

**Lyubomirsky, S., Dickerhoof, R., Boehm, J. K., & Sheldon, K. M. (2008). *Becoming happier takes both a will and a proper way: Two experimental longitudinal interventions to boost well-being*. Manuscript under review.**

Two experimental longitudinal studies examined the immediate and longer-term effects of regularly practicing two assigned positive activities - expressing optimism and gratitude - on well-being. More important, these interventions allowed us to explore the impact of three meta-factors that are likely to influence the success of any positive activity - whether one self-selects into the study knowing that it is about increasing happiness, whether one invests effort into the activity over time, and whether one belongs to a Western culture. Our results indicate that initial self-selection makes a difference, but only in the two positive activity conditions, not the control condition; that continued effort also makes a difference, but again only in the treatment conditions; and that the interventions are more happiness-enhancing for Anglo-Americans than for predominantly foreign-born Asian-Americans, but again, only in the treatment conditions. Furthermore, increases in lingering positive experiences, as well as boosts in relatedness and autonomy need satisfaction, were found to mediate the observed improvements in well-being. We conclude that happiness interventions are more than just placebos and can be effective in non-Western cultures, but that they are most successful when participants know about, endorse, and commit to the intervention.