



Neuroscientist Dr. Tali Sharot explained how optimism bias works (Image: The Diary Of A CEO /Youtube)

Neuroscientist explains why thinking positive thoughts can actually make you happier

If your parents ever told you to think positive thoughts in order to bring about positive outcomes then it turns out they might have been onto something, as a neuroscientist has explained how our outlook can affect our happiness

By **Amber O'Connor**, Lifestyle Writer

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Happiness is a slippery thing - but it is something we all aim for. So it is no surprise so many of us are drawn to tips and tricks touted as simple 'happiness cures'.

But it should without saying that our emotions are in fact incredibly complex. Equally, it's important to seek medical advice if you're struggling with your **mental health**.

It is nonetheless interesting to learn 'optimism bias' can help people to feel happier, and to learn more about what's going on inside our brains.

Appearing on **The Diary of a CEO**, neuroscientist Dr Tali Sharot explained it is possible to enjoy a happier life by thinking happier thoughts, confirming the popular belief.



Optimistic thinking could help us to feel happier (📷 Image: Getty Images)

Chatting to entrepreneur Steven Bartlett, the expert defined optimism as the belief 'positive things will happen' before explaining that 'optimism bias' refers to continued belief in a good outcome despite evidence suggesting otherwise.

It sees people 'overestimating the positive in light of the evidence in front of us, and underestimating the likelihood of negative events happening'. So on the surface, it does not sound very helpful. After all, 'it is actually a mistake,' as Dr Tali clarified.

However, even though this bias sounds like a bad thing 'it is not necessarily so' to quote the pro.

"It can actually have both positive and negative outcomes," she explained. "If I expect good things in my future, even though I'm overestimating the likelihood of these things happening, that then motivates you. So having these positive expectations motivates you to try harder. It also enhances your happiness and well-being."

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Dr Tali went on to reveal that our current feelings are often based on what we think we will be doing in the future rather than what we are doing in the moment.

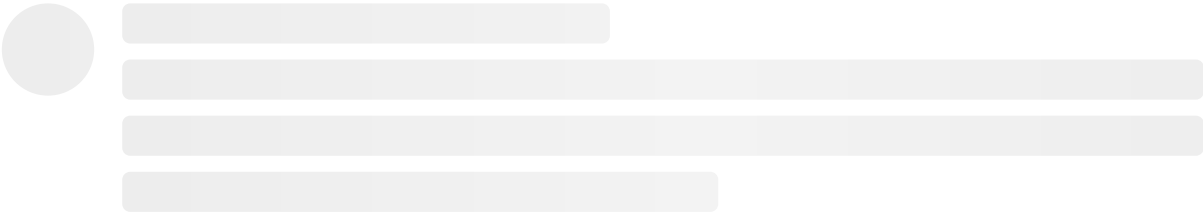
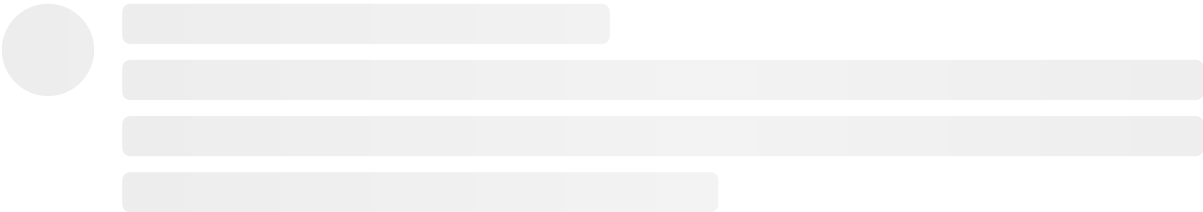
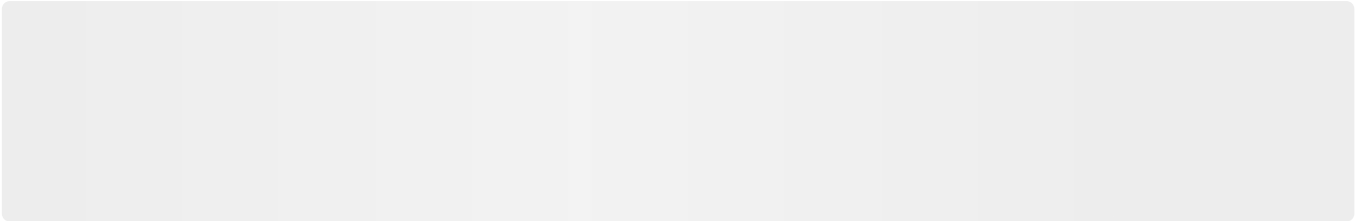
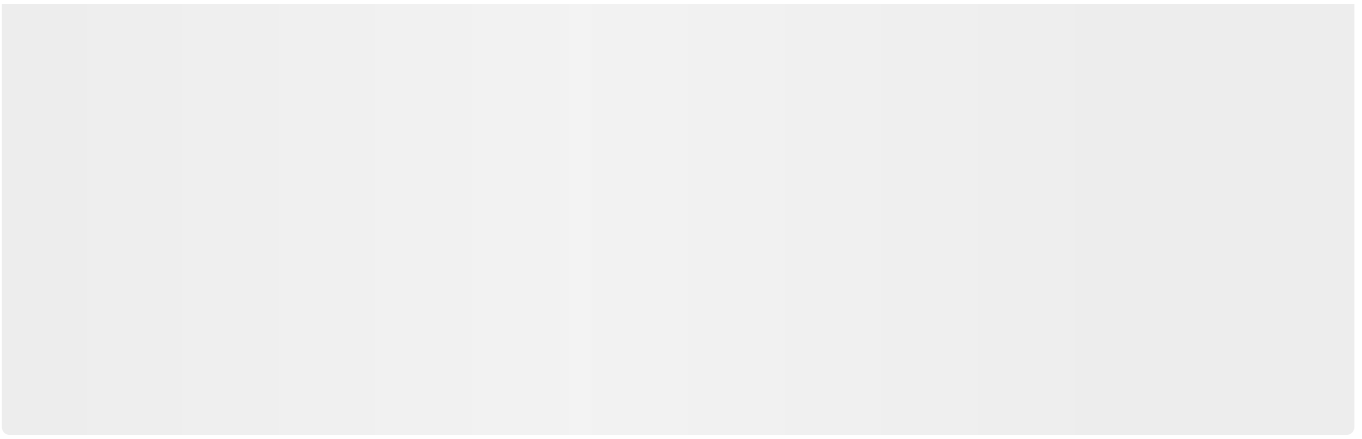
In other words: "Our expectations of where we will be in the future affects our happiness today."

To further her point, she also referenced a Harvard study that found people were happier before they went on holiday than they were during the trip.

When a group of holidaymakers were quizzed about their feelings before, during, and after their vacation, the day before ranked as their happiest.

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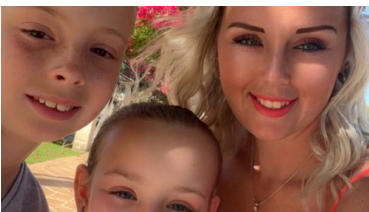
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