

Facilitating happiness

Semester B

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🕒 Course duration: 26 Hours

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FACILITATING HAPPINESS

While the "Introduction to happiness" course focuses on more theory than practice, the focus of this second course is almost entirely on practice—on application. Each of the lectures below highlights a series of evidence-based techniques that can significantly shift the needle in terms of your own and others' happiness. Over a period of 22 weeks—which will include lectures and webinars—I will introduce you to the science behind each technique and then provide you with concrete steps that you can take to make a meaningful difference in your life.

LECTURE 1

THE NATURE OF CHANGE

The first module explores the neuroscience of transformation and introduces a model for the attainment of lasting change.

- 1.1** What is the objective of this course? What are the benefits of experimentation? What is the difference between information and transformation?
- 1.2** What is neuroplasticity and why is it important? Would you rather be a taxi driver in New York City or London? What is the connection between neural pathways and rivers? What is the key to bringing about positive change?
- 1.3** What ideas about change do Peter Senge and Daniel Goleman share? Who are the NCs, TCs, and LCs? What is the Honeymoon Effect?
- 1.4** How do willpower and waypower work together? What are the components of a successful change process? Why is hard work not enough for meaningful transformation?

LECTURE 2

RITUALS

I introduce the what and the how of rituals, which constitute the primary path to lasting change.

- 2.1** What distinguishes the lasting change group from the temporary change group? Is motivation sufficient to bring about change? Did you follow up on all your New Year's resolutions? Did you brush your teeth this morning?
- 2.2** Why is failure helpful? Why is finding a regular time for rituals a good thing? What are healthy versus unhealthy rituals? What's a keystone habit?
- 2.3** What is Jeff Bezos' favorite book? What two-week intervention changes our neural structure? What is the difference between Friday Change and Monday Change?
- 2.4** What are the 12 techniques that you are going to learn about in this course? What techniques are best aligned with your passion and performance strengths?

LECTURE 3

MEDITATION (S2)

In this lecture I discuss meditation as a technique, associated with the second spiritual principle, for turning ordinary experiences into extraordinary ones.

- 3.1** What is the difference between formal and informal meditation? What are the four guidelines for the practice of mindfulness meditation? What are the three paths through which meditation impacts our wholebeing? (Hint: 3 Ps)
- 3.2** What is the value of being present? How can we increase the experience of pleasure while meditating? How can we become more perceptive, more sensitive, to the world—and why should we?
- 3.3** How do you practice Basic Meditation? How do you practice Loving Kindness Meditation? What are the benefits of Loving Kindness Meditation?
- 3.4** What is Loving Object Meditation? How can you learn to love a stranger on the subway? How can music, your body, or your chair become objects of meditation?

LECTURE 4

REMINDERS (W1)

The focus of this lecture is reminders, a set of tried and tested techniques that rely on wisdom from various religions.

- 4.1** Who was right, the philosopher or the theologian? What are ritualized reminders? What is common between marriage vows and a company vision?
- 4.2** What is Anterograde amnesia and what has it got to do with reminders? What is a Daily Ritual? What are your Ideal-Self Statements?
- 4.3** What are Specific Reminders? How did Juan Pablo transform his life using reminders?
- 4.4** How did Rory transform his life using a reminder? What are some of the uses of bracelets? What are Ever-Present Reminders? What is a Mini Reminder?

LECTURE 5

EMOTIONAL REFRAMING (E1)

Learning emotional reframing techniques
is the topic of this lecture.

- 5.1** Why is our understanding of the brain's malleability so significant? What has the Renaissance got to do with neuroplasticity and neurogenesis? How is the Happiness Revolution leading us to a Second Renaissance?
 - 5.2** Who is Lester Levenson? What, according to Levenson, is the path to happiness? Can you change feelings of resentment to feelings of love?
 - 5.3** How can lowering the emotional bar help us resolve conflicts? Should we always forgive? What is emotional pasting?
 - 5.4** Who are emotional cousins? Should you aim to be calm or excited before speaking in public? What is cognitive reframing?
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LECTURE 6

HIGH INTENSITY INTERVAL TRAINING (P2)

In this lecture I introduce High Intensity Interval Training as an
efficient and effective exercise technique.

- 6.1** What is NEST? What is HIIT? What is HRV? What's with all those ACRONYMS?
- 6.2** Why is HIIT more efficient and effective than regular aerobic exercise? Is boom-boomboom-boom better/worse than boom----boom----boom-boom? What is the one-minute workout?
- 6.3** What are some ways of informally inconveniencing yourself? Time for another acronym: What is HICT? What precautions do we need to take before going down the HIIT path?
- 6.4** What do we need to do if we want our pet rodent to live longer? How about us living longer? What does a varied exercise regime look like? If you're not doing so already, when are you starting to exercise???

LECTURE 7

MIND-BODY INTEGRATION PROCESS (P1)

This lecture explores the idea that each psychological state has a physical corollary.

- 7.1** What are the two basic premises of MBI? What are the physical corollaries of joy, determination and self-confidence? What is the difference between universal, cultural, and personal physical corollaries?
- 7.2** What is the relationship between attitudes and behaviors? What is self-perception theory? How can you generate Heartfelt Positivity? What is a rational psychological state?
- 7.3** What are the ABCs of psychology and how are they related to MBI? Why do meditation teachers so often emphasize sitting up straight with an elongated spine? What does the word “Yoga” mean?
- 7.4** How can we combine MBI with reminders? What is the difference between a formal and an informal MBI practice?

LECTURE 8

JOURNALING AND RESTORYING (I)

The technique I discuss in this lecture under the first intellectual principle is journaling.

- 8.1** What is the unifying theory of psychology? What role do stories play in clinical and developmental psychology? How about in organizational, cultural and cognitive psychology?
- 8.2** Does scaring children of a life of crime help to steer them away from breaking the law? How can stories contribute to students’ failure or success in college? In what ways can journaling contribute to our mental health?
- 8.3** What is Benefit Finding Journaling? How can we take the Benefit Finding approach and journal about each of the SPIRE elements?
- 8.4** What can we do to bring out the best version of ourselves? What does it mean to journal about the future and from the future? How can stories be used for strategic planning? What would your 110 year old self tell your present self?

LECTURE 9

APPRECIATIVE GOAL SETTING (S1)

In this lecture, I discuss Appreciative Goal Setting, a technique that can help individuals and organizations realize their purpose.

- 9.1** What is Appreciative Inquiry (AI)? What has Joshua Bell got to do with this approach? How does AI differ from traditional approaches to problem solving? What is grounded positivity?
- 9.2** What are the 4Ds? What are the four stages of the Appreciative Goal Setting process?
- 9.3** What are the benefits of remembering a positive past? What are the benefits of imagining a fantastic future? What is the Miracle Question? What is “daydreaming with a purpose”?
- 9.4** What are the benefits of generating concrete commitments? What are the benefits of realizing with authentic action? What is the role of strengths and values in the Appreciative Goal Setting process?

LECTURE 10

EMOTIONAL ART (E1)

The lecture focuses on making and experiencing art, as means of cultivating emotional wellbeing.

- 10.1** How can art contribute to each of the SPIRE elements? What is Positivity Resonance? How can music, painting, poetry, movies and other forms of art increase levels of wholebeing?
- 10.2** Who is James Pawelski? What is a Positive Portfolio? What are the big ten positive emotions according to Barbara Fredrickson?
- 10.3** Who is Alain de Botton? According to Alain de Botton, what criterion should we use to organize an art exhibition? How can art teach us to suffer more successfully? What is art’s true purpose?
- 10.4** What is an Emotional Art Event? What are some of the elements that make up such an event?

LECTURE 11

GUIDED EXPLORATION (I1)

This lecture is about teaching, specifically about Guided Exploration as a technique that generates growth and development in the teacher and the

- 11.1** What is the learning-teaching cycle? What are the benefits of teaching (to the teacher)? Why is change so hard?
- 11.2** What is Guided Exploration (Guidex)? What is the Case Study Method? What are the key guidelines for Guidex? What is William Blake's message in his poem Auguries of Innocence?
- 11.3** What are the guidelines for preparing a Guidex class? How can you hit a few homeruns each time you teach? How can you use stories in a Guidex classroom?
- 11.4** What does 1.5X and 2X refer to in the context of a lecture? Are teachers born or made? How do teachers make themselves? How can you enter the Teachers' Hall of Fame?

LECTURE 12

IMPROVISATION (R2)

In this lecture I address the art of improvisation, and the science behind this impactful practice, for cultivating interpersonal relationships through joy and play.

- 12.1** What is improvisational theatre (improv)? Can you think of things that you will regret later on in life? What is the antidote to excessive worry and seriousness?
- 12.2** Who is Patricia Madson? What are the six improv maxims? Why say "yes"? Why pay attention?
- 12.3** Why is failure so important? Why is appreciation central to improv? What does it mean to "take care" of others in improv and how can that improve our relationships elsewhere? Can you enjoy gain without suffering pain?
- 12.4** What is the "Yes, and..." exercise? How can you invent proverbs? How can improv help you tell stories? What are some other improv games? Why is improv important for both surviving and thriving?

LECTURE 13

ENVIRONMENTAL INTERVENTIONS (W2)

This lecture focuses on the notion that to bring about individual and communal well-being we need to address the person and the situation, the individual and the environment.

- 13.1** Why was 1968 such an important year in the field of psychology? What matters more, individual agency or situational pressure? What is Stanley Milgram's Obedient to Authority experiment about? How about Philip Zimbardo's Prison experiment?
- 13.2** Can awareness of environmental forces set us free? What is the impact of primarily focusing on the harmful power of the situation? What can historians, journalists, and authors do to create a better future for us all?
- 13.3** Is the environment good or bad? How can you improve your eyesight? What are "happiness clusters"?
- 13.4** How can you create an environment that brings out the best in you and others? What is the role of positive priming, positive people, positive choices, and positive behaviors? How can you positively transform your local supermarket in fifteen minutes?

LECTURE 14

CREATING A HAPPIER CENTER (R1)

In this lecture I focus on creating a Happier Center, a place dedicated to helping people understand, pursue, and attain life's ultimate currency.

- 14.1** What are Happier Centers? What does it mean to be an authentic leader? What role does charisma play in the context of becoming an effective leader? (Hint: Be prepared for a surprise).
- 14.2** What is the impact of technology on our mental health? How can technology contribute to each of the SPIRE elements? What's the Flip Classroom?
- 14.3** What are the twelve techniques that we covered in this course?
- 14.4** What is a Servant Leader? Who are some of the great Servant Leaders in history? In what way is listening central to servant leadership? What have movies got to do with listening? Are you ready to be a servant leader?