

## Key Elements of Happiness

### Introduction:

What makes people happy? We can say that there are several basic needs that must be met for most people to feel happiness: safety, shelter, food and water, stable income, and a supportive community, for example. **Do you agree?**

However, human beings are complex creatures, and these basic needs are not the only things that bring us joy. Research has shown that there are multiple key elements in life that that can increase our sense of happiness.

### Activity 1:

You've already explored elements of happiness in three other cultures, now it is time to explore some things that make you happy. In the chart below, we've provided examples of different ways that people may find happiness. Circle the examples that resonate with you and bring you joy:



#### **Connecting**

*Having close relationships with your community, family, and friends*



#### **Exercising**

*Physical activity and moving your body to boost your mood*



#### **Challenging**

*Exploring, learning, and challenging yourself with new things*



#### **Giving**

*Being kind, spreading joy, and helping others*



#### **Creating**

*Expressing yourself through art, music, dance, writing, etc.*

Having a game night with your best friends.	Playing a sport that you really enjoy and feel good at.	Watching YouTube videos to learn how to do something new.	Volunteering at a children's event at the library.	Making up a new song on your favorite instrument.
Spending quality time with your family or loved ones.	Going to the gym or working out.	Reading a good book about a topic you're really interested in.	Donating to a cause or charity that is important to you.	Creating a work of art that expresses something about you.
Going to a party with your friends.	Hiking, running, or other outdoor activities.	Playing a videogame that requires you to use strategy and focus.	Volunteering on a service project abroad.	Taking and editing pictures.
Having a deep talk with someone important to you.	Doing yoga or Pilates.	Watching an interesting documentary.	Helping out someone who needs a favor.	Writing in your journal.
Talking frequently with your best friend.	Practicing an active hobby such as biking or skateboarding.	Doing brain puzzles or challenging yourself mentally.	Being of service to your family or community.	Singing at a talent show or karaoke night.

## Activity 2:

Choose three of the elements of happiness above that bring you the most joy and write them on lines 1-3. Then, try to think of two or three examples of your own for each of those categories. In the last column, **what is another way that you find happiness?** Write it on line 4 and try to come up with two or three examples.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_


## Discussion:

1. Was there one element of happiness that brings you more joy than the others? If so, which one and why?
2. Of the elements listed above, which one(s) did you see as being most central to happiness in Mongolia, Paraguay, and Ethiopia?
  - Is that the same as, or different from, some of your key elements of happiness?
3. How might your own culture and values influence how you perceive happiness?
4. How does your community and environment influence the elements of happiness that matter most to you?