Axiology, psychopathology, and positive psychology: Investigating important relationships between personal values and mood, personality, beliefs, character strengths, and psychopathology

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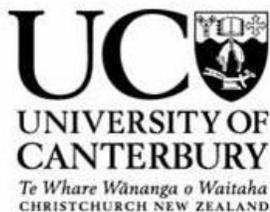
Outline

* **Origins of this research**.
* Background.
  * The history of values in psychology.
  * Definitions of values.
  * Values and similar constructs.
* **Shalom Schwartz's theory of values**.
* The Important Values Study (pilot).
* **The Values Study**.
  * Aims.
  * Methods.
  * **Findings**.
* The measurement of values.
* **Main conclusions.**

Origins of this research

* Qualitative research on beliefs in cognitive therapy; how they were constructed and used in therapy.

* People seem talk about their values; values are important.

* I was interested in the relationship between values and mood and psychopathology:
  * If you believe that values are important, are you happier?
  * If you know your values, are you happier?
  * If you live in alignment with your values, are you happier?
  * Are there differences between happy and sad people in the specific types of values they endorse?
  * Are there differences between people high or low in psychopathology and the specific types of values they endorse?

The history of values in psychology

* The concept of values became a research focus for scholars in the early 1930's.

* By the 1960's, values were an explicit focus of nearly all the social science disciplines.

* Little research on values between the 1960's and 1980's (≠anti-cognitivist movement & behaviourism).

* The 1980's saw a large renewed interest in values:

  * Allen Bergin's 1980 article (Bergin, 1980) and Albert Ellis's reply (Ellis, 1980) – this sparked debate about values issues among helping professionals.

  * Milton Rokeach's book *The Nature of Human Values* (1973) "caused a surge of empirical studies which investigated the role of human values in many branches of psychology" (Debats & Bartelds, 2005, p.48).

The history of values in psychology

* Recent values research has been sporadic and in various psychological sub-disciplines, e.g.:

    * Therapists' values (e.g., Kelly & Strupp, 1992).

    * The universality of values (Schwartz, 1992; Cohen & Cohen, 1995).

    * Specific religious and spiritual values (Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz, & Knafo, 2002; Schwartz & Huismans,1995; Bergin, 1980).

    * Cultural and national values (Swartz, 1992).

    * The transmission of values within the family (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004).

    * Values based interventions (Ernst, 2002).

    * The intergenerational transmission of values (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990).

The history of values in psychology

* Values have shown relationships with things such as:
  * Political and environmental attitudes (Duriez, Luyten, Snauwaert, & Hutsebaut, 2002; Grunert & Juhl, 1995).
  * Health behaviour (Ernst, 2002).
  * Interpersonal cooperation (Schwartz, 1996).
  * Behaviour aimed at value attainment (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003).
  * Gender (Feather, 1984; Struch et al., 2002).
  * Field of study (Verkasalo et al., 1994).
  * The Big Five personality traits (Roccas et al., 2002).
  * Therapy efficacy (Phillips, Russell & Brennan, 2002).

The history of values in psychology

✳ Values are currently not a central topic in psychology:

  ✳ There is a distinct lack of mention of 'value' or 'values' in popular and common psychology textbooks. Proctor and Williams (2006) surveyed 33 introductory psychology textbooks from 2003 to 2005 to determine their most frequently cited concepts. Via glossaries, 428 terms were found in 50% or more of the texts, and were designated "core concepts". However, 'value' or 'values' were not among the 428 core concepts.

  ✳ Rohan (2000) observed that there was no discussion of value theory in a sample of 10 introductory social psychology and personality textbooks published between 1990 and 2000.

✳ Although the history of values in psychology is brief, there is a long tradition and large literature on values in philosophy (notably ethical theory:

Definitions of values

* Axiology = the study of values.

* Many different conceptions and definitions of 'value' and 'values' in different domains within psychology.

  * Clyde Kluckhohn = as "a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable, which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action" (Kluckhohn, 1951, p. 395).

  * Milton Rokeach = an "enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence" (1973, p. 5).

  * Schwartz = as "desirable transsituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity" (1994, p. 21).

Definitions of values

✳ Schwartz - "there is widespread agreement in the literature regarding five features of the conceptual definition of values":

A value is a (1) belief (2) pertaining to desirable end states or modes of conduct, that (3) transcends specific situations, (4) guides selection or evaluation of behaviour, people, and events, and (5) is ordered by importance relative to other values to form a system of value priorities (1994, p. 20).

✳ More recently, Schwartz - "conceptions of the desirable that guide the way social actors (e.g., organisational leaders, policy-makers, individual persons) select actions, evaluate people and events, and explain their actions and evaluations" (1999, p. 24).

✳ Other definitions: Lewin (1951), Heider (1958), Allport (1961), Williams (1968), Super (1980), Hofstede (1980), Feather (1996), Maio and Olson (1998), Carver and Scheier (1998), Maes and Gebhardt (2000), Marini (2000), Henderson (2003), and Lindeman & Verkasalo (2005).

Values and similar constructs

✳ "The term 'values' has been used variously to refer to interests, pleasures, likes, preferences, duties, moral obligations, desires, wants, goals, needs, aversion and attractions, and many other kinds of elective orientations" (Williams, 1979, p. 37).

✳ Some of the more central concepts in the literature include attitudes, traits, norms and needs; some of the more peripheral concepts include likes, schemas, and moral obligations.

✳ Values differ from **attitudes:**

   ✳ in that values are more abstract, inherently positive, subject to hierarchical ordering by importance, and central to issues of personhood.

   ✳ attitudes are less directly implicated in behaviour and specifically evaluative.

Values and similar constructs

✴ Values differ from **traits:**

  ✴ in that values are not conceptualised as fixed aspects of personality, are inherently positive, and provide an evaluative function.

✴ Values differ from **norms:**

  ✴ in that values are 'trans-situational', measured at an individual level, and capture a personal ideal.

  ✴ norms are situation specific, measured at group level, and capture an 'ought' sense.

✴ Values differ from **needs:**

  ✴ in that values capture a feature of social life.

  ✴ needs connote a biological influence on behaviour.

Schwartz's theory of values

* Shalom Schwartz was the first to empirically validate a systematic theory regarding the organisation of an individuals' value system.

* Others have also attempted this, e.g.: Hofstede (1980), Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961), Parsons & Shils (1951), and of course Rokeach (1973).

* Schwartz:

  * searched for an underlying universality of the content and structure of values across cultures (1992, 1994).

  * gained empirical support for theory from 70+ cultures.

  * conceptualized an expanded model that classified many individual values into 10 universally distinct value types.

  * value content consists of the type of goal or motivational concern it expresses, and the model specifies the dynamics of conflict and congruence among the 10 individual value types.

Schwartz's theory of values

Theoretical model of relations among 10 motivational types of values.
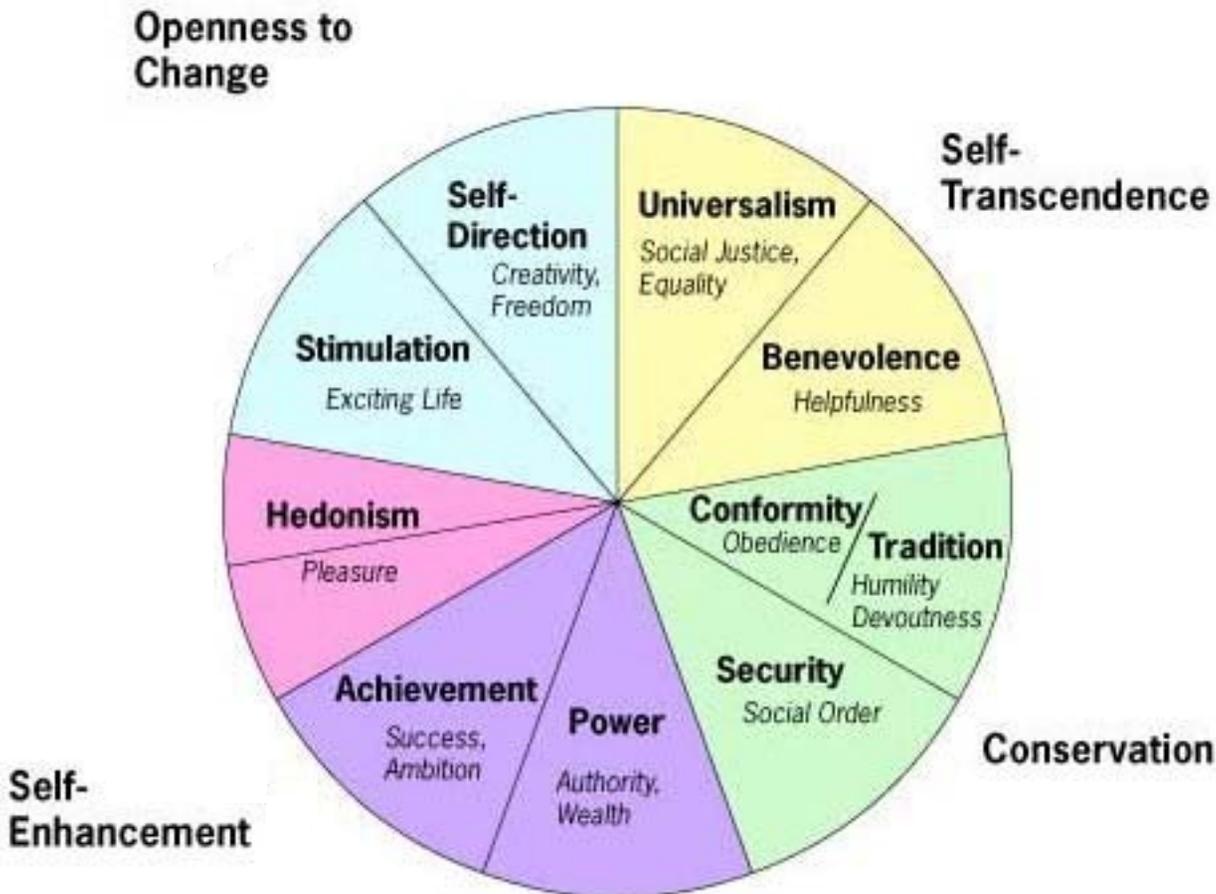
The Important Values Study

* 103 participants, 10 measures (e.g., BDI-II, SVS, BSI)

* Looked at the relationship between:
    * values and low mood.
    * values and psychopathology.
    * three different ways of measuring values (SVS, PVQ, SSVS).

* Main findings:
    * Age associated with positive affect (older more positive: on PANAS).
    * Relationship status associated with life satisfaction (married & in partnership more life satisfaction).
    * Previous psychartric diagnosis associated with low mood (BDI-II↑ & Happiness Measures↓).
    * Current medical issue associated with lower satisfaction with life (SwLS).
    * The importance of values not associated with mood.
    * The values of achievement and benevolence considered more important for those without low mood.

The Important Values Study

✳ Those with low mood not currently satisfied with their values:
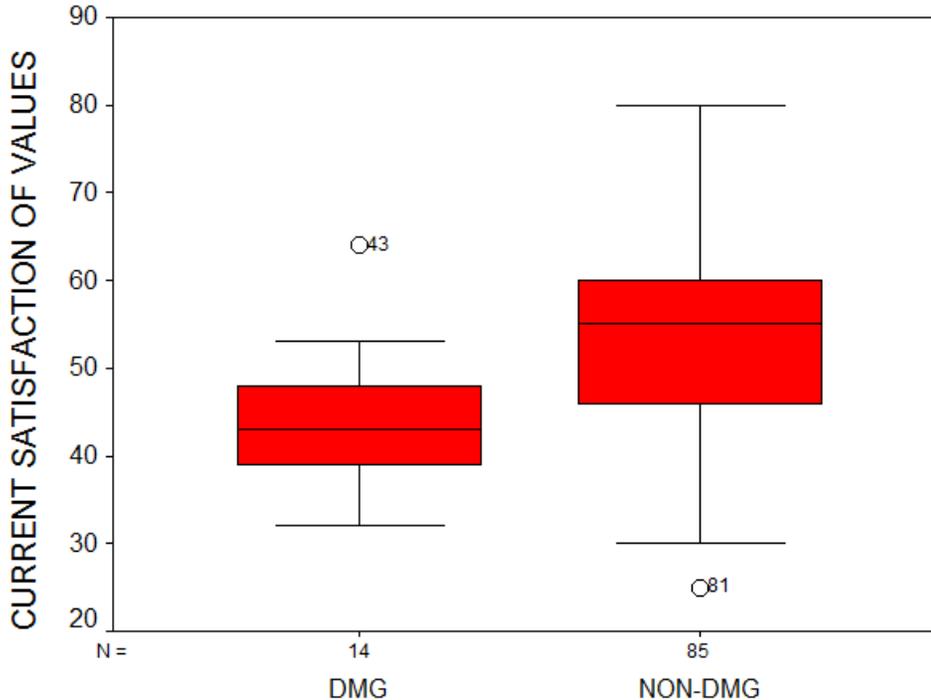
✳ The importance of values not associated with psychopathology.

✳ Those without psychopathology value benevolence (3), self-direction (1), achievement (1) and stimulation (1) more.

✳ All three ways of measuring values highly correlated, but

The Values Study

* Looked at the relationships between:
  * values and low mood.
  * values and psychopathology.
  * values and personality, dysfunctional beliefs, and character strengths.
* Design:
  * Builds on a previous study (pilot).
  * Web-based.
  * Used mostly common and brief psychometric scales (11 measures).
    * 3 values (e.g., Qual Q's, SSVS, PVQ).
    * 2 mood (CES-D, **BSI-**DEP).
    * 2 Psychopathology (**BSI**, DAS).
    * 4 others: TIPI, SwLS, HM, VIASC-R.
  * Participants recruited via e-mail list, website postings, newsletters.
  * Ran for 49 days, starting on 18/DEC/07 and ending on 04/FEB/08.

The Values Study

* Participants:
    * N=492 (5% data cleaned – extreme & erratic responding).
    * 71% Female.
    * 18-75 years, mean age 33.
    * 56% NZ, 22% UK, 10% Canada, 6% USA, 6% Australia.
* Main findings:
    * Schwartz model confirmed in data by multidimensional scaling.
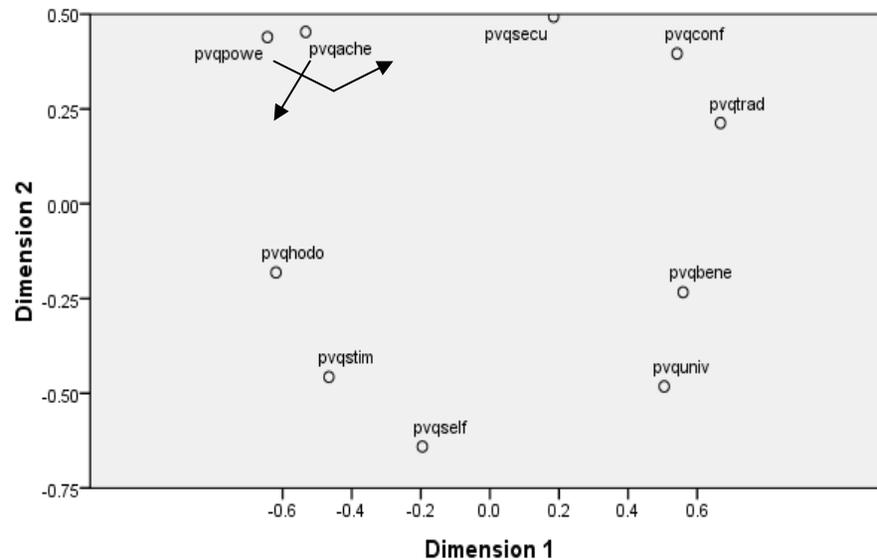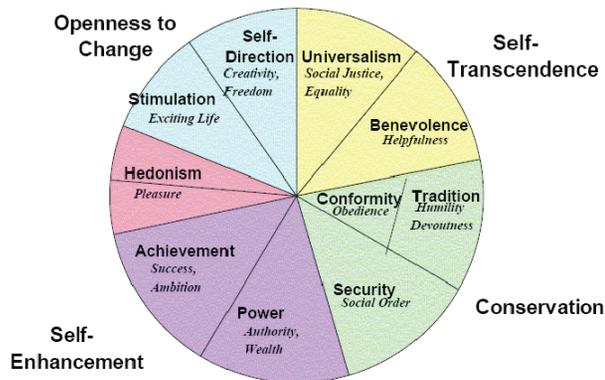
The Values Study

* <u>Demographic findings:</u>
* Females higher in importance of values, knowledge of value, and more low mood.
* Age positively correlated with knowledge of values, importance of values, and living in alignment with values, and negatively correlated with low mood, psychopathology, and strengths.
* NZ and USA both greater importance of values than UK.
* Those that had received a psychiatric diagnosis and those currently taking medications all reported more depressed mood, less satisfaction with life, less emotional wellbeing on the HM scale question, reported being happy less of the time, reported being unhappy more of the time, and more psychopathology.

The Values Study

* <u>DMG (Depressed Mood Group):</u>
  * 93 of the 492 participants having both a CES-D score of 16 or greater, and a BSI depression subscale T-score of 60 or greater.
  * The DMG were: more female, younger, a greater proportion were foreign, and were higher in rates of previous psychiatric diagnosis and current medication use.
  * Confirmation check: The DMG were less satisfied with life, reported a greater amount of time unhappy, a less amount of time happy, and rated a lower perceived quality of general happiness.
* The importance of values not associated with mood.
* The values of stimulation, self-direction and hedonism were considered more important for those without low mood (Non-DMG).
* Self-enhancement/self-transcendence. Neither associated with mood group (i.e., DMG or Non-DMG).
* Openness-to-change/conservation. Non-DMG more open-to-change.
* Non-DMG know values more and live in alignment with their value more than DMG

The Values Study

* Non-DMG know values more and live in alignment with their value more than DMG.
  * Example, live in alignment with values:
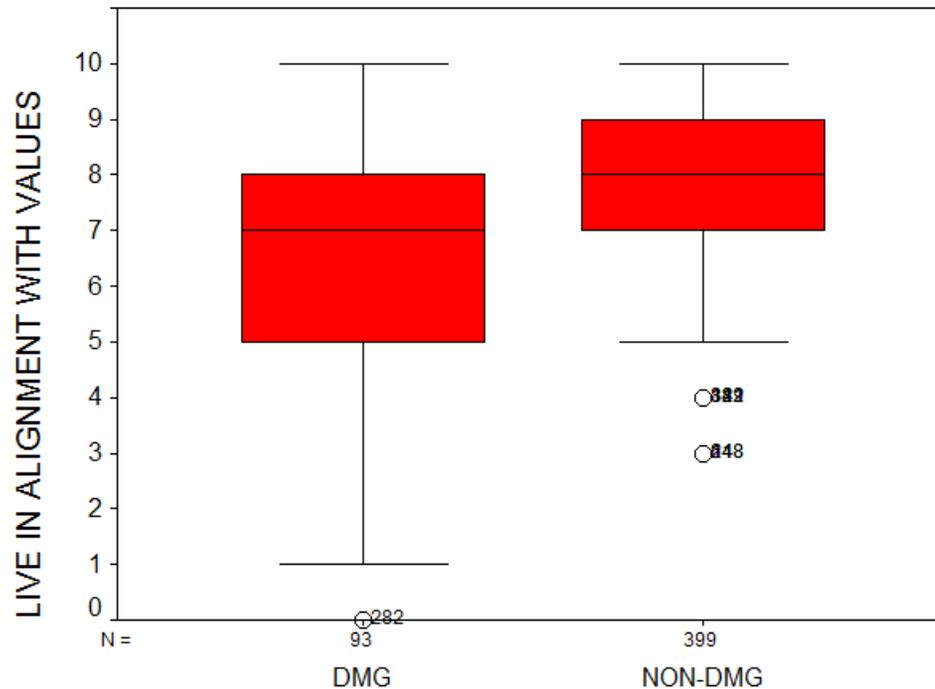
The Values Study

* <u>HIGH-PSY (High Psychopathology Group)</u>:
    * 122 of the 492 participants having a BSI GSI T-value of 60 or over.
    * The HIGH-PSY group were younger, a greater proportion were foreign, and were higher in rates of previous psychiatric diagnosis and current medication use.
    * Confirmation check: The HIGH-PSY group reported a greater number of dysfunctional beliefs.
* The importance of values not associated with psychopathology.
* The values of benevolence and conformity were considered more important for those with psychopathology (HIGH-PSY).

The Values Study

* LOW-PSY know values more and live in alignment with their value more than HIGH-PSY.
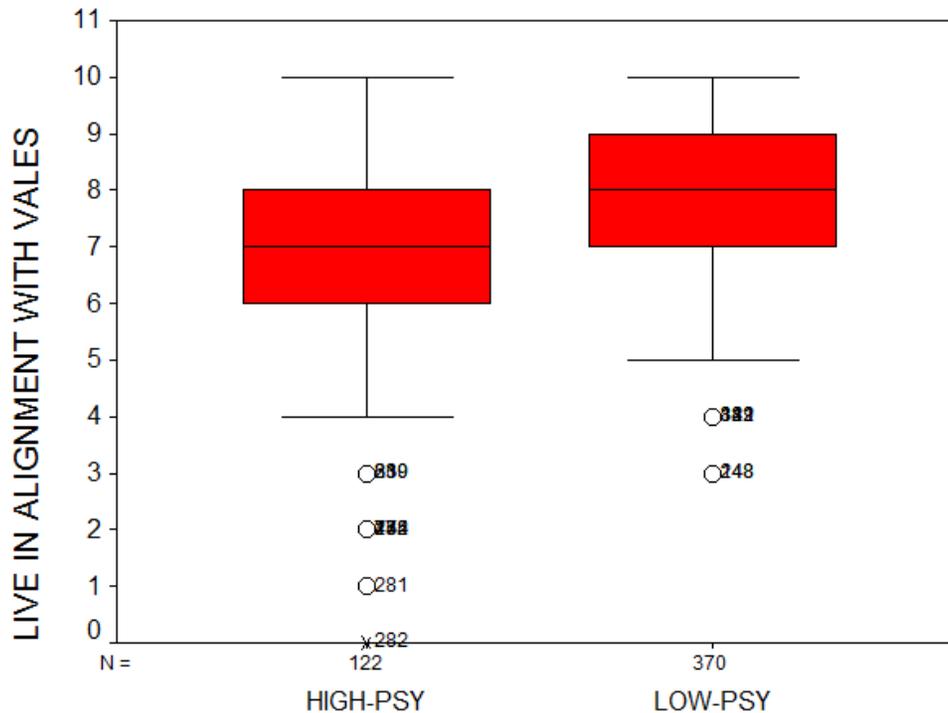 * Example, live in alignment with values:

The Values Study

* <u>HAP (Happy Group):</u>
  * HAP - 145 of the 492 participants having 8 or above HM scale (pretty/very/extremely happy) and 75% or more "time happy". UNHAP - 74 of the 492 participants having 1 to 5 (extremely unhappy to neutral) and 40% or less "time happy".
  * 273 determined somewhat average.
  * The HAP group were more male, a greater proportion were foreign, and were lower in rates of previous psychiatric diagnosis and current medication use.
  * Confirmation check: The HAP group reported a greater satisfaction with life.
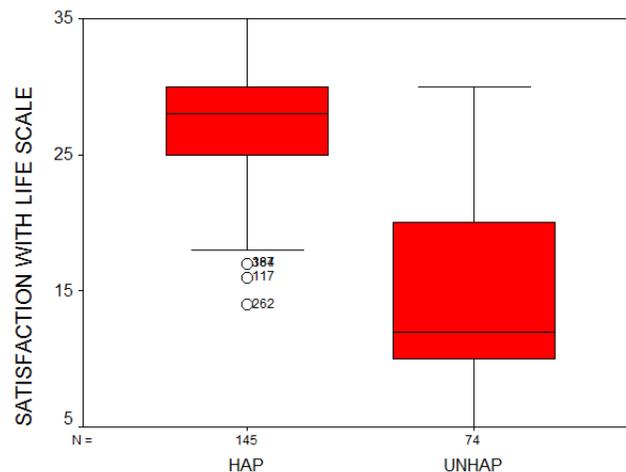
The Values Study

* The importance of values not associated with happiness, however HAP know values more and live in alignment with their values more than UNHAP.

* The values of self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, conformity and tradition were considered more important for those happy (HAP).

* Openness-to-change/conservation. HAP more open-to-change.

* HAP much less dysfunctional beliefs and psychopathology.

The Values Study

* <u>Happiness and strengths:</u>
    * HAP report more strengths overall.
    * (3) Hope, optimism, and future-mindedness (3.18 diff).
    * (13) Zest, enthusiasm, and energy (2.71 diff).
    * (20) Capacity to love and be loved (1.91 diff).
    * (19) Leadership (1.54 diff).
    * (10) Social intelligence (1.51 diff).
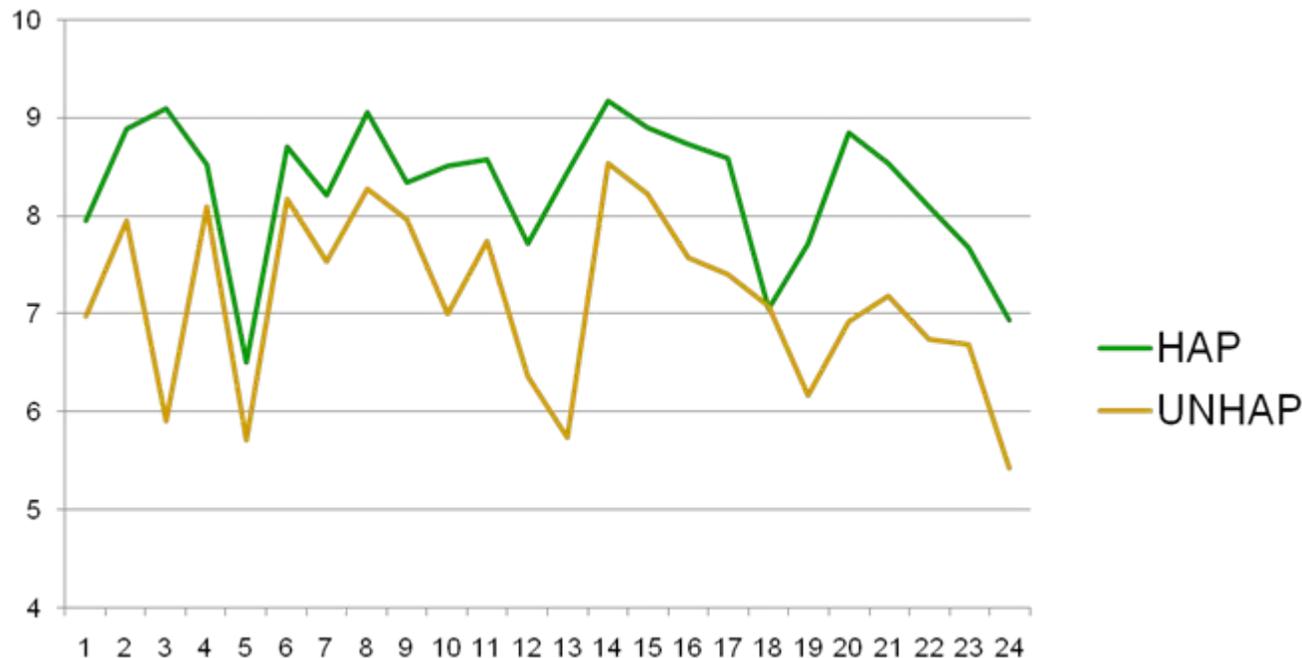
The Values Study

✳ <u>Specific values and personality:</u>

Pearson Product-moment correlations between SSVS and PVQ specific values and TIPI Big Five personality dimensions.

	Power	Achie	Hedon	Stimu	Self-D	Unive	Benev	Tradi	Conf	Secur
SSVS Extraversion	.031	.126**	.128**	.289**	.149**	.020	-.031	-.002	-.009	-.077
PVQ Extraversion	.245**	.174**	.337**	.376**	.174**	-.049	.082	-.146**	-.140**	-.049
SSVS Agreeableness	-.224**	-.120**	-.225**	-.084	.052	.124**	.316**	.163**	.123**	.043
PVQ Agreeableness	-.370**	-.225**	-.095*	-.021	-.052	.230**	.378**	.235**	.166**	.045
SSVS Conscientiousness	.090*	.143**	-.028	-.065	.016	-.020	.114*	.116*	.099*	.184**
PVQ Conscientiousness	.004	.065	-.037	-.031	.120**	.002	.141**	.086	.139**	.412**
SSVS Emotional stability	-.029	.015	-.031	.121**	.085	-.032	-.058	-.025	.014	-.045
PVQ Emotional stability	-.046	-.108*	.068	.162**	.239**	.027	.108*	.059	-.017	.000
SSVS Openness-to-exper	.026	.126**	.026	.357**	.394**	.218**	-.004	-.067	-.058	-.144**
PVQ Openness-to-exper	.077	.091*	.180**	.477**	.531**	.193**	.136**	-.089*	-.209**	-.084

*p < .05. **p < .01

The Values Study

* <u>Specific values and dysfunctional beliefs:</u>

Pearson Product-moment correlations between SSVS and PVQ specific values and DAS dysfunctional beliefs.

	Power	Achie	Hedon	Stimu	Self-D	Unive	Benev	Tradi	Conf	Secur
DAS SSVS	.181**	.113*	.038	-.102*	-.148**	-.063	-.006	-0.10	.006	.136**
DAS PVQ	.209**	.311**	-.044	-.202**	-.212**	-.063	-.071	.030	.186**	.114*

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

The Values Study

* <u>Specific values and character strengths:</u>

Pearson Product-moment correlations between SSVS and PVQ specific values and VIASC-R character strengths (first line SSVS, second line PVQ).

	Power	Achie	Hedon	Stimu	Self-D	Unive	Benev	Tradi	Conf	Secur
Wisdom and knowledge										
2 Curiosity and interest in the world	.003	.060	.012	.252**	.346**	.251**	.078	.036	-.057	-.056
	-.002	-.018	.078	.281**	.469**	.246**	.087	.002	-.162**	-.023
8 Love of learning	.019	.147**	-.076	.140**	.312**	.161**	.076	.052	.023	.048
	-.061	.115*	-.033	.103*	.364**	.214**	.143**	.100*	.007	.120
4 Judgment, critical thinking, and open-mindedness	.152**	.107*	.011	.122**	.133**	.074	-.059	-.037	-.033	.038
	.056	.110*	-.016	.101*	.226**	.090*	.036	-.037	-.081	.075
1 Creativity, ingenuity, and originality	.026	.048	-.011	.264**	.319**	.202**	.056	.041	.034	-.021
	.120**	.031	.093*	.296**	.467**	.134**	.046	-.001	-.053	-.028
9 Perspective (wisdom)	.064	-.023	-.004	.099*	.113*	.091*	.077	.066	.053	.028
	.088	-.008	.007	.097*	.228**	.105*	.153**	.031	.032	.098
Humanity										
15 Kindness and generosity	-.123**	-.070	-.037	.026	.122**	.207**	.424**	.331**	.273**	.210**
	-.155**	-.128**	.040	.061	.097*	.283**	.473**	.306**	.212**	.174**
20 Capacity to love and be loved	-.003	.080	.043	.154**	.101*	.119**	.198**	.148**	.146**	.154**
	-.057	.031	.152**	.192**	.080	.093*	.316**	.102*	.019	.116*
10 Social intelligence	.073	.065	.002	.185**	.117**	.063	.040	.039	.058	.057
	.104*	.104*	.167**	.251**	.165**	.067	.225**	.018	-.047	.032
Temperance										
12 Self-control and self-regulation	.165**	.107*	-.029	.067	.023	.020	.040	.149**	.148**	.172**
	.080	.087	-.039	.015	.080	.064	.103*	.159**	.190**	.329
18 Caution, prudence, and discretion	.115*	-.008	-.068	-.052	-.063	.052	.127**	.185**	.190**	.298**
	.021	-.004	-.081	-.153**	-.014	.074	.072	.234**	.258**	.431**
23 Modesty and humility	-.016	-.011	-.075	-.023	.040	.145**	.232**	.315**	.231**	.157**
	-.162**	-.102*	-.016	.043	.035	.276**	.339**	.394**	.265**	.216**
22 Forgiveness and mercy	-.033	-.007	-.123**	.072	.129**	.111*	.224**	.237**	.187**	.071
	-.139**	-.093*	-.006	.139**	.082	.235**	.425**	.263**	.131**	.143**

The Values Study

Pearson Product-moment correlations between SSVS and PVQ specific values and VIASC-R character strengths (first line SSVS, second line PVQ).

	Power	Achie	Hedon	Stimu	Self-D	Unive	Benev	Tradi	Conf	Secur
Justice										
21 Citizenship, teamwork, and	.014	.101*	-.019	.091*	.082	.072	.207**	.323**	.275**	.268**
Loyalty	-.040	.038	.105*	.145**	.054	.128**	.357**	.272**	.235**	.276**
6 Fairness, equity, and justice	-.063	-.030	-.095*	.032	.093*	.267**	.276**	.209**	.125**	.093*
	-.135**	-.087	-.084	-.014	.103*	.383**	.269**	.193**	.146**	.170
19 Leadership	.160**	.152**	.042	.197**	.149**	.040	-.003	.095*	.053	.102*
	.459**	.239**	.123**	.253**	.266**	-.012	.088	-.023	-.008	.138**
Courage										
5 Bravery and valor	.151**	.066	.029	.195**	.074	.123**	-.039	.159**	.096*	.060
	.163**	.061	.061	.260**	.197**	.110*	-.013	.018	-.017	.110
7 Industry, diligence, and	.056	.088	-.160**	-.040	.071	.065	.193**	.191**	.150**	.182**
Perseverance	-.006	.049	-.139**	-.021	.165**	.168**	.181**	.210**	.231**	.365
14 Honesty, authenticity, and	-.028	-.006	-.038	-.105*	.129**	.100*	.288**	.184**	.123**	.144**
genuineness	-.102*	-.048	.012	.025	.138**	.198**	.324**	.216**	.119**	.212**
13 Zest, enthusiasm, and energy	.094*	.178**	.082	.332**	.157**	.061	.040	.177**	.164**	.076
	.152**	.101*	.275**	.410**	.252**	.027	.141**	.047	.016	.127**
Transcendence										
17 Appreciation of beauty and	.036	.049	-.028	.170**	.139**	.253**	.173**	.163**	.169**	.114*
Excellence	-.023	-.057	.147**	.155**	.182**	.235**	.150**	.145**	.053	.198**
11 Humor and playfulness	.102*	.087	.196**	.250**	.198**	.039	.017	.071	.055	.093*
	.098*	.074	.368**	.269**	.230**	.029	.156**	-.024	-.105*	-.006
16 Gratitude	.066	.098*	-.010	.080	.122**	.127**	.234**	.274**	.202**	.165**
	-.065	-.011	.079	.132**	.130**	.250**	.353**	.280**	.159**	.203**
3 Hope, optimism, and	.023	.104**	-.020	.205**	.163**	.165**	.129**	.202**	.170**	.075
future-mindedness	.042	.054	.141**	.297**	.296**	.173**	.200**	.146**	.048	.107
24 Spirituality, sense of purpose,	-.045	-.073	-.161**	.023	.110*	.235**	.309**	.391**	.333**	.152**
and faith	-.008	-.086	-.040	.080	.125**	.251**	.348**	.489**	.239**	.220**

*p < .05. **p < .01.

The measurement of values

✳ Theorists have proposed many psychometric instruments for measuring values over time, e.g:

  ✳ Allport & Vernon (1931) – Study of Values (SOV).
  ✳ Kahle (1983) - List of Values (LOV).
  ✳ Miller, Baca & Matthews (2001) – Personal Values Card Sort (PVCS).

✳ I recommend the use of both the **SSVS** (Lindeman & Verkasalo, 2005) and **PVQ** (Schwartz, Melech, Lehmann, Burgess, & Harris, 2001), and the avoidance of the Schwartz Value Survey (SVS) or Rokeach Value Survey (RVS).

✳ The SSVS is a good explicit measure, and the PVQ a good implicit measure.

Main conclusions

✳ How important you think values are is largely unrelated to mood or psychopathology; what's important is whether you know your values and are living in alignment with them.

✳ The value of stimulation and being open-to-change is related to good mood and mental health.

✳ No real differences between yourself vs. others in relation to good mood or mental health.

✳ Seems strengths related to happiness.

✳ Seems personality, dysfunctional beliefs, and strengths related to values.

Thank You

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