

HUMAN HAPPINESS

L&S 160V, PSYCHOLOGY 162

Instructor:

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Texts

Keltner, D. (2009). *Born To Be Good: The Science of a Meaningful Life*. WW Norton.
Lyubomirsky, S. (2007/2008). *The How of Happiness*. The Penguin Press.
Keltner, D., Marsh, J., & Smith, J.A. (2010). *The Compassionate Instinct*. WW Norton.

Free Resources from UC Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center

greatergood.berkeley.edu	Great articles
ggia.berkeley.edu	Science-tested practices

Goals and procedures

The goal of this course is to engage you in an interdisciplinary approach to the study of happiness. The first part of the course will be devoted to understanding happiness across history and the great cultural and ethical traditions (e.g., Buddhism, Age of Enlightenment). With these perspectives as backdrop, we will consider three sources of happiness and the scholarship surrounding them. A first is the cultivation of passions and intuitions that play a strong role in the good life (e.g., compassion, gratitude, awe, justice). A second is social connection, and processes such as cooperation, non-violence, kindness, and forgiveness, which promote strong ties and communities. A third is the resilient mind in handling stress, and how it is cultivated by practices such as mindfulness, self-compassion, narrative, and play.

By design, this class draws upon the wisdom of psychology (e.g., Social Psychology, Health Psychology, Neuroscience) and related disciplines (Economics, Sociology, History, Anthropology). While exploring ideas from the past 5000 years, this class is also rooted in the scientific method and its grounding in theory, precise measurement, experimental design, and hypothesis testing. Given the urgency of the problems we face today (climate change, rising stress, racism and sexism, inequality), during this course we will also regularly engage in “happiness practices” that are secular, science-tested brief practices (the BEARS approach!), that have proven to be beneficial for the individual and the community, and that I hope that you build upon through the course of your life.

Grading

Grading will be based on two exams as well as your participation in section and RPP. There is a lot of reading in the course – three books as well as a series of peer-review empirical articles in your sections. Please stay up to date. The exams will be based largely on the material covered during lecture and section, and will involve short IDs and multiple choice questions.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

		BTGB	HoH	TCI
January 22	Introduction			
January 27	Happiness Across History		2,3	
January 29	A New Science of Happiness	2,3, 4		
February 3	Guest Lecture: The Brain on Happiness			
February 5	Compassion	11		287-300
February 10	Empathy			16-25
February 12	Gratitude		4	77-85
February 17	Holiday			
February 19	Awe	12		86-95
February 24	Mirth			
February 26	Spirituality and Mysticism		9	
March 2	Justice			190-194
March 4	Social Connection	10	5	100-110
March 9	Cooperation/Non-violence	6		
March 11	Forgiveness	5		51-71, 246-259
March 16	Exam 1			
March 18	Kindness, Trust	9		45-50, 157-161
March 23 to March 27	SPRING BREAK			
March 30	Power, Respect, and Esteem			213-222
April 2	Stress I			
April 6	Stress II	7		203-212
April 8	Illusions and Delusions		1,6	
April 13	Mindfulness I			
April 15	Mindfulness II			

April 20	Self-Compassion			
April 22	Play, Savoring, Flow	8	7	133-149
April 27	Wisdom	10		260-267 26-35
April 29	Purpose and Narrative	7	8	150-156
Final Exam				

