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What Do Happiness Data Mean?
Theory and Survey Evidence

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Web Appendix

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1 Survey Demographics

Appendix Table I: Comparison of Survey Respondent Demographics to Census Data

| | Self-Reported Well-being Survey | | | Census Etc. ¹ |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------|-------|--------------------------|
| | # Observations ² | Value | (SE) | Value |
| <i>Mean values:</i> | | | | |
| Age | 3005 | 48.2 | (0.3) | 46.4 |
| Household size | 3025 | 2.8 | (0.0) | 2.6 |
| <i>Percent:</i> | | | | |
| Female | 3030 | 52.5 | (0.9) | 51.5 |
| Non-White | 3031 | 28.1 | (0.8) | 25.3 |
| Married | 3030 | 62.2 | (0.9) | 51.4 |
| Employed | 3031 | 59.0 | (0.9) | 59.0 |
| Education | 3031 | | | |
| 12 years or less (no diploma) | | 6.3 | (0.4) | 14.7 |
| High school diploma | | 17.1 | (0.7) | 28.6 |
| College | | 61.3 | (0.9) | 47.5 |
| Graduate school | | 15.3 | (0.7) | 9.2 |
| Total Household Income: | 3029 | | | |
| Less than \$20,000 | | 15.7 | (0.7) | 19.9 |
| \$20,000 to \$40,000 | | 18.7 | (0.7) | 21.7 |
| \$40,000 to \$60,000 | | 21.0 | (0.7) | 16.7 |
| \$60,000 to \$100,000 | | 26.8 | (0.8) | 21.3 |
| \$100,000 or more | | 17.9 | (0.7) | 20.4 |
| Region: | 3023 | | | |
| Northeast | | 25.2 | (0.8) | 18.3 |
| Midwest | | 23.8 | (0.8) | 21.7 |
| South | | 29.5 | (0.8) | 37.0 |
| West | | 21.5 | (0.7) | 23.0 |

¹Entire-population estimates for Household size, Children under 18 in household, and Total household income; age 18+ population estimates for all other variables; see Appendix Table II for further details.

²Number of respondents reporting demographic characteristic (out of a total of 3,040 respondents).

Appendix Table II: Data Source and Variable Construction for Census Etc. Column in Appendix Table I

| Variable | Tables | Source | Notes |
|------------------------|---|---|--|
| Age | Table PCT12: SEX BY AGE - Universe: Total population | 2010 Census Summary File 1 | Calculated mean for 18 years and older. |
| Household Size | Table DP-1: Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics | 2010 Census Summary File 1 | Given as the average household size. |
| Female | Table DP-1: Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics | 2010 Census Summary File 1 | Calculated mean for 18 years and older. |
| Non-White | Table QT-PL: Race, Hispanic or Latino, Age, and Housing Occupancy: 2010 | 2010 Census National Summary File of Redistricting Data | Calculated for 18 years and over. Individuals who reported 2 or more races were considered Non-White. |
| Married | Table B12002: SEX BY MARTIAL STATUS BY AGE FOR THE POPULATION 15 YEARS AND OVER - Universe: Population 15 years and over | 2010 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates | Calculated as married, excluding separated, for 18 years and over. |
| Employed | Table B01001: SEX BY AGE - Universe: Total population. Table B21005: AGE BY VETERAN STATUS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS FOR THE CIVILIAN POPULATION 18 TO 64 - Universe: Population 16 years and over. Table B23001: SEX BY AGE BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS FOR THE POPULATION 16 YEARS AND OVER - Universe: population 16 years and over. | 2010 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates | Calculated percent employed for 18 years and over. Table includes military as employed, the estimate goes down by 0.2 percent if military personnel are dropped. |
| Education | Table B15001: SEX BY AGE BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR THE POPULATION 18 YEARS AND OVER - Universe: Population 18 years and over | 2010 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates | Calculated distribution for 18 years and over. |
| Total Household Income | Table HINC-06: Income Distribution to \$250,000 or More for Households: 2010 | Current Population Survey, 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplement | Total household income. |
| Region | Table PCT12: SEX BY AGE - Universe: Total population | 2010 Census Summary File 1 | Chose geographic units as regions. Calculated for 18 years and over. |

2 Multivariate Regression Analysis

In this appendix section we provide full details of the analysis summarized in the paper’s Section VII. Much of the SWB literature in economics focuses on cross-group comparisons of responses to SWB questions. Such comparisons assume that SWB responses capture the same utility notion across the groups. However, in the main text Sections V.C and VI.C, we record evidence of cross-group weighting differences for time horizons and social circles, which suggests that this assumption may not hold.

We now explore how these weighting differences may affect conclusions about cross-group SWB comparisons. In the paper, we studied the entire profile of slider responses but examined only univariate sociodemographic splits one at a time (age, sex, income, and employment status) averaged across respondents. To facilitate comparisons with the literature, we now switch to a multivariate regression framework for the sociodemographics and summarize the slider responses with respondent-level summary indexes, as described below.

Conceptually, our approach has three steps (the same steps as in a mediation analysis, albeit with a somewhat different interpretation): (a) run a standard regression of SWB responses on a full set of available sociodemographics in our survey data; (b) re-run the regression but additionally control for respondents’ weight profile on time horizon and/or social circle; then (c) examine how the coefficients on the sociodemographics are affected by the additional controls. To increase statistical power and reduce multiple hypothesis testing, we pool data from all the SWB questions, and we implement step (b) using only two variables: one summarizing time-horizon weights and one summarizing social-circle weights.

For example, one way that we construct a respondent-level measure of time-horizon weight profile is:

$$\text{“Now-ness”} = \text{rank(Entire life so far)} + \text{rank(Entire life including expectations)} - \text{rank(Right this moment)} - \text{rank(Today)},$$

where $\text{rank}(x)$ is equal to 1 for the slider assigned the highest weight by the respondent, 2 for the second-highest weight, and so on (with ties dealt with in the usual way, e.g., if two sliders both receive the highest weight, then each has rank 1.5). Higher values of Now-ness correspond to higher weight on one’s immediate present and lower weight on one’s entire life. By constructing the variable using the ranks of the sliders rather than the 0–100 numerical weights assigned to them, we avoid attributing more than ordinal information to the slider responses.

Similarly, one way that we construct a respondent-level measure of social-circles weight profile is:

“Me-ness” = rank(Your country) + rank(The world) – rank(Yourself) – rank(Your immediate family).

Higher values of Me-ness correspond to higher weight on one’s self and immediate family and lower weight on country and world.³ We also examine several alternative definitions of the Now-ness and Me-ness variables (both ordinal and cardinal) to ensure robustness of our findings.

The general model underlying our analysis is

$$y_i = f(x_{i1}, x_{i2}, \dots, x_{iJ}, n_i, m_i) + \epsilon_i,$$

where y_i is respondent i ’s 0–10 response on the SWB question, $x_{i1}, x_{i2}, \dots, x_{iJ}$ are standard sociodemographic variables used in the happiness literature (including sex, age, income, etc.), n_i is the Now-ness index, m_i is the Me-ness index, and ϵ_i is a mean-zero i.i.d. error term. We would like to estimate the associations between $x_{i1}, x_{i2}, \dots, x_{iJ}$ and y_i when n_i and m_i are equal to specific values determined by the utility notion we are interested in. We contend that this is the specification that papers in the literature would also like to use, i.e., they would also like to estimate the associations between sociodemographics and SWB responses while holding fixed (across respondents) the utility notion elicited by the SWB question. However, in the absence of individual measures of time-horizon and social-circle weights, the regressions in the literature omit n_i and m_i . Step (c) in our analysis can be viewed as an investigation of the implications of this omission for estimated sociodemographic coefficients.

The utility notion we focus on here is *family-centered flow utility* (where “family” means self and immediate family). Our analysis is cleanest for this concept, for reasons that we now explain; note also that this concept may be the appropriate one for economic analysis that relies on household-level flow variables (such as income and consumption). In terms of the equation above, this utility notion corresponds to n_i and m_i equal to their maximum values. If n_i and m_i were in fact maximal, then respondent i ’s response would capture fully family-centered flow utility. For this particular utility notion, it does not matter whether the respondent has other-regarding preferences that include broader social circles than the

³Recall from the paper’s Section VI that the screen with eight social-circle sliders on which the Me-ness index is based on is only presented to respondents who gave non-0 weight to “Larger Group” in a preceding, single-slider screen. In addition, due to a coding error, it was also not presented to respondents who did not move the slider from its initial value at the midpoint between “Personal situation” and “Larger Group.” In our main specification, for most of our measures we impute a value for the Me-ness index to these two groups of respondents. Specifically, the 523 respondents who gave 0 weight to “Larger Group” are assigned the average Me-ness value among the 463 respondents who gave 0–10 weight, and the 290 respondents who left the “Larger Group” weight at the default of 50 are assigned the average value among the 330 respondents who gave 40–60 weight. Appendix Table VIII reports robustness analysis in which we drop the relevant observations rather than using imputations; the table shows very similar results.

respondent’s family. In contrast, for other utility notions, it may matter. For example, if we aimed for a utility notion that included the non-family altruistic component of preferences, we would want to know what the respondent’s response to the SWB question would be if her response included that component of preferences. However, this response would correspond to different values of m_i for different respondents, depending on the extent of their other-regarding preferences.

The utility notion family-centered (or household-centered) flow utility is the most appealing in our context for another reason: it is closest to the weights observed in our data, so predicting what y_i would be if n_i and m_i were maximal relies on less extrapolation than predicting what y_i would be under other utility notions.

For simplicity, our regressions assume that the f function is linear:

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{i1} + \beta_2 x_{i2} + \dots + \beta_J x_{iJ} + \beta_n n_i + \beta_m m_i + \epsilon_i.$$

When we estimate this equation without including n_i and m_i as regressors, it is a standard specification from the happiness literature. When we instead include n_i and m_i , because of the assumed linearity of f , the coefficients $\beta_1, \beta_2, \dots, \beta_J$ can be interpreted as the associations of the sociodemographics with y_i when n_i and m_i are equal to their maximum values (or held fixed at any other values).⁴ We caution, however, that our measures of n_i and m_i are likely to be noisy proxies, and if this measurement error is classical and uncorrelated with the sociodemographics, then the change in the estimates of the coefficients $\beta_1, \beta_2, \dots, \beta_J$ from controlling for these proxies is a lower bound on what the effect of controlling for n_i and m_i would be.⁵

Appendix Table III reports our main results. The regressors in all columns are dichotomous measures of the following list of sociodemographics commonly included in happiness regressions in the literature: female, non-white, married, has kids, and unemployed, as well as above median age, religiousness, education, and income. As a preliminary step, columns (1) and (2) show coefficients from regressions of Now-ness and Me-ness, respectively, on the socio-demographics. The coefficients mostly have the same signs in the two columns, but the

⁴While it would be possible to estimate a non-linear f function instead—for example, including interactions between n_i and m_i and the x_{ij} ’s—we stick with the linear specification. We do so because we want to keep the analysis as simple as possible; our goal here is merely to examine the robustness of the β_{ij} ’s to controlling for heterogeneity in Now-ness and Me-ness, rather than to obtain gold-standard estimates of the effects of the sociodemographics.

⁵For the case of a single control variable measured with error, the claim follows directly from known results (Garber and Klepper, 1980; for a direct proof, see <https://blog.supplysideliberale.com/post/2019/10/10/adding-a-variable-measured-with-error-to-a-regression-only-partially-controls-for-that-variable>). Therefore, the change in sociodemographics coefficients when we control for one of the profile variables is a lower bound on what the change would be from a non-noisy measure of the variable. The same logic then applies iteratively when we additionally control for the other profile variable.

standard errors are systematically smaller in the Me-ness column (2). To various degrees, respondents who are female, older, white, non-religious, and unemployed reported responding to the SWB questions as being both more about the present and more about themselves and their families. More educated respondents also reported putting higher weight on themselves and their families. These findings are consistent with the visual patterns discussed in the main text (Sections V.C and VI.C), although we detect more sociodemographic differences here in our multivariate regressions. We highlight, however, that the R^2 of the Now-ness regression in column (1) is much smaller than the R^2 of the Me-ness regression in column (2): 0.02 versus 0.08. Although this low R^2 may reflect real lack of explanatory power of demographics for Now-ness (even if perfectly measured), it could alternatively reflect a Now-ness measure that is a particularly noisy proxy for n_i .

Our main results, corresponding to steps (a)–(c) from above, are reported in columns (3)–(6). Column (3) shows the coefficients from a regression of SWB on the sociodemographics. The results broadly mirror those that have been found in the literature: SWB is higher among respondents who have higher income, are more educated, more religious, older, and married, and lower among the unemployed. We also find that in our data, SWB is higher among women.

Columns (4)–(6) show the *change* in coefficients when our measures of Now-ness (Column 4), Me-ness (5), and both (6) are added as controls. Overall, we find that controlling for our measure of Now-ness (Column 4) causes zero coefficient changes up to two decimal places. This finding may suggest, reassuringly, that in our data, most SWB associations with the sociodemographic groups are robust to the differences we found above in time-horizon weight profiles across the groups. We suspect, however, that our measure of Now-ness is particularly noisy. In that case, controlling for this measure would be expected to leave the other coefficients unchanged (see footnote 5 above). Appendix Tables IV–VIII show similar results when we use a range of alternative measures of Now-ness, suggesting that our data may be too noisy to construct a good proxy for Now-ness at the individual level.

In contrast, controlling for our measure of Me-ness (Column 5) results in several meaningful coefficient changes. The coefficients on non-white, religious, and unemployed, for example, increase in magnitude by 57, 13, and 7 percent, while those on old and female shrink by 15 percent and 10 percent, respectively. Such large changes would have a substantial impact in applications that rely on coefficient magnitudes, such as efforts to “price” the costs of unemployment in terms of the decrease of income associated with the same decrease in SWB (e.g., Clark and Oswald, 2002). Our results also suggest that the increase in SWB at older ages (associated with the “U-shape” of SWB with age) is partly driven by increasing Me-ness with age (this finding of ours is consistent with socioemotional selectivity theory,

which posits that as people age, they prioritize close relationships and obtain more satisfaction from them; for a review, see Löckenhoff and Carstensen, 2004). Our findings thus serve as a caution that conclusions in applications that depend on coefficient magnitudes may sometimes be driven by cross-group differences in the weights regarding whom the SWB question applies to.

At the same time, we find no meaningful differences across columns (3)–(6) in the coefficients on being married, having children, and having high income. While we do not know whether this coefficient stability generalizes to other datasets, in our data at least, these cross-group comparisons appear robust to any time-horizon and social-circles weight-profile differences across these groups.

References

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- Garber, Steven and Steven Klepper.** 1980. “Extending the Classical Normal Errors-in-Variables Model.” *Econometrica*, 48(6): 1541–1546.
- Löckenhoff, Corinna E., and Laura L. Carstensen.** 2004. “Socioemotional Selectivity Theory, Aging, and Health: The Increasingly Delicate Balance Between Regulating Emotions and Making Tough Choices.” *Journal of Personality*, 72(6): 1395–1424.

Appendix Table III: Benchmark Specification

| Dependent Variable: | Now-ness | Me-ness | Original Well-Being | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | | Baseline | Δ Controlling for | | |
| | | | | Now-ness | Me-ness | Both |
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | |
| Female | 1.01 (0.27) | 0.81 (0.16) | 0.42 (0.08) | -0.00 (0.01) | -0.04 (0.01) | -0.04 (0.01) |
| Old | 0.46 (0.30) | 1.10 (0.17) | 0.35 (0.09) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.05 (0.01) | -0.05 (0.01) |
| Non-White | -0.70 (0.31) | -0.98 (0.20) | 0.07 (0.10) | 0.00 (0.00) | 0.04 (0.01) | 0.04 (0.01) |
| Married | -0.59 (0.31) | 0.23 (0.18) | 0.32 (0.10) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.01 (0.01) |
| Has Kids | 0.40 (0.30) | 0.31 (0.17) | 0.16 (0.09) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.01 (0.01) |
| Religious | -0.31 (0.28) | -0.85 (0.17) | 0.30 (0.08) | 0.00 (0.00) | 0.04 (0.01) | 0.04 (0.01) |
| High Education | -0.11 (0.30) | 0.33 (0.17) | 0.28 (0.09) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.02 (0.01) |
| High Income | -0.05 (0.31) | 0.01 (0.18) | 0.50 (0.09) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.00 (0.01) | -0.00 (0.01) |
| Unemployed | 0.77 (0.46) | 0.72 (0.25) | -0.45 (0.14) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.03 (0.01) | -0.03 (0.01) |
| Now-ness | | | | 0.00 (0.01) | | -0.00 (0.01) |
| Me-ness | | | | | 0.04 (0.01) | 0.04 (0.01) |
| Observations | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 |
| R^2 | 0.02 | 0.08 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 |

Notes: The total number of observations is 3040, including 2233 full responses, 756 imputed responses (see text for details), and 51 missing observations that are not included in the regressions. Columns (1)–(3) use OLS regression and columns (4)–(6) report the change in OLS coefficient caused by controlling for Now-ness and/or Me-ness, the standard errors were estimated using a stacked regression. All regressions control for political attitudes and region fixed effects. All regressions include a constant, which in columns (4)–(6) is estimated to intercept at 5.83 (0.15). Standard errors in parentheses.

This specification uses the example definitions of Now-ness and Me-ness mentioned in the body of the appendix, which we refer to hereafter as the basic specification. The indexes are calculated as follows:

$$\text{Now-ness} = \text{rank}(\text{Entire life so far}) + \text{rank}(\text{Entire life including expectations}) - \text{rank}(\text{Right this moment}) - \text{rank}(\text{Today})$$

$$\text{Me-ness} = \text{rank}(\text{Your country}) + \text{rank}(\text{The world}) - \text{rank}(\text{Yourself}) - \text{rank}(\text{Your immediate family})$$

Appendix Table IV: A variant of Appendix Table III, using a “Wider” definition of Now-ness and Me-ness

| Dependent Variable: | Now-ness | Me-ness | Original Well-Being | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | | Baseline | Δ Controlling for | | |
| | | | | Now-ness | Me-ness | Both |
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | |
| Female | 1.40 (0.42) | 1.05 (0.18) | 0.42 (0.08) | 0.00 (0.01) | -0.04 (0.01) | -0.03 (0.01) |
| Old | -0.39 (0.46) | 1.60 (0.19) | 0.35 (0.09) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.06 (0.02) | -0.06 (0.02) |
| Non-White | -1.36 (0.47) | -1.17 (0.23) | 0.07 (0.10) | -0.00 (0.00) | 0.04 (0.01) | 0.04 (0.01) |
| Married | -0.55 (0.47) | 0.26 (0.21) | 0.32 (0.10) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.01 (0.01) |
| Has Kids | 0.22 (0.45) | 0.30 (0.19) | 0.16 (0.09) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.01 (0.01) |
| Religious | -0.82 (0.42) | -1.14 (0.19) | 0.30 (0.08) | -0.00 (0.00) | 0.04 (0.01) | 0.04 (0.01) |
| High Education | -0.14 (0.45) | 0.41 (0.19) | 0.28 (0.09) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.02 (0.01) |
| High Income | -0.07 (0.47) | 0.06 (0.20) | 0.50 (0.09) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.00 (0.01) | -0.00 (0.01) |
| Unemployed | 1.39 (0.70) | 0.85 (0.28) | -0.45 (0.14) | 0.00 (0.01) | -0.03 (0.01) | -0.02 (0.01) |
| Now-ness | | | | -0.00 (0.00) | | -0.00 (0.00) |
| Me-ness | | | | | 0.03 (0.01) | 0.04 (0.01) |
| Observations | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 |
| R^2 | 0.02 | 0.11 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 |

Notes: The total number of observations is 3040, including 2233 full responses, 756 imputed responses (see text for details), and 51 missing observations that are not included in the regressions. Columns (1)–(3) use OLS regression and columns (4)–(6) report the change in OLS coefficient caused by controlling for Now-ness and/or Me-ness, the standard errors were estimated using a stacked regression. All regressions control for political attitudes and region fixed effects. All regressions include a constant, which in columns (4)–(6) is estimated to intercept at 5.83 (0.15). Standard errors in parentheses.

This specification uses the same ranking method as in the basic specification. The only difference is that this specification utilizes all variables:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Now-ness} = & \text{rank}(\text{Next few months}) + \text{rank}(\text{Next few years}) + \text{rank}(\text{Entire life so far}) \\ & + \text{rank}(\text{Entire life including expectations}) - \text{rank}(\text{Right this moment}) - \text{rank}(\text{Today}) \\ & - \text{rank}(\text{Last few days}) - \text{rank}(\text{Last few months}) - \text{rank}(\text{Last few years}) \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Me-ness} = & \text{rank}(\text{Other relatives}) + \text{rank}(\text{Your friends}) + \text{rank}(\text{Your community}) + \\ & \text{rank}(\text{Your country}) + \text{rank}(\text{The world}) - \text{rank}(\text{Yourself}) - \text{rank}(\text{Your immediate family}) \end{aligned}$$

Appendix Table V: A variant of Appendix Table III, using a “Narrow Ranking” definition of Now-ness and Me-ness

| Dependent Variable: | Now-ness | Me-ness | Original Well-Being | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | | Baseline | Δ Controlling for | | |
| | | | | Now-ness | Me-ness | Both |
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | |
| Female | 0.45 (0.12) | 0.45 (0.08) | 0.42 (0.08) | -0.00 (0.01) | -0.04 (0.01) | -0.04 (0.01) |
| Old | 0.24 (0.13) | 0.63 (0.09) | 0.35 (0.09) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.05 (0.01) | -0.05 (0.01) |
| Non-White | -0.31 (0.13) | -0.53 (0.10) | 0.07 (0.10) | 0.00 (0.00) | 0.04 (0.01) | 0.04 (0.01) |
| Married | -0.29 (0.13) | 0.11 (0.10) | 0.32 (0.10) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.01 (0.01) |
| Has Kids | 0.20 (0.13) | 0.13 (0.09) | 0.16 (0.09) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.01 (0.01) |
| Religious | -0.17 (0.12) | -0.49 (0.09) | 0.30 (0.08) | 0.00 (0.00) | 0.04 (0.01) | 0.04 (0.01) |
| High Education | -0.04 (0.12) | 0.15 (0.09) | 0.28 (0.09) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.01 (0.01) |
| High Income | -0.09 (0.13) | 0.04 (0.09) | 0.50 (0.09) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.00 (0.01) | -0.00 (0.01) |
| Unemployed | 0.26 (0.19) | 0.36 (0.13) | -0.45 (0.14) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.03 (0.01) | -0.03 (0.01) |
| Now-ness | | | | 0.01 (0.01) | | 0.00 (0.01) |
| Me-ness | | | | | 0.08 (0.02) | 0.08 (0.02) |
| Observations | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 |
| R^2 | 0.02 | 0.09 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 |

Notes: The total number of observations is 3040, including 2233 full responses, 756 imputed responses (see text for details), and 51 missing observations that are not included in the regressions. Columns (1)–(3) use OLS regression and columns (4)–(6) report the change in OLS coefficient caused by controlling for Now-ness and/or Me-ness, the standard errors were estimated using a stacked regression. All regressions control for political attitudes and region fixed effects. All regressions include a constant, which in columns (4)–(6) is estimated to intercept at 5.83 (0.15). Standard errors in parentheses.

This specification only ranks the variables used in the equations (on a scale of 1 (Highest) – 4 (Lowest)). Ties are dealt with in the same way as in the basic specification. The equations are:

$$\text{Now-ness} = \text{rank}(\text{Entire life so far}) + \text{rank}(\text{Entire life including expectations}) - \text{rank}(\text{Today}) - \text{rank}(\text{Right this moment})$$

$$\text{Me-ness} = \text{rank}(\text{Country}) + \text{rank}(\text{World}) - \text{rank}(\text{Immediate family}) - \text{rank}(\text{Yourself})$$

Appendix Table VI: A variant of Appendix Table III, using a “Cardinal” definition of Now-ness and Me-ness

| Dependent Variable: | Now-ness | Me-ness | Original Well-Being | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | | Baseline | Δ Controlling for | | |
| | | | | Now-ness | Me-ness | Both |
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | |
| Female | 7.56 (2.62) | 13.66 (2.15) | 0.42 (0.08) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.03 (0.01) | -0.02 (0.01) |
| Old | 2.37 (2.96) | 15.20 (2.39) | 0.35 (0.09) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.03 (0.01) | -0.03 (0.01) |
| Non-White | -8.21 (2.89) | -17.14 (2.48) | 0.07 (0.10) | -0.00 (0.00) | 0.03 (0.01) | 0.03 (0.01) |
| Married | -9.22 (2.98) | 2.47 (2.43) | 0.32 (0.10) | -0.00 (0.01) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.01) |
| Has Kids | 5.16 (2.96) | 3.07 (2.38) | 0.16 (0.09) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.00) | -0.00 (0.01) |
| Religious | -6.73 (2.69) | -14.13 (2.24) | 0.30 (0.08) | -0.00 (0.00) | 0.03 (0.01) | 0.02 (0.01) |
| High Education | -2.60 (2.88) | 3.97 (2.35) | 0.28 (0.09) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.01 (0.01) |
| High Income | -0.18 (2.98) | 2.42 (2.43) | 0.50 (0.09) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.01) |
| Unemployed | 13.79 (4.79) | 12.15 (3.64) | -0.45 (0.14) | 0.01 (0.01) | -0.02 (0.01) | -0.01 (0.01) |
| Now-ness | | | | -0.00 (0.00) | | -0.00 (0.00) |
| Me-ness | | | | | 0.00 (0.00) | 0.00 (0.00) |
| Observations | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 | 2989 |
| R^2 | 0.02 | 0.10 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 |

Notes: The total number of observations is 3040, including 2233 full responses, 756 imputed responses (see text for details), and 51 missing observations that are not included in the regressions. Columns (1)–(3) use OLS regression and columns (4)–(6) report the change in OLS coefficient caused by controlling for Now-ness and/or Me-ness, the standard errors were estimated using a stacked regression. All regressions control for political attitudes and region fixed effects. All regressions include a constant, which in columns (4)–(6) is estimated to intercept at 5.83 (0.15). Standard errors in parentheses.

This specification uses the original cardinal variables (0 (Lowest) – 100 (Highest)):

Now-ness = (Today) + (Right this moment) – (Entire life so far) – (Entire life including expectations)

Me-ness = (Immediate family) + (Yourself) – (Country) – (World)

Appendix Table VII: A variant of Appendix Table III, using a “Standardized Cardinal” definition of Now-ness and Me-ness

| Dependent Variable: | Now-ness | Me-ness | Original Well-Being | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | | Baseline | Δ Controlling for | | |
| | | | | Now-ness | Me-ness | Both |
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | |
| Female | 0.41 (0.13) | 0.59 (0.10) | 0.36 (0.09) | -0.00 (0.01) | -0.06 (0.02) | -0.05 (0.02) |
| Old | 0.07 (0.14) | 0.79 (0.11) | 0.30 (0.10) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.08 (0.02) | -0.08 (0.02) |
| Non-White | -0.40 (0.14) | -0.66 (0.13) | 0.02 (0.12) | 0.00 (0.01) | 0.06 (0.02) | 0.06 (0.02) |
| Married | -0.22 (0.15) | 0.23 (0.12) | 0.25 (0.11) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.02 (0.01) | -0.02 (0.01) |
| Has Kids | 0.15 (0.14) | 0.10 (0.11) | 0.26 (0.10) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.01 (0.01) |
| Religious | -0.10 (0.13) | -0.42 (0.10) | 0.37 (0.09) | 0.00 (0.00) | 0.04 (0.01) | 0.04 (0.01) |
| High Education | -0.04 (0.14) | 0.23 (0.11) | 0.28 (0.10) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.02 (0.01) | -0.02 (0.01) |
| High Income | -0.12 (0.14) | 0.02 (0.11) | 0.43 (0.10) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.00 (0.01) | -0.00 (0.01) |
| Unemployed | 0.30 (0.21) | 0.38 (0.17) | -0.47 (0.16) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.04 (0.02) | -0.03 (0.02) |
| Now-ness | | | | 0.00 (0.02) | | -0.01 (0.02) |
| Me-ness | | | | | 0.10 (0.02) | 0.10 (0.02) |
| Observations | 2143 | 2143 | 2143 | 2143 | 2143 | 2143 |
| R^2 | 0.02 | 0.11 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.08 |

Notes: The total number of observations is 3040. 2233 full responses, except this specification drops 90 observations with no variation in answers (cannot divide by standard deviation of 0) or missing answers. Columns (1)–(3) use OLS regression and columns (4)–(6) report the change in OLS coefficient caused by controlling for Now-ness and/or Me-ness, the standard errors were estimated using a stacked regression. All regressions control for political attitudes and region fixed effects. All regressions include a constant, which in columns (4)–(6) is estimated to intercept at 5.86 (0.17). Standard errors in parentheses.

This version standardizes the cardinal variables for each individual using the following algorithm: $Std_Variable_i = \frac{Variable_i - Mean_i}{SD_i}$, where $Mean_i$ and SD_i are the mean and standard deviation of each individual’s answers respectively. The equations are:

$$\text{Now-ness} = (\text{Std_Today}) + (\text{Std_Right this moment}) - (\text{Std_Entire life so far}) - (\text{Std_Entire life including expectations})$$

$$\text{Me-ness} = (\text{Std_Immediate family}) + (\text{Std_Yourself}) - (\text{Std_Country}) - (\text{Std_World})$$

Appendix Table VIII: A variant of Appendix Table III, without imputations

| Dependent Variable: | Now-ness | Me-ness | Original Well-Being | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | | Baseline | Δ Controlling for | | |
| | | | | Now-ness | Me-ness | Both |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Female | 1.09 (0.32) | 1.16 (0.21) | 0.35 (0.09) | -0.00 (0.01) | -0.05 (0.01) | -0.05 (0.02) |
| Old | 0.17 (0.35) | 1.34 (0.23) | 0.28 (0.10) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.06 (0.02) | -0.06 (0.02) |
| Non-White | -1.15 (0.36) | -1.30 (0.26) | 0.01 (0.12) | 0.00 (0.01) | 0.05 (0.02) | 0.06 (0.02) |
| Married | -0.25 (0.37) | 0.49 (0.25) | 0.31 (0.11) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.02 (0.01) | -0.02 (0.01) |
| Has Kids | 0.27 (0.35) | 0.40 (0.23) | 0.24 (0.10) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.02 (0.01) | -0.02 (0.01) |
| Religious | -0.17 (0.32) | -0.94 (0.22) | 0.37 (0.09) | 0.00 (0.00) | 0.04 (0.01) | 0.04 (0.01) |
| High Education | -0.03 (0.35) | 0.40 (0.23) | 0.27 (0.10) | 0.00 (0.00) | -0.02 (0.01) | -0.02 (0.01) |
| High Income | -0.21 (0.36) | -0.01 (0.23) | 0.42 (0.10) | 0.00 (0.00) | 0.00 (0.01) | 0.00 (0.01) |
| Unemployed | 0.68 (0.55) | 0.82 (0.34) | -0.41 (0.16) | -0.00 (0.00) | -0.03 (0.02) | -0.03 (0.02) |
| Now-ness | | | | 0.00 (0.01) | | 0.00 (0.01) |
| Me-ness | | | | | 0.04 (0.01) | 0.04 (0.01) |
| Observations | 2219 | 2219 | 2219 | 2219 | 2219 | 22 |
| R^2 | 0.02 | 0.09 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.08 | 0.08 |

Notes: The total number of observations is 3040, 821 were dropped due to missing observations. Columns (1)–(3) use OLS regression and columns (4)–(6) report the change in OLS coefficient caused by controlling for Now-ness and/or Me-ness, the standard errors were estimated using a stacked regression. All regressions control for political attitudes and region fixed effects. All regressions include a constant, which in columns (4)–(6) is estimated to intercept at 5.89 (0.17). Standard errors in parentheses.

3 Correlation Tables

Appendix Table IX: Correlation of Domain Weights Between Questions

| | Ladder | Life Satisfaction | Happiness | Family Well-Being | Personal Well-Being | Meaning & Value | Options & Possibilities | Dealing Well |
|-------------------------|--------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Ladder | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Life Satisfaction | 0.99 | 1 | | | | | | |
| Happiness | 0.98 | 0.98 | 1 | | | | | |
| Family Well-Being | 0.97 | 0.97 | 0.96 | 1 | | | | |
| Personal Well-Being | 0.97 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.99 | 1 | | | |
| Meaning & Value | 0.92 | 0.92 | 0.96 | 0.89 | 0.89 | 1 | | |
| Options & Possibilities | 0.95 | 0.94 | 0.94 | 0.9 | 0.91 | 0.91 | 1 | |
| Dealing Well | 0.97 | 0.98 | 0.99 | 0.97 | 0.96 | 0.95 | 0.93 | 1 |

Appendix Table X: Correlation of Time-Horizon Weights Between Questions

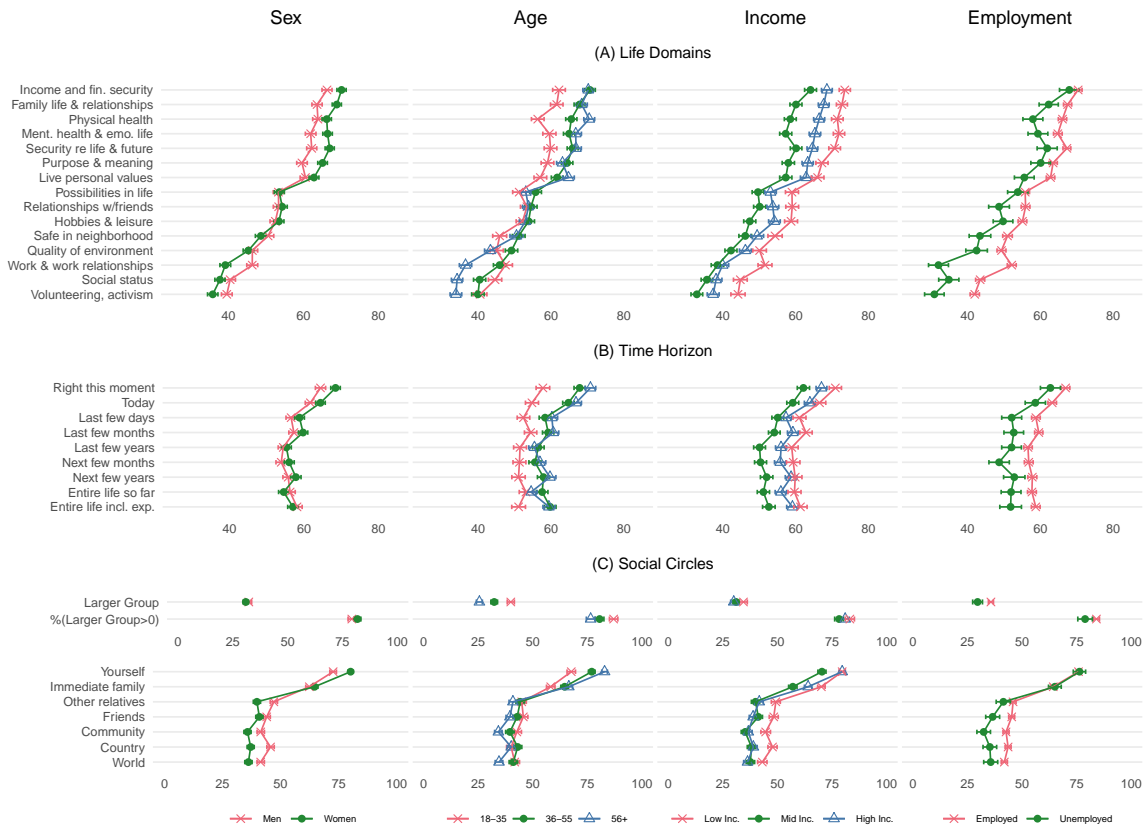
| | Ladder | Life Satisfaction | Happiness | Family Well-Being | Personal Well-Being | Meaning & Value | Options & Possibilities | Dealing Well |
|-------------------------|--------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Ladder | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Life Satisfaction | 0.94 | 1 | | | | | | |
| Happiness | 0.96 | 0.95 | 1 | | | | | |
| Family Well-Being | 0.74 | 0.88 | 0.82 | 1 | | | | |
| Personal Well-Being | 0.85 | 0.95 | 0.94 | 0.94 | 1 | | | |
| Meaning & Value | 0.52 | 0.43 | 0.39 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 1 | | |
| Options & Possibilities | 0.72 | 0.5 | 0.63 | 0.1 | 0.37 | 0.64 | 1 | |
| Dealing Well | -0.07 | -0.03 | -0.12 | -0.12 | -0.17 | 0.74 | 0.03 | 1 |

Appendix Table XI: Correlation of Social-Circle Weights Between Questions

| | Ladder | Life Satisfaction | Happiness | Family Well-Being | Personal Well-Being | Meaning & Value | Options & Possibilities | Dealing Well |
|-------------------------|--------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Ladder | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Life Satisfaction | 0.996 | 1 | | | | | | |
| Happiness | 0.992 | 0.998 | 1 | | | | | |
| Family Well-Being | 0.958 | 0.974 | 0.972 | 1 | | | | |
| Personal Well-Being | 0.993 | 0.989 | 0.989 | 0.932 | 1 | | | |
| Meaning & Value | 0.997 | 0.995 | 0.996 | 0.951 | 0.998 | 1 | | |
| Options & Possibilities | 0.995 | 0.986 | 0.981 | 0.928 | 0.994 | 0.993 | 1 | |
| Dealing Well | 0.989 | 0.996 | 0.998 | 0.965 | 0.989 | 0.994 | 0.981 | 1 |

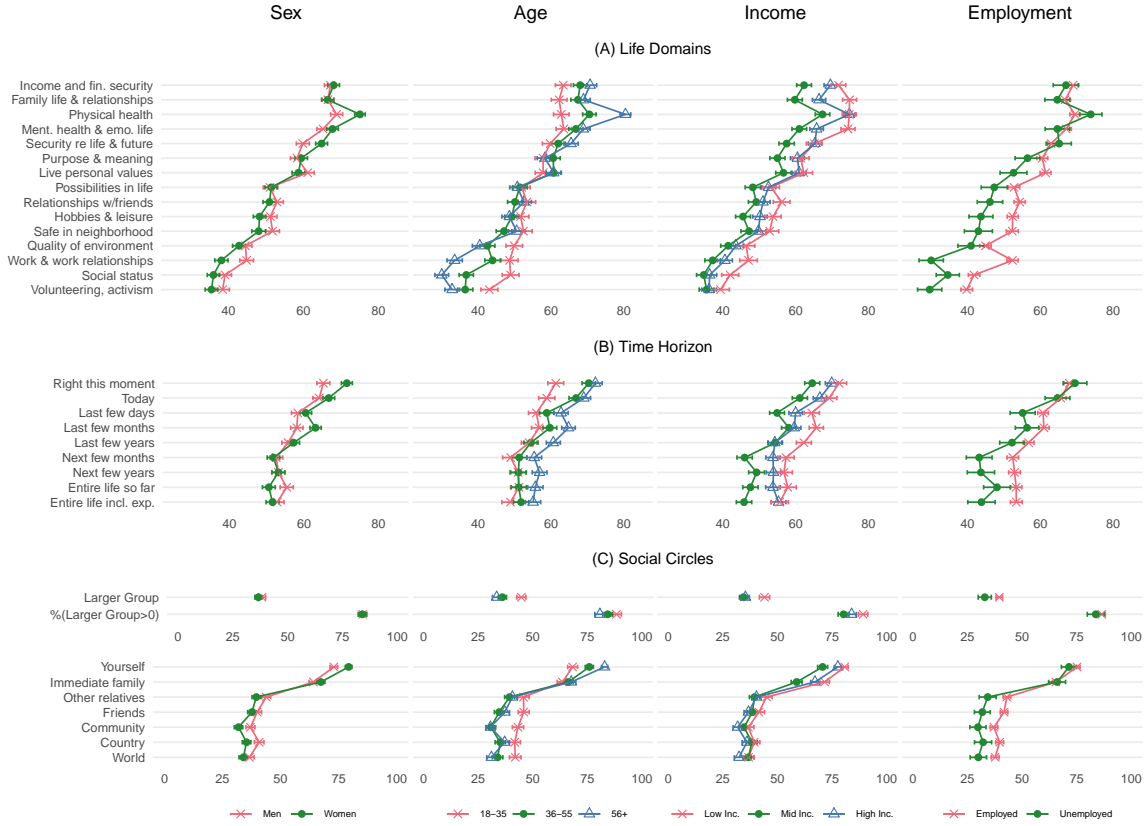
4 Reported Weight, by Demographics and by Questions

Appendix Table XII: A variant of Figure 2, for the standard SWB questions: Ladder, Life Satisfaction, Happiness



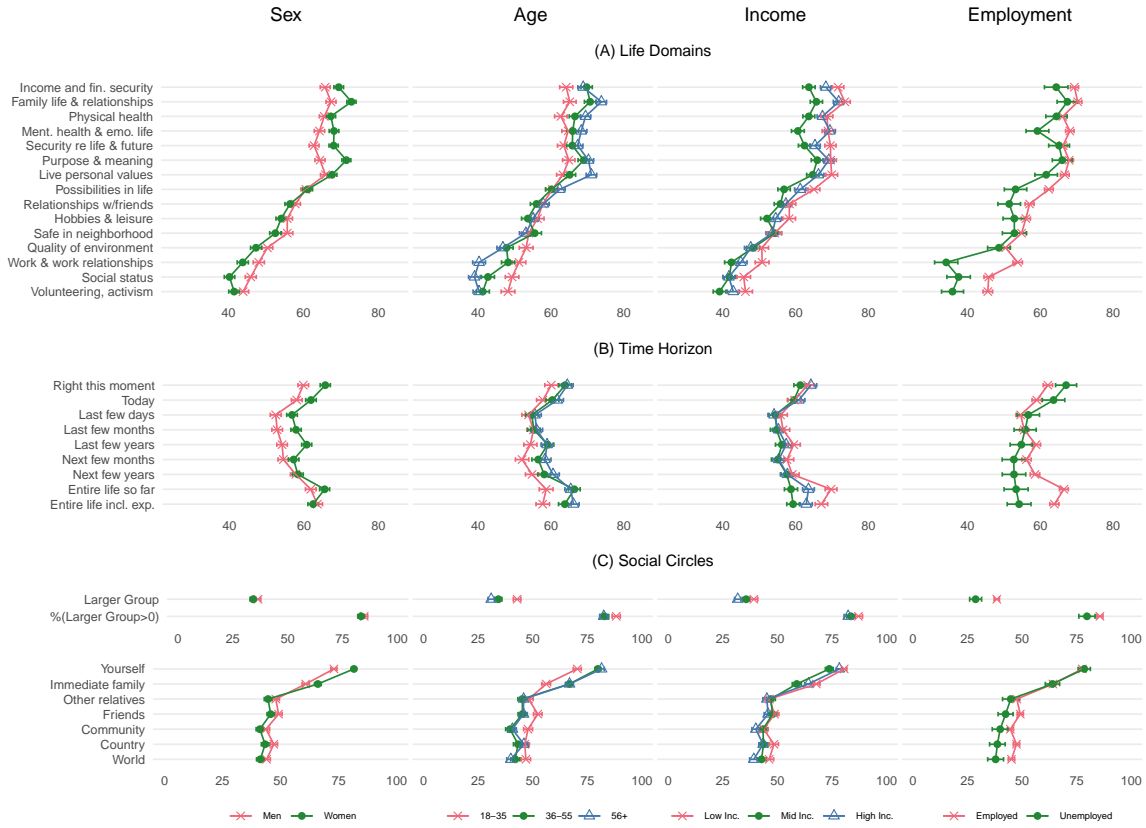
Notes: The total number of observations is 1177. Each row reports mean rating (0–100) by demographics, other than “%(Larger Group > 0)” row, which reports percent of respondents who rated Larger Group above 0 (see text for details). Each single mini-graph is based on 611–1172 observations. Capped bars report standard errors.

Appendix Table XIII: A variant of Figure 2, for the SWB questions: Family Well-Being, Personal Well-Being



Notes: The total number of observations is 762. Each row reports mean rating (0–100) by demographics, other than “%(Larger Group > 0)” row, which reports percent of respondents who rated Larger Group above 0 (see text for details). Each single mini-graph is based on 400–762 observations. Capped bars report standard errors.

Appendix Table XIV: A variant of Figure 2, for the SWB questions: Meaning & Value, Options & Possibilities, Dealing Well



Notes: The total number of observations is 1101. Each row reports mean rating (0–100) by demographics, other than “%(Larger Group > 0)” row, which reports percent of respondents who rated Larger Group above 0 (see text for details). Each single mini-graph is based on 579–1097 observations. Capped bars report standard errors.

5 Survey Screenshots

The following pages contain screenshots of the survey:



Cornell University

Welcome to the survey! Please think carefully about each question, and answer each question as best as you can.

There are no right or wrong answers. If you need to think about a question, please take your time. If you're not sure what a question means, or if you're not sure about your answer, please do the best you can and give us your best guess. We'll ask you at the end for feedback about the survey.

Thank you again for your participation. Please click "Next" to get started.



Next



Cornell University

All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?

Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied):



Next



Cornell University

Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

Many important surveys ask people questions much like the Life Satisfaction Question you have just answered (copied above, along with your answer), but little is known about how respondents understand such questions and how they form their answer. The purpose of this study is to better understand how people reason when they answer this Life Satisfaction Question. This will help researchers to make better use of the resulting data, in particular when they compare the responses of different people.

On the following screens, we will ask you questions about how you answered the Life Satisfaction Question. To help you remember the Life Satisfaction Question and the answer you have just given, the question and your answer will keep appearing at the top of the following screens (just like they appear above).

When you are ready to continue, please click "Next."



Next



Options & Possibilities Question: *On a scale from 0 to 10, to what extent do you feel that your life is full of options and possibilities that you are free to choose from? Please give a number between 0 (extremely limited options to choose from) and 10 (very many options to choose from).*

You answered: 8

In this survey, you will see a set of slider questions like the one below. When you respond to these questions, a number between 0 and 100 will appear, where 0 means "Not at All" and 100 means "A Lot".

The number that appears is the percentage of "A Lot" that you have selected for this question or category (given what "A Lot" means for you).

Example Question:

How much did you enjoy answering the Options & Possibilities Question?



Next



Cornell University

Life Satisfaction Question: *All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).*

You answered: 7

Just to make sure that the meaning of the slider is clear, your response to the example question means that you enjoyed answering the Life Satisfaction Question 0% as much as you would have needed to enjoy it in order for you to provide a response of "A Lot".

Please click "Next" to proceed with the survey.



Next



Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

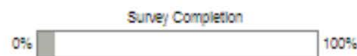
How difficult was it to answer the Life Satisfaction Question?

Not at All

A Lot

How difficult was it to answer the Life Satisfaction Question?

0



Next



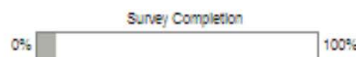
Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

Your answer to the Life Satisfaction Question was 7. *Using the same yardstick* that led you to answer 7, what would have to be different for you to answer 10?

Before you answer, let us explain what we mean by "*the same yardstick*." Think of teachers who grade students' exams. Some teachers give higher grades while others give lower grades, even when grading the same set of exams. To describe that difference in grading standards, we would say that different teachers use different *yardsticks*. In that example, "*using the same yardstick*" means giving the same grade to the same exam performance. When we ask you to "*use the same yardstick*," we mean we don't want you to change how you translate a given situation into a number. Rather, we want to know how the situation would have to be different for you to answer a particular number to the Life Satisfaction Question.

To help you answer this general question, first please pause for a few seconds and think about the moment when you first answered 7. At that time, if you thought of what would have to be different for you to answer 10, what picture did you have in mind? We won't ask you to actually tell us what you had in mind, but we would like you to keep that picture in your mind as you answer the next few questions.



Next



Cornell University

Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

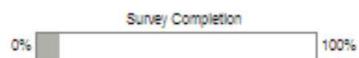
You answered: 7

If your current difficulties are solved, would that be enough for you to answer 10, or were you picturing a 10 as better than that?

I pictured a 10 as better



Would be enough



Next



Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

When you answered the Life Satisfaction Question, did you evaluate your situation as it is right this moment or over a longer period of time, in the past or in the future? To what extent did you evaluate your situation...

Please note: When you decide where the slider belongs for each time period, consider the importance of that time period on its own, and not in comparison with the other items in the table.

| | Not at All | A Lot |
|---|------------|-------|
| Right this moment (while answering the survey) | | |
| Today | | |
| In the last few days | | |
| In the last few months | | |
| In the last few years | | |
| In the next few months | | |
| In the next few years | | |
| Over your entire life so far, until this moment | | |
| Over your entire life, including your expectations for the future | | |
| Other (please specify): <input type="text"/> | | |



Next



Cornell University

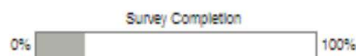
Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

When you answered the Life Satisfaction Question, to what extent did you evaluate your own, personal situation relative to evaluating the situation of a larger group that includes you and others?

Personal Situation

Larger Group



Next



Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

When you answered the Life Satisfaction Question, to what extent did you evaluate the situation of...

Please note: When you decide where the slider belongs for each person or set of people, consider the importance of that group on its own, and not in comparison with the other items in the table.

| | Not at All | A Lot |
|---|------------|-------|
| Yourself | | |
| Your immediate family (parents, children, siblings, spouse) | | |
| Other relatives | | |
| Your friends | | |
| Your community | | |
| Your country | | |
| The world | | |
| Other (please specify): <input type="text"/> | | |



Next



Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

People often attribute unequal importance to various aspects of their life. When answering the Life Satisfaction Question, how much weight do you think the following aspects of your situation had on your answer?

Please note: When you decide where the slider belongs for each aspect, consider the importance of that aspect on *its own*, and not in comparison with the other items in the table.



Next



Cornell University

Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

In your opinion, *using the same yardstick* that led you to answer 7, what percentage of people in the country have a situation and experience to which you would give more than 7 as an answer?

Percentage, between 0% and 100%:

%



Next



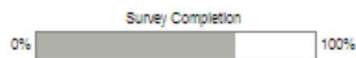
Cornell University

Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

Now suppose that you win the lottery. The prize gives you 10% more income per year for the rest of your life than what you would otherwise have had. Using the same yardstick that led you to answer 7 to the Life Satisfaction Question, what would be your answer to the Life Satisfaction Question now?

Please give a number from 0 to 10. (Feel free to give a response that includes decimals.)



Next

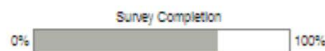


Life Satisfaction Question: *All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).*

You answered: 7

What percentage of people in this country do you consider to have a situation and experience that you rate better than yours in the Life Satisfaction Question, after you find that you have 10% more income every year from the lottery winnings?

Percentage, between 0% and 100%:

 %

Next



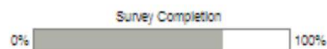
Cornell University

Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

Now suppose that you win the lottery, but that the prize is a 20% increase in your income every year for the rest of your life (relative to what you would otherwise have had). *Using the same yardstick* that led you to answer 7 to the Life Satisfaction Question, what would be your answer to the Life Satisfaction Question now?

Please write a number from 0 to 10. (Feel free to give a response that includes decimals.)



Next



Cornell University

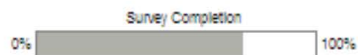
Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

What percentage of people in this country do you consider to have a situation and experience that you rate better than yours in the Life Satisfaction Question, after you find that you have 20% more income every year from the lottery winnings?

Percentage, between 0% and 100%:

%



Next



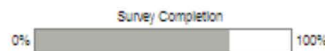
Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

When you answered the Life Satisfaction Question, to what extent did you come up with a particular number on the 0-10 scale by...

Please note: When you decide where the slider belongs for each category, consider the importance of that category on its own, and not in comparison with the other items in the table.

| | Not at All | A Lot |
|--|------------|-------|
| Comparing your situation to your life in the past | | |
| Comparing your situation to the situation of other people | | |
| Thinking about your usual emotions and feelings these days | | |
| Comparing your situation to your goals | | |
| Thinking about how you should answer given your situation | | |
| Comparing your situation to some absolute standard | | |
| Other (please specify): <input type="text"/> | | |



Next



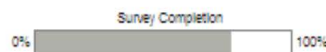
Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

What determines how you should answer given your situation? To what extent do the following considerations determine how you "should" answer?

Please note: When you decide where the slider belongs for each category, consider the importance of that category *on its own*, and not in comparison with the other items in the table.

| | Not at All | A Lot |
|---|------------|-------|
| How you would want yourself to answer given your situation (i.e., how satisfied your "ideal self" would be) | | |
| Moral or religious principles | | |
| An "objective" assessment of your situation | | |
| The normal/standard answer people would give to this question | | |
| Other people's opinions about your situation | | |
| Other (please specify): <input type="text"/> | | |



Next



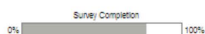
Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

When you answered 7, to what extent did you come up with a particular number on the 0-10 scale by making a comparison between your situation and some references such as...

Please note: When you decide where the slider belongs for each category, consider the importance of that category on its own, and not in comparison with the other items in the table.

| | Not at All | A Lot |
|--|------------|-------|
| People in other countries | | |
| People in previous generations | | |
| Your family members or relatives | | |
| Your friends | | |
| Your expectations | | |
| Your colleagues or co-workers | | |
| People whom you consider to have better life situations and experiences than yours | | |
| Your neighbors and community | | |
| Your own goals and aspirations | | |
| Your situation in the past | | |
| The average person in your country | | |
| People whom you consider to have worse life situations and experiences than yours | | |
| Your idea of what a good life for a human being is supposed to be | | |
| People you consider as your role models | | |
| Other (please specify): <input type="text"/> | | |



Next



Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

If the situation of the following persons improved while your own personal situation did not change, do you think that this would increase, decrease, or leave unchanged your answer to the Life Satisfaction Question?

| | Increase | Decrease | Leave Unchanged | Does Not Apply |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Your partner | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Your children | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Your siblings | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Your siblings' partners | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Your parents | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other relatives | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Your friends | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Your colleagues | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Your neighbors | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Your community | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Your country | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other (please specify): <input type="text"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



Next



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Life Satisfaction Question: *All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).*

You answered: 7

Think of the goals, aspirations, and dreams you had in mind when you answered the Life Satisfaction Question. *Using the same yardstick* that led you to answer 7 to the Life Satisfaction Question, what would be your answer in a situation in which all your goals, aspirations and dreams were realized?

Please give a number from 0 to 10:



Next



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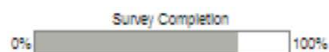
Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

And what percentage of the population in this country would still have a situation and experience that you rate better than yours if these goals, dreams, and aspirations were realized?

Percentage, between 0% and 100%:

%



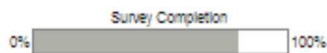
Next



Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

To achieve the goals, aspirations, and dreams you have today about what will happen over the next year, it would take:



Next



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Life Satisfaction Question: *All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).*

You answered: 7

Consider the situation you were in five years ago. *Using the same yardstick* that you used when answering the Life Satisfaction Question at the beginning of this survey, how would you rate that situation from five years ago?

Please give a number between 0 and 10:



Next



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Life Satisfaction Question: *All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).*

You answered: 7

And how do you think you would have actually answered the Life Satisfaction Question five years ago, with the yardstick you would have used back then?

Please give a number between 0 and 10:



Next

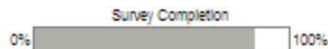


Ladder Question: Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you, and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time? Please give a number from 0 to 10.

You answered: 8

How would you explain the difference between the response you would have answered to the Ladder Question five years ago and the answer of 8 that you gave to the Ladder Question at the beginning of the survey? (Please select all that apply.)

- My goals in life are different
- My situation is different
- My beliefs about what is possible in my life have changed
- I compare myself to different people
- My values have changed
- My mood/feelings are different
- I use a different yardstick to evaluate my situation
- Other (please specify):



Next



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Life Satisfaction Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied).

You answered: 7

Relative to five years ago, would you say that for a similar situation and experience...

- I now give higher numbers in response to the Life Satisfaction Question
- I now give lower numbers in response to the Life Satisfaction Question
- I give similar numbers now as I did then in response to the Life Satisfaction Question
- I don't know

Survey Completion
0% 100%

Next



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You are almost done; in the next screens we are only going to ask you a few demographic questions for statistical purposes. Before we do that, we are going to ask you the Life Satisfaction Question again because some participants have told us that after taking the survey, they would want to change their answer to this question. Please feel free to respond with the same answer that you gave before or to give a different answer; please just try to answer the question as best you can:

The Life Satisfaction Question:

All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?

Please give a number between 0 (extremely dissatisfied) and 10 (extremely satisfied):



Next



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Why did your answer to the Ladder Question change since the beginning of the survey?

Survey Completion
0% 100%

Next

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

In what year were you born?

Which best describes your religious affiliation or beliefs?

- Protestant
- Catholic
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Buddhist
- No religion or agnostic
- Other (please specify):

Which of the following best describes how often you attend religious services?

- About once a week or more
- Once or twice a month
- Rarely
- Never

How important is religion in your life?

- Not important
- A little important
- Pretty important
- Very important

In general, which of the following best describes your political views?

- Very liberal
- Liberal
- Slightly liberal
- Moderate
- Slightly conservative
- Conservative
- Very conservative

Thinking about economic issues, which of the following best describes your attitudes?

- Very liberal
- Liberal
- Slightly liberal
- Moderate
- Slightly conservative
- Conservative
- Very conservative

Thinking about social issues, which of the following best describes your attitudes?

- Very liberal
- Liberal
- Slightly liberal
- Moderate
- Slightly conservative
- Conservative
- Very conservative

Do you consider yourself a...

- Republican
- Democrat
- Independent
- Other
- None of the above

What region of the United States do you currently live in?

- Northeast
- Midwest
- South
- West

Which best describes your race?

- White or Caucasian (non-Hispanic)
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African-American
- American Indian, Alut, Eskimo
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Do not know
- Other (please specify):

What is the highest degree or level of schooling you have completed?

- No schooling completed
- Grade 1 through Grade 11
- 12th Grade (No Diploma)
- High School Diploma
- Some College
- Associate's Degree (2 year degree)
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Professional Degree (ex. MD, JD, LLB)
- Doctorate Degree

Which of the following best describes your employment status?

- Employed Full-Time
- Employed Part-Time
- Student
- Self-Employed
- Unemployed
- On Temporary Leave from Work
- Retired
- Other (please specify):

What is your current marital status?

- Married
- Living with a significant other
- Widowed
- Divorced
- Separated
- Single

What is your annual household income?

- Under \$20,000
- \$20,000 - \$29,999
- \$30,000 - \$39,999
- \$40,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 - \$59,999
- \$60,000 - \$69,999
- \$70,000 - \$79,999
- \$80,000 - \$89,999
- \$90,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 - \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more

How many people currently live in your household? (including yourself)

How many children do you have, if any?

Survey Complete 100%

Next



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How enjoyable or annoying did you find answering this survey?

Extremely Annoying

Extremely Enjoyable

A horizontal slider scale with a vertical line on the left and a vertical line on the right. A grey bar is positioned between the two lines, and a vertical slider knob is located on the bar, positioned approximately two-thirds of the way from the left.

0% **Survey Completion** 100%

Next



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What did you like or dislike about the survey? Please share any comments you may have. Thank you again for participating!

Survey Completion
0% 100%

Next



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We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.
Your response has been recorded.

