

3/1/2020

## Psychology of Well Being

Psychology: Scientific study of mental process, behavior and experiences.

It is scientific because:

1. Systematic & Empirical
2. Objective (factual)
3. Replicability / Verifiability

mental processes  $\Rightarrow$  thoughts

Brain vs Mind  
(Hardware) (Software)

Controls body by thought processor

organs communicate by language

behavior  $\Rightarrow$  Observable Actions

Experiences  $\Rightarrow$  Emotions and feelings

8/1/2020

## Mental Health & well-being

Mental Health: A state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

## Mental health -

" A state of well being in which the individual realizes his / her abilities , can cope with the normal stresses of life , can work productively & fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to this or her community .

## Mental illnesses / disorders

### Anxiety Disorders :

- generalized anxiety disorder
- phobias (irrational and exaggerated fear)
- panic disorder (panic attack triggered by something resulting in increased heart beat / freezing / unable to speak etc.)

### Depression / Bipolar / mood Disorders :

Symptoms - Loss of Interest (in most of the things in life) tired ; hopeless , emptiness sadness , anxious feelings .

Clinical depression is chronic or long lasting (sometimes leading to suicides )

(Nagashree)

Bipolar / Manic depressive disorder -  
extreme happiness and then extreme sadness.  
(Indranil D.)

→ Personality Disorders:

Antisocial personality disorders - doing antisocial works without any guilty feelings, Psychopaths, violet rules often.

Borderline personality disorder - extreme mood swings, not good interpersonal relations.

Narcissistic personality disorders - extremely self-centred, want to be center of attraction.

Post Traumatic Stress disorders (PTSD) -

- (a) Re-experiencing of trauma in terms of flashback, dreams etc.
- (b) Avoidance - Avoid the things, places that make them remember the trauma.
- (c) Arousal - There is always a fear in mind

# All these are neurotic disorders.

Psychotic Disorders :

Schizophrenia

→ Hallucination & delusions

Flourish - To live within an optimal range of human functioning

Languish - living a hollow & empty life

optimum experience & functioning

1. Hedonic Well-being

2. Eudaimonic Well-being

Hedonic - (Worldly pleasures and avoiding pain) Well being consists of pleasures and happiness

Eudaimonic - Well being is more than just pleasures & happiness. It lies with the actualization of human potentials.

Focuses on cultivating personal growth, meaning & flourishing

## Hedonic Well Being

Well being co-exists with pleasures and happiness. Focuses on maximising pleasures and avoiding pain.

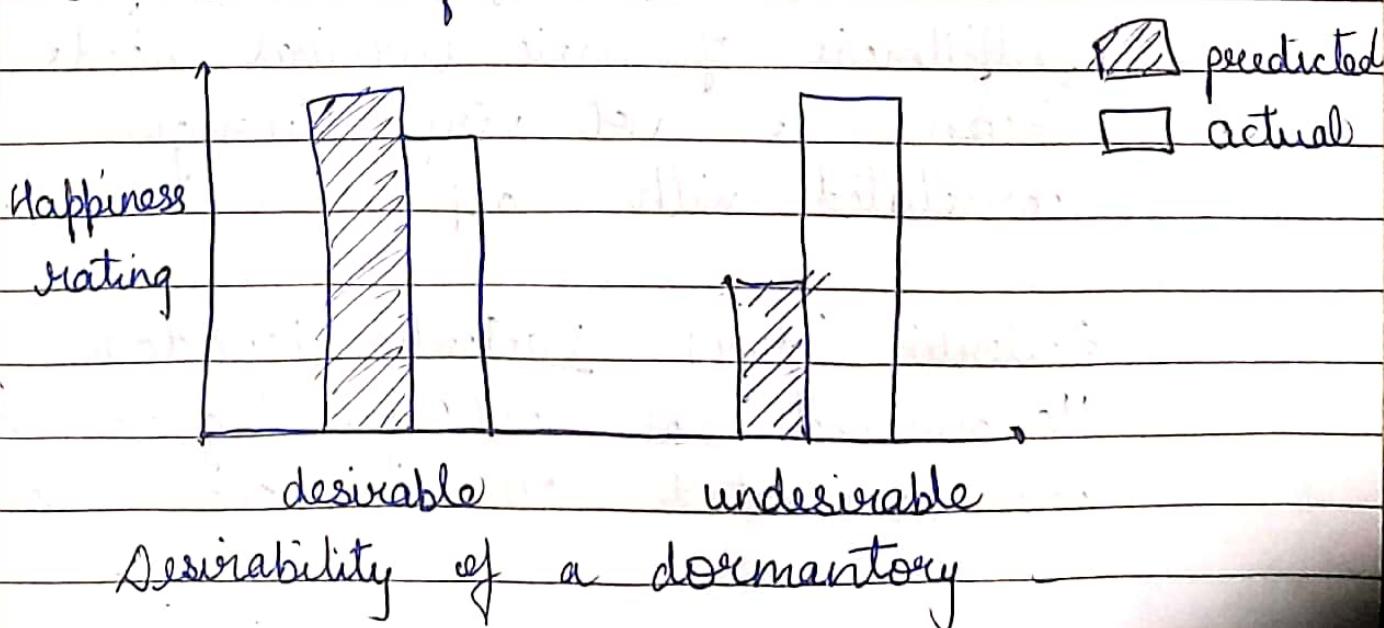
subjective well being (SWB) - Happiness

SWB = Positive emotions + negative emotions  
+ Life satisfaction

Happiness is a universal goal

## Impact Bias

Generally human beings over-estimate the intensity & duration of their emotional reactions to future events





Focalism: Tendency to over-estimate how much we will think about the events in the future & underestimate the extent to which other events which will influence our thoughts and emotions.

### Making Sense of an event!

23/01/2020. Income & happiness

(can money buy happiness?) +ve correlation  
(↑↑ 2nd ↑)

#### Correlational research

Diener & Oishi (2000)

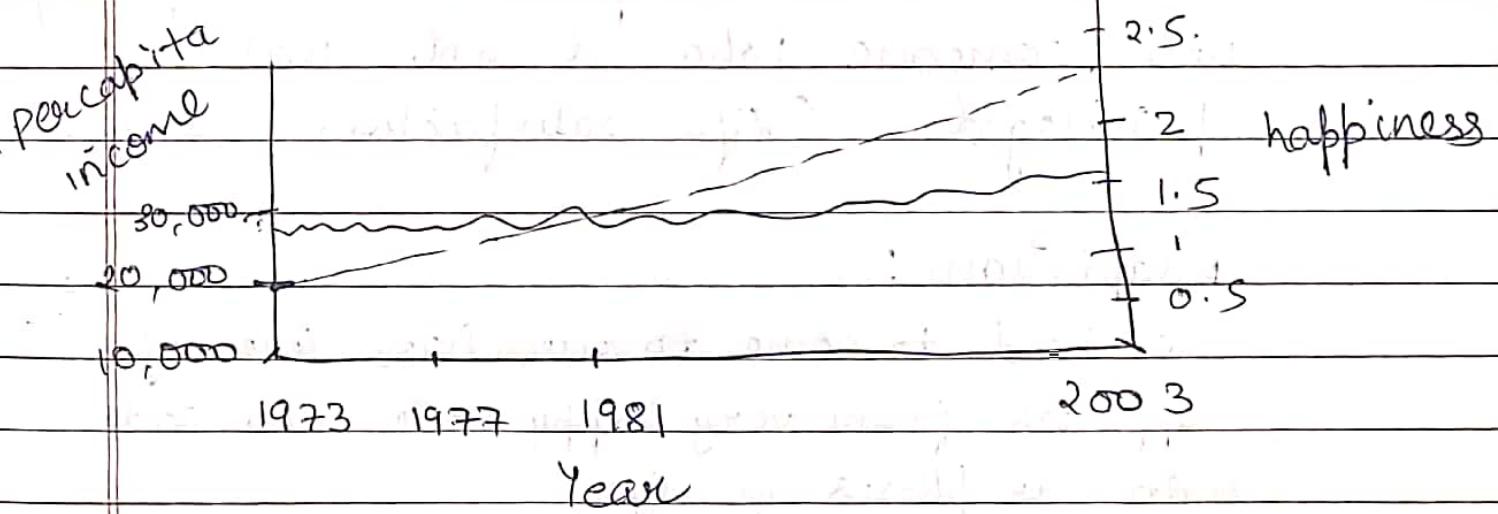
correlation ranges from (0.02 to 0.38)

Income level above those needed for fulfillment of basic survival needs, income is not very strongly correlated with happiness.

Easterlin (1974) - Easterlin Paradox

We observed that although higher income are associated with higher level of

happiness within a country, average level of happiness for a country do not appear to increase over time in line with increase in average income.



Richer countries are found to be happier than poorer countries.

Within each country, the rich members are found to be happier than poor.

#### (a) Social Comparison -

It is relative income rather than one's absolute income which determines life satisfaction.

- Upward Social Comparison - comparing with someone better. (life satisfaction will be less)
- Downward Social Comparison - comparing with someone who is not that privileged. (life satisfaction is more).

Adaptation:

We tend to come to our base line of happiness from very happy state and sad states or phases of life.

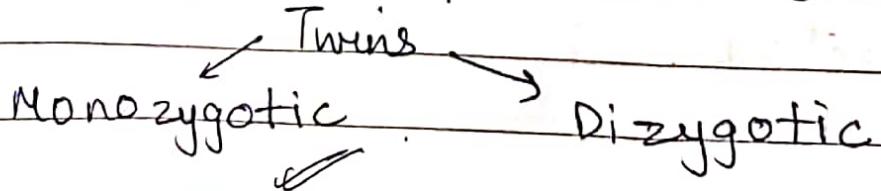
## # Can we become happier?

There are certain barriers:

### ①. Genetic Set point

A growing literature suggests that the baseline level of happiness is partially influenced by genetics.

→ Studied by twins separated n raised in diff. cultures



Identical twins have been found to report more similar levels of happiness than fraternal twins even if they were raised in different households.

## ① Personality

Neuroticism → emotionally unstable (anxiety)

Extrovert / Introvert [jese dharti]

Experience more happiness

## ② Hedonic Adaptation

It refers to the process by which individuals return to baseline levels of happiness following a change in life circumstances.

- i) It protects people from dangerous psychological & physiological consequences of prolonged emotional state.
- ii) Allows unchanging stimuli to fade into the attentional background so that new changes in the environmental receives extra

attention.

- (iii) Allows individuals to disengage from goals that have little chance of success.

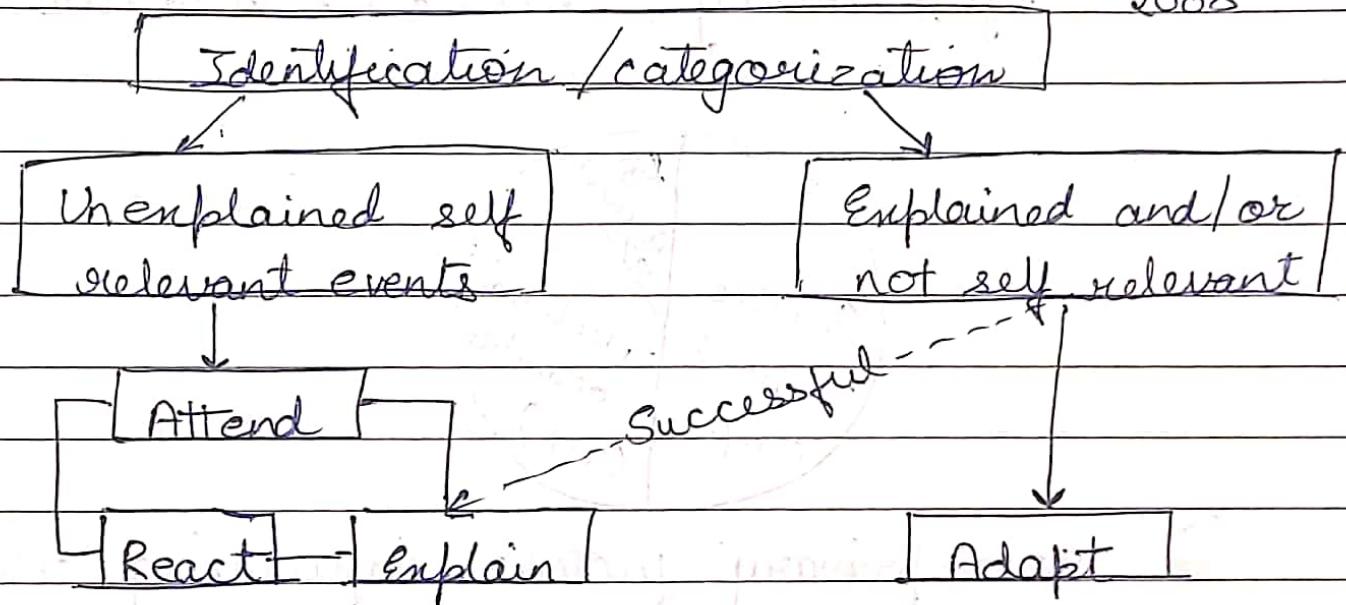
### Hedonic Adaptation

Some studies have found that individuals only partially adapt to negative events such as divorce & unemployment. By contrast, the evidence is fairly consistent that people, on average, adapt completely to major positive life changes such as getting married, acquiring a new job & even winning a lottery.

1. Negative experiences have a stronger effect than positive.
2. People are more likely to monitor negative feedback than positive feedback, more likely to remember it & more likely to be influenced by it.

## A PERA model of Adaptation (Wilson & Gilbert)

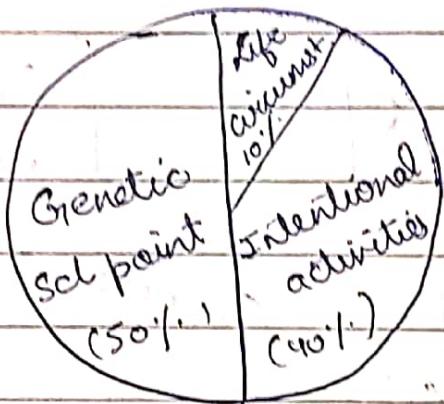
2008



### Sources of optimism

- 1 Many happiness enhancing interventions seem to work as shown by many studies.
- 2 Many motivational & attitudinal factors are linked to long term happiness.
- 3 Some research findings showed that the older people tend to be somewhat happier than young people.

## # Sustainable Happiness Model (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon & Schkade, 2005)



Three primary factors influencing chronic level of happiness

### Life Circumstances

Incidental but relatively stable facts of an individual's life

It includes national, geographical & cultural region in which a person resides.

It includes demographic factors such as age, gender & ethnicity.

It also includes life status factors such as marital status, occupational status, income, health, religious affiliation.

### Intentional Activities

It includes a wide variety of things that people do and think in their daily life.

Intentional activities require efforts to enact. They do not happen automatically.

Life circumstances happen to people, intentional activities are ways that people act on their life circumstances.

→ There can be 3 types of intentional activities

1. Behavioral Activities → (the way we behave)
2. Cognitive Activities → (mental thoughts)
3. Volitional Activities. (motivational towards achieving goals)

Benefit of intentional activity is that we do it by ourself, nobody is forcing us

1. Intentional activities are episodic - We are less likely to get adapted to it because we do it sometimes not regularly.
2. Intentional activities can be varied - If we get adapted to it, we can change it.

### Person-Activity Fit

Eg. Personality - Job fit theory - The person's characteristics and job characteristics when match each other, there are higher chances of job satisfaction and growth in job.  
(Eg. creative person is unlikely to be happy in banking (organised) sector).

- ① Fit with the sources of unhappiness  
Eg. passimism. Try to get it treated.

## ② Fit with your strength.

Do activities you are good at. It gives you joy. Don't run after things that don't interest you by watching the crowd.

## ③ Fit with your lifestyle

Some have hectic some have relaxed day-to-day lives. Choose the one that suits you.

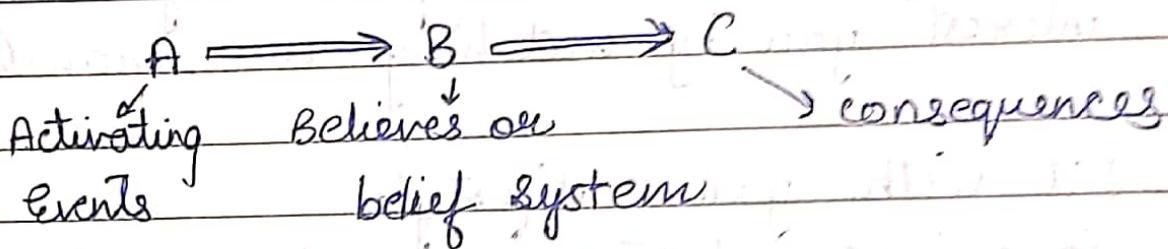
\* The way our mind processes events and information decides whether it makes us happy or not and to what extent.

→ Human beings are imperfect information processors.

→ Thoughts are not always facts, e.g. I am worthless. (Our mind interprets it as if it is a fact).

→ Discontinuous or dysfunctional thinking is common to all psychological disturbances or disorders.

Albert Ellis proposed a theoretical model called ABC model.



Failure in a task → I am a failure, I am worthless → sadness, depression

A never causes C; it is always B that causes C.

You feel the way you think

Irrational / catastrophic thoughts

- ① It distorts reality
- ② It is illogical
- ③ It prevents you from reaching a goal.
- ④ It leads to unhealthy emotions
- ⑤ It leads to self-defeating behavior

Eg. It is a dire necessity for a human being to be loved & approved by virtually every significant other person.

Eg. I must be outstandingly competent or I am worthless.

Eg. The world should always give me happiness.

### Reducing irrational/catastrophic thoughts

#### ① Detecting Irrational thinking :

- Examine your self talk.
- Look for "alarm" situations.
- Spot unrealistic pessimism or wild exaggeration in your thinking.  
"Ignoring the positive exaggeration  
the negative overgeneralization."
- We need social support sometimes.  
(parents, friends etc.)
- Ask yourself (why you are getting upset?)

(e) look for catastrophic thought's key words  
like should, must, never, always etc.

#### ② Disputing Irrational thinking :

Socratic questioning is a very effective cognitive re structuring techniques.

One may ask what is the value of this?

1. Is this thought realistic?
  2. Am I basing my thoughts on facts or feelings?
  3. What is the evidence of this thoughts?
  4. Am I viewing the situation as black or white when it is more complicated?
  5. Am I having this thought out of habit or do facts support it?

### ③ Replacing irrational thoughts (with more rational thoughts)

## Faulty thoughts Healthy thoughts

→ Everyone hates me → Some people dislike me

→ I am so unlucky Everyone is unlucky

## # Gratitude

A felt sense of wonder, thankfulness & appreciation for life. (Robert Emmons)

- (1) Gratitude promotes the positive experiences of life.
- (2) Expressing gratitude increases self esteem (positive emotion  $\rightarrow$  self esteem  $\uparrow$ )
- (3) Gratitude helps to cope with stress & trauma. (Focusing on good things in bad situations)
- (4) Gratitude helps to build social connections.
- (5) Gratitude inhibits social comparison.

Gratitude journal - Writing things down that you are grateful for.

## # Meditation

(Latin word "Meditatio" means "to engage in contemplation or reflection".)

It is a discrete and well defined experience of a state of "thoughtless awareness" or mental silence in which the activity of the mind is minimized.

without reducing the level of alertness

Body  
Mind

Awareness → (Meditation is done to reach this state)

① Concentrative Meditation

② Mindfulness

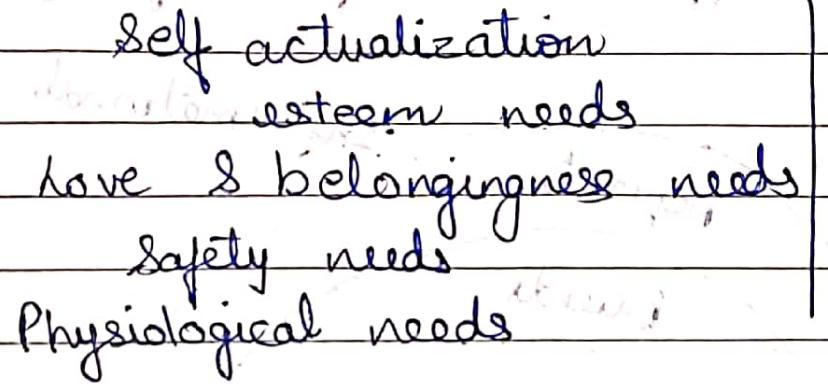
Concentrative meditation aims at a single pointed focus on some sound, image or sensation to still the mind & achieve greater awareness.

Mindfulness involves opening up or becoming more alert to the continuous passing stream of thoughts, images, emotions & sensations without identifying with them.

Investing in Social Connections

One of the strongest feelings in the literature on happiness is that happy

people have better relationships than the unhappy peers of them



"Need to belong"

Social relationship  $\Rightarrow$  happiness

### Social Support

It is defined as information leading a person to believe that they are cared for and loved, esteemed & valued & integrated within a network of communication & mutual obligation (Cobb, 1976).

→ It is a source of coping up with stress & trauma.

(May also include connections to animals, nature or higher power.)

20 - GT  
21 - STC  
22 - IC  
23 - OC  
24 - GT  
25 - STC

CLASSMATE

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page \_\_\_\_\_

26 - IC

### TYPES OF SOCIAL SUPPORT :

- Emotional Support (talking about problems to friend)
- Informational Support (Advises)
- Tangible Support (Quantified things Eg money, visit)



Volunteering / community work → like minded people  
(new connections)

## Acts of Kindness

An act of kindness is a spontaneous gesture of goodwill towards someone or something.

Compassion is the basis of all morality.

True happiness consists in making others happy without kindness, there can be no true joy.

Being kind leads you to perceive others more positively.

It impacts self perception.

Kindness can jump start a cascade of +ve consequences.