

The Three Equations for a Happy Life, Even During a Pandemic

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It seems strange to launch a column on *happiness* during a pandemic. The timing is, well, awkward, isn't it?

Maybe not. We're stuck at home; our lives on COVID time have slowed to a near halt. This creates all sorts of obvious inconveniences, of course. But in the involuntary quiet, many of us also sense an opportunity to think a little more deeply about life. In our go-go-go world, we rarely get the chance to stop and consider the big drivers of our happiness and our sense of purpose.

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The scientific study of happiness has exploded over the past three decades. The Nobel Prize winners Daniel Kahneman and Angus Deaton (both at Princeton University) publish extensively on the subject. The University of Pennsylvania has a whole graduate-degree program in positive psychology, led by Martin Seligman, one of the most distinguished social psychologists in the world. A peer-reviewed academic journal called the *Journal of Happiness Studies* has been in operation since the year 2000 and enjoys high prestige in scholarly circles.

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