

# Positive Psychology: Happiness as a Different Approach to Activation and Health

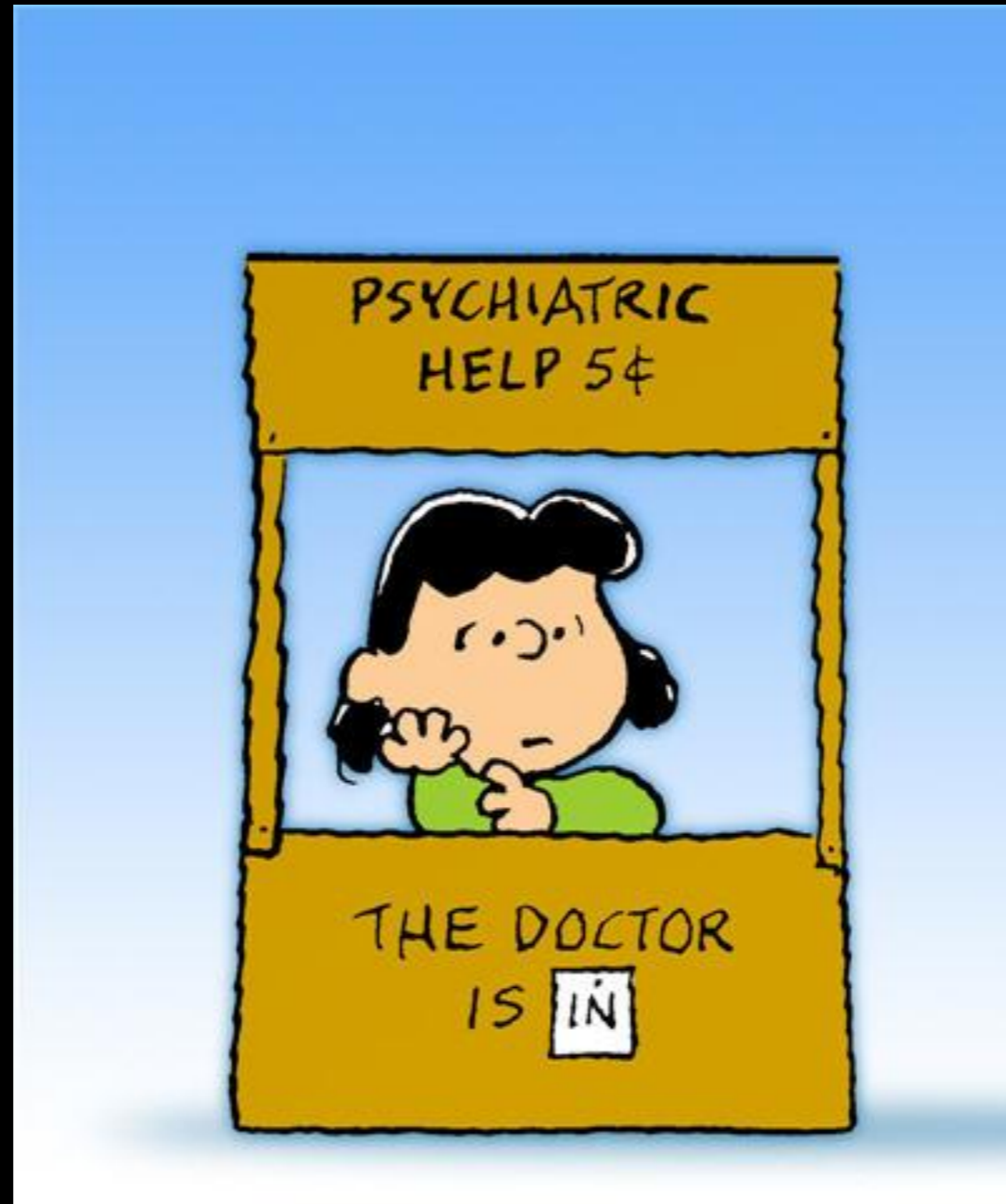
**ACMHA**

The College for  
Behavioral Health Leadership

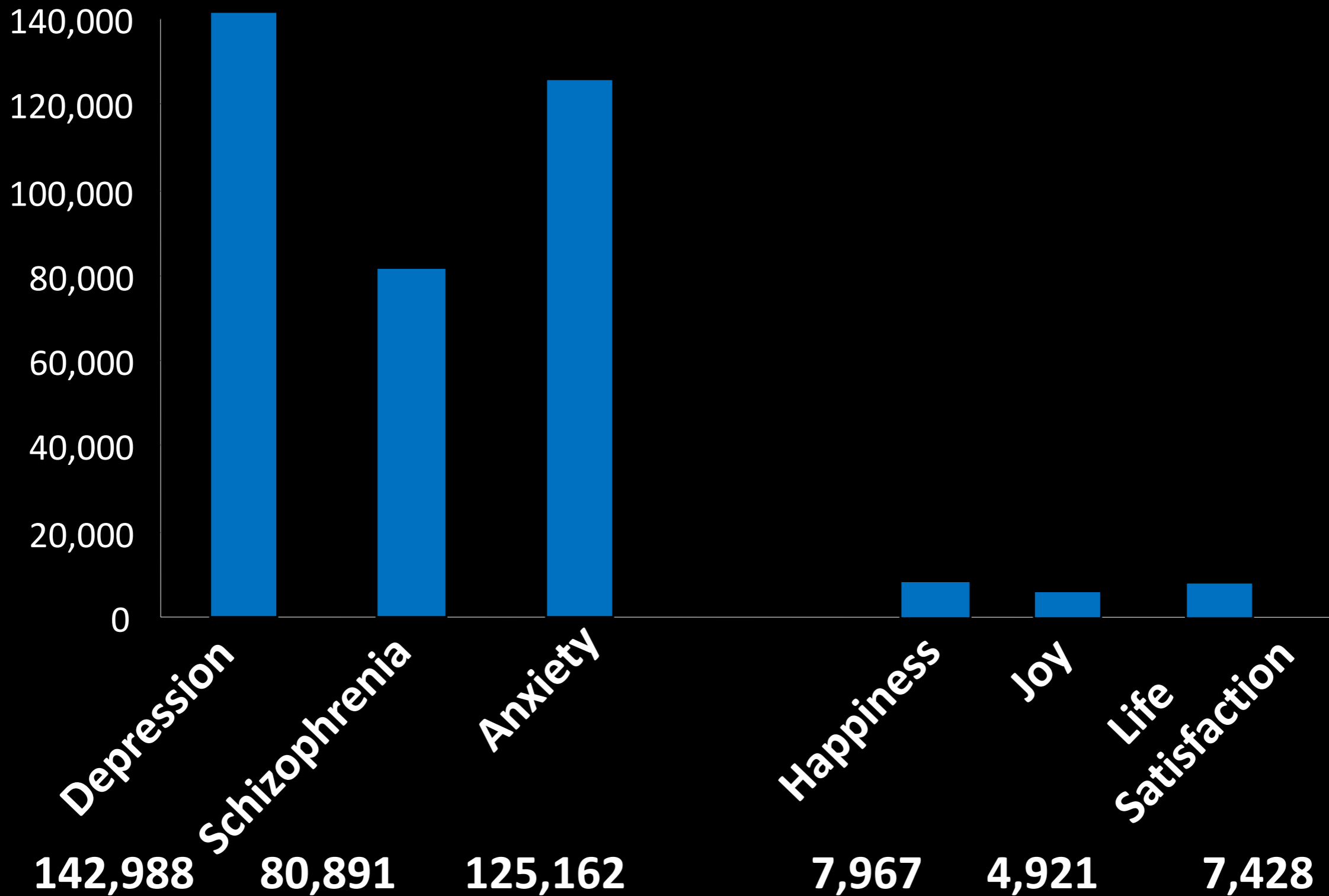
March 25, 2015

Timothy J. Bono, PhD

# Traditional Psychology



# Research Articles in Psychology



# Positive Psychology



# Positive Psychology

Psychology is not just about correcting errors.  
It's also about building meaningful lives based  
on our strengths.

# Could Positive Psych be Negative?

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

U.S. EDITION Tuesday, March 15, 2011

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IN THE LAB | March 15, 2011

## Is Happiness Overrated?

Study Finds Physical Benefits to Some (Not All) Good Feelings

By SHIRLEY S. WANG



Article

Comments (63)

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A A

The relentless pursuit of happiness may be doing us more harm than good.

Some researchers say happiness as people usually think of it—the experience of pleasure or positive feelings—is far less important to physical health than the type of well-being that comes from engaging in meaningful activity. Researchers refer to this latter state as "eudaimonic well-being."

Happiness research, a field known as "positive psychology," is exploding. Some of the newest evidence suggests that people who focus on living with a sense of purpose as they age are more likely to remain cognitively intact, have better mental health and

FISHER INVESTMENTS\*

### 8 investing mistakes you should avoid in 2013.

If you have a \$500,000 portfolio, download the guide by *Forbes* columnist Ken Fisher's firm. It's called "The Fight Biggest

# Basic Premises

1) Positive Psychology is not about  
“being happy all the time”

- Emotional experiences on a continuum

- Happiness does not spontaneously arise when we take away unhappiness

2) Positive Psychology is not about  
“becoming happy”

- It's about “becoming happier”

# Mindset

**Learn to Fail**

**-or-**

**Fail to Learn**

**Learn to Fail or Fail to Learn!**

**Give yourself Permission to be Human!**

# Snowdon (2001): The Nun Study



Written Statement upon  
entering the convent

# Snowdon (2001): The Nun Study

	<u>85</u>	<u>94</u>
Least Happy 1/4	34%	11%
Happiest 1/4	90%	54%

# Emmons & McCullough (2003)

10 weekly journals

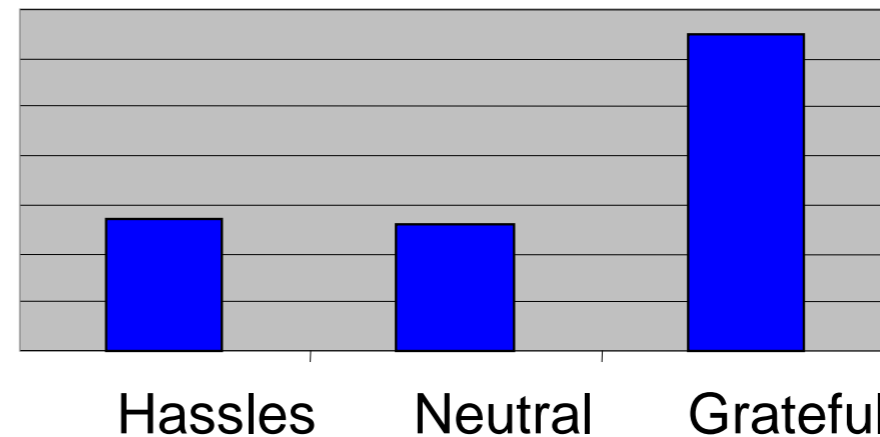
“List five events from last week”

Three conditions

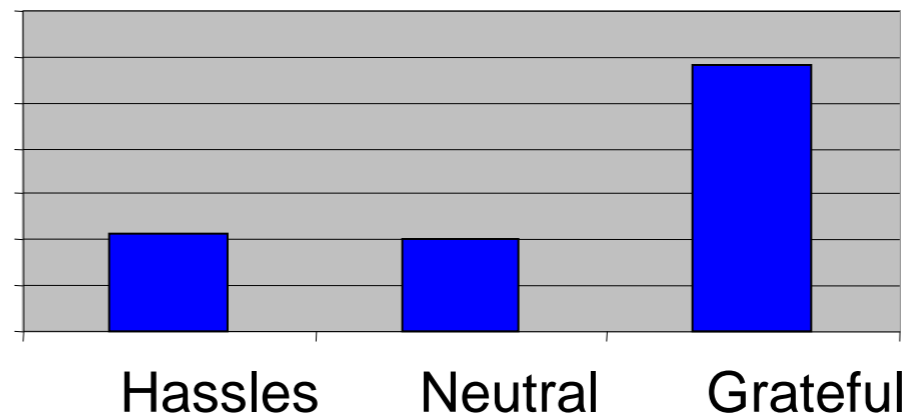
- Five things you are grateful for
- Five hassles
- Control

# Emmons & McCullough (2003)

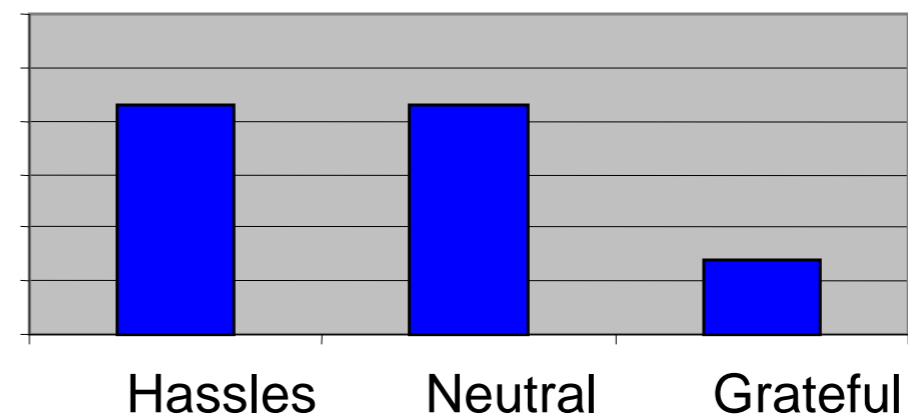
**Life as a Whole**



**Upcoming Week**



**Physical Symptoms**



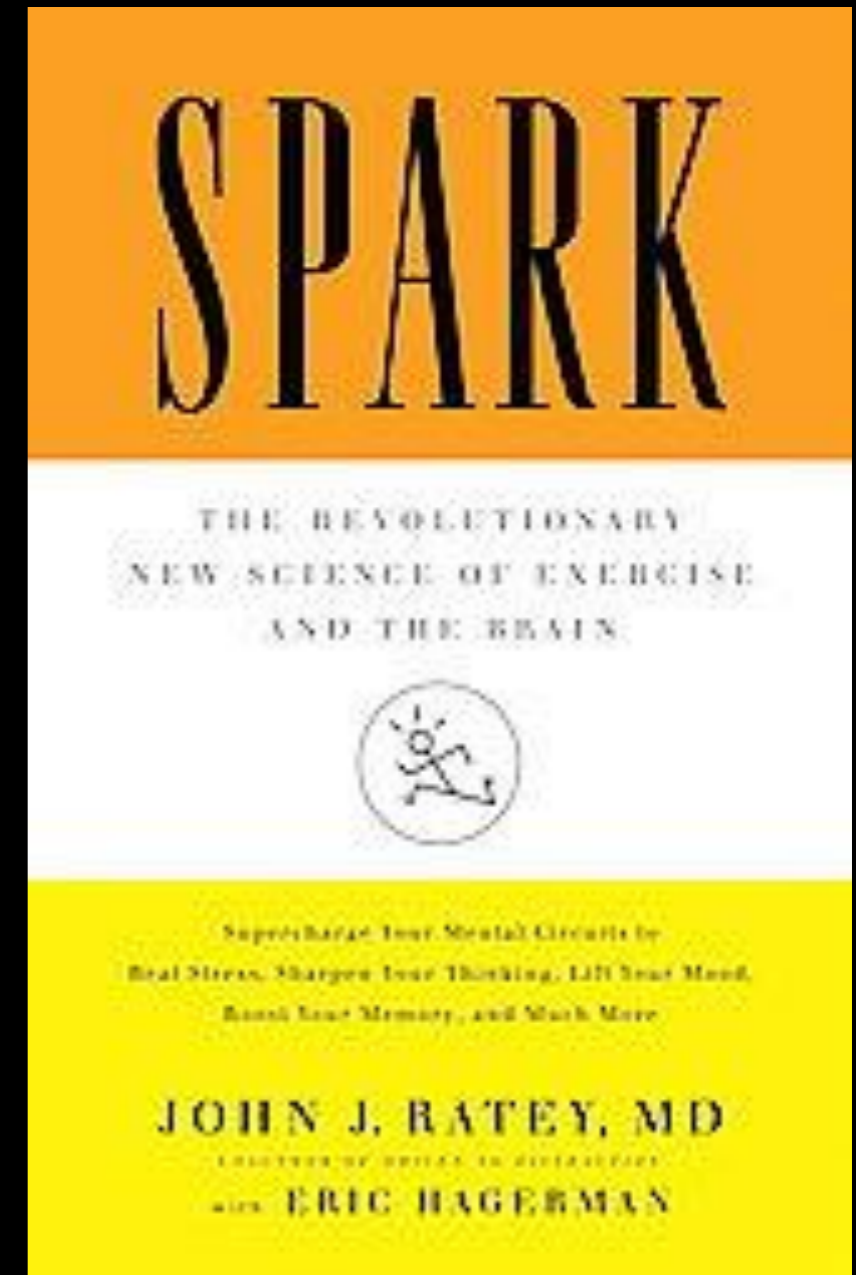
# Exercise



# Benefits of Exercise

“In a way, exercise can be thought of as a psychiatrist’s dream treatment. It works on anxiety, on panic disorder, and on stress in general, which has a lot to do with depression. And it generates the release of neurotransmitters—norepinephrine, serotonin, and dopamine—that are very similar to our most important psychiatric medicines. Having a bout of exercise is like taking a little bit of Prozac and a little bit of Ritalin, right where it is supposed to go.”

John Ratey



# Does money make us happy?



# American Freshman Survey

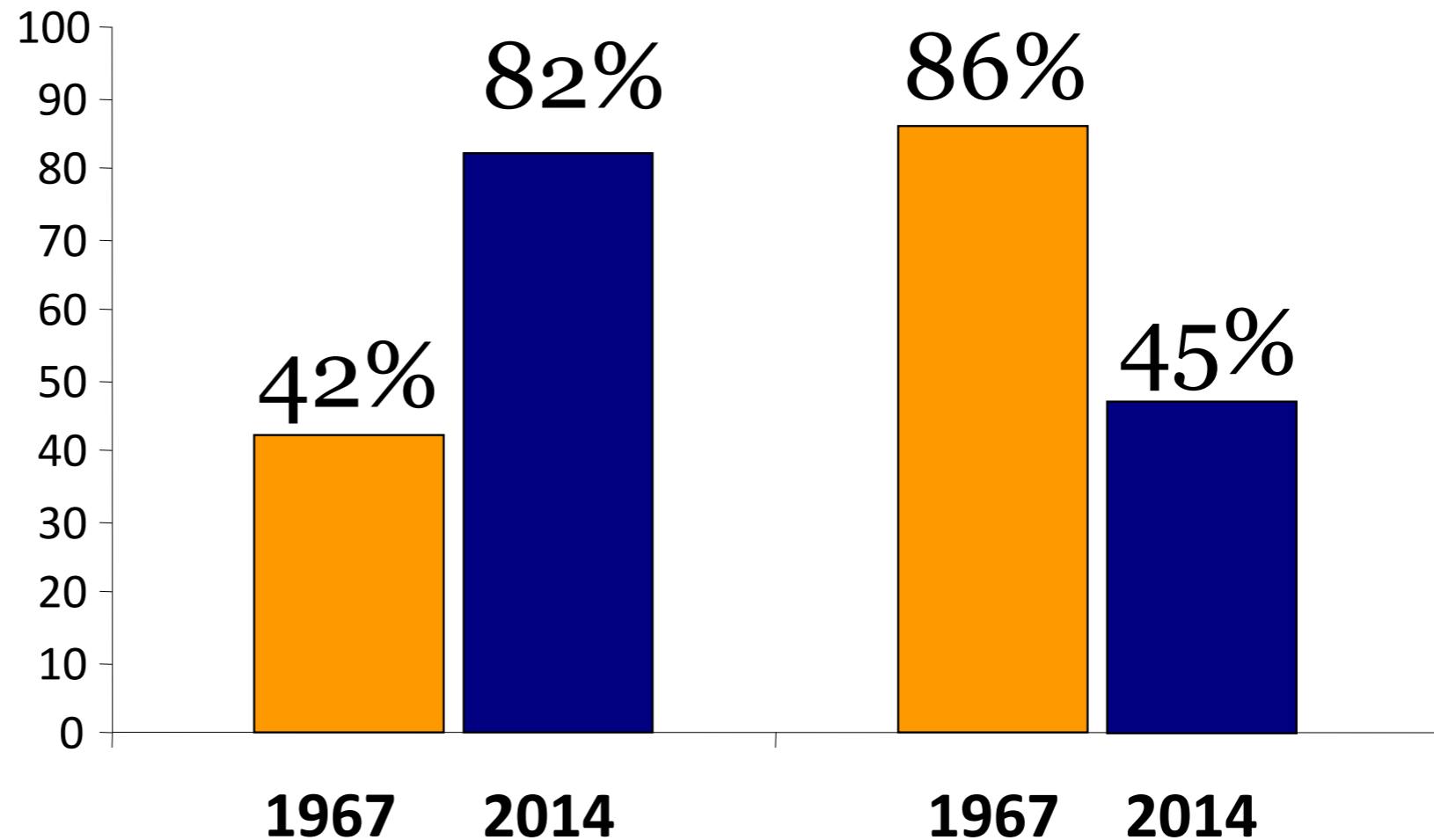


THE AMERICAN FRESHMAN:  
NATIONAL NORMS FALL 2014

Kevin Egan  
Ellen Bara Stolzenberg  
Joseph J. Ramirez  
Melissa C. Aragon  
Maria Ramirez Suchard  
Sylvia Hurtado

“Very well off financially”

“Develop Meaningful Philosophy of Life”



# Money = Happiness?



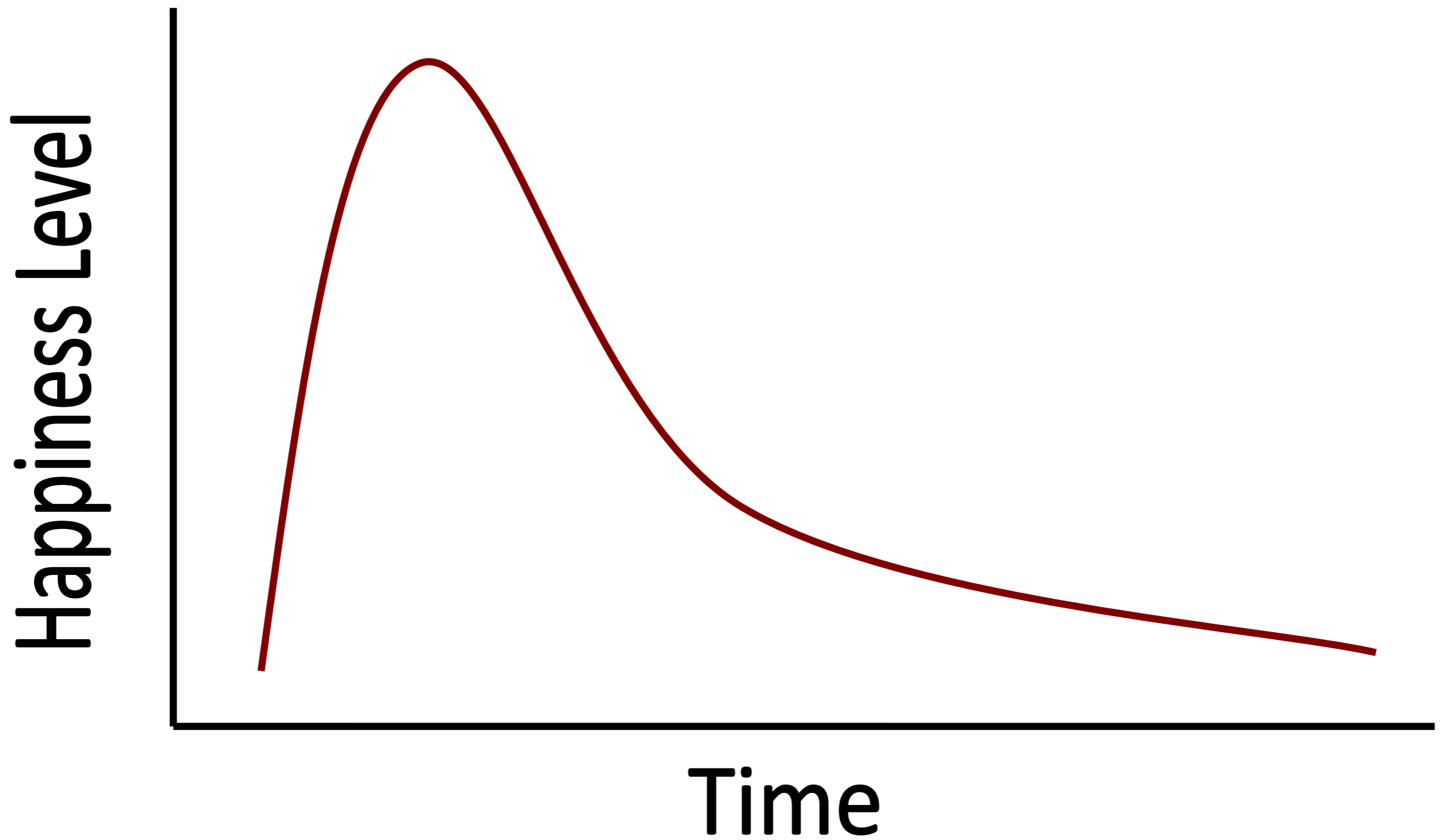
# Money = Happiness?



# The Happiness Formula

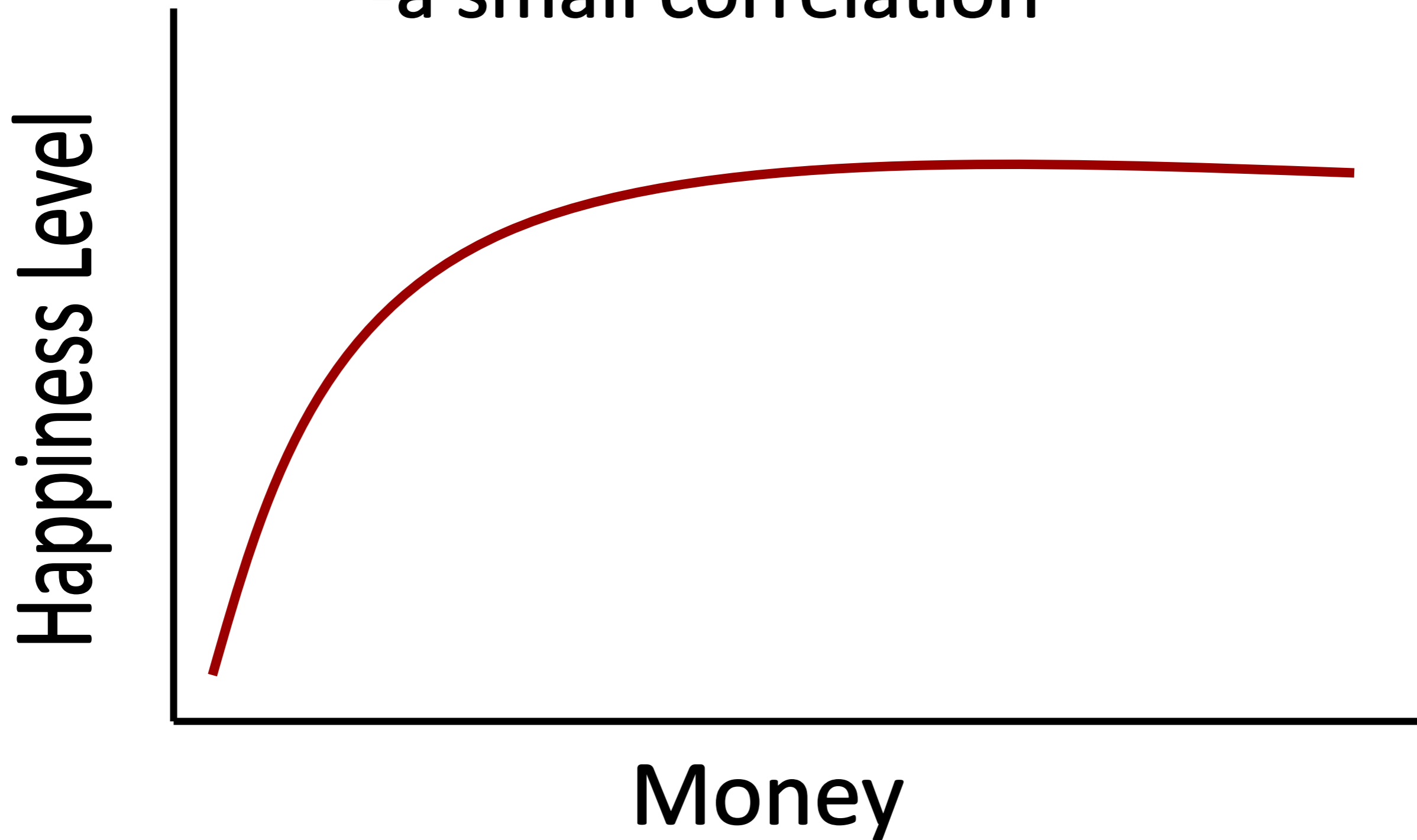
$$\text{Happiness} = \frac{\text{What we have}}{\text{What we want}}$$

# Money = Happiness?



# Money & Happiness

-a small correlation



# Dunn, Aknin, & Norton (2008)

Assessed participants' happiness in the morning

All given an envelope with money inside

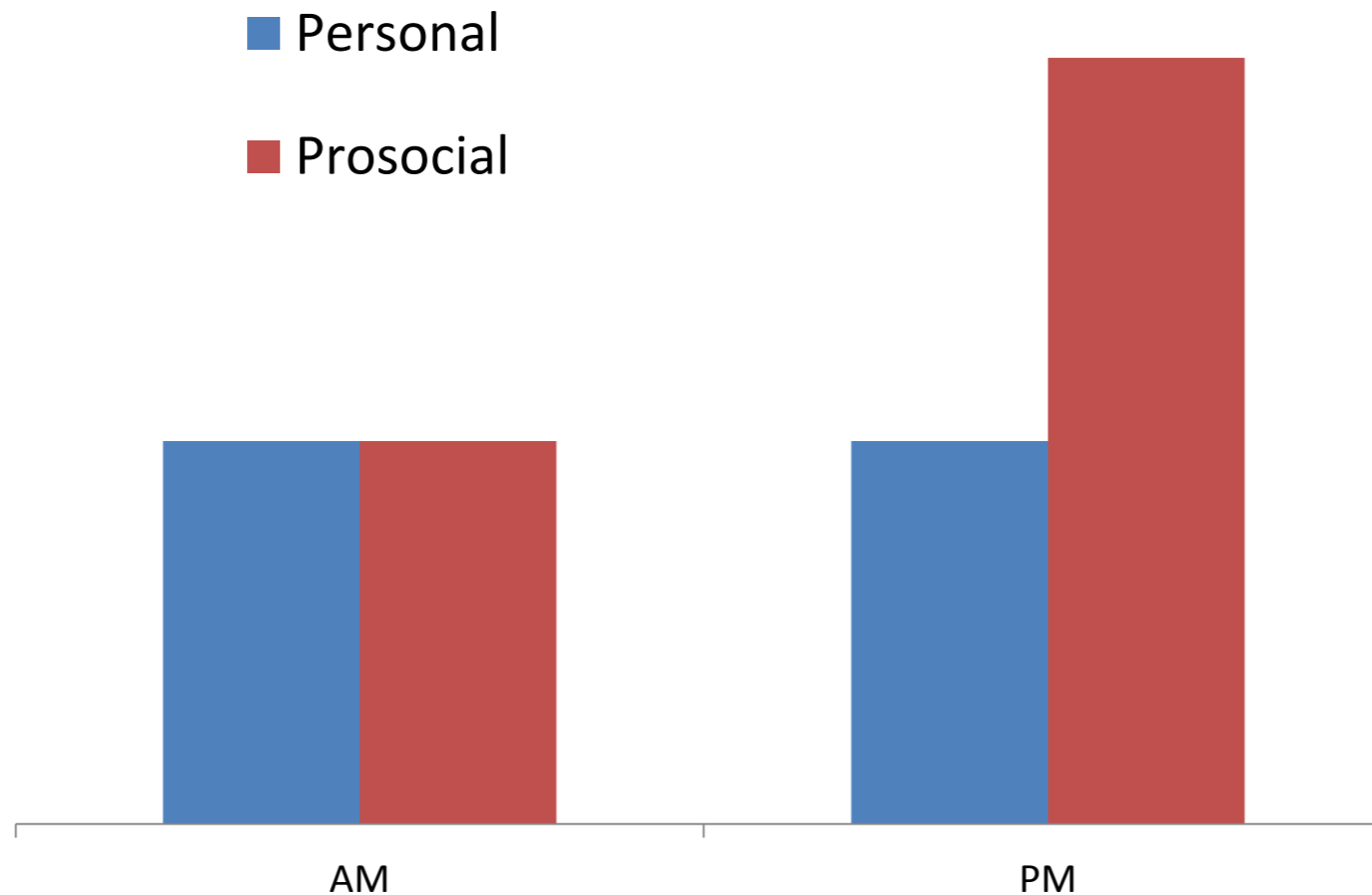
## Two conditions:

1) Personal spending:  
spend on yourself.

2) Prosocial spending:  
spend on someone else.

Happiness assessed in the evening.

# Dunn, Aknin, & Norton (2008) Results



-People who spent money on others became happier

-Similar effect for spending time on other or for ourselves

# Prosocial Behavior



# Summary and Conclusion

- 1) Don't Be Happy--Be Happier
- 2) Learn to Fail or Fail to Learn
- 3) Take time for Gratitude
- 4) Exercise
- 5) Spend time and money on others

# Positive Psychology in a Nutshell

If you believe in yourself...

And if you keep practicing...

You will get the hang of it...

And then you can get better and better at it!

Thumbs up, everybody, for rock and roll!

# Thank You.

Tim Bono

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