



## The Science of Well-Being

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# The Science of Well-Being

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How much do we know about what makes people thrive and societies flourish? While a vast body of research has been dedicated to understanding social problems and psychological disorders, we know remarkably little about the positive aspects of life, the things that make life worth living. This volume brings together the latest findings on the causes and consequences of human happiness and well-being. The book covers a wide variety of disciplines, encompassing evolutionary biology, positive psychology, economics and social science, neuroscience and peace studies. Contributors to the volume include some of the most distinguished scholars in the field: social scientist Robert Putnam, evolutionary psychiatrist Randolph Nesse, psychologist Howard Gardner, economist Robert Frank, the founder of the Positive Psychology movement Martin Seligman, and the economic psychologist and Nobel Laureate Daniel Kahneman.

This landmark volume presents new evidence that sustainable positive states enhance capability and functioning, social relationships, health and survival, and thriving communities. Likewise, evidence is presented that positive functioning, good relationships and optimal experience enhance feelings of well-being. This positive spiral towards improved well-being contrasts sharply with the downward spiral which is commonly seen in people who lead unhappy, unfulfilled or materialistic lives. By integrating the many strands of research, this book provides a unique, realistic, and scientifically based approach to understanding and improving individual and societal levels of well-being. It is essential reading for anyone interested in how emotions influence behaviour, how behaviour affects emotions, which self-improvement strategies work, and how we can make the world a better place.

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