3 REGRETS ABOUT THE PIE CHART

- Assigning hard numbers (50/10/40) to the three factors influencing happiness
- Not clarifying that the three factors are not independent, additive, or non-overlapping
- Pie chart widely misinterpreted—for example, percentages wrongly used to describe individuals, not percent variance accounted for

FROM: Lyubominsky, S. (July 20, 2019). Revisiting the happiness pie chart: The science of interventions aimed at increasing well-being. Invited plenary at the 6th World Congress on Positive Psychology, Melbourne, AUSTRALIA.

WHAT’S THE BOTTOM LINE?

- There are at least three major influences on happiness: genetics, circumstances, and activities
  - With the caveats that they are not independent, additive, or non-overlapping; they include measurement error; and their precise contribution is unknown and could change over time
- All three factors exert sizable influences on well-being
- The pie chart calls for future research to test whether practicing intentional activities can increase happiness

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