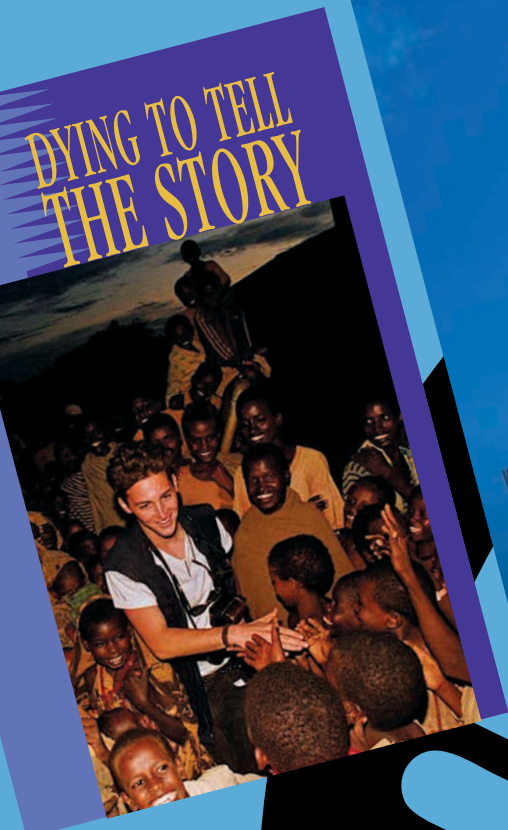
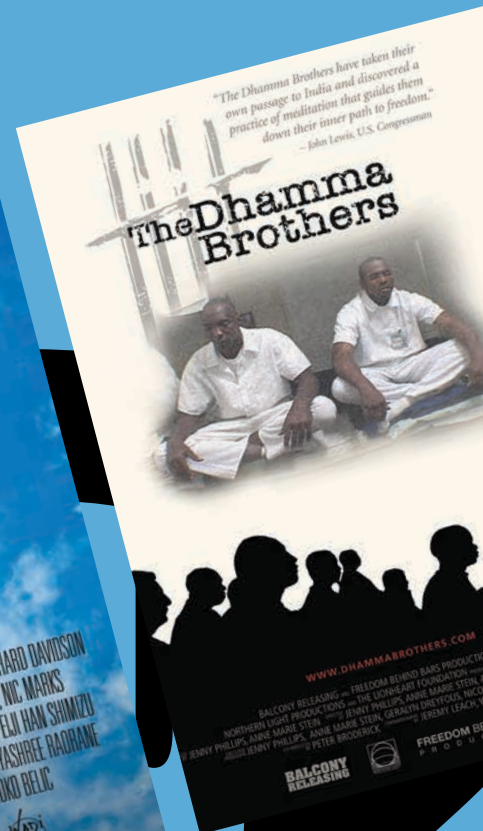




JOURNEYS IN FILM

educating for global understanding

Teaching the Film happy



Documentary-Based Film Curriculum

Teaching the Film
HAPPY
Through
Journeys in Film

Educating for Global Understanding
www.journeysinfilm.org

Journeys in Film Staff

Joanne Strahl Ashe, Founding Executive Director

Anna Mara Rutins, Director of Programs

Eileen Mattingly, Director of Education/Curriculum Content Specialist

Amy Shea, Director of Research

Roger B. Hirschland, Executive Editor

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Journeys in Film

50 Sandia Lane
Placitas, NM 87043
Tel: 505.867.4666

www.journeysinfilm.org

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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.

A Letter From Liam Neeson



In 1993, I performed the role of Oscar Schindler in Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List*. This experience deepened my awareness of the Holocaust and the tragic consequences of intolerance and hatred. Ten years later, I met Joanne Ashe, who acquainted me with a new educational program, *Journeys in Film—Educating for Global Understanding*. I have served as its national spokesperson since its inception, and I clearly believe in its effectiveness as an educational tool for teaching our youth to value, appreciate, and respect the cultural diversity in our world.

Journeys in Film is a nonprofit organization dedicated to teaching cross-cultural understanding to students through the use of quality, age-appropriate films. The powerful use of films as a teaching tool cannot be underestimated, and *Journeys in Film* has succeeded in creating the first and only film-based curriculum integrated into core academic subjects.

By using carefully selected films that depict life in other countries and cultures around the globe, combined with

interdisciplinary curriculum to transform entertainment media into educational media, we can use the classroom to bring the world to each and every student. Our program dispels myths and misconceptions, enabling students to overcome biases; it connects the future leaders of the world with each other. We are laying a foundation for understanding, acceptance, trust, and peace.

Please share my vision of a more harmonious world where understanding and dialogue are key to a healthy and peaceful present and future. I encourage you to participate in the *Journeys in Film* program as a student, educator, film studio, or financial supporter.

Sincerely,



National Spokesperson
Journeys in Film

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.

About the Filmmakers

Director: Roko Belic

Roko Belic's directorial debut, *Genghis Blues* (1999), won the Sundance Audience Award and was nominated for an Academy Award® for best documentary feature. Belic recently directed the 44-minute documentary *Dreams: Cinema of the Subconscious*, which was released on the *Inception* Blu-Ray.

Executive Producer: Tom Shadyac

A onetime actor/comedian and the youngest writer to work for comedy legend Bob Hope, Tom Shadyac launched his writing/directing career in 1994 with the Jim Carrey smash hit *Ace Ventura: Pet Detective*. In the years that followed, Shadyac would establish himself as one of the most prolific comedy directors in Hollywood, while working with some of the biggest names in the business. Huge hits such as *Liar Liar*, *The Nutty Professor*, *Bruce Almighty*, *Patch Adams*, *Accepted*, and *I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry* have helped establish Shadyac as one of Hollywood's most successful writer/director/producers.

Producer: Eiji Han Shimizu

A filmmaker and publisher from Japan, Eiji Han Shimizu is the creator of a highly acclaimed manga series [Japanese comics], *Biographic Novels*, which is published in nine languages and in more than 20 countries. His TED talk about how his media projects are changing the world for the better is available on YouTube.

Producer: Frances Reid

Frances Reid has been working as a producer, director, and cinematographer of documentary films for more than 30 years. In the 1980s she was the cinematographer of many notable documentaries, including the Oscar-winning *The Times of Harvey Milk*. In 2000, she made the film *Long Night's Journey Into Day* about South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The film

won the Grand Jury Award at the Sundance Film Festival and was nominated for an Academy Award®, an Emmy®, and a Directors Guild Best Documentary award. In 1994 she was nominated for an Academy Award® for her short documentary, *Straight From the Heart*. That same year she was the cinematographer for Deborah Hoffmann's *Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter*, which was also nominated for an Academy Award®. Reid also served as co-director of the acclaimed documentary *Waging a Living*, and executive producer of *Lost Boys of Sudan*.

Editor: Vivian Hillgrove

Vivian Hillgrove is a highly acclaimed editor whose extensive picture-editing credits include *Henry and June* and *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, both directed by Phil Kaufman. Her sound editing credits include *Blue Velvet*, directed by David Lynch; *Amadeus*, directed by Milos Forman, which won 11 Academy Awards® in 1984; and *One From the Heart*, directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Her documentary work includes *Broken Rainbow*, directed by Victoria Mudd, which won an Academy Award® in 1985; six award-winning documentary films by Lourdes Portillo, including *The Devil Never Sleeps* and *Señorita Extraviada*, which won a special jury prize at Sundance and the 2002 International Documentary Award. Her other documentary credits include *First Person Plural* and *Heart of the Sea*, and *The Future of Food*, by Deborah Koons Garcia.

Cinematographer/Associate Producer Adrian Belic

Adrian and his brother, Roko, formed Wadi Rum Productions in 1996 and embarked on their first production, *Genghis Blues*, winner of the 1999 Sundance Audience Award and a 2000 Academy Award® Nominee for Best Feature Documentary. Adrian Belic recently completed his latest project, *Beyond the Call*, a feature documentary shot in Afghanistan and Asia about three Americans who travel to the world's war zones delivering lifesaving humanitarian aid.

Notes to the Teacher

This guide is designed to help educators or youth-group leaders use the film *HAPPY* with their 6th- through 12th-grade students. It offers a variety of suggestions and resources for enabling students to explore the ideas presented in the film and to consider ways to apply them to their own lives.

The 75-minute educational edition of the film is divided into five chapters. For each chapter, the guide offers several different ways to explore the chapter topics: brief focusing exercises to prepare students for watching the film chapter; discussion questions to promote a class dialogue after viewing the chapter; hands-on activities for delving more deeply into the chapter theme; and reflection questions to prompt journal-writing or other personal reflection. (Reflection exercises are not meant to be shared with the class or other students).

You may opt to show the film one chapter at a time and do the activity and reflection suggested for each chapter. Or, you may show the whole film at once or over two days, and then select questions, activities, and reflections from throughout the guide that best fit your instructional goals.

The film and the guide aim to help students understand the many facets of happiness, to examine their own experience with happiness, and to help them make changes in their lives so that they can be happier. These changes take time, so we would recommend doing the activities and reflections over the course of several days, or even weeks.

While this guide is designed for use with secondary students, the activities, discussion questions, and reflections may be adapted for younger students and for adults. Suggested courses in middle or high school include health, English, psychology, social studies, guidance, and economics. Lessons may be used as a community-building program for an entire school or with youth groups within the community.

The concepts presented in *HAPPY* affect all of us. We encourage you to take time to view the film in its entirety and reflect on your own happiness before sharing the film with your students. Doing so may not only benefit your own life, but it will also allow you to have the greatest impact for your students through modeling.

Note: *HAPPY* contains emotional content and should be previewed in its entirety before sharing with students.

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/natlhlthed.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.

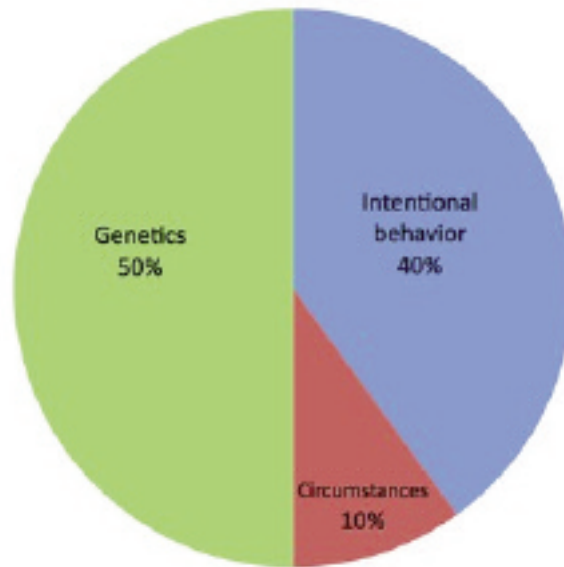
_____ Having a lot of money and material things always leads to more happiness.

_____ 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. _____

What Really Makes Us Happy?

Enduring Understandings:

- A key ingredient to happiness is being able to recover from adversity, which occurs in everyone's life.
- Once basic needs are met, additional wealth does not guarantee additional happiness.
- A close network of family and friends increases happiness.
- Meeting intrinsic goals (which are within a person) is more likely to bring happiness than meeting extrinsic goals (which are outside a person).

Essential Questions:

- What are the chief elements that bring about happiness in life?
- What are the differences between intrinsic and extrinsic goals? Which are more important to happiness?

Notes to the Teacher:

People overestimate the impact of both good and bad events on their future happiness. In fact, as this chapter shows, people have a tremendous ability to bounce back from hardship, and can do really well over time even

when bad things happen. Melissa Moody, profiled in *HAPPY*, survived a disfiguring accident, but is now happier than ever. As the film points out, there is no such thing as a life with only pleasure and no pain, and a key ingredient to happiness is being able to recover from adversity.

Most people in our society believe that more money will make them happier. But, as this chapter explains, once your basic needs are met, whatever level of wealth or material goods you have, you become used to it. This phenomenon is known as hedonic adaptation or the hedonic treadmill.

According to a study cited in the film, one thing that the happiest people have in common is a close network of family and friends. Happy people don't necessarily love or get along with everyone, but they have a strong base of support—as depicted by the Blanchard family in the film.

The chapter also discusses the differences between extrinsic and intrinsic goals. Extrinsic goals focus on something outside the person (like money, financial success, status), while intrinsic goals fulfill basic psychological needs (like personal growth, relationships, or helping others). Research shows that intrinsically oriented people are happier than extrinsically oriented people.

During the first class period for this lesson, students write a journal entry about a hypothetical lottery win and then they watch Chapter 2 of the film (12:32). After a post-film discussion, they will have an assignment to conduct a survey on happiness using **Handout 3**. (Alternatively, you may guide students in creating their

own survey.) Decide beforehand whom students will ask to take the survey, as well as how many people they will ask, and how long they will have to do the assignment. Make as many photocopies of **Handout 3** as necessary to give students adequate supplies of the survey. The second session of the class is the opportunity to debrief on the surveys, aggregate the results, and compare them with the information in the film.

Duration of Lesson:

Two 45- to 60-minute class sessions, with time in between for student surveys

Assessment:

Journal entries
Discussion

Standards addressed by the lesson:

Health Standards

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 Standards

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

Writing Standard 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

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

Listening and Speaking Standard 4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Psychology Curriculum Standards

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

Materials:

Film, *HAPPY*

Method of projection

Student journals

Sufficient copies of **Handout 3: Survey on Happiness** for each student to complete the prescribed number of surveys

Procedure:

1. Before showing the film chapter, ask students to write a journal entry on the following prompt: If you won the lottery tomorrow, how much happier do you think you would be a year from now? Do you think good and bad events affect our long-term happiness? Have them share their answers and accept all of them for now.
2. Show Chapter 2 of the film (12:32 minutes).
3. Begin a class discussion using the following questions:
 - a. After seeing the film chapter, do you think you would be happier a year after winning the lottery? Why, or why not? How does this compare with what you thought before?
 - b. What do you think enabled Melissa Moody to overcome her devastating accident? What skills or resources did she need to draw on?
 - c. Do you think there can be a life with only pleasure and no pain? If so, what would that life look like? If not, what does that mean about what it takes to be happy?

- d. Roy Blanchard and his family enjoy time together, and studies show that the happiest people have strong connections to others and their community. Why do you think connecting with people is so important for happiness?
4. Point out that researchers continue to learn more about the field of happiness. Suggest that students could learn more about what makes people happy by conducting a survey of their families and friends.
5. Distribute copies of **Handout 3: Survey on Happiness**, and help students familiarize themselves with the questions. (Alternatively, you may guide students in creating their own survey.) Tell students whom they should ask to take the survey, how many people they should ask, and when the surveys must be completed.
6. After sufficient time has elapsed, collect the completed surveys, and help students tally and organize the results using charts or graphs.
7. Lead a discussion about what students can conclude from the results, using such questions as:
 - What does our survey tell us about what makes people happy?
 - How do our results compare with the information in the film?
8. For homework, have students respond to the following prompt in their journals: Describe a happy time in your life in full detail. Don't analyze the event; simply recount all of the aspects of it as if it were happening today. What aspects seem to be central to the experience (e.g., people, the environment, things)?



Handout 3 Survey on Happiness

1. If 10 is the happiest you could ever imagine, and 1 is the least happy, how happy would you say are right now? (Place a check mark below one number.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. How much does your level of happiness change...

Over the course of a day?

Stays about the same

Changes a little

Changes a lot

Over the course of a week?

Stays about the same

Changes a little

Changes a lot

Over the course of a year?

Stays about the same

Changes a little

Changes a lot

3. Rank the following items from 1 through 10 in terms of how much you believe they contribute to your happiness, with 1 being the least and 10 the greatest.

____ Money

____ Playing a game or other fun activity

____ Close friends

____ Owning the latest phone or other device

____ Supportive family

____ Exercise

____ Looking good

____ A hobby or passion

____ Good health

____ Being popular

4. If you are having a bad day, what helps you feel better? (You may choose more than one response.)

____ Listening to music

____ Talking to a parent or other adult

____ Hanging out with friends

____ Working

____ Logging in to the Internet

____ Volunteering

Other (please describe):

Values and Happiness

Enduring Understandings:

- Values affect happiness in both positive and negative ways.
- Stress can be detrimental to both happiness and health.

Essential Questions:

- How do our values (and the values of our community) affect happiness?
- How can stress affect happiness and health?

Duration of Lesson:

One or two periods

Assessment:

Class discussion

Journal entry

Community designs

Notes to the Teacher:

This chapter explores some ways in which values can affect happiness. It first describes how economic growth and prosperity in Japan have led to a dangerous phenomenon called *karoshi*, or death from overwork. Many Japanese are working such long hours that an alarming number die each year of work stress, including Kenichi Uchino, who is profiled in the chapter. When discussing this with students, it is important to note that this is a phenomenon and reflective of systemic issues and should not be seen as a judgment on individuals.

The film then moves to Bhutan, a developing country with a fledgling economy, where the government has decided to implement “Gross National Happiness” as an indicator to drive policy decisions. Recognizing that growth and economic development can lead to people losing their culture, their environment, and their social system, Bhutan has decided to take a different path. Gross National Happiness is a way for the government to consider more holistically how its actions affect citizens.

Finally, the chapter profiles a Danish family living in a co-housing community, where multiple families live in close proximity and share certain chores and activities.

According to researchers, Denmark ranks as the happiest country on Earth. Anne Bechsgaard talks about how co-housing has benefited her family through the family’s strong sense of community and daily support.

The lesson begins with a journal assignment on the relative value of work and community in bringing happiness. After viewing the film segment (14:25 minutes), students review and discuss their journal entries and talk about the role of community in their lives. Working in small groups, they design an ideal community on poster paper and present their ideas to the class.

Standards addressed by the lesson:

Health Standards

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

Standard 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

Standard 6: Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.

Standard 7: Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

Common Core English Language Arts College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards

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

Writing Standard 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

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.

Listening and Speaking Standard 3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Listening and Speaking Standard 4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Listening and Speaking Standard 5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

Listening and Speaking Standard 6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Psychology Curriculum Standards

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

Biopsychological Domain, 2.2: Describe the effects of hormones on 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.

Materials:

Film, *HAPPY*

Method of projection

Student journals

Poster paper and markers

Procedure:

1. Before showing the film, have students answer the following questions in their journals:

- Which do you think is valued more in our culture: work or community? Why?
- Do you think one leads to greater happiness? If so, which one? Why?
- Are there different ways work or community can increase happiness?

Tell students that the class will discuss their answers after watching the film chapter.

2. Show Chapter 3 of the film. (Run time is 14:25.)

3. Start a discussion using student journals and the following questions:

- a. Which did you say is valued more in our culture—work or community? What made you say that?
- b. Which did you think leads to greater happiness? After watching the chapter, did your opinion change?

- c. The film contrasts Japan, where material productivity is highly valued, with Bhutan, where happiness is an important value. What features or qualities do you think are valued in your community?
 - d. What do you think of the idea of using “Gross National Happiness” as a measure of success? How might that change decision-making in your community or state?
 - e. Stress is a big problem for many people living in the modern age. What kinds of things stress you out? In what healthy ways can you or others relieve stress?
 - f. The film profiles a Danish family living in a co-housing community. What might be advantages and disadvantages of living so closely with other families? Would you like living in co-housing? Why, or why not?
4. Ask students to name things that they value about the community where they live and what they would miss if it wasn’t there. List their ideas on the board.
 5. Ask students to think of ways their community could be even better, and list those ideas separately.
 6. Divide the class into small groups, and give each group a piece of poster paper and marking pens. Explain that each group’s task is to design a community. Ask the students to include a list of five values that their community will focus on as well as proposed activities that their community members will

participate in. Allow groups time to discuss their ideas and to find a way to incorporate each group member's perspectives in their final plans.

7. Have groups present their posters to the class.
8. For homework, have students respond to one or more of the following prompts in their journals:
 - a. How would you define “community,” and, more specifically, your community?
 - b. What do you value about your community?
 - c. What could you do to make your community even better?

The Social Side of Happiness

Enduring Understandings:

- Helping others and showing compassion toward them can provide a sense of meaning and connection.
- Happiness promotes greater productivity and even longer life expectancy.

Essential Question:

- How can helping others improve our own happiness?
- How might happiness lead to a longer life?

Duration of Lesson:

Two or three class periods

Assessment:

Student journal entries

Class discussions

Student questions for speaker (optional)

Notes to the Teacher:

This chapter explores how we all need something bigger than ourselves to care about, which also makes us happier. For many people, spending time with their community, practicing a religion, or volunteering provides a sense of meaning, and promotes feelings of compassion, caring, and gratitude that connect them with other people and the universe.

Research indicates that happy people are more productive and also live longer than others. The film visits the island of Okinawa, Japan, which has a disproportionately large percentage of the world's oldest people. Despite the stress and unhappiness in other parts of Japan, Okinawan islanders live long, happy lives, buoyed by traditions that bind people together in a number of ways.

Humans are social creatures, and social bonding, social interaction, and cooperation are intrinsically rewarding for us. The film depicts comedian Michael Pritchard teaching middle school students about happiness by encouraging them to be more compassionate with each other. It also shows members of the San Bushmen in Namibia, who feel responsible for each other's health and well-being, and recognize the importance of community.

The basic lesson gives students a chance to think about the connection between compassion for others and one's own happiness. (This might be an ideal time to discuss your school's community-service requirement.) The lesson begins with student journal entries, written or sketched, about a recent event that made them happy. After watching Chapter 4 of the film (run time: 18:36

minutes), students discuss the connection between car-ing for others and their own happiness; if bullying is an issue in your school, this is a good opportunity to address it.

Be aware, if incidents of bullying may be part of student journal writing, that a choice not to share would be important and keeping student confidentiality and building trust will be helpful for the activity. Additionally, the role of social media may be relevant during this activity particularly student reflection on the influence of their social media threads and the ways that people “curate and present” their lives in certain ways on social media that are often not reflective of their actual lives.

Standards addressed by the lesson:

Health Standards

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

Standard 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

Standard 6: Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.

Standard 7: Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

Common Core English Language Arts College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards

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 3. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Listening and Speaking Standard 4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Psychology Curriculum Standards

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.

Materials:

Film, *HAPPY*

Method of projection

Student journals

Procedure:

1. Have students draw a picture or jot down words in their journals describing a happy time they had in the past month or year. (Make sure to tell them that they won't be sharing this with anyone.) Ask them to jot down who they were with and what they were doing at the time. Then ask for a show of hands to find out whether more of the students' happy moments involved other people in some way or not.
2. Show chapter 4 of the film. (Run time is 18:36 minutes.)
3. Hold a class discussion using the following questions:
 - a. What are some examples from the film of how connecting with other people contributes to happiness? What are some examples from your everyday life?
 - b. What types of events or organizations in your community help people become happier?
 - c. Thinking back on the film chapter, what do you think contributes to Okinawan elders' living such long lives? What might we be able to learn from them?
 - d. What lessons do you think Michael Pritchard is teaching middle school students through his presentation? What other ways would you suggest for encouraging more cooperation among students? What are some ways to "teach children to love," as Mr. Pritchard suggests?
 - e. Have you ever stood up for (or chosen not to stand up for) someone being picked on? How did it make you feel?
 - f. How do laughter and play promote happiness? Do you think laughter and play come from happiness, or does happiness come from laughter and play? Explain your thoughts.
 - g. Why are social interactions so important to human happiness?

4. For homework, have students write a journal entry using one or both of the following prompts:
- What is one tradition or something that you do on a regular basis that connects you with your family, friends, or the larger community?
 - What is something you could do today to strengthen your relationship with a family member, friend, or group in the community?
5. (Optional) If you have invited a member of the community to come to your class, announce this to the class. Help students prepare a list of possible questions.

Sample questions:

- What have been the best or happiest times in your life?
- Did you ever have a major setback? If so, how did you recover from it?
- What's something really funny that happened to you?

After the visit, have students share their impressions of the guest's talk. Ask what they learned from the visitor about happiness and about what is important in life.

Practicing Happiness

Enduring Understandings:

- Happiness is a skill that can be learned and developed through practice.
- Practicing activities that increase happiness can actually transform the brain.

Essential Questions:

- How can one increase happiness?
- How does practicing activities to achieve happiness alter the brain?

Duration of Lesson:

One or two class periods, plus time for making optional collages

Assessment:

Class discussions

Journal entries

Happiness inventories

Notes to the Teacher:

This chapter focuses on things that individuals can do to become happier. The Dalai Lama speaks in the film about compassion, and research shows that people who perform meditations on compassion and loving kindness can significantly increase their happiness levels. Counting your blessings and committing acts of kindness are also effective ways to build happiness.

Showing compassion for others gives life meaning, as exemplified in the film by Andy Wimmer, a long-time volunteer at Mother Teresa's Home for the Dying and Destitute in Kolkata, India. Experiencing what may be called "spiritual" emotions—gratitude, compassion, caring, and love—can help people care about, and feel connected with, things bigger than themselves.

As the film explains, happiness is a skill that can be learned, and there are practices we can undertake that not only make the world a better place, but transform our brains in positive ways. While the formula for happiness is not the same for everyone, the things we love to do—like playing, having new experiences, being with friends and family, and doing things that are meaningful—are the building blocks of a happy life.

Before conducting the activity, read over "What Is Positive Psychology?" on page 8, which explains the six

practices students will explore.

The lesson begins with a journal entry defining happiness. After viewing the film (run time: 12:25 minutes), students discuss the definition of happiness and practices that increase happiness for the individual as well as for people around him or her. Students take stock of their own practices by filling out **Handout 4: Happiness Inventory**. (For younger students, you may prefer to ask students to create a collage or poster that depicts what makes them happy. If you wish them to do so in class, be sure to have a good supply of old magazines on hand. Collages may also be created at home, using magazines or computer printouts.) The lesson concludes with a journal entry assignment that requires both an action and commentary.

Standards addressed by the lesson:

Health Standards

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

Standard 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

Standard 6: Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.

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Listening and Speaking Standard 5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

Psychology Curriculum Standards

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.

Materials:

Film, *HAPPY*

Method of projection

Student journals

Photocopies of **Handout 4**

Procedure:

1. Before showing the film chapter, have students write a journal entry defining the term “happiness.” Write the following questions on the board to help them start:
 - a. What is happiness? What does happiness feel like?
 - b. How do we know when we are happy?
2. After they have completed their journal entries, have students work in small groups or pairs to come up with a definition for happiness, and then ask a few groups to share their definitions.
3. Show Chapter 5 of the film. (Run time is 12:25 minutes.)
4. Hold a classroom discussion using the following questions:
 - a. Although happiness is not explicitly defined in the film, how do you think the different individuals in the film would define it? Would their definition be the same as yours? Has your idea of happiness changed after watching the film?
 - b. What practices described in this chapter increase happiness? (Answers may include—but are not limited to—counting your blessings, being kind, showing compassion, playing, having new experiences.)
 - c. Have you, or someone you know, ever tried meditation? Why might the simple act of meditating on compassion and loving kindness increase happiness levels?
 - d. Being around poor or sick people may not seem like a happy experience, but Andy Wimmer, shown in the film, has been volunteering to do just that for 17 years. What do you think he gains from the experience? What do the people he cares for gain? Why do you suppose volunteering for these people makes him feel happy?
 - e. The film asserts that happiness is a skill that can be practiced. Do you think that’s true? What can you or others do to practice happiness?

5. Remind students how the film talked about happiness being a skill that can be learned and practiced. Point out that one tool for practicing happiness is an inventory that helps people “take stock” of what they are doing to increase their level of happiness.
6. Give each student a copy of **Handout 4: Happiness Inventory** and discuss with the class the six practices listed, using information from “What Is Positive Psychology?” as appropriate. If you prefer, provide students with markers, magazines, and paper to make a collage about what makes them happy.
7. Allow time for students to complete the inventory. Then lead a discussion about the process, with questions such as the following:
 - How did the act of completing the inventory help you—or not help you—think about happiness in your life?
 - For which of the practices did you find it easiest to find items?
 - Which were most challenging?
 - How might you share with others what you have learned through this process?
8. For homework, have students write a journal entry on the following prompt:

Studies have found that doing “random acts of kindness” not only makes the recipient of the kindness happier, but the doer as well. In the next 24 hours, do something kind for someone—with or without the person knowing. (It can be more effective if the person knows.) Reflect on what you did and how it made you feel.

Handout 1 — p. 1 Happiness Inventory

Directions: For each practice below, consider the things you have experienced recently that are related to the practice. Be mindful of the areas that are particularly easy to complete and those for which nothing comes to mind. Fill in any blank spaces with additional things you could do to develop that practice. It's OK if you don't complete every blank or have more than three for others.

Expressing Your Gratitude

Things or people you are grateful for:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Doing Something Kind

Kind things you have done for someone else, or that someone else has done for you:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Connecting With Your Community

People you can always rely on, or other connections with your community:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Handout 1 – p. 2 Happiness Inventory

Playing

Things that bring play, joy, and laughter in your life:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Getting in the Flow

Activities that absorb your attention so completely that you lose track of time:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Trying Something New

New experiences you have had recently, or that you would like to try:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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.

Chapter 1

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

Chapter 2

- Melissa Moody—Accident survivor
- Blanchard Family

Chapter 3

- Hiroko Uchino—Widow
- Anne Bechsgaard—Co-housing resident

Chapter 4

- People of Okinawa
- Michael Pritchard—Educator / Comedian
- San Bushmen—Namibia

Chapter 5

- Andy Wimmer—Volunteer

***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