

Psychology of happiness: a innovative approach

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ABSTRACT

Recently the researchers attend to positive psychology instead of attention to negative problems as psychological disorders and disturbances. Happiness and happy person have spicily characteristics and benefits that the person how is unhappy hasn't it. The benefits of happiness go beyond just feeling good. The psychological inquiry into happiness is important because happiness is not only associated with improved physical health and even longevity, but it is also a priority for people – across the world, happiness has been rated as being more important than other desirable outcomes including living a meaningful life or making a lot of money. Experts continue to find evidence that happiness is good for health. In this article tried to more know happiness, the benefits and the role of happiness in our life.

Keywords: Positive Psychology, Happiness, Benefits of Happiness

Psychology of Happiness

Way back in 1929, Walter A. Pitkin wrote '*The Psychology of Happiness*' and in this book, he differentiated between happiness and related emotions including pleasure and enjoyment (Diener, et.al. 2017). He argued that achieving happiness was not merely the result of luck or chance. Since this time, psychologists have continued to try and define happiness.

According to psychology, happiness is about more than simply the experience of a positive mood. In order to describe happiness, psychologists commonly refer to subjective well-being (Oerlemans, W. G. M., 2018). In other words, happiness is "*people's evaluations of their lives and encompasses both cognitive judgments of satisfaction and affective appraisals of moods and emotions*" (Kaufman, M., 2018,).

The psychological inquiry into happiness is important because happiness is not only associated with improved physical health and even longevity, but it is also a priority for people – across the world, happiness has been rated as being more important than other desirable outcomes including living a meaningful life or making a lot of money (Hoffman, J., 2018).

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There are three ways that psychologists study happiness:

1. Need and Goal Satisfaction Theories

These theories suggest that happiness results from striving to achieve appropriate goals and meeting one's fundamental human needs (Piff, P. K.,2018). for example, proposed Self-determination Theory, which stipulates that wellbeing is achieved when one meets their basic human needs including autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

2. Genetic and Personality Predisposition Theories

These propose that wellbeing is influenced by genes, and is associated with the personality traits of extraversion and neuroticism. This, in turn, implies that wellbeing does not change much over time.

3. Process/activity theories

Process/activity theories argue that wellbeing may be improved by participating in activities that are engaging and require effort.

Psychologists ask the question, 'is it possible to increase one's happiness?'. Some psychologists claim that making an attempt to enhance happiness is pointless because happiness levels are predetermined and stable over time (McGuirk, L., 2018).

Consistent with this argument is the Happiness Set Point. The Happiness Set Point argues that a person's state of happiness will be constant over time, regardless of changes in circumstances.

Adapting to environmental changes is termed 'the hedonic treadmill' or 'homeostatic control' Warr, P. (2018). This notion of adaptation (leading to relatively stable levels of happiness) is supported by findings in research that individuals who may be high in either positive or negative affect (e.g. lottery winners, paralysis victims) demonstrate that their happiness levels revert to their 'usual' range after a period of time (Liao, K Y-H, & Weng, C-Y. (2018).

Some psychologists argue that the Happiness Set Point provides evidence that happiness cannot be enhanced. There is a perspective taken by some psychologists that happiness is a 'trait' or a personal disposition to experience a certain affect.

This perspective suggests that happiness is relatively stable over time, and therefore efforts to increase happiness are futile. However, research has shown that although subjective well-being may be associated with personality traits (e.g. extraversion), that differences in reports of happiness levels over time suggest that, in fact, happiness is not a trait Blanke, E. S., Riediger, M., & Brose, A. (2018).

Thus, happiness has been an important area of focus for psychologists. What, then, about the more recent science of happiness...positive psychology?

Happiness and Positive Psychology

Positive Psychology can be described as a psychology of potential, and what 'could be' as compared to what 'is'. It aims to shift what has historically been the predominant focus of psychology – pathology – to examining the development of positive qualities in individuals and communities (Fuochi, G., Veneziani, C. A., & Voci, A. (2018).

Psychology of happiness: a innovative approach

In other words, Positive Psychology aims to understand and cultivate the factors that put individuals, communities, and societies in a position where they are able to ‘flourish’. What does it mean to ‘flourish’? Put simply, it is a state of optimal wellbeing asked the question “*what role do positive emotions play in positive psychology?*”.

Well, as it turns out, happiness can be thought of as experiencing predominantly Positive emotion, or affective states, rather than negative ones (Weber, S., & Hagmayer, Y. (2018). Thus, positive emotions are a sign of flourishing, or, in other words, happiness . Happiness is central to the assumptions of positive psychology.

Seligman described the PERMA model of flourishing. This model defines psychological wellbeing in terms of 5 domains:

Positive emotions – P

Engagement – E

Relationships – R

Meaning – M

Accomplishment – A

Seligman, Steen, Park, and Peterson propose that there are, at least, three clear, well-defined paths to happiness:

Positive emotion and pleasure

In other words, happiness exists when positive emotions are dominant, with the experience of negative emotion minimal. The so-called ‘pleasant life’ is one which involves enjoyable and positive experiences.

Engagement

Engagement refers to being fully involved in a task that is at hand and feeling absorbed by it. According to Seligman, the ‘good life’ is a result of a person developing and then demonstrating their ‘signature’ strengths and virtues in relationships, work, and leisure. ‘Signature strengths’ are the result of an individual discovering the unique strengths that they already have and taking ownership of these.

Meaning

Meaning exists when we have a higher purpose than ourselves. The ‘meaningful life’ sees a person using their signature strengths to work towards the greater good.

These three elements combine to, according to positive psychology, result in authentic and stable happiness (Tamir, M., 2017). What then, is authentic happiness?

Authentic happiness results from identifying and developing ‘signature strengths’ and virtues. It is suggested that in order to achieve authentic happiness, people should pay attention to their strength rather than their weaknesses (Gross-Manos, D., & Ben-Arieh, A. (2017).

Any serious discussion about happiness must first begin by attempting to define what we mean by the term happiness. In general, happiness can be thought of as an emotional state that reflects a high level of mental and /or emotional well-being. (Phillips, J., De Freitas, J., (2017). The happiness is one of the fundamental values of our society. Positive psychology movement, which has its own historical roots in the human potential movement of Rogers

and Maslow, has un abashedly adopted the Aristotelian concepts of hedonia and eudaimonia in an attempt to frame the exploration of happiness within the field of psychology. Indeed, positive psychology defines itself as the scientific study of human flourishing and Martin Seligman's (the oft-noted founder of the positive psychology movement) theoretical model of happiness is based on the good life which contains three elements: the pleasant life, the meaningful life, and the engaged life (Chopik, W. J., & O'Brien, E. (2017).

Positive psychology Conceptualization

Different theorists conceptualize positive psychology, and actively try to shape the field subsequently, in different manners. Well-being theory, postulated by Martin Seligman, posits five dimensions of holistic fulfillment. Each element must contain three properties that include the ability to contribute to well-being, of being sought for its own sake or as an end unto itself, and of exclusivity, or the ability to be studied on its own, independent of the other elements. The five dimensions are:

1. Positive emotion, or the pleasant life, encompassing happiness and life satisfaction. While happiness was formerly the end of positive psychology, in this framework it is a component part of a greater state, well-being.
2. Engagement, similar to the state of flow, involves participation in a pleasurable activity. Seligman notes that during engagement, cognition and affect are typically not present. Only after the activity/event does one reflect and proclaim a sense of enjoyment.
3. Meaning, or dealing with something larger than the self, something that transcends egoism, is the third element. Meaning is both subjective, capable of being important only to the person engrossed in the activity or advocacy, and objective, at least through the lens of history. For example, whether or not Rosa Parks found personal meaning in her reluctance to surrender her bus seat to a White man is essentially irrelevant to the meaning this act has had on civil rights.
4. Positive relationships, which are supreme in this model. As social animals, having good relationships with others is crucial to health and happiness.
5. Accomplishment, which is an individual pursuit. Accomplishing—or achieving—something can be done in one instance or a life can be devoted to it. Winning a wrestling match against a friend versus dedicating one's life to excelling in the sport illustrates the difference. Clark, A. and C. Senik (2010).

With his PERMA model, Seligman has seemingly broken positive psychology down to its building blocks. Additionally, the field is given a focus: Well-being, not happiness. Happiness, in this model, is but one direction that autonomous agents can pursue. To properly flourish, people aspire to something holistic, which is deemed wellbeing.

Benefits of Happiness

The benefits of happiness go beyond just feeling good. Experts continue to find evidence that happiness is good for you. Numerous studies show that happy individuals are successful across different areas, including marriage, friendship, income, work performance, and health. Diener E. (1984) Some of the many advantage linked to happiness include:

1. Reduced stress
2. Better overall physical health
3. Better overall emotional health
4. Longer lifespan
5. More successful relationship

6. Increased productivity
7. Increased energy
8. Greater creativity
9. Reduced stress and anxiety
10. Greater self-confidence
11. Higher self-esteem
12. Greater resilience
13. Increased cooperativeness
14. Deeper concentration

CONCLUSION

Current research strongly suggests that the level of happiness is relatively stable over time, and therefore efforts to increase happiness are important. The psychological inquiry into happiness is important because happiness is not only associated with improved physical health and even longevity, but it is also a priority for people-across the world, happiness has been rated as being more important than other desirable outcomes including living a meaningful life. In this research some benefits of happiness are given to improve happiness and live a better life with authentic happiness.

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Psychology of happiness: a innovative approach

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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