

Things We Think Make Us Happy

I. Good Job

Does Getting a Good Job Makes Us Happier?

Gilbert et al (1998)

Just AFTER a fair decision

predicted	drop in happiness	2.1 pt
ACTUAL		0.68 pt

	<u>unfair</u>	
predicted		1.90 pt
ACTUAL		0 pt

did not experience a significant decrease in happiness

What Salary is enough to make us happy

currently earning \$30,000 → \$50,000

\$100,000 → \$250,000

II. Money

American Phenomen Survey

What's Very Important In Life?

	2005	1967
"very well off financially"	71%	82%
"Develop a meaningful philosophy on life"	52%	86%

But does money makes us happy?

global survey

1. income doesn't have that much impact on happiness,
2. poorer >> richer countries
3. once basic needs are met, money has negligible effect

Historical

1940

7.5 out of 10

2005

7.2 out of 10

① An Income Threshold

(EWB)

\$75,000

Emotional Well-being has an effect up to \$75,000,
after which bigger income does not yield further
gains in EWB

② Life Evaluation

0

→ 10

worst

best

- Emotional well-being levels at \$75,000
- life evaluation increase w/ income

High Income ≠ Happiness

But does bring you a life that you think is better

But does money makes us happy?

maybe a little bit.

III. Awesome Stuff, True Love, Perfect Body & Good Grades

Awesome Stuff

"If only I had _____, I would be so happy."

Does awesome stuff makes us happier?

Nickerson et al (2003)

- 12,000 freshmen in 1976 Asked About materialist attitude
- ~20 years later asked about life satisfaction

▷ Materialists had ↓ life satisfaction vs non-materialists
2 decades later.

▷ Materialists also had more mental health disorders.

No

(Seeking it out may makes us less happy)

True Love

Lucas et al (2003)

- 25,000 people surveyed for 15 years
- 1716 people got married
- Are married people happier?

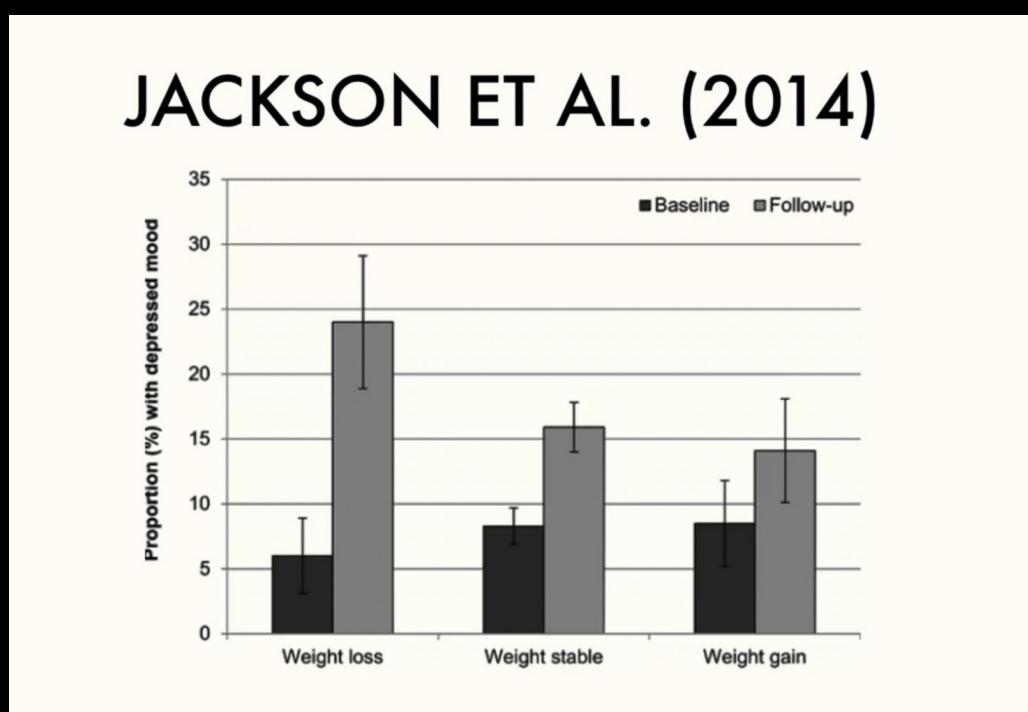
- Married people are happier in year 1-2
- But after that, married = non-married.

Does True Love really Make us Happier?

For a little bit
(then goes back to baseline)

Perfect Body

- 4 years
- weight loss, gain, same



Does beauty really makes us happy?

No

Grades

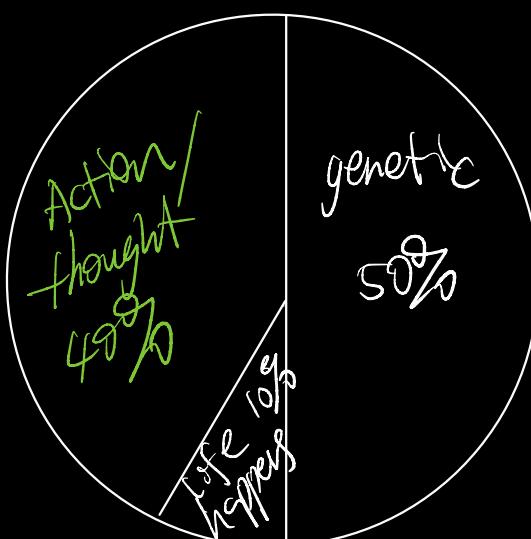
If you get a grade that is lower/higher than you expect, how happy will you feel?

	<u>predicted</u>	<u>actual</u>
higher than expected	8.27	6.55
exactly	7.81	6.45
lower	4.42	6.34

Annoying Features of the Mind

Why doesn't these make we happier?

1. genetically set
 2. stuff happens & messes things up



There are things we can do
to become happier

But most of the goals we think will
make us happy don't really make us happy

Annoying Feature

#1 our mind's strongest intuitions are
often totally wrong

Q & A