Age and wisdom

• Wisdom has been found to increase dramatically during adolescence and young adulthood; it then appears to remain relatively stable until age 75, when it begins to decline.

• Getting older, by itself, does not enhance wisdom.

• However, examination of the top 20% of wise people showed that a higher proportion of the "very wise" were middle-aged (Baltes & Staudinger, 2000).
Personal goals & well-being

YOU GET A GOAL!

AND YOU GET A GOAL!

AND YOU GET A GOAL!

EVERYBODY GETS A GOAL!
Exercise

• Describe a person (and their life) who has no goals
Goals & well-being

• Importance most obvious when have none
• Goals are the “well-spring of a positive life”
• Intimately connected with our happiness and well-being
• “An engaged life”
What are goals?

“internal representations of desired states, where states are broadly construed as outcomes, events or processes”
Emotion-motivational component

- Not all cognitive
- Emotional motivational component is what energizes action
Emotion-motivational component

• Positive and negative feelings associated with:
  – thinking about achieving/failing,
  – evaluations of goal progress,
  – successful or unsuccessful goal attainment
Choosing goals: What motivates us?
Goal organization: Maslow

- 8 universal sources of human motivation
  - Physiological (survival)
  - Safety and security
  - Belongingness (love, intimacy, attachment)
  - Esteem (positive self-regard)
  - Cognitive (knowledge)
  - Aesthetic (appreciation of beauty)
  - Self-actualization (personal growth)
  - Transcendence (find purpose in life)
Goal organization: Maslow

• Lower take precedence
• Human development involves moving up the hierarchy
• Shifting circumstances can move our focus from higher to lower-order
Goal organization: Maslow

- Hierarchy has not received extensive research
- Order has been challenged
- Still respected in PP: more needs fulfilled, the happier & healthier

“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”
Personalized goals

• Personalization of more general needs, values
• Example: universal need for belongingness
  – Having many causal friends
  – Having few close friends
  – Committing oneself to marriage and children
  – Having many cats
Goals & Well-Being Research
Research: Asking about personalized goals

• Personal projects:
  – Projects that we think about, plan for, carry out, sometimes complete (McGregor & Little, 1998)

• Personal strivings:
  – What one is trying to do in their everyday behaviour (Emmons, 1999)

• Life tasks:
  – Important goals where we direct energy toward solving (Cantor et al., 1990)
Jenny’s goals

• Read 20 min/day
• Read with kids
• Give interesting lectures each week
• Save monthly for retirement
• Have date night biweekly
• Friends weekly

• Communication skills w/family
• 10,000 steps per day
• Eating less cereal
• Stay on top of laundry
• Make bed every day
• Grow as a therapist
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Important (1-10)</th>
<th>Attainable (1-10)</th>
<th>Resources (1-10)</th>
<th>Progress (1-10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research: Personal goals & WB

• Rich assortment of interrelated factors for PP researchers
• Window into what makes people happy
Goals & Well-Being Research:
Some findings
Resources are important

- Need the right ones
- Example: New job opportunity
Resources for goals

(Diener & Fujita, 1995)

• List personal strivings
• Later 15 strivings on a grid crossed with 21 resources
• Indicate how relevant each resource was to each of their strivings (1 = irrelevant, 5 = very helpful)
• Complete WB measures
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-confident</td>
<td>5.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-discipline for work</td>
<td>4.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social skills</td>
<td>5.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence</td>
<td>5.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energetic</td>
<td>5.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td>4.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family support</td>
<td>5.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close friends</td>
<td>5.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional self-control</td>
<td>4.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy</td>
<td>5.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulate</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong romantic relationship</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good manners</td>
<td>5.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert knowledge</td>
<td>4.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public speaking skills</td>
<td>4.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position of authority</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical attractiveness</td>
<td>5.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influential connections</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material possessions</td>
<td>4.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic ability</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resources for goals

Results: Presence of resources had an impact on well-being only if there was strong congruence between resources and the personal striving.
Goal Progress

• Semester-long study
• Perceived progress toward personal goals correlated with PA and SWL
• Happier & satisfied -> motivates goal directed behaviour
Does progress toward any goal lead to well-being?
Person-fit & well-being

• “Matching hypothesis”: pursuit of goals that **fulfill our needs/values/motives** are more likely to increase WB

• Suggests that there are “right” goals and “wrong” goals when it comes to our WB
Which is more motivating for you?

Agency

– You strive to master the environment, to assert yourself, to experience competence, achievement, and power.

– You experience fulfilment through individual accomplishments and sense of independence and separateness.
Which is more motivating for you?

Communion

– You desire to closely relate to and cooperate and merge with others.
– You experience fulfilment through relationships with others and sense of belonging.
Matching hypothesis
(Brunstein et al., 1998)

• Classified by motives: communion & agency
• Describe current goals related to each motive
  – Agency goals: “striving for achievement and mastery experiences” (e.g., understanding a subject)
  – Communion goals: “striving for affiliation and friendly social contacts” (e.g., spend time with friends)
• Rate each goal on progress
• Record daily well-being
Support for matching hypothesis

Results:
(a) for agency-motivated people, greater progress toward communal goals did not result in heightened WB, but agentic-goal progress did;
(b) vice versa for communion-motivated people

*only when personal goals meet (predominant) motive disposition that progress is reflected in WB
Why person-goal match & well-being?

Self realization:

• “This is who I am & this is what I am meant to do”

• Enhances eudaimonic well-being (fulfill potentials)
Why person-goal match & well-being?

Intrinsic, rather than extrinsic

• Activity acts as its own reward bc it is enjoyable and/or highly interesting

• Vs. activity is as means to an end (extrinsic motivation)
Why person-goal match & well-being?

Autonomous freely chosen goals

• Generate feelings of ownership, personal expressiveness

• Not all personal goals are personal
The HOW of goal progress

• Having resources, progress and motives...still not enough

• Must regulate behaviour over time; make adjustments; control side tracking temptations; etc.
Becoming who we want to be

“the ability of the self to change itself by controlling or regulating feelings, thoughts and actions to achieve personally significant goals (in line with needs, values and personal qualities that define us)”
Self-control

• Ability to initiate and guide actions toward a desired future goal
• Requires delay of gratification
• Consistently linked with positive outcomes (and lack of self-control linked to negative outcomes)
Self-control: Research

• One of the most significant predictors of **post-secondary grades**!
  – 200 college students
  – 32 personality variables, including self-control
  – best predictor was high school grades (makes sense) and then self-control (only variable with significant relationship)
Delay of Gratification

Ability to forgo short-term rewards for longer term benefits

• E.g., Marshmallow test: 1 now or 2 later? (15 min.)
Delay of Gratification

• Predicts future outcomes
  – More socially and academically competent adolescents
  – Higher college placement scores
  – Cope better with stress
Planning!!!!

• **Desire** to achieve certain outcomes – NOT ENOUGH

• The plans we make much to do with success
Planning!!!!

- **Implementation intentions**
  - Specifying the exact steps necessary to achieve the goal (e.g., At this time, I do this)

- **Example**:
  - Goal intention: I want to exercise more
  - Implementation intention: Ride exercise bike for 30 mins/day while watching the news
Planning!!!!: Proof?
(Gollwitzer & Brandstatter, 1997)

- Study: “Describe difficult and easy project that you intended to complete during winter break”
- Do you have specific plans (when, where, how)?
- After break: “Complete?”
Why is planning helpful?

• Mental & environmental markers make self-regulation more efficient, more automatic, and less susceptible to distractions

• “passing control of one’s behaviour to the environment”
Goals that create self-regulation problems

1) Avoidance goals
2) Goal conflict
3) Prolonged mental control
Goal orientation

• "exercise a little more in 2017 to enjoy the benefits of continued good health."
• "exercise a little more in 2017 to prevent heart disease."

• both goals are related to a little more exercise
• BUT...how are they psychologically different?
Goal orientation

• Approach goals
  – positive outcomes that people move toward/maintain
  – **reduce discrepancy** b/w the standard and current state
  – E.g., get along better with a spouse; stay physically fit
Goal orientation

• Avoidance goals
  – negative outcomes that people are trying to avoid/prevent; **increase discrepancy**
  – E.g., stop arguing with spouse; avoid gaining weight
Goal orientation: Research

• Studies on orientation:
  – Have people list important goals
  – Assess number of avoidance or approach
  – Relate to measure of WB, progress, achievement
Goal orientation: Research

• Outcomes: More avoidance goals:
  – Higher emotional distress (anxiety)
  – More physical symptoms
  – Problems with progress
  – Lower satisfaction with goal achievement
Why are avoidance goals problematic?

• Less likely to be freely chosen and intrinsically enjoyable

• Heightened vigilance and sensitivity to negative information
Goals that create self-regulation problems

1) Avoidance goals
2) Goal conflict
3) Prolonged mental control
Goal Conflict

• Competition for limited resources (time, money, energy)
• Often activity aimed at one reduces pursuit of the other
• Conflict and ambivalence about goal success can lead to reductions in wellbeing (Emmons & King, 1988)
Goal Conflict: Solutions

• Implementation intentions
• Intergoal facilitation: pursuit of one goal increases the odds of success in achieving another goal
Goals that create self-regulation problems

1) Avoidance goals (goal orientation)
2) Goal conflict
3) Prolonged mental control
Mental Control

• Self-regulation requires mental and physical exertion
• Limited resource that can be depleted
• Variety of studies: minor acts of self control, lead to poorer performance acts on a subsequent act
Self-control a limited resource:  
Baumeister et al., 1998

“Study on taste perception”

• No food 3 hs before experiment
• Lab smelled like cookies
• 2 foods displayed: cookies & radishes
• Random assignment: cookie, radish or control
Self-control a limited resource:
Baumeister et al., 1998

• Then 15 min wait (sitting in the same room)
• Then problem solving ability test (cover story, actually unsolvable)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Time (min)</th>
<th>Attempts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radish</td>
<td>8.35</td>
<td>19.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate</td>
<td>18.90</td>
<td>34.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No food control</td>
<td>20.86</td>
<td>32.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Standard deviations for Column 1, top to bottom, are 4.67, 6.86, and 7.30. For Column 2, SDs = 8.12, 20.16, and 13.38.
Resisting temptations

• *Highly motivated* by external or internal incentives (e.g., substantial monetary reward; concern from others)
• *Autonomous* (freely chosen and personally expressive) vs. control or pressure

** research: if autonomous, actually increases energy and vitality (does not seem to use up self-control energy)
Goal disengagement

• Adaptive skill: when to give up & when to persevere
• Those who find it easier to disengage from unattainable goals:
  – higher SWB,
  – more mastery,
  – lower stress,
  – less intrusive thoughts about life problems
• Goal re-engagement related to SWB
BREAK
Money

Happiness
Money & happiness?

• We “know” money does not buy happiness... BUT we still act like it does
• Importance is increasing (surveys of students)
• Accumulating wealth & its symbols are a central feature of lives
Money & happiness?

• Chicago Tribune study:
  – What would improve/interfere with your QOL?
  – Makes sense for those in poverty
  – But average/above average income?
substantial correlations (.5 to .7) between average per capita income and average level of SWB
Standard of Living

Basic Education (Read+Write)

Career / Job

Annual Income

Quality and Quantity of Food

Where you live

Health

Life expectancy

material goods
Money & happiness?

• Within countries correlations:
  – Poor countries: moderate to high correlations
  – Wealthy countries: very small or non-significant correlation
$75,000 cut-point?

Fulfillment of basic needs

– Nutrition, health care, sanitation, housing, discrimination

– But once basic needs are fulfilled and one enjoys a level of income that is similar to others, the source of happiness might shift away from income to other aspects of life
Individual longitudinal studies

- Study:
- Tracked the impact of increased or decreased income by following the same individuals over time
Individual longitudinal studies

• Some short-term increase
• Overall, no effect of increased income on WB
• Some have found increased happiness with decreases in income
Paradox of influence

• Since the 1950s:
  – increase in material affluence (ability to buy stuff)
  – unchanging life satisfaction/happiness
  – increasing depression (10 fold increase)

• Relationship exists in a number of countries

• Except the Amish
Why doesn’t buying stuff make us happier?

• Paradox of choice
• The empty self
• Decreased savouring
• Not spending it right
Paradox of choice

• The more choice we have, the more we may be dissatisfied with the results

• “Maximizing” vs. “good enough/satisficing” philosophy

• Problems w/ maximizing:
  – Stressful & paralyzing
  – Self-blame & regret
The empty self
(Cushman, 1990)

Consumer culture has displaced deeper meanings and purposes (family life, sense of community, spirituality)
Reduced Savouring

Experience-stretching hypothesis (Gilbert, 2006)

According to this perspective, experiencing the best things in life—such as surfing Oahu’s famous North Shore or dining at Manhattan’s four-star restaurant Daniel—may actually mitigate the delight one experiences in response to the more mundane joys of life, such as sunny days, cold beers, and chocolate bars.
Reduced Savouring
(Quoidbach et al., 2010)

- **Participants:** 40 volunteers for a taste test
- **Procedure:**
  - Brief questionnaire: demographics and attitudes toward chocolate
  - Last page “unrelated” (random assignment): money or neutral photo
  - Eat the chocolate
  - Blind observers watched eating
Reduced Savouring
(Quoidbach et al., 2010)

• Two observers (blind to condition) surreptitiously watched each participant eating the chocolate.

• Measured:
  – amount of time participants spent eating the chocolate (using stopwatches).
  – how much enjoyment participants displayed, on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (a great deal).
Reduced Savouring
(Quoidbach et al., 2010)

Results

• [Because females spent significantly more time savoring the chocolate than males did, they controlled for gender, as well as baseline attitudes toward chocolate.]
Reduced Savouring
(Quoidbach et al., 2010)

Results

• money “prime” condition spent significantly less time eating the chocolate, and displayed significantly less enjoyment (vs control)

**a simple reminder of wealth undermined participants’ ability to savour the pleasurable experience of eating chocolate
If money does not buy happiness, it is because people “probably aren’t spending it right” (Dunn, Gilbert, & Wilson, 2011).
Not spending it right

Psychological fit: express oneself in a way that maintains and enhances the self-concept

Oh good... my books are here.
Exercise

What were your last 5 purchases (over $10)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Payment type</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Money out (£)</th>
<th>Money in (£)</th>
<th>Balance (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 May</td>
<td>balance brought forward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>672.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 May</td>
<td>cashpoint</td>
<td>Bank UK, Giston High St</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>622.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>debit card</td>
<td>Giston Value Foods</td>
<td>73.69</td>
<td></td>
<td>549.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 May</td>
<td>standing order</td>
<td>rent – Giston Housing Assoc.</td>
<td>500.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>49.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 May</td>
<td>cashpoint</td>
<td>Bank UK, Giston High St</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.73 OD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 May</td>
<td>debit card</td>
<td>Happy Toys</td>
<td>32.27</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.00 OD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 May</td>
<td>bank charges</td>
<td>Bank UK</td>
<td>28.35</td>
<td></td>
<td>61.35 OD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 May</td>
<td>transfer</td>
<td>from Arjun Chowdry savings a/c</td>
<td>200.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>138.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 May</td>
<td>direct debit</td>
<td>City Electricity Services</td>
<td>85.94</td>
<td></td>
<td>52.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 May</td>
<td>direct debit</td>
<td>Mobile4U</td>
<td>31.67</td>
<td></td>
<td>21.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 May</td>
<td>bank giro credit</td>
<td>Giston Petrol Station</td>
<td>842.65</td>
<td></td>
<td>863.69</td>
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<td>27 May</td>
<td>debit card</td>
<td>Giston Value Foods</td>
<td>66.93</td>
<td></td>
<td>796.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 May</td>
<td>debit card</td>
<td>onlinefood.com</td>
<td>54.01</td>
<td></td>
<td>742.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 May</td>
<td>balance carried forward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>742.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Not spending it right
(Matz, Gladstone, Stillwell, 2016)

• Study:
  • Multinational bank customers sent survey including Big 5 & SWL
  • Accessed transactional records over 6 months
  • Purchases grouped into categories; each category rated for Big 5 fit (professional raters)
Not spending it right
(Matz, Gladstone, Stillwell, 2016)

• Results
  – participants generally spent more money on products that matched their personalities (vs. products that did not)
  – degree of fit between personality and purchases predicted SWL
Not spending it right
(Matz, Gladstone, Stillwell, 2016)

• Prediction errors about spending & happiness

• **Procedure:** Students were given:
  – $5 or $20;
  – Spend on self vs. other
  – Spend by the end of the day

• Asked other students: What combo would make them most happiest?
Not spending it right  
(Matz, Gladstone, Stillwell, 2016)

- **Predicted** (when asked other students): happier if more money on self
- **Results**: happier if money spent on others (regardless of how much)

- Suggests: Daily spending choices may be guided by flawed intuitions about the relationship between money and happiness
Pro-social spending: Universal?  
(Aknin et al., 2013)

- Economical groups: CAN and South Africa
- 20% of South African sample did not have enough to support family
Pro-social spending: Universal? (Aknin et al., 2013)

• Opportunity to spend money on “goody bag” filled with treats
• Random assignment: Told..
  – Personally receive the bag
  – Sick child in hospital receive bag
• Results: happier if purchased for sick child
Prosocial spending may be one way to meet our human psychological needs.

According to self-determination theory (SDT), human well-being depends on the satisfaction of three basic needs: relatedness, competence, and autonomy.
SDT needs
(Aknin et al., 2011)

• **Relatedness**: Greater happiness when provides the opportunity to connect with others
• E.g., received $10 Starbucks card were happier if they spent it on a friend rather than on themselves—but only if they took the time to go to Starbucks with their friend
SDT needs (Aknin et al., 2011)

- **Competence:** When people can see how their spending made a difference (effective, competent helper)
- E.g., UNICEF vs. Spread the Net (clear, concrete promise; 10$ donation = bed net) – bed net resulted in greater happiness
SDT needs  
(Aknin et al., 2011)

• **Autonomy**: emotional benefits when people have a choice about giving

• E.g., experienced happier moods when they gave more money away—but only if they had a choice about how much to give
Next week

- Well-being and relationships
  - Acquaintance vs. Friendships
  - Friendships vs. Romance
  - Qualities of happier/healthier romantic relationships