

The ENHANCE Program



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1646 Connecticut Dr., Salt Lake City, UT 84103

Welcome to ENHANCE

Small Changes to Enhance your Health and Well-Being During COVID-19

The ENHANCE Program was developed to bring together the science of happiness and well-being with the most up to date research-based approaches towards forming new, healthy habits. Throughout the program, you will be introduced to the **10 Principles of Happiness and Well-Being** that have been shown to improve people's emotional experiences and life satisfaction.

First, we will introduce you to the basic science of happiness in Session 1. Over the next 10 sessions, we will spend time discussing each new happiness/well-being principle and the different strategies for effectively practicing these principles in your daily life. Finally, we will end with a plan for your long-term health and well-being!

Session Topics

Session 1: Welcome to ENHANCE

Session 2: Values & Goals

Session 3: Physical Well-Being

Session 4: Mindfulness

Session 5: Dealing with the Negative (Part I)

Session 6: Dealing with the Negative (Part II)

Session 7: Close Relationships

Session 8: Social Interactions

Session 9: Gratitude & Savouring

Session 10: Contributing to the Happiness of Others

Session 11: Harnessing Your Personal Strengths

Session 12: Moving Forward

FOREWORD

The COVID-19 pandemic has had profound effects on each of us—from those who have suffered with the virus or cared for those who have, to those who have struggled endlessly with concern for the health and well-being of those they love. COVID-19 has led to lost jobs and routines, lost access to regular health and well-being supports, and new roles, such as teacher or daycare provider (while perhaps still working). Many of us have faced the physical and emotional tolls of self-isolation and feared the uncertainties of the future ahead.

There is no doubt that we are now living in a challenging and stressful time with many consequences for well-being—including increased stress, depression, and anxiety, addiction, and domestic abuse. A recent study published in *Nature* of June 2020 reported an all time low in well-being in the United States. While there may be no single remedy, one part of the solution is to offer treatment and programs for those in need. Another part is to strengthen our mental health skills and resilience, helping us to suffer less from the challenges facing us.

Over the past 30 years, there has been an explosion of research into the science of happiness and well-being. We know more now about how to improve these vital aspects of the human experience. In fact, over the past 5 years, we and our colleagues have developed and tested the effectiveness of a 12-week program — *ENHANCE (Enduring Happiness and Continued Self-Enhancement)* — that has been shown to improve positive emotions, well-being and life satisfaction. The ENHANCE program has also shown benefits for decreasing negative emotions and improving overall physical health. What is more, these benefits were maintained over a 6-month period.

ENHANCE is a skills-based program that teaches mental health, resilience, and social skills that can help us flourish even in tough times. ENHANCE can help buffer against strains on our emotional well-being, and very often it can increase our life satisfaction, supportive social relationships, and personal resilience. The ENHANCE program has been tested in randomized trials in Canada and the United States, and the resulting research findings have been presented nationally and internationally and published in several highly respected scientific journals.

Given these unprecedented times, our team has worked to modify the ENHANCE program to address the common mental and physical health challenges faced by each of us on a daily basis. Our hope is that each week you will learn new principles and skills for maintaining or increasing your overall happiness and well-being by making small, meaningful changes in your daily life. Not all skills in this program will be the right fit for you, but we hope that you will discover the right mix of skills that are most meaningful to you and that align most with what you value in life.

Health—as defined by the World Health Organization (1995)—recognizes the importance of social, emotional, and physical well-being, not just the absence of disease. Therefore, we are honoured to offer this evidence-based program to anyone looking for additional support during this time.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ed Diener, Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois
Dr. Lesley Lutes, Professor, University of British Columbia

~ July 2020 ~

Welcome to ENHANCE

Small Changes to Enhance your Health and Well-Being During COVID-19



What is Happiness?

Happiness means something different to everyone. For some, happiness may mean feeling calmer, satisfied, and free of worries. For others, it may mean feeling joy and excitement in their daily life. For others still, it may be pursuing the right kind of goals in life and being true to their authentic selves.



Why Pursue Happiness?

- Become resilient to life's challenges
- Live a meaningful and fulfilling life
- Improve health and well-being
- Enhance close relationships
- Become more mindful

The Power of Positive Emotions

Positive emotions can help us change how we think about the world!



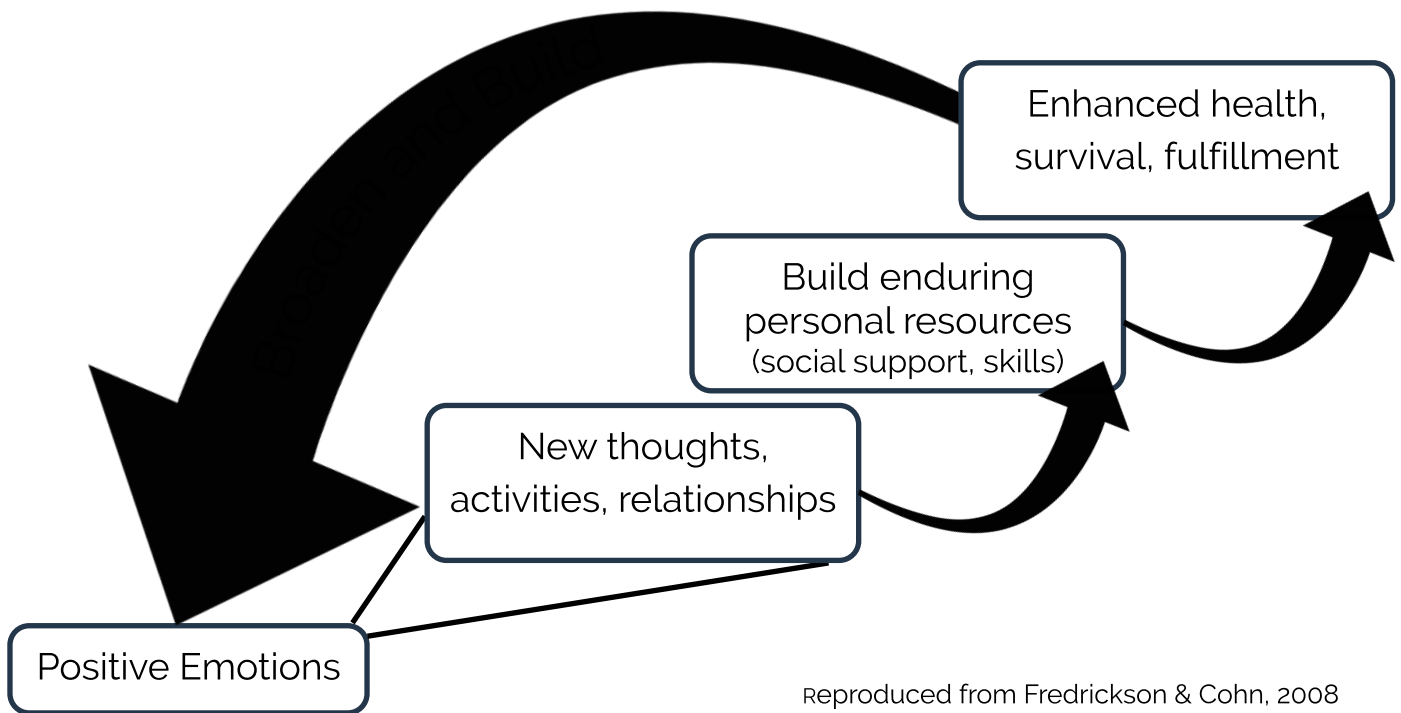
If you think that pursuing your happiness is selfish (especially now in these stressful and uncertain times), think again. When you feel happy, you improve your personal well-being and positively affect the people in your life. This is called an upward spiral of positive emotions!

Feeling happier not only benefits you but also the people in your life!



What do you need and want from this program?

The Power of Positive Emotions



What do you notice about yourself when you experience positive emotions? How does feeling happier affect your sense of empowerment, esteem, and confidence? What are your interactions like with others when you feel happier? How does feeling happier affect the way you behave around others and in different places and situations?

"I Will Be Happy When..."



People often believe the thought, "I will be happy when ...". This pattern of thinking postpones happiness to some future event, making the experience of happiness and positive well-being always beyond your reach. And this way of thinking can make you feel worse in times of stress and uncertainty.

Focusing on big life events can make us happier, but there are at least two reasons why long-term happiness and well-being cannot be found in big events alone.

Reason 1: People overestimate how happy they will feel when their dreams finally come true.

This is because people tend to focus only on the positive aspects of big life events and forget about the possible challenges.

Reason 2: Big life events are not the secret to long-term happiness because we adjust to these events when they finally come true.

Buying a new house, getting that job promotion, or getting back to your previous lifestyle (before COVID-19) can certainly boost your happiness in the moment. But this happiness is often short-lived and difficult to hold onto over the long-term. Because after adjusting to big life events, people often return to their usual levels of happiness.

"I Will Be Happy When..."



What Are Your "I Will Be Happy When..." Thoughts?

I will be happy when...

I will be happy when...

I will be happy when...

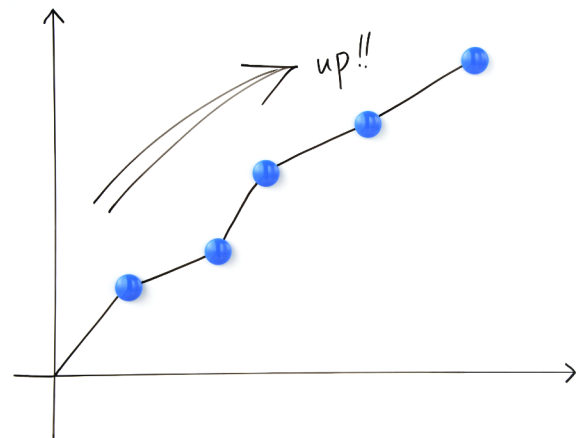
What Makes Us Happy?



Research suggests that our genes play a role in determining how happy we will be over the course of our life. This is called our "baseline for happiness." The simple fact is that some people are born with a happier disposition than others.

The good news is, our genetics are only partly responsible for determining how happy we will be in life. According to the researchers of happiness and well-being, a part of our happiness also falls under our immediate control. That is, we can choose to make small, meaningful changes in our daily lives towards enhancing our overall happiness and well-being. This means that we can increase our baseline for happiness beyond the level set by our genetics!

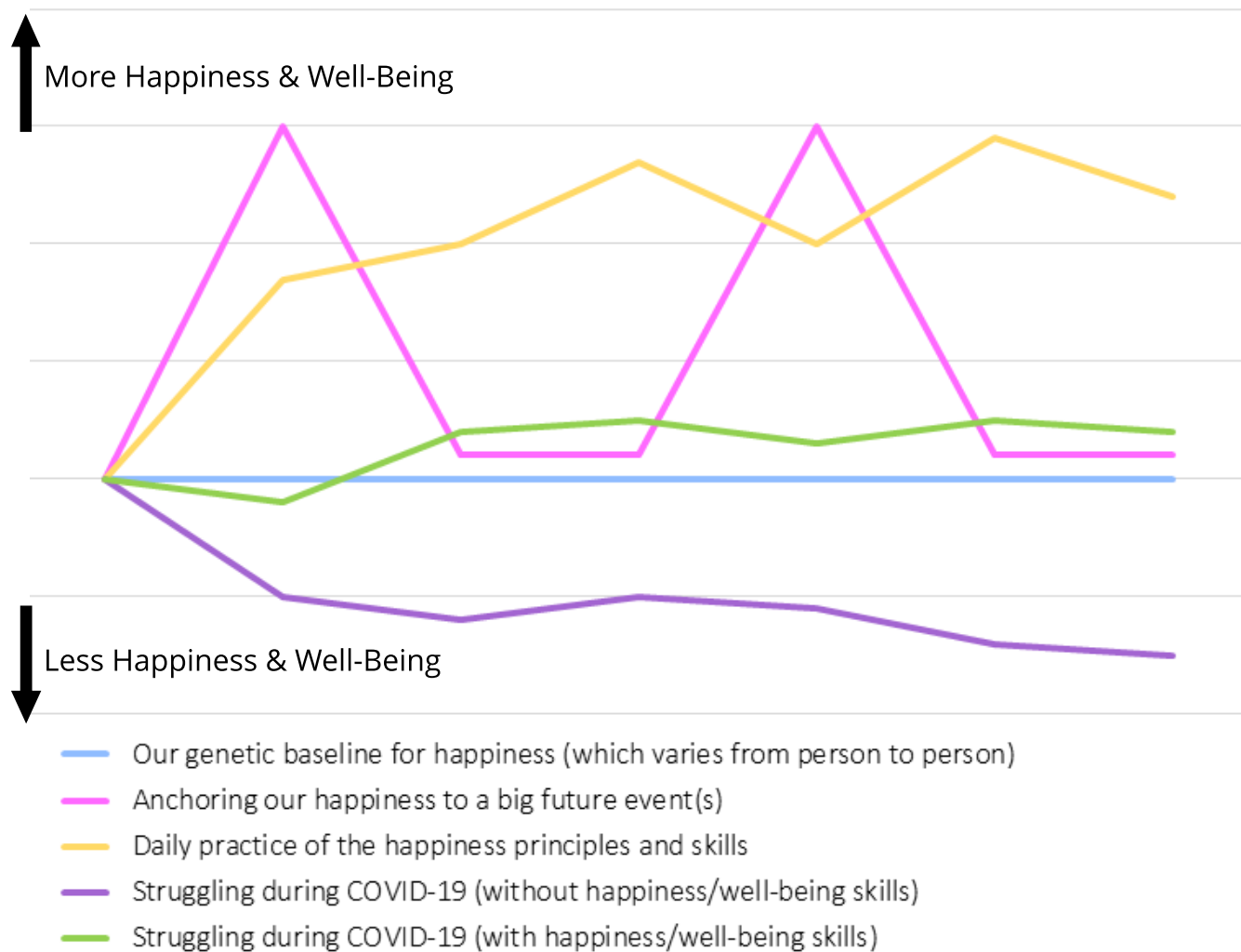
Throughout this program, we will explore decades of happiness and well-being research to learn about the key principles and skills to enhance personal happiness and well-being.



You will learn how to develop and practice these skills in your daily choices and actions towards enhancing your happiness and well-being over time. Throughout the program, we will be discussing how these skills can be adapted to help manage the current challenges of COVID-19.

Changing Our Baseline for Happiness

Happiness and Well-Being Over Time



The graph above illustrates the different ways that your baseline for happiness (blue line) can change over time. When you rely on big future events (e.g., buying a new car) to feel happier, you experience immediate boosts in your happiness, but you eventually return to your baseline level (pink line). Alternatively, big changes to your lifestyle (such as COVID-19, quarantine, isolation, and distancing) can cause you to feel more depressed, anxious, worried, and stressed - pulling down your happiness (purple line). The good news is, by applying the principles of happiness in your daily routine, over time your baseline for happiness gradually reaches new heights (yellow line)! You can even learn how to recover and enhance your happiness in especially challenging moments in your life, such as in this uncertain time of COVID-19 (green line).

Living Through the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has weighed heavily on each of us, upending life as we knew it. It is a matter of human, economic, and social crisis.



Here are some ways that people have been impacted in response to COVID-19 and public health measures, such as quarantine, isolation, and physical distancing:

- Loss of our daily schedule and routine
- Loss of our plans (travel, celebrations, pursuit of opportunities)
- Social isolation and loneliness
- More worries and stress (financial, relational, health, parental)
- Loss of lives (either directly or indirectly known to us)
- Loss of personal certainty and security
- And much more...

It is important to both recognize and honour the full range of emotions we have been experiencing throughout this pandemic. More than ever, we must practice self-compassion and remind ourselves of the simple truth, which is we are doing our very best in an utmost challenging time of our life. And we are not alone, as the rest of the world is faced with the same challenges.

This program was not intended to erase our negative emotions. The goal of this program is to develop the key principles and skills that can help us to better manage our negative emotions and experiences, in addition to enhancing our baseline for happiness over the long-term.

The ENHANCE Program in a Nutshell

What Is This Program Designed To Do?

You will learn how you can boost and sustain your happiness by tackling the three challenges of long-term happiness.

What are these three challenges?

1. Not knowing what leads to happiness.
2. Not knowing how to practice the principles of happiness.
3. Not practicing these principles in your daily life.

You will learn how to overcome each of these challenges by:

- Learning 10 principles of sustainable happiness.
- Engaging in activities that apply these principles.
- Developing habits that integrate these principles into your daily life.

What Is This Program NOT Designed To Do?

Our program is NOT designed to treat major mental illness.

- If you are struggling with mental illness, we encourage you to seek help from an appropriate mental health professional.

Our program is NOT designed as a magic bullet for happiness.

- There are no shortcuts for increasing happiness and well-being. Long-term happiness requires effort and practice to apply the principles you learn in this program towards making "real" long-term changes in your daily life.

Change Takes Practice and Effort!



Over the course of the program, you might find yourself standing outside your comfort zone. You may feel awkward rather than happier at first. You may not even experience immediate boosts in your happiness.

And it may even be more challenging in this present moment to find the time, energy, and motivation to practice new skills when you are overwhelmed by stress, worry, and anxiety. To sustain the benefits of this program, you will be encouraged to regularly practice and integrate each happiness principle in your daily life.



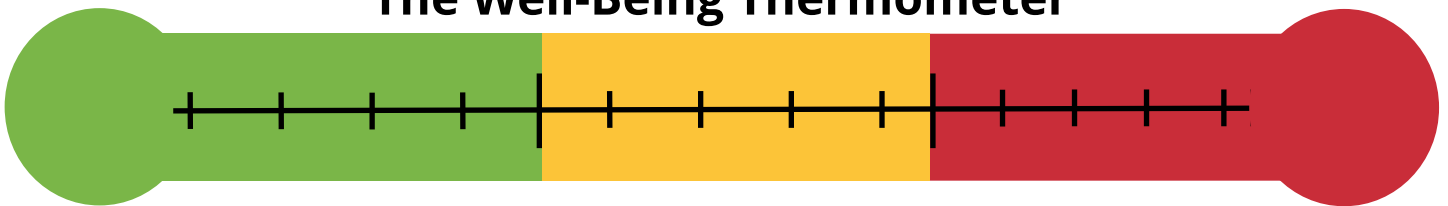
Daily practice is how we come to develop healthier habits! But remember not to try too hard!

Happiness principles require practice and effort, but trying too hard to become happier isn't always a good thing! People who try too hard to be happy may actually end up feeling worse. It is important that you practice each activity in the program without expecting a particular result or trying to feel a certain way.

Introducing the Well-Being Thermometer

Self-awareness and self-reflection are essential skills in enhancing your happiness and well-being, especially in challenging times. It is important that you check-in regularly with yourself and ask: What emotion(s) am I feeling? What am I saying to myself in my head? How does my body feel? What do my behaviours look like? Responses to these questions can be categorized into different zones - with each zone representing a different level of well-being. Once you become aware of what zone you are in, you can learn when and how to apply skills to move between zones.

The Well-Being Thermometer



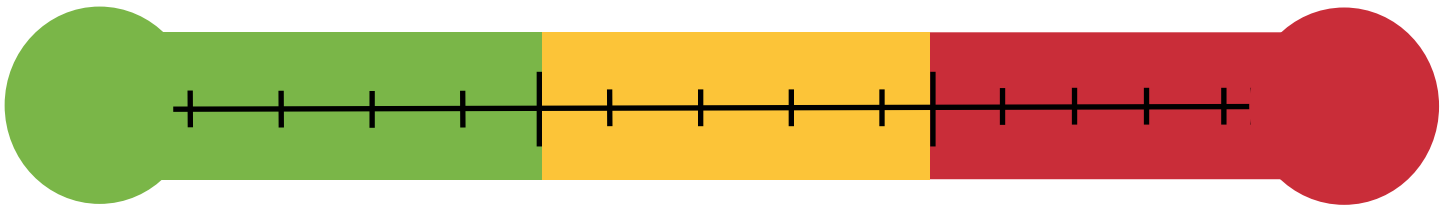
Examples of the Different 'Signs' for Each Zone

Green Zone: You may find yourself feeling more calm and in better control of your emotions and experiences. You might feel the confidence to say to yourself, "I can do this!" You may feel physically well and alert. Others may say they enjoy your company and that you seem happy.

Yellow Zone: You may notice warning signs for the potential of stress ahead. You may find yourself beginning to feel more irritable or sad, but still able to meet your daily demands. You may feel less motivated or interested in your usual activities. It is important to recognize when you are in this zone, so that you can find effective ways to stay in the green zone and avoid slipping into the red zone.

Red Zone: You may find yourself more irritable and unable to effectively manage overwhelming emotions. You might hear yourself saying, "I'm not good enough" or "I can't do this!" Others may say that you are being short, snappy, or even rude. You may experience disruptions to your sleep and/or appetite. You may feel very depressed or anxious and experience significant muscle tension or fatigue.

What Does Your Well-Being Thermometer Look Like?



Take a moment to define what each zone looks like for you:

Green Zone:

Yellow Zone:

Red Zone:

Moving forward: Begin each week by checking in with yourself to increase your self-awareness and to determine which zone you are in. You will learn new skills throughout this program that will help you move between zones.