

# Patterns for Well-being in Life – 9 Patterns for Being in the World

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In this paper, we present Patterns for Well-being in Life, a pattern language that supports people achieve their own way of well-being in their daily life. In this study, we shift our focus on practical aspects of well-being by explaining the concept in the form of pattern language. The elements of Patterns for Well-being in Life were extracted from tips to practice “Four Factors of Happiness”, and have developed into 27 patterns. Patterns for Well-being in Life are constructed in three categories: “Being Oneself,” “Being with Others,” and “Being in the World.” This paper focuses on “Being in the World,” and presents nine patterns to achieve well-being through finding comfort in your surroundings, designing your lifestyle, and finding a new view of the world.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

“Well-being,” is related closely to our way of living and has been an everlasting question in the history of human living. Although it has been a topic in the field of studies such as philosophy, psychology, and health, the definition of well-being is not yet understood enough to guide each person achieve their well-being.

In this study, we present Patterns for Well-being in Life, a pattern language that supports people achieve their own way of well-being in their daily life. By using pattern language as a method, we put focus in finding out basic human behaviors or activities needed to live a well-being life. Although the state of well-being is difficult to understand, we aim to guide people find their own way of creating their well-being in life.

The creation of Patterns for Well-being in Life is and ongoing research, and will continue to have further updates. The language is made of a total of 27 patterns and are constructed in three different categories (Fig 1).

The three categories are the follows:

- **[Category 1] Being Oneself:** about spending time on yourself, learning yourself, and approaching yourself to make and accept yourself as a better person.
- **[Category 2] Being with Others:** about accepting others, communicating with others, and learning the warmth of a team.
- **[Category 3] Being in the World:** about finding comfort in your surroundings, designing your lifestyle, and finding a new view of the world.

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Category 1 Being Oneself			Category 2 Being with Others			Category 3 Being in the World		
Reflect My Journey	My Place	Happiness in My Words	Sharing Hearts	What I can do	Present Thanks	Awareness to Body	Tricks to Possible	Power of Living
Yourself from Others	With Your Supporters	Feelings First	Building Excitement	Discovering Charms	Place to Make Together	Stories of the Objects	Integrating Routine	Place to be Freed
Through Emotion	On My Way	Towards Happiness	Comfortable Relationships	Mission for Society	Tackle Together	Loving Care	Coincidental Possibilities	Sparkles in the World

Fig. 1 Pattern Names

This paper is divided in six sections starting with “introduction.” Second section explains the definition of well-being in the paper by introducing other researches and previous studies that have become basis of our studies. Third section covers making process of patterns, and the fourth details on to three categories of well-being in life. Fifth section shows the list of 9 nine patterns of category 3 in the full version with text and illustrations. In conclusion, we mentioned an overview of further research process.

## 2. DEFINITION OF WELL-BEING

### 2.1 The History of Well-Being Studies

The study on well-being started around more than 2000 years ago, by one of the most famous Greek philosophers, Aristotle. Out of many subjects he covers, he also focuses on philosophy of Eudaimonia, in other words, happiness. Thompson[1] mentions in his study of Aristotle, that Aristotle states explicitly in his book, “Nicomachean Ethics,” that Eudaimonia is the final and utmost goal of human life.

In more modern studies, the word “well-being” became common among a wider range of fields, after the publication of “Subjective Well-Being” by psychologist, Diener [2]. His paper became widely used in many studies and at the same time, the study of well-being began to gain momentum. In the 1900s, Seligman established a new psychology field, positive psychology, where he proposed a theory of PERMA (Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationship, Meaning and Purpose, Achievement).

The word “well-being” mentioned in WHO’s (World Health Organization) definition of health also attracts the attention of well-being in health and medical aspects. According to an article by WHO [3], they mention the definition of mental health as follows:

*Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.*

Additionally, in their constitution, WHO [4] claims that “Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity,” which means that physical, mental and social aspect coincides with the definition of well-being.

Furthermore, recently, the study of well-being has begun to gain more focus in politics and the economic field. For example, the Government of Bhutan’s focus on GNH (Gross National Happiness), and economist Joseph Stiglitz, one of the Nobel Prize winners, points out the importance of well-being in economics in his book, “Mis-measuring Our Lives: Why GDP Doesn’t Add Up”.

As the field of well-being gains momentum, our study focuses on practical aspects by defining tips to apply well-being in daily life. While previous well-being studies have been focused on well-being from philosophical and theoretical aspect, the Four Factors of Happiness [5][6] by Maeno, has given an impact to the field of well-being as one of the first studies that focuses on well-being from the bottom up perspective. By using the Four Factors of Happiness

as bases of our studies, we aim to present practical explanations on well-being. Below, we explain the Four Factors of Happiness.

## 2.2 Four Factors of Happiness

While a lot of well-being studies in the past have focused on the philosophical concept of well-being, Four Factors of Happiness [5][6], study of Maeno, focuses more on practical methods of well-being in life. To extract tips to live well-being, we defined people practicing Four Factors of Happiness as people who live in well-being, then extracted tips in practicing Four Factors of Happiness in their daily life. Therefore, Four Factors of Happiness is referred to our study as conceptual framework of our patterns.

Four Factors of Happiness found by one of the authors, Takashi Maeno, is a list of four factors or elements needed for people’s positive state mentally and psychologically. Four Factors of Happiness “Let’s try it,” “Thank you,” “It will turn out all right!” and “Be yourself.” (Fig.2), are described with casual quotes to interact with the readers.

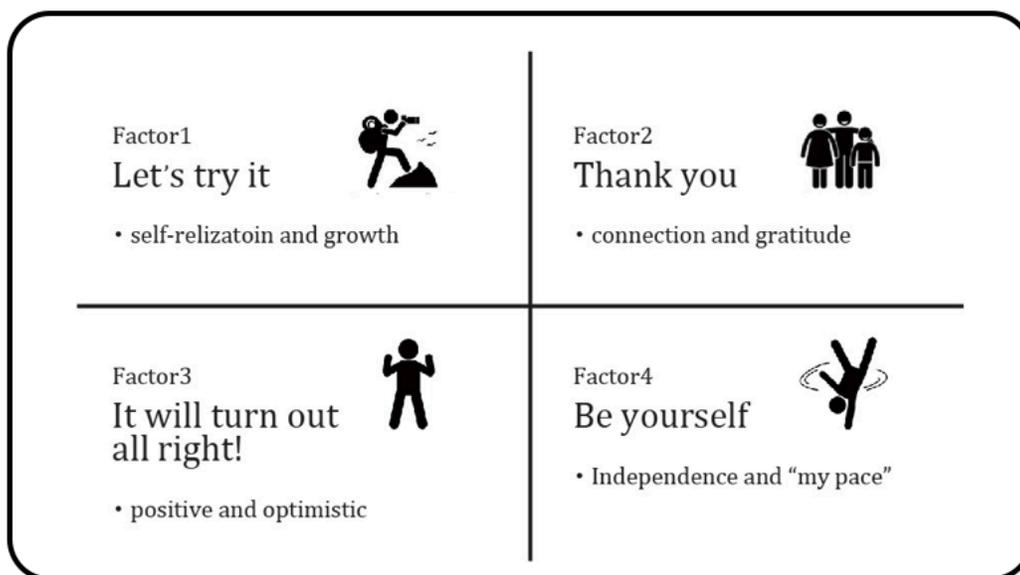


Fig.2. Four Factors of Happiness

As Maeno’s analysis has been presented with the name, Four Factors of “Happiness” in English, he has named his study Four Factors of “shiwase,” in his Japanese study. As the word “shiwase” includes both meanings of happiness and well-being, the difference between happiness and well-being is very vague in this content. Therefore, in this paper, “happiness” is defined as the same meaning as “well-being,” which explains that our study on Patterns for Well-being in Life focuses on the Four Factors of Happiness as a framework to define not happiness, but well-being in daily life.

## 3. MAKING PROCESS OF PATTERNS FOR WELL-BEING

“Patterns for Well-being in Life - 9 Patterns for Being in the World” has been continuously written and revised. Our making process can be divided roughly into four phases. We collected tips from interviews, organized them as data, divided them to three categories, and wrote them out as patterns.

First, we collected tips through an interview called Mining Dialogue [7], a special interview style where interviewer and interviewee engaged in a dialogue to mine out information by asking questions that relate to solution, problem, context. We interviewed 14 people who practice four factors of happiness in daily life and collected specific tips for applying them in daily life. We wrote the tips down on sticky notes to organize after the interview.

Second, we grouped the tips by using KJ method [8] and made 39 clusters, basic form of patterns. The KJ method is a process to “gain full advantage of the emergence that occurs in this step, a note must be brought close to another based on a one-to-one relationship, and not by the guidance of existing categories.” [9] Then, we divided them

into three categories: *understanding yourself, building relations with others, improving more*, which was introduced in our first PLoP paper [10].

Another structuring took place after the PLoP 2018. We looked over the tips we collected from Mining Dialogue and identified key essence for achieving well-being and redefined three categories: *love yourself, love others, love the world*, which was introduced in our second paper for Euro PLoP [11]. Continuous structuring has been done until we reached our last categories: *Being Oneself, Being with Others, Being in the World*. Then, we classified the tips into each category and made nine clusters for one category. In order to grasp the whole, we extracted a solution from each cluster and gave it a name.

Last, we outlined the essence of patterns. We wrote out the solution first and then problem and finally the context and completed 27 patterns.

#### 4. EXPLANATION ON THREE CATEGORIES

Patterns for Well-being in Life are made in three categories: “Being Oneself,” “Being with Others,” and “Being in the World” (Fig.3). As related study, Calvo and Peters, behavioral psychologists have presented three categories for well-being, which is self, social, and transcendent [12].

“Being the World,” about finding comfort in your surroundings, designing your lifestyle, and finding a new view of the world. Patterns include a wide view of the world by looking at the world equally and holds a spiritual point of view. In the past, many researchers have examined the importance of nature in human’s well-being. One of the researchers in the field, Capaldi [13], points out that “the evidence suggests that exposure to nature is a health and well-being promotion strategy that is underutilized (and perhaps unknown) by mental health care providers.” Furthermore, the founder of pattern language, Christopher Alexander, also focuses on spirituality, nature, and life, and explains that it is related to a well-being life. Ed Diener's [14] *Advances in subjective well-being research* mentions that there are findings that the factors of subjective well-being differ depending on the regional culture. In 24 countries, including Japan and China, the concept of happiness comes from "luck", and Diener names it "luck based happiness". In the "luck based happiness", individuals consider themselves to have wide recognition that they are continuously connected with others and the world. This kind of view and positioning themselves in the complex network, is related to the Buddhist thought that is the cultural ground of Asia [14]. As the idea related to this complexity, there is a concept such as "ugin" that there is nothing isolated and unrelated in the world.

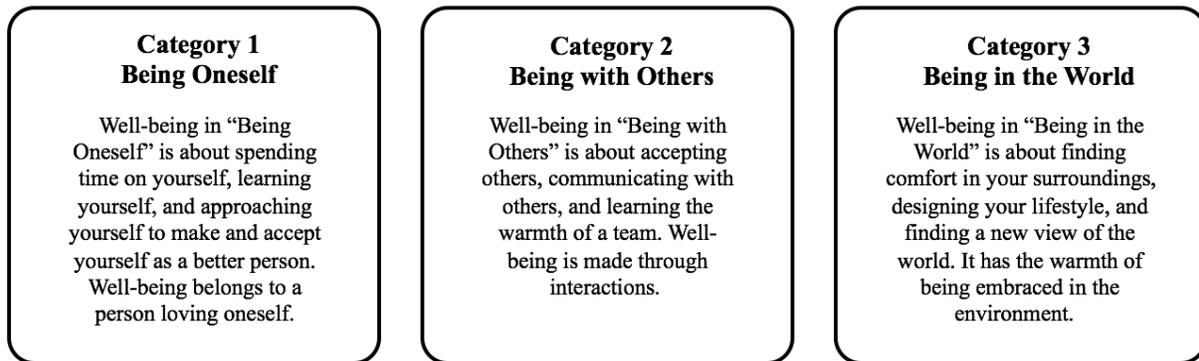


Fig.3. Summary of Category 1, Category 2, Category 3

## 5. NINE PATTERNS FOR BEING IN THE WORLD

### Awareness to Body



You sometimes feel unwell, but mostly healthy and fit.

▼ In this Context

**When you don't put care to yourself so much, you could wear out yourself which could lead to physical unhealthiness.** Because the physical systems of your body work on its own, you could feel fine without being much aware of its condition. However, there are possibilities that small stress to body accumulate to major illness or to some serious physical break down. It could be too late when you begin to feel sick or notice some symptoms of disease.

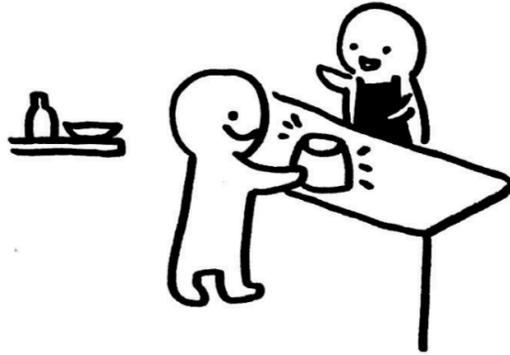
▼ Therefore

**Regularly give your body some time to be nurtured and cared for.** Your everyday work makes up the condition of yourself and your body. For example, you could make a habit of drinking smoothies, walking to work, or massaging yourself. Practice the habit regularly even when you already feel healthy.

▼ Consequently

You may notice positive changes to your body and feel healthier and fit. Regular care to your body could lead to natural affection and feeling of gratefulness to your body. You could comfort yourself through it, and also feel relaxed to yourself. Addition to feeling physical healthiness, you could feel more positive and good about yourself as well.

## Stories of the Objects



You are choosing a commodity for yourself.

▼ In this Context

**When you are just buying your commodities just for its use and benefit, you could easily lose interest in it and gradually feel used up yourself as well.** Consumption is usual in modern society where large mass of products are produced everyday. You could buy things easily and continue to buy other new things to replace the objects you already own. Your feelings could feel detached from your own life, making your life seem insufficient and unfriendly.

▼ Therefore

**Pay attention to the background of the item and buy the one that you like.** Every object holds history, and original stories behind it. You could ask the store owners about the products, or do some research on it. You could learn the concepts made by its producers or designers, and imagine the stories the objects hold. Pay attention to the stories, and choose the object that you feel affectionate and interested in. Take it and keep it for yourself.

▼ Consequently

With passion and stories to be told, you could feel more connected to your possessions. The possession will warm up your heart as you feel the affection and greatness towards them. The feeling will grow, enriching your daily life with heartfelt feeling.

## Loving Care



Some of your belongings look worn out.

### ▼ In this Context

You could feel discouraged if the objects seem invaluable, making you feel disappointed in your life. Compared to other new products around, your worn-out possessions could seem outdated and invaluable for you. As you use them or see them in your everyday surroundings, you could be discouraged. The negative feelings could accumulate leading to disappointment and dissatisfaction of your current life.

### ▼ Therefore

**Keep the objects with you for a longer time by giving them care and regular maintenance.** Your belongings are the partner in your life as well as your family and close friends. You could repair them or make new adjustments when the object becomes old or broken. You could also take care of them regularly such as cleaning and brushing, to keep them in their best condition. Make an effort to keep your belongings close to you, and use time giving them care and repair.

### ▼ Consequently

As you take care of it and interact with them often, your passion for the possessions would grow. You may remember some memories that you had with the object, which will make the object seem more special for you. Despite the oldness or shabbiness of the object, deep emotion could grow onto it. With repair and maintenance, you will be able to use them in longer span. More memories could be made, which will create another warm memory of your daily life. Your life may feel more fruitful and cheerful with the possessions.

## Tricks to Possible



You may have to put up with things that you don't really feel like working on.

▼ In this Context

**Your obligations could burden you sometimes, and you may feel discouraged of your circumstances.**

There are always times you feel unmotivated or too tired to work on some things. However, even if you try to ignore it, your obligations could stay in your head and bother you to work on it. You may feel dismayed or frustrated by such a situation that you belong.

▼ Therefore

**Reflect your action patterns and design a situation where you could put yourself to take action.** Look for your tendency of any kind of situation where you were motivated to do something. Make up a plan to trick yourself into doing it. It could be something very simple such as giving yourself a treat every time you achieve something, or appealing your goal to others beforehand so you have no choice but to continue your actions.

▼ Consequently

Your designed routine will make it easier to follow your attempts without much pressure. You will feel more willing to continue the attempts, and enrich your daily life with successes.

## Integrating Routine



You have something that you want to try out.

▼ In this Context

**You may fail to take action, and feel frustrated and unsatisfied with your present self.** Starting something new is hard because you will have to create a time to work on it. Even if you were able to do it once, it is hard to continue it as your routine. You could feel discouraged of yourself who is so far from your ideal self.

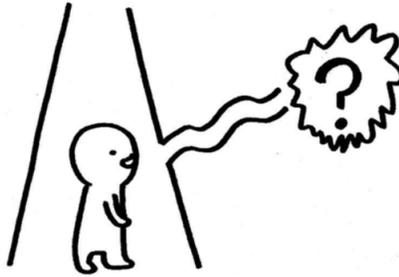
▼ Therefore

**Make it a daily agenda by setting up a specific amount of time to work on it.** Things you want to try out could come from any small things that you work on. It is important to realize them in daily life in order to make a bigger change to yourself. For example, it could be just a minimum amount of time; make yourself focus on it just for the minutes.

▼ Consequently

Trying out new things becomes much easier when you set up the time to work on it as your daily routine. From the everyday progress, you may feel closer to the ideal image you hold for yourself. You could feel more content and or your life, which could help you feel fulfilled in your everyday life as well.

## Coincidental Possibilities



You are looking for some new things to try out.

▼ In this Context

**Even when you are trying out something new, you may hold some unsure feelings that you might be missing out on other possibilities.** Because trying out new things itself is a challenge, it is usual for people to look for new things based on your experience or from your surroundings close to you. When you are just challenging inside your own boundaries, your life will possibly stay similar to your current ones.

▼ Therefore

**Try out things other way around.** There are always new ways of thinking, new kinds of experiences, from things that you have never gone through. Something surprising and powerful could appear in unexpected places. Try out things other way around to peak into a world with a different kind of view. You could try to do the opposite of what you usually do, or make yourself try out things that you have never done before.

▼ Consequently

You may experience something completely new for yourself. Through the experience you will have a chance to know new things that you usually would have ignored. With new types of experiences and preferences, you will find more possibilities for yourself.

## Power of Living



You are muddled up in a problem and are not sure what you should do about it.

### ▼ In this Context

**When you couldn't find a way out of it for a while, you could feel lost and feel like there is no way out of it.** A helpless feeling could fill you, struggling you in a negative wave of sorrowful emotions. When things feel so helpless, the world could feel very lonely. The more you feel overwhelmed with it, the problem becomes more difficult to solve.

### ▼ Therefore

Take living animals or plants into your life, and observe and take care of them in your daily life. Living animals and plants are similar to humans in a way that they are living objects with life and death. As you observe and take care of them, you may notice their growth and slight changes every day. If you feel close to them, you could give them nicknames, or have some quite conversations with them.

### ▼ Consequently

As you observe them, you could see that the animals and plants are living simply for their life and nothing more. Their will and strength to live could feel very powerful and even spiritual sometimes. They could make you feel like you have a friend. You may feel cheered and energized by their power and strong will for living.

### Place to be Freed



You feel frustrated by things that have been bothering you.

#### ▼ In this Context

**You could feel stressed out of your regular life and gradually feel overwhelmed.** As much as you try to face up to the trouble, you may think about it more often, and feel more tied to it. The situation could disturb you and stress you out in different situations as well, giving you a bad impression of your life.

#### ▼ Therefore

**Go to your favorite place or to anything you feel comfortable doing, and just focus yourself into it.** Focusing on specific feelings or objects could let you feel absorbed in the object, letting you forget the troubled moments. You may breathe into its faint smell or feel every bit of its texture. Use your senses or your concentration and focus onto your surroundings or your actions as you work on it.

#### ▼ Consequently

The ambience may give you a space to lean away from frustration and things that have been bothering you. Given space from your troubles you may feel more relaxed to look at things in a clearer and wider range of view. At the same time, you may notice new things of other objects and your surroundings, and feel a deep touch to your heart.

## Sparkles in the World



You are living normally without finding much change in your daily life.

▼ In this Context

**There are times you could feel bored and unsatisfied with your life.** When you always have similar things around you, they may seem boring and tedious to you. Even if it is something special for others, it is difficult to notice anything special about it. With nothing so special in your life, you may feel that your life is not as good as you wish.

▼ Therefore

**Take a closer look at things around you, and look for things that you may find special.** The closer you look at it, there are possibly many things that you may notice. Take a look at the character and qualities of your surrounding objects and environment. For example, look at small plants blooming beneath your feet, or take a deep breath to the scent of your meal. Focus onto things that you may normally ignore.

▼ Consequently

You may notice a new view of the place you live in. You may notice the powerfulness of the plants or the deep flavor of the meal as you let it linger onto your tongue. The feeling could be vivid and strong to your senses. The world you know will not look so normal, but full of excitement and amazing characteristics.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we introduced Category 3 of Pattern Language of Well-being in Life. As our third version of the series, this paper could be read after “Patterns for Well-being in Life - Supporting Life Design Based on Four Factors of Happiness” [10] and “Patterns for Well-being in Life - 9 Patterns for Loving Others.” [11]

Since the other versions of this series, many improvements and changes have been made on pattern structures and also the making process. However, while some of the patterns have good solutions and correlate with other patterns, most of the pattern solutions are vague and not direct enough to motivate the reader's action. For the needed updates, additional mining dialogue on pattern solutions and further updates of the sentences are needed.

Through our further studies on this pattern language, we aim to improve the quality and brush up every 27 patterns. When our patterns are completed, we wish to deliver them to the society to support people in achieving their own way of well-being in life.

## APPENDIX

The four factors are founded through a study of factor analysis results of mental/psychological factors of happiness. The survey was conducted for two days, from August 27th 2011 to 28th, on Rakuten Research, which is an online web research system operated by Racten, Inc. The survey was targeted to people aged 15 to 79, with 144 respondents grouped in 5 year ages (Table 1). The Questionnaire focused on respondents’ mental/psychological state on a seven-point scale “does not apply at all,” “mostly does not apply,” “does not apply much,” “neither applies nor does not apply,” “somewhat applies,” “pretty much applies,” “very much applies.”

Age range (yrs)	# of Male Respondents	# of Female Respondents
15-19	57	57
20-24	57	57
25-29	57	57
30-34	62	60
35-39	58	60
40-44	60	60
45-49	57	57
50-54	57	57
55-59	57	57
60-64	57	57
65-69	57	57
70-74	57	57
74-79	57	57
TOTAL	750	750

Table.1 Result of Survey Conducted through Online Rakuten Research Form

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