

If were so rich then why arent we happy essay



The measure of happiness has so many underlying factors that some psychologists can't really account for in their studies. The study of happiness has many influences and is a highly subjective topic. Because the study of what really makes one happy has so many varying factors the methods used to conduct these studies are relatively easy and are usually conducted verbally and can be interpreted differently depending on who is conducting the survey or analyzing it.

The data that is being observed could not be accurate because of the high volume of error that occurs from these various methods and interpretations each person gives after looking at the data. But the problem that presents itself is that these sometimes false case studies are the one tool psychologists have of collecting data on the subject of happiness. But although these methods have a flaw they are just so simple and easy to conduct by just sending out a survey asking participants if they are happy in their lives. Strength of this method is that it is easy and quick to record large amounts of participants and can easily survey a large group. Or simply going to person to person asking them, it's convenient and easy.

But those people have personal influences that could be affecting their answer that day. I feel a more effective way to test whether a person is happy or not could be hypnosis. I personally was hypnotized before and everyone tells the truth while under hypnosis so if you are really trying to determine if a person is happy or not without their underlying influences you could simply ask them and get the reasoning behind them. I think you should carefully choose who you are conducting the research on because if you take a look at their history and background they could be from an abusive family

and they say they are happy then they know they are lying for unknown reasons.

I think you could also put them through a lie detector test and that will determine if they are being true to their level of happiness or not. I think this topic would fall under behavioral and comparative psychology. In the article the study done t by Brickman and Coatesm and Janoff-Bulman was discuses. In this study conducted in 1978 the men conducted long term individual case studies on people who had won the lottery and then measures if they were happy or not due to their recent winnings. This was interesting because In America we usually believe that money buys happiness and I feel we live in a very materialistic world and look up at figures of fame and wealth as the ultimate subjects of happiness.

It's the idea that the answer to leading a happy and healthy life is if you are wealthy. America is looked at as the place for opportunity the land of dreams and people come here to fulfill their dreams of becoming something out of nothing your typical rags to riches story so it has forever been set in our culture that wealth will bring you happiness and that is what you should strive to accomplish. One's social status is judged by their income and you have to have some talent or gift that will get you a good job that will provide you with a hefty salary and if that gift doesn't pay you a large annual salary a year then people think they are nothing because it doesn't bring them money. Before wealth became such an issue you weren't ranked by your wealth you were ranked on your abilities and talents. Your knowledge and skills would place you in a good job or not.

Research does show that when you have a raise in your company that you become happier but this is only a temporary affect and does not last forever. People are constantly striving for more and are never satisfied with what they have. It is the concept of “ keeping up with the Jones’s” You have just got a raise in your job and bought a brand new T. V. This makes you happy until you see your neighbors have outdone you with a plasma T.

V with surround sound . Because of this you aren’t always going to be happy until you can buy everything and be better than the person next to you, this is the philosophy that Americans today have embedded in their head. The only way to have everything you want is to have money to buy these things. People lose sight of what is most essential and most important are the things that don’t cost anything, and are worth the most value because things like family are priceless. Early philosophers like John Locke believed in “ the pursuit of happiness constituted the basis of both individual motivation and social well-being”. (Csiszszentmihalyi, 1).

This seems very limited but mostly true. One of their ideas was you must be disciplined and make sacrifices for your well being in the future and that is what will bring you a happy life. But today that is not practiced at all people believe that doing what feels right and good to them at that moment will bring upon happiness. For example if you are craving a chocolate bar and you may eat it at that moment and it will satisfy your craving but ultimately it will cause you unhappiness because you will gain those extra pounds that you were trying to keep off. So people today forget about the sacrifice you make will lead to you being happy later down the road and they forget the consequences it may have to them in the future.

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In this article they talk about the concept of “ flow”. This is when one is completely consumes and absorbed in what they doing that nothing else matters. It’s like getting lost in the moment. During flow there is no room to feel or think or act on anything because you are so overwhelmed in that moment of what you are doing you don’t think about any outside consequences. When you are in the zone you feel ecstatic and it often occurs when you are participating in something enjoyable to you or meaningful.

You lose your sense of time and you are completely engaged in what you are doing. I felt a personal religious flow when I went to Israel in the summer of 2006. I climbed up Mt. Masada for sunrise and I was sitting on top of the large mountain and I looked out into the large span of land to see the Dead Sea and the desert sand.

It was absolutely incredible and mind blowing and I just lost myself in that moment and stared out watching the sun peak up. It was such an incredible experience because I was completely engrossed in where and I was and what I was seeing, nobody around me mattered and I was just there. Another flow I feel every summer for the past 8 years is when I step off the bus and put my feet on the gravel, smell the fresh air, let the sun hit my body and look up to see that I have returned to my home away from home Emma Kaufmann Camp. EKC is one of the most important things in my life and every time I return there I get the most overwhelming experience and I forget anything about the outside world and it is only the camp I am with.

Even now that I’m a counselor I still get the encompassing feeling I got when I was 12 every time I return. The concept of flow shows that it’s not what you

are doing that causes happiness it is how you are doing. People think that being a janitor is an unpleasant job but if the person doing it enjoys his work and does it with a smile on his face then he creates his own happiness. The preconceived notion to happiness is that you must fully get involved in life to enjoy it. You must take advantage of all that life has to offer so you can truly be happy. Studies suggest that children from the most affluent families find it more difficult to be in a state of flow compared with less well-to-do teenagers, they tend to be more bored, not as involved, less enthusiastic, and less excited.

I think it's the environment you are coming from that affects your ability to be in flow because if you aren't given opportunities to do what you want or discover hidden talents or experience life's splendors then one will have a harder time discovering flow. I truly believe that money does not buy happiness, that yes it helps but in the end when all your money is gone you really won't have anything if you haven't developed happiness in places where money can't buy. Your family and friends should be your most important thing in life because you don't need all life's riches as long as you have people in your life that care about you. You may think to yourself if only I had a million dollars or if only I would win the lottery well I was recently watching a special on T. V. on people who have won the lottery and many of them end up depressed because of it.

Money is never the solution. If you find something you love to do that makes you happy then that is all you need, not materialistic things to show off to the neighbors.