

## Person-Activity Fit Diagnostic

(Sonja Lyubomirsky, adapted from Ken Sheldon)

Consider each of the following 12 happiness activities. Reflect on what it would be like to engage in each activity every week for an extended period of time. Then rate each activity by writing a number from 1 to 7 in the space next to the words Natural, Enjoyment, Value, Guilt and Situation. These terms describe different reasons for why we might choose to engage in a given activity:

**Natural:** I'll keep doing this activity because it will feel "natural" to me, and I'll be able to stick with it.

**Enjoyment:** I'll keep doing this activity because I'll enjoy doing it; I'll find it to be interesting and challenging.

**Value:** I'll keep doing this activity because I'll value and identify with doing it; I'll do it freely even when it's not enjoyable.

**Guilt:** I'll keep doing this activity because I would feel guilty, ashamed or anxious if I didn't do it; I'll force myself to do it.

**Situation:** I'll keep doing this activity because my particular situation will compel me to or because somebody else will want me to.

Use this 7-point scale to rate each activity on these five dimensions:

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7**  
Not at all    Somewhat    Very much

---

**1. Expressing Gratitude:** Counting your blessings for what you have (either to a close other or privately, through contemplation or a journal) or conveying your gratitude and appreciation to one or more individuals whom you've never properly thanked.

Natural \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_ Value \_\_\_\_\_ Guilt \_\_\_\_\_ Situation \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Cultivating Optimism:** Keeping a journal in which you imagine and write about the best possible future for yourself or practicing to look at the bright side of every situation.

Natural \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_ Value \_\_\_\_\_ Guilt \_\_\_\_\_ Situation \_\_\_\_\_



**3. Avoiding Overthinking and Social Comparison:** Using strategies (such as distraction) to cut down on how often you dwell on your problems and compare yourself with others.

Natural \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_ Value \_\_\_\_\_ Guilt \_\_\_\_\_ Situation \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Practicing Acts of Kindness:** Doing good things for others, whether friends or strangers, either directly or anonymously, either spontaneously or planned.

Natural \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_ Value \_\_\_\_\_ Guilt \_\_\_\_\_ Situation \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Nurturing Social Relationships:** Picking a relationship in need of strengthening and investing time and energy in healing, cultivating, affirming and enjoying it.

Natural \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_ Value \_\_\_\_\_ Guilt \_\_\_\_\_ Situation \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Developing Strategies for Coping:** Practicing ways to endure or surmount a recent stress, hardship, or trauma.

Natural \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_ Value \_\_\_\_\_ Guilt \_\_\_\_\_ Situation \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Learning to Forgive:** Keeping a journal or writing a letter in which you work on letting go of anger and resentment toward one or more individuals who have hurt or wronged you.

Natural \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_ Value \_\_\_\_\_ Guilt \_\_\_\_\_ Situation \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Increasing Flow Experiences:** Increasing the number of experiences at home and work in which you "lose" yourself, which are challenging and absorbing.

Natural \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_ Value \_\_\_\_\_ Guilt \_\_\_\_\_ Situation \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Savoring Life's Joys:** Paying close attention, taking delight, and replaying life's momentary pleasures and wonders, through thinking, writing, drawing, or sharing with another.

Natural \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_ Value \_\_\_\_\_ Guilt \_\_\_\_\_ Situation \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Committing to Your Goals:** Picking one, two, or three significant goals that are meaningful to you and devoting time and effort to pursuing them.

Natural \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_ Value \_\_\_\_\_ Guilt \_\_\_\_\_ Situation \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Practicing Religion and Spirituality:** Becoming more involved in your church, temple, or mosque or reading and pondering spiritually themed books.

Natural \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_ Value \_\_\_\_\_ Guilt \_\_\_\_\_ Situation \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Taking Care of Your Body:** Engaging in physical activity, meditating, and smiling and laughing.

Natural \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoyment \_\_\_\_\_ Value \_\_\_\_\_ Guilt \_\_\_\_\_ Situation \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Determining Your Best-Fit Activities:** Conduct the following 3 steps for each activity:

**Step 1:** Average the **Natural**, **Enjoyment**, and **Value** scores:

$(\text{Natural} + \text{Enjoyment} + \text{Value})$  divided by 3.

**Step 2:** Average the **Guilt** and **Situation** scores:

$(\text{Guilt} + \text{Situation})$  divided by 2.

**Step 3:** Subtract the **Guilt** and **Situation** average from the **Natural**, **Enjoyment**, and **Value** average:

$(\text{Natural} + \text{Enjoyment} + \text{Value average})$  minus  $(\text{Guilt} + \text{Situation average})$

The resulting number is your **Fit Score** for that activity. The Fit Score is a measure of what psychologist Ken Sheldon calls “self-determined motivation,” or a commitment to engage in an activity because it's grounded in your genuine interests and personal values. The activities with the highest Fit Scores are likely to be the ones that will feel most natural and enjoyable to you, will be easiest to sustain over time, and will have the greatest impact on your happiness.