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**ABSTRACT**  
OF DISSERTATION  
FOR ACQUISITION OF SCIENTIFIC DEGREE DOCTOR OF  
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Title:  
**PERSONALITY PREDICTORS OF EXPERIENCED  
WELL-BEING**

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The 309-page dissertation is organized as follows: introduction, three chapters, conclusion, references, and appendices. Results are illustrated in 135 figures and 160 tables. The list of references comprises 452 sources, including 423 in English and 29 in Bulgarian.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS OF THE DISSERTATION

### Introduction

#### I. Chapter One: Theoretical approaches to the study of well-being, personality traits and personality dispositions

##### I.1. Holistic approach to well-being

##### I.2. Personality trait models

###### I.2.1. Big Five Model

###### I.2.2. Cybernetic Big Five Theory

##### I.3. Personality dispositions and relations with well-being and personality traits

###### I.3.1. Coping and coping potential

###### I.3.2. Mindfulness

###### I.3.3. Self-esteem

###### I.3.4. Learned helplessness, self-handicapping, mistake rumination, planning

###### I.3.5. Meaning of life and search for meaning

##### I.4. Promotion of personal resources for effective self-regulation through learning

#### II. Chapter Two: Design of the empirical research

##### II.1. Aim, subject, objectives and hypotheses

##### II.2. Research procedure and subjects

##### II.3. Research methods

#### III. Chapter Three: Analysis and interpretation of the results of the empirical research

##### III.1. Structural organization of the scales

##### III.2. Relationships between personality traits, personality dispositions and well-being

##### III.3. Regression analyses: predictors of well-being

###### III.3.1. Personality traits - predictors of well-being

###### III.3.2. Personality traits - predictors of personality dispositions

###### III.3.3. Personality dispositions - predictors of well-being

###### III.3.4. Direct and indirect predictors of well-being

##### III.4. Effect of individual variables on well-being and its components

##### III.5. Effect and sustainability of the training for strengthening individual resources for optimal self-regulation

##### III.6. Summary and analysis of the results of the empirical research

### Discussion and future research perspectives

### References

#### Appendix 1. Items of the scales

#### Appendix 2. Descriptive statistics

#### Appendix 3. Direct linear effects of personality traits

#### Appendix 4. Multiple regression data

## Introduction

The current study examines the direct, indirect and aggregate effect of personality predictors on well-being<sup>1</sup>, suggesting a dynamic model of personality – environment – well-being interaction.

The research is realized during times of living in crisis with main focus to account the decisive relevance of the environment in facilitating or impeding the self-regulation and choices. In the context of general uncertainty and ongoing search for adaptive responses in the polarities of reactive and proactive coping behaviours, stability and flexibility, individuation and socialization, primary interest is given to behaviours, attitudes and coping that contribute to maintenance of higher level of experienced well-being. We believe that drawing conclusions during a period of adjustment to the instability of the external framework can highlight the intersections of the integrated influence of personality predictors and proactive directions for promoting personal effectiveness, adaptive potential, and self-regulation.

Given the complex interactions and interdependence of factors in predicting self-regulation, the question personality or environment is stronger predictor has a long history. Research has generally concluded that personality traits are relatively stable but exhibit specific dynamics across age and individual developmental trajectories and, like attitudes and behaviours, have a consistent and dynamic aspect in determining individual adjustment. We sought to add another facet to their predictive role to complement the concept of preventive interventions, emphasized in positive psychology and the position that flourishing can be learned and that the earlier this process begins, the higher the personal effectiveness may be (Seligman, 2011), and that it is beneficial to incorporate interventions during higher education (Dik & Duffy, 2009; Van Zyl & Rothmann, 2012).

The overall goal of the study is to derive a comprehensive framework and model of well-being, as well as practical guidance for preventive support in the process of maintaining optimal levels of personal functioning. To some extent, this is also provoked by the time period of the study's design and implementation - a life in crisis. The cross-cultural study was conducted in the period of the COVID -19 pandemic, followed by the crisis caused by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and natural disasters, that still take place. The global environment of uncertainty and unpredictability,

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<sup>1</sup> In this study, we use the term "experienced well-being" and "well-being" as a term that encompasses optimal personal functioning and self-regulation, including psychological well-being (self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, growth, life purpose, and environmental mastery), subjective well-being (life satisfaction, positive and negative affect (affective balance), happiness, and flourishing. Social well-being, which is viewed as a stand-alone construct in the three-component model of well-being is not included due to its incorporation into the components included. As personality predictors we have used individual variables (age, gender, occupation, perceived income), personality traits and personality dispositions. For personality traits, we have chosen the Big Five model, adding the meta-traits from cybernetic personality theory to the hierarchical structure. We use the term "personality dispositions" as a grouping term for the self-esteem, meaning in life, coping (proactive and preventive coping, and accommodative and problem-oriented coping potential), mindfulness, learned helplessness, self-handicapping, mistake rumination, and planning, included in the research model. There is some variability in approaches to studying them: in some they are conceptualized as stable traits, in others (the position we share) as attitudes and stable behavioural patterns, conditioned at the personal level and depending on environmental and contextual factors.

affecting existential issues of survival, financial coping and making decisions, and living with limited personal control, has lasted for more than three years, leaving no one untouched. A study of adaptation to pandemic during the onset of the process reported a global trend toward choosing accommodative coping strategies and the important aspect of the role of coping potential in adapting to external situations in more effective way (Kirby et al., 2021). At the same time, behavioural changes depending on the different dimensions and experiences of the crisis have been reported (Sutin et al., 2020, 2022) due to the specificity of the adaptive potential. The global crisis, complemented by national, personal, and normative crises, highlights the need to use one's own resources for sustainable and effective self-regulation.

We are far from believing that a single study can provide an answer to the complex relationships and interactions between stable predispositions and environmental factors, which always jointly determine the nature of adaptation and self-regulation. Coping resources and evaluation of situations, individual and environmental factors, determine the direction and manner in which short- and long-term decisions are made. Moreover, attributions and perceived patterns and attitudes can be viewed as complementary stable and dynamic component that makes the role of situational effects stronger or weaker, especially in times of severe change, personal and global crises that are not only a challenge, but ongoing pressure to be resilient and cope with uncertainty. The complex trajectories of mental processes reflect both stable predispositions and the importance and significance of particular situations and experiences associated with adaptability and flexibility. Recognising this complexity and multi-faceted nature, we have sought to add another line of enlightenment to clarify possible pathways to flourishing through proactive and mindful self-reflection and self-regulation, which we consider particularly important in an unsupportive external environment. In this line training for promotion of effective self-regulation was piloted. We addressed the research questions: *What are the characteristics of experienced well-being and its components under conditions of stability and crisis? What is the prediction of personality traits of experienced well-being during long life in ongoing crisis? How do personality traits predict coping resources and coping potential? Do personality traits or personality dispositions better predict well-being? What is the interaction between personality traits and personality dispositions in determining experienced well-being and its components? What behaviours can contribute to a more painless adjustment to life in crisis? Are there efficient training but not therapeutic activities that can promote self-regulation and self-actualization?*

The dissertation is divided into the classic introduction, three chapters, conclusion, references, and appendices. The theoretical overview is presented in four sections. The first describes approaches to the study of well-being and integrates research in this direction. The second section addresses the Big Five personality trait model and the cybernetic theory of personality and relations with well-being. The third section describes the personality dispositions self-esteem, mindfulness, coping and coping potential, meaning in life, learned helplessness, self-handicapping, rumination, and planning and their relations with and personality traits and well-being. The fourth and final section systematizes ways to achieve effective personal change through learning

and prevention. Chapter Two describes the purpose, objectives, expectations, methods, subjects, procedure, and design of the study. Chapter Three presents the results and analysis of the empirical study. The content of the sections of the dissertation is summarized below.

## **I. Chapter One: Theoretical approaches to the study of well-being, personality traits and personality dispositions**

Chapter One summarizes the theory and research implications related to the concepts, included in the empirical research. The content of the sections briefed below.

### **I.1. Holistic approach to well-being**

The different approaches to study and conceptualization of well-being (subjective well-being, psychological well-being, social well-being) and the integrative concept of flourishing are outlined. Holistic framework, as well as their specific and common explanatory factors are highlighted. Research on subjective well-being (life satisfaction, positive and negative affect (affective balance)) from the perspective of hedonism - the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain (Diener, 1984, 2000, etc.) and analysis of studies of psychological well-being based on eudaimonia (autonomy, relationships with others, self-acceptance, environmental mastery, life purpose, and growth) (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995), social well-being (Keyes, 1998; Keyes et al., 2004), and flourishing (Seligman, 2011), as well as numerous studies of subjectively perceived happiness (Veenhoven, 1984, 2017) are summarized. One of the new research directions has also been highlighted, that of fear of happiness as an individual and cultural variable (Joshanloo, 2013). Research on the effects of personality predictors on well-being are also discussed.

Well-being is described as optimal experiencing and functioning (Waterman, 1993) and is usually assigned to one of two research approaches, hedonistic and eudaemonic. We define these two approaches also as individual and universal and substantively as the emotional and cognitive or evaluative components of well-being. The first demarcation is in the derivation of predictors of well-being, focusing on individual experiences or conceptualizing individual differences in universal needs and motivations; and the second is in a content perspective - experiencing and evaluating perceived information. This is also the intersection we draw to unify the approaches in the search for the intrinsic relationship between them - subjective perception and individual differences, located in the universal framework of psychological needs and motivations, and the inseparable link between experience, meaning-making, evaluation, and behaviour. In summary, the wide range and multidimensionality of well-being highlights both the overlap and the specificity and differentiation of its components, which are also considered from the perspective of genetically determined well-being, with particular emphasis on emotional well-being, and also from the suggestion that well-being is determined by personality traits and personality dispositions, but may in turn modify them.

## **I.2. Personality trait models**

### **I.2.1. Big Five Model**

The choice of Costa and McCrae's Big Five model, comprising the traits extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, and openness to experience (Costa & McCrae, 1976, 1992, 1995, 2009; McCrae & Costa, 1987, 2008; McCrae et al. 2005;) is argued. Personality traits and their individual facets are described, and research on the relationships between the Big Five and other personality dispositions and well-being are discussed. Based on meta-studies conducted in stable periods, generalizations are made confirming that the traits of the five-factor model predict various behaviours, with each trait having unique predictive power and relationships. Based on the comparative analysis and synthesis of meta-studies universality, as well as some individual and cultural specificities, are outlined (Alderotti et al., 2021). Reference is made to some of the studies conducted in Bulgaria on work behaviour (Tair, 2020), career choice (Karabelova, 2015), health behaviour and Internet addiction (Ivanova and Karabelova, 2012; Ivanova, 2014), road behaviour (Totkova, 2017), social desirability (Ferdinandov, 2021), perfectionism (Rasheva, 2013), decision making (Ketyrov, 2021), leadership styles (Gatsova, 2020), career choice in young adulthood (Papazova, 2016), and other perspectives (Todorov, 1997; Miteva et al., 2013, Taneva, 2011; Ivanova, 2014; Bazovska, 2018). The research directions on the relationships of personality traits with well-being and personality dispositions, their relative stability and constancy and the factors determining the dynamics of personality traits are systematized.

### **I.2.2. Cybernetic Big Five Theory**

A new area of interest is the applicability of cybernetic Big Five theory (DeYoung, 2015). It views personality as a cybernetic system that evolves to make survival more efficient. In this line the two meta-traits, stability and plasticity, are the adaptive dimensions of the human cybernetic system, and each of the five personality traits is related to and plays an independent but interactive role in goal-directed behaviour. The meta-traits describe interpersonal differences in efforts to achieve goals while adapting to changes in the environment. Stability is the mechanism, by which the cybernetic system maintains goal directedness when confronted with disruptive stimuli and includes emotional stability (low neuroticism), motivational stability (conscientiousness), and social stability (agreeableness). Plasticity is the mechanism, by which the cybernetic system evaluates and explores the new and unfamiliar cognitively (openness to experience) and behaviourally (extraversion) (DeYoung, 2006, 2015). The conceptualization of cybernetic theory is complex and integrates advances in the field of personality traits by incorporating the two research approaches of genetic determinism and variation, assuming that heritability is moderated by multiple factors in the interaction of genetic and environmental factors (DeYoung, 2015). Personality traits are thus viewed as phenotypic rather than genotypic constructs that are predicted by both genes and the environment. We consider the heuristic potential of the theory and the wide range of possible extensions in its implementation to a wider research context.

### **I.3. Personality dispositions and relations with well-being and personality traits**

#### **I.3.1. Coping and coping potential**

Coping, like personality traits, is presented from the perspective of hierarchical structure and in relation to appraisal theory. Attention is given to research describing the effect of personality traits as determinants of preferred choice of behaviours and modes of adaptation (Connor-Smith & Flachsbart, 2007). The included models describe the universal direction of adaptation and self-regulation – behaviours, aimed at seeking or avoiding control over the environment and adapting according to ascribed relevance and expected outcomes and attributive control. Transactional theory has been presented with a focus on the source of stress (problem-focused coping) and emotion regulation (emotion-focused coping) as a function of situation appraisal (Lazarus, 1966, 1991; Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000; Smith et al., 2009). The distinction of coping into assimilative (active adaptation of environment and life events to personal goals) and accommodative (adaptation of one's preferences and goals to situations and constraints) (Brandtstädter & Renner, 1990) and their age specific expression is also addressed. Further, in our focus are coping resources and their maintenance and dealing with upcoming events (Hobfoll & Leiberman, 1987; Hobfoll & Lilly, 1993) and perceived situational and global relevance (Janoff-Bulman, 1992; Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000). Results of studies of the relations of coping with well-being are systematized with the general conclusion that active coping is more predictive of psychological well-being (Lee et al., 2019).

#### **I.3.2 Mindfulness**

Differences and similarities in the conceptualization and study of mindfulness are outlined. Mindfulness is considered as a unidimensional and multidimensional construct, conceptualized in the perspective of Eastern (Kabat-Zinn, 2003) and psychological practice (Langer, 1989); as a personality trait and as an attitude; and from the perspective that since it is influenced by personality traits, it can also influence personality traits. Despite the different approaches, the relationship of mindfulness with well-being and mental health has been clearly confirmed (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Baer et al., 2004; Grossman et al., 2004; Paul-Labrador et al., 2006; Carmody & Baer, 2008, Eberth & Sedlmeier, 2012) and the potential of mindfulness to promote it (Carson et al., 2004; Barnes et al., 2007; Jones et al., 2011).

In practical terms the benefits of mindfulness, reported in various therapeutic approaches (Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Segal et al., 2002; Grossman et al., 2004) are summarized, showing its relationship to self-regulation and adaptive potential. Research, outlining the construction of mindfulness and its development, including as a personality disposition, confirm the positive relations of mindfulness with well-being and the Big Five (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Giluk, 2009; Stahl & Goldstein, 2010; Eberth & Sedlmeier, 2012; Bergen-Cico et al., 2013; Rizer et al., 2016; Hanley & Garland, 2017; Ortet et al., 2020).

### **I.3.3 Self-esteem**

Self-esteem is assumed to be a stable construct and a developmental determinant, influenced by age and cultural background, which has a specific role in adjustment and personal effectiveness (Dilova et al., 2017; Diener & Diener, 1995; DeNeve & Cooper, 1998; Oishi et al., 1999; Robins et al., 2001; Varanarasama et al., 2019). Research on self-esteem and its relations with well-being and its components, and with personality traits and personality dispositions, are presented. The crucial role of self-esteem in the process of effective and ineffective personal self-regulation is discussed.

### **I.3.4 Learned helplessness, self-handicapping, rumination, planning**

The constructs of learned helplessness, self-handicapping, rumination, and planning are included in this study as ineffective defensive or coping behaviours in relation to experienced well-being, and results from studies along these lines are summarized.

Learned helplessness represents passive behaviour and an inability to learn when exposed to stressful, uncontrollable, and unavoidable disadvantageous events due to an automatic defensive transfer of negative past experiences to the new stressful situation (Seligman & Maier, 1967; Elliott & Dweck, 1988; Dweck, 2006; Dweck & Yeager, 2019). Self-handicapping is related to motivation theory (Atkinson, 1964; Greenberg, 1985) and is viewed as anticipatory pursuit of defences, aimed to protect oneself and self-esteem in the face of possible adverse developments (Jones & Berglas, 1978).

Self-reflection is a process that describes the time a person spends analysing inner thoughts and feelings. Self-reflection and self-knowledge are not a single construct, but encompass two opposing dimensions: "proactive" and "rigid" reflection (Trapnell & Campbell, 1999). Rigid meaning-making is associated with anxiety, whereas proactive meaning-making is associated with satisfaction. Regarding the difference between reflection with proactive meaning-making and rumination (rigid meaning-making), the relationship to personality traits has been reported (Trapnell & Campbell, 1999).

Planning or planning avoidance has been studied primarily in relation to domain-specific behaviours (Weber et al., 2002), relationships (Aaker & Lee, 2001), objectively and subjectively perceived severity of events (Larsen et al., 1986), temporal perspective, and psychological time (Trope & Liberman, 2003; Zauberman & Lynch, 2005).

### **I.3.5. Meaning in life and search for meaning**

Meaning in life, despite its incorporation in flourishing, is independently included due to the abundance of evidence, revealing its strong prediction of happiness (Park et al., 2010; Steger et al., 2014), positive emotions, self-esteem, optimism, and life satisfaction (Ryff, 1989; Compton et al., 1996; King et al., 2006; Steger et al., 2009), and well-being (Zika & Chamberlain, 1992; Ryff & Keyes, 1995), leading to a reduction in negative emotions. Also discussed is the concept of expectation of meaningfulness - that people may support unrealistic assumptions and expectations that their lives should be meaningful and stable (Camus, 1955), a process defined as mythologizing the meaning (Vaumeister, 1991).



The perspectives in examining meaning in life and search for meaning are described as one process or opposing outcome and process. The second view is that low presence of meaning leads to higher activity in the search for meaning (Steger et al., 2006). The presence of meaning in life represents an important part of eudaemonic psychological well-being (Urry et al., 2004; Mascaro & Rosen, 2005; Reker, 2005; King et al., 2006; Steger et al., 2006) and the pursuit of self-actualization (Ryff & Singer, 1998) and predicts psychological well-being. Conversely, the lack of meaning in life is associated with a range of negative experiences (Mascaro & Rosen 2005, 2006). With regard to the search for meaning there are several approaches to its conceptualization - as a process driven from within, with the search also showing a positive correlation with psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989), and its consideration as a deficit need of people with frustration experiences (Baumeister, 1991; Klinger, 1998), as well as the suggestion that it can take both forms - as self-affirmation and as deficit motivation (Reker, 2000).

#### **I.4. Promotion of personal resources for effective self-regulation through learning**

A systematic review of research is provided, and various opportunities for developing and promotion of mindfulness, coping strategies and coping potential, flourishing, and changes in self-esteem and personality dispositions, including personality traits, following implemented interventions, are highlighted. Of interest to us are the directions, which suggest that just as personality traits affect well-being, changes in well-being can also affect personality traits. This point and the positive effects of promoting personal resources and self-efficacy are addressed in the line of preventive action and learning.

In order to test the possibility of learning without consciously seeking and demanding support for change, a pilot training was developed. The basis of the training to improve personal self-regulation is Seligman's Flourishing Model (PERMA, Seligman, 2011) and the appraisal theory (Smith & Kirby, 2009, 2011). The general concept in developing training sessions to increase reflection and self-reflection is ten specifically tailored sessions, based on expressive (art) techniques and phototherapy. Sessions integrate the experimental and rational system of information processing and over time aim to create a stable way of thinking, analogous to a personality disposition in terms of *recognition – reflection - a new way of experience and evaluation* – which is supposed to be contrary to the negative effect of the automatic thoughts, irrational beliefs, and tendency toward self-defensive behaviours.

The intended effect is individuals to become aware of their perceptions, feelings, and thoughts and learn to accept them objectively and in a regulated, active manner in a training rather than therapeutic setting. Coping, for the proactive person, is not a singular response, but a consistent pattern of behaviour, an existential belief that things will work out not because of luck or other uncontrollable factors, but because the person takes responsibility for achieving his or her goals (Schwarzer, 1999).

## **II. Chapter Two: Design of the empirical research**

### **II.1. Aim, subject, objectives and hypotheses**

The research design and choice of constructs are based on the relations between personality traits, personality dispositions and well-being, accounted in research. We aim to examine the direct, mediated, and moderating effects of personality traits and personality dispositions on well-being and its components, whether personality traits or personality dispositions are more predictive of well-being, and what their aggregate effect is together with individual variables. Well-being is considered integrative construct to which we have added happiness and flourishing as components in this study in addition to the traditionally studied subjective and psychological well-being. An addition to the study is the piloting of a training to increase personal resources for self-regulation through learning. In this way we are attempting to address the possibility of increasing adaptive capacity and flourishing through learning as a prevention for effective personal development and optimal functioning.

*Object* of the study are the factors that directly and indirectly determine experienced well-being.

*Subject of the study* are personality traits and personality dispositions as self-regulatory predictors of optimal functioning and well-being.

*The research objective* is to study the direct, mediated, and moderating effects of personality traits and personality dispositions on well-being and its components and the possibilities for promotion of personal resources to achieve optimal self-regulation.

The tasks of the study are:

1. To study the relationship between personality traits, well-being and its components, and personality dispositions.
2. To study the relationship between personality dispositions and well-being and its components.
3. To study the direct, mediated, and moderating effects of personality traits and personality dispositions on well-being and its components.
4. To study the effect of individual variables (gender, age, marital status, occupation, subjective assessment of income) on well-being and its components.
5. To study the impact and sustainability of the piloted training aimed to promote personal resources for effective self-regulation.

Our expectations are based on the research results presented:

1. We expect personality traits to predict well-being and its components, as well as personality dispositions, to a low to moderate degree.
2. We expect personality dispositions to predict well-being and its components in a specific way and to a higher degree than personality traits.
3. We expect personality traits and personality dispositions to have direct, mediated, and moderating effects on well-being and its components.
4. We expect individual variables to have partial independent effects on well-being and its components.
5. We expect training to increase personal potential for self-regulation with partial, but sustainable effect.

To implement tasks 1-4, 14 continuous variables are used, some of which contain sub-variables, bringing the total number of variables included in the study to 31. In addition, 5 single variables are included: gender, age, marital status, occupation and subjective assessment of income. The research model is shown in Figure 1.

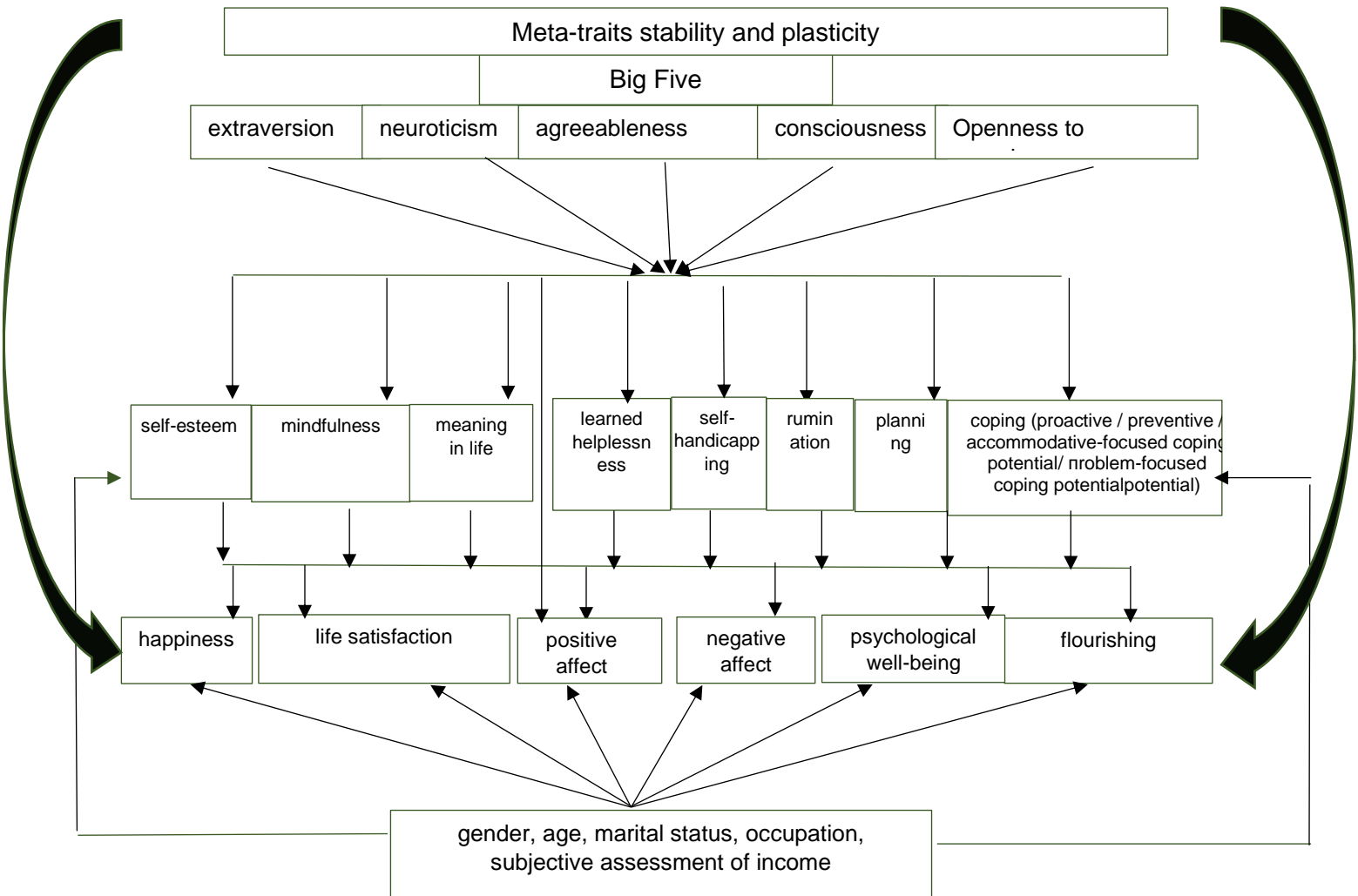


Figure 1. Research model

## II.2. Research procedure and subjects

The survey to implement tasks 1-4 was conducted between January 2021 and December 2022 and includes responses from 455 respondents (Table 1). Data were processed using IBM SPSS Statistics 25 and Process 3. Descriptive statistics, reliability tests using Cronbach's alpha and item analysis, principal components factor analysis with rotation, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, analysis of variance, t-test, paired samples comparison, correlation analysis, regression analysis, multivariate linear regression analysis, multivariate hierarchical regression analysis with controlled variables, moderation and mediation analyses, are employed for data processing.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents

					total
Gender	women	men			455
	300 (66%)	155 (34%)			
Age	below 25 years	25-35 years	above 35 years		455
	105 (23%)	152 (33%)	198 (44%)		
Family status – living	Alone	With partner	With family	unwilling to answer	455
	65 (14%)	97 (21%)	243 (54%)	50 (11%)	
Occupation	only study	only work	work and study	neither work nor study	455
	94 (21%)	55 (12%)	256 (56%)	50 (11%)	
Incomes assessment	sufficient to cover their needs	insufficient to cover their needs	unwilling to answer		455
	218 (48%)	150 (33%)	87 (19%)		

For Task 5, a control group and an experimental group were formed. The piloting of the training for the implementation of Task 5 and the study was carried out in the period April 2022 - December 2022. The training consisted of 10 sessions carried out over a period of 3 months. The results are compared within the experimental group and between the experimental and control groups at three points in time, before and after the training and 6 months after completion of the training. Table 2 shows the number of participants at these three points in time.

Table 2. Description of the participants in the control and experimental group

	March 2022 (N)	June 2022 (N)	December 2022 (N)
Control group	20	11	10
Experimental group	13	11	10

### II.3. Research methods

Administered scales: Big Five Inventory (BFI-2), Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale, Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ), Planning scale (authored for this study), Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness Scale – Revised (CAMS-R), Learned Helplessness Scale (LHS), Self-Handicapping Scale), The Proactive Coping Inventory (PCI): A Multidimensional Research Instrument; Accommodative-focused coping potential and Problem-focused coping scales; Mistake Rumination Scale, Flourishing Scale, Psychological Wellbeing Scale, Life Satisfaction Scale, Positive and negative affect scale (SPAN-E-N).

### III. Chapter Three: Analysis and interpretation of the results of the empirical research

**Section III.1.** presents the structural organisation of the scales used. **Section III.2** describes the relations of personality traits, personality dispositions and well-being. **Section III.3** outlines the predictors of well-being – first individually for regression analyses, outlining the models with inclusion only of personality traits, afterwards including only personality dispositions and models, outlining the personality traits predictors of personality dispositions. Last are described the general models, with

included all personality predictors with reported mediated and moderated effects. **Section III.4.** summarises the effects of the individual variables subjective perception of income, occupation, gender, age and marital status on well-being and its components. **Section III.5.** reports the impact and sustainability of the training in promotion of individual resources for optimal self-regulation, with sustainable positive effects on meaning in life, reported also six months after completion of the training

### III.6. Summary and analysis of the results of the empirical research

The relationships between personality traits and well-being are examined hierarchically at the level of facets, global traits and meta-traits. As expected, personality traits are related to well-being and its components in a specific way, with mostly weak to moderate relationships in replication of the majority of published data. The role of personality dispositions in coping, mindfulness, meaning in life and ineffective models of well-being is replicated as well. The findings support the conclusion that personality traits and dispositions are robustly related to both subjective and psychological well-being and that dimensions of well-being are strongly related to each other, while reflecting different aspects of well-being (Anglim & Grant, 2016; Sun et al., 2018), which is extended in this study to happiness and flourishing in the same line of conclusions.

#### Personality predictors of well-being

Below are outlined the different models of predictors of the components of well-being. Just illustrated is the effect, accounted separately in regression models with included personality traits, personality dispositions and the effect of individual variables. Discussed are the general models, with regressed both traits and dispositions, accounting the direct and indirect effects. In the general models personality traits have indirect effect and much less traits appear as individual predictors.

#### Predictors of flourishing

Predictors personality traits, personality dispositions and individual differences are described in Fig. 2.

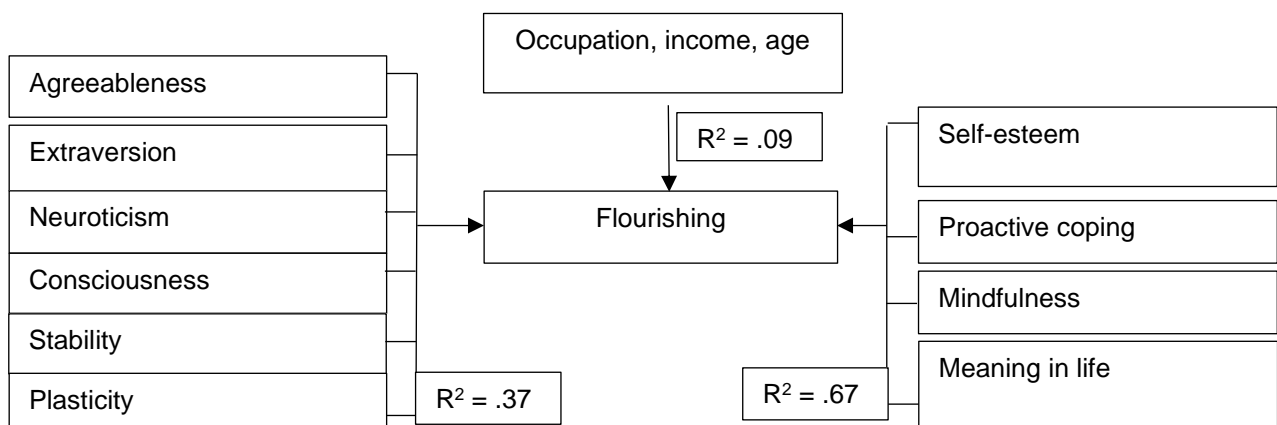


Figure 2. Models of the predictors of flourishing

In the general model, flourishing is predicted by high self-esteem, proactive coping, mindfulness, agreeableness and meaning in life. Problem-oriented coping potential mediates the relationship between agreeableness and flourishing. Conscientiousness and stability moderate the relationship between proactive coping and mindfulness with flourishing, and plasticity moderates the relationship between self-esteem and flourishing. All indirect effects are positive. This finding supports the proposed balance and joint effect of the two meta-traits, with plasticity and stability being the two dispositions specifically related to self-regulation. Self-esteem is expected to be not only stable and rigid, but also flexible enough to be revised, validated and supplemented in order to fulfil its optimal relationship with self-perception, while proactive coping and mindfulness, as dispositions related to activity in cognitive, emotional and behavioural aspect, are supported by the balance, provided by stability (Fig. 3).

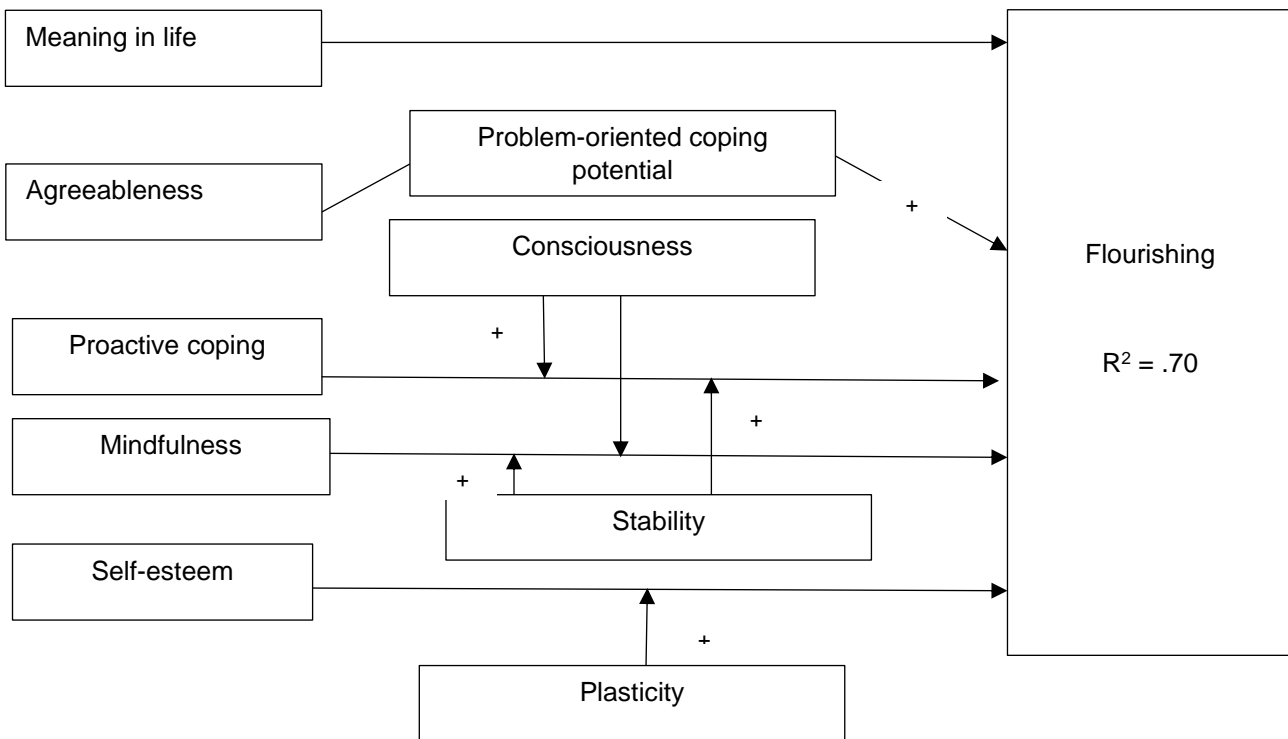


Figure 3. General model of flourishing

*The flourishing people have a clear sense of purpose in life, are kind their problem solving is relational in nature. They are proactive in their actions, focused and experiencing each individual moment in active manner and revealing their potential, supported by their sense of connectedness, organisation and life purpose. They maintain a healthy self-esteem that is not rigid but is regularly validated. They demonstrate and seek both stability and flexibility in their orientation and performance and have variety activities, define their income as sufficient to cover personal needs, and are over 35 years old.*

## Predictors of life satisfaction

Predictors personality traits, personality dispositions and individual differences are described in Fig. 4.

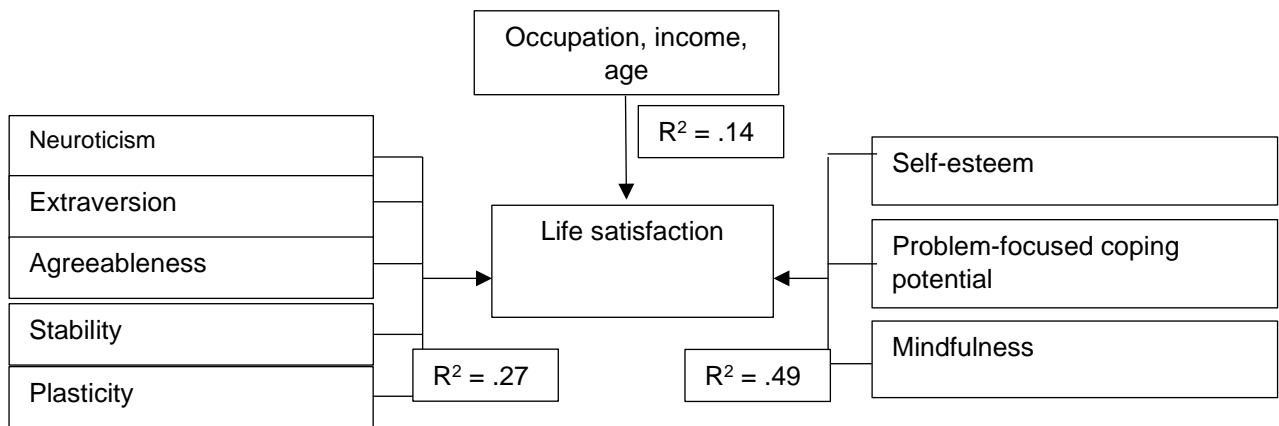


Figure 4. Models of the predictors of life satisfaction

In the general model direct predictors are only the personality dispositions, outlined in the regression of dispositions: self-esteem, problem-focused coping potential and mindfulness, whereas personality traits have indirect effect, with plasticity and consciousness as moderators. Consciousness moderates the relationship between mindfulness and problem-focused coping and life satisfaction, whereas plasticity moderates the relationship between problem-focused coping and life satisfaction. High consciousness, mindfulness, and problem-focused coping combined with high plasticity do not promote life satisfaction, but hinder it. Life satisfaction is highest for problem-focused coping potential, moderate plasticity, and high mindfulness with moderate consciousness. Excessive organisation and distractibility appear to impede problem-focus and goal-directed problem-solving, leading to lower life satisfaction. In other cases, organisation, consistency and flexibility provide a balanced framework for moving steadily and purposefully towards goals while maintaining a sufficiently broad perspective. (Fig. 5).

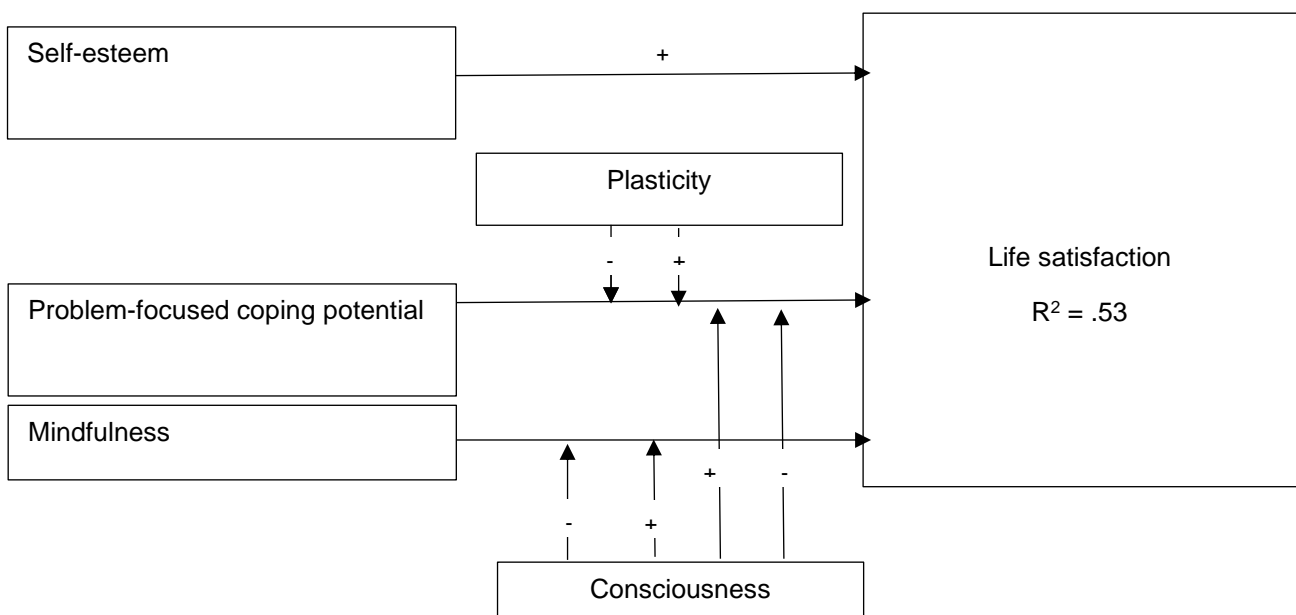


Figure 5. General model of life satisfaction

People who are satisfied with their life have good self-esteem, are problem-focused, actively experience and make sense of situations in terms of their desires and abilities. They are balanced and do not exhibit extremes such as excessive flexibility or constant seeking of new stimuli, or excessive rigidity, but remain consistent in their behaviour without being overly organised or linearly goal-oriented. They are over 35 years old, have a variety of activities and consider their income to be sufficient to cover their needs.

### Predictors of happiness

Predictors personality traits, personality dispositions and individual differences are described in Fig. 6.

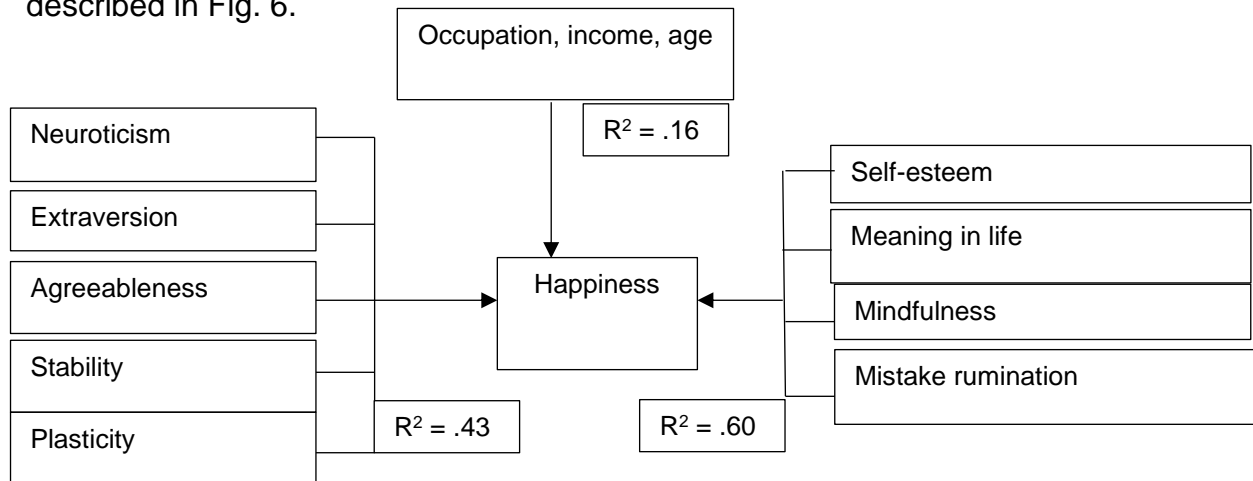


Figure 6. Models of the predictors of happiness

In the general model (fig. 7) happiness is predicted by high self-esteem, meaning in life, mindfulness and low neuroticism. Problem-focused coping and mistake rumination mediate the relationship between neuroticism and happiness. Low problem-focused coping and high mistake rumination increase the negative effect of neuroticism on happiness. Moderating effects were found for neuroticism and conscientiousness in the relationship between mindfulness and happiness, and for extraversion in the relationship between self-esteem and happiness. High extraversion and plasticity increase self-esteem. High neuroticism neutralises the positive relationship between mindfulness and happiness and leads to lower perceived happiness. Higher conscientiousness increases the positive relationship between mindfulness and happiness.

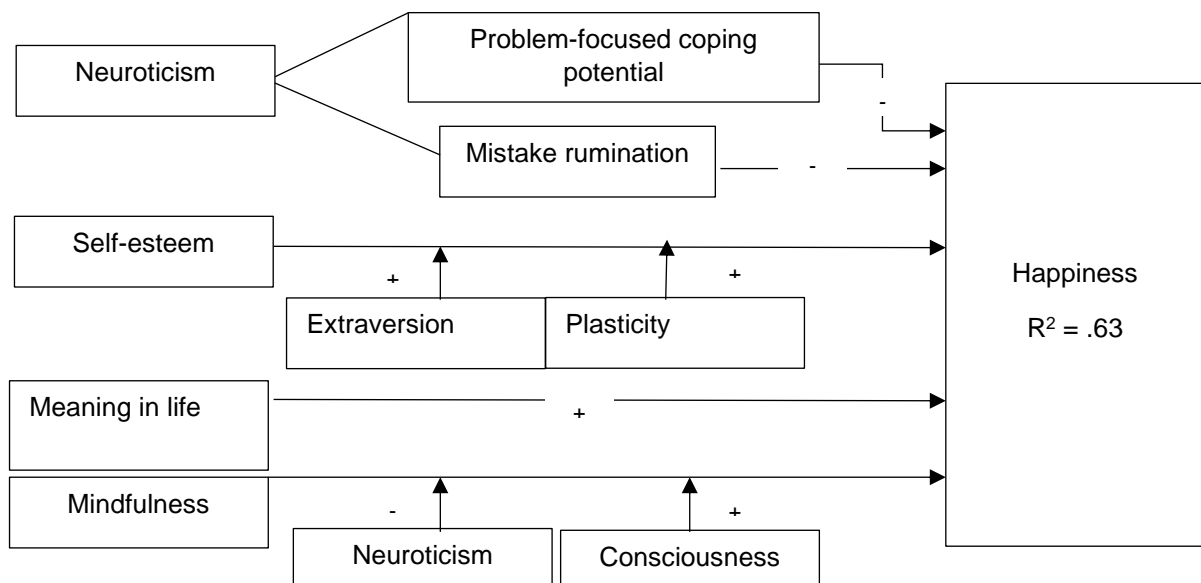


Figure 7. General model of happiness



*Happy people perceive their life as meaningful and have a flow state of experiencing the moment. They are characterised by emotional stability, defined not by looking back at past mistakes, but by a problem-solving orientation. They maintain a healthy self-esteem defined by flexibility as orientation and energy, sociability and assertiveness. Awareness and benefiting from environmental opportunities and personal resources are supported by being conscious, organised and purposeful. They have a variety of interests, are over 35 years old and perceive their income as sufficient to meet their needs.*

### **Predictors of positive affect**

Predictors personality traits, personality dispositions and individual differences are described in Fig. 8.

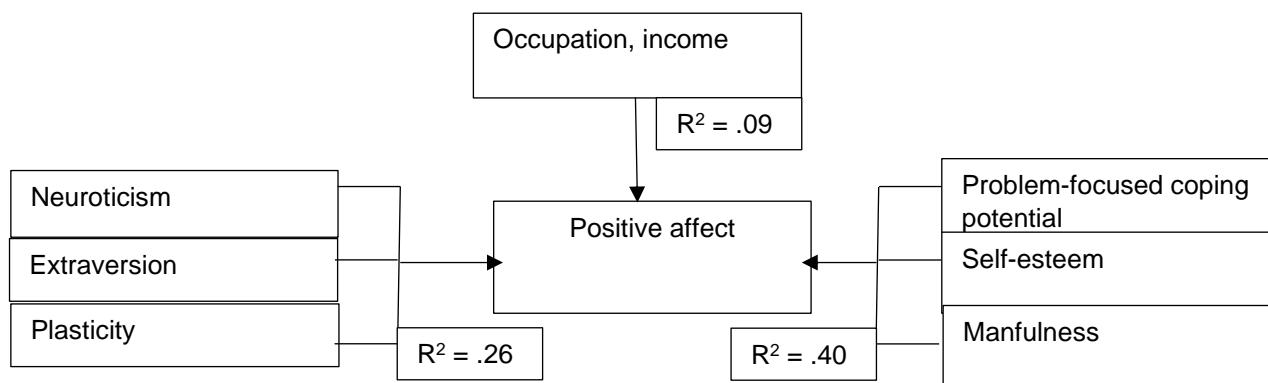


Figure 8. Models of the predictors of positive affect

In the general model positive affect is predicted by problem-focused coping potential, low neuroticism and high self-esteem. In relation to the mediated effect of the relationships between neuroticism and positive affect, when mindfulness and proactive coping potential have low values, this decreases the experienced positive affect. Moderators of the relationship between self-esteem and problem-focused coping with positive affect are extraversion and plasticity, especially for lowest self-esteem. Self-esteem and problem-focused coping prognosticate positive affect, depending on the level of extraversion. The effect of self-esteem on positive affect is determined by extraversion and plasticity. High extraversion and moderate plasticity are important in the relationship between problem-focused coping and positive affect. Very high plasticity neutralises the effect of high problem-focused coping and, at the same time, moderate and high extraversion increase the positive effect of problem-focused coping. The difference in the moderating effects of extraversion and plasticity appears to be due to the latent effect of openness to experience. Extraversion, which includes energy, assertiveness, and sociability, has only a positive effect, as opposed to dispersion and distraction, as an effect of high openness to experience specifically for problem-focused coping, given its nature (Fig. 9).

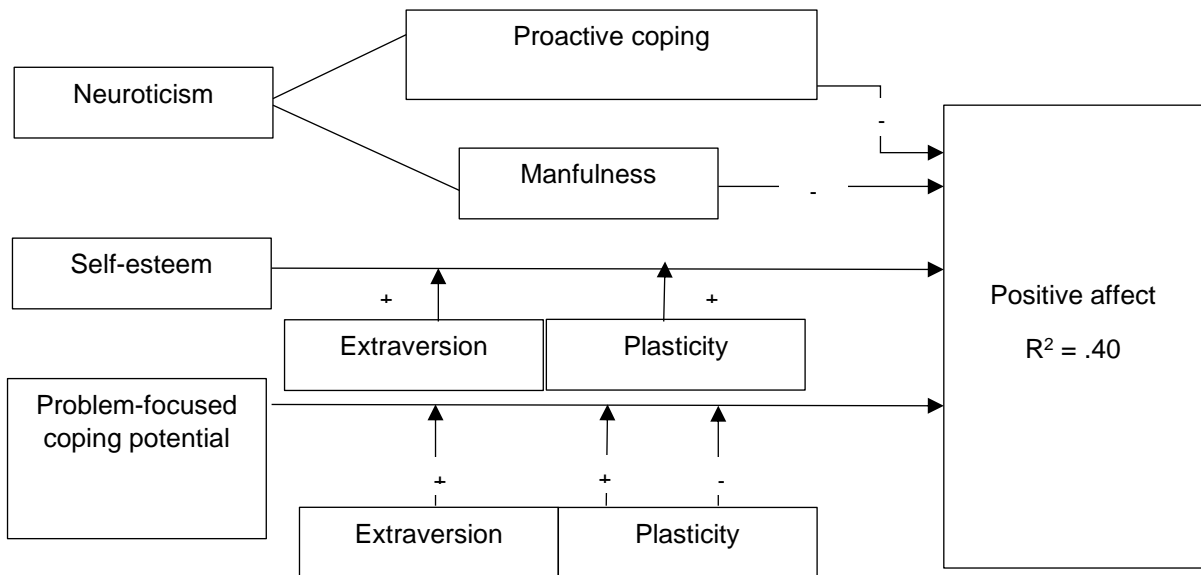


Figure 9. General model of positive affect

Positive people are emotionally stable, supported by their proactive attitude, active self-reflection and reflection on life situations. They have good self-esteem and are problem-focused. This is determined by their high sociability, energy, assertiveness, balanced plasticity and flexibility in world view without excessive search for new stimuli. They define income as sufficient to meet their needs and have various commitments.

### Predictors of negative affect

Predictors personality traits, personality dispositions and individual differences are described in Fig. 10.

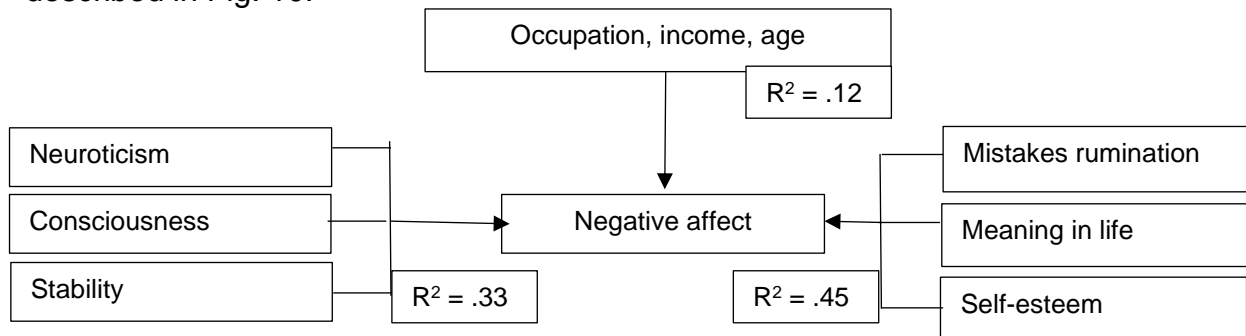


Figure 10. Models of the predictors of negative affect

In the general model high rumination, neuroticism and low perceived meaning in life predict negative affect. Self-esteem has a mediating effect and its high levels reduce the positive effect of neuroticism on negative affect (Fig. 11).

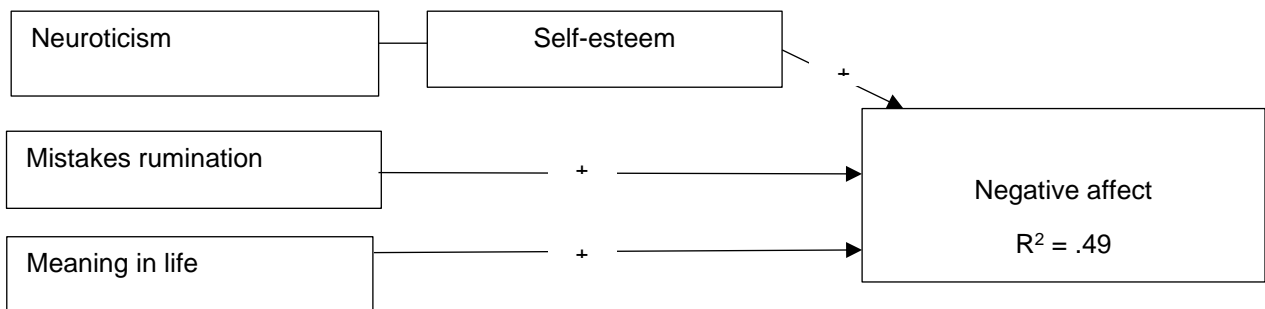


Figure 11. General model of negative affect

*Negative affect is experienced by people who have no meaning in life, often revert to past mistakes, are emotionally unstable, anxious and depressed, which also supports their low self-esteem. They have a few activities, define their income as insufficient to meet their needs and are under 35 years of age.*

### **Predictors of psychological well-being**

In terms of psychological well-being personality traits have predictive value only when included separately in regression analysis. No trait had an individual effect in the general model, either as a direct predictor or as a moderator of the psychological well-being relationships. Figure 12 summarizes the models of the predictors of psychological well-being - personality dispositions that appear in the general model above and predictors personal; dispositions below.

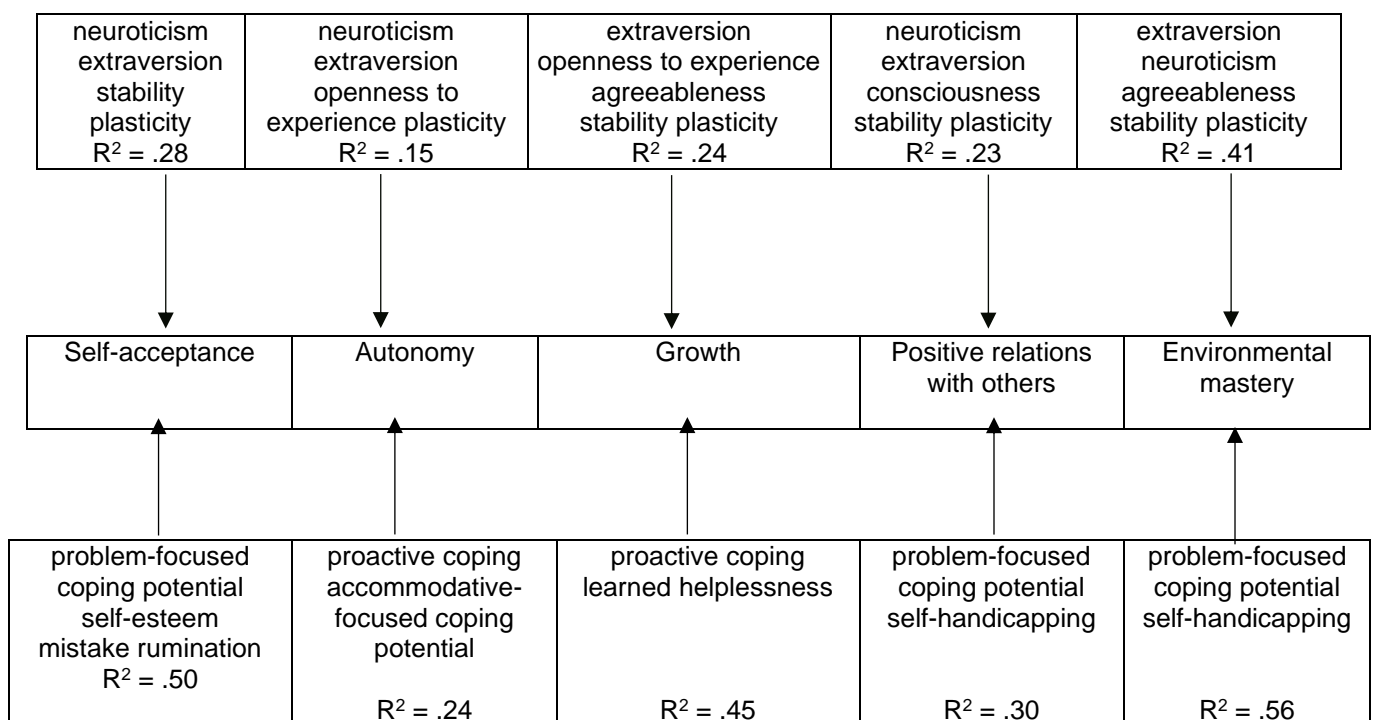


Figure 12. Models of the predictors of psychological well-being

The model for maintaining positive relationships with others and environmental mastery is identical - no self-handicapping, but problem focused and problem-solving attitude. Self-acceptance is predicted by high self-esteem, lack of rumination and problem focusing, and lack of self-defensive behaviours. Autonomy also excludes self-defensive behaviour, which is represented as a predictor in other components and is related to anticipatory behaviour and active adaptation to situations. The absence of learned helplessness is important for growth, as is proactive coping.

Despite the reported influence of personality traits, the general patterns of predictors of well-being are clearly dominated by personality dispositions, in most cases retaining the predictors inferred in the personality disposition effect models (Table. 3).

Table 3. Summary of explained variance in well-being - adjusted  $R^2$

	individual variables	personality traits	personality dispositions	personality traits and dispositions	General model
flourishing	0,090	0,373	0,672	0,682	0,701
life satisfaction	0,138	0,274	0,494	0,501	0,526
happiness	0,157	0,433	0,597	0,622	0,632
positive affect	0,093	0,262	0,397	0,398	0,399
Negative affect	0,123	0,333	0,454	0,486	0,494
positive relations with others	0,026	0,229	0,299	0,337	0,353
self-acceptance	0,084	0,275	0,487	0,487	0,487
autonomy	0,001	0,145	0,241	0,260	0,266
growth	0,011	0,242	0,449	0,449	0,455
environmental mastery	0,063	0,405	0,564	0,564	0,602

We used five directions to explain the greater effect of personality dispositions relative to personality traits and in view to the influence of personality traits on personality dispositions: 1) the relative stability of personality traits and their place, supported by similarities in the data in this study and others conducted under conditions of relative stability, also revealing low to moderate predictive effects of personality traits; 2) the hierarchical explanatory power of facets, traits, and meta-traits; 3) the emerging age dynamics and individual trajectories of personality trait change over time; 4) the dynamics resulting from experienced crises; and 5) the dynamics resulting from interventions and targeted actions to change personality traits.

### **Changes related to age development and life events**

Studies have focused on normative age development and personal events to track the stability and variability of personality traits. Research focused on outlining the effects of major life changes on personality traits do not report consistent results, except for the first romantic relationship, which is associated with an increase in emotional stability and extraversion, and the transition from school to university or work, which is associated with an increase in agreeableness, consciousness, openness to experience, and a decrease in neuroticism (Bleidorn et al., 2022). In terms of lifelong development the summary of research on personality trait stability and change suggest that traits generally increase in stability during adulthood, while change is most dynamic in early adolescence. Personality traits change in the direction of increasing psychological maturity, which follows individual rates. The issue of personality traits and their differential prediction at different ages, particularly in adults, for eudemonic, hedonic and social well-being, has been addressed by a number of authors (Melendez et al., 2020; Petric & Zupančič, 2021).

### **Changes as a result of experienced crisis**

The experience of adaptation to the COVID-19 pandemic has led to numerous cross-sectional studies and fewer longitudinal studies. Overall, in terms of adaptation to crises, we can highlight the difference in adaptive resources and capacities depending

on the duration of the crisis and whether its end is anticipated and clear, which determines different patterns of adaptation to predictable and local crises and to prolonged survival and living in an uncertain environment without clear expectations and perceived personal control, but of strong relevance.

A study of changes in adolescents' well-being during the first 14 days of lockdown reported increases in neuroticism, tolerance of uncertainty, and negative self-direction associated with maladjustment (Riulli et al., 2002). A general increase in anxiety is associated with the indeterminacy of the crisis and its outcome, which is experienced more by individuals with an external locus of control and intolerance of uncertainty (Árbol et al., 2021).

The global nature of the crisis shows that the relevance of personality traits is preserved to some extent, but the typical patterns of predicting well-being in stable periods has changed. A study, comprising 41 countries with an average age of 39 years (respondents aged 18-101) found that people with higher levels of neuroticism, openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness and lower levels of conscientiousness, experienced higher levels of perceived stress, with women and younger respondents being more vulnerable. Under normal conditions, people high in extraversion feel less lonely, but the limited interactions caused of the opposite relationship during the pandemic. At the same time, higher levels of openness to experience during the pandemic were associated with higher levels of perceived stress, depressive and anxiety symptoms and suicide risk, as well as less fear of infection in the context of COVID-9. Thus, openness to experience may be a vulnerability factor during a pandemic, as it is a prerequisite for risky behaviour.

Agreeableness is also associated with stress and loneliness, in contrast to usual circumstances, due to concerns about loved ones and social isolation (Ikizer et al., 2022). Other authors have also confirmed that the pattern of the relationship between personality traits is different in conditions of stability and crisis (Chan et al., 2021). Study in 12 countries during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of the characteristics experienced in the crisis, which sets a universal pattern of adaptation depending on the measures and the country situation, with some variability depending on cultural and individual factors. Optimistic expectations and coping appraisals, represented by accommodative coping emerged as the most effective for stress management and self-regulation, followed by problem-focused coping (Kirby et al., 2022).

During the pandemic period the results, accounted for the relationship between well-being and the Big Five were reduced correlations of openness to experience and conscientiousness with life satisfaction and all Big Five with positive affect, including the negative association of neuroticism with negative affect, and a weakening of all reported stable-period associations between the Big Five and components of psychological well-being, particularly indicative of the change in the correlation of agreeableness with autonomy from positive to negative during the pandemic (Anglim & Horwood, 2021).

Neuroticism is a vulnerability factor for stress and loneliness during crises (Eichel et al., 2022). Neuroticism appears to increase in crises of shorter duration and greater

predictability, such as natural disasters. On the other hand, anxiety and stress during COVID-19 pandemic were attributed to the pandemic and not to neuroticism. This explains why neuroticism decreased during the peak of the pandemic (Sutin et al., 2020).

These and many other studies confirm the universal responses and behaviours in crisis conditions that are associated with prevented personal control and that have a strong perceived relevance because of their existential nature, namely those associated with personal survival and the survival of loved ones, and the place of personality predispositions that can reverse signs in stable and unstable conditions.

Of greater interest are the few longitudinal studies that have tracked changes following the process of adaptation to prolonged crises. We see this as important line for delineating a model of support in volatile environments that can also be applied in stable environments and as a preventive resource for future crises.

One study found that positive mood declined early in the spread of the virus, but returned to pre-pandemic levels once measures had been implemented (Foa et al., 2020).

The most informative study is the study of changes in attitudes and personality traits conducted at five time points: pre-pandemic, at the onset of the pandemic and later in 2020, 2021 and 2022 with 7100 respondents (Sutin et al., 2022). At the onset of the pandemic there had been a decrease in neuroticism with no change in other personality traits. In the course of adaptation the opposite effect had been observed, with neuroticism returning to pre-pandemic levels at the expense of declines in all other personality traits, with specific profiles of different ages (youth, middle and late adulthood). At the onset of the crisis, the greatest decline in neuroticism had been observed in the oldest people, followed by middle-aged people and a non-significant decline in youths. In the 2021 and 2022 surveys the decline in neuroticism continued, but without statistically significant difference for middle and late adulthood. In contrast, youths during this period showed a significant increase in neuroticism compared to pre-pandemic levels. They had much greater decreases in agreeableness and consciousness. The authors explain these changes in several ways. Firstly, before the pandemic, neuroticism was attributed to personality dispositions, whereas the pandemic provided an explanation for this and, at the same time, guidelines for coping or measures at the behavioural level that did not exist before the pandemic. Keeping one's distance, hand washing and other guidelines appear to have had a temporary positive effect. The different patterns of change observed during adaptation have been analysed in relation to national and global trust measures, the prolonged period of restricted social contact, and teleworking (Sutin et al., 2022). We consider this new lineage and dataset to be highly significant, and given the age differences and opportunities for in-depth analysis.

### **Changes in personality traits and dispositions following interventions**

There are numerous published results providing evidence of changes in personality traits as a result of targeted interventions, such as mindfulness facilitation (Van den Hurk et al., 2011; Stieger et al., 2019), the influence of values (Roccas et al., 2002),

and others. In general, various benefits have been highlighted, for example, that increasing mindfulness and reducing neuroticism can improve mental health (Bleidorn et al., 2022), and that it is important to work with a preventive purpose to change traits in a direction that ensures more favourable functioning. It is emphasised that personality traits are not "fixed", but are plastic and change following specific experiences or interventions, as well as depending on the goals set for trait change (Anglim et al., 2020). Along these lines is the finding of a positive reciprocity between personality traits and well-being, which is not considered as predicted primarily by personality traits or the environment - well-being partly reflects the expression and trajectories of personality traits, and vice versa, thus the expression and changes in personality traits may partly reflect the levels and trajectories of well-being (Keyes et al., 2015).

In other words, changes in well-being may cause changes in personality traits, and vice versa. We make an analogous claim about the interaction and dynamic relationships between personality traits and dispositions. Behaviours correspond to and support traits, and traits create the conditions for the establishment of behavioural patterns and dispositions. Attitudes, as defined by personality traits and dispositions, can be situated within a framework of stability and plasticity. We considered the model of dynamics reflected in cybernetic theory (DeYoung, 2015) as a broad explanatory framework for traits as phenotypic structures. The role of personality traits in relation to dispositions, and the interaction between them, determines the personality-environment balance, stability and flexibility at any given time. In this regard, we note the negative effect of very high consciousness and plasticity on the relationship between problem-oriented coping and self-esteem and mindfulness with well-being, which makes the relationship sensitive at very high levels of organisation and dispersion, especially in crisis conditions. This is complemented by the neutralising effect of neuroticism on the relationship between mindfulness and well-being. Taking into account the stability of personality traits this leads to the conclusion of an interaction rather than a simple addition of the factors that predict well-being and an explanation of the complex interactions between them, as well as considering well-being in a dynamic circular model in which it is not just an outcome but part of the process.

As a result of the training, a positive trend of increased coping and adaptive learning potential was reported in some volunteers, which is not targeted as a specific need and confirms the resilience of attitudes and behaviours that require ongoing action to achieve meaningful change. The stable results are reported both after the training and six months after its for significant increase of the meaning of life in the experimental group. Irrespectively the other changes are only on individual level in some of the participants, the explanation of which is the small group of piloting and voluntary nature, may be also the period, and given the strong prediction of meaning in life we consider this a first step in confirming the multidirectional possibilities of stimulating the learning of effective models of self-regulation, active reflection and self-reflection.

## **Dynamic model of well-being**

An indicative comparison of the results obtained in this study and the meta-analyses presented on the relationships between personality traits and subjective and psychological well-being reveals some similarities, confirming the universal effect of personality traits and their place in the prediction of well-being. At the same time, contrary to the traditionally assumed stability of personality traits, a growing number of publications report rapid changes in personality traits within one year in crisis situations (Sutin et al., 2022) and within three months of interventions (Stieger et al., 2019). Many studies have demonstrated the relative predictive power of personality traits. In terms of stability over time well-being also shows stability. At the same time, the influence of changes in personality traits on experienced well-being has been reported, as well as the reverse effect of changes in experienced well-being that can modify personality traits.

With regard to the role of adaptive and maladaptive behaviours and coping strategies, we also consider the influence of the context and the framework of self-determination and choice in prediction of well-being. The context determines the framework within which individual choices are made, with a share of stable personal dispositions in this process. In contexts that are seen as relatively stable, or that have clear predictability in terms of consequences and duration, the interaction between personal dispositions and personality traits has a prominent place. Conversely, in conditions that are described as having a high degree of indeterminacy and unpredictability, as well as predetermining a universal pattern of adaptation, context is dominant.

The question of the place of human behaviour and the importance of the person or situation as a determinant is addressed in detail by Karastoyanov (2018), who traces the history of the discussion from the roots of Plato's and Aristotle's opposition of the person and situation positions to the answer found. The solution described is not the summation of personality variables, which influence behavioural dispositions and situational characteristics, which influence situational effects, but tracing the interaction between them - how people respond to different situations according to their individual characteristics. We used this idea to search for a model that considers the interaction of adaptive mechanisms and personality traits as determinants of self-actualisation and effective performance including in crisis conditions.

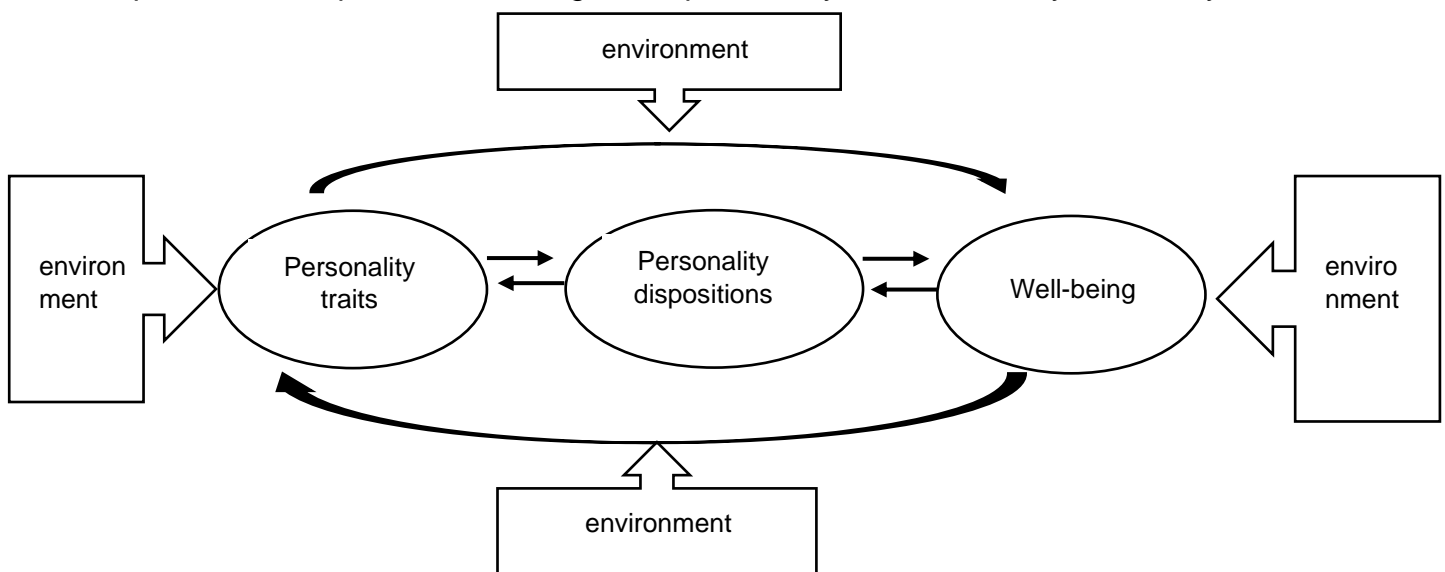
The different patterns of relations between dispositions and traits with well-being clearly show that both constructs have significant effects. Both the low to moderate level of correlation between well-being and personality traits reported in the studies and their heterogeneous relationships with external variables support the position that personality dispositions and traits have their own independent effects as well as being interrelated. Adding the effects of each variable completes the explanatory model. Behaviours correspond to and support traits, and traits set the stage for the development of patterns of behaviour and attitudes. Understanding the causal mechanisms underlying these relationships can contribute to understanding individual differences in adjustment models. We outline the following basic positions:

1. Personality traits, personality dispositions, and well-being are relatively stable over time.



2. Adaptation to the environment leads to a change in personality dispositions due to what is perceived as the most adaptive solution for a given context.
3. For well-being, dispositions have a higher predictive value, and in the long run, dispositions can modify or support traits.
4. Personality traits influence well-being and dispositions.
5. Individual variables, especially age and self-performance, measured through income and commitments, are also important.
6. Well-being is best explained by the inclusion of individual variables, personality traits and personality dispositions, but what matters is not mechanical summation, but taking into account the specificity of the interaction.
7. Well-being itself can be seen not only as an outcome, but also as part of the process, since it determines the perspective of perception of the environment and of the self, which determines the willingness to act and thus stimulates or inhibits effective personality dispositions and personality traits.

This is outlined in the model in Figure 13. In the long run, the model can be seen as a process of effective self-regulation that can be stimulated by learning as preventive promotion of optimal functioning of the personality, viewed as a cybernetic system.



*Figure 13. Model of the dynamic interaction of well-being factors*

The model can be used as a framework that describes the process of adaptation to the environment and allows for individualisation according to personality profiles. At this stage the lack of sufficient data outlines the directions for future research. The model can be used in both research and practical application at group and individual levels to support personal resources as part of the learning and growth and can be part of formal and informal educational processes. The importance of applying a preventive and resource-building approach is considered important for future and ongoing conditions of uncertainty, instability and crisis, where it can support effective management of the environment and self-regulation and maintain perceived wellbeing and an active mindful attitude.

## **DISCUSSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES**

Overall, our expectations are confirmed. Personality traits and dispositions directly and indirectly determine the level of experienced well-being. Personality traits have weak and moderate predictive effects, while also moderating the relationships between personality dispositions and well-being. Personality dispositions predict experienced well-being to a greater extent than personality traits. The individual components of well-being are determined by distinct and common predictors, and their effects can be viewed along the general lines of the two perspectives, stability and plasticity, as determinants of effective personal self-regulation.

Personality traits have both direct and moderating effects, as well as an indirect effect as they influence personality dispositions. Weak to moderate relationships are expected not only because they have been reported in several studies, but also because traits do not directly predict well-being, but lead to it through their effect on the process of self-regulation and the choice of proactive or protective behaviours, and are themselves influenced by experienced well-being and individual variables. The pattern of interaction is determined by the characteristics of the environment - the conditions of the crisis experienced and its specificity - duration, globality, unpredictability and existential significance - determines the context of individual responses. The overall complexity can be illustrated as a cycle of supporting and hindering a sense of personal control and search for the most adaptive coping mechanisms. Well-being is determined by the cumulative influence of the interaction between personality traits and personality dispositions occurring in the course of self-regulation and adaptation to the environment.

Well-being and its components are discriminatively distinct but also highly interconnected, and are determined both generally and specifically by personality traits and dispositions, individual variables and environmental factors. It is important to note that in addition to differences in the predictors of well-being components, the models share common predictors.

Meaning in life emerged as the strongest predictor with an independent effect, for which no mediated relationships with well-being were found. Future research should focus on extending the reported effects of mindfulness, plasticity and stability, which at high levels of individual factors - in this study mindfulness, problem-focused coping potential and self-esteem - have an inhibitory effect on experienced well-being. In terms of the mediating effect of traits, the balance between plasticity and stability, as well as individual traits such as openness to experience, either strongly defocus or strongly focus and adhere to the choices made, have an effect on well-being and its components, for which balance is central. The importance of neuroticism, which fully moderates the relationship between mindfulness and happiness, is also interesting for future research.

Of particular interest for future research is the possibility of grouping the study of personality dispositions and behaviours aimed at promoting a balanced way of finding security in stability into the plasticity and stability lines. We also see this possibility in the construct of meaning in life and in proactive and problem-focused coping, as well as in mindfulness: the parallel search for meaning and maintenance of meaning in life,

proactive coping aimed at new possibilities, and problem-focused coping as providing stability, perceiving all possibilities and accepting them, analogous to mindfulness. Research and practice to build such a disposition can be used to promote plasticity and stability as two mutually supportive lines of development.

The fact that the results we obtained are similar to the data reported on personality traits and their relationship with well-being in periods of stability - 2000-2019 (Anglim et al., 2020), despite the different periods, methods and, above all, individuals studied, attests to the robustness of the effect of personality traits. This is supported by the relationship between personality dispositions such as self-esteem and learned helplessness. To some extent personality traits, and to a greater extent personality dispositions, determine the importance of personal adaptive potential and developmental resources, and these retain a stable influence. With regard to the position that behaviour is predicted mainly by situations than by traits, it is important to consider the changeable and dynamic nature of personality traits (Bleidorn et al., 2022). Personality traits develop over the lifespan and amidst the plethora of research on their stability and age dynamics, there is little that provides a definitive answer to when, how, and why personality traits change. More suggestive findings indicate changes in crisis situations and following interventions.

A major focus of this study is on the emergent effects of context, particularly living in conditions of prolonged global crisis. This highlights new research areas and interventions and prevention. A step in this direction is the proposed model, which takes into account the complex dynamic interaction between environment, personality predictors, and well-being. It is important to consider the role of environment and personality in individual adaptation. In conditions of crisis, fear for life and health, financial instability, social distancing and uncertainty, the effect of personality traits and individual variables persists, but it weakens and changes the pattern and sign of the relationships depending on the situation. The specificity of the perceived environment and situation determines the universality of the pattern of response to high uncertainty and indeterminacy, becoming a supra-individual pattern of adaptation compared to adaptation in a stable, familiar and predictable environment.

In this research, we have attempted to trace the relationship between personality traits and dispositions in the aggregate, taking into account the hierarchical approach to traits, including happiness and flourishing as aspects of well-being. We consider cybernetic theory primarily from the perspective of conceptualising personality as an adaptive cybernetic system that strives to survive and achieve its goals, processing information from the environment and the specific context.

The possibility of learning adaptive behaviours was examined against the background of reported findings on changes in personality traits, personality dispositions, and environmental influences. We argue that the limited evidence on the long-term consequences of living in a global existential crisis, complemented by unstable data in national contexts, raises questions not only about responses and effects on well-being and personality traits, but also about inferring trajectories and providing opportunities for individuals to build effective self-regulation. The results of profiling against individual

characteristics and the reported evidence of increased vulnerability can be used to tailor proposed strategies.

Despite the inevitable limitations inherent in a separate cross-sectional study, we believe that it leads to suggestion of a general framework, outlining the specificity and commonality in the interaction of personality factors and environmental specificity, with consideration of individual differences in a general framework for determining the dynamics of well-being and its individual components as a result of adaptation to environmental changes depending on the specificity of the context. On the basis of the research results presented and the training carried out, it can be concluded that not only interventions but also the learning process can be included in order to stimulate personal adaptive resources. We consider this issue to be particularly relevant in the context of ongoing crises and the prospect of finding various adverse expressions in individual terms and, as a counterpoint established coping resources to sustain self-regulation under conditions of uncertainty and indeterminacy. The research and practice directions outlined here will be expanded in our future work.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

1. A holistic approach to the study of well-being and its components has been applied, taking into account the complex factors and interactions of personality traits, personality dispositions, individual variables and the environment. Based on this, a dynamic model for measuring and promoting well-being of research and applied relevance is derived.
2. The influence of the environment is analysed in terms of universal and personality-determined responses and perceived perspective. Emphasis is placed on the experience of crisis and the determinacy of predictable outcomes and expectations that condition adaptive choices and self-regulation. Findings on the place of personality traits in stable and unstable conditions are summarised.
3. The heuristic potential of cybernetic theory and the position that the hierarchy of categories provides different profiling and prediction possibilities depending on the goals set is substantiated.
4. The possibility of applying the aggregate categories of plasticity and stability, which define optimal self-regulation to personality dispositions is conceptualized, and the line of operationalizing instruments for measurement is suggested.
5. Possibilities for promotion of experienced well-being as part of the process of learning and mental health prevention are presented, and directions for expanding work in the perspective of learning effective models of personal functioning in the positive psychology paradigm are highlighted. Stimulation of internal resources and the capacity for effective self-regulation is given priority as resource for long-term optimal functioning in the face of current and future crises.

### Publications related to the dissertation topic

1. Papazova, E., **Bakracheva, M.** (2021). Bulgarian adaptation of Trapnell and Campbell's rumination-reflection scale, *Bulgarian Journal of Psychiatry*, 6(3), 38-43, ISSN SSN 2367-8828, Ref. Scopus [<https://bulgarian-journal-of-psychiatry.bg/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/BJP-63-2021.pdf>]
2. **Bakracheva, M.**, Zamfirov, M. (2021). In search of integrativity of sciences: the principle of supplementarity in the story of Pauli and Jung. Annual of the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", *Book of Educational Studies*, volume 114, 82-106.
3. **Bakracheva, M.**, Pavlov, D. (2021). Delivery of intergeneration business course at secondary and high schools as a career orientation and prevention of immigration tool, *SocioBrains*, 80, 48-57.
4. Papazova, E., **Bakracheva, M.** (2021). Bulgarian adaptation of Identity Distress Scale, *Vocational Education*, 23(4), 359-369, <https://doi.org/10.53656/voc21-4.3dist>
5. **Bakracheva, M.** (2022). *Learned Helplessness and Self-handicapping*, St. Kliment Ohridski University Press, ISBN 978-954-07-5378-2
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