



Being good by doing good: Daily eudaimonic activity and well-being

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Abstract

Eudaimonic theories of well-being assert the importance of achieving one's full potential through engaging in inherently meaningful endeavors. In two daily diary studies, we assessed whether reports of engagement in behaviors representative of eudaimonic theories were associated with well-being. We also examined whether eudaimonic behaviors were more strongly related to well-being than behaviors directed toward obtaining pleasure or material goods. In both studies, eudaimonic behaviors had consistently stronger relations to well-being than hedonic behaviors. Data also provided support for a temporal sequence in which eudaimonic behaviors were related to greater well-being the next day. Overall, our results suggest that “doing good” may be an important avenue by which people create meaningful and satisfying lives.

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1. Introduction

“The art of life lies in taking pleasures as they pass, and the keenest pleasures are not intellectual, nor are they always moral.” Aristippus, 4th Century BCE

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“The many, the most vulgar, seemingly conceive the good and happiness as pleasure, and hence they also like the life of gratification. Here they appear completely slavish, since the life they decide on is a life for grazing animals.” Aristotle, 4th century BCE

Significant strides have been made in identifying the demographic features, correlates, and personality and biological bases of happiness (e.g., DeNeve & Cooper, 1998; Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Urry et al., 2004). Traditionally, this work has focused on a handful of well-being indicators, most commonly affect, self-esteem, optimism, and life satisfaction. Recently this area has witnessed an explosion of psychological research influenced by moral philosophy, such as character strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), religion (Pargament, 2002), gratitude (Emmons & McCullough, 2003), meaning in life (Ryff & Singer, 1998), and particular aspects of interpersonal relationships (e.g., Gable, Reis, Impett, & Asher, 2004; Ryff & Singer, 2000). This research holds promise for enriching our comprehension of well-being. However, most of this research has been confined to exploring the relations between cognitive and emotional variables and measures of well-being. The present studies extend this research by pushing into areas that have been relatively neglected, specifically by addressing how daily eudaimonic behaviors influence well-being, and by exploring the temporal relation between eudaimonic activity and well-being.

A perspective has emerged in well-being research that draws heavily on Aristotle’s writings regarding *eudaimonia*, which refers to a life lived to its fullest potential (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Psychological research from this perspective has centered on identifying the factors that maximize people’s capacity to fulfill their potential. Two theories in particular have become associated with this eudaimonic approach to well-being. The first, Self-Determination Theory (SDT), has proposed that eudaimonic well-being is attained through the satisfaction of three human psychological needs for relatedness, autonomy, competence (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The second, Psychological Well-Being theory, has argued that eudaimonic well-being consists of high levels of six constructs: relatedness, autonomy, personal growth, self-acceptance, purpose in life, and environmental mastery (Ryff & Singer, 1998). Both theories are prescriptive in that they specify that well-being is attained through satisfying specific needs (SDT), or consists of specific contents (PWB). The importance of these qualities, whether described as psychological needs or the contents of well-being, is that their presence indicates that people are striving for those things in life that are inherently worthwhile (Ryan, Huta, & Deci, in press). These theoretical traditions suggest that there are specific things people can be doing to fulfill their potential, and that engaging in “eudaimonic activity” fosters well-being. For example, cultivating healthy relationships with others creates a resource (e.g., friends) that increases people’s quality of life (e.g., Gable et al., 2004). As people build resources such as feelings of mastery, competence, or improved relationships, they are more likely to sustain perceptions that life is satisfying and meaningful. In other words, it is specifically through eudaimonic activity that people develop enduring well-being. In contrast, activity focused on obtaining simple pleasure (e.g., sex purely for pleasure) may provide only that moment’s pleasure, which can dissipate or lead to habituation.

Others have argued that eudaimonic well-being is achieved through participating in activities that are congruent with one’s personal values (Waterman, 1993) or characteristic personality traits or strengths (Seligman, 2002). In these theories, people prosper when they engage in intrinsically meaningful activity that is inherently interesting and important

to a person (as opposed to being motivated by external concerns). This perspective proposes that eudaimonia consists of a lifestyle in which intrinsically meaningful pursuits are abundant because of their effectiveness at meeting people's psychological needs.

Eudaimonic theories have often been contrasted with alternative views that well-being consists of simply feeling good, regardless of whether psychological needs are met or not. This latter argument describes the hedonic approach to well-being, which defines well-being in terms of maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain. In contrast to hedonic approaches, eudaimonic approaches focus on prescribed constructs that are "good for" people in the sense that they build people's capacity to fulfill their potential rather than because they necessarily provide pleasure or remove pain.

Research has generally supported eudaimonic theories of well-being (for reviews, see Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff & Singer, 1998). People who report greater satisfaction of the psychological needs identified in SDT and the contents of the PWB theory report greater well-being. For example, people report greater happiness and life satisfaction when they experience relatedness (e.g., belongingness, Baumeister & Leary, 1995; positive relationships; Myers, 2000), feel self-accepting (e.g., self-esteem; Lucas, Diener, & Suh, 1996), and have a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives (e.g., Baumeister, 1991; Emmons, 1991; Ryff & Singer, 1998). Although goal progress is generally associated with well-being (e.g., Brunstein, 1993), research also suggests that pursuing and accomplishing intrinsically meaningful goals, those that are congruent with one's innermost self, values, and aspirations (e.g., Kasser & Ryan, 1993; Kasser & Ryan, 1996; Oishi, Diener, Suh, & Lucas, 1999; Ryan et al., 1999; Sheldon & Kasser, 1995; Sheldon, Ryan, Deci, & Kasser, 2004), or that provide autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999) contribute more to well-being than other goal-oriented activity.

However, most of what we know about eudaimonic well-being is limited to states, judgments, and goals. Research is less clear on what a eudaimonic lifestyle might look like. Aristotle claimed that one becomes good by *doing* good (Cahn, 1990), and many eudaimonic theories stress the importance of effort, engagement, or applying oneself (Seligman, 2002; Waterman, 1993). Implicit in many of the needs and contents central to eudaimonic well-being are certain activities in which individuals might engage. For example, satisfying the need for relatedness might be accomplished through expressing gratitude, listening carefully to others, or through acts of altruism. Developing a sense of purpose in life might be accomplished by identifying and persevering at one's goals. Identifying specific activities and behaviors characteristic of a eudaimonic lifestyle is important to understanding *how* eudaimonic well-being is achieved.

Research into eudaimonic activity might also provide a more persuasive way to test some of the assumptions of eudaimonic theories. Critically, the hedonic approach to well-being challenges the necessity of identifying universal psychological needs (e.g., SDT) or specific contents of well-being (e.g., PWB). For example, eudaimonic theories stipulate that relating to others in positive ways is necessary for optimal functioning and growth, whereas hedonic theories would assert that positive relationships are associated with well-being simply because such relationships provide pleasant (as opposed to unpleasant) experiences. Because positive relationships are considered to be a source of both need satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff & Singer, 1998) and people's most intense affective experiences (Berscheid & Ammazalorso, 2004), correlations between global ratings of relationship satisfaction and well-being might support either eudaimonic theories, hedonic theories, or

both. Daily interpersonal interactions, for example, appear to have significant impact on both types of well-being (Reis, Sheldon, Gable, Roscoe, & Ryan, 2000). The simple fact that people spend time with others is not informative for testing eudaimonic theories. Some of the behaviors Reis et al. assessed appeared to be eudaimonic (i.e., meaningful conversation), whereas others seem more hedonic (i.e., doing pleasant or fun things, hanging out). Additional precision for testing these theories can be gained by examining the well-being correlates of behavioral markers of eudaimonic or hedonic activity. According to eudaimonic theories, it should matter whether people listen carefully to another's point of view or confide in that person with something important, versus getting drunk or experiencing sexual pleasure in the absence of emotional intimacy with that person. The former activities ought to build resources and capacity for fulfilling a person's potential, whereas the latter might only provide momentary pleasure. Indeed, Diener (2000) conjectured that "if people seek ecstasy much of the time. . . they are likely to be disappointed" (p. 36). However, both types of activities might be equally fun or rewarding at the time of enactment. Research suggests that physical pleasure is associated with satisfaction with life in the short term (i.e., within a particular day), but not the long term (i.e., over several weeks) (Oishi, Schimmack, & Diener, 2001). Further, because some affective states convey important meaning associated with cultivating interpersonal (e.g., love) or personal (e.g., pride) resources (Fredrickson, 2000), they may be more important to sustaining well-being than less meaningful states like sexual pleasure or amusement. Global reports of relationship satisfaction, or of generic activities, can not illuminate such distinctions effectively. However, by focusing on the relation between both eudaimonic and hedonic behavior reports and well-being over time, the relative benefits of a eudaimonic lifestyle can be assessed.

In trying to understand the activities that might comprise the eudaimonic lifestyle, obtaining behavior reports over extended periods of time is obviously preferable to cross-sectional snapshots. One approach is to administer measures on a daily basis for several weeks, enabling researchers to understand the daily life experiences of participants. Daily diary methods provide insight into the dynamics of behavior and well-being by focusing on whether certain activities are related reliably to well-being for a given person on a given day (Kahneman, Krueger, Schkade, Schwartz, & Stone, 2004). Importantly, focusing on daily life experiences also helps avoid the biases common to retrospective or global judgments (e.g., focusing on the most readily available recollections in forming judgments; Kahneman, 1999). Although many daily/weekly diary and experience sampling studies have examined the dynamics between experiences and well-being (e.g., Emmons, 1991; Gable, Reis, & Elliot, 2000; Nezlek & Pleško, 2003; Oishi, Diener, Scollon, & Biswas-Diener, 2004; Watson, Clark, McIntyre, & Hamaker, 1992), we are not aware of any that have focused on understanding whether explicitly eudaimonic behaviors are associated with well-being in people's daily lives.

Daily diary studies provide short-term longitudinal samples of individuals, and from these samples we can assess the antecedents of a given day's reports from the previous day's reports, thus inferring a temporal link. According to theories that contend eudaimonic activities build psychological functioning (e.g., Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff & Singer, 1998), we would expect to observe relations with well-being to persist from one day to the next. We are not aware of any studies that have examined the temporal links between eudaimonic behaviors and well-being, and believe that the present studies represent an advance in this area.

2. Overview of the studies

In sum, previous well-being research has generated support for the claim that eudaimonic variables are important to human functioning. However, no studies of which we are aware have examined the relation between eudaimonic behaviors and indicators of subjective well-being. We conducted two daily diary studies ranging in duration from three weeks (Study 1) to four weeks (Study 2) in an effort to test whether behaviors derived from eudaimonic and hedonic theories of well-being were related to well-being. Because eudaimonic theories purport that activities that satisfy psychological needs (eudaimonic behaviors) cultivate sustainable well-being, whereas activities that satisfy the desire for pleasure (hedonic behaviors) do not, we also tested whether eudaimonic behaviors are related to greater well-being than hedonic behaviors. We anticipated that eudaimonic behaviors would be more strongly related to meaning in life and life satisfaction, whereas hedonic behaviors would be more strongly related to positive affect. Additionally, we explored the temporal links between eudaimonic behaviors and well-being. Finally, Study 2 examined the potential role of social desirability in behavior reporting.

3. Study 1

Study 1 used a three-week daily diary method to evaluate the extent to which a number of eudaimonic and hedonic behaviors related to well-being. We examined the relations among global measures of life satisfaction, meaning in life, and positive affect (PA) and negative affect (NA) associations with aggregated reports of daily hedonic and eudaimonic behaviors. We used multilevel modeling to assess whether behavior reports were related to life satisfaction, meaning in life, and PA and NA in participants' daily lives. Finally, using time-lagged analyses, we tested the hypothesis that engaging in eudaimonic behaviors would predict higher well-being the next day. We expected to find support for a link from behaviors to later well-being, but not the reverse.

3.1. Method

3.1.1. Participants and procedure

Sixty-five undergraduate psychology students completed two sets of questionnaires 22 days apart, also completing an online daily log each day for course credit (age: $M = 18.9$, $SD = 1.6$; 70% female; 81% Caucasian). Participants were given the URL for an online survey and instructed to complete each day's survey after 7 pm of that day, but before 5 am of the next day. Of the 1313 daily surveys submitted, 17 (1.2%) were completed outside the time window and discarded. Seven reports were discarded either because they were duplicate reports or could not be attributed to a specific participant, leaving a total of 1,289 valid and usable reports of a possible 1365 (94.4%), for an average of 19.8 valid reports per participant.

3.1.2. Materials

Global meaning in life. The Presence subscale of the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ; Steger, Frazier, Oishi, & Kaler, 2006) was used to assess the degree to which participants feel that their lives are meaningful. The MLQ is a 10-item scale that measures the presence of meaning and the search for meaning using five items each. Items are rated on a

7-point scale ranging from 1 (absolutely untrue) to 7 (absolutely true), thus scores could range from 7 to 35 on each subscale. The two-factor structure has been replicated through confirmatory factor analysis in multiple samples, and a multitrait-multimethod matrix has established convergent and discriminant validity (Steger et al., 2006). The MLQ was developed to provide a brief measure of meaning in life with good psychometric properties (i.e., good internal consistency, structural validity, and test–retest stability; Steger & Frazier, 2005; Steger, Frazier, & Zacchanini, in press; Steger & Kashdan, in press). Only the scores on the presence of meaning subscale were used in this study (sample items: “I have a good sense of what makes my life meaningful”, “My life has no clear purpose”; α s = .81 and .86 at Time 1 and Time 2, respectively).

Global life satisfaction. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) was used to measure life satisfaction. The SWLS consists of five items that are rated on a 7-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), for scale totals ranging from 5 to 35. The SWLS widely used and well-validated measure of life satisfaction (sample item: “In most ways my life is close to the ideal”; α s = .87 and .91 at Time 1 and Time 2, respectively).

Global positive and negative affect. Participants completed the basic positive and negative emotion scales of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule—Expanded form (PANAS-X; Watson & Clark, 1994). The PANAS is a 30-item scale that measures PA and NA using 15 items each. Items are rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (very slightly or not at all) to 5 (extremely), thus scores could range from 15 to 75 on each subscale. Factor analysis has consistently confirmed the two-factor basic structure of the PANAS positive (sample items: “serene”, “proud”; α s = .85 and .85 at Time 1 and Time 2, respectively) and negative (sample items: “guilty”, “jittery”; α s = .87 and .88 at Time 1 and Time 2, respectively) affect.

Daily meaning in life. The Daily Meaning Scale (DMS) consisted of two items, “how meaningful does your life feel?” and “how much do you feel your life has purpose?” The 21-day average scores on the DMS correlated .55 ($p < .0001$) with the MLQ-presence subscale, indicating the items constitute a valid measure of state meaning in life. The multilevel random coefficients modeling software program HLM 5 (Raudenbush, Bryk, & Congdon, 2000) provides appropriate reliability estimates for the nested repeated-measures data generated by daily reports (Nezlek, 2001). The reliability estimate for the average daily meaning was excellent (.98).

Daily life satisfaction. Daily life satisfaction was measured using the item, “how satisfied are you with your life?” The 21-day average scores on this item correlated .63 ($p < .0001$) with the SWLS, indicating this item constituted a valid measure of state life satisfaction. The reliability estimate for the average daily life satisfaction was excellent (.97).

Daily positive and negative affect. Positive affect was measured using five items from the PANAS (relaxed, proud, excited, appreciative, and enthusiastic), two items frequently used in online studies of affect (happy, satisfied; see Feldman, 1995), and the item “curious”. Negative affect was measured by the items “sluggish” and “afraid” from the PANAS, and three items from Feldman, “sad”, “anxious”, and “angry”. Aggregated scores on the daily PA items correlated significantly with the PA scale of the PANAS ($r = .55, p < .001$), and aggregated NA scores were significantly related to the NA scale ($r = .57, p < .001$), providing evidence of the convergent validity of the daily affect measures. Reliability was good for average daily positive (.98) and negative (.97) affect.

Daily behaviors. A pool of 46 activities and behaviors was created following a literature review (Aristotle, in Cahn, 1990; Epicurus, in Cahn, 1990; Baumeister, 1991; Deci & Ryan, 2000; King & Napa, 1998; Maslow, 1971; Ryff & Singer, 1998; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Seligman, 2002; Waterman, 1993). This list was rated by five experts in philosophy and psychology who had published work on eudaimonic and hedonic well-being. Items were rated in terms of how representative each was of prototypically eudaimonic and hedonic pursuits on a 5-point scale ranging from “completely representative of eudaimonic well-being” to “completely representative of hedonic well-being”. In addition, a small number of undergraduate students (7) were asked to indicate the behaviors they had engaged in at least once during the previous three weeks. Items with an extremely low frequency rate were undesirable; hence, any items unendorsed by these students were dropped. The most representative items were included in the daily reports (7 each for eudaimonic and hedonic). The items are listed in Table 1, along with the mean number of times each item was endorsed per week (21-day grand mean divided by three weeks). HLM analyses indicated that reliability was very good for the average daily eudaimonic behaviors checklist (.98) and the average hedonic behavior checklist (.92).

Daily important events. To account for other influential events which were not included in the behavior checklist, the daily measures included an item asking participants to rate any other important daily event from 1 (Extremely Good) to 4 (Extremely Bad) (reliability = .93).

3.2. Results

3.2.1. Descriptive statistics

Mean scores were 20.6 ($SD = 4.6$) for the MLQ-P (four items), 25.6 ($SD = 6.0$) for the SWLS, 34.3 ($SD = 4.6$) for the PA and 20.2 ($SD = 4.6$) for the NA scales of the PANAS. At Time 2, mean scores were 19.7 ($SD = 4.8$) for the MLQ-P (four items), 25.4 ($SD = 6.7$) for the SWLS, 31.4 ($SD = 6.6$) for the PA and 18.8 ($SD = 6.4$) for the NA scales of the PANAS.

Reports of eudaimonic and hedonic behaviors were aggregated across the three weeks of the study. On average, participants engaged in each behavior at least once in the three weeks of the study (or nearly so in the case of buying jewelry or electronics and getting high on drugs; see Table 1). Participants reported eudaimonic behaviors by a margin of about 3.5:1 over hedonic behaviors, and eudaimonic relationship behaviors were the most common (expressing gratitude, listening to another’s point of view, confiding in another).

3.2.2. Behavior reports and well-being

Global analyses. As predicted, eudaimonic behaviors were related to the well-being variables (Table 2). Meaning and PA demonstrated small to medium positive correlations with eudaimonic behaviors, at both Time 1 and Time 2. At Time 1, NA was significantly, inversely related to eudaimonic behaviors, and life satisfaction was marginally related as well. At Time 2, NA was positively related to hedonic behavior reports. All of the well-being variables intercorrelated with medium or greater effect sizes. Hedonic behaviors were generally unrelated to well-being, but inversely related to meaning in life.

Concurrent daily analyses. To assess the relations among daily behaviors and well-being, we followed two steps, using HLM 5. We first assessed daily relations among the criterion variables (daily meaning, day’s quality, PA, NA) and the predictor variables

Table 1
Average weekly frequencies of eudaimonic and hedonic behaviors

Item	Average endorsement per week	Study 1	Study 2
Eudaimonic behaviors		16.60 (8.06)	14.59 (11.76)
Volunteered my time		.96 (1.28)	.98 (1.32)
Gave money to a person in need		.51 (.90)	.39 (.48)
Wrote out my goals for the future		1.30 (2.15)	1.14 (1.50)
Expressed my gratitude for something someone did for me either verbally or in writing		4.49 (2.15)	3.96 (2.57)
Listened carefully to another's point of view		4.45 (1.97)	4.05 (2.10)
Confided in another person about something very important to me		3.26 (2.12)	2.43 (1.95)
Persevered at a valued goal even in the face of obstacles		1.62 (2.05)	1.63 (1.85)
Hedonic behaviors		4.26 (3.12)	4.14 (6.18)
Had sex purely to get pleasure ^a		.51 (1.06)	.08 (.40)
Bought a new piece of jewelry or electronics equipment just for myself ^b		.19 (.39)	.28 (.40)
Got drunk ^c		.62 (1.01)	.48 (.78)
Got high on drugs		.23 (.66)	.27 (1.04)
Kept eating more than I intended of something just because it tasted so good		1.79 (1.62)	1.93 (1.92)
Masturbated		.48 (.92)	.54 (1.04)
Went to a big party		.47 (.68)	.55 (.60)
Modified hedonic behaviors		—	16.76 (14.12)
Went on a long walk ^d		—	2.04 (1.98)
Watched a movie that was pure entertainment		—	1.54 (1.36)
Attended a sporting event or concert		—	.40 (.55)
Relaxed by watching television or playing video games		—	5.33 (1.79)
Spent time listening to music		—	3.32 (2.27)

^a This item was changed for Study 2, to: Had sex with someone I do not love.

^b This item was changed for Study 2, to: Bought a new piece of jewelry or electronics equipment for myself.

^c This item was changed for Study 2, to: Drank enough to get “buzzed” or drunk.

^d Average endorsement per week for modified hedonic behaviors includes the original seven hedonic behaviors.

(eudaimonic and hedonic behavior reports). We used robust standard errors to help account for non-normality in the data. Next, to test whether eudaimonic and hedonic behaviors differed in their relations with well-being, we performed a single-degree of freedom chi-square test of whether models constraining the eudaimonic and hedonic coefficients to be equal differed. A non-significant chi-square means that the two coefficients were of equal magnitudes.

The results of the HLM analyses revealed consistent, positive relations between daily eudaimonic behavior reports and meaning in life, life satisfaction, and PA (see Table 3). Engaging in hedonic behaviors was positively related to PA. In all cases daily eudaimonic behaviors showed significantly stronger relations with well-being than daily hedonic behaviors.

Specificity test. We assessed the relations between daily behavior reports and well-being, including the other event rating item in the analyses. Positive other event ratings

Table 2
Correlations between global well-being and aggregated eudaimonic and hedonic behaviors

	MLQ-P	SWLS	PA	NA	T2 MLQ-P	T2 SWLS	T2PA	T2NA	Eud. Behs.
<i>Study 1 (N = 65)</i>									
MLQ-P									
SWLS	.48***								
PA	.51***	.59***							
NA	-.26*	-.38***	-.44***						
T2MLQ-P	.56***	.36***	.39***	-.30**					
T2SWLS	.48***	.68***	.44***	-.36***	.63***				
T2PA	.51***	.59***	.60***	-.38***	.50***	.45***			
T2NA	-.26*	-.38***	-.44***	.57***	-.36***	-.46***	-.21*		
Eud. Behs.	.21*	.18 ⁺	.25*	-.20*	.22*	.17	.29**	-.11	
Hed. Behs.	-.22*	-.14	-.14	.16	-.12	-.07	-.08	.20*	.08
	MLQ-P	SWLS	MCSD-Short	T2 MLQ-P	T2 SWLS	Eud. Behs.	Hed. Behs.	Ret. Eud. Behs.	
<i>Study 2 (N = 45)</i>									
MLQ-P									
SWLS	.38**								
MCSD-Short	.20	.29*							
T2 MLQ-P	.89***	.25	.03						
T2 SWLS	.33 ⁺	.47**	.31 ⁺	.41*					
Eud. Behs.	.22	.21	-.02	.30 ⁺	.16				
Hed. Behs. ^a	-.14	.28 ⁺	-.02	-.02	.09	.09			
Ret. Eud. Behs.	.02	.04	-.01	.20	-.09	.64***	.28		
Ret. Hed. Behs. ^a	-.21	.13	.19	-.01	-.12	.35 ⁺	.58***	.56***	

Note. Eud. Beh., aggregated daily eudaimonic behavior reports; Hed. Beh., aggregated daily hedonic behavior reports; T2, Time 2 (21 days later in Study 1; 28 days later in Study 2); Ret. Eud. Beh., retrospective reports of eudaimonic behavior frequency (previous four weeks); Ret. Hed. Beh., retrospective reports of hedonic behavior frequency (previous four weeks).

^a Modified hedonic behavior checklist, see Section 4.1.2.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

⁺ $p < .10$.

were positively related to daily meaning, life satisfaction, and positive affect, and negatively related to negative affect. Eudaimonic behavior reports were still positively related to meaning ($\gamma = .08$, $p < .0001$), life satisfaction ($\gamma = .07$, $p < .0001$), and positive affect ($\gamma = .07$, $p < .0001$), and hedonic behavior reports were related to more positive affect ($\gamma = .05$, $p < .0001$). Thus, accounting for other daily events did not eliminate relations between the daily behavior reports and daily well-being.

Time-lagged analyses. Finally, we investigated the temporal relation between daily behaviors and well-being by estimating simultaneously the relation between the previous day's eudaimonic and hedonic behaviors and the current day's well-being ratings, controlling for the previous day's well-being ratings. We also tested the reverse sequence; namely, whether the previous day's well-being predicted behaviors.

Daily eudaimonic behavior reports were significantly related to more meaning in life ($\gamma = .02$, $p < .05$) and more life satisfaction ($\gamma = .03$, $p < .05$, see Fig. 1) the following

Table 3
Eudaimonic v. hedonic predictors of daily well-being

Predictor	γ Coefficient	SE	<i>t</i> -Ratio	Approx <i>df</i>
<i>Study 1</i>				
DV = daily meaning in life				
Intercept	-.04	.10	.40	63
Eud. behaviors	.13^{***}	.02	6.43	63
Hed. behaviors	.01	.02	.34	63
DV = daily life satisfaction				
Intercept	-.02	.10	.18	63
Eud. behaviors	.13^{***}	.02	5.19	63
Hed. behaviors	.01	.02	.84	63
DV = daily positive affect				
Intercept	.02	.10	.23	63
Eud. behaviors	.20^{***}	.03	7.39	63
Hed. behaviors	.06 ^{***}	.02	3.13	63
DV = daily negative affect				
Intercept	-.03	.09	.34	63
Eud. behaviors	-.04	.03	1.32	63
Hed. behaviors	-.01	.02	.20	63
<i>Study 2</i>				
DV = daily meaning in life				
Intercept	-.09	.11	.81	28
Eud. behaviors	.37^{***}	.05	8.45	28
Hed. behaviors ^a	.02	.02	.47	28
DV = daily life satisfaction				
Intercept	-.09	.11	.80	28
Eud. behaviors	.38^{***}	.04	7.65	28
Hed. behaviors ^a	.01	.03	.29	28
DV = daily positive affect				
Intercept	-.08	.07	1.21	28
Eud. behaviors	.67^{***}	.03	11.89	28
Hed. behaviors ^a	.03	.03	.16	28
DV = daily negative affect				
Intercept	.04	.11	.35	28
Eud. behaviors	-.01	.05	1.60	28
Hed. behaviors ^a	-.04	.18	.19	28

Note. Slope coefficient in boldface is significantly larger than the other slope coefficient in the equation, according to a single-degree of freedom chi-square test of fit differences of a model in which coefficients were constrained and a model in which they were not ($p < .05$).

^a Modified hedonic behavior checklist, see Section 4.1.2.

*** $p < .001$.

day. Daily hedonic behavior reports were not significantly related to well-being the following day ($ps > .35$). The reverse temporal sequences were not significant for any variables.

It is possible that people's activities on one day carried over to their activities on the next, which would call into question these time-lagged analyses. For example, someone who confides something important one day and experiences higher well-being might be more likely to confide in someone the next day as well. In this case, the current day's activity would be driving the effect. To assess this possibility, we examined the autocorrelations

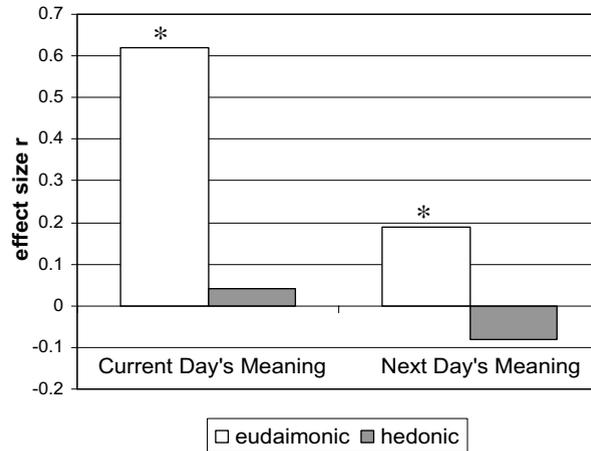


Fig. 1. Relations between eudaimonic and hedonic activity and same day and next day's meaning in life, Study 1. Effect size was computed using t -to- r transformation. * Relation significant at $p < .05$.

between current and previous day's activities using HLM, with the previous day's behavior reports predicting the current day's reports. There was no evidence of significant autocorrelation for either eudaimonic reports ($\gamma = -.006, p > .88$) or hedonic reports ($\gamma = .01, p > .74$). Thus, the relations between the previous day's eudaimonic activity and current day's well-being are not due to the current day's activity.

3.3. Discussion

The principal finding from this study was that the more an individual reported engaging in eudaimonic behaviors, the greater the well-being reported as measured by meaning in life, life satisfaction, and PA. This positive association was replicated at a daily level, above and beyond other important daily events, suggesting that eudaimonic behaviors have a close temporal relationship with momentary well-being, as well as a strong relation with global well-being. Consistent with Oishi et al. (2001), no significant relations were observed between the frequencies of hedonic behaviors engaged over three weeks and global measures of well-being. On a daily level, eudaimonic behaviors were more robustly related to well-being than were hedonic behaviors. Importantly, small to medium relations were identified between one day's eudaimonic activity and the next day's meaning in life and life satisfaction, suggesting the possibility that eudaimonic behaviors may have a small causal effect on improving well-being.

4. Study 2

Although the items on the behavior checklist were selected based on expert ratings, an examination of their content raises the possibility that the two categories of behaviors differ in terms of the degree to which they are socially desirable. If participants perceived eudaimonic behaviors as valued by society, and hedonic behaviors as disapproved of by society, a socially desirable response bias could account for the pattern of findings in

Study 1. Thus, we conducted Study 2 to examine the relations of social desirability with daily behavior reports. It is possible that the specific behaviors included, or how they were worded, could reduce endorsement. For example, a respondent could read the item, “Had sex purely for pleasure”, and decide that while she or he engaged in pleasurable sexual activity, it was with a loved one, and therefore not motivated purely by pleasure. Therefore, in addition to addressing socially desirable responding with daily reports of these behaviors, we reworded three of the items (see Table 1, notes).

It is also possible that the low frequency rate of hedonic behaviors could be due to low base rates among these behaviors. Therefore, we included five additional behaviors that describe more common pleasurable experiences (see Table 1).

4.1. Method

4.1.1. Participants and procedure

Forty-five undergraduate psychology students completed two sets of questionnaires 28 days apart, also completing an online daily log each day for course credit (age: $M = 20.0$, $SD = 3.9$; 61% female; 68% Caucasian). Participants were given the URL for an online survey and instructed to complete each day's survey after 7 pm of that day, but before 5 am of the next day. Of the 1037 daily surveys submitted, 23 (2.1%) were completed outside the time window and discarded. Five reports were discarded either because of duplicate reports or could not be attributed to a specific participant, leaving a total of 1032 valid and usable reports of a possible total 1232, for an overall valid response rate of 83.7%, for an average of 22.9 valid reports per participant. Following the 28-day reporting period, participants were given the link to a webpage containing a retrospective version of the behavior checklist asking about the frequency of the behaviors over the 28-day reporting period as well as the MLQ-P and SWLS. Thirty participants completed these measures. Participants who completed the Time 2 measures did not differ significantly from those who did not (e.g., non-significant t -tests on demographics and Time 1 MLQ-P, SWLS, and behavior reports).

4.1.2. Measures

Participants completed the 5-item MLQ-P ($\alpha = .88$) and SWLS ($\alpha = .91$) at Time 1. Following the 28-day reporting period, participants also completed a retrospective behavior report in which they indicated the number of times they had engaged in each behavior over the previous 28 days (eudaimonic behavior frequency list, $\alpha = .75$; modified hedonic behavior frequency list, $\alpha = .42$). Participants completed the MLQ-P ($\alpha = .91$) and SWLS ($\alpha = .83$) at Time 2. Participants completed the same daily measures used in Study 2 (Daily Meaning Scale [HLM reliability estimate = .99], daily life satisfaction item [reliability = .98], and daily eudaimonic and the 12-item modified hedonic behavior checklist [reliabilities for eudaimonic and hedonic behaviors were .98 and .96, respectively]). Participants completed a measure of social desirability at Time 1. The DMS and the MLQ-presence subscale again correlated highly ($r = .51$, $p < .0001$) as did the daily life satisfaction item and the SWLS ($r = .54$, $p < .0001$).

Social desirability. Participants completed a short form of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSD-Short), which was demonstrated by confirmatory factor analysis to effectively assess socially desirable responding (Fisher & Fick, 1993). The MCSD-Short consists of 10 items, with half indicating items that are considered to be rarely true

of anyone (e.g., “I never resent being asked to return a favor”) and half indicating items considered to rarely be false of anyone (e.g., “I like to gossip at times”). Respondents rate items as true (1) or false (2) and scores could range from 10 to 20. The internal consistency of the MCSD-Short was lower in the present sample ($\alpha = .47$) than reported previously ($\alpha = .88$; Fisher & Fick, 1993). Therefore we deleted four items to create a scale with somewhat higher internal consistency ($\alpha = .57$).

Daily behaviors. We augmented the hedonic behavior checklist with other activities believed to be pleasurable, but that might be more socially commendable. We also anticipated that the frequency of these behaviors would be higher than those constituting the earlier version of the hedonic behavior checklist. These items are included in Table 1. Three existing items were modified in an attempt to lessen any potential social disapproval conveyed by their wording (“Got drunk” was changed to “Drank enough to get “buzzed” or drunk”, “Bought a new piece of jewelry or electronics equipment just for myself” was changed to “Bought a new piece of jewelry or electronics equipment for myself”) or to simplify their meaning (“Had sex purely to get pleasure” was changed to “Had sex with someone I do not love”). The five new items and four modified items were not subjected to expert judgments. The reliability of this modified hedonic behaviors scale was good according to HLM (.96).

Retrospective behavior reports. Participants completed a version of the modified behavior checklist with instructions focusing on activities during the previous 28 days: “How often have these events happened in your life in the last four weeks (e.g., during this study)?” Participants reported the number of times in space provided. The internal consistency of the eudaimonic and hedonic frequency lists was somewhat low (α s = .62 and .61, respectively).

4.2. Results

4.2.1. Descriptive statistics

The mean eudaimonic and the original hedonic behaviors reported per week were fairly similar in Study 1, and again suggest that people typically engage in more eudaimonic than hedonic behaviors (Table 1). As expected, the new hedonic items were indeed reported with higher rates, and the modified hedonic behavior checklist exceeded the eudaimonic behavior checklist in frequency reported.

Mean scores on the global scales were 24.2 ($SD = 6.1$) for the MLQ-P, 25.4 ($SD = 6.2$) for the SWLS, 14.6 ($SD = 1.90$) for the MCSD-Short, and 24.1 ($SD = 6.8$) for the MLQ-P and SWLS 24.9 ($SD = 5.1$) at Time 2. People reported an average of 50.7 ($SD = 35.4$) eudaimonic behaviors and 64.5 ($SD = 26.7$) hedonic behaviors over the previous four weeks. Multiplying the average endorsement per week of daily eudaimonic and hedonic behaviors by four weeks leads to an average of 58.4 eudaimonic behaviors and 67.0 hedonic behaviors. Thus, retrospective reports were fairly accurate, but slightly underestimated actual behavioral activity.

4.2.2. Behavior reports and social desirability

We first calculated correlations between social desirability and the aggregated totals of behavior reporting from the 28-day reporting period (see Table 2). Social desirability was not significantly related to aggregated eudaimonic behavior reports nor aggregated modified hedonic behavior reports. Social desirability also was not significantly related to

either 28-day retrospective eudaimonic reports, or retrospective modified hedonic reports.¹ Thus, it appears that social desirability did not play a significant role in behavior reporting.

4.2.3. Behavior reports and well-being

Global analyses. We next assessed relations between the aggregated eudaimonic and modified hedonic behavior reports and global meaning and life satisfaction at both time points. Eudaimonic behavior reports were related to the presence of meaning in life and life satisfaction with similar effect sizes as those observed in Study 1, although these relations did not achieve significance, due to low power (Table 2). The relation between eudaimonic behaviors and Time 2 meaning in life was marginally significant, with a medium effect size. The well-being variables were intercorrelated with medium or greater effect sizes. As in Study 1, hedonic behavior reports were generally unrelated to well-being, although there was a marginally significant relation with life satisfaction. Retrospective reports and aggregated reports were correlated with large effect sizes, suggesting a good degree of accuracy in participant reports.

Concurrent daily analyses. Engaging in eudaimonic behavior again was positively related to meaning in life, life satisfaction, and PA (see Table 3). Engaging in hedonic behaviors was not significantly related to any daily well-being variables. Daily reported eudaimonic behaviors were significantly more strongly related to daily meaning, life satisfaction, and PA than were daily reported hedonic behaviors, as indicated by significantly worse fit of models with the coefficients constrained to be equal.

Time-lagged analyses. Previous day's reports of eudaimonic behaviors were positively related to meaning in life the following day controlling for the previous day's well-being ratings, replicating findings from Study 1 ($\gamma = .08, p < .05$). They were unrelated to life satisfaction, PA and NA the next day. Previous day's hedonic behavior reports were also related to meaning the following day ($\gamma = .05, p < .05$). The gammas were not significantly different.

4.3. Discussion

This study sought to address two alternative explanations for the pattern of findings reported in Study 1. First, due to concerns about the low frequency of hedonic behavior reports, we modified our measure. Using this modified hedonic behavior checklist, we replicated many of the findings from Study 1. Second, to further examine the potential influence of social desirability on behavior reporting, we examined relations with aggregated reports from a 28-day diary study and retrospective reports concerning the same 28-day period. In both cases, behavior reports were unrelated to social desirability, and overall,

¹ Because of the low alpha for the short social desirability measure, we calculated error-corrected correlations between social desirability and the other variables where the error-corrected correlation is equal to the observed correlation divided by the square root of the alpha coefficients of the two scales. The error-corrected correlation between social desirability and with Retrospective Hedonic Behaviors increased to a medium effect size ($r = .38$). Critically, no error-corrected correlations were significant with aggregated behavior reports ($r = -.03$ with Aggregated Eudaimonic Behaviors; $r = -.03$ with Aggregated Hedonic Behaviors). Other correlations changes minimally ($r = .28$ with Time 1 MLQ-P; $r = .40$ with Time 1 SWLS, $r = .04$ with Time 2 MLQ-P; $r = .44$ with Time 2 SWLS; $r = -.01$ with Retrospective Eudaimonic Behaviors).

we would recommend using the modified hedonic behavior checklist in future research. Thus, Study 2 adds to the evidence that reported eudaimonic activity is related to more meaning in life, life satisfaction, and positive affect.

5. General discussion

The ancient concept of eudaimonic well-being has enjoyed a recent renaissance, possibly because it serves as a useful organizational system for approaching well-being research in psychology (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Eudaimonic theories prioritize the achievement of people's full potential by engaging in inherently meaningful endeavors. In two studies reported here, reports of behaviors derived from eudaimonic theories demonstrated small to medium relations with greater life satisfaction, meaning in life, and positive affect. Hedonic behavior was less consistently related to well-being. This pattern was especially pronounced in participants' daily lives, providing indications that the eudaimonic lifestyle is associated with elevated well-being.

The temporal relation between daily behaviors and well-being also is consistent with this interpretation. Studies 1 and 2 provided indications that eudaimonic activity has a sustained positive relation with the next day's well-being, particularly meaning in life. In contrast, hedonic behaviors generally were unrelated to well-being either on the global or daily level. We had anticipated that hedonic behavior reports would be related to daily positive affect, given the emphasis placed on pleasure in hedonic pursuits. However, eudaimonic behavior reports, and not hedonic behavior reports, were most consistently related to positive affect, both on the global and the daily level. As Fredrickson (2000) has suggested, those affective states most closely related to immediate survival (e.g., pleasure, pain) are also those that convey the least personally-relevant meaning. Pleasure simply means "good" and pain means "bad", without connecting the experience to deeper psychological processes. Chocolate cake from a vending machine can please us, but chocolate cake from a spouse or child can elevate us. In the present study, eudaimonic behaviors may have had deeper, more meaningful effects than hedonic behaviors, supplying participants with positive affect and perhaps helping them to identify opportunities to acquire resources important to their future. Interestingly, on the global level, hedonic behavior reports were inversely related to positive affect and positively related to negative affect. It appears that those who most often engage in pleasure-seeking behavior tend to have less desirable emotional lives, suggesting that pleasure-seeking is a poor long-term strategy for achieving enduring well-being (Diener, 2000). Finally, the lack of significant relations with negative affect on the daily level of analysis reflects long-standing distinctions that have been drawn between processes related to positive affect and negative affect (e.g., Cacioppo & Bertnson, 1999). From these results, we might suggest that eudaimonic behaviors are most relevant to the systems underlying well-being, rather than distress (see also Ryff et al., 2006).

One alternative explanation for these findings was that social desirability response biases could have led to over-reporting of eudaimonic behaviors and under-reporting of hedonic behaviors thus reducing the variance in the latter reports and attenuating any real relations. Further, those who truthfully reported socially unacceptable behaviors might themselves be psychologically dysfunctional or immersed in solipsistic self-gratification, which we would expect to run counter to well-being. This alternative explanation was not supported, however. It bears noting that the most robust findings across both studies

concerned positive and consistent relations between reported eudaimonic activity and well-being. The possibility that hedonic activity is, in fact, equally related to greater well-being, but that this relation was masked by social desirability appears quite slim given these findings. Nonetheless, future investigations of the role of response bias in the asymmetric relations to well-being of eudaimonic and hedonic activity may be beneficial.

Another possible explanation for our findings is that respondents could not distinguish among the daily constructs assessed, such as daily meaning, life satisfaction, and affect. The daily items could therefore have been tapping an indiscriminate “goodness” of the day, rather than distinct aspects of how it was a good day. However, we feel that focusing on reports of distinct behaviors allowed us to substantially avoid merely tapping this sort of “halo effect”. Objective behaviors should be a preferred target of psychological research, particularly in well-being research wherein many of the indicator variables are highly intercorrelated. Certain personality dimensions have also been shown to be systematically related to well-being (e.g., DeNeve & Cooper, 1998; Diener et al., 1999). To the extent that reports of behaviors and well-being share underpinnings in personality, some amount of their relations is likely to be influenced by disposition. Of course, behavioral activity, not to mention behavior reporting, is also influenced by personality (e.g., Magnus, Diener, Fujita, & Pavot, 1993; Myers & Diener, 1995). The eudaimonic behaviors we assessed are likely to be related to personality dimensions such as extraversion and neuroticism. It is unlikely that the magnitude of these relations approaches that between personality and subjective judgments, however. Thus, one of the strengths of the current research was the use of behavioral reports.

Focusing on behaviors, rather than subjective self-perceptions, was one of the novel contributions of these studies. Because of this, these findings may have particularly important implications for the development and maintenance of well-being. Daily behaviors are malleable (e.g., Gollwitzer, 1999), and are more palpable than more subjective constructs such as meaning in life. Further, research on behavioral activation treatments for psychological disorders suggests that depressive symptom reduction is associated with increasing people’s level of activity and the positive consequences of such activity (e.g., Lejuez, Hopko, & Hopko, 2001). Activating eudaimonic behaviors may be a promising route to increasing well-being. As one confronts the question of how to maximize well-being, focusing on engaging in certain daily behaviors likely holds more appeal and seems more attainable than attempting to “feel life is more meaningful”, or “be more joyous”. Thus, these findings suggest several avenues for cultivating well-being, vis-à-vis enacting daily eudaimonic behaviors.

We have argued that the road to eudaimonic well-being consists of people’s efforts to fulfill their potential through engaging in meaningful pursuits. How, specifically, might such pursuits help people fulfill their potential and achieve lasting well-being? According to Self-Determination Theory, eudaimonic activity produces well-being if it satisfies basic human needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Ryff and Singer (1998) argue that “Key components of positive health. . . address essential features of engagement in living. . .” (p. 2). From these two theories, we might surmise that eudaimonic activity delivers experiences of autonomy, relatedness, and competence, and allows people to engage in their lives in beneficial ways. An examination of the behaviors we assessed supports this idea. For example, persevering at a valued goal implies a strong degree of autonomy/volition and engagement in important pursuits, and may engender a sense of competence as well. This activity also suggests a good deal of effort, which some have suggested is essential to eudaimonia (Scollon & King, 2004). In fact, effort is a key

component of people's lay theories of the Good Life. The notion of effort might also explain why so many people continue to seek fulfillment and happiness in pleasure and instantly gratifying experiences—engaging in more eudaimonic behaviors is harder work. A further examination of the eudaimonic behaviors we assessed suggests other important mechanisms for fostering well-being. Several of the items are interpersonal in nature, and could be expected to help build close relationships. For example, confiding in a friend about something important is the type of disclosure that may nurture heightened intimacy (Reis & Shaver, 1988). In general, we would argue that eudaimonic activity is especially likely to build a variety of durable psychological and social resources, leading to more resilient, fulfilled people.

We believe the pattern of results from these studies makes the case that meaning in life is a particularly valuable indicator of eudaimonic well-being. Perhaps meaning in life captures an essential contribution to well-being of eudaimonic activity, one that is not captured otherwise by affective benefits (although substantially related to PA, King, Hicks, Krull, & Del Gaiso, 2006. Seligman (2002) suggested that the meaningful life can be experienced in the absence of PA, and is important in its own right. In fact, several theorists have argued that people have a need for meaning (e.g., Frankl, 1963; Heine, Proulx, & Vohs, 2006; Ryff & Singer, 1998). For example, identifying and pursuing worthwhile goals that successfully organize one's experience is critical to human functioning and thought to provide life with meaning (e.g., Klinger, 1977). Perhaps eudaimonic activities assist people in endowing their experiences with coherence, meaning, and purpose (Steger, *in press*). We believe future research should seek to integrate measures of meaning in life into investigations of well-being. Including such measures might be particularly valuable in light of other research using different methods that suggested that the relation of meaning in life with indices of broader well-being was mediated by positive affect (King et al., 2006). Thus, although meaning in life appears to be a key concomitant of the eudaimonic lifestyle, positive affect appears implicated in both the eudaimonic lifestyle and meaning in life, and the relations among these variables warrant additional examination.

5.1. Limitations and future research

In the present research, we extended research on eudaimonic well-being into reports of theoretically-derived behaviors. However, behavioral reports are still self-reports. It is likely that the process of recalling and recording whether or not one *did* something is more accurate and less biased than recalling and recording an accurate summary of one's *feelings, thoughts, states, and judgments*. Nonetheless, the next step in this research would be to obtain observational data of participant behavior, whether from trained experimenters or informants. Also, our methodology did not allow us to adequately address issues related to causality. Although we were able to provide limited tests of day-to-day temporal sequences, we were not able to fully assess the question of whether people experience greater well-being because they engage in eudaimonic behaviors, or whether experiencing well-being causes people to be more likely to do eudaimonic things. Assessing participants over a longer period of time would provide further insight.

The purpose of the present research was to test the relative contributions of eudaimonic and hedonic activity to well-being. Because of this, we attempted to design a behavioral checklist consisting of relatively pure representatives of each tradition. The purpose of developing our bi-polar dimensions was to isolate as much as possible their relative con-

tributions to well-being; for this purpose, the checklists were effective and appropriate. However, this decision probably led to a list of behaviors that might be relatively rare. Most things people do probably have both eudaimonic and hedonic aspects, and in fact, we might expect that people whose pursuits combine intrinsically meaningful activity with fun and pleasure lead richer, fuller lives than those who focus only on one aspect or the other (see Seligman, 2002). The behaviors assessed in the present study do not represent such blended activities. Including such activities in future studies would better reflect life as it is lived, and allow for a test of whether the full life is both more typical and more highly associated with well-being.

Another question is which, if any, individual difference variables moderate relations between eudaimonic and hedonic pursuits and well-being. For example, others have found that those high in agreeableness appear to derive greater PA from pleasant social interactions (Côté & Moskowitz, 1998). In contrast, others have argued that variability in a trait (i.e., gratitude) might be so over-determined by personality that relevant activity is likely to influence well-being only for those low in the trait (McCullough, Tsang, & Emmons, 2004). The investigation of the moderators of the relation between eudaimonic behaviors and well-being would be highly informative.

One of the limitations of these studies was that the samples were largely homogeneous. Culture has been shown to influence the expression of many well-being variables (for a review see Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003). Such differences have often been attributed to differing emphases on self-oriented individualistic versus other-oriented collectivistic values. An examination of the behaviors that comprise the eudaimonic and hedonic checklists in the present studies suggests that most of the eudaimonic behaviors are somewhat collectivistic (e.g., listened carefully to another's point of view), whereas more of the hedonic behaviors are somewhat individualistic (e.g., masturbated). In some ways, this limitation of the item content reflects the fact that eudaimonic activity is often presumed to incorporate a concern for others, whereas hedonic activity is often presumed to be self-centered pleasure-seeking (e.g., Seligman, 2002). However, given the importance of social relationships to well-being (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Ryff & Singer, 2000), future research should attempt to balance collectivistic and individualistic activity across the eudaimonic and hedonic distinctions. This is particularly important to cross-cultural research due to broader cultural variation along collectivistic–individualistic lines. For example, engaging in overly individualistic, self-oriented activity might signify poor acculturation or functioning among members of collectivistic societies. The question thus remains whether eudaimonic events are related to well-being in all cultures. In addition, because previous research has shown that various aspects of well-being relate to age and life-span development (Ryff & Keyes, 1995), as well as education level to a lesser degree (Diener et al., 1999). Our results should be replicated in age- and education-diverse samples.

6. Conclusion

The studies presented here clearly show that people who report engaging in more eudaimonic behaviors feel their lives are more meaningful and satisfying, across global and daily levels of analysis. Contrary to the prevalent popular cultural support for pleasure-seeking, those who engaged in more hedonic behaviors did not consistently report more well-being. Whereas some analyses revealed that engaging in eudaimonic behaviors was associated with more sustained well-being, engaging in hedonic behaviors generally

was not. Thus, these studies lend support to the growing body of work indicating that we should perhaps take seriously Aristotle's admonitions to cultivate virtue in our actions. Further, they provide a starting point for identifying specific behaviors associated with a eudaimonic lifestyle. A list of normative eudaimonic behaviors could provide researchers with a valuable tool in documenting the effects of engaging in meaningful pursuits.

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