
THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS: THE MAIN EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

L.Z. Levit, Ph. D., Minsk, Belarus

ABSTRACT: *The article presents a new systemic Person-oriented conception of happiness (POCH) elaborated by the author as well as the main results of his three experimental investigations conducted with the help of experience sampling methods (ESM). The regularities obtained challenge common beliefs concerning the nature of happiness and its main components. There have been discovered three main notions («involvement», «egoism», «meaning») which correlate with the «happiness» construct to the greatest degree. Two qualitatively different factors, representing «easy» and «hard» happiness have been outlined. The author has discovered only positive correlations between “egoism” and “altruism”, between “egoism” and “meaning” that opens new horizons for future theorizing, experimental investigations and therapeutic practice.*

KEYWORDS: person-oriented conception of happiness, experience sampling methods, egoism, altruism, meaning, personal uniqueness, involvement, the flow.

POCH: INTRODUCTION AND EXPLANATION

In the years 2006-2012 we have developed a synthesizing conception, which is based on the ideas of systemic approach and combines biological, psychological, social and spiritual (the highest) level of individual life and activity. The results of our six-year work on the problem are summarized in seven monographs [Levit, 2008; 2009 a; 2010; 2011 a; 2011 c; 2012 a; 2013 c] and plenty of articles [Levit, 2009 b; 2011 b; 2012 b-g; 2013 a, b, d-g; 2014 a-e; Levit, Radchikova, 2012 b].

Our Person-oriented conception of happiness (POCH) belongs to eudaimonic group of theories, which deal with person's realization of her own potential. It represents the interaction of two systems – “Personal Uniqueness” (PU) and “Egoism” (EG). The original design of the new theory was based on the necessity to discriminate the concepts belonging to substantial issues of self-realization (e. g. the Ancient Greek concept of daimon [Norton, 1976], the Jungian Self [Jung, 2009], the Inner Self of C. Rogers [Rogers, 2001], the inner potential) and its more dynamic functional forces (the Maslowian self-actualization [Maslow, 2002; 2009], Freud's sublimation [Freud, 1991] etc.).

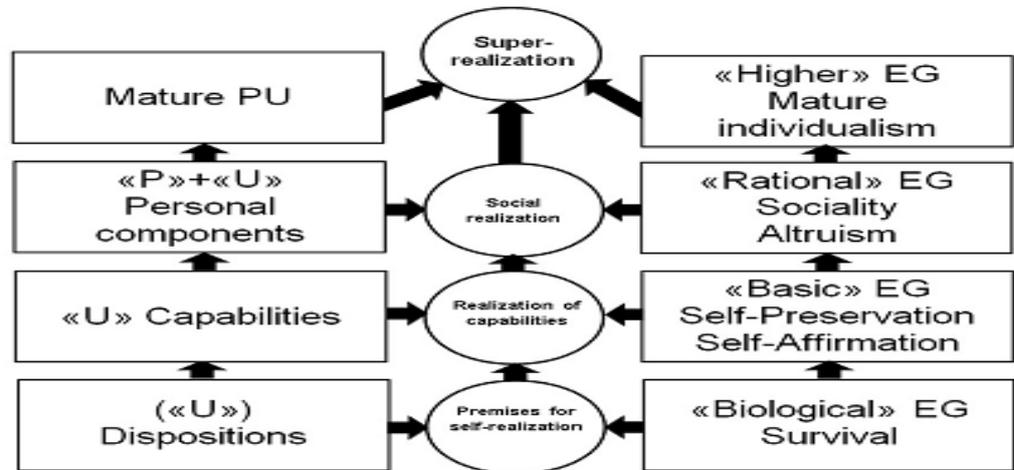


Fig.1 POCH

Moving bottom-up, let us briefly describe the main components of POCH. Each system consists of four levels. Each of them represents a certain period of person's life – from his birth until mature self-realization. Both systems develop from one level to the higher one, thus changing the interaction of horizontally corresponding levels, each of which is connected to this or that type of life problems.

Firstly, let's briefly describe the Personal Uniqueness system. PU is somewhat analogous to daimon in its classical meaning or personal potential in humanistic comprehension. Personal Uniqueness represents synthesis of individual gifts and potentials ("U") with the personal components ("P") that facilitate its application in "appropriate" activity (assurance, persistence, etc.). At its first biological level it is represented by the letter "U" (Uniqueness), which implicates a kind of natural gift, the inherited disposition of individual. At the next, second level which is usually associated with person's youth, the disposition gradually changes into abilities and begin to actualize. At that very period, a young man usually has some difficulties due to the shortage of his personal maturity and responsibility. The situation is being corrected at the third stage, when the person acquires motivational components of self-regulation ("P") which help to overcome the obstacles *inside* specific activity and persistently move towards the attainment of personal goals. At the final fourth stage, (if it comes) we can see the mature Personal Uniqueness. Its realization provides all the "eudaimonic" effects, which will be discussed later.

Now let's describe the "Egoism" (EG) system. The biological («body») level of our model (EG-1) is represented by the concept of Health, which we understand primarily as the absence of essential body "problems" in the course of self-realization. From our point of view, Health is the most important characteristic of the body level, which gives a person physical energy and therefore the opportunity to strive for optimal life. The necessity of its inclusion is determined by the importance of biological, genetic premises of man's egoism.

As for the concept of "Basic" Egoism (EG-2), the inborn property which is common to humans and other living creatures we place it at Level 2. EG-2 is responsible for self-protection and

survival of species, for satisfying two basic instincts - food and sexual, that brings to man hedonistic («lower») pleasures.

Moving further up along L2, EG-2 gradually transforms into “Rational” Egoism (REG), that includes intellectual, regulatory, and (if necessary) reflexive components. Until being reoriented towards PU actualization REG is responsible for “higher”, “human” pleasures and activity at the social level.

The internal logic of our theory rests upon the following isomorphism: REG originates from EG in the same way as consciousness and rational mind allowed the mankind to evolve from the animal world. In connection with this, let’s recall the Freud’s idea that personality Ego is developing from Id [Freud, 1991]. EG-2 in POCH with its instinct of self-preservation and Freud’s “pleasure principle” serves as a link between the first body level (L1) and the third, social level (L3).

Finally, the fourth level is associated with higher forms of egoism (individualism), when a person, having surmounted the three previous stages, makes the deliberate decision to devote his life to unique self-realization. Here we can see the overcoming of the lower, Basic Egoism with its pleasure principle and the serious reorientation of Rational Egoism on the third level. While REG organizes the social environment for an individual, his “Higher” Egoism of Level 4 creates the best conditions for the PU actualization.

Thus, we argue that cohesive interaction of EG-4 and PU-4 brings self-realization and complete human life. “Egoism” system is the best “partner” for “Personal Uniqueness” system since it accomplishes protective, intellectual and motivating functions in the process of her actualization, being on the outside of the PU activity. To put it metaphorically, REG in its optimal form can be described as the experienced “promoter”, which protects his very talented but rather “naïve” pupil (PU) from external threats and superfluous problems in the time of her actualization.

The following continuity from hedonism to self-realization can be marked within POCH framework: “lower” pleasures, primarily connected with the satisfaction of food and sexual instincts (EG); “higher” pleasures (REG); the process of self-actualization (REG+PU at the fourth level); the Flow (PU-4). Our conclusions concerning REG and EG-2 original responsibilities (“higher” and “lower” pleasures correspondingly) as well as their common descent are confirmed by the results of the recent neuroscientific investigation: “...the brain mechanisms involved in fundamental pleasures (food and sexual pleasures) overlap with those for higher order pleasures (for example, monetary, artistic, musical, altruistic, and transcendent pleasures)” [Kringelbach, Berridge, 2010].

Introducing our new conception we take into account, that positive psychology will hardly feel itself very convenient (at least at first) with such negatively loaded term as “egoism”. So let’s remind that REG radically distinguishes from EG and even overcomes it in the process of self-actualization. Can inborn egoism's negotiation and submission be called truly egoistic? Not likely.

One of the most exciting things about POCH is that EG at its highest stages, being “Basic” EG “offspring”, becomes rather antagonistic towards his “father” for the sake of PU actualization. So, a person faces an existential choice: to stay on the “hedonic” (EG) level, or to “climb higher”, discover his true potentials and lead the meaningful life. To decide between life *for oneself* and life *in the name of oneself*.

At present we cannot give an exhaustive explanation of how REG reorients into EG-4 (from “higher” pleasures to PU actualization). Still, some analogies can be mentioned. Esoteric literature gives examples, when a person transcends the borders of everyday life after spiritual crisis. According to Maslow [2009] a man moves to self-actualization when both his “basic” and “higher” needs are satisfied – usually in the second half of his life. The same regularity is mentioned in Jung’s writings [Jung, 2009].

The similar dilemma – between the “ethical” choosing of one’s Self and “aesthetic” choosing of external life and its pleasures – is put by S. Kierkegaard [2007]. For Kierkegaard despair was the main means of transition to Self-choice; for us – the PU reinforcing signals, “heard” by EG.

Just in that area, there appear motivation premises of eudaimonic life. The «Egoism» system meets the mature “Personal Uniqueness” system, the result of which is a new substance, which we call “Super-realization”. Maslowian peak experience, the flow states of M. Csikszentmihalyi [1993], Jungian individuation, contemporary and ancient theories of eudaimonia [Levit, 2013 g] as well as some forms of person’s unusual spiritual experience take place in it. The function of “Higher” Egoism still consists in its protective and motivation properties, which help individual strive for peak level and transcend his own limits.

POCH: some comparative analysis

The comparison of our model with the most famous theories of the first half of the XXth century (the conceptions of Z. Freud, E. Berne, C. Jung, A. Maslow, C. Rogers, R. Assagioli, partially G. Allport and E. Erikson) uncovered integrative character of POCH. Our model combines the energy of the Freudian unconscious drives, intellectual capabilities of an Adult in the transactional analysis [Berne, 2008], self-actualization and self-fulfillment tendencies in the humanistic approaches of A. Maslow [2002; 2009] and C. Rogers [2001], inner “centre” (somewhat analogous to PU) and the movement towards it in the R. Assagioli’s psychosynthesis theory [2008], principles of individuation and movement towards Self in the Jungian conception [2009]. One can also see the proximity of EG-4 to G. Allport’s proprium in the function of “positive, creative, developing source of human nature” [Allport, 1998], while PU successful actualization - to Eriksonian feeling of identity [Erikson, 2006].

“Universal” properties of POCH are somewhat surprising even for the author. If a person for example, discovers his PU (“daimon”) and with EG help wishes to actualize it in the external world, we talk about *humanistic* character of our model. In this case, the movement is directed *outwards*. However, if an individual chooses to move in the opposite course – *inwards*, guided by the slogan “Know thyself” (know your Personal Uniqueness) we can talk about esoterically, mystically oriented conceptions. Such an inward movement is vividly represented in C. Jung’s theory (knowing Self in the process of individuation) and in R. Assagioli’s psychosynthesis (person’s tending towards his deeply located centre). In this case, the third, social level of EG

system fulfils the role of “false façade”, the cover under which a real life, though not seen by strangers, proceeds.

A closer look at the second (L2) and third (L3) levels of our conception makes evident its partial isomorphism to the Freudian theory of personality. Indeed, “Basic” EG can be treated as a certain counterpart of Id with its primary drives and the reigning pleasure principle (Freud, 1991). REG development from EG is analogous to that of Ego from Id. The Moderation principle at the social L3 of our model can be in a certain sense interpreted as a “softened” version of Superego. However, in the Freud’s personality theory there is no notion concerning “personal potentials” of a man. Psychoanalysis interprets any creative activity in terms of sublimation defensive mechanism [Freud, 1991], while the attempts at explaining person’s inborn talent are not even undertaken.

That’s why, POCH admitting the existence of “ideal” PU, is not as “pessimistic” about human nature as the psychoanalytic theory. At the same time, our model does not predict an easy and “natural” way towards PU actualization that may seem possible from Jungian writings – mainly because of the radical distinction in origin between Egoism and Personal Uniqueness. Therefore, an actualization of our “inner treasure” is not predetermined; it becomes rather hypothetical, a question of conscious choice and hard work for a person who “hears” the reinforcing call of his PU and feels his own vocation. Such mode of the theoretical discourse gives much better explanation of the relatively small number of individuals involved in the process of self-actualization and individuation.

Consequently, POCH occupies the *intermediate* position between the two psychological “monsters” – the theories of Z. Freud and C. Jung. In our opinion, this is one of the examples of the “golden mean” that was intuitively observed in POCH in the process of its construction. A person with a strong and developed EG-4 can overcome dangers of the environment in the process of PU realization. Within such an approach, we also get the opportunity to deal successfully with an important problem in humanistic psychology, which is relative but not identical to the one discussed above. A. Maslow and C. Rogers explained small percentage (less than one) of self-actualizing people due to “unfriendly conditions of the environment” [Maslow, 2009; Rogers, 2001]. At the same time, both scientists believed that *every* person has his inborn potential.

POCH application based on PU-REG dualism enables us to outline some ways of solving this problem. For example, a person with a strongly developed sense of Personal Uniqueness (and even giftedness) not always possesses a proper mechanism (REG) of its realization in the outer world, thus becoming “non-actualized” talent. On the other hand, an individual may hold neither REG nor PU, but can have strong EG and move further towards unlimited satisfying of his materialistic needs and getting new hedonic pleasures.

Furthermore, if we investigate Carl Rogers’ process of psychotherapy within the framework of POCH, we can give alternative explanation to its beneficial effects. Therapist’s efforts at the initial stages of work with a client, connected with the unconditional understanding and acceptance of the latter, can be interpreted as EG activity, the function of which the therapist fulfils by himself. Such efforts help to strengthen the client’s PU at the first stage of its

development. If the therapy is effective, there comes the time for the second stage – PU entering the external world – firstly, into the space of interaction between the therapist and the client. Such space is broadening by degrees while the client's PU is getting more and more solid.

In modern theories, the PU-EG connection easily incorporates most of the components concerning eudaimonic living and self-fulfilment: autonomy [Ryan and Deci, 2001, 2008; Ryff and Singer, 2006; Sheldon and Elliot, 1999]; competence (Ryan and Deci) and mastery (Ryff and Singer); life purpose (Ryff and Singer) and self-concordant goals (Sheldon and Elliot); personal growth and self-acceptance (Ryff and Singer). Every personal trait, mentioned above, can be included either into EG concept (for example autonomy, life purpose, self-acceptance etc.) or into PU. If a trait is demonstrated “inside” the person's specific activity, it should be related with PU, if “outside” – with EG.

Further, we would also like to dwell on a very important theme, which we want to discuss with the help of POCH ideas – the flow [Csikszentmihalyi, 1993]. We understand the flow as unimpeded PU actualization (almost without EG) in appropriate activity. That's why, one can fully concentrate on the process and use his psychic energy in a harmonious pattern [Csikszentmihalyi, 1993, p.176].

In explanatory purposes, let's add “some POCH” into the flow and describe the dynamics. When a person is inside the flow without anything hampering his PU, he acts in the most effective way. Imagine that after some time there appears a minor “irritator” that can distract the actor's attention. For example, some strangers appear near the rock during the climber's training. They watch his performance and loudly talk about it. In order to keep his activity at the proper level and under control, the climber's REG comes into play. Most probably, the sense of flow will diminish to some extent. The noisier are the visitors, the bigger REG is, and the smaller the flow is. If the “audience” begins to behave aggressively (like throwing stones at the climber), his flow and PU disappear, while “intelligent” REG is replaced by more “brutal” Basic EG.

M. Csikszentmihalyi's characteristic of transcendent personality is a fine confirmation of EG-PU coexistence and interaction: “It is the T-person who combines harmoniously these opposite tendencies: he or she is original yet systematic, independent yet responsible, bold yet disciplined, intuitive yet rational ... It is easy to be at one or the other pole of these pairs, and much more difficult to be at both ends at once. Yet only when the apparent antinomy of these two processes is resolved can a self fully participate in the flow of evolution” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993, p. 238).

What's more, the protective function that the “EG” system implements towards the “PU” system during its actualization in the outer world helps to withstand “The Hostile-World Scenario” [Shmotkin, 2005].

Within the present theoretical article, we can cover only a small part of the problems we are interested in. So let's show the possible solution of only one «enigma» that exists in modern psychology – “the egoist's dilemma”, which deals with a balance between personal egoism and social good [Myers, 2009]. The problem in general is reduced to the following: there is a village and a common meadow nearby. The peasants have cows that feed on the meadow. For his own

benefit, each peasant wishes to have as many cows as possible, but in this case all the grass on the meadow will be eaten soon and the cows will starve to death.

With the help of POCH, this problem can be easily solved. If every peasant knows his PU (that is *unique* for each person) then only few of them (if any) may wish to deal with cows, because the majority will prefer to actualize themselves in other, more suitable activities. While the peasants, whose PU lies in the sphere of agriculture, will easily figure out the optimal herd [Levit, 2011c]. That is it – the modern solution of “the egoist’s dilemma” by means of a *Higher Egoism!* Not only for peasants, but for their cows as well.

The use of our model can be highly productive in the upbringing of gifted children. We help to *uncover* their Personal Uniqueness, while we can *form* the “Rational” and the “Higher” Egoism components for their future life and activity [Bratchenko, Mironova, 1997]. In this case, the theoretical contradiction between conditional (for EG formation) and unconditional (for PU uncovering) positive approaches is resolved.

We have elaborated and tested several techniques and inquiries based on our theoretical model [Levit, 2012 d; e; 2013 a]. In the present article, we shall speak not only about our theoretical model but shall also consider the main results obtained with the help of experience sampling methods. ESM methodology is described in our latest publications and monographs [Levit, 2012 c; 2013 d; Levit, Radchikova, 2012 a].

ESM techniques. In the years 2011-2013 we have conducted three ESM-investigations which lasted from two weeks to two months. Thirteen adult persons (9 women, 4 men) aged 24-52 years, physically and mentally healthy, with higher education participated in it.

First of all, the participants were given written instructions. They filled in their daily form for every 2 hours (when they were not sleeping) and registered out the activity they engaged in as well as their thoughts (in case the thoughts were not corresponding to what they were doing). They also evaluated (from 0 up to 10 points) each kind of activity according to 12 scales denoting the main concepts that are usually associated with the well-known theories of happiness and subjective well-being. ESM-2 also applied to pointing out the *flow activities* with the subsequent comparative analysis between the two groups of statistics. One of the participants in ESM-2 decided to fill the curtailed form (excluding the “egoism” scale) that did not change the general regularities discovered.

The final version of ESM-3 form included the scales which represented all the main psychological states associated with happiness as well as the correspondent positive (“subjectivist”) theories standing behind them: Level of complexity; Self-realization; Pleasure; Self-perfection; Positive emotions; Involvement; Physical fitness (Feeling good); Meets my values, has meaning for me (Meaning); Good, benefit for me (Egoism); Good, benefit for others (Altruism); Life satisfaction in general.

The results (from 1200 to 1500 measurements for every participant) have been processed with the help of various statistic procedures and factor analysis. The author has also conducted several interviews with every participant after the investigations were over.

The principal results.

1. The scales dealing with person's self-realization (Level of complexity; Self-realization; Self-perfection) usually had the lowest scores among all the scales. This may denote rather weak necessity for the unique potential realization in everyday activities of the participants.

2. The scales "Self-realization" and "Self-expression" used in ESM-1 showed positive correlations of 0.90 and more among all the participants. Such a result enables to stop the discussions about the interrelationship between the two concepts and preserve more traditional "Self-realization" for the future research.

3. Situations ascribed to "the flow" demonstrated the growth of almost *all* the scales (except altruism) but not 2-3 of them as it was assumed according to the flow criteria [Csikszentmihalyi, 1993]. The most interesting thing in the flow is the same proportion between the scales, which "mirrors" the main figure at a higher (1-4 points) level. Thus, the positive load of every scale increases significantly and the flow may be considered to be "quintessence" of happiness.

At the same time, the Level of complexity though having grown on 2-3 points among all the participants in the flow situations, has reached only medium (but not high as it was expected) scores of 5-6 points.

The results obtained raise the question about the main factors of the flow (if there any) anew.

4. Let us remind a reader about the growth of the Physical fitness scale in the flow states, that enables to strive for them in prophylactic purposes.

5. We have also studied the situations of "unhappiness" belonging to the lowest quartile of all the scales. Most of them are related to the so-called "maintenance activities" [Hektner et al, 2007] – preparing food, cleaning the house, combing one's hair in the morning etc. Thus, the participants are bound to fulfil them in order to support their daily living. Experience sampling methods also enable a psychologist to study *real unhappiness* in a person's life with a consequent therapeutic work, which becomes highly individualized in this case.

6. Factor analysis fulfilled after ESM-2 and -3 ending did not confirm the claims of the Life satisfaction scale to be integral in relation to the "happiness" construct. This scale always belongs to one factor with the Pleasure, Positive emotions and Physical fitness scales and never belongs to one factor with the Level of complexity, Self-realization and Self-perfection scales among all the participants. Thus, Life satisfaction scale has more strong correlations with *emotional* states and, consequently, can hardly be equalized with *cognitive* evaluation of life situation as it is represented in E. Diener theory [Diener, Biswas-Diener, 2008].

7. There are some scales, which always fall into one factor among all the participants: Level of complexity, Self-realization and Self-perfection. We have called this factor "Hard happiness". Some other scales – Pleasure, Positive emotions, Physical fitness and Life satisfaction in general – always fall into another factor ("Easy happiness"). The rest of the scales (Involvement, Meets my values, has meaning for me {Meaning}; Good, benefit for me {Egoism}; Good, benefit for others {Altruism}) fall into one or another factor or belong to both of them.

Quantatively, the "Easy happiness" scores outnumber "Hard happiness" substantially in most of the situations. At the same time, there's no chasm between both factors, since 99 percent of all the correlations between the scales are positive though not always significant.

As long as the Pleasure scale and the Level of complexity scale fall into different factors (while the Involvement scale occupies an intermediate position), all three of them can hardly be considered as the leading characteristics of the flow state. In our opinion, very high level of complexity questions the possibility of getting pleasure from the activity.

Now we can offer an explanation to p. 1: the scores of the “Hard happiness” scales are so low because they are so difficult to reach.

8. Only positive correlations are observed between the “egoism” and the “altruism” scales in the second and the third investigation (table 1). Besides, most of them (5 out of 7) are statistically significant.

Table 1. The correlations between the “egoism” scale and the “altruism” scale for each participant

0.47	0.11	0.66	0.87	0.26	0.63	0.29
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Comment: the significant correlations are printed in boldface.

Therefore, there were not a single testee who, receiving some good and benefit for herself in her daily activities, thought that she was bringing harm to other people. And vice versa: the activity for the benefit of other was usually associated with the good for oneself. Thus, we have obtained the results that confirm our theoretical construction – POCH and at the same time can change traditional, morally flavored but empirically unproved ideas, dealing with egoism and altruism as the opposites.

Quantitatively, the egoism scale surpasses its opponent in most cases (6 out of 7). The results obtained fit the theories of the inborn egoism as more important means of survival (table 2).

Table 2. The average scores of the “egoism” and the “altruism” scales for each participant

Egoism	5.8	6.2	5.6	5.1	4.0	7.0	7.0
Altruism	5.2	6.3	3.8	3.5	1.1	6.5	3.1

The only participant whose “altruism” exceeded “egoism” (though only at 0,1) has confessed after ESM-2 that she was taking daily care of her dying mother in the given period. Such an activity, which was perceived by her as hard but *inevitable and temporary* measure, influenced her marks. As we already know the ESM-2 investigation was also connected with the study of the flow states. It has been discovered, that the “egoism” scores in the flow activities grew for all the participants, while the altruism scores – only for one of them.

Table 3 The average scores of the “egoism” and the “altruism” scales (overall and in the flow in ESM-2)

Egoism (overall)	5.8	6.2	5.6
Egoism (the flow)	6.5	7.5	7.8
Altruism (overall)	5.2	6.3	3.8
Altruism (the flow)	5.1	6.3	6.0

As far as the flow activities are associated with happiness and studied by the positive psychology, we can see the forecasted growth of the egoistic components in the situations linked to psychological well-being. This particularly confirms the rightfulness of the “Egoism” system inclusion into our theoretical construction (see fig. 1). The decrease of the correlations between the “egoism” and the “altruism” scales in the states of the flow for all the participants in ESM-2 can be interpreted as the corroboration of p. 3 (table 4).

Table 4. The correlations between the “egoism” and the “altruism” scales (overall and in the flow in ESM-2)

Overall	0.47	0.11	0.66
The flow	0.45	-0.02	0.53

9. All the participants had positive correlations between the “egoism” and the “meaning” scales. The latter sounded like “My own choice” in the ESM-2. In the ESM-3 investigation, the “meaning” scale received the more precise formulating: “Meets my values, has meaning for me”. We have also calculated the correlations between the “altruism” and the “meaning” scale (tab. 5).

Table 5. The correlations between the “egoism” – “meaning” and the “altruism” – “meaning” scales for each participant

Egoism-Meaning	0.45	0.49	0.04	0.75	0.52	0.93	0.86
Altruism-Meaning	0.16	0.04	-0.05	0.59	0.24	0.83	0.37

Comment: the significant correlations are printed in boldface.

As one can see from table 5, “egoism” has stronger connection with “meaning” than “altruism” for each person. Besides, most of the “egoism-meaning” correlations (6 out of 7) are statistically significant – unlike the “altruism-meaning” correlations (3 out of 7). Still the latter are mostly positive (excluding a woman who was taking care of her dying mother).

The scores obtained can hardly be explained with the help of the typical traditionalistic approaches (appreciated in the Soviet and the Post-soviet psychology) which equalize the possibility of meaning attainment exclusively with the altruistic help to other people – without any proofs.

10. Factor analysis also displayed that both scales (egoism and meaning) related to one factor. This took place in the case of two as well as in the case of three factors allocation. In the latter variant (three factors), the “altruism” scale has always left the factor where egoism and meaning remained. As a joke, we even thought that the “meaning” scale of ESM-2 “My own choice” could be justly renamed into “My own *egoistic* choice”.

According to factor analysis and correlation analysis we also conclude that in the flow situations the overall “distance” between egoism and altruism as well as between meaning and altruism becomes “longer”, while between egoism and meaning it becomes “shorter”.

11. Positive correlations between all the scales of ESM form demonstrate a) precision of their choosing for our investigation and b) complexity of the “happiness” construct. Nevertheless, we were eager to find out which characteristics of happiness were associated with the given notion to the greatest degree and thus related to its “core”.

Using different mathematic procedures, we have discovered three scales whose scores mostly correlate with a high level of an “overall” well-being among all the participants: “Involvement”, “Meaning” and “Egoism” – the “IME” group [Levit, 2014 e]. At the same time, all the rest theories of happiness represented by the other scales preserve their significance, though smaller than the outlined “trio”. Most probably, they can appear either because of the “IME” successful realization or by themselves. Therefore, happiness remains a complex notion but now we know the factors, which are mostly associated with its nature. Consequently, there is no magical and suitable for everybody “secret of happiness”. All the scales have positive (though very different) correlations with each other including the Level of complexity.

In our opinion, the IME group, entering “Easy” or “Hard” happiness, makes the corresponding way of living more attractive for a person, because brings to it some more experience associated, as we already know, with happiness in general. At present, we can comprehend the simultaneous rise of all the scales (except “Altruism”) in the flow states, since the flow from now on can be better represented by the “IME” group as its leading factor. Thus, the flow becomes a fine example of a person’s *authentic* living. And vice versa: an existence in which a person finds no meaning, sees no benefit and interest for herself can be described as *unhappy*.

Our results show again that modern consumerist society goes the wrong way since it links together happiness and the pursuit of short-term pleasures, thus underestimating or missing creative self-realization and meaning.

Nowadays, any reader who wants to make his life happier can at first search the activities, which create the highest involvement while practicing them. The next step must be finding his “signature strengths”. Their actualization will be *useful*, *beneficial* and *meaningful*. Thus, practical work of positive psychologist and psychotherapist acquires more structure and direction [Levit, 2014 b].

DISCUSSION.

The results obtained reveal that people feel but do not actualize their inner potential – mostly because of the difficulties connected with such a process. Consequently, the flow is experienced in the “medium” but not at the “height” of the complexity level. Besides, the flow states include almost all the subjective characteristics associated with happiness – its “Hard” (more “eudaimonic”) and “Easy” (more “hedonic”) variations, as well as the ruling “IME” group.

The discovery of positive correlations between “egoism” and “altruism” breaks the “traditional” (and to some extent ideological) views, which prefer to consider both notions as the opposites, having different implications and value from the moralistic point of view. The real facts are not taken into account – despite A. Waterman’s findings according to which, people with individualistic traits have a better *social* functioning and social attitudes including tolerance, helping, cooperation and non-manipulative acceptance of others [Waterman, 1984, pp. 153-157]. We should remind the reader that in POCH, the mature individualism is interpreted as the highest (the fourth) level of the “Egoism” system” (fig. 1).

From now on, we argue that egoism and altruism are not only compatible but largely indissoluble in everyday life situations. Most of the helping behaviors make the actor stronger as well – especially when he finds an “egoistic” opportunity for his own self-development or at least his mental state amelioration. The psychologist’s work may serve as a fine example to that. In the opposite case, when egoism does not fulfill its protective functions, the “altruistic” worker may get a quick burnout. And vice versa: person’s activity directed at her own good (especially in the sphere of self-realization) usually brings value to other people – immediately or in future.

Our investigations show two main variants of vivid divergence between egoism and altruism. The first is hedonism in its traditional, “sensual” meaning, which taken in big quantities, leads to laziness, senseless life and therefore doesn’t contain any altruistic components. In the hedonistically colored situations (dinner, afternoon tea, evening TV, internet surfing, listening to music etc.) there always exists a substantial severance between both scales. The “altruism” marks decrease sometimes almost to zero. In our opinion, such situations may be regarded exclusively as a means of (temporary) recreation, the way of “recharging batteries”.

The second variant of possible divergence between egoism and altruism (in favor of the latter) reflects the idea that a “strong egoist” may see useless (and senseless) to cooperate with a more “weak” person, because the “strong” gets no good from such a cooperation. At the same time, the “strong” may get a lot of “harm” and therefore become “weaker”.

Nevertheless, the given example does not show the real egoism-altruism *opposition*. Normally the “strong” does not exploit the “weak” but simply refrains from unnecessary and useless contacts. In this case, the energy is directed towards more “meaningful” (for oneself, not for the “weak”) goals. Thus, “egoism of the strong” diverges from altruism if the latter is treated as a *supreme* moral value, but not with morality in a more broad sense.

In the interviews given after the research, some of the participants defined such situations as *inevitable* and *temporary* – something that should be tolerated and fulfilled for a certain amount

of time. The examples were as follows: taking daily care of the heavily ill relative, helping a colleague who fell behind, cleaning the flat after puppy's mischief etc. Such an attitude has more common features with a dependent labor, rather than with a spontaneous altruism expression, which "leads to happiness".

In general, the positive correlations between the "egoism" and the "altruism" scales, as well as the quantitative superiority of the former over the latter, make us turn down their interpretation as being the opposites and advance another metaphor – of two "brothers", among which egoism is the older while altruism is the younger. That's why, in POCH altruism represents the variation of the so called "Rational" (society-oriented) Egoism which belongs to the third, social level of our model. Such disposition is particularly concordant with "altruistic egoism" concept elaborated by H. Selje [1982]. What applies to the mature individualism, it belongs to the highest – the fourth level of the "Egoism" system in POCH.

Nevertheless, "brothers' bond" becomes weaker in the flow situations, hedonically oriented activities during leisure time and some cases "forced" by another person (actually a relative or co-worker) who needs urgent help. Such cases occur not too often: they constitute about 20 percent of the overall activity.

The results obtained correspond well with the "theory of predominant egoism", elaborated by G. Kavka. According to it, "self-interested motives tend to take precedence over non-self-interested motives in determining human actions. That is, non-self-interested motives usually give way to self-interested motives when there is a conflict. As a result, we may say that human action in general is *predominantly* motivated by self-interest" [Kavka, 1986, p. 64]. Table 2 clearly demonstrates natural predominance of egoism over altruism in a person's daily activities.

G. Kavka also mentions that "altruistic motives may inhibit or delay action, motivate a search for new alternatives that serve *both selfish and altruistic* ends of the agent..." [ibid, p. 65]. As can be observed in table 1, the basic activities of healthy adult people with higher education already include both kinds of motivation – "good for oneself" and "good for others" in which connection the former usually surpasses in the latter. The Kavkian term "nonmaximizing egoism" also fits our results very well, because it leaves some place for altruism as well. The successful interaction of both components *maximizes* person's activity.

At the same time, since the "altruistic" scale almost never equals to zero, we should talk about the "pure", "isolated" egoism with great care – at least if we do not touch some leisure time "solo" activities or pathological cases.

Now we have a better opportunity to understand J. Mills' views, according to which, "the distinction between active and passive characters is much more fundamental than the distinction between egoistic and altruistic motives" [Holmes, 1990, p. 282]. As it becomes clear, an *energetic* person normally brings good for herself and for others (egoism *plus* altruism equates *total* good]. And vice versa, a lazy fellow does nothing useful but stigmatizes any successful laborer as an "egoist".

In J. Mill's opinion, Christian altruism is rather ambivalent since "devotion to the glory of God sometimes required neglect of others as well as neglect of self". Such an attitude, as D. Hume puts it, is contrary to *both* private advantage *and* the public good" [ibid, p. 282].

The results demonstrate some important overlapping areas relating to the terms "meaning", "egoism" and "personal uniqueness". The connection between the first two notions is particularly interesting since it looks counterintuitive for any existential psychologist and disclaims the traditional widespread negative views on egoism. The "egoism-meaning" connection gets stronger in the situations and activities associated with high personal well-being, particularly in the flow states. Person's desire to find meaning in life may also strengthen his Higher Egoism and the inner sense of Personal Uniqueness [Levit, 2014 c].

We have found several theoretical definitions, which can be applied to both concepts under consideration. Most probably, inborn egoism is one of the meaning "predecessors" in the process of ontogenesis, while its higher forms directly participate in PU realization and meaning creation. Person's self-actualization achieved with the help of Higher Egoism as well as his health strengthening proved good prevention factors against loss of meaning in one's life. Both of the terms can give the same answer to the main existential question: "What does a man live for?" – "For *himself*".

Thus, we can offer scientifically proved possibilities for finding meaning during typical existential crises when a person has to tolerate painful conditions of living and/or cope with her own negative states of mind caused by losses and other hurting events. Our ESM results suggest that the best choice for an individual to cope with such situations may be his engagement in some specific activity associated with his "good", "benefit for himself" and PU realization in a broad sense. Victor Frankl's working on his book in Nazi's concentration camp serves as a proper example.

There also exists the second part of the answer – what an individual *shouldn't* do in order not to lose meaning of his life. The straightforward pursuit of short-termed hedonic pleasures may (and really does) lead to existential "dead end". According to our results, "social" actualization also can't be considered the best choice since it doesn't guarantee meaning disclosure [Levit, 2013 c; 2013 f].

At the same time, it is not quite clear why do some psychologists prefer to connect meaning primarily to the *negative* aspects of living. By doing so, they supply with extra work other scientists [Wong, 2012] who are in their turn trying to unify the artificially separated parts. After all it looks quite natural when "good" and "benefit" in person's mind are linked to his "meaning" and "values", particularly, in specific activities aimed at self-realization.

It is hardly possible to find life situations in which beneficiary and useful actions were at the same time *meaningless* for a man (high egoism, low meaning). We do not include materialistic consumption and the straightforward pursuit of hedonistic pleasures into our list since we are not persuaded of their long-term "good". The latest one serves as an example of strong *Basic* Egoism (level 2 in POCH) but has nothing in common with productive self-fulfillment and flourishing.

The reverse case (high meaning, low egoism) is also hard to imagine. For example, if I give some money to a beggar, I make (seemingly) the altruistic *deed*, which can possess high meaning for me. But since my spirit grows as a result of charity, my *motivation* should be considered to be at least partially egoistic. Frankly speaking, I “use” the beggar to feel myself better. This is a typical example of the so-called hedonistic egoism [Levit, 2012 g].

Anyway, in the context of self-actualization, eudaimonic activity and happiness achievement the two concepts do not contradict but finely supplement with each other. The author sees only one but serious obstacle to practical fulfillment of the given considerations. First of all, a person has to invest a lot of *effort* into the chosen activity which corresponds to his Personal Uniqueness in order to get benefit and a sense of meaning in it. Very bad news for numerous loafers and hedonists...

In any case, the intermarriage between the two “global” concepts – meaning and egoism – has taken place. The meaning is “egoistical” one way or another, while the highest level of egoism is deeply “meaningful”. The extraordinary “fruits” of such a union may prove exceptionally useful for future investigations and theorizing. It is understood, we’ll need more people for our future explorations in order to make more certain conclusions and generalizations.

The illustrating example. In the frame of the results concerning an interaction between “egoism” and “altruism” notions, let’s analyze the key act and the motivation of a legendary Albert Schweitzer. Being the successful musician, the famous philosopher and theologian, A. Schweitzer suddenly changed his career. At the age of thirty he began studying medicine at the university and then left Europe for Africa (Gabon) where he had been working off and on until his death [Nosik, 1971]. His biography from the age of 35 is represented as the example of purely unselfish service for people in need.

The situation becomes more complicated if we take into account not only A. Schweitzer’s actions but the underlying motivation as well. For example, I can be of benefit for other people if I want to raise my self-esteem and get the reciprocal good from them in future. In this case my “altruistic” activity is (at least partially) selfishly motivated.

Within such a frame, A. Schweitzer’s activity was far from being exclusively unselfish. First, his departure to Africa has deprived thousands of amateurs the possibility of listening to his music and studying his new scientific works. While at the beginning of his medical career, A. Schweitzer was an *inexperienced* doctor. He could have stayed and work in Europe, thus not leaving his wife with a little baby.

As A. Schweitzer declared, with the help of such an activity he actually wanted to prove his faith in God who lives *inside* human nature [ibid, p. 113]. We can interpret this statement as his attempt to be godlike for the sick and uneducated Africans. It is clear such a position could not be demonstrated with the European patients who demanded only professionalism from a doctor.

Person’s desire to be a “healing God” for his grateful patients can raise his opinion about himself to the height that is unattainable for others and thus can bring the feeling of one’s own exclusiveness. Nobody higher than God. It looks like Schweitzer’s aspiration for an “isolating

superiority” represented the example of egoistic motivation being at the core of his altruistic activity.

Searching and finding selfish motives in Schweitzer’s biography in no way means that we want to denounce the value of his medical work. In the light of our ESM results, it looks only natural when egoistic and altruistic components are combined in one’s actions – even if they look heroic. The hidden desire of A. Schweitzer to be “godlike” (at least for his African patients) reflects the idea of one’s Personal Uniqueness – the extremely important component of the POCH model, determining person’s designation and her destiny.

We should also notice that Schweitzer’s motivation was not *totally* egoistic. It is well known that he had a pungent feeling of compassion for other people’s misfortunes [ibid, pp. 112 – 113]. It is understood, his activity as a doctor also represented some sort of altruism coupled with egoism.

In our opinion, Albert Schweitzer deserves maximal respect not for his exotic decision but for continuous self-realization through all his life. It looks like this man has revealed *all* the talents with which he was so generously endowed. The life of our hero represents a bright example of eudaimonic existence with the unique potential actualization being its highest value. It is clear for us that eudaimonia appears to be the most reliable means for a full-fledged life and happiness achievement [Levit, 2013 c, ch. 3; 2013 g]. Having started his medical career in Africa from the zero point, Albert Schweitzer has accomplished a unique project. He became a big fish in his own pond. With his noble activity, A. Schweitzer deserved great respect from his contemporaries and descendants.

CONCLUSION.

In the sphere of fundamental psychology, Person-oriented conception of happiness has integrative character towards some personality theories of the twentieth century and at the same time can serve as the possible systemic «prototype» for the future theoretical and experimental investigations. POCH in our opinion is a fine example of the integrative approach, the intermarriage of different perspectives around the concepts of self-actualization and complete human life.

In our opinion, the POCH not only enables to resolve most of theoretical difficulties connected with the concepts «happiness» and «self-actualization», but also uncovers new horizons of exploring the highest manifestations of individual in the context of full-fledged life.

Experience sampling methods, being applied in the sphere of positive psychology, enable to outline the main factors associated with the “happiness” construct. The obtained results give the opportunity of further productive psychological explorations.

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Bio

Leonid Zigfridovich Levit was born in 1958 in Minsk, Belarus. He got his PH.D. in 1988 at Moscow State University (Department of Psychology). At present time he runs his own Health and Educational Centre. His hobby is rock-climbing and mountaineering.