

Identifying Types of Self-Kindness and Exploring their Potential to Increase

Mental Well-being

A qualitative diary study

Master thesis

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Abstract

Background. High mental well-being encompasses psychological and social functioning, life satisfaction and the absence of psychopathology. Acts of kindness interventions have been found to increase well-being. However, research on the effectiveness of practising self-kindness in order to increase well-being is barely existent. The present study therefore investigated the potential of performing different self-kindness activities to promote mental well-being, by identifying different types of self-kindness behaviours and associate these behaviours with well-being.

Methods. In total 85 participants took part in a 6-week self-kindness intervention, wherein they performed five acts of self-kindness on one day per week. Participants were drawn from a nationwide sample in the Netherlands, predominantly higher educated, female and on the average $M = 47.91$ years ($SD = 9.54$) old. They additionally filled in online diaries about the acts of self-kindness they had performed, which were qualitatively analysed using content analysis. The identified categories were correlated with mental well-being.

Results. Eleven different types of behaviours were identified: *Self-indulgence*, *Pursuit of meaningful goals*, *Indulging with foods/drinks*, *Idleness*, *Material Goods*, *Wellness*, *Mindfulness*, *Positive relationships*, *Active leisure*, *Physical activity*, *Flow activities* and *Organize duties*. Performing self-kindness activities led to significantly higher mental well-being within this condition over time. Specifically ‘flow activities’ were significantly correlated with increases in mental well-being.

Conclusion. In general, self-kindness seems to bear the potential to increase mental well-being. It seems that in order to promote well-being a balance of simple, passive (hedonic) actions and more complex, active (eudaimonic) actions must be established. However, as

the present study is the first to qualitatively analyse self-kindness, the results should be interpreted with caution. Confirmatory research regarding the present results will be needed.

Introduction

Nowadays, Western societies are on the ‘pursuit of happiness’. Happiness has evolved as an ideal that people strive for (Diener & Suh, 2003). As part of this development, self-care and self-management advice in the form of books, blogs, podcasts or counseling circulate within the public, containing advice on how to treat oneself with kindness and care in order to lead a fulfilled life. In this light, it is remarkable that self-kindness has not received much attention within psychological research yet.

With the emergence of *positive psychology*, which is the study of ‘conditions and processes that contribute to the flourishing or optimal functioning of people, groups, and institutions’ (Gable & Haidt, 2005, p. 103), the need to focus not only on disfunction and psychopathology, but also on personal welfare and functioning has found its way into psychological research. Its’ central aim is to promote positive experiences, positive relationships as well as mental and physical health on the subject and community level (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). On a related note the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared mental health as ‘a state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community’ (WHO, 2014). Mental health consequently is no longer defined as the mere absence of psychopathology, but has expanded to include aspects of *positive mental health*, hence, positive emotion and positive functioning (Huppert, 2005; Seligman et al., 2005; Bohlmeijer et al., 2013).

The present study will consequently dedicate itself towards the topic of self-kindness and explore its' potential to promote personal well-being.

Self-kindness

There are very few studies that investigate the concept of self-kindness in general or the effects of performing acts of self-kindness on well-being. Present insights concerning the effectiveness of self-kindness to enhance well-being do predominantly stem from experimental studies on prosocial behaviour, wherein self-kindness serves as an active control group.

Prosocial behaviour has in contrast been investigated extensively and has been found not only to increase well-being for the recipient of the good deed, but also to result in higher well-being levels of the do-er (Dunn, Aknin & Norton, 2008; Buchanan & Bardi, 2010; Weinstein & Ryan, 2010; Schueller & Parks, 2014; Curry et al., 2018). Some of these studies on prosocial behaviour have even concluded that being kind towards others is more effective than being kind towards oneself (Dunn et al., 2008; Nelson, Layous, Cole & Lyubomirsky, 2016).

However, the overall results concerning the effectiveness of self-kindness to promote well-being are mixed (Rowland & Curry, 2019). Rowland and Curry (2019) as well as O'Connell, O'Shea and Gallagher (2016), found self-kindness to be effective in boosting well-being. Furthermore in a recent trial, Nelson-Coffey, Bohlmeijer and Schotanus-Dijkstra (in progress) compared two acts of kindness conditions (one with, one without reflection) and an acts of self-kindness condition with regard to their effectiveness to enhance mental well-being. Like Nelson et al. (2016), they expected the acts of kindness exercise to produce higher increases in well-being than the self-kindness exercise. However, both, the acts of kindness condition as well as the acts of self-kindness condition, were found to be effective in promot-

ing well-being (Nelson-Coffey et al., in progress). This indicates that self-kindness does bear the potential to increase well-being.

In order to conduct research on the effectiveness of self-kindness, in a first step self-kindness needs to be defined. With research on self-kindness being sparse, one must mainly rely on research on distinct, but similar concepts, such as *self-compassion* in order to provide a definition of self-kindness. Self-compassion describes a warm, kind, understanding and accepting way of treating and relating to oneself (Neff, 2003). It entails three facets: *self-kindness*, *common humanity* and *mindfulness*. In this context, self-kindness is understood as the treatment of oneself with kindness, even (and especially) in the face of suffering, failure and one's flaws and imperfections, by taking on a warm and understanding attitude towards one self. (Neff, 2003). 'People are often much harsher and unkind toward themselves than they ever would be to others they cared about, or even to strangers' (Neff, 2003; p. 87) which can be problematic, since self-criticism and shame present transdiagnostic factors that underlie numerous mental health problems (Gilbert, 2009). A compassionate attitude towards one self and treating oneself with kindness on the contrary has been found to be associated with higher mental well-being (Neff, Kirkpatrick & Rude, 2007; Leary, Tate, Adams, Batts Allen & Hancock, 2007; Gilbert, 2009). So, from research on self-compassion we might consider defining self-kindness as an attitude or a way of relating towards oneself, rather than a specific action.

In contrast, research on prosocial behaviour describes self-kindness in terms of specific behaviours. In a study by Nelson et al. (2016) for example, behaviours like enjoying a favourite meal, spending time on a hobby are, buying oneself a treat, enjoying a massage or exercising are mentioned. They operationalized self-kindness and acts of kindness as the same behaviours per se, only that they are targeted in different directions (i.e. at others vs. at oneself) (Nelson et al., 2016). When defining self-kindness, Nelson and colleagues (2016) used

the same line of argumentation as Neff and Germer (2013), who pose that being compassionate to one self is the same as being compassionate towards others, only in the other direction. In that way, any act of kindness such as spending money for somebody, cooking for somebody or caring for somebody (Ouweneel, Le Blanc, & Schaufeli, 2014) qualifies as an act of self-kindness, if only it is directed at the self instead. So - in the manner of Nelson et al. (2016) and Neff and Germer (2013) - if prosocial behaviour is defined as behaviour that is aimed at protecting or increasing the welfare of others, including any type of kind action directed towards another person (Weinstein & Ryan, 2010; Ouweneel et al., 2014), self-kindness may be defined as *any kind of behaviour that is aimed at protecting or increasing the welfare of oneself*. Taken together, self-kindness most likely encompasses a great range of kind behaviours, that are directed towards oneself (Nelson et al., 2016) and are carried out with a well-meaning attitude towards oneself (Neff, 2003).

Mental Well-Being and Flourishing

The vision of happiness and optimal functioning that positive psychology and individuals seek to establish, is captured under the term *mental well-being* (Keyes, 2007; Bohlmeijer et al., 2013; Nelson et al., 2016). Mental well-being features three components. The first is *emotional well-being*, which refers to the subjective experience of well-being in the form of positive affect, happiness and life satisfaction (Diener, 1984; Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009). Emotional well-being targets hedonic well-being, which arises from the presence of positive and the absence of negative affect and is characterised by the search for pleasure and comfort (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Delle Fave, Massimini & Bassi, 2011). The other two are: *psychological well-being*, that is leading a meaningful, autonomous life by realizing one's potential including discovering and making use of one's individual strengths and *social well-being*, thus having

positive relations, taking part in community-life and experiencing a sense of belonging (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989). Optimal functioning in individual and social life, which the latter two target, is referred to as eudaimonic well-being. Eudaimonic well-being is mainly characterised by the pursuit of meaningful goals and relationships (Delle Fave et al., 2011). While emotional or hedonic well-being involves immediate pleasurable experiences, social and especially psychological well-being (i.e. eudaimonic well-being) often rather result in pleasure retrospectively, establishing well-being on the longer term (Delle Fave et al., 2011).

Individuals that experience high levels of both hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, thus feel and function well, are called *flourishers* (Keyes, 2007; Seligman, 2012; Huppert, Timothy, 2013). Recent research has proven that flourishing (i.e. experiencing high levels of mental well-being) is associated with better mental and physical health outcomes, as well as heightened creativity and cognitive abilities (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Huppert, 2005; Keyes & Simoes, 2012; Schotanus-Dijkstra et al., 2016). Furthermore it has been found, that these benefits also extend onto the community level. Namely, flourishing is associated with increased productivity, lowered health care costs and lower numbers of sick-days at work (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Hamar, Coberley, Pope & Rula, 2015; Keyes, 2007). Hence, in order to foster these beneficial outcomes, ways to promote flourishing (i.e. ways to increase well-being) need to be studied.

In fact, along with the growing research interest about what constitutes positive mental health, research on the promotion of well-being in the form of positive psychology interventions (PPI's) has also been growing (e.g. Bolier et al, 2013; Hendriks et al., 2019). PPI's are treatments 'or intentional activities aimed at cultivating positive feelings, positive behaviours, or positive cognitions' (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009, p. 468). As PPI's are easily to be integrated

into everyday life, they are a suitable means to promote well-being and optimal functioning not only in clinical settings, but also amongst the general public (Seligmann, et al., 2005; Mongrain & Anselmo-Matthews, 2012). Considering the present focus on self-care within the general public (Nelson et al., 2016), one shall ask whether this approach can be successful from a scientific point of view. Can one increase one's personal welfare by treating oneself kindly?

The current study

The aim of the current study is to examine the potential of self-kindness to promote mental well-being, reveal what types of self-kindness behaviours people do perform and to investigate whether certain types of self-kindness prove to be more effective than others in increasing mental well-being. Specifically, the research questions are: Firstly, *'Which types of self-kindness behaviours do people perform?'*, secondly, *'Do acts of self-kindness bear the potential to increase mental well-being?'* and thirdly, *'Which types of self-kindness behaviours are linked to higher levels of well-being?'*.

It is hypothesized that self-kindness behaviours include a large variety of actions that target all three facets of well-being. Hence self-kindness is expected to include different activities that aim to foster positive emotions and experiences, to build/strengthen social support and feelings of belonging or behaviours that produce meaningful experiences (Ryff, 1989; Keyes, 2007; Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009; Nelson et al., 2016). Furthermore it is hypothesized that self-kindness in general does bear the potential to promote mental well-being, since previous research for the most part did find a positive effect of acts kindness on well-being, even if that effect has been smaller than for prosocial behaviour (Dunn et al., 2008; Nelson et al., 2016; O'Connell et al., 2016; Rowland & Curry, 2019; Nelson-Coffey et al., in progress).

With regard towards the question whether certain types of self-kindness lead to better outcomes, it is hypothesized that hedonic pleasures produce immediate, but rather short-termed positive experiences (Delle Fave et al., 2011) and therefore fail to initiate long-lasting behavioural changes, which is why mere hedonic activities are expected to prove less effective than activities targeting eudaimonic well-being.

Methods

Design

This study builds upon a large randomized controlled trial in the Netherlands on the effectiveness of different happiness exercises, conducted by researchers of the University of Twente (Nelson-Coffey et al., in progress).

The current study focused on one arm of the larger trial, namely the self-kindness condition. A qualitative content analysis of the online diaries of the participants was conducted in order to distinguish different types of self-kindness behaviour. Furthermore, the relationship of these different types of self-kindness behaviours with changes in mental-well being scores was quantitatively analysed. Well-being was measure using the Mental Health Continuum-Short Form (MHC-SF) (Keyes et al., 2008). Changes in well-being were calculated using the change score from baseline to 6-week post-test. All participants provided informed consent to take part in the study.

Participants and procedure

In total 653 participants were recruited. To participate in the study, participants needed to give informed consent and complete a screening questionnaire that tested for their eligibility to take part in the study. Inclusion criteria were: an age of minimum 18; access to internet and an

e-mail address; sufficient Dutch language skills and a completed baseline questionnaire. Furthermore participants had to show low or moderate levels of well-being and no symptoms of severe depression (i.e. scores >34 on the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D) (Radloff, 1977) and/or anxiety (i.e. >15 on the Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7-item Scale (GAD-7) (Spitzer, Kroenke, Williams & Löwe, 2016).

Of the 653 recruited participants, 423 met the inclusion criteria. 85 participants were randomly assigned to the acts of kindness condition, which was the focus of the current study. The average age in the current sample was $M = 47.91$ years ($SD = 9.54$), ranging between 18 and 67 years. Participants scored moderately ($M = 2.77$; $SD = .69$) on the MHC-SF (Keyes et al., 2008), were mainly female (89.4%), of Dutch nationality (90.6%), higher educated (80.0%) and in paid employment (89.4%). About half of the participants were married (47.1%) and lived together with their partner (58.8%).

Participants received instructions via e-mail to perform five acts of self-kindness on one day per week, over a period of six weeks in total. The day after they had performed the five acts of self-kindness, they were instructed to fill in an online diary (see Appendix A (in Dutch). wherein they should report on these acts of self-kindness, hence how many actions they had performed and what these actions consisted of. Participants could perform any kind of action they would consider as an act of self-kindness, however, they were encouraged to focus on small acts that take little money or effort. In order to strengthen adherence, participants received a weekly reminder e-mail containing the instructions (see Appendix B (in Dutch)).

Qualitative Data Analysis

In order to analyse the contents of the diary data, a code scheme was created using content analysis (Mayring, 2000; Kuckartz, 2014). All qualitative analysis were conducted with the software atlas.ti (version 8.3.1). The first step of this analysis was the creation of a code scheme (see Table 1). For the creation of the scheme, the diaries were read once by the researcher and a tentative code scheme was derived directly from the data by categorising the statements of the participants according to their content and labelling them. This method features the inductive approach (Mayring, 2000). The resulting tentative draft was then discussed with a second researcher and applied by the first researcher and a second researcher to about 10% of the data (= the data of 8 participants) to check for its' validity and comprehensiveness. Based on the results of this process, the code scheme was adjusted again resulting in a first draft of the coding scheme (see Appendix B), which was then applied to all data by both researchers.

To check for subjectivity the interrater-reliability was calculated. Cohens' Kappa for this first draft was $\kappa = .051$, (95% CI - .059 to .161), $p < .05$, which according to the guidelines proposed by Landis & Koch (1977) qualifies only as a poor level of interrater-reliability.

Table 1 Coding scheme of the different types of self-kindness behaviours including definition, variation within the code and examples

Main category	Code	Subcode	Definition code	Variation within code	Examples
Self-Indulgence	<i>Indulging in foods/drinks</i> 33.3%		Treating oneself with foods/drinks.	Having an extra treat/drink Having special/one's favourite food/drink Ordering take-outs Going out for food/drinks Buying oneself special foods	ID 2: „Enjoyed an extra treat: a brownie with my coffee“ ID 18: „Went out for dinner, after the hard work of today“ ID 46: „Had a glass of wine“ ID 80: „Eating out, instead of cooking“ ID 318: „Had my favourite meal (lasagna)“
	<i>Leisure/idleness</i> 23.3%		Engaging in passive (i.e. activities that require little or no effort) leisure activities.	Doing nothing, resting Staying in bed/sleeping longer/napping Watching films/series Visiting concerts/readings/cinema Surfing the internet Listening to music Reading Gaming	ID 9: „Watched an episode of my series“ ID 46: „Slept half an hour longer“ ID 97: „Spend some time on my own this afternoon, simply doing nothing on the couch“ ID 120: „Read the whole newspaper in bed“ ID 155: „Gamen on the x-box“
	<i>Material goods</i> 9.6%		Purchasing things in order to treat oneself.	Buying all kinds of things e.g. clothing, books Buying luxury/expensive articles Buying things one does not necessarily need	ID 12: „Bought myself some flowers“ ID 93: „Bought a jacket for myself that I did not necessarily need but that I find really nice“ ID 170: „Bought a book and had it wrapped up as a gift for myself“
	<i>Wellness</i> 9.4%		Engaging in activities that promote wellness and comfort.	Having a massage Going to the sauna or spa Getting a facial treatment/manicure etc. Using special wellness products (shampoo/body lotion etc.) Having a haircut	ID 31: „Had a massage“ ID 46: „Sauna“ ID 102: „Took a long bath“ ID 115: „Warm pillow in my neck“ ID 284: „Went to the hairdresser“ ID 307: „Used a facial mask“

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	33.3%				
Pursuit of meaningful goals	<i>Mindfulness, reflection and self-care</i>		Consciously attending to the present moment, reflecting onto one's current state and acting accordingly.	Meditating Practicing yoga Reflection (also via journaling) Gratitude for one's blessings Guarding one's own boundaries (e.g. saying no, taking time-out when needed) Self-appreciation/self-care	ID 2: „Consciously made time in the morning for some yoga, meditation and enjoyed the shower“ ID 30: „Reflected on what I have contributed today“ ID 222: „Evening meditation“ ID 232: „Stayed in bed due to sickness“ ID 273: „Did some Yoga“
	<i>Active leisure</i>				
	13.8%	<i>Physical activity</i>	Being physically active.	Exercising Perform moderate exercise Physical activities like going for walks, bike tours etc.	ID 6: „Went running“ ID 78: „Went for a walk, after a day of sitting“ ID 139: „Exercising, even though I mostly do not like going there, I know that I will feel great when I go back home. It makes me happy.“
		9.1%			

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	33.3%				
		<i>Flow activities</i> 4.7%	Engaging in active leisure activities that promote flow (i.e. activities that are intrinsically rewarding and meaningful to the individual).	Creating art Crafting Playing/writing music Gardening Cooking Trying new things, challenging oneself Spending time outdoors/w. pets	ID 34: „Knitted for an hour“ ID 116: „Begun to create a website for a hobby.“ ID 127: „Did some yard work, being outside“ ID 166: „Played with my dog“ ID 223: „Played some music“ ID 265: „Made a cake (new recipe)
	<i>Organize duties</i>		Organising one's everyday duties.	Doing/delegating chores Study To carry out or delegate one's duties	ID 2: „Business meeting outside on a walk“ ID 108: „Delegated a task“ ID 166: „Time for studying“ ID 191: „Decluttering = sorted out old stuff and prepared it for the second hand shop.“

Therefore, the scheme was re-edited profoundly until it was found to be the best possible reflection of the diary content and comprehensive of all data (Mayring, 2000).

Using the final scheme (Table 1), the data was analysed by the first researcher, according to the coding rules specified within the scheme. However it was not possible to have a second researcher code the data again, therefore interrater-reliability could not be calculated. Each description of a self-kindness activity presents a fragment. There were 1302 of such fragments in total from 78 participants who had completed the online diary at least once. The average number of fragments (i.e. acts of kindness described) per participant was $M = 12$ ($SD = 5.58$). The total number of fragments per participant varied between 6 and 28 fragments. A maximum of 30 fragments per participant was possible. Because the fragments could describe more than one activity or more than one type of activity, each text fragment could have been assigned multiple codes.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Measures. Well-being was measured with the Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF) (Keyes et al., 2008; Lamers et al., 2011). The MHC-SF (14 items) has 3 sub-scales: emotional-well being (3 items), social well-being (5 items) and psychological well-being (6 items). Participants had to report on the frequency of experiencing different emotional states during the last four weeks, using a 6-point Likert scale (0 = never; 5 = almost always). Higher scores indicate a higher level of well-being, while lower scores indicate low levels of well-being. In general the MHC-SF has good psychometric properties (Lamers et al., 2012). In this study the MSC-SF shows an excellent internal consistency ($\alpha = .91$) at pre-test and at post-test ($\alpha = .95$).

Quantitative analyses. The quantitative statistical data analysis was conducted with SPSS, version 25.0 (IBM). Two tailed tests were used with a significance level of $> .05$. The descriptives (age, gender and education) of the participants were calculated. The mean fre-

quencies by which each code was mentioned were calculated, as well as the difference score for mental well-being by subtracting the mean score at baseline from the score at post-test. Positive difference scores indicate an increase in well-being, while negative difference scores indicate a decrease in well-being.

In order to answer whether and how self-kindness behaviours influence well-being, a correlational analysis of the types of self-kindness (as found in the qualitative analysis) and the outcomes on mental well-being was conducted. The difference scores were correlated with the mean frequencies of the self-kindness behaviours using Spearman's rho (r_s). In order to assess whether well-being has increased during the intervention the Wilcoxon-Signed-Ranks-Test was used to compare the mean scores on mental well-being between baseline and post-test.

Results

In total, thirteen categories of self-kindness behaviours were found that summarise the 1302 acts of self-kindness that were performed by the participants. The content analysis revealed two overarching categories, namely *Self-indulgence* and *Pursuit of meaningful goals*. Each of these main categories comprises four categories. *Self-indulgence* consists of the categories *Indulging with foods/drinks*, *Idleness*, *Material Goods* and *Wellness*, while the main category *Pursuit of meaningful goals* includes the categories *Mindfulness* (including self-reflection and -care), *Positive Relationships*, *Active leisure* and *Organize duties*. The category *Active leisure* was further divided, to include two subcategories: *Physical activity* and *Flow activities*.

Figure 1. presents a graphic of the code structure with their absolute and relative frequencies. The arrows indicate to which extent two quotes are mentioned together (i.e. the thicker the arrow, the more often these two codes were mentioned together).

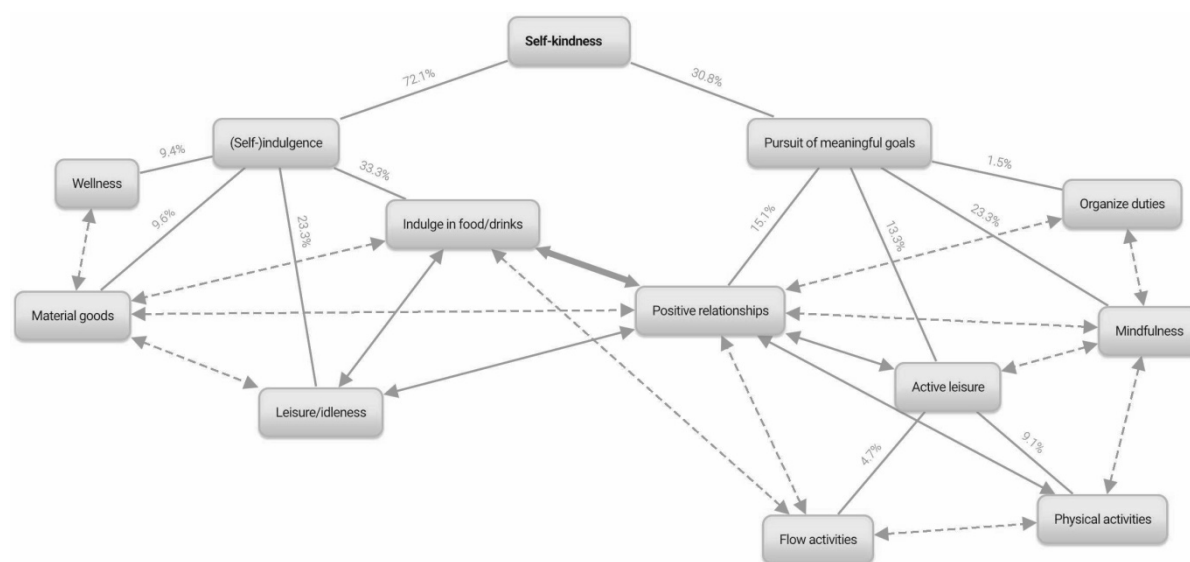


Figure 1. Code structure and relationships between the codes

Self-indulgence

The main category '*Self-indulgence*' summarises types of self-kindness behaviours which are aimed at increasing pleasure, require little effort to initiate and result in immediate reward. Behaviours, which hence can be identified as hedonic actions. In total 939 (72.1%) of all actions mentioned were self-indulgent in nature, while four different types of self-indulgent behaviour were identified.

One third (144 times, 33.3%) of all activities reported by the participants involved:

Indulging in food/drinks. The code was assigned to all kinds of behaviours, that include either the consumption, purchase or preparation of (special) foods and drinks in order to treat oneself. Examples of this code are little treats throughout the day, e.g. 'Enjoyed an extra treat: a brownie with my coffee' (ID 2), a special drink, for example '[...] a glass of wine' (ID 46), [...] eating out (ID 146) or enjoying one's '[...] favourite meal' (ID 318).

304 (23.3%) of all behaviours were classified as: **Idleness.** Under this category fall all kinds of behaviours that are passive and/or consuming in nature. Characteristic for these actions is, that they require little or no effort to initiate and pursue. Examples of this code are

idleness ‘Spend some time on my own this afternoon, simply doing nothing on the couch’ (ID 97), sleep (‘Took a nap’, ID 46) and also all kinds of media consumption, like ‘[...] reading’ (ID 62), ‘listening to music’ (ID 9), watching TV-series (‘Watched a nice series’, ID 115), surfing the internet or ‘Gaming [...]’ (ID 155). The category furthermore includes activities like visiting the cinema (‘Visited the cinema, ID 91), concerts etc., since the performer of these actions still remains passive and consuming in these settings.

Behaviours that involve purchasing of material goods and/or luxury articles in order to treat oneself and make oneself a gift, have been assigned the code: **Material goods**. This code was mentioned 125 (9.6%) times. Examples of this code are ‘Bought a book and had it wrapped up as a gift for myself’ (ID 170) or ‘Bought luxury eyeliner at the airport’ (ID 116).

Wellness. Wellness activities were named 123 (9.4%) times. This category includes visits to the ‘Sauna’ (ID 46) or spa, getting a massage or haircut, as well as a ‘Long shower’ (ID 277) at home or the use of ‘Luxury body lotion’ (ID 96) or other (luxury) cosmetic products in order to feel well.

Pursuit of meaningful goals

While the first main category *Self-indulgence* summarises self-indulgent behaviours that are characterised by a search for pleasure, the second main category *Pursuit of meaningful goals* includes meaningful actions that promote personal growth or positive relationships. These types of actions in contrast might not seem pleasurable per se at first glance, since they often rely on active effort to initiate and pursue. The content analysis revealed four categories that describe behaviours linked to the *Pursuit of meaningful goals*.

Frequently mentioned by the participants was: **Mindfulness**. This code was assigned 304 (23.3%) times. In this way *Mindfulness* presents the second largest category, along with

Idleness. Mindfulness involves consciously attending to the present moment, gratitude, reflecting on one's situation, strengths and weaknesses and acting accordingly by caring for one-self, respecting and appreciating oneself, e.g. 'Consciously made time in the morning for some yoga, meditation and enjoyed the shower' (ID 2), 'Smiled at myself in the mirror' (ID 170); 'Reflected on what I have contributed today' (ID 30) or 'Wrote down, what I am grateful for', ID 284.

Furthermore, even though participants were encouraged to perform acts of self-kindness, this often (197, 15.1%) involved cherishing **Positive relationships**. This category comprises behaviours like relying on, building and strengthening meaningful relationships with others. Examples for such behaviours are inviting ('Invited a friend', ID 154), calling, visiting or texting others, as well as seeking help, advice or comfort from others (e.g. 'Asked someone for a lift (I can't drive at the moment)', ID 93; 'Had a hug from my husband', (ID 314)).

In contrast to *Idleness*, participants also mentioned: **Active Leisure**. This code was assigned 173 (13.3%) times. *Active leisure* was further divided into two sub-categories (i.e. **Physical activity**, which was mentioned 119 (9.1%) times and **Flow activities**, which were mentioned 61 (4.7%) times). *Physical activity* consisted of activities such as 'Exercising' (ID 46), 'Going for a walk in the forest' (ID 304) or 'Taking a stroll through the city [...]', (ID 326), including intensive and moderate forms of physical activity. *Flow activities* include all active leisure activities and hobbies (other than sports), that are meaningful to the individual and require some effort/challenge in their performance and initiation, in contrast to the code leisure/idleness. Examples of such behaviours are creating art, e.g. 'Spend an afternoon drawing and painting' (ID 120), playing or writing music, cooking/baking, as well as outdoor

activities like gardening, playing with pets etc. ('Did some yard work, being outside', ID 127; 'Quality time with dog', ID 166).

The last category is: **Organize duties**. This code was assigned the least often with 20 (1.5%) times. *Organize duties* included all activities that are about the performance, organisation and/or 'Delegation of a task' (ID 108) in order. Other examples of productive actions are work or study related duties, chores, 'Decluttering [...]' (ID 191).

Additional Impressions

In general the complexity and individuality of the behaviours differed notably between those activities that fell under the category *Self-indulgence* versus those that fell under the category *Pursuit of meaningful goals*. The activities that fell under *Self-indulgence* were largely relatively simple and common activities which were mentioned by many participants (e.g. 'having a special coffee [...]', (ID 53), 'having a sweet [...]', (ID 314) or '[...] buying something', (ID 2)). Those activities usually were easy to perform and required little own initiative, while the activities that fell under the category *Pursuit of meaningful goals* required effort and were much more individualistic, more complex and often also more active and time-consuming (e.g. '[...] painting', (ID 147), 'gardening [...]', (ID 127) or 'training [a] dog (ID 166)), when compared with activities from the category *Self-indulgence* (eg. '[...] painting', (ID 147) vs. 'having a special coffee [...]', (ID 53)).

Furthermore, it seemed that activities from the category *Self-indulgence* were often activities that usually are associated with guilt. Participants remarkably often added that they performed activity 'X' without feeling guilty (e.g. 'Read for half an hour [...], without feeling guilty', ID 174) or that they usually would not do this (e.g. 'Had doner kebab. (I usually never do this)', ID 102). Indulgence at times seems to involve performing activities, one usually feels guilty about performing, but for once choosing to ignore the guilty feeling.

Effects on Well-being

The Wilcoxon-Signed-Ranks-Test demonstrated that participants level of well-being significantly increased between baseline ($M = 2.84$, $SD = .68$) and post-test ($M = 3.06$, $SD = .80$), $t(1146) = 14.21$, $p < .001$. In addition, the correlational analysis yielded a significant positive relationship between *Flow activities* and the change score for well-being ($r_s = .08$, $p = .007$, see Table 2), indicating that the purposeful performance of activities that are intrinsically rewarding and meaningful to the individual is associated with increases in well-being. A marginal positive correlation was found for the relation between increased well-being and *Active leisure* ($r_s = .05$, $p = .084$). No significant correlations were found between *Self-indulgence* ($r_s = -.03$, $p = .256$), *Pursuit of meaningful goals* ($r_s = .02$, $p = .477$), *Indulging with foods/drinks* ($r_s = -.05$, $p = .109$), *Idleness* ($r_s = .05$, $p = .118$), *Material Goods* ($r_s = -.05$, $p = .117$), *Wellness* ($r_s = .01$, $p = .868$), *Mindfulness* ($r_s = -.05$, $p = .107$), *Positive relationships* ($r_s = .02$, $p = .524$), *Physical activity* ($r_s = -.00$, $p = .956$) or *Organize duties* ($r_s = .02$, $p = .593$) and well-being (Table 2).

Discussion

The aim of the current study was to identify different types of self-kindness behaviour from qualitative diary data, investigate whether self-kindness bears the potential to increase well-being and if so, to explore whether certain types of self-kindness activities prove to be more effective in increasing mental well-being than others.

Main Findings

Different types of self-kindness. The present study identified and differentiated thirteen different categories of self-kindness behaviours. The actions that were performed by the participants, included behaviours ranging from simply indulging and initiating hedonic pleasures, towards more effortful activities that help maintaining and building social relationships and/or the pursuit of meaningful, strengthening eudaimonic well-being. Hence, the outcomes revealed two overarching categories of self-kindness that comprised the remaining eleven types of self-kindness.

The overall tendency was that people tend to perform hedonistic behaviours more often, trying to increase well-being through immediate and momentary pleasures. Nevertheless, 20% of the activities that were reported by the participants were eudaimonic in

Table 2 Correlation matrix of change scores in well-being and self-kindness categories

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Well-being	1												
2. Self-indulgence	-.03	1											
3. Indulge in food/drinks	-.05	.44**	1										
4. Idleness	.05	.36**	-.32**	1									
5. Material goods	-.05	.20**	-.22**	-.17**	1								
6. Wellness	.01	.18**	-.22**	-.18**	-.10**	1							
7. Pursuit of meaningful goals	.02	-.80**	-.25	-.31**	-.21**	-.19**	1						
8. Mindfulness	-.05	.39**	-.17**	-.13**	-.08**	-.08**	.35**	1					
9. Positive relationships	.02	-.26**	.01**	-.14**	-.11**	-.09**	.62**	-.08**	1				
10. Active leisure	.05 ⁺	.44**	-.24**	-.22**	-.13**	-.13**	.25**	-.05 ⁺	-.01	1			
11. <i>Physical activity</i>	-.00	-.50**	-.20**	-.18**	-.10**	-.10**	.48**	-.03	-.01	.80**	1		
12. <i>Flow activities</i>	.08**	-.33**	-.13**	-.12**	-.07**	-.07**	.32**	-.05 ⁺	-.60**	.01	.01	1	
13. Organize duties	.02	-.19**	-.09**	-.05 ⁺	-.04	-.04	.18**	-.00	-.05 ⁺	-.05 ⁺	-.04	-.03	1

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, ⁺ $p < 0.10$

nature. This finding is remarkable, since in the first place the instructions rather encouraged simple and hedonistic actions, while additionally previous research by Parker Schiffer and Roberts (2018) found that people usually tend to perform simple, passive and hedonistic actions over more complex and active eudaimonic ones. People seem to perceive simple ‘passive activities as being significantly more enjoyable, requiring less effort, and being less daunting to get started [when comparing them to more meaningful active leisure activities]’ and - when given the choice – most would opt for the performance of simple and passive acts, even though these activities are found to be less effective in increasing well-being (Parker Schiffer & Roberts, 2018).

A possible explanation why participants in the present study also performed more complex, effort-requiring actions might be, that while the study by Parker Schiffer and Roberts (2018) simply assessed which activities participants would perform in a typical week, the present study instructed participants to consciously perform actions that do them good once per week (i.e. acts of self-kindness). Indeed, participants in the study by Parker Schiffer and Roberts (2018), did report being aware of the fact, that the performance of active and complex activities would do them good, however typically they would perceive these activities as being more exhausting and less enjoyable and therefore still opt for simpler activities. It may be that the explicit instruction to perform five acts of self-kindness, made participants choose their activities with more consideration and/or increased the motivation of the participants to undergo some effort, which caused the participants in the present study to not only perform hedonic actions, but also eudaimonic actions.

A balanced performance of both, hedonic and eudaimonic acts in turn, might benefit well-being. The words of Neff (2011) regarding self-compassion illustrate the downside of extensively focusing on immediate pleasure quite well: ‘focusing exclusively on pleasure for

oneself might lead to self-indulgence [...] in many instances, giving the self pleasure actually harms well-being [...] while promoting one's health often involves a certain amount of displeasure [...] (Neff, 2011, p.). Thus, even though pleasure and feeling well are part of mental well-being and can to some extent promote well-being (Fredrickson, 2000; Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002; Keyes, 2007), it is important to balance these kind of activities with activities that support the pursuit of meaning and optimal functioning (i.e. psychological well-being) and that foster positive relationships (i.e. social well-being). Respectively, it seems that it is especially this balance that is crucial. Following Keyes and Annas (2009) only people who experience high levels of both hedonic and eudaimonic well-being in a balanced way are can experiences high overall well-being (Keyes & Annas, 2009). Balancing hedonic and eudaimonic acts may keep one from over-indulging (Neff, 2011; Nelson et al., 2016). The results of the present study imply that extensive self-indulgence in turn, might lead towards feelings of guilt, which may eventually overarch the pleasure one gains from it. Indeed Veenhoven (2003) implies, that the absence of feelings of guilt is crucial for hedonic actions to not back-fire.

Self-kindness and well-being. In general, participants reported a significant higher level of well-being after the 6-week self-kindness intervention then at baseline. This finding is essentially in line with existing research. Even though, for example Dunn et al. (2008) and Nelson et al. (2016) prominently hypothesised self-kindness to be ineffective or at least less effective than prosocial behaviour, other studies that address the topic (e.g. O'Connell, O'Shea & Gallagher, 2016; Rowland & Curry, 2019) or that address related concepts (i.e. research on self-compassion (Neff, 2003; Neff et al., 2007) indicate, that there may be the possibility that self-kindness can indeed work to increase well-being. The present study confirms this view.

So why is it, that Dunn et al. (2008) and Nelson et al. (2016) found the opposite? Looking more closely at their studies, there are some differences in how self-kindness was operationalized. Dunn et al. (2008) did operationalize self- and other-kindness as spending money for oneself vs. for others. Considering the outcomes of the present study, it becomes clear, that spending money on oneself, is only one way of being kind-towards oneself (and the study of Dunn et al. (2008) might prove it to be not an effective one), but this finding may be not generalizable. Nelson et al. (2016) in contrast, did include a larger variety of self-kindness behaviours. Still they specifically ‘sought to hold constant the types of behaviours people performed (e.g. buying a cup of coffee), while altering only the target of those actions’ (Nelson et al., 2016, p.851). Self-kindness was hence operationalized merely as the exact opposite to specific prosocial actions that Dunn et al. (2008) and Nelson et al. (2016) studied and as such, their operationalizations of self-kindness may have failed to capture self-kindness in all its’ different facets. The present research or the RCT by Nelson-Coffey et al. (in progress), allowed for the participants to think of their own actions, capturing more facets of self-kindness, which might be the reason for the opposing results.

Flow activities. The results of the present study imply, that in general self-kindness may be related to increased well-being. However, considering each category on its own, only for flow activities (i.e. activities that are intrinsically rewarding and meaningful to the individual) it can be concluded with certainty, that this type of self-kindness behaviour significantly relates to higher well-being.

The finding of flow activities relating to higher well-being is in line with the large body of research on the concept of flow. Flow activities are intrinsically rewarding activities that foster personal growth and are essential for psychological well-being (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Research shows that actively pursuing meaning-

ful goals and actively initiating and performing actions is a prerequisite for well-being (Ryff, 1989; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Schiffer Parker & Roberts, 2016). The experience of mastery experiences, which arise from completing an important or difficult task (i.e. flow activities) has been found to positively affect the mood (i.e. increase emotional/hedonic well-being) (Yeung, 1996). Furthermore, since flow activities are activities, more complex, active activities that are meaningful to the individual, they do also promote psychological well-being/eudaimonic. Hence what was defined as '*Flow activities*' in the present research, seemingly succeeds to target both hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, which might be the reason why '*Flow activities*' did have a significant effect on well-being.

For the remaining categories no particular conclusions can be drawn, as the correlations did not reach statistical significance. However, since many of the correlations at times were close to being marginally significant (i.e. $< .100$), it may be that significant relationships were to be found when using a larger sample size. Even though previous literature for example indicates that positive relationships, mindfulness or physical activity relate to higher well-being (e.g. Yeung, 1996; Chiesa & Serretti, 2009; Schueller & Parks, 2014), the present study did not find such effects. Concerning the relationship of different types of self-kindness and well-being, further research therefore is indicated.

Strengths and limitations

The current study is one of the first to focus exclusively on the topic of self-kindness. The major strength of this research is the combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The participants were moreover completely free to choose any activity they would think of, ensuring that the natural variance in self-kindness behaviours is captured by the current research and by this presents a best possible reflection of the concept of self-kindness. Via the

inductive approach of the qualitative analysis, it was ensured that the concept was captured as least biased as possible. Lastly, the sample was drawn nationwide and sample size was considerably high for a qualitative study (Robinson, 2014) including a large amount of data, which should have ensured as much variety as possible and led to better representativeness.

However, one large limitation of the current study is the absence of a second coder for the final code scheme. This might have led to subjectivity bias within the coding process and biased results. However, up until the last coding process, a second coder was involved in order to establish inter-rater agreement, and in general the coding process carefully followed the qualitative, inductive research methodology. Still, the possibility of biased results cannot be ruled out and results must be interpreted with some caution. Another limitation concerns the representativeness of the sample, participants were predominantly female, higher educated and in paid-employment. It can, therefore, not be concluded that the results apply to the general public. Furthermore adherence in the intervention was far from perfect. Not one of the participant reported a number of 30 acts of self-kindness, the average number of actions performed being 12. Concerning the setup of the research, there may have been some additional minor flaws. Firstly, as participants were only instructed to report what they did, this research mostly captured overt behaviour and not the intention behind it. Considering the argumentation of Nelson et al. (2016) that self-kindness may be more than a specific action, but rather present an attitude, this research might miss out on an important aspect regarding self-kindness. Lastly, the instruction e-mail contained predominantly examples of behaviours of the self-indulgence type and encouraged participants to perform especially small and simple activities, which might have led participants to perform or report these types of actions more often and therefore might have slightly biased the results.

Directions for future research

In general, the present research should be understood as an invitation to fellow researchers to pay more attention towards the concept of self-kindness and its potential to increase mental well-being. The creation of self-kindness interventions should receive more consideration in the context of mental health promotion. More specifically, research in the form of experimental designs will be needed in order to assess the efficiency of single types of self-kindness behaviours with regard towards their potential to increase well-being.

However, the present study indicates that it may be necessary to design self-kindness interventions in a way, that different types of self-kindness activities are being performed in a balanced way, equally addressing the different facets of well-being. Well-being being as multi-faceted as it is, might require the performance of several types of actions, for one type of activity might not be able to prove itself more effective than the other. Research on the interaction of different types of self-kindness activities should therefore be conducted. This might be done, by pairing activities (e.g. in a way that they complement each other, regarding the facet of well-being that they target) and compare different combinations with regard to their effectiveness in increasing well-being in experimental designs and in a following step, balancing future intervention based onto that knowledge. Another possible way of ensuring balance between the different activities, is to collect numerous examples of activities, cluster them based onto the facet of well-being they address the most and following that, to design self-kindness interventions in such a way, that participants get to choose freely from these activities, but under the premise that they must choose one activity from each cluster. A final possibility, may be to begin an intervention with training (e.g. a short online training) involving an introduction on well-being, wherein participants receive knowledge of the import-

ance of addressing different facets of well-being through different types of self-kindness activities and knowledge which types of activities can address which facet of well-being.

To exclude the possibility of biased results due to flaws in the present research design and process, attention should be paid to several aspects. Firstly to exclude that the qualitative analysis contained a subjectivity bias, a replication should be conducted, with at least a second coder, in order to assess inter-rater reliability. Moreover, replication studies with different samples may be a valuable addition to see if the effectiveness of self-kindness and the found types of self-kindness, may be generalised to a more representative sample. For example by using stratified sampling (Robinson, 2014 in order to address underrepresented population groups within this research (such as men or lower-educated) directly. Also adherence must be strengthened, for example, by tailoring interventions more to personal needs or include more interactive features (Bolier et al., 2013).

Conclusion

All in all, the present study illustrates the potential that self-kindness presumably bears the potential to promote mental well-being. However more research should follow and it remains to be seen how self-kindness can be integrated in mental health interventions in order to be the most effective and whether certain types of self-kindness prove more (like '*Flow activities*') or less effective than others increasing well-being.

Generally, it seems that especially addressing all three facets of well-being by effectively balancing simple, low-effort, hedonic activities with more complex, meaningful, eudaimonic ones, might be the most effective way to benefit from self-kindness activities. Hence, there is most likely not only one way of successfully practising self-kindness. At times it will be enjoying a piece of cake along with a coffee that contributes to well-being as much as en-

gaging in a meaningful and challenging task - it is the balance of these activities that matters the most and that will make a difference.

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Appendix A – ‘Geluksdagboekje’

Hoe vaak heb je jezelf getrakteerd gisteren?

Indien je vergeeten was dit dagboek de dag na je activiteiten in te vullen, dan gaan de vragen over de dag waarop jij de oefening hebt uitgevoerd in de afgelopen week.

- ☐ 5 keer
- ☐ 4 keer
- ☐ 3 keer
- ☐ 2 keer
- ☐ 1 keer
- ☐ Ik heb de afgelopen week mezelf niet getrakteerd.

Geef per activiteit aan wat je hebt gedaan om jezelf te trakteren. Bijvoorbeeld: “Een luxe koffie gedronken”.

- ☐ Activiteit 1
- ☐ Activiteit 2
- ☐ Activiteit 3
- ☐ Activiteit 4
- ☐ Activiteit 5

Hieronder volgen drie stellingen. Geef voor elke stelling aan wat op jou van toepassing is. Je doet dit door het balkje te verschuiven.

a. Hoeveel moeite heb je gedaan om de oefening "jezelf trakteren" uit te voeren in de afgelopen week?

- **1 = helemaal geen moeite** **9 = heel erg veel moeite**
- 1 ----- 9

b. Hoe erg deed jij je best om de oefening "jezelf trakteren" uit te voeren in de afgelopen week?

- **1 = ik deed helemaal niet mijn best** **9 = ik deed ontzettend erg mijn best**
- 1 ----- 9

c. Hoeveel extra tijd kostte het jou om de oefening "jezelf trakteren" uit te voeren in de afgelopen week?

- **1 = helemaal geen extra tijd** **9 = heel erg veel extra tijd**
- 1 ----- 9

Appendix B – Instructions for participants

Beste {FirstName},

Hartstikke leuk dat je mee doet aan ons onderzoek naar de effectiviteit van geluksoefeningen! Ken je iemand die ook aan dit onderzoek mee doet? We verzoeken je geen informatie uit te wisselen met hen over de instructies die jij hebt gekregen omdat dit de resultaten ernstig kan beïnvloeden. En dat zou natuurlijk jammer zijn. Vanaf kerst mag je ervaringen met elkaar uitwisselen.

INSTRUCTIES

De komende zes weken ontvang je elke week onderstaande geluksoefening. De oefening bestaat steeds uit twee delen: Op één dag in de week de geluksoefening ‘**jezelf trakteren**’ uitvoeren (zie hieronder, punt 1) en de volgende dag deze activiteiten opschrijven in een **online geluksdagboekje** (zie hieronder, punt 2).

Geluksoefening: Jezelf trakteren

In ons dagelijkse leven doen we allemaal wel eens iets aardigs voor een ander, maar we vergeten vaak onszelf. Daar gaan we met deze oefening verandering in brengen. Het gaat bij het ‘jezelf trakteren’ vooral om kleine, simpele dingen die relatief weinig extra geld of inspanning kosten. Voorbeelden zijn: jezelf trakteren op een luxe koffie, lekker gebakje, je favoriete tijdschrift of je lievelingsmaaltijd, een extra lekkere douchegel gebruiken, 5 minuten extra pauze nemen van je werk of studie, jezelf een compliment geven, een wandeling maken. Af en toe mag je jezelf ook op iets groters trakteren, zoals een massage of meer tijd besteden aan je eigen hobby. **Het gaat dus om activiteiten die je helemaal voor jezelf doet.**

1. Het is de bedoeling dat je op **één doordeweekse dag** van de komende week jezelf **vijf keer** trakteert. Dus alle vijf activiteiten op één dag. De activiteiten mogen hetzelfde zijn als de voorbeelden die we hierboven noemden, maar je mag ook andere activiteiten bedenken of meer stil staan bij de dingen die je al voor jezelf doet. We willen je vragen om deze oefening uiterlijk **a.s. vrijdag** uit te voeren. *Voer alsjeblieft geen activiteiten uit die jezelf of anderen in gevaar kunnen brengen.*

2. **De dag nadat** je de oefening ‘jezelf trakteren’ hebt uitgevoerd, is het de bedoeling dat je via onderstaande link in je geluksdagboekje opschrijft welke activiteiten je de vorige dag hebt gedaan. Dus als je dinsdag de oefening hebt uitgevoerd, dan vul je op woensdag het dagboekje in. We willen je vragen om het dagboekje **op zaterdag in te vullen**, omdat je zondag weer instructies ontvangt voor de oefening van volgende week.

Wil je zaterdag XX.XX via onderstaande link het geluksdagboekje invullen?

Jouw wekelijkse ervaringen met de oefening zijn voor ons zeer waardevol! Alvast hartelijk dank!

{Link: Online geluksdagboekje week X}

Heel veel plezier met de geluksoefening van deze week!

Met vriendelijke groet,
dr. Marijke Schotanus-Dijkstra
Onderzoeker Universiteit Twente

Appendix C – Draft code scheme*Draft code scheme with code, frequencies, definition and example*

Code	Frequency	Definition	Code	Example
Treat yourself	584 (44.8%)	to allow oneself a little luxury or a little extra		
- food/ drink	341 (26.1%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have special/favourite food/drink, - have a second (or more) drink/helping of food - eating out - order a take away 	<p>ID 1022: 'Genoten van extra tractatie: brownie bij de thee'</p> <p>ID 1027: 'Heerlijke yoghurt van de yoghurt barn met cookie dough. Ben daar rustig voor gaan zitten om van te genieten'</p> <p>ID 1041: 'Na het zware werk van deze dag lekker uit eten geweest'</p> <p>ID 1465: 'Mijn lievelingsmaaltijd gegeten (lasagne)'</p>	
- shopping/ gift to self	127 (9.7%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - make yourself a gift (flowers, book etc.) - buy something you wanted to have (e.g. book, clothing etc.) 	<p>ID 1135: 'Tijdschrift Happinez gekocht'</p> <p>ID 1169: 'Nieuwe jas gekocht die ik niet nodig had maar wel leuk vond'</p> <p>ID 1240: 'boek gekocht en laten pakken als cadeau voor mezelf'</p>	
- wellness	116 (8.9%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - visit spa/sauna, beauty salon - have a haircut, facial treatment, massage, special shampoo etc. 	<p>ID 1059: 'me laten masseren'</p> <p>ID 1100: 's Morgens mijn lichaam scrubben onder de douche Vervolgens een lekkere douchegel gebruikt'</p> <p>ID 1101: 'Naar de kapper haar kleuren i.p.v. Zelf doen'</p>	
social support/socialising	147 (11.3 %)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - accessing ones' social network for support/help, company, advice , comfort - activities with others that aim to improve/maintain social relations (activities, lunch/dinner/coffee, dates/appointments etc., with others) 	<p>ID 1030: 'Mijn verhaal van de dag gedeeld met een vriendin'</p> <p>ID 1062: 'gelunched met mijn zus'</p> <p>ID 1080: 'Glas wijn met vriendin'</p> <p>ID 1122: 'Vrienden afgesproken'</p> <p>ID 1137: 'iemand gevraagd om een lift (ik mag op dit moment geen auto rijden)'</p>	

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me-time/ time-out	164 (12.6%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - taking a time-out from everything and every one/time-alone - pausing every-day life - take the time to do things slowly, start the day slowly - going on holiday - relaxing/chilling out - nap 	<p>ID 1101: 'Extra pauze'</p> <p>ID 1122: 'Ochtend alleen'</p> <p>ID 1142: 'middag niksen op de bank, alleen'</p> <p>ID 1168: 'Rustig ontbeten met krant'</p> <p>ID 1169: 'Heel spontaan een weekendreisje naar Barcelona geboekt'</p> <p>ID 1305: 'Heerlijk uitgeslapen. Mm mm zonder wekker'</p> <p>ID 1479: 'Een dutje in de middag'</p>
hobby/pleasant activities	150 (11.5%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - spending (extra) time on ones hobbies (painting, crafting, photographing...) - other pleasant activities (netflixen, listening to music, playing (board) games ...) 	<p>ID 1091: 'De hele avond heerlijk zitten mazen voor de trui van mijn kleinzoon'</p> <p>ID 1101: 'Museumbezoek'</p> <p>ID 1175: 'middagje getekend en geschilderd'</p> <p>ID 1182: 'naar mooie muziek thuis geluisterd en meegezongen'</p> <p>ID 1222: 'bordspel'</p> <p>ID 1282: 'boek gelezen'</p>
health	125 (9.6%)	nurturing ones own body/health	
- moderate exercise	60 (4.6%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - low intensity exercise: going for a walk, cycling (slowly), stretching 	<p>ID 1142: 'Op de fiets naar het werk'</p> <p>ID 1174: 'via een omweg naar de bakker gefietst'</p>
- exercise	33 (2.5%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - higher intensity exercising: running, cycling, swimming, gymnastics, dancing, etc. 	<p>ID 1027: 'hardlopen'</p> <p>ID 1080: 'Sport'</p> <p>ID 1142: 'Getraind met personal trainer en afgesloten met een potje boksen'</p> <p>ID 1190: 'zwemmen'</p> <p>ID 1479: 'Wielrenfietsen'</p>
- healthy diet	26 (2.0%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - healthy diet (fruit, vegetables, organic food..) - fresh and self cooking 	<p>ID 1059: 'meer aandacht besteed aan lunch, rauwkost salade erbij'</p> <p>ID 1089: 'Kokoswater na de workout'</p> <p>ID 1089: 'Biologisch uit eten'</p> <p>ID 1094: 'vers gekookt!!!'</p>

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mindfulness/savouring	47 (3.6%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - meditation - mindfulness exercises - living in the present moment - yoga - generate, prolong and intensify enjoyment through consciousness and deliberation 	<p>ID 1022: 'echt bewust tijd gemaakt 's morgens voor yoga, meditatie en genoten van de douche'</p> <p>ID 1034: 'Uurtje yoga gedaan'</p> <p>ID 1137: 'Korte buitenwandeling, even op een bankje zitten om te genieten prachtige herfstbomen'</p> <p>ID 1245: 'tijdens het fietsen me één gevoelt met de prachtige lucht en schitterde wolken in de zon'</p> <p>ID 1282: 'Rustig naar werk gefietst en genoten van de geuren en om me heen gekeken naar de mooie gebouwen'</p>
self-acceptance/compassion	19 (1.5%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - compassionate attitude towards oneself - self-care - comforting, accepting and forgiving oneself - accepting own flaws - cheering oneself up - complementing oneself - self-appreciation 	<p>ID 1057: 'Bewust teruggekeken op wat ik vandaag allemaal heb bijgedragen'</p> <p>ID 1190: 'nagedacht wat ik moest doen om me na 22.00 uur s'avonds minder eenzaam te voelen. Niets bedacht! Maar was leuk om te doen'</p> <p>ID 1251: 'Mezelf een compliment gegeven'</p>
saying no/delegating	23 (1.8%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - delegating tasks/chores - saying no to things one does not want (to do) 	<p>ID 1022: 'aan mijn man gevraagd of hij naar een ouderavond kon gaan zodat ik mijn yogales kon volgen'</p> <p>ID 1156: 'Taak gedelegeerd'</p> <p>ID 1156: 'Ondanks verzoek van dochter niet meegedaan aan een spelletje'</p>
productivity	15 (1.1%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ticking off ones' to do-list - stop procrastination - getting things done 	<p>ID 1062: 'In de zon het tuinbankje geverfd'</p> <p>ID 1235: 'tijd om te studeren'</p> <p>ID 1287: 'Ontspult = oude rommel uitgezocht en klaargezet voor het goed'</p>
try something new	14 (1.1%)	<p>leaving the comfort-zone by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - trying new challenges/things/activities - visiting new places - meeting new people 	<p>ID 1089: 'Op verzoek yin yoga cooling down'</p> <p>ID 1100: 'Eerste keer naar zumbales'</p> <p>ID 1100: 'Wandeling op onbekend terrein'</p>