

"Long before it's in the papers"

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Money CAN buy happiness, within limits: study

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Money can buy happiness, but within limits, a study suggests.

People asked to rate their own everyday "emotional experiences" give higher ratings the higher their income is, up to an average of about \$75,000 a year, according to Princeton University researchers Daniel Kahneman and Angus Deaton.

Above that amount, these ratings level off, though even then, people continue evaluating their own life in general more highly as their earnings increase.

Kahneman and Deaton analyzed over 450,000 responses to a daily survey of 1,000 randomly selected U.S. residents. Life evaluations were measured by asking respondents to rate their lives on a scale of zero to 10, while emotional well-being was measured according to respondents' experiences of certain positive and negative emotions the previous day.

As income decreased from \$75,000, respondents reported decreasing happiness and increasing sadness and stress, according to the investigators, whose findings appear in this week's early online edition of the research journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

The data also suggested that poverty exacerbates the emotional pain of unfortunate events or circumstances, including disease, divorce, and loneliness, the authors added.

The study doesn't imply that people's lives won't improve after a raise in annual income from \$100,000 to \$150,000, they said, but it suggests that above a certain income, people's emotional well-being is constrained by other factors, such as temperament and life circumstances.