Do the preparation exercise first. Then read the text and do the exercises to check your understanding.

Preparation: multiple choice

Choose the correct definition of the word in CAPITALS.

1. Happiness depends on a BALANCE of two things.
   a. having the minimum amount
   b. having equal or correct amounts
   c. having more than you need

2. We don't know what brings MEANING.
   a. money
   b. fun
   c. value

3. Some activities might be MOTIVATING.
   a. make you want to do them
   b. easy and relaxing
   c. boring

4. REALISTICALLY, society won't benefit from you getting an A in a subject you hate.
   a. probably
   b. definitely
   c. if you really think about it

5. Get out of the car HALFWAY to school and cycle the rest.
   a. 25% of the way
   b. 50% of the way
   c. 75% of the way

6. We design our lives to MAXIMISE happiness.
   a. make as small as possible
   b. make as fast as possible
   c. make as big as possible

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Do you know what makes you happy or do you just think you know? At first glance, these two questions look like the same thing. If you think something makes you happy, then it must make you happy. After all, you know yourself, don't you?

Write a list of all the things that make you happy. Now look at that list and tick all the ones that are fun or enjoyable. Probably most of them, right? So, if you spend your time doing all this fun stuff, you'll be really happy, won't you? Well, maybe not. For most people, only doing things for fun isn't enough for real happiness. That's because, according to author of Happiness by Design Paul Dolan, your happiness depends on a 'pleasure–purpose balance'. If most of the things on your list are about pleasure, that might be what you think makes you happy. But in order to be happy, you also need activities that give your life purpose.

We usually know if something is enjoyable, but to know what brings meaning and value requires more thought. For example, most people will say that air pilots have jobs with clear purpose. They are responsible for hundreds of people and fly all over the world. But they often have to spend time in boring hotels or stuck in airports and they perform routine actions hundreds of times. Those activities might not feel like they have meaning – and they're probably not fun either. Just like everyone else, pilots need balance in their work and life to be happy.

There are different ways we can find purpose in things. Some activities might be motivating because they work towards the 'greater good' of society or the world around us. Or what you do might help a team you're working in. Or it might be motivating to see you're making progress.

If you're still in education, you can think of your 'job' as studying and passing exams. It's easy to do well in subjects you enjoy. But subjects you don't like are much less motivating. You can't always choose not to do those subjects, so you need to find a sense of purpose. Realistically, society won't benefit from you getting an A in a subject you hate. But can you find a way to be part of a study team? Maybe you could find others who find that subject difficult. Each person can study one part until they understand it and then teach it to the others in the group. The purpose becomes about helping the team. Or you can find purpose in progress, for example divide a job into smaller jobs and take a reward or a break as you complete each one.

Go back to your list of things that make you happy. How many of them are activities that bring purpose? Can you add any?

Now you need to find balance, but that doesn't mean it has to be 50/50 – 60/40 or 70/30 might work better for you and, of course, some activities might bring both pleasure and purpose. Paul Dolan believes in 'deciding, designing, doing'. First decide what things in life bring you pleasure and/or purpose – which is what your two lists are for. Then, don't just think about doing these activities, design your life so you do as many of them as possible.

It's easy to make excuses not to do things because they're not convenient. For example, you might love riding a bike but never have time to do it. But it's up to you to build a routine where you can use it to go to school or the library or the shops. If you live too far from those things, take your bike on the bus or train and get off early so you can cycle the rest of the way. If you go in the car, put it in the back, get out of the car halfway and cycle the rest. Or move somewhere you can cycle more. Some parts of our lives are the result of good or bad luck, but we can still design the parts that are under our control to maximise happiness.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1. Check your understanding: true or false

Circle *True* or *False* for these sentences.

1.	Everyone knows what makes them happy.	*True*	*False*
2.	You'll be happy if you're always having fun.	*True*	*False*
3.	Pilots have the best job in the world.	*True*	*False*
4.	Being in a team gives us purpose.	*True*	*False*
5.	School is similar, in some ways, to having a job.	*True*	*False*
6.	You need equal amounts of pleasure and purpose in your life.	*True*	*False*

2. Check your understanding: gap fill

Complete the sentences with a word from the box.

enjoyable	good	purpose
happiness	pleasure	balance

1. It's more difficult to know what brings meaning than what's _____.
2. Happiness depends on a _____ of two things.
3. Doing something for society is one way to find a sense of _____.
4. Some activities are motivating because they help us work towards the 'greater _____'.
5. You should design your life to maximise _____.
6. Spending time with friends brings _____.

Discussion

What makes you happy?

Vocabulary box

Write any new words you have learned in this lesson.

LIVEWORKSHEETS