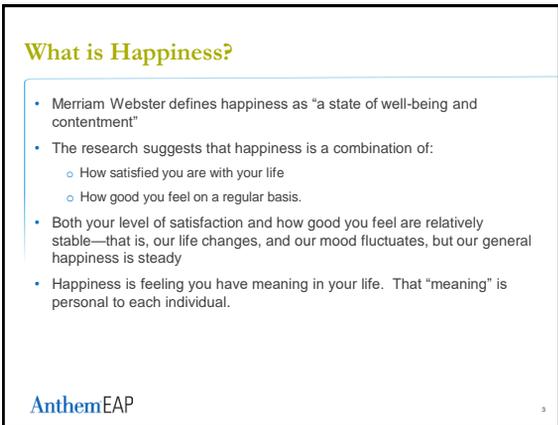




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The History of Happiness

- The pursuit of happiness began nearly 2,500 years ago with Confucius, Buddha, Socrates, and Aristotle.
- The idea of happiness in Western Culture emerged in the 18th century during the Age of Enlightenment
- Prior to the Enlightenment cultural standards encouraged a slightly saddened approach to life, with facial expressions to match. The observation was that sinful humanity had best display a somewhat sorrowful humility.

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Pioneers of Happiness: Abraham Maslow

- Maslow pioneer in psychology to shift focus from the roots of unhappiness to the source of happiness
- Best known for developing the "hierarchy of needs"
 - In order to understand human motivation and the pursuit of happiness, he formulated a list of basic human needs that had to be fulfilled for maximum psychological health.

The more we learn about man's natural tendencies, the easier it will be to tell him how to be good, how to be happy, how to be fruitful, how to respect himself, how to love, how to fulfill his highest potentialities ... The thing to do seems to be to find out what one is really like inside, deep down, as a member of the human species and as a particular individual (Maslow, 1987)

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Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Summarized

- Maslow theorized that there is a hierarchy of needs that ranges from "lower" to "higher."
- The hierarchy starts with an individual's most basic needs for survival through an individual reaching their full potential.
- The higher needs are most important for the development of personality; however, these higher needs could not be satisfied until the lower needs including the physiological and safety needs were satisfied. If two different needs were in conflict, the lower need would dominate.

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Pioneers of Happiness: Dalai Lama

- Dalai Lama was a prominent modern spiritual leader that gave happiness a central role in his teachings.
- Three of the ways recommended by the Dalai Lama for cultivating happiness:
 - Train Your Mind For Happiness
 - Shift Your Perspective
 - Cultivate Compassion and Altruism

"I believe that the very purpose of our life is to seek happiness."
— The Dalai Lama

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Pioneers of Happiness: Martin Seligman

- Martin Seligman is a pioneer of Positive, not simply because of his theory about why happy people are happy, but because he uses a scientific method to explore it.
- Seligman concluded that the most satisfied, upbeat people were people who had discovered and used a combination of their personal "signature strengths," such as humanity, temperance and persistence.
- Seligman established that happiness has three dimensions that can be cultivated:
 - The Pleasant Life
 - The Good Life
 - The Meaningful Life

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Types of Happiness

- Type 1: Characterized by momentary feelings of joy and pleasure
 - Short-term positive emotions or "simple pleasures"
- Type 2: Characterized by judgements about feelings a.k.a. wellbeing
 - This type of happiness is more thoughtful and requires an assessment that goes beyond the simple pleasures
- Type 3: Characterized by a higher meaning of life, flourishing and fulfilling one's potential
 - This category of happiness represents fulfilment at a higher level - achieving one's full potential. It can be seen as accomplishments with a higher meaning and has to do with self-realization. (Think Maslow's hierarchy)

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Did you know?

- Approximately 50% of happiness is biologically determined
- 10% of our happiness is determined by our current circumstances
- 40% of happiness is controlled by your thoughts, actions, and behaviors

Happiness is a skill that can be learned by learning to change thoughts, actions and behaviors that keep you from finding true happiness

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Activity

- Take a few minutes and think of a happy moment, time or experience that you can recall
- Can you think of a time looking back when you were happy, and you didn't even know it?

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Why is Finding Happiness so Challenging?

- We don't live in the present moment and focus our energy on the past or the future
- We live our lives in a constant go pattern
- We either lack gratitude or don't take the time to be grateful
- We Compare ourselves to what we perceive others to have that you don't
- Lost reality – we lack focus on where we are and where we want to be
 - Hiding from problems instead of facing them
- We do not prioritize what is important to us

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Personal inventory

- Why is it important for you to be happy?
- Do you have fulfillment in any area of your life? i.e. work, family, social, community?
- What do you imagine needs to happen for you to feel meaning in your life?

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Tips for Achieving Long Term Happiness

- Pay attention to your instinctive emotional responses and challenge the negative thoughts and belief systems tied to the response. Develop a helpful mantra
- Make a point of doing considerate, loving and generous things for others
- Make some time every day to connect with the important people in your life. Establish weekly or regular rituals that give you opportunities to interact with others in meaningful ways
- Look for ways to reduce your acquiring more material possessions, declutter and donate items you don't need
- Identify and develop your personal strengths

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In Conclusion

You have the power to take control of your happiness by choosing your thoughts, behaviors, and actions.

Identify one way you can move towards a happier more fulfilling life

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Resources

Books

- The Art of Happiness by the Dalai Lama and Howard C. Cutler
- Authentic Happiness by Martin Seligman
- Stumbling on Happiness by Daniel Gilbert
- The Happiness Trap: Stop Struggling, Start Living by Russ Harris
- A Hierarchy of Needs: A Theory of Human Motivation by Abraham Maslow



Apps:

- Headspace
- Happify
- Happy Now

Websites:

- The Happiness Trap
- Authentic Happiness

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