THE FUTURE OF HAPPINESS

Richard Layard

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ACTION FOR HAPPINESS
The Happiness Revolution

1. The two cultures and the happiness principle
2. The science of happiness
3. The role of Action for Happiness
4. Hope for the future
Two different cultures
The Science of Happiness has been growing fast

Articles on Happiness in academic journals (1990-2016)

Note: number of papers with reference in title or abstract to 'subjective wellbeing, life satisfaction, happy or happiness
The Happiness Revolution

New Ethics

Mind Training

Science & Policy

The Happiness Revolution

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS
Book: The Origins of Happiness

The science of well-being over the life course

Andrew E. Clark
Sarah Fleche
Richard Layard
Nattavudh Powdthavee
George Ward
Relational and personal factors matter most

Which current life circumstances explain Life Satisfaction?

- Mental health
- Quality of work
- Partnered
- Physical health
- Income
- Non-criminality
- Not unemployed
- Education

(partial correlation coefficients)

Source: British Household Panel Survey (BHPS)
Children’s emotional health is vitally important

Which aspects of child development (at age 16) best predict adult Life Satisfaction?

- Emotional Health
- Qualifications
- Good Behaviour

(partial correlation coefficients)

Source: British Cohort Study (BCS)
Schools can really make a difference

What predicts a child’s Emotional Health? (at age 16)

- Secondary School
- Family Background
- Primary School

(partial correlation coefficients)

Source: Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC)
The world is taking Happiness more seriously

The World Happiness Report

Top 3 happiest countries
1. Finland (7.63)
2. Norway (7.60)
3. Denmark (7.56)

US and UK
18. United States (6.89)
19. United Kingdom (6.81)

3 least happy countries
154. South Sudan (3.25)
155. Central African Rep. (3.08)
156. Burundi (2.90)

http://worldhappiness.report

Source: World Happiness Report 2018
The world is taking Happiness more seriously

The Exploring What Matters course
New study shows the course brings big benefits

Impact of the Exploring What Matters course
(2 months after completion)

Life Satisfaction

Depression

Social Trust

Source: Krekel et al, LSE Randomised Controlled Trial
Other ways we help people take action

- Support for individuals
- Training for organisations
- Resources for schools
- Get-Togethers for local groups
Questions for discussion

1. What can Action for Happiness do to make a bigger impact?

2. How can you contribute more to a happier society?
“I will try to create more happiness and less unhappiness in the world around me”