

# **Ine Seljeseth**

## **Happiness consultancy report**

**CST228, “Happiness: investigating its causes and conditions”**

**Autumn session, 2014**

**Cultural Studies, University of Wollongong**

**Subject coordinators: Chris Barker and Brian Martin**

### ***Assignment***

The consultancy is a continuation of your reflective journal.

- You continue with the activity you used for your journal, or a different one, and/or an additional one.
- You recruit two or more individuals — called clients — to undertake an activity known to increase happiness, either the same activity as your own or a different one.
- You introduce your clients to the activity, for example through a presentation, talk, workshop and/or handout.
- You monitor their engagement with the activity on a regular basis (at least weekly) through observations, interviews, survey and/or other means.
- You evaluate the effect of the activity on yourself and your clients using questionnaires, interviews, focus groups and/or other techniques.

For more details see [http://www.bmartin.cc/classes/CST\\_14outline.pdf](http://www.bmartin.cc/classes/CST_14outline.pdf)

*Ine Seljeseth's* consultancy report starts on the next page.

This document is located at <http://www.bmartin.cc/classes/happiness-consultancy-tops/>.

- CST 228 - Happiness : Investigating Its Causes & Conditions -

**Assessment 4: Happiness consultancy**

Student : 3927465

Tutorial : Tuesday 12.30 pm

Reference Style : Harvard



Personal Happiness Activity :  
**Expressing Gratitude & Keeping a Gratitude Journal**

Client Happiness Activity :  
**Physical Activity & Expressing Gratitude**

Link To Gratitude Journal:  
<http://www.awashinggratitude.blog.com>

## **Introduction**

It is suggested by positive psychology researchers such as Lyubomirsky, Sheldon & Schkade (2005) that 40% of our total happiness potential lies within our own ability to change through 'Intentional activity.' Furthermore, much research has gone into investigating and identifying various activities that have been scientifically proven to promote or influence happiness, two of these being 'expressing gratitude' and 'physical activity.' (Lyubomirsky, 2007)

The following report describes the process of my 'happiness consultancy' and outlines the experiences of both myself and four recruited 'clients' when undertaking the above mentioned activities, with the purpose of investigating whether or not the engagement in these activities would have an influence on our subjective happiness levels.

The layout of the report covers the various steps taken in the process of the happiness consultancy, including;

- ✚ Choosing The Activity
- ✚ Client Recruitment
- ✚ Client Introduction To Activities
- ✚ Monitoring of Client Engagement With Activities
- ✚ Evaluation of Experiences
- ✚ Relation To Happiness Research/Literature
- ✚ Benefits / Disadvantages of Activities
- ✚ Recommendations For Further Engagement in Happiness Activities

Appendices;

- ✚ **A-** Happiness Scale Test  
Used To Monitor Clients' Subjective Happiness Improvement
- ✚ **B-** Reflective Survey Questions  
Used To Evaluate The Clients' Experiences  
& The Effect Of The Activities On Their Happiness
- ✚ **C-** Summary of Qualitative & Quantitative Data  
Gathered From Clients About Their Experiences
- ✚ **D-** Consent Forms Signed By The Clients  
Agreeing To Participate In The Following Consultancy



## Choosing the Activity

When initially choosing the happiness activity 'expressing gratitude' as my personal happiness activity, I followed the steps in the 'Person Activity Fit' diagnostic by Sheldon (2001) found in Lyubomirsky. (2007) The purpose of this 'activity fit' is to identify the most suitable activity choices for one's personality through a series of survey questions with each answer given as a numeric score, and from there on picking one of the highest scoring activities to undertake as one's 'happiness activity'.

My highest scoring activities were however found to be ones that I was already undertaking, and I therefore decided to undertake 'expressing gratitude' as my new 'happiness activity' as I figured that being more actively aware of and actively engaged in this activity would benefit both myself and others in my life.

In terms of choosing an activity for my client 'consultancy', this decision was based upon my own experiences with the first few weeks of focusing on 'expressing gratitude', together with my personal experiences and knowledge about physical activity in relation to happiness. My positive experience with the 'gratitude' activity encouraged me to share this experience and to use it to influence the potential happiness and wellbeing of others, and I knew that combining 'practicing gratitude' with 'physical activity' would offer a great opportunity of seeing the effect of these activities on my client's happiness and wellbeing.

## Client Recruitment

The client recruitment process was driven by motives of both convenience and my personal ambitions in business and in life. In order to make the consultancy process as convenient and easy as possible to undertake, monitor and evaluate, I decided to recruit clients that were already my actual training clients at work. As a Personal Trainer and Wellness Coach I am blessed with the opportunity to influence both the behaviours, attitudes and knowledge base of my clients through providing them with information, guidance and advice, and by sharing my personal experiences and ideas about health and wellness.

Recruiting new training clients as subjects for my consultancy assessment therefore fitted nicely into my motives of providing my clients with as much positive and helpful knowledge and advice as possible in relation to their health and wellbeing, and at the same time I considered this to be the most convenient way of undertaking the consultancy as it would allow me to actually monitor and experience the potential changes in my clients' happiness levels first hand.

I decided to only recruit relatively new clients whom were relatively new to engaging in physical activity and exercise, as I believed that this would give me a greater ability to assess the actual influence of the physical activity on their happiness levels. Additionally, I did imagine that introducing them to the concept of physical activity as a scientifically proven 'happiness booster' would be a great method of motivating them to participate in physical activity.



I also figured that agreeing to participate in this consultancy process would provide me and my clients with the added benefit of accountability for their physical activity engagement, as they would know that both their physical activity and their happiness levels were being 'monitored'.

On top of all this, I considered the practice of introducing my new clients to the concept of 'practicing gratitude' for happiness to be a golden opportunity for forming a trusting relationship with my new clients through sharing something about myself, my experiences and my life in relation to the gratitude practice and also by showing them that my perception of wellness is holistic, and does not just come down to the training alone.

### Client Introduction To The Activity

When introducing my clients to the activities, I firstly spoke with them about the assignment and my experiences with the gratitude journal as this was also a part of the recruitment process.

I then supplied them with a complete 'information package' which included the following three elements:

1. A brief spreadsheet of information about physical activity in relation to happiness based on academic literature with references and links to literature or articles for those interested in reading more.
2. A brief spreadsheet with links to some literature on the relationship between gratitude and happiness as well as the link to my online gratitude journal.

3. A copy of my first assignment in CST 228. (*My reflective journal*)

The collective body of these elements was provided as PDF documents sent by email, and I considered this to be a great way of introducing them to the concepts and getting to know me and my experiences at the same time.

### Monitoring of Improvement

I monitored my clients' improvement in happiness firstly by providing them with a copy of the happiness / depression scale test provided in Lyubomirsky (2007) which I supplied them with to fill out on my 'iPad' prior to the session commencing. (*See Appendix Figure A*)

This initial test was given to them after the recruitment process where I told them about the assignment, but prior to supplying them with the information package, as I figured that this would to some extent prevent bias for my results evaluation, thinking that them being 'too informed' prior to this first test could have an impact on their responses. I would imagine that this is why Lyubomirsky (2007) also provides this test quite early in the text book, prior to informing and encouraging the reader to take action with the happiness activities.

My monitoring then went on by verbal communication with the clients before/during or after training sessions as well as making notes of visual cues and my own experiences and perceptions of their happiness levels.



The most important part of the monitoring was the ongoing, continuous communication, which is already a part of my service with my clients, as it allows me to gain insight into their daily lives and circumstances and thereby to identify factors which may influence their wellbeing and performance, and now in this case; their perception of their own happiness levels.

To prevent any 'forced' answers or discomfort I did not ask my clients to 'score' themselves on a happiness scale, but rather asked them the kind of questions that I normally do about their day or week and how they were feeling overall, and then asked them if they had been consciously practicing gratitude or had been focusing on being more active, -all as a part of our normal conversation. I then made note of their responses as well as my own perceptions of their behaviour and mood and made personal by making notes in their personal client files after the training sessions had ceased and they were out of sight.

At the end of the five week period, I asked them to recomplete the happiness / depression scale test provided by Lyubomirsky (2007) (*Appendix Figure A*) in order to use this in my evaluation of the effect of the activities.

At this time, I also asked my clients direct questions in terms of what they thought of the activities, if they thought that it had had any effect on their happiness levels and if they felt motivated to continue with these happiness activities.

To record their answers in written form, I also supplied them with a short survey covering similar questions.

(*See Appendix Figure B*)

### Evaluation of Experiences

I evaluated my clients' experiences with the activities in the same way that I monitored my own experiences, by;

1. Considering the qualitative data gathered through the scores of the happiness / depression scale test in Lyubomirsky (2007) at the start and the end of the consultancy, and by;
2. Analysing the qualitative data responses that I gathered in my conversations with them throughout the process and at the end of the consultancy period, as well as through the short survey / that I provided them with at the end of the final week. (*Appendix Figure B*)

The collective body of qualitative and quantitative gathered data suggested favourable outcomes from the engagement with the activities.

The repeated 'happiness /depression scale test' showed that all (4) of my clients had improved their overall 'happiness score' and this was also reflected in their qualitative responses in the final questionnaire and in conversations throughout the time period.

(*See Appendix Figure C*)

Both in the questionnaires and in conversation, all participating clients reported to feel happier and overall more joyful with life at the end of the consultancy. Based on this information and the personal conversations/feedback given throughout the process it seems reasonable to conclude that the combination of purposeful expression of gratitude and adhering to a physical activity program has had a positive effect on my clients' happiness levels.



I would say that the experiences of my clients would be quite similar to my own, as I have long known that physical activity influences my personal happiness levels, and have recently discovered that expressing gratitude also has a positive effect of my overall mood, by assisting the filtering of my thoughts and provoke positive focus where I really treasure the precious and positive things in my life.

One may argue that these results might also be due to some sort of a 'placebo effect' caused by the increased attention placed on the concept of happiness and its' relation to these activities, as I believe that it might be easier to be happy if we think that we are doing activities which provoke happiness, rather than focusing on the activities in our life that might not cause happiness. As Emmons & Shelton (2002) put it; if we think that something will makes us happy, there is a greater chance that it will.

I do however not consider this to be a great concern, as the overall goal of engaging in these activities is simply to improve our physical and emotional health and wellbeing. If it comes down to a 'placebo effect' being more influential than the actual explanatory factors (the activities) on the outcome factors (happiness levels & wellbeing) then so be it. How I see it is that this is what positive psychology is all about, the concept of filtering out the negative thoughts and behaviours in our life and focusing on the positives. If we all succeed in doing this, I am sure we will all be happier. The real challenge in all this is learning the skill of filtering out the negative and holding on to and encouraging the positive.

### *The relations between Personal / Clients' Experiences and the Literature*

It is stated by Lyubomirsky (2007) that expressing gratitude is kind of a 'meta-strategy' for achieving happiness and that it can be a lot of different things to different people. The general understanding of expressing gratitude is however that the activity or behaviour encourages a positive mindset, featuring more positive outlooks, feelings and actions, which leads to more positive experiences and relationships, -and subsequently; increased happiness, wellbeing and satisfaction with life. (McCullough & Tsang, 2004)

Emmons & Shelton (2002) defines gratitude as 'A felt sense of wonder, thankfulness and appreciation for life', and similarly, Woods (2009) defines it as 'A life orientation towards noticing and appreciating the positive in the world.' I think this relates closely to the experiences of both myself and my clients, as we have all discussed that practicing gratitude assists us in being more aware of the great things in life and placing less emphasis on the negative.

Some literature concerning physical activity and its' relation to happiness states that physical activity can positively influence happiness and wellbeing through physiological reactions in the brain and the body, through the secretion of happiness hormones (Humphreys, & Huang, 2012) and generation of increased brain activation (Bouchard, Blair & Haskell, 2007) Some literature also suggests that engaging in physical activity in the great outdoors is even more beneficial to happiness levels, as it provides exposure to natural surroundings



-most importantly the sun, causing vitamin D activation, -and also that the social nature of exercising in a group environment exaggerates these benefits even further. (Mozaffarian, 2009)

During the consultancy period, my clients and I had a chain reaction receiving benefits from all of these aspects of physical activity, as we have been exercising in a group environment in the great outdoors, with great weather conditions which we have been very thankful to have. During winter times when the weather conditions might be less than ideal for outdoors training, I must as a trainer still try to encourage my clients to continue with the exercise by focusing on the other positive benefits of the physical activity.

We do however often tend to see dropping rates in client engagement with outdoors training during the colder seasons, and I am therefore now hoping that my clients' introduction to the concepts of all the various benefits of physical activity together with the increased focus on gratitude and positive thinking will act in everyone's favour for this upcoming winter season, as it may influence the ability of my clients to keep a positive focus and sustained motivation.

### [Benefits & Disadvantages of The Activity](#)

#### **- Gratitude**

The benefits of expressing gratitude are believed to be copious, as numerous studies have linked greater levels of gratitude to; increased happiness and physical and psychological health and

wellbeing, (Emmons & Crumpler 2000, McCullough et al. 2004, Zeynab et al. 2012, Chang et al. 2013, Lee. 2013) more positive interpersonal relationships (Algoe et al. 2010, Lambert et al. 2010, Chang et al. 2013) and also to greater success in life. (McFie. 2012) I consider this to be a great collective body of benefits of the activity, and as previously discussed, I think that the greatest benefit which has been experienced by both myself and my clients is the assistance of this activity in keeping a positive mindset.

The only disadvantage I can think of from using the expression of gratitude as a happiness activity is the fact that as previously discussed; it can sometimes be hard to be grateful for things that we do have if we find ourselves in a situation are in a severe situation which is impacting what we do have and emphasising what we don't have in a severe manner.

Examples of this may include losing someone or something that is very important to us, whether it's a friend a family member, our income, our home or our health. What is important to accentuate in this regard is that much evidence on the topic does suggest that positive thinking and the focus of gratitude is particularly beneficial in these kinds of circumstances when we might find it the hardest to utilize the skill of expressing gratitude and staying positive. (Emmons & Crumpler 2000, Emmons & Shelton 2002, Emmons & McCullough 2003, Watkins, Grimm & Kolts 2004, and Zeynab et al. 2012)





## - Physical Activity

Some of the benefits of physical activity which I try to highlight and discuss with my clients include firstly of course the many well-known health benefits such as decreased risk of cancers, CVD's, obesity, overweight, bone loss and type II diabetes, as well as improved immunity, muscular strength and overall functioning of the body (Warburton, Nicol & Bredin, 2006) - but the benefits of physical activity on mental health are important to highlight.

It has been stated by Fox (1999) that participation in physical activity, exercise and sports has been identified as a cause of joy and this is perhaps much due to the well-known fact that physical activity releases endorphins, which create feelings of happiness and euphoria. (Humphreys, & Huang, 2012) Much further research evidence suggests that participating in physical activity is also effective in promoting relaxation (Bouchard, Blair & Haskell, 2007, Clow & Emunds, 2014), as well as the reduction and management of stress (Penedo & Dahn 2005 and Asztalos et al, 2012) and numerous studies have shown that physical activity is beneficial in reducing and coping with signs of depression, and anxiety (Faulkner & Taylor, 2009) with some studies suggesting that only 30 minutes of daily exercise can be equally effective in reducing depression as a medically prescribed antidepressant drug. (Fox, 1999)

Other research evidence also suggests that participating in physical activity can help boost self-esteem and self-confidence in both children and adults (Ekeland et al. 2004, Landaas, 2005 and Bailey, 2006) and that participating in physical

activity can increase overall brain function (Biddle, 2008, Faulkner & Taylor, 2009), productivity (Penedo & Dahn, 2005) and can also help prevent cognitive decline. (Dykens, Rosner & Butterbaugh, 1998, and Bouchard, Blair & Haskell, 2007) In addition to this, some research findings have also revealed that physical activity and exercise may be helpful in addiction recovery by reducing withdrawal symptoms and cravings related to tobacco, alcohol and other drugs. (Clow & Emunds, 2014)

Needless to say, the benefits of physical activity to the individual are boundless, and an important point which I also try to highlight to my clients for additional motivation is that these positive benefits on mental health have also been shown to last for extended periods after the exercise, with researchers such as Whitelaw et al (2010) suggesting that an effect can be seen for as long as up to 24 hours after engaging in the activity.

An additional note on the topic is that physical activity engagement and promotion has also been claimed to benefit societies at large, with evidence from around the world suggesting that regular physical activity engagement is a crucial part of sustaining population health, deterring crime and is an imperative part of imparting important life skills on youth. (Bull, Bellew, Schoppe & Bauman, 2004)

With all of these positive elements to physical activity engagement, it is hard to imagine that there might be negative outcomes of this activity.

There are however some downfalls to physical activity engagement, such as exercise obsession, which can lead to



damage caused to both the mental and physical health of individuals.

It is in fact reported by Penedo & Dahn (2005) that in some cases, over exercising can lead to compulsive behaviours with an intense need to exercise, leading to excessive strain caused on bones, joints and ligaments.

Additionally, exercise and sport related injuries are quite common in general (Bouchard, Blair & Haskell, 2007) and it is for this reason that communicating the concept of safety with exercise and proper skill development is a key priority of fitness professionals such as myself.

### [Recommendations for Continuing With The Happiness Activities \(or choosing other activities\)](#)

#### **- Choosing Activities**

As I have discussed with my clients, I believe that the most important thing to consider when undertaking or choosing a 'happiness activity' is to find one that you truly enjoy and which suits your lifestyle and personality. This is also discussed by Lyubomirsky (2007) and is of course the purpose and concept behind utilizing the 'Person Activity Fit' by Sheldon (2001) which I initially used when trying to find a suitable activity. However, as I personally discovered when using this tool, we cannot always rely on such tools to choose an appropriate activity for us. Although it may be quite useful as a guide, the most important thing is to consider our circumstances and to evaluate our options, and then to choose an activity which truly fits into our lives.

What I also highlighted in this regard is the idea that it is OK to stop an activity if it doesn't suit us, and to re-evaluate and choose a better suiting activity.

When discussing the matter with my clients I also emphasized the fact that we should not limit ourselves to one activity if we truly want to incorporate several 'happiness activities' into our daily lives, but also that focusing at one at a time is also great if this is our preference.

As highlighted by Schueller (2012) different people have different lives, minds and preferences, and just because an activity might positively influence one persons' experienced happiness, this does not necessarily mean that it will have the same effect on someone else. Some overly ambitious individuals such as myself might be willing to take on several different happiness activities at once, but for many other people, incorporating one activity at a time is often more than enough.

#### **-Gratitude**

In regards to keeping a gratitude journal, when doing so it is recommended by Lyubomirsky (2007) to do ones entries on a weekly basis rather than on a daily basis, in order to prevent the practice of gratitude from turning into a chore. I found this advice to be helpful when keeping my own gratitude journal, and I would recommend the same to others, while emphasizing the importance of neither pressuring oneself to nor restricting oneself from writing in their gratitude journal at any specific time, but to make the entries in their gratitude journal into something special which they would do only when they genuinely feel excited about it.



It is also stated by Borysenko (2004) that when you practice gratitude, you naturally search for kindness, love, and goodness. One can therefore still continue to practice gratitude in general on a daily basis by being in a positive, grateful mindset. My belief is that when this mindset becomes a habit, the gratitude will be genuine and will not feel forced. I might also recommend trying to adopt rituals such as saying 'thank you' in the morning each time one wakes up, as this is believed to be an effective way of starting your day in a positive mindset (Borysenko, 2004) and my personal experience certainly confirms this.

Another important recommendation I would give in regards to practicing gratitude is to focus on actually acknowledging the kindness of others and genuinely feeling grateful each time you receive something, regardless of how little. This especially in relation to interpersonal gratitude, but also in regards to the gifts you receive from life itself.

The concept of interpersonal gratitude is discussed by Satinder(2010) who states that 'the gift of gratitude springs from a deep realisation that our whole life depends on the kindness of others', and that both the practice of giving kindness to others and appreciating when receiving are fundamental to maintaining happy and positive relationships.

### - Physical Activity

Recommendations for how to continue with physical activity is a more difficult topic, as much literature shows that many factors determine physical activity engagement and maintenance. Much research on the topic has established that we must consider both

socio environmental, structural and personal influences which may affect an individual's ability and/or motivation to engage in physical activity, -and that the barriers preventing someone from engaging in the activity are often even more influential than the motivations.

Barriers to physical activity engagement includes structural factors such as socio-economic status, (Giles-Corti, B & Donovan, R.J, 2002) geographical location, (Humpel, N, Owen, N & Leslie, E, 2002,) the social environment (McNeill, et al. 2006) and demographic determinants such as age and gender(Netz & Raviv 2004) as well as personal factors such as time, money, mobility, skills, knowledge and personal interest (Boehm et al. 2013) It is also suggested by much research that 'social support' and 'self-efficacy' are key determinants for physical activity engagement. (Ayotte, B, Margrett, J & Hicks-Patrick, J 2010, Anderson, E.S, Wojcik, J.R, Winett, R.A & Williams, D.M, 2006.)

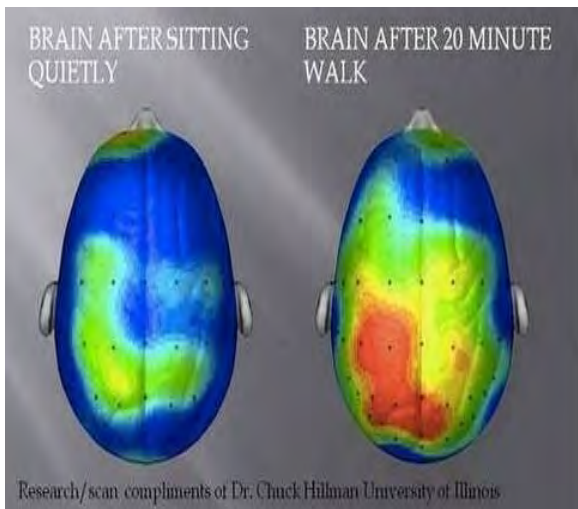
From personal experience I do know that it is easier for my clients when they have a trainer and a team providing them with social support and making them accountable for their activity, and I also know that all the above mentioned structural and personal barriers can pay a great part in influencing a person's motivations and ability to engage in physical activity, as this is a topic I have spent much time researching throughout my degree in 'health promotion.'

What I also like to point out to my clients is that physical activity can be many different things and does not necessarily have to involve intense or vigorous exercise. Even mild walking has shown to be effective in inducing many of the



previously discussed benefits of physical activity, by increasing brain activity and thereby influencing both the mental and physical health. (Hillman, 2012)

The figure below illustrates a visual image of the differences in detected brain activity in a person after sitting quietly and then after a 20 minute walk.



I presented this image to my clients used in my 'information package' with facts about physical activity and it's relation to mental and physical health, as I think that this is a great representation of the relationship between physical activity and 'brain health', and confirms my overall message; that physical and mental health are interconnected and are equally important in maintaining overall health, wellbeing and happiness.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the experiences of both myself and my clients during this consultancy have revealed that both 'expressing gratitude' and 'physical activity' prove to be effective in influencing overall subjective happiness and wellbeing. As a PT, Health and Wellness Coach, I will therefore continue to promote both of these activities, as well as other 'happiness activities' which I believe to be influential to health and wellbeing, in the aim to provide my clients with a holistic sense of health where both physical health, mental health and the role of positive psychology is embraced.

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## Appendices

### Appendix Figure A

Copy of Happiness Scale Test Given To The Clients At The Beginning & End Of The Consultancy Period

#### Subjective Happiness Scale

Permission is granted for all non-commercial use.

A PDF of the scale can be downloaded [here](#).

To score the scale, reverse code the 4th item (i.e., turn a 7 into a 1, a 6 into a 2, a 5 into a 3, a 3 into a 5, a 2 into a 6, and a 1 into a 7), and compute the mean of the 4 items. Norms are available in the reference below, as well as in many other publications that have used the scale (see PsycInfo).

Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).

For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.

1. In general, I consider myself:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not a very happy person						a very happy person

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
less happy						more happy

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all						a great deal

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all						a great deal

Note: Item #4 is reverse coded.

Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).





## Appendix Figure C

### Summary of Qualitative and Quantitative Data Gathered From Clients About Their Experiences During The Happiness Consultancy Period – Client Colour Coded –iPad-

#### Client 1.

Age: 39 Gender: F

Initial Happiness Score: 3.5

Date: 24/04/2014

Second Happiness Score: 5.25

Date: 29/05/2014

#### Observational Details:

Client 1 seems to have benefited greatly from the happiness consultancy. This client has been very actively engaged in the two happiness activities, and has throughout the consultancy period seemed very excited to talk about the activities and their effect on her happiness/mood/everyday life.

#### Reflection Survey Details:

Client 1 reported to have benefited greatly from both activities. She reported that she found the information package provided to be very useful and that she would definitely continue to practice the happiness activities that she has been introduced to. She also reported that she has started looking into the concept of positive psychology and have purchased the book "The How Of Happiness" by Lyubomirsky. (2007)

**Subjective Happiness Scale**

Permission is granted for all non-commercial use.

A PDF of the scale can be downloaded [here](#).

To score the scale, reverse code the 4th item (i.e., turn a 7 into a 1, a 6 into a 2, a 5 into a 3, a 3 into a 5, a 2 into a 6, and a 1 into a 7), and compute the mean of the 4 items. Norms are available in the reference below, as well as in many other publications that have used the scale (see PsycInfo). Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).

For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.

1. In general, I consider myself:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not a very						a very
happy						happy
person						person

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
less						more
happy						happy

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at						a great
all						deal

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at						a great
all						deal

Note: Item #4 is reverse coded.

Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).

**Subjective Happiness Scale**

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To score the scale, reverse code the 4th item (i.e., turn a 7 into a 1, a 6 into a 2, a 5 into a 3, a 3 into a 5, a 2 into a 6, and a 1 into a 7), and compute the mean of the 4 items. Norms are available in the reference below, as well as in many other publications that have used the scale (see PsycInfo). Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).

For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.

1. In general, I consider myself:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not a very						a very
happy						happy
person						person

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
less						more
happy						happy

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at						a great
all						deal

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at						a great
all						deal

Note: Item #4 is reverse coded.

Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).



Client 2.

Age: 22 Gender: F

Initial Happiness Score: 5.0

Date: 26/04/2014

Second Happiness Score: 5.5

Date: 29/05/2014

Observational Details:

Client 2 seems to have benefited from the happiness consultancy.

This client seemed like a generally happy person at the start, who was interested in participating as a client in my consultancy because she likes to participate and be involved in positive things.

My observations of this client throughout the period were that she generally seemed happy and positive all the time, and she was interested and happy to talk about the concepts of gratitude and physical activity in relation to happiness in our time spent together.

This client seems like she is always interested in learning more and has been a pleasure to watch throughout the period.

Reflection Survey Details:

Client 2 reported in the reflection survey that she benefited from both physical activity engagement and practicing gratitude. She reported that she found it interesting to read and learn about positive psychology ideas and theories and that she would definitely continue to be mindful of practicing gratitude and that she also plans to continue on with her engagement in physical activity.

**Subjective Happiness Scale**

Permission is granted for all non-commercial use.

A PDF of the scale can be downloaded [here](#).

To score the scale, reverse code the 4th item (i.e., turn a 7 into a 1, a 6 into a 2, a 5 into a 3, a 3 into a 5, a 2 into a 6, and a 1 into a 7), and compute the mean of the 4 items. Norms are available in the reference below, as well as in many other publications that have used the scale (see PsychInfo). Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).

For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.

1. In general, I consider myself:

1    2    3    4    5    6    7  
not a very    a very  
happy    happy  
person    person

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself:

1    2    3    4    5    6    7  
less    more  
happy    happy

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1    2    3    4    5    6    7  
not at    a great  
all    deal

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1    2    3    4    5    6    7  
not at    a great  
all    deal

Note: Item #4 is reverse coded.

Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).

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To score the scale, reverse code the 4th item (i.e., turn a 7 into a 1, a 6 into a 2, a 5 into a 3, a 3 into a 5, a 2 into a 6, and a 1 into a 7), and compute the mean of the 4 items. Norms are available in the reference below, as well as in many other publications that have used the scale (see PsychInfo). Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).

For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.

1. In general, I consider myself:

1    2    3    4    5    6    7  
not a very    a very  
happy    happy  
person    person

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself:

1    2    3    4    5    6    7  
less    more  
happy    happy

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1    2    3    4    5    6    7  
not at    a great  
all    deal

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1    2    3    4    5    6    7  
not at    a great  
all    deal

Note: Item #4 is reverse coded.

Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).



Client 3.

Age: 44 Gender: M

Initial Happiness Score: 4.0

Date: 24/04/2014

Second Happiness Score: 4.75

Date: 29/05/2014

**Observational Details:**

Client 3 seems to have benefited from the consultancy to some degree.

This client is quite reserved but seems generally content in life. He is a hard worker in training sessions and I did not speak to him about the happiness activities during training, but tried to talk to him a bit about it prior to or after his sessions. I cannot say that I have seen any significant changes in his mood or behaviour over the time period, but his happiness scores from before and after indicate that he has benefited from the activities.

**Reflection Survey Details:**

Client 3 reported in his reflection survey that he has been trying to be more optimistic and have been thinking about positive things in his life rather than negative since the consultancy period started. He also reports that he has been more wary of putting in extra energy to his training sessions and that he has tried to be more physically active overall. He reported that he found the information about these activities in relation to happiness as interesting and that he is going to try to continue on practicing these activities as much as he can.

**Subjective Happiness Scale**

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A PDF of the scale can be downloaded [here](#).

To score the scale, reverse code the 4th item (i.e., turn a 7 into a 1, a 6 into a 2, a 5 into a 3, a 3 into a 5, a 2 into a 6, and a 1 into a 7), and compute the mean of the 4 items. Norms are available in the reference below, as well as in many other publications that have used the scale (see PsycInfo). Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).

For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.

1. In general, I consider myself:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
not a very happy person a very happy person

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
less happy more happy

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
not at all a great deal

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
not at all a great deal

Note: Item #4 is reverse coded.

Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).

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For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.

1. In general, I consider myself:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
not a very happy person a very happy person

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
less happy more happy

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
not at all a great deal

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
not at all a great deal

Note: Item #4 is reverse coded.

Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).



Client 4.

Age: 25 Gender: M

Initial Happiness Score: 5.0

Date: 26/04/2014

Second Happiness Score: 5.5

Date: 29/05/2014

Observational Details:

Client 4 seems to have benefited from the consultancy.

This client is a generally positive person, but has seemed increasingly positive over this period of the consultancy. I am unsure whether this client has become increasingly positive towards me as a result of getting to know me better or if it is due to him practicing the happiness activities in his everyday life. This client seemed amused by the thought of the activities affecting his happiness, and made jokes in regards to the practices throughout the period. He seemed genuinely interested in what I had to say about the activities in relation to happiness but he might have misunderstood the point of the activities and his responses were perhaps a bit too humorous, as he exaggerated the practice of gratitude by saying "thank you" to every exercise he was given, especially when he was in pain and joked about all the things he was grateful for, like his blisters on his feet etc. His happiness scores do however suggest that he has become happier over the time period, and even though I cannot say with full confidence that this response is genuine, I hope that he did learn something from this and that it has impacted his life in a positive way.

Reflection Survey Details:

Client 4 reported in the survey that he did benefit from the activities and that he has become a more positive person overall. He reports that he doesn't take things too seriously anymore and that he likes the ideas behind positive psychology. He also reports that he is planning to continue on with the activities and that he is encouraging his friends to do the same based on his experience.

**Subjective Happiness Scale**

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To score the scale, reverse code the 4th item (i.e., turn a 7 into a 1, a 6 into a 2, a 5 into a 3, a 3 into a 5, a 2 into a 6, and a 1 into a 7), and compute the mean of the 4 items. Norms are available in the reference below, as well as in many other publications that have used the scale (see PsycInfo). Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).

For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.

1. In general, I consider myself:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
not a very happy person a very happy person

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
less happy more happy

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
not at all a great deal

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
not at all a great deal

Note: Item #4 is reverse coded.

Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).

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For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.

1. In general, I consider myself:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
not a very happy person a very happy person

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
less happy more happy

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
not at all a great deal

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
not at all a great deal

Note: Item #4 is reverse coded.

Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).



**Appendix Figure D**  
**Consent Forms-iPad**



UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

Consent to participate in the research project 'Happiness: causes and conditions'

Being conducted by XXXXX

Your participation is sought in a research project being undertaken by students of the University of Wollongong under the supervision of Professor Brian Martin and Associate Professor Chris Barker. The project involves talking to people about the causes of happiness in their working lives and involves semi-structured interviews, or conversations, lasting approximately 30 minutes. Students will write a research report for the purposes of university assessment. The material would not be published without further explicit consent being given. Some conversations would be audio recorded with your consent but no one other than the student researchers XXX and Professors Martin and Barker would hear them. As a participant, you should not reveal any information of an incriminating nature. Should you do so, be warned that the researcher would be obliged to report such information if it relates to serious a criminal offence and that such information could be subpoenaed.

Your participation in this research is voluntary, you are free to refuse to participate and you are free to withdraw from the research at any time. Your refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent will not affect your relationship with the University of Wollongong in any way. If you would like to discuss this research further please contact Professor B Martin on or A/Prof Chris Barker on (02) 42213671. If you have any enquiries regarding the ethical conduct of the research please contact the Secretary of the University of Wollongong Human Research Ethics Committee on (02) 4221 4457.

Research Title: Happiness: causes and conditions

I, Nicole David consent to participate in the research conducted by XXXX of the University of Wollongong (under the supervision of Professor B Martin and A/ Professor C Barker as it has been described to me in the information sheet. I understand that the data collected will be used to analyze the causes of happiness within the organization being studied and to write a research report for the purposes of university assessment. I understand that the material would not be published without my giving further explicit consent. I consent for the data to be used for these purposes.

Signed Nicole David Date 21/4/2004.....



UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

Consent to participate in the research project 'Happiness: causes and conditions'

Being conducted by XXXXX

Your participation is sought in a research project being undertaken by students of the University of Wollongong under the supervision of Professor Brian Martin and Associate Professor Chris Barker. The project involves talking to people about the causes of happiness in their working lives and involves semi-structured interviews, or conversations, lasting approximately 30 minutes. Students will write a research report for the purposes of university assessment. The material would not be published without further explicit consent being given. Some conversations would be audio recorded with your consent but no one other than the student researchers XXX and Professors Martin and Barker would hear them. As a participant, you should not reveal any information of an incriminating nature. Should you do so, be warned that the researcher would be obliged to report such information if it relates to serious a criminal offence and that such information could be subpoenaed.

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Research Title: Happiness: causes and conditions

I, GARY Mc KEVIN consent to participate in the research conducted by XXXX of the University of Wollongong (under the supervision of Professor B Martin and A/ Professor C Barker as it has been described to me in the information sheet. I understand that the data collected will be used to analyze the causes of happiness within the organization being studied and to write a research report for the purposes of university assessment. I understand that the material would not be published without my giving further explicit consent. I consent for the data to be used for these purposes.

Signed GM Date 21/4/2004.....



UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

Consent to participate in the research project 'Happiness: causes and conditions'

Being conducted by XXXXX

Your participation is sought in a research project being undertaken by students of the University of Wollongong under the supervision of Professor Brian Martin and Associate Professor Chris Barker. The project involves talking to people about the causes of happiness in their working lives and involves semi-structured interviews, or conversations, lasting approximately 30 minutes. Students will write a research report for the purposes of university assessment. The material would not be published without further explicit consent being given. Some conversations would be audio recorded with your consent but no one other than the student researchers XXX and Professors Martin and Barker would hear them. As a participant, you should not reveal any information of an incriminating nature. Should you do so, be warned that the researcher would be obliged to report such information if it relates to serious a criminal offence and that such information could be subpoenaed.

Your participation in this research is voluntary, you are free to refuse to participate and you are free to withdraw from the research at any time. Your refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent will not affect your relationship with the University of Wollongong in any way. If you would like to discuss this research further please contact Professor B Martin on or A/Prof Chris Barker on (02) 42213671. If you have any enquiries regarding the ethical conduct of the research please contact the Secretary of the University of Wollongong Human Research Ethics Committee on (02) 4221 4457.

Research Title: Happiness: causes and conditions

I, Laura Knite consent to participate in the research conducted by XXXX of the University of Wollongong (under the supervision of Professor B Martin and A/ Professor C Barker as it has been described to me in the information sheet. I understand that the data collected will be used to analyze the causes of happiness within the organization being studied and to write a research report for the purposes of university assessment. I understand that the material would not be published without my giving further explicit consent. I consent for the data to be used for these purposes.

Signed Laura Knite Date 26/4/2004.....



UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

Consent to participate in the research project 'Happiness: causes and conditions'

Being conducted by XXXXX

Your participation is sought in a research project being undertaken by students of the University of Wollongong under the supervision of Professor Brian Martin and Associate Professor Chris Barker. The project involves talking to people about the causes of happiness in their working lives and involves semi-structured interviews, or conversations, lasting approximately 30 minutes. Students will write a research report for the purposes of university assessment. The material would not be published without further explicit consent being given. Some conversations would be audio recorded with your consent but no one other than the student researchers XXX and Professors Martin and Barker would hear them. As a participant, you should not reveal any information of an incriminating nature. Should you do so, be warned that the researcher would be obliged to report such information if it relates to serious a criminal offence and that such information could be subpoenaed.

Your participation in this research is voluntary, you are free to refuse to participate and you are free to withdraw from the research at any time. Your refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent will not affect your relationship with the University of Wollongong in any way. If you would like to discuss this research further please contact Professor B Martin on or A/Prof Chris Barker on (02) 42213671. If you have any enquiries regarding the ethical conduct of the research please contact the Secretary of the University of Wollongong Human Research Ethics Committee on (02) 4221 4457.

Research Title: Happiness: causes and conditions

I, Sam Connor consent to participate in the research conducted by XXXX of the University of Wollongong (under the supervision of Professor B Martin and A/ Professor C Barker as it has been described to me in the information sheet. I understand that the data collected will be used to analyze the causes of happiness within the organization being studied and to write a research report for the purposes of university assessment. I understand that the material would not be published without my giving further explicit consent. I consent for the data to be used for these purposes.

Signed S Connor Date 26/4/2004.....

