Professional Happiness in the Field of ESL

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Advance Organizer

- Start with some *blue-sky* activities: interpreting graphics … I'm going to need you to **chime in with comments!**
- Plainly, happiness is *complicated*; so, What's Happiness? … try a couple of **definitions**
- **Your turn:** a couple of pie graph activities to doodle on a page beside your computer
- **Actual case(s):** time to apply theory to realistic situations
- Back to **the big picture of happiness**

Can You Suggest a Caption?
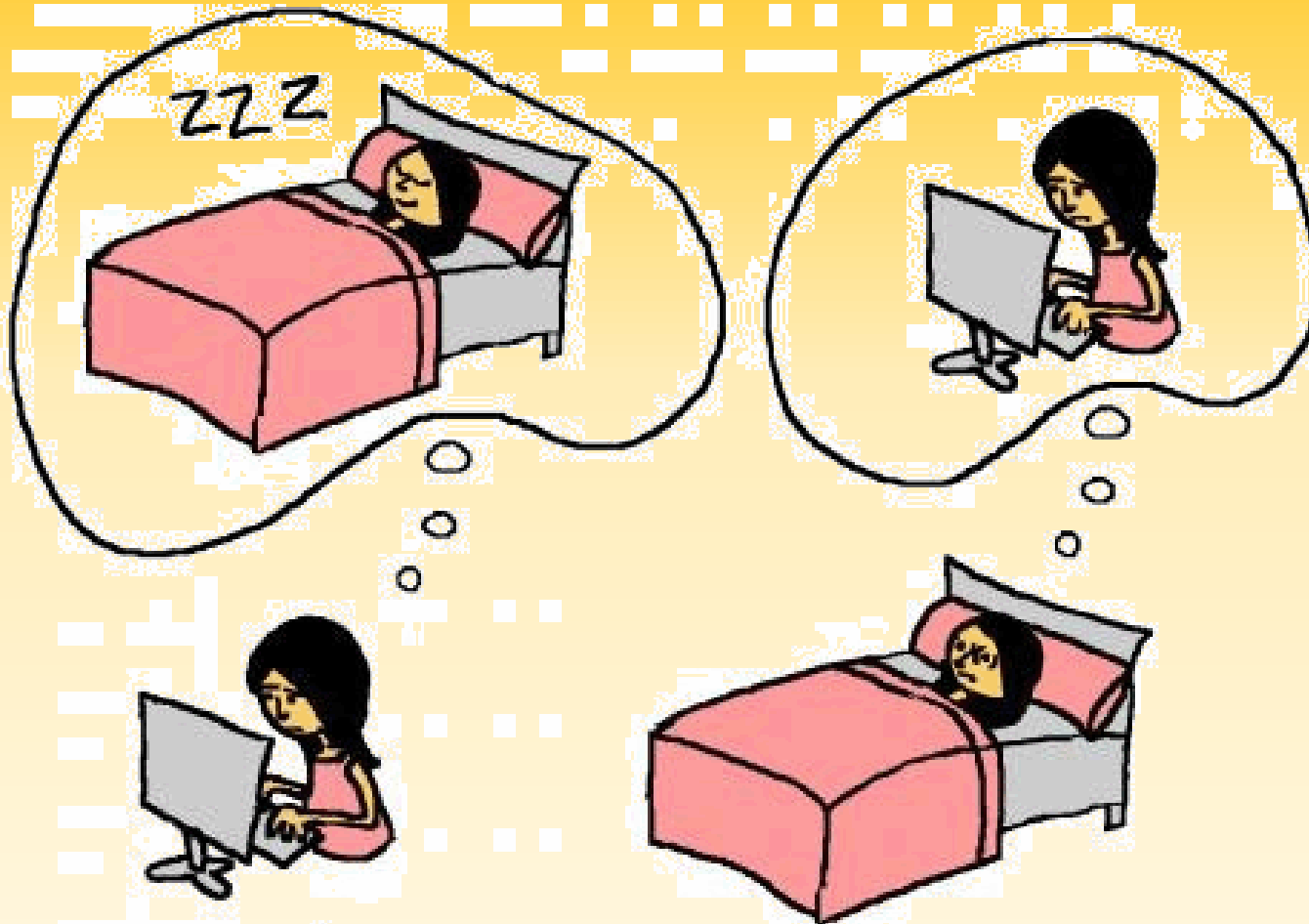
Another Chance …
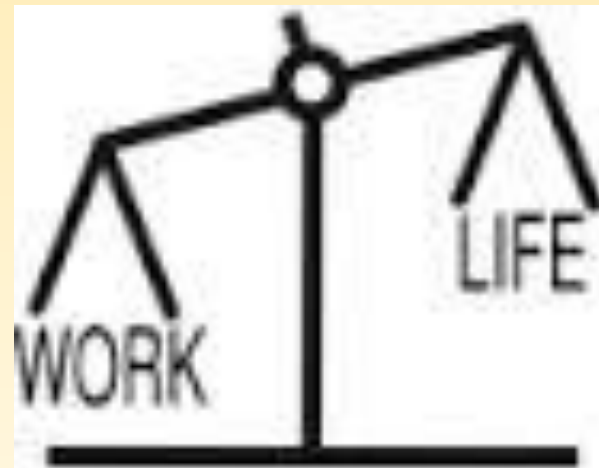
What's Happiness?

- Two main traditions (Ryan & Deci, 2001, p. 161):
  - **A.** **"eudaimonic viewpoint":** stress "psychological well-being" in broader sense of "the fully functioning person"; may be "operationalized … as a set of wellness variables such as self-actualization and vitality"

  - **B.** **"hedonic viewpoint":** "happiness" in sense of "subjective well-being" … "more positive affect, less negative affect, and greater life satisfaction"

- In short, what we might call *chocolate* or *broccoli* … which is which, and why?

Chocolate or Broccoli?

- Self-Determination Theory (SDT)
  - **Broccoli** – recognize/promote happiness in sense of "eudaimonia": "well-being as distinct from happiness per se" (Ryan & Deci, 2001, p. 145)
  - bigger than just emotions of "pleasure or happiness" as stressed by "subjective well-being" (pp. 143, 144)
  - "doing what is worth doing" (p. 145)

- "intrinsic motivation" arises via meeting three "innate psychological needs" (Deci & Ryan, 2000, pp. 227, 228):

Competence – Autonomy - Relatedness

Three Psychological Needs

- **Competence:** "feeling effective ... experiencing opportunities to exercise and express one's capacities"
- **Autonomy:** "being the perceived origin or source of one's own behavior"
- **Relatedness:** "feeling connected ... caring for and being cared for ... sense of belongingness both with other individuals and with one's community"

Examples of each? ... Which seem(s) most frequently available?

- *Ryan & Deci (2002), p.7*
- *also discussed by Van de Breock, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, Soenens, & Lens (2010), or by or Ryan & Deci (2000)*

What Does the Literature Say?

- Nimiec & Ryan (2009): much literature advises "classroom practices that support <u>students</u>' satisfaction of **autonomy**, **competence**, and **relatedness**" (p. 141)

- **BUT** oddly, professional development literature for <u>teachers</u> often stresses *<u>competence</u>* (and maybe *<u>autonomy</u>*), not so much *<u>relatedness</u>*; e.g. PD helps teachers to

  – "update their <u>technical knowledge</u> … [and] … build up their own <u>repertoire of skills</u> to use in their practice" (Vacilotto & Cummings, 2007, pp. 153-4)
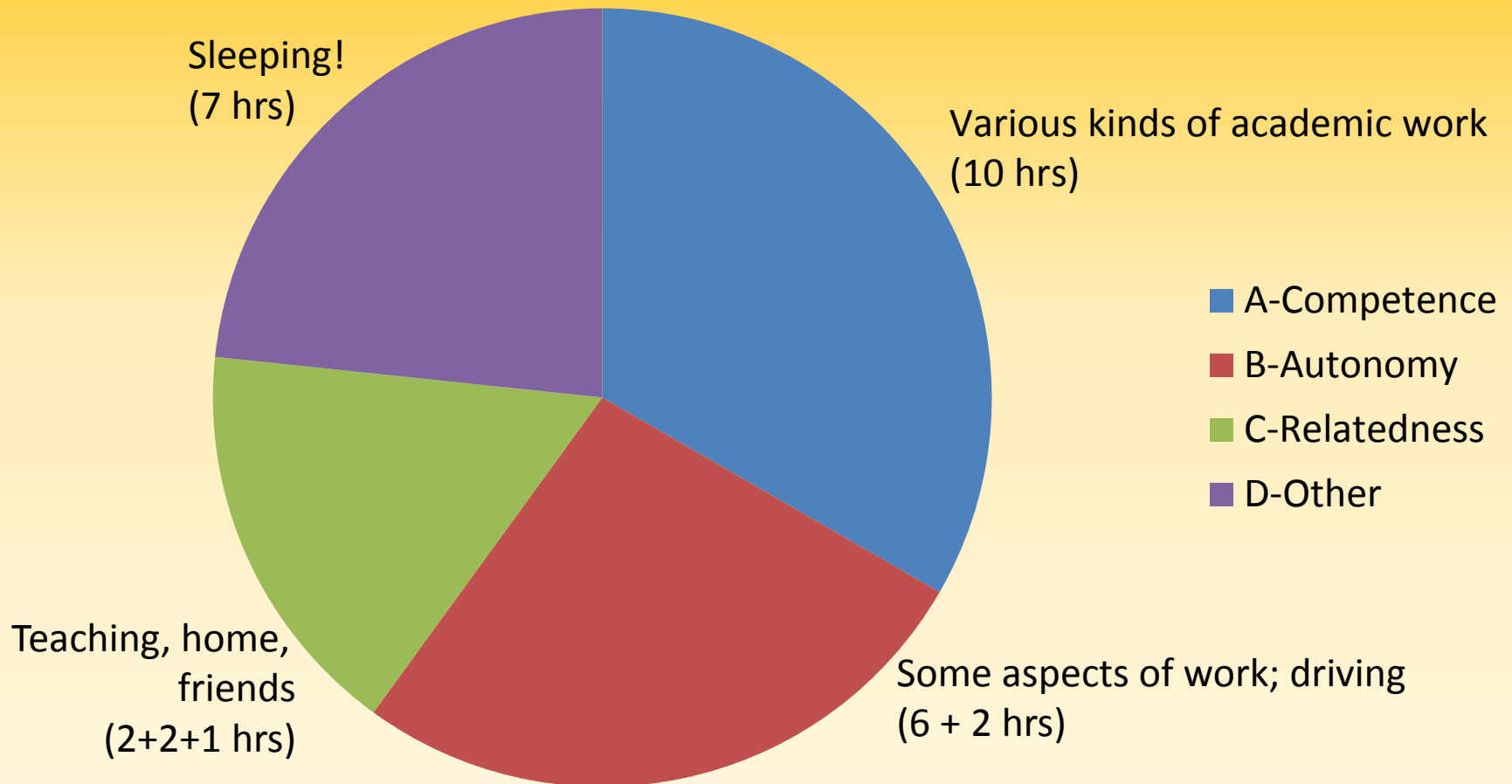
Relatedness for Teachers

- Obvious point: most actual *teachers* see the importance of **teacher/student** relatedness:

  - Split, Koomen, & Thijs (2001), "Teacher–student relationships are often mentioned as one of the core reasons for staying in the profession" (p. 460)

  - "connecting with students is a critical component of the satisfaction of teachers' need for relatedness" (e.g. Klassen, Perry & Frenzel, 2012, p. 161)

- But oddly, SDT *research* on teachers looks "almost exclusively" at **teacher/teacher** relationships (Split et al., p. 462)

Pie Graph Activity

- Draw a pie graph with slices for the **_proportion_** _of time per typical working day_ when you are engaged in activities:

  - A: connected with experiencing **competence**
  - B: connected with experiencing **autonomy**
  - C: connected with experiencing **relatedness**
  - D: **not directly connected** with any of the above

While you're thinking, here's mine

Design Problem: Some activities match **more than 1 category**: e.g. *some* academic work counts as both competence and autonomy.

Sleeping! (7 hrs)

Various kinds of academic work (10 hrs)

A-Competence

B-Autonomy

C-Relatedness

D-Other

Teaching, home, friends (2+2+1 hrs)

Some aspects of work; driving (6 + 2 hrs)

Second Pie Graph Activity

- Now, make **a new pie graph** displaying proportions for an **<u>ideal day</u>**

Thoughts About the Two Pie Graphs

- In comparing the two
  - What would you *increase/decrease* when drawing the second graph?
  - Why?
  - What obstacles might deter you?

- Possible generalizations about things <u>teachers</u> in particular may struggle with?

Now the Really Hard Stuff…

- Consider a fictional but realistic ***Case for Study: Student Plagiarism***
- Please have a look at the PDF … as it says:

"Thinking about the need for academic standards, but also about the student's – and your own – need to experience <u>competence</u>, <u>autonomy</u>, and <u>relatedness</u>, what would you do?"

Plagiarism Case: Discussion

- What *tensions/conflicts* does the case evoke?

- Can you imagine different reactions from different colleagues? … if so, where do you fit in the picture?

- Are there potential policy implications?

- What elements of the case foreground aspects of <u>teacher</u> as well as <u>student</u> happiness?

    – in what respects are you inclined to adopt a <u>chocolate</u> or a <u>broccoli</u> perspective?

New Colleague Case

- Again, please have a look at the second PDF ... as it says:

"Where do you go from there? What might be the trajectory of your conversation with the new colleague?"

New Colleague Case: Discussion

- What *tensions/conflicts* does the case evoke?

- Can you imagine different reactions from different colleagues? … if so, where do you fit in the picture?

- Are there potential policy implications?

- What elements of the case foreground aspects of happiness for <u>newer</u> vs more <u>experienced</u> teachers?

  – in what respects are you inclined to adopt a <u>chocolate</u> or a <u>broccoli</u> perspective?

Back to the Big Picture

- Where does teaching fit in the galaxy of jobs?

- Happiest job "by a longshot" in **2013** was **Teaching/Research Assistant** (per Workopolis)

- **Forbes Magazine** – 10 happiest jobs (Denning, **2011**):

  #5: Special Ed Teachers

  #6: Teachers

  – clergy (#1), firefighters, physical therapists, authors, special ed teachers, teachers, artists, psychologists, financial services sales, operating engineers (#10)

Community of Teaching and Learning

- "The path taken …" Niemiec, Ryan & Deci (2009): attainment of ***any aspiration*** usually **does** promote happiness somewhat, but <u>not all equally</u> …

Intrinsic aspirations: "personal growth, close relationships, community involvement, and physical health" (p. 291)	"The pursuit and attainment of intrinsic aspirations are associated with psychological health because intrinsic aspirations relate positively to basic psychological need satisfaction." (p. 304)
Extrinsic aspirations: "money, fame, and image [i.e. personal appearance]" (p. 291)	"attainment of extrinsic aspirations was either unrelated or negatively related to psychological health, which is consistent with SDT predictions" (p. 304)

Possible Conclusion

- Niemiec, Ryan & Deci (p.302) quote **Aristotle**:

"[Happiness] belongs more to those who have cultivated their character and mind to the uttermost, and kept acquisition of external goods within moderate limits, than it does to those who have managed to acquire more external goods than they can possibly use, and are lacking goods of the soul … Any excessive amount of such things must either cause its possessor some injury, or, at any rate, bring him no benefit."

- Cliché or reality? -

A More Modern Source

- Meynell (2013, p. 67):

"It does not seem satisfactory to treat happiness as a mere sum of pleasures. At least in the normal senses of the terms, 'pleasure', 'pain,' and 'happy,' a life might be full of pleasures, and largely without pains, and yet fail to be happy, if, say, it seemed to be aimless or pointless, or to lack any sense of achievement."

- How might these comments be related to happiness as an intrinsically motivating combination of competence, autonomy, and relatedness? -

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