

MONTA VISTA ATHLETICS

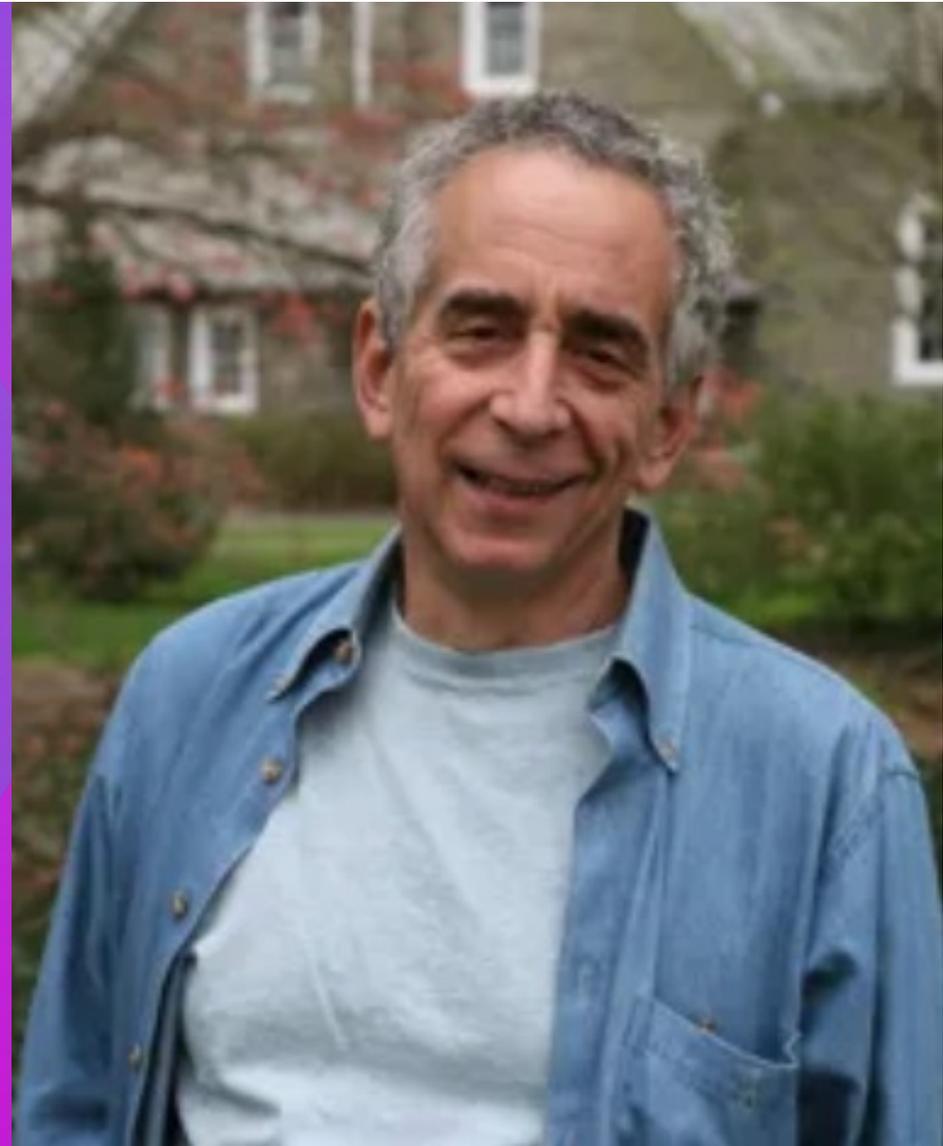
CHARACTER LAB

SESSION 2.2

CHOICE AND HAPPINESS

THANK YOU TO BARRY SCHWARTZ
FOR FEEDBACK AND ENCOURAGEMENT

BASED ON IDEAS FROM *THE PARADOX OF
CHOICE: WHY LESS IS MORE*, BY BARRY
SCHWARTZ, 2004





**CHAPTER ONE:
THE WAY PEOPLE
MAKE DECISIONS
IS ...
NOT OBVIOUS**



GIVEN THIS CHOICE, WHAT WOULD YOU DO?



- Buy discounted, low end Bose headphones for \$99, or
- Do more research?

WHAT PEOPLE SAID



Tversky and Shafir, "Choice under Conflict: The Dynamics of Deferred Decision." *Psychological Science*, 1992.

GIVEN AN EXPANDED CHOICE WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

- Buy discounted, low end Bose headphones for \$99, or
- Buy the high-end model of a lower end brand for \$169, or
- Do more research?



WHAT PEOPLE SAID



Some people who had decided to buy the Bose decided to buy nothing!



Tversky and Shafir, "Choice under Conflict: The Dynamics of Deferred Decision." *Psychological Science*, 1992.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID



Adding the second category creates a conflict, and more people punted on the whole decision.



Tversky and Shafir, "Choice under Conflict: The Dynamics of Deferred Decision." *Psychological Science*, 1992.

A LOT more!

WHICH GROUP BOUGHT MORE?

Six jam choices



Thirty jam choices



Wilson and Schooler, "Thinking Too Much: Introspection Can Reduce the Quality of Preferences and Decisions," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1991.

AS A REWARD FOR FILLING OUT A QUESTIONNAIRE, PEOPLE WERE OFFERED A CHOICE:

A metal pen worth about \$2.00

\$1.50



MOST PEOPLE TOOK THE PEN



A THIRD OPTION

\$1.50

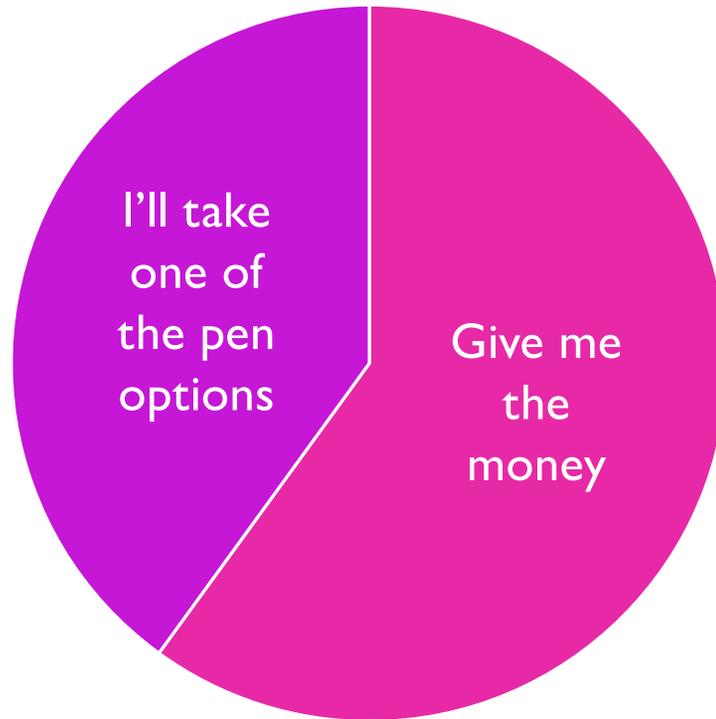
A nice metal pen
worth about \$2.00



Two cheap felt
tip pens worth
about \$2.00



NOW PEOPLE TAKE THE MONEY!



This makes no objective sense; if we were willing to take the pen before, why did an additional option cause us to take cash?



LESSONS



Decision making is messy. No one likes making trade-offs, so **narrowing our options** can lead to better decisions.



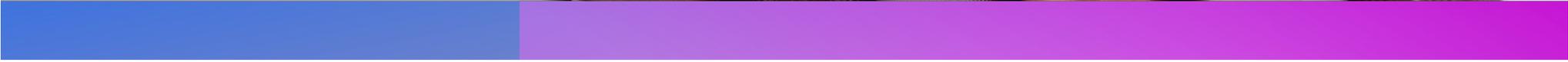
We make decisions about jobs, schools, investments, friends, relationships, medical care, retirement...learning about how to improve our decision processes can be valuable!

(BTW marketing firms weaponize this psychological knowledge against us.)



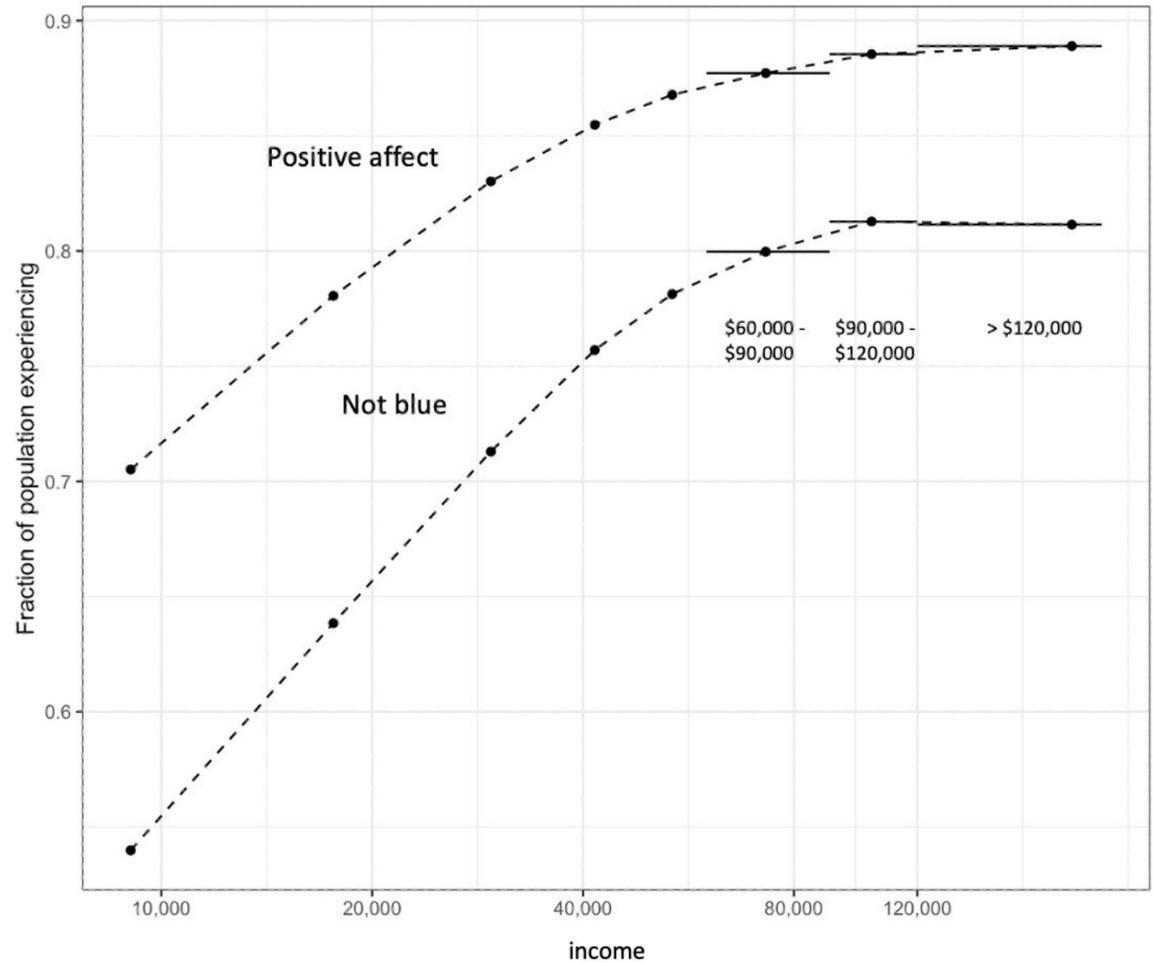
More choices and freedom to do anything we want might not make us happier.

**CHAPTER TWO:
WOULDN'T
MORE MONEY
AND MORE
STUFF MAKE ME
HAPPIER?**



AFTER BASIC
NEEDS ARE
MET, AT
SOME POINT
MORE
MONEY ONLY
DOES SO
MUCH FOR
US.

THIS IS MORE
COMPLEXITY TO THIS
RELATIONSHIP, BUT
LET'S ROLL WITH
THIS.



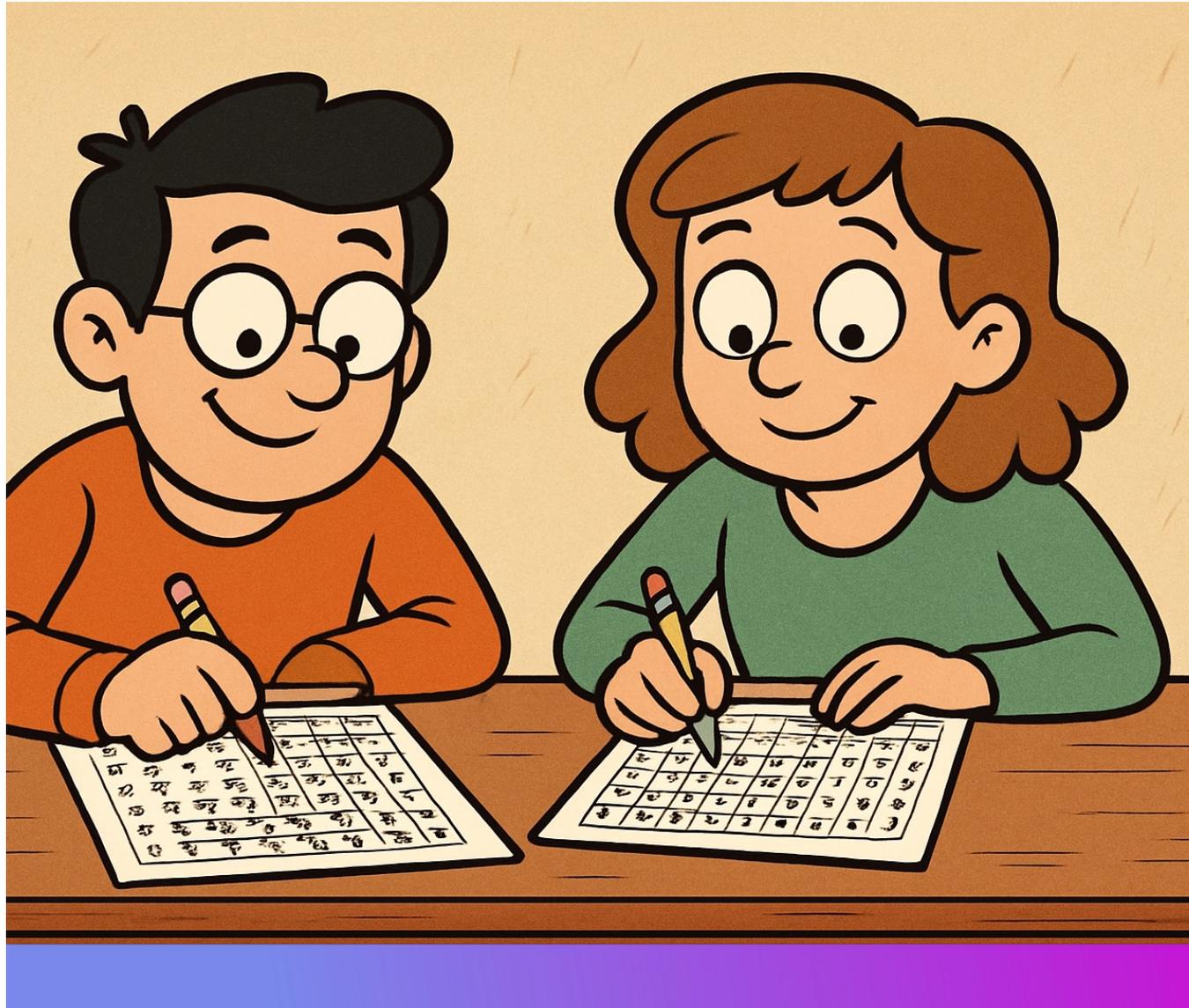
Daniel Kahneman and Angus Deaton
Center for Health and Well-being, Princeton University, Princeton
2010

INCOME
INEQUALITY
MAKES THE
MONEY/HAPPINESS
RELATIONSHIP
WORSE

AND SOCIAL MEDIA MAKES
THIS WORSE BY MAKING IT
EASIER TO COMPARE
OURSELVES TO OTHERS.



"O.K., if you can't see your way to giving me a pay raise, how about giving Parkerson a pay cut?"



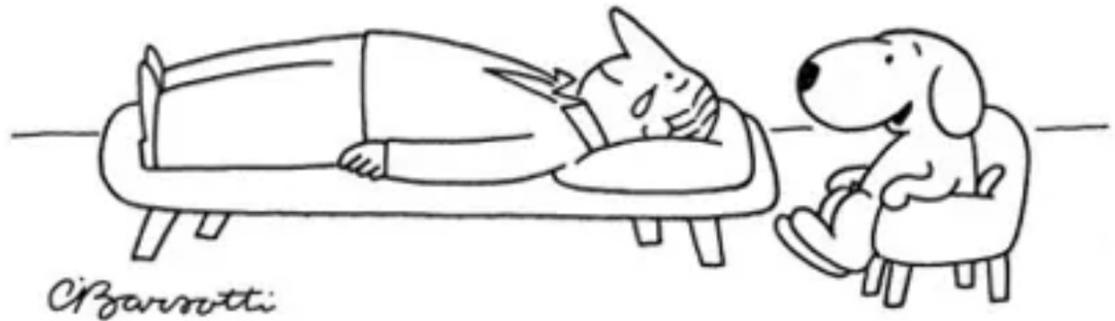
HAPPIER PEOPLE DON'T TEND TO JUDGE THEMSELVES RELATIVE TO OTHERS (AS MUCH)

- Experiment:
 - Subjects given puzzles to work
 - Secret confederate worked puzzles next to the subject; some of the confederates 'solved' the puzzles easily, some of the confederates 'struggled'
 - The happier the subject, the less they seemed to care whether the person next to them is doing well or not
- What is the cause, what is the effect is not entirely clear; Barry Schwartz and I think it's a bit of both

See for example,
Lyubomirsky and Ross,
"Hedonic Consequences of Social Comparison: A Contrast of Happy and Unhappy People,"
Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1997.

CHAPTER
THREE:
SO IF MORE
CHOICE AND
MORE STUFF
DOESN'T
MAKE US
HAPPY,
WHAT
DOES?

THE QUESTION THAT
LAUNCHED A
THOUSAND
PHD DISSERTATIONS



"Well, I think you're wonderful."

- P** Positive affect
- E** Engagement
- R** Relationships
- M** Meaning
- A** Achievement



P

Positive affect

E

Engagement

R

Relationships

M

Meaning

A

Achievement

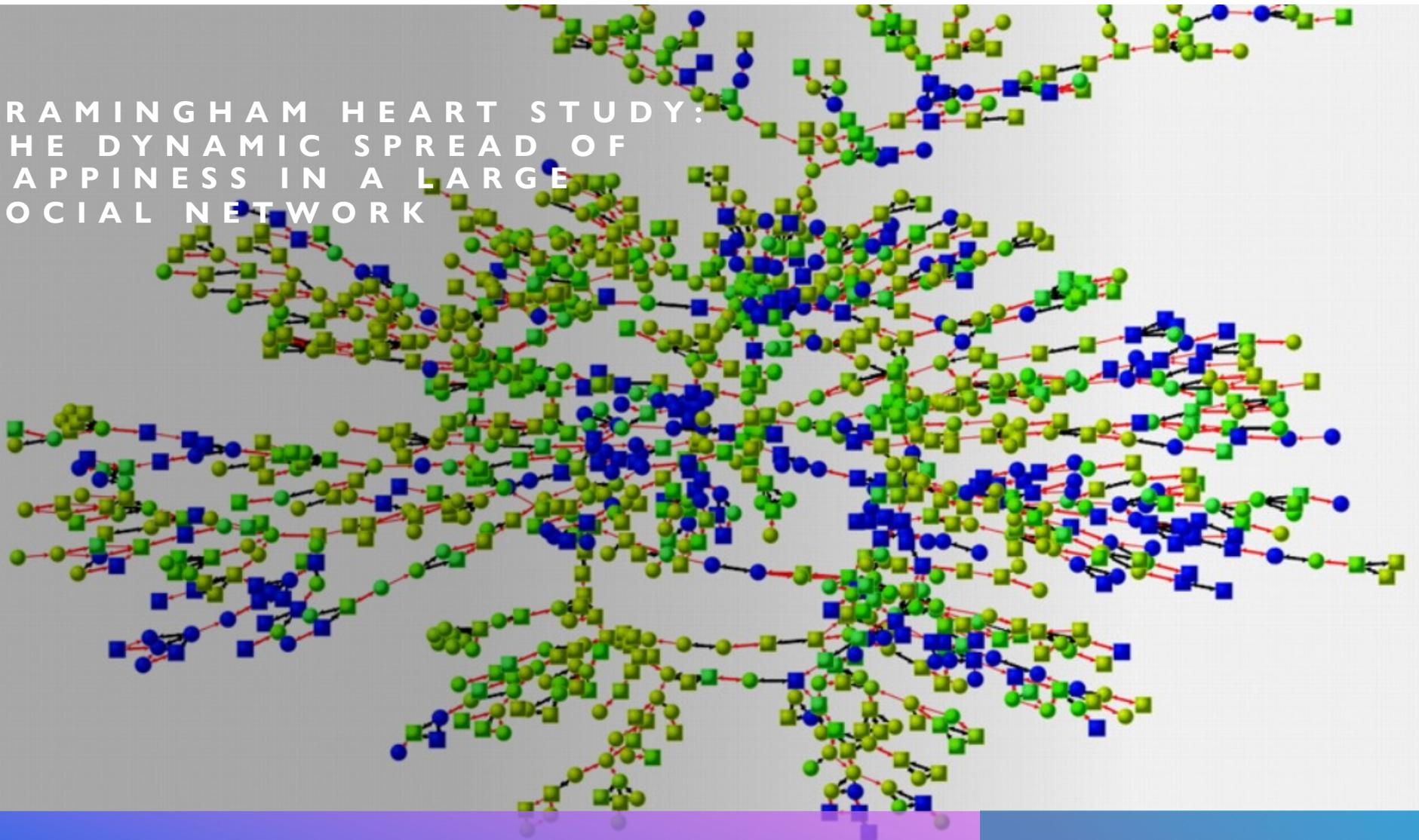




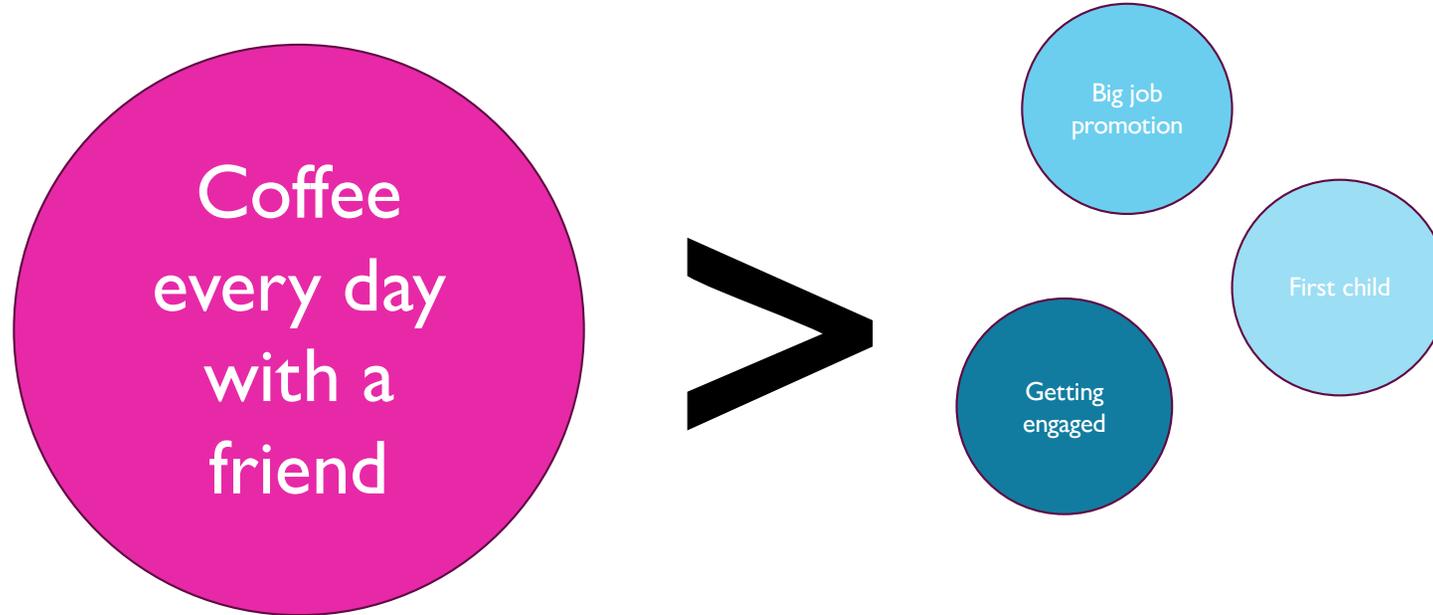
**RELATIONSHIPS:
OTHER PEOPLE
MATTER.**



FRAMINGHAM HEART STUDY:
THE DYNAMIC SPREAD OF
HAPPINESS IN A LARGE
SOCIAL NETWORK

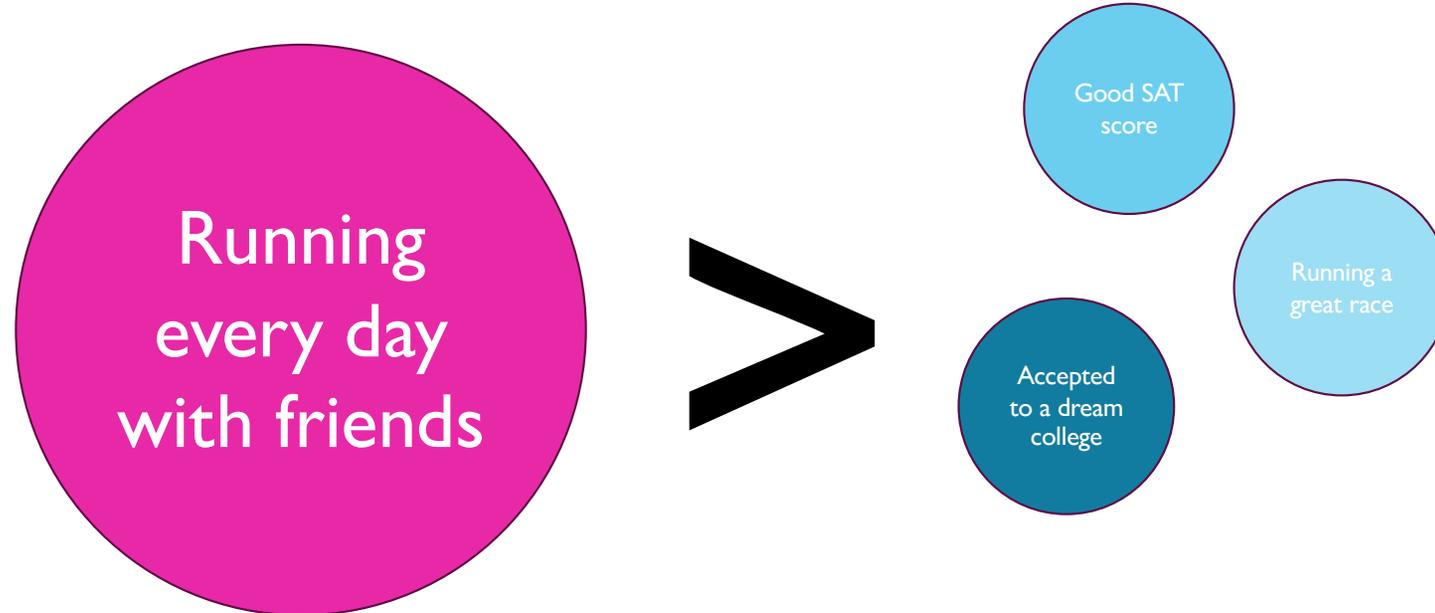


FREQUENCY OF HAPPY EVENTS HAS MORE IMPORTANCE TO OUR HAPPINESS THAN THE INTENSITY OF THE EVENTS



Deiner & Seligman, "Very Happy People," *Psychological Science* 2002; Haidt, *The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom*, 2006.

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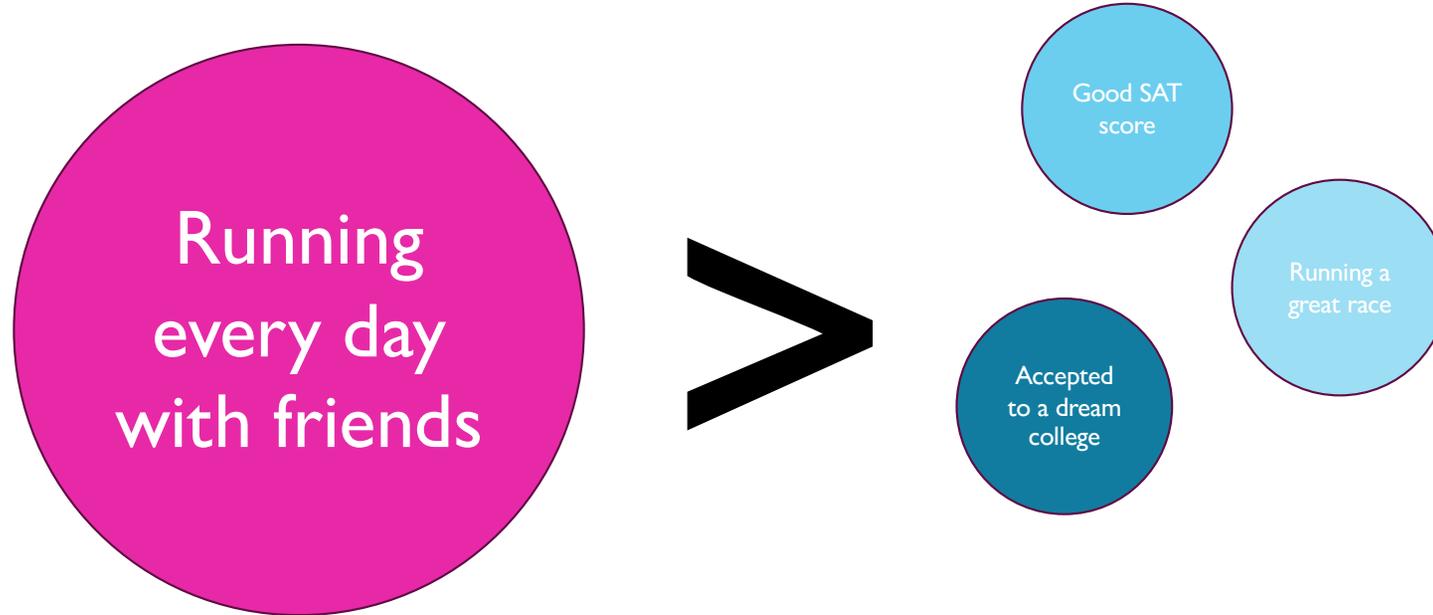


Coach Flatow infers from...

Deiner & Seligman, "Very Happy People," *Psychological Science* 2002; Haidt, *The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom*, 2006.

THIS RELATIONSHIP DOES NOT IMPLY A CHOICE OR A PRIORITY!

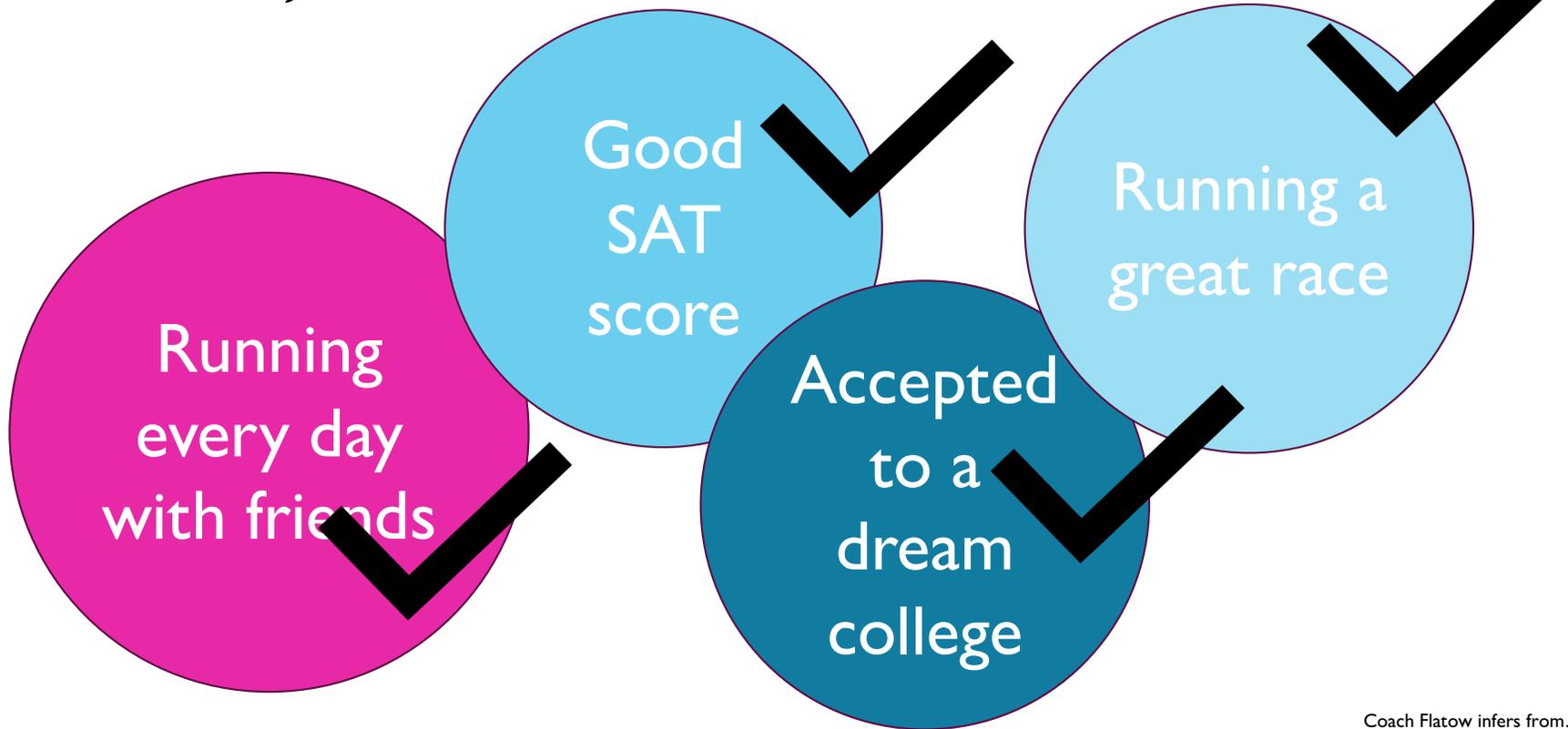
(REMEMBER, ACHIEVEMENTS, MEANING, ETC ARE
ALSO PERMA ELEMENTS)



Coach Flatow infers from...

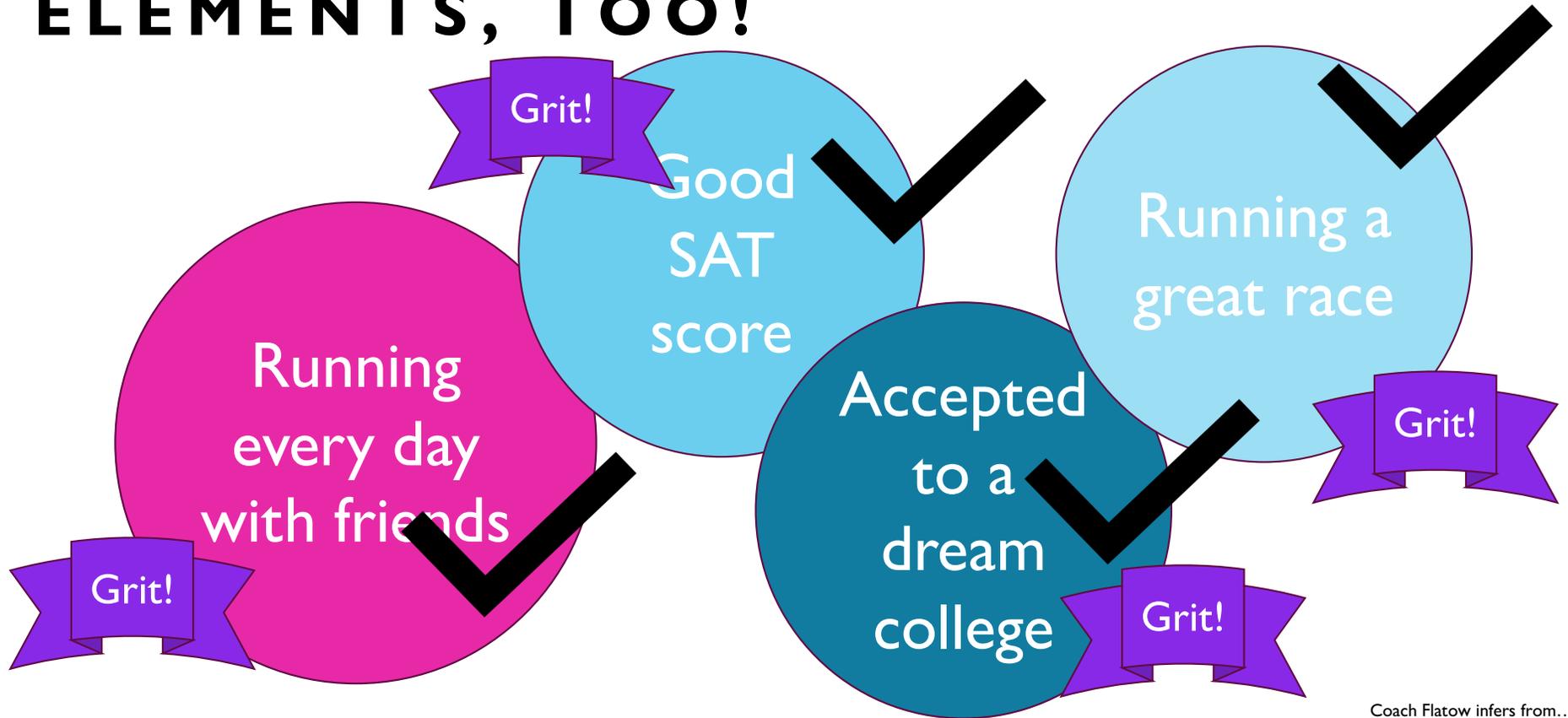
Deiner & Seligman, "Very Happy People," *Psychological Science* 2002; Haidt, *The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom*, 2006.

PLENTY OF US DO ALL THESE THINGS; THIS IS NOT EITHER/OR



Coach Flatow infers from...
Deiner & Seligman, "Very Happy People," *Psychological Science* 2002; Haidt, *The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom*, 2006.

GRIT MATTERS TO THESE ELEMENTS, TOO!



Coach Flatow infers from...
Deiner & Seligman, "Very Happy People," *Psychological Science* 2002; Haidt, *The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom*, 2006.

- Free time
- Social plans
- Be at practice on time
 - Be ready to work
 - Be attentive
- Wear team gear
- Personal comfort
- Take care of ourselves
- Be at team competitions
 - Excuses
- Express gratitude
- Support teammates



**WE GIVE UP SOME FREEDOM/
CHOICES WHEN WE JOIN A TEAM**

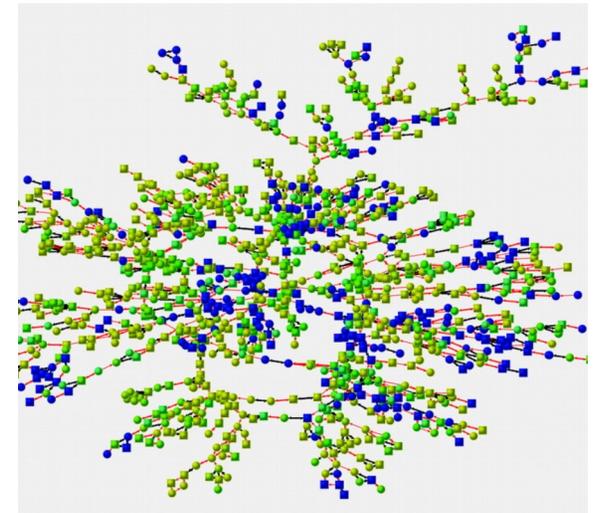


WE GIVE UP SOME FREEDOM/ CHOICES WHEN TO HAVE A TIGHT FRIENDSHIP

- **Time** – spending time helping, listening, or just being there for your friend.
- **Pride** – admitting when you're wrong or apologizing first.
- **Selfishness** – putting your friend's needs ahead of your own sometimes.
- **Comfort** – stepping out of your comfort zone to support them.
- **Judgment** – accepting your friend as they are, even when you disagree.
- **Control** – letting them make their own choices without trying to fix everything.
- **Gossip or negativity** – choosing loyalty and respect over talking behind their back.
- **Convenience** – keeping in touch and showing up even when it's not easy.



**A TEAM IS A
NETWORK OF
RELATIONSHIPS**



A group of runners in purple uniforms are running on a grassy field. The runners are in various stages of their stride, and some are smiling. The background consists of tall, green trees under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is bright and energetic.

HAPPINESS IS
NOT PERSONAL
SUCCESS

HAPPINESS
COMES FROM
INTERPERSONAL
SUCCESS

A TEAM IS A PLACE TO
WORK ON DEVELOPING YOUR
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

TAKEAWAY POINTS

Our decision making is not as logical as we think, and too many options can put us on tilt

The freedom to make any choice we could possibly want does not guarantee happiness

Getting more stuff is not the path to happiness either

What does seem to make us happier is our relationships

Relationships ask us to give up some of our choices—some of our freedom—in return for more happiness

Our interpersonal skills are malleable/can be developed, and our team is a safe place to work on these skills

**APPENDIX:
WE ALSO DON'T DO A
GREAT JOB OF
PREDICTING HOW WE
WILL FEEL AFTER WE
REACH A GOAL (OR
FAILURE TO REACH A
GOAL)**

WE TEND TO OVERESTIMATE HOW MUCH HAPPINESS WE WILL GET FROM SUCCESS



Researchers asked
assistant professors to
predict how they would
feel if...

They got
tenure

They were
denied
tenure

Gilbert et al, "Immune Neglect: A Source of Durability Bias in Affective Forecasting," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1998.

SEEMS LIKE AN OBVIOUS QUESTION, RIGHT?



Researchers asked
assistant professors to
predict how they would
feel if...

They got
tenure
FANTASTIC

They were
denied tenure
DEVASTATED

Gilbert et al, "Immune Neglect: A Source of Durability Bias in Affective Forecasting," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1998.

THEN THE RESEARCHERS LOOKED FOR WHAT HAPPENED



How did assistant professors **ACTUALLY** feel after...

They got tenure

They were denied tenure

Gilbert et al, "Immune Neglect: A Source of Durability Bias in Affective Forecasting," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1998.

THEN THE RESEARCHERS LOOKED FOR WHAT HAPPENED



How did assistant
professors **ACTUALLY**
feel after...

They got
tenure
FINE

They were
denied tenure
**BETTER
THAN
EXPECTED**

Gilbert et al, "Immune Neglect: A Source of Durability Bias in Affective Forecasting," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1998.

THE IMPLICATION OF THIS STUDY FOR MV STUDENTS IS...



March 20, 2014

If we ask students how they will feel after college offers come out...

Dream School:
FANTASTIC

Safety School:
DEVASTATED

THE IMPLICATION OF THIS STUDY FOR MV STUDENTS IS..



March 20, 2014

How will students
ACTUALLY feel after
college offers come
out...

Dream School:

FINE

(Maybe, relieved?)

Safety School:

**BETTER
THAN
EXPECTED**

THE IMPLICATION OF THIS STUDY FOR MV STUDENTS IS..



March 20, 2014

I'm not saying don't try,
and try hard...I'm just
saying "It will be OK!"

Dream
School:

You will be
OK!

Safety
School:

You will be
OK!

DOES
HAVING
MORE
FREEDOM
OF CHOICE
MAKE US
HAPPIER?



"Can we talk through a decision that I've already made?"