

The Flow of Happiness

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Whether in the creative arts, athletics, work, or spiritual practice, happiness lies in working to expand one's skill level. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has devoted his career to studying what makes people happy. Building on years of detailed research, Csikszentmihalyi created the term "flow" to describe the experience of being completely immersed in an activity for its own sake. When someone is in a state of flow, self-consciousness disappears and sense of time becomes distorted, according to Csikszentmihalyi's research. "An activity that produces such experiences is so gratifying that people are willing to do it for its own sake," he once wrote, "with little concern for what they will get out of it, even when it is difficult or dangerous."