

Participants wanted for new happiness study

Rosalind Woodworth, a Doctor of Philosophy student in the UTAS School of Psychology, needs participants for an internet-based study that will test the interventions recommended by American psychologist Martin Seligman. According to Seligman, these interventions are easy ways to increase the happiness of the ordinary person. Rosalind has already completed one study previously based on recommendations from Seligman. She followed 17 people for ten weeks who applied some of the interventions Seligman proposed. "Seligman had five interventions and he found that three showed particularly good results," she said. One of these interventions focused on building gratitude, two focused on increasing awareness of what is most positive about oneself, and two focused on identifying strengths of character. It remains unclear as to why Seligman believes that these particular interventions work.

Rosalind's first study tried these interventions with people over a ten week period and didn't find any clear results. "My participants didn't report any real difference in their happiness levels."

Rosalind's second study will investigate whether a problem exists with the interventions themselves or whether other factors may be influencing the results.

"I'm interested in finding out why Seligman had such strong, positive results--I'm also interested in seeing whether it might be a cultural difference, as Seligman's studies are US-based."

"Those positive results may be a result of Seligman's status in America as a big-name researcher."

"He has quite a big following and a series of popular books. It may be that his profile is attracting people who already believe in his teachings on optimism."

"Seligman remains silent in his research as to why the interventions he has developed should work. Part of my research is to further explore this issue."

Participating in the study

Participants will take part in the study via an internet based program.

Rosalind would like only participants living in Australia in order to compare her results the US results Seligman showed.

She would like 500 people ideally.

To take part in the study, please visit www.happiness-study.org

For more information/interviews, please call Rosalind on: 00 0000 0000 or email: xxxxx@xxxx.xx.xx