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Magazine for a sustainable economy



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Topic

# WISH-FOR-HAPPINESS

Not only, but also Resilient for life Happy as a pig in a mud puddle

Happy birthday EFA+ The right ingredients Initiative instead of frustration

A nice day Better than GDP Fortunately there is post-growth

# The good life

If you are healthy, satisfied, and successful, if you have a good life, everyone would probably say that you are happy. Happiness researchers have determined that most people in successful relationships are happy if they can autonomously complete useful tasks, if they experience little inequality and if they have possibilities to participate. Happiness is the fulfilment of people's wishes and desires. The term happiness is complex; it encompasses moments of happiness as well as lasting bliss. It describes a happy coincidence or a life of happiness. Yet, this has little to do with material wealth. Still, most people are running on a status treadmill, as the economist Mathias Binswanger calls it. They aspire to something better, want to own, consume and earn more and, given the stress involved, are less and less able to enjoy life. Ute Scheub also points this out in the chapter on happiness in her book *Beschissatlas* (cheat atlas). However, business and advertising only support this pursuit of „more“. The good life for all, however, only results from uniting prosperity, the social fabric and a sound environment. Those who advocate a sustainable society will thus also have to address happiness and wishes as well as their less resource-intensive fulfillment.



At factory, on the other hand, we do this by using a hyphenated title. Wish-for-Happiness allows the best-known happiness philosopher Wilhelm Schmid to begin with a definition of happiness. It shows where learning resilience is essential, and it demonstrates that in a country of intensive livestock farming there are indeed still some happy pigs. You will also learn how good life is with kale and chocolate, why a founder's happiness essentially works towards change and how doing without a technological device can lead to wonderful moments. A travelogue from Bhutan asks whether the growth of gross national happiness is an alternative to that of the gross national product, and psychologist Marcel Hunecke explains how post-growth increases happiness.

We join in congratulating the Effizienz-Agentur NRW (agency for resource efficiency in North Rhine Westphalia) on promoting resource efficiency for 15 years – the Wish-for-Happiness may not only appeal to the birthday celebrants. We wish you all the best and hope you enjoy reading.

**Ralf Bindel and the factory team**

Translated by: Sandra Walter, Annika Wagener, Anna Lena Vohl, Mareike Baudewig, Rebecca Brookes







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»Short is the joy  
that guilty pleasures bring.«

Euripides (\*480 or 485/484 in Salamis –†406 BC in Pella), one of the great classic Greek playwrights

# 10

In the years between 1973 and 2003, the per capita GNP of the Federal Republic of Germany increased by 60 percent. During the same period, life satisfaction decreased by 10 percent. In the US, life satisfaction was at its peak in 1957 and has been decreasing since then. BUND (Friends of the Earth Germany), taken from: "A sustainable Germany in a globalised world", 2008. [Translator's note: The study in German can be ordered here: [www.zukunftsfaehiges-deutschland.de](http://www.zukunftsfaehiges-deutschland.de)

# 30000

Advertisements use associations, fears, impulses and desires for happiness, fitness, outer appearance, self-esteem, identity and reward, which lie deep in the subconscious mind. Over 3,000 advertising messages stream into the brain each day. In the course of their life, U.S. citizens watch three years' worth of TV commercials. Per day, 12 billion visual advertisement messages and over 200,000 TV commercials are produced in the USA. Lasn, Kalle. Culture Jam: The Uncooling of America, 1999.

# 90

A well-functioning relationship makes a major contribution to a life full of happiness. In a long-term study, psychologist and mathematician John Gottman developed a mathematical model which allows him to predict with a success rate of 90 percent whether a marriage will last over the next five years. All he needs as input is a relationship stress test, i.e. a short conversation between the couple about a topic on which they have controversial opinions along with measurements of some physiological parameters. Hesse, Christian. "Vom Glück der Zahlenlehre." Focus Online, 21 November 2013. [The article is available here in German: [www.focus.de/wissen/experten/hesse/vom-glueck-der-zahlenlehre-wieso-mathematik-gluecklich-macht\\_id\\_3419765.html](http://www.focus.de/wissen/experten/hesse/vom-glueck-der-zahlenlehre-wieso-mathematik-gluecklich-macht_id_3419765.html)]

# 8,9

According to the German Glücksatlas (happiness map), Denmark is the country with the most content people with an average value of life satisfaction of 8.9. The people in Greece are the most discontented with a value of 3.4 on the scale, a difference of 5.5 points. Ten years ago, the values for the greatest and the lowest dissatisfaction were only 3.5 points apart. In times of crisis, values like those of Spain at 5.9 and Portugal at 3.7, show a considerable decline in the quality of life. Compared to the rest of Europe, Germany, with a value of 7, moved from 15th place (2006) to 8th place (it came in 9th place in 2011). Deutsche Post Glücksatlas 2013

# 120

In order to play all of the possible number combinations of the German '6 out of 49' lottery, including the 'super number' at one time (14 million combinations x 10 super numbers), it would cost about EUR 120m. Even though you would win the jackpot and most of the other cash prizes, you would still only take in a two-digit million sum. On average, the loss rate per game amounts to 50% for the German lottery and 2.7 percent for roulette. ([de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lotto](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lotto))

# 50

According to a study conducted by the German Federal Centre for Health Education in 2008, more than half of the German population participates in gambling (60 percent of men and 50 percent of women). In 2008, legal gambling had a turnover of EUR 24.9bn, of which EUR 16.2bn came from slot machines, roulette and card games and EUR 6.8bn with the Deutscher Lotto-To-to-Block (one version of the German lottery). The federal states have total revenues of EUR 3.3 billion.

# 54.1

The Happy Planet Index (HPI) is an attempt to create a way of measuring the ecological efficiency of producing contentment. For this purpose, components such as life satisfaction, life expectancy and ecological footprint are combined. In contrast to established economic indices such as the gross domestic product (GDP) or the Human Development Index (HDI), the Happy Planet Index also includes the criterion of sustainability. In Europe, Albania leads the field with a total score of 54.1, a life expectancy of about 77 years and an ecological footprint of 1.8 hectares, which corresponds to 18th place in the global ranking. Denmark lies in 110th place in the HPI ranking. [www.happyplanetindex.org](http://www.happyplanetindex.org)

# 37

Neither in Africa, China, Latin America or Eastern Europe does life quality grow in parallel with the economy. This is shown in a study by economist Richard Easterlin, who, together with his team, has analysed long-term observations conducted in 37 countries. Weber, Christian. "Irgendwann ist es genug" (enough is enough). Süddeutsche Zeitung 2010.

# 11

In Germany, rich men live 11 years longer than poor men. The difference between the life expectancy of rich whites and poor blacks in the US is 28 years. Wilkinson, Richard and Kate Pickett. The Spirit Level, 2009.

# 500

Even back in 500 BC, the boar was a holy animal for the Germanic peoples. This is why the pig is seen as a sign of prosperity and wealth, as it stands for fertility and strength. In Greek and Roman culture, people with many pigs were considered privileged. In the middle ages, losers of competitions would get a pig as a consolation prize. Due to this medieval tradition, pigs are still seen as a symbol of luck in Germany. ([de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glückssymbol](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glückssymbol))

# 15,000

According to the findings of economist Jim Jackson, the level of happiness stops increasing when the average annual income passes USD 15,000. Happiness researcher Richard Layard suspects that rich people suffer from an 'income addiction' which leaves no time for social relationships or family. Jackson, Tim. Prosperity Without Growth, 2009; Layard, Richard. Happiness, 2005.

# 13

Thirteen is the natural number between 12 and 14. It is an odd and a prime number. It is considered both an unlucky and a lucky number. The irrational fear of this number is called triskaidekaphobia. This wide-spread phobia or superstition goes so far that sometimes the 13th floor of a building is 'missing', meaning the number has simply been left out. There are several planes that do not have a 13th row of seats. ([de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dreizehn](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dreizehn))





»Lasting happiness loses  
because of its very duration.«

Georg Christoph Lichtenberg (\* 1 July 1742 in Ober-Ramstadt near Darmstadt; † 24 February 1799 in Göttingen), mathematician and first German professor of experimental physics.

# Not only, but also

He who does not worry about happiness is the happiest, Seneca once said and wrote a comprehensive book on this topic. Nowadays, book after book is published on the subject. The desire for happiness is more present than ever, its fulfilment an important driving force of the economy. But in order to recognise it, one has to be able to differentiate.

By Wilhelm Schmid

Translated from the German by Christoph Ulbert, LaToya Vaughn, Viktorija Tapai, Maciej Maj and Margarita Müller





What is happiness? What does happiness mean for me? Anyone who wonders about this should look closely because it becomes evident that there is not only one, but several kinds of happiness at play. It would make sense to distinguish between them.

## Chance

First of all, there is chance, which is important throughout life. People wish for something that unexpectedly and naturally comes to them and which turns out advantageously for them. The English word 'luck' stems from the early Middle Dutch *luc*, the short form for *gheluc* meaning 'happiness' or 'good fortune'. It also has cognates such as the German word *Glück* (fortune, good luck) and the Middle High German *gelücke*, which designated the chance outcome of an affair, yet originally not only in the advantageous, but also in the disadvantageous sense. The essential feature of chance is unavailability; available is only the attitude one can assume.

They can open themselves to or ignore a chance encounter, experience,

or a piece of information. Both within themselves as well as in life, people can hold up the butterfly net in which chance can get caught, or can build a wall around themselves, so chance won't get through. It seems as if the openness of people inspires chance. It likes to stop where it feels at home and is not being accused of its bad timing – it's as if chance were a living being that knows exactly when it is welcome and when not. Furthermore, forcing chance, being offensive about it, would mean that you're trying your luck. In other

words, you're going for it, even though it's unavailable. The person who hopes for a chance encounter, experience, or a piece of information is well advised to communicate this intention to others. The Internet can also be used to do so. The likelihood for something good to come out of this is much higher than if hope remains locked up inside. If you never play the lottery, you have no chance of winning.



## The Feel-Good Moment

In this day and age, people in pursuit of happiness see it as a matter of being well and healthy and feeling good in general. They want to have fun, have wonderful experiences, feel pleasure and be successful. In a nutshell, they want to experience all the things that are considered positive. In addition to chance, life is also about a special kind of happiness you might call the feel-good moment. This moment, or rather these moments, are all the happy times life presents you with. They are up for grabs if you want them and can be actively cultivated. These are moments which can be sought and found and are so beautiful that you want to hold onto them. A lot can be done to achieve this special kind of happiness, if it doesn't, in fact, come about by itself. With a little experience, you know what ingredients you need to make your own happiness and work on it day after day. A feel-good moment is an aromatic, delicious cup of coffee. Or a beautiful film or the intimate conversation between friends and lovers that feels so comfortable you get

lost in it completely since the attention of the other feels so good that saturation can almost never be reached. Or it can be the kind of wellness that can be enjoyed in a sauna or elsewhere. And let's not forget about chocolate, preferably with a high cocoa content. Or it can be overcoming a major challenge, gaining new knowledge or experience, breaking unknown ground, immersing oneself in unfamiliar territory. It can also be the pursuit of novel activities, as long as they provide the attraction of being new. And even anticipating and desiring something can provide you with more happiness than actually savouring that

very thing and, on top of that, can last much longer. The problem is that, in the end, this kind of happiness never lasts for long. What about the moments after, what about the time in between? Nowadays people aren't prepared for these bad patches, this stagnation. They find it difficult to get through the dreary, mundane, everyday times in which they have to 'recharge' their desire. It's hard to deal with the ordinary times of this life. The most important thing, however, is to accept those stretches of time as part of life. Only then can you learn how to get through them successfully. And then there is another kind of happiness.



## The Happiness Of Abundance

The greater happiness, called the happiness of abundance, always includes the other side of the coin: the unpleasant, the painful and the negative, which all have to be dealt with. Happiness of abundance is influenced only by people's attitude towards life, which they have adopted and live by, based on their reflections on life with all its peculiarities and uncertainties. Aren't all things and all experiences full of polarity, differences and contradictions? The fact of the matter is that the negative cannot simply be erased, no matter how many cosmetic surgeries a person has had, how much new medicine is developed and how many political reforms are implemented by a government. If I can see life as something beautiful and worth living despite all the bad things going on, then I might achieve this happiness of abundance. It is more comprehensive and lasts longer than chance and all the feel-good moments combined. It is true philosophical happiness, unaffected by coincidence and luck, a person's sense of well-being or their indispositions. It

is the equilibrium of life and needs to be obtained again and again. It doesn't necessarily apply to one particular moment but rather to all the aspects of life.

It applies not only to success, but also to failure; not only to accomplishment, but also to defeat; not only to pleasure, but also to pain, not only to health, but also to sickness; not only to merriment, but also to sadness; not only to contentment, but also to dissatisfaction, not only to rich days, but also to empty days. The crucial step towards this kind of happiness is made



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by determining one's own attitude. None of the above-mentioned 'kinds of happiness' are dispensable, but we need to rediscover the third one in these modern times full of convenience and fastidiousness.

Wilhelm Schmid teaches philosophy at the University of Erfurt. His book "Glück: Alles, was Sie darüber wissen müssen, und warum es nicht das Wichtigste im Leben ist" (happiness - everything you need to know about it, and why it isn't the most important thing in life) was published in Germany in 2007 by Insel publishers. In November 2013, he received the science prize of the Swiss Egnér foundation for his previous work on the art of living.



»Happy slaves are the most  
bitter enemies of freedom.«

Baroness Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach (\*13 September 1830 at Zdislavice Castle in Moravia; † 12 March 1916 in Vienna), an Austrian author, is considered one of the most important German-speaking narrators of the 19th century.



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# Resilient for Life

You can learn how to be happy. It is even a subject in some schools in Germany nowadays. You will not learn how to develop a successful career or how to find the love of your life. But you can learn to go through life with confidence and satisfaction.

By Nicole Walter

Translated from the German by Viktorija Tapai and Ruthild Gärtner

Those who teach happiness as a subject need to have a thick skin. They are ridiculed as teachers who tickle out the talent of the students with a feather or they are eyed with suspicion or are seen as undercover representatives of Scientology. In about 60 schools in Germany, happiness already has an established spot in the timetable, between math, physics and history. Although the term 'happiness' excites the imagination, the subject is not about winning the lottery, a trip around the world or about true love. It deals with the capacity to shape one's personal well-being in everyday life. Katja Reuter teaches happiness to even the youngest of pupils. She gives lessons at the Oberforstbach Primary School in Aachen. The mother of two children is a dance and movement therapist and in her professional everyday life she works with many people who have faced personal difficulties.

"I've found out what our society's pressure to perform and mad rush do to our souls," she says. "At school, children don't learn how to handle that, although they should start learning such things early." And then fate gave her Ernst

Fritz-Schubert, she tells us with a wink. Many happiness teachers talk about him with reverent admiration, almost giving the impression of a sect. But Fritz-Schubert, who is 65 years old today, has shaped the subject of happiness in Germany more than any other person and as a school principal, he also has a lot of practical experience.

In Aachen, the first place that Katja Reuter went after she completed her advanced training in happiness was her son's primary school. She was able to convince principal Maria Schiefer very quickly. "It's a great attempt," says Schiefer. "It has always been a part of our schooling programme to not only teach the kids content, but also to support social interaction and emotional aspects." Today, all kids at Oberforstbach Primary School are being taught happiness. Each of Katja Reuter's lessons starts with a big circle where the kids pass a ball and everyone tells what has already made them happy that day.

The happiness teacher writes down all the good qualities every child discovers in him- or herself over the course of the class in a collective 'sun of powers'.

When the children leave elementary school, they possess a great deal of knowledge and helpful tools. Reuter stresses the importance of team spirit. The children support each other, they learn how to use their creative resources and how to stay focused. It is clear to Reuter that if adults teach those values early enough they can keep children from making certain mistakes.

## Happiness in school...

According to the German Alliance against Depression, three to ten percent of all adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17 are currently suffering from depression. A research project conducted by Unicef shows that children and adolescents in Germany are doing well when assessed on the basis of the objective criteria of material wealth, education and health. But they don't consider themselves to be all that happy. ►



In the 29 countries included in the survey, there has been no bigger gap between objective views and the subjective perception of one's own happiness than in Germany, Unicef researchers state. This is where happiness lessons come in. They are especially important in lower class neighborhoods. Helmut Richter and his colleagues from the Willy-Brandt-Berufskolleg business college in Duisburg-Rheinhausen are on their way to happiness with their students. This includes cooking together or enjoying a really nice dinner at a restaurant. But most of all, happiness lessons are about finding one's own strengths, learning how to enjoy good moments, to trust oneself and others. Four of five students have an immigrant background and many live in difficult family situations.

After reading Fritz Schubert's book, principal Richter thought that was exactly what they needed in his school. Anke Roessling, a happiness teacher, explains that the students' motivation to succeed in other subjects grows through happiness lessons. They come to school more often, start organizing

their days more actively and invest more time in preparing for exams. Ingrid Noack teaches happiness at the vocational school for economics for adolescents between the ages of 15 to 17 in Bietigheim-Bissingheim and has had similar experiences. "We cannot prove that our students get better grades but we can see that they are socially more competent than others and the support among them is much stronger", Noack explains. She also adds that her students begin to feel more comfortable at school. Experts state that this kind of positive feeling is the best way to prevent violence in schools.

Students, teachers and principals must stay committed to keep school a happy place. They have to work happiness lessons into an already tight schedule, convince the school board of the concept and establish a financial plan that mostly consists of annually hard-won state resources and private sponsoring.





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## ... resilient for life

Ingrid Noack also continued her studies in her free time. She tested most of the exercises from her happiness lessons during her vocational training. For example: Ziel-Skalenlauf (goal-scale rally). Each student thinks of one of her or his goals in life, like winning a 100-meter race or getting a good grade in the next exam for example. Eleven cards with the numbers from 0 to 10 lie on the floor and represent a scale. The student picks the number that expresses how far he or she has come in fulfilling this dream. The other students also participate: one group on the right tells the student in the middle his or her positive traits like a mantra ("You're patient", "You're persistent", "You're cheerful", e.g.). The group to the student's left side tells him or her all the negative traits ("You're lazy", "You're not motivated", e.g.). The student in the middle simply listens. Ingrid Noack knows from her own experience that after a while, one only hears the positive things. Then the question of how far the student has come in achieving his or her dream is raised again and

the results show that all students pick a higher number on the scale than they did before. They experience how it feels emotionally, physically and on a cognitive level to get closer to one's goal and that they can overcome difficulties with their inner strengths, which is very motivating. When the students choose an apprenticeship after graduation and start writing applications, they not only rely on the inner strength they have found during happiness lessons, but also use the acquired tools to stay focused and concentrated.

Finally, the happiness lessons take effect in practical terms when the graduates try to find a job. According to Roeßing, the students learn to properly assess their strengths and interests in this class, which spares them lots of frustration on the job market because they find an adequate apprenticeship more easily.

Nicole Walter works as a journalist in Berlin and writes about economic and social issues.

»Who would not prefer  
to become more stupid by luck  
rather than to become smart  
by suffering harm?«

Salvador Felipe Jacinto Dalí i Domènech, since 1982 Marqués de Púbol (\* 11 May 1904 in Figueres, Girona, Catalonia; † 23 January 1989 ibidem), a Spanish painter, graphic artist, writer, sculptor and stage designer



# As happy as a pig in a mud puddle

The domestic pig is an ancient symbol of happiness. Only a few of them are happy themselves, among them Wanja, Freia, Babuschka and Matruschka. A report by Ralf Bindel (text) and Martina Nehls- Sahabandu (pictures)

Translated from the German by Meike Padutsch







*Babuschka and Matruschka together with the boar Wanja (on the right) on the Vorberg farm. The shelter was built in the course of a school project. Previous page: Freia and Wanja in front of their meadow.*



Imagine a cold and damp Sunday in autumn. A gusty wind is blowing with occasional rain showers. Four large spotted pigs are lying in the straw. A shelter and wooden walls protect them, their feeding trough is empty. There is a chorus of grunting and snoring in the air and a rutted muddy meadow lies in the background. Six little ones are dozing, pressed close against each other next door; they are the one year olds. According to Ulfert Bewig-Glashoff, the farmer at the Vorberg farm, they are happy now. He believes that being well-fed and at rest is happiness for them.

Is it as simple as that? Enough food and lots of sleep, intensive livestock farming should be able to provide that, too. But not even those who do not believe that animals have feelings like happiness, anger and sorrow would deny that around 28 million pigs in Germany are not happy on intensive livestock farms. Indeed, science has proven a long time ago that animals feel like human beings. They can feel fear, pain, depressiveness, but also joy, pleasure – and happiness.

Ulfert explains that they eat until they are full in the morning and then go back to sleep. At dawn they root around in the mud. Suddenly, something interesting happens. Babuschka gets up and walks to the former meadow – the toilet. Ulfert describes pigs as very clean, never soiling their sleeping places. Back to the trough, just to see if there is anything new, a glance up at the visitors, then it's time to shove their way back into the lively pigsty. Wanja grunts. The boar weighs 250 kg, and pokes Freia with its nose. Just like Babuschka and Matruschka, which had their litters on the same day, Freia has had three litters already, all from Wanja. The younger sows



*Farmer Ulfert Bewig-Glashoff is massaging the contentedly grunting boar Wanja, the only boar for three breeding sows. Just like Freia, Wanja is an Angeln Saddleback, Babuschka and Matruschka are hybrids.*







*In the Windrath valley, young and fattening pigs find themselves for the first time in a stable with a concrete surface and open-air runs. The rule for the space requirement is: with open-air runs, three to four times the size of the pig, without open-air runs six times its size.*





*Babuschka looks at the rain outside from their joint shelter. She gave birth to her piglets on the same day as Matruschka. It was all very confusing until three of the piglets chose one mother and ten of them chose the other. Piglets need three days to get used to their own private teat. Of the sixteen teats available, those that are not used dry up.*

are supposed to grow and Wanja is not allowed to mount them. By the time they are one year old they will weigh 90 kg.

Three sows and one boar, around ten to twelve fattening pigs live on the Vorberg farm. It is one of five Demeter farms in the Windrather valley in the region called Bergisches Land between Essen and Wuppertal, Germany. Idyllically situated, one can see the Langenberg medium-wave transmitter and a complex of wind turbines, biogas plants and barns. The latter are operated for poultry baron Hennenberg, the largest poultry and egg producer in the region. The company wants to build further barns in the valley and, supported by a group of investors, buys land all around, Ulfert says. “They recently took over another farm although it was written in the testament that neither the anthroposophists nor Hennenberg were to get the farm.” The anthroposophists are a group consisting of five Demeter farms. They have been present in the valley since 1985. With money provided by the GLS Bank, they have bought the farms and the surrounding fields as a cooperative. Since then, it has been the largest conjoined organic production zone in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. From every farm one can see almost all of the other farms. There is even a farm hostel with a bakery. There, all of the products are collected and distributed to markets, wholefood shops, schools and







*Angelns Saddlebacks are an old breed of domestic pigs from Angeln in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany from 1880, but they grew too slowly and didn't have enough piglets for modern livestock farms. In 1926, they were crossed with the English Wessex Saddleback breed. They are undemanding, robust and grow fast, and they are well suited for free-range husbandry. When the demand for pigs with an increased percentage of meat and a decreased percentage of fat on their bodies dominated the market over the course of the 1950s, Angeln saddlebacks lost their importance over time. In 1990, they were declared endangered farm animals. Only the interest in different forms of animal husbandry and marketing methods in agriculture and the demand for good meat quality give Angeln Saddlebacks a chance of survival nowadays.*





*Wanja and Matruschka. Pigs can hear and smell very well, and they have a good sense of taste and decent eyesight. They have a good memory and learn fast. They love living and eating in company, wallowing in the mud, punctuality, dry and sufficiently open spaces, and unpleasant smells.*

direct customers. Every farm has those and, most of the time, they also have a farm shop with their own specialties, like cheese – or pigs.

Animal husbandry is part of every farm in biodynamic agriculture according to its founder Rudolf Steiner. The Demeter guidelines have been applied since 1928. Additional organic feed should only be bought in times of need but otherwise, most of the food must come from a farmer's own fields. Due to this rule, the farming of animals is tied to the respective farm. One can only keep as many animals as the fields can provide for. There is no chance of intensive

animal farming. The rain has stopped for now. Wanja gets up. He has really thick fur. "Pigs that live outside have more and thicker hair", Ulfert explains. It's time for a quick visit to the mud puddle. When the mud dries on their skin, the parasites die. "Conventional farmers always tell us that the animals get sick in the mud." But the Vorberg pigs are all absolutely healthy, "they never get sick." As in former times, the pigs get little food but it is rich in protein and this is why they don't have problems with their joints, and also why their meat, in contrast to conventional meat, can be eaten by people who are allergic to histamines. In intensive

livestock farming, high-protein and genetically modified soy is used. Forests in South America and Asia are cleared for its intensive farming.

In Germany, pigs are the most frequently raised animals for meat production after poultry. Every German eats around 55 kilograms of pork per year. In addition, 1.5 million tons are exported and 972 thousand tons are imported. A total of 28 million pigs are slaughtered over the course of half a year, they are never older than six months and are raised in 28,000 different farms. The currently largest farm is located in Hasleben and includes 85,000 animals. ►



*Even if it does not seem so, pigs are very neat and clearly separate their sleeping area from the faeces area. Demeter farmers do not cut off the pigs' tails.*





Around 160,000 pigs are cared for in an environment-friendly manner; organic farmers are allowed to fatten several thousand in pigsties.

200 out of 1,400 Demeter farms keep pigs; 22 animals on average. The intensive feeding farms in Lower Saxony have 740 animals per farm. All in all, the three biggest Demeter pig-fattening farms have 660 animals. "Everybody loves our pigs", Ulfert says. Marina, the gardener, looks after them and feeds them. The husbandry requires a huge amount of work, because the feed leftovers are not pourable as they are in intensive feeding. At the Vorberg, Marina has more than 18 black-and-pink friends. "The animals are intelligent and sensitive. They pay attention to noises from the farm and like to get in touch." They do that in such an intense way that a customer has paid the feed costs for the retired pig Kunigunde, who gave birth to piglets for ten years. The piglets and fattening pigs in the stables are enjoying the rain break now. They can go out into the yard anytime, but not to the meadow. For some of them the date for slaughtering has already

been set. At that moment, they will be between eight months and one year old and will weigh 90 kilograms. One kilo yields EUR 3.30, which is a little bit more than the price for organic meat. Half of that amount goes for conventional fatteners. Demeter animals must not be transported more than 200 kilometres on their first, and last, journey. On-site domestic slaughtering is forbidden. The Vorberg animals could almost walk to the EU-approved slaughterhouse nearby. All small and part-time farmers in the region have the slaughtering done there. "The pigs are afraid of unfamiliar and noisy things", Ulfert says. It's easier since he started to say goodbye to the animals. He talks to them many times. "They are less scared and they just go on their own way if you let them." It's raining again. The Angeln Saddlebacks are done with the visitors and the weather and go off to the stable. Now it's time for cuddling, bundling some straw together, joggling their body between the others. They seem to be happy.



*Pigs want to be addressed and handled in a nice way. They neither like noise and disturbance nor being driven or kept in very big herds.*

### Reading tip:

- Five organic farms in Windrather Tal: [www.biohoe-fe-windrathertal.de](http://www.biohoe-fe-windrathertal.de)
- Appropriate animal husbandry: [www.demeter.de/verbraucher/aktuell](http://www.demeter.de/verbraucher/aktuell)
- Wild emotions - About happy cows, misunderstood love of animals ..., FU Berlin, science magazine profound, 2008, [www.fu-berlin.de](http://www.fu-berlin.de)
- Pig husbandry: [www.spiegel.de/thema/schweine](http://www.spiegel.de/thema/schweine)



*Along with the dog, the domestic pig is probably one of the first pets to be domesticated in the history of human civilization. For about 9000 years, pigs have been kept for meat production, and pork is the most popular kind of meat in Europe and Asia. Today, pig husbandry generally takes place without access to the outdoors.*





»We are in this world  
not to be happy  
but to fulfil our duty.«

Immanuel Kant (22 April 1724 - 12 February 1804; born and died in Königsberg, Prussia)  
was a German philosopher of the Age of Enlightenment.

# Happy Birthday EFA+

The EFA is coming of age. In 2013, the Efficiency Agency North Rhine-Westphalia (EFA) turned fifteen and now has a plus sign in its logo. The EFA has fifteen years of experience in promoting resource efficiency in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. Its efforts have an impact on Germany and beyond, all the way to Japan.

## A Critical Birthday Message from Klaus Dosch

Translated from the German by Olympia Klassen, Maciej Maj,  
Sandra Walter and LaToya Vaughn





For 15 years, the North Rhine-Westphalia Efficiency Agency has been helping companies improve their resource productivity, i.e. to generate more revenue and use fewer resources. The EFA is the anchor of stability of the state government. It has seen four minister presidents come and go. Happy Birthday EFA!

The ongoing increase in productivity promoted by the agency is a matter of course. At least, this is what economic theory teaches us. Every economic entity by definition performs at an optimum level. It has access to unlimited information, and is steadily and consistently increasing its revenue. Therefore, it does not waste any of its resources. Are you sure? Absolutely! Unfortunately, this ideal of the homo economicus exists only on paper and in the minds of Nobel laureates in economics and economists who have received slightly less prestigious awards. Homo sapiens, however, is far less rational, not very thorough, and not at all omniscient. Despite all economic theories, many companies still

have the potential, to a greater or lesser degree, to save energy and resources.

But what about resource efficiency in Germany? 15 years of EFA and resource efficiency programmes of the federal government and various federal states – surely this must have made a difference. The federal government's sustainability strategy that was passed in 2002 stated that resource productivity is expected to double by 2020 compared to its 1994 level. From what we've seen so far, the German economy isn't exactly on track. In the last 20 years, resource productivity went up by approximately 50 percent, just half of what was expected. Less than six years remain to achieve the set goal. Resource productivity in Germany needs to increase at a faster rate, at least three times as fast to be exact. Instead of strolling towards the finish line, we need to pick up the pace and run!

Unfortunately, an acceleration of efficiency is nowhere in sight. On the contrary, in May 2012, the Energy Labelling Directive for cars went into force. It does nothing to help raise resource efficiency. ►

In fact, it is a political folly. The heavier a car is with exactly the same consumption of fuel, the more energy-efficient it is! In other words, if a car does not reach the efficiency requirements, the weight optimization is neglected. This is why gigantic SUVs that just barely meet the roadworthy requirements end up having respectable efficiency values – at least on paper. Petrol station owners cry tears of joy every time an SUV drives up. Lightweight construction does not pay; cars have to be disproportionately energy-efficient to obtain the best rating. The method of measuring fuel consumption is another major impediment to car efficiency. The NEDC, the New European Driving Cycle, does not promote competition between engineers to design the most energy-efficient car, but the most deceptive engine electronics. When tested, the car engines go into economy mode, resulting in ridiculously energy-efficient cars – but once again only on paper.

When measuring resource efficiency, however, fictitious values do not matter. What matters is the actual resource con-

sumption. What resources are being depleted and imported, how much of the resources are being consumed? All the relevant data is collected and compared to the economic performance. What we need is true innovation, not clever algorithms. But true innovation requires a desire for change and the provision of incentives: how can we point car engineers in the right direction, i.e. towards resource efficiency?

On the other hand, we need to re-evaluate how we think about consumerism. What do we really need? Does it always have to be the newest product, or can we use the old one for just a little longer? When we buy something, can we consume it responsibly? Can we have it repaired, replaced, exchanged, or upgraded? That last part concerns us all: you and me, producers as well as consumers. It influences our everyday purchase decisions.

However, the companies are responsible for creating innovations. Thus, this is a case for the EFA. I hope that over the coming years, the Efficiency Agency

will get the chance to identify further innovations with regard to resource efficiency and pass them on to companies in North Rhine-Westphalia. The companies themselves are creative enough to develop a business model based on these ideas. The only thing missing might be the innovation scout of the EFA!

Klaus Dosch is chief scientist of the Aachen-based Kathy Beys Foundation and has known the NRW Efficiency Agency and their projects from the beginning.





»We must believe in luck.  
For how else can we explain  
the success of those  
we don't like?«

Jean Cocteau (\* 5 July 1889 in Maisons-Laffitte near Paris; † 11 October 1963 in Milly-la-Forêt near Paris),  
French author, director and painter

# The right ingredients

Culinary delight can make you happy. But a bite of delight cannot be bought – either in a delicatessen or in a fine restaurant. The keys to culinary pleasure lie in the mind and the senses, as is the case with curly kale or chocolate.

By Klaus Dahlbeck

Translated from the German by Olympia Klassen,  
Chantal Gruber and Kerstin Haep



Does curly kale make you happy? Wolfram Siebeck would answer that of course it doesn't. For decades, he has been a culinary inspector and feared food critic on the German media scene. Just recently, the 85-year-old voiced devastating criticism about "the horrible stalk", as he put it, in the German magazine *Der Feinschmecker* (the gourmet). According to him, there are many reasons to rate curly kale as an inedible luxury food. This raises the question of whether food can even make us unhappy. There is no information on curly kale yet, but the National Institute Of Health in Maryland, USA, suspects that the fatty acid DHA, which is found in numerous fish species, intensifies depression.

Does chocolate make us happy? There is no doubt about this if we believe the advertisements of the confectionery industry. Also, a number of studies prove that chocolate contains, in addition to sugar, four ingredients that can cause feelings of happiness: phenethylamine (PEA), anandamide, tryptophan and theobromine. PEA is a compound that is found in the human body in the form of, for example,

a neurotransmitter like dopamine or a hormone like adrenaline. People in love always have a lot of PEA in their blood. Anandamide binds to the same receptor in the brain as tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the intoxicating substance of the cannabis plant. In contrast, tryptophan is converted into serotonin in the body, the so-called happiness hormone, whereas theobromine is a compound that causes muscular relaxation and thus has an emotionally elevating effect. According to a study of the Department of Chemistry of the University of Madrid published in 2012, dark chocolate in particular, with 70 to 85 per cent of cocoa butter, contains a high percentage of serotonin and tryptophan. Could it really be true that only food with ingredients also contained in drugs can make us happy? It is appropriate to be sceptical about this, as the percentage of these substances in chocolate as well as in other foods like nuts and tomatoes is in general below the effect threshold. It would be best to return to the lovers once again, who do not need any chocolate to start the cascade of chemical processes evoking the feeling of happiness.

Or to say it with the words of an old German song by Trude Herr:

*“I do not want any chocolate, I want a man instead!”*



According to science, good relationships to other people play the most important role for our feeling of happiness. So the kale enjoyed in a cheerful atmosphere with friends and a good glass of beer should make one happier than a bar of handmade high-quality chocolate that a lonely single person eats while watching television in the evening. Is this true?

With this question, the moment of truth should have come, because we also eat with our minds. Does the feeling of happiness still remain, even if we wonder during a meal in a cosy atmosphere if the smoked beef sausage in the splendid tasting kale comes from happy organic pigs? Does this feeling still remain if we lose our appetite already at the sight of the sausage because we fear for our figure? There is no doubt that true moments of happiness during a meal can only be experienced if worries are suppressed, if gourmets can eat without worrying because they know that the vegetables are free of harmful substances and that the animals do not come

from intensive farming and if they don't care about a few calories more or less.

*“Delight in abundance loses its value.”*

However, those who are looking for their culinary happiness don't need only the right products and pleasant company. Even a perfectly prepared favourite meal can be disappointing when eaten with the expectation that it tastes just like the meal our grandmother used to cook when we were a child. Even if it tastes exactly the same – after three days of eating the same meal, the culinary moment of happiness will hardly last forever. Delight in abundance loses its value and is as far from happiness as the smell of kale from the smell of chocolate.

Reason is a category that often pre-emptively moments of happiness during meals, although all gourmets dream of the accidental discovery of a small restaurant, somewhere in nature, where

they can stop for a bite to eat and realize that this is not only the very best authentic family cuisine available for a reasonable price, but also that the products come from the restaurant's own organic farm. Getting more than you had even dared to dream of without high expectations: that's happiness!

A positive surprise in the perfect moment is unfortunately a witty lover that only rarely puts in an appearance. So there has to be another way to find culinary happiness. Those who don't want to rely only on coincidence could – with good prospects of success – try to adjust their own needs. This is an art we didn't inherit. Who, as a child, hasn't eaten so many sweets that he felt as if he was going to vomit? What memory remained of it? Do we still know what an enormous amount we ate at the seventh birthday of Susanne or Thomas? We probably do not. We more likely remember the colour of the toilet lid in the bathroom of their parent's house.

Creating culinary lighthouses is a strategy that has something to do with adjusting one's own needs. Instead of going to the Italian restaurant around the corner four times a month and always scarfing down the same pizza, you could go to an excellent restaurant every three months and be surprised by the chef's extraordinary creations. You will pay special attention to the smell and taste, and concentrate carefully on each dish. You will feel the crunchy, spongy and sparkling texture in your mouth, taste sweet, salty and sour ingredients and enjoy the smell of different spices. However, it is not only the attentive consumption of an impressively prepared meal that can lead to culinary moments of happiness, but also cooking in one's own kitchen, for or with your family and friends. Experience how a recipe or an idea becomes a delicious meal. The great number of cookery programmes on television and their ratings show how great the longing is for cooking and food as a community experience, even though a smelling and tasting screen hasn't been invented yet. Those who want to comprehend the importance of

the social aspect of cooking nowadays and our deeply rooted desire for food as a community experience simply must consider the success of cooking shows. Although the transition to more flexible working hours and working places, the decline of the extended family and the sharp increase in the number of single households did change the reality of life, the longing for food as a community experience cannot be destroyed. Cooking shows are a reflection of this longing and probably contribute sometimes to subsequent actions.

*“Finally, it is not all that difficult to find culinary happiness if a few rules are taken to heart.”*

For example, if we choose good ingredients from sustainable and ecological production that we do not have to worry about.

In the end, it is not too difficult to find culinary happiness with respect to some rules. Consumers could, for example, choose good ingredients from sustainable, ecological production to ease their conscience. They should learn to control their needs and to pay attention to the food, both while cooking and eating. Another issue is a realistic approach to their own expectations and the ability to enjoy the community. Taking these aspects into account, even kale can taste great – with or without sausage.

The journalist Klaus Dahlbeck has been writing about enjoyment in all its culinary facets for a long time.





»With slight misconceptions  
of reality we fabricate our hopes  
and beliefs, and we live off  
crusts we call cakes,  
like poor children  
who make believe they're happy.«

Fernando Pessoa (13 June 1888 – 30 November 1935), a Portuguese poet and author  
From: The Book of Disquiet

# Initiative instead of frustration

According to traditional business economics, many companies should not even exist. However, a completely different way of economical success could develop, in contrast to the theory, if happiness played the lead instead of money.

By Annette Jensen

Translated from the German by Chantal Gruber, Yvette Gossel and Ruthild Garner





One weekend, a couple of village dwellers near Munich decided not to be at the mercy of the food industry any longer. They were tired of buying their eggs from agonised chickens and eating vegetables that were grown in a field hundreds of kilometres away. They cannot be bothered to protest or hope for political decisions. Therefore, they took matters into their own hands. Since these people had understood that small farms have only a small chance of survival in the system, they organised a market stall for an organic farmer and worked there themselves. In the beginning, they didn't even have a scale and therefore a paediatrician had to help them out with hers.

The project was fun for all of the participants. The network grew and gradually developed into a cooperative called Tagwerk (day work). Today, besides the numerous consumers, about one hundred growers such as farmers, beekeepers, butchers, millers and cheese makers are involved. The cooperative generates roughly EUR 5m per year, employs 39 people and is an important economic factor. The organ-

isation claims that cooperation makes people happy. Today, the promotion of regional food products is not the only aim of the Tagwerk companion. The cooperative's longtime chairman Inge Asendorf explains that she abandoned her academic career to work for Tagwerk due to the funny and interesting people. New projects are being developing continuously. For example, one companion writes funny seasonal recipe books, and the former bank manager Rudolf Oberpriller organised bicycle trips to farms and invented an ecological bicycle path throughout Germany. He says that his former work was useless and that the companions of the network do not need a lot of money to set up something meaningful. Rudolf Oberpriller's statement confirms the results of the international happiness research, which Kate Pickett and Richard Wilkinson have summarised on the basis of worldwide research. They say that cooperation makes people happy – whereas earning more money only supports well-being in very poor social classes and rising inequality does not even make rich people happy.

Even the founding of the Schönauelectricity plant, which today is a nationwide provider of green electricity, had not been planned. Chief executive Ursula Sladeck says that the participants in fact just slipped into the project. Everything began in 1986, after the nuclear accident in Chernobyl. Some neighbours wanted to take the first steps towards the grassroots phasing out of nuclear power by organising energy efficiency competitions. Then however, the venture developed its own dynamics, which were expedited by a stubborn energy provider who threatened to take the energy savers to court for harming the interests of his company. In subsequent years, the rebels of the Schönauelectricity plant experienced a lot of solidarity. Was it 'luck' that experts had always appeared at just the right moments to help them out?

However, this issue then started to develop a momentum of its own and was driven by a stubborn energy supplier that threatened to take those people to court who had tried to reduce their energy consumption, for harming his business. In the following years, the ►

‘nuclear power rebels’ from Schönaue received a lot of support. Were they just lucky to have always found experts at the right time to help them? Engineers, management and tax consultants, municipal representatives and publicity experts voluntarily offered their specialised knowledge, often even free of charge. They were fascinated by the project and knew that it depended on their support. They did not earn any money, but they got the great feeling of having successfully contributed to establishing an extraordinary company. Together they were able to compete with their powerful and financially better-off opponents and therefore helped David

to win the battle against Goliath. The growth-critical economist Tim Jackson states that successful relationships are the key to happiness – and that “trust, safety and the sense of community decisively contribute to social well-being”. Even the people who only receive their energy from the ‘nuclear power rebels’ from Schönaue can consider themselves part of this success story.

*“Successful relationships are the key to happiness.”*

And in fact, there are more happy entrepreneurial personalities. The chemist Hermann Fischer is a good example, because in his Auro chemical plant, located in Braunschweig, only organic and other natural substances are used to produce varnish, glue and cleaning agents. Fischer’s concept is thus exceptional in that sector – today approximately 90 per cent of chemical substances are based on petroleum and other fossil resources. But the 60-year-old chemist is firmly convinced that his ‘solar chemicals’ will prevail in the long run, as not only the most important resource of the conventional chemical industry is finite, but their production also only works by using many highly toxic substances like chlorine and nitric acid. Within the various steps of the synthesis process, apart from the desired products, high amounts of waste are also produced whose dangerous impact, however, is being ignored. By comparison, all of the products of the Auro company are biodegradable. As a student, Hermann Fischer already knew that he would never want to work for the pharmaceutical giants Bayer or BASF. There- ►





fore, together with two fellow students, he founded his first company. He concludes his credo by saying that they did not only want to think about the right thing, but also act the right way. Happiness researchers believe that living and putting convictions into effect makes people content, as you can see in the case of the chemist Hermann Fischer. In contrary, the Happy Planet Index shows that environmental destruction has an extremely negative impact on one's well-being.

Another example is 35-year-old Sina Trinkwalder. She earned a lot of money in advertising – but after a while her job started to bore her and she felt the need of doing something more meaningful. Therefore she decided to found a company that offers elderly women and single mothers secure jobs. In her hometown of Augsburg, many people worked in the textile industry in former times until German employees were regarded as too expensive and production was moved to Eastern Europe and Asia. Sina Trinkwalder was convinced that some of these workers still had to be living in Augsburg.

*“Living one's own convictions makes a person content.”*

Even though she had no clue about the textile industry, she was not worried – as she knew that she was capable of picking things up quickly. But more importantly, she is a person who can get others going and fill them with enthusiasm. Thus, her first sewing machine supplier taught her to sew, employees at museums informed her about the characteristics of the fabrics and when in the end she ran out of money to buy a sewing machine, a generous supplier even gave her a high discount. Today 130 women and men have unlimited jobs at 'Manomama'. They sew bags for the DM drugstore chain and jeans for the Real hypermarkets, only working with organic fabric and earning more than 10 euros per hour.

There are several reasons for the success of her concept, which many economists had declared impossible to become successful. Sina Trinkwalder

makes her pricing public – and it becomes apparent that she personally has very modest earnings and does not spend money on advertising. The marketing for her company consists in her appearing on talk shows defending her ideas against politicians and typical CEOs of global companies. At the same time she turns around the relationship between suppliers and customers. She calculates the price and makes it clear to her customers that she will neither lower the price of the fabric producers nor make her employees work extra hours or lower their salary.

And, lo and behold, it actually works. People buy her products. Sina Trinkwalder just had her book published in Germany: 'Wunder muss man selber machen' (you have to create your own miracles),. Not only is the book fun to read but it also gives readers courage and even brings some happiness.

Annette Jensen is a German journalist and has been writing about economic alternatives to the mainstream for many years now. Her book 'Wir steigern das Bruttosozialglück. Von Menschen, die anders wirtschaften und besser leben' (We are increasing gross national happiness. About people who do business differently and live better lives) was published by the German publishing house Verlag Herder.

»It would be naive to think that traditional politics are more 'liberal' today, when actually we have only gotten used to their restrictions. It is indeed true that, at first glance, eco-sufficiency brings forth new limitations. But in the long run it will make much more room for a creative, happy and a responsible way of life.

Angelika Zahrnt and Uwe Schneidewind in 'Nicht immer mehr, schneller, globaler!' (It doesn't always have to be more, faster and more global) in the German daily newspaper taz in November 2013.



# A nice day

Streets filled with people instead of cars, happy faces, no rushing. Events such as the 'Car-Free Sunday' and the 'Tag des guten Lebens', a day celebrating the good life, made people's genuine wishes come true, beyond their usual consumption habits.

By Davide Brocchi

Translated from the German by Inga Festersen, Eva Flucke, Ruthild Gärtner and Viktorija Tapai



A call for renunciation leads to a complete loss of approval. Therefore, it has to be presented as a gain in order to attract people's attention on how to lead a resource-efficient life. Even then, people are sceptical about breaking old habits. But are renunciation and happiness really opposed to each other? The following brief outline describes the development of the Car-Free Sunday in several stages and shows that this assumption is fairly relative.

**1973:** The German Federal Government implemented four car-free Sundays as a response to the first international oil crisis. By closing the streets to motorised traffic, people were enabled to have entirely new experiences on the Autobahn throughout Germany. Whole families went for walks on the Autobahn, young people were roller skating, and senior citizens got on their bikes. Without traffic, the cities showed themselves in a completely different light. Those who were present at the time still look back fondly on the experience.

Since 2000, there have been several car-free Sundays in Brussels throughout

the year. On the third Sunday in September, the entire city is closed to cars (161 square kilometres). Surveys have shown that the people's satisfaction has been continually growing since the initiative was started. By now, 87 percent of the inhabitants consider the car-free Sunday to be a good or even excellent initiative.

**2005:** In the context of a representative survey by the city of Augsburg, 65 percent of its inhabitants advocated car-free Sundays in the city centre. Fifty-nine percent could see six of the car-free Sundays happening each year, 42 percent could even imagine having twelve. Only 22 percent of the respondents opposed the whole idea.

**2010:** Hardly any citizens complained on 18 July when the A40, the federal autobahn between Duisburg and Dortmund, was closed to cars and opened for visitors. Three million people accepted the invitation. They had breakfast together at long tables, made music and did arts and sports together – everything on the autobahn. The project

‘Still Leben – Ruhrschnellweg’ (still life – Ruhrschnellweg) became one of the most successful and impressive projects of the campaign ‘RUHR.2010 – Kulturhauptstadt Europas’ (European Capital of Culture).

**2013:** On 15 September, the first ‘Day of Good Life: Cologne’s Day of Sustainability’ took place. Ehrenfeld, a district in Cologne where more than 20,000 people live, remained closed to motorised traffic for one day. Entire streets were completely freed from cars by organising 1,000 alternative parking spaces for the residents. The public space was transformed into a wide ‘agora’. In an ancient Greek polis, an agora was the central place where direct democracy was created. There, the city’s politics, markets, and cultural life took place. According to the motto ‘more space for parks instead of space for parking’, greenery was planted on many car parks. People appreciated the non-commercial character of the event and the relaxed atmosphere in the spirit of deceleration. According to unofficial estimates by the police,





between 80,000 and 100,000 people took part in Cologne's 'Day of Good Life.'

The response of the press was great. The daily newspaper 'Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger' commented: "Cologne's urban development policy needs more such stimuli – and many more Days of Good Life." This day was organised by 'Agora Köln', a varied association of more than 91 citizen's and environmental initiatives, companies, theatres, and further groups from Cologne which campaign for a stronger civic participation and for a progressive transformation of the city towards sustainability.

## New forms of freedom

What do these examples show? It is certain that the limited availability of resources (e.g. crude oil), air pollution, noise pollution or the high consumption of space for car parks (i.e. for unused cars) require a change of thinking. The actual aim of car-free Sundays is the promotion of sustainable mobility – along with a reduction in the consumption of resources. Especially in cities with a high volume of road traffic such

as Milan, Italy, or Bogotá, Columbia, they support health and environmental relief. In Brussels, Belgium, there is six to eight times less noise on car-free Sundays and the air in the city centre contains three to four times less nitrogen. In fact, in some streets, a nitrogen monoxide concentration ten times lower than on normal workdays was measured.

The popularity of car-free Sundays can hardly be explained by the environmental awareness of the population. The social and psychological side effects, however, are crucial. Especially in a car-friendly city, the suspension of motorised traffic has dramatic effects on the environment. The areas for cars and public transport become public space and create an area in which people's longing for community, creative development, and alternative lifestyles are projected. This longing is also the result of progressive privatisation and commercialisation of the urban environment within the last few decades. Economic growth, mass consumption and faster cars no longer represent freedom, dynamism, and wealth, but they stand for blockage, traffic congestion and



stress. Considering this background, abstinence is a form of self-protection, a requirement for being happy. Car-free Sundays offer – at least for a brief moment – the opportunity to escape the ‘mega-machine society’ as the American architecture critic Lewis Mumford († 1990) called it.

## Happiness needs a strong democracy

In Germany, the popularity of car-free Sundays is a paradox in contrast to the high status of cars themselves. When the idea of the ‘Day of Good Life’ was presented to the meeting of a regional representation in Cologne, the reaction of the borough mayor, a member of The Greens, was as follows: “We shouldn’t ask too much of the citizens with visionary plans as such. A car-free street would be more realistic than a whole district.” Since nothing was sold and car-free days are considered to be bad for business, the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce and the city marketing had not supported the project, but even the ADAC, a German automobile club, ap-

proved the initiative. While abstinence is considered highly unpopular in political and administrative sectors, the success of car-free Sundays shows that most citizens are sometimes smarter than their political representatives.

Since social development is not determined by the citizens’ understanding of happiness, car-free Sundays remain a marginal phenomenon. In other words, happiness needs a strengthened democracy. According to the theory created by Elinor Ostrom, a US American political scientist and winner of the Nobel Prize in economics, common property is managed sustainably if its users cooperate and form small communities that act in a self-determined and autonomous manner. A project based on precisely these principles was organised in Cologne under the name Tag des guten Lebens (day of the good life). All neighbourhoods were allowed to ‘rule’ their own street for one day. Duties and responsibilities like cordoning off and cleaning the streets were assigned to the residents. The sharing strategy did not only lead to a significant decline of costs, but even made the pro-

ject possible which was not within the financial means of the heavily indebted city. Residents stated that the assignment of responsibilities made them feel appreciated and that they enjoyed the volunteer work as a possibility for participation as well as a sign of equality in their neighbourhood.

## Recapturing public spaces

Happiness is one of the rare goods that grow if you share them. “Since the Day of the Good Life,, it takes me 15 minutes longer to go to the bakery because I am constantly greeted by neighbours or because I stop to talk to them,” explains a resident of Cologne. The neighbourhoods that used to meet regularly to prepare that day have continued to meet, for example, to autonomously reorganise the nearby playground. Many people want to repeat the Day of the Good Life in their neighbourhood and are willing to take even more responsibility for organising it.

Anyone who has ever organised a car-free Sunday comes to the important conclusion that it is not essentially re- ►



sources that are needed to organise a good life and sustainable alternatives, but open spaces for their realisation. The greatest challenges are the diversion of traffic, cordoning off and controlling the boundaries of car-free areas and the fulfilling of the numerous regulations concerning the use of public space by citizens. As soon as there is an open space, sustainability, community and the good life arise almost naturally. That was the impressive experience of 15 September in Cologne.

Davide Brocchi is a social scientist and a lecturer in sustainability at the ecosign-Akademie für Gestaltung (academy for design) in Cologne and at the University of Lüneburg, among other institutions. He initiated the project Tag des guten Lebens: Kölner Sonntag der Nachhaltigkeit (day of the good life: Cologne's Sunday for sustainability).

CherryX (Eigenes Werk) via Wikimedia Commons



## Further reading:

- Survey results and results of pollutant measurements regarding the car-free Sunday in Brussels: [www.dimanchesansvoiture.irisnet.be/fr/resultats.html](http://www.dimanchesansvoiture.irisnet.be/fr/resultats.html)
- Citizen survey on the car-free day in Augsburg: [www.augsburg.de/fileadmin/www/dat/01au/statistik/Buergerumfrage/Buergerumfrage\\_2005.pdf](http://www.augsburg.de/fileadmin/www/dat/01au/statistik/Buergerumfrage/Buergerumfrage_2005.pdf)
- Der Tag des guten Lebens- Kölner Sonntag der Nachhaltigkeit (day of the good life: Cologne's Sunday for sustainability): [www.tagdesgutenlebens.de](http://www.tagdesgutenlebens.de)



»Humans need deserts – in  
order to cherish the delight  
of an oasis!«

Martin Kessel (pseudonym Hans Brühl, \* 14 April 1901 in Plauen (Vogtland); † 14 April 1990 in Berlin), German writer



# Better than GDP

The gross national happiness is rising in the country of Bhutan. There, well-being is the leading economic indicator instead of material wealth. And yet there is no principle there of “poor but happy”. The UN believes the model can be applied elsewhere, too. A travel report by Maja Göpel

Translated from the German by Larissa Burkart, Sina Brauch and Ruthild Gärtner





Just as the plane is about to land, the pilot suddenly pulls it back up. After a few heart-pounding seconds, he announces that we have to make a layover in India due to inclement weather conditions in the narrow Himalayan Valley – too bad. Three hours later, however, we touch down on Bhutanese soil in Thimphu. The houses in the capital of Bhutan, which is estimated to have 750,000 inhabitants, are of the same style as those in the rural areas with wonderfully carved roof gables, pastel colours, and not more than five storeys high. Yet a large majority of Bhutanese people depend on agriculture in order to make a living, and live spread out in small villages.

In official statistics, Bhutan still ranks low in terms of poverty and economic strength, and the economy is largely dependent on India, the country's large neighbour. As the Bhutanese government restricts the number of visas issued each year and as the fees charged for them are high, tourism is rare. Nonetheless, an increasing number of international media have focused on Bhutan over the past few years. In

rich and fully industrialized western countries, Bhutan is considered to be a source of inspiration due to its development goals, which also include 'gross national happiness' (GNH).

## Gross National Happiness As the Country's Ultimate Goal

We as scientists as well as political and economic agents are on a research mission and are currently researching the question of how happiness can be established not only as a life goal, but also as an overall social objective. The fact that our economic growth and competition model produces an ever decreasingly positive image of the future provides motivation to search for alternatives. Also in countries where material growth is vital in order to secure basic care for the people, the feeling is reinforced that the traditional Western model is not ideal. The Gallup Institute, for example, found that China has experienced a dramatic decline in the quality of life, even though the per capita GDP has increased by a factor of 2.5.

Whenever contradictions become so clearly apparent, certain questions move into the centre of attention: what is a society and what is its economy actually supposed to produce and for whom? And how can we ensure that these concerns will find their way into the focus of crisis-exit strategies? Initially, the USA had been very precise about this and declared "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" to be a universal fundamental right in the Declaration of Independence in 1776; the protection of this fundamental right needs to be the responsibility of government institutions. It is similar in Bhutan, but there the government made this responsibility their most important priority. In 1972, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the Fourth Dragon King of Bhutan, explained his theory that an increase in material wealth does not necessarily simultaneously result in a better quality of life. According to him, a successful government does not derive from an increase in gross national product (formerly GNP, currently known as gross domestic product, GDP), but rather from an increase in gross national happiness. ►

In addition, the Bhutanese basis of the political philosophy closely reflects that of the USA: in 1729, the legal basis for the kingdom of Bhutan was formulated; already then it stated: “If the government cannot create happiness for its people, there is no purpose for the government to exist.” In opposition to modern western countries, where happiness is considered to be an individual right, the Bhutanese define happiness as a multidimensional social entity, specifically as: the creation of conditions under which people are able to pursue their well-being in a sustainable manner and in this process, to also take responsibility for the society as a whole and for other individuals.

Basically the principle serves as an excellent example for a strategy of ‘sustainable development’, which is a main goal that 193 countries in the world have agreed to follow. In a nutshell, sustainable development is a type of social development in which our current generations satisfy their needs for a healthy and fulfilling life, while maintaining the basis for healthy and fulfilling lives of future generations. This goal has not yet

been achieved; this is particularly due to the fact that society is relentlessly striving to increase its GDP. At the same time, they neglect the fact that people will not become more satisfied during this process, while the destruction of nature as well as social and economic inequalities will increase. This is not a good environment for happiness at all.

This goal has still not been achieved because, although people are very concerned about spending all their energy on chasing after a high rating on the performance index of the GDP growth rate, they do not pay enough attention to the fact that people do not become more satisfied in this process, but that the destruction of nature and social as well as economic inequality increase. So this is not a good environment for happiness.

## From a Tiny Kingdom to an Avantgardist of the United Nations

When we think about ‘being happy’, we mainly think of a temporary individual emotional state. So do we have to im-





agine the Bhutanese as constantly smiling exotic people? What is different in Bhutan? The Gross National Happiness (GNH) Index clearly defines the basis for a healthy and fulfilling life today and in the future. It comprises four pillars: the establishment of good governance, the promotion of sustainable socio-economic development, the preservation and promotion of cultural values, and the conservation of the natural environment. Quality of government requires that Bhutan does not reject sustainability as being irrelevant, but integrates it as an important part of the society's index of progress. It provides a basis for political decisions: through collaboration with the United Nations and an international group of scholars, a large catalogue of indicators and questions based on nine dimensions was compiled. In this catalogue, the people are asked about their psychological well-being, for example their subjective life satisfaction, their overall health and education level. They answer questions about their opportunities to participate in cultural life, their use of time and how they feel about governance and political

participation. Other factors that play an important role are: community structure, ecological diversity and resilience as well as living standards (income, fortune, housing quality).

These dimensions are quite similar to the eleven dimensions that the OECD has recently compiled in their Better Life Index. Bhutan's government and the Gross National Happiness (GNH) Commission are drawing up policy plans for the next five years on the basis of the survey results. This is what makes the survey in Bhutan something special when compared to ones in Europe. These plans are mainly intended to meet the needs of the 'unhappy' population. It is not surprising, though, that Bhutan had some work to do in relation to the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012. In July 2011, the resolution 65/309 entitled "Happiness: Towards a Holistic Approach to Development" was passed by the United Nations with the support of 68 countries. In April 2012, Bhutan convened at a high-level meeting on "Wellbeing and Happiness: Defining a New Economic

Paradigm". An astounding number of 800 participants came to the exploratory meeting where, among other things, the establishment of the International Day of Happiness was founded. It was celebrated on 20 March 2013 for the first time. Ever since the outcome document of Rio+20 was released, which also includes the recommendations for drawing on indicators 'beyond the GDP' for social development, Bhutan has once and for all become the 'Mecca of inspiration'.

## Finding the Key to the Common Good

It has become apparent that our study group is by far not the only one. Many participants report similar observations: an impartial kindness, an alertness of the people and the point that despite poverty no slums exist and even the street dogs seem at ease. What impresses me most is the people's modesty towards their role in the world and the acknowledgement and appreciation of other peoples' performances and opinions. While every day we are exposed

to the demand for the best solution, the cheapest prices, the most hostile take-overs and the incompetence of other people who live and think differently, you can almost feel the respect for people and nature in Bhutan. Probably the most beautiful symbols are the colourful prayer flags: the flags that accumulate good wishes from meditation and transfer them by wisps of air in the form of shadows even to animals and the nature.

It is precisely this that appears to me to be the key to happiness and successful crisis management: pausing for a moment; appreciating and understanding the things we have been given and the world around us; carefully questioning what we really need in order to live a good life; determining by means of social dialogue how an economic system could provide a good life in a more sustainable, more fair and more resilient way.

Dr. Maja Göpel is the head of the Berlin office of the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy. She travelled to Bhutan with the GIZ Global Leadership Academy in the context of 'Beyond GDP' in April 2013. Photos: Maja Göpel



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- ➔ Initiatives on the topic from civil society:  
[www.dayofhappiness.net](http://www.dayofhappiness.net), [www.worldhappyday.com](http://www.worldhappyday.com)



»Happiness is often brought about by attention to small things and unhappiness often by neglecting them.«

Heinrich Christian Wilhelm Busch (\* 15 April 1832 in Wiedensahl; † 9 January 1908 in Mechtshausen), one of the most influential humorous German poets and illustrators

# Fortunately There is Post-growth

If people and societies want to achieve happiness and satisfaction beyond material consumption and economic growth orientation, they need positive conditions on an individual, economic and political level.

By Marcel Hunecke

Translate from the German by Mareike Baudewig, Violette Beuteman and Eva Flucke





Steadily increasing growth in material prosperity and the energy and resource consumption associated with it is not indefinitely compatible with the vision of sustainable development. In this context, it is necessary to reflect upon post-growth societies, which can enable every single citizen to live a happy life without being dependent on an increase in material prosperity. If people living in a post-growth society no longer saw it as their social and individual goal to reach material prosperity, then they would have to cultivate alternative life goals to secure the subjective well-being and life satisfaction of larger population groups. This is not at all an enterprise as hopeless as it first appears. Already today, it has become obvious that life satisfaction in countries with a high standard of living can hardly be enhanced by increases in material prosperity. But what will secure individual life satisfaction in post-growth societies if the increase in material prosperity is no longer a desirable goal?

A look at positive psychology (which is less interested in removing mental disorders or unusual behaviour than in promoting positive development potential in humans) offers interesting insights into this. Indeed, it was not positive psychology that raised the issue of a good or truly successful life for the first time, but it has rather been reflected upon in diverse philosophies and teachings on wisdom for thousands of years already. What is specific about the approach of positive psychology, however, is that it tries to provide solid empirical evidence for possible answers to the question of a good life.

Nevertheless, neither a quantifiable, nor an exclusive answer from positive psychology with regard to the contents can be expected at this point, since the issue of a good life is inseparably linked to moral concepts and can therefore not clearly be solved empirically. Reflecting on a good life can in terms of content still be enriched and defined by empirically sound knowledge about the positive characteristics and potential of man.

All in all, three strategies can be identified on how to live a good lifestyle. They are not only part of philosophical discussions, but their suitability for daily use has also been empirically confirmed by positive psychology: the joyful life, the committed life and the purposeful life. Pleasure, achievement of goals and meaning are three sources that can motivate people to live a happy life. ►



Whether every individual is capable of using these sources for their own good depends on his or her personal character. There are some people who find happiness in pursuing a specific purpose, e.g. successfully living their life according to religious or spiritual ideals. Even a pleasure-seeking hedonist can lead a happy life if he strikes the right balance of enjoying his pleasures and indulges in them. Anyone who is capable of achieving their own goals in life and approaches them through well-regulated partial goals is happy as well. The three strategies for a good lifestyle are most contradictory in philosophical reflections, when they are condensed to their extreme positions. Especially the hedonist is then often denied the necessary aptitude to lead a real good life. Such contradictions can, however, rarely be found in empirical research of everyday life. From the psychological perspective, the trick is rather to combine the three strategies for a good lifestyle with another intelligently in accordance with one's own personality.



## Let Mental Resources Grow

This conclusion drawn from the so-called pleasure-aim-sense theory of subjective well-being should also be considered by all efforts that neither want to rely on moral suasion nor on ultimately priceless material incentives during the upcoming transformation to post-growth societies.

Instead people must be able to enjoy positive emotions if they are supposed to move from their usual and not too unpleasant surroundings to another post-growth culture which they have not yet experienced first-hand.

Six mental resources can be derived from the pleasure-aim-sense theory which are both linked to positive emotions and oriented towards immature- ►



rial sources of satisfaction: ability to enjoy pleasure, self-acceptance, self-efficacy, mindfulness, interpretation and solidarity (see table). The six mental resources can be strengthened through specific measures in health promotion as well as in consulting and coaching processes. They can also be promoted in different organisational or institutional settings such as schools, universities, companies, non-profit organisations or at the local community level.

The crucial function of mental resources in order to achieve post-growth societies consists in promoting the individual powers of resistance as opposed to compensatory forms of consumption to which insecure people with low self-esteem and who are less socially integrated are more susceptible (see also the factory issue entitled Appreciating Values). By promoting these six mental resources, the personality of every individual is strengthened against social processes of comparison in which one's own self is depreciated compared to better, prettier and richer people. Resistance against endless social processes of comparison reduces the performance-related as well as efficiency-related stress of every individual and at the same time increases life satisfaction. The six mental resources, however, cannot be promoted separately on an individual level if the entire organisational and institutional

strategy	mental resource	psychological function	positive emotion
hedonism	ability to enjoy pleasure	intensity of experience instead of variety of experience	sensual pleasures
		promotion of immaterial sources of pleasure	aesthetically intellectual well-being
		sensual pleasures	
goal attainment	self-acceptance	greater independence from social processes of comparison	satisfaction
	self-efficacy	strengthening capacities to act	pride
			flow
sense	mindfulness	orientation towards supra-individual goals	serenity
	interpretation		security
	solidarity	motivation for collective actions	belonging trust

*Strategies for a good lifestyle, the mental resources derived from it, psychological functions and positive emotions according to the pleasure-aim-sense theory of subjective well-being*

surrounding is structured contrary to it. Psychology inevitably reaches its limits here. Then again, to bring about cultural change towards post-growth, a large number of individuals is required who embody this change on a personal level and push it forward in a pioneering manner. These individuals will only build up the necessary motivation if their subjective well-being and life satisfaction can be permanently maintained at a high standard or even be increased. Promoting the ability to enjoy pleasure, self-acceptance, self-efficacy, mindfulness, interpretation and solidarity will undoubtedly support this process.

Prof. Dr. Marcel Hunecke is a psychologist who holds a teaching and research position at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts in Dortmund and at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum (RUB). His book *Psychologie der Nachhaltigkeit – Psychische Ressourcen der Postwachstumsgesellschaft* (sustainable psychology – mental resources of the post-growth society) was published by the Oekom Verlag.





»Happiness is a state of peace  
that causes neither pleasure  
nor pain.«

Pierre-Marc-Gaston de Lévis, Duc de Lévis (\* 7. March 1764 in Paris; † 15. February 1830), french politician and writer

# factory<sup>y</sup> – the Magazine for Sustainable Economy

Although the word ‘factory’ is mostly associated with the manufacturing industry and industrial production, it can also refer to ‘factor Y’, the factor by which energy consumption needs to change so that future generations will find themselves living in similar conditions. Such an understanding of sustainability implies that all aspects of economic activity need to be addressed with sustainability in mind, including consumer practices as well as the manufacturing and services sectors.

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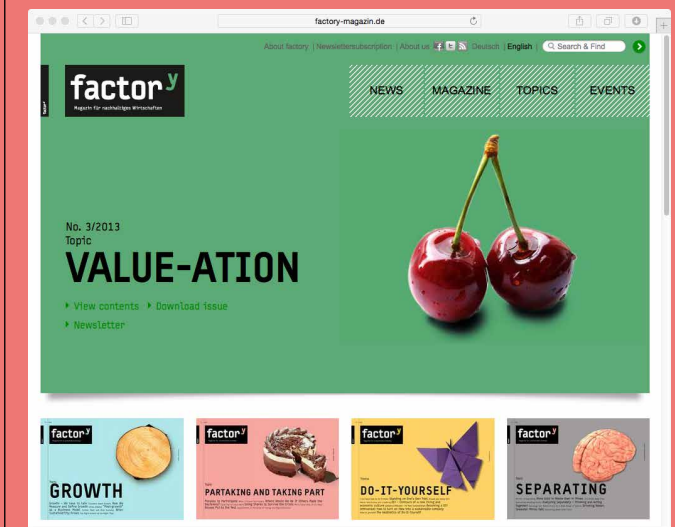
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