

UNITED WISDOM

Life Is Better Where We Are Not

The Person and the Inner World

Andrey Zarinsh & Maria Evilkut

I-11-X01 · EN

@andrey.zarinsh @ilkutki

Life Is Better Where We Are Not

How someone else's life becomes our desire

United Wisdom · Andrey Zarinsh & Maria Evilkut

> ***Archival translation note.*** *Research descriptions and statements about source checks below belong to the accepted Russian archive. They are preserved as the original article's record, not as claims of fresh verification for this English package. Quotations are translated from that Russian text; their wording has not been newly checked against the named English editions.*
>
> *"You need a change of soul, not of climate."*
>
> *Seneca, Moral Letters to Lucilius, Letter 28, §1. Translated for the original article from Richard M. Gummere's English translation [1].*

What This Article Is About

In the morning we still liked our own life. By evening we had seen how someone else lives and discovered that ours had become somehow insufficient. The room had not shrunk, our loved one had not changed, our work had not grown worse. But another point of reference had appeared. Where does this sudden sense of lack come from? How does fading enjoyment of the familiar combine with other people's successes, advertising promises, and the hope of finally becoming someone different? Why does getting what we want sometimes help, while at other times it merely pauses the search? The answer involves several mechanisms: habituation, comparison, anticipation of pleasure, and social ways of evaluating ourselves. Seeing them serves a practical purpose: understanding what life we really want to build and what we are willing to spend its time on. Psychological research appears here alongside philosophical and religious texts; their conclusions have different standing. Everyday examples are hypothetical, and the argument connecting them is the authors' interpretation.

I. An Evening When Nothing Happened

Imagine an ordinary evening. You came home, ate dinner, and planned to watch a film. The day was tiring but quite normal. Then you opened your phone. An acquaintance posted photographs of a new house. A friend described a move. A former colleague announced a project launch. Twenty minutes later, your apartment seems smaller, your work more meaningless, and a quiet evening suspiciously like a life being missed.

Nothing you have disappeared during those twenty minutes. The story you tell about it changed. Until recently, the apartment meant security and a door you could close behind you. Now it means the distance between you and someone else's house. Work was a way to live; now it is evidence that someone has moved ahead. Even rest begins to need justification: while I sit here, others seem to be getting on with living.

There is a hidden asymmetry in this comparison. We experience our own lives in full: we know the cost of purchases, the history of conflicts, the exhaustion after a successful day. Someone else's life is represented by a few fragments. We are shown a result, and mentally attach well-being to it. A beautiful place becomes proof of freedom. A smile beside a partner promises intimacy. An expensive object looks like confirmation of inner confidence.

A similar error is studied in research on affective forecasting. Timothy Wilson and colleagues described focalism: when assessing a future event, people may give it too much attention and underestimate everything else that will fill their subsequent lives. This can lead to overestimating how long its emotional effect will last. Study, 2000.

In our scene, someone else's house occupies almost the whole imaginary frame. We do not yet see an ordinary sleep-deprived morning there, work messages, or a leaking tap. In fantasy, an acquisition takes the place of an entire life. That is why it promises so much.

II. How a Dream Becomes the Background

Suppose the house is bought. During the first weeks, its owner notices the living-room light, the quiet, the chance to eat breakfast on the terrace. Then the rainy season begins and tasks accumulate. The terrace remains, but experiencing it no longer feels like an event every day. It is easy to take this change as evidence that the purchase was not good enough.

Several processes need distinguishing here. Satiation occurs when repeating an experience reduces the pleasure it gives: we can listen to a favorite song too often, and a familiar treat stops delighting us. Hedonic adaptation concerns the way emotional responses to changed life conditions weaken over time. Rising aspirations mean that the standard of sufficiency itself changes. These processes can combine, but one is not necessarily the cause of another.

In a three-month study of 476 students, Kennon Sheldon and Sonja Lyubomirsky tested a model accounting for declining positive emotions after good changes and increasing expectations. The results supported the model in the sample studied. They do not prove that every improvement must eventually lose all its value. Study, 2012.

The distinction between value and emotional vividness already changes a great deal. A quiet apartment still allows you to sleep well even when it no longer produces delight. A reliable

person beside you does not become less reliable because the relationship has settled into a calm rhythm. The absence of daily surprise does not yet mean that the good has ended.

Even satiation cannot be reduced to an inevitable mechanical exhaustion of pleasure. In experiments by Jeff Galak and colleagues, recalling the variety of earlier experiences helped restore enjoyment of repeated experiences. The authors emphasized how people represent their own consumption. Study, 2009.

Sometimes the circumstances themselves need changing. Sometimes it is enough to stop treating what is already there as an unnoticed background. It is difficult to work out which is true if every fading impression immediately becomes a command to seek a replacement.

III. Someone Else’s Example Gives Desire a Shape

Boredom rarely arrives with precise instructions. A person feels that “something is wrong” but does not yet know what is missing. Novelty? Rest? Work with visible results? Company? The chance to make decisions? These conditions can feel similar while requiring different responses.

Shane Bench and Heather Lench proposed understanding boredom as a signal prompting a search for other goals and activities. This is a theoretical model grounded in a review of research, not proof of boredom’s only function. It helps show why seeking something new is not in itself a flaw: it can take us beyond an overly narrow range of experience. Article, 2013.

But an undefined search readily encounters a ready-made image of an answer. Someone exhausted by pointless meetings sees an acquaintance with a laptop beside the sea and decides they must move. Perhaps that is a good choice. Perhaps they are trying to solve, by changing location, a problem with work that will travel with them. The photograph helped name the desire before the difficulty had been understood.

Other people generally serve as points of reference. In his classic work on social comparison, Leon Festinger considered how people evaluate their opinions and abilities by comparing themselves with others, especially when objective criteria are lacking. This is a theory of self-evaluation; turning it into a universal explanation of all purchases would stretch it too far. Paper, 1954.

The question of a desire being “our own” therefore cannot be settled by finding an aspiration untouched by outside influence. We learn about professions, books, and ways of living through people. It is more useful to ask what happened after encountering the example. Did a specific interest appear that we want to explore, or only an unpleasant feeling that our life fails someone else’s test?

IV. When “I Have Enough” Becomes “I Am Falling Behind”

You can be satisfied with your salary and become disappointed after talking to a friend. The amount has not changed, but it has acquired a new meaning. It now shows a position in a comparison. This experience does not necessarily mean pettiness: our position among people is connected with real opportunities, respect, and access to resources. The mistake begins when one indicator is granted authority to assess an entire life.

Comparing data on people’s well-being and their neighbors’ incomes, Erzo Luttmer found an association between higher neighboring incomes and lower reported happiness after accounting for personal income. This was observational research, not an experiment in which participants were randomly assigned wealthy neighbors. Study published in 2005.

If a goal is defined as being “no worse off than others,” reaching it does not guarantee stopping. One comparison group is followed by another. The house grows larger, the social circle changes, and so does the idea of a normal house. You can move very fast and constantly feel behind because the destination moves with the observer.

In *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, Thorstein Veblen described conspicuous consumption: possessions and ways of spending time participate in the public confirmation of status. His analysis concerns the social world of the late nineteenth century; a modern phone should not automatically be declared an exact copy of that era’s status practices. Yet the possibility of buying an object partly for its social meaning remains useful to consider. Primary text, chapters II and IV.

A thought experiment can help: if nobody ever knew about my choice, would it retain its value? Answering “It matters to me that people see it” requires no self-humiliation. It simply makes another part of the purchase explicit. Now we can ask whether this way of gaining recognition is worth the money, time, and effort it demands.

V. Desire Cannot Promise Pleasure

A person spends a month choosing a watch. They compare models, read reviews, return to photographs. There is already a great deal of life in this story: anticipation, recognition, small discoveries. Finally the box is opened. There is joy, but before long the watch becomes a watch. Anticipation occupied more space than ownership did afterward.

We readily mistake the strength of desire for a forecast of the strength of satisfaction. But these are different quantities. Kent Berridge and Terry Robinson distinguish the motivational attraction of a reward, *wanting*, from the pleasure it gives, *liking*. Their work concerns the neurobiology of reward and addiction; it does not authorize diagnosing addiction in someone who enjoys shopping. The relevant conclusion is narrower: systems involved in pursuing

rewards and experiencing pleasure partly differ. “I want it very much, therefore I will be very happy” does not follow from the organization of these processes. Review by the theory’s authors, 2016.

An object may also carry an expectation of a new version of ourselves. I imagine becoming calmer, more confident, more interesting. That change is what gives the object its special power. Yet a watch can perform its job perfectly without resolving why I find it so difficult to feel my own significance.

Disappointment can then be read in two ways. First: I chose the wrong model and need to find the next one. Second: I expected a purchase to produce something requiring a different kind of participation in life. In the first case, desire acquires a new object; in the second, it becomes available for understanding.

Of course, an object can bring lasting enjoyment, help with work, and become part of a beloved activity. What matters is accurate expectation. A good camera expands a photographer’s possibilities; it does not guarantee that someone will start leaving home, noticing light, and enduring the time needed to learn. We still have to be present in our own lives ourselves.

VI. How Dissatisfaction Acquires a Destination

Advertising often reaches people before they have understood their own condition. Someone has not yet formulated why they are exhausted, and already they are shown a way to “restore energy.” They have not understood what their relationship lacks, and a romantic itinerary is ready. They have not decided what knowledge their work requires, and a course offer connects learning with the chance finally to become worthy of respect.

A hypothetical sequence might be described as follows: identify a significant feeling, make it more prominent, show an attractive outcome, and connect that outcome with an offer. Sometimes every transition is justified: someone needs a comfortable chair and a seller helps find a suitable one. Sometimes a large gap remains between the product and the promised condition. Then a beautiful story is what fills that gap.

In three field studies, Sandra Matz and colleagues examined the fit between advertising messages and audiences’ psychological characteristics. In the campaigns studied, such a fit improved advertising effectiveness. Effects depended on conditions, and profiling had limitations. The paper does not confirm an infallible technology for reading everyone’s “secret pain.” Study, 2017.

An appearance of shared choice provides additional persuasion. Matthew Salganik, Peter Dodds, and Duncan Watts built an experimental music market where participants could either

see or not see what others had downloaded. Social information increased inequality in songs' success and made the outcome less predictable. Experiment, 2006. Songs were studied here, but the result helps identify one mechanism: popularity itself becomes information influencing choice.

Thus we are sold not only an object's properties, but a place among those who have already understood, bought, and arrived in time. Our previous life can begin to seem insufficient before we have found our own reason to change anything. Distinguishing these transitions lets us assess an offer more carefully while retaining the option to use it if it truly fits.

VII. Understanding a Need or Exploiting Vulnerability

Knowledge of another person's desires is not manipulation in itself. An architect asks how a family lives to design a comfortable space. A teacher notices what prevents a student from learning. A friend understands why an offer seems important to us. In each case, attention to the person can make a decision more accurate.

The difference appears in what happens next to that knowledge. Does the conversation help clarify options and limitations? Can an uncomfortable question be asked? Does the right to refuse without humiliation remain? Or does the other person intensify anxiety, hurry us, and associate refusal with inadequacy: "If you do not decide now, you clearly do not want to change your life"?

That last formula closes the exit from the conversation. A person must either agree or accept an unpleasant judgment of themselves. The target is no longer just an opinion about a product; their relationship with themselves is placed under pressure. This is the authors' criterion for examining such situations: how far the method of persuasion supports a person's ability to consider a decision.

Even understanding the mechanism does not guarantee complete protection. In a study by Philipp Lorenz-Spreen and colleagues, a short procedure drawing participants' attention to their personality characteristics improved recognition of advertising targeted at them. What was measured was precisely the ability to recognize it. Study, 2021. A later study found that warning people about microtargeting did not remove personalized persuasion's advantage under the conditions examined. Study, 2025.

This is a reason to abandon overconfidence, not our own judgment. We can recognize an advertising technique and still find an offer attractive. Checking promises, having time to pause, and access to alternatives matter. There is still room for honest persuasion: people change their minds through facts and arguments, not only because someone has found a weakness.

VIII. A Life Constantly Being Evaluated

Imagine a couple choosing a place for the weekend. The search began with wanting to be together. Gradually something else becomes central: will the place be beautiful enough, will it produce a good photograph, have acquaintances chosen something better? During the trip, one scrolls through other people's posts while the other makes their own. They have spent the time together, but imagined spectators have occupied their attention for most of the day.

There may be a cost here that is hard to see in a bank statement. Time spent continually evaluating a life ceases to be time spent participating in it. This is not a law about every use of a phone. It is a question to ask about a particular evening: what did I do, and what consequently never happened?

The relationship between social media, comparison, and well-being is more complicated than the familiar slogan about inevitable harm. In a critical review, Adrian Meier and Benjamin Johnson note heterogeneous findings, the influence of circumstances and individual differences, and the possibility of positive and reciprocal effects. Someone else's life can inspire and offer useful information. Review, 2022.

The place an acquisition occupies among other goals also matters. Tim Kasser and Richard Ryan found an association between the relative centrality of financial success among aspirations and lower well-being. The research concerned the ordering of life priorities; it does not show that high income itself is harmful. Three studies, 1993.

One can seek prosperity to provide family stability and the opportunity to do meaningful work. One can seek the same amount to stop painful comparison. Outwardly the actions look similar. But in the second case, every success someone else achieves can undo what has already been attained. Life then gradually becomes the preparation of evidence that it has succeeded, while the ability to notice it from within goes unpracticed.

IX. What Must Change Along With the Purchase

Distinguishing a need from its proposed solution can matter more than sorting desires into good and bad. "I want to live by the sea" can conceal very different tasks. One person truly suits the climate and way of life. Another wants to see their boss less often. A third wants to feel again like someone with a future ahead. One move does not automatically answer all three requests.

In Richard Ryan and Edward Deci's self-determination theory, autonomy, competence, and relatedness are considered basic psychological needs. Autonomy means experiencing meaningful assent to one's actions; it does not require complete independence from people.

Competence concerns feeling able to act and master tasks. Relatedness concerns meaningful relationships. Theoretical and research paper, 2000.

Through this perspective, a particular desire can be examined more carefully. If someone lacks participation in their own life, buying a symbol of freedom may be less helpful than changing working arrangements. If intimacy is missing, a new apartment helps only insofar as space for real communication appears within it. If someone wants to feel capable of doing something, an object can be a tool, but mastery still requires effort.

Sheldon and colleagues separately examined the content of goals and the motives for pursuing them. Their findings supported the importance of both dimensions for well-being: it makes sense to ask what a person seeks and why. Study, 2004.

This avoids an awkward trap: imagining a list of “right” purchases for everyone. An expensive tool may serve a beloved activity for years, while a modest-looking purchase may be a way of pleading for approval. Understanding a choice requires bringing the chooser back into the picture: their circumstances, values, and daily actions.

X. How Ancient Thinkers Distinguished Desires

Epicurus, Seneca, and early Buddhist texts offer different ways of considering dissatisfaction. They cannot be combined into a single scientific theory. They ask about a good life, freedom, and liberation from suffering within their own worldviews. Comparing them here helps formulate more precisely the question usually concealed behind a short “I want.”

In the *Letter to Menoeceus*, Epicurus distinguishes natural from empty desires and, among natural desires, those that are necessary. He proposes evaluating pleasure in light of consequences: attractiveness alone does not make a choice reasonable. His ideal concerns freedom from bodily pain and mental distress, rather than an obligation to intensify impressions endlessly. Primary text, translated by Robert Drew Hicks. For our question, this invites us to see a limit: by what signs will I know that what I want is enough?

In the *Discourse on Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion*, the origin of suffering is linked to craving, *taṇhā*, which seeks enjoyment here and there. The text places it within the Four Noble Truths and the path to liberation. Reducing this to advice to shop less would lose its religious meaning. SN 56.11, translated by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. What touches our subject is the structure of the transition itself: each new “there” promises to complete what the previous one did not.

In Letter 28, Seneca addresses someone who changes places while retaining the weight of their own condition. His question concerns what travelers carry with them. This is Stoic reflection on working on oneself, not proof that moving is useless. Primary text.

The differences matter. Epicurus discusses prudent choices of pleasure; Seneca writes from Stoic ethics; the Buddhist discourse discusses the cessation of craving in the context of liberation. Yet each text, in its own way, suggests examining our relationship to what we want before entrusting the next object with the final resolution of our life.

XI. Sometimes We Really Do Need to Leave

The account of habituation becomes dangerously convenient when it is used to explain every dissatisfaction. Someone is underpaid, lives amid noise, has no control over their time, yet hears: “You simply do not know how to appreciate what you have.” A complex explanation becomes a way to ignore a concrete problem.

Material conditions matter. Examining disagreements between earlier results on income and emotional well-being, Matthew Killingsworth, Daniel Kahneman, and Barbara Mellers showed that the relationship differs across groups. Their analysis does not support a simple universal formula in which money stops helping everyone above the same amount. These are associations within the American sample studied, not a promise of happiness from any increase. Study, 2023.

Likewise, wanting new experiences does not necessarily conceal emptiness. People are entitled to enjoy travel, beautiful things, and variety. In studies by Leaf Van Boven and Thomas Gilovich, participants on average associated experiential purchases with greater happiness than material acquisitions. These findings do not make every trip a good choice and every object a bad one. Study, 2003.

Examining desire must therefore include the outside world. What specifically makes life difficult now? Which constraints will disappear after a change? Which will remain? An apartment nearer work can return an hour every day. A different job can allow adequate sleep. A move can provide safety. Such improvements do not become illusions simply because they eventually stop surprising us.

Gratitude need not mean agreeing to stay. We can value the experience a job gave us and seek another. We can love a city and realize we no longer want to live there. Noticing what we have is compatible with the right to choose change. It helps us see more clearly what is worth changing.

XII. What This Means in Practice: An Ordinary Tuesday

Let us return to the evening with the phone. The other person’s house is still beautiful. Desire has not disappeared because we learned about comparison and habituation. Now we can ask it more useful questions than “Why am I so envious?”

The first concerns the expected result. What will change in an ordinary day if I get what I want? “I will be happier” is still too broad. “I will be able to work in a separate room,” “I will see friends more often,” and “I will stop spending two hours commuting” already let us discuss reality. The more concrete the expected change, the easier it is to compare the promise with the possibilities of the choice.

The second question brings back the full price. It includes money, maintenance, time, moving, learning, and giving up other opportunities. An imagined life often consists of its best minutes. A real life includes repetition. Do I want an ordinary Tuesday inside this dream? Am I ready for entrepreneurial freedom to coexist with uncertainty, a house to need maintenance, and a new profession initially to involve considerable awkwardness?

The third question concerns means. If I want rest, which options actually reduce the load? If I want recognition, whose recognition do I need, and for what? If I want change, what small action could bring a new experience now? These questions do not cancel a large goal. They allow us to test its content before making a large commitment.

Finally, desire can be given time. A pause lets us see whether interest remains beyond a particular image, conversation, or advertisement. Sometimes a clear intention remains. Sometimes we discover that what we wanted most was a few minutes free of feeling behind. Both results are more useful than an automatic decision.

The sequence proposed here—habituation, comparison, promise, acquisition, renewed habituation—is a scheme of one possible scenario. In reality, links may change places or be absent. A person can notice another’s opportunity, choose it, gain lasting benefit, and never enter an endless chase. Understanding should therefore expand freedom of choice rather than prohibit desires.

Perhaps after this conversation you will still decide to look for another house. Perhaps for the first time you will clearly understand why. Or perhaps you will close the phone and return to the person with whom you planned to spend the evening. Either ending can make sense. Someone else’s life stops automatically deciding what yours is missing.

Life is better where we are not partly because our imagined “there” does not yet contain our ordinary days. When choosing another life, it is worth imagining how we will live in it after it stops being new.

> *“Not every pleasure should be chosen.”*
>
> *Epicurus, Letter to Menoeceus, §129. Translated for the original article from Robert Drew Hicks’s translation [17].*

Connections Between Traditions and Research

This map shows comparable questions. Similarity of questions does not mean identity of teachings or experimental confirmation of a philosophical position.

Question	Research line	Philosophical comparison and boundary
Why does joy fade?	Adaptation in Sheldon and Lyubomirsky; satiation in Galak and colleagues.	Buddhist craving describes a different, religious level of the problem and cannot be equated with adaptation.
How does a standard of sufficiency arise?	Festinger's social comparison; Luttmer's relative income.	Veblen analyzes the social meaning of consumption and status. This is social theory, not the neurobiology of desire.
Does desire guarantee satisfaction?	Berridge and Robinson's wanting/liking distinction.	Epicurus proposes evaluating consequences. An ethical argument is not an early version of neuroscience.
What changes after moving?	Focalism in affective forecasting.	Seneca's Letter 28 asks about the traveler's own condition; it does not deny the importance of living conditions.
What makes a goal fit a person?	Self-determination; goal content and motives for achievement.	Epicurean measure in desire raises the question of enough, but is not identical to the psychological needs model.
Where is the boundary of influence?	Personalized persuasion; recognition of microtargeting.	Retaining the ability to consider and reject an offer is used here as an authorial criterion of respect for choice.

Primary Texts and Research

Each work is listed with its role and the level of checking available in the original archive. "Abstract" means only claims available in the authors' abstract were used; details of methods and effect sizes from the full text are not claimed. These are inherited archive records, not newly performed checks.

1. Seneca. *Moral Letters to Lucilius*, Letter 28, §§1–4. English translation by Richard M. Gummere, 1917. Text. Epigraph and discussion of moving; the relevant passage was checked in the original article.

2. Wilson T. D., Wheatley T., Meyers J. M., Gilbert D. T., Axsom D. *Focalism: A Source of Durability Bias in Affective Forecasting*. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2000. Abstract. Errors in predicting emotional duration.

3. Sheldon K. M., Lyubomirsky S. *The Challenge of Staying Happier: Testing the Hedonic Adaptation Prevention Model*. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 2012. Author manuscript. Archive check: abstract and relevant model passages; adaptation, aspirations, variety.

4. Galak J., Redden J. P., Kruger J. *Variety Amnesia: Recalling Past Variety Can Accelerate Recovery from Satiation*. Journal of Consumer Research, 2009. Text. Archive check: result description and relevant passages; memory of variety and satiation.

5. Bench S. W., Lench H. C. *On the Function of Boredom*. Behavioral Sciences, 2013. Article. Archive check: available portions of the theoretical review; boredom and searching for alternatives.

6. Festinger L. *A Theory of Social Comparison Processes*. Human Relations, 1954. Publication. Classic theory of evaluating opinions and abilities through comparison; archive bibliography and basic-premise checks.

7. Luttmer E. F. P. *Neighbors as Negatives: Relative Earnings and Well-Being*. Quarterly Journal of Economics, 2005; working paper 2004. Author abstract at NBER. Relative position and well-being; observational data.

8. Veblen T. *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, 1899, chapters II and IV. Primary text. English original; chapters on pecuniary emulation and conspicuous consumption.

9. Berridge K. C., Robinson T. E. *Liking, Wanting, and the Incentive-Sensitization Theory of Addiction*. American Psychologist, 2016. Author manuscript. Archive check: abstract and available passages; motivation/pleasure distinction, qualified by the addiction context.

10. Matz S. C., Kosinski M., Nave G., Stillwell D. J. *Psychological Targeting as an Effective Approach to Digital Mass Persuasion*. PNAS, 2017. Publication. Archive check: abstract and available passages. Advertising personalization without generalization to universal control of behavior.

11. Salganik M. J., Dodds P. S., Watts D. J. *Experimental Study of Inequality and Unpredictability in an Artificial Cultural Market*. Science, 2006. Abstract. Experiment on the influence of information about others' music choices.

12. Lorenz-Spreen P. et al. *Boosting People's Ability to Detect Microtargeted Advertising*. Scientific Reports, 2021. Article. Archive check: available result description and limitations; recognizing personalized advertising does not equal resistance to persuasion.

13. Carrella F., Simchon A., Edwards M., Lewandowsky S. *Warning People That They Are Being Microtargeted Fails to Eliminate Persuasive Advantage*. Communications Psychology, 2025. Article. Archive check: available result description and discussion; limits of warning effects.

14. Meier A., Johnson B. K. *Social Comparison and Envy on Social Media: A Critical Review*. Current Opinion in Psychology, 2022. Abstract and main propositions. Heterogeneous findings and context; the review is not counted as a separate experiment.

15. Kasser T., Ryan R. M. *A Dark Side of the American Dream: Correlates of Financial Success as a Central Life Aspiration*. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1993. Abstract. Centrality of financial success among goals; values distinguished from actual income.

16. Ryan R. M., Deci E. L. *Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being*. American Psychologist, 2000. Author PDF. Archive check: relevant sections on needs and autonomous motivation.

17. Epicurus. *Letter to Menoeceus*, §§127–132. English translation by Robert Drew Hicks. Primary text. Distinguishing desires and consequences; the Russian quotation was translated for the original article.

18. *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, Saṃyutta Nikāya 56.11. English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu. Text. Archive check: craving within the Four Noble Truths; a religious primary text.

19. Killingsworth M. A., Kahneman D., Mellers B. *Income and Emotional Well-Being: A Conflict Resolved*. PNAS, 2023. Abstract. Heterogeneous income–emotional well-being association; against a universal saturation threshold.

20. Van Boven L., Gilovich T. *To Do or to Have? That Is the Question*. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2003. Abstract. Experiential versus material purchases; average results do not prescribe individual choices.

21. Sheldon K. M., Ryan R. M., Deci E. L., Kasser T. *The Independent Effects of Goal Contents and Motives on Well-Being: It's Both What You Pursue and Why You Pursue It*. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 2004. Abstract. Goal content distinguished from reasons for pursuing it.

Tags

Desire, needs, social comparison, envy, inspiration, novelty, boredom, satiation, hedonic adaptation, aspirations, satisfaction, affective forecasting, focalism, pleasure, motivation, advertising, marketing, microtargeting, influence, manipulation, autonomy, attention, status, conspicuous consumption, material conditions, self-determination, Epicurus, Seneca, Buddhism, everyday life.

About the Authors

Andrey Zarinsh is the author and founder of United Wisdom. He explores inner transformation, the unity of traditions, intercultural dialogue, and contemporary spiritual discipline.

Instagram: @andrey.zarinsh

Maria Evilkut is a coauthor of United Wisdom. Alongside research, she seeks to test these ideas in practice and observe how principles of unity and mutual understanding work in real life between people and cultures.

Instagram: @ilkutki

References Inherited from the Archive

These links accompanied the archived original and have not been newly verified.

- horosho-tam-source-01 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-02 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-03 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-04 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-05 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-06 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-07 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-08 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-09 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-10 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-11 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-12 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-13 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-14 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-15 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-16 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-17 — source PDF page unspecified.

- horosho-tam-source-18 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-19 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-20 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-21 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-22 — source PDF page unspecified.
- horosho-tam-source-23 — source PDF page unspecified.