So... what is happiness?

Hedonism?

The idea that you should maximize _____________ and minimize _____________

Eudaimonia

Happiness entails identifying one’s virtues, cultivating them, living in accordance with them

Pursuit of ________________________________

Why be happy?

Tal Ben-Shahar says that you can play the why game like kids- eventually you will get to the point where you say “because it makes me _____________”

After that there is no where else to go

Called an ungrounded grounder because it requires no further rationale

Why is happiness important?

The _____________ study

Women that had duchenne smiles were more likely to be _____________ and more likely to be _____________ with their marriages

Controlled for physical attractiveness

For a _____________ population, the study could not be replicated

The _____________ study

Autobiographical essays about their childhoods were analyzed for emotional content

Counted the _____________ emotion words and _____________ emotion words

Those with more positive emotional content lived _____________ _____________ than their less happy counterparts

Believed to be a very good study because most of their lives is constant and controlled

Criticisms of the nun study

Maybe this just measures __________________________

Not everyone is capable of expressing emotions vividly in writing

A different study found that linguistic complexity for the writing samples predicted _____________ reliably

Could be that those that wrote more sophisticated samples were less likely to get AD and thus were less likely to be depressed?

So maybe it isn’t positive vs negative that matters but complexity instead

The third big study on why happiness is important

2282 Mexican Americans age 65 or older
Controlled for age, income, education, weight, smoking, drinking, and disease
Happy people were half as likely to die or become disabled
Didn’t control for __________________________, a known predictor of health

Theories about happiness
Four types of happiness ideas (Ben-Shahar, Happier)
   Rat-racer
       Be _______________ now for _______________ later
   Hedonic
       Be _______________ now and _______________ later
   Nihilist
       Be _______________ now and _______________ later (too bad, you’re screwed!)
   Happiness
       Be _______________ now and _______________ later

The Hamburger Model
Eating the amazing really bad for you but really tasty burger and fries
   Hedonism: present benefit and future detriment
Eating a tasteless ______________________________ made with the healthiest of ingredients
   Rat race: future benefit and present detriment
Eating a _______________ and _______________ burger
   Nihilism: present and future detriment
Eating a tasty burger that is also very healthy
   Happiness: present and future benefit

The rat racer
Strives for a goal
   Believes that the _______________ will bring about happiness
   The goal just leads to ______________________________
   The happiness that is felt is merely relief from stress and pain
      Not sustainable
      It quickly goes away once the person is no longer in pain

The hedonist
Believes that pleasure should be now and hard work should be postponed
   Effort = pain, doing nothing = pleasure
   Having no meaningful actions leads to ______________________________
An experiment: students were paid to do _______________
   They were paid better than they would have been paid in the real working world
      Within 4-8 hours most had _______________ their “cush” jobs to look
      for worse paying jobs that required more work
      ______________________________ get a quick fix
   Does not lead to long term happiness
Flow goes against them
We are happier when engaged in a complex task

The nihilist
Believes that the bad stuff from the past is determining the ____________ and the ____________
________________________ contributes to a nihilist attitude

Happiness is the highest goal
Believes that happiness is possible in the future and in the ____________ to get there
The “why game” shows us that most of what we do is to be happy
Flow fits this model as well

Eudaimonia leads to
Increased satisfaction
Across ______________ and ______________

How to measure happiness?
Depends on how you ____________ happiness
Hedonism: Pleasure vs pain
Experience sampling method
Overall trajectory or pattern of their lives
____________ theory: happiness is whether you get what you want or not
(it doesn’t have to be pleasurable)
Ask the person what they desire
Objective list theory: happiness is achieving some ______________
____________ ______________ (education…)
Need people to agree on those universal things
Most of these things are actually unrelated to happiness itself- so why have this be a measure?

More measures?
____________ of life
Overarching label that includes emotions, experiences, appraisals, expectations, and accomplishments
Subjective ______________
Relatively high levels of positive affect and relatively low levels of negative affect
Aka life satisfaction
Happiness
Most of the research on these “different” things typically comes to the ______________ ______________ about the things that affect them

Most common technique
Just ____________________________
Are you happy or not…
Or give a scale: very happy, pretty happy, unhappy
Ask about different time periods

During the past 4 weeks
In ___________________

Problems?
Self-report is not always ___________________
Everyone has bias and may bias their answers one way or the other

How to measure happiness
Some ask more ________________ questions
During the past weeks have you felt:
Particularly excited or interested in something
Pleased about having accomplished something
On ________________________________
Bored
_____________ because someone criticized you
Depressed or very unhappy

Other aspects of measuring happiness
Measure it with a one time survey
Measure it in __________ format
Have people rate their happiness every time a pager or alarm goes off throughout the day
Can ________________ the negative feelings from the positive ones to get an overall level of happiness (or unhappiness)

How do the ratings turn out?
Observations seem to find that most people are ________________
Counselors rate that ____________________________ of Americans are truly happy
Up to ________________ are depressed
If you ask people directly, only 1/10 say “not too happy”
More than ________________ themselves as more satisfied than dissatisfied

So, can we trust people’s perceptions of themselves?
People suffer from two major biases according to Myers (Pursuit of Happiness)
People focus and over report good things
“________________________________ syndrome”
College students rate themselves as far more likely than their classmates to get a _____________, draw a _____________________________, and own a house
Rate themselves as less likely to get _____________, have cancer, be ________________, and drop out
Only 2% say there is a good chance they’ll drop out, but only __________ of students entering a 4 year institution will graduate within 5 years.

So… what if people are always painting a rosy picture?
Well, we can still compare ________________; if everyone seems to look at things in a better view than they really are, we are still comparing “like” responses.
Imagine a thermometer that always was ________________; it still could be useful to tell whether you were hotter or colder than normal.

The second bias
People ________________ their current feelings
Schwartz and Strack (1999)

If you ask young adults about their ________________
Then follow it with life satisfaction
The two are strongly related
If you flip the order (life satisfaction first, then dating life)
The two are only ________________ related
If you make people think about something that they are unhappy with, they then judge their life satisfaction as unhappy
If they are happy with their dating life, it will lead them to believe that their life satisfaction is happy.

More on current feelings influencing happiness ratings
If people are in a good mood, they see the world through ________________
______________ glasses
______________ adults are more likely to recall parents as rejecting, punitive, and guilt-promoting
But, formerly depressed adults see their parents positively, so ________________ mood matters most.

Two reassuring facts
People’s reports retain ________________ at various points in time
Those that report happiness and satisfaction are likely to report the same a year from now
People that report happiness show more ________________ of happiness than those that don’t
Smile more, laugh more, more happy memories, report more joy, observed as happy by friends and family

The Progress Paradox
Objective goods have increased over the past few decades ________________ rates are higher
Life is longer
Information is more available
People have more _______________
Happiness has ______________________________, according to most surveys

How to explain the progress paradox?
Maybe this is a problem with _______________ ratings of happiness?
    Maybe people are _______________ judging their happiness

Cultural differences in happiness
Typically _______________ rate _______________ than others in life satisfaction
        Could be due to the Asian norm of _______________
            Not wanting to say that life is better than others, so they rate in the middle of the scale

US vs Korean youth
Family satisfaction links to life satisfaction strongly in _______________
    _______________ is more associated with life satisfaction in the US than Korea
    In Korea, _______________ is more associated with life satisfaction than in the US

US vs Japan
US: the best predictor of overall satisfaction is the domain in which one is _______________.
    Marriage is bad, health is bad, work is bad, kids are great- thus life is _______________!
Japan: the best predictor of overall satisfaction is the domain in which one is _______________.
    Marriage is good, health is good, work is good, kids are bad- thus life is _______________!

One more idea
Depressive realism: “_______________ but _______________”
    Depressed vs non-depressed students in a condition where there was a button for them to press and a light went on and off randomly
    They were asked to determine the relationship of what they did to the light
    Depressed people were more _______________
    Nondepressed people came up with complex ideas
        “the light flashed when I pressed the button twice- first for _______________”
    Peterson argues that this is only true when addressing noncontingencies, but not contingencies
        If they actually had _______________, depressed people would not be very accurate at detailing that