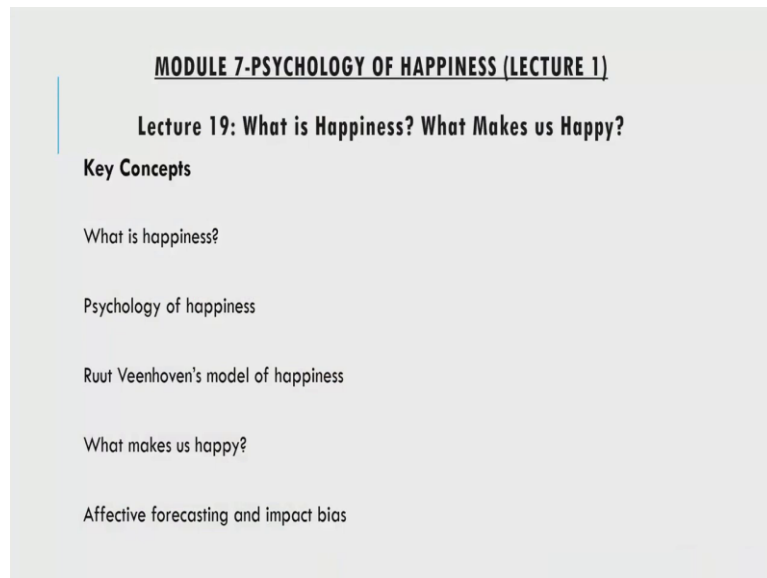


Psychology of Stress, Health and Well-Being
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Lecture - 19
What is Happiness? What Makes us Happy?

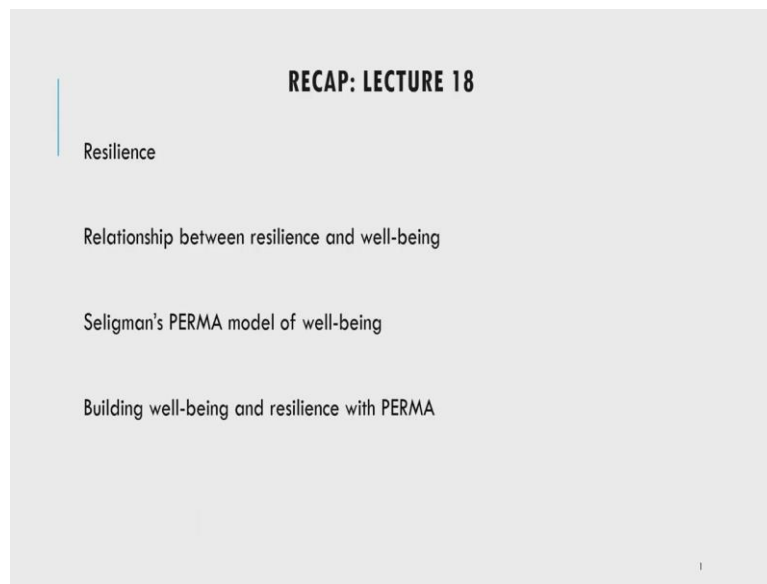
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Hello and I welcome you all to the lecture number 19 of this course title psychology of stress health and well-being. So, this is the first lecture of Module 7. So, we are starting Module 7 which is about psychology of happiness and today is the first lecture and overall, it is lecture number 19.

So, today we will discuss the concept and meaning of happiness, as well as what makes us happy from a psychological standpoint. So, before we get into today's session, let me give you a quick overview of the last course, lecture 18.

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So, in the previous lecture, we addressed the concept of resilience and how it relates to the concept of well-being. So, we try to comprehend and explore that the concept of resilience is an important concept that is very strongly related to a sense of well-being. In fact, many theorists and psychologists regard it as a key component of well-being. So, resilience is defined as our ability to recover from adversity, threat, or life crisis. So it is our ability to bounce back, how quickly we can recover from adversity or crisis in life and resume normal functioning. That ability is known as resilience. And, in most cases, resilience is mentioned in the context of a crisis, threat, or adversity in one's life. So there must be some kind of threat, adversity, or crisis in life, and the next critical component is your constructive response to those threats and adversities.

As a result, many experts believe that resilience is both a trait and a process. So, some believe it to be a kind of trait, which basically implies that it is more like your personal quality, it is kind of personality qualities. Many studies see it as a process that is dependent on the interaction of our internal and external factors, and many elements contribute to your sense of resilience. However, the overall idea is that resilience can be acquired and developed; it is not something that we are born with.

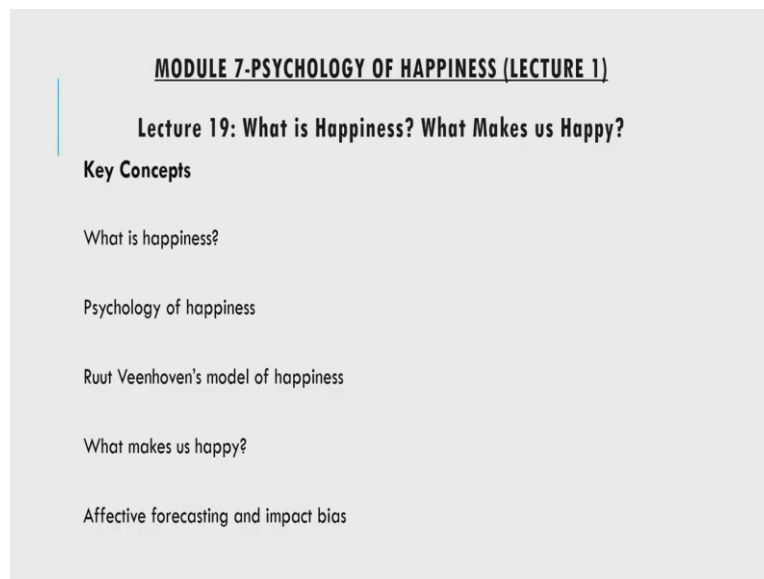
Then we talked about the connection between resilience and well-being. There is no clear association in the literature, but most studies demonstrates that an increase in our experience

of well-being also enhances our sense of resilience as certain component of well-being such as positive emotions, positive relationships, these are key ingredient for enhancing our sense of well-being.

Then we talked about Martin Seligman's PERMA model, P E R M A, which talks about well-being in terms of five components: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning in life, and achievement or accomplishment. And we have explored this model in terms of both well-being and resilience, primarily because the components of PERMA are also highly significant in strengthening our sense of resilience.

So, we have discussed all this component briefly and we also discussed how can we increase them or build them within us. So, we have discussed all these things in the last class.

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So, let's have a look at today's class. So, today we will discuss what the concept of happiness is and what makes us happy from the standpoint of psychological literature. So, the major themes that we will explore today are what happiness means and the psychology of happiness. Then we'll talk about one particular researcher's happiness model, Ruut Veenhoven's model. Then we'll talk about what makes us happy and whether we really know what makes us happy. In this context, we will look at effective forecasting and impact bias. So, let us go through them one by one.

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The Idea of Happiness

Happiness is a universal goal.

"All men seek happiness. This is without exception. Whatever different means they employ, they all tend to this end. The cause of some going to war, and of others avoiding it, is the same desire in both, attended with different views. The will never takes the least step but to this object. This is the motive of every action of every man, even of those who hang themselves." -Blaise Pascal

Happiness is highly valued in present day society. Not only do people aim at happiness in their own life but also we care for the happiness of other people and that governments should aim at creating greater happiness for a greater number of citizens (Bentham 1789).

So, the concept of happiness is something that we all share as a universal aim. It is not something that only a few people want while others do not. So it is a universal objective in the sense that everyone desires happiness and seeks it in various forms. So, this is certainly one of the common threads that connects all of us: we are all pursuing happiness in various forms, but our approaches to finding it may differ.

So, in that setting, Pascal, a French philosopher and mathematician, wrote a very fitting idea regarding the concept of happiness. He stated that all men seek happiness. This is without exception, so there is no exception to it, everybody seeks it. Whatever methods they choose, they all work toward the same goal. So, whatever means they use to find it, they are all eventually trying to attain to that, I mean, whatever happiness they define. The reason for some going to battle and others avoiding it is the same desire in both attended with different perspectives. So, if someone goes to war, it is also for the purpose of pursuing happiness, and if someone avoids war, it is also for the purpose of seeking happiness, just from a different angle. They will never take even the smallest step away from this object. This is the motivation behind every man's deed, including those who hang themselves. So, even people who commit suicide do so because they believe it would enhance their happiness in some way. So, this is a universal objective that everyone seeks in so many different ways in order to eventually arrive at that point called happiness, whatever they think it to be.

So, happiness is highly valued in society; it is expressed not just on an individual level, but also in terms of community happiness or boosting collective pleasure. Not only should people strive for happiness in their own lives, but we also care about the happiness of others, and government should strive to increase happiness for a greater number of citizens. So, this is the ideal philosophy that we all look at, that we are not only looking for our own happiness, but also trying to increase collective happiness in terms of society, in terms of nation, and this is something that we all want for a good society and a good nation, at least on a philosophical level.

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So, if you want to see how important this concept is, go to a self-help bookshop or go to Amazon's bookstore, Amazon's online bookstore, and you will discover thousands of books that basically talk about the whole concept of happiness. As a result, there are numerous titles related with happiness, some of which are self-help books, while others are authored by experts, philosophers, and psychologists.

So there are a plethora of books to peruse. As a result, this indicates how people are looking for it and why they believe it is so vital.

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For most of its history, psychology had concerned focused itself with disorders of human mind such as anxiety, depression, neurosis, obsessions, paranoia, delusions.

The goal of practitioners was to bring patients from a negative, ailing state to a normal state of functioning.

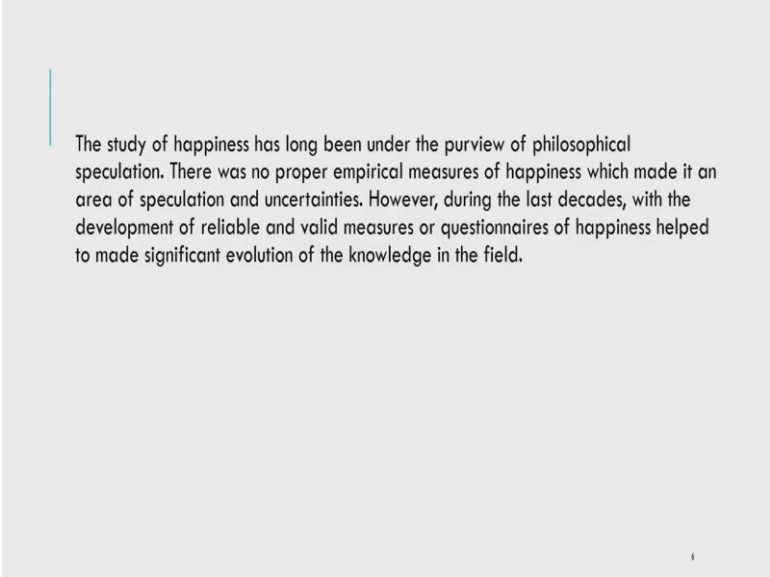
Over the decades, with the rise of positive psychology, a few psychological researchers had ventured out of the dark realm of mental illness into the sunny land of the happiness and well-being.

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As we have discussed previously in previous lectures, Psychology was largely concerned with understanding diseases such as anxiety, depression, neurosis, obsession, and so on. So the goal was to focus more on understanding problems and how to help individuals get out of them. Primarily due to the necessity, there was an increase in psychological problems, particularly during wars and other collective societal crises, and psychiatric disorders at the individual level have also been on the rise. As a result, there was a need to comprehend psychological illnesses and cure people. As a result of this need, psychology has mostly focused on disorders.

And practitioners' primary goal was to return patients from a negative ill state to a regular state of functioning. So, from being negative to making them normal. However, with the rise of positive psychology, which is a type of approach or branch of psychology in which researchers began focusing on positive functioning of people rather than just normal levels of functioning, researchers began talking about the concept of happiness, well-being, and the positive state of the human mind. As a result of the increased emphasis on positive psychology, notions such as happiness and well-being began to enter the mainstream of psychology. It was there, but it was never given adequate attention throughout the history of psychology. However, it has recently come to the fore, notably with the rise of positive psychology.

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The study of happiness has long been under the purview of philosophical speculation. There was no proper empirical measures of happiness which made it an area of speculation and uncertainties. However, during the last decades, with the development of reliable and valid measures or questionnaires of happiness helped to made significant evolution of the knowledge in the field.

Happiness as a concept was primarily discussed or included in philosophy. Or philosophers have been discussing the concepts of happiness, good life, and well-being, which fall principally under the purview of philosophical explorations and discussions.

So philosophers were mostly engaged in speculation because philosophers are primarily interested in providing theoretical notions, or armchair speculations. They are not very interested in data collection, analysis, or the like. As a result, because it was predominantly discussed in the field of philosophy, there was mostly theoretical literature available for understanding happiness and well-being.

However, with the rise of positive psychology, psychologists became interested in these themes and began measuring this idea as well. Because one of the primary distinctions between the philosophical and psychological approaches is that psychologists are concerned in gathering data, measuring it, and providing evidence-based ideas. As interest in concepts like as wellbeing and happiness grew in the field of psychology, researchers began developing more reliable and valid tools to quantify happiness. And as a result of this approach, there has been a substantial evolution of knowledge in this domain over the previous few decades, notably in grasping the concept of pleasure and well-being. It is no longer speculative, but rather data-driven. If you look at the psychology literature.

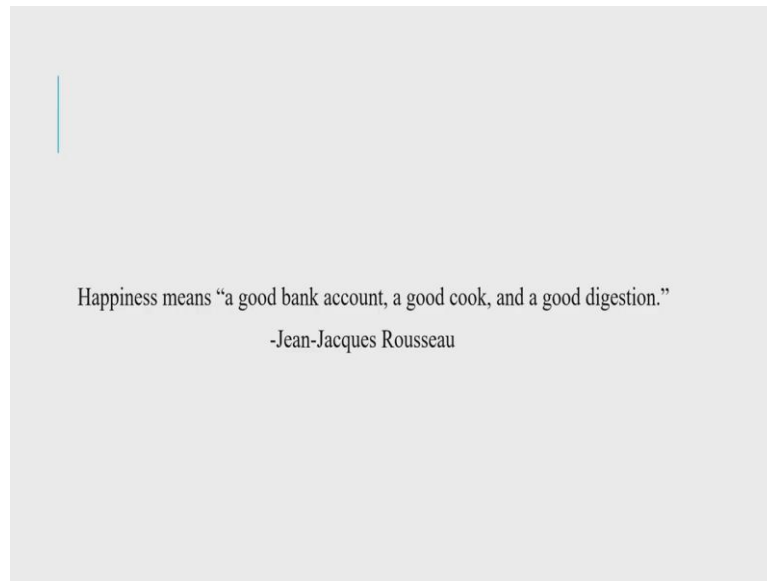
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What is Happiness?

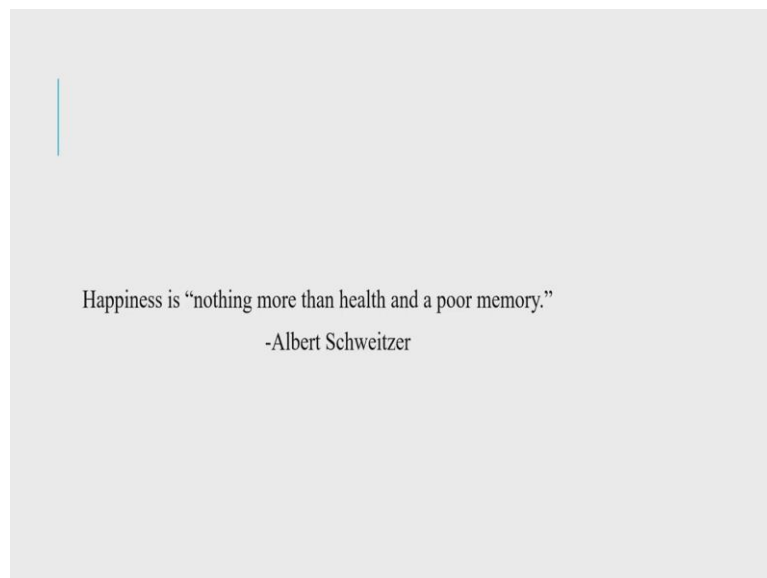
So, what exactly is the definition of happiness? People define happiness; everyone has their own interpretation of what happiness is. So, while we all have different perspectives on happiness, I'll offer you some examples of how various philosophers described it.

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So, Rousseau defined happiness means a good bank account, a good cook and a good digestion. So, probably in a more humorous way he might have defined it. He is talking about happiness only in terms of money and food and health.

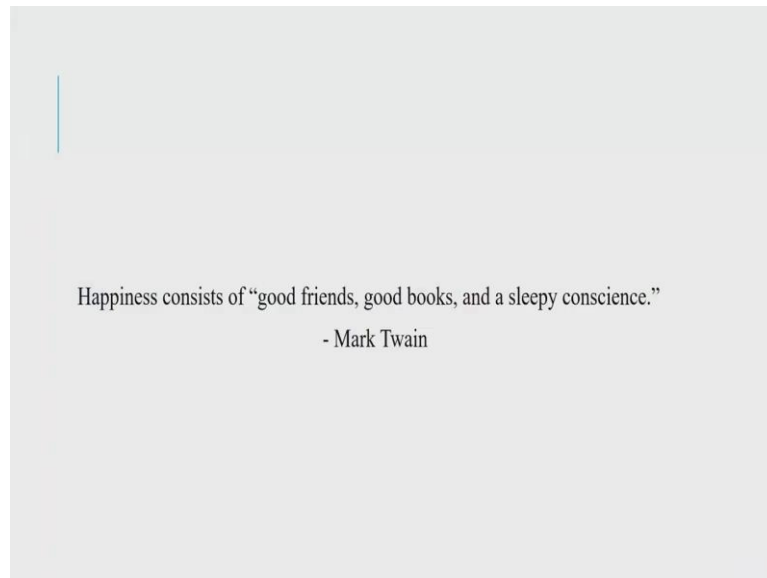
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Another philosopher said, happiness is nothing more than health and poor memory. So, this is also another perspective what he said. So, if you have a good health and poor memory, means

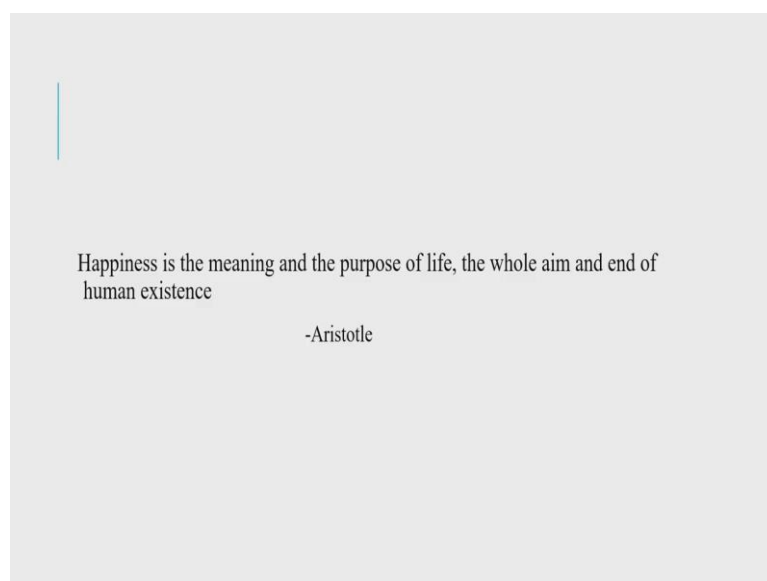
it is the memory that disturbs us so much, we remember so many things and which keeps on disturbing us. So, if you have a poor memory, in that sense he is saying you will be happier.

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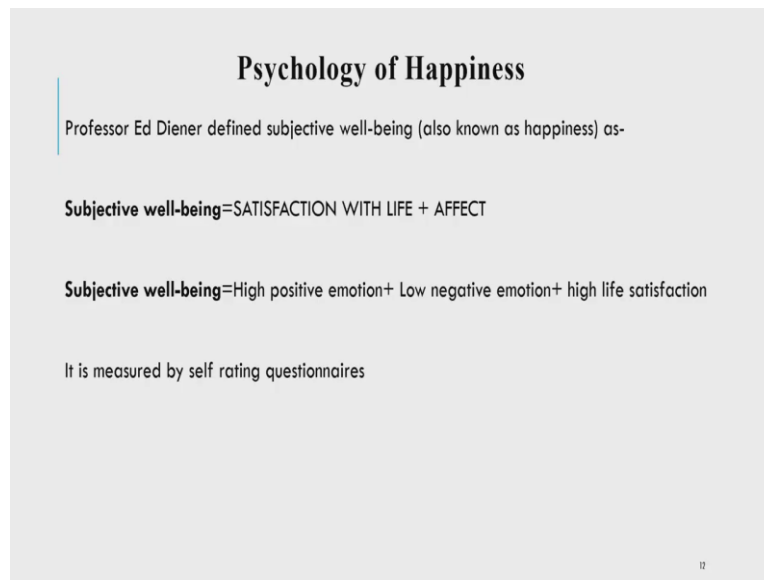
Mark Twain said happiness consists of good friends, good books and sleepy conscience. So, it is because of conscience we feel guilty shame and so many negative emotions. So, probably a sleepy conscience can make you happy.

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Aristotle said, happiness is the meaning and purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence. So, Aristotle defined it happiness in terms of meaning and purpose in life. So, if you have very meaningful and purposeful life then it is a happy life. So, you can see there are many definitions.

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Psychology of Happiness

Professor Ed Diener defined subjective well-being (also known as happiness) as-

Subjective well-being=SATISFACTION WITH LIFE + AFFECT

Subjective well-being=High positive emotion+ Low negative emotion+ high life satisfaction

It is measured by self rating questionnaires

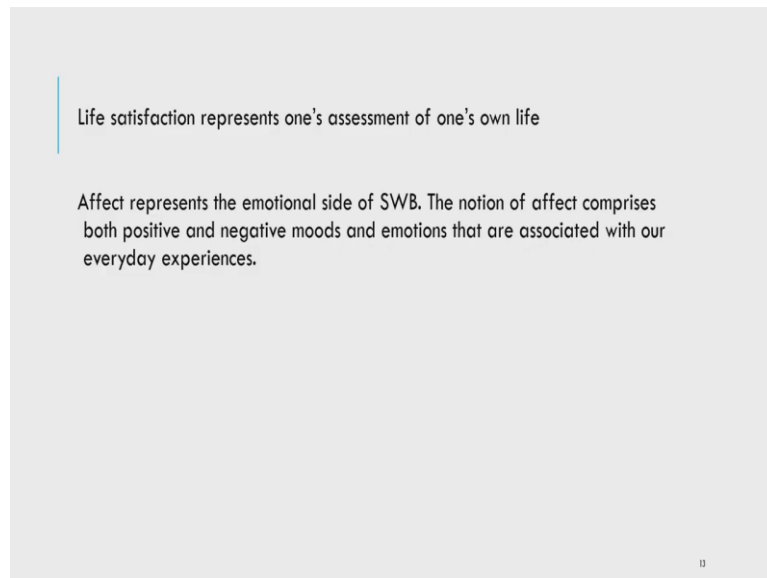
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Everybody defined happiness in their own ways. And it can be defined in a diverse way depending on what do you consider as happiness. So, let's see how psychology defines happiness. In psychology when we talk about any concepts, we are conceptualizing it in such a way that it is measurable also. So, there are indicators.

In psychology generally we avoid the word happiness because it has so many connotations and people have so many ideas, as we have seen, people define it in so many ways. So, more technically, in psychology we use the word subjective well-being which basically means happiness. And this subjective well-being is primarily defined in terms of two components. One is satisfaction with life and second is affect. So, affect basically means emotions. So, one is satisfaction with life how satisfied are you with your life this is one important component of subjective wellbeing or happiness. And second is your emotional experiences, how do you experience life in terms of your emotions, positive emotions and negative emotions. So, more specifically we can say, subjective well-being is equal to high positive emotions plus lower negative emotions plus high life satisfaction. So, this will determine your level of subjective well-being. So, if you have more of this, more of positive emotions

more of life satisfaction and less of negative emotions your level of subjective well-being or happiness will be higher. So, this is how it is conceptualized in psychology, these are important indicators of subjective well-being or happiness.

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So, a life satisfaction aspect of happiness primarily talks about how you assess your life, how you evaluate your life in terms of how satisfied are you with your life. As a result, your level of contentment with your life may be determined by how you compare your current situation to whatever ideal standard you imagine or project for yourself in the future.

So, in terms of whether you are content or not with your life, you will look at the current state of my life and try to compare it to some predicted future standard that you want to accomplish. So, if there is less discrepancy, you are probably more satisfied with your life.

Then people try to comprehend or measure their own life pleasure by comparing it to that of others. As a result, many people compare themselves to their peer groups and the people around them in order to acquire a sense of contentment.

So, how you generate your sense of happiness depends on a variety of circumstances, such as comparing yourself to future standards or comparing yourself to other people. The emotional side of subjective well-being is represented by the affect comprising both positive and negative moods and emotions and are associated with our everyday experiences.

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Ruut Veenhoven's Model of Happiness

Ruut Veenhoven is a Dutch sociologists and a pioneer in the scientific study of happiness.

He explained happiness using the concept of qualities of life and life satisfaction.

Quality-of-life concepts can be sorted using two distinctions:

(1) **Chances vs outcomes:** Life chances are the opportunities that we get in life and outcomes are actualization of those potentials and opportunities.

(2) **Outer vs inner qualities of life:** Outer qualities refers to the aspects of the environment and inner qualities refers to the qualities of the person

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So, in the context of understanding happiness and life satisfaction, we look at one specific researcher's happiness model to gain a better knowledge of the concepts of happiness and life satisfaction. So, Ruut Veenhoven's happiness model will be examined in order to gain a better understanding of these components of happiness as they are viewed in psychology and other linked fields.

Ruut Veenhoven is a sociologist from the Netherlands. He is not a psychologist in the traditional sense; rather, he is a sociologist who is particularly engaged in the scientific study of happiness. As a result, he attempted to comprehend happiness by comprehending life qualities and life satisfaction. As a result, he focused his research on understanding two concepts: life qualities and life satisfaction. So, with these two, we'll see what he meant.

As a result, he attempted to construct quality of life in two dimensions. One is the difference between chances and outcomes in your life. So, life chances refer to the opportunities that you have throughout your life. Assume that when you took birth, you have certain opportunities in your family in terms of whatever you obtain. As a result, life gives you specific chances and possibilities. What are your chances in life?

And outcomes essentially indicate how you employ those opportunities from potential to actualization. So, it is about how do you use those opportunities and bring about certain outcomes. As a result, there are outcomes. So, one dimension is your life chances and

outcomes, or what opportunities you have in life and what outcomes you get by taking use of those opportunities. As a result, this is one dimension.

The second dimension is life's outer and inner qualities. So, in terms of our environment, what are the qualities of life that I get? And inner qualities refer to my psychological makeup in terms of how I deal with difficulties and things, how I view life, and what my attitude on life is. As a result, these are listed among the inner qualities of life. So, based on the interaction of two dimension chances and outcomes versus outer and inner qualities, we get four qualities of life.

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Four qualities of life

	<u>Outer Qualities</u>	<u>Inner Qualities</u>
<u>Life Chances</u>	Livability of environment <i>nature, pollution</i>	<u>Life-ability of the person</u> <i>Ability to cope with problems</i>
<u>Life Results</u>	<u>Utility of life</u> <i>Higher values & meanings such ecological preservation, cultural development etc</i>	<u>Satisfaction with life</u> <i>Same as happiness</i>

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According to Ruut Veenhoven, there could be four aspects of life depending on the interconnections of these two dimensions. So we can have outer qualities, inner qualities, and life chances and outcomes. So, based on the interaction of these two dimensions and four subdimensions, we can have four different qualities of life.

So, the first one is livability of environment. The livability of an area is mostly determined by its outer aspects and life chances, opportunities that life provides you with whatsoever opportunities you may encounter in your life. And it is dependent on outer quality, so what are the things that you are getting in terms of your life in your environment that defines the quality of your life?

What is the extent to which your environment in which you are positioned, how livable is that situation? As a result, this is a vital quality of life. As a result, it may encompass your natural surroundings, natural pollutants, and so on. So, your surroundings, in terms of climate, weather, pollution, and so on. So, that is determined by your outer qualities of life and what life chances, life opportunities you have, and where you are in your life. So, this component of quality of life, livability of environment, is primarily emphasized by many professional groups, particularly social reformers and politicians, who all focus on these dimensions of quality of life, in terms of improving quality of life, livability of your environment, livability of the environment in which you are placed.

As a result, this is one facet of or one quality of life. The second is based on the outer qualities, which we will see first. So, outer qualities life chances give livability of environment outer qualities and life outcomes, what is the conclusion that you bring about in your outer element of your life that is known as utility of life As a result, this is the second quality of life. The utility of life essentially discusses how you use your life in the external environment in terms of higher values and meanings. such as environmental protection, cultural development, and so forth.

So, how can you make your life helpful in terms of the outer world in terms of higher values and meanings such as maintaining ecological elements, developing cultural aspects, and so on, so that is the meaning of life's utility? And that this is yet another significant part of life quality. And that this is yet another significant part of life quality. So, many professional groups, such as pastors, moral advisers, and religious leaders, talk about this element of life, emphasize this component of life in terms of improving quality of life, using your life for social service, and so on.

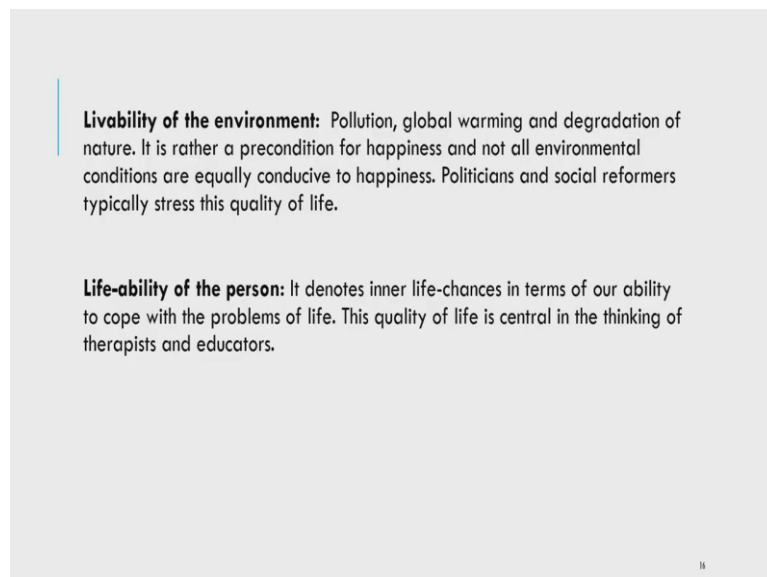
Now, we may add two additional characteristics of life quality to the list of inner qualities, life chances, and life outcomes. So, one is referred to as a person's life ability; it is your inner quality depending on what, how, and where you find yourself within yourself. As a result, it mostly discusses the ability to deal with various life situations.

So, ultimately, a person's life ability is a component of life quality that talks about the ability to cope with challenges, stress, and problems in life, that is, your inner abilities to deal with problems in life. Many professional groups, such as therapists and educators, place a high

value on these dimensions of quality of life, increasing your inner capacities or life abilities, and dealing with life's issues.

The final one is satisfaction with one's life. This is the dimension that Ruut Veenhoven is referring to, and it is the one to which the concept of happiness is linked. So, life satisfaction is essentially the outcome of life in your inner side of your life. So, how satisfied you are basically speaks about how satisfied you are with your life internally. In psychology, this is referred to as happiness or subjective well-being. So, in terms of determining happiness, how satisfied are you with your life is more significant.

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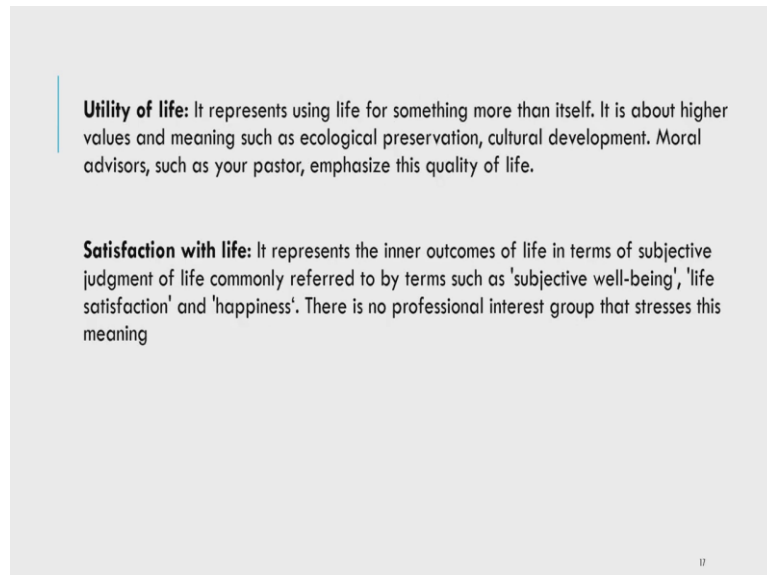


Now, according to Ruut Veenhoven, satisfaction with life is more than just one thing; it can have several dimensions. So, he explained, just as there are four qualities of life, there might be four levels of satisfaction with life, or four dimensions to it. So, let me just briefly explain these four dimensions that we have already discussed, but let us also discuss this briefly.

So, environmental livability is one quality of life that discusses pollution, global warming, and environmental deterioration. So, how are you positioned in your environment? So it is not happiness in and of itself, but rather a prerequisite for happiness. So, to a considerable extent, your experience of happiness is determined by the environment you are placed in.

The person's life-abilities, which we mentioned, signifies inner life opportunities in terms of your ability to deal with life's issues. How much capacity you have in terms of, this is your inner ability, this quality of life is fundamental to therapists and educators' views.

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The utility of life, as previously established, indicates the use of life for something other than itself. So, it is more than just using your life for your own self-interest; it is about higher values and meaning, such as in terms of the outer world, ecological preservation, cultural development, whatever, it could be in the religious context, it could be in the social context, so moral advisors, pastors, and these are the people who emphasize this aspect. The final one is satisfaction with one's life. It symbolizes the inner result of life in terms of subjective evaluation and life, also known as subjective well-being or happiness. Because it is a very subjective and individual phenomenon, we cannot point out any specific professional groups that discuss about it, however certain therapists and psychotherapists may talk about it indirectly.

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Four kinds of satisfaction

	Passing	Enduring
Part of life	<u>Pleasure</u> <i>Sensory, intellectual</i>	<u>Part-satisfaction</u> <i>Enduring satisfaction with a part of life</i> <i>Job Satisfaction</i>
Life as a whole	<u>Top-experience</u> <i>Passing satisfaction with life as a whole</i>	<u>Life-satisfaction</u> <i>Enduring satisfaction with life as a whole</i> <i>- Same as happiness</i>

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According to Ruut Veenhoven, life satisfaction is the most appropriate concept for understanding happiness since it indicates the degree to which external living conditions match inner life abilities. So, in terms of comprehending happiness, life satisfaction is most significant since it represents the degree to which our external circumstances match our inner abilities. So, if you are happy with your life, it signifies that your exterior surroundings and your inner qualities are in sync.

As I previously stated, there can be different aspects to life satisfaction, and as Ruut Veenhoven stated, life satisfaction is not simply one thing. As a result, the concept of life satisfaction can have several meanings and features. These meanings can be further subdivided into two dimensions: life aspects versus life as a whole. So, your contentment may be based on one facet of your life or one domain of your life, or it may be based on your entire life. So, life elements against life as a whole, so your happiness can be about a domain or about life as a whole. So that's one aspect.

The second aspect is passing satisfaction versus enduring satisfaction. So, what is your satisfaction in terms of temporary or enduring. So, is it like passing satisfaction or very temporary transient satisfaction or is it enduring satisfaction which endures for a long time.

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Four kinds of satisfaction

	Passing	Enduring
Part of life	<u>Pleasure</u> <i>sensory, intellectual</i>	<u>Part-satisfaction</u> <i>Enduring satisfaction with a part of life Job Satisfaction</i>
Life as a whole	<u>Top-experience</u> <i>Passing satisfaction with life as a whole</i>	<u>Life-satisfaction</u> <i>Enduring satisfaction with life as a whole - same as happiness</i>

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So, based on these two aspects, there are four different types of life satisfaction. So, one is passing-enduring in one and aspect of life or life as a whole is the other. So, by interacting with this, we can obtain four types of life satisfaction, the first of which is when we have a transitory satisfaction regarding a certain aspect of life, which is referred to as pleasure.

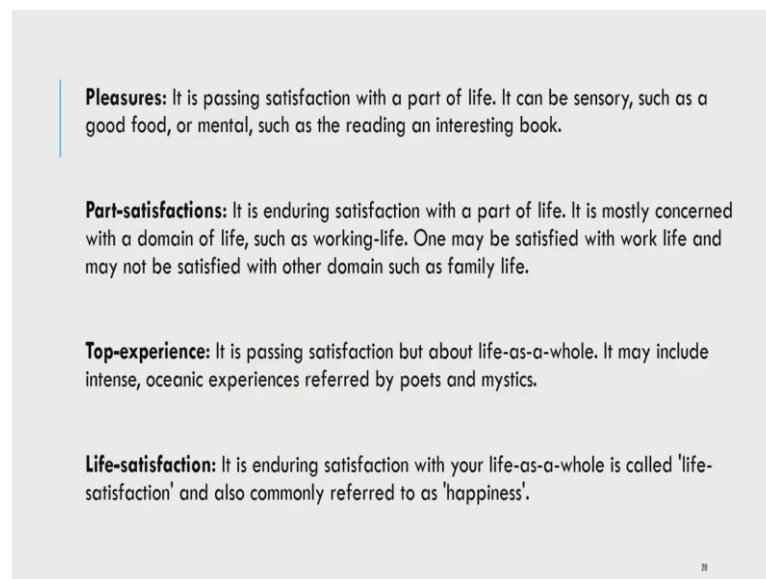
So, what is pleasure about? It could be largely sensory pleasure; for example, eating nice food provides you sensory pleasure. The pleasure could also be intellectual pleasure, such as reading a good novel or a good book of your choice, which provides you with a lot of intellectual pleasure as you read it. So there can be sensory pleasure, intellectual pleasure, such as reading a good engaging book, and sensory pleasure, such as eating nice food or doing something that offers you sensory stimulation and pleasure. So, the concept is that pleasure is transient and fleeting. So it will be really short-term, and you will no longer experience that after a short period of time.

Then there is part satisfaction, which is when we talk about a part of life and some enduring satisfaction. Which is basically long-term contentment with a particular facet of your life. So, long-term satisfaction with a facet of life. Consider job satisfaction. So, you may be quite content with your career but not with other aspects of your life, such as your family life, which is an example of partial satisfaction. Satisfaction with specific aspects of your life, rather than all of them.

When we consider life as a whole, when it is transitory, this is referred to as top experience. So, basically, peak experience is what Ruut defined as passing satisfaction with life as a whole. The idea of top satisfaction is that certain people such as poets and mystics, sometimes experience some kind of peak experiences, or oceanic/mystical experiences where they no longer just their own self egoistic person they experience some broadness in their consciousness. Mystics and poets sometimes get tuned into certain experiences which can be called as peak experiences. So, those are called top experiences because they do not remain for a long time. So, they are passing experience but influence their whole life. So, in that sense it is categorized under this category.

And the last one is life satisfaction which is basically enduring satisfaction. So, life satisfaction is satisfaction with the whole life. So, it is basically same as the concept of happiness.

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Pleasures: It is passing satisfaction with a part of life. It can be sensory, such as a good food, or mental, such as the reading an interesting book.

Part-satisfactions: It is enduring satisfaction with a part of life. It is mostly concerned with a domain of life, such as working-life. One may be satisfied with work life and may not be satisfied with other domain such as family life.

Top-experience: It is passing satisfaction but about life-as-a-whole. It may include intense, oceanic experiences referred by poets and mystics.

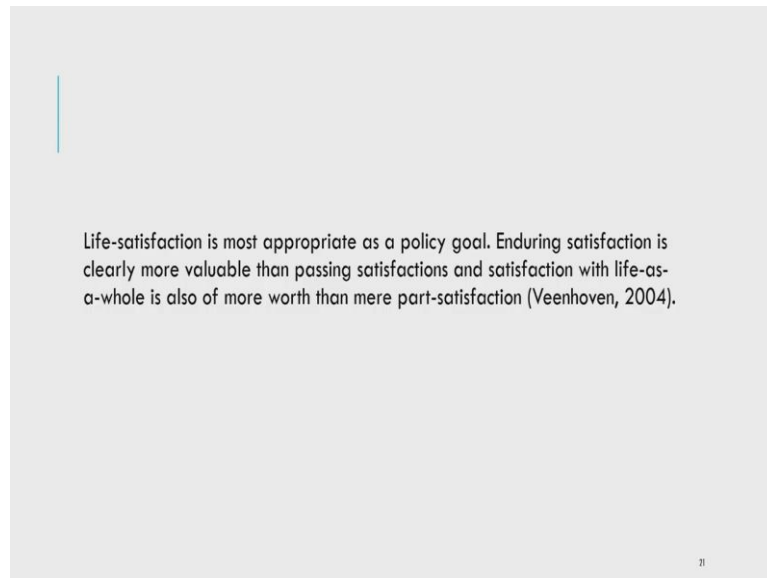
Life-satisfaction: It is enduring satisfaction with your life-as-a-whole is called 'life-satisfaction' and also commonly referred to as 'happiness'.

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So, once again, these are only briefly mentioned here. Pleasure is defined as temporary enjoyment with a part of life. It can be sensory, such as nice food, or mental, such as reading an intriguing book. Part satisfaction is long-term satisfaction with a particular aspect of your life; it is most often connected with the domain of life, such as your job or work life. One may be satisfied with one's professional life or employment but not with other aspects of one's life, such as family life. Top experience is about passing satisfaction about life as a whole, and it may include powerful oceanic experiences referred to by some poets and

mystics. The final one is life satisfaction, which is long-term satisfaction with your life as a whole.

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According to Ruut Veenhoven, life satisfaction is the most appropriate public goal. Clearly, long-term satisfaction is more valuable. How? Because passing satisfaction is not truly reliable, you may be satisfied today and unsatisfied the next day. As a result, those information may be meaningless in terms of policy implications. As a result, life satisfaction or, in general, more enduring is more relevant for policymaking and other purposes.

So, in psychology, happiness is defined primarily in terms of life satisfaction as well as emotional experiences. As a result, the majority of the indicators are this. So researcher measures the emotional experiences of the people in terms of their positive emotions, negative emotions, and they also measure their satisfaction level with their life. So, that determines the concept of happiness as well as subjective well-being.

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Do You Know What Makes You Happy?

- A relationship?
- A new job that better provides for you and your family?
- More money?
- Losing weight?
- Looking younger?
- A baby?

Let us now look at the next question that is relevant in the context of happiness: do we know what makes us happy? So, do we truly understand what makes us happy? Or, if I ask this question to anyone, do you know what or what will bring you happiness in your life?

So, in general, we have projections in our lives about certain things in the future, and if I obtain it, I will be happy. So, some may argue that it is about relationships, that if they have a good relationship with someone, they would be happy; others may argue that if they acquire a certain job, they will be happy; and yet others may argue that if they receive more money, they will be happy. Some people may have a goal of decreasing weight, while others set a goal of looking better and younger. Some people may be planning to have children, and children may be a source of happiness for them. So, we all have numerous ideas and goals for the future that we hope to achieve, and we believe that if we achieve them, we will be happier.

Now the question is, if I ask people in general, they will project it in this manner.

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Affective Forecasting and Impact Bias

Will you become happier if your wishes become true?

Can you predict what will make you happy in future?

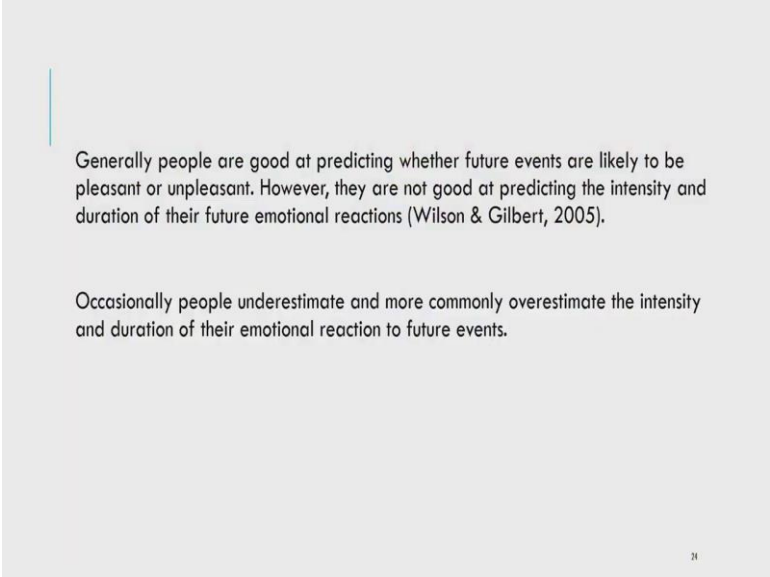
Affective forecasting include predictions about emotional reactions to future events

Research on affective forecasting has shown that people generally mispredict how much pleasure or displeasure a future event will bring (Wilson & Gilbert, 2005).

However, several instances in the field of psychology suggest that we are not particularly adept at predicting what the emotional implications of future events will be. So, in that context, there are two concepts that we will discuss: one is affective forecasting, and the other is impact bias. So the question is, will you be happier if all of your wishes come true? Or can we truly forecast what will make us happy in the future? Affective forecasting is a notion that attempts to comprehend or address this question. As a result, affective forecasting entails predicting emotional reactions to future events. So, affective means emotional, and forecasting is predicting the emotional reactions to a future event.

So, if something happens in the future, how do you forecast what your emotional experience will be, will you be happy or unhappy, so we can predict, we try to predict a lot of things in terms of emotional implications in relation to specific future events. This is known as affective forecasting, and it involves predicting the emotional repercussions of future occurrences. Now, research in this field suggests that people frequently overestimate the amount of pleasure or displeasure a future event will bring. People, in general, mispredict it; they are not good at predicting the emotional consequences of future events, and they make a lot of mistakes in that context. So, in that framework, I posed the question, "Do we really know what makes us happy?" We may have certain ideas, but do they truly bring us happiness? According to affective forecasting, human beings regularly mispredict while anticipating emotional consequences of future events.

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Generally people are good at predicting whether future events are likely to be pleasant or unpleasant. However, they are not good at predicting the intensity and duration of their future emotional reactions (Wilson & Gilbert, 2005).

Occasionally people underestimate and more commonly overestimate the intensity and duration of their emotional reaction to future events.

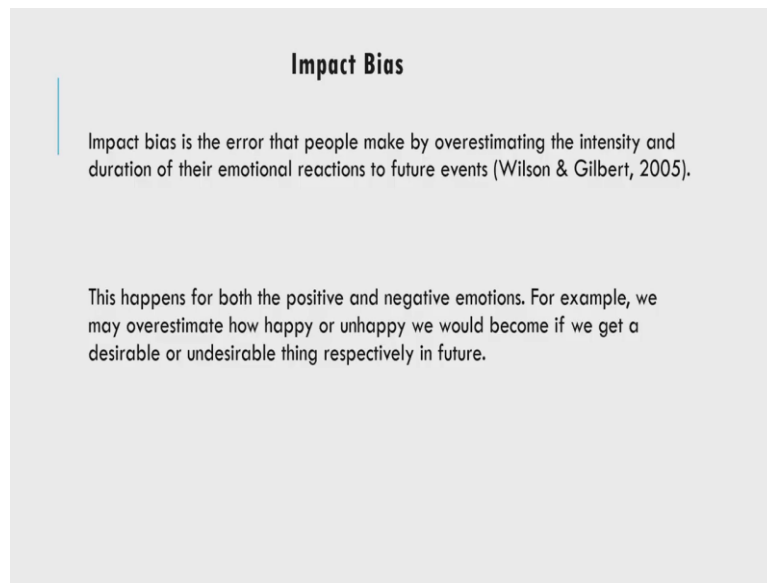
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People are often competent at anticipating whether future events will be pleasant or unpleasant. That sense that most people have about whether an event will be pleasant or unpleasant, so that most people can predict it. People, on the other hand, are not very good at forecasting the intensity and duration of future emotional consequences.

How intense our emotional sensations will be if a given event occurs in the future, and how long will they last. As a result, we are unable to forecast the intensity and length of emotional consequences particularly well in general. As a result, people occasionally underestimate, but most of the time they overestimate the intensity and duration of their reaction to future events. In general, people overestimate the intensity of emotional consequences for both positive and negative events. As a result, it is frequently referred to as impact bias, which is a type of emotional durability bias. We tend to overestimate how much emotion we will feel and for how long, which is why it is also known as the emotional endurance bias. So, for example, we may have thought as children that if I received a gift of, say, x on my birthday, I would be happy and would not desire anything else. B but once we get it, we discover that it is not even near to ultimate satisfaction. Many people believe that they will never be able to recover from a breakup in a love relationship, however most people recover within a few days.

So, when they predict, they often overestimate because they believe they will never be able to come out of it, so the duration and intensity are overestimated. But actually when it happens generally the intensity and duration is not that high.

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Impact Bias

Impact bias is the error that people make by overestimating the intensity and duration of their emotional reactions to future events (Wilson & Gilbert, 2005).

This happens for both the positive and negative emotions. For example, we may overestimate how happy or unhappy we would become if we get a desirable or undesirable thing respectively in future.

As a result, this tendency is known as impact bias. People make the error of overestimating the intensity and duration of their emotional reaction to future events, which is known as impact bias. So, when we consider or predict the emotional effects of future events, such as how happy or unhappy we will be if x event occurs, we tend to overestimate.

This is known as impact bias, and it is one of the areas where affective forecasting research is being conducted. Wilson and Gilbert, as well as some of their colleagues, have done much study in this area. This research on impact bias reveals that it occurs for both positive and negative emotions. So, if you forecast a happy event, your estimation or prediction of how happy you will be is overstated, and if you predict a sad event, your estimation or prediction of how sad you will be is also overestimated.

As a result, we may exaggerate how happy or unhappy we will be if we receive a good or unwanted item. So, if I obtain something I want, I exaggerate how happy I will be and for how long. And if I receive anything unfavorable, we tend to exaggerate how much sadness or anguish we would suffer, as well as how long it will last. As a result, this is referred to as impact bias.

As a result, Duun Wilson and Gilbert In the framework of impact bias about future events, various evidences were discovered. For example, in a study of college football enthusiasts, it was discovered that they overestimated the impact of their favorite team's victory, and how

happy they would be if they won. People exaggerated the impact of receiving an unexpected higher or poor grade on an exam, according to research.

Impact bias was discovered in a variety of populations, including students, even professors, sports enthusiasts, dieters, and vacationers, therefore impact bias was discovered in all of these scenarios. It was also discovered with a variety of situations such as relationship breakups, personal insults, and sports victories. So, research were done in diverse contexts and it was found that people are engaged in impact bias in all this diverse context as well as diverse population.

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So, for example, one basic experiment that was carried out by Duun and colleagues. So, for example, I'll just give you one small example of an experiment that these people conducted to study this impact bias. So they did with a college student who had recently enrolled at a college or university. As a result, when students first arrived, they were asked to predict how they would feel if they were allocated to desirable or unfavorable dormitories. As a result, whenever a student enrolls in an institute, they are usually assigned to specific hostels and dormitories. So, these new students were asked to anticipate how they would feel if they were assigned to a very desirable, good dormitory, and how they would feel if they were assigned to a very unpleasant dormitory. Because when a student enrolls, it has a significant impact on how they experience life at college and other aspects of their lives.

So, after a year, the participants projected their overall satisfaction level. So, they predicted how happy they would be if they were randomly allocated to a desirable or undesirable dormitory. So they were asked to anticipate how happy they would be after a year if they were allocated to a desirable dormitory in some cases and a very undesirable type of dormitory in other cases.

As a result, students anticipated their dormitory assignment, which was quantified in terms of how happy or unhappy they would feel after a year. Then it was actually measured after one year, so a measurement was done before one year, and after one year, the actual level of happiness was recorded after one year in whichever dormitory, desirable or undesirable

dormitory. So, they discovered that students predicted that their dormitory assignment would have a major positive or negative emotional effect based on desirability or undesirability at the prediction level. As a result, when asked if a desirable dormitory is assigned, they exaggerated their happiness level, and when asked if an undesirable dormitory is assigned, they underestimated their satisfaction level.

When tested after a year, their satisfaction levels in both categories, desirable and undesirable, were nearly identical. As a result, the graph looked like this. So on this side, it was happiness level that they measured, and whatever projected happiness level they used in terms of a given score, a certain scale. And for the desired dormitory category, this was the actual degree of happiness after one year, as expected.

If anything bad happened, it was predicted, and it happened. As a result, they projected that if they were assigned to an unfavorable dormitory, their happiness would fall. However, after a year, it was practically identical to the people who had gotten a desirable dormitory. As a result, predictions were constantly exaggerated.

So, in terms of pleasant emotions, they overestimated it, and in terms of negative emotions, they overestimated it, which means they basically claimed that if they receive an unsatisfactory dormitory, their happiness level will be much lower. So, these are some of the outcomes of many similar experiments, which reveal that people have biases in a variety of contexts and with a variety of populations.

As a result, they aren't particularly effective at forecasting future emotional effects. So, when that event occurs and they predict it beforehand, their emotional reactions, experiences, and length of those experiences are vastly different.

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Causes of Impact Bias

Focalism: It is the tendency to overestimate how much we will think about the event in the future and to underestimate the extent to which other events will influence our thoughts and feelings (Wilson, et al., 2000; Wilson & Gilbert, 2005).

So, what are the reasons for this, and why aren't we very good at predicting the emotional consequences of future events? As a result, researchers tried to figure out what was causing it. One of the reasons behind this, according to the researcher, is a phenomenon known as focalism. Focalism is defined as the tendency to exaggerate how much we will think about an event in the future while underestimating how other events will influence our thoughts and feelings. What this means is that when we predict something in the future, we are only concerned with that event. So, whenever I predict an occurrence, for example, if event x occurs in my life, such as my favorite team winning again, I am forecasting. I'm solely thinking about or focusing on that event while I'm making a forecast.

As a result, one experience alone determines my entire emotional response. So, if it's a positive event, I'll assume I'll be overjoyed if it occurs because I'm just thinking about it now. However, when that real event occurs, we are influenced by a plethora of other factors that contribute to that event or that particular instant in time. So, let's suppose my favorite team wins a game; when that event occurs, I may not be able to focus solely on that sport because I may have a number of other things on my mind at the time. I might need to finish an assignment that I didn't really want to do at home, and there could be a lot of other stress and tension, as well as a lot of other things that I need to finish at that time.

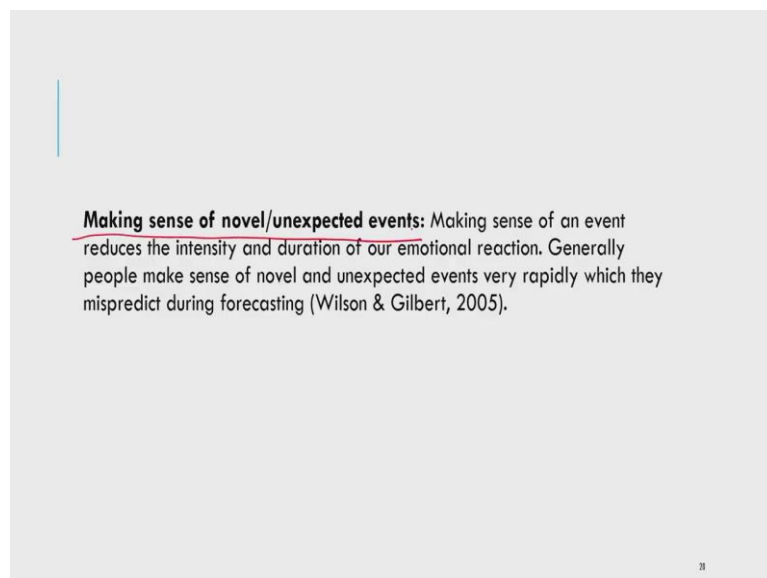
All of this will have an impact on my mood at the time. So, it's not only one event when, in reality, a variety of other factors can affect my emotional responses. As a result, the actual

intensity and duration may be far lower than what we expected. As a result, when we predict, we are simply considering that event.

So, for example, when they were predicting, they were only thinking about how they would stay in that dormitory and how it would affect them, so if it was a good dormitory, they would say, "I will be very happy and peaceful in that dormitory," and if it was a bad dormitory, they would say, "My life will be kind of hell in that dormitory or something." They're solely concerned about the dorm.

But when they receive a dorm, their lives aren't only about the room; it's also about the people they meet in their dorms, and there are so many other things they need to do at college. So, this is why people kind of make a lot of mistakes or they overestimate or miscalculate while predicting a future emotional consequence about a future event. So this is called as focalism.

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Making meaning of novel and unexpected situations is the second important reason. So, basically, if something new occurs, so when you are forecasting it, it may be a very novel thing for me, so I may be overly thrilled, and I may exaggerate its emotional consequences for both positive and negative emotions.

But, in general, when this occurs, we adjust to the events and situations and make meaning of them. When something is highly novel, it stimulates us and we have a lot stronger emotional reaction, but after a while, we normally become accustomed to it because we make sense of it, and it is no more unique, a new thing. So, anytime we plan a vacation, for example, we should keep in mind that we will be visiting a new, exciting, fresh destination, which will have a lot of emotional ramifications. However, after a short time there, we have a better understanding of the area and other things, and we have become accustomed to it, so the emotional consequences are not as severe as we had anticipated. As a result, another reason we make mistakes and overestimate is because of this.

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Impact Bias and Decision Making

Affective forecasts and impact bias may influence decisions ranging from the mundane (Should I take the scenic route home today?) to the profound (Should I marry this person?)

People generally make decisions by projecting their emotional reactions to future events. Impact bias can lead to mistaken projections and irrational or unbalanced decisions in their life.

People may also show a **retrospective impact bias** where they overestimate the impact of past events on their happiness, explaining why they do not learn from experience and correct their forecasts (Wilson, Myers, & Gilbert, 2003).

It may be difficult to correct impact bias as it is mostly unconscious. However, we reduce such biases by rational thinking and analyzing other things that may influence us in the future.

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As a result, impact bias might affect our decision-making on a regular basis. Because we are always predicting things and emotional implications in the present, and our decision is heavily influenced by how much emotional consequences we anticipate in the future. The majority of decisions are influenced as a result of this.

As a result, impact bias can have a significant impact on our decision-making process. As a result, affective forecasting and impact bias may influence decisions ranging from the most basic to the most complex, such as the route to take when going to place x. So, if I think this route will provide me with a lot of interesting sights, I'll take it. It could also be a major decision like who to marry. So, impact bias can influence all of these varied judgments, from the ordinary to the profound.

People usually make decisions based on their emotional reactions to upcoming events. As a result, impact bias can lead to erroneous projections and unreasonable and unbalanced life decisions. As a result of this impact bias, we frequently make irrational decisions, decisions that are not particularly sensible simply because we believe emotionally that it will be good or terrible regardless of what it is. As a result, we form irrational projections and make decisions based on them, which may or may not be accurate or may lead to unbalanced life decisions. As a result, our decisions are constantly influenced by this.

People can also exhibit retrospective impact bias, according to research. So, what does retrospective impact bias mean? It means that people not only show impact bias when anticipating future occurrences, but also when recalling past events. That's also quite intriguing.

So, for example, in most of this future event impact bias research, most of these events are not like first time it is occurring. So, if people are asked to predict something, let's say how their favorite team will feel if they win. So, they may have witnessed such an event in the past; it is not the first time they will witness it; nonetheless, people continue to make the same mistakes. As a result, it's likely that we don't learn from our mistakes.

So, in many of the experiments we've discussed, participants projected the impact of an event they'd previously witnessed in the past, but they continue to make the same mistake when forecasting future events. They may have made a more accurate prediction about a future event if they had remembered or recalled their past experiences precisely. However, most people are unable to do so, as they are unable to recall the emotional implications of previous experiences while forecasting future events. Because the majority of occurrences repeat themselves, it is not that only a few events occur once in a while; many events occur repeatedly, and we continue to make numerous errors. In that sense, we do not learn from our experiences. As a result, researchers looked into why this would be the case.

So, in the instance of retrospective impact bias, focalism could be a contributing factor. This is most likely why, while recalling a former emotional incident, people forget the context and other factors that influenced them at the time. As a result, when individuals recall past emotional situations, they simply remember that incident, and they forget the context and

other events that were influencing them at the time. As a result, focalism could be a contributing factor in the retrospective impact bias as well.

So, it's not always easy to correct impact bias, especially because of our emotional state; when we're emotionally upset, our rational faculties aren't always as effective. As a result, it can be difficult to correct impact bias because it is often unconscious. As a result, we don't learn from our mistakes too often.

However, we can reduce impact bias by instilling or practicing more rational thinking and analysing things, particularly how they happened or, in the past, how other factors influenced or, in the future, how other factors may influence when making a decision, rather than just thinking about that event. So we can kind of actively bring and think about other things that are related with that particular occurrence and how it will influence us to reduce those impact biases and take more sensible and effective actions. So, these are some of the most crucial points to comprehend. Such biases may also have an impact on our happiness. As a result, we may not always be able to accurately forecast our emotions and happiness levels in the future, or even when we think back on past occurrences. So, with that, I'd want to thank you for attending today's lecture.