The Joy is Mine: Re-centering the Person in the Study of Well-Being

Adam T. Nissen & Emorie D. Beck

University of California, Davis

This is a manuscript that has not yet been peer-reviewed. This version may not reflect the final, published version of the manuscript.

Author Notes

Adam Nissen: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2101-9478

Emorie Beck: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8152-3510

Corresponding Author: Adam T. Nissen, Psychology Department, One Shields Ave, Davis, 95616; adamnissen97@gmail.com

Funding Statement: The authors declare no funding support.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure: The authors declare no conflicts of interest for this work.

Abstract

Over the last several decades, promoting the happiness of citizens has become a priority across the globe. However, much of the empirical work does not reflect the foundational theories suggesting that capturing, operationalizing, and modeling well-being is best done at the person level. In this paper, we argue that well-being science needs to re-center the person in research to accurately assess the dynamic and unique ways well-being unfolds. We first highlight why well-being is best understood as an idiographic, person-specific construct. We argue that well-being is best captured as a dynamic system and should reflect the unique building blocks of a person based on meaning-making processes. We then integrate the two to show how dynamic meaning-making gives way to understanding the structure and processes of well-being. We conclude by pointing to ways researchers can use idiographical approaches with new methodological advances to answer long-standing questions in the field.

Keywords: well-being, idiographic, dynamic systems, meaning-making, well-being structure, well-being processes

The Joy is Mine: Re-centering the Person in the Study of Well-Being

Well-being – a person's experience of contentment and flourishing (Diener, 1984; Ryff & Keyes, 1995) – is critical to health, occupational success, and more (e.g., Diener et al., 2018; Gómez-López et al., 2019; Ryff et al., 2021). Well-being is therefore recognized as essential to individual wellness and as a public health concern more broadly (World Health Organization, n.d.). Policy implications (e.g., Oishi & Diener, 2014) and increases in global expenditures addressing ill-being (World Bank Group, 2024) provide promising avenues to ensure citizens' wellness.

However, current understandings of well-being and interventions to improve well-being largely presume that all people experience it similarly (i.e., flourishing should look the same for most people). Yet, foundational well-being theories suggest that it is an individualized process, leaving a gap between theory and empirical and applied work. Assuming the universality of what contributes to well-being may lead to divestments from key components and limit who benefits from these investments (Krys et al., 2024). To illustrate this, take a moment to reflect on what makes you happy. Now think about what makes others happy. How is your list similar to or distinct from others? There are likely some commonalities but also just as many unique components.

The mismatch between theories and applications of promoting well-being likely persists for several reasons. Despite decades of progress, how to best conceptualize well-being remains a core question in well-being research (e.g., Willroth, 2023). While theories of well-being generally suggest that it is a unique, dynamic process characterized by the meaningful units of the individual, current conceptualizations of well-being often fail to capture these core

components. As a result, both our understanding of well-being and our ability to foster it from the individual to the global level remains limited (Thomas & Markus, 2023).

In the present paper, we argue that well-being research needs to adopt more person-specific (i.e., idiographic) approaches to re-center the person in understanding well-being. Idiographic approaches flip common approaches on their head, arguing that we must start with understanding the single case before making generalities (Allport, 1968; Fisher et al., 2018). We first describe why well-being is better understood as an idiographic construct. We then argue why idiographic approaches are well-suited to capture well-being as a (1) dynamic construct characterized by (2) the meaningful components defined by the person that (3) reflect the structure and processes of well-being for a person. We conclude with an agenda for well-being science to study well-being from an idiographic perspective.

Well-Being as an Idiographic Construct

Current frameworks split well-being into hedonic (the "pleasurable" life) and eudaimonic (the "meaningful" life) well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Hedonic well-being emphasizes happiness as maximizing pleasure and is operationalized as one's satisfaction with life and feeling positive versus negative emotions (Diener, 1984). Eudaimonic well-being instead emphasizes happiness in maximizing one's potential such as purpose in life and seeking personal growth (Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

Hedonic and eudaimonic well-being theories generally fall into three broad classes: bottom-up, top-down, and bi-directional. Bottom-up theories argue that well-being is a product of the situational components of one's life (Diener, 1984; Hill et al., 2023; Rohrer & Schmukle, 2018; Ryff, 2018), such as happiness across life domains (e.g., work, relationships, leisure) and how people differentially consider those domains as important. Top-down theories instead

suggest that happiness is trait-like: Happier people view life as more satisfying and purposeful (Diener, 1984; Diener & Lucas, 1999; Ruini & Ryff, 2016; Ryff, 2018). Top-down theories such as the hedonic treadmill argue that situational factors can temporarily change well-being, but people return to their setpoints (Diener et al., 2009). Evidence supports both top-down and bottom-up theories, (Bialowolski & Weziak-Bialowolska, 2021; Feist et al., 1995; Schimmack, 2008), leading to the development of bi-directional theories which underscore the reciprocal interplay between top-down and bottom-up happiness. Bi-directional theories also highlight individual differences in vulnerability to environmental changes (e.g., people reporting low well-being are more susceptible to domain-level changes).

Despite differences in directionality, these theories converge on one assumption: All people uniquely experience happiness. In other words, well-being is *variable-centered* (i.e., people can be ranked relative to others on shared dimensions) but also *person-specific* (i.e., people uniquely differ in their determinants of happiness). Yet, empirical studies largely conflate differences in happiness levels (i.e. rank-ordering) with why people are happy. Well-being science has therefore largely focused on well-being differences across people, which ignores or averages across components and dynamics. These studies instead asked, who are the happiest people (e.g., Batz-Barbarich et al., 2018; Helliwell et al., 2024; Ryff et al., 2021; Tay et al., 2018)?; what are the consequences of being happier (e.g., Pfund & Hill, 2018; Ryff et al., 2021; Willroth et al., 2023)?; and how does happiness change across the lifespan and in response to exogenous forces (e.g., Bossert et al., 2024; Buecker et al., 2023; Bühler et al., 2024; Nissen et al., 2022; Pfund & Lewis, 2020; Scharbert et al., 2024)? However, the personalized experience of well-being is lost to the aggregate.

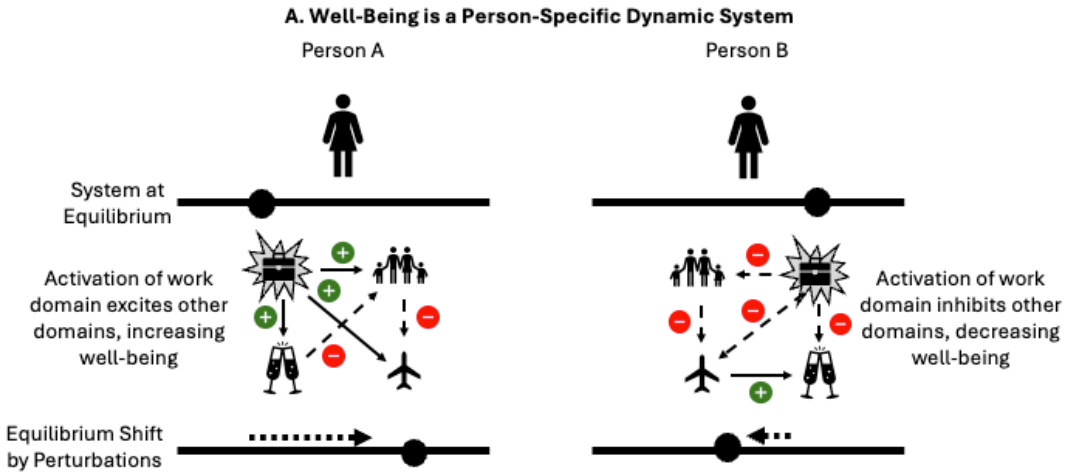
To re-center the person in well-being science, we argue that idiographic approaches are better suited to studying well-being for at least three reasons. First, idiographic approaches correspond to process-based and dynamic approaches that capture well-being. Dynamic approaches examine how well-being unfolds over space and time, and idiographic dynamics examine dynamics for a single person. Second, idiographic approaches also complement qualitative approaches to well-being. They consider the person relative only to themselves, allowing insights into how a person makes meaning of what is (and is not) relevant to their well-being units. Lastly, idiographic approaches are a pathway of integration: We can capture the dynamic meaning-making of well-being that can explain how well-being unfolds similarly and differently across people and intraindividual changes across one's lifetime. The panels of Figure 1 provide an overview of these arguments, which we explain in more detail below.

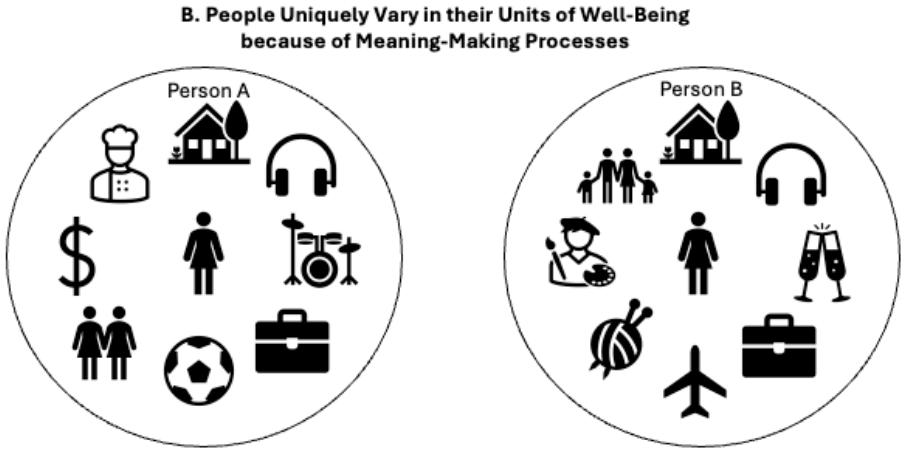
Well-Being is a Person-Specific Dynamic System

Theories of well-being characterize it as a dynamic construct: All people experience changes in well-being but vary in the rate, degree, and duration of change. Indeed, people experience both short-term fluctuations (e.g., Lades et al., 2020; Pfund et al., 2024; Roshanaei et al., 2023) and long-term mean-level changes (e.g., Buecker et al., 2023; Pfund & Lewis, 2020) in well-being. Well-being theories, however, differ in the ways situational (i.e., bottom-up) and psychological (i.e., top-down) forces influence change (e.g., Diener, 1984; Hill et al., 2023; Ryff, 2018; Schimmack, 2008). We argue that well-being is best conceptualized as a person-specific dynamic construct– that is, bottom-up and top-down forces likely impact people differently (i.e. an individual differences perspective) and are best captured through dynamic systems approaches.

Dynamic systems frameworks provide three core features that are particularly relevant to well-being: Each person's system is characterized by (1) an equilibrium(-a), (2) regulatory processes, and (3) unique connections amongst well-being units. These parameters can serve as individual difference measures that can help explain population-level trends in well-being while preserving the person-specific experience of well-being. First, convergent with the hedonic treadmill, a person's equilibrium refers to the level where their well-being system is at homeostasis (i.e., a setpoint), around which they vary. People's equilibria can differ in three ways: number, location, and strength. For instance, Person A and B in Figure 1A have one equilibrium (number), but Person A is generally unhappier than Person B (location). Perturbations, such as unexpected expenses or personality state expressions, push or pull the system to different equilibria or new momentary happiness levels.

Second, endogenous and exogenous regulatory forces help the system maintain its equilibrium(-a) and help determine equilibrium strength. A core focus of dynamic system theories is capturing the processes through which a system (e.g., a person) responds to the forces that push and pull well-being, which is compatible with the top-down hedonic treadmill (Diener et al., 2009) and bottom-up importance weighting (Rohrer & Schmukle, 2018) theories. These regulatory processes can take many forms, such as emotion regulation strategies that prioritize behaviors that return well-being to an equilibrium. In Figure 1A, increased work demands result in Person A seeking out family support because family time successfully diminishes their negative emotions (positive connections) resulting in rapid increases in well-being. Person B, however, secludes themselves (negative connections) to quickly finish the job to overcome feeling unhappy. This coupled with their sunny disposition results in only minor decreases (see Springstein & English, 2024 for further examples). While individuals have unique elements and


A. Well-Being is a Person-Specific Dynamic System
Person A
Person B
System at Equilibrium
Activation of work domain excites other domains, increasing well-being
Activation of work domain inhibits other domains, decreasing well-being
Equilibrium Shift by Perturbations


B. People Uniquely Vary in their Units of Well-Being because of Meaning-Making Processes
Person A
Person B

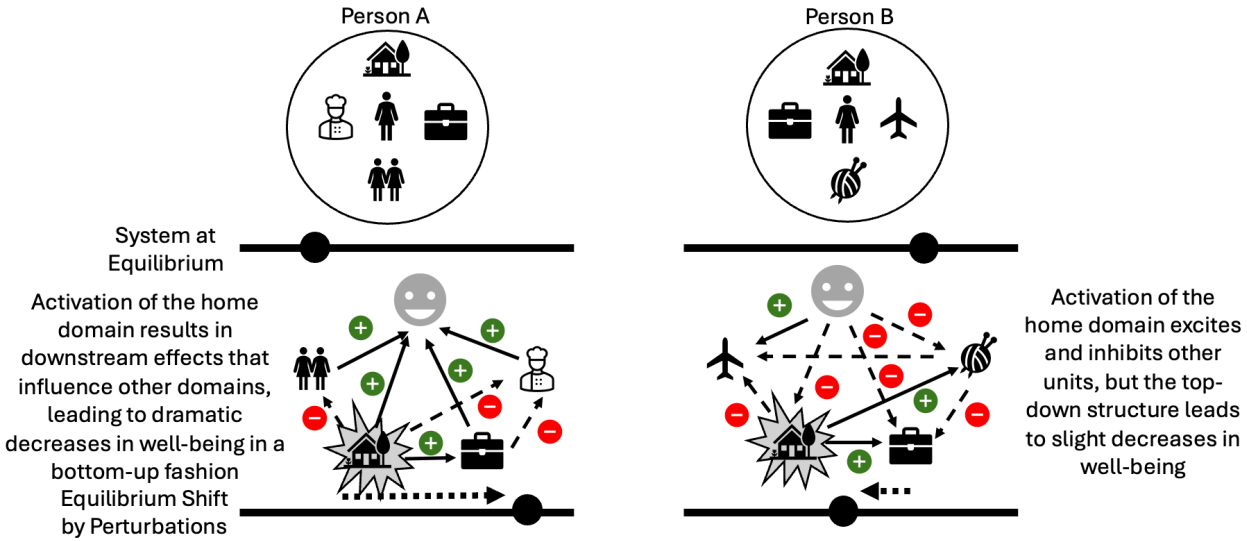

C. Dynamic Meaning-Making Gives Way to the Structure and Processes of Well-Being
Person A
Person B
System at Equilibrium
Activation of the home domain results in downstream effects that influence other domains, leading to dramatic decreases in well-being in a bottom-up fashion
Equilibrium Shift by Perturbations
Activation of the home domain excites and inhibits other units, but the top-down structure leads to slight decreases in well-being

Figure 1. Well-being depicted as an idiographic dynamic system. A) Well-being is a dynamic system that explains how and why well-being uniquely unfolds for a person as a function of their equilibrium(-a), regulatory processes (+ = excitatory; - = inhibitory), and unique connections among units. Person A has a lower level of well-being than Person B as indicated by their different equilibrium positions (black circles). Person A and B also differ in the strength and direction of the connections and interactions among well-being units. Finally, people differ in their vulnerability to perturbations, such that Person A is more sensitive to the forces that act on their well-being as seen with a stronger change in well-being. Person B is less vulnerable, only experiencing minor changes to well-being from perturbations. B) People also differ in the kinds of units they have for well-being. The units of well-being are defined by the individual based on meaning-making processes. A person constructs and updates their units as they go through life and accomplish and fulfill goals. C) Panel C serves to integrate differences in dynamics and units to highlight how dynamic meaning-making gives way to why people vary in the structure and processes of well-being. The meaningful units of a person are uniquely connected, and this is why some people with similar units have different levels of well-being and why people with different units sometimes have similar levels of well-being.

regulatory processes, how quickly a system returns to equilibria provides a unifying theoretical and empirical structure for comparing well-being systems across people (e.g., Sonnentag, 2015).

Finally, a dynamic systems account of well-being can capture the factors that impact a person's well-being (e.g., health, income) and the unique associations among them. Person systems can differentially interact with and impact these forces as well as broader structural systems (e.g., culture, family, etc.) (Bronfenbrenner, 2000). Even for two people with the same units, one person could have a heavily interconnected system, where the influence of one unit of well-being has strong downstream consequences for other units. Another may have weak connections, at best. As depicted in Figure 1A, Person A and B share similar units, yet Person A lacks a connection between travel and leisure units while they are connected for Person B. Any travel Person A takes does not impact their leisure life, while Person B is likely to pursue more leisure activities after traveling. As a result, a system's interconnectedness (e.g., density, reactivity) can act as integrative individual difference markers (e.g., Johal & Rhemtulla, under review; Nissen & Beck, 2024). Overall, these three core features provide a way for researchers to conceptualize well-being as a dynamic construct.

What can a person-specific dynamic systems approach offer beyond traditional population-level applications of well-being theories? As an example, Kelley and colleagues (2023) used idiographic dynamic systems conceptualizations of positive and negative affect to explain population-level experiences of depression. These researchers found that greater interconnectedness among emotions was related to more variability in depression severity. In other words, people whose dynamic emotion system was more reactive to outside forces through cascading effects (i.e., a "slippery slope"-like system) explained greater variation in a person's depressive symptoms. These findings exemplify how idiographic dynamic systems perspectives

to well-being can be useful for identifying ill-being at the population level and vulnerabilities to target in treatment at the individual level.

In sum, an idiographic dynamic systems approach to personality maps onto the proposed nature of well-being. System parameters such as the location of equilibrium(-a), the processes involved in the system, and the number and strength of connections amongst the units of well-being can be used as meaningful individual differences such as means, variability, and reactivity that can help explain how well-being unfolds for a person and among people. The integration of these parameters can help researchers understand why people differ in their experience of well-being.

Meaning-Making is Core to the Units of Well-Being

Considering the dynamic nature of well-being also requires understanding its components, or *units*. Theories of well-being have long acknowledged that the elements of well-being are likely unique to the individual. For instance, although theories and empirical studies of eudaimonic well-being suggest that people differ in levels of purpose (Mackenzie et al., 2018; Pfund & Lewis, 2020; Ryff et al., 2021), the determinants of purpose for two people with the same level are likely different (Ryff, 2018). Yet, well-being measures typically assume what makes up well-being, as evidenced by measures that presume what the units are (i.e., PANAS; Watson et al., 1998), make broad generalizations about what constructs look like (e.g., purpose; Ryff, 1989), or include variable units across studies (Beck et al., 2024). Ascribing universal units loses valuable information about what informs a person's well-being but also leaves questions about whether those units correctly reflect what is true for a person. This raises concerns about the validity of current well-being operationalizations because omitting focal units can severely bias or overestimate our understanding of what contributes to well-being (Rohrer et al., 2024).

To better capture how a person considers their units, the importance-weighting literature aims to characterize well-being by how people differentially weigh the importance of these units (e.g., Rohrer & Schmukle, 2018). As typically applied, most importance-weighting work still assumes that people are aware of how important these units are, yet one recent study found that the perceived importance of units was unrelated to how units impacted happiness (Rohrer et al., 2024). Null findings may reflect people selecting the units as important in socially desirable ways or their unawareness of what contributes to their well-being. Despite attempts to capture how people consider the units of well-being, current well-being conceptualizations limit our understanding of what units and processes influence person-specific unit selection.

If well-being is person-specific, how do we define the building blocks? Theories of well-being point to *meaning-making* processes as foundational to understanding well-being. For instance, constructivist approaches highlight that emotions are unlikely to be "natural kinds" even if grounded in universal systems, leading to both broad, cross-cultural variations in emotion labels and variations within cultures (Averill, 1980; Barrett, 2013; Karnaze, 2013). Meaning-making refers to the processes a person uses to identify their components of well-being as important to their identity (Kegan, 1982; Kunnen & Bosma, 2000), idiographic goals (Cox & Klinger, 2023; Emmons, 1986; Little & Balsari-Palsule, 2020), and current context (Diener & Fujita, 1995; Kegan, 1982). Figure 1B illustrates how meaning-making occurs across people. Person A and B share and differ in their units of well-being. Person B considers engaging in many leisure activities as essential to their well-being because it allows them to unwind. For Person A, leisure activities are less relevant; they instead prioritize financial stability. Both share units like work but their selection reflects different priorities (Person A = opportunities to foster fulfilling relationships; Person B = sense of purpose). Therefore, for researchers to understand

how well-being unfolds across people, understanding the construction of what makes something meaningful (i.e., meaning-making) must be considered and not aggregated.

Well-being science, however, has not fully captured meaning-making processes. Qualitative research provides opportunities for participants to identify and contextualize their units of well-being. Such designs coincide with constructivist theories, which suggest that people assign value to their units of well-being based on their past experiences (Averill, 1980; Karnaze, 2013). A person must therefore identify their units, as what researchers presume is true may not reflect a person's constructed reality. Indeed, previous research found that the degree of coupling between positive and negative affect failed to replicate its assumed orthogonality and varied across people due to personal significance from previous experiences (Rafaeli et al., 2007; Rafaeli & Revelle, 2006). Emerging evidence also suggests that emotion labels identified by participants rarely reflect the content of standard measures (Hoemann et al., 2024). Finally, constructivist theories can also help explain between and within-cultural differences in well-being through meaning-making processes (Barrett, 2013). Understanding a culture's history, experiences, and norms can identify general patterns in how different cultures label units and how deviations from a culture's typical construction influence unit selection (Diener et al., 2018; Gardiner et al., 2020; Schimmack et al., 2002; Scollon et al., 2004; Tam et al., 2012). Overall, allowing people to define their units allows for constructivist examinations of meaning-making processes.

Similarly, well-being theories that conceptualize well-being through goal and value fulfillment provide another avenue to understanding these meaning-making processes. The Cybernetic Value Fulfillment Theory, for instance, posits that well-being is the result of completing goals aligned with one's values (DeYoung & Tiberius, 2023). According to this

theory, a person's goals reflect their sense of purpose, and accomplishing one's goals should lead to increased hedonic happiness while goal conflict should lead to decreases (Wilt et al., 2017). As these goals apply to various life domains, people will determine what domains are meaningful (i.e., good and bad) in pursuing their values. Similarly, cross-cultural differences in goals and values can explain how people differentially experience well-being across and within cultures (Galinha et al., 2023; Oishi et al., 2009; Oishi & Diener, 2001). Overall, these theories and empirical work underscore the importance of meaning-making processes to well-being and how well-being researchers can consider them.

In sum, meaning-making allows researchers to re-center the person in the study of well-being as proposed by foundational well-being theories. As it is a process that unfolds within a person, capturing it via idiographic methods is a fruitful avenue for well-being science. This requires that at the person level, between-person operationalizations of well-being units be reconsidered. Doing so allows a person to relay how they construct and assign meaning to their units. Researchers can then search for any commonalities among these units to determine any true universal building blocks (if at all).

The Structure and Processes of Well-Being: Dynamic Meaning-Making

Thus far, we discussed how idiographic approaches are better suited to capture (1) the dynamic nature of well-being and (2) the units of well-being through meaning-making. Together, idiographic dynamics and meaning-making provide opportunities to examine how well-being is organized for a person. In other words, by integrating these two (i.e., dynamic meaning-making), well-being researchers can better study the structure and processes of how well-being unfolds for a single person and how it compares to others.

However, understanding well-being as a dynamic system governed by meaning-making processes has not yet been fully realized. This largely stems from foundational cross-sectional studies of well-being's structure, which assume a static structure with variable-centered units (e.g., Crawford & Henry, 2004; Diener et al., 2013, 2018; Springer & Hauser, 2006). The dynamic structure of well-being therefore remains unclear. Two recent studies aimed to address this gap using longitudinal panel data (Beck et al., 2024; Schaefer et al., 2024). Both studies found evidence for a bi-directional structure in the population despite differences in units. However, Beck and colleagues (2024) found that the bi-directional models did not fit well at the person level. Rather, roughly equal proportions of people's well-being were best captured as bottom-up, top-down, bi-directional, or non-directional (i.e., no associations among units), highlighting that population-level structures may mask how well-being is organized for a person. These findings refute the idea that one theory best describes well-being and that the better question becomes for whom is a theoretical structure correct?

Fully understanding the person-specific organizations of well-being will require a bottom-up, idiographic perspective in which no assumptions are made about how the units and forces interact with one another and in which the system is assumed to change over time. Dynamic meaning-making provides pathways to capture a person's well-being structure for at least two reasons. First, the units are reflective of the person's reality and goals. Second, the connections and ordering of those units inform how a person experiences well-being. Dynamic meaning-making processes therefore result in interindividual differences in the intraindividual structuring of well-being.

Figure 1C aims to integrate dynamic meaning-making. Person A and Person B not only share and differ in their units but in their connections as well. Person A's connections result in a

bottom-up structure while Person B has a top-down structure. Person A's overall happiness is contingent on more situational forces, where demands at home have detrimental consequences to their well-being and other units. Despite how work-life influences Person B's units, they are more likely to view their home life as generally better, resulting in minimal changes to their happiness. Therefore, dynamic meaning-making is best done through idiographic approaches, which provide contextualized insight into the structuring and experience of happiness.

Similarly, dynamic meaning-making provides a framework to describe and assess the processes of a system that capture how the person responds to perturbations (Kunnen & Bosma, 2000). As mentioned above, these regulatory processes can be excitatory, inhibitory, or work to maintain well-being. Understanding these processes can help explain why a person behaves in certain ways to enhance, diminish, or maintain levels of well-being across situations and their lifetime. Idiographic approaches are necessary to identify dynamic mean-making processes because these processes vary across people and a person's units. For instance, the same processes can lead to differences in how well-being unfolds. In Figure 1C, Person A and Person B have excitatory processes connecting the home unit to work. However, Person A is more sensitive to the situational forces surrounding their relationships at work resulting in substantial negative consequences across many other units of their well-being. While Person B also experiences negative consequences from work, these effects are less potent because it is less interconnected than Person A. Two very different processes can also result in well-being unfolding similarly across people. Person A vacillates between the importance of work and leisure activities because it allows them to maintain their relative happiness overall. Person B may always be dissatisfied with their romantic relationship, but they are always seemingly happy at work because it provides a way to separate themselves from their partner.

Lastly, dynamic meaning-making can also explain lifespan changes in the structure and processes of well-being for a person. Population-level trends suggest that well-being experiences moderate mean-level (e.g., Buecker et al., 2023; Pfund & Lewis, 2020; Steger et al., 2009) and structural (Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Schaefer et al., 2024; Schimmack, 2008) changes. However, these studies are often plagued by cross-sectional designs or by using measures optimized for cross-sectional assessment. Dynamic meaning-making instead compares how an individual constructs their well-being in the moment, with their former self as the key reference point. As mentioned above, some theories consider meaning-making processes as value-oriented (e.g., DeYoung & Tiberius, 2023; Ryff et al., 2021). These theories suggest that the experience of and changes in well-being reflect unique goal fulfillment and conflict, which is corroborated by empirical research (e.g., Bühler et al., 2019; Hanel et al., 2023; Steca et al., 2016). Lifespan changes in goals may reflect changes in social roles and other self-regulatory factors (e.g., Atherton et al., 2021; Buchinger et al., 2024; Gouveia et al., 2015) that influence the selection of unique goals that reflect personal strivings (Emmons, 1986). In other words, as goals shift across a person's lifetime, so should the structure and processes of well-being. Dynamic meaning-making thereby links value fulfillment to intraindividual changes in well-being. For instance, if in young adulthood someone finds purpose in giving back to their community, their well-being structure is likely to reflect units and connections in pursuit of these values. As this person starts a family, they may include their growing family in pursuing these goals instead of their friends, thereby providing ways for units and interconnections among them to change. These same features can be applied to processes. If someone's main goal is to build relationships, they are likely to have excitatory processes of well-being tied to social gatherings. However, if their

priorities shift to instead focus on saving money to increase well-being, these processes may move to more inhibitory roles as attending many social gatherings becomes expensive.

Overall, well-being is a construct that is best examined with dynamic, idiographic approaches that merge the quantitative and the qualitative. As we have argued, this is because the theoretical cores of well-being, a dynamic structure whose units are unique to the individual, are best captured as person-specific. Current variable-centered and population-based conceptualizations lose these meaningful pieces to the aggregate, leaving uncertainty as to whether well-being is truly being captured for each person. Idiographic approaches are well-equipped to re-center the focus of well-being on a person through dynamic systems approaches. With an idiographic, dynamic meaning-making framework, well-being science can begin to answer many of the questions that researchers are interested in and remain elusive.

Setting an Agenda for Well-Being Science

Given ongoing mismatches between theoretical foundations and empirical applications in well-being, classic questions remain to be answered. We have argued that moving toward an idiographic conceptualization will open doors to explore these questions and set an agenda for new ones. In this section, we point to lingering questions and recent advances in modeling and methodologies to shift the focus to idiographic approaches in well-being science.

First, if well-being is a dynamic system of meaning-making processes, how do we model it as such? Network science offers a promising tool for operationalizing these systems (Beck & Thapa, 2024). Networks consist of nodes that serve as units, whose connections are represented by edges (e.g., the association between nodes controlling for all other associations with other nodes). Edges reflect the processes of well-being through their sign (e.g., positive = excitatory, negative = inhibitory) and magnitude (strong and weak cascading effects). Networks can also

capture the various timescales that well-being is theorized to unfold across people and for a specific person (e.g., contemporaneous vs lagged, time-varying, continuous-time) as well as the direction of the effects of units (bottom-up, top-down, bi-directional, undirected). Lastly, networks can be captured at individual and population levels, allowing for comparisons in how well-being unfolds across people and in individual-level structures. Given the flexibility of the network, relevant summaries of network parameters (e.g., density as a measure of susceptibility) can be extracted and used as individual difference measures (Kelley et al., 2023; Nissen et al., 2024). The use of networks in psychology more broadly and advances in longitudinal panel studies and intensive longitudinal designs (Beck & Thapa, 2024; Borsboom et al., 2021; Costantini et al., 2019; Park et al., 2020) allow for the incorporation of these networks into the study of well-being (Beck et al., 2024; Schaefer et al., 2024). For example, the features of networks can be useful in answering questions about how and why people experience mean-level changes or day-to-day variability in well-being (discussed more below). The use of networks in psychology is an active area of research and provides an exciting opportunity for well-being science.

Second, are there any units of well-being that are universal? Most empirical studies have assumed so while many theories of well-being suggest otherwise. This has led to substantial variability across studies in unit inclusion. While there are likely some universal units, ascribing population-level units masks much of the heterogeneous meaning-making processes involved in what contributes to a person's well-being (Kunnen & Bosma, 2000). Therefore, questions remain about how units of well-being should be operationalized. As a first step, researchers need to identify the units of well-being for a person. Qualitative research highlights the utility of people providing their units over standard measures. These methodologies allow people to contextualize

their constructed reality (Averill, 1980; Barrett, 2013; Karnaze, 2013) and idiographic goals (Cox & Klinger, 2023; Emmons, 1986; Little & Balsari-Palsule, 2020) that inform the units. Orthogonal measures make it difficult to disaggregate down to identify what the person-specific units are. Idiographic approaches allow for bottom-up construction of well-being measures by looking for commonalities among the units reported by each person. Qualitative responses can then be compared to established measures of well-being with tools like machine learning to determine which units are best representative of a person (Beck & Jackson, 2022; Margolis et al., 2021; Nan et al., 2024). Future research needs to continue to understand the unique content of one's well-being and whether it outperforms more standard measures.

Third, researchers should pivot to identifying the dynamic structure of well-being for a person and how it compares to population-level structures. Recent evidence using network approaches suggests that while a bi-directional structure best reflects well-being at the population level (Schaefer et al., 2024), this may be because equal proportions of people with bottom-up, top-down, and bi-directional structures are masked in the bi-directional model (Beck et al., 2024). Moreover, researchers should shift from "What structure best fits the population?" to "For whom, is a theory correct?" This allows multiple well-being theories to exist, which allows a rich understanding of how well-being unfolds across people. Testing these assumptions, however, requires many waves of data either through longitudinal panel data or intensive longitudinal designs (experience sampling methodologies; ESM) to accurately estimate the associations among the units of well-being (Beck & Thapa, 2024). Taking an individualized approach to the structure of well-being may also help address and contextualize the effects between life events and well-being (e.g., Bühler et al., 2024; Luhmann et al., 2012; Luhmann & Eid, 2009). In sum,

idiographic approaches along with networks and longitudinal designs provide an exciting and fruitful avenue for understanding the structure the well-being and righting the wrongs of the past.

Lastly, understanding the processes of well-being can explain inter- and intraindividual differences in how well-being unfolds. Using idiographic approaches, well-being researchers can further investigate how dynamic meaning-making processes unfold for a specific person across space and time. Advancements in ESM methodologies are exciting opportunities to ask questions about these processes. While people can respond to multiple surveys a day, mobile sensing data (i.e., phone calls, GPS locations) can be helpful in further understanding how these unique processes unfold across forces beyond just self-report data (Harari & Gosling, 2023; Thapa et al., 2021). Idiographic approaches further allow us to better characterize the processes of well-being, which can help researchers generate measures that differentiate these different types of processes. Additionally, the timescale of these processes likely has meaningful implications for the experience of well-being, as people may differ in how swiftly these processes regulate well-being. Recent investigations of timescales in psychological phenomena provide various ways to examine this (continuous vs discrete time; contemporaneous vs lagged models) but heed necessary interpretations in understanding what is learned from these models (Park et al., 2023). However, despite being an active area of research, these modeling techniques could prove useful in understanding the processes of well-being.

By conceptualizing well-being as idiographic in our methodologies and analytical strategies, we can begin to answer many of the questions well-being researchers are interested in. Network approaches, qualitative research, and machine learning provide promising analytical models and tools to examine well-being with the increased use and advancements in longitudinal

panel data and ESM designs. Pivoting to these types of studies can help greatly advance our understanding of well-being as it should be considered, a person-specific construct.

Conclusion

In sum, well-being is a person-specific construct that has long been misrepresented in empirical work. Idiographic approaches offer avenues to capture, define, and model well-being with the person in focus. By incorporating a dynamic systems approach with meaning-making processes, we can begin to identify the way well-being unfolds not only for a person but also in the population. We call on well-being researchers to reconsider how they examine well-being and begin to pivot toward these new approaches and analytical strategies to assess well-being as conceptualized by many of the foundational theories.

References

Allport, D. A. (1968). Phenomenal Simultaneity and the Perceptual Moment Hypothesis. *British Journal of Psychology*, *59*(4), 395–406. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8295.1968.tb01154.x

Atherton, O. E., Grijalva, E., Roberts, B. W., & Robins, R. W. (2021). Stability and Change in Personality Traits and Major Life Goals From College to Midlife. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *47*(5), 841–858. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167220949362

Averill, J. R. (1980). A Constructivist View of Emotion. In R. Plutchik & H. Kellerman (Eds.), *Theories of Emotion* (pp. 305–339). Academic Press. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-558701-3.50018-1

Barrett, L. F. (2013). Psychological Construction: The Darwinian Approach to the Science of Emotion. *Emotion Review*, *5*(4), 379–389. https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073913489753

Batz-Barbarich, C., Tay, L., Kuykendall, L., & Cheung, H. K. (2018). A Meta-Analysis of Gender Differences in Subjective Well-Being: Estimating Effect Sizes and Associations With Gender Inequality. *Psychological Science*, *29*(9), 1491–1503. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797618774796

Beck, E. D., Cheung, F., Thapa, S., & Jackson, J. (2024). *Towards personalised happiness: An idiographic approach to change in satisfaction* [Preprint]. https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-3074181/v1

Beck, E. D., & Jackson, J. J. (2022). Personalized Prediction of Behaviors and Experiences: An Idiographic Person–Situation Test. *Psychological Science*, *33*(10), 1767–1782. https://doi.org/10.1177/09567976221093307

Beck, E. D., & Thapa, S. (2024). Dynamic Network Analysis. In M. R. Mehl, M. Eid, C. Wrzus, G. M. Harari, & U. W. Ebner-Priemer (Eds.), *Mobile Sensing in Psychology: Methods and Applications* (pp. 386–408). Guillford Press.

Bialowolski, P., & Weziak-Bialowolska, D. (2021). Longitudinal Evidence for Reciprocal Effects Between Life Satisfaction and Job Satisfaction. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *22*(3), 1287–1312. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-020-00273-1

Borsboom, D., Deserno, M. K., Rhemtulla, M., Epskamp, S., Fried, E. I., McNally, R. J., Robinaugh, D. J., Perugini, M., Dalege, J., Costantini, G., Isvoranu, A.-M., Wysocki, A. C., Van Borkulo, C. D., Van Bork, R., & Waldorp, L. J. (2021). Network analysis of multivariate data in psychological science. *Nature Reviews Methods Primers*, *1*(58), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1038/s43586-021-00055-w

Bossert, S. A., Jayawickreme, E., Blackie, L. E. R., & Cole, V. T. (2024). Further exploring the impact of cumulative lifetime adversity on life satisfaction, psychological flourishing, and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *110*, 104488. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2024.104488

Bronfenbrenner, U. (2000). Ecological systems theory. In *Encyclopedia of Psychology, Vol. 3.* (pp. 129–133). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/10518-046

Buchinger, L., Entringer, T. M., Richter, D., Wagner, G. G., Gerstorf, D., & Bleidorn, W. (2024). Codevelopment of life goals and the Big Five personality traits across adulthood and old age. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *126*(2), 346–368. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000477

Buecker, S., Luhmann, M., Haehner, P., Bühler, J. L., Dapp, L. C., Luciano, E. C., & Orth, U. (2023). The development of subjective well-being across the life span: A meta-analytic

review of longitudinal studies. *Psychological Bulletin*, *149*(7–8), 418–446. https://doi.org/10.1037/bul0000401

Bühler, J. L., Orth, U., Bleidorn, W., Weber, E., Kretzschmar, A., Scheling, L., & Hopwood, C. J. (2024). Life Events and Personality Change: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *European Journal of Personality*, *38*(3), 544–568. https://doi.org/10.1177/08902070231190219

Bühler, J. L., Weidmann, R., Nikitin, J., & Grob, A. (2019). A Closer Look at Life Goals across Adulthood: Applying A Developmental Perspective to Content, Dynamics, and Outcomes of Goal Importance and Goal Attainability. *European Journal of Personality*, *33*(3), 359–384. https://doi.org/10.1002/per.2194

Costantini, G., Richetin, J., Preti, E., Casini, E., Epskamp, S., & Perugini, M. (2019). Stability and variability of personality networks. A tutorial on recent developments in network psychometrics. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *136*, 68–78. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2017.06.011

Cox, W. M., & Klinger, E. (2023). Assessing current concerns and goals idiographically: A review of the Motivational Structure Questionnaire family of instruments. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *79*(3), 667–682. https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.23256

Crawford, J. R., & Henry, J. D. (2004). The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS): Construct validity, measurement properties and normative data in a large non-clinical sample. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *43*(3), 245–265. https://doi.org/10.1348/0144665031752934

DeYoung, C. G., & Tiberius, V. (2023). Value Fulfillment from a Cybernetic Perspective: A New Psychological Theory of Well-Being. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *27*(1), 3–27. https://doi.org/10.1177/10888683221083777

Diener, E. (1984). Subjective Well-Being. *Psychological Bulletin*, *95*(3), 542–575.

Diener, E., & Fujita, F. (1995). Resources, Personal Strivings, and Subjective Weil-Being: A Nomothetic and Idiographic Approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *68*(5), 926–935.

Diener, E., Inglehart, R., & Tay, L. (2013). Theory and Validity of Life Satisfaction Scales. *Social Indicators Research*, *112*(3), 497–527. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-012-0076-y

Diener, E., & Lucas, R. E. (1999). Personality and Subjective Well-Being. In D. Kahneman, E. Diener, & N. Schwarz (Eds.), *Well-Being: The Foundations of Hedonic Psychology* (pp. 213–229). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Diener, E., Lucas, R. E., & Scollon, C. N. (2009). Beyond the Hedonic Treadmill: Revising the Adaptation Theory of Well-Being. In E. Diener (Ed.), *The Science of Well-Being: The Collected Works of Ed Diener* (pp. 103–118). Springer Netherlands. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-2350-6_5

Diener, E., Oishi, S., & Tay, L. (2018). Advances in subjective well-being research. *Nature Human Behaviour*, *2*(4), 253–260. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-018-0307-6

Emmons, R. A. (1986). Personal Strivings: An Approach to Personality and Subjective Weil-Being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *51*(5), 1058–1068.

Feist, G. J., Bodner, T. E., Jacobs, J. F., Miles, M., & Tan, V. (1995). Integrating top-down and bottom-up structural models of subjective well-being: A longitudinal investigation.

Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, *68*(1), 138–150. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.68.1.138

Fisher, A. J., Medaglia, J. D., & Jeronimus, B. F. (2018). Lack of group-to-individual generalizability is a threat to human subjects research. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *115*(27), E6106–E6115. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1711978115

Fogel, A. (2006). Dynamic Systems Research on Interindividual Communication: The Transformation of Meaning-Making. *Journal of Developmental Processes*, *1*, 7–30.

Galinha, I. C., Oishi, S., Pereira, C., & Wirtz, D. (2023). Personal values and life domain satisfaction predict global life satisfaction differently across cultures. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *40*(10), 3319–3343. https://doi.org/10.1177/02654075231173157

Gardiner, G., Lee, D., Baranski, E., Funder, D., & Project, M. of the I. S. (2020). Happiness around the world: A combined etic-emic approach across 63 countries. *PLOS ONE*, *15*(12), e0242718. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0242718

Gómez-López, M., Viejo, C., & Ortega-Ruiz, R. (2019). Well-Being and Romantic Relationships: A Systematic Review in Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *16*(13), 2415. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16132415

Gouveia, V. V., Vione, K. C., Milfont, T. L., & Fischer, R. (2015). Patterns of Value Change During the Life Span: Some Evidence From a Functional Approach to Values. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *41*(9), 1276–1290. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167215594189

Hanel, P. H. P., Tunç, H., Bhasin, D., Litzellachner, L. F., & Maio, G. R. (2023). Value fulfillment and well-being: Clarifying directions over time. *Journal of Personality*, *0*(0), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12869

Harari, G. M., & Gosling, S. D. (2023). Understanding behaviours in context using mobile sensing. *Nature Reviews Psychology*, *2*(12), 767–779. https://doi.org/10.1038/s44159-023-00235-3

Helliwell, J., Huang, H., Shiplett, H., Wang, S., & World Happiness Report. (2024). *Happiness of the Younger, the Older, and Those In Between* (v1.0) [Application/pdf]. University of Oxford. https://doi.org/10.18724/WHR-F1P2-QJ33

Hill, P. L., Pfund, G. N., & Allemand, M. (2023). The PATHS to Purpose: A New Framework Toward Understanding Purpose Development. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *32*(2), 105–110. https://doi.org/10.1177/09637214221128019

Hoemann, K., Warfel, E. A., Mills, C., Allen, L., Kuppens, P., & Wormwood, J. B. (2024). *Using freely generated labels instead of rating scales to assess emotion in everyday life*. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/squyk

Johal, S. K., & Rhemtulla, M. (under review). *Relating network-instantiated constructs to psychological variables through network-derived metrics: An exploratory study* [Preprint].

Karnaze, M. M. (2013). A Constructivist Approach to Defining Human Emotion: From George Kelly to Rue Cromwell. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, *26*(3), 194–201. https://doi.org/10.1080/10720537.2013.787327

Kegan, R. (1982). *The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development*. Harvard University Press.

Krys, K., Kostoula, O., van Tilburg, W. A. P., Mosca, O., Lee, J. H., Maricchiolo, F., Kosiarczyk, A., Kocimska-Bortnowska, A., Torres, C., Hitokoto, H., Liew, K., Bond, M. H., Lun, V. M.-C., Vignoles, V. L., Zelenski, J. M., Haas, B. W., Park, J., Vauclair, C.-M., Kwiatkowska, A., … Uchida, Y. (2024). Happiness Maximization Is a WEIRD Way of Living. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 17456916231208367. https://doi.org/10.1177/17456916231208367

Kunnen, E. S., & Bosma, H. A. (2000). Development of meaning making: A dynamic systems approach. *New Ideas in Psychology*, *18*(1), 57–82. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0732-118X(99)00037-9

Lades, L. K., Laffan, K., Daly, M., & Delaney, L. (2020). Daily emotional well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. *British Journal of Health Psychology*, *25*(4), 902–911. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjhp.12450

Little, B., & Balsari-Palsule, S. (2020). Personal Projects. In B. J. Carducci, C. S. Nave, & C. S. Nave (Eds.), *The Wiley Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences* (1st ed., pp. 305–310). Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118970843.ch51

Luhmann, M., & Eid, M. (2009). Does it really feel the same? Changes in life satisfaction following repeated life events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *97*(2), 363–381. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015809

Luhmann, M., Hofmann, W., Eid, M., & Lucas, R. E. (2012). Subjective well-being and adaptation to life events: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *102*(3), 592–615. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025948

Mackenzie, C. S., Karaoylas, E. C., & Starzyk, K. B. (2018). Lifespan Differences in a Self Determination Theory Model of Eudaimonia: A Cross-Sectional Survey of Younger,

Middle-Aged, and Older Adults. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *19*(8), 2465–2487. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-017-9932-4

Margolis, S., Elder, J., Hughes, B., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2021). *What Are the Most Important Predictors of Subjective Well-Being? Insights From Machine Learning and Linear Regression Approaches on the MIDUS Datasets*. [Preprint] https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/ugfjs

Nan, J., Herbert, M. S., Purpura, S., Henneken, A. N., Ramanathan, D., & Mishra, J. (2024). Personalized Machine Learning-Based Prediction of Wellbeing and Empathy in Healthcare Professionals. *Sensors*, *24*(8), 2640. https://doi.org/10.3390/s24082640

Nissen, A. T., & Beck, E. D. (2024). *Linking person-specific network parameters to between-person change* [Preprint]. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/pvubn

Nissen, A. T., Bleidorn, W., Ericson, S., & Hopwood, C. J. (2022). Selection and socialization effects of studying abroad. *Journal of Personality*, *90*(6), 1021–1038. https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12712

Oishi, S., & Diener, E. (2001). Goals, Culture, and Subjective Well-Being. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *27*(12), 1674–1682. https://doi.org/10.1177/01461672012712010

Oishi, S., & Diener, E. (2014). Can and Should Happiness Be a Policy Goal? *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *1*(1), 195–203. https://doi.org/10.1177/2372732214548427

Oishi, S., Diener, E., Lucas, R. E., & Suh, E. M. (2009). Cross-Cultural Variations in Predictors of Life Satisfaction: Perspectives from Needs and Values. In E. Diener (Ed.), *Culture and*

Well-Being: The Collected Works of Ed Diener (pp. 109–127). Springer Netherlands. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-2352-0_6

Park, J. J., Chow, S.-M., Fisher, Z. F., & Molenaar, P. C. M. (2020). Affect and personality: Ramifications of modeling (non-)directionality in dynamic network models. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*, *36*(6), 1009–1023. https://doi.org/10.1027/1015-5759/a000612

Park, J. J., Fisher, Z. F., Chow, S.-M., & Molenaar, P. C. M. (2023). Evaluating Discrete Time Methods for Subgrouping Continuous Processes. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, *0*(0), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1080/00273171.2023.2235685

Pfund, G. N., Burrow, A. L., & Hill, P. L. (2024). Purpose in daily life: Considering within-person sense of purpose variability. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *109*, 104473. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2024.104473

Pfund, G. N., & Hill, P. (2018). The Multifaceted Benefits of Purpose in Life. *The International Forum for Logotherapy*, *41*, 27–37.

Pfund, G. N., & Lewis, N. A. (2020). Aging with Purpose: Developmental Changes and Benefits of Purpose in Life Throughout the Lifespan. In P. L. Hill & M. Allemand (Eds.), *Personality and Healthy Aging in Adulthood: New Directions and Techniques* (pp. 27–42). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-32053-9_3

Rafaeli, E., & Revelle, W. (2006). A premature consensus: Are happiness and sadness truly opposite affects? *Motivation and Emotion*, *30*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-006-9004-2

Rafaeli, E., Rogers, G. M., & Revelle, W. (2007). Affective Synchrony: Individual Differences in Mixed Emotions. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *33*(7), 915–932. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167207301009

Rohrer, J. M., & Schmukle, S. C. (2018). Individual Importance Weighting of Domain Satisfaction Ratings does Not Increase Validity. *Collabra: Psychology*, *4*(1), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1525/collabra.116

Rohrer, J. M., Seifert, I. S., Arslan, R. C., Sun, J., & Schmukle, S. (2024). *The Effects of Satisfaction with Different Domains of Life on General Life Satisfaction Vary Between Individuals (But We Cannot Tell You Why)*. OSF. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/dkrxa

Roshanaei, M., Vaid, S. S., Courtney, A. L., Soh, S. J., Zaki, J., & Harari, G. M. (2023). *Contextualizing Meaningful Social Interactions and Momentary Well-Being in Everyday Life* [Preprint]. PsyArXiv. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/gu4pv

Ruini, C., & Ryff, C. D. (2016). Using Eudaimonic Well-being to Improve Lives. In *The Wiley Handbook of Positive Clinical Psychology* (pp. 153–166). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118468197.ch11

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017). *Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness*. The Guilford Press.

Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness Is Everything, or Is It? Explorations on the Meaning of Psychological Well-Being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *57*(6), 1069–1081.

Ryff, C. D. (2018). Eudaimonic Well-being. In *Diversity in Harmony – Insights from Psychology* (pp. 375–395). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119362081.ch20

Ryff, C. D., Boylan, J. M., & Kirsch, J. A. (2021). Eudaimonic and Hedonic Well-Being: An Integrative Perspective with Linkages to Sociodemographic Factors and Heatlh. In M. T. Lee, L. D. Kubzansky, & T. J. VanderWeele (Eds.), *Measuring Well-Being: Interdisciplinary Perspectives from the Social Sciences and the Humanities* (pp. 92–135). Oxford University Press.

Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *69*(4), 719–727. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.69.4.719

Schaefer, B., Haehner, P., & Luhmann, M. (2024). *Network Dynamics in Subjective Well-Being and Their Differences Across Age Groups*. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/92cp3

Scharbert, J., Humberg, S., Kroencke, L., Reiter, T., Sakel, S., ter Horst, J., Utesch, K., Gosling, S. D., Harari, G., Matz, S. C., Schoedel, R., Stachl, C., Aguilar, N. M. A., Amante, D., Aquino, S. D., Bastias, F., Bornamanesh, A., Bracegirdle, C., Campos, L. A. M., … Back, M. D. (2024). Psychological well-being in Europe after the outbreak of war in Ukraine. *Nature Communications*, *15*(1), 1202. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-024-44693-6

Schimmack, U. (2008). The Structure of Subjective Wellbeing. In M. Eid & R. J. Larsen (Eds.), *The Science of Subjective Well-Being* (pp. 97–123). The Guilford Press.

Schimmack, U., Radhakrishnan, P., Oishi, S., Dzokoto, V., & Ahadi, S. (2002). Culture, personality, and subjective well-being: Integrating process models of life satisfaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *82*(4), 582–593. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.82.4.582

Scollon, C. N., Diener, E., Oishi, S., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2004). Emotions Across Cultures and Methods. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *35*(3), 304–326. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022104264124

Sonnentag, S. (2015). Dynamics of Well-Being. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *2*(1), 261–293. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-032414-111347

Springer, K. W., & Hauser, R. M. (2006). An assessment of the construct validity of Ryff's Scales of Psychological Well-Being: Method, mode, and measurement effects. *Social Science Research*, *35*(4), 1080–1102. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2005.07.004

Springstein, T., & English, T. (2024). Distinguishing Emotion Regulation Success in Daily Life From Maladaptive Regulation and Dysregulation. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *28*(2), 209–224. https://doi.org/10.1177/10888683231199140

Steca, P., Monzani, D., Greco, A., D'Addario, M., Cappelletti, E., & Pancani, L. (2016). The Effects of Short-Term Personal Goals on Subjective Well-Being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *17*(4), 1435–1450. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-015-9651-7

Steger, M. F., Oishi, S., & Kashdan, T. B. (2009). Meaning in life across the life span: Levels and correlates of meaning in life from emerging adulthood to older adulthood. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *4*(1), 43–52. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760802303127

Tam, K.-P., Lau, H. P. B., & Jiang, D. (2012). Culture and Subjective Well-Being: A Dynamic Constructivist View. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *43*(1), 23–31. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022110388568

Tay, L., Zyphur, M., & Batz, C. L. (2018). Income and Subjective Well-Being: Review, Synthesis, and Future Research. In E. Diener, S. Oishi, & L. Tay (Eds.), *Handbook of Well-Being* (pp. 532–542). DEF Publishers.

Thapa, S., Tay, L., & Hou, D. (2021). Experience Sampling Methodology: Conceptual and Technological Advances for Understanding and Assessing Variability in Well-being Research. In P. D. Harms, P. L. Perrewé, & C.-H. (Daisy) Chang (Eds.), *Examining and Exploring the Shifting Nature of Occupational Stress and Well-Being* (Vol. 19, pp. 137–154). Emerald Publishing Limited. https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-355520210000019007

Thomas, C. C., & Markus, H. R. (2023). Enculturating the Science of International Development: Beyond the WEIRD Independent Paradigm. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *54*(2), 195–214. https://doi.org/10.1177/00220221221128211

Willroth, E. C. (2023). The Benefits and Challenges of a Unifying Conceptual Framework for Well-being Constructs. *Affective Science*, *4*(1), 41–44. https://doi.org/10.1007/s42761-022-00152-3

Willroth, E. C., Pfund, G. N., McGhee, C., & Rule, P. (2023). Well-Being as a Protective Factor Against Cognitive Decline and Dementia: A Review of the Literature and Directions for Future Research. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, *78*(5), 765–776. https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbad020

Wilt, J. A., Bleidorn, W., & Revelle, W. (2017). Velocity explains the links between personality states and affect. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *69*, 86–95. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2016.06.008

World Bank Group. (2024). *Current health expenditure (% of GDP)*. World Bank Open Data. https://data.worldbank.org

World Health Organization. (n.d.). *Health and Well-Being*. Retrieved June 21, 2024, from https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/major-themes/health-and-well-being