



SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP AND WELL-BEING

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents an overview of relation of well-being and social relationship. Strong social relationship is an important contributors of well-being. Our need to form and maintain strong social relationship is a basic source of human motivation. This motivation significantly influences our well-being. Earlier researches suggest that social relationship enhance our happiness level and psychological well-being. It makes us happier and adds meaning to our life. Thus relationship has the most significant impact on human flourishing. People who have more friends are happier. Friends advise and support us to cope with difficult life situations. Having else and strong relationship also enhance physical well-being and longevity. Many studies report that individuals who had high levels of social support had lower level of stress and anxiety. They stayed healthier and lived longer lives. We should always try to make strong social relationship in our lives. We make else friends at society and at our workplace too. We spend a significant amount of time at our workplace. So, we must develop good relationship with people at our work place.

Key Words: Well-being, Social connection, Stress, Happiness, Longevity.

Many factors contribute to well-being. Carl Ryft, a researcher at the University of Winconsin includes six components in her measure of psychological well-being: autonomy, self-acceptance, purpose in life, environmental mastery or feeling in control, positive relationship and personal growth. Joseph Ciarrochi, Todd Kashdan and Russ Harris, have identified seven foundations of well-being: functional beliefs such as having hope and self-esteem, mindfulness and awareness, perspective taking or empathy, knowing your values or purpose, experiential acceptance rather than trying to avoid or suppress your thoughts and feelings

behavioral control like will power and resilience and cognitive skills that help us to solve problems and adapt. According to Seligman five essential elements are required for well-being: positive emotion, engagement, positive relationship & meaning and accomplishment or achievement.

Human beings have a fundamental need to belong, to be an accepted member of a social group. Our need to form and maintain strong social relationship is a basic source of human motivation. The need to belong has two main features. First is the need for frequent positive interactions. These interactions make us happy. The second is to perceive that we have an interpersonal bond with others. Having strong social relationship enhances our sense of meaning in life.

Thus our social relationships have significant influence on enhancing our well-being. They increase our happiness and life satisfaction. R.F. Baumeister (2013) has found in his research that relationships that serve to satisfy our needs make us happy, while our contribution to the welfare of others increases our sense of meaning in life. George Vaillant has extensively researched on secrets to a fulfilling life. He has extensively researched for many years and published the findings in the book “Triumphs of Experience: The Men of the Harvard Grant study (2012)”. He found that the warmth of people’s relationships has the most significant impact on human flourishing. He concluded “The only thing that really matters in life are your relationships to other people.”

Martin Seligman and Diener (2012) have found that the single factor that distinguished the very happiest students from everyone else was they all had close meaningful connections with others. In another study, Tom Rath and Jim Harter (2010) found that people who have at least there are four friends are happier, healthier and more engaged. It is interesting to note that how relationships make us feel happier. It seems that relationships make us feel safe at time of difficulty. We share our stress and worries with friends. Friend’s advice and support boosts our self-confidence. When we share our problems with some close friends, our tension releases and we become less stressed. Thus our social relationship increases our happiness.

Having close and strong relationships also enhances or physical well-being and longevity. Baumeister (1995) had found that individuals who had high levels of social support had lower levels of stress and anxiety, stayed healthier and lived longer lives. In another study the researchers found that the women with more friends developed less physical impairments and they lead a joyful life. In another study, Janice K. et. al. (2005) found that, relationship enhances our recovery from hurts. In this study, the researchers made

small cuts on the arms of 42 married couples. It was found that wound of happy married couples healed earlier than the wounds of couples who had hostile relations with each other. Positive relationships have been also found to increase resistance to upper respiratory infections and to boost the body's ability to fight off cancer.

Barbara Fredrickson has done extensive research on social connections and health. In her book, "Love 2.0: Finding Happiness and Health in Moments of Connection" (2013), she discussed how positive social connections raise our oxytocin levels. Oxytocin has been called the "Cuddle Hormone" because it promotes caring behavior causing us to more attend to people and more open to emotional exchanges. Oxytocin protects the heart against the dangers of stress by lowering stress-induced increase in heart rate and blood pressure. It also reduces levels of stress hormone cortisol in our bodies. So we experience significant health benefits as a result of increased levels of oxytocin in our bodies that occur where we connect with other. Frederickson has found that a positive impact of connecting with people is found even when we do not know the people well. A shared smile or short exchange of words is enough to trigger the release of oxytocin.

Thus, there are abundant research finding on the positive impact of relationship on well-being. Having strong soul relationship is essential for our physical and psychological well-being.

How to Maintain Good Social Relationships

Now the question arises that how can we maintain good social relationship in our busy life schedule. We have hardly spare time to spend with our family members at present time. Then, how it is possible to develop new outside relationships and maintain them. The answer to his question is, yes it is possible. We can develop social relationship by few simple steps. It does not demand too much time or effort. We have time to check our social networking sites, we maintain a large number of friends in facebook, but not a few true friends in real. We are connected to technology but totally disconnected to real relationship, meet them personally, talk to them, listen them and spend some nice time with our real friends.

Social Relations at Workplace

We spend a significant time at our workplace. We should develop healthy relationship with people at our workplace too. Having positive relationship with colleagues can reduce our stress and increase our productivity. It has been found in researches that employees who

have a best friend at work are seven times more likely to highly engaged than those who do not have friends. They are happier and because positive emotions enhance both motivation and effectiveness they have higher levels of performance. People who have three or four close friendship at work are nearly fifty percent more satisfied with their company and are significantly more satisfied with their lives in general. So, we must have some close friends at our workplace with whom we can share our all happiness and sorrow and we can rely on them.

Having friends at work gives us access to knowledge and information that helps us to do our jobs better. Working with friends leads to greater collaboration and less efforts. People are more willing to go out of their way to help friends accomplish their tasks. We can easily find such examples in our lives too.

Friends can also help us to cope with difficulties and bounce back quicker when we face challenges. When we work with people we feel close to, it gives us a sense of security, so we are more willing to take risks and think creatively. Supportive relationship, encourage us to go outside of our comfort zone, which leads to growth. Working with people we like, energizes us and brings out our best ideas. It has occurred many times in my life. Whenever, I had to organize a seminar on any big activity my friends at my college come out and supported whole heartedly. The workload and stress was shared by all of my friends and I could successfully manage all the big activities at my college. Actually friends support by two ways. They provide emotional support and they share the work load too. That is why work becomes easier and one is happier too. There had been such times in my life when I was very disappointed at my college, but it was my colleagues who came forward discussed my problems and helped me to come out of the problem.

What should we do if we do not have close friends at our workplace? We should look for opportunities to form close relationship at work. We should make a point to spend time with people have a cup of coffee with our colleagues. We should invite our colleagues for tea, coffee or lunch. When we are feeling stressed and under time pressure, we like to do our lunch alone at our desks. We should stop this and learn to be more social. This socialization will help to cope with our stress and as a result, we will be more effective when we go back to finish our work. If we will spend time with our colleagues, we will be able to understand them in better way. It is not possible to have close relationship with all our colleagues, but few friends and be surely made. These few friends can help in enhancing our psychological well-being and productivity at work too.

At workplace relationships can be of various types. Close friends, mentors and sponsors are few types. All types of relationship is positively correlated with well-being and betterment in career with friend. We can share all the problems and stress. Stress is reduced to some extent with somebody attentively listen us. Friends can be best listeners and counselors at workplace. Another work relationships mentor and sponsors are very important. A mentor is someone who shows you the right path and guides us the sponsorship goes beyond giving feedback and advice. Sponsors use their influence to advocate for someone helping them to get a promotion or making sure they get visible stretch assignments. Mentoring helps people succeed at work, however sponsoring is more directly linked to getting promoted.

CONCLUSION

To sum, it can be stated that social relationship is an important contributor of our physical and psychological well-being. Our strong social connections not only make us happier, they also enhance our physical health. Our close friends add meaning to our life, they add to quality of our life. Therefore, we must try to make good friends at our surroundings. We should also make good social relationships at our workplace. Having positive relations at workplace reduces our stress and increase productivity. People having good friends at workplace are happy because positive emotions enhance both motivation and effectiveness required at their workplace. So, if we want to live healthier and longer life we must develop strong social relationship around us. Then only we can lead stress free and happy lifestyle. It is rightly said,

“Treasure Your Relationship, Not Your possessions.”

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