4

Self, the Hyphen between Culture and Subjective Well-being

Eunkook M. Suh

The self stands at the junction of subjective well-being and culture. Culture provides form and shape to the self, which in turn influences how individuals feel and think about various aspects of their lives—the central research issue of SWB. Given its overlapping intersections with both culture and subjective experience, the self holds a key in unraveling the complex relation between culture and SWB. Most of the existing studies on culture and SWB, however, have used aggregated cultural variables, such as individualism and power distance, in their analyses (Arindell et al. 1997; Diener, Diener, and Diener 1995; Veenhoven 1993). Although important advances are made from this approach, the psychological mechanisms involved in the experience and judgment of SWB among different cultural members remain rather poorly understood. In order to fill in this theoretical vacuum, the present chapter contends that the field needs to carefully observe the various ways in which the self mediates the influence of culture on SWB.

Western theories of psychological well-being are firmly established on a highly individuated self concept; individuals are believed to be metaphysically discrete and separate from others just as their physical bodies are. Psychological characteristics commonly associated with mental health in North America (e.g., self-actualization, autonomy) portray the personal qualities of a highly independent, self-reliant individual who is capable of transcending the influences of others and of the society. Such ideals, to borrow Geertz's (1984, p. 126) expression, are "rather peculiar idea(s) within the context of the world's cultures." East Asian notions of selfhood, in particular, are antithetical to the typical North American understanding of the person. The East Asian discussion of the individual starts with the Confucian assumption that the person exists in relationship to others (King and Bond 1985). The individual is viewed as being fundamentally socially oriented (Yang 1984), situation centered (Hsu 1953), interdependent (Markus and Kitayama 1991), and

inextricably bonded with others through emotional ties (Choi and Choi 1994). Such cultural assumptions of selfhood are inevitably incorporated in concepts of psychological well-being. Accordingly, the list of Western psychological virtues associated with the individuated self model appears to have far less importance in determining the SWB of East Asian cultural members. The first section of the chapter is focused on this issue.

The second section discusses the important role played by the self in the judgment of SWB. For instance, individualist cultures that advocate the primacy of individual experience chronically direct the attention of their members to their internal psychological attributes. In contrast, in East Asian cultures where salient cultural tasks constitute others, individuals are constantly drawn to external social cues. The basis of life satisfaction judgment seems to differ between these two cultures, depending on what types of information are chronically accessible to the individual. Finally, the chapter concludes by addressing an issue that is attracting increasing attention among cross-cultural researchers. Namely, why are North Americans happier and more self-positive than East Asians? In addition to motivational reasons, the chapter proposes that cultural differences in mean levels of SWB and positive self-judgments could partly arise from the diverging ways in which North Americans and East Asians evaluate themselves.

Correlates of Subjective Well-being

A common expression used by a Korean wife when introducing her husband to a stranger is "This is our father." Although the exact origin of this expression is not clear, it appears to be related to the general East Asian tendency to restrain the self from becoming uncomfortably salient in a social context. By referring to her husband from the perspective of her children ("our father") rather than from her own ("my husband"), the wife may draw less attention to the self in the social context. Although this interpretation is speculative, what is unambiguously clear is that East Asian cultural members constantly tone down their individuality by avoiding overly self-promoting and self-assertive self-presentations. The central motives of the self in these cultures, accordingly, are quite different from those of the North Americans who are encouraged, if not obliged, to discover and assert their distinct positive inner qualities (Fiske et al. 1998; Markus and Kitayama 1991).

Self-enhancement and self-consistency are two motives of the self that hold prominent positions in Western psychology (Brown 1998; Jones 1973; Sedikides

and Strube 1997; Swann et al. 1987). In this light, it is not surprising that high self-esteem and self-congruence have been long regarded as quintessential markers of mental health in the West (Allport 1961; Lecky 1945; Maslow 1954; Rogers 1965). Self-esteem and self-congruence, respectively, represent the crystallized fulfillment of the needs of self-enhancement and self-consistency. A growing number of cross-cultural psychologists, however, find that the motive of self-enhancement (Kashima and Triandis 1986; Kitayama et al. 1997; Heine et al. 1999) as well as the motive of self-consistency (Bachnik 1992; Heine and Lehman 1997; Kashima et al. 1992; Rosenberger 1989) are weaker in East Asian than in Western cultures. In line with this cultural difference, recent findings further suggest that both self-esteem and level of identity consistency are less powerful predictors of SWB in collectivist than in individualist cultures.

Self-esteem

Liking oneself appears to be the panacea for most psychological problems in North American cultures. People who possess high self-esteem are able to find more meaning in their lives and ward off anxiety more successfully (Greenberg et al. 1992), are less prone to substance abuse (Hawkins, Catalano, and Miller 1992), and are less affected by negative moods (Brown and Mankowski 1993) than those who have negative views of themselves. Not surprisingly, self-esteem is a strong predictor of SWB among North Americans (Campbell 1981; Lucas, Diener, and Suh 1996).

Recent cross-cultural findings indicate, however, that the strength of the relation between self-esteem and SWB varies considerably across cultures. Although Diener and Diener (1995) found that life satisfaction correlated positively with self-esteem across all of the 31 nations they examined, the size of this correlation differed substantially across nations. For instance, self-esteem and life satisfaction correlated 0.60 in samples from the United States and from Canada, whereas they correlated only 0.08 among Indian and 0.27 among Bahrain women. Across the entire pool of nations, the individualism of the nations correlated 0.53 with the size of the self-esteem and life satisfaction relation. Thus self-esteem predicts life satisfaction more strongly in individualist than in collectivist societies.

In addition to self-esteem, Kwan, Bond, and Singelis (1997) hypothesized that maintaining a harmonious relationship with others may be a particularly important source of life satisfaction in collectivist cultures. When the SWB responses of U.S. and Hong Kong college students were analyzed through structural equation models, self-esteem and relationship harmony each had an additive effect on life satisfaction

and were separable in both cultures. However, as predicted, relationship harmony turned out to be as important as self-esteem in predicting the life satisfaction of Hong Kong respondents. In contrast, the standardized path coefficient of self-esteem (0.63) was significantly larger than the coefficient of relationship harmony (0.23) in the United States. In addition to replicating the findings of Diener and Diener (1995), Kwan et al. found an indigenous collectivist factor (relationship harmony) that importantly predicts SWB in a collectivist cultural setting.

If self-esteem is indeed less central to East Asian individuals, they should be less disturbed by threats to their self-esteem than individualists. A study by Brockner and Chen (1996) supports this idea. They examined how college students from the United States and the People's Republic of China (PRC) react to a negative feedback about the self after completing a test that purportedly measures the individual's cognitive ability. In the United States, but not among the PRC sample, individuals with high self-esteem engaged in greater self-protective response (e.g., less internal attribution) to negative feedback than those with low self-esteem.

A further analysis by Brockner and Chen (1996) revealed that the pattern of self-protective behavior observed at the cultural level also exists at the individual level. Even among the PRC respondents, those with a more independent self-construal resembled the general self-protective behavior of the U.S. participants. Conversely, within the United States, those with a less independent self-construal resembled the self-protective patterns exhibited by the PRC sample. In other words, in both cultures, individuals whose self-system "mismatched" the cultural prototype engaged in a self-protective style that was consonant with the typical pattern of the "opposite" culture. This finding suggests that a psychological phenomenon observed at the cultural level tends to occur also at the individual level. It highlights the fact that a large amount of individual variance exists within a culture and also that there is considerable overlap in the psychological behaviors of different cultural members.

The above studies suggest that having a positive self-view is beneficial to SWB in most cultures. As Diener and Diener (1995) found, self-esteem was correlated positively with SWB in all of the 31 nations they observed. However, the degree of importance varies substantially across cultures. Self-esteem is a very important element of life satisfaction in individualist cultures because their members are "taught to like themselves, and doing so is a sign of mental adjustment" (Diener and Diener 1995, p. 653). In cultures where the collective takes precedence over the individual, however, positive feelings about the self appear to constitute a smaller part of one's overall life satisfaction. In fact the term "self-esteem" does not even exist in the

common vocabulary of Koreans. Furthermore, at this point it is unclear whether the exact origin of this positive self-feeling is similar across cultures. That is, even though self-esteem relates positively with SWB across cultures, we need to gain a more refined understanding of what types of experience cause the positive self-feelings of collectivist versus individualist cultural members. Overall, although recent studies indicate that self-esteem is positively related to SWB across cultures, its intrinsic importance has been overestimated by traditional Western theories of psychological well-being.

Identity Consistency

Possessing an internally coherent self-identity is considered to be another integral ingredient of mental health in Western theories. Despite the multifaceted nature of the self, the prevailing view in psychology asserts that the person should coherently integrate the various components of the self and be consistent across situations. Lecky (1945), one of the earliest proponents of this idea, claimed that people seek to understand who they are by integrating various self-perceptions into an organized knowledge structure. Because information that is inconsistent with the existing self-view must go through a strenuous "repair work," Lecky argued that people are strongly motivated to act in manners consistent with their self-views. The psychological importance of having a consistent identity has been reiterated in the writings of prominent personality theorists, such as Maslow (1968), Rogers (1965), Erikson (1950), and Jourard (1974), and is supported by contemporary research (Donahue et al. 1993.)

The above-mentioned theoretical position fits well with the North American cultural ethos that heralds the autonomy of the individual: the self, not the situation, should be the "anchor" of personal behavior. The decontextualized Western self derives its meaning, purpose, and behavioral guidance primarily from its internal sources. Thus it follows quite naturally that establishing a well-organized, internally and cross-situationally consistent self-structure is a prerequisite condition of mental health in the West. The question is whether this idea holds equally true in East Asian cultures where the focus is more often on the social context than on the person. Being rigidly self-consistent by insisting the principles of the internal self rather than those of the interpersonal context, for instance, could be construed as a reflection of personal immaturity or arrogance in East Asian cultures.

With this question in mind, Suh (2000) recently investigated the consistency of Korean and American college students' self-views across social roles in relation to

their SWB. Participants in both cultures were asked to rate how accurately twenty different personality traits (e.g., emotional, impulsive) described themselves in general, and also when they were engaging in five different social roles (e.g., son/daughter, friend). A number of interesting findings emerged. First, the self-views of Korean students were significantly more flexible across roles than those of the Americans. For instance, the personality profile of the general self, on average, correlated 0.32 across the five different social selves among the Koreans, whereas the mean of this within-person correlation was 0.58 in the U.S. sample. Thus the overall self-views of the Korean participants changed to a greater degree across social contexts than those of the Americans, implying that self-consistency needs are weaker in collectivist than in individualist cultures.

More important, Suh (2000) found that the degree of identity consistency was a significantly stronger predictor of SWB in the United States than in Korea. Based on a method developed by Block (1961), an index of identity consistency was obtained for each individual by factor analyzing his or her trait-role matrix (20 traits $\times$ 6 roles). This index of identity consistency, which reflects the degree to which an individual's ordering of the traits from the most to least self-descriptive is consistent across roles, correlated with SWB measures in a similar direction between the two samples. However, a significant cultural difference was observed in the strength of these relations. The correlation between the level of identity consistency and life satisfaction, for instance, was 0.49 among the Americans and 0.22 among the Koreans. Also the relation between identity consistency and unpleasant affect was significantly stronger among the American ($r = -0.50$) than the Korean ($r = -0.23$) respondents ($p < 0.05$).

One intriguing cultural difference emerged from the informant reports. According to the informant reports, highly self-consistent individuals were viewed by others to be socially more skilled ($r = 0.37, p < 0.01$) and more likable ($r = 0.33, p < 0.05$) than inconsistent individuals in the United States. Interestingly, however, Korean informants showed no such sign of preference between consistent versus inconsistent individuals. In short, in contrast to the situation in the United States, highly self-consistent people were not more popular than inconsistent people in Korea. Compared to the United States, the contingency between self-consistent behavior and social reward appears to be significantly weaker, or even absent in East Asian cultures. Although this conclusion needs more extensive examination, it may offer illuminating insights to understanding why the motive of self-consistency is weaker and why identity consistency is less predictive of SWB in East Asian cultures.

As in the case of self-esteem, maintaining a coherently organized personal identity does relate to SWB in both individualist and collectivist cultures. However, a similar caveat should be added. Unlike the traditional assumptions held in mainstream psychology, the need of self-consistency does not appear to be a universally strong psychological motive. Furthermore the psychological benefits accrued by maintaining a consistent identity across different social settings seem to be smaller in East Asian cultures than in North America. An impending task is to better understand the primary motives of the collectivist self and to uncover the concrete psychological constructs arising from these needs that contribute to SWB in East Asian societies.

Basis of Life Satisfaction Judgments

Subjective well-being, as the term indicates, is primarily concerned with the person's subjective judgment of his or her well-being (Diener et al. 1999). Because the standards of self-evaluation are deferred to the individual, evaluating whether one's life as a whole is satisfying or not can be a challenging cognitive task to the respondent. Theoretically, after retrieving, weighing, and appraising a wide variety of personal information, the person will need to translate his or her judgment into a numeric response. In reality, however, individuals rarely go through this exhausting mental process. Rather, as Schwarz, Strack, and their colleagues demonstrate, individuals tend to reduce their cognitive efforts by relying on cues that are readily accessible and salient at the time of their life satisfaction judgments (Schwarz and Strack 1999).

Cultures, by emphasizing different elements of experience and by giving priority to different types of information, play a key role in determining what types of information are chronically salient among their cultural members (Triandis 1989). This leads to the idea that the judgment of life satisfaction could be based on different sources of information across cultures. For instance, the North American culture strongly encourages its members to attend to, cultivate, and express their unique inner qualities. One consequence of this is that individuals tend to attach great value and validity to their internal, phenomenological experiences. Private emotions, in particular, are believed to reflect the most genuine aspects of the self (Andersen and Ross 1984). As a result individuals frequently use emotions as a piece of information in various self-judgments (e.g., Batson et al. 1995; Schwarz and Clore 1988). Even when explicitly asked to ignore, individualists tend to find it quite difficult to dismiss emotion-laden information (Edwards and Bryan 1997).

A recent study by Gilovich, Savitsky, and Medvec (1998) illustrates how strongly internal experience affects the psychological judgments made in individualist cultures. They found that North American college students tend to overestimate the extent to which others can discern their internal states, a phenomenon the authors labeled as the *illusion of transparency*. For instance, people believe that their feelings of disgust are more apparent than they actually are and overestimate how well others can detect their lies. After disproving a number of potential explanations, the authors conclude that this bias stems primarily from the powerful impact of the phenomenological experience on self-judgment. When individuals judge how apparent their internal states are to others, they begin the process by examining their subjective phenomenological experience. However, the internal experience is usually so salient that the adjustments individuals make to this phenomenological "anchor" tend to be insufficient. As a result people erroneously conclude that their internal states "leak out" more than they actually do. This study exemplifies how strongly internal experiences affect the self-inference processes of individualist cultural members.

A growing body of evidence suggests, however, that internal phenomenological states, such as emotions, are less central to the psychological behaviors of collectivist cultural members (Levenson et al. 1992; Levine et al. 1995; Miller and Bersoff 1998; Potter 1988). Such a cultural difference, regarding the significance of internal experience, seems to emerge at a relatively early age. A recent study by Han, Leichtman, and Wang (1998) is illuminating. They presented an identical children's story to 4- and 6-year-old Korean, Chinese, and American children and asked them to recall the story the next day. Content analysis indicated that compared to the Asians, American children used more internal emotion words and more frequently mentioned themselves relative to others when they recalled the story. Interestingly the American children used more internal qualifiers even though the story that was presented in the experiment was originally published in Korea. Thus, even at a relatively early age, North American children seem to schematize experience more in reference to internal referents of the self than East Asian peers.

If the primary source of self-knowledge differs across cultures, the judgment of life satisfaction may also be based on different cues across cultures. A recent study by Suh, Diener, Oishi, and Triandis (1998) supports this idea. When the relation between emotions and life satisfaction was compared across 41 nations, significantly stronger correlations were found in individualist than in collectivist societies. For instance, life satisfaction correlated 0.48 with affect balance (frequency of positive minus negative

affect) in the United States, but 0.22 in India, and 0.32 in Japan. Across nations the strength of the life satisfaction and emotion correlation was related significantly to the nations' degree of individualism ($r = 0.52$). Thus the more individualist the nation, the more heavily life satisfaction judgments tended to be based on internal emotions.

Considering that collectivists view external factors, such as norms, roles, and obligations as prime determinants of behavior (Fiske et al., 1998; Triandis 1995), Suh et al. (1998) further hypothesized that collectivists will pay considerable attention to normative concerns ("Is it culturally desirable to feel personally satisfied?") when they evaluate their overall lives. To test this idea, Suh et al. compared the relative weight of emotions and norms in life satisfaction judgments at the individual level using another international sample. As predicted, individuals of collectivist cultures based their judgments equally strongly on norms and emotions. On the other hand, norms played a negligible role in the life satisfaction judgment of individualists. As found earlier, individualists' judgments of life satisfaction were based predominantly on their internal emotions.

What crucial factor causes the divergent self-evaluation pattern between individualist and collectivist cultures? Suh et al. (1998) proposed that the cultural difference was primarily due to the relative salience of the autonomous versus the relational aspects of the self. According to this perspective, individualists' global self-evaluations tend to be based chiefly on private experiences (e.g., emotions) because the culture constantly directs the person's attention to the unique, individuated aspects of his or her identity. Collectivists, on the other hand, base their self-judgments heavily on external referents (e.g., norms) because diverse cultural mechanisms perpetually highlight the relational and interdependent aspects of the self.

Theoretically, then, an analogous self-judgment process may take place between individuals *within* a culture. For instance, the "idiocentric" mode of life satisfaction judgment (i.e., reliance on emotion) should be pronounced among individuals whose distinct individuality from others is salient. Conversely, life satisfaction judgments may be based more heavily on social information (e.g., social appraisal) when the relational aspects of the self are highly accessible. A recent within-culture study supports this idea. Compared to European-American participants, Suh and Diener (1999) found that Asian-Americans downplayed the importance of emotions but heavily emphasized social appraisal (i.e., significant other's evaluation of one's life) in their life satisfaction judgments. This ethnic group difference was replicated not only at the individual level between allocentric versus idiocentric respondents, but also between experimental priming conditions. Regardless of the respondent's

stable personal characteristics, internal emotions served as a principal source of self-evaluation when the person's distinct individuality was primed. However, when the person's attention was directed toward the relational aspects of the self, life satisfaction judgments were strongly based on how s/he thought significant others might view her or his life (social appraisal).

In sum, the multilevel research conducted among cultures (Suh et al. 1998), ethnic groups, individual differences in personality, and priming conditions (Suh and Diener 1999) converge to demonstrate that the self plays a pivotal role in determining the relative weight of internal versus external information in judgments of life satisfaction. Since the time of Wundt, psychology traditionally believed that the best way to evaluate ourselves is to "look inward" to our internal feelings and thoughts. In general, the life satisfaction judgment styles of those who highly endorse the independent elements of the self seem to match this traditional assumption. However, regardless of the specific cause, when individuals view themselves primarily in relational terms, self-evaluation appears to be based to a significant degree on external, social information. These findings not only highlight the pervasive influence of the self on the process of SWB judgments, but as we will discuss in the following section, they may also provide important clues to understanding why cultural differences in levels of SWB occur.

Why Are North Americans Happier Than East Asians?

"I feel very confident and very proud of what I've done" was the comment the U.S. national team coach offered to the press moments after losing a highly publicized match against Iran in the 1998 World Cup soccer tournament (Associated Press 1998). Although such flattering self-appraisal baffles many East Asians, research shows that such positive attitudes about the self are held prevalently among North American cultural members. For instance, individuals typically take credit for success, but detach themselves from failure (Miller and Ross 1975), feel quite invulnerable to negative future events (Perloff and Fetzer 1986; Weinstein 1980), and rate themselves "above average" on various positive personal qualities (Dunning, Meyerowitz, and Holzberg 1989). Such self-serving tendencies are so widespread and robust among the "normal" population that they are believed to be the typical way the North Americans think of themselves (Armor and Taylor 1998; Taylor and Brown 1988).

The self-views of East Asian cultural members are comparably less positive. In comparison to North Americans, for example, East Asians are less optimistic about

their future (Heine and Lehman 1995), have more moderate levels of self-esteem (Diener and Diener 1995), exhibit less self-serving bias (Kashima and Triandis 1986), and engage in less self-enhancement (Bond, Leung, and Wan 1982; Kitayama et al. 1997; Yik, Bond, and Paulus 1998). An interesting cultural effect was found when Lee and Seligman (1997) studied the attribution styles of White Americans, Chinese Americans, and mainland Chinese participants. The level of optimism displayed by the American Chinese was stronger than the mainland Chinese group but weaker than the White Americans, suggesting that the degree of optimism is related with the amount of exposure to individualist cultural values. Heine et al. (1999) also provide evidence that engagement in North American culture fosters the development of self-esteem.

Not surprisingly, North Americans report significantly higher levels of SWB than East Asians (Diener, Diener, and Diener 1995; Diener and Suh 1999; Diener et al. 1995). For instance, compared to 36 percent of Japanese and 49 percent of Korean men, 83 percent of American men and 78 percent of Canadian men reported above neutral levels of life satisfaction in Diener and Diener's study (1995). The majority of North Americans not only say that they are happy in an absolute sense (by reporting above neutral points on SWB measures), but also believe that their current age is the happiest time of life (*USA Weekend* 1998).

Why are North Americans so happy and self-positive? This is one of the most perplexing questions that have emerged from recent cross-cultural studies. Although a number of hypotheses have been considered, including possible cultural differences in emotion norms (Diener et al. 1996), response styles (Diener et al. 1995), and self-effacing motives (Kitayama et al. 1997), our understanding of this issue remains rudimentary. Because most of the current studies in this area rely on self-report measures, some may raise the possibility that self-presentational motives (e.g., to appear modest) lower the SWB reports of East Asians. Although this is a valid concern that warrants constant attention in comparing cross-cultural means, recent studies fail to lend a strong support for this interpretation (e.g., see Chen, Lee, and Stevenson 1995; Diener et al. 1995; Heine et al. 1999). In the following section we focus on some of the potential motivational and cognitive reasons that might lead to mean cultural differences in SWB and positive self-views.

Motivational Factors

Our self-understanding depends to a great extent on how we *wish* to view ourselves (e.g., Brown 1993). Motivation has a ubiquitous influence on our reasoning by affecting the cognitive strategies for accessing, constructing, and evaluating information

(Kunda 1990). Because people have a strong propensity to seek or interpret evidence in ways that confirm their expectations (Nickerson 1998), people are more likely to evaluate their lives and experiences positively when they have a strong incentive to do so. Thus, in attempting to understand why North Americans and East Asians differ so much in their mean levels of SWB, we should first consider the issue from a motivational perspective. In particular, whether the culture believes SWB hinges primarily on personal abilities or on less controllable external factors could affect how strongly its members try to view themselves in a positive tone.

The pursuit of happiness, in individualist North American cultures, is an inviolable individual right. In a culture that offers great amounts of opportunity and freedom to each cultural member, happiness is considered to be the ultimate culmination of one's labor and effort. Perhaps this is why happiness is not only one of the foremost concerns of Americans, but has such a enormous positive "halo" effect. For instance, Americans even believe that happy people are more likely to go to heaven than unhappy people (King and Napa 1998). The downside of individualism, at least from a personal perspective, however, is that each individual is highly accountable for his or her unhappiness and low self-regard. The psychological "pressure" to be happy and self-confident thus is strong in North American cultures. As the prevalent use of self-serving cognitive strategies implies (Greenwald 1980; Taylor and Brown 1988; Tesser 1988), individualist cultural members invest a considerable amount of effort to convince both the self and others that they are happy, self-confident, and in full control of their lives. It seems quite probable that such motivational reasons, to some degree, implicitly elevate the SWB reports of North American cultural members.

East Asian cultural perspectives on happiness are quite different from those of the West (e.g., Lee 1992; Minami 1971; D. Suh 1994). According to the Japanese social psychologist Hiroshi Minami (1971), for instance, a "habit of hesitation" (p. 34) toward happiness exists in traditional Japanese culture. This hesitant Eastern attitude toward happiness may partly originate from the Confucian idea that both happiness and unhappiness stem from a common "root" (Lee 1992). Unhappiness is believed to arrive on the heel of happiness, and vice versa. It is therefore taught that happiness should not be embraced with excessive joy. The upside of this logic is that the unhappiness of the moment should be endured with hope because happiness is imminent. Because the ebb and flow of happiness in life are believed to be essentially determined by heavenly forces, the individual is advised to find ways to be satisfied with his or her allotted amount of bliss. Traces of these traditional ideas,

although becoming weaker among younger generations, are still found in various East Asian customs, habits, and beliefs. An important consequence of these lay beliefs is that East Asian individuals feel personally less obliged to be happy and satisfied with their lives than North American cultural members do.

There is some evidence suggesting that SWB is a more central motive of North Americans than of East Asians. For instance, Chinese college students value happiness less strongly than Americans (Diener et al. 1995) or Australians (Feather 1986). Diener, Suh, Smith, and Shao also found that Chinese respondents think less frequently than Americans about whether their life is happy, satisfying, or joyful. More interestingly, when American and Korean students were asked to complete a life satisfaction scale as a culturally ideal person would, Korean students reported significantly lower scores. Not only is the ideal level of life satisfaction lower in East Asian cultures, but positive emotions, such as joy and happiness, are also not as highly valued by East Asians as they are by Americans (Diener et al. 1996). The cultural value placed on the concept of SWB as a whole, thus, seems to vary between individualist and collectivist cultures.

To return to the main argument, cultural attributions concerning the determinants of happiness should affect how strongly cultural members strive to achieve SWB. North Americans are likely to try to be happier and more positive about their lives than East Asians because SWB is tightly linked with individual effort in the former culture. Such differences in motivation level can lead to actual mean differences in SWB. The involvement of self-deceptive mechanisms cannot be completely ruled out (e.g., Shedler, Mayman, and Manis 1993). The more crucial reason, however, might be related to people's self-confirming information-processing tendencies. As mentioned earlier, people rarely seek or interpret evidence impartially. Rather, the norm is to selectively "see" what we desire to see and overweight the evidence that positively confirms our expectations (Greenwald 1980; Kulik, Sledge, and Mahler 1986; Nickerson 1998). For instance, American and Japanese tend to weigh positive and negative information differently to promote their different self-enhancing versus self-effacing needs (Kitayama et al. 1997). Similarly SWB reports, which are based on highly flexible criteria, are likely to be influenced by the degree to which cultural members desire to portray themselves as a person who is happy and satisfied with his life.

In sum, cultural perceptions concerning the nature and the meaning of personal happiness seem to differ between North American and East Asian societies. Global success in life is often measured by the individual's level of happiness in Western

cultures that is founded on the moral visions of personal freedom and liberty. Personal happiness occupies a less salient position in Eastern cultures that frequently expect their members to subordinate their personal desires, goals, and aspirations to those of the collective. Therefore members of these two respective cultures are likely to differ in terms of how much they center their personal goals, interests, and efforts on the attainment of SWB. Such cultural difference in the motive to be happy, through various intangible ways, could influence the SWB level reported by the members of these two cultures.

A motivational account of SWB highlights an important psychological dimension underlying cultural variations in SWB. Nonetheless, it is quite obvious that cultural differences in SWB cannot be caused by motivational reasons alone. Above all, given the constraints of reality, there is a clear limit as to how much motivation can influence the level of SWB. Another weakness of the motivational model of SWB is that it understates the psychological mechanisms underlying this cultural phenomenon. Although it suggests that motivational factors affect the direction and the amount of bias involved in SWB reports, the question of *how* cultural variations in SWB level arise is not explicitly addressed in motivational explanations.

In this regard the possibility that cognitive factors collaborate with motivational factors in creating cultural differences in SWB and positive self-views warrants consideration. For instance, is there an important difference in how North Americans and East Asians typically evaluate themselves? If so, are different cultural patterns of self-evaluation associated with different levels of SWB? Drawing evidence from recent developments in the self-judgment literature, the variance of SWB across cultures is discussed from a cognitive perspective in the following section. The idea that cultural difference in egocentric self-evaluation tendencies might partly cause mean differences in SWB and positive self-view is proposed.

Cognitive Factors

No matter how positively we wish (or need) to see ourselves, self-evaluations are constrained by reality (Armor and Taylor 1998; Kunda 1990). People may overestimate their chances of winning a poker game on a given night, but few believe that they can win the lottery every week. Desired conclusions about the self are difficult to maintain unless the individual can muster reasonable evidence to support them. That is, although motivation may provide the spark for the positive illusions about the self, cognitive mechanisms keep them afloat. In order to understand why cultural differences in happiness and positive self-view occur, it is therefore impera-

tive to consider the cognitive strategies that might work in concert with the motivational factors.

One prominent self-judgmental characteristic of North Americans is the tendency to process information in reference to the self. Such egocentric, self-referent information-processing tendencies are found consistently across a wide variety of judgmental contexts (Beuhler, Griffin, and Ross 1994; Fenigstein and Abrams 1993; Griffin and Ross 1991; Ross and Sicoly 1979; Weinstein and Lachendro 1982; Zuckerman et al. 1983). Although the details vary across studies, the core of this phenomenon is that individuals are strongly inclined to pay greater amount of attention to the self than to others, external standards, or objective information when they make judgments about themselves.

Importantly, such egocentric self-judgment tendencies are found to significantly contribute to the overly positive self-views of North Americans. According to a series of studies conducted by Dunning and his colleagues (Dunning 1993; Dunning and McElwee 1995; Dunning and Hayes 1996), most people are able to view themselves "above average" on many dimensions because their self-evaluative standards are constructed fundamentally in reference to the self. For example, an exceptional golfer who plays tennis terribly tends to define "athleticism" primarily in terms of his golf rather than his tennis skills. As a result, even though other tennis players may find it outrageous, this seasoned golfer is likely to say that he is above average in terms of athletic talent. Put differently, most people tend to score unduly highly on various "self-evaluation exams" primarily because the "test items" are integrated to put themselves in a highly favorable light.

One of Dunning, Meyerowitz, and Holzberg's (1989) studies eloquently demonstrates the relation between this egocentric tendency and positive self-view. An interesting result emerged when Dunning et al. asked Cornell University students to evaluate their artistic and athletic talents on a set of criteria generated by either themselves ("own-criteria" group) or by another person ("yoked" group). The underlying idea was that if people self-enhance by selectively choosing self-serving standards of evaluation, self-appraisal will deflate when they are forced to evaluate themselves on criteria generated by another person. This is what precisely happened. Compared to the pretest level, the self-evaluation of the "own-criteria" group remained unchanged, whereas the self-evaluation of the "yoked" group dropped considerably.

If positive self-illusions are based in part on egocentric judgment tendencies, increasing the salience of other people's qualities may diminish the positive illusions about the self. A number of studies support this idea. For instance, Alicke et al.

(1995) found that even a minimal contact with a concrete comparison target attenuated the above-than-average bias to a significant degree. Also, simply asking individuals to compare others to themselves (other-focused), rather than themselves to others (self-focused), weakens illusory superiority biases (Hoorens 1995). Overly positive projections about one's future are also partly caused by egocentric self-judgment tendencies. Weinstein (1980; Weinstein and Lachendro 1982) argued that unrealistic optimism stems from the fact that individuals focus on factors that improve their own chances of experiencing positive events while failing to consider that other people also have equally good, but different reasons to be optimistic. As predicted, Weinstein found that the sense of relative superiority drops when individuals are given a chance to read other people's list of optimistic reasons.

In addition to experimental studies, findings obtained from individual difference studies further support the notion that the use of internal, subjective criteria is a key ingredient of positive self-view. For instance, compared to unhappy people, Lyubomirsky and Ross (1997) found that happy individuals relied more heavily on internal, subjective standards than on external social comparison information in self-evaluation processes. Wayment and Taylor (1995) drew similar conclusions from their comparative study of high versus low self-esteem individuals. On the other hand, a significant volume of evidence suggests that being excessively sensitive to external, social sources of self-evaluation leads to depression and unhappiness among North Americans (e.g., Butler, Hokanson, and Flynn 1994; Fritz and Helgeson 1998; Kernis and Waschull 1995; Lyubomirsky and Ross 1997).

These studies collectively suggest that there is a strong tendency among North Americans to tailor the evaluations about the self in order to protect or bolster positive views of them. For this purpose, evaluating the self on the basis of subjective, internal standards rather than on external, objective information appears to be an effective cognitive strategy. In some cases, North Americans may not engage in any systematic self-evaluation at all. Individualist cultural members who are told throughout their lives that they are "special" in one way or another seem to routinely apply an "I am a great person" heuristic in various self-judgments (see Alicke et al. 1995). Unless situational forces demand them to, they seem to have minimal interest in "objectively" verifying their positive self-views. For instance, how the self objectively stands in comparison to one's roommate in various domains (e.g., academic achievement, physical attractiveness) has no significant impact on college students' SWB (Diener and Fujita 1997). Instead, Diener and Fujita found that preexisting information about the self have a more notable influence on SWB than

objective social comparison information in natural settings. Hence the possibility that SWB reports of North Americans may be based more frequently on preexisting positive self-feelings, rather than on objective external information deserves careful scrutiny. Brown (1993) raises a similar point concerning the nature of self-esteem in North America.

In short, a wealth of evidence indicates not only that egocentric self-evaluation strategies are widely used by North Americans, but also that they play a crucial role in prompting overly positive views about the self (e.g., Beauregard and Dunning 1998; Conway and Howell 1989; Fenigstein and Abrams 1993; Ross and Sicoly 1979; Weinstein and Lachendro 1983; Wood and Taylor 1991). However, we are now discovering that the self-understandings of collectivist individuals are less governed by internal standards (Lu and Shih 1997; Suh and Diener 1999; Suh et al. 1998). As a Korean social psychologist described, the question, "How am I viewed by others?" is a more salient concern than "This is what I think" in East Asian cultures (Yoon 1994). Because the *social* rather than the subjective images of the self are of central concern, evaluating the self primarily in terms of subjective, idiosyncratic criteria proves to be less meaningful for the central purposes of collectivist cultural members. Consequently the self-appraisals of East Asians are based relatively heavily on more visible external standards, such as norms and other's expectations, which are, unfortunately, more difficult to revise, change, or dismiss than subjective standards.

To conclude by using Dunning et al.'s (1989) earlier experiment as an analogy, the typical East Asian style of self-judgment in some sense resembles the "yoked" condition in that culturally established self-appraisal criteria are imposed on the individual through the explicit forms of social expectations, duties, and obligations. The highly self-focused North American mode of self-appraisal, on the other hand, resembles the "own-criteria" condition in that the assessment is essentially based on subjective, internal standards that are easier to tailor in service to the self. As we have seen, the two conditions lead to different levels of self-evaluation; evaluations about the self are much more likely to be positive when they are based on internal than on external criteria.

A crucial question that calls for a systematic future research is whether such culturally divergent cognitive strategies of self-appraisal play a role in causing the dramatic difference between North Americans and East Asians in their levels of SWB and positive self-views. East Asian culture's emphasis on objective, detailed referents of the self may restrict how positively individuals can view themselves. On

the other hand, the North American culture socializes its members to focus more on private reasons for why they should feel positive about themselves than on the various external, social "tags" attached to the self. The highly favorable self-views of North Americans could partly stem from the fact that their self-judgments are more often geared toward confirming preexisting positive beliefs about the self than toward drawing a conclusion based on objective details of the self. The cognitive model of SWB raises refreshing questions that need to be explored and answered by future research.

Concluding Comment

The field of SWB as a whole has made significant strides during the past three decades (Diener et al. 1999). Its theories and methodologies have become more sophisticated and the disciplinary emphasis has shifted from finding descriptive characteristics of happy people to understanding the psychological principles that make people happy and satisfied with their lives. Although the cross-cultural investigation of SWB has just begun, it is hoped that similar methodological and theoretical advances can be made in this young field in the ensuing decades. One general goal for future research is to gradually move on from identifying cultural differences in SWB to seeking more proximal explanations for why and how cultural differences in SWB occur. The study of self, although it is only one of the diverse approaches that will be required to achieve this goal, has embarked on a promising note.

References

Alicke, M. D., Klotz, M. L., Breitenbecher, D. L., Turak, T. J., and Vredenburg, D. S. 1995. Personal contact, individuation, and the better-than-average effect. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 68: 804–25.

Allport, G. 1961. *Pattern and Growth in Personality*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

Andersen, S. M., and Ross, L. 1984. Self-knowledge and social inference: I. The impact of cognitive/affective and behavioral data. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 46: 280–93.

Armor, D. A., and Taylor, S. E. 1998. Situated optimism: Specific outcome expectancies and self-regulation. In M. P. Zanna, ed., *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 30. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, pp. 309–79.

Arrindell, W. A., Hatzichristou, C., Wensink, J., Rosenberg, E., Twillert, B. V., Stedema, J., and Meijer, D. 1997. Dimensions of national culture as predictors of cross-cultural differences in subjective well-being. *Personality and Individual Differences* 23: 37–53.

Associated Press. 1998 (June 24). *U.S. coach might pay for losses*.

Bachnik, J. 1992. The two "faces" of self and society in Japan. *Ethos* 20: 3–32.

Batson, C. D., Turk, C. L., Shaw, L. L., and Klein, T. R. 1995. Information function of empathic emotion: Learning that we value the other's welfare. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 68: 300–13.

Beauregard, K. S., and Dunning, D. 1998. Turning up the contrast: Self-enhancement motives prompt egocentric contrast effects in social judgments. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 74: 606–21.

Beuhler, R., Griffin, D., and Ross, M. 1994. Exploring the "planning fallacy": Why people underestimate their task completion times. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 67: 366–81.

Block, J. 1961. Ego identity, role variability, and adjustment. *Journal of Consulting Psychology* 25: 392–97.

Bond, M. H., Leung, K., and Wan, K.-C. 1982. The social impact of self-effacing attributions: The Chinese case. *Journal of Social Psychology* 118: 157–66.

Brockner, J., and Chen, Y. 1996. The moderating roles of self-esteem and self-construal in reaction to a threat to the self: Evidence from the People's Republic of China and the United States. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 71: 603–15.

Brown, J. D. 1993. Self-esteem and self-evaluation: Feeling is believing. In J. Suls, ed., *Psychological Perspectives on the Self*, vol. 4. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 27–58.

Brown, J. D. 1998. *The Self*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Brown, J. D., and Mankowski, T. A. 1993. Self-esteem, mood, and self-evaluation: Changes in mood and the way you see you. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 64: 421–30.

Butler, A. C., Hokanson, J. E., and Flynn, H. A. 1994. A comparison of self-esteem liability and low trait self-esteem as vulnerability factors for depression. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 66: 166–77.

Campbell, A. 1981. *The Sense of Well-being in America: Recent Patterns and Trends*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Chen, C., Lee, S., and Stevenson, H. W. 1995. Response style and cross-cultural comparisons of rating scales among East Asian and North American students. *Psychological Science* 6: 170–75.

Choi, S. C., and Choi, S. H. 1994. We-ness: A Korean discourse of collectivism. In G. Yoon and S. C. Choi, eds., *Psychology of the Korean People: Collectivism and Individualism*. Seoul, Korea: Dong-A, pp. 57–84.

Conway, M., and Howell, A. 1989. Ego-involvement leads to positive self-schema activation and to a positivity bias in information processing. *Motivation and Emotion* 13: 159–77.

Diener, E., and Diener, M. 1995. Cross-cultural correlates of life satisfaction and self-esteem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 68: 653–63.

Diener, E., Diener, M., and Diener, C. 1995. Factors predicting the subjective well-being of nations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 69: 851–64.

Diener, E., and Fujita, F. 1997. Social comparison and subjective well-being. In B. Buunk and R. Gibbons, eds., *Health, Coping, and Social Comparison*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Diener, E., and Suh, E. M. 1999. National differences in subjective well-being. In D. Kahneman, E. Diener, and N. Schwarz, eds., *Well-being: The Foundations of Hedonic Psychology*. New York: Russell-Sage.

Diener, E., Suh, E. M., Lucas, R., and Smith, H. 1999. Subjective well-being: Three decades of progress. *Psychological Bulletin* 125: 276–302.

Diener, E., Suh, E., Oishi, S., and Shao, L. 1996. *Norms for Affect: National Comparisons*. Paper presented at the Ninth Conference of International Society for Research on Emotions. Toronto, Canada.

Diener, E., Suh, E. M., Smith, H., and Shao, L. 1995. National differences in subjective well-being: Why do they occur? *Social Indicators Research* 34: 7–32.

Donahue, E. M., Robins, R. W., Roberts, B. W., and John, O. P. 1993. The divided self: Concurrent and longitudinal effects of psychological adjustment and social roles on self-concept differentiation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 64: 834–46.

Dunning, D. 1993. Words to live by: The self and definition of social concepts and categories. In J. Suls, ed., *Psychological Perspectives on the Self*, vol. 4. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 99–126.

Dunning, D., and McElwee, R. O. 1995. Idiosyncratic trait definitions: Implications for self-description and social judgment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 68: 936–46.

Dunning, D., Meyerowitz, J. A., and Holzberg, A. 1989. Ambiguity and self-evaluation: The role of idiosyncratic trait definitions in self-serving assessments of ability. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 57: 1082–90.

Dunning, D., and Hayes, A. F. 1996. Evidence for egocentric comparison in social judgment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 71: 213–19.

Edwards, K., and Bryan, T. S. 1997. Judgmental biases produced by instructions to disregard: The (paradoxical) case of emotional information. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 23: 849–64.

Erikson, E. 1950. *Childhood and Society*. New York: Norton.

Feather, N. T. 1986. Value systems across cultures: Australia and China. *International Journal of Psychology* 21: 697–715.

Fenigstein, A., and Abrams, D. 1993. Self-attention and the egocentric assumption of shared perspectives. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 29: 287–303.

Fiske, A. P., Kitayama, S., Markus, H. R., and Nisbett, R. E. 1998. The cultural matrix of social psychology. In D. Gilbert, S. Fiske, and G. Lindsey, eds., *Handbook of Social Psychology*. New York: McGraw-Hill, pp. 915–81.

Fritz, H. L., and Helgeson, V. S. 1998. Distinctions of unmitigated communion from communion: Self-neglect and overinvolvement with others. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 75: 121–40.

Geertz, C. 1984. "From the native's point of view": On the nature of anthropological understanding. In R. A. Shweder and R. A. LeVine, eds., *Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self, and Emotion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 123–36.

Gilovich, T., Savitsky, K., and Medvec, V. H. 1998. The illusion of transparency: Biased assessment of others' ability to read one's emotional states. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 75: 332–46.

Greenberg, J., Solomon, S., Pyszczynski, T., Rosenblatt, A., Burling, J., Lyon, D., Simon, L., and Pinel, E. 1992. Why do people need self-esteem? Converging evidence that self-esteem serves an anxiety-buffering function. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 63: 913–22.

Greenwald. A. G. 1980. The totalitarian ego: Fabrication and revision of personal history. *American Psychologist* 35: 603–18.

Griffin, D. W., and Ross, L. 1991. Subjective construal, social inference, and human misunderstanding. In M. P. Zanna, ed., *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 24. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, pp. 319–59.

Han, J. J., Leichtman, M. D., and Wang, Q. 1998. Autobiographical memory in Korean, Chinese, and American children. *Developmental Psychology* 34: 701–13.

Hawkins, J. D., Catalano, R. F., and Miller, J. Y. 1992. Risk and protective factors for alcohol and other drug problems in adolescence and early adulthood: Implications for substance abuse programs. *Psychological Bulletin* 112: 64–105.

Heine, S. J., and Lehman, D. R. 1995. Cultural variation in unrealistic optimism: Does the West feel more invulnerable than the East? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 68: 595–607.

Heine, S. J., and Lehman, D. R. 1997. Culture, dissonance, and self-affirmation. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 23: 389–400.

Heine, S. J., Lehman, D. R., Markus, H. R., and Kitayama, S. 1999. Culture and the need for positive self-regard. *Psychological Review* 106: 766–94.

Hoorens, V. 1995. Self-favoring biases, self-presentation, and the self-other asymmetry in social comparison. *Journal of Personality* 63: 793–817.

Hsu, F. L. K. 1953. *Americans and Chinese: Two Ways of Life*. New York: Schuman.

Jones, S. C. 1973. Self and interpersonal evaluations: Esteem theories versus consistency theories. *Psychological Bulletin* 79: 185–99.

Jourard, S. M. 1974. *Healthy Personality: An Approach from the Viewpoint of Humanistic Psychology*. New York: Macmillan.

Kashima, Y., and Triandis, H. C. 1986. The self-serving bias in attributions as a coping strategy: A cross-cultural study. *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology* 17: 83–97.

Kashima, Y., Siegal, M., Tanaka, K., and Kashima, E. S. 1992. Do people believe behaviours are consistent with attitudes? Towards a cultural psychology of attribution processes. *British Journal of Social Psychology* 31: 111–24.

Kernis, M. H., and Waschull, S. B. 1995. The interactive role of stability and level of self-esteem: Research and theory. In M. P. Zanna, ed., *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 27. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, pp. 93–141.

King, A. Y. C., and Bond, M. H. 1985. The Confucian paradigm of man: A sociological view. In W. S. Tseng and D. Y. H. Wu, eds., *Chinese Culture and Mental Health*. New York: Academic Press, pp. 29–46.

King, L. A., and Napa, C. K. 1998. What makes a good life? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 75: 156–65.

Kitayama, S., Markus, H. R., Matsumoto, H., and Norasakkunkit, V. 1997. Individual and collective processes in the construction of the self: Self-enhancement tendencies in the United States and self-criticism in Japan. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 72: 1245–67.

Kulik, J. A., Sledge, P., and Mahler, H. I. M. 1986. Self-confirmatory attribution, egocentrism, and the perpetuation of self-beliefs. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 50: 587–94.

Kunda, Z. 1990. The case for motivated reasoning. *Psychological Bulletin* 108: 480–98.

Kwan, V. S. Y. , Bond, M. H., and Singelis, T. M. 1997. Pancultural explanations for life satisfaction: Adding relational harmony to self-esteem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 73: 1038–51.

Lecky, P. 1945. *Self-consistency: A Theory of Personality*. New York: Island.

Lee, K. T. 1992. *The Mental Structure of Koreans* (in Korean) Seoul: Shinwon Cultural Press.

Lee, Y-T., and Seligman, M. E. P. 1997. Are Americans more optimistic than the Chinese? *Personality and Social Psychological Bulletin* 23: 32–40.

Levenson, R. W., Ekman, P., Heider, K., and Friesen, W. V. 1992. Emotion and automatic nervous system activity in the Minangkabau of West Sumatra. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 62: 972–88.

Levine, R., Sato, S., Hashimoto, T., and Verma, J. 1995. Love and marriage in eleven cultures. *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology* 26: 554–71.

Lu, L., and Shih, J. B. 1997. Sources of happiness: A qualitative approach. *Journal of Social Psychology* 137: 181–87.

Lucas, R., Diener, E., and Suh, E. 1996. Discriminant validity of subjective well-being measures. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 71: 616–28.

Lyubomirsky, S., and Ross, L. 1997. Hedonic consequences of social comparison: Happy and unhappy people. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 73: 1141–57.

Markus, H., and Kitayama, S. 1991. Culture and self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review* 98: 224–53.

Maslow, A. H. 1954. *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper and Brothers.

Maslow, A. H. 1968. *Toward a Psychology of Being*. New York: Van Nostrand.

Miller, J. G., and Bersoff, D. M. 1998. The role of liking in perceptions of the moral responsibility to help: A cultural perspective. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 34: 443–69.

Miller, D. T., and Ross, M. 1975. Self-serving biases in the attribution of causality: Fact or fiction? *Psychological Bulletin* 82: 213–35.

Minami, H. 1971. *Psychology of the Japanese People*. Toronto University of Toronto Press.

Nickerson, R. S. 1998. Confirmation bias: A ubiquitous phenomenon in many guises. *Review of General Psychology* 2: 175–220.

Perloff, L. S., and Fetzer, B. K. 1986. Self-other judgments and perceived invulnerability of victimization. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 50: 502–10.

Potter, S. H. 1988. The cultural construction of emotion in rural Chinese social life. *Ethos* 16: 181–208.

Rogers, C. 1965. *Client-Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implication, and Theory*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Rosenberger, N. 1989. Dialectic balance in the polar model of self: The Japan case. *Ethos* 17: 88–113.

Ross, M., and Sicoly, F. 1979. Egocentric biases in availability and attribution. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 37: 322–36.

Schwarz, N., and Clore, G. L. 1988. How do I feel about it? Informative functions of affective states. In K. Fiedler and J. Forgas, eds., *Affect, Cognition, and Social Behavior*. Toronto: Hogrefe, pp. 44–62.

Schwarz, N., and Strack, F. 1999. Reports of subjective well-being: Judgmental processes and their methodological implications. In D. Kahneman, E. Diener, and N. Schwarz, eds., *Well-being: The Foundations of Hedonic Psychology*. New York: Russell Sage, pp. 61–84.

Sedikides, C., and Strube, M. J. 1997. Self-evaluation: To thine own self be good, to thine own self be sure, to thine own self be true, and to thine own self be better. In M. P. Zanna, ed., *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 29. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, pp. 209–69.

Shedler, J., Mayman, M., and Manis, M. 1993. The illusion of mental health. *American Psychologist* 48: 1117–31.

Sheldon, K. M., Ryan, R. M., Rawsthorne, L. J., and Ilardi, B. 1997. Trait self and true self: Cross-role variation in the big-five personality traits and its relations with psychological authenticity and subjective well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 73: 1380–93.

Suh, D. S. 1994. The Korean attitude towards happiness in classical literature. In *Comparative Analysis of Eastern and Western Thinking* (in Korean). Seoul: Sungkyunkwan University Press, pp. 25–55.

Suh, E. M. 2000. *Culture, identity consistency, and subjective well-being*. Manuscript submitted for publication. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Suh, E. M., and Diener, E. 1999. The use of emotion and social appraisal information in life satisfaction judgments: Joining culture, personality, and situational influences. Manuscript in preparation. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Suh, E., Diener, E., Oishi, S., and Triandis, H. C. 1998. The shifting basis of life satisfaction judgments across cultures: Emotions versus norms. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 74: 482–93.

Swann, W. B., Griffin, J. J., Predmore, S. C., and Gaines, B. 1987. The cognitive-affective crossfire: When self-consistency confronts self-enhancement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 52: 881–89.

Taylor, S. E., and Brown, J. D. 1988. Illusion and well-being: A social psychological perspective on mental health. *Psychological Bulletin* 103: 193–210.

Tesser, A. 1988. Toward a self-evaluation maintenance model of social behavior. In L. Berkowitz, ed., *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 21. New York: Academic Press, pp. 181–227.

Triandis, H. C. 1989. The self and social behavior in different cultural contexts. *Psychological Review* 96: 506–20.

Triandis, H. C. 1995. *Individualism and Collectivism*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

USA Weekend. 1998. The age of contentment. July 3–5.

Veenhoven, R. 1993. *Happiness in Nations: Subjective Interpretation of Life in 56 Nations 1946–1992*. Rotterdam: Risbo.

Wayment, H., and Taylor, S. E. 1995. Self-evaluation processes: Motives, information use, and self-esteem. *Journal of Personality* 63: 729–57.

Weinstein, N. D. 1980. Unrealistic optimism about future life events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 39: 806–20.

Weinstein, N. D., and Lachendro, E. 1982. Egocentrism as a source of unrealistic optimism. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 8: 195–200.

Wood, J. V., and Taylor, K. L. 1991. Serving self-relevant goals through social comparison. In J. Suls and T. A. Wills, eds., *Social Comparison: Contemporary Theory and Research*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 23–50.

Yang, K. S. 1981. Social orientation and individual modernity among Chinese students in Taiwan. *Journal of Social Psychology* 113: 159–70.

Yik, M. S. M., Bond, M. H., and Paulhus, D. L. 1998. Do Chinese self-enhance or self-efface? It's a matter of domain. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 24: 399–406.

Yoon, T. R. 1994. The Koreans, their culture and personality. In G. Yoon and S. C. Choi, eds., *Psychology of the Korean People: Collectivism and Individualism*. Seoul: Dong-A, pp. 15–26.

Zuckerman, M., Kernis, M. H., Guarnera, S. M., Murphy, J. F., and Rappoport, L. 1983. The egocentric bias: Seeing oneself as cause and target of others' behavior. *Journal of Personality* 51: 621–30.

This excerpt from

Culture and Subjective Well-Being.
Ed Diener and Eunkook M. Suh, editors.
© 2000 The MIT Press.

is provided in screen-viewable form for personal use only by members of MIT CogNet.

Unauthorized use or dissemination of this information is expressly forbidden.

If you have any questions about this material, please contact cognetadmin@cognet.mit.edu.