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# Further Examining the American Dream: Differential Correlates of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Goals

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*Empirical research and organismic theories suggest that lower well-being is associated with having extrinsic goals focused on rewards or praise relatively central to one's personality in comparison to intrinsic goals congruent with inherent growth tendencies. In a sample of adult subjects (Study 1), the relative importance and efficacy of extrinsic aspirations for financial success, an appealing appearance, and social recognition were associated with lower vitality and self-actualization and more physical symptoms. Conversely, the relative importance and efficacy of intrinsic aspirations for self-acceptance, affiliation, community feeling, and physical health were associated with higher well-being and less distress. Study 2 replicated these findings in a college sample and extended them to measures of narcissism and daily affect. Three reasons are discussed as to why extrinsic aspirations relate negatively to well-being, and future research directions are suggested.*

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Recently, we argued that aspirations for wealth and material goods, prominent elements of the American Dream, are potentially detrimental to well-being (Kasser & Ryan, 1993). In three samples of late adolescents, we compared the importance and likelihood of attaining aspirations for financial success relative to aspirations for self-acceptance, affiliation, and community feeling. Results supported the hypothesis that the relative centrality (Rokeach, 1973) of financial success goals is associated with lower self-report and interviewer ratings of well-being and functioning. Although the negative relationships between well-being and materialistic values are intriguing phenomena in their own right, the findings raise a larger question: Is the content of goals and values differentially associated with the well-being of the individuals who hold them?

In this article, we distinguish two broad classes of goals on the basis of their content. *Extrinsic* goals, such as

financial success, are those that depend on the contingent reactions of others. Further, they are typically engaged in as means to some other end. Conversely, *intrinsic* goals, such as self-acceptance, are expressive of desires congruent with actualizing and growth tendencies natural to humans. As such, intrinsic goals are likely to satisfy basic and inherent psychological needs.

The present analysis classified the following three general goals as extrinsic, in that they primarily entail obtaining contingent external approval and rewards: financial success (money), social recognition (fame), and an appealing appearance (image). These goals exemplify some of the most salient aspects of popular American culture, in which fame, money, and good looks are often portrayed as signs of one's ultimate success (Ryan, 1993). However, these three goals require some other person to judge whether one is worthy of praise and reward. In addition, these extrinsic goals do not provide satisfaction in and of themselves; instead, their allure usually lies in the presumed admiration that attends them or in the power and sense of worth that can be derived from attaining them.

Four other goals were selected for their largely intrinsic character: affiliation (relatedness), community feel-

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TABLE 1: Labels and Descriptions of the Seven Aspiration/Guiding-Principle Domains Used in Studies 1 and 2

Label	Description
Self-acceptance (growth)	Achieve psychological growth, autonomy, and self-regard
Affiliation (relatedness)	Have satisfying relationships with family and friends
Community feeling (helpfulness)	Improve the world through activism or generativity
Physical fitness (health)	Feel healthy and free of illness
Financial success (money)	Be wealthy and materially successful
Social recognition (fame)	Be famous, well-known, and admired
Appealing appearance (image)	Look attractive in terms of body, clothing, and fashion

ing (helpfulness), physical fitness (health), and self-acceptance (growth). These four goals are congruent with the movement toward self-actualization (Fromm, 1947; Rogers, 1963) or integration (Deci & Ryan, 1985b; Ryan, Sheldon, Kasser, & Deci, in press) and thus should be conducive to mental health. Such goals are called intrinsic in the sense of being inherently valuable or satisfying to the individual, rather than being dependent on the contingent evaluations of others. All seven goal domains are presented in Table 1.<sup>1</sup>

Organismic theories of personality would agree with the basic hypothesis that an overemphasis on extrinsic goals is associated with lower well-being. For example, both Maslow (1954, 1956) and Rogers (1961, 1963) suggested that distress occurs when people behave to obtain the approval of others, rather than on the basis of their own inherent needs and wants. Similarly, Fromm (1976) suggested that neuroticism is associated with a "having" orientation characterized by a concentration on status, possession, and appearance. More recently, self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985b, 1991) has empirically demonstrated that a focus on external rewards and approval can undermine intrinsic motivation and leave people feeling less agentic. Further, Deci and Ryan (1985a) showed that people with the trait of *control orientation*, reflecting in part a focus on obtaining rewards or praise from others, have lower self-actualization and more public self-consciousness and hostility.

Both empirical and theoretical sources thus point to the prediction that well-being occurs when people are motivated primarily by intrinsic goals based in growth tendencies, whereas distress accompanies a concentration on extrinsic goals reflecting the contingent approval of others. The present studies examined this supposition with two independent methods of assessing the content of subjects' values and goals. First, subjects completed an extension of the Aspiration Index (Kasser & Ryan, 1993) by rating possible future states in terms of both their personal importance and their likelihood of occurrence. Second, a rank-order measure of *guiding principles* (based on Braithwaite & Law, 1985) also assessed people's values for the seven domains presented in Table 1.

The relative centrality of intrinsic and extrinsic aspirations and guiding principles are explored in relation to indexes of well-being including self-actualization, vitality, depression, anxiety, and physical symptomatology. Because earlier research (Kasser & Ryan, 1993) has been conducted only with young adults, an adult sample was collected for Study 1. Examination of whether effects depend on subjects' age or income will thus be considered. Study 2 expands on assessments of well-being and examines effects of response style on the results.

To restate the basic hypothesis, lower psychological well-being and higher distress are predicted to occur when extrinsic aspirations and guiding principles are relatively central to an individual's personality, in comparison to intrinsic aspirations and guiding principles. Conversely, the centrality of intrinsic aspirations is predicted to be positively related to well-being and negatively related to distress. These hypotheses were tested using both the importance ratings on the Aspiration Index and the guiding-principle methodology.

An additional set of hypotheses derives from individuals' ratings of the likelihood that particular types of aspirations will be achieved. We predicted that having stronger relative efficacy for extrinsic versus intrinsic goals would actually be associated with negative outcomes regarding adjustment and health.

## STUDY 1

### Method

#### SUBJECTS AND PROCEDURES

Subjects were 100 adults (24 male, 76 female) residing in an urban neighborhood of Rochester, New York. Survey packets were distributed to homes following a procedure determined by coin flips. A total of 257 packets were left at homes, and 105 were returned, yielding a response rate of 41%. Five subjects were dropped because of incomplete data or having returned the packet especially late. Subjects ranged in age from 18 to 79 years ( $M = 38$  years,  $SD = 13$  years). Most of the sample was Caucasian (93%); the others were African American (5%) and other ethnicities (2%). The yearly family income was under \$20,000 for 31% of the sample, between

\$20,000 and \$50,000 for 49%, and over \$50,000 for 20%. People who returned packets were sent \$10.

#### MEASURES

*Aspiration Index* (Kasser & Ryan, 1993;  $n = 100$ ). Subjects were presented with 32 possible aspirations that they rated on two 5-point scales representing (a) the importance of the aspiration and (b) the likelihood it will happen in the future. Aspirations represented the seven life domains previously discussed. A total of 14 subscale scores were obtained by computing the mean of relevant items for a specific domain and dimension (e.g., importance of self-acceptance, likelihood of financial success). Alpha coefficients for the importance subscales ranged from .59 to .87; the mean was .76. Alphas for likelihood subscales ranged from .68 to .86; the mean was .76. Overall importance and likelihood scores were also computed by averaging scores across all domains for each dimension.

*Guiding principles* (based in part on Braithwaite & Law, 1985;  $n = 96$ ). Subjects were presented with three sets of values and asked to "rank-order the seven values as to how much each one is a 'guiding principle' in your life, i.e., how important it is to you." After reversing scores, a summary importance score was computed for each domain by averaging across the three rank-orderings. Alphas ranged between .39 and .85; the mean was .67.

*Self-actualization* (Jones & Crandall, 1986;  $n = 99$ ). A total of 15 items assessed aspects of self-actualization on a 9-point scale. Items concern emotional integration, relations with other people, and self-knowledge.

*Vitality* (Ryan & Frederick, 1994;  $n = 100$ ). This 7-item questionnaire assesses on a 9-point scale feelings of physical and mental vitality, aliveness, and vigor.

*Center for Epidemiological Studies—Depression Inventory* (Radloff, 1977;  $n = 100$ ). On this index of depression, subjects rate on a 4-point scale how much in the past week 20 symptoms have occurred.

*Hopkins Symptom Checklist (HSCL)—Anxiety Subscale* (Derogatis, Lipman, Rickels, Uhlenhuth, & Covi, 1974;  $n = 98$ ). Of the 58 items from the HSCL, 6 assessed subjects' nervousness, tension, and somatic signs of anxiety. A 9-point scale was used.

*Physical symptoms* (Pennebaker, 1982;  $n = 99$ ). Subjects reported on a 7-point scale how much in the past 7 days they had been bothered by nine physical symptoms (e.g., headaches, faintness, sore muscles). Scores were summed to obtain a single physical symptom score.

#### Results

To support our a priori classification of values into intrinsic and extrinsic categories, higher order factor

TABLE 2: Loadings From Higher Order Factor Analyses of Aspiration Subscale Scores, Studies 1 and 2

	Importance		Likelihood	
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 1	Factor 2
<b>Study 1</b>				
Self-acceptance	.77	.20	.73	.32
Affiliation	.76	.19	.77	.09
Community feeling	.76	-.21	.80	.01
Physical fitness	.60	.18	.62	.36
Social recognition	.18	.75	.18	.79
Appealing appearance	.10	.76	.12	.78
Financial success	.02	.87	.18	.84
<b>Study 2</b>				
Self-acceptance	.89	.06	.85	.15
Affiliation	.87	.15	.79	.26
Community feeling	.72	-.07	.65	.12
Physical fitness	.79	.28	.71	.35
Social recognition	.03	.83	.09	.88
Appealing appearance	.24	.86	.42	.67
Financial success	.03	.91	.25	.82

analyses were conducted. The seven aspiration subscale scores for each of the two dimensions (i.e., importance and likelihood) were independently submitted to principle components factor analyses with varimax rotation. Analysis of the seven importance scores revealed two factors, as can be seen in Table 2. The first factor included only the intrinsic aspirations, whereas the second factor represented the extrinsic aspirations. Two parallel factors also emerged for the seven likelihood scores. These analyses support the theoretically based distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic goals.

Four summary scores reflecting the average importance and likelihood of intrinsic and extrinsic domains separately were computed by averaging relevant subscale scores. The intrinsic importance and likelihood aspiration scores were correlated  $r = .61$ , and the extrinsic scores were correlated  $r = .69$  ( $ps < .01$ ). The intrinsic and extrinsic importance scores were correlated  $r = .20$  ( $p < .05$ ), and the two likelihood scores were correlated  $r = .41$  ( $p < .01$ ). Similar summary scores were also computed for guiding-principle ratings. The importance of extrinsic aspirations and extrinsic guiding principles was significantly correlated ( $r = .50$ ,  $p < .01$ ), although the analogous intrinsic scores were not ( $r = .15$ ,  $ns$ ).

Next, two sets of regressions (one each for importance and likelihood dimensions) were conducted for each well-being variable in which the summary score for either intrinsic or extrinsic aspirations was entered into the prediction equation after controlling for the overall score for that dimension. For example, self-actualization was regressed onto the overall importance of aspirations at Step 1, and then the semipartial for the importance of intrinsic aspirations was tested at Step 2. This procedure is analogous to that conducted by Kasser and Ryan

(1993), as variance due to having generally high importance or likelihood ratings is controlled before considering the relationship of the content of goals to well-being.

As shown in Table 3, the overall importance score was related to more anxiety. After controlling for this score, results showed that having a high importance on intrinsic aspirations was associated with significantly more self-actualization and vitality and with significantly less depression and physical symptoms. Conversely, the relative importance of extrinsic aspirations was associated with significantly less self-actualization and vitality and with more physical symptoms. Parallel results were obtained for likelihood ratings. High overall efficacy concerning attaining aspirations was associated with significantly more self-actualization and vitality, but results again differed depending on the content of the goals. High likelihoods for intrinsic aspirations were associated with more self-actualization and vitality and with less depression, whereas extrinsic likelihoods had the opposite relationship to these variables.

Table 3 also presents simple correlations between the guiding-principle summary scores and outcome variables. Because this measure forces subjects to rank-order items, scores directly reflect the relative centrality of one's values. The intrinsic guiding-principle score was associated with more self-actualization and fewer physical symptoms. Conversely, extrinsic guiding principles were negatively correlated with self-actualization and positively correlated with physical symptoms.

Last, we examined for effects of gender, age, or income on aspirations and well-being. Although males and females did not differ in their ratings of the intrinsic and extrinsic parts of the aspiration scales, there were three interactions between gender and aspirations in the prediction of well-being. Males who rated the importance of extrinsic aspirations as high had more physical symptoms,  $F(1, 92) = 5.81$ ,  $p < .05$ . Females who rated the likelihood of attaining intrinsic aspirations as low had more anxiety,  $F(1, 91) = 5.33$ ,  $p < .05$ , and depression,  $F(1, 93) = 10.08$ ,  $p < .01$ . Regarding age, older subjects rated both the importance and the likelihood of extrinsic aspirations as significantly lower ( $r$ s of  $-.21$  and  $-.28$ , respectively,  $p$ s  $< .05$ ); however, age did not interact with any of the goal measures in the prediction of well-being. Income was not correlated with any of the goal measures, nor did it interact with them.

### Brief Discussion

Study 1 provided initial support for the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic goals. First, factor analyses revealed that aspiration subscale scores for the seven domains fell on distinct factors for both importance and likelihood ratings. Second, analyses with summary scores for aspirations and guiding principles showed differential relationships with well-being measures. In general,

TABLE 3: Relations of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Goals to Well-Being Variables, Study 1

	Self- Actualization	Vitality	Depression	Anxiety	Physical Symptoms
Aspiration importance <sup>a</sup>					
Step 1					
Overall	-.11	.11	.12	.24**	.18*
Step 2					
Intrinsic	.40***	.46***	-.35**	-.19	-.35**
Extrinsic	-.52***	-.60***	.29	.25	.46**
Aspiration likelihood <sup>a</sup>					
Step 1					
Overall	.29**	.42***	-.19*	-.07	.05
Step 2					
Intrinsic	.59***	.64***	-.45**	-.23	-.37*
Extrinsic	-.57***	-.62***	.44**	.23	.36*
Guiding principles <sup>b</sup>					
Intrinsic	.34***	.09	-.19*	-.17*	-.27***
Extrinsic	-.34***	-.09	.18*	.17	.26***

a. Aspiration scores for a dimension are entered hierarchically, yielding standardized regression coefficients.

b. Guiding-principle results are zero-order correlations.

\* $p < .10$ . \*\* $p < .05$ . \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

the centrality of intrinsic goals was positively associated with well-being and negatively associated with distress, whereas the reverse was true for extrinsic goals. These results were found in a heterogeneous adult sample, supporting the idea that the detrimental effects of extrinsic aspirations are neither limited to late adolescence nor a function of income. Although some effects were modified by gender, this may be due to the relatively low number of males who participated.

Because new goal items were developed in this study, psychometric results are in need of replication. Study 2 also extends beyond the trait measures assessed in Study 1 by examining daily reports of positive and negative affect, as well as physical symptoms, in relation to the centrality of intrinsic versus extrinsic goals. We also examined the hypothesis that extrinsic values in particular should be positively associated with the character style of narcissism (Raskin & Terry, 1988), in which concerns with others' views of one's worth are a significant focus (Miller, 1981). A final goal of Study 2 was to examine whether the differential results might be explained by the general response tendency of social desirability.

### STUDY 2

#### Method

##### SUBJECTS AND PROCEDURES

Subjects were 192 undergraduates enrolled in a psychology course at the University of Rochester; they re-

ceived extra course credit for their participation. Of subjects providing demographic information, 71 were males and 107 were females. Regarding ethnicity, there were 129 Caucasians, 26 Asians, 7 African Americans, 5 Hispanics, and 6 others. Questionnaires for the study were filled out in group administrations on scantron sheets. Volunteers were also solicited for a diary study, and interested subjects were given a diary containing detailed instructions and 1 week's supply of rating sheets. Subjects returned their first-week diary 7 days later and picked up a second packet, which was, in turn, collected 1 week later.<sup>2</sup>

#### MEASURES

*Aspiration Index* (Kasser & Ryan, 1993;  $n = 192$ ). All subjects completed the same 32-item version of this questionnaire, responding to stems on dimensions of both importance and likelihood. Alphas ranged between .72 and .89 for importance ratings; the mean was .82. For likelihood ratings, alphas ranged between .70 and .84; the mean was .79.

*Guiding principles* ( $n = 128$ ). The same three sets of seven values (based on Braithwaite & Law, 1985) were again assessed. Alpha coefficients ranged between .51 and .84; the mean was .69.

*Self-actualization* ( $n = 192$ ). The same 15-item questionnaire (Jones & Crandall, 1986) was given to subjects.

*Vitality* ( $n = 177$ ). The same 7-item questionnaire (Ryan & Frederick, 1994) was used.

*Center for Epidemiological Studies—Depression Inventory* ( $n = 177$ ). The same 20-item depression questionnaire (Radloff, 1977) was used.

*HSCL—Anxiety Subscale* ( $n = 192$ ). The six anxiety items of this questionnaire (Derogatis et al., 1974) were again used, although this time they were presented in the context of the entire 58-item scale.

*Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI)* ( $n = 162$ ). Subjects completed this 40-item questionnaire (Raskin & Terry, 1988) using a true-false format. The NPI measures characteristics of narcissism including vanity, self-aggrandizement, defensiveness, and interpersonal manipulateness.

*Daily checklist* ( $n = 97$ ). Twice daily for 14 days, subjects completed diaries based on Emmons (1991). At both the middle and end of each day, subjects rated the extent to which they were currently experiencing four positive moods (e.g., happy, joyful) and five negative moods (e.g., unhappy, angry) on 7-point scales. Subjects also rated on a 7-point scale how much they had experienced the nine physical symptoms (Pennebaker, 1982) assessed

in Study 1; summary scores were computed by averaging across the 28 observations.

*Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale* ( $n = 192$ ). Subjects completed the 33 true-false items of this often-used measure of socially desirable response sets (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960).

#### Results

The seven aspiration subscale scores for each dimension were again submitted to principle components, higher order factor analyses with varimax rotation. Two factors emerged for both importance and likelihood analyses and corresponded to intrinsic and extrinsic goals. The results, appearing in the bottom half of Table 2, again support the hypothesized intrinsic versus extrinsic classification of goals. Summary intrinsic and extrinsic scores were again computed for both aspiration and guiding-principle measures. In this sample, intrinsic importance and likelihood aspiration scores were correlated  $r = .68$ , and extrinsic scores were correlated  $r = .65$  ( $ps < .01$ ). The intrinsic and extrinsic importance scores were correlated  $r = .23$  ( $p < .01$ ), and the comparable likelihood scores were correlated  $r = .54$  ( $p < .01$ ). The importance of intrinsic aspirations was significantly correlated with intrinsic guiding principles ( $r = .22$ ,  $p < .05$ ), as were the comparable extrinsic scores ( $r = .49$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

Table 4 reports beta coefficients that resulted when each dependent variable was regressed onto the goal variables in the hierarchical manner described in Study 1. The overall importance score was associated with significantly more vitality, narcissism, and negative affect. After controlling for this score, the relative importance of intrinsic aspirations was associated with significantly more self-actualization and vitality and significantly less depression, narcissism, and physical symptoms. In contrast, the relative importance of extrinsic aspirations was associated with less self-actualization and vitality and with more depression, narcissism, and physical symptoms. Once again, parallel results were obtained for likelihood ratings. Having high general efficacy toward goals was associated with more self-actualization, vitality, and narcissism and with less depression. After controlling for this general sense of efficacy, intrinsic likelihoods were related to more self-actualization, vitality, and positive affect and to less depression and physical symptoms. On the other hand, high relative likelihoods for extrinsic aspirations were associated with significantly less self-actualization, vitality, and positive affect and with significantly more depression, anxiety, and narcissism.

Correlations between well-being measures and guiding-principle scores are also reported in Table 4. Intrinsic guiding principles were positively correlated with

TABLE 4: Relations of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Goals to Well-Being, Study 2

	<i>Self-Actualization</i>	<i>Vitality</i>	<i>Depression</i>	<i>Anxiety</i>	<i>Narcissism</i>	<i>Positive Affect</i>	<i>Negative Affect</i>	<i>Physical Symptoms</i>
<b>Aspiration importance<sup>a</sup></b>								
Step 1								
Overall	-.12	.17**	.09	.14*	.30***	-.19*	.25**	-.09
Step 2								
Intrinsic	.59***	.31***	-.27**	-.04	-.31***	.29*	-.05	-.35**
Extrinsic	-.67***	-.34***	.30**	.05	.35***	-.35*	.06	.43**
<b>Aspiration likelihood<sup>a</sup></b>								
Step 1								
Overall	.18**	.50***	-.28***	-.13*	.34***	-.07	.09	-.19*
Step 2								
Intrinsic	.70***	.25**	-.33**	-.22*	-.19	.43**	-.26	-.51***
Extrinsic	-.90***	-.44***	.48***	.34**	.46**	-.70***	.24	.43*
<b>Guiding principles<sup>b</sup></b>								
Intrinsic	.31***	.33***	-.12	-.06	-.20**	.10	-.05	-.20*
Extrinsic	-.27***	-.09	.03	.05	.19**	-.25**	.11	.13

a. Aspiration scores are entered hierarchically, yielding standardized regression coefficients.

b. Guiding-principle results are zero-order correlations.

\* $p < .10$ . \*\* $p < .05$ . \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

self-actualization and vitality and negatively correlated with narcissism. Conversely, extrinsic guiding principles were associated with less self-actualization and positive affect and with more narcissism.

Next, we examined relations of aspirations with social desirability. Subjects who responded in more socially desirable ways also rated intrinsic aspirations as more important ( $r = .19$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and as more likely to be attained ( $r = .27$ ,  $p < .01$ ); there were no significant correlations with extrinsic scores. To examine whether social desirability might account for the differential effects of intrinsic and extrinsic goals, the regressions from Table 4 were reconducted, with the social desirability score entered at Step 1, the overall importance or likelihood score entered at Step 2, and the intrinsic or extrinsic score entered at Step 3. For both importance and likelihood ratings, the general pattern of results remained the same, except that depression and physical symptom results became marginally significant for importance ratings.

Finally, effects of gender on aspirations were examined. In this study, there were several gender differences on scores for intrinsic and extrinsic goals. As can be seen in Table 5, females rated both the importance and the likelihood of intrinsic aspirations higher than did males. On the other hand, males were higher on the importance of extrinsic aspirations and guiding principles. When interactions between gender and aspirations were examined, no significant effects were found, however.

#### GENERAL DISCUSSION

In these two studies, we compared intrinsic and extrinsic goals. Intrinsic goals were conceptualized as those

that tend toward congruence with growth and actualizing tendencies and thus those that provide satisfaction of inherent psychological needs, whereas extrinsic goals are typically means to some other end and are focused on obtaining external rewards or praise from some other person. In support of the distinction, individual domain scores for intrinsic and extrinsic aspirations fell on separate factors for ratings of both their importance and their likelihood of attainment. Further, regression analyses with summary scores showed a general pattern in which the relative centrality of extrinsic goals was negatively related to well-being and positively related to distress, whereas the opposite pattern obtained for intrinsic goals.<sup>3</sup> The pattern of results was similar for both importance and likelihood ratings and for both aspirations and guiding principles. Further, the results were similar across both adult and college samples and were generally not modified by subjects' gender, income, or age, giving credence to their generalizability.

Three different explanations for the insalubrious relations between extrinsic aspirations and well-being can be put forth. The first is that extrinsic aspirations are a marker of a more general type of neuroticism and emotional insecurity. In support of this, Kasser, Ryan, Zax, and Sameroff (1995) found that young adults who especially valued financial success aspirations had parents who were less nurturant (i.e., less democratic and warm, more controlling). Further, young adults from disadvantaged socioeconomic circumstances were especially likely to emphasize the attainment of wealth among their values. Kasser et al. (1995) concluded that financial success aspirations may thus represent a compensation for feelings of insecurity engendered earlier in life, leading

TABLE 5: Gender Differences on Intrinsic and Extrinsic Goals, Study 2

	Males		Females		t
	M	SD	M	SD	
Aspiration importance					
Intrinsic	4.3	0.44	4.6	0.43	-3.86**
Extrinsic	3.4	0.75	3.1	0.71	2.18*
Aspiration likelihood					
Intrinsic	3.9	0.48	4.1	0.50	-3.04**
Extrinsic	3.3	0.65	3.1	0.55	1.38
Guiding principles					
Intrinsic	19.3	2.6	20.1	2.4	-1.62
Extrinsic	9.8	2.7	8.6	2.7	2.27*

NOTE: Degrees of freedom are 176 for aspirations and 112 for guiding principles.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

one to focus on external praise, recognition, and rewards as a way to maintain a sense of worth and gain approval.

The second explanation is that central extrinsic goals lead individuals to engage more frequently in controlled, ego-involving, and driven behaviors (Deci & Ryan, 1985a; Ryan, 1982) and to engage less often in experiences that are self-actualizing. This idea is supported by the fact that intrinsic and extrinsic aspirations in the current study were associated with daily reports of positive affect and physical symptoms. Further, Sheldon and Kasser (1995) found that personal strivings (Emmons, 1989) that help bring about extrinsic possible futures were associated with distracting daily activities such as smoking and watching television, whereas personal strivings linked to intrinsic possible futures were associated with meaningful daily activities such as helping friends or thinking about one's future. These results suggest that people with relatively central extrinsic aspirations may have fewer experiences supportive of the growth tendencies that lead to well-being and integration.

Although the first two explanations focus on how extrinsic aspirations contribute to the development and maintenance of an alienated false self, a third alternative explanation would hold that the relations are due to lower success rates in attaining extrinsic goals. In other words, extrinsic goals may be more difficult to attain, resulting in stress that then leads to detrimental psychological effects. Although this may be the case, we suggest that success at extrinsic goals, even when fully attained, is less nutritive than success at intrinsic goals. Studies examining this issue could compare the well-being and development of people who have differentially attained goals and who differ in the goals' relative centrality.

An important caveat to this article is that although intrinsic and extrinsic goal contents are differentially

associated with psychological health and well-being, this is not to say that all goals are necessarily classifiable as intrinsic or extrinsic. Some goals and values, such as religiosity or achievement, may not, on the basis of their surface content, be a priori accordant or discordant with integrative and actualizing processes. Instead, the relationship between such goals and one's psychological growth and adjustment likely depends on whether the reasons one pursues the goals are more autonomous or controlled (Ryan & Connell, 1989; Ryan, Rigby, & King, 1993; Sheldon & Kasser, 1995). As a twist to this caveat, it would be interesting to examine whether the well-being outcomes associated with intrinsic versus extrinsic goals differ when the reasons one pursues the goals are considered.

Four limitations to these studies warrant particular mention. First, we relied on self-reports of goals, values, and well-being outcomes. As such, some findings could have been due to response tendencies, although results in this study held even when considering socially desirable response tendencies, and Kasser and Ryan (1993) demonstrated relationships with interviewers' ratings of functioning. Second, research has focused only on individuals in one culture and historical period, and thus findings may not be cross-culturally generalizable. Third, all data are correlational and cross-sectional, so no conclusions regarding causality can be made. Fourth, the low alphas of some of the guiding-principle subscales suggest that modifications of this measure are desirable.

In summary, goals and values are not all equivalent in terms of their relationships to well-being. Lower well-being and greater distress in these two studies were found when extrinsic goals concerning the attainment of rewards or praise were relatively central to people's personalities, in comparison to intrinsic goals assumed to be congruent with growth and actualizing tendencies. Thus it appears that the suggestions within American culture that well-being and happiness can be found through striving to become rich, famous, and attractive may themselves be chimerical. Instead, this work provides support for an organismic perspective in which persons are viewed as inherently oriented toward being active, agentic, and meaningfully related to others (Deci & Ryan, 1991; Fromm, 1976; Maslow, 1954; Rogers, 1961). Although this research springs from such a perspective, the ideas behind it are much older, extending back at least 25 centuries. Said Lao-tzu (1988):

Chase after money and security  
and your heart will never unclench.  
Care about people's approval  
and you will be their prisoner.  
Do your work, then step back.  
The only path to serenity.

## NOTES

1. Parenthetically, these goal domains are similar to those identified in value research (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990) and research on various goal constructs (see Novacek & Lazarus, 1990).

2. To determine whether the subjects who participated in the diary study differed from those who completed only the trait questionnaires, *t* tests were conducted. No differences were found on gender, the goal measures, or the trait well-being variables.

3. For the sake of brevity, associations between well-being and the relative centrality of specific intrinsic and extrinsic goal domains are not reported here. Generally speaking, they were supportive of the basic hypotheses, although the pattern was somewhat less consistent given the large number of tests. Interested readers can find the results in Kasser (1994).

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