



What makes a good life?

KEY

1. What are the main goals of most people? Are they attainable?

- to get rich and famous
- these goals are not attainable for most of the people

2. How many participants have taken part in the Harvard study? 724 men

3. Who are the participants of the study? (two groups)

- Harvard students (sophomore year)
- boys living in the poorest neighborhoods in Boston

4. What happened to the participants of the research during these 75 years?

Some of them climbed up the social ladder and some of them wasted their lives.

5. How do scientists conduct the research?

- they send out questionnaires every year
- they meet with the participants and their relatives
- they check participants' medical files and talk to their doctors
- they perform some medical tests

6. What are the three big lessons learned about relationships?

Lesson 1: Social connections are really good for us

Lesson 2: It's the quality of our relationships that matters (not the number of friends)

Lesson 3: Good relationships protect both our bodies and our brains (people involved in solid relationships have better memories longer, they feel better even if they are sick)

7. How many Americans state that they are lonely?

1 in 5

8. What happens to people who experience loneliness?

Their health and brain functioning declines sooner.

9. What's important in our relationships?

Affection and being able to count on our significant other

10. Why do we keep forgetting what's truly important ?

Because we are human and we'd like to get a quick fix of the situation. We don't want to work on our relationships our whole lives.

Ex.2.b. Decide if the sentences are TRUE or FALSE.

1. Most of the original participants of the study are dead. **T**
2. The scientists have been talking to the spouses of the participants. **T**
3. The more friends you have, the happier you are. **F** (it's the quality that counts)
4. People who were in happy relationships in their 50s are the healthiest people in their 80s. **T**
5. Happiness has nothing to do with our physical wellbeing. **F**

Part 3 : Reading & Vocabulary

Ex.2.c. Match the words with definitions.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1.(to) lean in to sth | f |
| 2.hindsight | j |
| 3.vast | m |
| 4.(to) unfold | g |
| 5.exceedingly | h |
| 6.(to) dry up | a |
| 7.persistence | u |
| 8. tenement | c |
| 9.(to) decline | n |
| 10.committed | k |
| 11.in the midst | o |
| 12.affection | b |
| 13.octogenarian | d |
| 14.slings and arrows | l |
| 15.wisdom | i |
| 16.(to) tend to | e |

About 60 of our original 724 men are still alive, still participating in the study, most of them in their 90s. And we are now beginning to study the more than 2000 children of these men. And I'm the fourth director of the study.

Since 1938, we've tracked the lives of two groups of men. The first group started in the study when they were sophomores at Harvard College. They all finished college during World War II, and then most went off to serve in the war. And second group that we've followed was a group of boys from Boston's poorest neighborhoods, boys who were chosen for the study specifically because they were from some of the most troubled and disadvantaged families in the Boston of the 1930s. Most lived in **tenements**, many without hot or cold running water.(...)

So what have we learned? What are the lessons that come from tens of thousands of pages of information that we've generated on these lives? Well, the lessons aren't about wealth or fame or working harder and harder.

The clearest message that we get from this 75-year study is this: Good relationships keep us happier and healthier.

We've learned three big lessons about the relationships. The first is that social connections are really good for us, and that loneliness kills. (...)

People who are more isolated than they want to be from others find that they are less happy, their health **declines** earlier in midlife, their brain functioning declines sooner and they live shorter lives than people who are not lonely. And the sad fact is that at any given time, more than one in five Americans will report that they're lonely.

And we know that you can be lonely in a crowd and you can be lonely in a marriage, so the second big lesson that we learned is that it's not just the number of friends you have, and it's not whether or not you're in a **committed** relationship but it's the quality of your close relationships that matters.

It turns out that living **in the midst** of conflict is really bad for our health. High-conflict marriages, for example, without much **affection**, turn out to be very bad for our health, perhaps worse than getting divorced (...). The people who were the most satisfied in their relationships at the age of 50 were the healthiest at age 80.

And good, close relationships seem to buffer us from some of the **slings and arrows** of getting old (...)

And the third big lesson that we learned about relationships and our health is that good relationships don't just protect our bodies, they protect our brains (...). The people who are in relationships where

they can really count on the other person in times of need, those people's memories stay sharper longer.(...)

Why is this so hard to get and so easy to ignore? Well, we're human. What we'd really like is a quick fix, something that we can get that'll make our lives good and keep them that way. Relationships are messy and they are complicated and the hard work of **tending** to family and friends, it's not sexy or glamorous. It's also life long. It never ends.(...)

Just like millennials in that recent study, many of our men when they were starting out as young adults really believed that fame and health and high achievements were what they needed to go after to have a good life. But over and over, over these 75 years, our study has shown that the people who **fared** the best were the people who leaned in to relationships, with family, with friends, with community.

So what about you? Let's say you're 25, or you're 40, or you're 60. What might leaning in to relationships even look like?

Well, the possibilities are endless. It might be something as simple as replacing screen time with people time or **livening up** a stale relationship by doing something new together, long walks or date nights, or reaching to that family member who you haven't spoken to in years, because those all-too-common family **feuds** take a terrible toll on the people who **hold** the grudges (...).

Ex.3. Fill in the gaps in the following sentences.

tending to committed unfold vast hindsight persistence

1. I admire your **persistence** in looking for a well-paid job.
2. A **vast** majority of people want to get rich.
3. In **hindsight**, I wish I had gone on holiday with you last year.
4. We could only watch the fight **unfold** during the meeting.
5. Tim was too preoccupied with **tending to** his mom's needs.
6. She's desired to be in a **committed** relationship since the first moment she met Josh.

