Happiness & Sustainability Around the Earth

IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON MENTAL HEALTH: Implications for Happiness

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Happiness depends on mental health according to the Origins of happiness report. Research also indicate that elimination of mental health problems such as anxiety and depression increased happiness by 20%.

COVID-19 may represent an unprecedented phenomenon to most people which could have negative impact on their happiness.

As at 11 April, 2020 a total of 829 participants consisting of 391 females, 436 males and 2 participants who prefer not to say, have completed the questionnaires from different countries worldwide.

Age range: 18 - 72 years
In this study 93% of the respondents have adequate knowledge about COVID-19 obtained from various sources.

The lockdown period created serious strain for the participants.
Preliminary Findings: Covid-19, mental health and happiness

Mental health response to COVID-19 and lockdown among the participants as reported include:

- fear
- Sadness
- Anxiety
- Others are:
  - loss of sleep due to worry
  - perceived depression and worthlessness
  - inability to enjoy day to day activities
  - everything considered unhappy.
- These findings agree with the report from National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI, 2020) and Origins of Happiness report that mental health problems reduce happiness.
What to do: Promoting Happiness

❖ The experience of COVID-19 is a clear indication that we can not have it all

❖ Happiness could be promoted even as we wait for the end of COVID-19 pandemic and the vaccine

❖ We can be happy if we see the lockdown as an opportunity to save our lives and those of others

❖ Social distancing could be replaced with distance socializing to alleviate the mental health problems, promote social support, connectedness and happiness

❖ Happiness could be promoted by engaging in activities that are fun filled and enjoyable
❖ To be happy identify the sources of mental problems and keep them in perspective

❖ Make every effort to keep positive

❖ Reduce your frequency of assessing news on COVID-19 to morning and evening and fill the gap with other pleasurable activities even as you keep safe

❖ Listen only to experts

❖ Be kind and considerate to others

❖ Think about things you can be grateful for in your life and environment

❖ Make informed and wise decisions

❖ Let the awareness that many people have recovered from COVID-19 encourage you to be optimistic and happy
I choose happiness.