The Positive Organization: Leadership Legitimacy, Employee Well-Being, and the Bottom Line

Article *in* The Psychologist-Manager Journal · January 2000

DOI: 10.1037/h0095888

4 authors, including:

Corey L M Keyes
Emory University
91 PUBLICATIONS **8,201** CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

The Psychologist-Manager Journal
2000, Vol. 4, No. 2, 143-153

ISSN 1088-7156

The Positive Organization: Leadership Legitimacy, Employee Well-Being, and the Bottom Line

Corey Lee M. Keyes[1]
Emory University

Stuart J. Hysom
Emory University

Kimberly L. Lupo
Emory University

This paper reviews the elements of subjective well-being (i.e., emotional, psychological, and social well-being) and describes a measurement system for tracking high-level well-being (i.e., flourishing) in employees. Because empirical studies reveal a positive correlation between employee well-being and an array of business outcomes, this paper proposes a theoretical model of a mechanism for promoting employee well-being. Specifically, studies show that the exercise of legitimate authority with regard to subordinates promotes a host of positive outcomes and feelings in employees. This paper proposes a theory of positive organizations in which the promotion of legitimate leadership creates a positive cycle through which employee well-being affects positive business outcomes that feed back into sustaining employee well-being and the legitimation of leaders. This process, it is argued, helps make positive organizations become efficient and constructive producers of profit.

For-profit organizations tend to approach the pursuit of success by focusing on the alleviation of liabilities, inefficiencies, and sources of strain and discontent among workers and customers. However, studies (Spector, 1997; Warr, 1999) suggest that to increase the level and range of success, organizations need to cultivate a positive orientation toward business. Focusing on for-profit businesses, we define a positive organization as an efficient and constructive producer of profit over time. Positive organizations stand apart from businesses that merely turn profits and increase shareholder value, because they promote and sustain high levels of employee well-being and provide leaders with legitimate authority.

The nature of employee well-being, as well as how and why organizations would seek to become or remain positive, are the foci of this paper. We contend that positive organizations are efficient and constructive producers of profits because a "legitimated" manager will exercise authority in ways that promote employees' well-being. In turn, businesses in which employees report higher levels of well-being tend to report not only high profits, they also report greater customer loyalty and satisfaction, higher rates of employee retention and attendance, and

higher levels of productivity (Harter, Schmidt & Keyes, in press).

We will argue that employee well-being is partly the result of investing managers with legitimate authority. We review sociological theories of leadership and legitimacy that describe processes and consequences of leadership legitimation. We begin, however, by reviewing the elements of subjective well-being, the diagnosis of high-level well-being (i.e., flourishing), and its relationship to business outcomes. We then review structural theories of leadership authority, ways in which organizations may promote employee well-being, and possible ways that organizations may impart legitimacy to managers.

Subjective Well-Being

Subjective well-being refers to individuals' perceptions and evaluations of the quality of their lives, and the quality of their psychological and social functioning. Our research suggests that subjective well-being is multi-factorial. We have identified at least 14 distinct elements of subjective well-being (Keyes & Waterman, in press). This collection of elements falls into the category of emotional well-being (e.g., happiness), and into a category of positive functioning that consists of psychological well-being (e.g., personal growth) and social well-being (e.g., social contribution).

Emotional well-being is here defined as the evaluation of one's happiness and satisfaction with life, as well as the ratio of the number of symptoms of positive affect to those of negative affect. According to Bradburn (1969), well-being is the balance of positive and negative affect. That is, individuals who experience more positive than negative feelings over a period of time are designated as emotionally well. Since Andrews and Withey (1976), scholars have also measured emotional well-being by directly asking people how satisfied and happy they are with their lives overall or with specific domains of their lives (e.g., work, neighborhood, family). Studies support the proposed structure of emotional well-being as consisting of perceived life satisfaction, perceived happiness with life, and the ratio of positive to negative affect (see, e.g., Bryant & Veroff, 1982; Diener, Sandvik, & Pavot, 1991).

Though an important criterion, emotional well-being (*viz.*, happiness) may be ephemeral, can be based on low personal standards and adaptation to poor circumstances, and fails to detect the well-being of lives lived in pursuit of social justice and change (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr.). In addition to feeling good, subjective well-being consists of individuals' assessments of their own psychological and social functioning. Social well-being consists of five elements that, together, indicate whether and to what degree individuals are functioning well in their social lives—for example, as neighbors, as co-workers, and as citizens (Keyes, 1998). The dimensions are: social coherence, social actualization, social integration, social acceptance, and social contribution (see Table 1 for a definition and exemplary item of each dimension). Socially healthy individuals see the world around them as predictable and meaningful, as full of potential that is being developed. They see themselves as part of a larger group from which they derive comfort, and they accept others and feel that their contributions to the group are valued by others.

While social well-being epitomizes the more public and social criteria whereby people evaluate their functioning in life, positive functioning also consists of more private and psychological features. Psychological well-being consists of six

Table 1

Operational Definitions of High Scorers on the Dimensions of Psychological and Social Well-Being[a]

Psychological Well-Being	Social Well-Being
Self-Acceptance: Possess positive attitude toward the self; acknowledge and accept multiple aspects of self; feel positive about past life. *When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out so far.*	Social Acceptance: Have positive attitudes toward people; acknowledge others and generally accept people, despite others' sometimes complex and perplexing behavior. *I believe people are kind.*
Personal Growth: Have feelings of continued development and potential and are open to new experiences; feel increasingly knowledgeable and effective. *For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.*	Social Actualization: Care about and believe society is evolving positively; think society has potential to grow positively; think society is realizing that potential. *The world is becoming a better place for everyone.*
Purpose in Life: Have goals and a sense of direction in life; present and past lives are meaningful; hold beliefs that give purpose to life. *Some people wander aimlessly through life; I am not one of them.*	Social Contribution: Feel they have something valuable to give to society; think their daily activities are valued by their community. *I have something valuable to give to the world.*
Environmental Mastery: Feel competent and able to manage a complex environment; choose or create personally suitable contexts. *I am good at managing the responsibilities of daily life.*	Social Coherence: See a social world that is intelligible, logical, and predictable; care about and are interested in society and community. *I find it easy to predict what will happen next in society.*
Autonomy: Are self-determining, independent, and regulate behavior internally; resist social pressures to think and act in certain ways; evaluate self by personal standards. *I have confidence in my own opinions, even if they are different from the way most other people think.*	Social Integration: Feel part of community; think they belong, feel supported, and share commonalities with community. *My community is a source of comfort.*
Positive Relations With Others: Have warm, satisfying, trusting relationships; are concerned about others' welfare; capable of strong empathy, affection, and intimacy; understand give-and-take of human relationships. *People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.*	

[a]Exemplary items are shown in italics.

elements that, in combination, indicate whether and to what degree an individual is dealing well with the existential challenges of life (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). The dimensions of psychological well-being are: personal acceptance, positive relations with others, personal growth, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and autonomy (see Table 1 for operational definitions and illustrative items). Psychologically healthy individuals like most parts of themselves, have warm and trusting relationships, feel they are developing as a person, have a purpose to their lives, feel they can shape the world around them to fit their needs, and feel enabled to direct their actions from internal standards.

In several studies (reviewed in Keyes & Waterman, in press) employing random samples of local communities and national samples of the United States, data reveal that the scales of emotional, psychological, and social well-being are modestly correlated but distinct dimensions of well-being. The psychological and social well-being scales have been validated and have shown acceptable reliability. Factor analyses support the theory that psychological well-being consists of six facets, while social well-being consists of five facets. Lastly, published and ongoing studies have examined the distribution of subjective well-being in society (e.g., by social class, by gender, and by marital status), as well as the effects of numerous processes such as life events and subjective changes on levels of well-being (Keyes, 1998; Keyes & Ryff, 1998, 1999; Keyes & Waterman, in press; Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

According to Keyes and Lopez (in press), each element of well-being represents a symptom of mental health. The U.S. Surgeon General has defined mental health as ". . . a state of successful performance of mental function, resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people, and the ability to adapt to change and to cope with adversity" (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999, p. 4). Like mental illness, mental health is a syndrome comprised of symptoms of subjective well-being. Individuals may be designated as mentally healthy when a collection of symptoms is observed over a period of time and coincides with fulfillment of social roles and responsibilities (Keyes, in press; Mechanic, 1999). Because the symptoms of well-being fall into the categories of emotional well-being and positive functioning, mentally healthy adults will feel good about life, and will be functioning well psychologically and socially.

However, are measures of the symptoms of well-being and mental illness highly correlated, suggesting they are at the ends of a single continuum? In fact, measures of symptoms of mental illness correlate modestly with measures of subjective well-being. The scales of psychological well-being in multiple studies correlated -.51, on average, with the Zung Depression Inventory, and they correlated -.55, on average, with the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale. Scales of emotional well-being (e.g., life satisfaction) correlated between -.40 and -.50, on average, with measures of depression symptoms (see Keyes & Lopez, in press). In sum, measures of mental illness (i.e., depression) are associated with, but separate from, measures of mental health (i.e., well-being).

Keyes (Keyes & Lopez, in press; Keyes, 2000b) has proposed a diagnostic system for identifying adults who are flourishing and languishing—that is, those who are at opposite poles of the mental health axis. Flourishing adults possess high levels of emotional well-being and

high levels of positive functioning, and they have been free of clinical depression during the past year. In short, adults who are flourishing in life are filled with emotional vitality, and are functioning well psychologically and socially.[2] In contrast, languishing in life is a condition in which the individual is empty, and living a life of despair and low functioning. Thus, languishing adults are individuals with low levels of emotional well-being, low levels of levels of psychological well-being, and low levels of social well-being.[3]

Based on data from the 1995 MacArthur Foundation's national study of successful midlife in the United States, Keyes (2000b) has calculated preliminary estimates of the prevalence of languishing and flourishing. Findings suggest that between 6% and 13% of adults between the ages of 25 and 74 are languishing. Findings also suggest that between 9% and 22% of adults between the ages of 25 and 74 are flourishing in life. In short, one might conclude that too few adults are flourishing in life, and too many adults are languishing.

Employee Well-Being and the Bottom Line

What is the utility of employee well-being for organizations? We contend that there are both direct and indirect effects. Studies reveal that mental illnesses such as depression cost organizations (e.g., businesses and health care systems) billions of dollars each year in lost productivity and insurance claims (Mrazek & Haggerty, 1994). The promotion of well-being should, conversely, increase the productivity and profitability of organizations.

We argue that as employee well-being increases, the productivity and profitability of the organization also tends to increase (Spector, 1997). While studies have yet to show whether employee well-being is a cause or effect of positive business outcomes such as productivity, chances are that the causal arrows operate in both directions. We therefore contend that it is likely that productivity promotes employees' feelings of well-being (e.g., by making them feel competent and useful), and that subjective well-being is likely in turn to increase productivity. Supporting the latter contention are the results of studies demonstrating that individuals in positive affective states think more efficiently and creatively, and are more likely to engage in pro-social behaviors (Fredrickson, 1998; Isen, 1987).

Research also reveals that employees who are more satisfied with their lives and aspects of their work are more cooperative and helpful to their colleagues, more punctual, report fewer sick days, and remain employed for longer periods than dissatisfied employees (Spector, 1997; Warr, 1999). Moreover, employees who report a higher ratio of positive affect to negative affect (i.e., who have high levels of emotional well-being) receive higher performance ratings from supervisors than employees who report lower levels of emotional well-being (Wright & Bonett, 1997; Wright & Staw, 1999; Wright & Cropanzano, 2000).

Reviews of the Gallup studies of organizational functioning (Harter, Schmidt, & Creglow, 1998; Harter, Schmidt, & Keyes, in press) reveal a pervasive relationship between indicators of employee well-being and an array of business-unit outcomes. Companies in which employees report greater workplace satisfaction, personal development through work, and friendships at work, for example, report higher levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty, profitability, and productivity, as well as greater employee retention. Utility analyses conservatively estimate that companies with the most

employees with high levels of well-being report dramatically higher monetary returns than companies in the lowest quartile of employee well-being.

Leadership and Its Legitimation

We suggest that effective leadership encourages well-being, which in turn leads to positive business outcomes. What creates, however, an effective leader? Occupancy of a position of power and influence is central to effective management. However, an effective leader must also enjoy a high level of legitimacy. In this section we review key theories of legitimacy and its effects as developed by Kanter (1977) and by Zelditch and Walker (1984), whose research emphasizes formal organizations.

In contrast to early psychological research on personality traits and leadership effectiveness, sociologists have focused on the structure of organizations and of work within organizations as important factors in the understanding of effective leadership. The central question of these structuralist approaches asks why and how subordinates (i.e., employees) consent to and comply with a leader's (i.e., manager's) directives, especially when the subordinates themselves may disagree with a given directive. While the use of pure power, such as dominance or coercion, is one way a leader may obtain compliance, the use of such "brute force" may come at a high cost to the leader (Ridgeway & Diekema, 1989; Ridgeway, Johnson & Diekema, 1994; Zelditch & Walker, 1984). For example, the use of coercive power may breed contempt among subordinates or result in negative feelings and other undesirable outcomes (e.g., quitting). From a structuralist perspective, effective leadership is an outcome of organizational antecedents rather than the traits or characteristics of an individual. While this approach to leadership is common in sociological social psychology, it may be less commonly found in the psychological literature (Berger, Fisek, Ridgeway, & Norman, 1998).

Legitimacy, then, can be defined as compliance-based moral or normative beliefs, rather than compliance arising from the tactical use of raw power on the part of the leader (see, e.g., Kanter, 1977). A central assumption of many structuralist theories is that subordinates of legitimated leaders comply with a leader's directives because they come to believe that "what is" is "what ought to be" in terms of leader behavior. From this perspective, the social positions (e.g., manager), the characteristics of individuals who occupy those positions (e.g., male or female), and their behaviors (e.g., giving directives) are all possible objects of legitimation in organizations (Zelditch & Walker, 1984; Walker & Zelditch, 1993).

Consider an individual who occupies a formal position in an organization (e.g., vice president or line supervisor). The position itself may be seen as legitimate by others, but the particular individual, or actor, in that position may lack legitimacy. That is, occupancy of a formal position does not automatically ensure a given leader's legitimacy in that position (Kanter, 1977; Reskin & Ross, 1992; Zelditch & Walker, 1984). Similarly, a given individual may legitimately occupy a position, but make demands on her or his subordinates that lack legitimacy. Clearly, a line supervisor may legitimately take issue with the quality of an employee's work, but for that supervisor to enter the employee's home and inspect it for cleanliness would be seen as highly irregular. Thus, actions can also be objects of legitimacy.

Zelditch and Walker (1984) provide a useful discussion of the types and sources of legitimacy. They contend that there are

three independently operating sources of legitimacy for leaders: authorization, endorsement and propriety. *Authorization* involves support from individuals higher in an organizational hierarchy for a given leader. *Endorsement* involves receiving support from peers and subordinates. *Propriety* is individual-level support. It refers to the idea that a given individual in an organization may or may not support another individual. According to Zelditch and Walker (1984), collective sources of support are more powerful in producing compliance than propriety. That is, even if a given subordinate privately disagrees with a superior's directive, he or she is more likely to comply with that directive if the superior is authorized from above and endorsed from below.

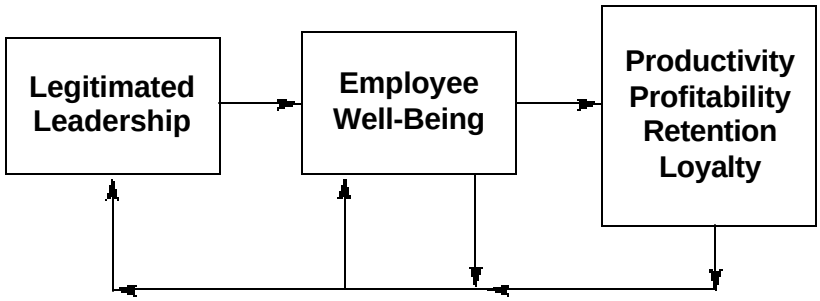
Studies suggest that authorization may be a more powerful source of legitimacy than endorsement (Ford & Johnson, 1998; Johnson & Ford, 1996; Ridgeway, 1989; Zelditch & Walker, 1984). Also, individuals in leadership positions tend to have the greatest legitimacy when their appointments are based on qualifications and expertise (former experience), are allocated their offices by someone from the top of the authority structure, or are authorized (Brown & Geis, 1984). Legitimacy, in turn, tends to increase a leader's ability to influence the behaviors of subordinates (Burke, 1968; Kanter, 1977; Read, 1974). Additionally, studies show that women and men who are in similar positions of authority and who are legitimated—here seen as the most qualified and appointed by an outside authority—are similarly directive with their subordinates (Johnson, 1993), talk more, and are less tentative and supportive in their speech styles than men and women in subordinate positions (Johnson, 1994). As such, legitimation can significantly reduce the gender disadvantage in groups.

Kanter (1977) also discusses the consequences of leaders' behavior in terms of its effects on the emotional reactions of subordinates. Kanter maintains that power, which she defines as the ability to "get things done" and to "mobilize resources," is necessary for effective leadership. Power, in turn, derives from legitimacy, which is synonymous with Zelditch and Walker's notions of authorization and endorsement. That is, leaders derive their power (the ability to succeed organizationally) through the support received from those higher in the organizational hierarchy (i.e., authorization) as well as from their peers and subordinates (i.e., endorsement).

Thus, powerful leaders who are able to get things done because they receive support from their peers, subordinates, and supervisors, are likely to generate trust in others and personally experience more positive emotions compared to powerless leaders. They delegate authority, share information, and give subordinates autonomy over their work. One outcome of these positive emotions is a willingness of powerful leaders to yield to the influence of their subordinates. That is, legitimated leaders tend to share power. Subordinates of powerful leaders are likely to experience more positive emotions (and fewer negative emotions) than subordinates of powerless leaders, because working with powerful leaders provides subordinates with the opportunity for upward mobility (because they belong to a successful work group), as well as input in work-related decisions.

On the other hand, powerless leaders may have a formal title of authority, yet lack the kinds of support needed to be effective managers. In contrast to legitimated leaders, powerless leaders have few sponsors and few peer connections, and they are unable to recruit or retain promis-

Figure 1
Theoretical Causal Model of the Positive (For-Profit) Organization



ing subordinates. Consequently, powerless leaders should be more likely to feel anxiety and insecurity. Kanter argues that because of their powerlessness, unlegitimated leaders engage in controlling, rule-minded, and territorial behaviors. Such behavioral responses of powerless leaders create conditions that should make work less satisfying for, and generate more negative feelings in, subordinates. Moreover, powerless leaders are unlikely to yield to the influence of their employees, because it would threaten to reduce the leader's power and status.

Conclusion

For-profit organizations that invest leaders such as managers with legitimate authority are likely to enhance those managers' ability to confidently and competently influence—and yield to the influence of—their employees. In turn, legitimated leaders will create conditions and relationships that should generate more positive feelings in their employees and should promote more positive functioning (psychologically and socially) among employees. When leaders occupy a position of authority but are not legitimated, they are likely to behave in ways (e.g., controlling and territorial) that generate negative feelings among employees and possibly hinder employees' psychological well-being (e.g., personal growth) or social well-being (e.g., social contribution).

What characterizes a positive organization? Our theoretical model is presented in Figure 1, which depicts the hypothesized chain of events within positive organizations. To begin, leaders such as managers are authorized with legitimacy from above and endorsed with legitimacy from subordinates. As a result, managers are more open to influence from employees (e.g., innovations and suggestions), and are able to exert more influence without negative consequences.

To the extent that empowerment and autonomy affect well-being, we expect that employees working for leaders who have power, or high levels of legitimacy, will flourish with high levels of subjective well-being. To the extent that employees feel happier and more satisfied, report higher levels of psychological well-being (e.g., personal growth), and social well-being (e.g., social contribution), subordinates are likely to continue to endorse the authority of their managers, which is epitomized in the feedback loop from employee well-being back to legitimated leadership in Figure 1.

To the extent that flourishing employees are more effective, less likely to resign, and more able to develop positive relationships with customers, we

should expect highly legitimate leadership to enhance business outcomes. In the model of the positive organization, effective leaders create sustainable businesses that are constructive and efficient producers of profit, because they promote and sustain their employees' well-being and mental health.[4]

Organizations that are productive and profitable, and retain employees, are likely to sustain, if not promote, employee well-being. That is, an employee's sense of personal growth, purpose in life, and sense of social contribution, for example, should be bolstered by organizational outcomes, provided his or her ideas and effort are recognized as a factor in the company's success (i.e., rather than solely its leadership or the marketplace).

References

Andrews, F. M., & Withey, S. B. (1976). *Social indicators of well-being: Americans' perceptions of life quality*. New York: Plenum.

Berger, J., Fisek, M. H., Ridgeway, C., & Norman, R. (1998). The legitimation and delegitimation of power and prestige orders. *American Sociological Review, 63,* 379-405.

Bradburn, N. M. (1969). *The structure of psychological well-being*. Chicago: Aldine.

Brown, V. & Geis, F.L. (1984). Turning lead into gold: Evaluations of men and women leaders and the alchemy of social consensus. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 46,* 811-824.

Bryant, F. B., & Veroff, J. (1982). The structure of psychological well-being: A sociohistorical analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 43,* 653-673.

Burke, P. J. (1968). Role differentiation and the legitimation of task activity. *Sociometry, 30,* 379-92.

Diener, E., Sandvik, E., & Pavot, W. (1991). Happiness is the frequency, not the intensity, of positive versus negative affect. In F. Strack, M. Argyle, & N. Schwarz (Eds.), *Subjective well-being: An interdisciplinary perspective* (pp. 119-139). Oxford, England: Pergamon.

Ford, R., & Johnson, C. (1998). The perception of power: Dependence and legitimacy in conflict. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 61,* 16-32.

Fredrickson, B. L. (1998). What good are positive emotions? *Review of General Psychology, 2,* 300-319.

Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Creglow, A. A. (1998). A meta-analysis of the relationship of core GWA employee perceptions and business outcomes. *Gallup Technical Report*. Lincoln, NE: Author.

Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Keyes, C. L. M. (in press). Well-being in the workplace and its relationship to business outcomes: A review of the Gallup studies. In C. L. M. Keyes (Ed.), *Flourishing: The positive person and the good life*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Isen, A. M. (1987). Positive affect, cognitive processes, and social behavior. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology, Vol. 20*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Johnson, C. (1993). Gender and formal authority. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 65,* 193-210.

Johnson, C. (1994). Gender, legitimate authority, and leader-subordinate conversations. *American Sociological Review, 59,* 122-135.

Johnson, C., & Ford, R. (1996). Dependence, power, legitimacy, and tactical choice. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 59,* 126-139.

Kanter, R. M. (1977). *Men and women of the corporation*. New York: Basic Books.

Keyes, C. L. M. (1998). Social well-being. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 61*, 121-140.

Keyes, C. L. M. (2000). Subjective change and its consequences for emotional well-being. *Motivation and Emotion, 24(2),* 67-84.

Keyes, C. L. M. (2000). *Languishing and Flourishing: Understanding the Poles of the Mental Health Axis.* Paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association, Washington, DC.

Keyes, C. L. M. (in press). Definition of mental disorders. In C. E. Faupel & P. M. Roman (Eds.), *The encyclopedia of criminology and deviant behavior, Vol. 4.* London: Taylor and Francis.

Keyes, C. L. M., & Lopez, S. J. (in press). Toward a science of mental health: Positive directions in psychodiagnosis and treatment. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of positive psychology.* New York: Oxford.

Keyes, C. L. M., & Ryff, C. D. (1998). Generativity in adult lives: Social structural contours and quality of life consequences. In D. McAdams & E. de StAubin (Eds.), *Generativity and adult development: perspectives on caring for and contributing to the next generation* (pp. 227-263). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Keyes, C. L. M., & Ryff, C. D. (1999). Psychological well-being in midlife. In S. L. Willis & J. D. Reid (Eds.), *Middle aging: Development in the third quarter of life* (pp. 161-180). Orlando, FL: Academic Press.

Keyes, C. L. M., & Waterman, M. B. (in press). Elements of mental health in adulthood. In M. Bornstein, L. Davidson, C. L. M. Keyes, and K. Moore (Eds.), *Well-being: Positive development across the lifespan.* Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Mechanic, D. (1999). Mental health and mental illness: Definitions and perspectives. In A. V. Horwitz, & T. L. Scheid (Eds.), *A handbook for the study of mental health: Social contexts, theories, and systems* (pp. 12-28). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mrazek, P. J., & Haggerty, R. J. (Eds.) (1994). *Reducing risks for mental disorders*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Read, P. B. (1974). Source of authority and the legitimation of leadership in small groups. *Sociometry, 37,* 189-204.

Reskin, B., & Ross C. E. (1992). Jobs, authority, and earnings among managers: The continuing significance of sex. *Work and Occupations, 19*, 342-365.

Ridgeway, C. (1989). Understanding legitimation in informal status orders. In J. Berger, M. Zelditch, Jr., & B. Anderson (Eds.), *Sociological theories in progress: New formulations* (pp. 131-159). London: Sage Publications.

Ridgeway, C. L., & Diekema, D. (1989). Dominance and collective hierarchy formation in male and female task groups. *American Sociological Review, 54*, 79-93.

Ridgeway, C. L., Johnson, C., & Diekema, D. (1994). Status, legitimacy, and compliance in male and female groups. *Social Forces, 72*, 1051-1077.

Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 57*, 1069-1081.

Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality*

and Social Psychology, 69, 719-727.

Spector, P. E. (1997). *Job satisfaction: Application, assessment, cause, and consequences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1999). *Mental health: A report of the Surgeon General*. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Walker, H. A., & Zelditch, M. Jr. (1993). Power, legitimacy, and the stability of authority: A theoretical research program. In J. Berger & M. Zelditch, Jr. (Eds.), *Theoretical research programs: Studies in the growth of theory* (pp. 364-381). Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Warr, P. (1999). Well-being and the workplace. In D. Kahneman, E. Diener, & N. Schwarz (Eds.), *Well-being: The foundations of hedonic psychology* (pp. 392-412). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Wright, T. A., & Bonett, D. G. (1997). The role of pleasantness and activation-based well-being in performance prediction. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 2(3),* 212-219.

Wright, T. A., & Staw, B. M. (1999). Affect and favorable work outcomes: Two longitudinal tests of the happy-productive worker thesis. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 20,* 1-23.

Wright, T. A., & Cropanzano, R. (2000). Psychological well-being and job satisfaction as predictors of job performance. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 5,* 84-94.

Zelditch, M. Jr., & Walker, H A. (1984). Legitimacy and the stability of authority. In E. J. Lawler (Ed.), *Advances in group processes, Vol. 1* (pp. 1-27). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

[1]***Correspondence to:***
Corey Keyes, PhD
Department of Sociology
& Rollins School of Public Health
Emory University
1555 Pierce Drive
Room 225 Tarbutton Hall
Atlanta, GA 30322
E-mail: ckeyes@social-sci.ss.emory.edu

[2]Emotional vitality is operationalized as a score that falls into the upper tertile of two of the three measures (positive affect, low negative affect, and satisfaction) of emotional well-being. In addition, a high level of functioning is operationalized as a score that falls in the upper tertile of five of the eleven measures of positive functioning (i.e., scales of psychological well-being and social well-being).

[3]Languishers score in the lower tertiles on two of the three scales of emotional well-being, and on five of the eleven measures of positive functioning (i.e., scales of psychological well-being and social well-being).

[4]While we are not arguing that employee well-being is the only cause of business outcomes, it should be a central facet allowing organizations to become sustainable.