The Psychology of Life Balance

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Abstract:

Life balance is a state of equally moderate-to-high levels of satisfaction in important life domains contributing to overall life satisfaction. Life balance can be effectively achieved through a set of inter-domain strategies. Two sets of inter-domain strategies are identified, namely strategies to prompt greater participation of satisfied domains to contribute to life satisfaction and strategies to increase domain satisfaction and decrease dissatisfaction. Inter-domain strategies designed to prompt greater participation of satisfied life domains to contribute to life satisfaction include: (1) engagement in social roles in multiple life domains (explained by the principle of satisfaction limits), (2) engagement in roles in health, safety, economic, social, work, leisure, and cultural domains (explained by the principle of satisfaction of the full spectrum of human development needs), and (3) engagement in new social roles (explained by the principle of diminishing satisfaction). Inter-domain strategies designed to increase domain satisfaction and decrease domain dissatisfaction include (1) integrating domains with high satisfaction (explained by the principle of positive spillover), (2) optimizing domain satisfaction by changing domain salience (explained by the value-based compensation principle), (3) compartmentalizing domains with low satisfaction (explained by the segmentation principle), (4) coping with domain dissatisfaction by engaging in roles in other domains likely to produce satisfaction (explained by the behavior-based compensation principle), (5) stress management (explained by the principle of role conflict), and (6) using skills, experiences, and resources in one role for other roles (explained by the principle of role enrichment).

Key words: Balanced Life, Life Balance, Work-Life Balance, Life Satisfaction, Subjective Well-being, Quality of Life. Work-Family Conflict, Work-Family Interference

Much research has been documented about concepts related to the balanced life in the literatures of organizational/industrial psychology and human resource management. These concepts include work-life balance, work-family balance, work-family interference, and work-family interface (see literature reviews of various concepts related to work-life balance by Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Bulger & Fisher, 2012; Byron, 2005; Casper, Eby, Bordeaux, Lockwood, & Lambert, 2007; Danna & Griffin, 1999; Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Eby, Maher, & Butts, 2010; Greenhaus & Allen 2011; Kalliath & Brough, 2008; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998; Lee & Sirgy, 2017; McNall, Nicklia, & Masuda, 2010; Sirgy & Lee, 2016, 2017; Sirgy, Reilly, Wu, & Efraty, 2008; Yasbek, 2004). In the literature of subjective well-being, only a few studies were found addressing life balance. For example, Diener, Ng, and Tov (2008) reported a study involving a representative sample of the world to assess people's affect balance (positive versus negative affect) on the previous day and the various activities they have engaged in. The study found that the most popular activity that most people engaged in is socializing with family and friends. In this context, the study also found a *decreasing marginal utility* of this type activity. That is, to ensure an optimal level of life satisfaction, people attempt to engage in a variety of activities because satisfaction from one type of activity diminishes in time. Sheldon and Niemiec (2006) demonstrated that life balance is achieved not only by the fulfilment of psychological needs (needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness) but a *balanced effect among the satisfaction of these needs*. Matuska (2012) conceptualized life balance as congruence among both desired and actual time spent in activities and equivalence in the degree of discrepancy between desired and actual time spent across *activities that satisfy basic and growth needs* (needs related to health, relationship, challenge/interest, and identity). The author

was able to demonstrate a strong association between life balance and personal well-being. A similar conceptualization was introduced by Sheldon, Cummins, and Kamble (2010). They defined life balance as perceived low discrepancy between actual and ideal time-use profiles. The authors developed a life balance measure based on this conceptualization and were able to demonstrate that life balance is positively related to subjective well-being mediated by psychological need satisfaction.

The first author of this chapter made an attempt to address the concept of the balanced life in his 2002 book on the *Psychology of Quality of Life* (Sirgy, 2002). In Chapter 14 of the book, titled "balance," Sirgy proposed that people make attempts to create balance in their lives to *optimize* life satisfaction (i.e., achieve and maintain an acceptable level of life satisfaction). He made a distinction between two balance concepts: within-domain balance and between-domain balance. *Balance within a life dom*ain is achieved by striving to experience both positive and negative affect. Positive affect reflects a reward function, namely goals are attained and resources are acquired. In contrast, negative affect serves a motivational function. That is, negative affect helps the individual recognize problems and opportunities for future achievement and growth (cf. Kitayama & Markus, 2000). *Balance between life domains* can be achieved through compensation (i.e., increasing the salience of positive life domains compensates for negative life domains; and conversely, decreasing the salience of negative life domains helps reduce the influence of negative affect from these domains on overall life satisfaction) (also see Sirgy, 2012). The same author with a doctoral student at the time (Sirgy & Wu, 2009) published an article in the *Journal of Happiness Studies* titled "The pleasant life, the engaged life, and the meaningful life: What about the balanced life?" In this article the authors positioned the concept of the balanced life vis-à-vis other popular concepts of subjective well-being, namely "the pleasant life," "the engaged life," and "the meaningful life" (as proposed by Martin Seligman in his 2002 book, *Authentic Happiness*). Seligman has argued that life satisfaction stems from three major sets of experiences in life, namely experiencing pleasantness regularly (the pleasant life), experiencing a high level of engagement in satisfying activities (the engaged life), and experiencing a sense of connectedness to a greater whole (the meaningful life). In response, Sirgy and Wu countered by suggesting that having a balanced life is equally important to life satisfaction. The balanced life is experienced when people are highly engaged in social roles in multiple domains. They explained the effect of balance on life satisfaction using two concepts, namely *satisfaction limits* (i.e., people can derive only limited amount of satisfaction from a single life domain; hence engagement in multiple domains is necessary to optimize life satisfaction) and *satisfaction of the full spectrum of human developmental needs* (i.e., people have to be involved in multiple domains to satisfy both basic and growth needs; both sets of needs have to be met to induce a high level of subjective well-being). This article won the Best Paper in the journal and was reprinted in *Explorations of Happiness* (edited by Delle Fave, 2013).

The goal of this chapter is to identify the major principles of life balance, and as such we introduce to the reader a comprehensive construct of life balance reflective of these principles. We describe how life balance contributes to subjective well-being (life satisfaction or perceived quality of life).

Life Balance

To follow the subsequent discussion, the reader needs to become familiar with some basic concepts of subjective well-being, namely life domain, domain satisfaction, and the bottom-up spillover process of life satisfaction. Let's first define the concept of "life domain" and "domain satisfaction." Then we will tackle the concept of "balance." Andrews and Withey (1976) and Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976) were the main proponents of the life domain approach to the study of quality of life and subjective well-being. Andrews and Withey used multiple regression to predict subjects' life satisfaction scores ("How do you feel about life as a whole?" with responses captured on a 7-point delighted-terrible scale). They found that satisfaction with various life domains explained 52-60% of the variance. These domains are interpersonal relations, self, family, leisure/leisure-time activities, home, friends and associates, neighborhood, job, education, services/facilities, community, economic situation, local government, national government, and life in the U.S. today. Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers used a similar set of life domains, namely leisure/nonworking activities, family, standard of living, work, marriage, savings/investments, friendships, city/county, housing, education, neighborhood, life in the U.S., health, religion, national government, and organizations. Many other quality-of-life/well-being researchers have uncovered other variations of life domains (see literature reviews by Diener, 1984; Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999; and Sirgy, 2012), and the notion of satisfaction in life domains contributing to a life satisfaction judgment has come to be known as *bottom-up spillover theory of life satisfaction*.

Affective experiences are stored in memory in life spheres, and these spheres are organized in a hierarchy of satisfaction. At the top of the satisfaction hierarchy is life satisfaction—a hot cognition reflecting how the individual feels about his or her life overall. Second in line in the satisfaction hierarchy is

domain satisfaction. That is, people make judgments about how they feel in certain life domains such as family life, social life, work life, material life, community life, etc. Satisfaction in these life domains influences the life satisfaction judgment, which is at the top of the satisfaction hierarchy—the most abstract hot cognition. At the bottom of the satisfaction hierarchy are concrete hot cognitions related to satisfaction with life events (i.e., concrete and salient events that have occurred and are associated with positive or negative affect). As such, satisfaction judgments related to life events (most concrete hot cognitions) influence satisfaction judgments of life domains, which in turn influence satisfaction with life overall (most abstract hot cognition). The reader should then note that the central tenet of bottom-up spillover theory of life satisfaction is the carryover of affect from subordinate life domains to superordinate ones, specifically from life domains such as leisure, family, job, and health to overall life. Thus, bottom-up spillover implies that subjective well-being (or life satisfaction) can be increased by allowing life domains carrying positive feelings or satisfaction to spill over unto the most superordinate domain (overall life). The positive affect accumulates in life domains as a direct function of satisfaction of human development needs—physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs, self-actualization needs, knowledge needs, and aesthetics needs (Maslow, 1970).

Having explained the concepts of life domains and domain satisfaction, the reader is now ready to appreciate the discussion concerning how people manipulate the interplay life domains and domain satisfaction to increase life balance, which in turn contributes to life satisfaction. That is, to achieve life balance people engage in behavioral strategies to increase life satisfaction by manipulating the interplay among domain satisfaction to prompt greater participation of satisfied life domains to contribute to life satisfaction and increase domain satisfaction and decrease domain dissatisfaction. Inter-domain strategies designed to prompt greater participation of satisfied life domains to contribute to life satisfaction include: (1) engagement in social roles in multiple life domains (explained by the principle of satisfaction limits), (2) engagement in roles in health, safety, economic, social, work, leisure, and cultural domains (explained by the principle of satisfaction of the full spectrum of human development needs), and (3) engagement in new social roles (explained by the principle of diminishing satisfaction). Inter-domain strategies designed to increase domain satisfaction and decrease domain dissatisfaction include (1) integrating domains with high satisfaction (explained by the principle of positive spillover), (2) optimizing domain satisfaction by changing domain salience (explained by the value-based compensation principle), (3) using skills, experiences, and resources in one role for other roles (explained by the principle of role enrichment), (4) compartmentalizing domains with low satisfaction (explained by the segmentation principle), (5) coping with domain dissatisfaction by engaging in roles in other domains likely to produce satisfaction (explained by the behavior-based compensation principle), and (6) minimizing role conflict (explained by the principle of role strain and stress).
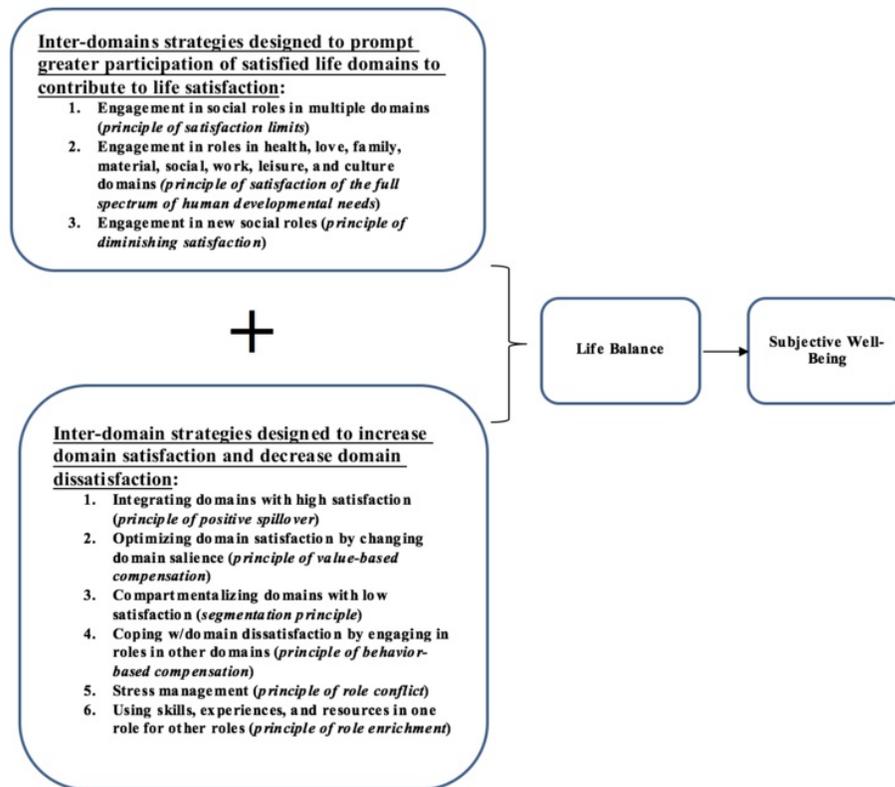
We will begin by discussing those principles related to prompting greater participation of satisfied life domains to contribute to life satisfaction. See Figure 1.

Inter-domain Strategies Designed to Prompt Greater Participation of Satisfied Life Domains to Contribute to Life Satisfaction

As previously mentioned, we will discuss three behavioral strategies people use to achieve life balance by prompting greater participation of satisfied life domains to contribute to life satisfaction. These are (1) engagement in social roles in multiple life domains (explained by the principle of satisfaction limits), (2) engagement in roles in health, safety, economic, social, work, leisure, and cultural domains (explained by the principle of satisfaction of the full spectrum of human development needs), and (3) engagement in new social roles (explained by the principle of diminishing satisfaction).

Engagement in social roles in multiple life domains and the principle of satisfaction limits. Much research has shown that engagement in social roles in work life and nonwork life (family, leisure, social, community, etc.) serves to produce a positive, fulfilling, state of mind characterized as vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, & Bakker, 2002). *Vigor* reflects a high level of energy and mental resilience in role engagement in multiple domains. *Dedication* refers to being strongly involved in one's roles at both work and nonwork by experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, and challenge. *Absorption* is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in the task at hand associated with the various roles across life domains (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Figure 1. Behavioral Strategies of Life Balance

Inter-domains strategies designed to prompt greater participation of satisfied life domains to contribute to life satisfaction:
1. Engagement in social roles in multiple domains (*principle of satisfaction limits*)
2. Engagement in roles in health, love, family, material, social, work, leisure, and culture domains (*principle of satisfaction of the full spectrum of human developmental needs*)
3. Engagement in new social roles (*principle of diminishing satisfaction*)

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Inter-domain strategies designed to increase domain satisfaction and decrease domain dissatisfaction:
1. Integrating domains with high satisfaction (*principle of positive spillover*)
2. Optimizing domain satisfaction by changing domain salience (*principle of value-based compensation*)
3. Compartmentalizing domains with low satisfaction (*segmentation principle*)
4. Coping w/domain dissatisfaction by engaging in roles in other domains (*principle of behavior-based compensation*)
5. Stress management (*principle of role conflict*)
6. Using skills, experiences, and resources in one role for other roles (*principle of role enrichment*)

Life Balance → Subjective Well-Being

Individuals are likely to achieve a high level of satisfaction in life overall when they are fully engaged in multiple roles in work *and* nonwork life. Further, they are likely to maximize their life satisfaction if and when they become fully engaged in *multiple* roles. Doing so is essentially one way to increase harmony among life domains. Increasing satisfaction in multiple domains ultimately serves to increase life satisfaction at large. The effect of role engagement in social roles in multiple domains on life satisfaction can be explained through the *principle of satisfaction limits,* which we now turn to.

The bottom-up spillover model of life satisfaction proposes that life satisfaction is determined by cumulative satisfaction experienced in important life domains such as satisfaction in work life, family life, social life, leisure life, spiritual life., community life, etc. (e.g., Andrews & Withey, 1976; Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976). Mathematically speaking, the model states that a life satisfaction score of an individual can be predicted by adding all the satisfaction scores of salient life domains. For example, if one uses an 11-point satisfaction scale (-5=high dissatisfaction to +5=high satisfaction), then an individual (A) registering satisfaction in work life (e.g., "+3"), family life (e.g., "+3"), leisure life (e.g., "+3"), social life (e.g., "+3"), and material life (e.g., "+3") should have a higher life satisfaction score than another individual (B) who registers satisfaction in work life (e.g., "+5"), family life (e.g., "0"), leisure life (e.g., "0"), social life (e.g., "0"), and material life (e.g., "0"). This is due to the fact that the former individual has a total domain satisfaction score of "15" [(+3) + (+3) + (+3) + (+3) + (+3)], whereas the latter has a total domain satisfaction score of "+5" [(+5) + (0) + (0) + (0) + (0)]. Of course, this predictive equation assumes that work life, family life, leisure life, social life, and material life are all equally salient to both individuals. In other words, overall life satisfaction is accrued additively from satisfaction in multiple life domains. Research has demonstrated that satisfaction from a variety of life domains contributes to unique variance in life satisfaction, and that there is some validity to this compensatory model of life satisfaction (e.g., Hsieh, 2003; Rojas, 2006; also see reviews by Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1999).

The *principle of satisfaction limits* (Sirgy & Wu, 2009) posits that the amount of contribution of domain satisfaction from a single life domain to overall life satisfaction is limited. In the example of the compensatory model described above the limit is +5 satisfaction units in each domain (scale = +5 to -5). In other words, one can achieve only a limited amount of satisfaction from a single life domain (a maximum of 5 satisfaction units). Using the example above, Person A is satisfied in work life ("+3"), leisure life ("+3"), social life ("+3"), material life ("+3"), and family life ("+3"). His life satisfaction (15 units) is based

on a moderate degree of satisfaction in five salient life domains. Person B is satisfied with work life (+5) only. He is not satisfied in family life ("0"), leisure life ("0"), social life ("0"), as well as material life ("0"). His life satisfaction score ("5" units) is based on satisfaction from 1 out of 5 salient domains. In sum, an individual who is highly satisfied in *multiple domains* is likely to experience a higher life satisfaction compared to an individual who is highly satisfied in a single domain. As such, role engagement in multiple life domains produces an additive effect on life satisfaction (e.g., Andrews & Withey, 1976; Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976: Eakman, 2016; Hsieh, 2003; Rojas, 2006; Sirgy & Lee, 2016; Sirgy & Wu, 2009). That is, high role engagement in a single life domain with little or no role engagement in other life domains cannot contribute much to life satisfaction compared to high role engagement in multiple domains.

Consider the following study: Bhargava (1995) asked study participants to discuss life satisfaction of others. Most participants inferred life satisfaction of others as a direct function of their satisfaction in *multiple* domains. They calculated happiness by summing satisfaction across several important domains—the more positive affect in multiple domains, the higher the subjective well-being. In a work context, individuals engaging in various social roles in nonwork life domains, in addition to roles in work life, are likely to experience a high level of life satisfaction compared to those who are highly engaged only in work life (e.g., Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Rice, McFarlin, Hunt, & Near, 1985).

In sum, this discussion can be captured as follows: Individuals who have a high level of role engagement in multiple life domains are likely to increase life balance and experience higher life satisfaction than those who have a high level of role engagement in a single domain. This effect may be due to satisfaction limits. Specifically, compared to individuals who are engaged in a single domain, individuals who are highly engaged in multiple life domains are likely to experience more satisfaction in those domains, contributing to life satisfaction. Those who are engaged in a single domain can produce only a limited amount of domain satisfaction (less that those who are engaged in multiple domains) that spills over to life satisfaction. That is, compared to role engagement in multiple domains, role engagement in a single domain is likely to be wholly insufficient to contribute significantly to life satisfaction.

Engagement in roles in health, love, family, material, social, work, leisure, and culture domains; and the principle of satisfaction of the full spectrum of human developmental needs. People try to optimize their life satisfaction (enhance their life satisfaction to an acceptable level) by actively engaging in social roles in multiple domains. The question that arises based on the preceding argument is "which domains?" Life satisfaction is significantly increased when the individual engages in roles in life domains that can satisfy the full spectrum of human development needs (Maslow, 1970). As such, we believe that life balance can be achieved through active engagement in social roles in multiple domains serving to satisfy both basic and growth needs: health, love, family, and material domains serving to satisfy mostly basic needs and social, work, leisure, and culture domains serving to satisfy growth needs. Let us be more specific.

Sirgy and Wu (2009) have argued that subjective well-being is not simply cumulative positive minus negative affect—irrespective of the source. It is the satisfaction of human developmental needs, the full range of needs—not a handful of selected needs. In other words, one cannot substitute positive affect related to one need with another need. To illustrate this point, let us consider the following example. Two individuals, A and B. Person A has "+3" satisfaction units in each of the following domains related to basic needs: health life, love life, family life, and material life. In other words, Person A is satisfied in domains related to his basic needs, a total score of "+8" satisfaction units [(+2) + (+2) + (+2) + (+2)] and the same person is similarly satisfied in life domains related to growth needs (social life, work life, leisure life, and culture life), a total of "+8" [(+2) + (+2) + (+2) + (+2)]. Summing up Person A's domain satisfaction scores, we obtain a total amount of "16" units of domain satisfaction (+8 satisfaction units from domains related to basic needs, and another +8 satisfaction units from domains related to growth needs). Now let us compare this case with Person B who is highly satisfied with basic needs only. Person B is highly satisfied in domains related to his basic needs, a total score of "+20" satisfaction units [(+5) + (+5) + (+5) + (+5)] while is dissatisfied in domains related to his growth needs, a total of "-8" satisfaction units [(-2) + (-2) + (-2) + (-2)]. As such, the total domain satisfaction score for person B is also "+12". We predict that person A is likely to report a higher degree of life satisfaction than person B because person A has *balanced satisfaction* from life domains related to *both basic and growth needs*, whereas Person B has unbalanced domain satisfaction (high satisfaction in domains related to basic needs but low satisfaction in domains related to growth needs).

Let us delve deeper to understand the psychology underling this effect. We will do so by discussing the *principle of satisfaction of the full spectrum of human developmental needs*. This principle posits that individuals who are satisfied with the full spectrum of developmental needs (i.e., satisfaction of growth needs as well as basic needs) are likely to have a high level of life satisfaction relative to those who are less satisfied (e.g., Alderfer, 1972; Herzberg, 1966; Maslow, 1970; Matuska, 2012; Sheldon, Cummins,

& Kamble, 2010; Sheldon & Niemiec, 2006). When people engage in multiple roles across life domains, they are likely to obtain access to psychological and physical resources, which in turn increase opportunities for satisfaction of many basic and growth needs. Seeking to satisfy a specific need in a single life domain does not positively contribute much to life satisfaction (Sirgy et al., 1995). That is, when people engage in multiple roles, they are likely to experience satisfaction of growth needs (i.e., social, knowledge, aesthetics, self-actualization, and self-transcendence needs) as well as satisfaction of basic needs (i.e., health, safety, and economic needs). Satisfaction of growth needs contributes to positive affect, whereas satisfaction of basic needs contributes only to the reduction of negative affect (Herzberg, 1966). Satisfaction of both sets of basic and growth needs contributes significantly and positively to life satisfaction.

Specifically, Sirgy and Wu (2009) have described how people organize their lives to fulfil their developmental needs. To satisfy their biological and health-related needs, people engage in a variety of activities such as eating right, exercising regularly, getting regular check-ups, engaging in regular sex, and so on. The events related to those activities and their outcomes generate a certain amount of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. These affective reactions are organized and stored in memory in certain life domains such as health, love, family, and economic. When a man is asked how he feels about his health life, he is likely to reflect on his affective experiences in relation to health-related activities such as eating right, exercising regularly, having regular check-ups, and so on. When the same person is asked about his love life, he reflects about his affective experiences related to love, romantic relationships, and sex. When asked about his family life, he reflects on those experiences related to the use of his significant others such as spouse and children, his residence, his neighborhood, and community. Financial issues and experiences related to money, income, standard of living, and material possessions also likely to be segmented in material life and mostly related to basic needs. With respect to growth needs (e.g., social, esteem, self-actualization, self-transcendence, aesthetics, and knowledge needs), experiences may be segmented in life domains such as social life, work life, leisure life, and culture life. However, this is not to say that a variety of developmental needs can be met in a single domain. Consider the work domain for example. Many developmental needs, both basic and growth needs, can be met through work life. Through work life, both basic (i.e., economic, health and safety, and family-related needs) and growth needs (i.e., social, esteem, self-actualization, self-transcendence, knowledge, and aesthetics needs) can be met. To reiterate, in every life domain a variety of developmental needs can be met. However, certain life domains are predisposed to meet certain developmental needs more so than others. As such, we argue that health, love, family, and economic domains are likely to reflect satisfaction resulting more from meeting basic than growth needs. Conversely, social life, work life, leisure life, and culture life are domains likely to reflect satisfaction resulting more from meeting growth than basic needs.

Suggestive evidence of this principle comes from a body of evidence showing that materialism is negatively correlated with life satisfaction (see Wright and Larsen, 1993, for a meta-analysis of the research findings). Specifically, materialistic people can be viewed as imbalanced in that they pursue wealth and material possessions to the exclusion of other important goals in life. Materialistic people who are successful hoarding material wealth may feel successful and happy with their material life. Placing undue emphasis on making money (to satisfy basic needs such as biological and safety needs) is likely to lead them to neglect other growth needs such as social, esteem, self-actualization, self-transcendence, aesthetics, and knowledge needs. It is no wonder that the evidence shows that materialism is negatively correlated with life satisfaction.

Furthermore, as previously discussed, Matuska (2012) conceptualized life balance as congruence among both desired and actual time spent in activities and equivalence in the degree of discrepancy between desired and actual time spent across *activities that satisfy basic and growth needs* (needs related to health, relationship, challenge/interest, and identity). The author conducted a study that successfully demonstrated a strong association between life balance and personal well-being.

In sum, the preceding discussion can be captured as follows: Individuals who have a high level of role engagement in life domains related to both basic needs (e.g., health, love, family, and material domains) and growth needs (e.g., social, work, leisure, and culture domains) are likely to experience greater satisfaction among life domains contributing to higher life satisfaction than those who have a high level of role engagement in domains related to only basic or growth needs. This effect may be due to the effect of satisfaction of the full spectrum of human developmental needs. Specifically, compared to individuals who are engaged in roles in select domains, individuals who have a high level of role engagement in multiple domains addressing both basic and growth needs are likely to experience more life satisfaction. Role engagement in health, love, family, and material domains are likely to satisfy mostly basic needs (survival needs such as having enough resources to deal with health and safety issues), whereas role engagement in social, work, leisure, and culture are likely to satisfy mostly growth needs (higher-order

needs such as social, esteem, self-actualization, aesthetics, and knowledge needs). The combined and balanced effects of satisfaction of both basic and growth needs serve to increase life satisfaction. That is, satisfaction of the full spectrum of human developmental needs (balance between basic and growth need satisfaction) produces the highest level of life satisfaction.

Engagement in new social roles and the principle of diminishing satisfaction. Much research in variety seeking supports the notion that successful engagement in new roles is likely to produce more positive affect than successful engagement in well-established roles (e.g., Kahn, 1995; Kahn & Isen, 1993; Levav & Zhu, 2009; McAlister & Pessmier, 1982). That is, engaging and succeeding in new roles tend to produce a jolt of positive affect much more so than engaging and succeeding in well-established roles. Also, much research in industrial/organizational (I/O) psychology has demonstrated the effect of task variety on job performance and employee well-being (e.g., Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; Pierce & Dunham, 1976). That is, compared to workers who are engaged in repetitive tasks, workers engaging in a variety of tasks tend to feel much more motivated to excel on their jobs, tend to do much better in relation to job performance, and experience higher levels of job satisfaction. One can extrapolate from this research that life balance is not only limited to engagement in social roles in multiple domains satisfying both basic and growth-related needs but also new social roles. This may best be explained using the *principle of diminishing satisfaction.*

This principle states that individuals with life balance are likely to continuously engage in new roles to guard against diminishing satisfaction associated with well-established roles. Why? The intensity of the positive affect in the context of a social role experienced in a given life domain tends to decay with adaptation effects (Helson, 1964). Consider the following scenarios. Person A (woman) is right out of college and starts a new job. She experiences success in her assigned roles. This success is likely to bring much positive affect and satisfaction in work life—+4 units of satisfaction in the work domain—on a 11-point satisfaction scale varying from -5 (very dissatisfied) to +5 (very satisfied). Compare Person A (woman) to Person B (man) who is a seasoned worker—has been on the job for a long time. He is equally successful in his assigned work roles (perhaps a +2 units of satisfaction). That is, the man is not likely to experience the same magnitude of satisfaction compared to the woman. This dampening of positive affect and satisfaction for the man is due to an adaptation effect. That is, positive affect is dampened with repeated successful performance. To guard against this dampening effect and to restore satisfaction in the work life domain, the man has to engage in new roles to maintain the same level of domain satisfaction that was once generated through old and well-established role performance. However, to increase positive affect in the work domain (say from +2 units of satisfaction to +4 units of satisfaction), he needs to engage in new work-related roles successfully.

Research has documented this phenomenon. Specifically, given successful role performance in a particular life domain (e.g., work life) individuals who have not been feeling satisfied in that domain are likely to experience a greater magnitude of domain satisfaction than individuals who are already satisfied in the same domain (e.g., Ahuvia & Friedman, 1998; Diener, Ng, & Tov, 2008; Rojas, 2006). Put succinctly, increases in satisfaction in a life domain serve to increase life satisfaction but at a decreasing marginal rate with repeated experiences.

In sum, we can capture the preceding discussion as follows: Individuals become engaged in new social roles to mitigate decreases in domain satisfaction and life satisfaction overall. This effect is due to the diminishing satisfaction effect. Specifically, individuals who are engaged in social roles experience diminishing satisfaction in a given life domain over time, which in turn detracts from life satisfaction overall. To guard against this diminishing domain satisfaction, they engage in new social roles to generate new satisfaction thereby compensating for the diminished satisfaction related to the old roles.

Inter-domain Strategies Designed to Increase Domain Satisfaction and Decrease Domain Dissatisfaction

In this section we will discuss six behavioral strategies people use to achieve life balance by increasing domain satisfaction and decreasing domain dissatisfaction. These are: (1) integrating domains with high satisfaction (explained by the principle of positive spillover), (2) optimizing domain satisfaction by changing domain salience (explained by the value-based compensation principle), (3) compartmentalizing domains with low satisfaction (explained by the segmentation principle), (4) coping with domain dissatisfaction by engaging in roles in other domains likely to produce satisfaction (explained by the behavior-based compensation principle), (5) stress management (explained by the principle of role conflict), and (6) using skills, experiences, and resources in one role for other roles (explained by the principle of role enrichment).

Integrating domains with high satisfaction and the principle of positive spillover. Life balance can also be achieved by integrating life domains that house high levels of positive affect or satisfaction.

Doing so contributes to life satisfaction overall. Consider the owner of a mom and pop store whose family residence is situated on the top floor of the store. His wife and children help at the store by staffing the checkout stand, maintaining inventory, dealing with suppliers and customers, etc. In this situation, the store owner's work life is highly integrated with his family life, marital life, social life, material life, and perhaps community life too. The store is highly successful in that it has a good stream of patrons, a good reputation in the neighborhood, and it generates a decent income that supports his family and a few other jobs in the community. Success in these varied roles translates into positive affect in work life, family life, marital life, social life, material life, and community life. Thus, life satisfaction is increased by integrating both work and family life, which serves to increase satisfaction in both domains. This phenomenon is essentially known as "positive spillover."

Let us further delve in this discussion of positive spillover. Experiences in work *and* nonwork life may spill over. That is, affect may spill over from work life to nonwork life and vice versa. This is what I/O psychologists commonly refer to as "affect spillover" (e.g., Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). Affect spillover can be either positive or negative. Positive affect spillover refers to positive mood that transfer from one life domain to another. Conversely, negative spillover refers to negative mood spilling over from one domain to another. *Affect spillover* should be distinguished from *crossover effects*. Affect spillover refers to feelings caused by experiences in one life domain influencing another life domain. It is an intra-individual phenomenon (i.e., within an individual). In contrast, *crossover effect* is an inter-individual construct. It refers to emotional contagion between individuals whereby individuals are influenced by the emotions displayed by those around them (e.g., Demerouti, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2005; Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994). Crossover effects are likely to be high when individuals are in physical proximity and in close communications (Barsade, 2002; Neumann & Strack, 2000).

Consider the following case involving two individuals, Person A and Person B. Both individuals experience "+1" units of satisfaction in work life and "+3" units of satisfaction in family life. However, Person B decides to integrate work and family domains (e.g., by doing work at home and taking care of family responsibilities at work). Person B was highly successful in integrating work and family domains. Doing so increased his satisfaction in work life from "+1" to "+3," whereas his satisfaction in family life remained at "+3." Person B achieved work life balance through positive spillover. In contrast, Person A did not bother to integrate the two domains; hence, he remained experiencing "+1" satisfaction in work life and "+3" in family life. In this case, positive spillover through domain integration resulted in greater satisfaction in family life for Person B, and as a result higher subjective well-being.

Individuals are likely to experience spillover of positive affect from one life domain to another when the life domains are interdependent and the roles are integrated (e.g., Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Ilies, Wilson, & Wagner, 2009). In regard to the direction of spillover of positive affect, individuals are likely to experience spillover of positive affect from a life domain with a strong involvement to another life domain with weak involvement (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992). For instance, for those who are highly involved with work, affect spillover from work-to-family seems to be stronger than family-to-work spillover.

The *principle of positive spillover* posits that positive affect in two life domains that are highly integrated amplify domain satisfaction, which in turn spills over to overall life satisfaction. That is, positive affect that spills over between life domains increases the level of satisfaction in those domains. For example, sharing of positive work experiences increases family satisfaction because sharing of positive events facilitates positive mood among family members and family satisfaction (e.g., Gable, Gonzaga, & Strachman, 2006; Heller & Watson, 2005). Furthermore, positive affect in one role can boost the level of motivation and energy to engage in another role in a neighboring domain. Thus, positive affect in one domain may increase the likelihood of successful performance in a different domain, resulting in increased satisfaction in that domain, which in turn increases life satisfaction overall (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). In other words, increased satisfaction in the respective domains contribute additively to life satisfaction.

In sum, the preceding discussion can be captured as follows: Individuals who experience positive spillover between two or more life domains through domain integration are likely to experience greater satisfaction in those domains, compared to those who do not experience positive spillover. Such increases in domain satisfaction contribute to increases in life satisfaction overall.

Optimizing domain satisfaction by changing domain salience and the principle of value-based compensation. Consider the following scenario: Person A is satisfied with family life (+3 unit of satisfaction units on a 11-point scale varying from +5 to -5) but not satisfied with work life (-3 satisfaction units). Person A also believes that both family life and work life are equally important (0.8 importance points to each domain on a 1.0-point importance scale varying from "0" as "not important at all" to "1.0"

as "extremely important"). Hence, family satisfaction is "+2.4" [(+3) x (0.8)] and work satisfaction is "-2.4" [(-3) x (0.8)]. Person B is also in the same boat—feels happy with family life but unhappy with work life. Person B also believes that both domains are equally important. Note that in both cases, there is marked satisfaction in family life ("+2.4") and dissatisfaction in work life ("-2.4"). How do people manipulate the interplay between/among the domains to enhance life satisfaction overall?

Person A makes a cognitive change by increasing the salience of family life—increasing importance weight from "0.8" to "1.0," resulting in "+3.0" satisfaction points [(+3) x (1.0)] in the family life and decreasing the salience of work life—decreasing the salience weight from "0.8" to "0.1" resulting in "-0.3" satisfaction units [(-3) x (0.1)] in work life. That is, satisfaction in family life increases—from "+2.4" to "+3.0" [(+3) x (1.0)] and dissatisfaction in work life decreases from "-3.2" to "-0.3" [(-3) x (0.1)]. Person B remains the same. Thus, Person A was able to increase satisfaction in family life and decrease dissatisfaction in work life. Doing so serves to increase life satisfaction overall. Person B remains the same.

This prediction is in line with the research showing a significant correlation between domain satisfaction and domain importance (Hsieh, 2003). That is, domains in which people express high levels of satisfaction are likely to be treated as more salient than domains with low satisfaction (or dissatisfaction). Consider the following study. Scott and Stumpf (1984) collected data on subjective well-being, domain satisfaction, and domain importance using a population of immigrants to Australia. The data clearly revealed a pattern of correlations in which most domain satisfaction scores were significantly correlated with their corresponding domain importance scores—friendship, material possessions, family recreation, and nation. Also consider research in social psychology showing that people report things they are not proficient at to be less important than the things that they are proficient at (e.g., Campbell, 1986; Harackiewicz, Sansone, & Manderlink, 1985; Lewicki, 1984; Rosenberg, 1979). These findings also are in line with the positive correlation between domain satisfaction and domain importance.

The *principle of value compensation* provides an explanation for the association between domain satisfaction and domain salience. People jack up the salience of domains they feel satisfied in and decrease the salience of domains they feel dissatisfied in. Why? They do so to increase life satisfaction or at least prevent life satisfaction from falling below an acceptable level (Sirgy, 2002). Wu (2009) attempted to capture the value-based compensation effect by developing an index that reflects the correlation between have-want discrepancy scores from 12 different life domains and perceived importance scores of these domains—a correlation coefficient at the individual level. Individuals who engage in compensation are those who perceive life domains with high satisfaction to be more important than others. Wu calls this compensation phenomenon the "shifting tendency." Correlations between the *shifting tendency* and life satisfaction (as well as domain satisfaction scores) were positive suggesting that the shifting tendency may be a strategy that enhances subjective well-being.

In sum, the preceding discussion can be captured as follows: Individuals increase domain satisfaction by increasing salience of satisfied domains; and conversely, they decrease domain dissatisfaction by decreasing salience of dissatisfied domains. Life satisfaction is increased by doing so.

Compartmentalizing domains with high dissatisfaction and the segmentation principle. Consider the following scenario comparing two individuals (persons A and B) who are experiencing dissatisfaction at work: -3 units of dissatisfaction on a 11-point scale varying from -5 (very dissatisfied) to +5 (very satisfied). However, both individuals are satisfied with their family life (+3 units of satisfaction). Both individuals are experiencing negative spillover of affect from work life to family life. That is, their dissatisfaction at work (-3 units of satisfaction) is influencing their mood at home causing friction and stress in family life. Person A decides to deal with the high dissatisfaction at work by compartmentalizing his work life to prevent future negative spillover of negative affect from work life to family life. That is, he decides that at home he will not think about work issues, speak of work issues, and do anything related to work. Doing so, Person A manages to maintain his satisfaction in family life to the previous level (+3). Person B does not segment and thus remains to experience decreased satisfaction in the family life as a result of the negative spillover.

Negative affect in one life domain is likely to spill over to other life domains when there is a high level of overlap across life domains in terms of time, space, effort, and resources. In order to prevent spillover of negative affect to other life domains, individuals create and maintain psychological, physical, or behavioral boundaries around their life domains (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Judge et al., 2001; Sonnentag 2012). For example, workers can segment family life domain from work life domain. At home, they do not converse about work experiences. Work-life issues stay at work, and home-life issues stay at home.

Research by Lucas, Diener, and Suh (1996) has demonstrated that the global category of happiness

is composed of separable well-being variables (e.g., work satisfaction, home satisfaction, and life satisfaction). These variables sometime move in different directions over time (cf. Scollon & Diener, 2006). This finding point to the possibility that some people at times are able to prevent spillover of negative affect between life domains. Recent research found that increased use of mobile technologies blur the boundaries between work and family, making segmentation difficult (Chesley, 2005; Park, Fritz, & Jex, 2011).

Let us now delve more into the psychological dynamics concerning the effect of segmentation on life satisfaction in greater detail. Wilensky (1960), I/O psychologist, was the first to describe how people use segmentation to enhance their subjective well-being. He argued that when people feel dissatisfied in one life domain and they realize they have little control in changing that outcome, they make an attempt to "seal off" the domain housing the dissatisfaction. They do so to maintain a certain level of overall life satisfaction (i.e., to ensure that overall life satisfaction does not drop below an intolerable level). He described how affect from one domain "spills over" unto other domains. He described how people "segment" their affect in certain domains preventing affect from spilling over.

As such, the *segmentation principle* posits that individuals who segment life domains can prevent spillover of negative affect across life domains. Segmentation of dissatisfying life domains from other life domains contribute to overall life satisfaction because segmentation of dissatisfying life domain from other life domains protects satisfaction in other life domains. Segmentation of a life domain with negative experiences is important because it serves as a coping mechanism and a buffer for subjective well-being. Much research in work-life balance has documented the segmentation effect (e.g., Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Michel & Hargis, 2008; Sonnentag et al., 2008).

Based on the discussion, we can summarize the concept of segmentation as a behavioral life-balance strategy. Compared to individuals who do not compartmentalize their dissatisfied domains from spilling over to other domains, those who manage to compartmentalize reduce the likelihood of decreases in life satisfaction overall. That is, compartmentalizing negative affect in one domain serves to protect neighboring domains from negative spillover, thus preventing the neighboring domains from slipping into dissatisfaction, and doing so prevents declines in life satisfaction.

Coping with domain dissatisfaction by engaging in roles in other domains and the principle of behavior-based compensation. Consider the following scenario. Person A is becoming increasingly unhappy with family life—satisfaction in family life drops from +3 units to -2 units. This drop of satisfaction in family life is likely to adversely influence his life satisfaction overall. Person B is similarly unhappy with family life—satisfaction drops from +3 units to -2 units in the last few months. Person A becomes more engaged at work by taking on more responsibility, socializing with his co-workers, and getting more recognition from his boss. That is, his satisfaction in work life jumps from a mere +1 units of satisfaction to +4, a whopping increase of +3 units. This increase of satisfaction in work life serves to offset the decrease of satisfaction in family life. Person B does not do anything about his family situation (-2) and his satisfaction at work is rated +1. Ultimately, Person A's life satisfaction is maintained, while Person B's life satisfaction drops significantly.

Many seminal studies in I/O psychology have documented the fact that involvement at work is negatively correlated with involvement in nonwork (e.g., Cotgrove, 1965; Clark, Nye, & Gecas, 1978; Fogarty, Rapoport, & Rapoport, 1971; Goldstein & Eichhorn, 1961; Haavio-Mannila, 1971; Haller & Rosenmayr, 1971; Rapoport, Rapoport, & Thiessen, 1974; Shea, Spitz, & Zeller, 1970; Walker & Woods, 1976). Other evidence suggests that individuals dissatisfied at work tend to increase their engagement in nonwork roles (e.g., Furnham, 1991; Shepard, 1974; Staines, 1980). For example, individuals in low-status jobs feel dissatisfied with their jobs. To compensate for this dissatisfaction, they become more involved in leisure activities (Miller & Weiss, 1982). Specifically, they stress the importance of prize winning in leisure activities related to organized league bowling.

Also consider the research on materialism. There is much evidence to suggest that materialism (strength of financial aspirations) is negatively related to subjective well-being (see literature review by Richins & Rudmin, 1994; Roberts & Clement, 2007). That is, those who score highly on measures of materialism report lower levels of subjective well-being, and vice versa (e.g., Ahuvia & Wong, 2002; Kasser & Ryan, 1993; Richins & Dawson, 1992; Sirgy, 1998). One explanation provided by Diener and Biswas-Diener (2009) is the notion of shopping therapy. Those who do not have close friends and other social resources tend to *compensate* by shopping. In other words, shopping becomes therapeutic.

According to the *principle of behavior-based compensation*, individuals experiencing dissatisfaction in one life domain are more likely to compensate by engaging in satisfying roles in other life domains. For example, individuals feeling dissatisfied with their jobs invest themselves in more satisfying nonwork activities such as leisure, family, or religion (e.g., Brief et al., 1993; Freund & Baltes, 2002;

Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001; Tait, Padgett, & Baldwin, 1989).

Best, Cummins, and Lo (2000) conducted a study on the quality of rural and metropolitan life and found that both groups report equivalent levels of life satisfaction. However, metropolitan residents reported more satisfaction with family and close friends, while farmers reported more satisfaction with the community and productivity. The authors explained this finding by suggesting that life satisfaction is maintained through behavior-based compensation. That is, decreases in satisfaction in one domain are compensated by increases in satisfaction in another through role engagement. Specifically, behavior-based compensation occurs when an individual repeatedly experiences dissatisfaction in a life domain allocates much time, energy, and other resources in another life domain to make up for the satisfaction deficiency.

In sum, we can capture the preceding discussion as follows: Individuals who feel dissatisfied in a life domain and engage in successful role performance in another life domain are likely to experience higher levels of life satisfaction than those fail to feel equally dissatisfied but do not engage in other life domains. Engaging in successful role performance in the other life domain serves to increase satisfaction in that domain to compensate for the decrease in satisfaction in the original domain. Doing so serves to maintain an adaptation level of life satisfaction.

Stress management and the principle of role conflict. The compensatory model of life satisfaction does not take into account the interaction of roles between life domains. Consider the following scenario: Person A experiences a moderate level of satisfaction in both work life and family life (e.g., +3 units of satisfaction in each domain). The same person experiences conflict between roles in work life and family life (e.g., family demand interferes with work demand and vice versa). Person B experiences the same levels of domain satisfaction in both work life and family life (+3 units of satisfaction in each). Additionally, Person B does not experience role conflict. The compensatory model of life satisfaction would predict that both individuals are likely to experience the same the level of life satisfaction. However, life balance dictates that role conflict be accounted for in the way domain satisfaction contributes to life satisfaction. By taking into account role conflict we would predict that Person B should experience higher levels of life satisfaction than Person A.

Research has shown that role conflict in life domains has an adverse effect on domain satisfaction and overall life satisfaction (e.g., Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). A high level of psychological involvement in one role is usually associated with increased amount of time and involvement devoted to that role, thereby making it difficult to deal with role demand in other life domains (e.g., Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Individuals experiencing role conflict across life domains are likely to experience stress, which in turn reduces overall life satisfaction (e.g., Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992). Why would they experience stress? To maintain successful performance in these roles they have to invest much more time and energy in the same roles to maintain an acceptable level of life satisfaction. This allocation of more resources to maintain successful performance in conflicting social roles is essentially induced by psychological stress commonly manifested in terms of general psychological strain, somatic/physical symptoms, depression, substance abuse, burnout, work-related stress, and family-related stress. Positive affectivity is negatively correlated with stress (e.g., Brief et al. 1993; Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998; Watson, 2000; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988).

Much research has shown that life balance can be achieved when social roles in work and non-work life domains are compatible with minimal conflict (e.g., Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). That is, stress management is typically a suggested approach to deal with the stress generated by role conflict. Role conflict can take multiple forms (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). *Time-based conflict* refers to time pressures from one role preventing individuals from meeting expectations in another role or creating a preoccupation with one role while one is physically attempting to fulfil another role. *Strain-based conflict* occurs when tension, anxiety, and/or fatigue from one role affects performance in another role. *Behavior-based conflict* occurs when in-role behavior from one role is incompatible with behaviors expected in another role. As such stress management can be viewed as involving three different set of techniques, techniques to reduce stress from (1) time-based conflict, (2) strain-based conflict, and (3) behavior-based conflict. Examples of stress management techniques dealing with time-based conflict is to plan ahead and schedule tasks and events in ways that do not conflict. In doing so, the individual has to be time sensitive and punctual in starting and completing tasks and attending events on time. Examples of stress management techniques designed to reduce strain-based conflict include breathing exercises, meditation, physical exercise, among others. An example of a stress management technique that can assist in reducing behavior-based conflict is to become more conscious at identifying behaviors that may cause role conflict and to take action to change those behaviors in ways to avoid role conflict.

In sum, the preceding discussion can be summarized as follows: Individuals who successfully manage stress stemming from role conflict are likely to experience higher life satisfaction than those who

fail to manage that stress. Specifically, role conflict brings about much stress—stress stemming from time-based role conflict, strain-based role conflict, and behavior-based role conflict. Stress take a toll on life satisfaction. Stress management to reduce time-based conflict, strain-based conflict, and behavior-based conflict serves to reduce domain dissatisfaction. In doing so, life satisfaction is maintained at acceptable adaptation levels.

Using skills, experiences, and resources in one role for other roles and the principle of role enrichment. Consider the following scenario. A worker experiences imbalanced domain satisfaction in work and family life. That is, his satisfaction at work is +4 units—on a 11-point satisfaction scale varying from -5 (very dissatisfied) to +5 (very satisfied). A few months ago his satisfaction in family life was +3 but now it plummeted to -2 (moderate degree of dissatisfaction in family life). That is, his satisfaction in family life has decreased significantly but his satisfaction at work remained constant. He is experiencing diminished satisfaction in family life due to conflict with his adolescent children. He remembers using conflict resolution strategies at work that were successful in resolving conflict within his project team. He applies the same conflict resolution strategies at home to deal with the family conflict with positive results. Doing so managed to change his satisfaction in family life from a -2 to a +3, thus increasing satisfaction in family life.

There are many situations in which people use skills, experiences, and resources in one role for other roles to enhance balanced satisfaction among life domains. Experiences in a social role can produce positive experiences and outcomes in another other role. Similarly, skills and resources in one role can improve or further enhance performance and satisfaction in another role. For example, work-to-family enrichment occurs when work experiences serve to increase satisfaction in family life; and similarly, family-to-work enrichment occurs when family experiences contribute to heightened satisfaction in work life (e.g., Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Voydanoff, 2004). Doing so helps workers enhance domain satisfaction. That is, learning occurs in one life domain is easily transferred to other life domains allowing the individual to generate more domain satisfaction through role engagement and goal attainment. And such learning serves to enhance domain satisfaction.

Research has documented the effect of *role enrichment* on overall life satisfaction when two roles are integrated (e.g., Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2006), when the skills and resource requirements are similar (e.g., Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), and when role performance in one life domain becomes increasingly interdependent with another (e.g., Hanson & Hammer, 2006; Ilies et al., 2009). High levels of role enrichment serves to improve role performance in work and non-work domains, which in turn contributes to balanced domain satisfaction. That is, skills, psychological resources, and material resources generated in a life domain can be applied to roles in other life domains to improve role performance in those domains (e.g., Hanson & Hammer, 2006). Furthermore, individuals with high role enrichment are less likely to experience stress and anxiety from increased role demand. Such individuals apply their skills and resources across social roles producing more positive outcomes—less psychological distress and anxiety in performing multiple roles and a heightened sense of self-efficacy in those roles.

In sum, we can succinctly capture the preceding discussion as follows: Individuals who use their skills, experiences, and resources in one role for other roles across life domains are likely to experience greater domain satisfaction (in dissatisfied domains) than those who do not. That is, they use skills, experiences, and resources in one domain to increase satisfaction in another domain (or mitigate decreases in satisfaction in another domain), and doing so helps to increase (or preserve) life satisfaction overall.

Conclusion

The key goal of this chapter is to shed more light on the concept of life balance and its effects on life satisfaction. We presented a concept of life balance involving nine behavioral strategies and linked those strategies to subjective well-being and we explained how they impact life satisfaction through a set of psychological principles. The first three of these strategies are designed to prompt greater participation of satisfied domains to contribute to life satisfaction, whereas the remaining strategies are designed to increase domain satisfaction and decrease domain dissatisfaction. As such we believe that there are two sets of strategic requisites of life balance. One requisite is to prompt greater participation of satisfied life domains to contribute to life satisfaction; the second requisite is to increase domain satisfaction and reduce dissatisfaction. These two strategic requisites result in what we call "life balance."

To reiterate, inter-domain strategies designed to prompt greater participation of satisfied life domains to contribute to life satisfaction include: (1) engagement in social roles in multiple life domains (explained by the principle of satisfaction limits), (2) engagement in roles in health, safety, economic, social, work, leisure, and cultural domains (explained by the principle of satisfaction of the full spectrum of human development needs), and (3) engagement in new social roles (explained by the principle of

diminishing satisfaction). Inter-domain strategies designed to increase domain satisfaction and decrease domain dissatisfaction include (1) integrating domains with high satisfaction (explained by the principle of positive spillover), (2) optimizing domain satisfaction by changing domain salience (explained by the value-based compensation principle), (3) compartmentalizing domains with low satisfaction (explained by the segmentation principle), (4) coping with domain dissatisfaction by engaging in roles in other domains likely to produce satisfaction (explained by the behavior-based compensation principle), (5) stress management (explained by the principle of role conflict), and (6) using skills, experiences, and resources in one role for other roles (explained by the principle of role enrichment).

The reader should note that we have construed life balance in terms of two sets of conjoint behavioral strategies. We identified at least three principles to capture the psychological dynamics of the first set and six other principles capturing the psychology of the other set. Within each set there may be more. We encourage researchers to make a concerted effort to identify more behavioral strategies of life balance within each set. For example, one can argue that people who have a balanced life are adept in organizing their lives. That is, they use organizational skills to help them do the best they can in various social roles across a variety of life domains. This may be a principle involving the second set of inter-domain strategies—strategies designed to increase domain satisfaction and decrease dissatisfaction. Another behavioral strategy that may involve the second set is efficiency. Perhaps people with a balanced life tend to use efficiency skills. To be efficient is to try to generate as much output with as little input. Efficiency skills require to be creative in engaging in tasks that manage to "kill two birds with one stone." For example, a person is efficient in planning to shop for office supplies (i.e., work life) and family meals (i.e., family life) at the same time. How about making decisions in one social role in a particular life domain by taking a whole-life perspective—by considering the effect of that decision on satisfaction in other life domains? Could this be a behavioral strategy of life balance characteristic of the second set (inter-domain strategies designed to increase domain satisfaction and decrease dissatisfaction)?

Much of what we discussed in this chapter have focused on behavioral strategies of life balance in relation to life satisfaction. Future studies should examine the relative efficacy of these strategies affecting life balance and life satisfaction. Future studies should empirically test the conceptual model presented in this study.

Understanding the dimensions of life balance and the theoretical mechanisms linking life balance with life satisfaction should help practitioners and policy makers formulate programs that can enhance subjective well-being. Armed with this greater understanding, therapists, life coaches, human resource managers, and policy makers can develop better programs to help their own constituencies achieve greater balance in their lives.

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