



### ***Will I Be Happy? Who Cares?***

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This curriculum unit is recommended for any course typically taught in High Schools Grades 10-12, in particular it may also be used to enhance the study of specific Teaching Standards for Psychology, Sociology, and World History

**Keywords:** Human Agency, Student motivation, Pursuit of Happiness

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

**Synopsis:** This Curriculum Unit, intended for experienced teachers' use at the start of a course, proposes a teaching framework to enhance student engagement. It provides activities to address specific knowledge requirements and to inspire collaborative group projects. Human Agency is applied to Education beginning with considerations of Classical to modern day Philosophers and Psychologists and their work particularly on the Pursuit of Happiness. Findings include that seeking Happiness and understanding Caring may provide strong motivational factors at the heart of increasing student engagement and inspiring higher levels of achievement in underperforming students. Learning activities are included that provide means to enhance student engagement and achievement. The first is to motivate students through an examination of why they are involved in a course. The second provides an exploration of Aristotle's belief that "happiness is the ultimate end and purpose of human existence." The third facilitates student consideration of factors that lead to ultimate happiness. The fourth facilitates student consideration of the question: "Who will take care of me?" It is the author's belief that the concepts and activities shared in this unit provide means for building foundations to close achievement gaps and/or continue sustained high performance.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 73 students in AP Statistics and ~ 50 students in Honors Civil Engineering and Architecture.*

*I give permission for the Institute to publish my curriculum unit and synopsis in print and online. I understand that I will be credited as the author of my work.*

# Will I be Happy? Who Cares?

Lew Davidson, PhD

## Introduction

Is your happiness and that of your loved ones important to you? One would naturally think that the vast majority of people would answer YES. So let's assume that is the case and then consider – Who Cares? Ah, complexity STRIKES!<sup>i</sup> Clearly to gain insight we need a thorough understanding of Happiness and Caring. There are major existing bodies of knowledge on both of these subjects and significant research continues. Besides the interesting nature of these two subjects, why might they be of special interest to us as Educators?

A finding of this study of the application of Human Agency to Education is that Happiness and Caring may be at the heart of increasing student engagement and inspiring higher levels of achievement in traditionally underperforming students. Therefore, an Objective of this Curriculum Unit is to provide means to enhance student engagement and achievement. It is the author's belief that the concepts and activities shared in this unit provide means for building foundations to close achievement gaps and/or continue sustained high performance.

Perspectives:

During my 11 years of teaching high school students, it became quite evident that student achievement levels in a major way are dependent upon levels of motivation and persistence. Additionally, the majority (but definitely not all) of the current generation of high school students, appear to have:

1. very little long term perspective and thus make many decisions based on what appears in the short term to be most advantageous. For example, when faced with the opportunity to study course material to the degree needed for content mastery versus the enjoyment of "hanging out with friends," often socializing wins out.  
*Depending on students' characteristics, I might be able to get them talking and thinking about the aim of action. When we make a choice, we are trying to achieve something. What is the goal? Not just in particular, but in general? A goal in this would be to go beyond a state where the only apparent causal factor is just the pleasure of the moment.*<sup>ii</sup>
2. a widespread belief that someone or something (e.g., the government) will take care of "me." Such a belief does not provide, in fact it kills, motivation since it

fails to generate a perceived need to prepare for future responsibilities by thoroughly understanding and mastering content as a prerequisite to success.

3. a fairly prevalent belief that it is socially acceptable to have the disease known as "Senioritis", wherein students conclude they have done enough and can now just coast. (Often this disease is brought on by a college Acceptance Letter).

These issues I believe are potential "Show Stoppers" for many (but definitely not all) of today's students in terms of realizing their potential and, as we will see below, hence success and happiness. Also, I have seen students who, under the current grading systems, appear to have done well. However, as I have gotten to know them, I realize they are not achieving their potential. This is tragic!

On the good news side, I have universally found that students who seriously undertake the opportunities for learning that they are provided, do quite well and overwhelmingly achieve mastery levels of understanding and capability. So I am convinced that the opportunity to master to the degree of one's potential is there, and thus I see my challenge as a teacher is to enable students' dedication and determination to be able to take advantage of their educational opportunity to learn at the level of their potential. Given the points described above, this is no small challenge.

As I have, studied, discussed, and reflected on these issues, I have concluded that their causes are likely environmental in nature. It appears that many of our current students have not knowledgeably and thoughtfully considered such issues so vital to their futures, developed an informed personal judgment, and made decisions to realize their potential.

Rather, like boats drifting at sea, many students are strongly influenced by the unpredictable "waves" of life that affect us all. For example, consider a person trying to reach a specific location. If their journey is on land, they have a firm and stable surface on which they can proceed on their journey. However at sea, they are subject to a continuous variation in the sea surface from winds and waves. Thus on land they have a consistent likelihood or probability of reaching their destination in a specific time. However on the sea, unless they have a very firm hand on the boat's rudder, their journey is subject to many unexpected variations that may varying the probability of their achieving their potential.

So the question becomes, what would happen if these students were to have a well informed opportunity to understand and reflect on these issues? Would they (better) realize their individual potential and be motivated to achieve it?

Given the above reflections, the announcement of the 2014 **Charlotte Teachers Institute** (CTI) Seminars provided a very welcomed lighthouse beacon to guide my journey of discovering how to better help my students. Dr. Meghan Griffith, Associate



2. Human Agency                      The choice-making capability and actions of Humans

So let's utilize our Human Agency to make a choice in a thought experiment:

1. Consider any two options for anything of interest.
2. Envision that the only difference you would experience when using these options is the state of Happiness that you would enjoy by exercising one of the options.
3. Determine which of the two options you would choose. Would you choose the one that results in the most Happiness?

As illustrated by this thought activity, the choice of Happiness seems axiomatic. It was of utmost importance to Aristotle who believed that "Happiness is the ultimate end and purpose of human existence ... Happiness is not pleasure, nor is it virtue. It is the exercise of virtue...." <sup>iv</sup> In particular Aristotle shared in his Nicomachean Ethics

*...the function of man is to live a certain kind of life, and this activity implies a rational principle, and the function of a good man is the good and noble performance of these, and if any action is well performed it is performed in accord with the appropriate excellence: if this is the case, then happiness turns out to be an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue.* <sup>v</sup>

When Aristotle refers to virtue he is referring to character: "Aristotle's view of having "complete virtue" is to have a good moral character" <sup>vi</sup>. Aristotle was not alone in these beliefs as "Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle are in agreement ... that the highest good for Human Beings is happiness..." <sup>vii</sup>

This line of thought brings one to what I will call the "Ultimate Question": Achieving our own potential! What are the competitive forces for this question? Can we broadly define an achievement in this context?

*Aristotle claims that happiness is the ultimate aim. All other good things are pursued for its sake and not the other way around. Happiness is something we desire for its own sake. Happiness is living the best life a human being can live and this means being the best example of a human being one can be. For him this is acting rationally in accordance with virtue (because human beings are defined as rational beings and they are also social beings). Aristotle thinks such a life will also be pleasant but it's not just about pleasure" <sup>viii</sup>.*

So how do we live what in Aristotle's view would be "the best life we can live"? Is it enjoying many pleasures of the moment, e.g., hanging out with friends or winning an

athletic event? Although these may be viewed as momentary successes, a more life encompassing view is of fundamental importance. To help us with such a view we turn to a fantastic basketball coach and English teacher, John Wooden. He concluded that success is more important than winning. He developed his own definition of success:

*"Success is peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best you are capable of becoming."*<sup>ix</sup>

These very experienced words of wisdom point our way to achieving the state of happiness envisioned by Aristotle, namely by working to achieve our potential and with the knowledge of having done that, we may enjoy ultimate happiness.

Much work has been done on the subject of the Pursuit of Happiness, which may be viewed as follows:

*The Pursuit of Happiness is an essential human right. Both Confucius and Socrates implied that happiness and personal growth were a major purpose of life, and a central goal of education. According to the Federalist Papers, written by the founders of U.S. government, "A good government implies two things: first, fidelity to the object of government, which is the happiness of the people; secondly, a knowledge of the means by which that object can be best attained."*<sup>x</sup>

Thomas Jefferson saw this philosophy as a cornerstone for our country as demonstrated in our Declaration of Independence:

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."*<sup>xi</sup>

Given our cultural focus on Happiness, it would seem that students would resonate with it as a life objective and be motivated both by Coach Wooden's words, "did your best to become the best you are capable of becoming," and Aristotle's words, "Happiness is the ultimate end and purpose of human existence."

So there are many drivers to inspire achievement at the rate of the best we can be, however there are challenges to achieving this. In researching these challenges it became apparent that the question of "CARE" seems to be a central issue. So I researched and thought about it. Interestingly I found a multitude of definitions for "CARE" that are sensitive to the grammatical use of the word "CARE." For the purpose of this Curriculum Unit, the following definitions are of interest:

CARE as a VERB:

... be interested in, interest oneself in, trouble oneself with, ...<sup>xii</sup>  
be interested in something and feel strongly that it is important.<sup>xiii</sup>

CARE as a NOUN:

The provision of what is necessary for the health, welfare, maintenance, and protection of someone or something.<sup>xiv</sup>

We begin with CARE (verb) in the sense of students knowing the importance of undertaking the work and challenges needed to be the best they can be and achieve happiness. In my experience such knowledge and willingness are not present in many students who, rather, have an intrinsic operative belief that someone (typically parents) or something (typically our Government) will take CARE (noun) of them. Without CARE, motivation suffers and potential is not realized. In the words of Aristotle, "happiness belongs to the self-sufficient,"<sup>xv</sup> i.e., those who have taken care of themselves.

Implementation intentions provide a powerful methodology to be a better agent.

*To implement the goals that are selected, some individuals form implementation intentions (Gollwitzer, 1993, 1999; Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2006). In particular, some individuals form conditional plans, in which they imagine the precise behaviors they will undertake in response to specific cues. That is, they might form an image of when, where, and how they will execute the intended behavior<sup>xvi</sup> (Also see. <sup>xvii</sup> Also see. <sup>xviii</sup>).*

With Professor's Griffith's knowledgeable and much appreciated sharing of this technique, I have begun using it in my classes. I am very excited to see the current understanding of Implementation Intentions and associated work as shared below by Gollwitzer in 2014. I see it as potentially a tremendous next step in the application of applying Philosophy to Education. From a Human Agency standpoint this current work addresses establishing motivation for doing what it takes to be the best one can be and hence be Happy! I foresee another exciting project in the context of Human Agency being how to achieve the goals that are clarified through a focus on being the best one can be. As Gollwitzer claims,

*implementation intentions suggests that goal striving should be strategically automated so that weakness of the will is no longer an issue. This can be achieved by making if-then plans that hand over goal striving to specified if-then contingencies.<sup>xix</sup>*

The objectives for this Curriculum Unit are to:

1. provide means for students to appreciate long term consequences of their current decisions and actions.
2. motivate (further) students by exposing them to the concept of who (which agents) will provide the care (noun) needed by them as their lives proceed. In particular, to motivate them to want to and be better able to self-provide the care (noun) needed for them to be happy.

3. motivate (further) students to be the best they can be by enabling them to master course material as part of achieving their potential and hence their happiness. In other words, to enhance students' caring (verb) about learning course content when seen in the context of it being a vital part of their achieving long term happiness.

The assessment context for these objectives is a measurement framework that considers

1. Likelihood of enthusiastic and proactive student engagement.
2. Likelihood of an increase in student engagement driving increased levels of mastery.
3. Impact on Student Learning for the entire course and the student's future learning experience.

## **Teaching Strategies**

### The Framework

Since the impact of this unit is intended to increase student motivation, it should be taught at the highest cognitive levels with students obtaining and absorbing information, analyzing it and synthesizing it into a personal philosophy. The ultimate aim is to increase their motivation to achieve mastery of the course content to the extent of their abilities and to enhance their capacity to care for themselves and their loved ones in their years ahead of them.

### Classroom Activities

Four activities are shared in this unit as follows:

1. What am I doing here?  
The purpose of this activity is to motivate students.
2. What is happiness and how do I obtain it?  
The purpose of this activity is to guide students through an inquiry into happiness with the purpose of their considering the conclusion that by being the best they can be, they will achieve happiness as a major purpose of life.
3. How can I be happy?  
The purpose of this activity is to facilitate student consideration of factors that lead to ultimate happiness.

4. Who will take care of me?

The purpose of this activity is guide students through considerations of who will care for them and how can they best care for themselves.

Activity One

What am I doing here?

Note to Teacher:

The purpose of this activity is to motivate students by giving them the means to appreciate the:

- tie between being the best they can be and happiness
- importance of seeing (have a Vision of) the Big Picture of what they are accomplishing through their education.

It is suggested that students discuss the discussion items in self-selected groups of 3 to 4 members, and then each student should individually develop and submit his or her own responses to the discussion item questions. It is recommended that a Google form or other equivalent means be used to record students' responses to the discussion questions included in this activity. Then a few of the most insightful reflections may be used to catalyze a class discussion.

For the Student:

*"'Thou didst thy best, that is success.' From those things, and one other perhaps, I coined my own definition of success, which is: peace of mind attained only through self-satisfaction in knowing you made the effort to do the best of which you're capable. I believe that's true. If you make the effort to do the best of which you're capable, to try and improve the situation that exists for you, I think that's success."*<sup>xx</sup>

So spoke John Wooden in his 2009 Ted Talk. On ESPN we find the view that "John Wooden is the greatest coach ever – in any sport, not just college basketball."<sup>xxi</sup> What a fitting role model for us as we learn and gain insight. If we view Wooden's reference to self-satisfaction in the context of obtaining happiness, we are in the process of obtaining the notion that we are in a position to achieve ultimate happiness by working towards our goals and hence knowing we have succeeded to the best of our abilities.

To be able to assess whether we are realizing our potential and being the best we can be, we first need to understand what we are doing. So what are you all about as you undertake education and prepare yourselves for your future? Are you:

1. Doing basically what your teacher asks you to do? Or

2. Realizing you are engaging in activities to learn important skills? Or
3. Understanding that you are engaging in learning activities that can lead to your ultimate happiness by preparing yourself to be the best you can be?

Before reading further, please discuss these three questions above in groups of 3 or 4 students. In your discussions please specifically discuss and record key observations in preparation for sharing them with the whole class. As you consider these questions please think about responding to the following PROMPT in the medium specified by your teacher (note that responses may be shared with others, including the whole class):

By providing learning activities that I am required to do, my teacher wants me to ...  
*(please select one of the following three options and explain why you believe that is the reason your teacher is requesting that you do learning activities.)*

1. Answer questions? Or
2. Through answering these questions realize I am not just doing things, rather I am engaging in learning activities to master skills that society believes are important to me and my ability to contribute to society? Or
3. Through these questions appreciate that I am working toward achieving the big picture of my ultimate happiness."

Before finalizing your answers regarding the above three options, please read and consider the following story of the three stonecutters:

*One day a traveller, walking along a lane, came across 3 stonecutters working in a quarry. Each was busy cutting a block of stone. Interested to find out what they were working on, he asked the first stonecutter what he was doing. "I am cutting a stone!" Still no wiser the traveller turned to the second stonecutter and asked him what he was doing. "I am cutting this block of stone to make sure that it's square, and its dimensions are uniform, so that it will fit exactly in its place in a wall." A bit closer to finding out what the stonecutters were working on but still unclear, the traveller turned to the third stonecutter. He seemed to be the happiest of the three and when asked what he was doing replied: "**I am building a cathedral.**"<sup>xxii</sup>*

Note to teacher:

After the students have submitted their responses it is suggested that the most interesting and appropriate responses be shared with and discussed by the entire class as a whole. After the class discussion is completed the class may move to the second part of this activity by having students consider the following:

One of the challenges at the secondary level of education is that in most cases one's personal "Cathedral" is not clear or finalized. This should not deter us from invoking the motivational power of realizing we are working for a ultimate state of happiness, for we can apply this concept to one or more possible long-term pursuits. For example, if one is uncertain if they might want to pursue a career as an artist, nurse or a statistician, one can gain information on the importance of one's current course for pursuing each of these professional careers. Then armed with the knowledge of why the current course is a cornerstone or otherwise important in building one's Cathedral for that specific career, one has a basis for motivation to master the current class content. Means for evaluating a career option include internet searches and interviewing a professional in the career of interest. For example, a student in a Statistics course may wonder "Why is Statistics important in Nursing?". A web search yielded 82,000,000 hits to this question. Or a student could ask a nurse, such as a School Nurse.

### *Inquiry Activity*

1. Investigate the following question using Web based searches, interviews or other means of interest to you that are approved by your teacher:

*Why is <fill in the name of your current course > important in <fill in the name of a career of interest to you>?*

2. Write a brief summary of your findings and reflection on your motivation for mastering your current course to aid in achieving ultimate happiness by being able to know in the future that you were the best you could be.

Note to the teacher

After all of the student responses have been received have a class discussion that starts with sharing with the class some of the most relevant responses and generating a class list of important reasons for mastering the current course content. Students should then discuss and prioritize these reasons to gain additional insight and motivation.

### Activity Two

What is happiness and how do I obtain it?

Note to Teacher

The purpose of this activity is to guide students through an inquiry into happiness with the purpose of their considering the conclusion that by being the best they can

be, they will achieve happiness as a major purpose of life. This in turn is hoped to inspire students to do the best they can in their classes and learning activities.

It is suggested that students read the information provided in this activity and then join together in self-selected groups of 3 to 4 students to discuss these concepts. Then students should input their individual written thoughts into Google forms or an equivalent medium. Selected student responses could be shared with the class.

For the student

In this activity we will consider the notion of happiness and its importance to each of us. So let's utilize our abilities as Humans to make a choice in a thought experiment:

1. Consider any two options for anything of interest.
2. Envision that these choices are equal in every attribute that meaningfully characterizes them except the state of Happiness that you would experience by exercising a particular option.
3. Determine which of the two options would you choose.

As illustrated by this thought activity, the choice of Happiness seems axiomatic. It was of utmost importance to Aristotle who believed that "Happiness is the ultimate end and purpose of human existence ... Happiness is not pleasure, nor is it virtue. It is the exercise of virtue.... " In particular Aristotle shared in his Nicomachean Ethics *...the function of man is to live a certain kind of life, and this activity implies a rational principle, and the function of a good man is the good and noble performance of these, and if any action is well performed it is performed in accord with the appropriate excellence: if this is the case, then happiness turns out to be an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue.*<sup>xxiii</sup>

Please consider the following thoughts:

What is happiness?

Happiness is the meaning and the purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence."-Aristotle

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."~Thomas Jefferson writing in the Declaration of Independence

How can we be happy?

"There is no happiness except in the realization that we have accomplished something."  
~ Henry Ford

"The person born with a talent they are meant to use will find their greatest happiness in using it." ~ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Why does my state of happiness matter?

Make plans as to how you can attain goals that will give you happiness. Once you do this, your mood will change as you are slowly able to achieve your goals. You will feel much better within. This is because you are able to get the things that you value.

On the web one can find a URL with 110 Happiness Quotes.<sup>xxiv</sup> They include:

19. "If you observe a really happy man you will find him building a boat, writing a symphony, educating his son, growing double dahlias in his garden, or looking for dinosaur eggs in the Gobi desert. He will not be searching for happiness as if it were a collar button that has rolled under the radiator. He will not be striving for it as a goal in itself. He will have become aware that he is happy in the course of living life twenty-four crowded hours of the day." ~W. Bearn Wolfe

61. "The Constitution only guarantees you the right to pursue happiness. You have to catch it yourself." ~Benjamin Franklin

63. "Happiness is different from pleasure. Happiness has something to do with struggling, enduring, and accomplishing." ~George Sheehan

74. "Remember that happiness is a way of travel — not a destination." ~Roy M. Goodman

82. "Folks are usually about as happy as they make their minds up to be." ~Abraham Lincoln

100. "Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful." ~Herman Cain

[In the comments] "When I went to school, they asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up. I wrote down 'happy.' They told me I didn't understand the assignment, and I told them they didn't understand life." ~John Lennon

Looking at these selected quotes a common theme appears to be present: Happiness is in the doing of things that are important to each of us AND in doing them to the best of our ability.

Please again consider Coach John Wooden's definition of success (thinking of self-satisfaction in the context of happiness):

"peace of mind attained only through self-satisfaction in knowing you made the effort to do the best of which you're capable. .... If you make the effort to do the best of which you're capable, to try and improve the situation that exists for you, I think that's success."

In your group of three to four students, consider the thoughts above and any other beliefs or thoughts you have on this inquiry into Happiness. Then please respond to the following prompt:

#### PROMPT

In a written response, excerpts of which may be shared with the whole class, discuss the propositions:

1. The studies I undertake in high school and subsequent education can better prepare me to be the best I can be given my unique set of interests and skills, if I complete with a high degree of motivation and excellence the learning activities provided to me.
2. If I am the best I can be, that means I will be successful and achieve a state of happiness, which many wise voices through the ages view as the ultimate goal of life.

#### Activity Three

##### How can I be happy?

To the Teacher:

The purpose of this activity is to facilitate student consideration of factors that lead to ultimate happiness. It is hoped that as students think about and discuss these factors, they will develop enhanced motivation to undertake activities that would lead to such happiness. In particular, the hope is that these activities enhance students' commitment to and effort on activities such as their studies with the understanding of these activities' importance in students achieving ultimate happiness.

It is suggested that the teacher set up a Google Form, or equivalent, means of input to record student replies to the following questions and reflection.

- For the discussion items. It is further suggested that students discuss the discussion items in self-selected groups of 3 to 4 members, but each student should then individually submit their own responses to the discussion item questions.
- Students should answer the Happiness Activities Profile questions only as individuals with no collaboration.

For Students:

*Introductory Perspective*

As a student you are at a wonderful time as you prepare for the rest of your life. The formative years you are enjoying are now here and then will be gone faster than you can imagine, so it is critically important that you do not delay in both enjoying and utilizing the time and experience they afford you. Key tasks, or should we say opportunities, facing you include preparing to be successful and achieving happiness. As a guide for these tasks it is important to know where one is going and what we can learn from those who have gone before with excellence. To help you gain perspective on these concepts please answer the following questions in the indicated format:

1. Considering ONLY activities you enjoy and the content matter of this current course, list your primary areas of interest. Even if you are not sure, you must list at least three areas in which you are most interested. For each area of interest indicate:
  - a. if you envision that it will be a:
    - i. (timeframe)
      - A. short term pursuit (only during high school)
      - B. long term pursuit (only during the next ten years)
      - C. lifelong pursuit
    - ii. (nature or type of interest)
      - A. recreational
      - B. social
      - C. professional (income source) interest [at least one of the listed interests must be professional, i.e., you could see yourself doing this interest/activity as your career]
  - b. how much you like (are happy when doing) each area of interest
    - A. passionate about it
    - B. tremendous degree
    - C. a lot
    - D. some degree
  - c. how much you care (in the sense that you feel it is important to you) about each interest
    - A. passionate about it

- B. tremendous degree
- C. a lot
- D. some degree

- d. thinking of your immediate efforts, to what degree would you be willing to sacrifice pleasures of the moment (e.g., hanging out with friends or social media time) to prepare yourself for the pre-requisites and needs for success in that interest
- A. tremendous degree
  - B. a lot
  - C. some degree

Now use a decision matrix as follows to quantify your answers to the above questions. Look at each of your answers and assign the points as indicated in the Rubric below.

Decision Matrix Rubric					
<u>Answer</u>	<u>a-i) timeframe</u>	<u>a-ii) nature</u>	<u>b) like</u>	<u>c) care</u>	<u>d) effort</u>
A.	1	1	5	5	5
B.	3	1	4	4	4
C.	5	5	2	2	2
D.			1	1	1

Then sum the points for each interest. An example is shown below the rubric of a possible output. Please note that the examples shown below are not meant to state what the values should be for a particular interest or course. Rather they are offered only as an example of the decision process.

<u>Examples</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>a-i) timeframe</u>	<u>a-ii) nature</u>	<u>b) like</u>	<u>c) care</u>	<u>d) effort</u>	<u>Sum</u>
Recreational	1	5	1	5	1	2	14
Professional	2	5	5	5	5	3	23
Social	3	5	1	4	2	5	17
Course (major)		5	5	4	5	3	22
Course (required, not of interest)		1	5	1	1	1	9

Now please answer the following questions:

1. Do you think the questions asked in this activity are the significant factors to consider when thinking about what activities you should prioritize? (please answer Yes, No) If

no please share what should be added or changed (please explain the change) and why it (they) should be added or changed.

2. Do you think the numerical weight factors assigned (please see the rubric) in this activity are appropriate to characterize what would result in satisfaction and long term happiness from a person's interest? (please answer Yes, No) If no please share what should be changed and a more appropriate value. Please explain your thoughts on both the suggested change and suggested rubric value.

3. Rank the summative scores for each interest and use them in numerical rank order as a basis for discussing in your group what interests might best give you the most ultimate happiness, and why your views are reasonable. (Please note there is no claim here or existing data to correlate such scores to ultimate happiness. Rather, this methodology is used here to just facilitate discussion.)

4. Considering your top ranked interests/courses, given this exploration of factors leading to ultimate happiness are you willing to place more priority on your efforts/study of them?

To the Teacher:

For a more enriching version of this activity, the teacher might first ask the self-selected groups to develop a list of the factors they consider important to consider when one is discussing achieving ultimate happiness and their respective rubric values. After the students have inputted factors they consider important please share the factors suggested in this activity and ask the students to also consider ones they may have not already identified when they provide their profile inputs.

## Activity Four

### Who will take care of me?

To the teacher: The purpose of this activity is to guide students through consideration of who will care for them and how can they best care for themselves.

In our younger years there is typically little thought afforded to the question in the title of this activity. Students have grown up in a culture in which someone or something other than themselves is actually taking care of them. For example, parents or other caregivers have seen to students' personal needs and schools have seen to students' educational needs. In other words, students are quite used to someone or something taking care of them. This in turn is a demotivator for some students who have no basis for perceiving what their lives will be like if they fail to prepare to care for themselves in the future.

As you determine your answers to the following questions please write your answers in the medium specified by your teacher (please note some of the responses may be shared with the class and others, without any identification that they were inputted by you).

1. First consider what care (major items only) you and your loved ones will need (both to sustain yourselves and to enjoy a desired quality of life) when you are in, for example, your 30's to 50's. In your discussion groups make a list of such needs, e.g., housing, medical, transportation, children's advanced education, tickets for admission to entertainment, ability to support charitable activities, etc.
2. Now examine this list to determine the type of resources that each item requires. Do you find that many of these needs require financial resources?
3. Now envision the source of the financial resources, e.g., from you, your spouse, your current family, governmental bodies, charitable agencies, other?
4. Now discuss whether you want to prepare to perform to the best of your ability and be able to earn the means to care for yourself and your loved ones, or if you are willing to proceed to your future hoping that someone or something else will take care of you.
5. Now reconsider the question of working and learning to be the best that you can be in Activities 1 - 3. Does your answer to them change when you consider the question of who will care for you and your loved ones?

In terms of being able to better take care of ourselves and better achieve objectives, one can consider using implementation intentions as follows:

*To implement the goals that are selected, some individuals form implementation intentions (Gollwitzer, 1993, 1999; Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2006). In particular, some individuals form conditional plans, in which they imagine the precise behaviors they will undertake in response to specific cues. That is, they might form an image of when, where, and how they will execute the intended behavior.*<sup>xxv</sup>

Let's do another thought experiment. Suppose you are given an assignment to do an Online Quiz that will be due in two days. Which of the following actions do you envision would give a higher probability of a successful on-time completion of such an assignment:

1. You write in your note book: "Online Quiz due Wednesday"
2. You reflect on when and how you will do the assignment and write in your notebook: "During study hall tomorrow do the Online Quiz due Wednesday"

If you believe Action #2 above would give a higher probability of a successful on-time completion of such an assignment, you might want to try this methodology when recording your assignments.

Another factor to consider in one's ability to take care of oneself is the inherent attractiveness of enjoying immediate pleasures of the moment as opposed to the more demanding efforts of long-term life fulfilling actions of studying and working to a level of mastery. This phenomena has been recognized for a long time and was addressed by Plato in his *Protagoras*:<sup>xxvi</sup>

*There is a Plato dialogue in which Plato gives an analogy dealing with the ability to accurately calculate long term pleasures against short term. His idea is that we overestimate short term because it's close to us, much the way objects closer to us look bigger. So it might seem more pleasant today to skip the dentist appointment. But in the long run, we are miscalculating. He says we need to recognize this temporal illusion for what it is so that we can understand the truth and act accordingly.*<sup>xxvii</sup>

Ask yourself: are you able to weigh the apparent pleasures of the moment, such as hanging out with friends, against the benefits of effective actions to enable your long-term success and happiness?

## **Appendix 1: Implementing Teaching Standards**

This Curriculum Unit may be used to support any Grade 10 - 12 High School course to enable students' engagement and to enhance motivation and dedication to achieving their potential.

### From World History:

WH.H.2 Analyze ancient civilizations and empires in terms of their development, growth and lasting impact.

WH.H.2.9 Evaluate the achievements of ancient civilizations in terms of their enduring cultural impact.

### From Psychology:

12.LC.1 Understand how conditioning, learning, and cognition affect behavior.

12.LC.1.3 Summarize the cognitive factors involved in perception, motivation, emotion, and consciousness.

12.LC.1.4 Use classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and observational learning theories to manage daily problems and improve the quality of life.

12.DE.1 Analyze human development throughout the lifespan.

12.DE.1.4 Use knowledge gained from an analysis of human development to understand personal challenges at different stages of life.

### From Sociology:

12.C.1 Understand how culture and its diversity sustain humanity.

12.C.1.3 Explain the influence of values, norms, folkways, cultures and subcultures of the United States.

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## **Materials for Classroom Use**

Computer Access: Students must be able to perform Web Quests. To ensure all students have access to the Internet, the class may go to a computer laboratory or bring a laptop or IPAD cart into the classroom.

## **Reading List for Students**

Aristotle. Pursuit of Happiness. Accessed December 10, 2014. <http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/history-of-happiness/aristotle/.ibid>

## **Bibliography for Teachers**

<http://www.ted.com/> This is a repository of very insightful and thought provoking talks by noted authorities

The difference between winning and succeeding – John Wooden which inspires one to read: Wooden, John They Call Me Coach.

[http://www.ted.com/talks/john\\_wooden\\_on\\_the\\_difference\\_between\\_winning\\_and\\_success.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/john_wooden_on_the_difference_between_winning_and_success.html)

## Notes

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<sup>i</sup> "Care" is a word with multiple meanings, which are highly dependent on context and grammatical usage

<sup>ii</sup> Personal interview by author. 9-2014. Professor Griffith

<sup>iii</sup> Griffith, Professor Meghan. "Human Agency." Charlotte Teachers Institute. January 1, 2014. Accessed December 10, 2014.

<http://charlotteteachers.org/seminars/2014-seminars/human-agency/>.

<sup>iv</sup> "Aristotle." Pursuit of Happiness. Accessed December 10, 2014.

<http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/history-of-happiness/aristotle/>.

<sup>v</sup> Brown, Lesley, ed. *The Nicomachean Ethics (Oxford World's Classics) Paperback*. Oxford World's Classics, 2009.

<sup>vi</sup> Aristotle." Pursuit of Happiness. Accessed December 10, 2014.

<http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/history-of-happiness/aristotle/.ibid>

<sup>vii</sup> Brown, Lesley, ed. *The Nicomachean Ethics (Oxford World's Classics) Paperback*. Oxford World's Classics, 2009. pg ix

<sup>viii</sup> Personal interview by author. 10-2014. Professor Griffith

<sup>ix</sup> "The Difference between Winning and Succeeding." John Wooden. February 1, 2001. Accessed September 10, 2014.

[http://www.ted.com/talks/john\\_wooden\\_on\\_the\\_difference\\_between\\_winning\\_and\\_success?language=en](http://www.ted.com/talks/john_wooden_on_the_difference_between_winning_and_success?language=en).

<sup>x</sup> Pursuit of Happiness. Accessed December 10, 2014. <http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/history-of-happiness/> ibid

<sup>xi</sup> "The Declaration of Independence: A Transcription." National Archives and Records Administration. Accessed December 10, 2014.

[http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration\\_transcript.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html).

<sup>xii</sup> "Oxford Dictionaries." Oxford Dictionaries. Accessed December 10, 2014.

<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us>.

<sup>xiii</sup> "Care." - Definition from Longman English Dictionary Online. Accessed December 10, 2014. [http://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/care\\_2](http://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/care_2).

<sup>xiv</sup> "Oxford Dictionaries." Oxford Dictionaries. Accessed December 10, 2014.

<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us>. ibid

<sup>xv</sup> "The Most Poignant Happiness Quotes." The Most Poignant Happiness Quotes. Accessed December 10, 2014.

<http://www.quotes.stevenredhead.com/poignant/Happiness.html>.

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- <sup>xvi</sup> "Implementation Intentions." - Psychlopedia. Accessed December 10, 2014.  
<http://www.psych-it.com.au/Psychlopedia/article.asp?id=276>.
- <sup>xvii</sup> "Goal Achievement: The Role of Intentions." Taylor & Francis. Accessed December 10, 2014.  
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14792779343000059#.VIR3OjHF-hM>.
- <sup>xviii</sup> [http://www.psych.nyu.edu/gollwitzer/99Goll\\_ImpInt.pdf](http://www.psych.nyu.edu/gollwitzer/99Goll_ImpInt.pdf)
- <sup>xix</sup> [http://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/brp/constructs/implementation\\_intentions/goal\\_intent\\_attain.pdf](http://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/brp/constructs/implementation_intentions/goal_intent_attain.pdf)
- <sup>xx</sup> [http://www.ted.com/talks/john\\_wooden\\_on\\_the\\_difference\\_between\\_winning\\_and\\_success/transcript?language=en](http://www.ted.com/talks/john_wooden_on_the_difference_between_winning_and_success/transcript?language=en)
- <sup>xxi</sup> <http://espn.go.com/page2/s/questions/wooden.html>
- <sup>xxii</sup> <http://www.the-happy-manager.com/articles/leadership-quality/>
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Professor Griffith, personal communication
- <sup>xxiv</sup> 110 quotes Happiness Quotes
- <sup>xxv</sup> <http://www.psych-it.com.au/Psychlopedia/article.asp?id=276>
- <sup>xxvi</sup> <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/protagoras.html>
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Professor Griffith, personal communication

