

Wellbeing – you know it makes sense

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Centre for Well-being
nef (the new economics foundation)



Five ways to wellbeing

Connect...

Connect with the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of those as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

Be active...

Go for a walk or jog. Stop outside. Dance. Play a game. Stretch. Dance. Exercising makes you feel great, but importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

Five ways to wellbeing

Take notice...

Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Notice the changes. Notice the things you are looking at, work, eating, food or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you determine what matters to you.

Five ways to wellbeing

Give...

Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.

Five ways to wellbeing

Keep learning...

Try something new. Redefine an old interest. Sign up for a new course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Pick a hobby. Learn to give an endorsement or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will keep achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.

economics
real wealth
means well-being

enviro
lifestyle
become sustainable

ciety
mmunities need
power and influence

About nef



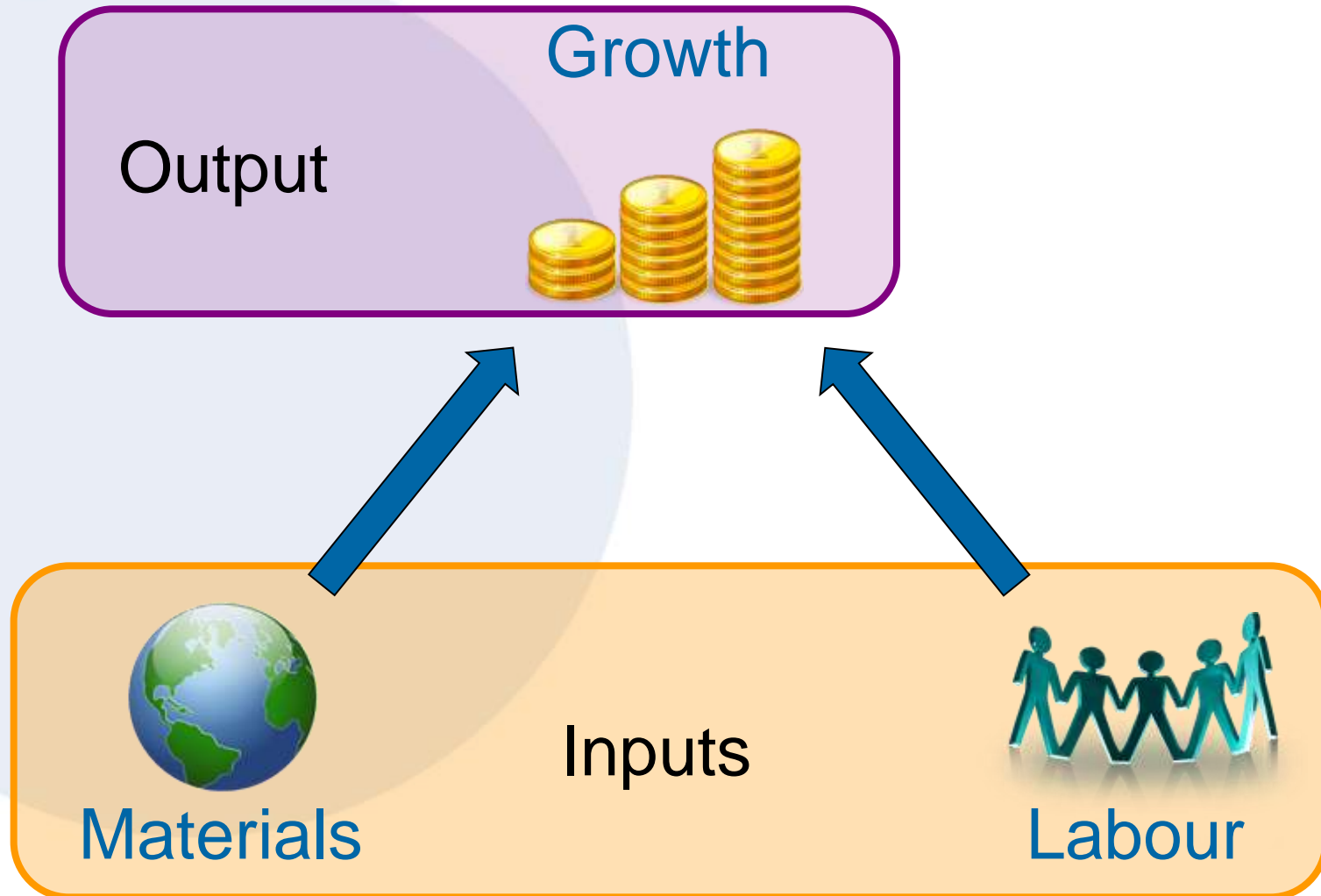
- An *independent* UK think-and-do-tank (founded 1986).
- Working across three areas
 - Sustainable Development
 - Social Justice
 - People's Well-being
- Well-being programme set up in 2001 to ask: *What would policy look like if it focused on improving well-being?*
- Centre for Well-being established in 2006

Outline



- What are we aiming for – what does ‘progress’ mean?
- Why is measuring well-being important?
- And what do we mean by well-being?
- How can we improve our well-being?
- The Five Ways to Well-being
 - Background and Evidence
- Using the Five Ways to Well-being: Examples
- What is the role of government?
- How can we use well-being in policy?
- Measuring national well-being

What we do at the moment



Have we got this the right way round?



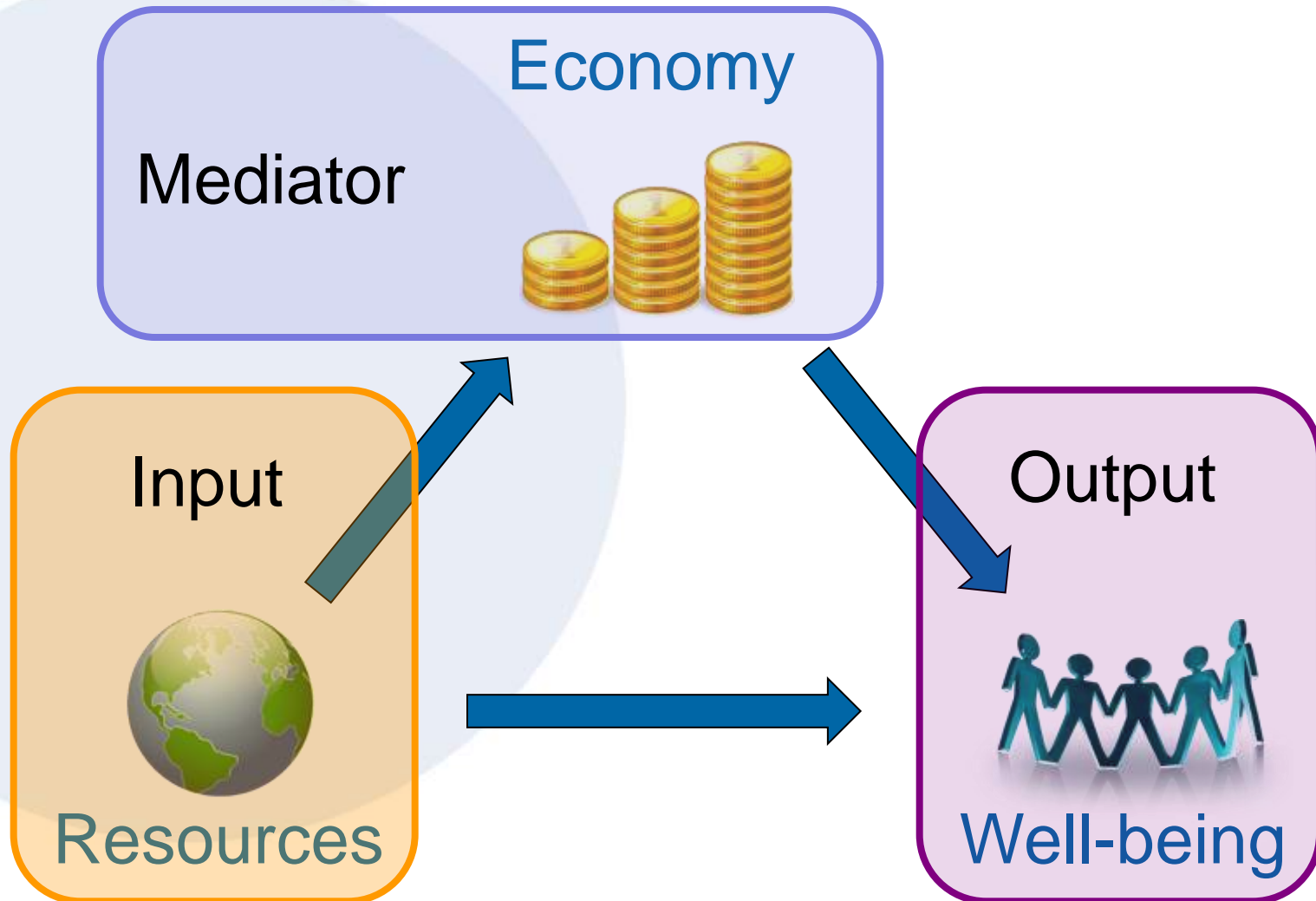
Gross National Product counts air pollution, and cigarette advertising and...the destruction of the redwood and the loss of our natural wonder in chaotic sprawl. It does not allow for the health of our children, the quality of their education or the joy or their play...the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages. It measures everything, in short, except that which makes life worthwhile.

Robert Kennedy, 1968

Economic performance is not intrinsically interesting. No-one is concerned in a genuine sense about the level of gross national product last year or about next year's exchange rate. People have no innate interest in the money supply, inflation, growth, inequality, unemployment Economic things matter only in so far as they make people happier."

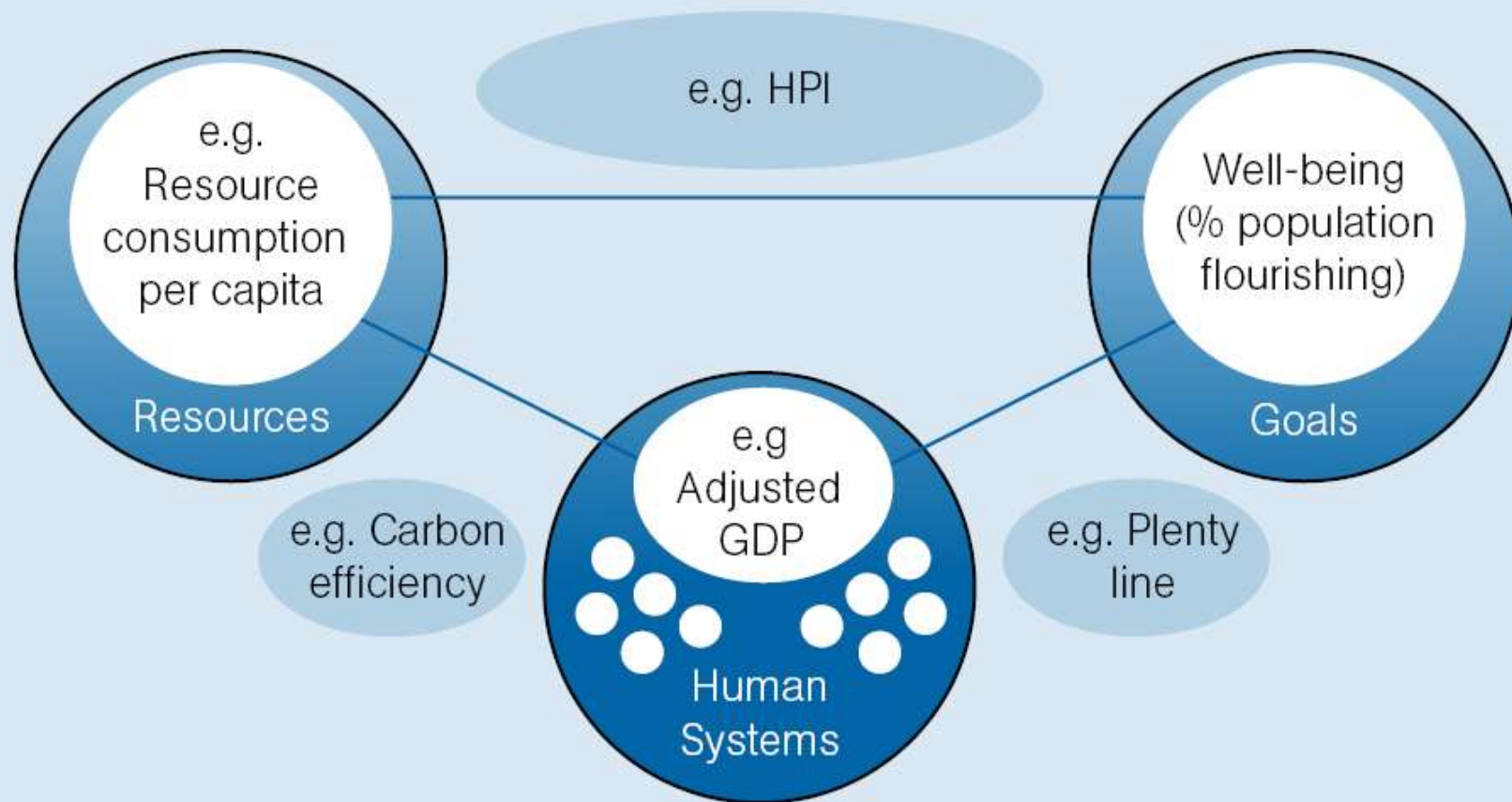
Andrew Oswald, 1980

Thinking differently about progress...



...and measuring it differently

Figure 2. Framework for measuring societal progress



Effective measurement



- What gets measured *matters*
 - Measurement shape our understanding of issues
 - ‘*If you treasure it, measure it*’, Sir Gus O’Donnell
- All the more important when money’s tight...
 - Effective measurement is essential to a strong case for funding
- Demonstrating impact will be critical
 - Plethora of new measures of well-being (including those being developed by the ONS) that can be used to show benefits of projects and initiatives
 - Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment Toolkit

But what is well-being?



Think of a time when
you've felt on top of the
world...

Dynamic model of well-being



**External
Conditions**

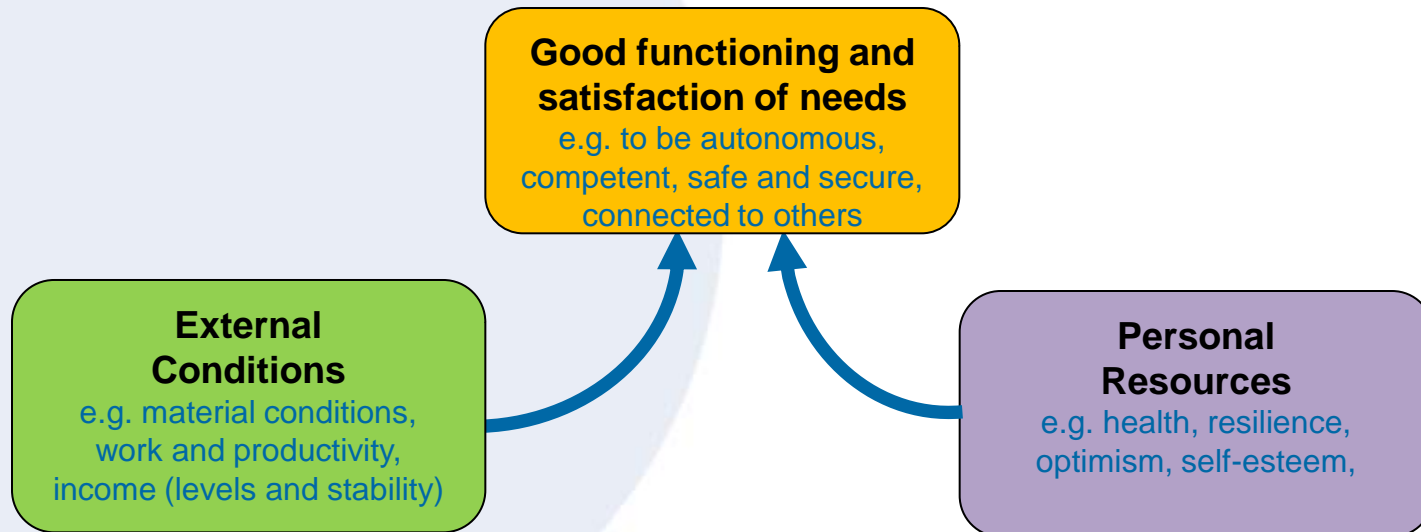
e.g. material conditions,
work and productivity,
income (levels and stability)



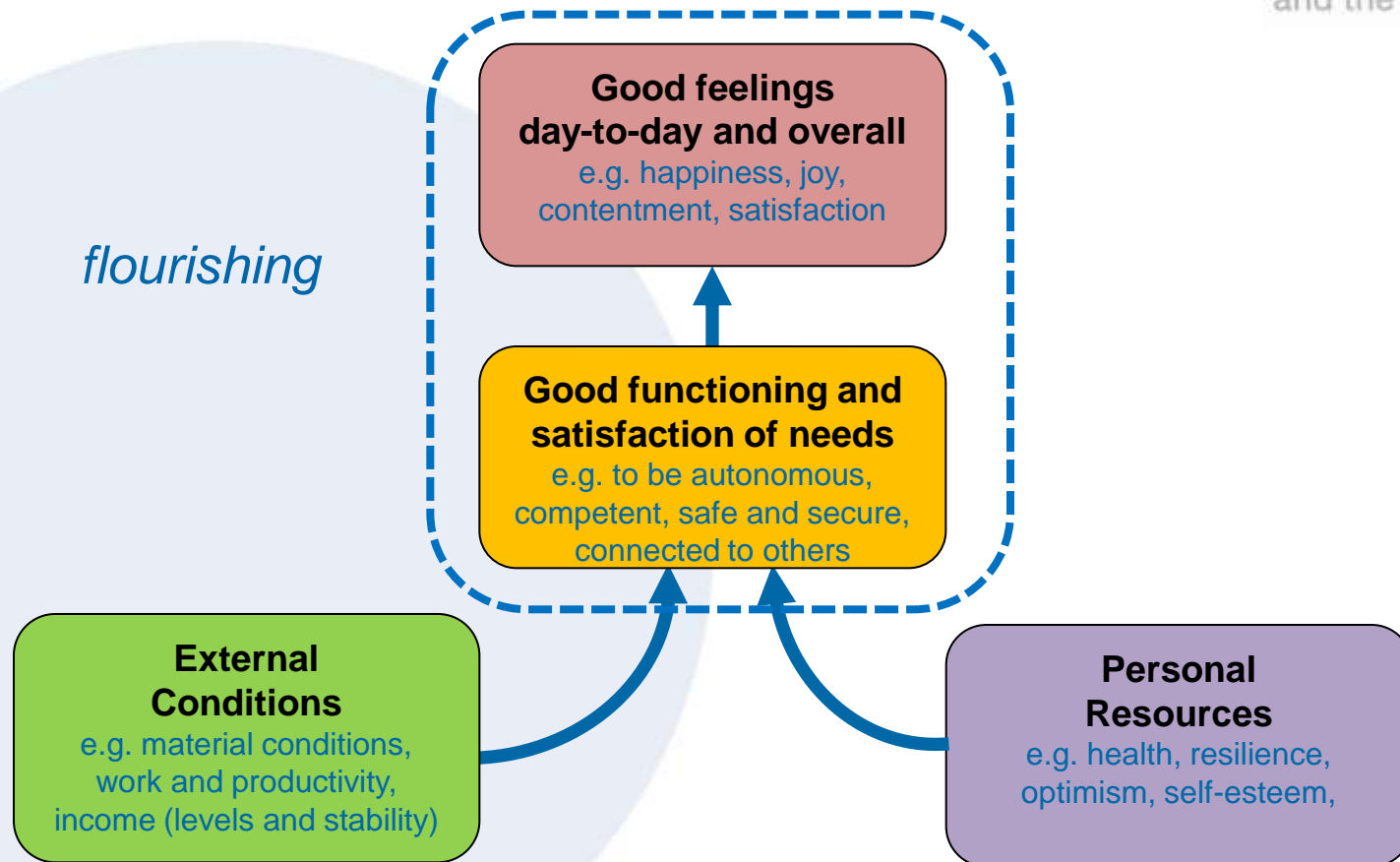
**Personal
Resources**

e.g. health, resilience,
optimism, self-esteem,

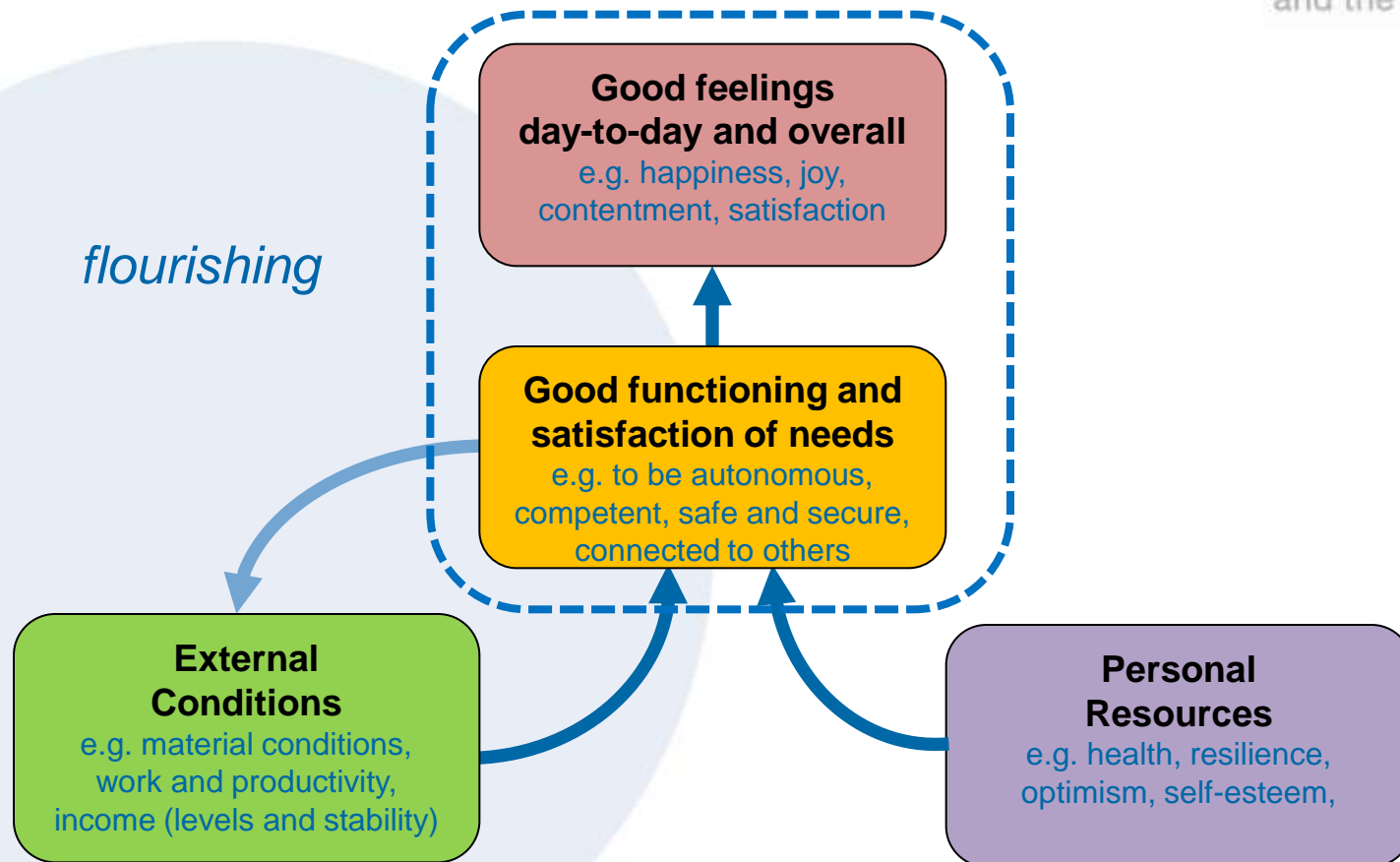
Dynamic model of well-being



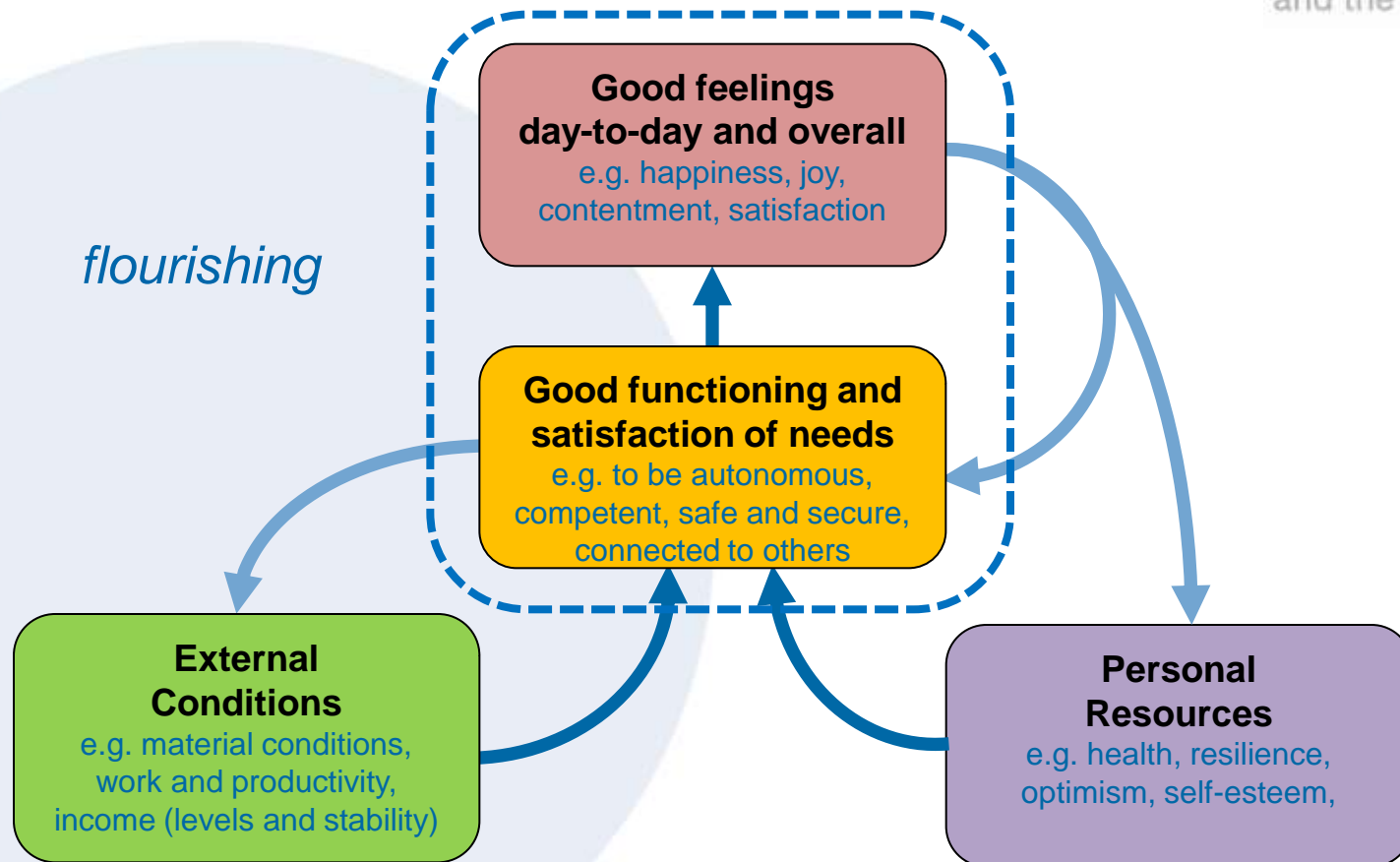
Dynamic model of well-being



Dynamic model of well-being



Dynamic model of well-being

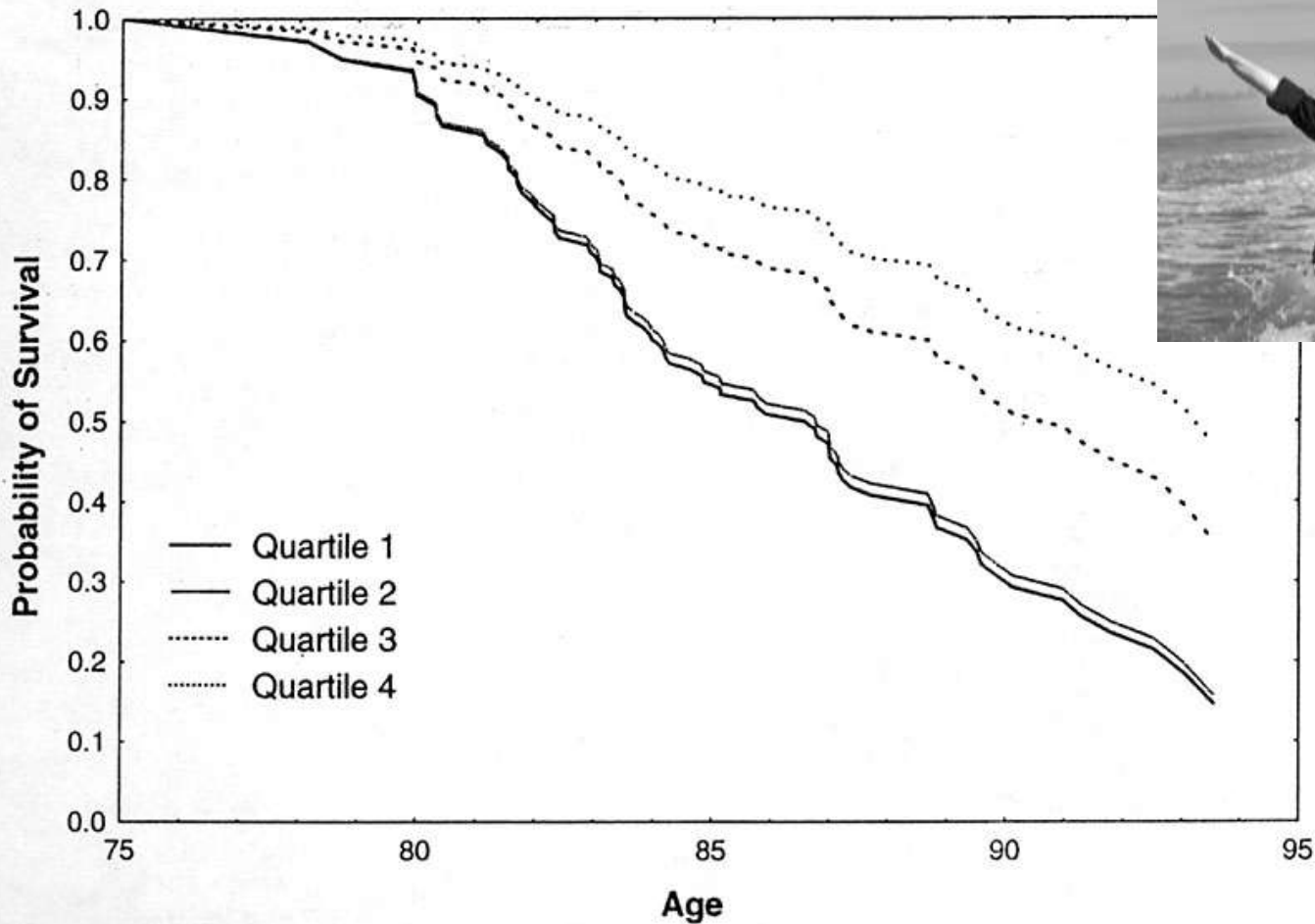


Feedback loops

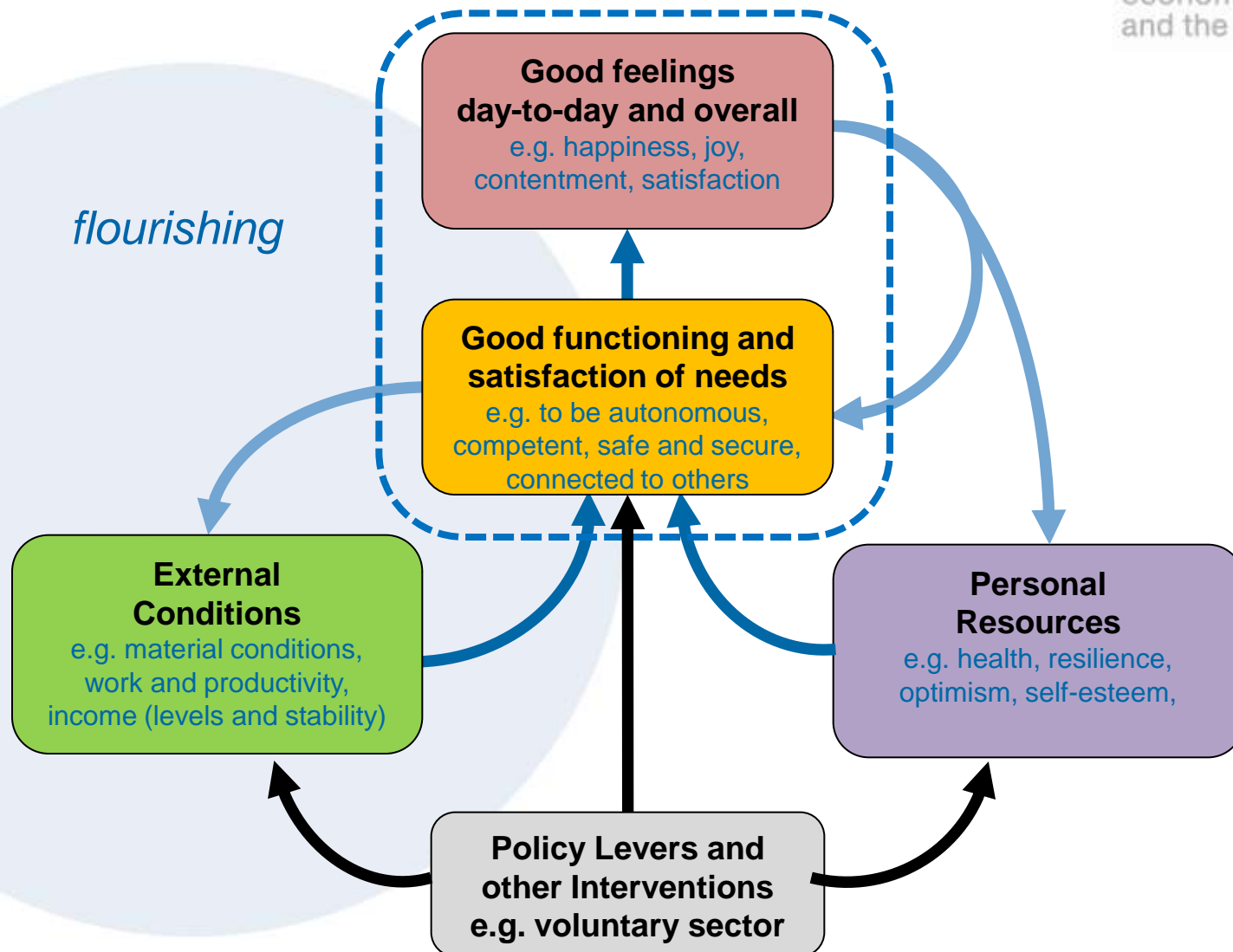
- The ‘Unhappy-well’
 - Unhappy people are more likely to consider themselves ill
 - Happier people absorb more health information and show better adherence to treatment
- Well-being may *preempt* good health
 - Self-reported happiness predicts working days lost through illness 5 years later, likelihood of stroke 6 years later, and of cardio-vascular disease 10 years later.
- Longevity and well-being
 - Happy people live up to 7 years longer, an effect comparable with BMI, smoking or exercise.

Happy Nuns live longer!

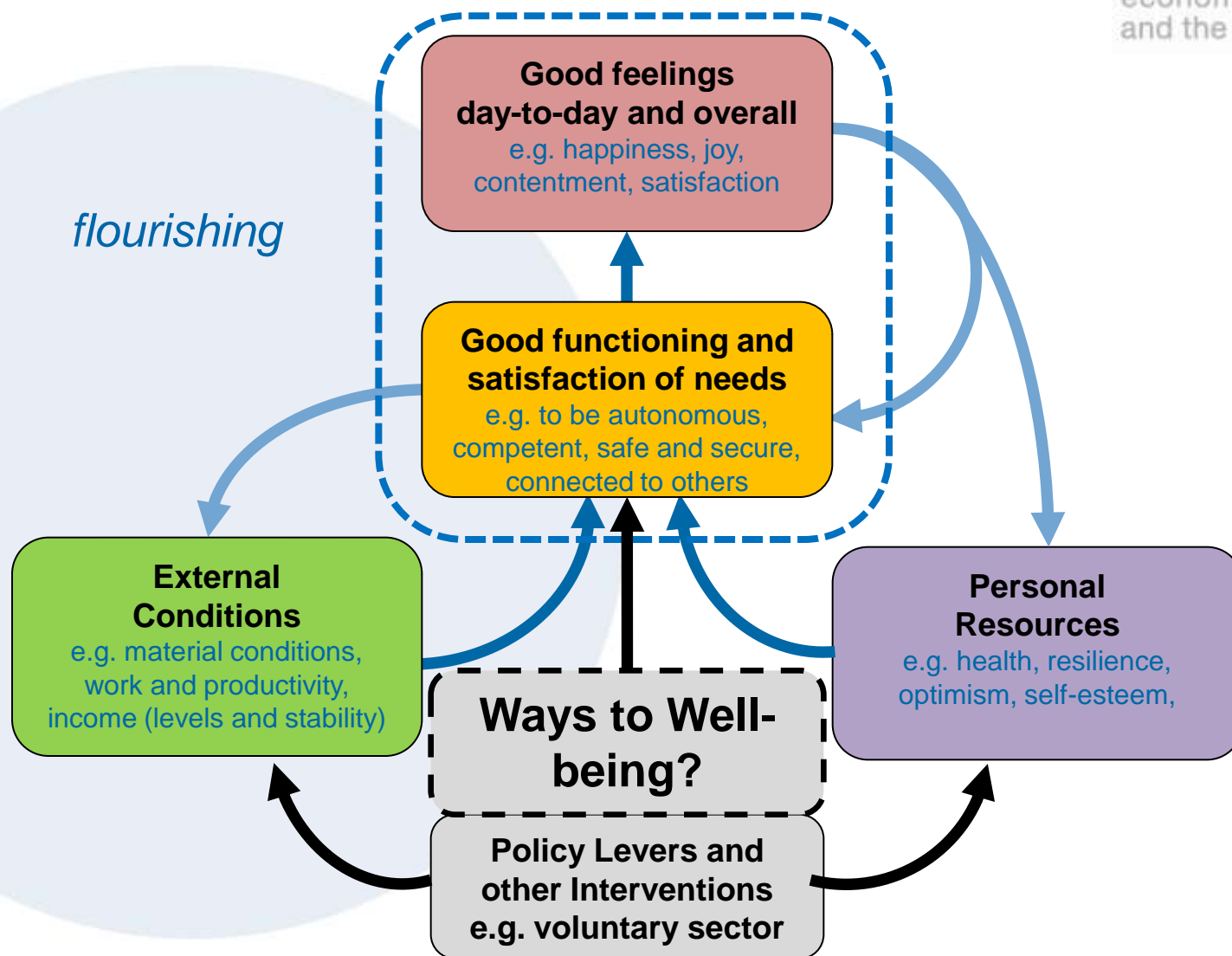
POSITIVE EMOTIONS IN EARLY LIFE



Dynamic model of well-being



Dynamic model of well-being



nef's brief from Foresight



Foresight

**Government
Office for Science**



- What would be the well-being equivalent of “five fruit and veg a day?”
- Evidence-based actions that are memorable, easy to understand and have a wide variety of possible applications

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to wellbeing

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Connect:

A flavour of the evidence



- Belonging to a social network involving communication and supportive relationships found to predict good health and positive wellbeing (Jenkins *et al.*, 2008)
- Primary friendship group size of 3 or less predicts worse mental health in adults (Brugha *et al.*, 2005)
- In a study of undergraduate students, researchers found that “very happy people have rich and satisfying social relationships and spend little time alone relative to average people... good social relationships are... universally important to human mood” (Diener & Seligman, 2002).

Five ways
to wellbeing

Be active...

Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

Be Active: A flavour of the evidence

- Men and women between 25-64 years of age who exercised at least 2-3 times a week experienced significantly less depression, anger, cynical distrust and stress than those exercising less frequently or not at all (Hassmen *et al.*, 2000)
- Older women with higher levels of physical activity less likely to develop cognitive decline (Yaffe *et al.*, 2001)
- Men engaged in high levels of physical activity were 28% less likely to become depressed (Paffenbarger, Lee & Leung, 1994)

Five ways
to wellbeing

Take notice...

Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.

Take notice: A flavour of the evidence

- Practice of mindfulness associated with a number of well-being indicators, in particular self-knowledge and self-regulation (Brown & Ryan, 2003)
- Group mindfulness meditation training program effectively reduces symptoms of anxiety and panic (Kabat-Zinn *et al.*, 1992)
- A mindfulness-based intervention for adults with recurrent depression and anxiety reduced mean levels of depression (35.7 to 17.8) and anxiety (32.0 to 20.5) on the Beck inventories (Finucane & Mercer, 2006)

Five ways
to wellbeing

Keep learning...

Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.

Keep learning: A flavour of the evidence

- Learning in childhood strongly predicts probability of developing depression later in life (Feinstein, 2002)
- A review of literature found that “education can help directly as a therapeutic activity for people with mental health problems” and also has “a preventative effect, whereby learning helps avoid, minimise or address depression” (Schuller *et al.*, 2002)
- A study of older people in adult informal education found that 80% reported positive impacts on self confidence, self perception and ability to cope (Dench & Regan, 2000)

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Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.

Give:

A flavour of the evidence



- Regularly performing random acts of kindness leads to sustained improvements in happiness (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2010)
- People who volunteer weekly report an average life satisfaction of 7.35 points, compared with 6.93 for those who do not – a “sizeable and statistically highly significant” difference (Meier & Stutzer, 2008)
- For people in middle and later life, researchers found that episodes of volunteering lowers depression levels for those over 65, and regular volunteering has benefits for all (Musick & Wilson, 2003)

Who has used the Five Ways?



- NMHDU / NHS Confed project to find out
- To our delight (& slight surprise), lots of people!
 - GPs / PCTs / NHS Trusts
 - Local authorities
 - Voluntary and community groups
 - National charities
 - Central government agencies
- And not just in the UK
 - Picked up as far afield as Australia and New Zealand

But what are they using them for?

How have they been used?



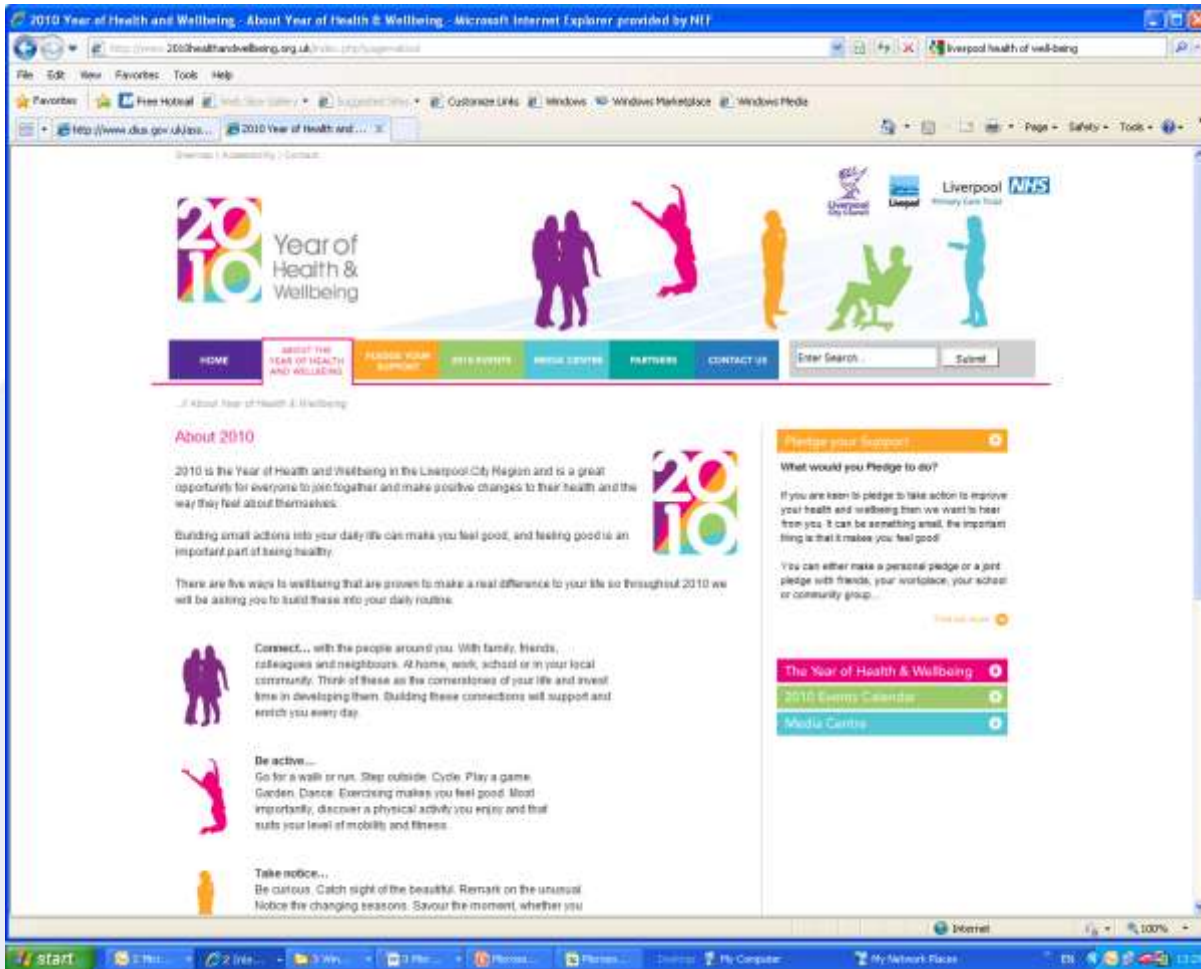
- **Public mental health promotion** e.g. NHS in Worcestershire public information campaign on plasma screens in the waiting rooms of 40 GP surgeries; well-being resources; web resources; leaflets/credit card wallets; workshops with community groups, and workplace well-being sessions
- **Targeted at vulnerable groups** e.g. *DIY Happiness* – innovative project for women in disadvantaged areas of South London; Age Concern; Children and young people (*Five ways and fairy tales*)
- **Local Community** e.g. NHS Western Cheshire Five Ways grants
- **Staff development** e.g. Devon Partnership NHS Trust
- **Needs assessment tool** e.g. NHS Stoke-on-Trent

As a strategic framework

- Liverpool 2010 *Year of Health and Well-being*
 - 2010 Year of Health and Well-being: themed year of activities based around Five Ways
 - Public health campaign but also as an effective way of bringing together diverse actors
 - Provides a “common language” and a simple set of guidelines for developing services and activities



Year of
Health &
Wellbeing



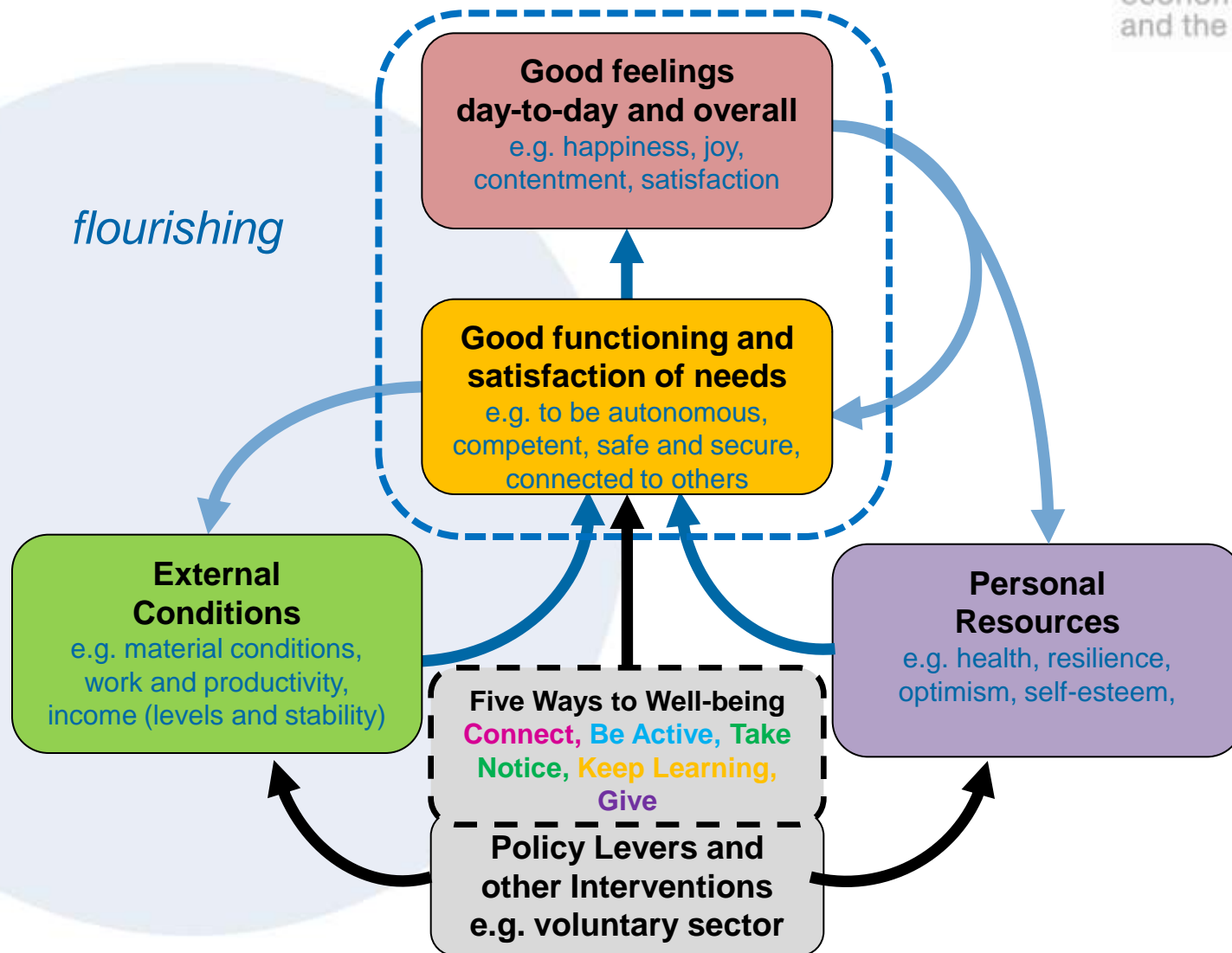
So successful that...



Lots of opportunities to improve well-being through partnership

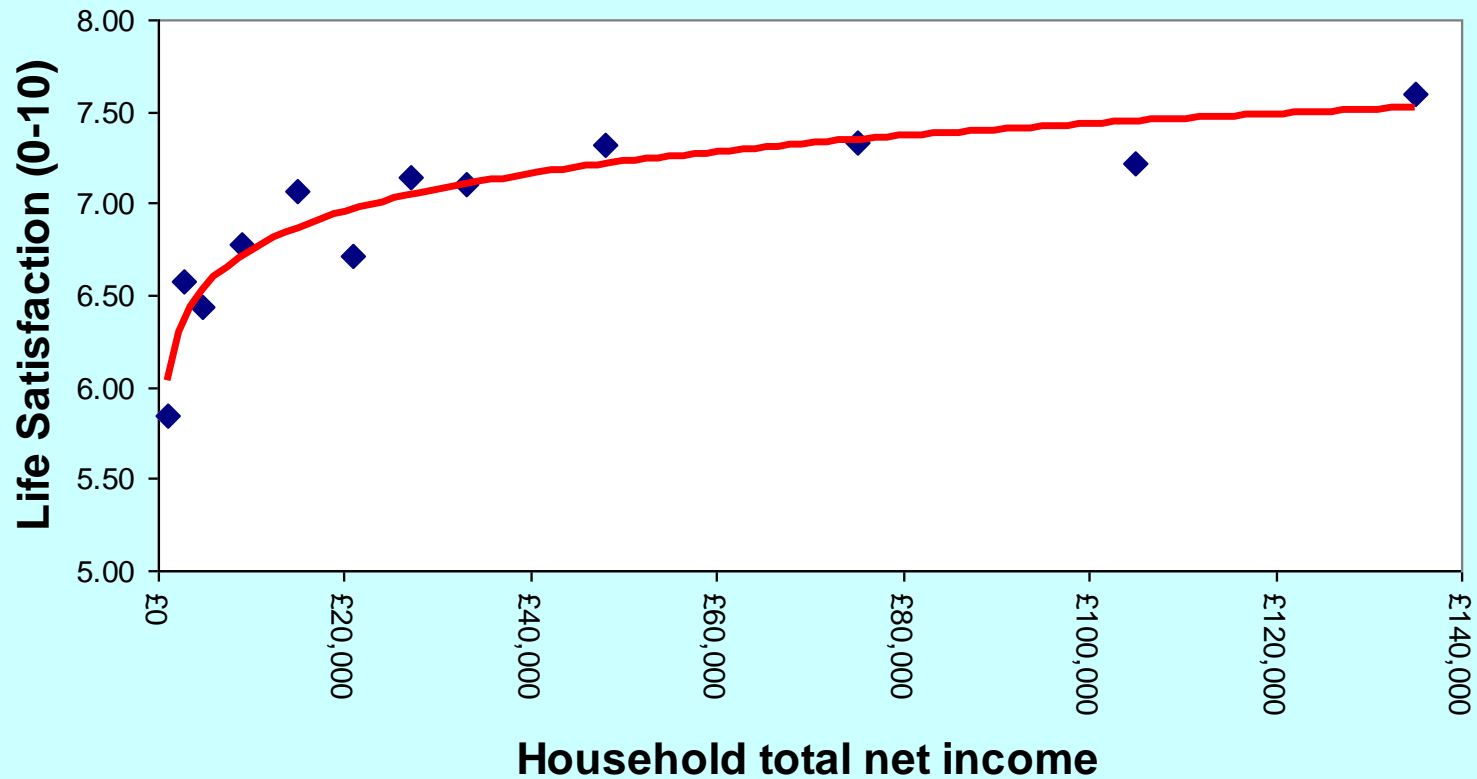
	Children's services	Adult social care	Planning and transport	Housing and community services	Environmental services	Work, worklessness and the local economy
Connect	Inter-generational activities (eg <i>Merton Council</i>)	Local area co-ordination (eg <i>Middlesborough Council</i>)	Designing in traffic-free spaces (eg <i>Sutton Council</i>)	The Big Lunch (eg <i>St Albans City and District Council</i>)	An area-based growing competition (eg <i>Rushmoor Borough Council</i>)	A local procurement policy (eg <i>Camden Council</i>)
Be active	Sports support buddies for disabled young people (eg <i>Nottingham City Council</i>)	Healthy walks scheme (eg <i>Adur District Council</i>)	City centre cycle paths (eg <i>Herefordshire Council</i>)	Enabling council tenants to grow their own food (eg <i>Southwark Council</i>)	Green Gym (eg <i>Bath and North East Somerset Council</i>)	Green space apprenticeships (eg <i>Tamworth Borough Council</i>)
Take notice	Public art project devised in collaboration with young people (eg <i>Bristol City Council</i>)	Arts festival for social inclusion (eg <i>Lambeth Council's Springforward</i> .)	Auditing green space provision (eg <i>South Gloucestershire Council</i>)	Gardening support for vulnerable residents (eg <i>Hampshire County Council</i>)	Resident involvement in wildlife protection (eg <i>Fareham Borough Council</i>)	Helping local people understand the local economy (eg <i>South Somerset District Council</i>)
Keep learning	An online directory of informal learning activities for young people, (eg <i>Essex County Council</i>)	Adult learning on prescription (eg <i>Northamptonshire County Council and partners' Learn 2b scheme</i>)	Identifying sites for self-builders (eg <i>Swindon Borough Council</i>)	Providing training as part of resident involvement (eg <i>South Kesteven District Council</i>)	Community planting day events (eg <i>Banbury Town Council</i>)	Local entrepreneurship coaching (eg <i>Norwich City Council</i>)
Give	Peer support awards for young people (eg <i>Bradford Metropolitan District Council</i>)	Timebanking to encourage skills swapping and reciprocal volunteering (eg <i>Bromley Council</i>)	Supporting volunteer-led walking bus schemes (eg <i>Thurrock Council</i>)	Using peer-support models to enable independent living and residential support (eg <i>Lincolnshire County Council</i>)	Encouraging volunteers to 'adopt' their local area (eg <i>Manchester City Council</i>)	Local business support networks (eg <i>Malvern Hills District Council</i>)

Role of government?



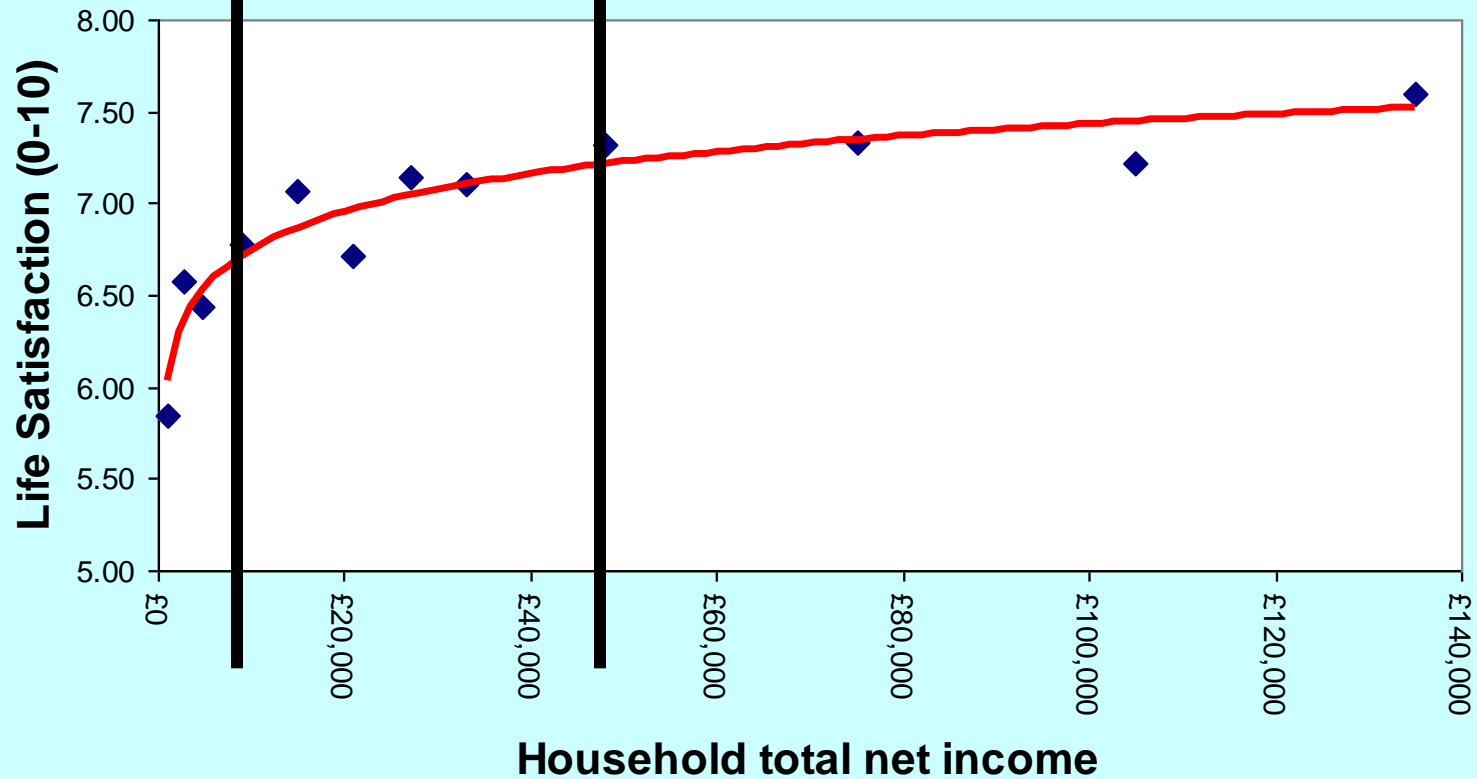
Tax? Diminishing marginal returns of well-being to income

Life satisfaction and Household income in the UK

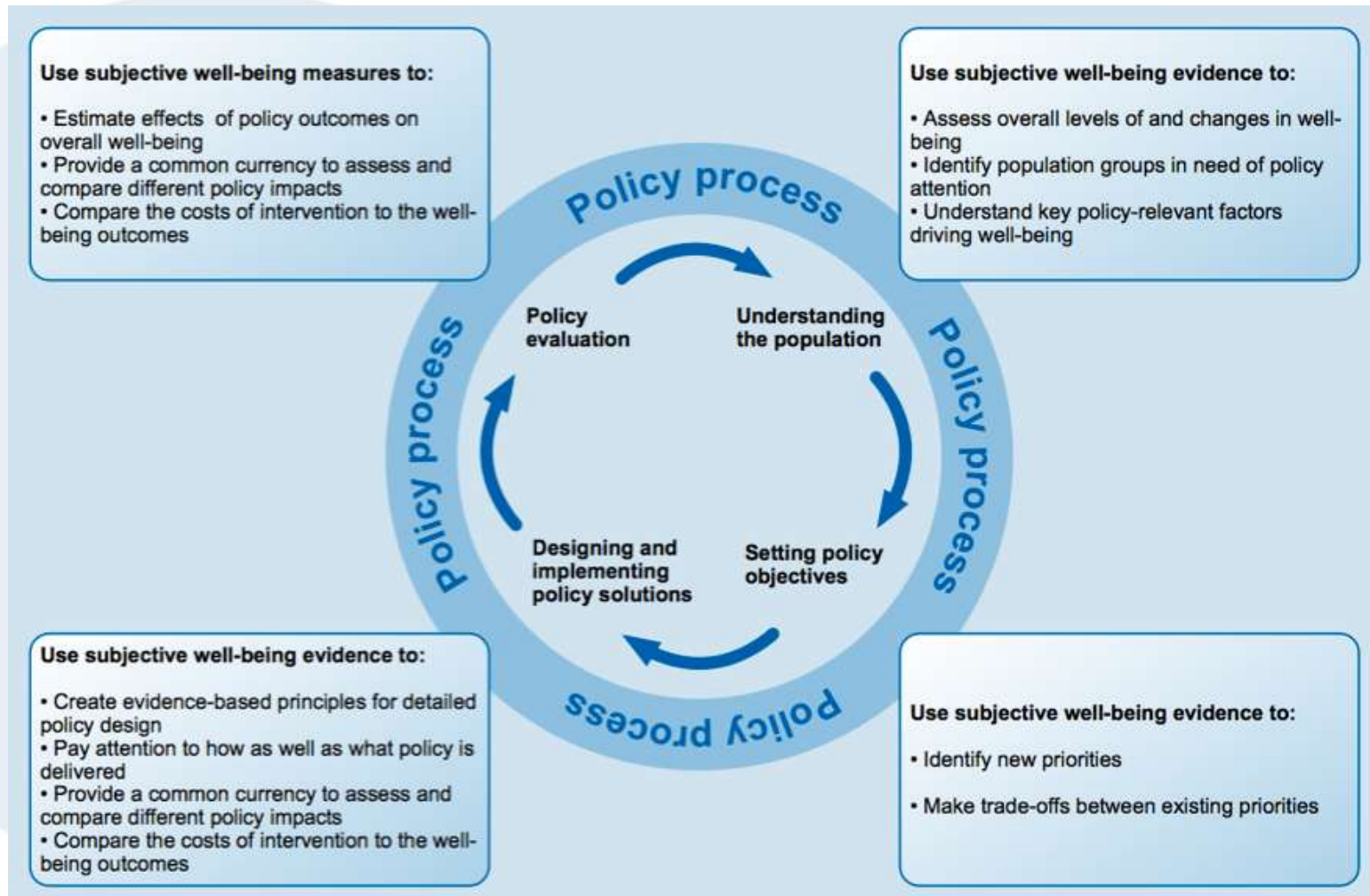


Diminishing marginal returns of well-being to income

Life satisfaction and Household income in the UK



Subjective well-being can be used in the policy process



Examples of how using well-being would lead to policies



- Trade offs
 - Unemployment vs. Inflation
 - Unemployment much larger relative effect on people's well-being
- Identifying new priorities
 - e.g. Poor sleep quality
- Identifying inequalities – knowing where to target policies
 - E.g. age groups, geographical areas
- Providing more information – better understanding of our population

Our national success can be measured using well-being

- In November 2010, Prime Minister David Cameron announced that UK will measure well-being as progress and that policies will be shaped by it.

“... the government is asking the Office of National Statistics to devise a new way of measuring wellbeing in Britain. And so from April [next year], we’ll start measuring our progress as a country, not just by how our economy is growing, but by how our lives are improving; not just by our standard of living, but by our quality of life.”

David Cameron, November 2010



- Office for National Statistics – public debate and survey

Integrated Household Survey



- 200,000 adults surveyed annually
- From April 2011 subjective questions on well-being included:
 - Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
 - Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?
 - Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?
 - Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?
- Opinions Survey – more detailed questions

Conclusions

- The “well-being agenda” is gaining momentum
 - Significant opportunities within reorganisation to embed well-being into ways of working
 - And to shift the way we think about progress
 - But taking advantage of this requires *evidence* – new ONS measures of well-being will help
- Five Ways seem to be effective in helping people understand well-being
- What is the role of government in all this?
 - Integrating well-being into the policy process
 - Using well-being as a measure of national success

Find out more...



nef

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Our contribution to the ONS national debate: *Measuring our progress*

<http://www.neweconomics.org/publications/measuring-our-progress>

Our review of how the Five Ways to Well-being have been used: *Five Ways to Wellbeing: New applications, new ways of thinking*

<http://www.neweconomics.org/publications/five-ways-to-wellbeing>

Our report from LGID: *The role of Local Government in Promoting Well-being*

<http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=23692693>

Foresight

www.bis.gov.uk/Foresight