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*Happiness Is Associated with a Stronger Belief in the Value of Prosocial Behavior*

The ways in which we interact with others is an integral yet often overlooked part of our everyday lives. This study sought to provide insight into the association between happiness and the belief in the value of prosocial behavior. It was hypothesized that a) People who report themselves to be happier will also have an increased belief in the value of prosocial behavior – to what extent they believe that prosocial spending, charitable donations, and volunteer work would make them happier, and b) Priming the belief that older people are wiser will increase the belief in the value of prosocial behavior.

Participants were randomly divided into three conditions in which they completed an Implicit Association Test-like task categorizing a series of pictures and words. The categorization task associating old age and wisdom primed the belief that older people are wiser. All participants then completed a questionnaire reflecting the positive belief in the value of prosocial behavior and reported happiness on three items of a subjective happiness scale.

While priming the belief that older people are wiser had no effect, happiness correlated with and was a significant predictor of this belief in the value of prosocial behavior.

These results lead to the conclusion that happiness and the belief in prosocial behavior are cyclical; such that greater happiness leads to an increased belief in prosocial behavior, followed increased engaging in prosocial behavior, causing increased happiness. Implications of this study lie in improving the general well-being of people by increasing prosocial tendencies in society.