

Yoga and Positive Psychology for Managing Career and Life
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DharmahKriya and Sukhayu-Hitayu: Ways of Attaining Wellbeing
Lecture - 47
Dharmahkriya in Positive Psychology

(Refer Slide Time: 00:16)

DharmahKriya in Positive Psychology

Period	>25% or more	>20.3% or more	>5% or more
1984-83	~15	~10	~5
1984-88	~25	~15	~8
1989-2003	~35	~25	~10
2004-03	~40	~28	~12

Fig. 1. Percentages recording large changes in life satisfaction: >25%, >20.3%, and >5% (aged 25-64 y, n = 853).

- Self determination theory points out the role of autonomy, competence and belongingness as natural expressions of human nature
- Work of Elizabeth Dunn and colleagues on relationship between money and happiness; importance of connection, impact and choice
- Limitation of Set Point theory, Work of Bruce Headey and Colleagues on association of happiness with self and partners personality, non economic goal like social participation and healthy life style and transferability through parents

Key References

Dunn, E. W., Aknin, L. B., & Norton, M. I. (2008). Spending money on others promotes happiness. *Science*, 319(5870), 1687-1688.

Headey, B., Muffels, R., & Wagner, G. G. (2010). Long-running German panel survey shows that personal and economic choices, not just genes, matter for happiness. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 107(42), 17922-17926.

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Let us look at how Dharmakriya. Dharmahkriya is in line with the modern positive psychological finding. Dharmahkriya includes civilization of self and expression of the power of self, expression of the talent of the self for the well-being of all that is the essence of Dharmahkriya.

If we look at the positive psychology, the foundational theory it also talks about self-determination theory. Self-determination theory also says that human being have tendency and power to get the autonomy. They want to have control over their environment. They have another tendency to develop competency, we have had more discussion on this in the second or third session.

So, human being have urged to get autonomy to develop competency and develop belongingness to build groups, to make families, to build communities all these are natural expressions of human

nature. So, in the dharmakriya as well people actually realize their autonomy, their competence and their belongingness the tendency to belongingness with the family society and community.

The work of Elizabeth Dunn is very interesting in this regard. So, she has looked at the connection between money and happiness, Dunn and colleague have found that happiness and money are connected only to some extent beyond that extend additional money does not give us happiness.

Actually, it has small negative connection with the happiness. So, when more money can give happiness, money can give happiness beyond a point beyond the point where people can fulfill their basic requirements, money can give happiness only when they are able to use it for the altruistic purpose, when they are able to use it for the social cause.

And when they get benefit and when they get happiness by spending money for the social cause is when they have a sense of connection for which they are spending money. So, there has to be some connection there has to be a sense of connection impact when they see the impact of their work, the positive impact of their work that increases the happiness. Then ends third is choice, when they have choice of spending money for a particular purpose for the particular project which they feel connected to.

So, connection impact and choice these three things when they are there, then only additional money additional beyond a point where it satisfies the basic needs, additional money can give happiness only when it is spent with the sense of connection impact and choice. Work of Bruce Headey is also very very insightful about dharmakriya what it says and before we understand the work of Headey and colleagues, we need to understand this a theory called set point theory.

Set point theory is the concept or a theoretical proposition based on which at least 25- 30 years people build policies and the whole thinking about happiness was around this set point theory, what it says that people have a set point about their happiness. So, people can be different in terms of their happiness, but what is the point of happiness for a person that remains almost the same.

So, if something bad happens in life they come down to the happiness scale, but then after some time they come back to that set point. Similarly, if something great happens in their life they their happiness increases for some time, but then after that their happiness level comes to the original

level. So, there is a set point we cannot do much in terms of the policy formulation or some social interventions to enhance the level of happiness of the people.

This proposition is seriously challenged by Bruce Headey and his colleague what they have done, they looked at the panel data in Germany and this panel data is very extensively collected at the time frame of 30 years. So, they looked at the 30 year time frame about people's satisfaction of life, their life preferences, their life choices. So, it is a very extensive survey and these 30000 households are involved in this survey.

So, instead of looking at year to year regression between life satisfaction happiness and other factors they club the data for 5 years. So, they looked at the average of 5 years and what they have found that over the years there were people whose happiness levels increased. So, that was the major blow to set point theory, which was about believing that people generally have one set point of their level of happiness.

They found that there are quite a few people whose happiness is actually increasing very significantly in the when we combine the data in the chunk of 5 years. So, the next question was what was increasing? What were the factors behind increase and permanent increase in the happiness? And what they found was that economic goals were not explaining the increase in the happiness? There were some non-economic goals which were increasing the which were making the permanent increase in the happiness.

What was those non-economic goals? Those non-economic goals were social participation, engaging with some socially relevant projects some social work, some helping with some sections of society, commitment for some larger purpose these things were associated with increase in the happiness level.

Healthy lifestyle and transferability through parents these are also two very important factors. People by changing health to the happy lifestyle and that also that includes inclusion of yogic practices in our day-to-day life that is found to be associated with the permanent increase in happiness, one more finding is that the happiness of children is closely associated with the happiness of parents.

So, as a parents we can influence just by our personality, we can influence the happiness level of the children just by the way we are, at the same time they found that children could change their level of happiness by their individual efforts. So, it is not only what is received genetically or in the family, children can actually put an effort and enhance their level of happiness by social participation and healthy lifestyle.

So, these are some of the interesting findings in the modern positive psychology and the general psychology which suggests that dharmakriya; that means, working for the social cause larger purpose is deeply connected nimit, what this sutra say is nimit of happiness nimit of harsh.

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A divergence from ongoing lecture we should not avoid?



If happiness is dependent on so many non economic factors and so much about how we choose our life goals, choose and build our relationships, engage with social and natural environment why our education is so predominantly focused on economic actors and core professional competence?

<https://drawception.com/game/smChilyZd3/two-roads-diverged-in-a-yellow-wood/>

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Here I would like to have a little divergence from the ongoing lecture we are discussing the different factors of well-being and we will continue to discuss, but I am tempted to pose this question to all those who are watching this video if happiness is dependent on so many non-economic factors. So, by the way in the journal panel data there was no significant difference in the happiness across different professions or across different income groups.

So, happiness is dependent and change in the happiness dependent a lot on the non-economic factors and it is so much so that how we choose our life goal, how we choose and build our

relationships, engaging our engagement with the social and natural environment this is connected with all these things.

Then why our education system is predominantly focused on the economic factors and the core professional competencies which are mostly economic in nature, why we do not give sufficient input on choosing the life goal more consciously, choosing and building relationship in more effective ways and engaging with the social and natural environment this is just a divergence.

I hope there is a serious discussion on this aspect of education, which is so deeply influential on the quality of life on the level of happiness we live at.