

The Science of Happiness

Psychology 891, Spring 2009

Instructor

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Course Overview

This course will explore the scientific study of happiness. Although people have been interested in this topic since ancient times, happiness has only begun to receive intense empirical attention in recent years. Therefore, this course is framed around questions rather than answers. Each week we will take up a different question about happiness, beginning with questions about its measurement and causes and then moving toward considering the value of happiness for public policy and human life.

Requirements and Evaluation

This class has 5 requirements, as described below:

- 1) *Class Participation* (15% of grade): Discussion is a central component of this class. It is therefore very important that you attend class and participate actively. Chapter 2 of Chris Peterson's textbook is titled "Learning About Positive Psychology: Not a Spectator Sport." This means that in our course we will be learning by doing. Prior to every class, everyone will be expected to complete an assignment in preparation for that class - you are expected to engage in an activity related to the topic.
- 2) *Discussion questions* (15% of grade): Each week, you must submit two discussion questions by 10 am the day before class (i.e., Monday) via email. These discussion questions should be thoughtful responses to the reading, not requests for clarification (although you are welcome to submit clarification questions in addition to your discussion questions). In forming discussion questions, you may want to challenge the conclusions drawn by authors, consider implications of the findings, or relate the readings to other topics.
- 3) *Class facilitation* (20% of grade): About twice during the semester you will serve as a class facilitator (see Info Sheet at the end of the syllabus for additional guidelines).
- 4) *Idea papers* (30% of grade): You will write 3 brief idea papers (2-3 pages each). In each paper, you should propose a study or series of studies related to that week's topic. To generate these studies, you may want to think about (a) an unresolved or overlooked question related to the week's topic, (b) a connection between the week's topic and your own research interests, or (c) a connection between the week's topic and other articles you've read in this course or another course. In each paper, you should briefly introduce the question or hypothesis (tying it to the course readings and any other relevant literature), describe your proposed study and expected results, and identify the broader conclusions that could be drawn from your results. You can choose which weeks to write these papers, but I would strongly recommend that you not wait until the last month of the course to get started. Whenever you write a paper, you should bring it with you to class and be prepared to share your idea with your classmates, who will help you refine it.
- 5) *Debate* (10% of grade): Once during the semester, we will hold a debate regarding hedonic adaptation. The class will be split into two teams, and each team will be assigned a position to defend. In the week before the debate, you will meet with your team to prepare, rather than coming to class. Your entire team will be assigned one grade based on the team's performance; it is possible for both teams to receive high grades (or low grades). This will provide an opportunity not only to learn about adaptation, but also to practice your collaborative teamwork skills.

Class Structure

Each week, two or three students serving as class facilitators will be responsible for completing the recommended reading and teaching this material to the rest of the class. With my help, the facilitators will convey this supplementary material using lectures, demonstrations, and other methods (~20-30 mins). Next, we will discuss everyone's reading questions and experiences with the assignments (~60-90 mins). Finally, during most classes, we will have an Idea Workshop, in which students who have written idea papers that week will briefly share their study proposal with the class and receive feedback and assistance in refining it (~30-40 mins).

Access to Readings

Most readings will be available on ilearn.

- **Week 1: Jan.27: Course Introduction**

- Hyman, R. (1995). How to critique a published article. *Psychological Bulletin*, 118, 178-182.
- Maxwell, S. E., Cole, D. A. (1995). Tips for writing (and reading) methodological articles. *Psychological Bulletin*, 118, 193-198.
- Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2008). Ch. 14: Measuring Your Psychological Wealth. In E. Diener, & R. Biswas-Diener (Eds.). *Happiness: The science of psychological wealth*. Boston: Blackwell Publishing.
- You will rank your top three topics (see below) and decide if you have a preference for partner assignment. Our goal is to assign all the weeks topics.

- Activity

- Complete the AHI, CES-D, PANAS, VIA Classification, gratitude, and life satisfaction, surveys (the long version; www.authentichappiness.org). Before completing it, predict your scores. Was your prediction correct? Why or why not? Explain your gut reaction when you saw your results? What new insights did you gain from this?

- **Week 2: Feb.3: What does “happiness” mean and how can it be measured?**

“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. He will not be searching for happiness as if it were a collar button that has rolled under the radiator. He will not be striving for it as a goal in itself. He will have become aware that he is happy in the course of living life twenty-four crowded hours of the day.” ~W. Beran Wolfe

Required

- Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2008). Ch. 1: Psychological Wealth. In E. Diener, & R. Biswas-Diener (Eds.). *Happiness: The science of psychological wealth*. Boston: Blackwell Publishing.
- Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2008). Ch. 2: Two Principles of Psychological Wealth. In E. Diener, & R. Biswas-Diener (Eds.). *Happiness: The science of psychological wealth*. Boston: Blackwell Publishing.
- Pavot, W. & Diener, E. (2008). The satisfaction with life scale and the emerging construct of life satisfaction. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 3, 137 – 152.

- Kashdan, T. B., Biswas-Diener, R., & King, L. A. (2008). Reconsidering happiness: The costs of distinguishing between hedonics and eudaimonia. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 3, 219 – 233.
 - Recommended
 - Kopperud, K. H. & Vittersø, J. (2008). Distinctions between hedonic and eudaimonic well-being: Results from a day reconstruction study among Norwegian jobholders. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 3, 174 – 181.
 - Lucas, R. E., Diener, E., & Suh, E. (1996). Discriminant validity of well-being measures. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71, 616-628.
 - Sandvik, E., Diener, E., & Seidlitz, L. (1993). Subjective well-being: The convergence and stability of self-report and non-self-report measures. *Journal of Personality*, 61, 317-342.
 - Kahneman, D., & Krueger, A. (2006). Developments in the measurement of subjective well-being. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 20, 3-24.
 - Activity
 - Track your positive and negative moods three times a day over the course of six days. Graph the results and be prepared to discuss the patterns you observe and your experience doing this exercise.
- **Week 3:Feb.10: Does the “genetics of well-being” explain everything?**

“I’ve learned from experience that the greater part of our happiness or misery depends on our dispositions and not on our circumstances.” ~Martha Washington

Required

- Weiss, A., Bates, T. C., & Luciano, M. (2008). Happiness Is a Personal(ity) Thing: The Genetics of Personality and Well-Being in a Representative Sample. *Psychological Science*, 19, 205-210.
 - Barbara, B. Pandelaere, M., Dewitte, S. & Warlop, L. (2006). Hungry for money: The desire for caloric resources increases the desire for financial resources and vice versa. *Psychological Science*, 17, 393 - 343.
 - Urry, H. L., Nitschke, J. B., Dolski, I., Jackson, D. C., Dalton, K. M., Mueller, C. J., et al. (2004). Making a life worth living: Neural correlates of well-being. *Psychological Science*, 15, 367-372.
 - Lazar et al. (2005). Meditation experience is associated with increased cortical thickness. *Neuroreport*, 16, 1893-1897.
 - Recommended
 - Ashby, F.G., Isen, A.M., & Turken, A.U. (1999). A neuropsychological theory of positive affect and its influence on cognition. *Psychological Review*, 106, 529-550.
 - Buss, D.M. (2000). The evolution of happiness. *American Psychologist*, 55, 15-23.
 - Taylor, S.E., Klein, L.C., Lewis, B.P., Gruenewald, T.L., Gurung, R.A.R., & Updegraff, J.A. (2000). Biobehavioral responses to stress in females: Tend-and-befriend, not fight-or-flight. *Psychological Review*, 107, 411-429.
 - Activity
 - Design a perfect day that is possible for you to experience at this point in your life. Describe in detail what you would do and how you would allot your time. Attempt to live

that day. How did you feel throughout the course of the day? Did it work – that is, did your attempt to live a happy day result in increased well-being?

- **Week 4:Feb.17: How does happiness affect your health?**

“Happiness is nothing more than good health and a bad memory.”Albert Schweitzer.

Required

- Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2008). Ch. 3: Health and Happiness. In E. Diener, & R. Biswas-Diener (Eds.). *Happiness: The science of psychological wealth*. Boston: Blackwell Publishing.
- Cohen, S. & Pressman, S. D. (2006). Positive affect and health. *Psychological Science*, 15, 122-125.
- Steptoe, A. & Wardle, J. (2005). Positive affect and biological function in everyday life. *Neurobiology of Aging*, 26,108 – 112.
- Danner, D. D., Snowden, D. A., & Friesen, W. (2001) Positive emotions in early life and longevity: Findings from the Nun Study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80, 804-813.

Recommended

- Pressman, S., Cohen, S., Miller, G. E., Barkin, A., Rabin, B. S., & Treanor, J. J. (2005). Loneliness, social network size, and immune response to influenza vaccination in college freshmen. *Health Psychology*, 24, 297-306.
- Miller, G., Cohen, S., Pressman, S., Barkin, A., Treanor, J., & Rabin, B. (2004). Psychological stress and antibody response to influenza vaccination: When is the critical period for stress, and how does it get inside the body? *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 66, 215-223.
- Marsland, A.L., Pressman, S.D., & Cohen, S. (2006). Positive affect and immune function. In R. Ader (Ed.), *Psychoneuroimmunology* (pp. 761-779). Elsevier Publications.
- Steptoe, A., O'Donnell, K., Marmot, M., & Wardle, J. (2008). Positive affect, psychological well-being, and good sleep. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 64, 409 - 415.

- Activity

- You will describe your happiest day of the past and discuss what you did physically that day.

- **Week 5: Feb.24: How does your job and income affect your happiness?**

“The essence of philosophy is that a man should so live that his happiness shall depend as little as possible on external things.” ~Epictetus

Required

- Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2008). Ch. 5: Work. In E. Diener, & R. Biswas-Diener (Eds.). *Happiness: The science of psychological wealth*. Boston: Blackwell Publishing.
- Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2008). Ch. 6: Can Money Buy Happiness? In E. Diener, & R. Biswas-Diener (Eds.). *Happiness: The science of psychological wealth*. Boston: Blackwell Publishing.

- Nickerson, C., Schwarz, N., Diener, E., & Kahneman, D. (2003). Zeroing in on the dark side of the American Dream: A closer look at the negative consequences of the goal for financial success. *Psychological Science, 14*, 531-536.
 - Iyengar, S. S., Wells, R. E., & Schwartz, B. (2006). Doing Better but Feeling Worse: Looking for the 'Best' Job Undermines Satisfaction. *Psychological Science, 17*, 143-150.
 - Van Boven, L. (2005). Experientialism, materialism, and the pursuit of happiness. *Review of General Psychology, 9*, 132-142.
- Recommended
 - Smith, D. M., Langa, K. M., Kabeto, M. U., & Ubel, P. A. (2005). Health, Wealth, and Happiness Financial resources buffer subjective well-being after the onset of a disability. *Psychological Science, 16*, 663-666.
 - Ng, W., Diener, E., Aurora, R., & Harter, J. (2008). Affluence, feelings of stress, and well-being. *Social Indicators Research, Online*, 1 – 15.
 - Frank, R.H. (2004). How not to buy happiness. *Daedalus, 133*, 69-79.
 - Lucas, R. E., Clark, A. E., Georgellis, Y., & Diener, E. (2004). Unemployment alters the set point for life satisfaction. *Psychological Science, 15*, 8-13.
 - Grant, A. M. (2008) Designing jobs to do good: Dimensions and psychological consequences of prosocial job characteristics, *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 3*, 19 - 39.
 - Activity
 - Complete at least one “pleasurable” and one “philanthropic” activity, and comment on how each made you feel, both immediately following the activity and the next day.
 - **Week 6: Mar.3: Morality, Religion, and Spirituality – how are they related well-being?**
 “Happiness cannot be traveled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace and gratitude.” Denis Waitley

Required

- Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2008). Ch. 7: Religion, Spirituality, and Happiness In E. Diener, & R. Biswas-Diener (Eds.). *Happiness: The science of psychological wealth*. Boston: Blackwell Publishing.
 - Haidt, J. (2007). The new synthesis in moral psychology. *Science, 316*, 998-1001.
 - Schnall, S., Benton, J., & Harvey, S. (2008). With a clean conscience: Cleanliness reduces the severity of moral judgments, *Psychological Science, 19*, 1219 – 1222.
 - Ginges, J., Hansen, I., & Norenzayan, A. (2009). Religion and support for suicide attacks. *Psychological Science, Online*, 1 – 7.
 - Toussaint, L. & Friedman, P. (2008). Forgiveness, gratitude, and well-being: The mediating role of affect and beliefs. *Journal of Happiness Studies, Online*, 1 – 20.
- Recommended
 - Ekman, P., Davidson, R.J., Ricard, M., & Wallace, B.A. (2005). Buddhist and psychological perspectives on emotions and well-being. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 11*, 59-63.
 - Pargament, K.I. (2002). The bitter and the sweet: An evaluation of the costs and benefits of religiousness. *Psychological Inquiry, 13*, 168-181.

- Larsen, J. T. & McKibban A. R. (2008). Is happiness having what you want, wanting what you have, or both? *Psychological Science*, 19, 371 - 377.
- Witvliet, C. V., Ludwig, T. E., & Vander Laan, K. L. (2001). Granting forgiveness or harboring grudges: Implications for emotion, physiology, and health. *Psychological Science*, 12, 117-123.

○ Activity

- Write and deliver a “gratitude letter” to someone who has been especially kind to you but has never been properly thanked (See example in Seligman article, “Can Happiness be taught?”, p. 82). Describe how this experience affected you and the recipient.

Or

- Complete a “Gratitude diary” by writing down three things that go well each day and their causes every night for one week; provide a causal explanation for each good thing. After a week, evaluate how the exercise made you feel.

● **Week 7: Mar. 10: Why are some places happier than others?**

“If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.” HH The Dalai Lama

○ Required

- Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2008). Ch. 8: The Happiest Places on Earth: Culture and Well-being. In E. Diener, & R. Biswas-Diener (Eds.). *Happiness: The science of psychological wealth*. Boston: Blackwell Publishing.
- Oishi S. & Diener, E. (2003). Culture and Well-being. The cycle of action, evaluation, and decision. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29, 939-949.
- Inglehart, R., Foa, R., Peterson, C. & Welzel, C. (2008). Development, Freedom, and Rising Happiness: A Global Perspective (1981–2007). *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 3, 264 – 285.
- Suh, E. M., Diener, E., & Updegraff J. A. (2008). From culture to priming conditions: self-construal influences on life satisfaction judgments. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 39, 3 – 15.

○ Recommended

- Tsai, J. L., Knutson, B., & Fung, H. H. (2006). Cultural variation in affect valuation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90, 288–307.
- Dorn, D., Fischer, J. A. V., Kirchgassner, G., & Sousa-Poza, A. (2005). Is it culture or democracy? The impact of democracy, income, and culture on happiness. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Public Choice Society, New Orleans, March 10 – 13, 2005.
- Oishi S. & Sullivan, H. W. (2005). The mediating role of parental expectations in culture and well-being. *Journal of Personality*, 73, 1267 – 1294.

○ Activity

- Choose a country included on the “World Map of Happiness” (<http://www.le.ac.uk/pc/aw57/world/sample.html>). Do some reading about the country, and comment on the social, political, and/or cultural factors that may contribute to the

country's "happiness" ranking.

- **Week 8: Mar.17: Do people know what makes them happy?**

"Wisdom is the supreme part of happiness." Sophocles

- Required

- Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2008). Ch. 10: Our Crystal Balls: Happiness Forecasting: Culture and Well-being. In E. Diener, & R. Biswas-Diener (Eds.). *Happiness: The science of psychological wealth*. Boston: Blackwell Publishing.
- Smith, D. M., Loewenstein, G., Jepson, C., Jankovich, A., Feldman, H. I., & Ubel, P. A. (2008). Mispredicting and misremembering: Patients with renal failure overestimate improvements in quality of life following a kidney transplant. *Health Psychology, 27*, 653–658.
- Ubel, P. A., Loewenstein, G., & Jepson, C. (2005). Disability and sunshine: Can predictions be improved by drawing attention to focusing illusions or emotional adaptation? *Journal Experimental Psychology: Applied, 11*, 111–123.
- Hsee, C. K. & Hastie, R. (2006). Decision and experience: why don't we choose what makes us happy? *Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 10*, 31-37.
- Gilbert, D. T. & Wilson, T. D. (2007). Propection: Experiencing the future. *Science, 317*, 1351 – 1354.

- Recommended

- Wilson, T. D., & Gilbert, D. T. (2005). Affective forecasting: Knowing what to want. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 14*, 131-134.
- Kahneman, D., Krueger, A. B., Schkade, D., Schwarz, N., & Stone, A. A. (2006). Would you be happier if you were richer? A focusing illusion. *Science, 312*, 1908-1910.
- Dunn, E. W., Biesanz, J. C., Human, L. J., & Finn, S. (2007). Misunderstanding the affective consequences of everyday social interactions: The hidden benefits of putting one's best face forward. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 92*, 990-1005.
- Wirtz, D., Kruger, J., Scollon, C. N., & Diener, E. (2003). What to do on spring break? The role of predicted, on-line, and remembered experience in future choice. *Psychological Science, 14*, 520-524.

- Activity

- Think of a time when you adapted to an experience, object, etc. that you dreamt about for eons and swore it would give you eternal pleasure/satisfaction. Now that you have an understanding of the affective forecasting, what would you have done differently?

- **Week 9: Mar.24: Spring Break.**

- **Week 10: Mar.31: Debate preparation & team meetings**

"I have now reigned about 50 years in victory or peace, beloved by my subjects, dreaded by my enemies, and respected by my allies. Riches and honors, power and pleasure, have waited on my call, nor does any earthly blessing appear to have been wanting to my felicity. In this situation, I have diligently numbered the days of pure and genuine happiness which have fallen to my lot. They amount to fourteen." Abd El-Rahman III of Spain, 960 C.E.

- You should pick whatever articles you think will make your case. Here are some articles I recommend:

- Riis, J., Loewenstein, G., Baron, J., Jepson, C., Fagerlin, A., & Ubel, P. A. (2005). Ignorance of hedonic adaptation to hemodialysis: A study using ecological momentary assessment. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, *134*, 3-9.
- Lykken, D., & Tellegen, A. (1996). Happiness is a stochastic phenomenon. *Psychological Science*, *7*, 186-189.
- Lucas, R. E. (2005). Time does not heal all wounds: A longitudinal study of reaction and adaptation to divorce. *Psychological Science*, *16*, 945-950.
- Lucas, R. E. (2007). Adaptation and the set point model of subjective well-being. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *16*, 75-79.
- Brickman, P., Coates, D., & Janoff-Bulman, R. (1978). Lottery winners and accident victims: Is happiness relative? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *36*, 917-927.
- Suh, E., Diener, E., & Fujita, F. (1996). Events and subjective well-being: Only recent events matter. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *70*, 1091-1102.
- Diener, E., Lucas, R. E., & Scollon, C. N. (2006). Beyond the hedonic treadmill: revising the adaptation theory of well-being. *American Psychologist*, *61*, 305-314.
- Lucas, R. E., Clark, A. E., Georgellis, Y., & Diener, E. (2004). Unemployment alters the set point for life satisfaction. *Psychological Science*, *15*, 8-13.
- Lucas, R. E., Clark, A. E., Georgellis, Y., & Diener, E. (2003). Reexamining adaptation and the set point model of happiness: Reactions to changes in marital status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *84*, 527-539.
- Lucas, R. E. (2007). Long-term disability is associated with lasting changes in subjective well-being: evidence from two nationally representative longitudinal studies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *92*, 717-730.
- Lyubomirsky, S., Sheldon, K. M., & Schkade, D. (2005). Pursuing happiness: The architecture of sustainable change. *Review of General Psychology*, *9*, 111-131.
- Fujita, F., & Diener, E. (2005). Life satisfaction set point: Stability and change. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *88*, 158-164.

- **Week 11: April 7: Is hedonic adaptation inevitable? (DEBATE)**

- **Week 12: April 14: How does our self-reflection and memory affect our happiness?**

“Happiness is a Swedish sunset -- it is there for all, but most of us look the other way and lose it.” Mark Twain

- Required

- Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2008). Ch. 11: Taking AIM: Attention, Interpretation, and Memory. In E. Diener, & R. Biswas-Diener (Eds.). *Happiness: The science of psychological wealth*. Boston: Blackwell Publishing.
- Redelmeier, D. A. & Kahneman, D. (1996) Patients' memories of painful medical treatments: real-time and retrospective evaluations of two minimally invasive procedures. *Pain*, *66*, 3-8.
- Fredrickson, B.L., & Branigan, C. (2005). Positive emotions broaden the scope of attention and thought-action repertoires. *Cognition and Emotion*, *19*, 313-332.
- Nolen-Hoeksema, S., Wisco, B. E., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2008). Rethinking rumination. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *3*, 400-424.

- Recommended

- Noguchi, K., Gohm, C. L., & Dalsky, D. J. (2006). Cognitive tendencies of focusing on positive and negative information. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *40*, 891-910.

- Cowley, E. (2008). Looking back at an experience through rose-colored glasses. *Journal of Business Research*, 61, 1046–1052.
- Lyubomirsky, S. (2001). Why are some people happier than others? The role of cognitive and motivational processes in well-being. *American Psychologist*, 56, 239-249.

○ Activity

- Stop and notice the next time something good/pleasurable happens. To savor this event, you should: share with others, build memories, self-congratulate, sharpen perceptions, and become absorbed.

Week 13: April 21: Optimal levels of happiness: Is happier always better?

Happiness: We rarely feel it.

I would buy it, beg it, steal it,

Pay in coins of dripping blood

For this one transcendent good. ~Amy Lowell

○ Required

- Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2008). Ch. 12: Yes, You Can Be Too Happy. In E. Diener, & R. Biswas-Diener (Eds.). *Happiness: The science of psychological wealth*. Boston: Blackwell Publishing.
- Fredrickson, B. L., & Losada, M. F. (2005). Positive Affect and the Complex Dynamics of Human Flourishing. *American Psychologist*, 60, 678-686.
- Oishi, S., Diener, E., & Lucas, R. E. (2007). The optimum level of well-being: Can people be too happy? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 2, 346-360.
- Storbeck, J. & Clore, G. L. (2006). With sadness comes accuracy; with happiness, false memory: Mood and the false memory effect. *Psychological Science*, 16, 785 – 791.

○ Recommended

- Diener, E. & Diener, C. (1996). Most people are happy. *Psychological Science*, 7, 181 – 185.
- Murray, S.L., Holmes, J.G., & Griffin, D.W. (2003). Reflections on the self-fulfilling effects of positive illusions. *Psychological Inquiry*, 14, 289–295.
- Crocker, J., & Park, L.E. (2004). The costly pursuit of self-esteem. *Psychological Bulletin*, 130, 392–414.

○ Activity

- Work on one goal this week that you have been avoiding because it does not bring you pleasure while you are working on it (e.g., for me it would be working out in the morning – which I always think would make me happy in the long term, but in the moment can never motivate myself to do). Reflect on how working on the goal made you feel both during and after you worked on the goal.

● **Week 14: April 28: Can we train our minds to be happy?**

“It's never too late to have a happy childhood”. ~Berke Breathed

○ Required

- Emmons, R.A. & McCullough, M. E (2003). Counting blessings versus burdens: An experimental investigation of gratitude and subjective well-being in daily life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 377–389.

- Dandeneau, S. D., Baldwin, M. W., Baccus, J. R., Sakellaropoulo, M. & Pruessner, J. C. (2007). Cutting stress off at the pass: Reducing vigilance and responsiveness to social threat by manipulating attention. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 93, 651–666.
 - Fredrickson, B.L., Cohn, M.A., Coffey, K.A., Pek, J., & Finkel, S.M. (2008). Open hearts build lives: Positive emotions, induced through loving-kindness meditation, build consequential personal resources. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95, 1045–1062.
 - Recommended
 - King, L. (2001). The health benefits of writing about life goals. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27, 798–807.
 - Bryant, F. B., Smart, C. M., & King, S. P. (2005). Using the past to enhance the present: Boosting happiness through positive reminiscence. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 6, 227–260.
 - Pennebaker, J. W. (1997). Writing about emotional experiences as a therapeutic process. *Psychological Science*, 8, 162–166.
 - Activity
 - Read about meditation from the following website: "<http://www.how-to-meditate.org>"
Meditate at least 20 minutes, three days in a row, and comment on the effects of the meditation.
- **Week 15: May 5: Happy is as happy does?**

“It's pretty hard to tell what does bring happiness. Poverty an' wealth have both failed.” Kin Hubbard

 - Required
 - Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive Psychology Progress: Empirical Validation of Interventions. *American Psychologist*, 60, 410-421.
 - Dunn, E. W., Aknin, L. B., & Norton, M. I. (2008). Spending money on others promotes happiness. *Science*, 319, 1687-1688.
 - Gable, S. L., Reis, H. T., Impett, E. A., & Asher, E. R. (2004). What do you do when things go right? The intrapersonal and interpersonal benefits of sharing positive events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 87, 228-245.
 - Recommended
 - Johnson, W., & Krueger, R. F. (2006). How money buys happiness: Genetic and environmental processes linking finances and life satisfaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90, 680-691.
 - Hills, P., & Argyle, M. (1998). Positive moods derived from leisure and their relationship to happiness and personality. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 25, 523-535.
 - Lyubomirsky, S., Sheldon, K. M., & Schkade, D. (2005). Pursuing happiness: The architecture of sustainable change. *Review of General Psychology*, 9, 111-131.
 - Activity
 - Try out one of the five happiness exercises for five days, spend a small amount of money on other individuals 2 out of the 5 days, or share your positive events with a different friend each day. Track your positive and negative moods three times a day over the course of these five days. Graph the results and be prepared to discuss the patterns you observe and your experience doing this exercise.

- **Week 16: May 12: Should happiness be a public policy goal?**
 “But where is what I started for so long ago?
 And why is it yet unfound?” Walt Whitman
 - Required
 - Diener, E., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). Beyond Money: Toward an Economy of Well-Being. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 5, 1-31.
 - Fowler, J. H. & Christakis, N. A. (2008). Dynamic spread of happiness in a large social network: longitudinal analysis over 20 years in the Framingham Heart Study. *BMJ*, 337, 1 – 9.
 - Duncan, G. (2008). Should happiness-maximization be the goal of government? *Journal of Happiness Studies*, online, 1 – 16.
 - Recommended
 - Loewenstein, G., & Ubel, P. A. (2008). Hedonic adaptation and the role of decision and experience utility in public policy. *Journal of Public Economics*, 92, 1795-1810.
 - Frey, B. S., & Stutzer, A. (2002). What can economists learn from happiness research? *Journal of Economic Literature*, 40, 402-435.
 - Napier, J. L. & Jost, J. T. (2008). Why are conservatives happier than liberals? *Psychological Science*, 19, 565 – 575.
 - Activity
 - Write (and submit) an essay to NPR’s program, “This I believe.” The essays should be between 350-500 words; see details at: <http://www.npr.org/thisibelieve/agree.html>

Facilitation Info Sheet

Here is what you will do as a facilitator during each part of class:

- 1) *Teaching recommended material (20-30 mins)*: Your job in this part of class is to familiarize your classmates with the material covered in the recommended readings. You may do this in whole or in part through lecture, but I would **STRONGLY** encourage you to incorporate creative or interactive teaching methods as well, such as:
 - a. Doing a demonstration that will allow your classmates to experience a psychological phenomenon discussed in the readings
 - b. Re-enacting the experiment in class
 - c. Showing a brief (<5 mins) video clip that highlights a key concept
 - d. Finding out some fun facts about study authors
 - e. Anything else you can think of—interpretive dance, diorama, whatever...
- 2) *Leading discussion (60-90 mins)*: Your job in this part of class is to facilitate (not dominate) class discussion of the readings. You will call on your classmates to read their own discussion questions in the order you determined ahead of time. Discussion does not have to be limited to the original list of DQ's and may shift toward issues you select or that come up in class, but it is your job (with possible nudging from me) to decide when discussion wanders too far astray from the key issues. Note that for most weeks you will need to leave time at the end of class to workshop research ideas generated by any students in their idea papers.

Here is the preparation you will need to do before facilitating:

- 1) Right after the class preceding your facilitation: See me briefly for initial discussion of possible approaches and to arrange a meeting time.
- 2) Well before facilitation: Read all of the required and recommended articles, and plan how to teach this material in conjunction with your partner(s).
- 3) Day before facilitation: Read through your classmates' discussion questions after they are submitted in the morning, and figure out how to organize them. Then, see me to go over your plans for the class.
- 4) More than 5 minutes before facilitation: Create a document that contains your classmates' questions in the order we decided upon (note that usually at least one question from everyone should be included). Make copies for everyone.

How to Read Articles

FIRST: Ask yourself what you want to get out of the article. Do you need to do a close reading or will skimming suffice?

- **Skimming:** Skimming can be OK (eg, recommended reading)
 - Read abstract carefully
 - Read 1st 2 paragraphs and last paragraph of intro
 - Skim method section (read overview if provided)
 - Skip results
 - Read 1st 2 paragraphs of discussion and look at sub-headings

- **Close reading:** Read article once thru and then re-read key/confusing bits
 - Can *still* skim more tangential parts
 - Literature you already know
 - Endless response to minor reviewer point
 - Method
 - Appropriate operationalization of constructs (alternative interpretation?)
 - Results
 - Do the #'s (tables, graphs) really support the authors' hypotheses?
 - If this article is right, how does it change our knowledge of the humans?
 - What questions does it open up?
 - What implications does it have for your research?