

What really makes us happy?



Dan Weijers says one of the things that makes him happy is his son Eli.

An open access online journal devoted to the study of human wellbeing, co-founded by Victoria alumnus Dan Weijers and Open Polytechnic Psychology lecturer Aaron Jarden, is helping academics and practitioners worldwide better understand what makes people flourish and thrive.

The International Journal of Wellbeing involves over 50 of the world's top interdisciplinary wellbeing researchers.

Dan Weijers, who graduated with a Master's in Philosophy in 2009, and is now a fixed-term lecturer in the Philosophy programme at Victoria, says the journal has been created to help researchers and practitioners learn from other disciplines to better understand and promote human wellbeing.

"Since the journal is open access and accessibly written, policymakers from all over the world will be able to gain deeper insight into what promotes wellbeing so that society is able to flourish," says Dan.

The development of the free access online journal was a natural extension of the research he has been carrying out with Aaron and over 70 international collaborators of the International Wellbeing Study—one of the largest wellbeing studies in the world.

"*The International Journal of Wellbeing* breaks down traditional academic and publishing barriers by making the very research that can change the world for the better easily available," he says.

The journal has a strong focus on interdisciplinary research, including research from the field of positive psychology, a relatively new sub-discipline of psychology that focuses on what is going right with people rather than what is going wrong—their strengths, levels of engagement and happiness.

In addition to his ongoing work with the journal, Dan, Aaron and Philip Morrison from the Geography programme are planning a major international conference titled *Wellbeing and Public Policy*, to be held on 13–15 June in Wellington next year.

"With rising academic, public and political interest in wellbeing, more and more government officials are considering using wellbeing research to inform their policy decisions."

To access the free online journal, go to www.internationaljournalofwellbeing.org

For more information about the conference, go to www.wellbeingandpublicpolicy.org

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