

The Science of Happiness: Theory and Practice

Happiness Soup



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Happiness Soup: What is *your* recipe?



Happiness Soup Review: 7 Habits of Happy People

1. Close Relationships



2. Kindness



3. Physical Well-being



4. Flow



5. Strengths



6. Positive Mindset



7. Meaning



Close Relationships: Key Points



- People who have one or more close relationships with friends and family are happier
- Quantity doesn't seem to matter
- What matters is:
 - Frequency of cooperation in activities
 - Active-constructive listening
 - Self-disclosure

Kindness: Key Points



- Confucius: kindness is about walking in someone else's shoes
- Planned acts of kindness
 - Successive waves of volunteering are most effective
 - Intrinsic motivation correlated with greater happiness: If you don't want to do it, it won't make you happier
 - Participation of recipients impacts their happiness
- Unplanned acts of kindness
 - RAKtivism
 - Frequency is key, not scale

Physical Well-being: Key Points



- **Exercise Regularly**
 - Work out at least 3 times per week (20-30 mins)
 - Mixed exercise and resistance exercise are most effective
- **Restore your Circadian Rhythms**
 - Get out and about for 20 mins as early as you can
 - Reduce screen time
 - Use night shift
- **Eat your way to Happiness**
 - Feed your friendly bacteria
 - Fill up with flavonoids
 - Fresh vegetables and fruits, as well as tea and raw cocoa, are great for your microbiome and packed with flavonoids

Flow: Key Points



- **Flow is about being in the zone**
 - Find something creative that you like doing
 - Set clear goals
 - Stay in the flow channel
 - Slowly raise the bar
 - Skills should match challenges
- **Benefits of Flow**
 - Impact on positive thinking / mood
 - Enhanced performance
 - Enhanced self-confidence through commitment to meaningful goals

Strengths: Key Points



- The two pillars of Positive Psychology
 - Strengths
 - Positive Emotions
- Strengths play a leading role in 2 out of 3 dimensions of happiness
 - The Pleasant Life
 - The Engaged Life
 - The Meaningful Life
- Signature Strengths are central to identity and self-image
 - Humility, humor, prudence, zest, creativity, etc.

Positive Mindset: Key Points



- The cultivation of positive emotions is a key to wellbeing
- Positive Psychology focuses on three kinds of positive emotions:
 - Gratitude about the past
 - Savoring the present (related to mindfulness)
 - Hope and optimism about the future
- **Gratitude**
 - Two effective exercises
 - Daily reflection on three things
 - Messages of gratitude
- **Savoring / mindfulness**
 - Enjoy / appreciate the present moment (the tigers and the strawberry)
- **Optimism**
 - Set Meaningful Goals

Meaning: Key Points



- **Goal setting promotes personal freedom and happiness**
 - We are “pulled” by the goals that we set instead of getting “pushed” by instincts
- **By setting and pursuing goals that we value, we discover meaning**
- **A meaningful life is the happiest life**
 - Use signature strengths not only to enrich one’s own life, but to discover meaning in the service of a greater purpose