READING: CAN WE CONTROL HAPPINESS?

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Can we control happiness?



A Who do you think is happier: someone who has won €500,000 in a lottery, or someone who has had a serious accident? The answer seems obvious! But it's not as obvious as it seems. A famous study measured the happiness of lottery winners, as well as accident victims, and the results may surprise you. Just three months after these life-changing events, the accident victims found everyday activities just as enjoyable as before, and so did the lottery winners!

B Why do accident victims feel as happy as before, when they can't do some things they could do easily in the past? And why aren't lottery winners happier, now that their money allows them to buy whatever they want? One theory is called Hedonic adaptation. This describes the way that new things quickly become normal to us, and so we stop appreciating them. Fortunately, this is also true with negative events, and we can adapt and find happiness despite difficult circumstances.

C On the one hand, it is good to know that if you face difficult times in the future, you will be able to overcome these challenges and feel happy again. But on the other hand, the research suggests that we can't change our long-term happiness. If winning lots of money won't make us happy for very long, what will?

D To boost our happiness levels, some psychologists recommend that we should try to be thankful: studies show that writing down the things you are grateful for will make you more appreciative of what's good in your life. Others say that people ought to volunteer, because being helpful and doing something valuable for your community can improve your self-esteem. Finally, trying new activities can help you stay cheerful. Many experts believe these lessons should be taught at school, and some UK schools are introducing happiness lessons, where students are allowed to talk about how they are feeling and teachers encourage them to try these happiness techniques when they're feeling anxious.

E So perhaps we need to change the way we think, and instead of trying to find happiness though money or possessions, we should focus on different ways to keep happiness.

1. What type of text is it?

A description A report A web page

2. Classify the following phrases according to where you find the information:

a) Focus on different ways to keep happiness

b) We always adapt to changes

c) Happiness lessons should be taught in schools

d) There is a well-known study about happiness

e) Although difficult times, we adapt to new situations

LIVEWORKSHEETS

3. Match the words or phrases with their synonyms. Write the corresponding letter next to the number.

A) Self-esteem	**1)** Useful or important
B) Honest	**2**) Feeling worried or nervous
C) Anxious	**3)** Something or someone that makes people upset
D) Overcome	**4)** When something is fun
E) Cheerful	**5)** Telling the truth about something
F) Thankful	**6)** Not right or not equal
G) Offensive	**7)** Looking happy
H) Valuable	**8)** Pleased that something good has happened
I) Unfair	**9)** A realistic respect for oneself
J) Enjoyable	**10)** To succeed in controlling

4. Complete the text with the words.

life-changing **overcome** **grateful** **self-esteem** **possessions**

My parents took me to live in Japan for a year when I was younger. I couldn't take all my with me, so, I had to choose carefully. I went to a Japanese school and at first I had lots of problems to . I couldn't speak Japanese at first but I was very when the children in my class helped me to learn. It was a experience for my family and it was brilliant for my .

5. Complete the words.

overcome **self-esteem** **possessions** **life-changing** **grateful**

1) She didn't own much. She could carry all her personal in one bag.

2) Doing voluntary work makes people feel good and improves their .

3) I'm extremely for all your help today.

4) His teachers are confident that he'll be able to his problems and be successful.

5) They took the decision to move to another country.

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6. What does this sentence mean?

Students **<u>are allowed</u>** to talk about how they are feeling.

have the ability to talk ☐ have permission to talk ☐

7. Copy and complete the sentences with the highlighted words from the text.

a) We should focus on our family and friends instead of thinking about having more

b) Working as a volunteer with the homeless was a experience and now I see things differently.

c) Passing the exam helped improve her and now she's much more confident about her studies.

d) I can problems with the help of my friends.

e) We're really for all the help that you have given us.

7. Select the sentence that summarizes better the text.

a) Some studies show how we can control happiness

b) Happiness and what we can do to be happier

c) People need to change and think about happiness.



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