

Abstract

Is there a “right” or “wrong” way to pursue happiness? Recent research suggests that not all methods of pursuing happiness are beneficial, with some methods backfiring and leading to disappointment. The present study hypothesized that prioritizing positivity, or intentionally making decisions in daily life that maximize the likelihood of experiencing positive emotions, would be positively associated with levels of well-being. It was also hypothesized that other-praising behaviors, specifically gratitude, would explain this association. In a sample of adults ($N = 245$), prioritizing positivity was found to have a positive association with meaning in life and satisfaction with life, as well as a negative association with loneliness, with other-praising behaviors not explaining this association. In sum, this study suggests that prioritizing positivity may be an effective method to pursue happiness.

Keywords: prioritizing positivity, gratitude, meaning in life, satisfaction with life, loneliness