What Enhances Wellbeing in Daily Life?

Teleios recently analyzed 63 peer-reviewed articles in the medical literature that evaluated wellbeing as related to 4 Bible-based terms:

- Forgiveness
- Gratitude
- Hope
- Empathy

These characteristics in a person’s life improve wellbeing!

They also demonstrated a positive influence on specific societal issues including improvement in social relationships, delinquent behavior and physical health.

These parameters were generally derived from only 2 sources:
Studies showed that 3 of these parameters (except hope) could be taught to some extent in a secular setting. However, all 4 characteristics (including hope) were shown to be improved by religious involvement.

Note: For this study almost all of the included articles meeting inclusion criteria were from Christian countries.

Importantly, ‘hope’ may be defined differently between secular and spiritual spheres.

Temporal hope: “…an expectation about attaining a desired goal in the future …”² generally thought of as a goal to achieve on earth during a person’s life.

Christian hope: “a confident expectation of salvation gained through faith in Jesus Christ’s sacrifice on the cross for mankind’s sin”³ that is, directed to a heavenly target.

How these characteristics were helped in these studies⁴ was not clear, but perhaps could be produced from:

1. Study of religion’s scriptures
2. Hearing sermons
3. Personal practice in a supportive church community
4. Encouragement from the faith community itself⁵
This study suggests that forgiveness, gratitude, hope and empathy may improve general well-being, pro-social, and positive relational behavior, and demonstrate positive health effects.

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References