Topic 3 – Giving (Charity and other giving) and Happiness

Generosity correlates with happiness = see article 63 (in Dahl et al, 2020 References):

Money Spent on Others Can Buy Happiness, The Harvard Gazette, April 17, 2008

Author: Colleen Walsh

<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2008/04/money-spent-on-others-can-buy-happiness/>

Article refers to research done by Michael Norton and associates. See the following articles:

The Secret to Happiness? Giving. Science. May 20, 2008

<https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2008/03/secret-happiness-giving>

Research paper:

Journal of Experimental Social Psychology

Volume 54, September 2014, Pages 11-24

Journal of Experimental Social Psychology

Getting the most out of giving: Concretely framing a prosocial goal maximizes happiness

Authors: Melanie Rudd, Jennifer Aaker, Michael I.Norton

[https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2014.04.002](https://doi-org.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/10.1016/j.jesp.2014.04.002)

According to this research, if you are concrete and specific about achieving a prosocial goal, you have a higher chance of increasing your happiness.

Another important paper regarding spending money on others:

Mogilner, Cassie, & Norton, Michael I. (2016). Time, money, and happiness. Current Opinion in Psychology, 10, 12–16. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2015.10.018

Ted Talk by Michael Norton:

<https://www.ted.com/talks/michael_norton_how_to_buy_happiness/transcript?language=en>

Possible Project:

Set a specific goal to act so as to benefit others on a daily basis, for at least 4 weeks, and track how your ‘good deeds’ make you feel.

Alternatively, you could give small amounts of money to various charities and track how such altruistic acts make you feel.

For example, you could donate to Donorschoose.org

<https://www.donorschoose.org/donors/search.html>

You could volunteer to an organization and do ‘good works’ for people less fortunate.

Examples:

Students who choose this topic must cite and paraphrase important information from at least two other peer reviewed Journal articles. Your essay must cite and use at least three articles provided in this memo, as well. (This will be ‘Part 1’ of your Essay Project.)

Finally, you must spend the last 10 days to two weeks of the course, engaging in some form of ‘giving’ or ‘charitable giving’ or ‘acts of kindness’ as a way of increasing your happiness, writing at least two significant paragraphs describing your experience (in Part 2 of the Essay project).