



Groups and individuals

Chapter 5

Learning Objectives

Describe the types and features of groups

Identify how the presence of others impacts performance

Evaluate the factors that impact group cooperation and conflict

Recall that the way group fairness is judged impacts behavior

Assess the factors that impact the effectiveness of the group decision-making process

Examine how social causes lead to physical and psychological ailments



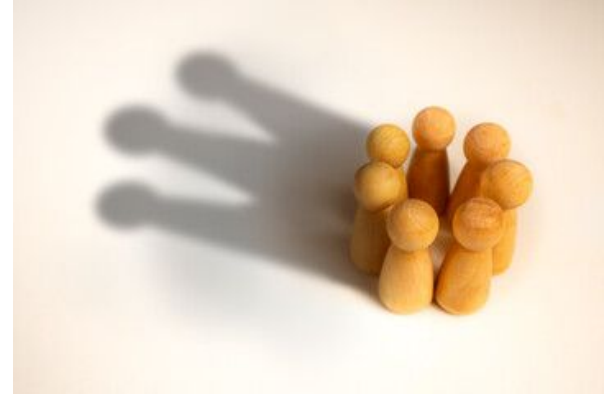
What do you think about **TEAMWORK**?



We are all members of many different groups.



Are all groups equally important to us?



Do **individuals or groups** make more risky (or worse) decisions?

Is being in groups a fundamental part of our evolutionary history?

Introduction: what is a group?



A **group** involves people who perceive themselves to be part of a coherent unit that they see as different from another group.

Common-bond groups, tend to involve face-to-face interaction among members, the individuals in the group are bonded to each other. Examples: the players on a sports team, friendship groups, a family, and work teams.

Common identity groups the members are linked via the category as a whole rather than to each other with face-to-face interaction often being entirely absent. Example: our national, linguistic, university, and gender groups are ones where we might not know personally all, or even most, of the other group members.

Introduction: what is a group?



Can you identify common-bond/ common-identity groups?

Introduction: what is a group?

What determines whether, and to what extent, we perceive a group as an entity? Groups can also differ dramatically in terms of their entitativity— the extent to which they are perceived as a coherent whole. Groups high in entitativity tend to have the following characteristics:

- (1) members interact with one another often, although not necessarily in a face-to-face setting (e.g., it could be over the Internet),
- (2) the group is important in some way to its members,
- (3) members share common goals, and
- (4) members perceive themselves as similar to one another in important ways.

The higher groups are on these dimensions, the more they will be seen by their members and nonmembers alike as forming coherent entities— real groups that can, and often do, exert powerful effects upon their members.

Highly entitative groups are more likely to be stereotyped than are groups low in entitativity.

Groups: key components

Status: Hierarchies in Groups

Roles: Differentiation of Functions Within Groups

Norms: The Rules of the Game

Cohesiveness: the Force That Binds



Groups: key components

Status: Hierarchies in Groups

Many groups have hierarchies like this, with members differing in status—their rank within the group. Sometimes it is an “official position” as in the case of the President, and sometimes it is not so explicit and instead is simply the “old-timers” in a group who are accorded higher status compared to “newcomers.” People are often extremely sensitive to their status within a group because it is linked to a wide range of desirable outcomes— everything from respect and deference from other group members to material benefits such as salary received.

Factors determining status:

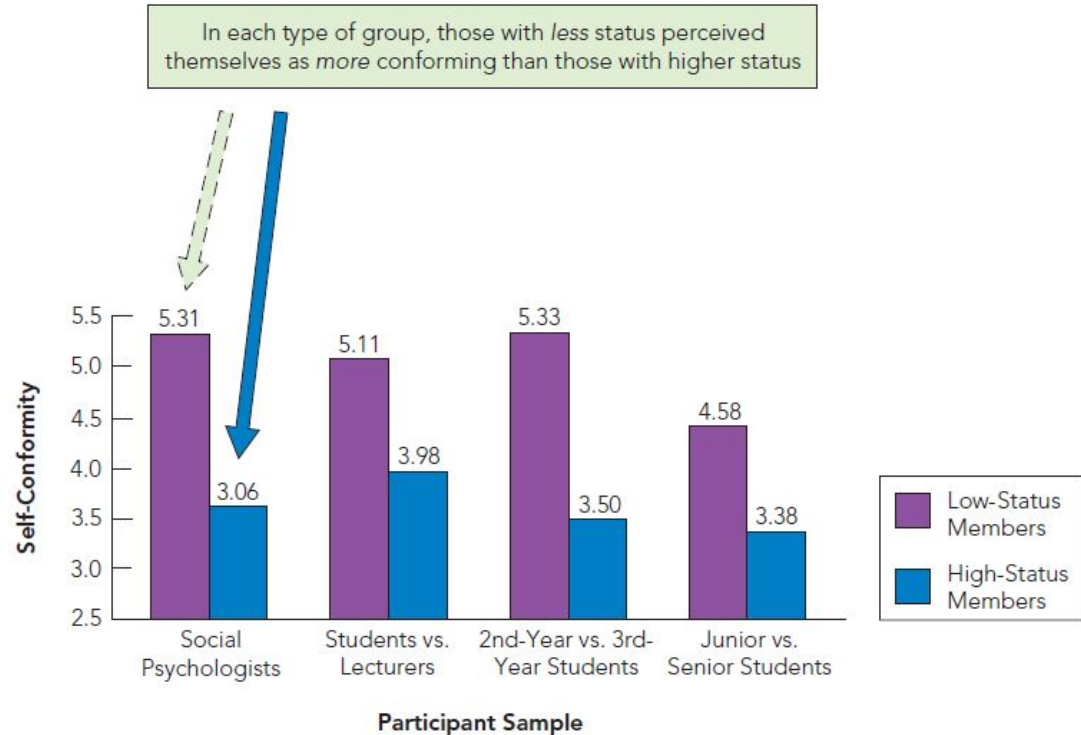
Physical attributes such as height may play some role—those who are taller are held in higher esteem compared to shorter people—they are literally “looked up to”, e.g., election candidates, workplace bosses.

People who are seen as prototypical—by embodying the group’s central attributes—are particularly likely to be accorded status and be selected as leader of a group.

Longevity or seniority in a group too can result in higher status—to the extent that it is seen as reflective of wisdom or knowledge of ingroup ways.

Groups: key components

Status: Hierarchies in Groups



Groups: key components

Roles: Differentiation of Functions Within Groups

Sometimes roles are assigned; for instance, a group may select different individuals to serve as its leader, treasurer, or secretary. In other cases, individuals gradually acquire certain roles without being formally assigned to them. Regardless of how roles are acquired, in many groups, someone often serves as the “good listener,” taking care of members’ emotional needs, while another person tends to specialize in “getting things done.”



Groups: key components

Norms: The Rules of the Game

Groups powerfully affect the behavior of their members via norms—implicit rules that inform people about what is expected of them. Sometimes those are explicit feeling rules—expectations about the emotions that are appropriate to express. norms for displaying positive feelings are specific to these types of employment settings.

An important norm that varies considerably across cultures, but can also apply differentially to groups within a culture is collectivism versus individualism. In collectivist groups, the norm is to maintain harmony among group members, even if doing so might entail some personal costs; in such groups, disagreement and conflict among members are to be avoided. In contrast, in individualistic groups, the norm is to value standing out from the group and be different from others; individual variability is to be expected and disagreeing with the group is often seen as courageous.



MacDonald's employees and flight attendants are told they must always smile at customers. Or, they can be more subtle, where learning to be a "good" group member means claiming to be "happier than you were before" you joined the group.

Groups: key components

Cohesiveness: the Force That Binds

Cohesiveness—all the forces that cause members to remain in the group. Cohesive groups have a sense of solidarity: They see themselves as homogenous, support and cooperate with ingroup members, aim to achieve group goals, have high morale, and perform better than non-cohesive groups. The general threat that your group's future might be in jeopardy can encourage all sorts of groups to advocate actions aimed at creating greater ingroup cohesion.

*An example of **group cohesiveness** in making economic decisions can be seen in a **small business team deciding on a new product launch**. A startup team in a tech company is working together to decide whether to launch a new software product. The team consists of developers, marketers, financial analysts, and executives. Because of their strong **group cohesiveness**—a shared vision, trust, and good communication—they collaborate effectively in making this economic decision.*

Groups: benefits and costs of joining



Why do you support even if your team is losing?

**MEMBERSHIP
APPLICATION
REJECTED**

Is it difficult to get membership of a group?

Groups: benefits and costs of joining

The Benefits of Joining: What Groups Do for Us

1. We often gain self-knowledge from belonging to various groups. Our membership can tell us what kind of person we are—or perhaps, would like to be—so group membership becomes central to our self-concept. Group memberships provide us with a sense of “existential security.”
2. Being part of a group can also increase our perceived ability to cope with stress, in part by making us feel a greater sense of control.
3. Groups can help us reach our goals of attaining prestige. When an individual is accepted into a certain type of group—a highly selective school, an exclusive social club, and a varsity sports team— self-esteem can increase.
4. People like being in a group best when it matches their current goal orientation.
5. Joining a group often helps us to accomplish goals we could not achieve alone—for example, social change, people can develop a politicized collective identity, which prepares them to engage in a power struggle on behalf of their group.

Groups: benefits and costs of joining

The Costs of Membership of a Group

1. Group membership often restricts personal freedom. Members of various groups are expected to behave in certain ways— and if they don't, the group may impose sanctions or even expel such violators from membership.
2. Groups often make demands on members' time, energy, and resources, and members must meet these demands or surrender their membership, e.g., cultural groups, political groups, religious institutions.
3. When differences in ideology—the philosophical and political values of a group—among different factions become so disparate that some members cannot see themselves as sharing a social identity with other members of the group.
4. When groups bring structural changes or transformation (e.g., removing a traditional activity), emotional distress experienced being in a group reflects the loss of an important identity/culture/ideology and is akin to bereavement.

Presence of others affects performance

Social Facilitation: We are strongly affected by the mere presence of others, even if we are not part of a formal group.



How does the presence of others affect our performance?

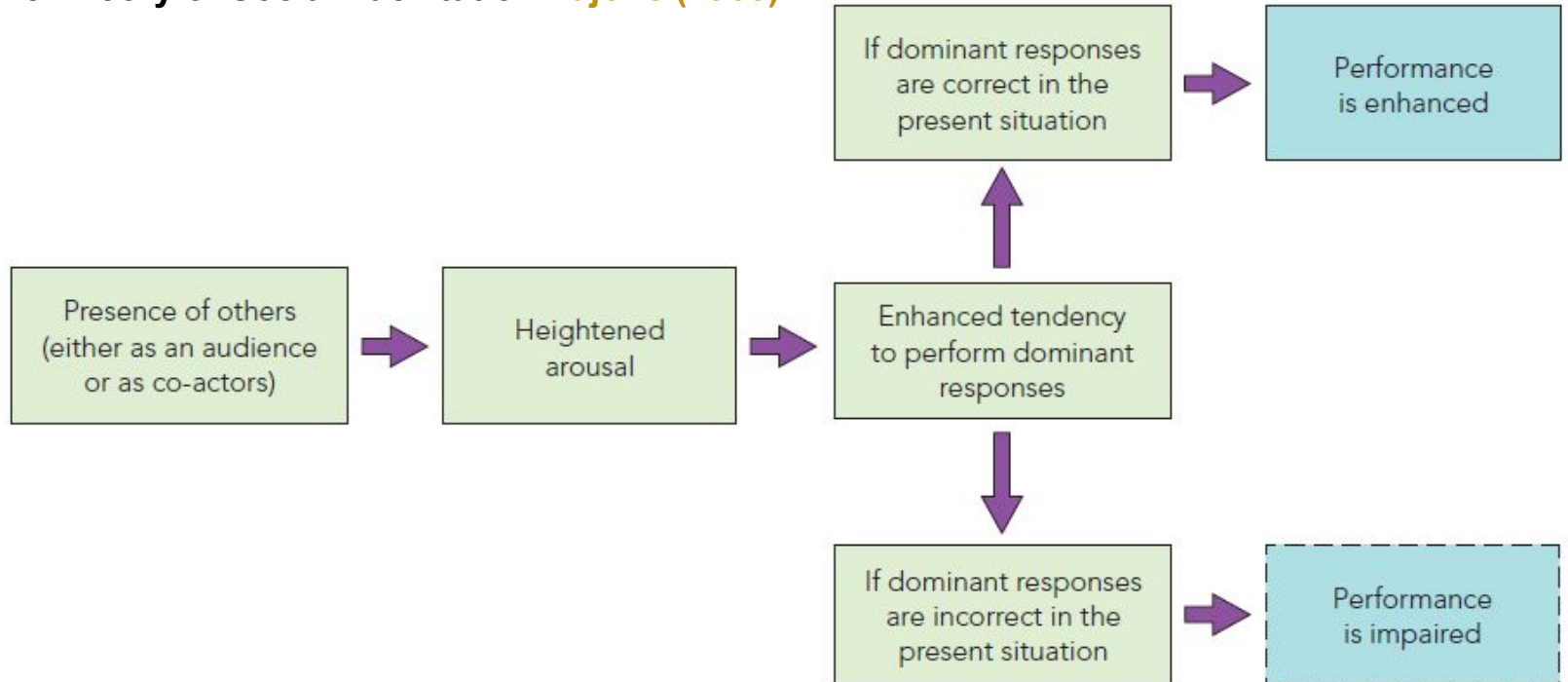
Evidence from several different studies confirms that the presence of others can affect our performance—sometimes positively and sometimes negatively.

Why does having an audience matter?

the presence of others increases physiological arousal (our bodies become more energized), and, as a result, any dominant response will be facilitated. This means that we can focus better on something we know or have practiced when we are aroused.

Presence of others affects performance

The Drive Theory of Social Facilitation Zajonc (1965)



Presence of others affects performance

Evaluation apprehension idea:

other researchers thought that performance might sometimes be disrupted by the presence of an audience because of apprehension about having their performance evaluated.



Presence of others affects performance

Social Loafing: some people will work hard, while others goof off and do less than they would if working alone. This is social loafing—reductions in effort when individuals work collectively compared to when they work individually.



Each person put out less effort as the size of the group increases.

Do you all perform equally in the chorus?

Why loaf?

- *those who feel “dispensable” to the group are more likely to loaf.*
- *the more fairness that is perceived in the group generally, the less likely students are to loaf.*

How to reduce?

- *making the output or effort of each participant readily identifiable*
- *increasing group members’ commitment to successful task performance*
- *increasing the apparent importance or value of a task*
- *given some kind of standard of performance—either in terms of how much others are doing or their own past performance*

Coordination in groups

Cooperation—helping that is mutual, where both sides benefit

Conflict— individuals or groups perceive that others have taken, or will soon take, actions incompatible with their own interests

Why would group members not consistently cooperate?

- Social dilemmas are situations in which each person can increase his or her individual gains by acting in a purely selfish manner, but if all (or most) people do the same thing, the outcomes experienced by all are reduced. **Ex. *prisoner's dilemma*.**

How to resolve conflicts?

- Bargaining: opposing sides exchange offers, counteroffers, and concessions, either directly or through representatives. If the process is successful, a solution acceptable to both sides is attained, and the conflict is resolved.
- Superordinate goals—goals that both sides seek, and that tie their interests together rather than driving them apart. When opposing sides can be made to see that they share overarching goals, conflict is often sharply reduced and may, in fact, be replaced by overt cooperation.

Perceived Fairness in Groups: Its Nature and Effects

Have you ever been in a situation where you felt that you were getting less than you deserved from some group to which you belong? In general, we make these judgments by focusing on three distinct aspects or rules.

Distributive justice, or fairness, involves the outcomes we and others receive. According to the equity rule, the more they provide in terms of effort, experience, skills, and other contributions to the group, the more they should receive. *We often judge fairness in terms of the ratio between the contributions group members have provided and the rewards they receive.*

Procedural justice We base our judgments about it on factors such as: (1) the extent to which the procedures are applied in the same manner to all people, (2) there are opportunities for correcting any errors in distribution, and (3) decision makers avoid being influenced by their own self-interest.

Transactional justice: We judge fairness in terms of the way information about outcomes and procedures is given to us. The extent to which we are given clear and rational reasons for why rewards were divided as they were and the courtesy or respect with which we are informed about these divisions.

Decision Making by Groups: How It Occurs and the Pitfalls It Faces

How do groups reach a decision?

How is a decision accomplished?

Can the final decision be predicted from the views initially held by the members of the group?



Decision Making by Groups: How It Occurs

Group polarization: Groups are more likely than individuals to make extreme decisions. Groups show a pronounced tendency to shift toward views that are more extreme than the ones with which they initially began. Whatever the initial leaning or preference of a group prior to its discussions, this preference is strengthened during the group's deliberations. However, **group's initial preference matters significantly in reaching decisions.**

Why polarization?

- social comparison plays a role. If we all want to be “above average,” where opinions are concerned, this implies holding views that are “better” than other group members.
- during group discussion, most arguments favor the group's initial preference. As a result of hearing such arguments members shift, increasingly, toward the majority's view.

Decision Making by Groups: How the Pitfalls It Faces

Group think: This is a strong tendency for decision-making groups to “close ranks” around a decision, to assume that the group can’t be wrong, with pressure for all members to support the decision strongly, and to reject any information contrary to the decision. Research indicates that once groupthink develops, groups become unwilling to change their decisions, even when initial outcomes suggest that those decisions were very poor ones.

Why does groupthink occur?

- a very high level of cohesiveness among group members and the fact that supportive group members in the leader’s “inner circle” exert a disproportionate impact on the ultimate decision making
- emergent group norms—norms suggesting that the group is infallible, morally superior, and because of these factors, there should be no further discussion of the issues at hand: the decision has been made, and the only valid response is to support it as strongly as possible.
- Groups do not always pool their resources—share information and ideas unique to each member. Pooling of resources or information may be the exception rather than the rule. Decisions made by groups tend to reflect the shared information rather than the total information available—such as that which only some group members possess.

Decision Making by Groups: How the Pitfalls It Faces

Space Shuttle Challenger Disaster: This tragedy due to *groupthink*, where pressure for consensus leads to ignoring critical warnings.

NASA and its contractors decided to launch the Space Shuttle Challenger despite engineers warning about faulty O-rings in cold weather. **Pressured by deadlines and public expectations, the group prioritized schedule over safety.** The result: The shuttle exploded 73 seconds after launch, killing all seven crew members



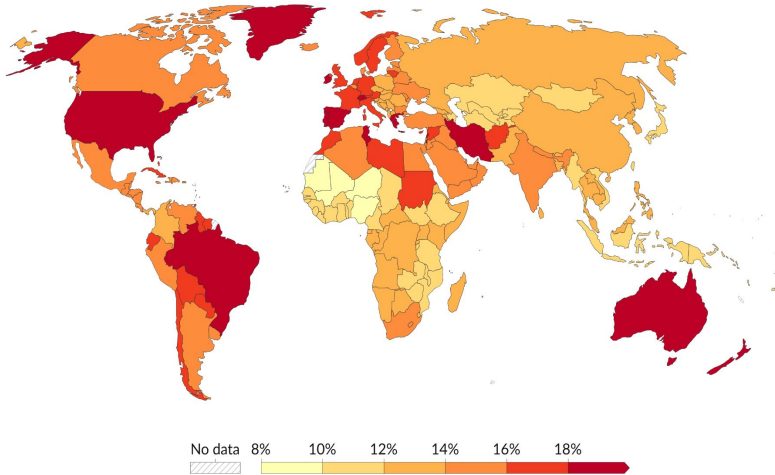
Social Sources of Stress and Their Effects on Personal Well-Being

Stress is a common part of modern life—few of us can avoid it altogether.

Share of population with mental health disorders, 2021

This includes depression, anxiety, bipolar, eating disorders, and schizophrenia.

Our World in Data



Data source: IHME, Global Burden of Disease (2024)

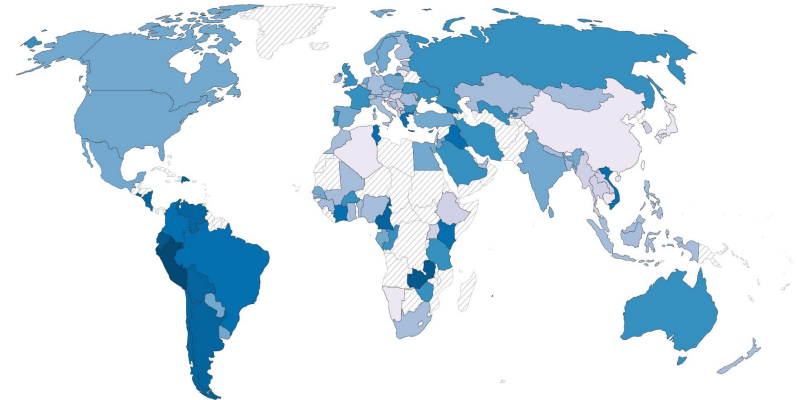
OurWorldinData.org/mental-health | CC BY

Note: Due to the widespread underdiagnosis, these estimates use a combination of sources, including medical and national records, epidemiological data, survey data, and meta-regression models.

Share who report lifetime anxiety or depression, 2020

Respondents were asked 'Have you ever been so anxious or depressed that you could not continue your regular daily activities as you normally would for two weeks or longer?'

Our World in Data



Data source: Wellcome Global Monitor (2021)

OurWorldinData.org/mental-health | CC BY

Social Sources of Stress and Their Effects on Personal Well-Being

What are the major sources of stress in our lives?

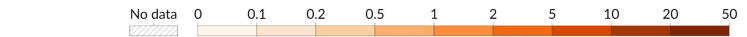
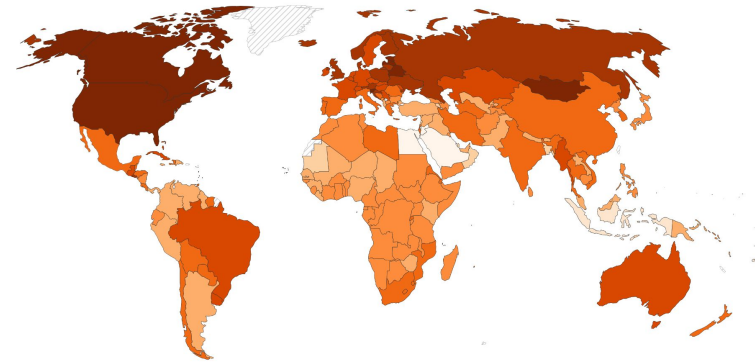
Major life events: the death of a loved one, a painful divorce, being excluded from important life arenas as a result of discrimination, childhood neglect, exposure to and experience of violence

Minor annoyances of daily life—often termed hassles: having too many things to do at once, misplacing or losing things, troublesome neighbors or roommates, and concerns over money

People who experience high levels of stress are more likely to become seriously ill than those who do not.

Mental health and substance use disorders death rate, 2021

Estimated annual number of deaths from mental health and substance use disorders per 100,000 people. These include alcohol use, drug use, and eating disorders. Figures do not include deaths resultant from suicide, which in some cases are related to these disorders.



Data source: World Health Organization (2024)

OurWorldinData.org/illlicit-drug-use | CC BY

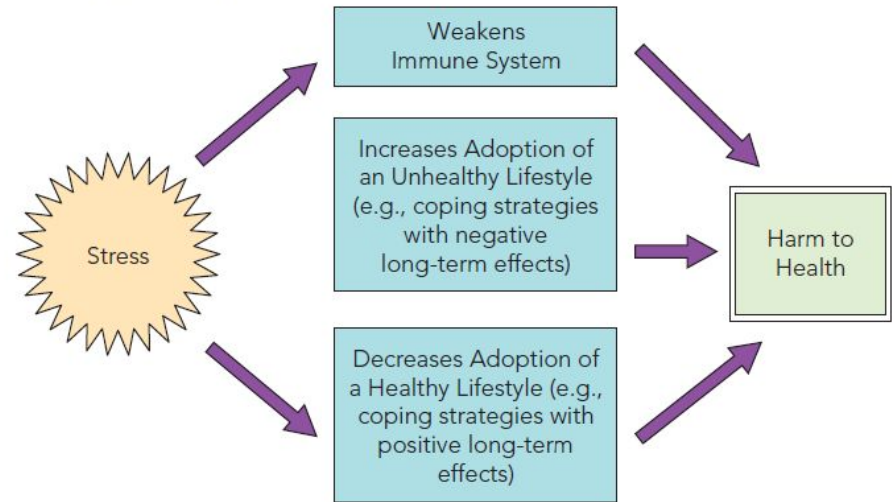
Social Sources of Stress and Their Effects on Personal Well-Being

Stress interferes with efficient operation of our immune system—the mechanism through which our bodies recognize and destroy potentially harmful substances and intruders such as bacteria, viruses, and cancerous cells.

Direct effects, weaken our immune system and also harm other bodily functions.

Indirect effects of stress influence the lifestyles we adopt. Stress can encourage behaviors that can provide immediate pleasure but have long-term health risks

Evidence: a link between stress and unhealthy behavior was found, especially among low-income American individuals (Krueger & Chang, 2008)



Fostering Happiness in Our Lives

Our subjective well-being involves four basic components:

- **Global life satisfaction**—feeling generally satisfied or happy with our lives
- **Satisfaction with important life domains**—being satisfied with our work, relationships, and family
- **Positive feelings**—experiencing positive emotions and moods often
- **Negative feelings**—experiencing negative emotions less often than positive ones, or preferably, rarely

Fostering Happiness in Our Lives

What makes people happy with their lives?

A higher frequency of positive emotions leads people to think and act in ways that help to broaden and build their emotional, physical, and social resources

Good social relations with other people—friends, family, romantic partners— is an important ingredient for being happy

People who have concrete goals, especially realistic ones, and who feel they are making progress toward those goals, are happier than people who lack goals

Fostering Happiness in Our Lives

Does more money equal more happiness?

Economists have long assumed that the wealth of a nation—termed gross domestic product (GDP)—should be the primary measure of the well-being of a nation.

World Happiness Reports show, GDP (per capita income) does predict differences across countries in the level of happiness and how satisfied people are with their lives.

At low-income levels, a lack of money is likely to make people feel unhappy because without it, they can't meet their basic needs—such as food, clothing, and shelter.

At higher income levels, however, income is not strongly related to how happy people feel. In cases, where people have enough money to meet all their basic needs, plus some of the “luxuries,” increasing wealth further does not result in improved happiness or life satisfaction.

Kahneman and Deaton (2010), examined a nationally representative sample of Americans, showed that increased income above \$75,000 per year had little connection with the positive feelings people experience on a daily basis.

Optimum level of well-being theory

Is It Possible to Be Too Happy? How much happy should you be?

Oishi, Diener, and Lucas (2007)—optimum level of well-being theory—which concerns the effects of well-being on task performance. This theory proposes that for any specific task, there is an optimum (i.e., best) level of subjective well-being.

For any task, there may be an optimum level of positive affect that is associated with maximum performance. Up to that point, performance on many different tasks improves as well-being increases, but beyond it, performance declines.

For tasks related to achievement (e.g., career success, educational attainment), very high levels of positive emotion may foster complacency or satisfaction with less than perfect outcomes. Motivation and effort are reduced. So, when people are feeling very happy, they may “take it easy,” rather than exerting maximal effort on difficult tasks since they are already quite satisfied with their lives. Thus, performance declines at very high levels of positive emotion.

Optimum level of well-being theory

Is It Possible to Be Too Happy? How much happy should you be?

Very high levels of subjective well-being may lead people to believe that they can “get away” with doing things that are dangerous or harmful to their health. They may eat or drink too much, engage in risky actions, and so on. This kind of illusion can, of course, be very harmful and undermine the benefits to personal health conferred by subjective well-being. For these and other reasons, very high levels of subjective well-being can have both harmful and beneficial effects.

to increase your happiness:

- Begin experiencing positive feelings
- Build close personal relationships or join groups that you value
- Invest in experiences over material goods
- Build personal skills that contribute to being happy
- Stop doing counteractive things: do not live in the future, stop worrying excessively and unnecessarily, do not set unreasonable goals for yourself, do not try to be perfect!**

Entrepreneurship as a Means of Seeking Happiness

An entrepreneur is a person who initiates change. An entrepreneur can be someone who starts a new company, creates a new product, or designs a new way of doing something, or people who work for themselves, as opposed to being employees—working for others.

Entrepreneurs tend to be optimists. They believe they will experience positive outcomes in life, even if this belief is not fully justified. Making money is not the key or central motive of an entrepreneur. **Being an entrepreneur is a key to happiness, a feeling of being self-dependent, fulfilling, adventurous, meaningful.**

Self-determination theory (SDT)—is directly relevant to understanding entrepreneurs' motives. This theory focuses on the distinction between two kinds of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation refers to activities that individuals pursue for their own sake—that is, for pure enjoyment. extrinsic motivation refers to situations in which individuals do seek external rewards, money, high status, better job. Intrinsic motives tend to promote higher levels of happiness and wellbeing than extrinsic ones.

Applying self-determination theory to entrepreneurs helps to explain why many of them are not primarily seeking monetary wealth. Rather, they want to enjoy their work and be happy.

Entrepreneurship as a Means of Seeking Happiness

Qualities of an entrepreneur:

Entrepreneurs, as a group, tend to have a high degree of confidence in themselves. They generally believe they can accomplish the tasks they set out to perform. This is known as self-efficacy and is closely related to self-esteem.

Entrepreneurs tend to display is a high level of social skills. Social skills include the ability to “read” other people accurately, the ability to influence people, skill in generating enthusiasm among others, and the capacity to change or adapt behavior from one social situation to another.

Entrepreneurs to develop a strong social network. An entrepreneur needs the expertise of a particular kind of engineer. If she or he has a large social network, someone in it might be able to help by recommending a person who can fill the need.

Entrepreneurs are intrinsically motivated by their work, which tends to promote happiness.

