THE NATURE OF WELL-BEING

This research project focuses on the nature and causes of well-being. Though the study of well-being has proliferated in recent years, the nature and causes of well-being are difficult to discern. This research aims to gain clarity by appealing to the disciplines of philosophy and psychology.

OBJECTIVE
To examine the nature and causes of well-being. We ask the questions, What does well-being consist of? How should we define and conceptualize the construct of well-being across disciplines?

METHODOLOGY
- Conducted a literature review of the psychology of well-being.
- Consulted philosophers to understand the philosophical underpinnings of well-being. Then aimed to clarify the relationship between the psychology and philosophy of well-being.
- Investigated further areas of study that may benefit from exposure to recent work on well-being.
- Identified community partners and organizations that advocate for well-being.

MINDFULNESS, EMOTION, 10 REGULATION AND SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING (SWB)

1. MINDFULNESS: An essential role of mindfulness in well-being. Emotional regulation: ability to regulate one’s own emotional states. Both are associated with SWB, comprised of:
   - Frequent positive or infrequent negative affect
   - Life satisfaction

2. THE WELL-BEING OF PEOPLE OF COLOR
- Racism-related stress and trauma impacts well-being. People can affect well-being through adaptational outcomes among physical, psychological, social, functional, and spiritual domains.

3. THE ENGINE MODEL
- Well-being consists of:
  - Inputs: resources that enable well-being
  - Processes: internal states influencing individuals
  - Outcomes: behaviors that characterize well-being

4. WHAT MAKES A GOOD LIFE? THE LONGEST STUDY ON HAPPINESS
- Harvard researchers studying hundreds of men over eighty years to analyze the components and determinants of a good life concluded that the quality of relationships is the strongest determinant of one’s well-being.

5. INTEGRATING HEDONISM AND EUDAIMONISM
- Happiness researchers studying hundreds of men over eighty years to analyze the components and determinants of a good life concluded that the quality of relationships is the strongest determinant of one’s well-being.

6. THE PHILSOPHY OF WELL-BEING
- Desire theories: well-being is the overall level of desire-satisfaction in an individual’s experiences.
- Hedonism: well-being consists of the greatest balance of pleasure over pain. The degree to which we are well is related to the degree to which we feel pleasure.
- Eudaimonism: well-being goes beyond pleasure and is defined by the pursuit of meaningful goals or human excellence.

7. FURTHER DOMAINS OF STUDY
- Current issues that we can consider alongside well-being.
- Well-being and…
  - Sexuality: gender-based sexual violence, and the #MeToo movement
  - Sexual empowerment, sexual wellness
  - Issues of consent, sexual safety, and bodily autonomy
- Social Media
- Environment
- Climate anxiety and transgenerational responsibilities

8. COMMUNITY PARTNERS
- Organizations that promote and protect the well-being of individuals living in London, Ontario, and across Canada. These are potential community partners for which the study of well-being is relevant.

- Thames Valley District School Board
- Programs and resources to support student mental health and well-being
- Afrotosa Family Healing Services
- Indigenous-led programs that offer holistic healing and wellness
- Western University
- Health and wellness supports + gender-based violence supports
- Anova A Future Without Violence
- Supporting survivors of gender-based violence
- London Environmental Network
- Protecting the environment and building a sustainable community
- Canadian Mental Health Association Indigenous Services
- Community-based supports for the mental health and wellbeing of all
- London Multicultural Community Association
- Promoting multiculturalism and inclusiveness within the local community
- Black Youth Helpline
- Black youth specific service, providing support and access to care
- LifeSpin
- Providing programs and resources to low-income families

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- Environment
- Climate anxiety and transgenerational responsibilities
- Interactions between the self and the environment
- Mental Health
- Helping individuals be aware of and track their own well-being
- Rebooting well-being after adversity and trauma
- Social Justice
- The well-being of minorities and marginalized groups
- Access to resources and equitable care
- Well-being for Indigenous peoples, healing and reconciliation
- Privilege and visibility: bodily autonomy, equal rights
- LGBTQ2S+:
  - Supporting the well-being of individuals navigating gender identity, sexual identity, and trans experiences

OBJECTIVE LIST THEORIES
- Well-being is defined by the possession of certain goods. These theories propose a list of items that constitute well-being such as friendship, knowledge, autonomy, or positive emotion.
- The constituents of well-being are determined by the theory. Different theories propose different components.