mm**Psychology 1A. Article Report 1. Spring, 2021. Milligan, PhD**

**Title 1.** Fredrickson, B.L. (2003). The value of positive emotions. American Scientist. Volume 91. 330-335.

**Title 2.** Kluger, J. (2005). Ambition: why some people are most likely to succeed. Time Magazine, November 6

1. What is the main idea of Title 1? Cite one piece of research from Title 1 which supports the main idea.

Main Idea. Positive emotions have short and long term survival value, psychologically, physically and socially. There are ways of increasing a person’s positive emotions.

Research;

1) Danner, Snowden and Friesen’s study of nuns’ happiness and longevity.

2) Frederickson and her students’ study of positive emotions and broadened thinking.

3) Isen’s experiment giving candy to doctors.

4) Frederickson and her students’ study of resilience and emotions after 9/11.

5) Frederickson and her students’ study of the effects of finding the meaning and long term benefit of the best, worst and ordinary experience each day for a month.

6) Frederickson and her colleagues experiment studying the effects of positive emotion on undoing the physiology of negative emotion.

7) Frederickson and Joiner’s study of the mutual benefits of positive emotion and broadened thinking.

2. What is the main idea of Title 2? Cite one piece of research from Title 3 which supports the main idea.

Main ideas. What factors play a role in ambition? What are the negative effects of ambition? Is an individual’s ambition level fixed or flexible?

Research:

1) stress – Demerath study of high achieving; they students – 70% experienced stress.

2) species – in wolves, alpha males enjoy special privileges throughout their lives.

3) genetics – in identical twins separated at birth, there is a 30-50% overlap (concordance rate) in level of ambition..

4) biology – there is an 80% correlation between ambition level and level of activity in the limbic system.

5) gender – in a study of 40 men and 40 women performing an arithmetic task, 75% of men chose the tournament option;35% of women did, leading the researchers to conclude that women dislike competition.

6) families – “Most psychologists agree that parents who set tough but realistic challenges, applaud successes and go easy on failures produce kids with the greatest self-confidence.”

7) social class – studies suggest it’s the upper middle class that produces the greatest proportion of ambitious people

8) culture – wealth of natural resources and individualism ; slim in natural resources and collectivism. Demarath study – comparison of high achievement school with Papua, New Guinea

9) culture – Suarez-Orozco study – 400 families who came to US from non-competitive cultures became competitive here within one generation

10) negative effects – Demerath study (high achievement school) – common cheating

3 a. From Title 1, list the benefits of positive emotions.

1) physiological – faster recovery of normal cardio vascular function after anxiety; reduces physiological “damage” to cardiovascular system done by negative emotions.

2) prepares an individual for later hard times by ;building enduring personal resources.

3) helps solve problems concerning personal growth and development.

4) broadens patterns of thinking.

5) play builds physical, intellectual, psychological and social resources.

6) Increases likelihood of positive emotions in the future.

7) increases compassion.

8) transforms communities into more cohesive, moral and harmonious social organizations.

3 b. From Title 2. list the benefits of ambition.

1. success
2. achievement academically and with respect to career
3. focus or concentration
4. ambitious wolves: “wander widely, breed annually” and live long
5. “multiplicity of rewards”

3 c. What benefits do positive emotions, interest and ambition have in common?

NOTE TO STUDENTS: I have explained my answer to 3c in detail. I do not expect you to have done so.

1) thinking:

Title 1. broadened patterns of thinking

Title 2. concentrative powers in the face of difficulty

Title 3. focus or concentration

2) academic success

Title 1. problem solving and intellectual resources

Title 2. better recall, fewer errors and better grades

Title 3. academic and career achievement

3) worldly success

Title 1. prepares an individual for later hard times by building personal resources

Title 2.wires us for worldly involvement and a foundation for personal resources

Title 3. academic and career success

4. From Title 2, list the negative effects of ambition.

1. tyranny
2. burnout
3. heart attack

5. all of your answers are correct

6.. From Title 1, list the ways to increase positive emotions.

* 1. humor, laughter
  2. finding positive emotions indirectly by finding positive meaning within current circumstances: finding benefits within adversity, finding meaning in ordinary events and effective problem solving.
  3. Compassionate acts/giving help leads to pride, a positive emotion
  4. Receiving help – gratitude, a positive emotion
  5. Witnessing good deeds is elevating, a positive emotion

7. From Title 2, state the influences on ambition.

1) necessity

2) survival

3) genetics

4) family

5) socio-economic status

6) culture

8. State two over generalizations from each of the two titles.

NOTE; Below are some of the overgeneralizations in each Title, not all of them.

Title 1.

1. The positive emotions “are comparatively few and relatively undifferentiated – joy, amusement and serenity are not easy to distinguish from one another”.

NOT YET! They have not been as extensively studied and, from an experiential point of view, they are certainly different to me.

1. “Facial expressions for positive emotions have no unique signal value: All share the Duchenne smile . . . “ Aargh! There is everything from the Mona Lisa smile to raucous laughter.
2. “A focus on goodness cannot only change your life and your community, but perhaps also the world, and in time create a heaven on earth.”
3. “there is, of course, the natural tendency to study something that afflicts the well-being of humanity”
4. “the expression and experience of negative emotions are responsible for much of what ails the world” (On the other hand, Frederickson suggests the negative emotions have important survival value)
5. “Although the use of humor, laughter and other direct attempts to stimulate positive emotions are occasionally suitable, they often seem poor choices, especially in trying times.” NOTE: The over generalization concerns “occasionally” and “often”. I would reverse them, and even in trying times, humor is **often** the best medicine.

Title 2

1. “You don’t get as successful as Gregg and Drew Shipp ;by accident.”
2. “Nature is a zero-sum game.” NOTE; This is a gross overgeneralization and leaves out the possibility that humans may cooperate with each other to reach some goal.
3. “For every person consumed with the need to achieve, there’s someone content to accept whatever life brings.”
4. “People with goals and no energy wind up . . . sitting on the couch. . . People with energy but no clear goals just dissipate themselves . . . “

NOTE: I believe that many students at SRJC have energy and do not yet have clear goals. That is appropriate and the JC is a great place to discover one’s career goals.

9. What questionable assumption is made in each of the following pieces of research in Title 1.

1) Frederickson’ research described on page 332, beginning, “My students and I. . . “

The assumption that penguin films would elicit joy, that nature scenes would elicit serenity and that precarious heights would elicit fear and scenes of deaths and funerals would elicit sadness. It is LIKELY that these emotions were elicited but it is questionable to assume this occurred in every case.

2) Isen’s esearch described on page 332, beginning, “In other experiments, Isen and colleagues . . .”

It does seem a stretch to assume that physicians felt good when given a bag of candy. If they ate the candy, perhaps it was the sugar in the candy that aided in their diagnoses of patients.

3) Frederickson’s research described on page 334, beginning, “My colleagues and I tested the undoing

hypotheses . . . “

Two questionable assumptions are made in Frederickson’s research:

That the assignment of the speech produced anxiety.

That the films shown the participants produced the intended emotions.