

Why Bronze Medalists Are Happier Than Silver Winners

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Scientific American:

In 1892, psychologist William James wrote these words in this foundational book, *The Principles of Psychology*.

James's observation echoes a sentiment that is well known in psychology: a person's achievements matter less than how that person subjectively perceives those achievements. For example, you might be thrilled over a 5% raise at work until you learn that your colleague down the hall earned a 10% raise. But is there ever a case when the individual with the 5% raise is happier with his or her outcome than the person with the 10% raise? Perhaps if Arthur only expected a 3% raise but received a 5% raise, while Emily expected a 15% raise but only received one worth 10%, then indeed Arthur would be more satisfied with his outcome, despite it being objectively lower than Emily's outcome.

Read the whole story: [*Scientific American*](#)