

# **Lesson 8 – The Science of Happiness**

# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

## Learning Objectives

**After this lesson, students will be able to:**

- Tell a genuine and fake smile apart.
- Define what happiness is.
- Justify a stand on a happiness-related issues.
- Define vocabulary from an audio using context clues.
- Interpret and explain the contents of infographics.
- Determine more effective ways to becoming happy.
- Identify and correct errors found in sentences.

# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

## Can you spot a fake smile?

1. “Fake it till you make it.” Discuss this quotation and give example if necessary.
2. Watch the video [\(61\) Can you spot a fake smile? - YouTube](#) and discuss the result with your teacher.
3. When do people commonly fake a smile?
4. How does being given a fake smile make you feel?
5. Differentiate a genuine smile from a fake one.

Genuine Smile

A diagram for 'Genuine Smile' consisting of a blue header box with the text 'Genuine Smile'. Below the header, a vertical line descends and then branches into two horizontal lines, each leading to an empty rectangular box for notes.

Fake Smile

A diagram for 'Fake Smile' consisting of a blue header box with the text 'Fake Smile'. Below the header, a vertical line descends and then branches into two horizontal lines, each leading to an empty rectangular box for notes.

# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

## In a nutshell

Happiness is an emotional state characterized by feelings of joy, satisfaction, contentment, and fulfillment. While happiness has many different definitions, it is often described as involving positive emotions and life satisfaction.

Two key components of happiness (or subjective well-being) are:

1. The balance of emotions
2. Life satisfaction

*“The present moment is filled with joy and happiness. If you are attentive, you will see it.”*  
– Thich Nhat Hanh

**Do you agree or disagree in the quotation above?**

Sources: [What Is Happiness? \(verywellmind.com\)](http://www.verywellmind.com)

# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

## Debate: What is your stand on the following?

- The purpose of our lives is to be happy.
- It is better to give than to receive.
- There is value in suffering.
- The pursuit of happiness makes people less happy.
- It is better to live for the present and not care about either the past or future.
- True happiness can't be achieved without sacrifice.
- Money can buy happiness.
- People always feel happy when they get what they want.
- If you know the "why "of your existence, you can bear almost any "how".

*Sources:*

[Does money buy happiness? A frustrating and tiresome debate – A Journey for Happiness \(wordpress.com\)](#)

[Can pursuing happiness make you unhappy? Researchers show that aiming to achieve happiness can affect your perception of time – ScienceDaily Opinion | The Value of Suffering - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](#)

[Living in the Moment | Article | Explore Life \(explore-life.com\)](#)

# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

## Keen Listening

Take notice of the following vocabulary in the audio. Talk about your comprehension of each if you are familiar with them. While listening, jot down notes on how the each vocabulary is defined, used and connected to topic presented.

family feuds

as old as the hills

High-conflict marriages

World War II

memory decline

healthy octogenarian

medical exams

alcoholism and Schizophrenia

social connection

social ladder

never in one's wildest dreams

brain scans

toxic

Identify what part of speech each vocabulary is.

# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness



## Listening (8.1) *What Makes a Good Life*

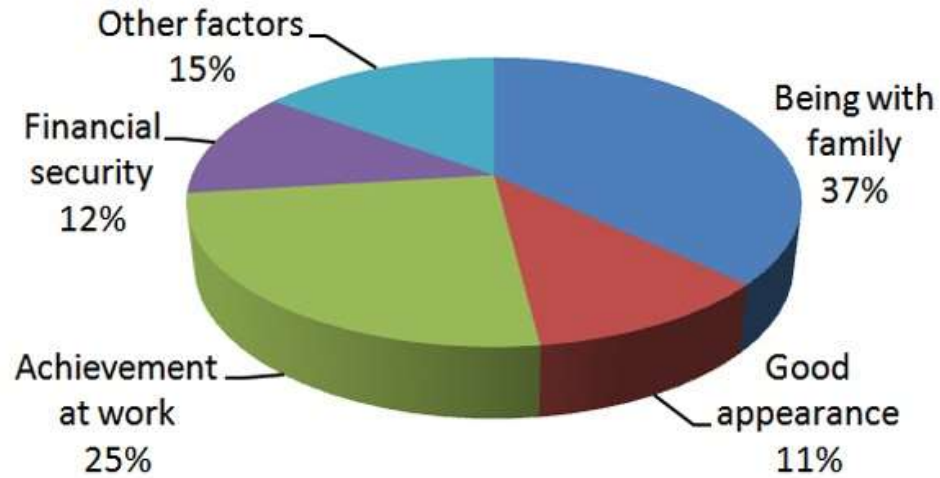
[\(63\) What makes a good life? Lessons from the longest study on happiness | Robert Waldinger - YouTube](#)

1. Why is the Harvard Study of Adult Development considered to be the longest study of adult life that's ever been done?
2. How is the study being done?
3. What are the lessons that come from the tens of thousands of pages of information that have been generated on the lives studied?
4. "There isn't time, so brief is life, for *bickerings*, apologies, heart burnings, callings to account. There is only time for loving, and but an instant, so to speak, for that." Discuss this quote from Mark Twain, give examples to justify.

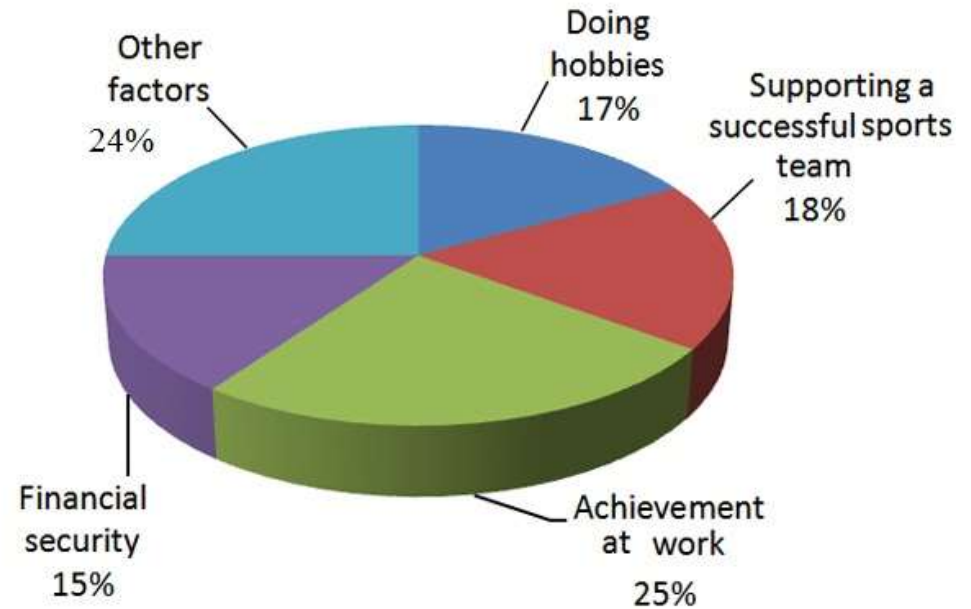
# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

Study and discuss the graphs below.

### What makes women most happy?



### What makes men most happy?



Do you agree with the results?

Source [Factors which have an influence on men and women \(essayforum.com\)](http://essayforum.com)



# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

## Preview Questions:

1. How do you think positive thinking affect your happiness?
2. Does abandoning the dark sides of life equal to happiness?
3. Talk about a time when you were resilient. Did it bring you happiness?

## Reading:

The phrase "the science of happiness" refers to a new field of social science called **positive psychology**. Contrary to popular belief, it is not "positive thinking" or **self-help**, but a broad **empirical field of research and application** worldwide. According to one of its pioneers Chris Peterson, simply put, positive psychology is the study of those things that make life worth living. While traditional psychology is **mitigative** -- helping us get less of what we don't want and fix the things that are wrong with us -- positive psychology functions constructively in helping us get more of what we do want, and making ourselves better, happier people. The executive director of the International Positive Psychology Association has called it the "psychology of building."

The science of happiness came about through the evolution of psychology. Its key co-founders are psychologists Dr. Martin Seligman and Dr. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, though it has roots in many disciplines, including emotion research, **moral psychology, humanism, cognitive behavioral therapy**, and the **humanities**, especially **philosophy**.

Early in his career as a psychologist, Martin Seligman developed the theory of **learned helplessness**, which outlines the response that follows when we believe our actions don't matter. This later led him to explore the idea that if we could learn to be helpless, we could also learn to be optimistic.

Source: [What Is the Science of Happiness? | HuffPost Life](#)

# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

This pioneering work in **learned optimism** underscored the role that our cognitive processes play in our own happiness. Positive psychology *officially* began in 1998 when Seligman made it his mission as President of the APA to turn the attention of psychology toward those elements of life that contribute to **human flourishing**. Through this prioritization of turning an empirical eye towards the good side of life, he was **paramount** in the creation of positive psychology as we know it. Co-founder Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi had spent years working on creativity and intrinsically motivated activity. He is most well-known for developing the construct of flow, or **deep immersion** in an activity (noticeably, the feeling when "**time stands still**" and you are "one with" an activity). Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi defined positive psychology as a "**science of positive subjective experience, positive individual traits, and positive institutions.**"

The field of positive psychology operates from the premise that we ought to acknowledge both the **light and the dark sides of life**. It focuses on positive elements of life such as **character strengths, positive emotion, resilience, purpose, positive relationships, and creative achievement**. It strives to create **healthy institutions, joyful and engaged individuals, and flourishing communities**. It has been said that positive psychology requires a "**metaphysical orientation toward the positive,**" a stance that the good in life is just as real (and worth measuring) as the bad. While traditional psychology has been highly successful at making life better for those of us suffering from negative conditions in our lives, positive psychology maintains that now is the time to turn our attention to matters that exist on the positive side of neutral, in the realm of what is best about life. It urges us to adopt bettering through effort, and to turn our attention to the **optimization** of the human experience. It does not deny the existence of the negative parts of life, but argues for a deep exploration of the upper reaches of human experience.

Source: [What Is the Science of Happiness? | HuffPost Life](#)

# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

Theories about happiness go back to before the time of Aristotle, and even today, there are many theories on what constitutes well-being and happiness. Some are focused on the society level (exploring issues of **justice**, for example), while some focus on **hedonic pursuits**, or psychological health. Of note in this context is Seligman's latest theory of well-being, which focuses on the individual, and goes by the acronym PERMA. Its constituent elements each contribute to well-being, are pursued for their own sake, and can be measured independently from the others:

- Positive Emotion (including the common notion of happiness)
- Engagement or Flow
- Positive Relationships
- Meaning and Purpose
- Accomplishment

Major ongoing theoretical developments like that of PERMA are reflective of the relatively young state of positive psychology and part of its rapid evolution. Its research and application spans the **domains of human life**: family, school, work, spirituality, health, community, government, medicine, military life, etc. Specialized areas of interest such as positive health and **neuroscience**, **positive education**, **positive psychology coaching**, **mindfulness**, and **positive business** are at the forefront of what has become a movement in social science. The collective hope and goals are that of greater human flourishing, increased **psychological resilience**, **well-being across the lifespan**, and of course, happiness.

**Give specific examples of how learning the Science of Happiness can help you achieve genuine happiness.**

Source: [What Is the Science of Happiness? | HuffPost Life](#)

# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

## ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

## VOCABULARY

1. **True or False:** Positive psychology and positive thinking are the same.
  2. How does positive psychology function constructively?
  3. Who are the following people; Chris Peterson, Martin Seligman and Dr. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi?
  4. Discuss **PERMA**.
  5. What are the collective hopes and goals of greater human flourishing?
    - A. based on, concerned with, or verifiable by observation or experience rather than theory or pure logic.
    - B. inability to defend oneself or to act effectively.
    - C. the capability of a strained body to recover its size and shape after deformation caused especially by compressive stress
    - D. an effort to achieve self-actualization and fulfillment within the context of a larger community of individuals, each with the right to pursue his or her own such efforts.
    - E. relating to or considered in terms of pleasant (or unpleasant) sensations.
    - F. a concept of moral rightness based on ethics, rationality, law, natural law, religion, or equity. It is also the act of being just and/or fair.
    - G. moderating pain or sorrow by making it easier to bear.
    - H. a doctrine that this world is the best possible world
    - I. more important than anything else; supreme.
    - J. a conception of or belief about something.
1. **paramount (adj)**
  2. **empirical (adj)**
  3. **optimism (n)**
  4. **mitigative (adj)**
  5. **helplessness (n)**
  6. **resilience (n)**
  7. **justice (n)**
  8. **hedonic (adj)**
  9. **human flourishing (n)**
  10. **notion (n)**

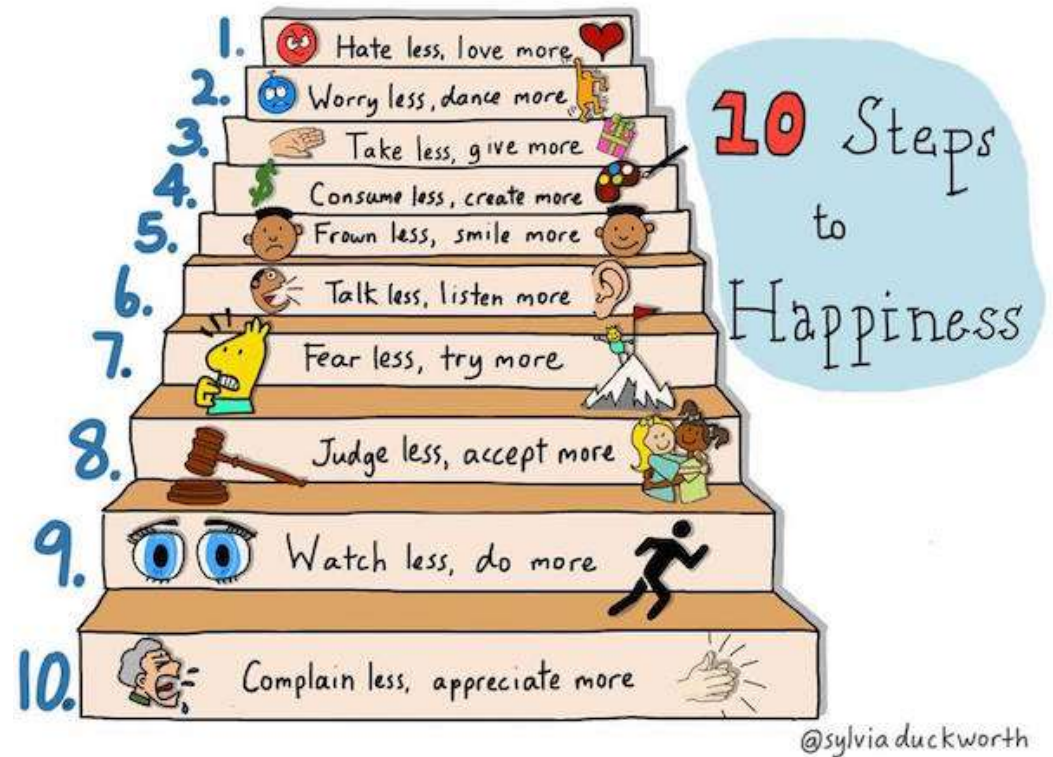
# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

## What Makes you Happy

Enlist the simple things and/or the complex things that (would) make you happy. Explore the link and the image below and find more things that could possibly make you happy.



Click this link: [Things to be Happy About](#)



# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

Identify the errors in each sentence and modify to make it correct.

1. The long term feeling of life satisfaction is most experienced when we embrace the emotion of joy in the here and now.  
A B C D
2. Be grateful for what you have, appreciate who you are, work hard every day to live your best life, and stop to compare yourself to others.  
A B C D
3. In the world of positive psychology, there is a few themes that emerge every time happiness is studied.  
A B C D
4. Both of which can only be understand correctly when we see them as disciplines rather than responses.  
A B C D
5. Marketers work hard to convince us there products are not just needed for life, but that they are essential to happiness.  
A B C D

# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

6. One thing that he has learned, and has been confirmed by studies elsewhere, is that relationships hold the key for happiness.

A

B

C

D

7. When we shift our focus off on ourselves, we live lives of greater meaning and greater contribution.

A

B

C

D

8. When we serve others without concern in what we might receive in return, we experience the beauty of selfless love.

A

B

C

D

9. Giving creates stronger connections between people and help to build a happier society for everyone.

A

B

C

D

10. We can also boost our well-being by unplugging of technology, getting outside and making sure we get enough sleep!

A

B

C

D

# Lesson 8. The Science of Happiness

1. Finish this sentence: I am happy \_\_\_\_ percent of the time.
2. Can happiness be shared? Give examples.
3. Research for the word ***Eudaimonia***. Differentiate it from happiness.
4. [\(63\) Make Yourself Happier Using Only A Pencil - Pleasure and Pain with Michael Mosley - BBC One – YouTube](#) – Try the experiment in the video and tell whether or not it is effective.
5. Do you think it is everyone's goal to achieve genuine happiness?
6. In what way can happiness be a weapon?
7. How do you regain happiness after being heartbroken from a bad situation?
8. Have you ever been happy for shameful reasons?
9. At what time of life are people the happiest?
10. Do you sometimes think, “I prefer not to be joyful because usually joy is followed by sadness” and “I am frightened to let myself become too happy”?
11. Do you think that you caused that good thing to happen or do you think that it was fate?
12. What is the happiest moment of your life by far?
13. Who is the happiest person in your knowledge?



**The End**