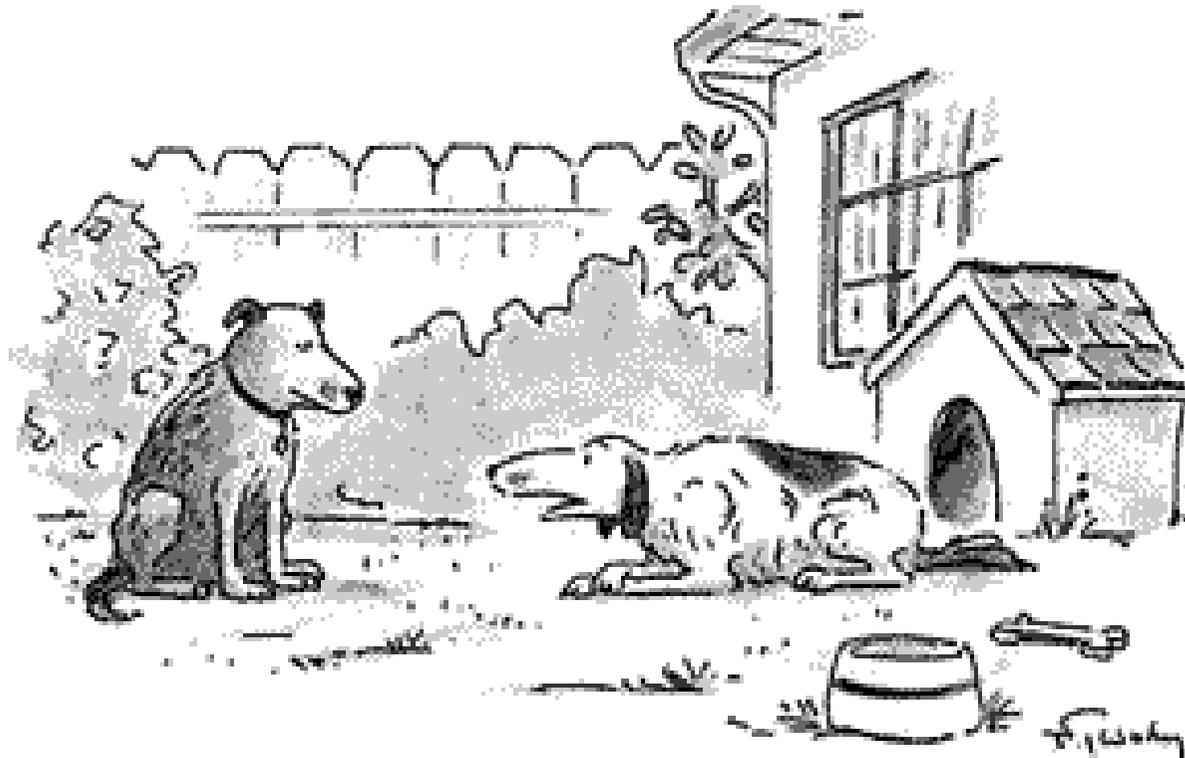


BUILDING A HAPPIER SOCIETY TOGETHER



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS



**“I’ve got the bowl, the bone, the big yard.
I know I should be happy”**

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

There's a lot of talk about happiness at the moment



I CAN MAKE YOU
HAPPY
PAUL MCKENNA
INCLUDES FREE HYPNOSIS CD

What do we mean by happiness?



Positive emotion

Feeling good right now

+



Life Satisfaction

Feeling that life is going well overall

+



Meaning & Purpose

Feeling that what you do is worthwhile

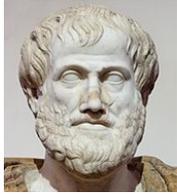
Warm-up exercise: what makes you happy?



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS



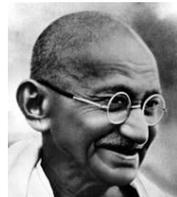
Some wise words on happiness



"Happiness is the meaning and the purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence" ~ **Aristotle**



"Happiness is not something ready made. It comes from your own actions" ~ **Dalai Lama**



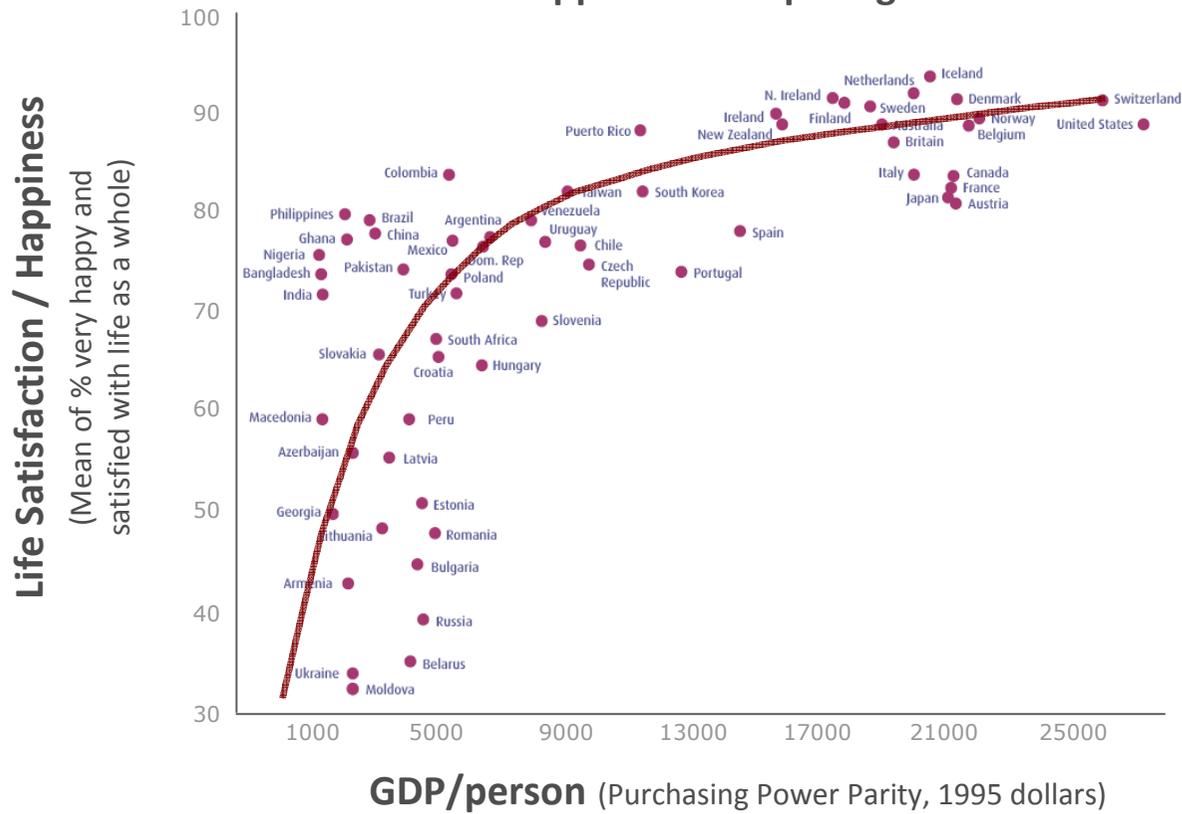
"Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony" ~ **Mahatma Gandhi**



"The talent for being happy is appreciating and liking what you have, instead of what you don't have" ~ **Woody Allen**

GDP only predicts happiness to a certain extent

GDP and Happiness: comparing countries



QUIZ: The world's happiest country



Which of these countries is consistently rated as being the happiest?

1. Netherlands



2. Denmark



3. United States

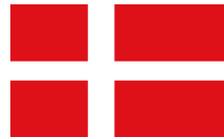


4. Brazil

Denmark consistently comes top of the happiness league



Answer: **Denmark**

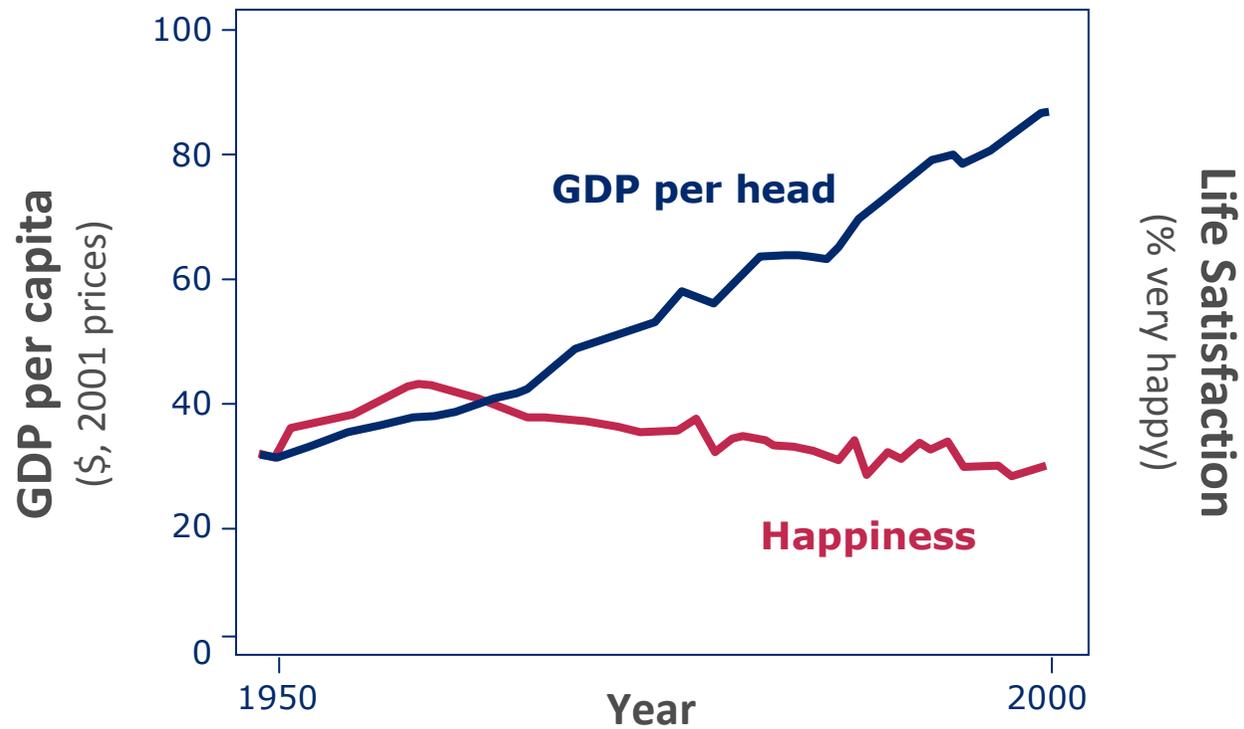


Why? It could be because the Danes are...

- **Connected:** great importance placed on family and community
- **Trusting:** high levels of trust
- **Fair:** very low levels of inequality
- **Supportive:** strong social safety net
- **Balanced:** good balance between work and leisure
- **Self-accepting:** extremely low *gelotophobia*

We've been getting richer but no happier

Changes in Happiness and GDP over time





**“Researchers say I’m not happier for being richer,
but do you know how much researchers make?”**

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

We've known for years that GDP is flawed...

"Gross National Product counts **air pollution** and **cigarette advertising**, and ambulances to clear our highways of **carnage**. It counts the **destruction** of the redwood and the loss of our natural wonder in **chaotic sprawl**. It counts the television programs which glorify **violence** to sell toys to our children.

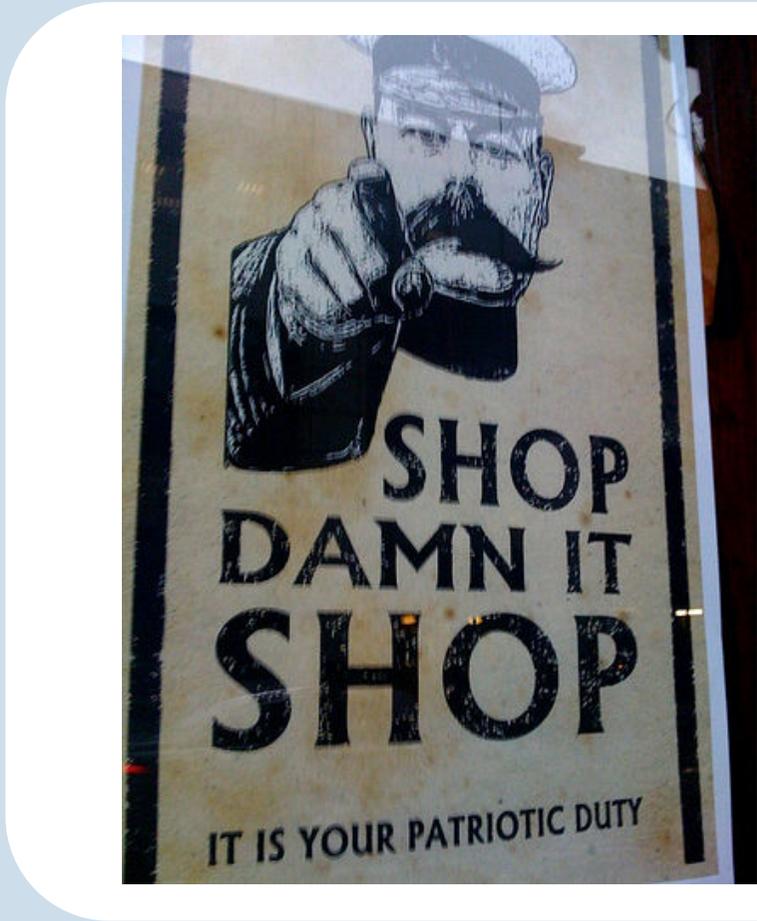
"Yet it does not allow for the **health** of our children, the quality of their **education** or the **joy** of their play. It does not include the **beauty** of our poetry or the **strength** of our marriages, the **intelligence** of our public debate or the **integrity** of our officials. It measures neither our **wit** nor our **courage**, neither our **wisdom** nor our **learning**...

"It measures everything in short, except that which makes life worthwhile"



Robert F. Kennedy
(1968 speech)

If we don't keep consuming the system will fail!



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Modern consumer society is failing to deliver fulfilling lives



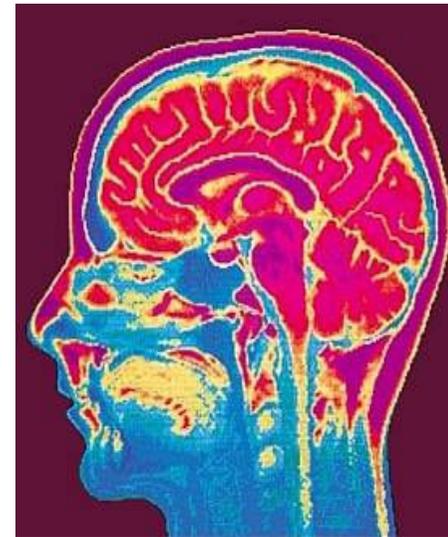
“We are being persuaded to spend money we don't have, on things we don't need, to create impressions that won't last, on people we don't care about” (Tim Jackson)

Research is uncovering what really affects our happiness



Our levels of happiness are not set in stone

- Although our **genes** and **circumstances** affect our well-being, a significant portion of our life satisfaction comes from our **conscious choices** and **behaviour**
- Neuroscience research shows that happiness is the product of **skills** that can be **learned and enhanced** through training, thanks to the **neuroplasticity** of our brains



Our approach to life makes a big difference to our happiness



The four basic personality types

GREAT DREAM: Ten Keys to Happier Living

GIVING



DIRECTION



RELATING



RESILIENCE



EXERCISING



EMOTION



APPRECIATING



ACCEPTANCE



TRYING OUT



MEANING



Happiness leads to better health and longevity

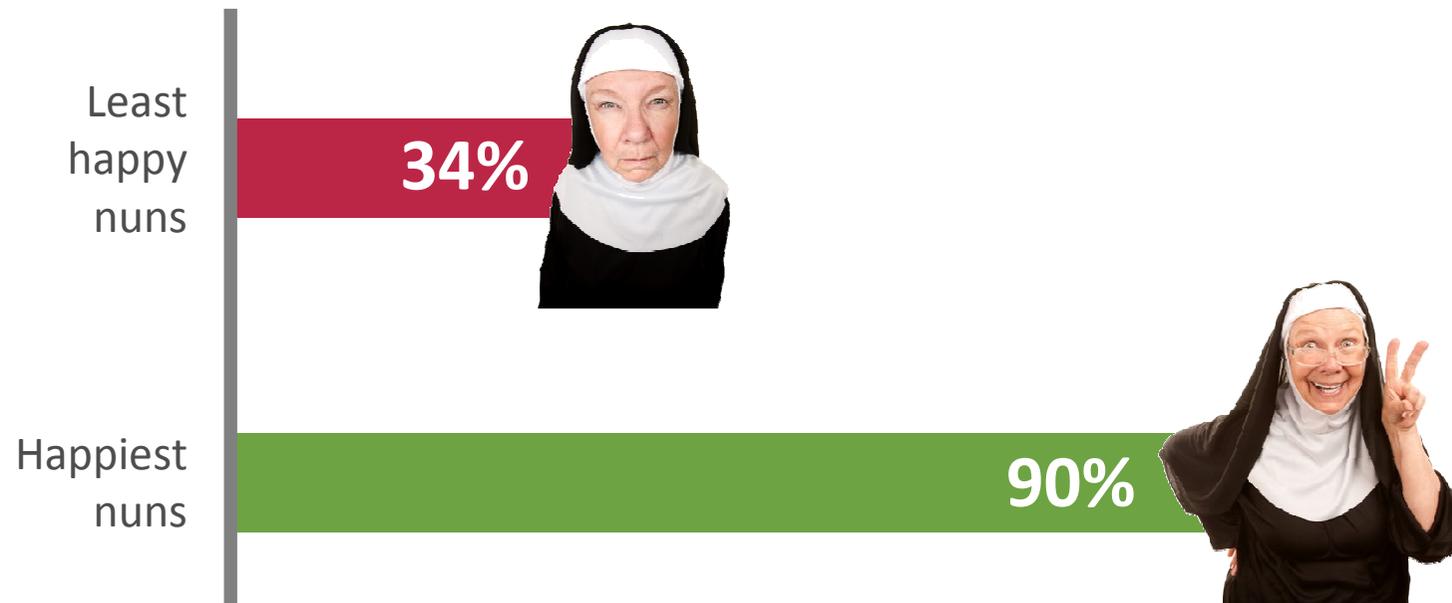
- A review of more than 160 different studies has found “clear and compelling evidence” that happy people experience **better overall health** and **live longer** than their less happy peers



- Anxiety, depression, pessimism and a lack of enjoyment of daily activities have all been found to be associated with **higher rates of disease** and **shorter lifespans**

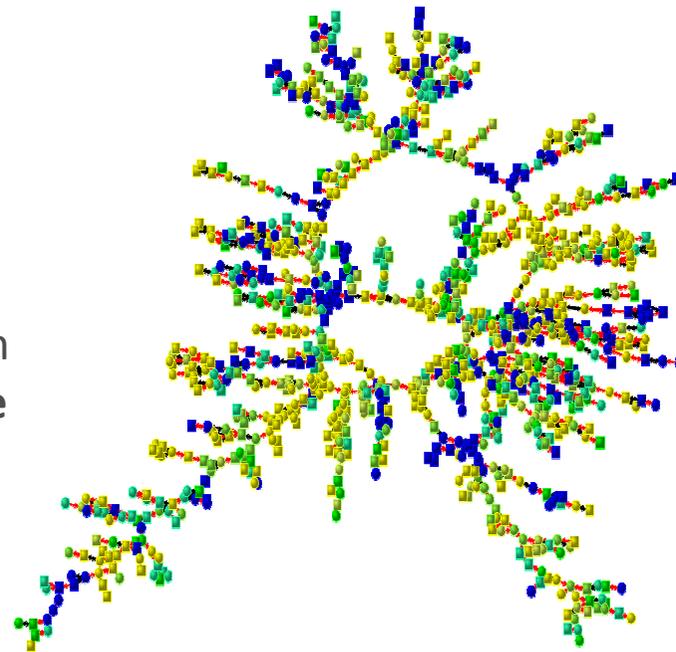
Milwaukee study: happy nuns lived so much longer

Percentage of nuns still alive at 85



Our emotions are contagious across social networks

- How happy or unhappy we are affects the people we know and the people they know
- An extensive longitudinal study has shown that our emotions can affect the happiness across **three degrees of separation** (i.e. the friend of a friend of a friend)



Action for Happiness: building a happier society together



**A movement of people taking action
to create a happier society for everyone**

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS



The Action for Happiness pledge

“I will try to create more happiness and less unhappiness in the world around me”



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

The Action for Happiness founders and board



Richard Layard

London School of Economics



Geoff Mulgan

NESTA



Anthony Seldon

Wellington College



Vanessa King

Positive Psychologist



Nic Marks

New Economics Foundation



Mark Williamson

Director

Action for Happiness: our key beliefs



We can each affect our happiness and the happiness of those around us



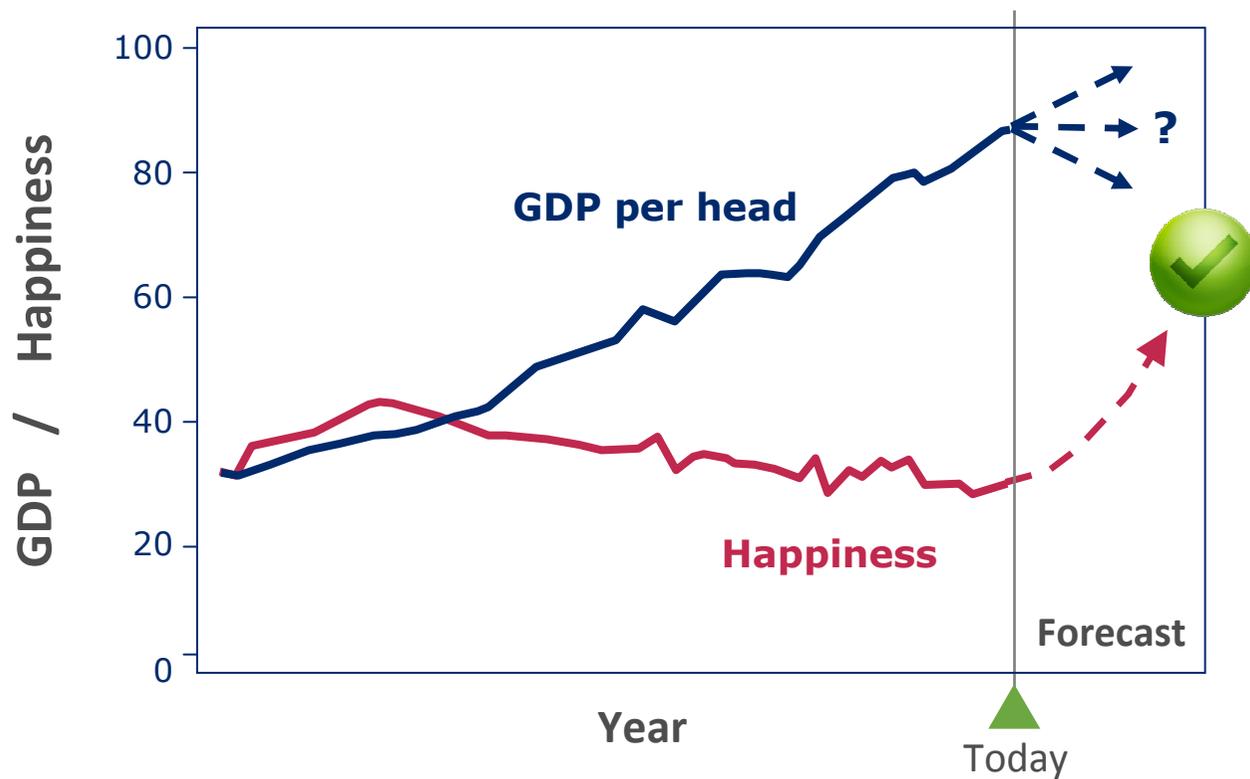
We need to prioritise the things that cause happiness



Helping others is essential for a happier society

What are we hoping to see happen?

Changes in Happiness and GDP over time



Our five main areas of activity

- 
-  ➤ **Global/political agenda**
 -  ➤ **Building the movement**
 -  ➤ **Local action groups**
 -  ➤ **Happiness in schools**
 -  ➤ **Happiness at work**

We are starting to see an encouraging shift in attitude



“It’s time we admitted there’s more to life than money, and it’s time we focussed not just on GDP but on GWB: General Well-Being.

Well-being can’t be measured by money or traded in markets. It’s about the quality of our culture, the beauty of our surroundings and, above all, the strength of our relationships”

David Cameron
UK Prime Minister

The UK is now officially measuring the nation's wellbeing

UK households are now being regularly asked:

- Overall, how **satisfied** are you with your life nowadays?
- Overall, how **happy** did you feel yesterday?
- Overall, how **anxious** did you feel yesterday?
- Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are **worthwhile**?

How can government help improve wellbeing?



Economy

Ensure stability and low unemployment



Healthcare

Focus on improving mental health



Education

Teach children life skills and values



Families

Support for early years and parenting



Equality

Reduce inequality and support those in need



Community

Encourage more civic engagement

Happiness book leads to important letter to world leaders

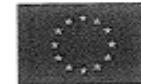


“This book... comes to you not only with my wishes for a happy new year but also with my request to you as world leaders to make people’s happiness and well-being our political priority for 2012.”

“I am very happy to give my support to the activity of Lord Richard Layard and Action for Happiness... it is an international movement for positive social change.”

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Mr Barack Obama
President of the United States of America



Dear Mr President *Barack*

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May the World Book of Happiness stimulate us all on this path.

Happy New Year!

Herman Van Rompuy
Chairman of the European Council



First ever United Nations conference on Happiness



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Happiness will be part of the new Sustainable Development Goals



RIO+20
United Nations
Conference on
Sustainable
Development



“We will be incorporating happiness in the Sustainable Development Goals”

Jeff Sachs

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Our five main areas of activity

- 
- **Global/political agenda**
 - **Building the movement**
 - **Local action groups**
 - **Happiness in schools**
 - **Happiness at work**

A network of partner organisations



national union of students

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Estimated media reach to over 10 million people in the UK



marie claire

THE TIMES



Telegraph

DAILY EXPRESS



Daily Mail



THE HUFFINGTON POST



PSYCHOLOGIES



THE INDEPENDENT



THE SUNDAY TIMES



theguardian



REUTERS

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Some media reactions have been rather cynical...



Janet Street-Porter, Daily Mail (Sept 2011)

“I like to think that negativity and pessimism are unique British traits which should be celebrated, not frowned upon”

...but others have been extremely positive



Hannah Booth, The Guardian (Sept 2011)

**“I come away...
glowing with
something indefinable
– the sensation that
I’ve done something
really nice”**

We've attracted around 500,000 visitors to our website



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

We've built a social media community of over 30,000 followers

facebook

The screenshot shows the Facebook profile for Action for Happiness. The profile name is "Action for Happiness" with 17,588 likes and 2,209 people talking about it. The bio states: "Non-Profit Organization www.actionforhappiness.org Action for Happiness is a movement of people taking action to create a happier society. Let's prioritise the things that really matter. Join us". The "Likes" tab is selected, showing a post by Oliver Burkeman with 17,589 likes circled in red. Other posts include a quote by Dalai Lama and a link shared by Action for Happiness.

twitter

The screenshot shows the Twitter profile for Action for Happiness (@actionhappiness). The bio reads: "Movement of people committed to creating a happier society by making positive changes in their personal lives, homes, workplaces and communities." The profile shows 2,382 tweets, 772 followers, and 13,178 followers circled in red. Recent tweets include a call to join an event and a quote by Dalai Lama.

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

We've spoken at events to around 9,000 people

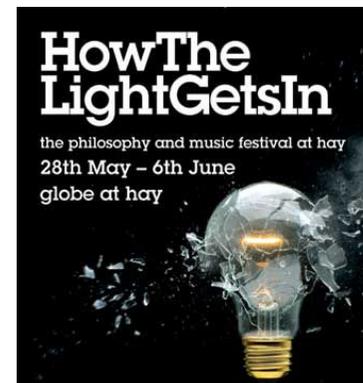
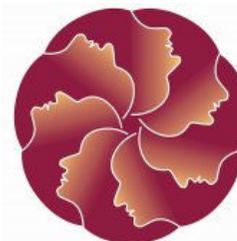
THE SCHOOL OF LIFE

IDEAS TO LIVE BY



Policy Exchange

INTERROGATE!
FESTIVAL



MIND & LIFE INSTITUTE

baacp

British Association for
Counselling & Psychotherapy

HAPPINESS & its causes



TEDx Observer
x = independently organized TED event
SATURDAY 19 MARCH 2011, LONDON



LONDON
+acumen



HAY FESTIVAL

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Old Narrative: "happiness comes from consuming & owning more"

Official
FIFA
Partner

SOUTH
AFRICA
2010
FIFA
WORLD CUP

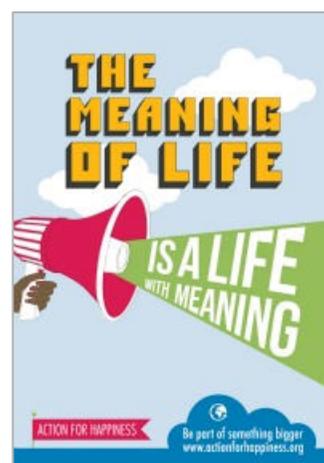
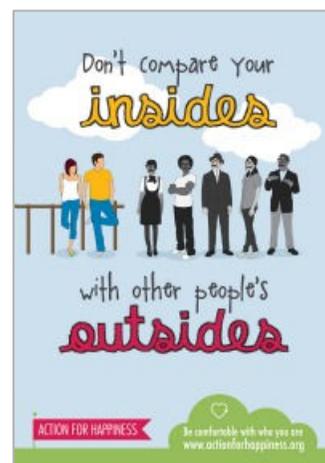
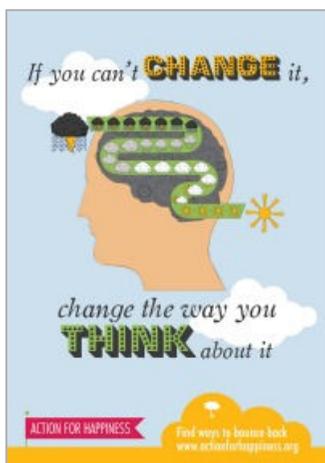
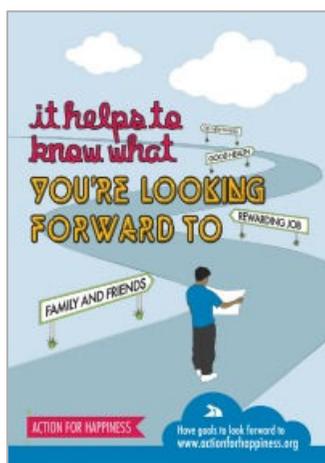
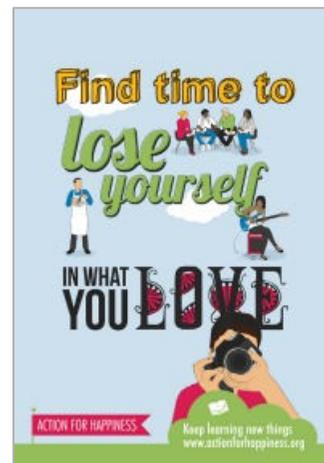
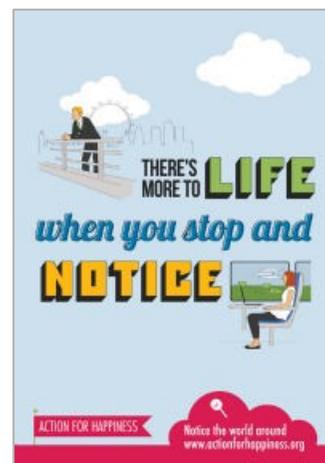
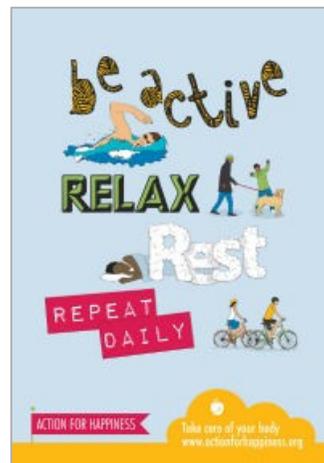
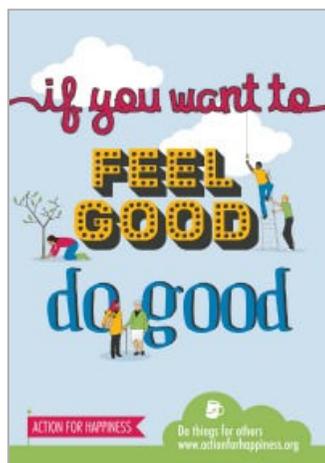
Coca-Cola

open happiness™

New Narrative: “real happiness is about people not stuff”



Our poster series brings the 10 Keys to life



It's been inspiring to have feedback from our members

“The past year has been challenging for me in terms of bereavement and ill health in the family and Action for Happiness has been a real support”

Debbie, Hampshire

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

It's been inspiring to have feedback from our members

“Due to Action for Happiness, I've spent my first day as a volunteer trustee of a charity today. Thanks for the kick up the bum that made me do it!”

Judi, Wallingford

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Our five main areas of activity



➤ **Global/political agenda**



➤ **Building the movement**



➤ **Local action groups**



➤ **Happiness in schools**



➤ **Happiness at work**

Local Action for Happiness groups



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Local Action for Happiness groups

Enabling local community groups to provide mutual support and encouragement to put our evidence-based actions into practice

- Groups open to all and led by non-expert volunteers
- Activities in 15 UK locations so far: Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Carlisle, Glasgow, Hastings, Lancaster, Lincoln, Loughborough, London, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Plymouth and York

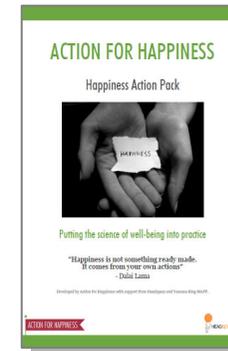


Initial trial in Scarborough on BBC TV

Working with:



The
British
Psychological
Society



Happiness Action Pack

We are hoping to recruit a network of “champions” across the UK

- We hope to see **100 groups** across the UK by the end of 2013
- This will be supported by a network of regional **AfH “champions”**
- Champions will **run local activities** and receive **training** and **support**
- Once proven we hope to extend this approach **around the world**



Our five main areas of activity



➤ **Global/political agenda**



➤ **Building the movement**



➤ **Local action groups**



➤ **Happiness in schools**



➤ **Happiness at work**

The UK is shockingly bad for child well-being

UNICEF
Innocenti Research Centre
Report Card 7

Child poverty in perspective:

An overview of child well-being in rich countries

**A comprehensive assessment of the lives
and well-being of children and adolescents
in the economically advanced nations**



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

League table of Child Wellbeing in OECD

- Netherlands
- Sweden
- Denmark
- Finland
- Spain
- Switzerland
- Norway
- Italy
- Ireland
- Belgium
- Germany
- Canada
- Greece
- Poland
- Czech Republic
- France
- Portugal
- Austria
- Hungary
- United States
- **United Kingdom**



Schools: helping children develop essential life skills



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS



Action for Happiness in Schools

Creating a movement of schools that are committed to putting happiness and well-being at the heart of their ethos and activities



Schools

Call to action
←
→
Access to resources

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

- Evidence/resources
- Case studies
- Access to providers of training & workshops
- Events/networking

Partnership for Wellbeing in Schools

EMOTIONAL FIRST AID

@antidote PROMISING PROGRESS

YOUNGMINDS IN SCHOOLS BETA Supporting the emotional wellbeing of children and young people in schools

how to THRIVE

ncb

The Matthew Elvidge Trust

The Children's Society

ICE LONDON

P1ac2b

WELLINGTON COLLEGE

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Our five main areas of activity



➤ **Global/political agenda**



➤ **Building the movement**



➤ **Local action groups**



➤ **Happiness in schools**



➤ **Happiness at work**

Workplaces: people work best when they feel good



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS





“Ok, if you can’t see your way to giving me a pay raise, how about giving Jones a pay cut?”

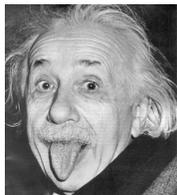
Final thoughts



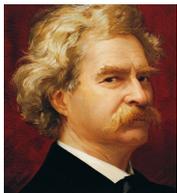
"People will forget what you said and what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel" ~ **Maya Angelou**



"Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits put together that overwhelm the world" ~ **Desmond Tutu**



"Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile"
~ **Albert Einstein**



"The best way to cheer yourself up is to cheer somebody else up" ~ **Mark Twain**

Join the movement. Be the change

www.actionforhappiness.org



facebook.com/actionforhappiness



[@actionhappiness](https://twitter.com/actionhappiness)



youtube.com/actionforhappiness

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS