The Happiness Data That Wrecks a Freudian Theory

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Does success make us miserable?

Sigmund Freud was one of the first to propose this peculiar form of distress in an essay he published more than a century ago. It was a theory built around a few case studies: a patient who fell into depression after earning a promotion at work, another patient who fell apart when she married her longtime partner—and Lady Macbeth, who was not his patient. They were, as [Freud famously put it](#), "wrecked by success."

There are so many examples of this paradox these days that it's easy for anyone to delude themselves into believing the most successful are the least happy.

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