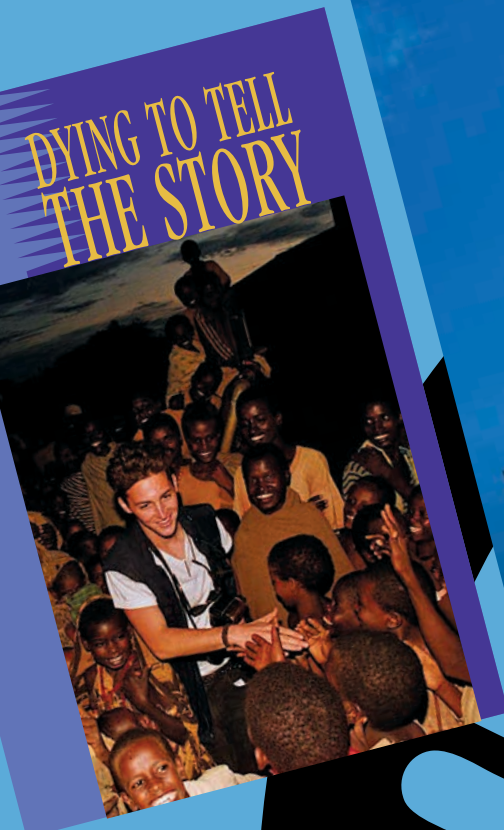
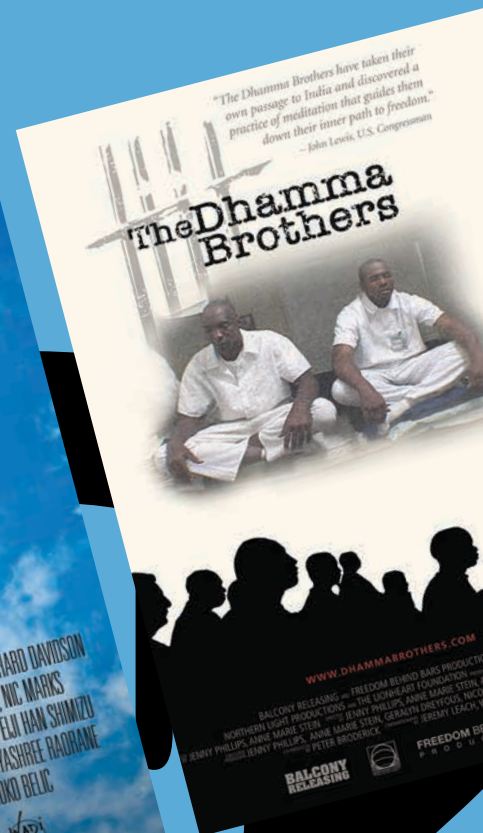




JOURNEYS IN FILM

educating for global understanding

Teaching the Film happy



The Study of Happiness

Table of Contents

Introduction		<i>Click the Chapter heading to be taken to that page</i>
About <i>Journeys in Film</i>		3
Introducing <i>HAPPY</i>		4
Lesson	The Study of Happiness	6
Handout 1:	Pre-Assessment on Attitudes About Happiness	9
Handout 2:	What Makes You Happy?	10
Appendix 1:	<i>HAPPY</i> Stories: An Alternative Approach	11
Appendix 2:	Glossary	12
Appendix 3:	Suggested Resources	14

About *Journeys in Film*

Founded in 2003, *Journeys in Film* operates on the belief that teaching with film has the power to prepare students to live and work more successfully in the 21st century as informed and globally competent citizens. Our core mission is to advance global understanding among youth through the combination of age-appropriate films from around the world, interdisciplinary classroom materials, and teachers' professional-development offerings. This comprehensive curriculum model promotes widespread use of film as a window to the world to help students to mitigate existing attitudes of cultural bias, cultivate empathy, develop a richer understanding of global issues, and prepare for effective participation in an increasingly interdependent world. Our standards-based lesson plans support various learning styles, promote literacy, transport students across the globe, and foster learning that meets core academic objectives.

Selected films act as springboards for lesson plans in subjects ranging from math, science, language arts, and social studies to topics that have become critical for students to learn more about—like environmental sustainability, poverty and hunger, global health, diversity, and immigration. Our core team of prominent educators consults with filmmakers and cultural specialists in the creation of the curriculum guides. The guides merge effectively into teachers' existing lesson plans and mandated curricular requirements. They provide teachers an innovative way to fulfill their school districts' standards-based goals.

Why use this program?

To prepare to participate in tomorrow's global arena,

students need to gain a deeper understanding of the world beyond their own borders. *Journeys in Film* offers innovative and engaging tools to explore other cultures and social issues, beyond the often negative images seen in print, television, and film media.

For today's media-centric youth, film is an appropriate and effective teaching tool. *Journeys in Film* has carefully selected quality films telling the stories of young people living in locations that may otherwise never be experienced by your students. They travel through these characters and their stories: They drink tea with an Iranian family in *Children of Heaven*, play soccer in a Tibetan monastery in *The Cup*, find themselves in the conflict between urban grandson and rural grandmother in South Korea in *The Way Home*, and watch modern ways challenge Maori traditions in New Zealand in *Whale Rider*.

In addition to our ongoing development of teaching guides for culturally sensitive foreign films, *Journeys in Film* has begun a curricular initiative to bring outstanding documentary films to the classroom. Working with the Norman Lear Center at USC's Annenberg School, *Journeys in Film* has identified exceptional narrative and documentary films that teach about a broad range of social issues, in real-life settings such as an AIDS-stricken township in Africa, a maximum-security prison in Alabama, and a concentration camp near Prague. *Journeys* guides help teachers integrate these films into their classrooms, examining complex issues, encouraging students to be active rather than passive viewers, and maximizing the power of film to enhance critical thinking skills and to meet the Common Core standards.

Journeys in Film is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and is a project of the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center, a non-partisan research and public policy center that studies the social, political, economic, and cultural impact of entertainment on the world—and translates its findings into action.



Introducing *HAPPY*

HAPPY is an award-winning feature-length documentary that takes us on a journey from the swamps of Louisiana to the slums of Kolkata, India, in search of what really makes people happy. Combining real-life stories of people from around the world and insightful interviews with the leading scientists in happiness research, *HAPPY* explores the secrets behind one of our most valued emotions.

This companion guide to the film *HAPPY* is designed to help 6th- through 12th-grade educators and their students get the most out of the film. Organized around the five film chapters, it provides activity ideas for exploring happiness, as well as suggestions for focusing, discussing, and reflecting on the topics presented in the film. In addition, the guide includes background information for educators, relevant national content standards, a glossary, and resources.

What Is Positive Psychology?

In the film *HAPPY*, viewers are introduced to the topic of positive psychology. This is a relatively new field of science that studies happiness and well-being. Positive psychology looks at how people can become happier and more fulfilled, and what happens when they do. It is an applied science that examines optimal human functioning and creates interventions for developing positive, healthy, thriving individuals, relationships, and institutions.

As described in the film, psychologists have traditionally focused on people with mental illness or other psychological problems, and on how to care for them. These efforts have led to great advancements in the treatment of psychological disorders, but have done little to help us understand psychological wellness. Positive psychology

aims to complement traditional psychology by focusing on mental wellness and strengths rather than only on mental illness. It asserts that human goodness and excellence are as much a part of the human condition as distress and disorder. It is concerned with making people's lives more fulfilling, and encourages practices that can increase happiness and satisfaction.

Practices highlighted in the film include:

Expressing Your Gratitude. Feeling thankful and expressing thanks can make a person both happier and healthier. Studies have shown that people who cultivate gratitude sleep better, exercise more, and experience less stress, all of which contribute to overall health. Being grateful helps turn the focus from what people don't have to what they do have, and helps them feel that they are loved and cared for.

Doing Something Kind. It turns out that being kind to someone else helps both the recipient and the giver. People who regularly practice kindness experience increased happiness, and also benefit from more self-acceptance and positive relationships. Research indicates kindness is valuable because it helps people feel that they are taking part in something that matters.

Connecting to Your Community. Having positive relationships and experiences with others in your community is an important element of happiness. Community connections contribute to peoples' sense of self and psychological well-being. For young people, these connections also enhance academic performance and social competence.



Playing. Adding more play and laughter in your life can make you happier. Studies have shown that play has many additional benefits, including helping you think more creatively; reducing stress, struggle, and worry; stimulating imagination and curiosity; and making you feel more energized.

Getting in the Flow. Flow is the experience of being so absorbed in a challenging and enjoyable activity that you lose track of time and lose self-awareness. People who regularly experience flow report greater happiness, motivation, and life satisfaction, as well as less stress and anxiety. Depending on a person's skills and interest, flow can come from physical activities, hobbies, or work.

Trying Something New. People who regularly seek new experiences are happier and more fulfilled than those who don't. Novelty challenges our views of ourselves, others, and the world, and stretches our knowledge and skills. Experiencing new things also helps us focus on the present, which enhances everyday life.

As the film explains, happiness is a skill that can be learned and practiced. By helping students recognize their potential for happiness, and giving them opportunities to cultivate and practice this skill, you will help them develop habits that can sustain them throughout their lives.



The Study of Happiness

Enduring Understandings:

- Positive psychology focuses on mental health and it studies what brings genuine happiness to people's lives.
- Happiness is primarily influenced by our genetic makeup and our intentional behavior; factors such as wealth and status play only a minor role.

Essential Questions:

- What is positive psychology?
- What are the influences that determine whether or not we are happy?

Notes to the Teacher:

The first chapter of the film opens with images of a rickshaw driver with his family in India. Though the driver doesn't have much material wealth, the film reveals that he is "as happy as the average American" and points out that happiness isn't necessarily related to our circumstances. Research is introduced from the field of positive psychology, which focuses on mental health and on what brings genuine happiness to people's lives.

People who are happier have better relationships, make more money, and do better at work. By conducting studies of identical twins, researchers have learned that approximately 50 percent of the differences in our happiness levels is determined by our genetic makeup. Surprisingly, our circumstances—like how much money we have, our job, our status, or our health—account for only 10 percent of the differences. The remaining 40 percent comes from our intentional behavior, or things we can do to become happier.

As the film explains, feelings of happiness are caused in part by a chemical in the brain called dopamine. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter, so it enables communication between neurons. Eating, physical activity, "flow," and other rewarding activities trigger the release of dopamine, leading to sensations of pleasure and happiness. The chapter profiles a fisherman, a surfer, and a cook who talk about what makes them happy.

The first activity in this lesson is a brief pre-assessment on students' ideas about happiness, which is followed by the first segment of the film (16:10 minutes). Then in class discussion students re-evaluate their initial ideas



about happiness. They study a chart that reinforces the message of the film chapter about the relative importance of influences on a person's happiness and describe in a journal exercise some of the things that make them happy as individuals.

Duration of Lesson:

One or two class periods, including time to view 16:10 minutes of the film *HAPPY*.

Assessment:

Group discussion

Handout responses

Journal entries

Standards addressed by the lesson:

Health Standards¹

Standard 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.

Common Core English Language Arts College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards²

Writing Standard 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Listening and Speaking Standard 1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Listening and Speaking Standard 2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Psychology Curriculum Standards³

Scientific Inquiry Domain, 1.3: Describe perspectives employed to understand behavior and mental processes.

Individual Variation Domain, 3.2: Identify biological and environmental influences on the expression and experience of positive emotions, such as happiness.

¹National Health Education Standards, 2nd Edition, 2007. <http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/doc/natlhlted.doc>

²http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf

³American Psychological Association, National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula, August 2011. High School Psychology Curricula, August 2011 at <http://www.apa.org/education/k12/national-standards.aspx>

Materials:

Film, *HAPPY*

Method of projection

Photocopies of **Handouts 1 and 2**
for each student

Chart paper and markers or computer
access to a chart-making program

Student journals

Procedure:

1. To prepare students for watching the film chapter, give them a quick “quiz” about happiness, using **Handout 1: Pre-Assessment on Attitudes About Happiness**.
 2. Explain to students that they are going to watch a segment of a film called *HAPPY* that looks at people all around the world in an effort to understand the causes of human happiness. Tell students they may take notes on the handout if they wish. Show the first chapter of the film (16:10 minutes).
 3. Begin a class discussion with the following questions:
 - a. Now that you know more after watching the film chapter, have your opinions changed about any of the statements in the poll? Did any of the information surprise you? If so, in what way?
 - b. How do you think it’s possible that someone as poor as a rickshaw driver can be as happy as the average American?
 - c. What are some of the ways described in this chapter that people can increase their happiness?
 - (Answers may include being in nature, exercising, experiencing flow, and doing what you love.) What other ways can you think of?
 - d. Have you ever experienced flow—being lost in an activity and unaware of time passing? What kinds of activities do you think might promote flow for you?
 - e. Positive psychology has shifted focus from mental illness to mental wellness. How do you think that shift has influenced our understanding of the human experience?
 - f. You learned that 40 percent of our happiness levels is determined by our intentional activities. Can knowing that fact influence your own happiness?
4. Give students copies of **Handout 2: What Makes You Happy?** Review and discuss individual differences in happiness levels, as shown in the film and in the pie chart. Give students a few minutes to answer the questions on the handout.
 5. Using a large piece of chart paper or an online chart-making tool (such as Glogster), create a class chart showing the many different things that students in the class do that make them happy. Post the chart somewhere prominent to remind students of the many ways they can increase their happiness. Invite them to add to the chart as they think of additional activities.
 6. Have students respond to the following prompt in their journals: What are three things that made you happy today? Yesterday? Last year? What is one thing you could do today that would make you happier?





Handout 1 Pre-Assessment on Attitudes About Happiness

Directions: Indicate in the spaces provided whether you think each statement is true or false.

_____ Having a lot of money and material things always leads to more happiness.

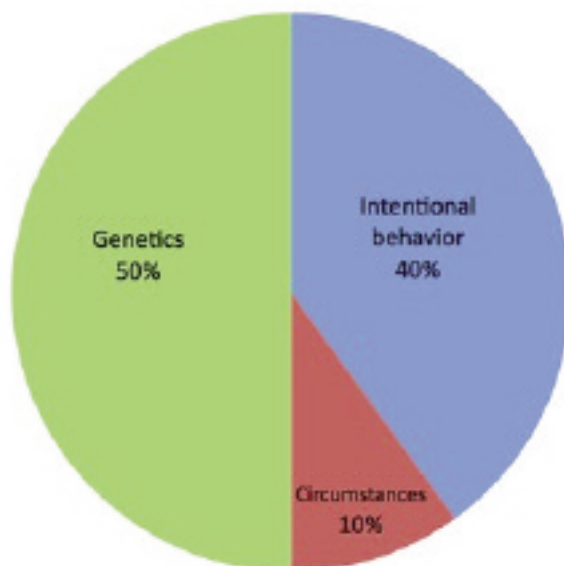
_____ Happiness is genetic: You can't change your level of happiness any more than you can change how tall you are.

_____ Happiness is a result of good events that happen to people.

Use the space below for any notes you would like to take on the segment of the film you are going to see.



Handout 2 What Makes You Happy?



Circumstances — 10%: Many people believe that their life circumstances play a big role in how happy they are. But studies show that things such as how much money you make, your health, or your popularity have only a small influence on your level of happiness.

Genetics — 50%: Genes play a part in the general level of happiness you are likely to maintain throughout your life. Do you have friends who usually have a sunny outlook—no matter what—and others who tend to be gloomier? Each of us is born with a certain range of happiness we fall within most of the time. Researchers call this our genetic set point.

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being most happy, where would you place your genetic set point? _____

Intentional Behavior — 40%: We can't really control our circumstances or genetic makeup, but there are lots of things we can do to increase our level of happiness. These are our intentional behaviors: expressing gratitude, doing something kind, connecting with your community, playing, getting in the flow, and exercising. Describe five things you can do this week to increase your happiness.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



APPENDIX I

HAPPY Stories: An Alternative Approach

The following stories are featured in *HAPPY* and are listed with their corresponding chapter. You may use them to highlight your class discussion on a particular chapter, or to illustrate one of the six positive psychology practices featured in this guide.

See below for more suggestions for using them with the six practices.

The Study of Happiness

- Manoj Singh—Rickshaw driver
- Roy Blanchard, Sr.—Fisherman
- Ronaldo Fadul—Surfer
- Jamal—Diner cook

***HAPPY* Stories and Positive Psychology Practices**

Whether or not you choose to show the entire film—or chapters of it—to your students, you may use the *HAPPY* stories to explore the six positive psychology practices featured in this guide. We offer a few suggestions for making the most of these stories. First, you may want to read the section “What Is Positive Psychology?” on pages 8 and 9, which describes the benefits of each of the practices. Then, choose one of the practices for your focus of study. Describe the practice to your students, and then present one or more of the stories, shown in the box on the next page.

After presenting the story clip, pose the questions and actions listed in the box to explore that practice with your students. You may also use the handouts and journal entries throughout this guide to deepen their thinking about the practice.



Using *HAPPY* Stories to Explore Positive Psychology Practices

Positive Psychology Practice	<i>HAPPY</i> Stories That Reflect Practice	Ways to Explore Practice
Expressing Your Gratitude	Manoj Ingh—Rickshaw Driver Melissa Moody—Accident Survivor Anne Bechsgaard—Co-Housing Resident	In what ways does the person in the story express gratitude? Think of someone you are grateful for, and write a letter to that person, expressing your gratitude.
Doing Something Kind	Michael Pritchard—Comedian Andy Wimmer—Volunteer	In what ways does the person in the story express kindness or compassion? How does kindness help the giver and the receiver? Think of someone you will see today for whom you could do something kind—and do it.
Connecting With Your Community	Blanchard Family Hiroko Uchino—Widow Anne Bechsgaard—Co-Housing Resident People Of Okinawa Michael Pritchard—Comedian Dalai Lama Andy Wimmer—Volunteer	In what ways does this story show the importance of community? How much time do you spend with people you feel close to? How could you make that time more meaningful? How can you build friendships at school or within your community? What group in your community could use a helping hand?
Playing	Ronaldo Fadul—Surfer Blanchard Family Hiroko Uchino—Widow People of Okinawa San Bushmen—Namibia	In what ways does this story reflect play? What were your favorite games when you were young? What are your favorite ways to play now? Think of a playful activity and arrange to do it this week.
Getting in the Flow	Ronaldo Fadul—Surfer Roy Blanchard—Fisherman Jamal—Diner cook	In what ways do the people in the story benefit from flow? When was the last time you were lost in an activity, unaware of time passing? What were you doing? What are three possible activities that would put you into a state of flow? Try one this week.
Trying Something New	Andy Wimmer—Volunteer Roy Blanchard—Fisherman	How might novelty fuel happiness? What surprising thing caught your eye recently that made you laugh or smile? Think of a new activity that you would like to try—and then go out and do it this week.



Glossary

Terms used in the film and this guide

Compassion – a feeling of deep empathy for others; a desire to relieve others' suffering.

Community – a group of people who reside in the same particular locale or who share common cultures, interests, or concerns.

Co-Housing – an intentional community with common areas that facilitate interactions among neighbors who share certain responsibilities and experiences.

Culture – the behaviors, beliefs, language, and values characteristic of a specific group of people.

Extrinsic – coming from an external source.

Flow – the mental state in which a person is fully immersed with energized focus in an activity.

Genetic Set Point or Set Range – a genetically determined level of happiness, to which one generally returns after positive or negative emotional experiences.

Happiness – state of well-being characterized by feelings of contentment and joy.

Hedonics – the study of pleasure and of pleasant and unpleasant sensations.

Hedonic Treadmill (or Hedonic Adaptation) – the tendency of a person to remain at a relatively stable level of happiness, even with changes in fortune or the attainment of major life goals.

Intrinsic – coming from within.

Karoshi (Japanese) – death by overwork.

Kindness – the quality of being friendly and considerate.

Meditation – a practice of concentrated focus on a sound, phrase, idea, sensation, intention, object, or breath.

Novelty – the quality of being new or unfamiliar.

Ichariba Chode (Okinawan) – an expression meaning “though we have just met, we are family.”

Positive Psychology – the scientific study of what enables individuals and communities to thrive.

Value – something regarded as worthy or important; also, the measure of something regarded as worthy or important.



Suggested Resources

Books

Berns, Gregory. *Satisfaction*

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Flow*

Dalai Lama. *The Essence of Happiness*

Davidson, Richard. *The Emotional Life of Your Brain*

Diener, Ed, and Robert Diener. *Happiness: Unlocking the Mysteries of Psychological Wealth*

Gilbert, Daniel. *Stumbling on Happiness*

Lyubomirsky, Sonja. *The How of Happiness*

Ricard, Matthieu. *Happiness: A Guide to Developing Life's Most Important Skill*

Shimoff, Marci. *Happy for No Reason*

Websites

HAPPY – www.TheHappyMovie.com

Action for Happiness – www.actionforhappiness.org

Center for Consciousness and Transformation – <https://masonleads.gmu.edu/faculty/the-center-for-consciousness-and-transformation/>

Center for Positive Psychology – www.ppc.sas.upenn.edu

Positive Psychology News Daily – <https://positivepsychologynews.com/>

Psychology Today Blogs (Find happiness-related blogs) – www.psychologytoday.com/blog/index

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