Sustainable Happiness: How Happiness Studies Can Contribute to a More Sustainable Future

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Sustainable development and sustainability have been fostering interdisciplinary research and policy development for two decades. Likewise, positive psychology and happiness studies are stimulating interdisciplinary research with implications for policy and practice. O'Brien (2005) defined sustainable happiness as the pursuit of happiness that does not exploit other people, the environment, or future generations. Bringing sustainability and happiness together within the concept of *sustainable happiness* holds significant possibilities for individual, community, and global well-being. Sustainable happiness is discussed with respect to liveable communities, child-friendly planning, and education.

Keywords: sustainable happiness, liveable communities, infrastructures of well-being

Twenty years ago, the Brundtland Commission published its report, *Our Common Future* (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987), which outlined concerns regarding the trajectory of development and the harmful impact of those development patterns for all life on the planet, including life that was yet to be born. It coined the now famous definition of sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (p. 24). By 1992, world leaders gathered in Rio de Janeiro at the Earth Summit, the first United Nations (UN) conference that combined issues of environment and development. The 40-chapter Earth Summit document that emerged, *Agenda 21* (UN, 1993), presented challenges and plans for action around biodiversity, trade, debt, deforestation, poverty, education, agriculture, desertification, human settlements, consumption, and much more.

There was a surge of optimism and activity in the wake of the Earth Summit. The concepts of sustainable development and sustainability became the subject of academic and political discourse, entering the rhetoric and politics of most nations, municipalities, and universities of the North and South.[1] While progress has been made, shifts in policy and practice are far short of the transition required for a sustainable future.

Positive psychology and happiness studies have tremendous untapped potential for contributing to sustainability. Seligman (2002) sees positive psychology as the study of positive emotions, positive traits, and positive institutions. For the purposes of this article, happiness studies include research from positive psychology as well as other disciplines such as economics, business, health, and education that investigate happiness, subjective well-being, and life satisfaction (Diener & Seligman, 2004; Helliwell, 2005; Luthans, 2002; Noddings, 2003).

In a world where global warming has begun (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC], 2007) and climate scientists are investigating both mitigation measures *and* adaptation measures some might wonder whether happiness studies are a pleasant but inconsequential research area. Many of my sustainability colleagues would likely point to the untempered pursuit of happiness as a major cause of environmental exploitation and degradation. Likewise, the founder of positive psychology, Martin Seligman, asks whether "the understanding and alleviating of suffering trump the understanding and building of happiness?" (2002, p. xi). His answer is that "people who are impoverished, depressed, or suicidal care about much more than just the relief of their suffering. These persons care—sometimes desperately—about virtue, about purpose, about integrity, and about meaning" (p. xi). This rationale could be expanded by recognising the relationship between human suffering worldwide and the unsustainable systems and policies that are, at least in part, responsible for perpetuating suffering.

Sustainable development created a paradigm shift in development theory, policy, and practice. It prompted the recognition that economic development, social development, and the environment are interdependent. Sustainable happiness represents another paradigm shift. It suggests that human pursuit of happiness has positive and adverse impacts, locally, and globally—in the present and far into the future. The challenge is for individuals, communities, organisations, and governments to recognise the far-reaching impact of everyday decisions and actions. A further challenge is for the human species to take responsibility for how we pursue happiness.

[1] In international development, "North" refers to countries that are commonly known as "developed" countries while "South" refers to countries that are often characterized as "developing" countries. The terms North and South are used to reduce the distinction of being more or less developed. See, for example, the North-South Institute.

Sustainable Happiness

Sustainable happiness is the pursuit of happiness that does not exploit other people, the environment or future generations. (O'Brien, 2005)

The concept of sustainable happiness was developed by O'Brien (2005) in order to draw attention to the consequences, both positive and negative, of how individuals, communities, and nations pursue happiness. In a globalised world, policies and behaviours have repercussions on distant lands and people. Some impacts are immediate and short-term while some have enduring effects. Thus, further aims of combining the two terms are as follows: to link happiness to sustainability, now and into the future; to emphasise the reality of our mutual interdependence; and to generate discussion regarding the potential for making substantial contributions to sustainability efforts through research from happiness studies.

The sustainability literature has only just begun to incorporate happiness research (Anielski, 2007; New Economics Foundation [NEF], 2006; Starke, 2004), although the emerging work is promising. The NEF (2006) developed a Happy Planet Index (HPI) to explore the question "does happiness have to cost the earth?" (p. 39). Each nation's HPI is calculated by multiplying its mean life satisfaction by its mean life expectancy, which is then divided by its ecological footprint. The ecological footprint is an established measure for calculating how individuals, organisations, or nations are using natural resources in relation to the carrying capacity of the biosphere (Rees & Wackernagel, 1994). An underlying hypothesis of the HPI study is that countries have the ability to support long and happy lives while using an equitable share of the earth's resources. The study found that, indeed, there are countries such as Costa Rica that have life satisfaction and life expectancy scores similar to Canada, but which attain these measures with a considerably smaller ecological footprint. Thus, Costa Rica ranked third on the HPI and Canada ranked 111th of 178 countries. The United States was in 150th place. The authors concluded that well-being does not need to rely on high levels of consuming. One of the limitations of the HPI, however, is that it uses only three measures of well-being such that any country with relatively high scores for life satisfaction and longevity and a relatively low ecological footprint will score favourably, regardless of other factors such as its human rights record. Nevertheless, the HPI exemplifies the growing recognition that more effective policy making will come from the use of indices that include social and environmental well-being.

Anielski (2007) makes the case that "Genuine Wealth" indicators would more accurately reflect whether economic development is meeting social needs and safeguarding the environment. A genuinely wealthy community is one that articulates its values and aligns both policy and behaviour with those values in a manner that is sustainable for current and future generations.

Happiness, Consumption, and Sustainability

Happiness is defined by Veenhoven (2008) as "*the overall appreciation of one's life-as-a-whole*, in short, how much one likes the life one lives" (p. 2, italics in original). Seligman's (2002) work on authentic happiness focuses on an enduring experience of happiness. Sustainable happiness is relevant to essentially every definition of happiness. As a demonstration, consider the momen-

tary pleasure of drinking a cup of coffee. Benefits of attending to and being mindful of the experience have been discussed by Brown and Kasser (2005) and Kabat-Zinn (2005). Viewed through the lens of sustainable happiness, this momentary pleasure can be placed in a wider context. Individuals can attend to whether that cup of coffee is fair trade coffee, which means that workers in the coffee plantation have been paid fairly and the coffee was grown with regard for the environment. It is important to reflect on whether the positive emotion derived from the coffee, (or anything else for that matter), has come at the expense of other people or the natural environment. The conditions under which clothes are manufactured, how far our fruit is transported, the pesticides that are sprayed on the local golf course, all have some impact on and connection to how individuals pursue happiness. On a daily basis, there are countless choices that individuals, organisations, and governments make that could contribute to sustainable happiness, whether we look at an individual's commute to work, an organisation's procurement policies, or a nation's foreign trade policies. If the intention is made to pursue happiness or life satisfaction without exploiting other people, the environment or future generations, then considerable shifts in behaviour and policy would be required. This is where happiness studies could have substantial influence, as outlined in subsequent sections of this article.

There are two key challenges for sustainability efforts. One is to debunk the outdated paradigm that economic growth equals development (which tends to overlook the environmental costs of conventional development so, e.g., the destruction of a forest, will increase gross domestic product [GDP]). The second challenge is the popular assumption that consumption leads to happiness. Both of these challenges are being considered in happiness research.

Well-being Indicators

Diener and Seligman (2004) note the danger of relying upon economic indicators of progress such as GDP, while social indicators such as life satisfaction and social capital tell a different story. This is the rationale behind various national well-being indicator projects such as the Canadian Index of Well-Being, which assesses living standards, health, education, civic engagement, community vitality, time use, arts, and culture, as well as ecosystem health. National indicators of well-being and ill-being are useful to evaluate policies that span a diversity of public policy domains, including health care, recreation, transportation, and the environment (Diener, 2005).

Happiness and Consumption

Brown and Kasser (2005) found that an intrinsic value orientation is associated with higher levels of subjective well-being. Kasser and Ryan (1996) differentiate between "intrinsic" goals through which individuals may satisfy "inherent psychological needs" (p. 280) for personal growth, self-acceptance, relationships, physical fitness, and community involvement and "extrinsic" goals which may be sought through financial success, social recognition, image and popularity. Several studies indicate that individuals with an intrinsic value orientation are less materialistic and more inclined to engage in environmentally friendly behaviour, such as cycling and recycling, than individuals with an extrinsic value orientation (Kasser & Sheldon, 2002; Richins & Dawson, 1992;

Sheldon & McGregor, 2000). Brown and Kasser (2005) concluded that it is possible for individuals to experience high levels of subjective well-being without excessive consumption. There is also evidence that once basic needs are met, substantial increases in income do not translate into substantial increases in happiness (Stutz, 2006). Thus, for many of us in industrialised countries, time spent to earn more money to buy more things may be a very inefficient pursuit of happiness (Litman, 2007). It seems that the overconsumption of consumer societies is neither the ideal path to happiness nor the path to sustainability. More than that, overconsumption of nonrenewable resources is unsustainable.

Despite these results from happiness studies, the social and cultural milieu that reinforces consumption is quite pervasive. The environmental cost of our excessive consumption is huge, with particular concern for nonrenewable resources (Flavin, 2004).

In a consumer society, where consumption and happiness have become inextricably linked, individuals are confusing the "good life" with the "goods life" (Kasser, 2006, p. 200). Municipal, provincial and national governments are embedded in these consumer societies and public policy is influenced by a public that is being socialised to pursue happiness through material consumption. Gilbert (2007) implies that national economies thrive on the widely held erroneous belief that personal well-being is tied to production and consumption.

While psychologists have typically focused on personal psychology, it is increasingly evident that there is tremendous potential for extending the scope of psychological studies with respect to sustainability. Winter (2005) recommends that psychologists contribute to research that assists consumers to make more sustainable choices.

Healthy People, Healthy Communities, and Sustainable Happiness

Research on happiness and health triggers intriguing questions with respect to sustainable happiness. Researchers have demonstrated that an individual's subjective experience of happiness corresponds with numerous positive health outcomes (Steptoe, Wardle, & Marmot, 2005). Veenhoven (2008) completed an extensive survey of studies regarding the relationship between happiness and physical well-being and found that there is a significant relationship between happiness and longevity. He discussed the implications for preventive health care and recommended further research into the possibility that individual health can be enhanced through interventions that increase happiness. Diener and Seligman (2004) were more tentative in their conclusions, noting that positive states of well-being generally correlate with better physical health, but research results are mixed and the variables linking physical health and well-being require further investigation. However, Diener and Seligman did note that the study of well-being and physical health is important for both research and policy, as well as implications for health care costs. Applying these views to sustainable happiness, the following questions could be investigated: Is it possible to assist individuals to make better choices about happiness, for themselves and all life on the planet? Can we teach sustainable happiness? If so, can this be expanded to the community level? Is it possible to create communities, towns, and cities that make people happier *sustainably* and thus contribute to public and environmental health and well-being? What policies

might contribute to sustainable happiness? Veenhoven (2008) concluded that public health policies could contribute to individual happiness through education and training for making better life choices and professional life-counselling. How this is being applied at the community level is explored in the following section.

Sustainable Happiness and Liveable Communities

We live in an urbanizing world in which half the earth's population now lives in cities (Flavin, 2007). Thus, there is tremendous interest in creating sustainable, liveable cities. Efforts to address the needs of urban populations and the accompanying demands on the environment have led to creative and collaborative initiatives regarding energy use, housing, waste management, transportation, health facilities, and much more. In recent years there has been a growing recognition that *how* we build our cities and towns has significant impact on human health through air quality, noise pollution, traffic fatalities, access to mobility, and liveability (Gilbert & O'Brien, 2005). Solutions to the current physical *inactivity* epidemic also involve efforts to create more active living infrastructure (Frank, Schmid, Sallis, Chapman, & Saelens, 2005; Killingsworth & Schmid, 2001). An Ontario Medical Officer of Health commented that we have been creating "obesogenic" environments (MHLC, 2004). This refers to environmental factors that promote obesity by reinforcing sedentary lifestyles and poor nutrition (Lake & Townsend, 2006). Examples in the built environment are auto-dependent neighbourhoods, the absence of cycling lanes and paths, and the existence of many neighbourhoods in which it is either unpleasant or unsafe to walk. A progressive trend, however, is that transport planners, public health officials, and urban planners are often attending the same conferences with the understanding that they have shared interests. Active Living by Design, housed within the University of North Carolina School of Public Health, is a national project that exemplifies this new level of collaboration. The program aims to support community initiatives that combine community design, public policy and communication strategies to increase physical activity.

Perspectives from happiness studies have yet to influence transport and urban planning policy and practice, though some studies are beginning to attend to the relationship between transportation and happiness. Kahneman and Krueger (2006) investigated the daily experiences of more than 900 Texas working women through a combination of daily diaries and Experience Sampling through which they registered mood at various points throughout the day. The least enjoyable activity of the participants was their daily commute. Transportation mode was not reported in the study. However, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2000), less than 2% of Texans commute by walking and even fewer do so as cyclists. Therefore, it is unlikely that the Texan women were walking or cycling. A Statistics Canada study found that workers who walk or cycle to work are more likely to enjoy commuting than those who use motorised transportation (Turcotte, 2006). The study did not determine causality so further research could investigate whether happy people tend to walk and cycle to work or if active commuting contributes to subjective well-being.

Turning to a younger population, the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute (CFLRI; 2006) asked youth to rate their quality of life and compared this to physical activity levels. Youth who were physically active in school and outside of school

rated their quality of life higher than youth who were less active. The daily "commute" of children who walk or wheel to school suggests that this form of physical activity is associated with positive well-being (World Health Organization, 2004), and anecdotal evidence from children supports this.

> *Everyone in our school tries to walk for a healthy body and safer streets. I liked walking to school with my friends because we could talk. Walking is way better than riding in a car because walking is more fun than getting a ride.* Student at Morton Way Public School, Brampton, Ontario, Canada

Over the last decade, a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) movement has grown worldwide. Every year, the number of schools participating in International Walk to School Day is rising. In 2007, 42 countries participated in International Walk to School month events (www.iwalktoschool.org). In Canada, thousands of schools across the country have initiated Walking Wednesdays, or Kilometre Clubs that encourage physical activity on the way to school or at school. Walking School Buses assist young children to walk or ride safely to school under the supervision of adults or older children who take turns as the "Bus" leader. SRTS organisers believe there are multiple benefits from these programs. Children learn about road safety with an adult, become acquainted with their neighbourhood, engage in daily physical activity, interact with one another, and use a mode of active transportation that is beneficial for the environment. Furthermore, Walking School Buses contribute to more "eyes on the street" and appear to build social capital as neighbours and children become better acquainted. It may also be an example of trust building which Helliwell (2005) has found to be related to life satisfaction.

Readers may wonder whether those happy walkers and cyclists are a minority while the majority of children would prefer to be chauffeured to school. The Ontario Walkability Study (O'Brien, 2001) surveyed more than 6,000 elementary students on International Walk to School Day, 2001 (IWALK). The study found that *nearly 75% of students surveyed would prefer to walk or cycle to school regularly*. Policymakers who are seeking measures to reduce greenhouse gases, and other adverse impacts of motorised transportation could tap into this latent desire for active transportation—which is both sustainable and appears to be a source of delight for those who choose it.

Policies for Sustainable Happiness

While few political leaders have made happiness a policy goal, the kingdom of Bhutan has become famous for its concept of Gross National Happiness (Royal Government of Bhutan, 1999). Also, Enrique Peñalosa, the former mayor of Bogotá, chose to "plan for happiness" (O'Brien, 2005). Peñalosa initiated the first car-free day in Bogotá. He created urban infrastructure and public space that gave priority to children and to those who don't own an automobile.

> We had to build a city not for businesses or automobiles, but for children and thus for people. Instead of building highways, we restricted car use. We invested in high-quality sidewalks, pedestrian streets, parks, bicycle paths, libraries; we got rid of thousands of cluttering commercial signs and planted trees. All our everyday efforts have one objective: Happiness. (Peñalosa & Ives, 2002)

In addition to bicycle paths and pedestrian infrastructure, a Bus Rapid Transit System referred to as the TransMilenio was created in order to reduce car traffic and provide transportation to low income residents. This resulted in fewer trips made by motorised transportation. There was a decrease in traffic accidents and crime, as well as improved air quality for certain pollutants (Wright & Montezuma, 2004). Peñalosa also extended the practice of closing streets to traffic on Sundays, turning 113 km of roads into weekly festivals. Each week, there are 1.5 million people who engage in physical activity (cycling, walking, skateboarding, running, aerobics) along the route, often remaining for hours, enjoying the social interaction (Walk and Bike for Life, www.walkandbikefor-life.com). During a recent interview, Peñalosa talked about his belief that city officials should strive to create "Cities of Joy" (Walljasper, 2004). Note that while Penalosa's work is in line with sustainability objectives, it has been couched within language that is likely more attractive to the public by reference to the term "Happiness." Wright and Montezuma (2004) have suggested that Peñalosa's legacy extends far beyond Bogotá, as municipal officials from more than 50 countries have visited the "new Bogotá" in recent years to understand the breadth of measures that were instituted by Peñalosa and his predecessor.

Peñalosa's focus on children and happiness led him to create "infrastructures of well-being" (Gardner & Assadourian, 2004, p. 172). Similar accomplishments are being reported through work on child-friendly cities. More than 800 municipalities are now registered on UNICEF's Child Friendly City web site (www.child-friendlycities.com). In Canada, the Centre for Sustainable Transportation developed *Child- and Youth-Friendly Land Use and Transport Planning Guidelines* (Gilbert & O'Brien, 2005) for Ontario. The Guidelines outline recommendations for municipalities to design communities where children and youth are able to walk or cycle to the majority of their destinations. The Centre is currently developing Guidelines for every Canadian province.

Traditionally, city planning has not considered where children want to travel, how they prefer to travel nor how community design could contribute to, or detract from, children's well-being. The Centre for Sustainable Transportation is working with Canadian municipalities to raise the profile of children and youth in urban planning and to mitigate the adverse health impacts of motorised transportation for this vulnerable sector of the population (Gilbert & O'Brien, 2005). This initiative was recently acknowledged by Imagine Canada (www.imaginecanada.ca) in its list of Top 100 "Promising Practices."

Advocates of child friendly planning point to the facts that children are particularly susceptible to poor air quality, that traffic fatalities are the leading cause of injury death, for children over one year, in most industrialised countries, and that growing evidence links the built environment with sedentary lifestyles and obesity (Gilbert & O'Brien, 2005). Furthermore, the physical inactivity levels of Canada's youth are alarming with more than half of the population between the ages of 5 and 17 not meeting the recommended levels of physical activity (Craig, Cameron, Russell, & Beauileiu, 2001). Creating environments and programs that foster active living for children and youth are increasingly viewed as opportunities for meeting health, environment, and transportation objectives for all residents, and contributing to more sustainable, liveable communities. Many Canadian municipalities are developing active transportation plans or revising Pedestrian and

Cycling master plans in efforts to reduce congestion and pollution and contribute to public health. Such plans involve ensuring that sidewalks are present in all neighbourhoods, (and kept clear of snow), extending cycling networks, and linking trails to active transportation routes. School boards could augment these efforts through the development of active transportation policies. All of these measures support the goal of integrating physical activity into daily transportation.

Sustainable happiness is a concept that has the potential to enhance urban planning policies by raising the profile of happiness and well-being, while reinforcing the links with sustainability. Public happiness may be an underlying intention of many politicians and planners, but the word "happiness" would rarely be used in transportation discussions. In the absence of more explicit discussions regarding public happiness or "Genuine Wealth," there continues to be tension between sustainability objectives and meeting the more public demands that are embedded in a consumer society view of happiness. Additional research regarding happiness, health and the built environment will undoubtedly encourage such discussions. Fostering an informed discourse about happiness and sustainability will require attention to education.

Sustainability and Education

Fifteen years ago, Chapter 36 of *Agenda 21* (UN, 1993) outlined a plan of action regarding education and sustainable development. However, progress in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) has been very slow and the UN declared 2005–2014 as the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UN, 2005) to draw greater attention to the essential role that education should play for improving the quality of life of current and future generations.

In a survey of current practice, a UNESCO report questioned whether education is the problem or the solution. "At current levels of unsustainable practice and over consumption it could be concluded that education is part of the problem. If education is the solution then it requires a deeper critique and a broader vision for the future" (UNESCO, 2005, p. 59).

It is beyond the scope of this paper to review the many barriers to shifting education systems, frameworks and practice. However, one barrier noted in the above document is that sustainable development and sustainability are not well understood by many educators, regardless of whether we are referring to elementary, secondary or postsecondary levels of education. Introducing educators to sustainable happiness may be an avenue for generating interest and greater awareness. It would also be useful for offsetting environmental messages that take a more negative approach. For example, some environmental education and media statements emphasise that we have to "live with less," (reduce, reuse, recycle) or they frighten audiences, aiming to provoke emotional reactions that will prod us to change unsustainable behaviour. A *San Francisco Chronicle* article linked global warming with the events of "911" stating that "The top of the world is ground zero for global warming" (Kay, 2006). *Time* magazine carried a cover story with the headline "Global warming: Be worried, be very worried" (Kluger, 2006). These sources of informal education can make environmental degradation appear inevitable and individual behaviour change seem inconsequential.

Raising awareness about environmental issues is essential and it is imperative to drastically reduce consumption of nonrenewable resources. Nevertheless, Brown and Kasser (2005) suggest that "as long as environmentally responsible behaviour is framed in self-sacrificial terms, individuals will be faced with tough choices about how to act" (p. 349) because such behaviour is assumed to detract from happiness. Sustainable happiness offers a fresh approach that invites reflection on sustainability issues coupled with opportunities to enhance our quality of life *and contribute to individual, community, and global well-being.* It also may be used to motivate behaviour change through compassion for others and the environment that sustains us.

Sustainable Happiness and Education

Personal happiness is an important individual goal. It is quite remarkable that our understanding of how to pursue it has been left, for the most part, to informal learning (the media, friends, parents) and nonformal education (spiritual leaders, self-help books, and support groups). Noddings (2003) has recommended that, "Happiness should be an aim of education, and a good education should contribute significantly to personal and collective happiness" (p. 1). To ensure happiness and the sustainability of the environment we depend upon, Noddings' recommendation could be modified to state: *sustainable happiness should be an aim of education and a good education should contribute significantly to personal and collective happiness that does not exploit other people, the environment or future generations.*

Sustainable happiness is integrated into every course that I teach at Cape Breton University. Students learn how to articulate who and what teaches them about happiness and to recognise the relationship between happiness and sustainability. Questions such as the following are posed: What are the informal and nonformal sources of education on happiness? Do different people and information sources teach different values? The aim is to create a "happiness literacy" that can be used to assess and appreciate competing values. Students are challenged to identify how they can leave a legacy of sustainable happiness and what barriers exist for doing so. This involves discussions regarding how those barriers could be overcome and what factors reinforce the pursuit of happiness through overconsumption. Sustainable happiness is relevant to every discipline and could be introduced throughout all levels of education. At the postsecondary level, it is an ideal concept for generating interdisciplinary discussions and research.

Conclusions

Sustainable happiness is a concept that can be used by individuals to guide their actions and decisions on a daily basis; at the community level, it reinforces the need to genuinely consider social, environmental and economic indicators of well-being so that community happiness and well-being are sustainable; at the national and international level it highlights the significance of individual and community actions for the well-being of all—now and into the future.

Sustainability seems to be consistent with behaviour and policies that support high levels of life satisfaction (Brown & Kasser, 2005), and sustainable happiness reinforces this relationship. The concept could be used to motivate sustainable behaviour from

sectors of the population that are weary of dire environmental messages. One drawback, of course, is that mentioning "happiness" in many academic and policy circles is still met with scepticism. As one transportation colleague suggested, "I don't care if people are happy, I just want them to get out of their cars!" Another challenge is the current limited set of choices for sustainable lifestyles and livelihoods. Some communities, for example, are so auto-dependent that individuals who would prefer to walk, cycle or take public transit do not have that option available. The increasing number of products that are manufactured offshore challenges North American consumers who wish to support local producers. Finally, stakeholders who have a vested interest in unsustainable policy and practice are likely to resist sustainable happiness.

Despite these limitations and challenges, we know that learning how to live sustainably is essential to human security (Flavin, 2007; Hulse, 2007; O'Brien & Leichenko, 2007). Individually and collectively, our pursuit of happiness has contributed to an unsustainable trajectory resulting in massive environmental failure and enormous human suffering. Happiness research can encourage a broader view of happiness by clarifying this connection with sustainability. Sustainability research could be augmented through happiness literature, particularly with regard to fostering sustainable behaviour.

Résumé

Le développement durable et la durabilité ont influencé la recherche et les politiques interdisciplinaires depuis deux décennies. De la même façon, les études sur la psychologie positive et le bonheur stimulent la recherche interdisciplinaire tout en ayant des implications pour les politiques et la pratique. O'Brien (2005) a défini le bonheur durable comme la poursuite d'un bonheur qui n'explite pas les autres, l'environnement ou les générations futures. Regrouper durabilité et bonheur à l'intérieur du concept de *bonheur durable* fait émerger des possibilités significatives pour les individus, la communauté ainsi que le bien-être global. Le bonheur durable est analysé dans des perspectives de communautés viables, de planification favorable aux enfants et d'éducation.

Mots-clés : bonheur durable, communautés viables, infrastructures du bien-être

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