Roadmap

Course Logistics

Happiness and Mental Health

Take-away Questions

FCQ
Course Logistics

Good News

EXAM 3 - OPTIONAL (WILL DROP LOWEST OF 3 TESTS)
Roadmap

Course Logistics

Happiness and Mental Health

Take-away Questions

FCQ
“Happiness is the meaning and the purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence.”

- ARISTOTLE
Happiness
“Happiness is the meaning and the purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence.”

- ARISTOTLE
“The very motion of our life is towards happiness.”

- Dalai Lama
The Art of Happiness
“What we call happiness in the strictest sense comes from the satisfaction of needs which have been dammed up to a high degree.”

- SIGMUND FREUD
“Onstage I’m the happiest person in the world”

- BRITNEY SPEARS
THEORIES ABOUT HAPPINESS
WHAT IS HAPPINESS
Scientific Definition
Happiness: Parts

Part 1: High Positive Affect
- Experiencing intense & frequent positive emotions

Part 2: Low Negative Affect
- Experiencing low-level & infrequent negative emotions

Part 3: Subjective Well-Being
- Cognitive evaluation of one’s current & past circumstances
Positive Emotions Broaden & Build

Positive Emotions
Joy, Love, Contentment, Interest, Happiness

Broaden
Expands inventory of thoughts and action

Build
Develops physical, mental and social resources

Fredrickson, 1998
Positive Emotions: Not All Are Alike

- EXCITEMENT
- JOY
- COMPASSION
- LOVE
- PRIDE

Shiota, John, & Keltner, 2006
SHS Scale Creator
Sonja Lyubomirsky
Hedonism
“Pleasure is our first and kindred good. It is the starting point of every choice and every aversion, and to it we always come back, inasmuch as we make feeling the rule by which to judge of every good thing.”

- EPICURUS

**Happiness consists of:**
1. Seeking pleasure
2. Avoiding pain
Sum of our sensory pleasures?
Eudaimonia
“Happiness is the meaning and the purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence.”

- ARISTOTLE

EUDAIMONIA (or Flourishing)
1. The highest human good
2. Living a good life: “virtuous activity”
3. Long-term life satisfaction
4. Involves deep contemplation: “in accordance with reason”
Meaningful Life
“A life is meaningful when it is understood by the person living it to matter in some larger sense. Lives may be experienced as meaningful when they are felt to have significance beyond the trivial or momentary, to have purpose, or to have a coherence that transcends chaos.”
3 Routes to Happiness

1. Pleasant Life: attaining and maximizing pleasures in life.

2. Good Life: knowing your signature strengths, and using to cultivate friendship, leisure (i.e., increase flow).

MYTHS ABOUT HAPPINESS
Happiness Comes from Within
**Gratitude**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELICITOR</th>
<th>Perception that another person has done a good deed for the self (intentionally or voluntarily)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACTION TENDENCY</td>
<td>Moral motive, makes people act more prosocially and help others</td>
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Haidt & Keltner, 1999; Haidt et al., 2002; McCullough et al. (2001)
Gratitude

Find-Remind-and-Bind Theory

The positive emotion of gratitude serves the evolutionary function of strengthening a relationship with a responsive interaction partner.

- May be an evolved mechanism to fuel upward spirals of mutually responsive behaviors between recipient and benefactor.

- Gratitude is important for forming and maintaining the most important relationships of our lives, those with the people we interact with every day.

Algoe, Haidt & Gable (2008)
- Increased gratitude not only benefits those who are the recipients

- Greater feelings of gratitude enhance resilience, physical health, and quality of life

- Focus on “gratitude interventions” to promote psychological well-being

Emmons & McCullough, 2003; McCullough et al., 2001
2
You Can’t Buy Happiness
Would You Be Happier If You Were Richer? A Focusing Illusion

Daniel Kahneman, Alan B. Krueger, David Schkade, Norbert Schwarz, Arthur A. Stone

The belief that high income is associated with good mood is widespread but mostly illusory. People with above-average income are relatively satisfied with their lives but are barely happier than others in moment-to-moment experience, tend to be more tense, and do not spend more time in particularly enjoyable activities. Moreover, the effect of income on life satisfaction seems to be transient. We argue that people exaggerate the contribution of income to happiness because they focus, in part, on conventional achievements when evaluating their life or the lives of others.

Most people believe that they would be happier if they were richer, but survey evidence on subjective well-being is largely inconsistent with that belief. Subjective well-being is most commonly measured by asking people, “All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?” or “Taken all together, would you say that you are very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?” The question has been used in most global evaluations of one’s life. An alternative method asks people to report their feelings in real time, which yields a measure of experienced affect or happiness. Surveys in many countries conducted over decades indicate that, on average, reported global judgments of life satisfaction or happiness have not changed much over the last four decades, in spite of large increases in real income per capita. Although reported life satisfaction and household income are positively correlated in a cross section of people at a given time, increases in income have been found to have a mostly transitory effect on individuals’ reported life satisfaction (1–3). Moreover, the correlation between income and subjective well-being is weaker when a measure of experienced happiness is used instead of a global measure.

The focusing illusion. Standard survey questions on life satisfaction by which subjective well-being is measured may induce a form of focusing illusion, by drawing people’s attention to their relative standing in the distribution of material well-being and other circumstances. More importantly, the focusing illusion may be a source of error in significant decisions that people make (4).

Evidence for the focusing illusion comes from diverse lines of research. For example, Strack and colleagues (5) reported an experiment in which students were asked: (i) “How happy are you with your life in general?” and (ii) “How many dates did you have last month?” The correlation between the answers to these questions was −0.012 (not statistically different from 0) when they were asked in the preceding order, but the correlation rose to 0.66 when the order was reversed with another sample of students. The dating question evidently caused that aspect of life to become salient and its importance to be exaggerated when the respondents encountered the more general question about their happiness. Similar focusing effects were observed when attention was first called to respondents’ marriage (6) or health (7). One conclusion from this research is that people do not know how happy or satisfied they are with their life in the way they know their height or telephone number. The answers to global life satisfaction questions are constructed only when asked (8), and are, therefore, susceptible to the focusing of attention on different aspects of life.

To test the focusing illusion regarding income, we asked a sample of working women to estimate the percentage of time that they had spent in a bad mood in the preceding day. Respondents were also asked to predict the percentage of time that people with pairs of various life circumstances (Table 1), such as high- and low-income, typically spend in a bad mood. Predictions were compared with the actual reports of mood provided by respondents who met the relevant circumstances. The predictions were biased in two respects. First, the prevalence of bad mood was

Table 1. The focusing illusion: Exaggerating the effect of various circumstances on well-being. The question posed was “Now we would like to know overall how you felt and what your mood was like yesterday. Thinking only about yesterday, what percentage of the time were you: in a bad mood___% a little low or irritable___% in a mildly pleasant mood___% in a very good mood___%.” Bad mood reported here is the sum of the first two response categories. A parallel question was then asked about yesterday at work. Bad mood at work was used for the supervision and fringe benefits comparisons. Data are from (14). Reading down the Actual column, sample sizes are 64, 59, 75, 237, 96, 211, 82, 221, respectively; reading down the Predicted column, sample sizes are 83, 83, 84, 84, 83, 85, 87, respectively. Predicted difference was significantly larger than actual difference by a t test; see asterisks.
Spending Money on Others Promotes Happiness

Elizabeth W. Dunn,¹* Lara B. Aknin,¹ Michael I. Norton²

Although much research has examined the effect of income on happiness, we suggest that how people spend their money may be at least as important as how much money they earn. Specifically, we hypothesized that spending money on other people may have a more positive impact on happiness than spending money on oneself. Providing converging evidence for this hypothesis, we found that spending more of one’s income on others predicted greater happiness both cross-sectionally (in a nationally representative survey study) and longitudinally (in a field study of windfall spending). Finally, participants who were randomly assigned to spend money on others experienced greater happiness than those assigned to spend money on themselves.

Can money buy happiness? A large body of cross-sectional survey research has demonstrated that income has a reliable, but surprisingly weak, effect on happiness within nations (1–3), particularly once basic needs are met (4). Indeed, although real incomes have surged dramatically in recent decades, happiness levels have remained largely flat within developed countries across time (5). One of the most intriguing explanations for this counterintuitive result is that thinking about money promotes; the mere thought of having money makes people less likely to help acquaintances, to donate to charity, or to choose to spend time with others (7), precisely the kinds of behaviors that are strongly associated with happiness (8–12). At the same time, although thinking about money may drive people away from prosocial behavior, money can also provide a powerful vehicle for accomplishing such prosocial goals. We suggest that using

http://www.sciencemag.org
Happy Money
The Science of Smarter Spending
Elizabeth Dunn & Michael Norton
How Money Can Buy Happiness—If You Spend It Right

http://www.amazon.com/Happy-Money-ebook/dp/B008J4L17K
To Do or to Have? That Is the Question

Leaf Van Boven
University of Colorado at Boulder

Thomas Gilovich
Cornell University

Do experiences make people happier than material possessions? In two surveys, respondents from various demographic groups indicated that experiential purchases—those made with the primary intention of acquiring a life experience—made them happier than material purchases. In a follow-up laboratory experiment, participants experienced more positive feelings after pondering an experiential purchase than after pondering a material purchase. In another experiment, participants were more likely to anticipate that experiences would make them happier than material possessions after adopting a temporally distant, versus a temporally proximate, perspective. The discussion focuses on evidence that experiences make people happier because they are more open to positive reinterpretations, are a more meaningful part of one’s identity, and contribute more to successful social relationships.

We live in a world of unprecedented abundance. Although few of us can live up to the advertising slogan that invites us to “have it all,” a growing swath of the population in developed countries has more discretionary income than ever before. We devote a considerable portion of our resources to the pursuit of “the good life”—one of contentment, pleasure, and happiness. For many of us, deciding how to invest our resources to maximize happiness is a challenge: We wonder whether we are as happy as we might be, given the resources at our disposal. We wonder whether more money, more leisure, or more stuff would make us happier. These are the cause of happiness” but claimed that “leisure of itself gives pleasure and happiness and enjoyment in life” (trans. 1996, pp. 185 and 197). Some time later, the bible has Jesus admonishing, “one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions” (Luke 12:15, New King James Version). More recently, Fromm (1976) criticized industrialized societies for neglecting “being” in favor of “having”—an emphasis he believed inhibits self-actualization. Scitovsky (1976) similarly suggested that people in industrialized societies, particularly the United States, have created a “joyless economy” by pursuing “comforts” (which eliminate pains but
We Can Predict What Will Make Us Happy
Affective Forecasting

Prediction of one’s emotional state in the future.

Most of the time, people are wrong about how they will feel in the future. They think things will matter more than they do.

Predict good things will make us really happy, and for a very long time. Usually OVERESTIMATE how happy (and unhappy) things will make us.

We are wrong!

Gilbert et al., 2008; Wilson & Gilbert, 2003; 2005
We Become Less Happy as We Get Older
The Paradox of Aging

“Despite age-related losses, emotional well-being remains relatively high in old age.”

Samanez-Larkin et al., 2011, p. 2
Carstensen et al (2011)

Positive Emotional Experience vs. Age

Carstensen et al (2011)
But Why?
Older People are Happier
TED talk: Laura Carstensen

http://www.ted.com/talks/laura_carstensen_older_people_are_happier.html
Young adults tend to prioritize future-oriented goals…

These goals place value on long-term rewards over emotional gratification in the moment.

Carstensen et al., 1999
Older adults tend to prioritize present-oriented goals...

These goals place value on current emotional gratification and meaning.

Carstensen et al., 1999
People 'get happier as they age'

Most people get happier as they grow older, studies on people aged up to their mid-90s suggest.

Despite worries about ill health, income, changes in social status and bereavements, later life tends to be a golden age, according to psychologists.

They found older adults generally make the best of the time they have left and have learned to avoid situations that make them feel sad or stressed.

The young should do the same, they told the American Psychological Association.

Ageing society

The UK is an ageing nation - in less than 25 years, one in four people in the UK will be over 65 and the number of over-85s will have doubled.

And it is expected there will be 30,000 people aged over 100 by the year 2030.
The Opinion Pages | OP-ED CONTRIBUTOR

My Own Life

Oliver Sacks on Learning He HasTerminal Cancer

By OLIVER SACKS | FEB. 19, 2015
“I feel intensely alive, and I want and hope in the time that remains to deepen my friendships, to say farewell to those I love, to write more, to travel if I have the strength, to achieve new levels of understanding and insight. This will involve audacity, clarity and plain speaking; trying to straighten my accounts with the world. But there will be time, too, for some fun (and even some silliness, as well)...”
“I feel a sudden clear focus and perspective. **There is no time for anything inessential. I must focus on myself, my work and my friends.** I shall no longer look at “NewsHour” every night. I shall no longer pay any attention to politics or arguments about global warming.

...It is up to me now to choose how to live out the months that remain to me. I have to live in the richest, deepest, most productive way I can.”
DARK SIDE OF HAPPINESS?
Is there a “Dark Side”?

Can there ever be ‘too much of a good thing’ when it comes to happiness and positive emotion? Should we strive to be happy?
POSITIVE EMOTION

Integrating the Light Sides and Dark Sides

edited by JUNE GRUBER
and JUDITH TEDLIE MOSKOWITZ
HAPPINESS ZEITGEIST?
“Getting angry or sad is easy and anyone can do it; but doing it in the right amount, at the right time, and in the right way is not easy, nor can everyone do it.”

- ARISTOTLE, Nicomachean Ethics, 11.9, 1109a27
THE DARK SIDE?

1. AMOUNT
2. TIME
3. WAY
Too much of a good thing?
1. AMOUNT

CREATIVITY

RISKINESS
ALCOHOL
DRUG USE
MENTAL ILLNESS
“The case for the dangers of positive emotions is made most straightforwardly by individuals with mania. Their joy is infectious, their optimism and self confidence unbounded...One manic may give away his life’s savings on a whim, while another joyfully drives 100 m.p.h. to a sexual liaison with a potentially dangerous stranger.”

NESSE, 2004
HEALTH vs. HAPPINESS graph
THE DARK SIDE?

1. AMOUNT
2. TIME
3. WAY
Wrong time for happiness?
2. TIME

COMPETITION

LOSS

Gruber et al., (2008); Tamir et al., (2008)
THE DARK SIDE?

1. AMOUNT
2. TIME
3. WAY
Wrong ways to pursue happiness?
A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America in Congress Assembled

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to

assert their right to freedom of navigation among the seas of the earth, the separation of

States, and to

secured the blessings of liberty to

people of these States.
3. WAY

VALUING HAPPINESS → HIGHER STANDARDS → DISAPPOINTMENT

HAPPINESS

Mauss et al (2011)
“Those only are happy who have their minds fixed on some object other than their own happiness.”

-JOHN STUART MILL
Accept your happiness as it is... wherever that is.
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Take-away Questions

FCQ
Roadmap

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Take-away Questions

FCQ
FCQ

[link] colorado.campuslabs.com/courseeval

15 minute set aside

Can use phone, tablet or computer

Instructor not be present in classroom while students complete their FCQs
Thank You!