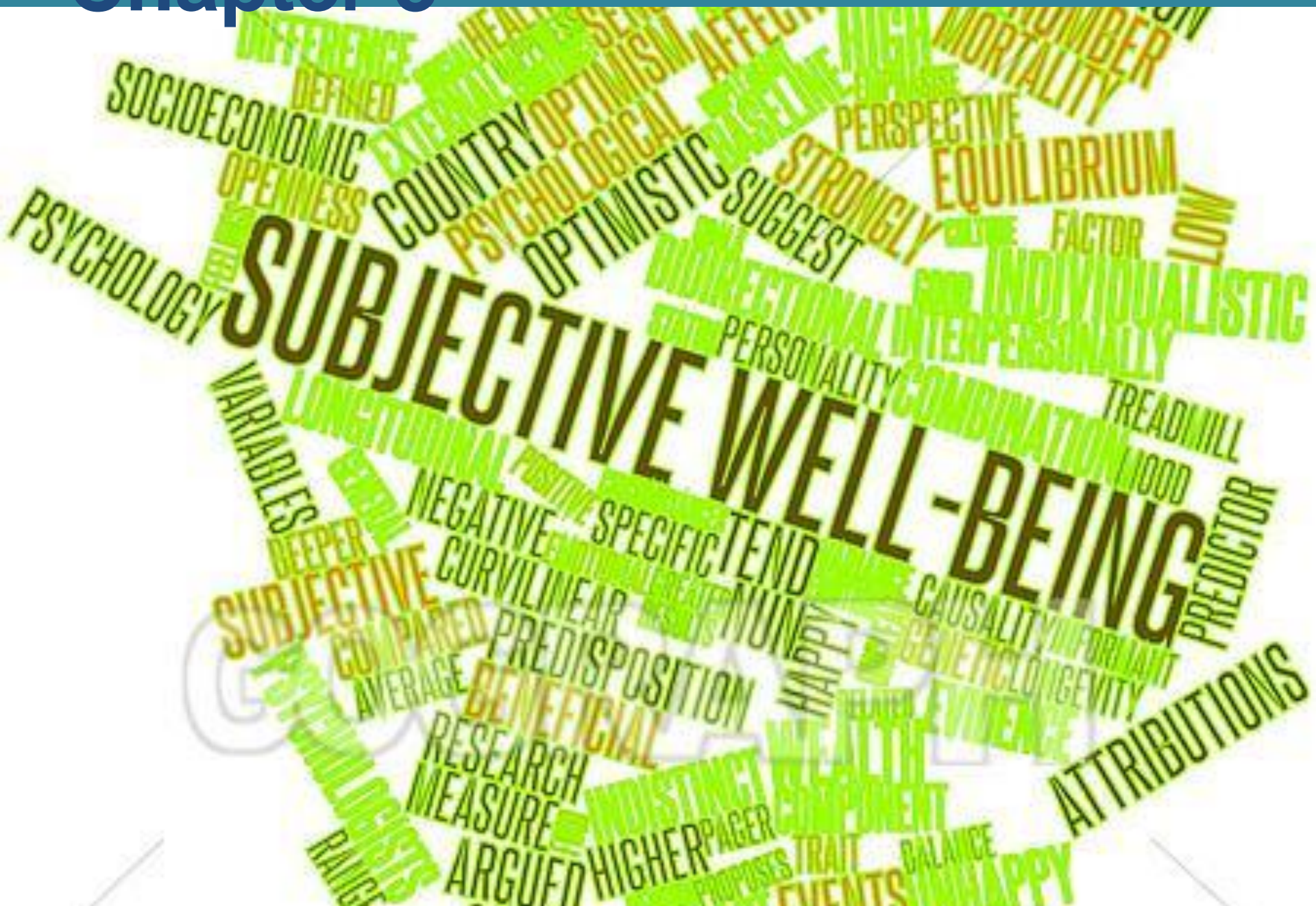


# Chapter 3



**“Happiness is not a goal. It’s a  
by-product of a life well lived”  
Eleanor Roosevelt**



# The Measurement of Subjective Well-Being

- How happy are you?
- Evaluations of happiness are subjective phenomena
- 3 Facets of Subjective Well-Being
  - Happiness
  - Life satisfaction
  - Neuroticism (low)

# The Measurement of Subjective Well-Being

## Self-Report Measures of Subjective Well-Being

- Scales used to measure happiness
  - Satisfaction with Life Scale
  - Subjective Happiness Scale



## **The Satisfaction with Life Scale**

DIRECTIONS: Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1 -7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number in the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Slightly Disagree

4 = Neither Agree or Disagree

5 = Slightly Agree

6 = Agree

7 = Strongly Agree

\_\_\_ 1. In most ways my life is close to ideal.

\_\_\_ 2. The conditions of my life are excellent.

\_\_\_ 3. I am satisfied with life.

\_\_\_ 4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

\_\_\_ 5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

# The Measurement of Subjective Well-Being

## The Stability of Subjective Well-Being

- Relatively stable
- Life events and daily fluctuations impact subjective well-being
- Self-report measures

# The Measurement of Subjective Well-Being

## Why Is Happiness Important?

- Benefectance
  - Most people view self as beneficial and effective
- Happier people are successful
  - Better marriages
  - More fulfilling friendships and social relationships
  - Healthier
  - More involved in their communities
  - Better coping skills
  - More satisfied with their jobs
  - Higher incomes

# The Measurement of Subjective Well-Being

## Why Is Happiness Important?

- Higher subjective well-being connects to having a better life
  - e.g., positive emotions may help students learn more effectively; reduce racial bias
- Being happier help people lead to more satisfying lives



# The Measurement of Subjective Well-Being

## Top-Down and Bottom-Up Theories

- Top-down theory
  - Bringing our tendencies toward positive interpretations to situations we encounter in life
    - i.e., bring knowledge, experience to situations
    - e.g., change of season...interpret as positive because think of apples, cider, cider donuts
  - Supports certain attitudes, self-perceptions, and personality traits are highly correlated with subjective well-being

# The Measurement of Subjective Well-Being

## Top-Down and Bottom-Up Theories

- Bottom-up theory
  - Characteristics of the situation used to assess SWB
  - Supports that poverty is associated with lower levels of subjective well-being and that certain negative life events can have a lasting impact on happiness
  - Assessing quality of marriage and several other areas to create statement of overall satisfaction
- Both Top-Down and Bottom-Up important and used in different situations and times in life

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

Cognition: Is the Glass Half Full? Half Empty?

- Happier and satisfied people view world in positive ways...how we *interpret* events
  - *Construals*: freely chosen interpretations of reality
- Positive mood seems to lead us to interpret events in positive ways
  - May pay attention and process information consistent with our mood
    - e.g., walk into crowded airport waiting area...happier people will “see” smiling couples and doting parents, unhappy people will “see” people who are tense, impatient



Happiness  
is a choice

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Cognition: Self-Esteem

- Positive self-esteem works against negative emotions
- High self-esteem leads to increased happiness (well, positive self-esteem and happiness are highly correlated)

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Cognition: Self-Esteem

- High self-esteem is composed of at least four components
  - Feeling that one is accepted by others
  - Being the recipient of positive evals by others
  - Believe that one compares favorably to other people or to one's ideal self
  - Believing that one can initiate effective action in the world



# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Cognition: Self-Esteem

- Self-esteem as predictor of WB is tricky
  - Self-esteem is related more to optimism and achievement, happiness related to positive social relationships and extraversion
  - Positive self-esteem may be more useful for defending against negative emotions than for promoting happiness
  - Note: self-esteem valued more in US

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

Cognition: Optimism and Hope

- Optimists
  - More effective coping behavior
    - Problem-focused coping, humor, positive reframing
  - Better physical health
  - Experience better relationships with others
  - Greater self-confidence and perseverance with challenges

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

Cognition: Optimism and Hope

- Presence of positive expectancies
- Optimism conceptualized as:
  - Dispositional optimism
    - global expectation that events will turn out well
  - Explanatory style
    - Way in which we interpret causes of events

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

Cognition: Optimism and Hope

- Learned Optimism (Seligman)
  - Optimists more willing to receive negative feedback about their performance, absorb bad news about their health, to raise difficult issues in their personal relationships
- Realistic Optimism (S. Schneider)
  - Optimistic thinking that does not distort reality

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

Cognition: Optimism and Hope

- Hope has two components:
  - Pathways
    - Ability to find ways to reach one's goals
  - Agency
    - Motivation to reach these goals
- Hope is the belief that one can find pathways to achieve desired goals and the belief that desired goals can be attained

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Cognition: Sense of Control

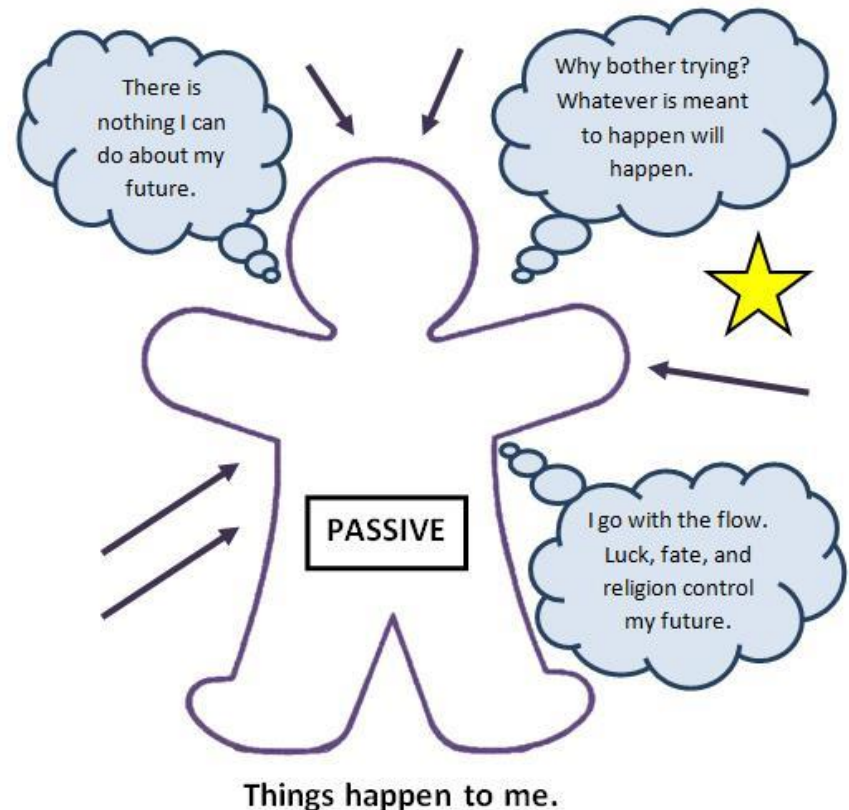
- Sense for desired outcomes and avoid undesirable ones
- Internal locus of control
- External locus of control
- Maintaining emotional stability and negotiate difficulties in life



## Internal Locus of Control



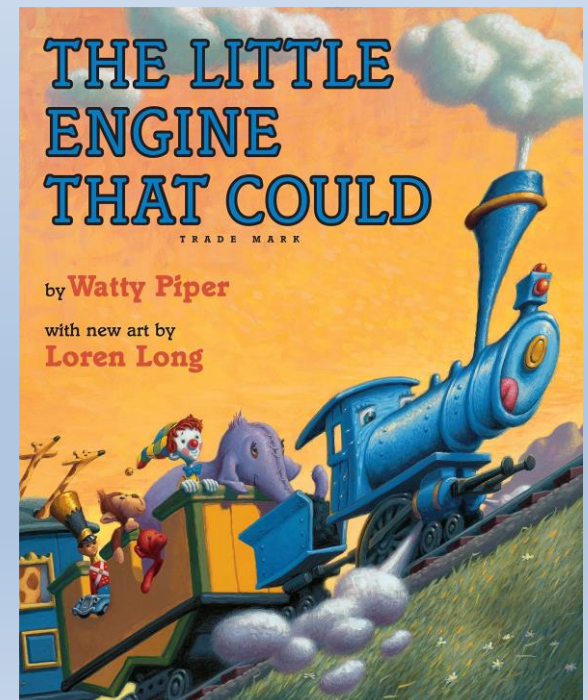
## External Locus of Control



# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Cognition: Self-Efficacy

- Self-efficacy: Belief that one has the capabilities to produce desired effects by their own actions
- Related higher to well-being throughout the life span
- Measured in relationship to specific outcomes



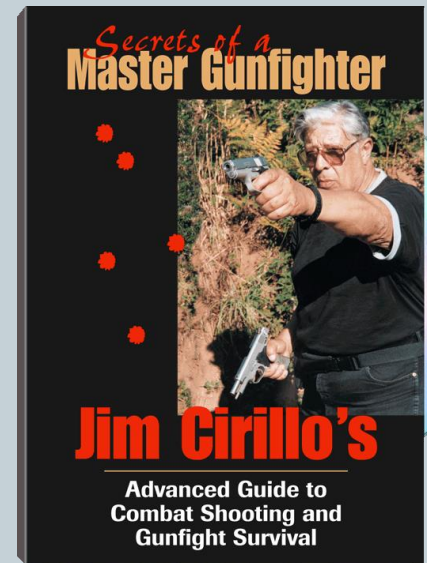
# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Cognition: Self-Efficacy



# Self-Efficacy and Cognitive Reframing

- Jim Cirillo, NYPD firearms instructor, involved in a number of gunfights
- Trained himself with positive imagery to clear his mind of any self-doubting conscious thoughts
- “If you jerk the trigger, you will miss the target” became “As you focus on the sights while compressing the trigger smoothly, you will achieve a good shot”



# A little encouragement



## Cyldesdale Dream Baby





# Role Modeling/Vicarious Learning



- “Take a good look at people’s ruling principle, especially of the wise, what they run away from and what they seek out.”  
– Marcus Aurelius







**In order to succeed, we must  
first believe that we can.**

Nikos Kazantzakis



# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

Cognition: A Sense of Meaning in Life

- Predictor of higher subjective well-being
- Greater sense of meaning in life increases well-being at all stages of life
- Greater openness and experiences
- Need not be tied to religious beliefs...just needs to be personally meaningful

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

Cognition: Decision-Making and Self-Reflection

- Happier people:
  - Report more satisfaction when making decisions
  - Ruminates less
  - Prefer to experience pleasant event quickly after unpleasant event
- Self-reflection allows thoughts to wander or to daydream

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Positive Relationships With Other People

- Supportive social support/relationships
  - Higher self-esteem, successful coping, better physical health, fewer psychological challenges
- Intimate social relationships (spouse, family, best friends) tend to be strongest predictors of life satisfaction
- Companionship and self-validation

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Positive Relationships With Other People

- Social connection can be contagious
- Challenge:

Deliberately make contact with another person (e.g., someone on the bus, seated next to you, walking the same way as you)

If at a loss for words, say “Hi, I’m taking this class called Positive Psychology and my professor asked us to start conversations with people who look friendly, and I choose you.”

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Personality Traits

- Relationship between genetically influenced traits and well-being
- Traits associated with well-being
  - Extraversion
  - Agreeableness
  - Conscientiousness
  - Neuroticism



# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Personality Traits: Extraversion

- Maintain positive relations with other people
- Direct positive impact on well-being
- High self-reported happiness
- Greater sensitivity to positive rewards
- Why do extroverts report more happiness:  
They have a cheerful disposition

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Personality Traits: Agreeableness and Conscientiousness

- Agreeableness: Being honest, trustworthy, modest, compliant, tender-minded, and altruistic
- People high in conscientiousness are self-disciplined, achievement striving, wilful, dutiful, and competent

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Personality Traits: Neuroticism

- Eliminate neuroticism to increase happiness and life satisfaction
- One facet of neuroticism crucial for subjective well-being: depression

# Top-Down Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Personality Traits: Comments on Personality Traits and Well-Being

- Different impact on well-being at different ages
- Interact with life events
- Traits impact well-being and well-being impacts the expression of traits

# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Money, Income, and Wealth

- Assumption that money brings happiness and satisfaction a persistent message in most societies
  - GDP-average life satisfaction correlation .50
  - Lower quarter of income distribution reduces the odds of being happy by about 26%
  - Upper quarter increases the odds by about 13%

# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

Money, Income, and Wealth

- *Diminishing marginal utility*
  - Happiness increases more quickly as income goes up only for those who have less income to begin with



# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Money, Income, and Wealth

- Tipping point
  - Point at which additional income does not impact well-being (U.S. \$85,375 in 2017 US\$).
  - Above that point does not raise happiness, but may raise life satisfaction
  - Below which money is important to well-being and above which point money is less important.



# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Money, Income, and Wealth

- Satiation points
  - Point at which amount of income needed before well-being no longer raises with income
  - Gallup World Poll
  - \$95,000 (USD) for life satisfaction (2018)
  - \$60,000-\$75,000 (USD) for emotional well-being or happiness

# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Money, Income, and Wealth

- Hedonic Treadmill
  - Keep setting higher goals in hopes of becoming “really happy”
  - Research suggests those who place a high value on money for personal happiness are less satisfied with their lives than others

# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

Money, Income, and Wealth: How Money Can Increase Subjective Well-Being

- Spending \$ on “material purchases” or “experiential purposes”
- Activities that enhance personal growth
- Use it to foster relationships with family and friends
- Type of spending indeed increased personal happiness

# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Money, Income, and Wealth: How Money Can Increase Subjective Well-Being

- Some Takeaways:
  - Positive attitude tends to be more important to well-being than income
  - Income is not a sufficient statistic for happiness...there is a complex relationship with many different factors

# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

Gender: Are Men or Women Happier?

- Women's average happiness has fallen dramatically since 1972
- No gender differences in the frequency, intensity or impact of emotions (stereotype that women are more emotional is just not accurate)
- Women are happier than men before about age 48
- Men are happier than women after midlife

# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

Gender: Are Men or Women Happier?

- Women and men calculate their well-being differently
  - Women enhance WB through positive self-esteem, greater harmony and closeness in their relationships, passive leisure, and religion
  - Men enhance WB through positive self-esteem, active leisure, and greater mental control

# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Attractiveness, Climate, and Other Predictors

- Physical attractiveness is related to well-being for women in urban areas
- Climate does have an impact on moods
  - People living in areas with more clement temperature (i.e., 72°F/22°C) scored higher on personality traits related to sociability, emotional stability, and personal growth
- Education does not impact happiness in any significant way



# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## The Impact of Discrimination on Subjective Well-Being

- Meta-analysis
  - Perceived discrimination (race, gender, sexual orientation, HIV+ status, mental illness, physical disability, and obesity) has negative impact on well-being (PA, life satisfaction, self-esteem), and impacted children more severely
  - Personal target more negative impact than member of a discriminated group
  - Positive social support an important factor in moderating the impact of discrimination

# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## The Impact of Discrimination on Subjective Well-Being

- Meta-analysis
  - Positive social support an important factor in moderating the impact of discrimination
  - Engagement type coping strategies better than disengagement coping
    - Alter the situation
    - Alter one's reaction to the situation

# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

The Impact of Discrimination on Subjective Well-Being: Race and Subjective Well-Being

- Differences between racial groups within a specific culture (this chapter)
- Differences among ethnically diverse cultures (in chapter 11)

# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## The Impact of Discrimination on Subjective Well-Being: Sexual Orientation and Sexual Identity

- Discrimination against lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transsexuals
  - Related to depression, anger, stress
  - Multiple sources of discrimination beginning to be researched more
- Positive well-being among LGBT people associated with greater social support

# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Bottom-Up Predictors and the “Happiest Man in America”

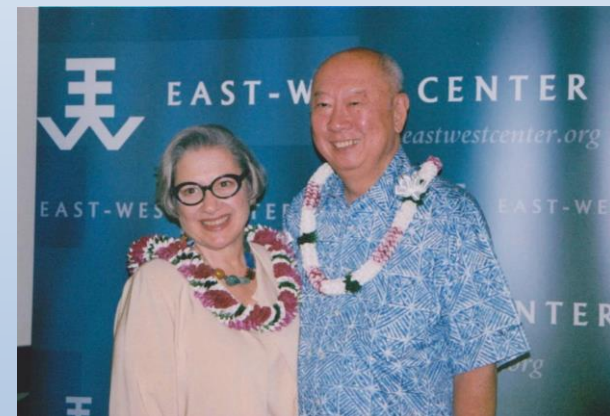
- Bottom-up predictors influence levels of subjective well-being
  - Gender, income, race, and marital status interact in relatively complex ways throughout the life span to influence levels of subjective well-being

# Bottom-Up Predictors of Subjective Well-Being

## Bottom-Up Predictors

The Gallup organization found the happiest man in America, Mr. Alvin Wong

- Gallup's answer: he's a tall, Asian-American, observant Jew who is at least 65 and married, has children, lives in Hawaii, runs his own business and has a household income of more than \$120,000 a year.



# Increasing Happiness and Life Satisfaction

- Genetic inheritance does not determine our long-term happiness
- Hedonic adaptations
  - Adapt to a positive stimulus so no longer feel its effects (e.g., hedonic treadmill and income)
  - But, we can make positive changes
- To avoid hedonic treadmill
  - Speed up adaptation to negative events
  - Slow down adaptation to positive events



# Increasing Happiness and Life Satisfaction

## Intensity and Frequency of Positive Emotion

- Peak-and-end rule
  - Intense peak moment and last moment of experience impacts how we think about the experience overall
- However, *frequency* is more important than *intensity*
- Feeling moderate subjective well-being brings more beneficial effect
- Large fluctuations in emotions are related to more negative emotions than positive

# Increasing Happiness and Life Satisfaction

## Strategies for Creating a Good Mood

- Self-help strategies are helpful for short period
- Doing something that increases the ratio of positive to negative emotions in one's life

# Increasing Happiness and Life Satisfaction

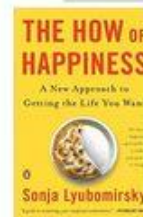
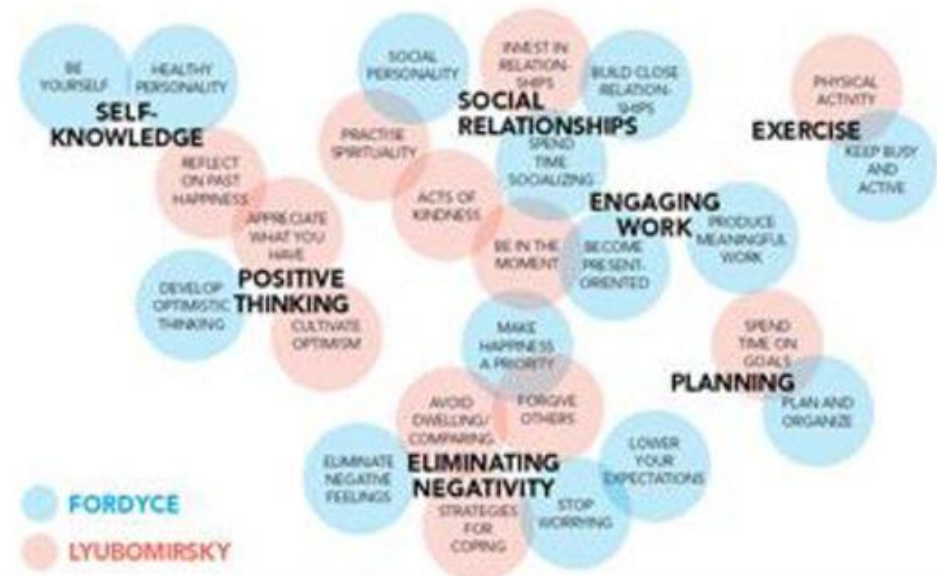
## Fordyce's Happiness Training Program

- Fourteen fundamentals of happiness
  - Change your activities
  - Change your thinking
  - Nurture relationships
  - Value personal growth
  - Decrease negative emotions
- Practice simple meditation technique to increase the happiness scores
- Implementing Fordyce's program for happiness

# Ways to wellbeing...

Fordyce lists 14 techniques as fundamentals:

1. Keep busy and be more active.
2. Spend more time socializing.
3. Be productive at meaningful work.
4. Get better organized and plan things out.
5. Stop worrying.
6. Lower your expectations and aspirations.
7. Develop positive, optimistic thinking.
8. Become present oriented.
9. Work on a healthy personality.
10. Develop an outgoing, social personality.
11. Be yourself.
12. Eliminate negative feelings and problems.
13. Close relationships are the number one source of happiness.
14. Put happiness as your most important priority.



# Increasing Happiness and Life Satisfaction

## Sustainable Happiness

- Long-term happiness is a function of
  - one's genetically determined set point
  - circumstantial factors
  - intentional activity
    - Choose goals that interest you
    - Follow through on strengths

# Increasing Happiness and Life Satisfaction

## Barbara Fredrickson's Positivity

- Relaxation strategies
  - Meditations, massages, muscle relaxations
- Gratitude journal
- Loving-kindness, a unique style of meditation, especially helpful
- Mindfulness meditation
- People should stop ruminating about issues...healthy distraction helpful
- Focus attention on sensory sensations, activities, or helping other people

# Increasing Happiness and Life Satisfaction

## Making Interventions More Effective

- Therapeutic lifestyle changes: exercise, nutrition, recreation, stress mgt, spiritual involvement
- Maintaining a sense of well-being through the ups-and-downs of life is a challenge
- To enhance the effectiveness of these interventions is to examine if some actually work better than others



# Increasing Happiness and Life Satisfaction

Making Interventions More Effective

Comparing Interventions: Which Ones Work Better?

- Seligman et al (2005)
  - 3 things grateful for and why, and VIA and using those strengths increased happiness and decreased depression for 6 months
  - Gratitude letter...1 month

# Increasing Happiness and Life Satisfaction

Making Interventions More Effective

Comparing Interventions: Which Ones Work Better?

- To evaluate the effectiveness of four happiness interventions
  - Express gratitude
  - Smile more
  - Recall a pleasant event that happened the previous day \* resulted in greatest increase
  - Perform an act of kindness

# Increasing Happiness and Life Satisfaction

## Making Interventions More Effective: Moderators of Effectiveness

- One of the moderators of effectiveness is motivation
- Interventions that are practiced for longer periods of time tend to have a greater impact
- People react differently to interventions because of personal traits

# Increasing Happiness and Life Satisfaction

## General Comments on Increasing Happiness

- No one can remain cheerful, jovial, and optimistic most of the time
- Feeling relaxed, energized or activated, and safe or content all impacted well-being
- Feeling safe resulted in the greatest reduction in depression, anxiety, stress, and self-criticism

# Can You Be Too Happy?

## Cautionary Tales: The Down Side of Feeling Up

- Wanting happiness too much can lead to loneliness
- Being happy can make people more gullible
- Being in a positive mood may tend to make us more selfish
- Unrealistic optimism: creates false sense of security and a bias in risk perception

# Can You Be Too Happy?

## Cautionary Tales: The Down Side of Feeling Up

- Stockdale paradox
  - Prisoner of war
  - Said those that perished were the optimists
    - Believed they would be rescued soon, so they were constantly disappointed
    - Said not to confuse faith in eventual happy outcome with denial of the reality of one's current predicament

# Can You Be Too Happy?

## We Also Need Negative Emotions

- Both positive and negative emotions are important to experience a full life
- Emotiversity
  - Greater well-being when people acknowledge both their positive and negative emotions
  - Greater emotional diversity may help increase resilience and counter our tendency to adapt or habituate to specific positive emotions
- Sadness and depression can at times be helpful emotions

A vibrant red poppy flower is the central focus, its petals fully open and showing a rich, saturated red color. It is positioned in the upper left quadrant of the frame. The flower's stem is thin and green, extending downwards. The background is a soft-focus field of tall, golden-brown grasses that appear to be blowing in the wind, creating a sense of movement and texture. The overall lighting is warm and bright, suggesting a sunny day. The image is framed by a thin red border on the left and right sides.

**IT'S A GOOD DAY TO BE HAPPY.**