

happiness amplification project

project overview

Led by Princeton psychology graduates, Happiness Amplification Project aims to:

- 1) study key elements of interpersonal interactions that improve well-being;
- 2) better understand the obstacles that inhibit people from seeking the help they need to be happier;
- 3) develop an approach to providing interpersonal support that minimizes these obstacles and makes it easier for people to seek and receive effective assistance from others.

We are studying people suffering from a range of problems, including PTSD, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, domestic abuse, obesity and addiction.

background

Our effort is guided by several premises.

First, well-being requires positive interpersonal interactions and support.

Second, there are a number of psychological factors that inhibit people from seeking interpersonal assistance, including:

- a perception that the act of seeking assistance is stigmatizing
- a fear that the act of seeking particular types of assistance confirms and inflates the significance of the underlying problem
- confusion about how the necessary assistance can be obtained
- concerns about personal compatibility with the provider

Third, while we know that these psychological factors are significant, we know little about how they manifest in people who are unhappy. It is well documented, for example, that military veterans underutilize critical mental health resources (as do victims of domestic abuse, bullying, and other traumas), though there is no consensus about why this is the case.

Fourth, a comprehensive study of these factors could generate valuable insights about how to offer more effective assistance to people suffering from an array of problems, and increase the utilization of these services.

our effort

To better understand the reasons that people refrain from seeking help to cope with problems that cause unhappiness, we are arranging and studying hundreds of conversations between people who desire assistance and people attempting to provide that assistance. For every conversation we arrange, we gather information about each party (e.g., demographics, background) and each party's reactions to the calls.

We are currently recruiting volunteers — specifically, people seeking assistance to raise important dimensions of happiness (through comfort, motivation, affirmation or advice).

To help us advance our research objectives, we are asking our partners to reach out to their audiences to spread awareness of our effort. If you choose to be a part of our effort, we will (happily) share with you our results and recommendations. If members of your audience are interested in participating in our study, we ask that they contact us at the email address below.

team

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