

Joy Beyond Work

An approach for the busy FP

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What can the COVID pandemic teach us about Joy? Why should we be joyful humans and FPs? Whilst there's been a lot about resilience, and having Joy At Work, how do we have Joy beyond Work? I'll try to answer these questions in this "case-based approach" to learning (humor generates joy) with real-life clinical material (my own) how I have Joy beyond work. Forgive me for my pedagogical slant – I'm obviously taking too much pleasure in this 😊

Aim and Objectives

By the end of this article, busy Family Physicians should be able to

- Select high value joy beyond work activities
- Formulate personal and familial plans for joy beyond work
- Cascade such plans to friends, colleagues and patients

Definitions

Joy has several definitions, but they revolve around well-being, success and achieving what one desires. Expressing such emotions Gaiety is a closely related concept (Merriam-Webster). Most importantly, one should be a source of such delight. We will examine how this can be made possible after an examination of the Aetiology and Epidemiology of Joy Beyond Work.

Aetiology and Epidemiology

Empirical evidence, closest being in Korea suggests significant positive association between out of work activities and presenteeism (1). Thus, even hard-nosed employers would do well to pay attention to this article! Local epidemiological studies on the prevalence of such out of work activities are lacking, though in this author's Community Hospital, the prevalence is 100%. There is of course, exposure heterogeneity, but common interventions include exercise (including HIIT upper body workouts with a sprained ankle – see figure 1), KTV singing, piano playing, reflection and prayer. Other common aetiologies leading to joy beyond work include holiday-making, volunteering, gardening and cooking. There are certain aetiologies that whilst creating joy can be harmful physically – these frequently do not lead to true joy.

History and Physical

People experiencing joy beyond work will usually have no complaints at or beyond work. They are usually healthier than their unhappy counterparts. Apart from the joy making



Figure 1: An upper body workout performed EOD by the author from his sprained ankle DOI 12/5/22 to present – the Russian man was mocking him initially, now the tables are literally turned.

activities, the sine qua non of such individuals is that they are a beacon of delight to others. It is almost as if joy beyond and at work is an infectious disease (albeit a good one!) They would partake in various activities and spread these to others (see figure 2). **The final common pathway is that these activities result in individuals recognizing the purpose of their existence thus being truly joyful.**



Figure 2: The author on holiday in Kuching (Cat) Museum in Kuching, Sarawak with his lady bosses - whoops he meant the delights of his life whom he lives for!

Mental state examinations of individuals who are joyful beyond work reveal well-kempt, smart but casual appearances. Their speech is usually of normal tone and volume, though sometimes racing excitedly as they try to share their infectious joy with others, turning them into YouDaJoys. They perceive things positively and are under

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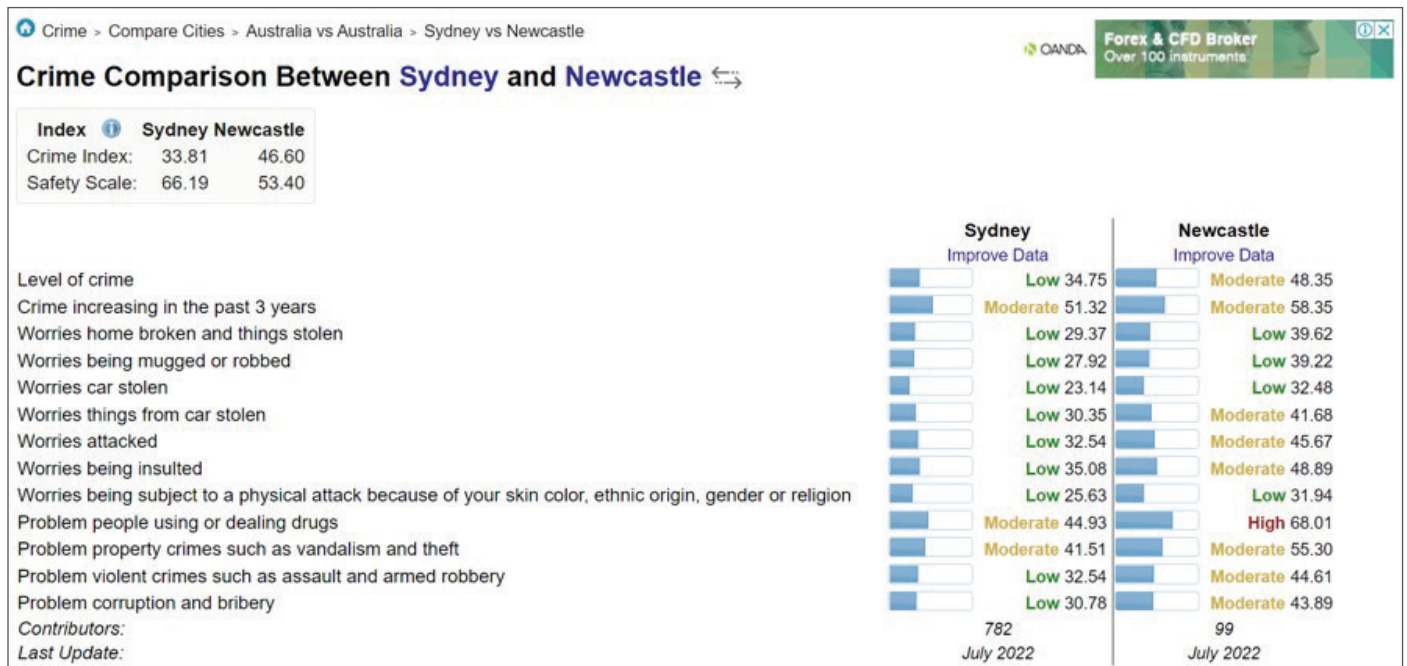


Figure 3: Pre trip planning for the author's upcoming Geriatric Conference

no delusions that people/life try to make things difficult for them – instead, life is life. As a result they are quite immune to the mini-psychotic episodes that characterise borderline states these days. They have insight into their infectious condition, and want to cascade the amazing gift of joy at and beyond work to others.

Physical examination is usually unremarkable as they have not damaged their internal organs.

Investigations

These can be kept minimal with regards the individuals who experience joy beyond work (as they are usually healthy).

However, for the various events that are planned, some investigation is prudent, for example the crime rate in areas one wants to holiday in (Figure 3).

Management

One of the skills learnt by the author during his COVID posting till present was administrative efficiency. The following (Table 1) is a snapshot of a Lazarus Island trip (which proceeded like clockwork), in which a shared understanding was achieved between him and his lady boss regarding the respective roles and responsibilities. Such holiday planning templates are available on request from the author - corresponding email gabriel.yee@hotmail.com.

Time	Issues Arising from Lazarus/St John Island Trip	Gabriel Action (tick if done)	Sally Action (tick if done)												
D-1 26/1/21															
2000	Buy Groceries for trip (Gabriel) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Biscuits, cheese, salami, canned foie de morue, canned fish, roast chicken? - Wine / whiskey - Plastic cup Bring Sephina's toy tent (Sally) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dismantle and pack Pack bags (Gabriel, Sally) <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Sunblock</td> <td>Food/drink</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Goggles</td> <td>Plastic cup</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Underwear</td> <td>Power bank</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Change of clothes</td> <td>Book to read</td> </tr> <tr> <td>towel</td> <td>slippers</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Plastic bag</td> <td>Sephina's toy tent/Ground sheet</td> </tr> </table>	Sunblock	Food/drink	Goggles	Plastic cup	Underwear	Power bank	Change of clothes	Book to read	towel	slippers	Plastic bag	Sephina's toy tent/Ground sheet		
Sunblock	Food/drink														
Goggles	Plastic cup														
Underwear	Power bank														
Change of clothes	Book to read														
towel	slippers														
Plastic bag	Sephina's toy tent/Ground sheet														
2030	Make Sephina sleep (Sally)														
D0 27/1/21															
0700	Gabriel, Sally, Sephina wake up														
0730	Sephina finishes breakfast														
0800	Sephina drops off at school by car (Sally) Get bags ready (Gabriel)														

Table 1: Direction, delegation and dissemination by author to wife for necessary holiday actions - externally applicable to holidays in foreign lands too!

References

I. Jung SW, Lee JH, Lee KJ. Associations Between Activities Outside Work and Presenteeism Among Korean Wage Workers: An Analysis Using a Nationwide Survey. J Prev Med Public Heal [Internet]. 2019 Sep 1 [cited 2022 Jul 10];52(5):292. Available from: /pmc/articles/PMC6780289/