

Flourishing through Savoring

NZPsS & NZCCP Joint Conference 2012:
20th to 23rd April
Wellington New Zealand

Erica D. Chadwick PhD

Victoria University of Wellington
Wellington, New Zealand

My Giants



Outline

- Defining and explicating Savoring
- Expectations
- Findings
- Further areas of study
- A few more findings and implications

Defining Savoring



Savoring Experience

*Stimulus, outcome, event, sensations,
emotions, and responses*

Savoring Processes

*Unfolding process: Thanksgiving,
Marvelling, Basking, or Luxuriating*

Savoring Strategies

*Concrete thoughts and behaviours, e.g.,
Sharing with others and Counting*



*"I don't sing because I am happy. I am
happy because I sing."*

10 Domains of Savoring Strategies

- Sharing with others
- Memory-building
- Self-congratulation
- Behavioral expression
- Counting Blessings
- Comparing
- Sensory-perceptual sharpening
- Absorption
- Temporal awareness
- Kill-joy thinking

Sharing with Others

- Four Styles of Responding to Positive News
 - What were you?
 - An example of each of the four styles:
 - Passive constructive— “congratulations, that’s great”
 - Passive destructive— “what’s for dinner”
 - Active destructive— “you know what tax bracket that going to put us into?”
 - *Active constructive*— “wow, tell me more about...I know you really wanted this from when...where were you when you found out...how did it happen...then what...let’s celebrate!”

(Gable et al, 2004)

Expectations

- Adolescents and adults will evidence a similar structure of savoring
 - However, adolescents will evidence stronger relationships between their savoring strategies than adults
- Adolescents will report more dampening savoring than adults
- Adults will report more amplifying savoring than adolescents

Participants

- 477 New Zealand adolescents 13 to 15 years old ($M = 13.9$, 59% female)
 - 34% NZ/Pakeha; 34% NZ Māori; .7% Pasifika; 1% Asian
- 980 English speaking international adults 16 to 84 years old ($M = 39$, 83% female)
 - 58% New Zealand; 30% USA; 83% White or European decent

Analytic Procedure

- Theoretical and empirical approach to the structure of adolescent and adult everyday savoring

(Koole, 2009; Skinner et al 2003)

- Theoretical groupings:

- Behavioral & Cognitive
- Amplifying & Dampening
- High & Low Arousal
- External & Self –focus

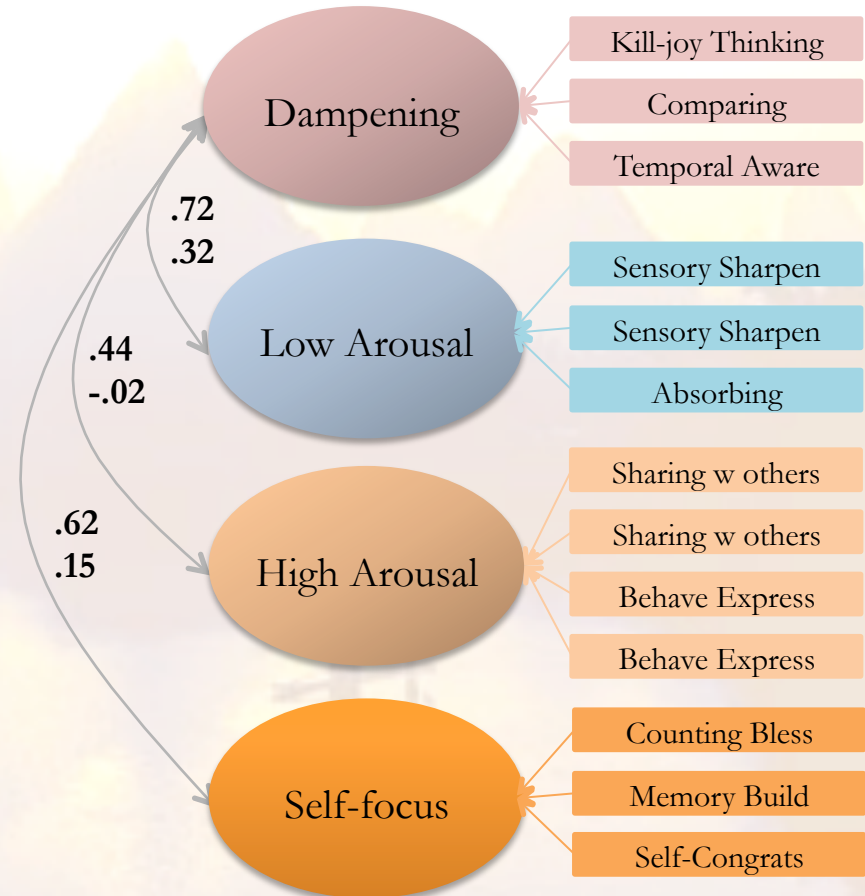
- Empirical approach

- Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in AMOS

- Invariance testing in AMOS
- Multivariate Analysis of Variance

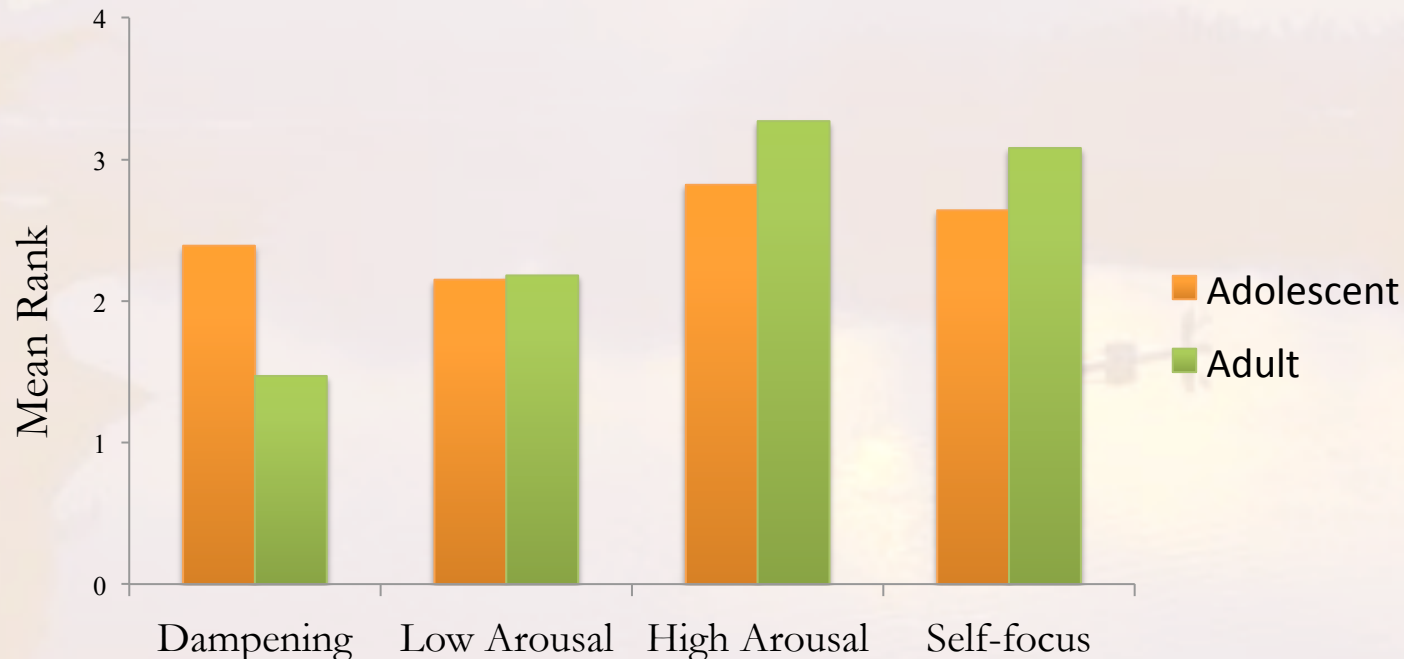
The Structure of Savoring

- First expectation was supported
 - Adolescents and adults share a similar structure of savoring
- Adolescents: $\chi^2 = 2.55$, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .06, sRMR = .04
- Adults: $\chi^2 = 4.16$, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .06, sRMR = .04
- Second expectation was supported
 - Adolescent dampening savoring is more highly related to all other savoring domains than adults



Dampening and Amplifying Savoring

- Last two expectations were supported:
 - Adolescents dampen savor more than adults
 - Adults amplify savor more than adolescents



Conclusions

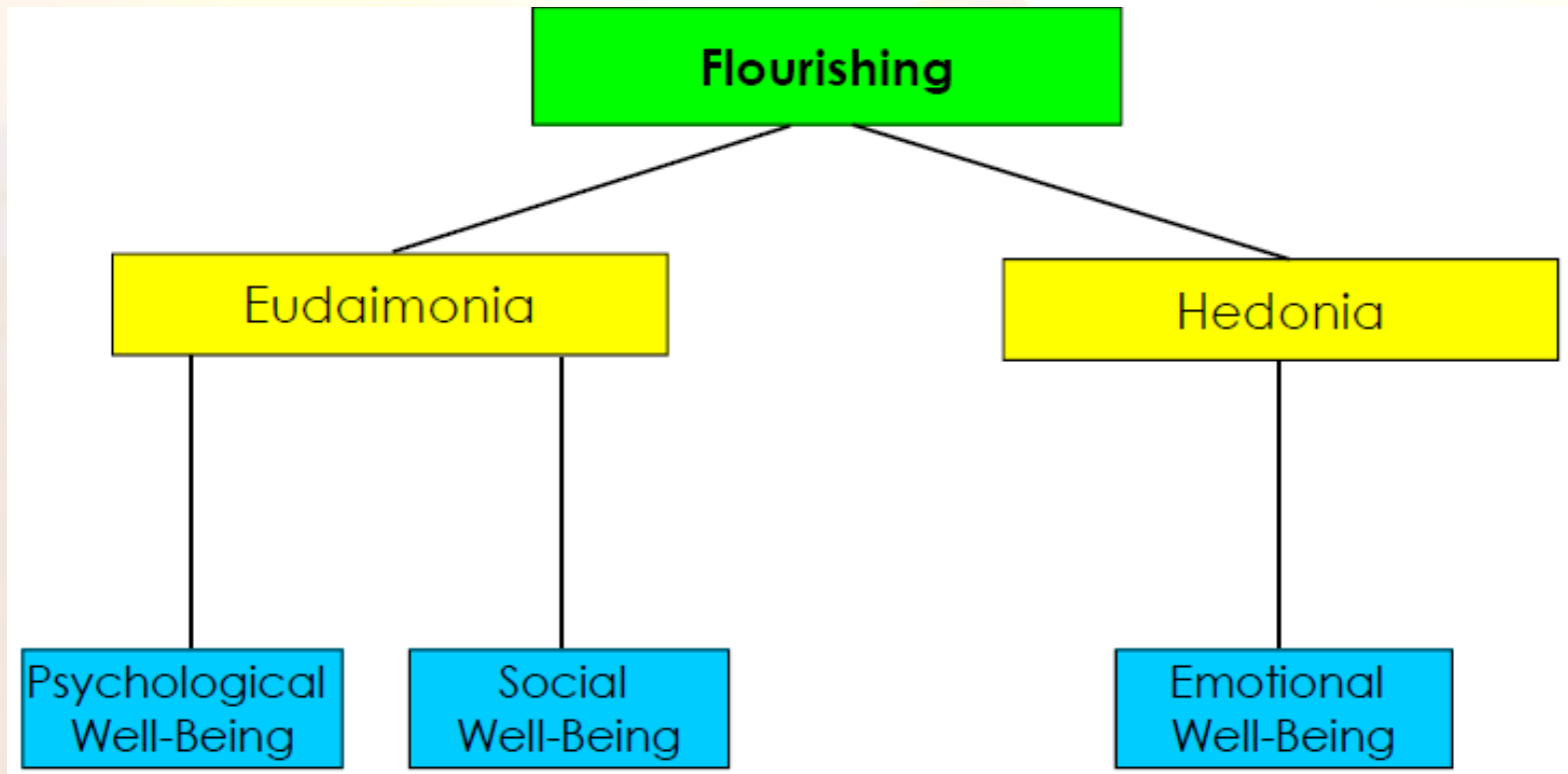
- The structure of savoring is similar from adolescence to adulthood, however, savoring is more differentiated in adulthood. The implication is that as individuals age their dampening savoring (i.e. making upward comparisons and thinking the good event was undeserved) becomes increasingly independent from amplifying savoring. Further, as individuals age their amplifying savoring increases and their dampening savoring decreases.

Further Investigations

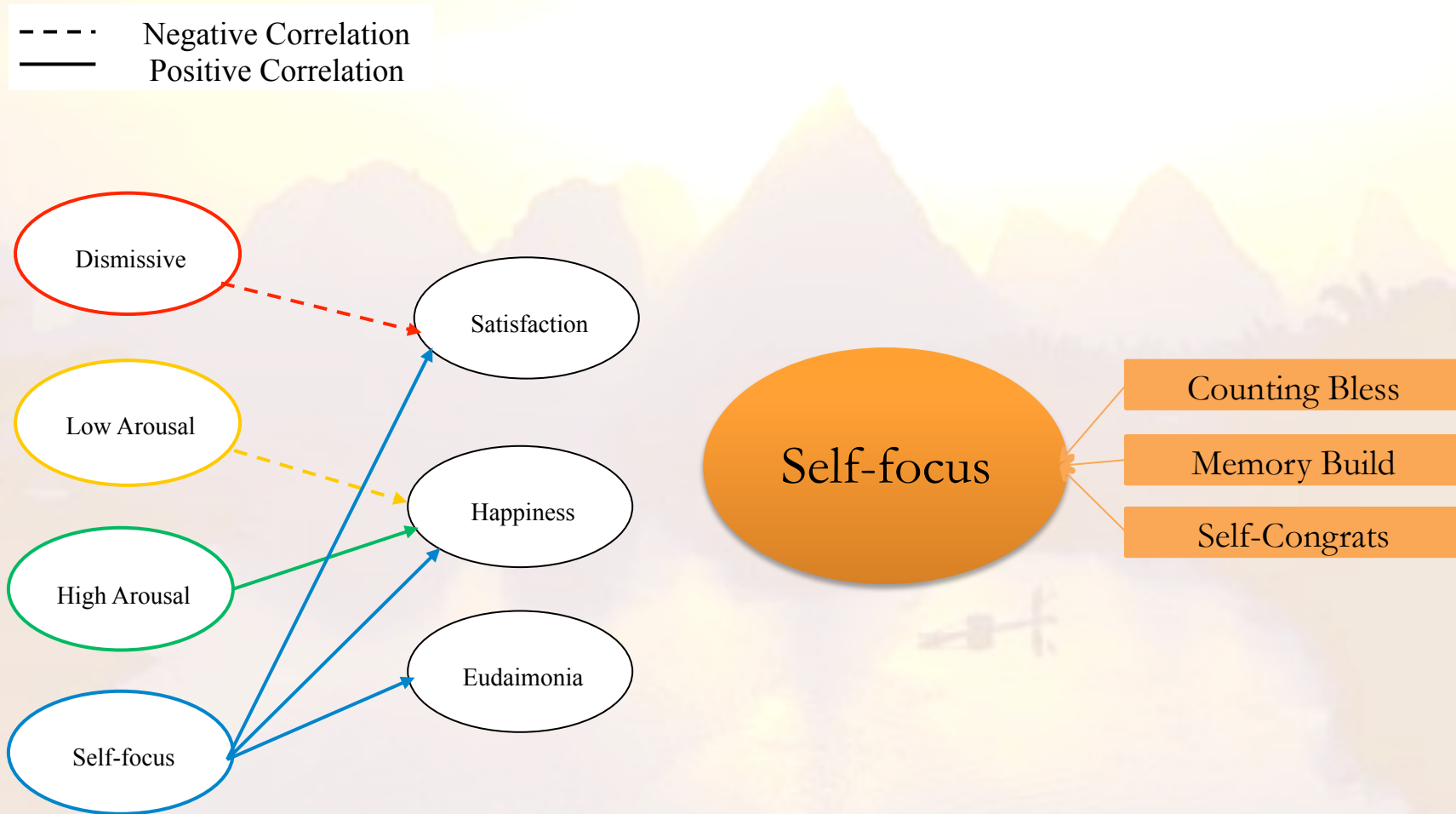
- How does savoring relate to well-being for adolescents and adults (similarities and differences)?
- Are there unique relationships between savoring and hedonic and eudaimonic well-being?
- Is savoring a moderator of the relationship between hedonia and eudaimonia?
- What is the direction of effect between positive events, savoring, and wellbeing?
- Is savoring a mediating mechanism within the Broaden and Build theory of positive emotion?



Defining Happiness



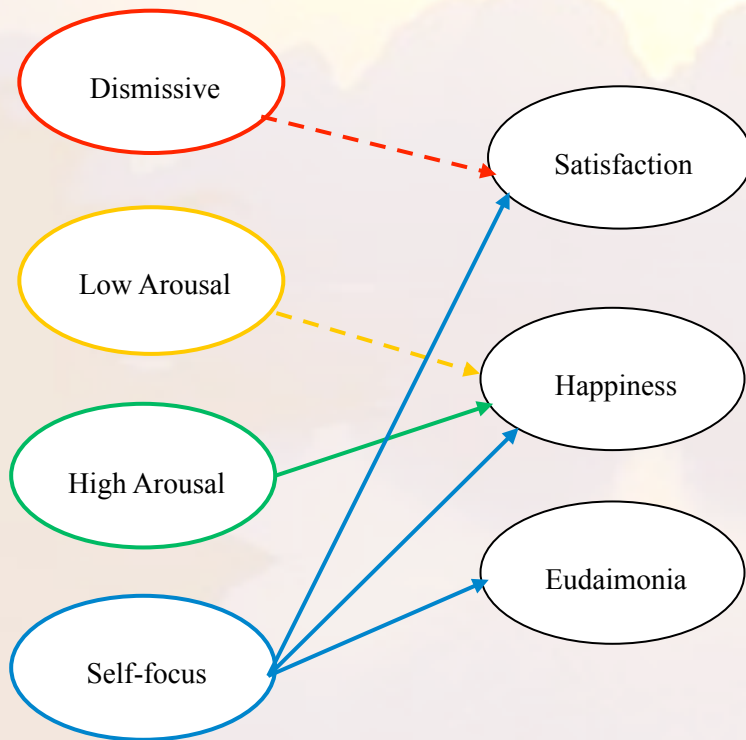
Everyday Savoring and Flourishing



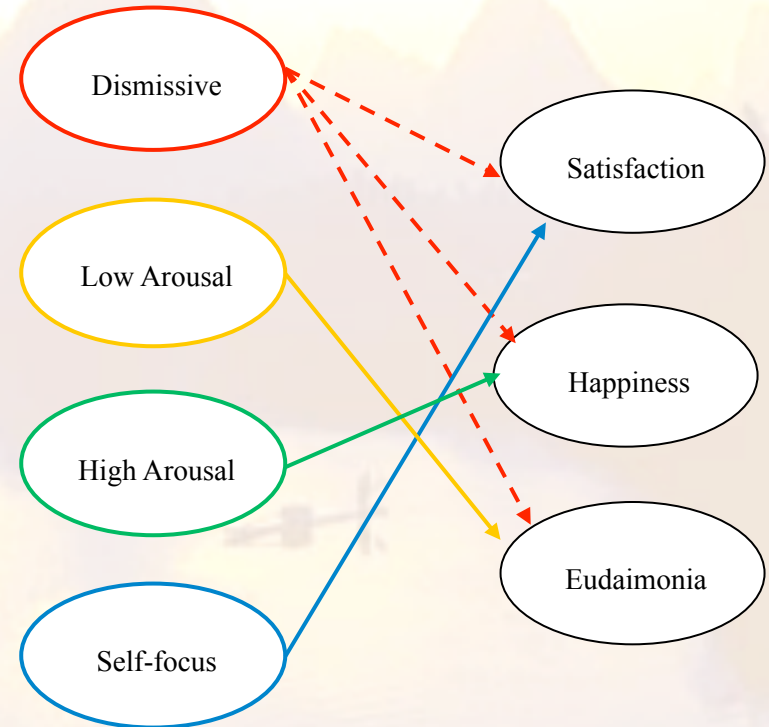
A. Adolescent Model $N=463$

Everyday Savoring and Flourishing

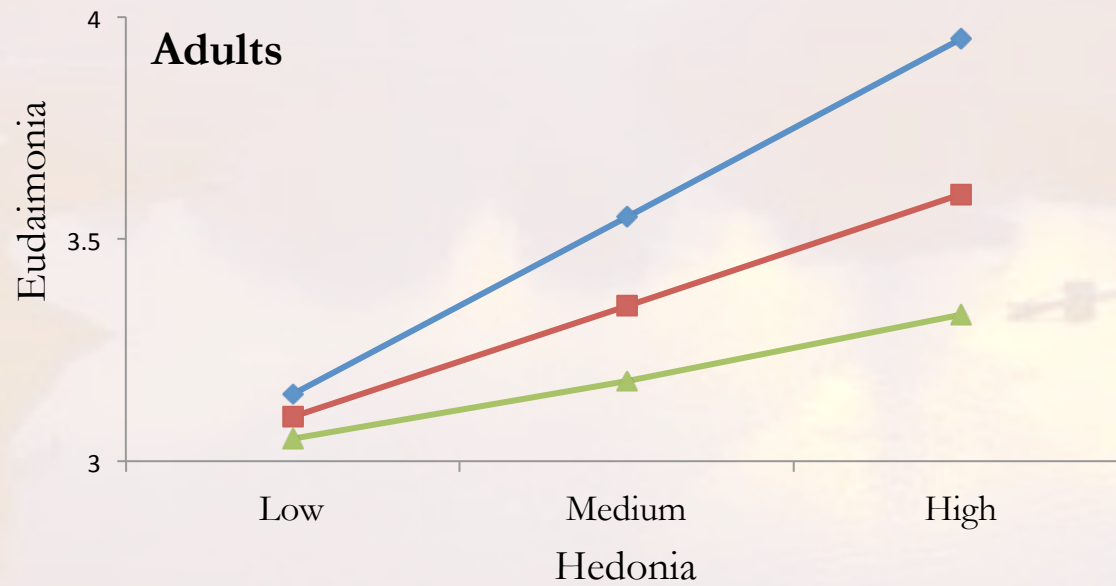
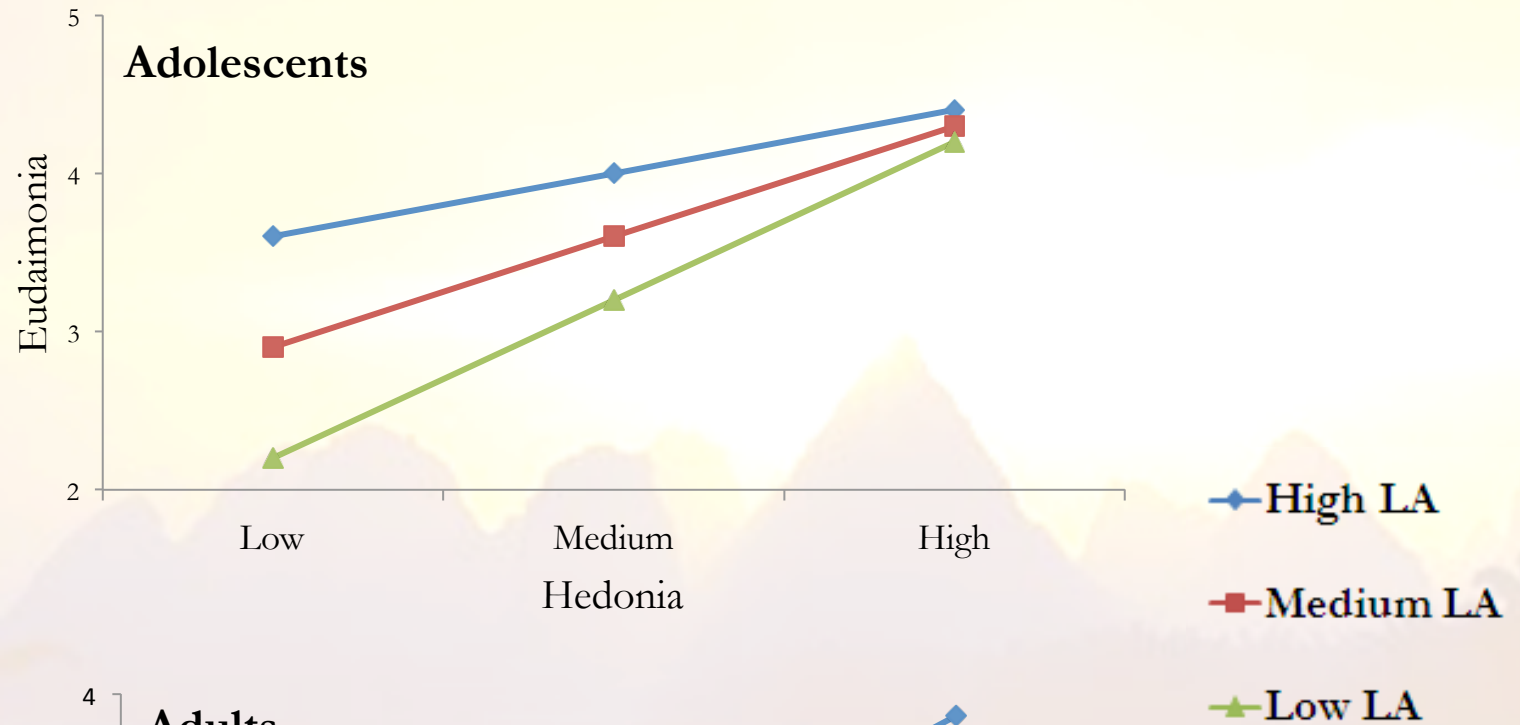
--- Negative Correlation
— Positive Correlation



A. Adolescent Model N=463



B. Adult Model N=980



Findings & Implications

- Adolescent self-focussed savoring has the strongest concurrent association with wellbeing
- Unlike adults, adolescent low arousal savoring is not a positive strategy for increasing their wellbeing
- **Implications:** Adult positive psychological interventions will not directly apply to adolescents without at least psycho-education. Adolescents would benefit from self-focussed strategies over low arousal savoring strategies (e.g. mindfulness).

The more we learn about man's natural tendencies, the easier it will be to tell him how to be good, how to be happy, how to be fruitful, how to respect himself, how to love, how to fulfil his highest potentialities.

~Abraham Maslow, 1962

Thank You!



Contact: Erica.Chadwick@vuw.ac.nz