

First, I would like to thank the organizers of the World Happiness Summit for partnering with the University of Miami to bring this wonderful event to our community

I would like to take a moment to recognize government officials from various countries who have come to the Summit to share best practices and learn from researchers and practitioners.

In addition, I would like to recognize Karen Guggenheim, the CEO of the World Happiness Summit for her amazing work in putting together this event. Karen is a double alumna of the University of Miami, and, in addition, her son Kristoff is a student in the business school, and her late husband Ricardo graduated from the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and was a physician in our health system. Karen is a 'Cane through and through! Thank you Karen!

I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Dr. Tal Ben Shahar, a leader in the field of positive psychology, for partnering with the World Happiness Summit, and with the University of

Miami. Dr. Ben Shahar and the University of Miami are collaborating to create some programs in the promotion of happiness, and we are very excited about that.

I would also like to thank Dean Isaac Prilleltensky for the important work you do at the University of Miami ensuring the well-being of our students, faculty and staff. Your commitment to creating a culture of belonging at UM is vital to our community.

In the few moments that I have I would like to make a few comments about the science and the practice of happiness and well-being. As a physician, I know the importance of physical fitness for wellness, but as a former minister of health, I also know the importance of fairness in improving *well-being for all*.

The science of well-being has made tremendous gains over the last three decades, and researchers, practitioners, scholars and policy makers have done a great deal to implement findings to improve lives.

Our challenge, as a society, is to extend well-being for all people.

By making sure that all people benefit from the advances in well-being, we will be creating a happier, safer, and more prosperous society.

Today, the advantages of the science of well-being are not evenly distributed across communities. We have to close the well-being gap, and we can do so in a number of ways.

We have an opportunity to improve well-being in families, schools, workplaces and communities. We know, for example, that well-being is multidimensional, and that it consists of *interpersonal, community, occupational, physical, psychological, and economic* domains.

Interpersonal well-being, or social support, is correlated with psychological thriving, physical health, and longevity. Loneliness and isolation are seriously detrimental to our health and happiness. Only last month the United Kingdom appointed a

minister to look into loneliness. We have to make sure that no one suffers from exclusion and isolation.

This is related to community well-being. A sense of belonging is crucial for happiness and well-being. Communities must ensure that all of their members feel valued and have an opportunity to add value. Here at the University of Miami we have made a concerted effort to create a culture of belonging. It is, in fact, a strategic priority for us. I'm happy to report that we have made considerable progress in the last few years in this regard. Last year Forbes magazine ranked the University the #1 employer to work for in the educational sector in the country.

Occupational well-being depends on the engagement of employees and their opportunities to be creative and supported by colleagues. We know that your boss can be your best healer. Research shows that a good relationship with your boss can improve your health, but a bad one can be very harmful to your psychological and physical well-being. The research is very

convincing. This is why we must emphasize the training of managers in emotional intelligence. Millions of dollars are lost, and much suffering is incurred by supervisors who ignore the emotional well-being of their employees.

We have an opportunity to make sure that no one is left behind at home, the community or the workplace. We must nurture supportive environments for everyone to flourish.

The science of well-being has also made tremendous gains in understanding how to build positive emotions and how to reduce stress. Here at the University of Miami we have an institute on mindfulness and our researchers and scholars, including Amishi Jha and Scott Rogers, are leading the way in the science of mindfulness. We have to ask ourselves what we can do to make sure that everyone in society, regardless of background, can benefit from advances in psychological well-being.

When it comes to physical well-being, there is so much we can do. We have to start by focusing on prevention, and not just on reaction. From proper nutrition to physical activity to proper sleep, there are multiple ways to prevent disease and promote health and wellness. In fact, we know that 75% of the cost incurred by the health system are caused by lifestyle and not by genetic conditions. Unfortunately, the benefits of this knowledge are not evenly distributed. We still see food deserts in many communities, and many neighborhoods are unsafe for walking.

Economic well-being has a lot to do with our overall level of happiness. Countries with higher GDP tend to report higher levels of life satisfaction, but the research also states that money is not everything. Globally, there is a ceiling effect at \$ 95,000. Beyond that income, there are diminishing returns to more money. We also know that if you have disposable income, one of the best things you can do is spend it on experiences, and not on objects. Experiences build memories and meaning, which enhance well-

being. Red sports cars do not add much to our happiness. A walk in the park with our family does.

But if you don't have enough economic resources, all domains of well-being will suffer. As the recent book *Scarcity* makes the point, when you lack resources you tend to focus so narrowly on gaining them that you neglect other important aspects of your life, such as relationships or your physical health. If you need to work so much to make ends meet, you are likely going to suffer from poorer relationships, poor physical health and elevated stress.

To put it simply, to promote happiness and well-being for all, we need to foster fitness and fairness.

Fitness refers to skills. To improve the function of our body we need to work on physical fitness. To reduce stress we need to sharpen our psychological fitness. To have flourishing relationships we need to enhance our interpersonal fitness.

But fitness is not enough. We also need to improve fairness.

Fairness is about affording all people opportunities to learn and practice the skills of well-being.

There cannot be wellness for all if there is not fairness for all.

This, in my view, is the next frontier for happiness and well-being.

This is becoming increasingly clear to governments around the world. In the Global Happiness Policy Report published last month, Jeffrey Sachs from Columbia University makes the point that we must close the well-being gap in the physical, occupational, psychological, interpersonal, community, and economic domains.

In policy as well as in practice there are two type of errors: Errors of omission and errors of commission. Errors of commission entail behaviors that offend, exclude, and marginalize. Errors of omission consist of not doing something, or not doing enough.



We run the risk of errors of omission in the current discourse on happiness and well-being. We run the risk of forgetting vast sectors of the population that do not have the luxury of engaging in self-improvement, and herein lies our greatest opportunity.

By contributing to society at large, we are helping ourselves. This is a win-win. Many studies demonstrate that when we help others we are primarily helping ourselves. Pro-social behaviors are beneficial to the recipient and to the giver. Social capital is good for everyone in the community.

This is the challenge of our times: affording well-being for all. To accomplish it, we need to foster fitness and fairness.