

Traces of Syntropy in the practices that lead to Happiness

Maurizia Mancini¹

Introduction

What is the relationship between Syntropy and Happiness? Is it possible to use syntropy to be happier? And how important is this not only for the individual, but for the whole of society? In this text we will answer these questions and give the reader the opportunity to experience if this is possible. First of all, we will briefly deal with what is meant here by happiness and what impact being happy has on the life of the individual and the community in which he lives. Then we will make a brief summary of the main characteristics of syntropy and their relationship to what science says about happiness and how to increase it. Finally, we will identify a practical way to exploit the principles of syntropy to increase our happiness through a simple exercise.

What is happiness?

The theme of happiness has always been dear to mankind: it has been the protagonist of many ancient philosophical currents around the world, defined in different ways, in various eras and cultures. Sometimes the focus has been placed more on collective happiness, sometimes more on individual happiness, always trying to maximize the state of well-being of the human being. We can consider two strands that, roughly, describe the two main approaches to happiness. We will borrow them from Greek philosophy, also because they were defined with precision and had a strong impact on how the topic was then scientifically treated in contemporary times.

The two strands of happiness are mainly:

- **short-term happiness (hedonistic)**, i.e. the satisfaction of an immediate need or desire, or even more precisely the search for the maximization of pleasure (see the Cyrenaic school of Aristippus) or the absence of pain (epicurean school).

¹ info@mauriziamancini.com – www.mauriziamancini.com

- **long-term happiness (eudaimonic)**, that is, to say it with Aristotle, the maximum realization of one's nature, or with Socrates, the result of a rational behavior directed towards virtue. In both cases, it is seen as the realization of the good that is present in the human being.²

Nowadays happiness is mainly studied by researchers of positive psychology (that is the branch of psychological research that deals with how the personal well-being and the quality of life are structured), anthropology and sociology. However, it is also becoming an important topic for those involved in economics, given that the impact of happiness on a country's economy is becoming increasingly evident.³

Nevertheless, today the definitions of happiness, even in the scientific field, are not homogeneous. The definition that in my opinion and that of many scholars is the most balanced and complete was formulated by the researcher of positive psychology Sonja Lyubomirsky:

“the experience of joy, contentment or positive well-being, combined with the feeling that one's life is good, meaningful and useful”.

This definition provides an idea of happiness that includes both a present state of well-being, and the idea that one's life has meaning, and is therefore realizing one's nature at its best.

What is the use of being happy?

Now that we have clarity on what we mean here by “Happiness”, we can say that it has been scientifically proven that being happy makes people more productive at work, makes them more successful in various areas of life (longer lasting marriages, more satisfying friendships, better career and financial situation, better health), decreases stress and strengthens the immune system. It also makes people live longer, makes them feel less pain, solve problems easier and have more trust in others, as well as manage emotions better. Finally, being happy is contagious and leads to greater happiness for the people around us.⁴

² Uchida, Y., & Ogihara, Y. (2012). Personal or interpersonal construal of happiness: A cultural psychological perspective. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 2(4), 354- 369. doi:10.5502/ijw.v2.i4.5

³ Helliwell, J., Layard, R., & Sachs, J. (eds.) (2012, 2015, 2016, 2017). *World happiness report*. The Earth Institute, Columbia University, New York, USA.

⁴ For a specific bibliography of the scientific studies supporting these theses see my book “Happy People Exist”, to be published in 2021

In short, being happy is an excellent idea, both for our well-being and for that of the community. This is why I dedicate my life both to nourishing my happiness every day, and to sharing with as many people as possible the most effective tools to be able to rediscover happiness and live a happy long-life. A happy world of people is not only possible and desirable, but we are now working on it.

Syntropy and happiness

What does syntropy have to do with all this?

To learn more about what is meant by Syntropy, I refer the reader to the other contributions which can be found within the Permanent Conference on Vital Energy, Syntropy and Resonance, of which this paper is part.⁵ The other contributions allow to deepen the concept of syntropy and its practical applications. Here we limit ourselves to summarizing some truly surprising characteristics of this force which, under certain conditions, describes the natural tendency of energy to converge and create complexity, differentiation and structures.

For example, Syntropy:

- works from the future to the past
- acts only on living systems
- tends to bring order and harmony

Now let's keep these characteristics in mind as we list the main ways to nourish our happiness. The pillars of happiness and the trainings towards happiness seen in a syntropic perspective are:

1. autonomy
2. environmental mastery
3. personal growth
4. quality relationships
5. self-acceptance
6. know the goals of one's life
7. access to the state of Flow⁶

⁵ www.sintropia.it e www.syntropy.org

⁶ It is very interesting to note that what is shown to nourish these pillars is in accordance with the ancient precepts and practices reserved for the mystics of the various religions of the world. The practices to which I refer are aimed at giving the practitioner a direct

Happiness is nourished by a series of habits and exercises that increase the strength of several pillars at the same time. Let's consider them as the best "happiness workouts" available today.

Except for those basic strategies necessary to provide the person with the satisfaction of basic survival needs, happiness trainings are good practices, tools and habits that are tailored to the needs of the individual, but which focus on:

- **the liberation from blocks**, beliefs, impressions and self-sabotage that disperse and divert attention and energy from what we really want and would give us long-term well-being and meaning. In this context, we can consider these practices as aimed at the decrease of inner entropy.
- **knowing oneself and clarifying what we want**. This can be read as a concentration of energy on oneself and one's inner world, before being able to create external structures or increase their complexity. It is a question of turning one's attention and energy within, precisely where our perception of the world and our actions originate.
- **living satisfying relationships**, fostering social skills and healthy and intimate communication with partners, friends and relatives. To do this, some relational skills are learned, enhanced and customized that deeply involve the emotional and intuitive sphere of the person and which are aimed at increasing intimacy, harmony and structure in one's social network. The impact of the social network on individual happiness (and vice versa) is an almost literal example of syntropy at work. We all have experience of how much the presence of syntropic characteristics in any relationship makes a difference. Harmony is also a decisive element in achieving anything concrete with other people, regardless of the nature of the relationships. Furthermore, we all have experience that in a group the more complex the task, the more concentration and structure are essential for success. Every human social network is an evident game of entropy and syntropy.
- **cultivating kindness, empathy and compassion**,⁷ which are three skills strongly related to personal happiness (and capable of nourishing most of the pillars). It is

experience of contact with the divine / the infinite / the truth. The exercises and the most effective tools to nourish the pillars of happiness, however, start with the application of what has been shown to be effective for improving one's well-being and finding meaning in one's life. But the similarities are striking and, even more interesting to us here, they are all syntropic in nature.

⁷ Bernhardt, B. C., & Singer, T. (2012). The neural basis of empathy. *Annual Review of Neuroscience*, 35, 1-23. doi:10.1146/annurev-neuro-062111-150536 Bartz, J. A., Zaki, J., Bolger, N., & Ochsner, K. N. (2011). Social effects of oxytocin in humans: Context and

amazing how the anatomical aspects involved in feeling empathy and compassion and in acting with kindness coincide with the parts of us that seem to be able to perceive syntropy. Think for example of the vagus nerve which is largely involved in emotional states of empathy and compassion⁸ and which is also responsible for the regulation of the heartbeat, fundamental in the experiments on syntropy as also described in the paper “Experiments on Vital Energy and Retrocausality” by Antonella Vannini.⁹

- **Cultivating the presence of the Self and the ability to stay in the Flow**, through practices of meditation, creativity development and presence.¹⁰ The very definition of the Flow contains literally syntropic aspects: it is about being completely absorbed in an activity, therefore being concentrated and in a state of pleasant harmony with what is happening.
- **knowing how to forgive**. The ability to let go the past has beneficial effects on physical health, relationships, self-esteem and much more.¹¹ In a syntropic perspective, forgiving means freeing ourselves from the entropic effects that past episodes can have on our present, making us waste energy, occupying thoughts and stimulating unpleasant emotions. Forgiveness is therefore a decrease in inner entropy.
- **have faith in oneself, in others and in the world**. Trust is a fundamental factor for the happiness of the individual (it is related to a good immediate release of oxytocin and supports better long-term relationships), but it is even more important for the effectiveness of any group.¹² This is perhaps the aspect in which Syntropy appears less obviously involved. Yet trust is such only if we leave room for the future to happen, expecting something to happen that increases harmony and well-being. Where there is trust, therefore, there is more space for syntropy to manifest itself, that is, for future harmonic Supercauses to create their own “pre-effects” without the contrast of entropic movements from the past.

person matter. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 15(301–309).

doi:10.1016/j.tics.2011.05.002

⁸ Stellar, J. E., Cohen, A., Oveis, C., & Keltner, D. (2015). Affective and physiological responses to the suffering of others: compassion and vagal activity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 108(4), 572-585.

⁹ <http://www.sintropia.it/journal/english/2020-eng-03.pdf>

¹⁰ Fredrickson, B. L., Cohn, M. A., Coffey, K. A., Pek, J., & Finkel, S. M. (2008). Open hearts build lives: Positive emotions, induced through loving-kindness meditation, build consequential personal resources. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95(5), 1045-1062. doi:10.1037/a0013262

¹¹ Worthington Jr., E.L., Scherer, M. (2004). Forgiveness is an Emotion-Focused Coping Strategy That Can Reduce Health Risks and Promote Health Resilience: Theory, Review, and Hypotheses. *Psychology and Health*, 19(3), 385-405.

¹² <https://www.td.org/magazines/td-magazine/the-science-behind-building-a-culture-of-trust>

We have therefore seen that those who really want to act on their happiness find themselves encountering syntropic aspects in practically any practice or tool. Since Syntropy is typical of living systems, it can also be said that the human being is all the happier the more he favors life, harmony, collaboration and Syntropy in himself and in others.

Nevertheless, although we have seen how much happiness is to be pursued both as an individual and as a whole community, many are not ready to give priority to their own happiness or that of the groups to which they belong.

This usually happens for three reasons. The first is an idea of happiness as an abstract or ephemeral concept, a passing state that vanishes and therefore makes no sense to pursue. I hope that I have here done a little justice to the real nature of this concept, which is definitely concrete and impacts people's lives in the long term, also affecting the duration and quality of life in general.

The second reason why we don't care about our happiness, when we are faced with the possibility and the tools to do so, is the fear of change. Our mind tends to want to remain in the known, albeit unpleasant, because in a substantial change such as "living a happy life" one's identity is at stake: our pains and defects, to which we are secretly so fond of, are part of what we believe to be "I". There is often a strong fear of not recognizing oneself without those "problems" to which we have dedicated years of thoughts and suffering.

In this, Syntropy can help us because, by its nature, it allows to "throw the heart over the obstacle" since, for the principle according to which the Supercauses create their own "pre-effects" back in time, for a Supercause the obstacle has already passed by definition.

The third reason is that it is believed that there are things more important than happiness to devote to. Which is very ironic, as through a brief investigation of why they are so important, it always emerges that the person believes they will produce greater well-being (or less discomfort) for themselves or others or give meaning to their life. So, if you review the definition, more happiness.

Here, then, if you are not yet ready to prioritize your happiness, Syntropy can allow you to bring out, or even go beyond, what is nothing but a block.

Try this experiment.

Little experiment in personal syntropy

Of the things you read above about happiness, there is certainly something that has remained most impressed on your mind. It could be one of the pillars, or one of the characteristics of my happiness training.

Get a piece of paper and a pen. Imagine yourself in a future where you have best developed the skill or pillar that impressed you. It doesn't matter that you know how you got there. Imagine yourself in a concrete scene of this future. Observe and describe the scene, also answering these questions: how are you? What environment are you in? What is around you? What makes you realize in that scene that you have best developed that skill / pillar? Now with your eyes closed, immerse yourself in that scene as if you were there and you were experiencing it firsthand, in that present. Give yourself time to perceive the details. If in this process you feel something unpleasant, or if you are unable to concentrate, you are probably feeling the block that is now preventing you from realizing that possibility you are perceiving. In that case, suspend the experiment and write down the sensations, which may be useful when you want to identify and overcome any blockage or which show you the way forward if you already have the tools to get rid of them. If, on the other hand, the sensations are pleasant and you can perceive the scene vividly, inhaling collect the scene in you and exhaling turn around as if to throw the "seeds" of that reality into its past, made up of your present (and your past).

By doing this little experiment you are accomplishing a symbolic act in which you "embody" the Supercause you desire, that is, a significant moment for you in which you have best developed that skill or that pillar. Through a symbolic act, you behave as a Supercause that consciously activates the "pre-effects" that precede it. It is a powerful symbolic act, which is able to align yourself to that specific goal using a method that is illogical from a rational point of view, but perfectly understandable to that part of you that, instead of reasoning according to causes and effects, syntropically perceives life (happiness) waiting for you.

I will be happy to know the results of your experiment if you want to share them with me by sending an email to info@mauriziamancini.com