Life
Satisfaction
Research-based concepts for a satisfying quality of life
What We Will Cover

1. What research has been used to assess life satisfaction (Quality of Life Inventory)

2. What method can be used to improve life satisfaction and happiness (Quality of Life Therapy)

3. Activities to improve life satisfaction and happiness:
   a. Happiness House
   b. String of Pearls
   c. Inner Abundance or “Chill Pill Time”
   d. CASIO
From QOLI Came QOLT

- Quality of Life Therapy (QOLT) came as a result of the research behind the Quality of Life Inventory (QOLI) developed by Michael B. Frisch, PhD, in 1994.

- QOLT provides a wide range of interventions to assist people in gaining a more satisfying quality of life.

- New research continues in how to obtain life satisfaction.
Quality of Life Inventory (Frisch, 1994)

- QOLI is a validated assessment that measures one’s quality of life.
- It has participants rate 17 areas of life in terms of importance and satisfaction.
- An area of life is either important or not to someone. The importance can change over time.
- Satisfaction or dissatisfaction can be measured and can change over time depending on goals someone sets, or decides not to set.
Areas of Life Assessed by the QOLI

1. Health
2. Self-Esteem
3. Goals-and-Values (Philosophy of Life)
4. Spiritual Life
5. Money (Standard of Living)
6. Work
7. Play (or Recreation)
8. Learning
9. Creativity
10. Helping
11. Love (or Love Relationship)
12. Friends (or Friendships)
13. Children
14. Relatives
15. Home
16. Neighborhood
17. Community
Exercise: “Happiness House”

• "Happiness House" (Miller & Frisch, 2009) is a method to prioritize life areas.

• Choose from 17 life areas which ones are important to your happiness, fulfillment, or quality of life then put the names of the most important on the 1st floor of a house picture, the second important on the 2nd floor, and the third on the top floor.

• You may draw your own house on a piece of paper and fill in the floors based on the following definitions.

• Some areas may not apply for you.
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Only areas important to your happiness or quality of life prioritized here.
Let’s Talk About What Each of These Areas of Life Mean …
Health

Health is being physically fit, not sick, and without pain or disability. (Get a check up!)
Self-esteem means liking and respecting yourself in light of your strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures, and ability to handle problems.
Goals-and-values are your beliefs about what matters most in life and how you should live, both now and in the future. This includes your goals in life, what you think is right or wrong, and the purpose or meaning of life as you see it.
Spiritual life refers to spiritual or religious beliefs or practices, that you pursue on your own or as part of a like-minded spiritual community. If important, Spiritual Life becomes an important part of a person’s Goals-and-Values.
Money (or standard of living) is made up of three things: It is the money you earn, the things you own (like a car or furniture,) and believing that you will have the money and things that you need in the future.
Work means your career or how you spend most of your time. You may work at a job, at home taking care of your family, or at school as a student. Work includes your duties on the job, the money you earn (if any), and the people you work with.
Play means what you do in your free time to relax, have fun, or improve yourself. This can include watching movies, visiting friends, or pursuing a hobby like sports or gardening.
Learning means gaining new skills or information about things that interest you. Learning can come from reading books or taking classes on subjects like history, car repair, or using a computer.
Creativity is using your imagination to come up with new and clever ways to solve everyday problems or to pursue a hobby like painting, photography, or needlework. This can include decorating your home, playing the guitar, or finding a new way to solve a problem at work.
Helping means helping others in need or helping to make your community a better place to live. *Helping* can be done on your own or in a group like a church, a neighborhood association, or a political party. *Helping* can include doing volunteer work at a school or other organization.
Love is a very close romantic relationship with another person. Love usually includes sexual feelings and feeling loved, cared for, and understood.
Friends (or Friendships)

Friends are people (not relatives) you know well and care about who have interests and opinions like yours. Friends have fun together, talk about personal problems, and help each other out.
Children means how you get along with your child (or children). Think of how you get along as you care for, visit, or play with your child (or children).
Relatives means how you get along with your parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, and in-laws. Think about how you get along when you are doing things together like visiting, talking on the telephone, or helping each other out.
Home is where you live. It is your house or apartment and the yard around it. Think about how nice it looks, how big it is, and your rent or house payment.
Neighborhood is the area around your home. Think about how nice it looks, the amount of crime in the area, and how well you like the people.
Community is the whole city, town, or rural area where you live (it is not just your neighborhood). **Community** includes how nice the area looks, the amount of crime, and how well you like the people. It also includes places to go for fun like parks, concerts, sporting events, and restaurants. You may also consider the cost of things you need to buy, the availability of jobs, the government, schools, taxes, and pollution.
According to Frisch (2015), there is no right or wrong order that the life areas should be prioritized. The point is to become aware of what is important to you, then set your goals to become more satisfied in those life areas.
Research Shows…

According to Frisch (2015), "Having goals and a purpose in life is essential to happiness. . . . Recent research suggests that goals that are non-competitive and are service, relationship or hobby oriented may be very important to a life of meaning or happiness."
Research Also Shows…

Goals related to areas that are dissatisfying, such as Spiritual Life, Work, or Retirement, are especially important to tackle to make them more satisfying (Frisch, 2015).
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Exercise: “Happiness House”
Next Steps

The next step with “Happiness House” is to write goals for the life areas you chose that will help you feel happy and satisfied with your life. See the example on the right.

Goals to increase my satisfaction with Home:
1. Have a garden.
2. Live in a pet friendly place.
“Happiness House”

Use

- The collage of sorts can be a reminder of what is important to you. You may paste it on your refrigerator, for example.
- The life areas can be changed and moved around. Check it annually.
- The goals can be things you want to achieve in your lifetime.
Exercise: “String of Pearls”

• This intervention is one that could be done by individuals daily for "a quick improvement in contentment" (Frisch, 2015).

• Each pearl on an imaginary necklace represents an interaction with someone. The String of Pearls is "meant to become a habit of kindness towards others in every interaction" (Frisch, 2015).

• Per Frisch (2015), String of Pearls can "eliminate guilt from being rude or dismissive to others," and may help build stronger bonds with those whom we interact regularly.

• If your interaction is kind, even if not reciprocated, then the imaginary pearl may become a positive one for the day, shining brightly.
Research Also Shows…

- To serve others or to pursue happiness in \textit{any} area of life in Quality of Life Therapy, we must feel \textit{centered, calm, and good on the inside} (Frisch, 2015).

- Having a \textbf{routine} that renews you each day, and taking time to do it, can help achieve an inner calmness (Frisch, 2015).
Exercise: “Inner Abundance or Chill Pill Time”

Quality of Life Therapy (QOLT) recommends a self-selected technique to help obtain an inner calm regularly. QOLT calls it Inner Abundance or Chill Pill Time. It requires you having a routine to access your inner calm, such as:

- Set “me time”
- Relax and unwind to de-stress (like guided meditation)
- Set cherished goals
- Problem solve ways to become more satisfied with life
- Do something that recharges your batteries (such as a physical activity)
Research over 20 years found…

Regarding the quality of life across nations and individuals around the world, there are **Five Paths** that can be changed to enhance or boost *any* area of life to feel more fulfilled. The paths can be recalled using this acronym:

**CASIO**
CASIO

- CASIO stands for *changing.*
  - Circumstances
  - Attitudes
  - Standards or Goals for an area both now and in the future
  - Importance (or priority) we place on an area
  - Happiness in Other Areas of life outside of an area that we may have put in one of our Happiness House rooms
Change Your Circumstances

Example: Being in an unfulfilling job. You can talk to your boss to try to change things or look for another job.
Change Your Attitudes

Ask two **key questions:**

“What is really happening here (what are the facts)?”

“How will this situation affect me and my future prospects for happiness?”
Key idea: Set realistic goals and standards and experiment with raising and lowering your standards for fulfillment.

*Often, lowering your standards slightly helps gain more fulfillment.*

Ask, “How much is enough?”
Change Your Priorities (Importance)

**Key idea:** Distinguish areas of life that you can and cannot change. De-emphasize what you cannot change or control.
Consider Other Areas for Satisfaction

**Key idea:** Even if not your “number one” concern, focus on other areas of life for fulfillment that you may not have considered.
CASIO (Five Paths)

- Can be:
  - A happiness-booster for any area of life
  - A guide for creative problem solving
  - Five possible pathways or strategies to achieve your life goals in your valued areas of life.
In Summary

• Life satisfaction can be achieved by prioritizing life areas that are important to you at different points in your life and setting goals for those areas that help you feel content, fulfilled, and satisfied.

• Helping others, being kind to others, and also being kind to yourself through self-care (e.g., “me time”) have been shown to assist in living a more satisfied life.

• We may change our circumstances, attitudes, standards, areas of importance (priorities), and/or focus to other life areas not previously considered in order to feel more fulfilled and contented.
References


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