

Nicole Strasinski

Mr. Mangini

English 100

November 17th, 2018

Are you grateful?

Introduction

In the article "Wellbeing" it states some people believe that wealth is a fast track to happiness. Yet various international studies have shown that it is the quality of our personal relationships, not the size of our bank balances, which has the greatest effect on our state of wellbeing (Well being). I participated in a project called "the three good things" where each day for a week straight I would reflect on three things in my day that impacted me positively and explained them. One day during the project I hadn't been feeling well at all, on my dad's way home he stopped and got me a gatorade and a vaporizer to help me. On any other day I would just thank him and that be it but during this process when I reflected on the encounter I felt more thankful than usual that he went out of his way to do something to make me feel better. During this process I was able to sit back and truly reflect on my everyday experiences in a more grateful way through my relationships and my accomplishments.

Literature Review

After reading the article “What is positive psychology and why is it important” I grasped a better understanding that positive psychology is the scientific study of what makes life worth living. Positive psychology allows you to be grateful for moments in your life, allows smaller gestures to have more meaning and in general gives us meaning in life. Well being is essential in our lives, in the article “Subjective Well-Being: Your Life, Your Happiness” it is described as an individuals experience of affective reactions and cognitive judgments. In the article “Gratitude” it defines gratitude as an emotion expressing appreciation for what one has rather than what someone wants or needs.

In the three good things process as you reflect on your day to day interactions its purpose is to improve your well being. The “three good things” allows you savor the better things in life and look at things more different in a more positive way (The three good things). In the article “three good things” it was noted that people who participated in the project received significant increase in happiness as well. During my process with the “three good things” I used the PERMA model in my findings.

The PERMA model stands for positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishments. I found that I covered the relationship and accomplishment section a lot during the process. Dr. Martin Seligman, who created the PERMA model was considered to be the father of positive psychology (Sze). In Sze’s article “The Father of Positive Psychology and His Two Theories of Happiness” he talks about how you don’t always have to be happy and force it but instead you should let the

positive come to you and focus on your core strengths and use them often, while creating relationships, and allowing yourself to reach achievements. During my own experience with this week long project I felt it did begin to change my well being. I began focusing more on the positives in my day and was able to sit and actually take in each day being more humble.

Findings

During the “three good things” process I was able to really think about things that impacted me throughout my days. I recorded a lot of different relationships throughout the process. On the first few days of the project I recorded some main parts of my days that I remembered the most. On Tuesday my mom made me breakfast before leaving for work. I woke up to the smell of fresh bacon sizzling on the stovetop which was my favorite breakfast meal. On Wednesday my parents had plans so were out for the night and I was home alone. I was talking to my friends about it and they asked if they could come over to watch some halloween movies and we could make popcorn. I enjoyed their company since halloween movies were my favorite and it meant me not having to be home alone in the end. When Thursday came I felt sick and stayed in bed all day. My dad knows how much I do not like being sick so on his way home he stopped to get me a gatorade and a vaporizer to make me feel better. For these first three days when I reflected on them in my gratitude journal, I didn’t think much about my encounters with my parents, besides the fact that they were thoughtful gestures. I kept trying to relate the actions back to how they could possibly being improving my wellbeing or helping me in the long run. I went on and continued the process. Day five took a huge turn in my

gratitude journal. My family and I participated in a walk for ALS down at Citizens Bank Park. Earlier this year on Easter I lost my pop pop to this horrible disease that shut down his body function little by little. My family and I decided to take a stand and walk in his memory. My whole entire family showed up including the extended side, traveling all the way from Ohio as well which I hadn't seen in a while. I sat down that night and wrote in my journal with a smile from ear to ear. It made me so happy that no matter what each one of my family members comes together when needed. I see family a lot but this time it was different. I was so grateful for each and every one of them and was truly able to savor being surrounded by them more than usual.

In addition to relationships accomplishments also played a huge part in my gratitude journal. During my gratitude journal there had been times I felt proud and felt the need to record it. On day four I found myself struggling on a sociology essay that was nearing the due date. My friend always tells me how much she loves sociology and how great of a class it is but I always found myself struggling with the subject which was complete opposite of her. We were discussing the essay when I confessed to her how hard the subject seemed to be to me. She got super excited and asked if she could help me with the essay to see if it would help me understand the concept and view it from her perspective. She helped me and explained it a more laid out matter to the point I felt like I could do it too. Later that night I sat down to record the three things from my day and my essay stood out to me the most. I truly did not believe I could complete the essay and felt defeated. With some help by my friend I felt so much better. Being able to complete this once impossible assignment, I was now feeling on top of the world

towards it. After this huge accomplishment I found myself the next day doing things I normally don't do. I left myself an extra 10 minutes the next morning to allow myself to stop for a coffee I felt great about myself after the huge accomplishment the night before. I was proud of myself which is something so important to happiness in life.

Conclusion

In my overall experience I believe that the "three good things" process is something I can see myself continuing to do. Even though at first I didn't enjoy it, it truly opened my eyes to look deeper with the moments in my life rather than as everyday occurrences. I feel as though if the process was longer than a week I would have even more of a humble outlook on my journal recordings. In my own experience I am happy that I had the opportunity to do a week of the "three good things" project and that it truly impacted my happiness for the better. Sometimes you might have to look further in the moments in life to see how they really impact who you are.

Work Cited

Gratitude- "Gratitude." *Psychology Today*, Sussex Publishers,
www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/gratitude.

Subjective Well-Being: Your Life, Your Happiness - "Subjective Well-Being: Your Life,
Your Happiness." Positive Psychology Program - Your One-Stop PP Resource!,
3 July 2018, positivepsychologyprogram.com/subjective-well-being/.

Sze, David. "The Father of Positive Psychology and His Two Theories of Happiness."
HuffPost, HuffPost, 17 June 2015,
www.huffpost.com/entry/the-father-of-positive-ps_b_7600226/amp.

The Three Good Things - "Three Good Things (Greater Good in Action)." Practice
| Greater Good in Action,
ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/three-good-things#data-tab-evidence.

Well Being -Department of Health & Human Services. "Wellbeing." Better Health
Channel, Department of Health & Human Services, 31 Aug. 2014,
www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/wellbeing.

What is positive psychology and why is it important? -“What Is Positive Psychology & Why Is It Important? Definition Examples.” Positive Psychology Program - Your One-Stop PP Resource!, 23 Aug. 2018, positivepsychologyprogram.com/what-is-positive-psychology-definition/.