

**Figure 1** Dimensions and specializations of well-being.

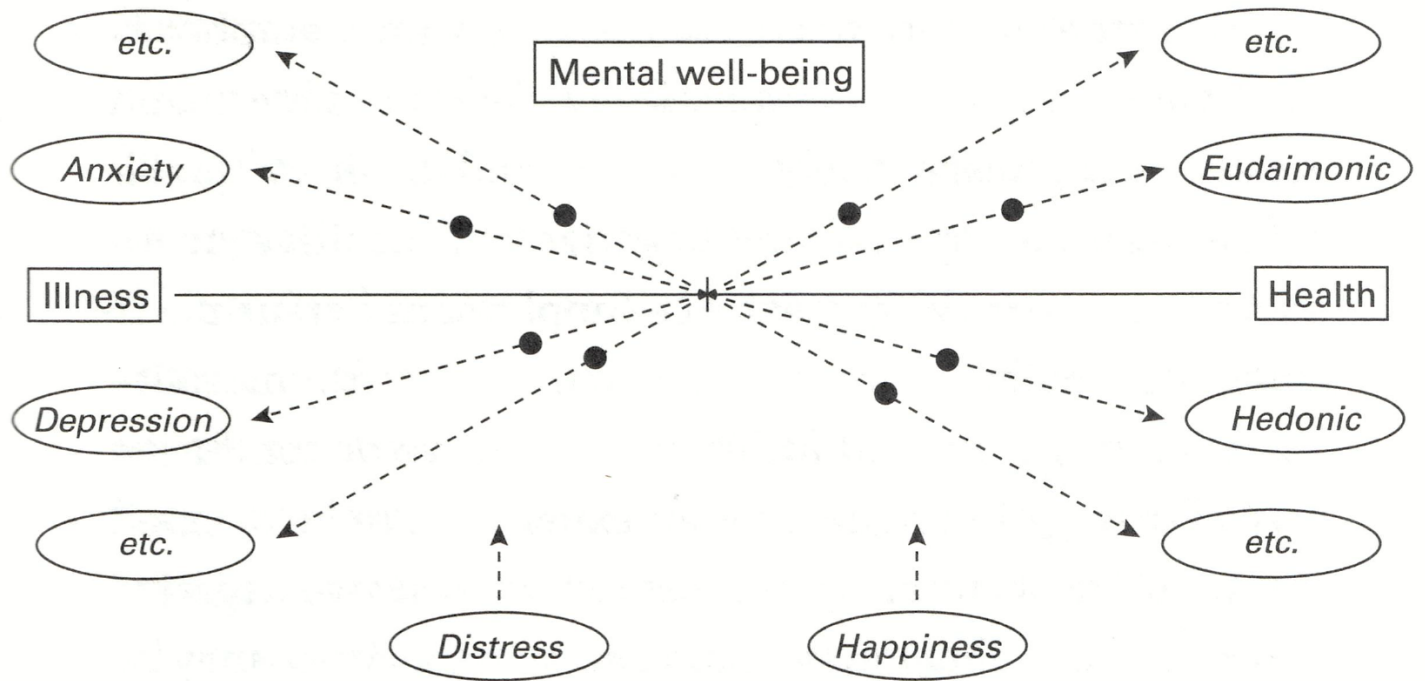
### Definitions

#### Anomie

Lack of the usual social or ethical standards in an individual or group.

#### Transcendence

Existence or experience beyond the normal or physical level.



**Figure 3** The differentiated mental well-being spectrum.

### Definitions

#### Eudaimonic - Aristotle

A contented state of being happy and healthy and prosperous.

The subjective experiences associated with eudaimonia or living a life of virtue in pursuit of human excellence.

#### Hedonic - Aristotle

Devoted to pleasure.

Of, characterizing, or pertaining to pleasure.



The Roots of Happiness through time and in different cultures. These are roughly listed in chronological order and represent YOUR interpretations of the different sections in the book. The following outline will serve to place all of our future conversations about happiness in a more global historical context.

#### Aboriginal roots of happiness

Aljjerre-Nge is one of the Oldest perspectives on flourishing and signifies the complex cultural-religious beliefs of the early aboriginal people. It can be thought of as the nexus of thought and practice. Similarly, the Western Perspective denotes holistic all-encompassing ways of perceiving all life as interconnected.

#### Mesopotamian roots of happiness

- Agricultural wealth and societal development
  - Focused on physical happiness → material wealth
  - Self growth and finding personal goals / purpose
    - ↳ don't think of impending death
- "Savor your food, make each of your days a delight, bathe and anoint yourself, wear bright clothes that are sparkling, let music and dancing fill your house, love the child who holds you by the hand"
- "Above all, it's (Gilgamesh's story) a tale of finding meaning in life despite its existential limitations, through a commitment to a virtuous path"

## Chinese roots of happiness

Taoism - way of thinking

- "I Ching" translates to "Book of change"
  - includes divination practices of analysis of hexagrams [emphasizes state of becoming, rather than state of being]
- "Wu-Wei" means "surrendering to organic patterns of life"
  - shapes conceptualizations of various forms of happiness
- "To be in heaven, is to be in Tao"

## Vedantic roots of happiness

The Vedas, the foundational texts of Hinduism, often mention ānanda, an intense, profound happiness translated as bliss. It can mean eternal bliss in reference to samsāra, the ongoing cycle of birth, death, and rebirth in Vedantic beliefs. Ānanda can be interpreted as a release from the cycle into a state of total wellbeing or happiness (e.g., nirvana). The main topics of the Vedas are how to achieve these states. For example, the texts describe the union between a person's inner spirit or soul and Brahman (pantheistic gods or an Ultimate Reality).

## Vedantic roots of happiness

basic concept of Hinduism.

eternal ānanda  
can be obtained by samsara

← ānanda: genuine happiness, bliss

← samsara: cycle of birth, death, and rebirth

focus on inner soul, unchanging element

example of attaining: yoga



#### Judaic roots of happiness

The foundation of Judaic tradition is the Tanakh, the collection of Jewish scripture including the Torah, Nevi'im, and Ketuvim. The tradition holds that Moses received the Torah on Mt. Sinai, and it is now recognized as one of humanity's oldest moral frameworks (shaping many cultures through laws known as Mitzvat). The laws ~~prohibit~~ prohibit: ~~the~~ blasphemy, killing, adultery, theft, and more. It was believed that following these laws provided the wisdom to a fulfilling life, as fulfilling religious duties should lead to joy, and serving God was seen as essential. Ultimately, Judaic teachings tie happiness and well-being to religious devotion and moral living.

#### Judaic roots of happiness

The Tanakh contains the Torah. Inside the Torah are the 10 commandments, which are a framework that guides individuals religiously and personally. The mitzvot, laws, of the 10 commandments are a guide on how to live, offering a perspective of well-being that helps us understand happiness. Fulfilling religious duties and a mitzvah result in a simnah (joy and celebration). You will be punished if you do not reward your actions with joy.

#### Buddhist roots of happiness

The goal of Buddhism is to attain Nirvana, and even if that is unattainable, it offers ultimate happiness in its pursuit.

It is connected to the 4 Noble truths: <sup>life is</sup> Dukkha, suffering, the cause of Dukkha can be identified through cravings and attachments, understanding can alleviate dukka and finally the Noble Eightfold Path: ~~wisdom~~ wisdom, ethical conduct, meditation & concentration provides direction to nirvana.



### Hellenistic roots of happiness

1. A complex idea, it encompasses the cultivation of character, pursuit of knowledge, and commitment to ethical development.
2. The former refers essentially to pleasure, while the latter reflects deeper forms of happiness arising through self-cultivation, which he defined as the "activity of the soul in accordance to virtue."
3. The happy man is content with his present lot, no matter what it is.
4. It was possible to be "sick and yet happy, in peril and yet happy, dying and yet happy, in exile and happy." → ataraxia
5. Among his many contributions is the pivotal distinction between the two forms of happiness: hedonic and eudaimonic.

### Christian roots of happiness

Christian roots of happiness evolve from the "essence of Christianity." To align with God's grace is what will lead these people to happiness. Being blessed is said to be higher than happiness in Christianity. Whether you are poor or persecuted you can attain happiness through the mercy of God's grace and being blessed. The ideas of happiness can be determined by fate or even by influence, which all leads back to God's grace and people who truly want to attain happiness. Jesus preached that the rich and powerful are less blessed than the poor and persecuted who want to attain happiness.

### Islamic roots of happiness

Islam's influential text known as the Quran differentiates forms of happiness, one being "mut'a", referring to earthly satisfaction or hedonism. Another form of happiness known as "sa'adah" is tied to an ultimate or superlative happiness for those that believe in the afterlife. The reward of "Jannah" (paradise) is a key component in guiding people's conduct in life to promise sensual delights and elevated visions (ex. beholding God). However, Islamic perspectives on happiness don't only focus on the afterlife, but also teach ways to live good on earth via core tenants of temperance, modesty, and self-restraint pertaining to eudaimonia.



### Renaissance roots of happiness

The rebirth of learning, driven by the rediscovery of the classical world, caused optimistic humanism to arise from the dark tones of the church, celebrating humankind and the possibility of happiness on earth (not only the afterlife). This humanism movement encouraged people to engage in their own beauty and personal pursuits of truth. As Lucretius's long lost poem "De Rerum Natura" was discovered and spoke that humans cease to exist after death, people argued the goal of life is happiness.

### The Enlightenment roots of happiness

- Happiness can be found on earth above all through the development of character and pursuit of truth
- It advocated for advancement of science, secularism, rationality and open-mindedness.
- Well-being is influenced by free thinking study of the world
- The idea that the perfection of society as a pathway to happiness.

### Therapeutic roots of happiness

Through the lense of both the first and second waves of therapeutics, happiness is achieved through alleviating mental illness. However, the second wave recognized that the spectrum of wellbeing continued <sup>beyond</sup> simply the presence of illness and the absence of illness ~~and the absence of illness~~.



### Humanistic roots of happiness

Otto Rank, protégé of Freud who broke away to study/concentrate on healthy developmental processes. Critiqued how Freud explained away personal creativity as a mere byproduct of sex drive, instead believing psychotherapy should instead be used to create nurturing spaces for clients to explore individuation processes. Influenced Abraham Maslow + Carl Rogers, regarded as "Twin founders of humanistic psychology. Person-centered therapeutic approach, helped people become self-actualized, (modern incarnation of eudaimonia), by reaching congruence between actual self and ideal self. emphasis on scientific approaches later on.

### Scientific roots of happiness

The measurement of someone's wellbeing like a life evaluation. It's similar to a ladder whereas the top and base represent their worst and best life. Positive psychology was focused on disorder and dysfunction. Some areas did attend to positive wellbeing but overall it put off happiness as not worthy of scientific attention. Now happiness and wellbeing is emerging and is studied more seriously.

### Global roots of happiness

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Humans have 2 fundamental modes of existence: Agency (autonomous beings) and Communion (being a part of a network of people). Everyone strives for well-being. Well-being can be achieved through <sup>3 things,</sup> Qualia (positive emotions, cognition), relationships (love and connection), and development (character and competence).