



Personal Safety Nets® e-Newsletter



The Happiness Initiative

November 2012, Issue 54

In This Issue

[Letters . . . We Get Letters](#)

[Connections](#)

[Miss Something?](#)

[December 8th Workshop](#)

[The Happiness Initiative](#)

December 8th Workshop

DON'T MISS OUT!

There's still room for you at our upcoming workshop, "**A Gift That Keeps on Giving: Asking for Help With Style**" **Saturday, December 8th, from 10:00 to 11:30 am.**

In collaboration with [Northwest Center for Creative Aging](#), this will be our first event at our new facility at [Childhaven](#) (316 Broadway on Capitol Hill in Seattle). The workshop will be 90-minutes long.

Cost is just \$10, and you can register by calling either 206-659-0665 or by [going on line](#).

The workshop is open to everyone, but seating is limited - so call or go on line and register today. Those who register in advance will also receive **free parking** in our underground parking lot.

In this workshop we'll help you identify the importance of giving and receiving help.

Why is it that you'd rather give than receive? What gets in the way? How to give the gift of gracious asking and acceptance. You'll think about what you might want, and what you like to give. You'll practice asking, and play with alternatives. **You'll leave with more ease and comfort in these important areas of life.**



Letters, We Get Letters . . .



Dear PSN Staff: Thank you. **I (have) met an amazing number of (people who could hold up my) 'Safety Net.'** Through these difficult weeks they have come to mind many times. And when they have, it has truly been with a peaceful sigh. That alone is a gift, but knowing they are there is a blessing. Again, thank you! For I would be less without it." - Judi P.

Here in the office we've done some research to back up what Judi had to say. She is so right! There is an increases sense of well-being simply knowing that there is supportive community around, even though we'd suggest putting a plan together & enlisting support. Maybe she did. We're overjoyed to share it with you. Here are some findings from the [Gallup Group](#) on research they've conducted on well-being (you can get more details at their site):

Social Well-being: Do you have strong relationships and love in your life? Your Social Well-being is strongly influenced by your closest relationships and social connections. **For each hour of social time you**

The Happiness Initiative



While economists the world over argue the key to happiness is obtaining and enjoying material development, the small country of **Bhutan (known as the Land of the Thunder Dragon)** argues that **amassing material growth does not necessarily lead to happiness.** Upon Bhutan's admission to the United Nations in 1971, their Druk Gyalpo (King) announced "our country's policy is to consolidate our sovereignty to achieve economic self-reliance, prosperity and happiness for our country and people."

experience in a given day, your odds of having a good day increase and your odds of having a bad day decrease.

Physical Well-being: Do you have good health and enough energy to do what you want every day? **You will look better, feel better, and live longer with regular exercise** if you do. Your daily energy level will increase. Be part of the 27% of Americans who exercise regularly. And do so with a friend for maximum benefit.

Financial Well-being: Do you think money buys happiness? Think again. Income alone does not predict this. At almost every income level, "experiential" purchases produce a higher level of well-being than material purchases. **Material items fade, but we can relive experiences always.**

Community Well-being: Do you take pride in your community? Do you participate? **Volunteering not only benefits society, but might also be the difference between having a good life and a great one.** It improves your Community Well-being, while increasing your learning and interest level throughout the day.

Connections



This is a new column that will appear regularly. Our goal is to increase our readers' awareness of some resources that may support your life and those around you.

Many of these connections (stories, websites, facts) come from our readers. Our idea is to pass them on to you - because they're fun, factual and helpful.

Organize your documents, medications, contacts, and helpers in one place with [CareZone](#). Want to blog & share information? Try [CarePages](#). Want to get help for a sudden or big medical issue? Try [CareBrigade](#).

While the emphasis is placed on both prosperity and happiness, the latter is considered of more significance. The reigning fourth Druk Gyalpo emphasized less than 10 years ago that for Bhutan "**Gross National Happiness,**" is more important than "**Gross National Product.**"



In Bhutan, the four main pillars of Gross National Happiness are: 1. Equitable and equal socio-economic development, 2. Preservation and promotion of cultural and spiritual heritage, 3. Conservation of environment and, 4. Good governance which is interwoven, complementary, and consistent. While conventional development models stress economic growth as the ultimate objective, the concept of Gross National Happiness is based on the premise that **true development of human society takes place when material and spiritual development occur side by side to complement and reinforce each other.**



Now, in case you're thinking this is a "nice" concept that probably works on a commune somewhere in northern California, Bhutan is a county with 634,982 inhabitants and a land area of 38,394 square kilometers - quite a bit bigger than a hippie enclave! Further, **the concept of "Gross National Happiness" has greatly enabled**

Bhutan to create a government dedicated to facilitating community, to reducing the gap between the rich and the poor, and to ensuring good governance and empowerment of her people.

Can such a concept work here in the United States where most people think of money as defining happiness, and this to be directly linked to increased income? (see the article on the left) For "[The Happiness Initiative](#)," a Seattle-based group headed by Laura Musikanski, emotions are just one part of happiness. **The Happiness Initiative defines happiness as "satisfaction with life," meaning whether you are living the best life for you, and feel your life is worthwhile.** They look at the conditions in which we live and satisfaction with our lives. According to Musikanski, "By including the conditions of happiness in a definition of happiness, one acknowledges the internal and external are integrated."



Working with a team of researchers led by Dr. Ryan Howell at [San Francisco State University's Personality and Wellbeing Lab](#), the Happiness Initiative developed a [survey](#). It is a set of scientifically validated questions most likely to accurately predict conditions of wellbeing.

Dr. Howell kept the nine domains measured by Bhutan and added a tenth, workplace experience, identified as an essential condition of wellbeing by Gallup and others.



Then read about a brand new approach with [Caregifted](#) - providing getaway weeks in 3 locations around the country, for full-time long-term caregivers of severely disabled family members! Sounds wonderful and well-deserved!

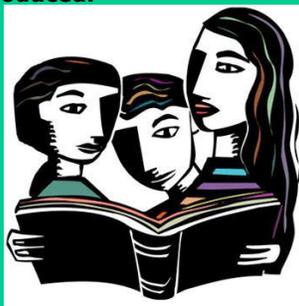


A [story of change](#) taking time and bringing with it growing pains in Phoenix, Canada - and written by someone with a name quite similar to our Judy's.

Have something to recommend? We'd love to hear from you. Please send us stories, articles, citations, and the helping organizations you'd love us to share with our readers.

Miss Something?

If you're fairly new to the Personal Safety Nets® newsletter and interested in seeing "back editions" - it's simple - [click here](#) and you'll have access to our entire Newsletter Library - and every edition we've produced.



Approximately ten times a year we pull together interesting research, stories, tips, answers to questions, upcoming events, Cool Free Downloads and more.

If you're not a subscriber, [click here](#) and you'll get all future issues sent directly to you. If you are a subscriber, please forward this on to a friend!

Our goal is to help you understand that creating a personal safety net is not



This way, **when you look at your own happiness, you can see where you have balance or imbalance in your life that fosters or undermines your affect and satisfaction with life.**

The conditions of happiness the Happiness Initiative uses to define happiness (along with affect and satisfaction with life!) are:

- **Material Well-being** - Evaluates individual and family income, financial security, the level of debt, employment security, and the quality of housing.
- **Physical Health** - Measures the effectiveness of health policies, with criteria such as self-rated health, disability, patterns of risk behavior, exercise, sleep, nutrition, etc.
- **Time Balance** - Looks at the use of time as one of the most significant factors in quality of life, especially time for recreation and socializing with family and friends. A balanced management of time is evaluated, including time spent in traffic jams, at work and in educational activities.
- **Psychological Well-being** - Assesses the degree of satisfaction and optimism in individual life. The indicators analyze self-esteem, sense of competence, stress, spiritual activities and prevalence of positive and negative emotions.
- **Education and Learning** - Considers factors such as participation in formal and informal education, development of skills and capabilities, involvement in children's education, values education and environmental education.
- **Cultural Vitality** - Evaluates local traditions, festival, core values, participation in cultural events, opportunities to develop artistic skills and discrimination due to religion, race or gender.
- **Environmental Quality** - Measures the perception of citizens about the quality of their water, air, soil, forest cover, biodiversity, etc. The indicators include access to green areas and system of waste management and transportation.
- **Governance** - Assesses how the population views the government, the media, the judiciary, the electoral system, and the police, in terms of responsibility, honesty and transparency. It also measures involvement of citizens in community decisions and political processes.
- **Community Vitality** - Focuses on relationships and interactions. It examines the level of confidence, the sense of belonging, the vitality of affectionate relationships, safety at home and in the community, and the practice of giving and volunteering.
- **Workplace Experience** - Evaluates employment satisfaction, work-life balance, job conditions, productivity and compensation.

Empowered by this data, anyone anywhere can revitalize and reframe the debate and provoke richer, broader conversation on a local and national level about what really should guide policy makers in governing our country.



only a continuing process but also a process that is done the world over.

We've been fortunate to team with the Happiness Initiative, and they are providing our readers the chance to [take the survey](#), and for you and PSN to see how happiness and well-being



are influenced by the conditions of our lives and communities. We'll tabulate the results of all PSN readers who take the survey and report back to you on how we see our lives - individually, as a group, and [compared](#) to those who have already taken the survey - and then start to tell you what can be done to enhance our individual

and collective happiness. To [take the survey](#) and find out your "Happiness" score