



## ATTAINABLE GOALS ARE THE KEY TO HAPPINESS

According to Naked Science, psychologists have confirmed that setting achievable goals makes us happier even if we fail.

A team of psychologists from the University of Basel (Switzerland) have studied how goals are embedded in people's lives across their adulthood. The research involved 973 people aged from 18 to 92 living in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. The participants were asked to assess the importance and perceived attainability of their life goals in ten areas (health, community, personal growth, social relations, fame, image, wealth, family, responsibility for younger generations, and work), using a four-point scale. Half of the respondents were surveyed again in two and four years. The results were published in the European Journal of Personality.

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One of the key findings of the study showed that people who perceive their goals to be generally achievable reported higher cognitive and affective (mental and emotional) well-being in the follow-up surveys. The scientists noted that the actual achievement of goals was not particularly important. It played a certain role in the study, but how people felt knowing that their goals were real had a greater effect. The scientists see this as an indicator that the sense of control over one's life stemming from people's perception of the attainability of goals generates positive feelings.

According to the scientists, the link between life goals and subsequent well-being did not hinge much on the age of the participants. However, that was a type of the goal that made a difference. For example, people whose goals had much to do with social relations or health were more satisfied with their social life or health condition, respectively.

Since our desires, needs and aspirations change over time, the team addressed the impact of people's age on their choice of goals. The study revealed that our goals are mostly connected to the challenges we face at certain life stages.

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For example, younger participants rated personal growth, social status, social relations, and professional development as the most

According to Janina Bühler, PhD candidate in Psychology at the University of Basel and the lead author of the study, many of the obtained results confirmed theoretical assumptions from developmental psychology, for example, the fact that goals are heavily influenced by age. However, Ms Bühler said that if we examine whether these goals contribute to well-being, age appears less relevant.

Psychologists recommend setting goals and breaking ambitious ones into smaller steps so that they always seem achievable, for, according to the research, even if you do not reach them, you will probably feel happier later.

*Source: Naked Science (<https://naked-science.ru/article/psy/psihologi-podtverdili-cto-postanovka>)*