

**Relationship between Happiness, Life Satisfaction, and Well-Being,
and the Impact of Inspirational Quotes**

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Abstract

Research in positive psychology is important because it can be applied to basic aspects of people's lives (Seligman, 2019). The present study focuses on three common positive psychology topics: well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness. One hundred and thirty one participants answered questions on positive psychology self-reports. Half of the participants were randomly assigned inspirational quotes before completing a questionnaire on well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness. The other half of participants were not provided with quotes before completing the same questionnaire. It was hypothesized that those who received the inspirational quotes would score significantly higher on each measure than those who did not receive the quotes. This was partially supported; those who received the quotes reported higher scores of well-being than those who did not receive a quote. It was also hypothesized that the measures of well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness would be positively correlated. This hypothesis was supported and was consistent with previous research. Future research could focus on how well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness can be promoted. Future research could also focus on the long-term effects that inspirational quotes may have on positive psychology.

Relationship between Happiness, Life Satisfaction, and Well-Being, and the Impact of Inspirational Quotes

Over the past decade there has been an increase in research within the field of positive psychology (Voerman, Korthagen, Meijer, & Simons, 2014), including research focusing on happiness, well-being, and life satisfaction. Positive psychology is the study of positive experiences, positive traits, and positive institutions (Seligman, 2019). The identification of positive emotions is a huge aspect of positive psychology (Seligman, 2019). Positive emotions (e.g., happiness, joy, hope) can influence cognition by increasing optimism and creativity. Experiencing positive emotions can also make life more enjoyable and meaningful (Voerman et al., 2014). Experiencing positive emotions is related to having a more positive outlook on life and higher academic success. Positive emotions can be created in life in many ways. For example, in education when a student completes a task, does well, or is praised, they are more likely to experience positive emotions (Voerman et al., 2014). While positive psychology is a broad field, the present study focuses on happiness, well-being, and life satisfaction which have many aspects in common.

Happiness

Happiness is one of the strongest motivators for human behaviour and it plays a huge role in people's lives (Akdogan & Cimsir, 2019). Happiness is a term that is not simple to define because it is interpreted in different ways depending on age, social class, and culture (Ye, Ng, & Lian, 2015). For example, as a person gets older the definition for happiness can change based on life experiences, and higher socioeconomic class individuals may define happiness as having many materialistic things (Ye et al., 2015). As well, in individualistic cultures, happiness is defined based on an individual's own achievements and feelings. However, in a collectivist

culture there is more emphasis on relationships, therefore happiness is typically defined by social connectedness and evaluation of others (Ye et al., 2015). Happiness also tends to be interpreted as different concepts such as well-being or life satisfaction (Ye et al., 2015). Happiness has been characterised as positive subjective feelings and appraisals (Schueller & Parks, 2014), how much individuals like their life by evaluating the quality of their present life as a whole (Mukherjee, 2018), or the interpretation of momentary joy, long-term joy, or total life joy (Khosrojerdi, Tagharrobi, Sooki, & Sharifi, 2018).

Happiness has been shown to have a relationship with age. According to Akdogan and Cimsir (2019), as people get older their feelings of inferiority decrease and their feelings of happiness increase (Akdogan & Cimsir, 2019). Mukherjee and Basu (2012) found that young adults ages 21 to 30 reported lower happiness scores compared to adults between the ages of 31 to 60 years.

According to Schueller and Parks (2014), gratitude, kindness, and creating meaning in life are a few factors that influence happiness. Having gratitude can influence happiness because when a person is thankful and shows appreciation, it helps increase their reflection on the good aspects in their life. Having high amounts of gratitude is a common trait of spirituality, therefore being a spiritual person (i.e., believing in a higher power) has been found to be associated with an individual's happiness (Barton, 2015). Lastly, creating meaning (i.e., interpreting life events as important and treasurable) increases individuals' happiness because events, memories, and life become more important and a person gains appreciation (Schueller & Parks, 2014). Creating meaning increases hope, the positivity in which life is interpreted, therefore happiness increases (Schueller & Parks, 2014).

There are many other things that influence happiness. Emotional intelligence, having a secure attachment pattern, and inner-other directedness (e.g., depending on people to give direction in their actions) have a positive relationship with happiness (Mukherjee, 2018). Having positive outcomes in life also increases happiness since the outcomes create positive affect (Mukherjee, 2018). Self-acceptance also has a positive relationship with happiness (Song, Gu, & Zuo, 2019). Other aspects of life that influence happiness include greater job satisfaction, satisfaction with salary, good mental health, older age, friendly relationships, good quality of life, and positive life perception (Khosrojerdi et al., 2018).

Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction can be defined as how an individual evaluates the positive aspects of their life as a whole, not by assessing how they feel about their life in a particular moment in time (Tomas, Gutierrez, Sancho, & Romeo, 2015). There are a few demographic differences regarding satisfaction in one's life. On average, women have slightly higher ratings of life satisfaction than men (Tomas et al., 2015). Younger people, typically those around the ages of 14 to 17, generally have a higher rating of life satisfaction compared to adults (Tomas et al., 2015).

Life satisfaction is influenced by many factors. Song et al. (2019) found that self-acceptance is a key factor that influences life satisfaction. The researchers explain that having self-acceptance encourages individuals to have confidence, feel superior, and maintain positive relationships, all of which positively impact life satisfaction. Charitable behaviour increases life satisfaction in all ages. Engaging in charitable behaviour increases self-acceptance and positive affect. Therefore, they concluded self-acceptance and positive affect are also factors that lead to the increase of life satisfaction. Subjective health and amount of income are also determinants of life satisfaction (Bhuiyan & Szulga, 2017).

Well-being

Well-being is an important aspect of everyone's lives, especially for work and school (Lustrea, Ghazi, & Predescu, 2018). Positive well-being can be defined as having good psychological and physical health (Sarotar izek, Treven, & CanAer, 2015). According to Houben, Van Den Noortgate, and Kuppens (2015), psychological well-being is a broad construct that includes having positive indicators of adjustment which could include happiness, positive emotionality, high self-esteem, or life satisfaction. The current study will be focusing on psychological well-being. Carol Ryff (1989) established six dimensions of well-being: self-acceptance, personal growth, environmental mastery, autonomy, and positive relations with others that is discussed heavily in research (Park & Jeong, 2015; Sarotar izek et al., 2015).

There are many factors that contribute to psychological well-being. Some determinants of psychological well-being identified by Bhuiyan and Szulga (2017) were better physical and psychological health, higher education, higher income, relative consumption, full-time employment, and being married. In another study, Krok (2015) stated that people who were optimistic, had a sense of coherence, and formed meaningful goals had high well-being. Individuals who have high psychological well-being tend to have higher life satisfaction, positive affect, higher self-esteem, lower negative affect and fewer depressive disorders (Lin, 2015).

Engaging in positive psychology activities is a great way to increase psychological well-being. Some positive psychology activities that increase well-being include performing acts of kindness or counting blessings (Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2013). According to Lyubomirsky and Layous (2013), personal features such as motivation, effort, efficacy beliefs, personality, social support, and demographics can impact the type of activities in which a person engages. These personal features often lead to an engagement in positive activities (Lyubomirsky & Layous,

2013). Individual's engagement in a positive activity enhances positive emotions, thoughts, and behaviours while also satisfying one's needs. Through these outcomes, well-being is increased. Another activity that can increase psychological well-being is mindfulness. Mindfulness is being aware of the present moment, experiences, and feelings one has (Bajaj, Gupta, & Pande, 2016). Activities that require mindfulness include meditation, mindful eating, or mindful breathing (Bajaj et al., 2016).

Relationship Between Happiness and Life Satisfaction

Having high self-transcendence and conservation are strong predictors for both happiness and life satisfaction (Joshnloo et al., 2016). Self-transcendence is defined as having concern for all people and also believing in a higher purpose in life (Joshnloo et al., 2016). Conservation is defined as valuing tradition, security, and conformity (Joshnloo et al., 2016). Self-acceptance has a positive relationship with both life satisfaction and happiness (Song et al., 2019). Self-acceptance improves self-confidence, reduces feelings of inferiority, creates and maintains positive social relationships, and also enhances positive affect (Song et al., 2019). These life improvements leads to an increase in life satisfaction and happiness (Song et al., 2019).

Relationship between Happiness and Well-being

Well-being and happiness are very similar and they both have an impact on each other (Qayoom & Husain, 2016). Qayoom and Husain (2016) stated that in order to be happy, people need to improve their well-being. Psychological well-being is connected to positive thoughts which then leads to happiness (Qayoom & Husain, 2016). Improving well-being involves becoming happy through gratitude, forgiveness, benevolence, peace, truthfulness, or compassion (Qayoom & Husain, 2016). It is common for scholars to discuss subjective well-being when referring to happiness because happiness is achieved when an individual has an inner state of

well-being (Qayoom & Husain, 2016). Most people seek happiness and well-being as they both have an impact on maintaining relationships, personality development, and positive behaviours (Qayoom & Husain, 2016).

Relationship between Well-being and Life Satisfaction

Both well-being and life satisfaction can be enhanced by positive emotions (Lin, 2015). Having a sense of coherence (i.e., feeling whole) has a positive relationship with both life satisfaction and well-being (Krok, 2015). Both life satisfaction and well-being also tend to be influenced by gratitude (Lin, 2015). Gratitude (e.g., showing appreciation or being thankful) increases life satisfaction because positive emotions are being experienced and a sense of worth is established (Lin, 2015). Gratitude also increases well-being because it promotes positive cognitive amplification (Lin, 2015). It has also been found that in those with depression, life satisfaction and well-being scores are significantly lower than those without depression (Park & Jeong, 2015). Park and Jeong (2015) stated that all of the six subscales of psychological well-being (autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance) were positively related to life satisfaction, with the exception of autonomy.

Motivation and Inspiration

Happiness and well-being tend to be higher when an individual has higher intrinsic motivation (i.e., behaviour that is motivated by internal rewards or satisfaction) in their life compared to those who have low intrinsic motivation (Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2013). It has been shown that inspiration often goes hand in hand with motivation (Bedrov & Bulaj, 2018). Motivation can be defined as the desire to behave a certain way or to complete a certain goal (Bedrov & Bulaj, 2018). Inspiration can be defined as when an individual gains awareness of

something and begins to see possibilities they could not before (Thrash, Moldovan, Oleynick, & Maruskin, 2014).

In their article on the psychology of inspiration, Thrash et al. (2014) stated that inspiration has been an emerging topic of study in the past few decades as more people are studying its benefits. Positive affect is known to have a very strong correlation with inspiration. However, they explained inspiration may be related to more than just positive affect. An individual can be inspired in more than one way. For example, a person can be generally inspired about life or a process such as a goal.

Thrash et al. (2014) explained that inspiration can be beneficial in many ways. Inspiration promotes a positive outlook on life because the individual is seeing life in a new, better way. Inspiration also promotes well-being because when the individual becomes inspired, they may make changes in their life or behaviour in a way that positively contributes to their psychological health. Inspired individuals see more opportunities to create optimism than those who are not inspired (Thrash et al., 2014).

Inspiration is also positively correlated to psychological well-being. Lin et al. (2018) found that changes in behaviour occurred using an intervention app that participants completed on their phone. The app provided the participants with online cognitive behavioural therapy to quit smoking. The app contained inspirational audio sessions, animated videos, reflective exercises, and quizzes. A survey was completed after all the steps in the app were completed. Participants reported that the app provided guidance and inspiration. The app created positive behaviour changes including healthier life choices.

Impact of Inspirational Quotes

Inspirational and motivational quotes are seen everywhere from books, school posters, and social media. However, there is a lack of research on how these quotes can impact people psychologically. Motivational and inspirational quotes are very similar, but Bedrov and Bulaj (2013) explained motivational quotes tend to be more complex than inspirational quotes. Therefore, they explained it is best to use inspirational quotes for children since they are often simpler compared to motivational quotes.

Yagcioglu (2014) conducted a study with students and found that providing the students with inspirational quotes gave them positive energy. Positive energy was measured as feelings such as enthusiasm and enjoyment. The quotes also helped increase the students' optimism (Yagcioglu, 2014). Bedrov and Bulaj (2018) stated that using motivation quotes can help raise an individual's self-esteem. Motivational quotes can build confidence, motivation, and empowerment (Bedrov & Bulaj, 2018). Motivational quotes are often used in the media and health programs to promote positive thinking.

In one study, participants with schizophrenia used an online intervention to help their recovery process. Inspirational quotes were used along with goal setting and positive psychology activities. A participant in the study was quoted saying she felt an increase of positive emotions from the inspirational quotes (Littlechild et al., 2013). However, the impact of the inspirational quotes was not examined specifically because it was not a focus of the study. In another study conducted by Poon (2015), inspirational quotes were used in a mobile app. Poon's (2015) app was called Pacifica and it aimed to decrease stress, anxiety, and depression, while increasing mindfulness, and relaxation. The application provided inspirational quotes along with books and videos. Poon (2015) concluded that the application empowered the participants to get through

their treatment for mental health. However, the specific impact of inspirational quotes was not examined. A study by Marchinko and Clarke (2011) included inspirational quotes in their materials. They created a wellness planner that included inspirational quotes and self-help ideas to increase empowerment and self-confidence. The wellness planner had a positive impact on mental illness recovery (Marchinko & Clarke, 2011). However, just like the other studies, the impact of inspirational quotes were not examined specifically.

There are many different types of inspirational and motivational quotes. Bedrov and Bulaj (2018) found that some quotes are best suited for specific situations. For example, they found that a quote containing a self-directed question often stimulates introspection and self-examination that could promote insight into one's well-being and, in return, increase well-being. While no known study has directly examined the relationship between self-directed quotes and well-being, Bedrov and Bulaj (2018) postulated that implementing motivational quotes in more digital health technologies may improve an individual's engagement, self-esteem, and self-efficacy.

Present Study

Positive emotions have a huge influence on an individuals' life experiences (Voerman et al., 2014). Life satisfaction is important to study because the more satisfied an individual is with life, the more confidence and positive affect one has which are beneficial at school and work (Song et al., 2019). Increasing well-being can help with competence in social connectedness at school and work (Lustrea et al., 2018). Many researchers have included inspirational quotes in their studies, but they have not looked specifically at the impact they had. Therefore, this study will examine the impact of inspirational quotes on an individual's self-report of well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction. If inspirational quotes have a positive impact on an individual,

then they can be implemented into more settings such as at work, school, and even in social media. I hypothesized that those who are provided with inspirational quotes before completing the self-assessment measures will report higher levels of happiness, well-being, and life satisfaction compared to those who were not provided with inspirational quotes before the measures. I also hypothesized that participants' total scores on scales measuring happiness, well-being, and life satisfaction will positively correlate. An exploratory analysis was conducted on the demographic questions.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited primarily at Grenfell Campus; however, the study was open to the general population. Participants had to be at least 19 years of age or a college or university student (mature minor). One hundred and thirty-one participants completed the questionnaire. Eleven identified as men, 101 as women, and one participant identified as gender fluid. Eighteen participants did not identify their gender. Out of the 131 participants, the average age was 21.42 years old ($SD = 6.60$). Seventeen of the participants did not identify their age.

Materials

Satisfaction with Life

One scale in the questionnaire was Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin's (1985) *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (SWLS) (see Appendix E). This scale is a five-item tool that uses a Likert scale. Scoring for this scale consisted of calculating the mean for all of the questions. The total score indicated how satisfied one was with their life (i.e., extremely dissatisfied to extremely satisfied). The scale consists of general questions related to one's life and participants rate the questions from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). This scale is both valid and

reliable (Vela, Lerma, & Ikonomopoulos, 2017) and is one of the most widely used tools for measuring life satisfaction (Tomas et al., 2015). The SWLS is free to use without permission by researchers as long as credit is given to the authors of the scale.

Subjective Happiness

The second scale was Lyubomirsky and Lepper's (1999) *Subjective Happiness Scale* (SHS) (see Appendix F). The SHS is a four-item tool that also uses a Likert scale. The questions were rated on a seven item scale ranging from *not a very happy person* (1) to *a very happy person* (7). Two questions regarding reports on how closely the statement related to the person consisted of a scale ranging from *not at all* (1) to *a great deal* (7). Scoring for this scale consisted of calculating the mean for all of the questions, except the fourth score was reversed. The total score indicated how happy the person is, a higher score indicated higher levels of happiness. The scale consists of four questions regarding subjective happiness in general life statements. This scale has demonstrated both validity and reliability (Vela et al., 2017). The SHS is one of the most common measurements for happiness (Iani, Lauriola, Layous, & Sirigatti, 2014). Studies have found that the SHS has similar scores across gender, age, and cultures (Iani et al., 2014). Permission was granted by Sonja Lyubomirsky. She stated in an email that the SHS is free to use for research purposes as long as the validation paper for the scale is cited within the research (see Appendix G).

Psychological Well-Being

The third scale was Ryff's (1989) *Psychological Well-Being Scale* (PWBS) (see Appendix H). The PWBS is an 18-item tool that uses a Likert scale. The questions were rated on a seven point scale consisting of *strongly agree* (1) to *strongly disagree* (7). Scoring for this scale consisted of calculating the mean for all of the questions, while questions one, two, three, eight,

nine, eleven, twelve, thirteen, seventeen, and eighteen are reversed scored. The total score indicated how strong a persons' well-being is. The scale consists of six subscales that measure autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. The PWBS has been used in many different studies and the findings have been consistent (Hsu, Hsu, Lee, & Wolff, 2017). The PWBS is valid and reliable (Lustrea et al., 2018). An email was sent requesting permission for the use of the PWBS which was granted (see Appendix I). Demographic questions were asked at the end of all three scales (see Appendix J).

Procedure

After ethics approval was obtained, recruitment began. Recruitment consisted of distributing posters around Grenfell Campus (see Appendix A), and advertising on Grenfell's online participation pool and on my personal Facebook page. (see Appendix B). The questionnaire was hosted on the Qualtrics platform and completed by the participants on any device that has access to the internet. A consent form was presented to the participants prior to completing the questionnaire (see appendix C). Participants were able to proceed to the questionnaire after completing the consent form and confirming that they are 19 years of age or a university or college student. Half of the participants were randomly assigned to the experimental group and the other half were assigned to the control group. The experimental group contained inspirational quotes presented before each of the three scales while the control group did not have any quotes presented. Demographic questions were asked last. The questionnaire finished with the End of Study description (see Appendix D).

Counterbalancing was used to deal with order effects of the presentation of the three scales. Both the experimental and control groups were presented with the *Satisfaction with Life Scale*, *Subjective Happiness Scale*, and the *Psychological Well-Being Scale* in a randomized

order. Three quotes were used in the experimental condition. The following quote was presented before the *Satisfaction with Life Scale*: “If you are working on something that you really care about, you don’t have to be pushed. The vision pulls you”- Steve Jobs (Fearless Motivation, 2017). This quote was chosen because motivational quotes that represent empowerment and affirmation often increase self-worth and outlook on life (Bedrov & Bulaj, 2018). The following quote was presented before the *Subjective Happiness Scale*: “The difference between misery and happiness depends on what we do with out attention.” – Sharon Salzberg (Bedrov & Bulaj, 2018). This quote was chosen because it presents the option of choice which promotes happiness (Bedrov & Bulaj, 2018). The quote that was presented before the *Psychological Well-Being Scale* is “Every person on this earth is full of great possibilities that can be realized through imagination, effort, and perseverance” – Scott Barry Kaufman (Bedrov & Bulaj, 2018). This quote was chosen for the well-being scale because the general statement promotes well-being without imposing on the individual (Bedrove & Bulaj, 2018). Participants in the control group did not receive any quotes before being presented with the three scales.

Independent measures *t*-tests were used to compare the control group and the experimental group on scores of happiness, well-being, and life satisfaction. Correlations between well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction scores were also calculated. Intercorrelations for the three measurement scales were also conducted for both the control and experimental group.

Results

Table 1 presents the mean scores for the experimental and control groups on the three scales: *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (Diener et al., 1985), *Psychological Well-Being Scale* (Ryff et al., 1995), and *Subjective Happiness Scale* (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999).

Quotes versus No Quotes

An independent measures *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference in self-reported well-being for the *Psychological Well-Being Scale* (Ryff et al., 1989). Participants in the experimental group ($M = 93.79$, $SD = 13.88$) reported significantly higher scores of well-being compared to participants in the control group ($M = 88.18$, $SD = 15.06$), $t(112) = -2.07$, $p = .041$, $r^2 = .04$, 95% CI [-10.99, -0.24]. That is, participants who were presented with an inspirational quote prior to completing the *Psychological Well-Being Scale* (Ryff et al., 1989) had significantly higher scores compared to those who were not presented with an inspirational quote.

There was no significant difference in happiness scores for those who were presented with an inspirational quote ($M = 18.38$, $SD = 5.15$) and those who were not presented with a quote ($M = 16.82$, $SD = 5.69$) before the *Subjective Happiness Scale* (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999), $t(116) = -1.56$, $p = .121$, $r^2 = .02$, 95% CI [-3.54, 0.42]. Furthermore, there was no significant difference in satisfaction with life scores for those who were presented with an inspirational quote ($M = 22.71$, $SD = 7.41$) and those who were not presented with a quote ($M = 21.14$, $SD = 7.35$) before the *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (Diener et al., 1985), $t(114) = -1.15$, $p = .255$, $r^2 = .01$, 95% CI [-4.28, 1.15].

Positive Psychology Scales

Scores for the *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (Diener et al., 1985) ($M = 21.92$, $SD = 7.39$) were positively correlated with the *Subjective Happiness Scale*, ($M = 17.59$, $SD = 5.47$), $r(113) = .60$, $p < .001$, $n = 115$. The *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (Diener et al., 1985) also positively correlated with the *Psychological Well-Being Scale* (Ryff et al., 1989), ($M = 90.98$, $SD = 14.69$), $r(111) = .63$, $p < .001$, $n = 113$. Lastly, the *Subjective Happiness Scale* (Lyubomirsky & Lepper,

1999) positively correlated with the *Psychological Well-Being Scale* (Ryff et al., 1989), $r(112) = .70, p < .001, n = 114$.

An exploratory analysis was conducted for the three scales and the demographic questions. A significant positive correlation was present between the scores of the *Subjective Happiness Scale* (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999) and participants' amount of exercise, ($M = 3.10, SD = 1.12$), $r(113) = .29, p = .002, n = 115$. Similarly, the scores of the *Psychological Well-Being Scale* (Ryff et al., 1989) had a positive correlation with participants' amount of exercise, $r = .30, p = .001, n = 113$.

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for the correlations conducted in the present study.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	1						
2. Employment status	—	1					
3. Spiritual level	-0.01	-0.02	1				
4. Exercise	0.11	-0.02	-0.11	1			
5. Satisfaction with life	-0.04	0.03	-0.06	0.15	1		
6. Happiness	0.02	-0.04	-0.07	0.29**	0.60***	1	
7. Well-being	0.06	0.05	-0.08	0.30**	0.63***	0.70***	1

** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Discussion

Positive psychology is an important area to study because it can be applied to many different aspects in people's lives (Seligman, 2019). The present study focused on three main topics in positive psychology: well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness. Participants were given one of two versions of a questionnaire. Half of the participants were provided with a questionnaire containing self-reports on well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness along with an inspirational quote before each scale. The other half were given the same three self-report scales without inspirational quotes. It was hypothesized that those who received the inspirational quotes would score higher on each measure than those who did not receive the quotes. It was also hypothesized that the three measures of positive psychology would positively correlate. Although it was hypothesized that the group provided with an inspirational quote would report higher levels of life satisfaction, happiness, and well-being, this was only partially supported. Participants that received an inspirational quote prior to completing the *Psychological Well-Being Scale* (Ryff et al., 1989) scored significantly higher compared to those who were not presented with an inspirational quote. However, those who were provided with an inspirational quote had similar scores on the *Subjective Happiness Scale* (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999) and the *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (Diener et al., 1985) compared to those not provided with a quote.

Past research has not looked at the specific impact inspiration quotes have on happiness, well-being, and life satisfaction. However, past research has looked at inspirational quotes as a subset of tools that impact people positively. For example, Yagcioglu (2014) found that inspirational quotes, along with positive books and websites, can increase optimism and happiness for learning. Perhaps the present study did not find a significant effect of the

inspirational quote for two out of the three positive psychology scales because the quotes needed to be presented along with other tools, such as books or websites, to cause a bigger impact.

Bedrov and Bulaj (2018) also found that inspirational quotes have a positive impact on an individual's psychological health. They found that implementing inspirational quotes caused an increase in self-esteem, confidence, and empowerment. Similarly to Yagcioglu's (2014) study, Bedrov and Bulaj (2018) used quotes along with other tools such as self-affirmation and reality check quotes to increase positive aspects in the participant's lives.

A study conducted by Littlechild and others (2013) provided inspirational quotes to individuals who were recovering from mental health difficulties, mainly individuals with schizophrenia, over several months. They found that participants who were provided with an inspirational quote had increased positive emotions after a therapy session (Littlechild et al., 2013). The current study provided the inspirational quote immediately preceding the positive psychology self-assessments. While well-being, as measured by the *Psychological Well-Being Scale* (Ryff et al., 1989), was significantly higher for those who were presented with an inspirational quote, there was no significant difference between the control and experimental groups on the measures of happiness and life satisfaction. Well-being is more easily increased compared to other positive psychology aspects such as life satisfaction because it is a broader characteristic that is easily manipulated by brief interventions (Oliver & MacLeod, 2018). It can be concluded that a single presentation of an inspirational quote may not have that strong of an effect on all aspects of positive psychology.

It was also hypothesized that all three scales used to measure the positive psychology aspects of well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness would positively correlate. This hypothesis was supported and is consistent with past research (Joshani et al., 2016; Lin, 2015; Qayoom &

Husain, 2016) Well-being and happiness are often related, as it is very uncommon for one to be high without the other (Qayoom & Husain, 2016). Life satisfaction and happiness have many influencers that are similar such as self-acceptance, having positive social relationships, and self-confidence. One will likely be happy if they are satisfied with their life and vice versa (Song et al., 2019). Lastly, life satisfaction shares similar influencers with well-being, with one of the biggest being gratitude. Gratitude creates feelings of positive emotions that positively impact well-being and life satisfaction. Having a sense of coherence and feeling one's life is in order also increases well-being and life satisfaction. Even though the two are not the same, well-being and life satisfaction are similar and are often felt equally (Lin, 2015).

An exploratory analysis revealed that happiness and well-being positively correlated with exercise. The more a person exercises, the higher their scores on the *Subjective Happiness Scale* (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999) and the higher their scores on the *Psychological Well-Being Scale* (Ryff et al., 1989). These findings are comparable to past research. More happiness is felt when a high volume of exercise occurs (Richards et al., 2015). It was also concluded that people who were more physically active had higher levels of happiness across all domains of age, gender, and race (Richards et al., 2015). Exercise positively correlates with well-being because the more an individual exercises, the better quality their sleep is, the happier they are about their appearance, and the better they feel (Evans et al., 2017).

Limitations

The current study had a few limitations. Firstly, not all participants completed the three scales. Thirteen out of 131 of the participants did not fill out the *Subjective Happiness Scale* (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999). Seventeen of the participants did not complete the *Psychological Well-Being Scale* (Ryff et al., 1995). Fifteen of the participants did not complete

the *Satisfaction with Life Scale* Diener et al., 1985). Each participant was provided with the scales in different orders to so unfinished questionnaires could be caused by a decline in interest. Out of the 17 participants that did not complete one or more of the scales, eleven of them were not provided with an inspirational quote and six of them were provided with an inspirational quote. It is undetermined whether the presence or absence of a quote had any impact on the scales being completed.

Another limitation related to the current study was that correlations were used to identify relationships. Relationships were identified, but it can not be concluded that there was any cause and effect relationship. For example, the current study concluded that there was a positive relationship between well-being and exercise. Therefore, the more exercise a person engaged in was related to higher levels of happiness. However, there is no identifiable marker that indicates whether happy people exercise more or if exercise increases happiness.

Lastly, the current study focused on the immediate effects that the inspirational quotes had on well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness. However, some positive psychology traits such as life satisfaction are difficult to alter in a short period of time (Oliver & MacLeod, 2018).

Directions for Future Research

Future research could look at the long-term effects inspirational quotes have on well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction. The current study may have found more differences between the control and experimental groups if the quotes were being provided regularly over a longer time span. For example, future research could conduct a longitudinal study where the three positive psychology aspects are measured, and then inspirational quotes are provided every day over a period of time. After this has been done, the three scales can be provided again so a

comparison can be made. Future research could also look at how inspirational quotes can be implemented into people's daily lives for example through social media or computer apps.

The current study identified an increase in well-being when a quote was provided, but there was no significant difference for life satisfaction or happiness. Future research could look more in-depth at the susceptibility to change of well-being compared to life satisfaction and happiness.

Implications

The experimental group who received inspirational quotes in this study reported significantly higher levels of well-being. Well-being is an important positive psychology topic that is beneficial to increase to improve a person's life (Oliver & MacLeod, 2018). Inspirational quotes can be seen throughout many areas of life including posters, social media posts, advertisements, and movies. The impact inspirational quotes have on individuals is important to study to understand where they work best and why. Studying how inspirational quotes impact us can offer information about how quotes can be used in beneficial ways, such as increasing well-being in certain environments. The results of this study support the use of inspirational quotes to increase well-being. Classrooms and the workplace may be important places to expose people to inspirational quotes.

Conclusion

The present study has demonstrated a relationship between well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction consistent with previous research. Inspirational quotes were shown to have positively impacted well-being. The study supports a need for future research regarding the longitudinal impact inspirational quotes may have on positive psychology aspects such as well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness as well as other areas of positive psychology. Findings

suggest it could be beneficial to implement inspirational quotes into areas of life such as work and educational environments.

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Appendix A

Participants Needed

For a study investigating self-reports on positive psychology concepts



Participants needed to complete a 5-10 minute questionnaire containing questions about self-reported positive psychology concepts. All responses will be anonymous and confidential. Participants must be 19 years of age or older or a college or university student. There are no right or wrong answers. This study is being conducted as an honours project for psychology 4959. If you have any questions please

contact Shannara Klassen at sklassen@grenfell.mun.ca or Dr. Sonya Corbin Dwyer at scorbin@grenfell.mun.ca

This study has been approved by an ethics review process in the psychology program at Grenfell Campus.

<https://tinyurl.com/positivepsychconcep>

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Appendix B

Advertisement for social media and Grenfell Participation pool: “I am conducting a study for my honors project in psychology at Grenfell Campus regarding self reports on positive psychology concepts. Participants must be at least 19 years of age or be a university or college student. The study is an online survey which should take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. It would be greatly appreciated if you took the time to fill out the questionnaire so the necessary information can be gathered to complete the study. If you are interested in participating, please go to the link provided. Thank you.”

Appendix C

**Investigating Self-Reports on Positive Psychology Concepts
Informed Consent Form**

The purpose of this Informed Consent Form is to ensure you understand the nature of this study and your involvement in it. This consent form will provide information about the study, giving you the opportunity to decide if you want to participate.

Researchers: This study is being conducted by Shannara Klassen as part of the course requirements for Psychology 4959, Honors Project in Psychology. She is under the supervision of Dr. Sonya Corbin Dwyer.

Purpose: The study is designed to investigate self-reported aspects of positive psychology concepts. The results will be used to write a lab report as part of the course requirements and presented at conferences. The study may be published in the future.

Task Requirements: You will be asked to complete a 30-item questionnaire. There are no right or wrong answers to the statements. You may omit any questions you do not wish to answer.

Duration: The questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes or less to complete.

Risks and Benefits: There are no obvious risks or benefits involved with your participation in this study.

Anonymity and Confidentiality: Your responses are anonymous and confidential. IP addresses will not be collected. All information will be analyzed and reported on a group basis. Thus, individual responses cannot be identified by the researchers. The survey company, Qualtrics, hosts this study and data on private Canadian servers. All information will also be held on a password protected computer during the duration of the project.

Right to Withdraw: Your participation in this research is voluntary and you are free to stop participating at any time. However, once you complete this survey and click submit, your data cannot be removed because we are not collecting any identifying information and therefore, we cannot link individuals to their responses.

Contact Information: If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please feel free to contact Shannara at slklassen@grenfell.mun.ca or, Dr. Sonya Corbin Dwyer at 639-2546 or at scorbin@grenfell.mun.ca As well, if you are interested in knowing the results of the study, please contact them after April 18, 2020.

This study has been approved by an ethics review process in the psychology program at Grenfell Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland and has been found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy.

By proceeding to the next page, consent is implied, and I confirm that I am 19 years of age or older or am a university or college student.

Appendix D

End of Study

Thank you for your participation in this study which is investigating self-reports of positive psychology concepts. All information that has been given will be analyzed and reported on a group basis, therefore no individual responses can be identified. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study, please contact Shannara Klassen at slklassen@grenfell.mun.ca or Dr. Sonya Corbin Dwyer at scorbin@grenfell.mun.ca. If you are interested in finding out the results of the study, please contact one of the people listed above in April 2020 or attend the Nick Novakowski Student Research Conference at Grenfell Campus in April 2020.

If you have ethical concerns about the research (such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chair of the Grenfell Campus Research Ethics Board at gcethics@grenfell.mun.ca or by calling 709-639-2736. If this study raises any concerns for you, please contact the NL Health Crisis Line at 1-888-737-4668 or your province/state mental health crisis line. If you are a student at Grenfell Campus, you can contact Counselling and Psychological Services at 709-637-7919.

Thank you again for your participation.

Appendix E

Quote for experimental group: "Focus on the journey, not the destination. Joy is found not in finishing an activity but in doing it." *Greg Anderson*

Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985). The Satisfaction with Life Scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 49, 71-75.

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

2. The conditions of my life are excellent.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

3. I am satisfied with my life.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Appendix F

Quote for experimental group: "The difference between misery and happiness depends on what we do with out attention." – Sharon Salzberg

Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155.

6. In general, I consider myself:

not a very happy person 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 a very happy person

7. Compared with most of my peers, I consider myself:

less happy 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 more happy

8. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 a great deal

9. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 a great deal

Appendix G

11/15/2019


Mail - Klassen, Shannara L. - Outlook

Re: Subjective Happiness Scale

Sonja Lyubomirsky <sonja@ucr.edu>

Mon 2019-10-21 10:08 PM

To: Klassen, Shannara L. <slklassen@grenfell.mun.ca>

 1 attachments (62 KB)

Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999.pdf;

Hi there — You are welcome to use the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS). (My website, which includes the SHS, states that anyone can use it for research purposes.) Just be sure to cite the scale validation paper, attached.

All the information is also included here: <http://sonjalyubomirsky.com/subjective-happiness-scale-shs/>

You may also be interested in my two books, *The How of Happiness* and *The Myths of Happiness* (translated into many languages too).

All best,
—Sonja

Sonja Lyubomirsky | Professor and Vice Chair of Psychology
uc riverside

Department of Psychology

University of California

Riverside, CA 92521

t | 951.827.5041 f | 951.827.3985

academic | sonjalyubomirsky.com

book: *The How of Happiness* | thehowofhappiness.com<https://outlook.office365.com/mail/deeplink?version=2019110503.11&popoutv2=1>

1/2

Appendix H

Quote for experimental group: “Every person on this earth is full of great possibilities that can be realized through imagination, effort, and perseverance” – Scott Barry Kaufman

Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69(4), 719–727.

10. “I like most parts of my personality.”

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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11. “When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out so far.”

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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12. “Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.”

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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13. “The demands of everyday life often get me down.”

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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14. “In many ways I feel disappointed about my achievements in life.”

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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15. "Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me."

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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16. "I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future."

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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17. "In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live."

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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18. "I am good at managing the responsibilities of daily life."

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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19. "I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life."

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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20. "For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth."

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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21. "I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how I think about myself and the world."

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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22. "People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others."

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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23. "I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago"

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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24. "I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions"

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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25. "I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others."

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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26. "I have confidence in my own opinions, even if they are different from the way most other people think."

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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27. "I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important."

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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Appendix I

11/15/2019


Mail - Klassen, Shannara L. - Outlook

RE: Psychological Well-being Scale

THERESA M BERRIE <berrie@wisc.edu>

Tue 2019-10-22 10:22 AM

To: Klassen, Shannara L. <slklassen@grenfell.mun.ca>

 2 attachments (226 KB)

1- Ryff PWB Scales.docx; 2- Ryff PWB Reference Lists.docx;

Greetings,

Thanks for your interest in the well-being scales.
I am responding to your request on behalf of Carol Ryff.
She has asked me to send you the following:

You have her permission to use the scales for research or other non-commercial purposes.

They are attached in the following files:

"Ryff PWB Scales" includes:

- psychometric properties
- scoring instructions
- how to use different lengths of the scales

"Ryff PWB Reference Lists" includes:

- a list of the main publications about the scales
- a list of published studies using the scales

There is no charge to use the scales and no need to send us the results of your study.
We do ask that you please send us copies
of any journal articles you may publish using the scales to:

<https://outlook.office365.com/mail/deeplink?version=2019110503.11&popoutv2=1>

1/2

Appendix J

28. What is your gender? _____

29. Age: _____

30. What is your academic year if applicable (1st year, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th+): _____

31. What is your current employment?

A) Full-time B) Part-time C) Student D) Both B & C E) Other: _____

32. How often do you exercise?

A) Never

B) Rarely (Less than once a month)

C) Sometimes (More than once a month)

D) Often (More than once a week)

E) Very Often (Five or more times a week)

33. I consider myself a spiritual person (i.e., having a relationship with a higher power, or having a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves)

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	A little agree	Neither agree nor disagree	A little disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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