

What makes a good life?

Level B1/B2

Part 1 : Conversation

Ex.1.a. What are the most important life goals of most people? Take a look at the photos below and use your own ideas.



source:pexels.com

Ex.1.b. Answer the questions:

1. What is true happiness and satisfaction?
2. What keeps us happy and healthy?
3. How to build a fulfilling, long life?
4. Do you consider yourself a happy person?

Part 2 : Watching

Ex.2.a. You are going to watch a video of a TED talk by Robert Waldinger, the director of a 75-year-old study on adult development, in which he explains how to build a happy, long life. Watch 9-10 minutes of the video and answer the questions.

The video:

https://www.ted.com/talks/robert_waldinger_what_makes_a_good_life_lessons_from_the_longest_study_on_happiness



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

- _____
- _____

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

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

- _____
- _____

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

5. How do scientists conduct the research?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

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

Lesson 1: _____

Lesson 2: _____

Lesson 3: _____

7. How many Americans state that they are lonely?

8. What happens to people who experience loneliness?

9. What's important in our relationships?

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

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

1. Most of the original participants of the study are dead.
2. The scientists have been talking to the spouses of the participants.
3. The more friends you have, the happier you are.
4. People who were in happy relationships in their 50s are the healthiest people in their 80s.
5. Happiness has nothing to do with our physical wellbeing.

Part 3 : Reading & Vocabulary

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

1.(to) lean in to sth	a) to cut off the supply of; to disappear as if by evaporation, draining
2.hindsight	b) a gentle feeling of liking, fondness
3.vast	c) a residence, dwelling meeting minimum standards of sanitation, safety and comfort
4.(to) unfold	d) a person who is between 80-89 years old
5.exceedingly	e) to take care of somebody/something; to frequently behave in a particular way
6.(to) dry up	f) to rely for support or inspiration; to bend from a vertical position
7.persistence	g) to expand, unwrap, reveal
8. tenement	h) extremely
9.(to) decline	i) the quality of having experience, knowledge and good judgement
10.committed	j) perception of event after it has happened
11.in the midst	k) dedicated; in a long-term emotional relationship
12.affection	l) unpleasant things that happen to you that are not your fault
13.octogenarian	m) very great in size, amount, degree, intensity
14.slings and arrows	n) to become less amount, to tend toward an inferior state or weaker condition
15.wisdom	o) in the middle
16.(to) tend to	u) not giving up

17.(to) fare	p) to become more interesting or exciting
18.(to) liven up	r) to progress or to be in a particular condition
19.feud	s) to have and maintain a feeling of anger and resentment towards somebody
20.(to) hold a grudge	t) a prolonged and bitter quarrel

Ex.2.c. Fill in the gaps in the following text.

What keeps us healthy and happy as we go through life? If you were going to invest now in your future best self, where would you put your time and your energy? There was a recent study of millennials asking them what their most important life goals were, and over 80 percent said that a major life goal for them was to get rich. And another 50 percent of those same young adults said that another major life goal was to become famous.

And we are constantly told to _____ work, to push harder and achieve more. We're under the impression that these are the things that we need to go after in order to have a good life. (...)Most of what we know about human life we know from asking people to remember the past, and as we know, _____ is anything but 20/20. We forget _____ amounts of what happens to us in life, and sometimes memory is downright creative.

But what if we could watch entire lives as they _____ through time? (...)

The Harvard Study of Adult Development may be the longest study of adult life that's ever been done. For 75 years, we've tracked the lives of 724 men, year after year, asking about their work, their home lives, their health, and of course asking all along the way without knowing how their life stories were going to turn out.

Studies like this are _____ rare. Almost all projects of this kind fall apart within a decade because too many people drop out of the study, or funding _____, or the researchers get distracted, or they die, and nobody moves the ball further down the field. But through a combination of luck and the _____ of several generations of researchers, this study has survived.

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 _____, 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 _____ 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 _____ relationship but it's the quality of your close relationships that matters.

It turns out that living _____ of conflict is really bad for our health. High-conflict marriages, for example, without much _____, 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 _____ and _____ 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 _____ 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 _____ 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 _____ 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 _____ take a terrible toll on the people who _____ the grudges (...).

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

tending to committed unfold vast hindsight persistence

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

