



HAPPINESS

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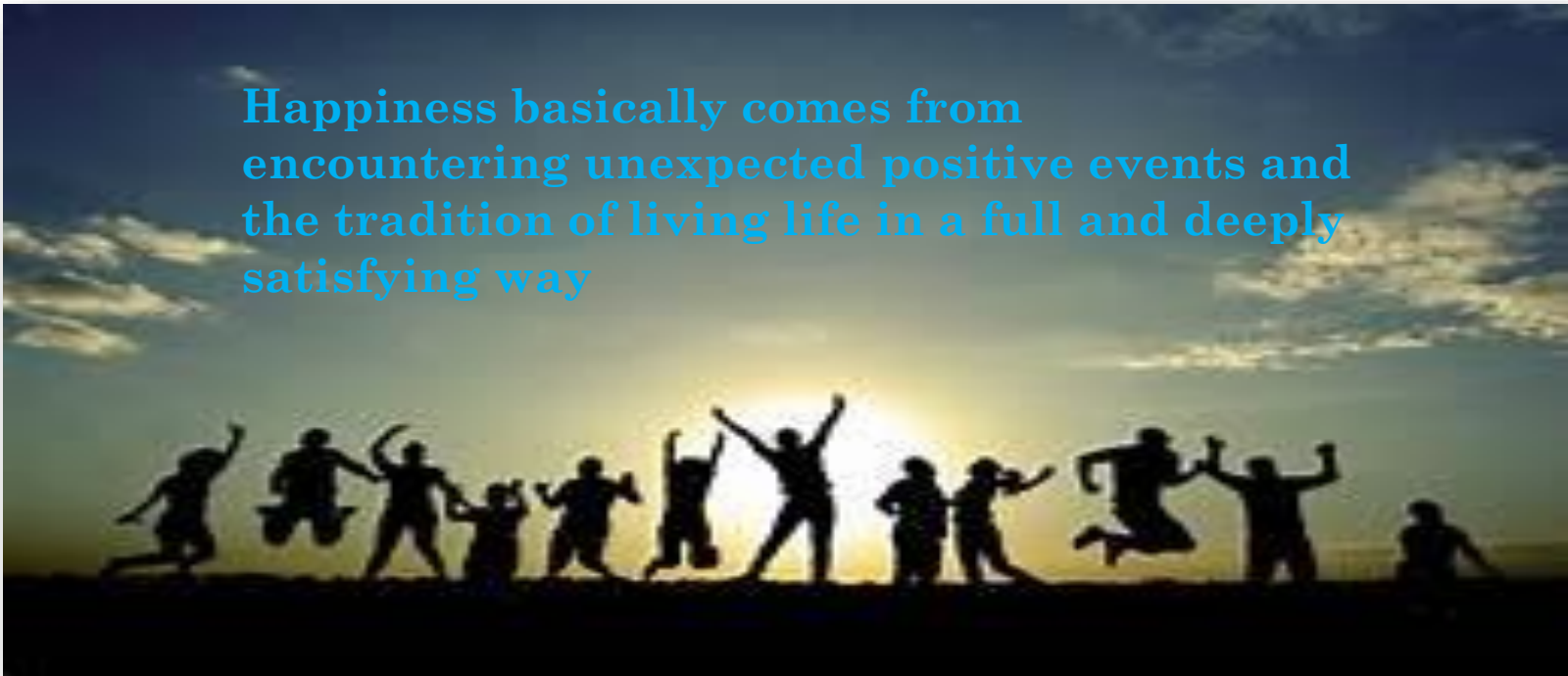


- In **psychology**, **happiness** is a mental or emotional state of well-being which can be **defined** by **positive** or pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy.
- **Happy** mental states may reflect judgements by a person about their overall well-being.



- One of the most encouraging aspects of positive psychology is that **it is possible to develop our capacity for happiness** – approximately 40% is under voluntary control.
- Even a born pessimist can learn to become more optimistic and increase their potential for satisfaction in life.

Happiness basically comes from encountering unexpected positive events and the tradition of living life in a full and deeply satisfying way



WHAT ACCORDING TO YOU IS HAPPINESS?



HAPPINESS AND RELATIONSHIPS

- Diener and Seligman in their study of exceptionally happy people (the upper 10% of 222 college students) found only one main difference between the happiest and the rest of the students.
- The very happy people had a **rich and fulfilling social life**.
- They **spent the least time alone**, had **good relationships** with friends and had a current romantic partner.
- They did not have **fewer negative and more positive events**, nor differed on the amount of sleep, TV watching, exercise, smoking, drinking, etc.



DO YOU THINK RELATIONSHIPS
REFLECT HAPPINESS??



HAPPINESS FORMULA

- *Seligman introduces the happiness formula:*

$$H = S+C+V,$$

where,

- *H stands for **happiness**,*
- *S for a **set range**,*
- *C for the **circumstances** and*
- *V for the factors under **voluntary control**.*

S is a genetically determined level of happiness, which remains relatively stable through the life span and returns to its original point soon after the majority of significant life events. It determines happiness up to about 50%.



C is the *circumstances* we've already considered.

- So, if you want to be happy, get into things that makes you happy, like social relationships, trips, foods, but don't bother about making more money, staying healthy, getting educated or moving to a sunnier climate.
- Finally, factors under *voluntary control* (**V**) refer to intentional and effortful practices a person can choose to engage in (which account for about 40%).



EFFECTS ON WELL-BEING

- Happiness and good health go hand-in-hand.
- Indeed, scientific studies have been finding that happiness can make our hearts healthier, our immune systems stronger, and our lives longer.
- Happiness and health may indeed be a virtuous circle, but researchers are still trying to untangle their relationship.



1. HAPPINESS PROTECTS YOUR HEART

- Love and happiness may not actually originate in the heart, but they are good for it.
- For example, a 2005 paper found that happiness predicts healthy heart rate and blood pressure.
- In the study, participants rated their happiness over 30 times in one day and then again three years later.
- The initially happiest participants had a lower heart rate on follow-up (about six beats slower per minute), and the happiest participants during the follow-up had better blood pressure.



- In a 2010 study, researchers invited nearly 2,000 Canadians into the lab to talk about their anger and stress at work.
- Observers rated them on a scale of one to five for the extent to which they expressed positive emotions like joy, happiness, excitement, enthusiasm, and contentment.
- Ten years later, the researchers checked in with the participants to see how they were doing—and it turned out that the happier ones were less likely to have developed coronary heart disease.
- In fact, for each one-point increase in positive emotions they had expressed, their heart disease risk was 22 percent lower



2. HAPPINESS STRENGTHENS YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

- Research is now finding a link between happiness and a stronger immune system.
- In a 2003 experiment, 350 adults volunteered to get exposed to the common cold.



- Before exposure, researchers called them **six times in two weeks** and asked how much they had experienced **positive emotions**—such as feeling energetic, pleased, and calm—that day.
- After five days in quarantine, the participants with the most positive emotions were less likely to have developed a cold.



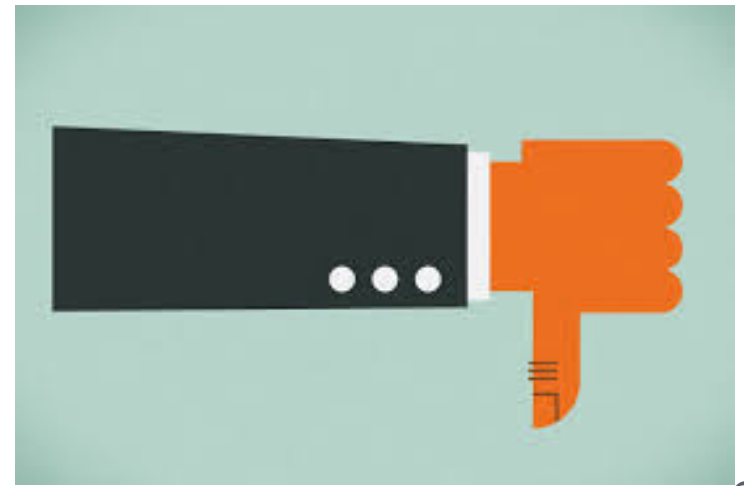
- Another experiment found that **immune system activity in the same individual goes up and down depending on their happiness.**
- For two months, 30 male dental students took pills containing a harmless blood protein from rabbits, which causes an immune response in humans.



- They also rated whether they had experienced various positive moods that day.
- On days when they were happier, participants had a better immune response, as measured by the presence of an antibody in their saliva that defends against foreign substances.



- At the time, mainstream science rejected the idea that any psychological state, positive or negative, could affect physical well-being.



- But studies during the 1980s and early 1990s revealed that ***the brain is directly wired to the immune system*** — portions of the nervous system connect with immune-related organs such as the thymus and bone marrow, and immune cells have receptors for neurotransmitters, suggesting that there is crosstalk.



3. HAPPINESS COMBATS STRESS

- Stress is not only upsetting on a psychological level but also triggers biological changes in our hormones and blood pressure.
- Happiness seems to temper these effects, or at least help us recover more quickly.



- In the study mentioned above, where participants rated their happiness more than 30 times in a day, researchers also found associations between happiness and stress.
- The *happiest participants had 23 percent lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol* than the least happy, and another indicator of stress—the level of a blood-clotting protein that increases after stress—was 12 times lower.



- There are four primary chemicals in the brain that effect happiness: **dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin, and endorphins.**
- By designing gamified experiences that activate these chemicals, you can increase your users' happiness and loyalty.



- Adrenaline increases your heart rate, elevates your blood pressure and boosts energy supplies.
- Cortisol, the primary **stress hormone**, increases sugars (glucose) **in the** bloodstream, enhances your brain's use of glucose and increases the availability of substances that repair tissues.



HAPPINESS BUILDS PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, AND SOCIAL RESOURCES

Positive emotions build the following resources:

- **Physical resources:** People are more playful when they're happy. Part of this comes from the higher self-esteem seen in happy people. In short, happiness translates into physical fitness — stronger muscles, improved heart-lung function, and increased flexibility.

- **Intellectual resources:** People learn better when they're in a positive frame of mind.

- **Social resources:** Human beings gravitate toward positive people and away from negative ones.





Lowers blood pressure:

Blood pressure is often unpredictable, and **a higher blood pressure** can lead to weakening blood vessels, clogged arteries, and even brain damage.

Speeds Recovery From Illness

Positive emotions **boost your immune response**, meaning that antibodies and other immune reactions to a virus or bacteria will work faster and stronger to banish your sickness for good.

Helps Heal Wounds Faster

Few breakthroughs in modern medicine have found a way to quicken the rate of wound healing in patients — but happiness somehow can.



**Focus beyond
self – perform
random acts
of kindness**

**Practice gratitude.
Stop occasionally
to “count your
blessings”**

**Don't compare
yourself with
media stars and
personalities**

**Treat yourself
to a special day,
and savour the
experience**

**Stop & think.
Maybe there is
meaning in life
after all...**

**Consciously
choose your
activities, rather
than going along**

**Join a “movement”
movement. A
sound mind resides
in a sound body**

**Look for new ways
to do something
usual to avoid being
bored**

**Give priority to
close relationships.
It's not the
quantity, it's the
quality that counts**



TWO MAIN THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

- In the pursuit of understanding happiness, there are two main theoretical perspectives which focus on addressing the question of what makes people feel good and happy.
 - These are the hedonic and eudaimonic approaches to happiness



Hedonic wellbeing is based on the notion that increased pleasure and decreased pain leads to happiness.

- Hedonic concepts are based on the notion of subjective wellbeing.
- Subjective well-being is a scientific term that is commonly used to denote the 'happy or good life'.
- It comprises of an affective component (high positive affect and low negative affect) and a cognitive component (satisfaction with life).
- It is proposed that an individual experiences happiness when positive affect and satisfaction with life are both high (Carruthers & Hood, 2004).



- *Eudaimonic wellbeing*, on the other hand, is strongly reliant on Maslow's ideas of self actualisation and Roger's concept of the fully functioning person and their subjective well being.
- Eudaimonic happiness is therefore based on the premise that people feel happy if they experience life purpose, challenges and growth.
- This approach adopts Self-Determination Theory to conceptualise happiness (Keyes et al., 2002; Deci & Ryan, 2000).
- Self determination theory suggests that happiness is related to fulfilment in the areas of autonomy and competence.



- the general consensus is that happiness does not result from the pursuit of pleasure but from the development of individual strengths and virtues which ties in with the concept of positive psychology (Vella-Brodrick, Park & Peterson, 2009).
- The differences between eudaimonic and hedonic happiness are :



Hedonic (Subjective Wellbeing)

- Presence of positive mood
- Absence of negative mood
- Satisfaction with various domains of life (e.g. work, leisure)
- Global life satisfaction



Eudaimonic (Psychological Wellbeing)

- Sense of control
- Feeling of meaning and purpose
- Personal expressiveness
- Feelings of belongingness
- Social contribution
- Competence
- Personal growth
- Self acceptance

