

I can safely say that I think few of us struggle with having too much happiness. With respect to physical health, a high degree of parent- and teacher-rated "cheerfulness" is prospectively associated with a greater mortality risk. Furthermore, when experiencing very high degrees of positive emotion, some individuals are inclined to engage in riskier behaviors, such as alcohol consumption, binge eating, and drug use. Their conclusion? The researchers then move on to make a false comparison of the costs of too intense positive emotion, basically equating the state of mania with "too much happiness." For example, Tsai, Knutson, and Fung (2006) demonstrated that in Chinese and Chinese-American compared with European-American culture, low-arousal positive states (e.g., contentment) are more highly valued than high-arousal positive states (e.g., excitement). Furthermore, people with extremely high positive-to-negative emotion ratios (i.e., >5:1) exhibit more rigid behavioral repertoires. Some studies suggest that certain positive emotions lead people to rely more on highly accessible cognitions, such as beliefs, expectations, and stereotypes. For example, participants in a positive mood produced significantly less persuasive arguments, whereas those in a negative mood produced significantly more persuasive arguments, compared with those in a neutral mood condition.[...] A second relevant dimension along which cultures vary is social engagement.