WORKING, PLAYING, AND EATING: MAKING THE MOST OF MOST MOMENTS

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Pleasure and fulfillment surely make for quality in life. The more of each, the more quality. Hence, the more pleasure and fulfillment are part of our most common daily activities, the better. It is probably true that work, leisure, and eating constitute the three major waking activities of most humans. From the economic point of view, work accounts for almost all of income, and food and leisure account for most expenditures—food in the developing nations and leisure in the developed nations (Samuelson, 1990). There is a great deal of variance, within and between cultures, in the enjoyment and personal fulfillment associated with work, leisure, and eating. It is reasonable to assume that the more positive these experiences, the better the quality of life (for evidence from the domain of work, see Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976; Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin, & Schwartz, 1997).

We propose that intrinsic value and fulfillment are two critical characteristics of activities that enhance their positivity and contribution to the quality of life. Intrinsic value is found in the accomplishment of an activity for its own sake, as opposed to accomplishment for some other purpose, such as for its instrumental value (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Lepper, 1983). Fulfillment refers to a sense that one is a better person, in terms of personal or societal goals, as a result of participation in an activity. Fulfillment and intrinsic value are clearly related; indeed, a sense of fulfillment may encourage intrinsic value. On the other hand, they are opposed in the sense that

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fulfillment, especially when expressed as improving the world or the lives of others, has an instrumental quality.

In this chapter, we explore the role of fulfillment and intrinsic value in three major domains of life: work, leisure, and the domain of food and eating. We discuss the domain of work first, and analyze callings in terms of both the intrinsic value of work (enjoyed for its own sake) and often, the sense of improving the world and the self (fulfillment). In English, the word callings describes a positive framing of fulfilling work. We propose the word passions for our second domain, leisure activities, to correspond to callings in the work domain. We hold that passions combine intrinsic value and fulfillment. In the third section, we explore the domain of food and eating, where the focus is more about intrinsic value rather than fulfillment. We consider the question of whether food and eating are enjoyed for their own sake or are embedded in the worrisome instrumentality of improved nutrition and avoidance of illness and obesity. Finally, we attempt to draw some conclusions from our analysis of the three major domains of life that we have analyzed.

THE DOMAIN OF WORK: CALLINGS

Work represents nearly half of waking life for most adults. Most people must work to make a living, which makes work an obligation rather than a choice. Even so, the experience of work is often quite varied, ranging from work as a drudging necessity to work as a source of joy. Traditionally, researchers have focused on either individual determinants of the experience of work (Dubin, 1956; Lodahl & Kejner, 1965; Roberson, 1990), such as expectations or values, or external characteristics of the job itself (Griffin, 1987; Hackman & Oldham, 1976, 1980), such as work tasks or social interaction at work. Both perspectives minimize the role that employees play in actively shaping the meaning of a job. Even in the most restricted and routine jobs, employees can exert some influence on framing the essence of the work.

The most common constructs studied in the meaning of work literature include work centrality (Dubin, 1956; MOW, 1987), work commitment (Losco, 1989), job involvement (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965), work involvement (Kanungo, 1982), intrinsic–extrinsic motivation (Kanungo, 1981; Kanungo & Hartwick, 1987; Roberson, 1990), and work values (Nord, Brief, Atle, & Doherty, 1990). Some researchers define work centrality in terms of how work compares with other life spheres in its importance (Dubin, 1956), whereas work commitment is defined as “the relative importance work has to people’s sense of self” (Losco, 1989, p. 370). Kanungo (1982) defined job involvement as attachment to work, whereas work involvement
has to do with a normative belief about the importance of work in life (Kanungo, 1982, p. 342). Herzberg (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959) was the first to identify the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for working. In the original conceptualization, intrinsic motivations for working included opportunities for advancement, achievement, and recognition, whereas more recent definitions have focused on interesting work, creativity, and fulfillment (Kanungo & Hartwick, 1987). Extrinsic motivations for working include pay, working conditions, and job security. Finally, work values have been defined as the “end states people desire and feel they ought to be able to realize through working” (Nord et al., 1990, p. 21).

Clearly, there is a great deal of overlap between the constructs listed and how all of them relate to either the importance or salience of work in the context of the rest of life or to the specific aims, goals, or reasons people have for working. For half a century, much attention has been paid to the relative importance of work in people’s lives, and researchers have charted trends showing that most people are likely to continue with their work without pay if they had all the money they would need (Morse & Weiss, 1955), although this trend has decreased in recent decades (Vecchio, 1980). In fact, the current thinking among many meaning-of-work researchers is that work is no longer at the center of the values and fabric of our society (Castillo, 1997; Vecchio, 1980).

Such findings raise the question of how the meaning of work is shaped and what effects it has in peoples’ lives. An ongoing debate in the meaning of work literature centers on whether the meaning of work is determined internally (i.e., within the individual) or externally (i.e., by the job and wider environment). Are the changing meanings of work a function of changing work environments, or have people’s needs in these work environments changed? Loscocco (1989) has investigated the influence of both the job and the person in shaping commitment to work. According to the first perspective, the jobs people have exert strong influences on their work commitment (Kohn, Schooler, Miller, Miller, & Schoenberg, 1983). In effect, it is the features of the job that are the primary determinants of the nature of our attachment to the job. Such a view is aligned with a job characteristics perspective of the experience of work. Oldham and Hackman (1981) claimed that it is the characteristics of a job that should have the greatest influence on work commitment. Another perspective takes the opposite argument—that it is the individual’s personality that determines work commitment (Alderfer, 1972; Staw, Bell, & Clausen, 1986). According to this view, individual needs, demographic, and social class background affect commitment to work. Loscocco (1989) found that both external and internal influences affected work commitment. Thus, people make meaning of their work, and forge their attachments to their work, under the influence of multiple forces.
The external characteristics of the job that are likely to affect attachment and attitudes toward work have long been a focus of organizational research. Two dominant perspectives—the job characteristics model and social information processing theory—have laid out different sources of job attitudes. The job characteristics model represents the experience of work as a function of objective features of the job, such as skill variety, task identity and significance, autonomy and feedback (Hackman & Lawler, 1971; Hackman & Oldham 1976, 1980). In contrast, social information processing theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) acknowledges that tasks are not purely objective but rather are socially constructed with others on the job. In effect, the cues that others give in the social environment about how the tasks and environment of the job should be interpreted by the employee are thought to be powerful influences on the experience of the job. Our focus in this chapter is on the individual determinants of how people make meaning of their experiences of work, regardless of the task characteristics and reactions of others that the work involves.

The kinds of meaning people make of their work make up a primary focus of this chapter. Recent research suggests that people tend to frame their relationship to work in different ways. More specifically, sociologists (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985) and psychologists (Baumeister, 1991; Schwartz, 1986, 1994; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997) have argued for a tripartite model of people’s orientations to their work. These general orientations toward work partially determine the experience of work and its accompanying thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. The orientations represent more of an individual differences view of work attitudes, but one’s orientation toward work may also be shaped by the job. As such, work orientation represents the interplay between the person and the job.

Bellah and colleagues (1985; see also Schwartz, 1986, 1994) described three dominant orientations that reflect the experience of work in the United States. In the first work orientation, people view work as a job, focusing on the material benefits of work to the relative exclusion of other kinds of meaning and fulfillment. The work is simply a means to a financial end that allows people to enjoy their time away from work. Usually, the interests and ambitions of those with jobs are expressed outside of the domain of work (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997) and involve hobbies and other interests. In contrast, those with career orientations work for the rewards that come from advancement through an organizational or occupational structure. For those with careers, the increased pay, prestige, and status that come with promotion and advancement are a dominant focus in their work. Advancement brings higher self-esteem, increased power, and higher social standing (Bellah et al., 1985, p. 66). Finally, those with calling orientations work not for financial rewards or for advancement but for the fulfillment that doing the work brings. In callings, the work is an end in itself.
and is associated with the belief that the work makes the world a better place.

Although callings have traditionally meant being "called" by God to do morally and socially significant work (Weber, 1958, 1963), in modern times the term has lost its religious connotation and acquired a focus on doing work that contributes to the world (Davidson & Caddell, 1994). Whether the work actually does contribute to making the world a better place is defined by the individual worker: A physician who views the work as a job and is simply interested in making a good income does not have a calling, whereas a garbage collector who sees the work as making the world a cleaner, healthier place could have a calling. Our focus in this chapter is on those who work in callings, because they are maximally engaged in and passionate about their work.

In an initial investigation of work orientation, Wrzesniewski and colleagues (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997) operationalized the job, career, and calling orientations, created measures of each, and surveyed 196 people from a variety of occupations. The measures took two forms: (a) a set of three paragraphs that described a prototypical job, career, and calling person; (b) a set of 18 items that were designed to reflect the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that were likely to accompany each work orientation. For example, it was expected that those with job orientations would report that work was largely a way to get income and that they were not deeply involved with or passionate about their work. For those with career orientations, it was expected that work would be approached with a focus on advancement, moving between jobs, and seeing one's current job as a stepping stone to other things. Finally, it was expected that those with callings would report that work was a deeply involving domain in life that they enjoyed very much and would continue in without pay if financially possible. In addition, those with callings were expected to feel that their work contributed to the world in a meaningful way.

Respondents were surprisingly unambiguous in reporting that they experienced their work as job, career, or calling. The sample was nearly evenly divided into thirds, with each third feeling that their work fit into one of the three categories. Within the sample, there was a group of 24 administrative assistants who worked in the same organization with similar levels of pay, education, and tenure. In this subsample, as in the full sample, each work orientation was represented by a third of the administrative assistants such that they were nearly evenly divided into the three work orientations. This finding suggests that even in the same job done in the same organization, there are quite meaningful differences in how people experience their work.

Overall, it appears that those with calling orientations have a stronger and more rewarding relationship to their work, which is associated with
spending more time in this domain and gaining more enjoyment and satisfaction from it (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997; Wrzesniewski & Landman, 2000). These studies have not been longitudinal, thus it is impossible to posit causal relationships (i.e., does the experience of the work produce the orientation, or does the orientation shape the experience of the work?). Because we have found all three work orientations among administrative assistants (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997) and evidence of both calling and job orientations among hospital cleaners (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), it is clear that there is some effect of the individual on shaping the work experience.

The three work orientations reflect different types of connections to the domain of work—connections that vary in their intrinsic and instrumental focus and in their implications for other domains of life. Those with jobs are not likely to have a passionate connection with their work, because the work primarily represents a means to an end. Those with careers may be more deeply engaged with their work, because the work is a source of achievement in the rewards, positions, and power it yields. Only for those with callings is work a wholly enriching and meaningful activity that is a passion in its own right.

Indeed, correlates of calling orientations support this point. Many people with callings put more time in at work (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997), whether or not this time is compensated. As well, those with callings report higher job and life satisfaction than those with jobs or careers (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). They also derive more satisfaction from the domain of work than the domain of leisure. It is interesting to note that those with jobs and careers rank the satisfaction they get from their leisure time (i.e., hobbies and friends) as higher than the satisfaction they get from work. The differences between those with callings and the other two groups are significant on each dimension. Clearly, for those with callings, work is one's passion, whereas for those with jobs and careers, the deeper satisfactions are found in leisure or in relationships outside of the workplace.

It seems likely that people with callings may demonstrate good psychological health along any number of dimensions. Traits such as optimism (Gillham, Shatte, Reivich, & Seligman, 2001), mastery (Rawsthorne & Elliott, 1999), and conscientiousness (McCrae & Costa, 1999) may be associated with having a calling. This raises the question of whether people with these traits tend to enter a line of work they view as a calling or if any line of work is likely to be viewed as such. Staw and his colleagues (1986) have found that job attitudes are highly stable over time and different kinds of jobs; thus, it may be that a calling orientation is a portable benefit of those who tend to have a more positive outlook on life in general.
Unlike work, which for most people is a necessity, leisure activities have an optional quality. One would and should be surprised that people did not get pleasure out of their leisure activities. This pleasure usually means that leisure activities have intrinsic value; it is usually the case that we engage in them for the enjoyment they inspire. Nonetheless, there are important differences in leisure activities with respect to how fulfilling they are and hence the extent to which they enrich life. There would seem to be two aspects to fulfillment in leisure activities. One has to do with mastery, self-improvement, and the richer pleasures that come from accomplishment and expertise. There is a sense in which a highly educated musical listener or football fan may get more out of these leisure activities than one without expertise might. A second aspect is the sense of purpose or moral accomplishment that comes from feeling that one contributes to a better life for those close to one or those far away. Both mastery and contribution add to the meaning of life. Mastery seems more important than moral fulfillment in most of the passions we have identified, with the exception of volunteer work.

There is a surprising absence of systematic investigation of passions, leisure activities, or hobbies in psychology (see Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, for a discussion of enjoyable activity). We have begun to collect descriptive data on what we call passions: a certain type of intense, focused leisure activity. For our respondents, we defined passions as follows:

A passion is an overwhelming interest in some object or situation. This interest becomes one of the major foci of life, is one of the principal sources of engagement, and often costs a good percentage of one's income. On retirement, people often devote their lives to their passions. The passion can concern anything other than another human being. Examples of passions included hobbies, activities—sports (participant or spectator—fan), collecting, (e.g., stamps, bottles), artistic—creative activities, puzzles—games (including video games), books, exercise, participation in an organization, house, clothing, food—cuisine, travel. A passion is sufficiently intense that it is the principal way one spends one's leisure time. Passions must last at least one month to qualify.

Note that we excluded specific relationships with other people, leaving out romantic relationships, good friends, and family as passions. We recognize that these activities may serve some of the same functions and may possess some of the same attributes as passions, but we think that they may be

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1It is possible that some leisure activities are engaged in toward some external goal, such as meeting other people or building one's resume. In this chapter, we consider those leisure activities that are ends in themselves.
distinctively different (e.g., they involve basic human bonds and are less likely to involve a substantial outlay of income). In retirement, family dedication, along with passions, probably constitute the major meaningful activities in life in the Western-developed world.

A survey that asked respondents to indicate their passions and provide some information about them was given to 235 University of Pennsylvania undergraduates (152 female, 81 male, 2 of unreported gender) and to 47 adult family members and friends (25 female, 22 male, mean age of 46 years, primarily parents) of a subset of these students. The results, by category of activity, are displayed in Table 8.1. The table lists the most common passions described by respondents, who were permitted to list up to six passions. We retained those categories that accounted for at least 4% of the responses given in one of the two groups (students and adults).

In both the student and adult samples, women and men reported similar numbers and patterns of passions. The 152 women in the student sample reported 823 passions (5.4 per person), and the 24 women in the adult sample reported 91 passions (3.8 per person). Comparable data from 81 male students included 409 passions (5.0 per person), and the 22 male adults reported 76 passions (3.5 per person).

In the student sample, women had a significantly greater number of passions related to the arts ($\chi^2 = 37.78; p < .001$), whereas men reported

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passion</th>
<th>College Students (n = 235)$^a$</th>
<th>Adults (n = 47)$^b$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of listed passions</td>
<td>1242$^c$</td>
<td>167$^d$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>23% (287)$^{**}$</td>
<td>25% (41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics (reading, writing, poetry)</td>
<td>15% (183)</td>
<td>16% (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>11% (140)$^{**}$</td>
<td>10% (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>9% (114)$^*$</td>
<td>3% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment (fun, games, entertainment, computer activities)</td>
<td>8% (102)$^{**}$</td>
<td>7% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People, social, volunteering</td>
<td>7% (91)</td>
<td>7% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting</td>
<td>6% (72)</td>
<td>7% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>4% (50)</td>
<td>5% (9)$^*$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>4% (50)</td>
<td>7% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobbies/cars</td>
<td>2% (21)</td>
<td>5% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of all passions listed, constituted by above categories</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: An asterisk indicates a significant sex difference: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .001$.

$^a$ For gender analysis, n = 233.

$^b$ For gender analysis, n = 46.

$^c$ For gender analysis, n = 1232.

$^d$ For gender analysis, n = 167.
a significantly greater number of passions related to entertainment (χ² = 11.05; p < .001), sports (χ² = 12.24; p < .001), and music (χ² = 5.18; p < .05). The adult sample size was small and only allows for limited conclusions on passions in relation to gender. However, the data show that female adults report a significantly greater number of passions for food than male adults. Overall, the frequency and distribution of passions is surprisingly similar across gender.

Respondents in the student and adult samples were asked to describe the effects of their strongest or most recent passion, and the results for both groups were similar. Both groups described their passions as being positive, enriching activities in their lives that offered an outlet for amusement and fun. Specifically, respondents felt that their passions sustained their mental health by offering them an outlet for stress and emotions, boosting their self-esteem, providing an escape, and offering a way to achieve focus, control, and creative expression.

From these data, we conclude that people in our sample (principally upper-middle-class Americans) generally had a positive attitude toward their passions—that is, they were glad they had them and thought that the passions enriched their lives. We recognize that this is a preliminary study on a nonrepresentative sample of Americans. However, we believe it opens the door to the study of an important part of human life, a part that has much to do with the quality of life.

Passions may have a particularly important function in retirement, when leisure activities come to dominate waking life and when the social and other rewards of work disappear. In this context, passions enrich life by personal and societal fulfillment (the latter as in volunteer work) and usually connect people into social networks of like-minded folk.

There is, of course, a relationship between callings and passions. For people with callings, work takes on most of the characteristics of passions; some describe work as their passion and intentionally allow their work to consume their leisure time. Self-realization, intrinsic value, and social fulfillment all play major roles in passions and callings. Indeed, it is possible that people with callings are less inclined to have other passions, because of the overwhelming time commitments demanded by their callings. On the other hand, the personality characteristics that incline a person to a calling, including perhaps desire for challenge and variety and motivation to improve the world, also might incline the same people to have passions and callings. We might expect, if this is true, that people with callings develop strong passions if or when they retire.

Our results suggest some intriguing hypotheses about the relationship between callings and passions. If those with callings report that work satisfactions crowd out other sources of satisfaction, then perhaps a compensatory or zero-sum relationship exists between callings and passions. In effect, those
with callings may not have other passions, because their passion is their work. Such a compensatory model is supported by findings that suggest that a high degree of involvement in one’s work is associated with feeling that one’s leisure is unsatisfactory (Gee & Baillie, 1999). Support for the compensatory model of work and leisure has been established by others as well (Melamed & Meir, 1981; Miller & Weiss, 1982). Other research suggests that spillover between work and leisure occurs as well, such that the experience of work is reflected in the experience of leisure and vice versa (Rothbard, 1999; Rousseau, 1978). However, no research in this area addresses extremes in experiences of work and leisure. Thus, research is needed to determine if those with callings tend to have passions outside of work as well (i.e., spillover) or instead if those with passions are compensating for a work experience that reflects a job or career orientation (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997).

Support for the hypothesis that callings are passions to those who have them comes from recent research on the effect of work orientations on employment transitions (Wrzesniewski, 1999). When talking about their experience of the jobs they had recently found, people with calling orientations talked about their work in ways that were strikingly different from how those with job orientations talked about work. Although both groups generally found their work likable, the ways they talked about the work in their jobs were rather different. For example, one respondent from the calling orientation group of our study explicitly rejected calling her job “work,” instead saying,

It’s not (work). Work, as work goes, I could do without it.  
I have enough to do here at home to keep me happy for the rest of my life. I get my satisfaction from the people I’m with, my patients and their families. Work itself, forget it.  
(Do you consider that work, when you’re with the patients and families?)  
No, not when I’m there, no.

Another respondent from the calling group talked about her sense of calling and its close relationship with helping others:

(What do you like most about your job?)  
I’m fulfilling a personal call. It is ultimately, enduringly fulfilling. It’s like I just said, I like people and I like to see people get helped. And we’ve seen a lot of people helped.

THE DOMAIN OF FOOD: FOOD AS FUN OR FRIGHTENING

Callings and passions are human inventions. They are afforded by lives in which work options are highly varied, leisure time is plentiful, and the
options for engagement during leisure are legion. In contrast, pleasure at eating is something we inherit from our mammalian and primate progenitors. It is one aspect of the general adaptive tendency, in evolution, to link pleasure with the satisfaction of basic biological needs. We did not invent the pleasure-eating link, and, on the contrary, are at risk for spoiling it. Thus, in terms of quality of life, our aim is to preserve something old rather than to create something new.

For most of human history, for almost all people in developing nations today, and for many people in developed nations, food remains something anticipated and enjoyed. For our ancestors and less fortunate contemporaries, the negative side of food and eating comes from the risk of not having enough food to eat. But just as we have created a world in which our work can be infinitely interesting and broad-ranging and our leisure can bring us into new and exciting worlds and challenges, we have also created a developed world in which food is plentiful, accessible (indeed, hard to avoid), varied, highly palatable, and relatively cheap. Built to find, consume, and conserve food, we (in the developed world) are now immersed in a world full of food. We are ill-suited to be in a world with such temptations, which satisfy our deep biological needs for nutrition and for storing away food for leaner times.

The abundance of food has been accompanied by a number of other social "advances" that help to create a worrisome side to eating. The epidemiological revolution, caused by the conquest of many infectious diseases by antibiotics, sanitation, and other environmental innovations and early detection of these diseases has produced much longer life expectancy. In the developing world people now usually die of degenerative rather than infectious diseases. Many modern diseases are typically insidious in onsets and slow in course, unlike the formerly rapid effects of food poisoning. Although we might have felt "safe" hours or days after eating a primeval meal, we now wonder about the lingering effects of our diets, slowly building up arterial plaques, the likelihood of cancer, and other ills. We are fostered in these concerns by the availability, in the last decades of the 20th century, of substantial epidemiological and experimental evidence, of a sort never generally available before. We hear constantly about risky activities, particularly risky foods, and in the United States have come to the point where risk factors (e.g., high blood pressure and cholesterol) are treated as if they are diseases.

The abundance of cheap and tasty food has collaborated with other societal advances, which have made it possible for us to go through life, working and playing, while hardly moving. Cars, electric garage door openers, phones, television, and the Internet all allow us to do what we have to do without much physical activity. The combination of plentiful food and relative inactivity has led to an increased prevalence of obesity in the
developed world, especially in the United States. Obesity has two negative consequences: It increases some health risks, about which we worry, and it makes us less attractive in our own eyes and in the eyes of others. As a result, we have widespread dieting, especially in women. Dieting itself is not necessarily problematic with respect to the quality of life, except that dieting is usually unsuccessful, resulting in both a deprivation of pleasure and a sense of failure (Seligman, 1994). In the United States, a fair percentage of college students (25 to 30) confess that they would choose a nutritive, inexpensive pill as an alternative to eating (Rozin, Bauer, & Caranese, 2002; Rozin, Fischler, Imada, Sanubin, & Wrzesniewski, 1999). It would not be pleasurable, but it might put temptation to rest and would likely produce desirable weight loss.

Thus, in the United States, and to a lesser extent other Western countries, we are faced with major food ambivalence, especially in women. Food is necessary for life and fun, but it also causes obesity and, in the eyes of many, a source of major disease risk factors: fats, sugars, and a myriad of potential toxins, including pesticides, synthetic chemicals, and (perish the thought) naturally harmful compounds. It is our view that for many Americans, worries about eating have come to dominate the pleasures of eating: there is little doubt that these worries have eroded the quality of life and reduced the intrinsic and largely innate pleasures of eating. However, such worries are often ungrounded or at least exaggerated: For health, eating is still better than not eating. Americans seem to have come to believe that food itself is a risk factor. They have, in our view, come to exaggerate the admittedly significant effect of diet on disease. Worry about diet may have positive health consequences insofar as it leads to an improved diet, but the worry per se is surely not good for the pleasure of life, and may itself be harmful to health. Thus, worry about diet and dieting has both costs and benefits.

The French seem to have found a different way to balance the costs and benefits of eating (Rozin, 1999; Rozin et al., 1999). The French are legendary for their love of food and wine, their care in preparing it, and the richness and variety of their cuisine. Meals are occasions of note in France. But, at least in the view of American doctors and the average American, this apparent food indulgence should come at a price. However, French life expectancy is slightly higher than American life expectancy. In what has been termed the “French paradox” (Renaud & Legeril, 1992), the French have a much lower mortality from cardiovascular disease than Americans. How do the French manage this miracle, and can we learn from them?

Americans seem to think diet is responsible for most of their ills, and have therefore gravitated to the idea that it is wine, a food, that protects the French from the ravages that their diet would otherwise take out upon
them. Wine is the most popular account for the French paradox. Although wine may contribute to the relatively healthier lifestyle of the French, there are many things we can learn from the French, in addition to moderate wine drinking.

First, and perhaps most critically, although the French diet is modestly higher in fat than the American diet (Drewnowski et al., 1996), it is lower in calories. The French simply eat less food, and by most accounts, it is calories that are the single biggest threat to health (and surely to our national waistline). But how is it that the French eat less than we do, with all that delicious food and all that time spent at the table? The French face their plates, and their meal companions, for much more time than Americans do. It is well-known that the more time one faces palatable food, the more one will eat. We do not want to claim that French food is unpalatable, as that seems highly unlikely. Thus, the paradox deepens.

How, then, is it that the French eat less food than Americans? Much of the answer has to do with tradition and ecology. The French tradition is to eat slowly and for a long time in a positive social environment. The tradition is to pay attention to the food one is eating, as opposed to shoveling it in the mouth while talking about other matters. The tradition is to not eat between meals. These traditions are represented in the ecology; in the fact that restaurants expect meals to take hours, in the lower chance that a television set dominates the dining room, and in the much lower availability of street food. Eating slowly allows satiation to increase during the meal. The upshot is that the French seem to get more experience of tasting food while eating less of it. They enjoy more while eating less. Perhaps the major determinant of how much we eat is how much we put in front of people. The French put less food in front of people; their portion sizes, whether in restaurants or individual containers of yogurt, are noticeably smaller than those in the United States (Rozin, Kabnick, Pete, Fischler, & Shields, 2002).

In a similar way, the French traditions and ecology discourage driving and encourage walking and bicycling. The necessities of life are closer at hand, gas is expensive, and parking is often difficult. Getting the car out of a crowded garage is time consuming, often involving getting in and out of the car two or three times to open and close doors.

As Peter Stearns (1997) has pointed out in his excellent comparison of the evolution of French and American culture over the past 100 years, there is a strong tradition of moderation in France, contrasted with a strong tradition of excess in the United States. The American Thanksgiving dinner, which is a failure if people can get up from the table, is totally foreign to the French view of a celebratory meal. This difference clearly maps into issues such as portion size.

Another reason for the relative success of the French in the domain of food is that the French are less concerned with the instrumental aspects
of eating: nutrition, and more critically, risks associated with particular foods. Although the American view (especially in the upper and upper-middle-classes) often frames food in terms of risks and benefits, or conflicts between pleasure and health, the French view is more unimodal and positive. The French recognize that, in general, food and eating are good for health, whereas Americans behave as if they are not so sure. These attitude differences are illustrated in a recent study that compared French and American attitudes to food and eating (Rozin et al., 1999). The French appeared to eat less of foods modified to be healthier (e.g., fat removed) and to be more food-focused, less worried about health and diet, and more inclined to think of foods in terms of the experience of eating them rather than their physiological effects.

American ambivalence about food is demonstrated in free associations to the word “chocolate” in France and the United States. Although about 20% of U.S. college students mention a fat word (fat, fatty, fattening) as one of the three top words that comes to mind when they think of chocolate, only about 5% of French college students offer such a word (Rozin, Kurzer, Lee, & Cohen, 2000). In free associations to the word “food,” fat is the third most common word among American college females, and falls much lower in France (Rozin, Kurzer, & Cohen, in press). Among American college females, some 12 to 15% admit to being embarrassed about buying a bar of chocolate (we were embarrassed to ask this question in France!; Rozin et al., 2000). When college student respondents are asked whether they associate chocolate cake with guilt or celebration, 22% of Americans, versus 14% of French, choose guilt. These and other effects we describe reliably show higher ambivalence in females than males, in both the United States and France.

Another major difference between French and Americans has to do with the importance of food in life, within a positive context. Given a choice for a vacation between a week at a luxury hotel with average food or a hotel with a normal comfort level with gourmet food, for the same price, 76% of Americans choose the luxury hotel, in comparison to 10% of the French. For the example mentioned previously, of a choice of an inexpensive, nutritive pill or eating, 28% of the American students choose the pill, but only 10% of comparable French respondents do. These and other results (Rozin et al., 1999) suggest that eating and enjoying food is a moderately ambivalent experience for Americans, whereas it is much more of a unidimensionally positive experience in France. A consequence is more pleasure and less worry about food in France than in the United States. It remains to be seen whether this more pleasure-oriented and relaxed attitude extends to other domains in which entertainment and health may be in opposition.
Of course, if the Americans are right about the risks of eating even moderate amounts of "bad" foods, then the French are trading short-term pleasure for a shorter life. But, as the record shows, the French do not pay this price. Some combination of their modest food intake, low stress and worry in the food domain (and perhaps others), particular food choices (e.g., red wine), and perhaps genetics, medical system, and other institutional factors seem to promote both health and the good life. It is also possible that Americans and the American medical profession exaggerate the admittedly substantial effects of diet on health.

Food is clearly a source of pleasure, and is also clearly related to health. So are driving, mountain climbing, walking, living in urban environments, marriage, and a myriad of other human activities. The French–American comparison raises the suggestion that any society may balance these risks and benefits in a nonoptimal way, and that it is possible for societies to learn from one another.

CONCLUSION

The total amount of time spent working, in leisure activities, and in eating surely varies greatly across age, social class, and culture. Retired people spend less time working than younger adults, French spend more time eating than Americans (while eating less!), people in developing nations may spend less time at leisure activities than people in developed nations. Our claim is that in all of these domains, the time spent can be more or less pleasant and fulfilling. Eating is more about pleasure (and filling, but not fulfilling), whereas there is more of a combination of pleasure and fulfillment in work and leisure. Work and eating are necessities of life; the question is how much positive experience we can make out of a necessity. Leisure is a luxury, in which pleasure is presumed, and the question is the degree of pleasure and the amount of fulfillment that can be attained. Ideally, one enjoys a leisure experience as it is occurring and at the same time feels a sense of personal and moral fulfillment.

Tibor Scitovsky (1976) made the important distinction between pleasures and comforts. According to Scitovsky, comforts are background improvements in life, such as air conditioning, which make life generally easier but which are things we adapt to. Pleasures are unique events, like good meals, evenings with friends, vacations, and concerts, which have the type of variety and distinctiveness to which we do not adapt. As a result, it is proposed that pleasures contribute more to the quality of life than do comforts. This difference is no doubt enhanced when we consider not only experienced pleasure but also anticipated pleasure and remembered pleasure.
(Kahneman, Wakker, & Sarin, 1997). We do not remember or anticipate our car air conditioning or its quietness in the same way that we do concerts or meals. As Scitovsky pointed out, cultures differ in the degree to which they apportion time and expenditures to these two broad domains, and it seems clear (to Scitovsky and us, at least) that Americans favor comforts much more than do Europeans.

The French food example suggests an important and largely ignored dimension that operates to enhance pleasure and perhaps fulfillment as well. This has to do with the ecology of the environment of artifacts created by each culture. The traditions of long, social meals, no snacking, and attention to food are manifested environmentally, in the design of restaurants and the absence of street food. Walking and bicycle riding, as alternatives to driving, are promoted by high gas prices, inconvenient parking, locally accessible food and other stores, and the difficulties of getting the car from the garage to the street.

Similarly, passions, and most critically, passions that are both self- and other-fulfilling, are promoted by cultural valuation of such activities, the availability of such activities in one's environment, and their presence in family and friendship networks. Most people develop passions by exposure to them, often through admired others (Bandura, 1977). The ecology of the work environment is, perhaps, less determinative of the development of callings than ecology is for play and eating. But it must be true that the social environment, including the example of callings in one's fellow workers, has some influence on the individual.

The forms that passions can take are likely more varied than the picture offered by our data. We surveyed students and adults from an upper-middle-class population, and although there was a wide range of passions reported, others may be represented in greater numbers among those from other class groups. For example, passions for academics and travel may be unavailable or unimportant to a large percentage of the population. It remains an interesting empirical question to determine the form and function of passions across a wide spectrum of society.

As it happens, distinctive pleasures and actions (e.g., special meals, special acts of kindness, special accomplishments in passions or at work) often produce the ideal result with respect to improving the quality of life. They provide some or all of experienced pleasure, pleasant memories, pleasant anticipations, a sense of personal fulfillment or accomplishment, and a sense of moral fulfillment by making the world, or somebody else's world, a better place. In at least some of these cases, these special pleasures are compatible with, or even promoting of, good health. This is a substantial package of rewards that is bound to improve the quality of life. It is definitely, in Robert Wright's (2000) sense, a non-zero-sum game.
Overall, the more we know about the acquisition of intrinsic value, the development of values that extend beyond the self, and the way that the cultural ecology promotes these, the more we will be able to make the most of most moments in our waking lives.

REFERENCES


