of “generating, intensifying, and prolonging enjoyment.”

There is a difference between “savoring” and “flow”. Savoring requires a stepping outside of experience and reviewing it, whereas flow involves a complete immersion in the experience. Those skilled at capturing the joy of the present moment are less likely to experience depression, stress, guilt, and shame. People who are prone to happy anticipation, who are skilled at obtaining pleasure from looking forward and imagining happy events are likely to be optimistic and to experience intense emotions. In contrast, those who are best at looking back on happy times are best able to buffer stress.

Strategies to Foster Savoring:

Relish ordinary experiences – Learn how to appreciate and take pleasure in mundane, everyday experiences. Consider your daily routine activities and rituals. Do you notice and savor the pleasures of the day, or do you rush through them? Resolve to seize those pleasures when they happen, and take full advantage of them.

Savor and reminisce with family and friends – It is easier to savor when you share a positive experience with another. The presence of another person can bolster the power of positive reminiscence. Researchers have found that mutual reminiscence is accompanied by abundant positive emotions, such as joy, accomplishment, amusement, contentment, and pride. This is particularly true for older individuals. The more time older adults spend reminiscing, the more positive affect and higher morale they report.

Transport yourself – This involves transporting yourself, at will, to a different time and place. Instructions include:
First, choose a positive memory to reflect upon. Sit down, take a deep breath, relax, close your eyes, and begin to think about memory. Allow images related to the memory to come to mind. Try to picture the events associated with this memory in your mind. Use your mind to imagine the memory. Let your mind wander freely through the details of the memory, while you are imagining the memory.

Positive reminiscence boosts happiness because focusing on positive aspects of past experiences may prompt one to feel that ideals and dreams are attainable – it helps to reinforce the person’s sense of identity.

**Replay happy days** – The practice of repetitively replaying happiest life events serves to prolong and reinforce positive emotions and make you happier. Consider the following instructions:

*Think about one of your happiest days and replay it in your mind as though you were rewinding a videotape and playing it back. Think about the events of the day, and remember what happened in as much detail as you can. What exactly did you (or other people involved) say or do? What were the thoughts and emotions running through your head at the time? Don’t analyze this day; just replay and revel in it. Perform this exercise for eight minutes per day, on three consecutive days.*

**Celebrate good news** – Passing on and rejoicing in good news leads you to relish and soak up the present moment, as well as to foster connections with others. It is not wise to shy away from pride – pat yourself on the back.

**Be open to beauty and excellence** – This involves allowing yourself to truly admire an object of beauty or a display of talent, genius, or virtue.

**Be mindful** – Mindful individuals are models of flourishing and positive mental health. Relative to the average person, they are more likely to be happy, optimistic, self-confident, and satisfied with their lives and less likely to be depressed, angry, anxious, hostile, self-conscious, impulsive, or neurotic. People who are habitually mindful are more likely to experience frequent and intense positive emotions, to feel self-sufficient and competent, and to have positive social relationships. Those who are not usually mindful report more illness and physical symptoms. Learning mindfulness can boost well-being and reduce psychological distress, pain, and physical symptoms in the ill. When people are taught specific techniques, like learning relaxation, paying attention to breathing through stretches and postures, and becoming aware of bodily sensations, thoughts and emotions, they tend to be happier.

**Take pleasure in the senses** – Luxuriating, or indulging the senses, is one of the key ways to promote savoring.

**Create a savoring album** – This is essentially a strategy to create and savor the memories of your positive experiences. It is valuable to review the album in less happy times, when you are especially in need of a boost.
Savor with your camera – Teach yourself to use your camera in a way that enhances your ongoing experiences, by truly looking at things and noticing what is beautiful and meaningful.

Seek bittersweet experiences – A bittersweet experience is one that involves mixed emotions, usually happiness and sadness mixed together. These events are usually characterized by the fact that they will end soon.

Wax nostalgic – When recalling the most wonderful moments in the past, the happiest people are apt to put them in their “psychological bank accounts” to experience them as adding meaning and richness to their lives, rather than focus on how the good old days were so much better than today. Nostalgic experiences spawn positive feelings, reinforce our sense of being loved and protected, and even boost our self-esteem.

Note – It is possible to overdo living in the present. People whose orientation is overwhelmingly present-focused have been found less capable of delaying gratification and more likely to engage in a host or risky behaviors.

Notes
Spirituality and Religion


Researchers in mental health have shown some reluctance in studying spirituality and religion. However, the consequences of having religious beliefs, participating in organized religion, etc., can be studied. A growing body of literature suggests that spiritual/religious people are happier, healthier, and recover better after traumas than nonreligious people. Two reasons are suggested to underlie the benefit of religion on adjustment:

1. Those active in their churches reported greater social support
2. Those involved in spiritual pursuits are more easily able to find meaning after a trauma

Relative to those not actively involved in a religion, those with a more involved spiritual life tend to live longer and are healthier in general. This may be related to the fact that religious people are more likely to practice healthy behaviors, or refrain from unhealthy behaviors. Some religious groups encourage healthy diets and prohibit premarital sex, alcohol, tobacco, drug use, etc. Religious groups often advocate positive, low-stress lifestyles – urging moderation and fostering a harmonious family life.

Forty-seven percent of people who report attending regular religious services describe themselves as “very happy”, versus 28% of those who attend less than once a month. People who attend regularly have larger social networks, and receive tangible help from members of their religious group. Religious activities bring together many people who have common beliefs, thus enabling one-to-one social, emotional, and material support.

It is possible that the “ultimate” supportive relationship – an individual’s relationship with their God is a source of many happy-provoking events. This relationship is a source of comfort in troubled times, as well as a source of self-esteem and unconditional love. The belief that God will intervene when needed may provide a sense of peace and calm.

The belief that God has a purpose in everything helps individuals find meaning in both ordinary life events and traumatic ones. This is particularly important during troubling times. The sense of meaning derived from religion can provide hope, an explanation about the larger “purpose”, and solace.

Benefits of Spirituality
Those who do not believe in God may still be able to find ordinary things as being sacred. Sanctification can provide motivation, meaning, and satisfaction.

Meditative prayer is the type of prayer through which you try to maintain a divine relationship. People who practice meditative prayer are happier overall and feel closer to God than those who practice other kinds of prayer such as petitioning for relief or beseeching for forgiveness. Often
very spiritual people try to experience a sense of the divine in their day-to-day existence by cultivating feelings of awe, inspiration, and wholeness.

A spiritual/religious focus is more strongly tied to happiness among women (relative to men), among African-Americans (relatives to Caucasians), among older people (relative to younger ones), and among North Americans (relative to Europeans). People who actively and publicly participate in religious activities are happier than those who simply espouse religious beliefs. Those who pursue religion for intrinsic reasons (as a way of life) are happier than those who pursue it as a means to an end (career or status).

Suggestions:

Seek meaning and purpose – Six suggestions

1. Life is more meaningful when you are pursuing goals that are harmonious and within reach.
2. Greater meaning comes from having a coherent “life scheme”
3. Creativity can impart a sense of meaning to many people’s lives
4. There is powerful meaning in anguish and trauma
5. Religious experiences may contain profound feelings of spiritual awakening, ecstasy, etc.
6. An essential path to finding meaning in your life is to work on developing your faith.

Pray – A universal way to practice religion and spirituality is through prayer. Suggestions for making prayer a bigger part of life include:

- Dedicate a period of time each day, from five minutes to an hour, to prayer
- Choose to pray spontaneously throughout the day, and in specific situations
- Say a prayer upon waking or before bedtime, or prior to each meal

Find the sacred in ordinary life – Develop an ability to see holiness in everyday things, both beautiful things and plain things.
How to Forgive


Worthington describes a five-step process he calls REACH.

R – Recall – Worthington suggests that you recall the hurt, as objectively as you can. Avoid thinking of the other person as evil. Do not wallow in self-pity. Take deep, slow, and calming breaths as the event is visualized.

E – Empathize – Understand the event from the perpetrator’s point of view why this person hurt you. Make up a plausible story that the transgressor might tell if challenged to explain. Remember that when others feel their survival is threatened, they will hurt innocents. People who attack others are themselves usually in a state of fear, worry, and hurt. It is the situation a person finds himself in, and not his underlying personality, can lead to hurting. People often don’t think when they hurt others; they just lash out.

A – Altruistism – Recall a time when you transgressed, felt guilty, and were forgiven. Consider this a gift given to you by another person because you needed it. Do not give this gift out of self-interest, but because it is for the trespasser’s own good. Rise above the hurt and vengeance.

C – Commit – Commit yourself to publicly forgive the person. Consider writing a “certificate of forgiveness”, a letter of forgiveness to the offender.

H – Hold – Hold onto forgiveness. It is important to realize that the memories do not mean unforgiveness. Do not dwell vengefully on the memories. Do not wallow in the memories. Remind yourself that you have forgiven, and read the documents you composed.
Practicing Forgiveness


Forgiveness is one of the most difficult happiness-promoting strategies to accomplish. Consider the following suggestions:

- **Appreciate being forgiven:** Consider an instance of when you have been forgiven.
  - How was this forgiveness communicated to you – what was your response?
  - Ask yourself if you think the person benefited from forgiving you.
  - Did you and your relationship with the person benefit as well?
  - What insight do you have about the experience now?

- **Seek forgiveness for yourself:** This could be for a past or present wrong. Write a letter of apology. Recognizing and accepting that sometimes you are the transgressor may give you empathy and insight into people who are the transgressors in your own life. In this letter:
  - Describe what you have done, or not done
  - Acknowledge that your actions were wrong
  - Describe the harm that was done to the other person or to your relationship
  - Apologize for the behavior, either directly or by affirming the value of the relationship and your wish to restore it.
  - Consider a pledge to change your behavior
  - Offer some way to “repay” the person
  - Ask what it would take to reestablish the relationship

- **Imagine forgiveness:**
  - Identify a person whom you blame for mistreating or offending you in some way
  - Engage in imagining empathizing with the offender and granting him or her forgiveness.
  - Make an effort to consider your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in detail.

- **Write a letter of forgiveness:**
  - Write, but do not send, a letter of forgiveness to a person who has hurt or wronged you.
  - Describe in detail the injury or offense that was done to you.
  - Describe how you were affected by it at the time and how you continue to be hurt by it.
  - State what you wish the other person had done instead.
• **Practice empathy:**
  - Notice every time someone does something that you do not understand
  - Try to work out this person’s thoughts, feelings, and intentions
  - If possible, ask the person about how his/her behaviors might be explained.

• **Consider charitable attributions:**
  - Write the letter that you would like to receive from the transgressor in response to your forgiveness.
  - Write the letter that the person might write to you and consider:
    - What might have driven the person to harm you
    - Whether you expect to be forgiven
    - Do you buy the explanation?
    - Do you find the explanation reasonable and adequate?
    - Would you believe the person?
    - Would you give the person the “benefit of the doubt”?

• **Ruminate less:** Rumination is a barrier to forgiveness. Fantasizing about how you might physically or verbally cause pain to someone actually increases hostility over the long term.

• **Make contact:** Sometimes it is appropriate and helpful to send the forgiveness letter.
  - Prepare for it to backfire
  - One alternative is to simply be kind to the person you have privately forgiven.

• **Remind yourself:** Make forgiveness a habit – consider treating it like a prayer.

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Meditation


Meditation comprises a family of techniques that go by different names. The core ingredient that underlies all of the techniques is the cultivation of attention. Meditation is a personal experience and may be performed in different ways, but there are several crucial elements:

- Be nonjudgmental
- Be nonstriving
- Be patient
- Be trusting
- Be open
- Let go

Many studies have shown that meditation has multiple positive effects on a person’s happiness and positive emotions, as well as health, cognitive abilities, and moral maturity. These studies can make meditation look like a panacea. The data are persuasive, indicating that there is something powerful about this technique, but only if you learn to apply it with effort and commitment.

**Meditation Techniques:**

Mediation suggestions:

- Sit alone in a comfortable place, back straight
- Close your eyes
- Focus on breathing in and out
- As you breathe out, silently repeat a word, or focus on a specific object, sound, or task
- Let your thoughts pass
- Restart by bringing your attention back to your breath
- When you notice your mind wandering, turn inward and “detach” from your thoughts
- Do not allow ruminations, plans, and memories to control you – take charge
- Build the length of time you are able to meditate from five to twenty minutes per day
- Try to do it every day
- Arrange for a mediation space
Look Happy


Pretending that you are happy, by smiling, engaging others, faking energy and enthusiasm, can result in some of the benefits of happiness, and can make you happier. Darwin said that “the free expression by outward signs of emotion intensifies it.”

Examples:

- Smooth your brow
- Fashion smile lines
- Open your hands

The configuration required for a genuine smile includes:

1. Contraction of the orbicularis oculi (muscles that encircle the eye)
2. Contraction of the zygomaticus major muscles (pulling the corners of the lips upwards).

Mobius syndrome is a birth defect that causes those afflicted with it to lack the ability to move their facial muscles – their facial expressions are essentially frozen. Such patients claim that they cannot “experience” emotions, only think them. It can be inferred that the inability physically to express emotions powerfully influences the ability to feel them. As people age, they tend to develop facial lines that match their personality.

In the real world, if you smile, others smile with you. The smiles of infancy have been shown to procure love and attachment. Even in the face of stressful events, smiling and laughter can help “undo” negative emotions, distract, and bring about feelings of peace, amusement, and joy.

In short, smiling and laughter, even when insincere, can give rise to a mild feeling of positive well-being. Further, this starts a powerful upward spiral of consequences for coping and social relationships, thereby reducing anxiety and distress, and bringing you even greater happiness and joy.
Happiness and Social Relationships


Happy people are typically good at being friends. Happier people are more likely to have a large circle of friends or companions, a romantic partner, and ample social support. The causal relationship between social relationship and happiness appears to be bidirectional. Lyubomirsky argues that working to improve and cultivate relationships will help you to feel happier. In turn, enhanced happiness will help you attract more and higher quality relationships, making you even happier. Good social relationships appear to serve many needs:

- Humans appear to be strongly motivated to seek out and maintain strong, stable, and positive interpersonal relationships
- Social support in times of stress, distress, and trauma is highly valued
- People with strong social support are known to be healthier and to live longer.

Studies of successful marriages indicate the following observations:

- The partners talk a lot – successful couples spend five hours more per week being together and talking.
- Happy relationships are characterized by a ratio of positive to negative affect of five to one. For every negative statement or behavior, there are five positive ones.
- Successful partners communicate admiration and gratitude directly.
- In flourishing relationships, partners evoke the best in each other (The Michelangelo effect)

Some studies have shown that what distinguishes good and poor relationships is not how the partners respond to each other’s disappointments and reversals, but how they respond to *good news*. How people respond to things going right for others may be diagnostic of the sense of connection between them.
Making Your Relationship Happy


Lyubomirsky cites John Gottman’s book, *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*, as the best marital advice manual on the market. Gottman videotapes couples, observing how they behave and talk with each other. Based on these observations, he reportedly predicts with 91% accuracy which couples will stay together and which will divorce. Some of the Principles involve:

1. Make time – Commit extra time each week with your partner. Spend five minutes per day expressing appreciation or gratitude for particular behaviors.

2. Express admiration, appreciation, and affection – A key conclusion in marriage research is that happy relationships are characterized by a ratio of positive to negative affect of five to one. It is recommended that admiration and gratitude should be communicated directly.

3. Capitalize on good fortune – take delight in the successes of others.

4. Manage conflicts more effectively – Happy couples don’t fight less, just differently.

5. Share an inner life – Shared rituals, dreams, and goals underlie thriving relationships.

Suggestions for *making* friends include:

- Make time
- Communicate
- Be supportive and loyal
- Hug.
Marriage and Happiness


Seligman cites John Gottman (University of Washington) as the co-director of the Gottman Relationship Institute (www.gottman.com). Gottman reportedly predicts divorce with 90% accuracy, by using the following factors:

- A harsh startup in a disagreement
- Criticism of partner, rather than complaints
- Displays of contempt
- Hair-trigger defensiveness
- Lack of validation
- Negative body language

On the other hand, Gottman also accurately identifies the marriages that will improve over the years. In general, these couples devote an extra five-hours per week to their marriages. The techniques used by these couples include:

- Partings – Before saying goodbye in the morning, they ask about one thing that the other is going to do that day.
- Reunions – At the end of each workday, there is a low-stress reunion conversation.
- Affection – These couples commonly touch, grab, hold, kiss, etc. This is always done with tenderness and affection.
- One weekly date – Successful couples spend time together regularly, with just the two individuals in a relaxed atmosphere.
- Admiration and appreciation – Daily, partners offer genuine affection and appreciation.

In his book The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work, Gottman and Nan Silver offer a series of exercises for improving marital relationships. One of the exercises suggested by Seligman involves identifying the three strengths most characteristic of the other and writing down an incident when that trait was displayed. This is shown to the partner, who does the same.
Happiness and Acts of Kindness


Relationships appear to constitute the most important factor relative to happiness. Lyubomirsky wrote that “one of the strongest findings in the literature on happiness is that happy people have better relationships than do their less happy peers.

Of course, relations with others that have been characterized by kindness and generosity are at the foundation of most moral systems. There is evidence that practicing acts of kindness is not only good for the recipient, but also good for the doer. Even when being kind is unpleasant at the outset, or when one expects or receives nothing in return, the doer appears to benefit. It is apparent that being generous and willing to share makes people happy.

This notion has been clear for centuries and across cultures. A common Buddhist refrain is, “If you want to be happy, practice compassion.” A Hindu proverb pronounces that “true happiness consists in making others happy.” Thomas Carlyle said that “without kindness, there can be no true joy.” [all cited in Lyubomirsky]. Early research correlated happiness and helping. Happier people are more likely admit to regular altruistic acts. They spend more time helping others, and they often perform work tasks that go beyond their job duties.

Lyubomirsky asked two groups of volunteers to perform five acts of kindness per week over the course of six weeks. One group was instructed to do these acts at any time throughout the week, while the second group was instructed to do the five acts only on a single day. Once weekly participants turned in a “kindness report”, describing the acts in some detail. The participants who committed acts of kindness over the course of the study experienced a significant elevation in happiness. That boost, however, was reported only by those who showed their generosity all in one single day. The group that was instructed to distribute its five weekly acts of kindness over the course of the week did not become any happier. Lyubomirsky suggests that optimal timing is critical for a happiness activity to be effective. Other studies by the same research indicates that it important to select activities that fit you so that you are choosing to do something that you value and that you believe you will enjoy. “the singular act of choosing an activity can make you feel brighter and gladder even before you commit your first act of kindness.”

Why does this happen?

- Being kind and generous leads one to see others more positively and more charitably
- Kindness fosters a heightened sense of interdependence and cooperation in your social community.
- Being kind often relieves guilt, distress, or discomfort over the difficulties of others
- Being kind encourages a sense of awareness and appreciation for your own good fortune – helping others allows you to feel advantaged.
- Being kind is a welcome distraction from your own troubles and ruminations.
When you see yourself as altruistic and compassionate, a sense of confidence, optimism, and usefulness is promoted.

Some argue that acts of kindness can promote a sense of meaningfulness and value in one’s life.

Kindness can initiate a cascade of positive social consequences – when you are nice to other people, they are typically nice back to you.

One study followed five volunteers for 3 years – all of whom had multiple sclerosis. These volunteers were chosen to act as peer supporters for 67 other MS patients and were trained in active and compassionate listening techniques. The volunteers were instructed to call each patient for 15 minutes, once a month. Over the three-year period, the peer supporters experienced increased satisfaction, self-efficacy, and feelings of mastery. They engaged in more social activities and endured less depression. The positive changes experienced by the five peer supporters were larger than the benefits shown by the patients they supported. The benefits experienced by the peer supporters grew as time went on.

How to be more effectively kind:

- Be careful about your timing. Select which acts you intend to do, how often, and how much.
  - If you do too little, you won’t obtain much benefit
  - If you do too much, you may feel overburdened or even angry
- Consider picking one day a week and, on that day, commit one new and special large act of kindness, or three to five little ones.
- Vary your acts of kindness.
- Work on developing your compassion
- At least once weekly, do a kind deed about which you tell no one, and for which you do not expect anything in return.

Can kindness hurt?

Certain categories of helping behaviors appear to be detrimental to physical and mental health:

- Full-time, relentless caregiving for chronically ill or disabled loved ones often results in significantly higher levels of depression – depression that can be even higher than their disabled partners.
- Any helping behavior that is burdensome, that interferes with your daily goals and functioning, or that causes bitterness, will probably backfire.
- Kind acts are best done freely and autonomously.
- Other people may not always welcome your kindness.
Benefits of Gratitude


The expression of gratitude is a keystone for achieving happiness. Gratitude can involve many things:

- Wonder
- Appreciation
- Optimism after a setback
- Appreciating abundance
- Thanking someone in your life
- Thanking God
- Counting blessings
- Savoring
- Not taking things for granted
- Coping
- An antidote to negative emotions
- A neutralizer of envy, avarice, hostility, worry, and irritation

Gratitude is typically associated with saying thank you for a gift or benefit received. Robert Emmons defines it as “a felt sense of wonder, thankfulness, and appreciation for life.” People who are consistently grateful have been found to be relatively happier, more energetic, and more hopeful, and to report experiencing more frequent positive emotions. Compared to others they tend to be:

- More helpful
- More empathic
- More spiritual
- More religious
- More forgiving
- Less materialistic
- Less likely to be depressed
- Less likely to be anxious
• Less likely to be lonely
• Less likely to be envious
• Less likely to be neurotic

Research suggests that a person would be happier if an “attitude of gratitude” could be cultivated.

Lyubomirsky suggested eight reasons why she advises people to practice gratitude:

1. Grateful thinking promotes the savoring of positive life experiences. By finding pleasure and embracing in the gifts of your life, the maximum possible satisfaction will be derived.

2. Expressing gratitude bolsters self-worth and self-esteem. Confidence emerges from realizing how much people have done for you, and how much you have accomplished.

3. Gratitude helps people cope with stress and trauma. The ability to appreciate life circumstances is an adaptive coping mechanism by which stressful or negative life experiences are reinterpreted.

4. The expression of gratitude encourages moral behavior. Grateful people are more likely to help others and less likely to be materialistic.

5. Gratitude can help build social bonds, strengthening existing relationships and nurturing new ones. Keeping a gratitude journal can produce feelings of greater connectedness with others.

6. Expressing gratitude tends to inhibit invidious comparisons with others. Those who are genuinely thankful and appreciative for what they have are less likely to envy what others have.

7. The practice of gratitude is incompatible with negative emotions and may actually diminish or deter such feelings of anger, bitterness, and greed. It is hard to feel negative emotions when you’re feeling grateful.

8. Gratitude helps thwart hedonic adaptation. This is our ability to adjust rapidly to any new circumstance or event. This is only adaptive when the new event is unpleasant, not when the new event is positive.
Physical Activity and Happiness


Several explanations underlie the well-being rewards of exercise:

1. Taking up a fitness regimen makes you feel in control of your body and your health.
2. Physical activity offers potential for flow as well as a positive distraction that turns away worries and rumination.
3. Physical activity, when performed along with others, can provide opportunities for social contact, potentially bolstering social support and reinforcing friendships.
4. The feel-good consequence of exercise could be physiological in origin. Exercise has been shown to elevate serotonin levels.
5. Physical activity provides an acute, immediate boost, as well as “chronic” improvements.

Recommendations:

- Start slow
- Decide ahead of time on specific dates, starting times, and durations of your exercise. Pencil them in and treat them like fixed appointments.
- Choose a time to exercise during a time of day when you feel most energetic.
- Strive for 30-minutes of moderate physical activity on most days of the week. Stick with your plan. It is better to exercise for ten minutes than not at all.
- If you already exercise, up the ante.
- If you break the routine, start it up again the following day.
Money and Happiness

A team of researchers at the University of British Columbia (Dunn, Aknin & Norton) performed research involving three separate studies and concluded that buying things for yourself does not make you happier, but spending money on other people does.

Over 600 Americans were given standardized, validated measures of general happiness, and were asked questions about income spending on:

1. Bills and expenses
2. Gifts for themselves
3. Gifts for others
4. Donations to charity

Spending on bills and expenses, and spending on gifts for self was not related to happiness. Gifts to others and charitable donations did appear to contribute to happiness.

Vohs, Mead, & Goode (2006) found that just thinking about having more money makes people less likely to use it in ways that would make them happy. When groups were asked to select the conditions that would make them happier, they predicted it exactly backwards.

Dunn and colleagues also looked at people who received a windfall profit sharing bonus and how they spent it. Happiness measures taken 6-8 weeks after, with reports of the percentage of the bonus that was spent on six different categories. Happiness was not related to income or the amount of the bonus, but spending in the “pro-social” categories predicted higher levels of happiness. Spending on others was related to happiness.

In a third study, participants were given either $5.00 or $20.00 to spend by later afternoon, and randomly assigned to two groups. One group was required to spend money on self, the other group on a gift for someone else or to make a charitable donation. Those in the second group had increased general happiness scores.


# Happiness and Purchasing Power


The following table compares the average level of satisfaction in answer to the question, “How satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?”, based on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being most satisfied – Purchasing Power is based on U.S. = 100.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>NATION</th>
<th>LIFE SATISFACTION</th>
<th>PURCHASING POWER</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>5.37</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belarus</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>Romania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
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Eight Techniques for Building Positive Emotion in Children


1. **Sleeping with your baby** – Seligman outlines several reasons for sleeping with infants.
   a. *Amai* – A Japanese idea – the sense of being cherished and the expectation of being loved.
   b. *Safety* – He argues that the safety considerations override the dangers associated with a sleeping parent rolling over and crushing a baby.
   c. *Adventures with Daddy* – Sleeping with the baby more easily allows the father to promote a secure attachment relationship with the child.

2. **Synchrony games** – Simply involves repeating the actions of the child. Toys are chosen because they respond to what the baby does – e.g., a rattle. Other examples are stackable blocks, books and magazines, cardboard crates, etc.

3. **No and Yes** – Minimize the use of the word “no”. If the child hears an angry “no” at every turn, when a new situation approaches, “no” will be anticipated.

4. **Praise and punishment** – Seligman does not support *unconditional* positive regard. He argues that love, affection, warmth, and ebullience should all be delivered unconditionally, but praise should be contingent upon success. Punishment gets in the way of positive emotion because it is painful and fear-evoking, and it gets in the way of mastery. Punishment fails frequently because “safety signals” (a sign of impending danger) are often unclear to the child. Children need to know exactly what they are punished for. Punishment should be avoided when there is an effective alternative.

5. **Sibling rivalry** – Sibling rivalry should be combatted, by having specific and separate chores for each child. Emphasis should be placed on the child’s peculiar strengths.

6. **Bedtime nuggets** – Seligman suggests two techniques:
   a. Best Moments – Ask the child to review the day and identify the positive aspects of the day. Anticipate the things they are looking forward to for the next day.
   b. Dreamland – Ask the child to call up a happy picture in his/her head, describe it, concentrate on it, and give it a name in words. As the child goes off to sleep, have the child picture the through in their head, say the name over and over while falling sleep, and plan to dream about it.

7. **Making a deal** – Making deals with children teaches them contingencies. It also presupposes that a reward can sometimes precede rather than follow the behaviors to be strengthened.

8. **New Year’s resolutions** – Resolutions are made about positive accomplishments that build on strengths.
Committing to Your Goals


W. Beran Wolfe wrote:

*If you observe a really happy man you will find him building a boat, writing a symphony, educating his son, growing double dahlias in his garden, or looking for dinosaur eggs in the Gobi Desert.*

Find a happy person, and you will usually find a project. The process of working toward a goal, participating in a valued and challenging activity, is as important to well-being as its attainment. Your priority should be to develop that missing passion and impetus.

**Six Benefits of Pursuing Goals:**

1. Committed goal pursuit provides us a sense of purpose and a feeling of control over our lives.
2. Having meaningful goals bolsters our self-esteem, stimulating us to feel confident and efficacious. The accomplishment of every subgoal is another opportunity for an emotional boost.
3. Pursuing goals adds structure and meaning to our daily lives. It grants responsibilities, deadlines, timetables, opportunities for mastering new skills, and for social interactions with others.
4. It helps us to learn to master our use of time, to identify higher-order goals, to subdivide them into smaller steps, and to develop a schedule to accomplish them.
5. It involves engaging with other people and such social connections can be happiness inducing in and of themselves.

The type of goal or valued life task that you pursue determines whether the pursuit will make you happy.

**Intrinsic goals** are those that are personally involving and rewarding. Those goals are more likely to bring you happiness than working toward goals that are not freely chosen. Intrinsic goals are those that you pursue because they are inherently satisfying and meaningful to you, which allow you to grow as a person, to develop emotional maturity, and to contribute to your community.

**Extrinsic goals** reflect more what other people approve or desire for you. People usually aim for extrinsic goals as a means to an end. Extrinsic goals, however, such as material wealth,
are sometimes pursued in order to obtain the resources and opportunities that will allow us to pursue our cherished dreams or intrinsic goals. **Authentic goals** are those that are rooted in a person’s lifelong, deeply held interests and core values. It is presumed that realizing authentic goals satisfies our true values and innate needs, thus delivering powerful emotional benefits.

**Approach goals vs. avoidant goals** – Approach goals are those that involve approaching a desirable outcome, such as making new friends. Avoidant goals are aimed at avoiding an undesirable outcome (trying not to feel guilty). The same goal can be conceptualized as an approach goal and an avoidance goal (to be a bit eater/to not be fat). People who chiefly pursue avoidant goals are less happy and more anxious, distressed, and unhealthy, than people who generally pursue approach goals.

**Harmonious goals** – Goals should complement one another. Striving for conflicting goals at the same time will lead to annoyances and discouragement.

**Flexible and appropriate goals** – Maximum happiness is obtained when we take on flexible and appropriate goals. We must adapt our goals to the opportunities that we have. Goals should change as we age. Young people are more likely to have goals that involve seeking new information, acquiring knowledge, and experiencing novelty. Older people make the opposite choice, being more concerned with emotionally meaningful goals.

**Activity goals** – Research suggests that when people strive to change their circumstances by defining and then achieving their goals feel happier, but risk experiencing hedonic adaptation – they are likely to adapt quickly to the new situation and begin to desire ever higher levels of pleasure in order to recapture the previous level of happiness.

**Recommendations:**

**Choose Goals Wisely** – The pursuit of goals that are intrinsic, authentic, approach-oriented, harmonious, activity-based, and flexible will deliver more happiness than otherwise. You are more likely to persevere and succeed at goals that have a larger purpose or long-term importance.

**Own Your Goals** – Try reflecting on the deeper value that the goal expresses. Try strategies that make the labor more rewarding. People who have goals that they truly own are continually growing and developing and are particularly prepared to take advantage of new opportunities to grow more. Those who do not own their goals appear stagnant in their growth.

**Commit With Passion** – Developing skills in almost any activity requires a great deal of practice, patience, and labor. Passionate commitment fulfills the need to belong and connect with others. Committing to important goals reinforces our sense of autonomy. Commitment is especially important when made in front of other people.
Create Self-Fulfilling Prophecies – If you believe in yourself and are optimistic, you will increase the chances that you will persevere and that whatever you are aiming for will ultimately come to pass. Taking action toward your goals, even when there are doubts, is likely to diminish those doubts or dispel them altogether.

Be Flexible – The ability to be flexible with regard to your activities and your goals is a valuable skill. This involves keeping your eyes and ears open to new prospects and possibilities.

Don’t Undermine Intrinsic Motivation – When you find a pursuit that is both enjoyable and meaningful, be careful not to do anything to undermine your intrinsic motivation. We can lose interest and motivation if we feel pushed or coerced to engage in the activity.

Break Down Your Goals – Break down goals into lower-level, concrete subgoals. Consider the following plan:

1. Generate a list of personal aspirations, intentions, and projects
2. Identify the highest-priority goals and contemplate on them at some length
3. Select a single goal, describe it in concrete terms, and personally commit to this goal
4. Develop implementation intentions – where, when, and how actions would be taken to complete the goal. Anticipate obstacles and think of strategies to manage them.
5. Carry out the plan, persisting through challenges and difficulties. Revise or change the chosen goal when necessary.
Sustaining Happiness


It is relatively easy to become happy for a short duration.  The challenge lies in sustaining a level of happiness.  With intentional activities, however, you have the power to harness the 40% of our feelings that are within our control.

1.  Positive Emotion – Happiness activities boost positive emotions.  Researchers have shown that positive feelings can reverse the effects of negative feelings.  Happiness activities boost positive thinking.

2.  Optimal Timing and Variety – Knowing what to do is an important step, but you also need to know how to do it and when to do it.  Self-experimentation is a key.

3.  Social Support – Emotional or tangible support is crucial in helping people persist at and realize their goals in general.  Group support can be extraordinarily powerful in galvanizing conviction, commitment, and perseverance.  Any change in behavior that requires effort and dedication will be made easier if your spouse, children, friends, parents, siblings, and coworkers are supportive.

4.  Motivation, Effort, Commitment – A vital key to a successful happiness-increasing program is committed and dedicated effort.  The more motivated you are to do something, the more likely you will invest effort in it.

5.  Habit – It takes effort and determination to become happier, but the effort is greatest at the beginning.

Notes

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Families and Happiness

Adapted from:
Several major styles of parenting have been identified (Baumrind, 1971, 1978):

**Authoritarian Parenting** – Firm, punitive, and emotionally cold. These parents value obedience and do not encourage independence or involve their children in decision making. They tend to produce children who are unhappy, dependent, and submissive.

**Permissive Parenting** – Loving, but lax. These parents exert little control over their children. The children are given freedom and are allowed to make decisions, but they have little guidance. They raise children who are likely to be outgoing and sociable, but also immature, impatient, and aggressive.

**Authoritative Parenting** – Involves negotiating with children. These parents set limits for a child, but explain why, and they encourage independence. As the child demonstrates responsibility, the parents allow more freedom. Decisions are arrived at through give and take. These children tend to be friendly, cooperative, socially responsible, and self-reliant.
Attachment Theory

Adapted from:

Securely attached children, in the *strange situation* paradigm, show a pattern of seeking and maintaining contact with their mother. Children whose mothers are supportive and affectionate in dealing with them show this pattern. Children who are securely attached in infancy are appropriately assertive with their parents. They explore the word with more enthusiasm, and they are more persistent at solving problems and more willing to ask for help and to seek comfort when frustrated. They strike a good balance between dependency and autonomy.

Upon entering school, securely attached children require less contact and discipline from their teachers, and they are less likely to seek attention, to act impulsively, to express frustration, or to display helplessness (Sroufe, Fox, & Pancake, 1983). Teachers like them and expect more of them in relation to their peers.

Secure attachment leads to good relationships with others, and good relationships with others are associated closely with happiness. Attachment styles established in infancy show up in how adults conduct themselves in romantic relationships.

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Read the following blurbs, and choose the one that best describes how you relate to people in your life:

- I find it relatively easy to get close to other people. I am comfortable depending on other people and having them depend on me. I don’t usually worry about being abandoned or about having someone get too close to me.

- I find it difficult to trust people completely. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others. I feel nervous when people start to get too close. Often, I feel like people want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on other people.

- I find that other people are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that someone I am close to doesn’t really love me or won’t want to stay with me. I want to merge completely with another person, and this sometimes scares people away.

The first option on the quiz represents secure relationships. The second option involves avoidant relationships. The third option involves ambivalent relationships.

Research findings about securely attached adults are listed below (cited in Peterson):

Securely attached adults are:

- More supportive of their partners in joint problem-solving tasks
- More likely to practice safer sex
- Less upset in the wake of stress
- More likely to seek support from others when it is needed
• More likely to compromise in conflicts
• Less likely to be depressed
• More likely to have good self-esteem
• Less likely to abuse their spouse
• Less likely to divorce

Reference:
Recent Research

The abstracts of the following articles were listed from a search of the APA database of full test journal articles published in the last year. The search term used was simply “happiness”.

1. **Journal Article**  
   Spousal interrelations in happiness in the Seattle Longitudinal Study: Considerable similarities in levels and change over time.  
   By Hoppmann, Christiane A.; Gerstorf, Denis; Willis, Sherry L.; Schaie, K. Warner  
   Development does not take place in isolation and is often interrelated with close others such as marital partners. To examine interrelations in spousal happiness across midlife and old age, we used 35-year longitudinal data from both members of 178 married couples in the Seattle Longitudinal Study. Latent growth curve models revealed sizeable spousal similarities not only in levels of happiness but also in how happiness changed over time. These spousal interrelations were considerably larger in size than those found among random pairs of women and men from the same sample. Results are in line with life-span theories emphasizing an interactive minds perspective by showing that adult happiness waxes and wanes in close association with the respective spouse. Our findings also complement previous individual-level work on age-related changes in well-being by pointing to the importance of using the couple as the unit of analysis. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

2. **First Posting**  
   Further evidence for mixed emotions.  
   By Larsen, Jeff T.; McGraw, A. Peter  
   Emotion theorists have long debated whether valence, which ranges from pleasant to unpleasant states, is an irreducible aspect of the experience of emotion or whether positivity and negativity are separable in experience. If valence is irreducible, it follows that people cannot feel happy and sad at the same time. Conversely, if positivity and negativity are separable, people may be able to experience such mixed emotions. The authors tested several alternative interpretations for prior evidence that happiness and sadness can co-occur in bittersweet situations (i.e., those containing both pleasant and unpleasant aspects). One possibility is that subjects who reported mixed emotions merely vacillated between happiness and sadness. The authors tested this hypothesis in Studies 1–3 by asking subjects to complete online continuous measures of happiness and sadness. Subjects reported more simultaneously mixed emotions during a bittersweet film clip than during a control clip. Another possibility is that subjects in earlier studies reported mixed emotions only because they were explicitly asked whether they felt happy and sad. The authors tested this hypothesis in Studies 4–6 with open-ended measures of emotion. Subjects were more likely to report mixed emotions after the bittersweet clip than the control clip. Both patterns occurred even when subjects were told that they were not expected to report mixed emotions (Studies 2 and 5) and among subjects who did not previously believe that people could simultaneously feel happy and sad (Studies 3 and 6). These results provide further evidence that positivity and negativity are separable in experience. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

3. **Journal Article**  
   Unraveling the daily stress crossover between unemployed individuals and their employed spouses.  
   By Song, Zhaoli; Foo, Maw-Der; Uy, Marilyn A.; Sun, Shuhua  
   This study examined the dynamic relationship of distress levels between spouses when one is unemployed (and looking for a job) while the other is engaged in full-time employment. Using the diary survey method, we sampled 100 couples in China for 10 days and tested a model comprising three stress crossover mechanisms: the direct crossover, the mediating crossover, and the common stressor mechanisms. Results supported the direct crossover and common stressor mechanisms. Other stressors (e.g., work–family conflict and negative job search experience) were also related to distress of the unemployed individuals and their employed spouses. Additionally, we found a three-way interaction involving gender, marital satisfaction, and distress levels of employed spouses. We discuss how the study contributes to the unemployment and stress crossover
4. **Journal Article**  **Peak - experiences among Norwegian youth.**  By Hoffman, Edward; Iversen, Valentina; Ortiz, Fernando A. Nordic Psychology, Vol 62(4), Dec 2010, 67-76. doi: [10.1027/1901-2276/a000022](10.1027/1901-2276/a000022) This study marks the first empirical investigation of youthful peak-experiences among Nordic persons. The sample comprised 309 native Norwegian college students who generated 318 retrospective reports (occurring below the age of 14). Early peaks involving interpersonal joy—especially the 3 sub-categories of family togetherness, the birth of a baby sibling or cousin, and romantic bliss—were most frequently reported. In frequency, these were followed by peaks involving nature and developmental landmarks. The relevance of these findings for fostering Nordic youth development from a positive, strength-based perspective is discussed. Avenues for future research are highlighted. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

5. **Journal Article**  **Positive psychology, happiness, and virtue: The troublesome conceptual issues.**  By Kristjánsson, Kristján Review of General Psychology, Vol 14(4), Dec 2010, 296-310. doi: [10.1037/a0020781](10.1037/a0020781) This article subjects the recently prominent theory of positive psychology to critical conceptual scrutiny, with emphasis on its general take on happiness, virtue, and positive emotion. It is argued that positive psychology suffers from internal divisions (such as divergent views of its proponents on what happiness is), ambiguities (e.g., regarding the possibility of nonvirtuous happiness), ambivalence (concerning self-realism vs. anti-self-realism), and at least one serious misconception (the assumption that any view that makes overall evaluative judgments thereby prescribes). Nevertheless, many of the charges commonly urged against positive psychology, in particular by Aristotelian theorists, do not stick, and we may be well advised to give it the benefit of our doubt. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

6. **Journal Article**  **Subliminal emotional priming and decision making in a simulated hiring situation.**  By Skandrani-Marzouki, Inès; Marzouki, Yousri Swiss Journal of Psychology/Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Psychologie/Revue Suisse de Psychologie, Vol 69(4), Dec 2010, 213-219. doi: [10.1024/1421-0185/a000025](10.1024/1421-0185/a000025) The present study examines the unconscious influence of emotional information on decision making in a simulated hiring situation. We used a subliminal masked priming paradigm with varying faces as primes, which were presented for a duration of 50 ms and had two levels of emotion: positive emotion (happiness) and negative emotion (anger). These primes were followed by emotionally neutral target faces. Primes were congruent (same faces) or incongruent (different faces). Prime Emotion (positive vs. negative) was crossed with Prime Repetition (repeat vs. unrelated) in a 2 × 2 factorial design. Each participant was tested in all four of the experimental conditions, each of which had 5 different trials. The participants were asked to indicate as rapidly as possible whether they were “favorable” or “unfavorable” toward the selection of the candidate (target face). Two dependent measures were analyzed: number of target faces chosen (i.e., number of “favorable” responses to target faces) and reaction time (RT). Results revealed a strong effect of emotional priming. Participants tended to choose more target faces preceded by positive prime faces than by negative prime faces. Moreover, they reacted faster when presented with target faces preceded by negative primes. Despite its exploratory nature, this study provides further evidence for the role of emotional processing in modulating decision processes and extends the experimental manipulation of subliminal emotion to the case of the masked repetition priming technique. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

7. **Journal Article**  **Authorizing happiness: Rhetorical demarcation of science and society in historical narratives of positive psychology.**  By Yen, Jeffery Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology, Vol 30(2), Fal 2010, 67-78. doi: [10.1037/a0019103](10.1037/a0019103) Notwithstanding the numerous critiques that have been leveled at the field of positive psychology over its short history, the field and its practitioners continue to enjoy substantial growth and popularity. Although several factors have no doubt contributed to their advancement, work in the field of science studies suggests that rhetorical demarcation in scientific writing, by which scientific fields establish their domains and distinguish themselves from
other forms of intellectual activity, may be equally significant. Such “boundary work” is an important means through which fields defeat their competitors, persuade their public, and compete for legitimacy. In light of this, I examine the discursive demarcation and legitimization of positive psychology as performed through historical narratives of its origins in its own writings. I offer an analysis of the ways in which these narratives exploit alternating and contradictory images of scientists, legitimate scientific activity, and in particular, images of American society, to perform the ideological and rhetorical work of describing, and making visible, the kinds of issues and problems for which positive psychology presents itself as the natural solution. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)


Although positive and negative images enhance the visual processing of young adults, recent work suggests that a life-span shift in emotion processing goals may lead older adults to avoid negative images. To examine this tendency for older adults to regulate their intake of negative emotional information, the current study investigated age-related differences in the perceptual boost received by probes appearing over facial expressions of emotion. Visually-evoked event-related potentials were recorded from the scalp over cortical regions associated with visual processing as a probe appeared over facial expressions depicting anger, sadness, happiness, or no emotion. The activity of the visual system in response to each probe was operationalized in terms of the P1 component of the event-related potentials evoked by the probe. For young adults, the visual system was more active (i.e., greater P1 amplitude) when the probes appeared over any of the emotional facial expressions. However, for older adults, the visual system displayed reduced activity when the probe appeared over angry facial expressions. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)


Most contemporary studies of change in marital quality over time have used growth curve modeling to describe continuously declining mean curves. However, there is some evidence that different trajectories of marital quality exist for different subpopulations. Group-based trajectory modeling provides the opportunity to conduct an empirical investigation of the variance in marital quality trajectories. We applied this method to analyze data from continuously married individuals from the Marital Instability over the Life Course Study (N = 706). Instead of a single continuously declining trajectory of marital happiness, we found 5 distinct trajectories. Nearly two thirds of participants reported high and stable levels of happiness over time, and the other one third showed either a pattern of continuous low happiness, low happiness that subsequently declined, or a curvilinear pattern of high happiness, decline, and recovery. Marital problems, time spent in shared activities, and (to a lesser degree) economic hardship were able to distinguish trajectory group membership. Our results suggest that marital happiness may have multiple distinct trajectories across reasonably diverse populations. Implications for theory, research, and practice are discussed. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

10. Magazine All in the family at convention By Goodheart, Carol D. Monitor on Psychology; 2010; 41(9) [American Psychological Association Public Information and Media Relations; Public Communications]. In this column, APA President Carol D. Goodheart remarks on the 2010 APA Convention, held in San Diego. Dr. Goodheart's goal to make this year's convention a family-friendly event was made possible, in part, due to the terrific venue in San Diego, but it was also due to a more family-centered programming. Among the most popular sessions was a talk by former APA President Diane F. Halpern, PhD, who spoke on "The Juggling Act: Balancing Work and Family." A new APA survey has found that trying to achieve that work-life balance is the top stressor for psychologists. The impact of marriage and children was also the major theme of keynote speaker Daniel Gilbert, PhD, whose research suggests that while many of us believe family will bring us happiness, that isn't always the case. The preconvention HIV Community Day Conference, on Aug. 11 brought together psychologists, clergy and
physicians to discuss ways of mobilizing families to curb the virus's spread. As part of "Psychology Navy Day" at the San Diego Naval Medical Center, senior staff and Dr. Goodheart spoke to Navy psychologists about APA's efforts to promote the health and well-being of service members, veterans and their families. These are just some of the topics covered in this Monitor special issue.

11. **Journal Article**  
Effects of worry on physiological and subjective reactivity to emotional stimuli in generalized anxiety disorder and nonanxious control participants. By Llera, Sandra J.; Newman, Michelle G. Emotion, Vol 10(5), Oct 2010, 640-650. doi: 10.1037/a0019351 The present study examined the effect of worry versus relaxation and neutral thought activity on both physiological and subjective responding to positive and negative emotional stimuli. Thirty-eight participants with generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) and 35 nonanxious control participants were randomly assigned to engage in worry, relaxation, or neutral inductions prior to sequential exposure to each of four emotion-inducing film clips. The clips were designed to elicit fear, sadness, happiness, and calm emotions. Self reported negative and positive affect was assessed following each induction and exposure, and vagal activity was measured throughout. Results indicate that worry (vs. relaxation) led to reduced vagal tone for the GAD group, as well as higher negative affect levels for both groups. Additionally, prior worry resulted in less physiological and subjective responding to the fearful film clip, and reduced negative affect in response to the sad clip. This suggests that worry may facilitate avoidance of processing negative emotions by way of preventing a negative emotional contrast. Implications for the role of worry in emotion avoidance are discussed. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

12. **Journal Article**  
Do happy faces capture attention? The happiness superiority effect in attentional blink. By Miyazawa, Shihio; Iwasaki, Syoichi Emotion, Vol 10(5), Oct 2010, 712-716. doi: 10.1037/a0019348 This study investigated the influence of positive affect on attentional blink (AB) with schematic faces. Results of Experiment 1 showed that the AB effect was smaller for both upright and inverted positive face icons than other face icons (neutral and angry faces) of corresponding orientations, confirming and extending the results of the earlier study by Mack, Pappas, Silverman, and Gay (2002). Results of Experiment 2 demonstrated that this attenuation of AB was unlikely to be attributable to attentional capture by the happy face. Perceptual saliency is suggested as a likely cause of the effect. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

13. **Magazine**  
Does marriage make us happy? By Munsey, Christopher Monitor on Psychology; 2010; 41(9) [American Psychological Association Public Information and Media Relations; Public Communications]. Opening session keynote speaker and Harvard researcher Daniel Gilbert, PhD, kicked off APA's 2010 convention with his finding that the life goals we strive for don't always make us happy. In the past 20 years, research led by psychologists is shedding light on whether the trifecta of marriage, money and kids does bring happiness, said Gilbert, author of "Stumbling on Happiness" (Knopf, 2006). Highlights from Gilbert's comments on each factor of the marriage/money/children trifecta are provided.

14. **Journal Article**  
Outpatients' ratings of use and efficiency of emotion regulation strategies. By Vikan, Arne; Rugset, Arild; Hassel, Anne Marit Nordic Psychology, Vol 62(3), Oct 2010, 50-66. doi: 10.1027/1901-2276/a000016 100 outpatients diagnosed as anxious and 100 as depressed, and 418 non-clinical participants rated their use and perceived efficiency of each of ten strategies to become happy and 14 strategies to stop being angry, anxious, and sad. Findings suggested a general outpatient problem of regulating emotions at high intensity levels. Examples were that outpatients selected fewer strategies for happiness than non-clients, and rated lower user frequency and strategy efficiency for strategies both for happiness and negative emotions. Differences were, moreover, shown both for strategies which could be associated with psychiatric symptoms and for those which could not. Specific factors in emotion regulation were suggested by outpatients' more frequent rating of avoidance, entertainment, and waiting for the emotion to pass to stop negative emotions, and by strategies which seemed to be associated with psychiatric diagnosis and emotion type. Thus, outpatients may also have problems related to their use of specific strategies for specific emotions. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)
15. **Journal Article**  
*Differentiation in preschooer's categories of emotion.*  
By Widen, Sherri C.; Russell, James A.  
Two studies (N = 68, ages 2;0–3;11; N = 80, ages 2;6–4;11) explore the idea that, rather than starting with a separate mental category for each discrete emotion, children start with two broad categories (positive and negative) and then differentiate within each until adult-like categories form. Children generated emotion labels for (a) facial expressions or (b) stories about an emotion's cause and consequence. Emotions included were happiness, anger, fear, sadness, and disgust. Both conditions yielded the predicted pattern of differentiation. These studies of younger children found the face more powerful in eliciting correct emotion labels than had prior research, which typically relied on older preschoolers. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

16. **Journal Article**  
*Implicit affective cues and attentional tuning: An integrative review.*  
By Friedman, Ronald S.; Förster, Jens  
A large and growing number of studies support the notion that arousing positive emotional states expand, and that arousing negative states constrict, the scope of attention on both the perceptual and conceptual levels. However, these studies have predominantly involved the manipulation or measurement of conscious emotional experiences (e.g., subjective feelings of happiness or anxiety). This raises the question: Do cues that are merely associated with benign versus threatening situations but do not elicit conscious feelings of positive or negative emotional arousal independently expand or contract attentional scope? Integrating theoretical advances in affective neuroscience, positive psychology, and social cognition, the authors propose that rudimentary intero- and exteroceptive stimuli may indeed become associated with the onset of arousing positive or negative emotional states and/or with appraisals that the environment is benign or threatening and thereby come to moderate the scope of attention in the absence of conscious emotional experience. Specifically, implicit “benign situation” cues are posited to broaden, and implicit “threatening situation” cues to narrow, the range of both perceptual and conceptual attentional selection. An extensive array of research findings involving a diverse set of such implicit affective cues (e.g., enactment of approach and avoidance behaviors, incidental exposure to colors signaling safety vs. danger) is marshaled in support of this proposition. Potential alternative explanations for and moderators of these attentional tuning effects, as well as their higher level neuropsychological underpinnings, are also discussed along with prospective extensions to a range of other situational cues and domains of social cognitive processing. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

17. **Journal Article**  
*Imagined positive emotions and inhibitory control: The differentiated effect of pride versus happiness.*  
By Katzir, Maayan; Eyal, Tal; Meiran, Nachshon; Kessler, Yoav  
Inhibitory control is a cognitive mechanism that contributes to successful self-control (i.e., adherence to a long-term goal in the face of an interfering short-term goal). This research explored the effect of imagined positive emotional events on inhibition. The authors proposed that the influence of imagined emotions on inhibition depends on whether the considered emotion corresponds to the attainment of a long-term goal (i.e., pride) or a short-term goal (i.e., happiness). The authors predicted that in an antisaccade task that requires inhibition of a distractor, imagining a happiness-eliciting event is likely to harm inhibitory processes compared with imagining a pride-eliciting event, because the former but not the latter primes interfering short-term goals. The results showed that imagining a happiness-eliciting event decreased inhibition relative to imagining a pride-eliciting event. The results suggest a possible mechanism underlying the role of imagined positive emotions in pursuit of goals that require self-control. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

18. **Journal Article**  
*The transition to parenthood and well-being: The impact of partner status and work hour transitions.*  
By Keizer, Renske; Dykstra, Pearl A.; Poortman, Anne-Rigt  
Using data from the first two waves of the Netherlands Kinship Panel Study for 338 women and 262 men, we examine the consequences of
making the transition to parenthood for life satisfaction, loneliness, positive affect, negative affect, and partnership satisfaction. We extend previous work by taking transitions in partner status and work hours into account. Results show a moderate impact of becoming a parent on well-being. In so far as effects of making the transition to parenthood emerge, they are attributable to changes in partner status and work hours. First, the decrease in negative affect upon making the transition to motherhood is attributable to the group of women who increase their working hours. Second, the detrimental impact of making the transition to motherhood on partnership satisfaction is attributable to the group of new mothers who quit their job. Third, the detrimental impact of making the transition to fatherhood on loneliness is attributable to the group of new fathers who become married. There is one exception to this pattern of partner status and work hours as mechanisms for changes in well-being. Men who become fathers remain less satisfied with their partnership, even when transitions in partner status and work hours have been taken into account. In the discussion-section, we consider the possible underestimation of negative effects because of the focus on the continuously partnered. We also reflect on our results in the light of the high incidence of part-time work in the Netherlands and Dutch policies aimed at supporting new parents. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

Participants viewed “hybrid” faces that showed a facial expression (anger, fear, happiness, or sadness) only in the lowest spatial frequency (1–6 cycles/image), which was blended with the same face’s neutral expression in the rest of the bandwidth (7–128 cycles/image). Participants rated the portrayed persons (compared to neutral images) as “friendly” when the lowest spatial frequencies showed a positive expression and “unfriendly” when the lowest spatial frequencies showed negative expressions. In contrast, the same hybrid images were explicitly judged as neutral and their “hidden” emotional expressions could not be explicitly recognized, as also confirmed by d′ sensitivity measures. Finally, one patient (SS) who had the left anterior temporal lobe surgically resected (including the amygdala), failed to show the above described unconscious effects on friendliness judgments when viewing “afraid” and “sad” hybrid faces. We conclude that the lowest spatial frequencies of facial expressions can evoke “core” emotions without knowledge or awareness of a specific emotion but these core emotions can convey a clear “impression” of a person’s character. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

The Gallup World Poll, the first representative sample of planet Earth, was used to explore the reasons why happiness is associated with higher income, including the meeting of basic needs, fulfillment of psychological needs, increasing satisfaction with one’s standard of living, and public goods. Across the globe, the association of log income with subjective well-being was linear but convex with raw income, indicating the declining marginal effects of income on subjective well-being. Income was a moderately strong predictor of life evaluation but a much weaker predictor of positive and negative feelings. Possessing luxury conveniences and satisfaction with standard of living were also strong predictors of life evaluation. Although the meeting of basic and psychological needs mediated the effects of income on life evaluation to some degree, the strongest mediation was provided by standard of living and ownership of conveniences. In contrast, feelings were most associated with the fulfillment of psychological needs: learning, autonomy, using one’s skills, respect, and the ability to count on others in an emergency. Thus, two separate types of prosperity—economic and social psychological—best predict different types of well-being. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

We examined whether accuracy of affective forecasting for significant life events was moderated by a theoretically relevant individual
difference (anxious attachment), with different expected relations to predicted and actual happiness. In 3 studies (2 cross-sectional, 1 longitudinal), participants predicted what their happiness would be after entering or ending a romantic relationship. Consistent with previous research, people were generally inaccurate forecasters. However, inaccuracy for entering a relationship was significantly moderated by anxious attachment. Predictions were largely unrelated to anxious attachment, but actual happiness was negatively related to attachment anxiety. Moderation for breaking up showed a similar but less consistent pattern. These results suggest a failure to account for one's degree of anxious attachment when making affective forecasts and show how affective forecasting accuracy in important life domains may be moderated by a focally relevant individual difference, with systematically different associations between predicted and actual happiness. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

22. Journal Article  
**What's love got to do with it? Social functioning, perceived health, and daily happiness in married octogenarians.**  
By Waldinger, Robert J.; Schulz, Marc S.  
Psychology and Aging, Vol 25(2), Jun 2010, 422-431. doi: [10.1037/a0019087](http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0019087)  
This study examined day-to-day links between perceived health and happiness and between time spent with others and happiness in 47 older adult couples over an 8-day period. Marital satisfaction and time spent with others were explored as potential moderators of links between health and happiness. For both men and women, hierarchical linear modeling revealed daily links between more time spent with others and greater happiness. Daily links between time spent with one's partner and happiness were strongly moderated by marital satisfaction. For both men and women, marital satisfaction buffered day-to-day links between poorer perceived health and a decline in happiness, but time spent with others did not. This study provides support for the role of marital satisfaction in protecting older adults' happiness from daily fluctuations in perceived physical health and for the influence of social connections in promoting happiness in the lives of older adults. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

23. Magazine  
**Stumbling on happiness**  
By Clay, Rebecca A.  
Monitor on Psychology; 2010; 41(5)  
[American Psychological Association Public Information and Media Relations; Public Communications].  
This article presents an interview with Dr. Daniel Gilbert of Harvard University, regarding his book "Stumbling on Happiness" (Knopf, 2006). Dr. Gilbert, the keynote speaker at the 2010 APA annual convention, discusses how his research on predicting one's happiness changed his own life.

24. Journal Article  
**Are health and happiness the product of wisdom? The relationship of general mental ability to educational and occupational attainment, health, and well-being.**  
By Judge, Timothy A.; Ilies, Remus; Dimotakis, Nikolaos  
This study tested a structural model explaining the effects of general mental ability on economic, physical, and subjective well-being. A model was proposed that linked general mental ability to well-being using education, unhealthy behaviors (smoking and excessive drinking), occupational prestige, and health as mediating variables. The sample consisted of 398 individuals, from whom measures were collected across 4 periods. The results supported a model that includes direct and indirect (through unhealthy behaviors and occupational prestige) links from mental ability to physical well-being (i.e., health) and economic well-being. Furthermore, the results supported the relationships of economic well-being and physical well-being to subjective well-being. Overall, the study underscores the importance of general mental ability to work and nonwork outcomes, including physical, economic, and psychological well-being. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

25. Magazine  
**In Brief**  
Monitor on Psychology; 2010; 41(5)  
[American Psychological Association Public Information and Media Relations; Public Communications].  
This section of the Monitor presents brief synopses of research studies that investigated the following topics: video game violence; natural schoolroom lighting; experiential purchases and happiness; pigeon intelligence; amyloid beta; stress and attraction; spanking; marketing to children; the Affective States Questionnaire; and boredom.

26. The voluntary control of facial action units in adults.  
By Gosselin, Pierre; Perron, Mélanie; Beaupré, Martin  
Emotion, Vol 10(2), Apr 2010, 266-271. doi: [10.1037/a0017748](http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0017748)  
We investigated adults' voluntary control of 20 facial action units theoretically associated with 6 basic emotions (happiness, fear,
anger, surprise, sadness, and disgust). Twenty young adults were shown video excerpts of facial action units and asked to reproduce them as accurately as possible. Facial Action Coding System (FACS; Ekman & Friesen, 1978a) coding of the facial productions showed that young adults succeeded in activating 18 of the 20 target action units, although they often coactivated other action units. Voluntary control was clearly better for some action units than for others, with a pattern of differences between action units consistent with previous work in children and adolescents. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

27. Journal Article  The impact of facial emotional expressions on behavioral tendencies in women and men. By Seidel, Eva-Maria; Habel, Ute; Kirschner, Michaela; Gur, Ruben C.; Derntl, Birgit  Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance, Vol 36(2), Apr 2010, 500-507. doi: 10.1037/a0018169  Emotional faces communicate both the emotional state and behavioral intentions of an individual. They also activate behavioral tendencies in the perceiver, namely approach or avoidance. Here, we compared more automatic motor to more conscious rating responses to happy, sad, angry, and disgusted faces in a healthy student sample. Happiness was associated with approach and anger with avoidance. However, behavioral tendencies in response to sadness and disgust were more complex. Sadness produced automatic approach but conscious withdrawal, probably influenced by interpersonal relations or personality. Disgust elicited withdrawal in the rating task, whereas no significant tendency emerged in the joystick task, probably driven by expression style. Based on our results, it is highly relevant to further explore actual reactions to emotional expressions and to differentiate between automatic and controlled processes because emotional faces are used in various kinds of studies. Moreover, our results highlight the importance of gender of poser effects when applying emotional expressions as stimuli. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

28. Magazine  Famous psychologists share their top reads, Web sites and more  By Chamberlin, J. gradPSYCH; 2010; 8(2) [American Psychological Association]. This brief article provides a list of famed Happiness researcher Sonja Lyubomirksy's favorite books.

29. Journal Article Age - related changes in detecting happiness: Discriminating between enjoyment and nonenjoyment smiles. By Slessor, Gillian; Miles, Lynden K.; Bull, Rebecca; Phillips, Louise H. Psychology and Aging, Vol 25(1), Mar 2010, 246-250. doi: 10.1037/a0018248  The present study investigated age-related changes in the ability to discriminate between distinctions in the emotion underlying enjoyment and nonenjoyment smiles, both when making explicit decisions about feelings of happiness and when making social judgments of approachability. No age differences were found in the ability to discriminate between these two types of smile. However, older adults demonstrated a greater bias toward reporting that any smiling individual was feeling happy. Older adults were also more likely to choose to approach an individual who was displaying a nonenjoyment smile. Implications of these findings for older adults' interpersonal functioning are discussed. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

30. Newsletter  Issues Matter  By Heitner, Keri The Feminist Psychologist; 2010; 37(1) [American Psychological Association Division 35 (Society for the Psychology of Women)]. Economists Betsey Stevenson and Justin Wolfers (2009) examined potential explanations for the trend of women’s declining happiness. Stevenson and Wolfers documented the absolute and relative decline in women's subjective happiness across demographic groups and in the industrialized world. They noted that, within a standard economic framework, women's expanded opportunities should have increased their well-being, contrary to current reports. This newsletter article provides more details about the study results.

31. Clinical Trial Interpersonal and Social Rhythm Therapy for Adolescents With Bipolar Disorder  By Hlastala, Stefanie (Other) [US Department of Health and Human Services National Institute of Mental Health]. Bipolar disorder is a brain disorder that causes dramatic changes in a person's mood and energy. Bipolar spectrum disorders, including bipolar I, II, and not-otherwise-specified (NOS) disorders, usually form in late adolescence or early adulthood and require treatment for the rest of a person's life. People with a bipolar spectrum disorder undergo periods of extreme happiness and extreme sadness, known as episodes of mania and depression. Psychotherapy has proven an effective adjunct treatment to medications for people
with bipolar disorder. Interpersonal and social rhythm therapy (IPSRT) is a specific type of psychotherapy that focuses on improving problems in interpersonal relationships that are related to a person's symptoms. Researchers believe that IPSRT helps people have more regular patterns of sleep, eating, and other activities that act to set a person's biological clock. This clinical trial seeks to specifically adapt IPSRT to the developmental needs of adolescents and will determine the effectiveness of this approach in treating adolescents with a bipolar spectrum disorder.

32. **Journal Article** *Feelings and perceptions of happiness and sadness induced by music: Similarities, differences, and mixed emotions.* By Hunter, Patrick G.; Schellenberg, E. Glenn; Schimmack, Ulrich Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts, Vol 4(1), Feb 2010, 47-56. doi: 10.1037/a0016873 The authors examined similarities and differences between (1) listeners’ perceptions of emotions conveyed by 30-s pieces of music and (2) their emotional responses to the same pieces. Using identical scales, listeners rated how happy and how sad the music made them feel, and the happiness and the sadness expressed by the music. The music was manipulated to vary in tempo (fast or slow) and mode (major or minor). Feeling and perception ratings were highly correlated but perception ratings were higher than feeling ratings, particularly for music with consistent cues to happiness (fast-major) or sadness (slow-minor), and for sad-sounding music in general. Associations between the music manipulations and listeners’ feelings were mediated by their perceptions of the emotions conveyed by the music. Happiness ratings were elevated for fast-tempo and major-key stimuli, sadness ratings were elevated for slow-tempo and minor-key stimuli, and mixed emotional responses (higher happiness and sadness ratings) were elevated for music with mixed cues to happiness and sadness (fast-minor or slow-major). Listeners also exhibited ambivalence toward sad-sounding music. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

33. **Journal Article** *Recognition of wives’ emotional expressions: A mechanism in the relationship between psychopathology and intimate partner violence perpetration.* By Marshall, Amy D.; Holtzworth-Munroe, Amy Journal of Family Psychology, Vol 24(1), Feb 2010, 21-30. doi: 10.1037/a0017952 Among a community sample of 88 couples, husbands’ emotion recognition skills were examined as a mechanism accounting for the relationships between two dimensions of psychopathology that commonly describe violent husbands (i.e., borderline/dysphoric and psychopathic personality characteristics) and their perpetration of intimate partner violence (IPV). Husbands’ diminished sensitivity to their wives’ expressions of happiness partially mediated the relationship between their borderline/dysphoric characteristics and their IPV perpetration, supporting Dutton’s (1995) theory of IPV. These relationships were specific to expressions displayed by husbands’ wives (as opposed to unfamiliar men and women), demonstrating the significance of the intimate relationship. Partial support was found for Blair’s (1995) violence inhibition mechanism model, such that husbands’ IPV was associated with their diminished sensitivity to expressions of fear and their psychopathy was associated with misidentifying fearful expressions as neutral. However, the strength of husbands’ diminished sensitivity to fear as a mediator of the psychopathy–IPV relationship was suboptimal. Moreover, sensitivity to wives’ expressions of happiness also mediated the psychopathy–IPV relationship, potentially because of overlap in psychopathology constructs or inadequate examination of the temporal specificity of the two theories tested. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

34. **Review-Book** *Review of Revitalizing retirement: Reshaping your identity, relationships, and purpose.* By Pushkar, Dolores; Bye, Dorothea Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne, Vol 51(1), Feb 2010, 71-72. doi: 10.1037/a0018316 Reviews the book, Revitalizing retirement: Reshaping your identity, relationships, and purpose by Nancy K. Schlossberg (2009). Therapists, counsellors, and life coaches working with older middle-age adults will find this handbook to happiness in retirement a useful working tool. The author introduces the book by stating that some content resembles notes she resurrected from a freshman undergraduate lecture on personal development; accordingly, both the format and the issues discussed in this book generalise to life span motivational needs, but the intended focus is on the transition to retirement. As a result, this book would make a useful tool for a support group or workshop on psychosocial transitions in postemployment life, with some limitations. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)
35. **Newsletter**  *Do individuals who have recovered from depression still have difficulty perceiving happy emotional faces?*  Clinician's Research Digest; 2010; 28(2) [American Psychological Association].

According to a recent study, the answer to the question posed is yes. Previous research has indicated that adults experiencing major depression may have cognitive biases that impair their ability to process social and emotional cues. These studies have shown that currently depressed adults have difficulty labeling and recognizing facial expressions. This research has not been extended to those who have a history of recurrent depression without current depression. This current study included 39 participants who had recovered from recurrent major depression (RMD) and 56 controls (CTL). Participants completed a negative mood induction and then a facial morphing task that required them to label angry, sad, and happy expressions as quickly as possible. The authors hypothesized that the RMD participants would require greater emotional intensity in the facial expression prior to accurate labeling of the emotion. The results of this study indicated that while RMD and CTL participants did not differ significantly on the intensity required to label sad or angry faces, they did differ significantly on happy faces.

36. **Newsletter**  *Many unhealthy people remain happy because they adapt to their medical conditions*  Research Activities; 2010; No. 354 [US Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality].  Medical conditions that disrupt daily life, notably debilitating pain and urinary incontinence, are linked to unhappiness. However, less disruptive conditions do not necessarily sow discontent, according to a new study. Kenneth G. Saag, M.D., M.Sc., and colleagues at the University of Alabama at Birmingham delved into the relationship between health and happiness by surveying 383 adults aged 50 and older from primary care practices in Alabama. Surprisingly, of the patients who rated themselves as unhealthy, many still considered themselves to be happy. The authors suggest that unhealthy but happy patients may have adapted to their illnesses or may have offset unhappiness by gaining more enjoyment from family and work. This newsletter article provides more findings and perspective.


When it comes to spending disposable income, experiential purchases tend to make people happier than material purchases (Van Boven & Gilovich, 2003). But why are experiences more satisfying? We propose that the evaluation of experiences tends to be less comparative than that of material possessions, such that potentially invidious comparisons have less impact on satisfaction with experiences than with material possessions. Support for this contention was obtained in 8 studies. We found that participants were less satisfied with their material purchases because they were more likely to ruminate about unchosen options (Study 1); that participants tended to maximize when selecting material goods and satisifice when selecting experiences (Study 2); that participants examined unchosen material purchases more than unchosen experiential purchases (Study 3); and that, relative to experiences, participants’ satisfaction with their material possessions was undermined more by comparisons to other available options (Studies 4 and 5A), to the same option at a different price (Studies 5B and 6), and to the purchases of other individuals (Study 5C). Our results suggest that experiential purchase decisions are easier to make and more conducive to well-being. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)


In “Freud, Civilization, Religion, and Stoicism” Douglas Kirsner (2006a) writes of the neglect in the psychoanalytical literature of mention of “Freud’s debt to stoicism”. His essay, he adds, is an attempt to “develop the idea of Freud as a stoic still further”. What does it mean to say that Freud is, at least to some degree, a Stoic and that he owes a debt to them? If a debt exists, it exists because there are numerous striking similarities that show a direct or significant influence of the Stoics on Freud. In this commentary, I show that the similarities Kirsner notes are indirect and, most importantly, insignificant. Freud is not in any meaningful sense a Stoic and, thus, he owes no debt to them. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)


Reviews the book, Self-help in mental health: A critical review by T. Mark Harwood and
Luciano L’Abate (see record 2009-25136-000). In this book, the authors provide a self-service menu that describes the options, benefits, pitfalls, uses, and conditions in which mental health self-help can be of use and misuse, along with the supporting research for each case. This book is an information-packed reference volume for the mental health practitioner that provides a wealth of material on self-help resources and the research-based strengths and weaknesses of each as applied to just about all of the common mental health diagnoses, with a few of the more common medical diagnoses thrown in. As a bonus, the authors develop a theory of relational competence for self-help, along with 16 models. Self-Help in Mental Health provides bibliotherapy sources, manualized treatments, support group formats, and Internet/website links to assist the practitioner in offering guided self-help to consumers. It is a quality reference, but the cost might be prohibitive to some. In addition, the book is directed at a professional audience and is unlikely to be found in the self-help section of your local bookstore any time soon, so you may have to use other sources to “help your inner child get the love you deserve while taking 12 steps and stumbling upon happiness.” (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

40. Conference Abstract  Promotion of Happiness and Life Satisfaction in Children  By Bray, Melissa A.; McCabe, Kelly; Kehle, Thomas J. [American Psychological Association]. The purpose of this article was to examine the enduring effects of an intervention designed to promote happiness, positive affect, and life satisfaction in middle school students. The results showed that students in the experimental group would have had significant increases in happiness, positive affect and life satisfaction and significant decreases in negative affect.

41. Conference Presentation  Getting Happy: Thinking Positively Versus Surfing the Net Versus Shopping  By Carducci, Bernardo J. [American Psychological Association]. This conference presentation summarizes the author's study that examined the cognitively based "looking-on-the-positive-side-of-things" self-selected strategy for enhancing one's happiness along with the behaviorally based self-selected strategies of "surfing the net" and "going shopping," two other strategies commonly associated with popular wisdom for enhancing one's happiness. Results suggest that surfing the net and going shopping seem to have a much weaker and more limited relationship with self-reported happiness that focused on present states of happiness. A discussion of future research to be presented as part of the poster presentation include a further examination of the gender differences in the use of self-selected happiness enhancement strategies and additional research examining other specific self-selected strategies commonly associated with popular wisdom for happiness enhancement, such as self-medication vs. helping others, with the three strategies investigated in the present study.

42. Review-Book  Psychology’s validation of Aristotle’s good life.  By Daniels, Jeffrey A. PsycCRITIQUES, Vol 55(10), 2010, No Pagination Specified. doi: 10.1037/a0019030 Reviews the book, The psychology of happiness: A good human life by Samuel S. Franklin (see record 2009-19687-000). In this book, Franklin reviews the thinking of great philosophers to define happiness and how people may go about pursuing (and hopefully attaining) it. These ideas are then examined from the lens of psychology. In particular, he details Aristotle’s notion of virtue, which is the vehicle by which we may attain happiness. Each component of Aristotle’s virtue is then related back to the great thinkers of psychology and, at times, to empirical support. True happiness is what Aristotle termed eudaimonia, or living well. It is not seeking pleasure, wealth, or even fulfillment. Rather, eudaimonia is similar to Carl Rogers’s notion of actualizing one’s full potential. In his book, Franklin addresses several topics related to happiness, including living a virtuous life, positive emotions, emotional intelligence, and the development of eudaimonia. Moreover, Franklin discusses the importance of other people and institutions in the development of happiness, including schools and the polis (roughly, the government). Finally, Franklin discusses religion and contemplation as pathways to happiness. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

43. Conference Abstract  Emotion Regulation Strategies for Anger and Happiness in Mexican Children  By De Ortega, Hilda M. Fernandez [American Psychological Association]. The main purpose of our study was to characterize the emotion regulation strategies for two emotions, anger and happiness.

44. Conference Abstract  Virtue Ethics, Eudaimonia, and Human Sociality  By Fowers, Blaine J. [American
Psychological Association]. This conference abstract summarizes a paper presentation that argues that eudaimonia is central to virtue ethics. It also discusses the importance of human sociality to eudaimonia and virtue. Brief conclusions are discussed in relation to eudaimonia not being treated as an individual phenomenon.

45. Review-Book  **The recursive nature of positivity.** By Furey, Robert PsycCRITIQUES, Vol 55(8), 2010, No Pagination Specified. doi: 10.1037/a0018524 Reviews the book, Positive psychology and family therapy: Creative techniques and practical tools for guiding change and enhancing growth by Collie Wyatt Conoley and Jane Close Conoley (see record 2009-05960-000). In this book, the authors apply recent advances in positive psychology to family work. While positive psychology offers a growing set of strategies to the family therapy repertoire, its primary influence may be toward shaping the goals of family treatments. These goals include the achievement of a positive state such as happiness, peace, or intimacy. The book is a relatively brief overview of the integration of systems theory and positive psychology. Its apparent intent is to introduce readers to the opportunities that arise as systems theory and positive psychology move to influence each other. Yet its brevity handicaps this intent. Important constructs such as equifinality and recursive interaction are introduced quickly. The overview of systems theory also lacks a depth that would help readers not familiar with this approach. The book's greatest success, however, may be that it generates enthusiasm for the topic. Its argument for the value of positive family therapy is, ultimately, persuasive. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

46. Conference Abstract  **Happiness, Life Satisfaction, and Personality Disorders: Subjective Well - Being and Alexithymia** By Holder, Mark D.; Love, Ashley B.; Timoney, Linden R. [American Psychological Association]. This conference abstract summarizes a study that examined the relationship between alexithymia and happiness in undergraduate students. A brief conclusion discusses how this research is the first to apply research in positive psychology to populations with affective disorders.

47. Conference Abstract  **Relationships Between Happiness and Religious Faith, Social Support, Marital Satisfaction, Economic Status, and Physical Health** By Jan, Nadia S. Siraj [American Psychological Association]. The purpose of the present study was to explore the relationships between subjective happiness and religious faith, social support, marital satisfaction, economic status, and physical health.

48. Review-Book  **The beginnings of a meaningful dialogue.** By Kosits, Russell D. PsycCRITIQUES, Vol 55(42), 2010, No Pagination Specified. doi: 10.1037/a0020805 Reviews the book, Meaning in life and why it matters by Susan Wolf (see record 2010-05811-000). Given the unfortunate (but arguably necessary) divorce of psychology from philosophy more than a century ago, books like Meaning in Life and Why It Matters, which allow for dialogue between these disciplines, are a much-needed and much-welcomed development. The core of the book is a 63-page philosophical essay by Susan Wolf, followed by brief comments by three philosophers (John Koethe, Robert M. Adams, and Nomy Arpaly) and one psychologist (Jonathan Haidt), which are, in turn, followed by Wolf’s response. Wolf’s essay is a psychologically sophisticated philosophical argument on the structure, reality, and importance of meaningfulness in life. Its psychological sophistication lies not in her mastery of any particular empirical literature but rather in her attentiveness to normal, everyday intuitions and feelings. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

49. Review-Book  **“Whistling in hell,” or how one manages to redefine the indefinable.** By Lawlor, Clare S. PsycCRITIQUES, Vol 55(48), 2010, No Pagination Specified. doi: 10.1037/a0021561 Reviews the book, Survivors: What we can learn from how they cope with horrific tragedy by Gregory K. Moffatt (see record 2010-06871-000). Integrated within the stories is the ongoing discussion of trauma, coping strategies, and resiliency. Moffatt describes resilient survivors as those whose internal locus of control assists in expanding their coping strategies. Important to survival are the survivor’s pretrauma existential meaning base, his or her belief in happiness, and the virtues of humility, gratitude, hope, forgiveness, and optimism. These elements function as the bases for survival. In combination with protective factors and the posttrauma environment, these assets lead to the increased resiliency exhibited by some survivors of horrific abuse. Moffatt describes seven strategies of survival gleaned from those persons interviewed for his book. Among these strategies are
forgiveness, gratitude, self-reliance, and a stubborn will to survive. He suggests that those who do not survive easily are prone to accept seven lies that prevent their growth. Moffatt’s faith tradition is evident as a subtext in his writing. Perhaps if he writes a Volume 2, it will focus on the cognitive and affective explorations of this existential struggle, which is often couched in terms of client traumatization and therapist vicarious traumatization. I suggest that Moffatt further develop this discussion by surfacing the religious and spiritual substrate he hints at, making it more identifiable and accessible and thereby more clearly and honestly presented in the context of the survivors’ full experiences. The fuller emergence of his thought will allow his readers to more fully “get it.” (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

50. Conference Abstract  **Happiness, Life Satisfaction, and Psychopathy**  By Love, Ashley B.; Holder, Mark D. [American Psychological Association]. This conference abstract summarizes a study that assessed psychopathy and subjective and well-being in undergraduate students. The study is one of the first attempts to apply research in positive psychology to populations with affective disorders.

51. **Development of Resilience Measurement Scale for Elderly People and Its Qualitative Study**  By Nakamura, Kazuhiro [American Psychological Association]. This conference presentation summarizes a study whose purpose was to develop a measurement scale for elderly people’s resilience and to confirm its validity and reliability. Three factors ("Problem-solving skills and self understanding", "Optimism" and "Affirmative reception of life") and 14 items were selected as valid elements after a factor analysis was made. The internal consistency and the validity of resilience scale for elderly people were confirmed. The study also confirmed that resilience is related to mental health, hope, psychosocial development and subjective happiness.

52. Review-Book  **Understanding human development**  By O'Donnell, Susan L. PsycCRITIQUES, Vol 55(34), 2010, No Pagination Specified. doi: 10.1037/a0020597 Reviews the book, Heredity and environment in 300 adoptive families: The Texas Adoption Project by Joseph M. Horn and John C. Loehlin (see record 2009-17165-000). This book is an important contribution to the field of psychology. As it summarizes 35 years of research in one volume, it has a distinct advantage of being able to provide breadth and depth to the understandings garnered from this unique research project. Separate chapters cover the basic history and design of the project as well as the findings regarding intellectual abilities, personality, and long-term outcomes. I highly recommend this book for a wide audience of educated readers. It makes an important and timely contribution to our understanding of genetic and environmental influences on different aspects of human behavior, and it is careful to keep its claims fixed in the framework of the research as it was actually done. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

53. Review-Book  **Pursuing happiness, sadly**  By Reiss, David M. PsycCRITIQUES, Vol 55(42), 2010, No Pagination Specified. doi: 10.1037/a0021210 Reviews the book, The politics of happiness: What government can learn from the new research on well-being by Derek Bok (see record 2010-06075-000). The author has written an excellent treatise that essentially deconstructs “the new research on well-being.” Bok discusses multiple sociopolitical issues (mostly, but not limited to, the economic realm), in an attempt to correlate policy decisions with measurements of public happiness and well-being. Ironically, just as he describes the conclusions of much of the literature on personal happiness, he provides an objective description of the serious problems and inconsistencies within the field while maintaining a rather surprising subjective sense of optimism. The Politics of Happiness ponders “what government can learn from the new research on well-being.” (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

54. Conference Abstract  **Heidegger's Theory of Joy: Implications for a Cultural - - Existential Therapy**  By Robbins, Brent D. [American Psychological Association]. This article describes Heidegger’s Theory of Joy as an authentic mood that, like anxiety, brings human beings before their authentic ability-to-be.

55. Journal Article  **Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA - IS): Adaptation and validation of the German version and the development of a peer - rating form**  By Ruch, Willibald; Prorer, René T.; Harzer, Claudia; Park, Nansook; Peterson, Christopher; Seligman, Martin E. P. Journal of Individual Differences, Vol 31(3), 2010, 138-149. doi: 10.1027/1614-0001/a000022 The Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS; Peterson, Park, & Seligman, 2005a) is an English-language self-report questionnaire that measures 24 widely-valued character strengths. The present paper describes the creation and adaptation of
extend the intellectual reach of the field of human factors by expounding on and exploring the future of technology symbiosis by Peter A. Hancock (see record [2009-17989-000]). Traditionally, for a profession to become important, it must develop a core philosophy. The field of human factors has not completed this process, borrowing results and methods from other disciplines. Peter Hancock has set out to remedy this situation with this book. Just as tools and technology extend a human’s reach, Hancock’s book aims to extend the intellectual reach of the field of human factors by expounding on and exploring the future of

56. Journal Article  Ways to happiness in German - speaking countries: The adaptation of the German version of the orientations to happiness questionnaire in paper - pencil and internet samples. By Ruch, Willibald; Harzer, Claudia; Proyer, René T.; Park, Nansook; Peterson, Christopher European Journal of Psychological Assessment, Vol 26(3), 2010, 227-234. doi: 10.1027/1015-5759/a000030  Peterson, Park, and Seligman (2005) developed the Orientations to Happiness (OTH) questionnaire to measure three routes to happiness: life of pleasure (hedonism), life of engagement (flow) and life of meaning (eudemonia). The questionnaire was translated into German in several steps (independent translations by five experts, creation of the initial version by committee approach, retranslation, modification, and final version). Data were collected in paper-pencil (N = 1,152) and Internet samples (N = 4,174). The OTH scales showed satisfactory internal consistencies (.63 ≤ α ≤ .76) and stability across 6 months (all ≥ .63). The factorial structure of the German OTH was analyzed (RMSEA ≤ .074 and SRMR ≤ .043 for the 3-factor solution) in both samples. Tucker’s Phi coefficients for factorial congruence between the two samples were .99. The three scales were positively intercorrelated. The endorsement of the life of pleasure was higher in younger, unmarried, and nonreligious participants. The life of meaning was more pronounced among the religious participants. There was a good convergence (all > .49) between homologous scale of the self- and peer-form, and the OTH predicted behavior in prototypical pleasure, engagement, and meaning situations. Most importantly, high scores in each of the orientations to happiness corresponded to higher degrees of overall satisfaction with life. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

57. Review-Book  The role of climate and wealth in national well - being. By Stagner, Brian H.  PsycCRITIQUES, Vol 55(1), 2010, No Pagination Specified. doi: 10.1037/a0018356  Reviews the book, Climate, affluence, and culture by Evert Van de Vliert (see record 2009-01826-000). Although the title of this book might suggest it, this is not an alarmist rehash of global warming (i.e., rich cultures need to change in order to spare the planet from certain doom). Instead, it elucidates a theory of how climates and affluence work to shape cultures (which, in turn, shape people and their life satisfaction). The author demonstrates that less wealthy regions that have especially cold winters have lower happiness levels than do poor countries with mild winters; this relationship holds regardless of whether the summers are temperate or extreme. These are bold, refreshing ideas. In an era when much of social thought in America centers on evolutionary psychology, neuroscience, or behavioral economics, Climate, Affluence, and Culture draws our attention to ideas that are currently given cursory attention. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

58. Review-Book  Being human, using tools, and the philosophical foundations of human factors. By Thomas, Jay C.; Noakes, Mark  PsycCRITIQUES, Vol 55(26), 2010, No Pagination Specified. doi: 10.1037/a0019848  Reviews the book, Mind, machine, and morality: Toward a philosophy of human–technology symbiosis by Peter A. Hancock (see record 2009-17989-000). Traditionally, for a profession to become important, it must develop a core philosophy. The field of human factors has not completed this process, borrowing results and methods from other disciplines. Peter Hancock has set out to remedy this situation with this book. Just as tools and technology extend a human’s reach, Hancock’s book aims to extend the intellectual reach of the field of human factors by expounding on and exploring the future of
human–machine interaction. Hancock takes the reader through a variety of stages, covering the evolution of technology, convergence of technology, common structure and function, rethinking allocation of function for technology, the purpose of technological progress, the role of technology in allowing work to be enjoyable and assisting in happiness, and, finally, morality. Each chapter acts as a rung in a ladder, expanding the reader’s intellectual field of view and gradually building upon each preceding thesis until the reader reaches the apex and gasps at what is revealed. The gasp is one of horror as Hancock shows the potential outcomes of misguided technology without morals. Hancock argues that it is not wise for the future of human existence to allow science to continue to be amoral. Science is to be guided with a sense of right and wrong, with an end in mind. Overall, Mind, machine, and morality is a thought-provoking book. The issues it raises are not easily resolved and may be with us for generations. They are important issues and deserve the consideration of thoughtful people. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

59. Review-Book Life, liberty, work, and the pursuit of happiness. By Thomas, Jay C.; Tasker, Tamara E. PsycCRITIQUES, Vol 55(51), 2010. No Pagination Specified. doi: 10.1037/a0022089 Reviews the book, The joy of work? Jobs, happiness, and you by Peter Warr and Guy Clapperton (see record 2009-19825-000). We Americans are taught from an early age that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are inherent rights. Although they are embedded in our Declaration of Independence, can we learn about them from British authors? We believe we can. In his earlier book, Warr pointed out that people do not seek satisfaction; they seek happiness. In fact, we build cultures on happiness, not satisfaction. Building on his prior research and that of many others, Warr identifies the “Top Twelve” features for any job. He and Clapperton begin with the “Needed Nine” external sources of happiness and unhappiness: “personal influence, using your abilities, demands and goals, variety, clear requirements and outlook, social contacts, money, adequate physical setting, and a valued role. Our overall summary is that The joy of work? is an excellent resource for both psychologists and the general public. Readers will need some degree of experience and maturity to benefit fully from reading it and using its suggestions. It would be to put much of it to work in practice, although the psychologist who does so should also consult Warr’s (2007) more technically presented material in his earlier book. Finally, we have noticed that many psychologists have difficulty explaining complex ideas to the public. We recommend the book to students as an example of how to communicate with nonprofessionals. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

60. Conference Abstract Moderating Effect of Individual Differences on Purchases and Happiness By Thomas, Rebecca L.; Millar, Murray G. [American Psychological Association]. This conference abstract summarizes a presentation of findings from a study that examined the moderating impact of materialism on the relationship between discretionary activities (creative activities, experiential purchases, and material purchases) and happiness. It was hypothesized that materialistic persons would associate more happiness with discretionary material purchases and that persons lower in materialism would associate other types of discretionary activity (experiential purchases and creative activity) with happiness. Consistent with the hypothesis, when creative activities were recalled increases in materialism were associated with decreases in happiness, and when material purchases were recalled this association reversed. Contrary to expectations, with experiential purchases (e.g., ski vacations, admissions to a theme park, or tickets to a concert) increases in materialism were not associated with changes in happiness. Instead, experiential purchases were associated with high levels of happiness regardless of the level of materialism. Implications for future research are discussed.

61. Chapter Forms of concern: A psychoanalytic perspective. By Tolmacz, Rami Mikulincer, Mario (Ed); Shaver, Phillip R. (Ed), (2010). Prosocial motives, emotions, and behavior: The better angels of our nature, (pp. 93-107). Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association. xiv, 468 pp. doi: 10.1037/12061-005 In this chapter, I consider the history of the concept of concern in psychoanalysis as a complement to most of the other chapters in this volume, which stem from research by personality and social psychologists. I describe different forms of concern and explain how various psychoanalytic theorists have conceptualized them. Specifically, I discuss Winnicott’s (1963) distinction between guilt-driven concern and joy-driven concern and Bowlby’s (1980) distinction between sensitive caregiving and compulsive caregiving. I also explain how intersubjective approaches to psychoanalysis (e.g., Benjamin, 1988) conceptualize caring attitudes toward others and differentiate forms of concern based on the extent to which self and others are perceived as subjects or objects. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)
62. Conference Abstract  **Favors From Heaven: Sources and Benefits of Gratitude Toward God** By Uhder, Jens; Webber, Amy C.; Watkins, Philip C. [American Psychological Association]. This article explored how gratitude toward God is related to intrinsic versus extrinsic religiousness and to trait gratitude in promoting spiritual well-being and subjective happiness.

63. Conference Abstract  **Adolescence and Autonomy: Hanging Out Has Its Benefits** By Weinkauf, Chris M.; Wampler, Kim [American Psychological Association]. This conference abstract summarizes a presentation that discussed the implications from a study that examined how adolescents' self-reported feelings of happiness, independence, strength and loneliness changed based on their perceived control of the activities in which they participated in.

64. Review-Media  **Finding meaning and happiness while dying of cancer: Lessons on existential positive psychology.** By Wong, Paul T. P.; Gingras, Daniel PsycCRITIQUES, Vol 55(2), 2010, No Pagination Specified. doi: 10.1037/a0018658 Reviews the film, Ikiru by Akira Kurosawa (1952). The 1952 classic film Ikiru is considered Akira Kurosawa’s greatest directorial achievement. The title literally means to live. It is a story about how to live in the face of impending death. It is a dark but life-affirming film, providing a compelling case of existential positive psychology (EPP; Wong, 2009) by exposing the dark side of human existence to awaken us to the potential of authentic meaning and happiness. Ikiru does not give viewers any cinematic elevation (Niemiec & Wedding, 2008); in fact, it is disconcerting and depressing. Yet, in a curious way, Ikiru leads us through an uplifting existential journey of the protagonist’s self-discovery and personal redemption. The film has two parts. The first part addresses the subjective struggles of the main character, Watanabe, and his quest for meaning. It begins with a narrator who informs us that Watanabe has been diagnosed with terminal stomach cancer. The narrator wonders whether the protagonist has simply passed his time without living his life. The second part begins with the narrator announcing Watanabe’s death and funeral wake. This segment consists of flashbacks of people describing how their lives have been affected by Watanabe’s final self-sacrificial act of creating a park from a cesspool. Their testimonies validate the transformation of Watanabe foreshadowed at the end of Part 1. The film ends with an epilogue. Ikiru shows us the process of transforming the terror of dying of cancer into the triumph of authentic living. Akira Kurosawa has created a moving portrait of the universal human struggle for meaning in a harsh and absurd world. As such, it still resonates today. Everyone can benefit from watching and reflecting on Ikiru. This film may be particularly beneficial to those who have been diagnosed with a terminal illness. Ikiru can also be used as a teaching tool for psychologists and those in medical professions. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)