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# Turns Out Money Can Buy You Happiness, a New Study Says

A new study reexamines the link between income and contentedness.

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Despite common belief, the more money you have, the happier you might be.

Previously, general knowledge was that happiness plateaued once you started making \$75,000 a year. But a new study finds that the limit might actually be closer to \$500,000, Bloomberg [reported](#) on Tuesday.

In a paper published March 1 in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, a team of researchers says that happiness steadily increases alongside income, and it even accelerates as your salary tops \$100,000 a year. The authors worked with 33,391 people living in the United States to get to these results, and they can be seen with pay up to \$500,000. (There weren't any conclusive data beyond that threshold.)

When you dive into the study, a few interesting tidbits come to light. For example, the happiest 30 percent of the population sees their happiness accelerate even faster once they start earning more than \$100,000 a year. But on the opposite end of the spectrum, the unhappiest 20 percent of people begin to hit a happiness plateau around that same \$100,000 mark (although their contentedness does increase as their income rises to that point).

“For very poor people, money clearly helps a lot,” Matthew Killingsworth, one of the researchers, [told](#) *New Scientist*. “But if you have a decent income and you’re still miserable, the source of your misery probably isn’t something money can fix.”

While these new findings are a boon for the idea that happiness is affected by income, the researchers note that the overall benefit is small compared with the one people may receive from other perks, like days off from work. “An approximately four-fold difference in income is about equal to the effect of a weekend,” the paper states.

The study is a notable departure from the previous idea that happiness flattened out somewhere between \$60,000 and \$90,000 a year. That was the result of work done in part by the psychologist Daniel Kahneman—who reanalyzed his work in this new study, alongside Killingsworth. The two describe their relationship as an “adversarial collaboration” in the paper, but it’s led to a major update in the world of happiness studies.

So, if you haven’t yet reached that \$500,000 mark, you have something to look forward to. And if you’re well past that threshold, you may need to seek out your happiness somewhere else.