

Vatovec & Ferrer: Sustainable well-being challenge: a student-centered pedagogical tool linking human well-being to ecological flourishing

Supplemental Material

Sustainable Well-Being Challenge Assignment Overview

What is the point of these assignments? If the goal of environmental health is to increase beneficial environmental exposures and decrease harmful environmental exposures, then there is a critical need to identify activities that increase human well-being without releasing carbon. According to Nic Marks, there are 5 key behaviors that make people happy and also have no carbon footprint. This semester we will test this assumption through a series of "sustainable well-being challenges."

For each challenge, please:

1. Choose an activity that allows you to try something new or connect with new people.
2. Just before starting the activity, complete the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) survey. Calculate your positive affect score and negative affect score using the directions on the bottom of the survey.
3. Participate in your activity, noting all the materials you use during the activity that have a carbon footprint.
4. Just after completing the activity, complete the PANAS survey again and calculate your scores.

BRING THE FOLLOWING TO CLASS ON THE ASSIGNED DAY FOR GROUP DISCUSSION:

- Your before/pre- and after/post-activity PANAS scores (and calculate the difference)

For example, to calculate the difference for your Positive Affect: if your pre-activity positive affect score is 20 and the post-activity positive affect score is 25, then the difference is $25 - 20 = +5$ (you were 5 points happier after the activity than before it).

To calculate the difference in Negative Affect: if your pre-activity negative affect score was 18 and your post-activity negative affect was 9, then the difference is $9 - 18 = -9$ (your unhappiness was 9 points lower after the activity).

- A short description of the carbon footprint of the activity

To better understand what types of materials are most important when calculating a carbon footprint, see the EPA Carbon Footprint Calculator, or The Nature Conservancy Carbon Calculator.

- A written reflection (300 words maximum) of your assessment of whether Nic Marks' assumption is correct that this activity "makes you happy without costing the planet."

Assignment Due Dates

Week 2 (date): social connection challenge (e.g. meet-up with a classmate to share a meal; host a game night with friends)

Week 4 (date): mindfulness challenge (e.g. try out a yoga class or online meditation tool)

Week 6 (date): lifelong learning (e.g. try a new recipe or a new craft that you have been meaning to try)

Week 8 (date): helping others (e.g. volunteer at a soup kitchen, food shelf, or children's literacy program)

Week 10 (date): physical activity (e.g. go for a walk, ride a bike, run, etc.)

Week 12 (date): Final Reflection (see below)

Sustainable Well-being Challenge Final Reflection

Complete the following and bring to class for discussion.

Challenge type	CHANGE from pre- to post- <u>Positive</u> Affect (if increase indicate +, if decrease indicate -)	CHANGE from pre- to post- <u>Negative</u> Affect (if increase indicate +, if decrease indicate -)	Well-being ranking Place a #1 next to the activity that you think most supported your well-being, then #2...through #5 (least supported your well-being)	Carbon footprint ranking Based upon your best estimate of carbon cost of the materials you used to complete the challenge, rank your activities from highest (#5) to lowest (#1)	YES or NO Do you agree that this activity improved your well- being without costing the planet?
Social connection					
Helping others					
Mindfulness					
Lifelong learning					
Physical activity					

- Briefly describe what you did for each challenge activity and why you think it did or did not support your well-being without costing the planet.
 1. Social connection:
 2. Helping others:
 3. Mindfulness:
 4. Lifelong learning:
 5. Physical activity:
- In 300 words or less, describe whether or not your experience, overall, does or does not support Nic Marks' claim that these activities can make people happy without costing the planet.
- Based upon the evidence you outline above, describe (in 150 words or less) which of the activities you would most encourage your fellow human beings to regularly engage with and why, AND/OR which activities you do NOT recommend people engage with and why.