



# Global Flourishing Study Questionnaire Development Report



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INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES OF RELIGION



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# Introduction

The Global Flourishing Study (GFS) is the product of collaboration among researchers from Harvard University, Baylor University and Gallup to address significant limitations in current studies of human flourishing. The project is based on the creation of an important new data resource: a global, probability-based panel of more than 240,000 participants from 22 geographically and culturally diverse countries.

Funders for the GFS include the John Templeton Foundation, Templeton Religion Trust, Templeton World Charity Foundation, the Well-Being for Planet Earth Foundation, the Fetzer Institute, Well Being Trust, the Paul L. Foster Family Foundation, and the David & Carol Myers Foundation. The project follows Sir John Templeton's intent of applying rigorous research methods to expand the spiritual horizons of humankind. The study includes a rich set of measures on well-being and health, religion and spirituality, and social, demographic, economic, political and psychological variables. The resulting data will be publicly accessible for use by scholars, students, journalists and policymakers around the world.

## How Is the Global Flourishing Study Unique?

The GFS will enable researchers to address critical knowledge gaps in the relationships among different aspects of well-being and its determinants by providing longitudinal data from a diverse set of countries. While probability-based, nationally representative longitudinal studies are not uncommon, few are cross-national, and none have been of the scope or depth of the GFS.

In the past, detailed empirical studies of human flourishing have focused largely on the United States and Europe, and such data have been more limited in other parts of the world. The GFS will allow for much broader analyses of determinants of flourishing and well-being across an array of cultural heritages, political systems and development levels. By establishing robust panels with engaged participants in each country, the GFS builds on the global survey research infrastructure developed for the Gallup World Poll while also drawing from Gallup's extensive experience maintaining a large-scale panel of respondents in the U.S.

- The Gallup World Poll launched in 2005 and currently collects data in more than 140 countries annually. Over the past 16 years, Gallup has developed close relationships with data collection partners in all regions to ensure that the same high methodological standards are maintained around the world.
- The Gallup Panel™ includes approximately 100,000 individuals in the U.S., each of whom was randomly recruited using probability-based sampling methods so that the Panel is statistically representative of the entire population. Gallup uses a variety of techniques to collect high-quality data from Panel members while maximizing their engagement and retention.

The panel design will allow the GFS to help establish causal connections in ways cross-sectional, multicountry surveys cannot by tracking changes in behaviors and opinions among the same set of respondents over time. For example, the ability to study how factors co-vary as the survey is readministered each year to the same individuals will inform which primary drivers are responsible for changes in humans' capacity to flourish.

The empirically robust findings that emerge from the GFS will help change the conversation around human flourishing, informing policies that promote the well-being of individuals and communities. Data will be made publicly accessible via the Open Science Framework in a branded registry, providing an important new resource for researchers, journalists, policymakers and educators.





**The Global Flourishing Study** is a collaboration among three organizations with combined expertise in the subject matter and research methodology needed to make this unprecedented endeavor successful.

■ **The Human Flourishing Program at Harvard's Institute for Quantitative Social Science** was founded in 2016 with the aim of synthesizing and disseminating knowledge on human flourishing from diverse fields in the social sciences and humanities. The program has a strong interdisciplinary team of scholars studying flourishing and has published numerous studies on its determinants.

■ **The Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion** initiates, conducts and supports research on religion involving scholars and projects across many academic disciplines. The institute studies the effects of all religions worldwide on outcomes such as prosocial behavior, family life, population health, economic development and social conflict.

■ **Gallup** is a global analytics and advice firm with more than 80 years of experience measuring public opinion and human development. In the organization's own research and in working partnerships with government, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, Gallup develops indicators to measure key global development and social responsibility indicators over time.







A woman in traditional Japanese clothing, including a patterned kimono and a dark obi, is shown from the side. The background features a wall with large, dark Japanese calligraphy characters. A semi-transparent dark overlay covers the middle of the image, containing the section title.

SECTION 1:

# Background and Key Research Questions



## Defining “Human Flourishing”

In the Global Flourishing Study, human flourishing is conceived of as living in “a state in which all aspects of a person’s life are good” (VanderWeele, 2017). As a starting point, six key domains that are nearly universally desired across cultures will be assessed, along with various other aspects of well-being. Each domain has a basis in the humanities and social science literature as a critical aspect of an individual’s overall well-being:

- 1 happiness and life satisfaction
- 2 mental and physical health
- 3 meaning and purpose
- 4 character and virtue
- 5 close social relationships
- 6 financial and material stability

In focusing on such outcomes, the GFS will add to a growing body of well-being research from multiple disciplines that include not only philosophy and theology, where topics such as happiness, virtue and purpose have traditionally been studied, but also sociology, psychology and economics.

The project integrates these different academic perspectives by assembling a group of accomplished scholars who are leaders in their fields, including researchers from the project’s two main academic stakeholders — Harvard’s Human Flourishing Program and Baylor’s Institute for Studies of Religion. Numerous leading scholars in well-being and religious studies research also provided input on the initial survey used in the cognitive interview and pilot testing phases (see Survey Development, p.16).

The project also benefits from Gallup’s extensive prior research on well-being. Data from the Gallup World Poll and customized global studies have helped international organizations measure and track progress toward happy, thriving societies since 2005. The World Poll is the most heavily used data source for the World Happiness Report, which incorporates a variety of well-being indicators, including life evaluations and affective experience measures (Sustainable Development Network, 2021).





## Key Research Questions

A fundamental premise of the GFS is that nations are too often evaluated solely on economic or material considerations, such as GDP. Other important factors, including social determinants of health and happiness — like strong family relationships, prosocial behavioral norms and opportunities for community involvement — are often ignored or downplayed. The GFS's rigorous methodology and multicountry longitudinal design will provide researchers new opportunities to study different aspects of well-being and how such determinants support human flourishing.

The Global Flourishing Study aims to address the following key research questions:

### 1 To what extent are individuals in different nations flourishing?

The GFS will provide a more nuanced understanding of what is or is not going well in each of the 22 countries studied across the various domains: happiness and life satisfaction, mental and physical health, meaning and purpose, character and virtue, close social relationships, and financial and material stability.

### 2 What factors influence flourishing in each country?

The longitudinal panel nature of the GFS will gather data from the same groups of individuals in each country over time, enabling causal analyses that can investigate the determinants of flourishing in ways cross-sectional data cannot. The resulting insights can be used to inform efforts by governments and other organizations, including religious and other communities, to promote human health and well-being.









## Pathways to Human Flourishing

To answer these questions, the GFS utilizes a variety of flourishing indicators and validated questions, including concepts addressed in previous research on well-being. Several studies have pointed to a variety of determinants of human flourishing; this longitudinal study adopts potential key drivers and incorporates them into the survey to determine which are fundamental to promoting human flourishing. These indicators and corresponding factors include:

- **Self-reported well-being indicators:** life satisfaction ratings, contentment and sense of balance/harmony, happiness, self-ratings of mental and physical health, etc.

Well-being is a broad term used to connote a positive state of human existence, characterized by physical and mental health as well as subjective qualities such as happiness and a sense of security. The latter aspects, commonly referred to as subjective well-being (SWB), are measured using individuals' own perceptions and do not rely on independent judgements by researchers or others regarding the requirements for a "good life." Many government agencies and international organizations now incorporate SWB measures among their benchmarks for progress.

- **Determinants related to dispositions and behaviors:** a person's character/virtue, capacity to forgive others, sense of self-efficacy, hopefulness, use of alcohol/tobacco, exercise, etc.

Some leading SWB researchers, including psychologist Ed Diener, have studied personality factors and other psychological determinants of well-being — including traits like extraversion, locus of control and self-esteem, which affect cognitive processing of emotional information. Others have focused on the links between SWB and physical health, including well-being determinants such as exercise as well as the possible effects of low SWB on health outcomes.

- **Determinants related to external factors:** satisfaction with friendships and relationships, the extent to which people in their country can trust one another, presence of social networks people can count on in hard times, one's sense of belonging in a community, confidence in government, feelings of being discriminated against, etc.

Since the 1990s, prominent scholars like sociologist James Coleman (1988) and political scientist Robert Putnam (1995) have illustrated the importance of social ties in helping people access resources for financial, physical and emotional well-being, and the COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the detrimental effects of isolation on humans' capacity to thrive.

- **Religion/spirituality:** connection to God or spiritual, communal practices like attending worship, etc.

One point of focus in the GFS is the influence of religion/spirituality and the social role of religious communities on human flourishing. Putnam and others have noted that religious groups represent the most prevalent source of social capital in many countries and communities (Putnam & Campbell, 2010; Helliwell & Putnam, 2004).

The GFS will enable researchers to expand the scope of such studies to include causal analyses and a broader range of religious and spiritual traditions.









## SECTION 2:

# Project Development

The idea for the Global Flourishing Study developed from a discussion at a multidisciplinary symposium on religion and human flourishing convened in November 2018 at Harvard University by the John Templeton Foundation. One topic at the conference on which there was clear consensus was that future research on human flourishing must begin to earnestly tackle the issue of causality.

Following the symposium, Harvard's Tyler VanderWeele and Baylor's Byron Johnson began to consider the possibility of creating the first representative longitudinal panel study on determinants of human flourishing in different countries and cultures around the world. Soon after, VanderWeele and Johnson met with Gallup leaders to discuss the idea, and in March 2019, leaders and researchers from Gallup, Harvard, Baylor and the John Templeton Foundation met to discuss Gallup's plan for utilizing its existing data collection infrastructure to create nationally representative panels in 22 geographically dispersed countries.

# Country Selection

In consultation with Baylor and Harvard, Gallup proposed an initial list of countries based in part on the following criteria:

- 1

maximizing coverage of the world’s population
- 2

ensuring cultural, geographic and religious diversity
- 3

considerations of existing data collection infrastructure and feasibility

The resulting 22 countries include:



Australia



Nigeria



U.K.



Poland



India



Mexico



Spain



Kenya



Indonesia



Germany



South Africa



Tanzania



Brazil



Philippines



Ukraine



Israel



Russia



Egypt



Argentina



U.S.



Japan



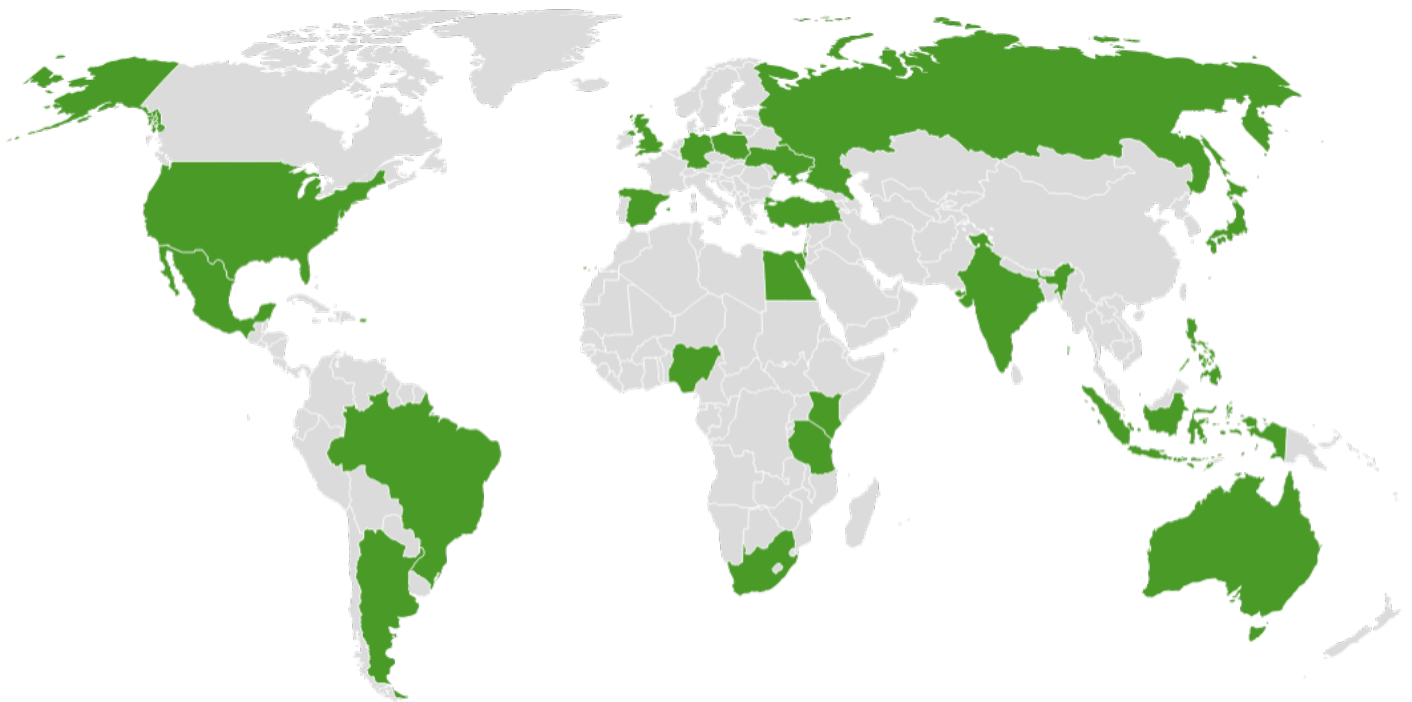
Turkey



Together, these countries represent about 46% of the global population. These countries also include some of the world's largest and most influential communities of religious believers, including **Christians** (Nigeria, Brazil, Russia, Germany, Philippines, South Africa, U.S.), **Muslims** (Indonesia, Nigeria, Turkey, Egypt), **Buddhists** (Japan), **Hindus** (India) and **Jews** (Israel).

The countries included in the GFS represent about  
**46%**  
of the global population.

#### Map of Countries Included in the GFS





# Survey Development

The GFS questionnaire development process consisted of seven distinct phases, briefly summarized here.

## 1 Selection of Core Religion, Well-Being and Demographic Questions

Questions on well-being and religion form the core of the survey. A preliminary set of well-being items was drawn from a flourishing index proposed by VanderWeele (2017) and ultimately comprised items chosen from among the currently most used and validated well-being items. A variety of additional social, demographic, economic and well-being items were also identified as candidates to provide consistency with core questions on the Gallup World Poll.

The Brief Multi-Dimensional Measure of Religion/Spirituality (BMMRS) (Fetzer Institute, 1999; Idler et al., 2003) was used as a starting point for the religion and spirituality questions. Developed in 1999 by a working group of U.S. experts supported by the Fetzer Institute and the National Institute on Aging (Fetzer Institute, 1999), the BMMRS focuses on the potential links between religion/spirituality and health. In discussions with an expert advisory group, alternative items were proposed or adapted when those in the BMMRS were not considered optimal for a multinational survey of people with diverse faith traditions.

## 2 Input From Content Experts

The second phase of survey design involved soliciting item recommendations from domain experts around the world to shape the social, political, psychological, economic and demographic questions in the survey. These experts included scholars in the following topics: social support and community; positive/negative affect; well-being; optimism; gratitude; generosity and volunteering; health; politics; and religion/spirituality.

Experts were asked to use their past research and expertise to recommend single items on these topics for survey inclusion and to provide evidence and justification for the items selected. Often the proposed items came from validated scales and were selected because they were the specific indicators most strongly predictive of subsequent outcomes. An initial survey draft was then developed based on the input from the domain experts.

## 3 Global Feedback

Once the survey draft was formed in Phase 2, input, recommendations and criticisms from scholars around the world were solicited (countries included Brazil, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, China, England and the U.S.). These scholars were sent the entirety of the survey and were asked for feedback.

The proposed study and survey items also were presented in October 2019 at a meeting hosted by Dominic Johnson (University of Oxford) and Templeton Religion Trust, convening scholars from numerous disciplines on the Social Consequences of Religion (SCORE). Further input and recommendations were solicited, and revisions to the survey were made accordingly, with open and disputed questions and additional feedback to be addressed during Phase 4 of the survey development process.

Tyler VanderWeele (Harvard), Byron Johnson (Baylor) and Joe Daly (Gallup) provided an overview of the project in January of 2020 to leaders from the John Templeton Foundation (Heather Templeton Dill, Nicholas Gibson, Kimon Sargeant), Templeton World Charity Foundation (Andrew Serazin), and Templeton Religion Trust (Christopher Stewart). A lively, positive discussion regarding a host of methodological and theoretical considerations provided the research team with valuable feedback.



## 4 Cross-Cultural and Translational Survey Feedback

The fourth phase of survey development took place at the University of Oxford on March 9, 2020, during an in-person meeting to discuss cross-cultural and translational issues and further refine details of the Global Flourishing Study survey items. Attendees included a small group of senior members of Gallup and world experts on translation and cross-cultural issues and well-being assessment. The meeting focused on the survey items, their suitability for use in a global context, questions of item translation, and evaluating recent input and suggestions from scholars around the world. The survey was further refined to reflect the resulting decisions.

## 5 Open Survey Feedback

The survey draft was then made publicly available via several online channels, including the Human Flourishing Program's website, and invitations to comment were sent to members of several academic associations devoted to religious studies and psychology as well readers of Baylor's Institute for Studies of Religion's *Religion Watch* (circulation of 10,000) and the *Psychology Today* blog (100,000 viewers).

Feedback received by June 15, 2020, was compiled into a single document organized by item and made publicly available in an anonymized form, referencing only the respondent's discipline or area of expertise. Given the prior phases of survey development, the bar for further modification was relatively high. However, repeated comments on specific items, issues or omissions were given serious consideration. Many of these were recommendations for ensuring that all items are relevant in countries and cultures worldwide. In total, 150 experts and scholars responded to

the open feedback request and 26 items were further modified, deleted or added to the survey in response to the feedback.

## 6 Gallup Feedback

In early 2021, Gallup survey design specialists provided feedback to the GFS research directors from Harvard and Baylor intended to optimize the questionnaire for fielding in a wide range of global settings and disparate populations. Given constraints to survey length of the annual survey, 14 questions were omitted prior to cognitive testing. Revisions to question wording and response options to some survey items also occurred to reduce respondent burden and increase comprehension for abstract concepts across cultural contexts.

## 7 Translation

Gallup translated the resulting questionnaire draft for cognitive interviews and pilot-testing. The translated instruments were sent to scholars in many participating countries to evaluate whether the translations faithfully reflected the original question meanings and would measure the relevant constructs in the intended manner. In addition to scholars already involved in the development and refinement of the survey, others known to conduct social and biomedical science research from the various countries included in the GFS were asked for their input on the final survey and its translations.







A group of young people are gathered outdoors at what appears to be a festival or community event. In the foreground, several individuals are seen from the back or side, looking towards the right. Above them, strings of colorful paper lanterns in blue and yellow hang from a line. The background shows a white building with a blue window frame and some trees. The overall atmosphere is bright and social.

## SECTION 3:

# Questionnaire Testing and Refinement

Once the initial questionnaire draft was completed, it was tested with respondents in each of the 22 GFS countries through two processes: 1) cognitive interviews that explored respondents' interpretation of each question item and identified problems with comprehension of the questions, and 2) pretest interviews that helped researchers fine-tune the instrument and gauge the survey length.



## 1 Cognitive Interview Process

**Objectives:** Researchers use cognitive testing to assess respondents' comprehension, item relevance to the sampled population, the extent to which it is feasible for respondents to answer a survey question and the steps required to select a response. The testing process ensures individual survey items and the final questionnaire elicit the desired information while minimizing respondent burden.

**Description:** Ten cognitive interviews (CIs) were completed in each of the 22 countries selected for the GFS except India, where 20 CIs were completed. In addition to the draft survey items, interviewers used question probes to determine what respondents had in mind when answering questions about key concepts and gauge how difficult it was for them to answer each question. The cognitive interview guides also had different versions of some questions to compare variations in question wordings or response options.

## 2 Pretest Interview Process

**Objectives:** The main goals of survey pretests are to examine if the planned process of administering and collecting responses is feasible, workable, timely, efficient and — when combined with the results of the cognitive interviews — whether the survey more broadly is “fit for purpose.” Pretests highlight areas where logistical and practical challenges might arise and provide information about the average length of interviews.

**Description:** Pretests were completed with 1,162 respondents from the 22 countries selected for the GFS in June 2021. About 50 respondents were interviewed in each country except India, where 101 pretest interviews were conducted. Most data collection was conducted online using Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI) software, but at least 10 interviews in each country were conducted over the phone using Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI).





## Overview of Cognitive Interview and Pretest Results

The findings from the cognitive and pretest interviews described below illustrate the GFS questionnaire development from its initial draft to the final version presented in Appendix 2.

### General Comprehension Issues

The cognitive and pretest interview comments highlighted the need to be as specific and clear as possible when asking about abstract concepts that may have clearer connotations in English than in other languages. This need was a concern for the GFS questionnaire, particularly regarding questions about respondents' worldview and spiritual beliefs. Examples of questions that were subject to different interpretations or often required clarification include the following:

- **I always act to promote good in all circumstances, even in difficult and challenging situations.** Several cognitive interview respondents were confused by the phrase "I always act to promote good in all circumstances," and asked whether it referred to good for themselves or good for others.
- **I have freedom in my life to pursue things that are most important to me.** Cognitive interview respondents differed widely on what the question was asking about freedom from — i.e., the type of constraints. Interpretations included life circumstances, family responsibilities, demands of work or school, COVID-19 restrictions, financial restrictions, social restrictions including restrictions on women, etc.
- **My relationships are as satisfying as I would want them to be.** Respondents commonly asked which types of relationships the question referred to.

In response to cognitive interview feedback on comprehension issues, some questions were deleted and for others, the wording was modified.

- Some changes addressed ambiguities in question language. For example, "How would you describe your sense of belonging to your local community?" was altered to "How would you describe your sense of belonging in your country?" due to lack of clarity about what was meant by "community."
- Several additional changes were made to further specify or clarify context. For example, "I feel that I am often discriminated against because of the groups I am a part of" was modified to "How often do you feel discriminated against because of any group you are a part of? This might include discrimination because of religion, political affiliation, race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, or involvement in civic organizations or community groups."

See Appendix 1 for a full account of feedback from cognitive interviews and the resulting question changes.

## Reactions to Questions on Religion and Spirituality

In more secular societies like China and the U.K., some cognitive interview respondents expressed confusion about being asked questions on religion that they did not see as relevant to them, and interviewers often had to remind them that “not relevant” was an available response option. However, none of these respondents grew irritated or seemed to find the religion questions off-putting.

In several cases, respondents affiliated with various world religions made comments highlighting where certain questions may be sensitive or phrased improperly in light of their particular practices and beliefs.

### ■ **How often do you attend religious services?**

The phrase “religious services” was confusing to a few respondents, some of whom said it would be more appropriate to ask how often they visited their place of worship. Some wondered if “services” included certain activities like volunteering. In Japan, the translation of “religious services” connotes a serious, rare occasion (like a funeral) rather than a weekly service. However, no changes were made after CIs due to concerns that adding other examples of worship would confuse some respondents. Further, no country-specific changes were made in order to achieve as much consistency in question wording across countries as possible.

### ■ **How often do you pray or meditate?**

A few respondents across countries asked for clarification on which aspect of the question they should answer, saying there was a big difference between prayer and meditation.

### ■ **Do you believe in a God, more than one god, an impersonal spiritual force, or none of these?**

This question caused distress among a few respondents in Egypt, who felt the suggestion that they might believe in more than one god or a spiritual force rather than one God was provocative. In response to such comments, the question was revised in Muslim-majority countries to remove the references to “more than one god” or “an impersonal spiritual force.”

### ■ **I feel loved or cared for by God, the main god I worship, or the force that guides my life.**

A few respondents in Islamic countries struggled with this question, noting that they view God’s love as something that is not guaranteed but which they continually strive for.

### ■ **I feel God, a god, or a spiritual force is punishing me.**

A few respondents in some countries, including Indonesia and Turkey, were confused by this question, saying they saw the idea that God delivers “punishment” as inappropriate.



## Issues Related to Scale Use

Response options to some items on the GFS questionnaire take the form of an 11-point scale, with points numbered from zero to 10 to gauge respondents' level of agreement, satisfaction or other forms of assessment from the most negative (0) to the most positive (10). These scales take several forms with different endpoints throughout the questionnaire as needed (for example, "Extremely unhappy" vs. "Extremely happy," "Not true of me" vs. "Completely true of me," etc.)

Though longer scales and frequent scale changes are less problematic in web-based surveys in which respondents can see the scale on their screen, they can cause confusion in telephone-based interviews. Thus, in the cognitive interviewing process, some items were evaluated using both longer and shorter sets of responses, and categories were included in different versions of the cognitive testing forms. Following these interviews, the shorter set was eventually chosen for some items in response to interview feedback; for others, the longer set was retained when this seemed less problematic (see Appendix 1 for full details).

## Survey Length

The length and complexity of survey instruments affect respondent participation and long-term retention — especially with regard to phone surveys, which are more burdensome to respondents than online surveys. Respondents in countries with lower average income and education levels will be more likely to take the survey over the phone than online due to lower rates of internet penetration.

Consequently, the length of the phone interviews and the cognitive burden placed on respondents were important considerations during the survey development process. Prior to the CIs, researchers made difficult decisions to cut items that were less central to the GFS's overall purpose or less well-suited to a multicountry survey. Following the CIs, the most consistently problematic questions were also removed from the instrument.

Pretest results indicated that the average length of interviews (LOI) for phone surveys was almost 29 minutes, pushing the upper bounds of acceptability. Reflecting concerns that long surveys with abstract questions are more taxing for less-educated respondents in lower-income countries, the phone survey LOI was particularly long (more than 38 minutes) in lower-income countries — such as the Philippines, Nigeria, Indonesia and Kenya — and was over two minutes longer for less-educated respondents than those with more education across countries.

The average length of web-based interviews was about 11 minutes, though it was significantly longer in Ukraine (22 minutes), Tanzania (21.5 minutes) and Kenya (17 minutes). The average LOI for online surveys was also somewhat longer among older than younger respondents.

Following the survey piloting, items that continued to cause difficulty for some respondents (such as items related to optimism and belonging) were removed from the annual survey in several countries where the average time to take the survey was longest (which often coincided with countries where comprehension difficulties were most common). To further reduce survey length, some items on the annual survey were transferred to an intake/empanelment survey for a single-time-point measurement, rather than repeated measurement on the annual survey.

## Next Steps

The GFS research team used the cognitive interview and pretest findings to make a last round of adjustments to the questionnaire, resulting in the finalized version included in Appendix 2. Following initial panel recruitment, the survey will be administered in the 22 selected countries in late 2021. Subsequently, Gallup will carry out retention and contact tracing activities to minimize attrition, and the GFS will be readministered on an annual basis.









# Appendices





# Appendix 1

## Evolution of the GFS Questionnaire

This appendix summarizes the changes to each GFS question item during two phases of testing with respondents in each of the countries included in the study and prior to finalizing the first draft: 1) cognitive interviews (CIs) and 2) pilot interviews. Questions are listed by topic area, roughly according to the order in which each domain appears in the survey instrument. For each question, relevant feedback from the CIs and pilot interviews is listed, as well as any modifications that were made to each question at each stage of the development process. Given that the CI process is mostly geared toward identifying issues that require revisions to questions or response options, many of the changes listed here took place following those interviews.

The CI surveys were administered live by interviewers, either in-person or via telephone, to allow for follow-up questions that probed respondents' comprehension and interpretation of various survey items. The pilot surveys were conducted either by interviewers over the phone or via automated online interviews in countries where data collection will be web-based. Qualitative feedback in both phases comes from interviewers collecting the data (though the online surveys in the pilot phase provided important information on average survey length among different countries and demographic groups, see page 23). Along with the feedback itself, this appendix lists any changes made to question wordings or response categories resulting from that input.

In some cases, question wording differed slightly according to whether the question was asked by interviewers or online. For example, interviewers used second-person pronouns when asking respondents to rate their agreement with a statement ("You understand your purpose in life"), but the same statements used first-person pronouns when presented to respondents online ("I understand my purpose in life").

## Flourishing 12

The GFS includes 12 questions that gauge respondents' level of "flourishing" across six domains. The items in these domains were previously validated (Weziak-Bialowolska et al., 2019) as part of a human flourishing index proposed by Tyler VanderWeele (2017) consisting of two questions in each of six domains: 1) happiness and life satisfaction, 2) mental and physical health, 3) meaning and purpose, 4) character and virtue, 5) close social relationships and 6) financial and material stability. Following each question not specifically written for the VanderWeele index is the source where it was previously used.

All 12 items were fielded at both the CI and pilot survey stages. Though interviewers in some countries provided comments on several items, the feedback was not sufficient on any item to justify alteration to this validated index.

Feedback largely consisted of respondents' requests for greater specificity on several items. For example, when asked whether they always act to promote good, some participants asked if this meant good for themselves or others. On questions about the quality of their relationships, several respondents asked for more information about the types of relationships the questions refer to. Finally, some respondents in the Philippines felt that people there may hesitate to answer honestly in rating their mental health due to the sensitivity of the topic there.



**1 Overall, how satisfied are you with life as a whole these days?**

[0=Not satisfied with your life at all,  
10=Completely satisfied with your life]  
[OECD, 2013]

**2 In general, how happy or unhappy do you usually feel?**

[0=Extremely unhappy, 10=Extremely happy]  
[Fordyce, 1988]

**3 In general, how would you rate your physical health?**

[0=Poor, 10=Excellent] [NORC, 2017]

**4 How would you rate your overall mental health?**

[0=Poor, 10=Excellent] [WHO, 2017]

**5 Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?**

[0=Not at all worthwhile, 10=Completely worthwhile] [OECD, 2013]

**6 I understand my purpose in life.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[VanderWeele, 2017]

**7 I always act to promote good in all circumstances, even in difficult and challenging situations.**

[0=Not true of me at all, 10=Completely true of me] [VanderWeele, 2017]

**8 I am always able to give up some happiness now for greater happiness later.**

[0=Not true of me at all, 10=Completely true of me] [VanderWeele, 2017]

**9 I am content with my friendships and relationships.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[Campaign to End Loneliness, 2015]

**10 My relationships are as satisfying as I would want them to be.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[Campaign to End Loneliness, 2015]

**11 How often do you worry about being able to meet normal monthly living expenses?**

[0=Worry all of the time, 10=Do not ever worry] [Prawitz et al., 2006]

**12 How often do you worry about safety, food, or housing?**

[0=Worry all of the time, 10=Do not ever worry] [VanderWeele, 2017]

Many additional questions in the GFS further explore attitudes and perceptions related to the six domains in the Flourishing 12, including happiness/life satisfaction, physical and mental health, character and social/community ties.



## Happiness and Life Satisfaction

Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to ten at the top. Suppose we say that the top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you, and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time?

[0=Worst possible, 10=Best possible] [Gallup World Poll]

- Only asked on the pilot surveys
- No changes made

Just your best guess, on which step do you think you will stand in the future, say about five years from now?

[0=Worst possible, 10=Best possible] [Gallup World Poll]

- Only asked on the pilot surveys
- No changes made

Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad.

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree] [Scheier et al., 1994]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- No changes were made to the question wording or response scale
- Following the pilot interviews, this question was removed from the survey in the six countries with the longest average survey length to keep the questionnaire streamlined; it was kept in all other countries

I am free to pursue what is most important.

[0=Completely disagree, 10=Completely agree] [Aetna Wellbeing Assessment, modified]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Feedback from CIs: Respondents differed widely on what the question is asking about freedom from — i.e., the type of constraints; some said life circumstances, family responsibilities, demands of work or school, COVID-19 restrictions, financial restrictions, social restrictions including restrictions on women, etc.
- Change after CIs: The question wording was revised somewhat to improve clarity: *I have the freedom in my life to pursue the things that are most important to me.*
- No further changes made after pilot surveys

In general, how often do you feel you are at peace with your thoughts and feelings?

[Always, often, rarely, never] [Lambert et al., 2020]

- Only asked on the pilot surveys
- No changes made

I feel that I'm a person of worth.

[0=Completely disagree, 10=Completely agree] [Marsh et al., 2020]

- Only asked on CIs
- Feedback from CIs: Some respondents were unclear about the specific connotation of "worth"; some pushed back on the idea of evaluating their own worth, saying it is immodest and that it is other people's perceptions that matter
- Question removed from survey after CIs



### **In my life, I feel very capable in what I do.**

[0=Completely disagree, 10=Completely agree]  
[Sheldon and Niemiec, 2006]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - In CIs, an alternative 4-point response scale was also assessed: Always, often, rarely, never. The stem wording was changed for the shorter scale: *How often do you feel very capable in what you do in life?*
- Feedback from CIs: Some respondents saw the question as vague, saying they feel capable in some areas of life but not others; some emphasized work, while others emphasized personal relationships
- Change after CIs: The 4-point scale version was adopted
- No further changes made after pilot surveys

### **The various aspects of my life are in balance.**

[0=Completely disagree, 10=Completely agree]  
[Lambert et al., 2020]

- Only asked on the pilot surveys
- Question altered to match response scale and question wording like adjustments made to the previous question: *In general, how often do you feel the various aspects of your life are in balance? [Always, often, rarely, never]*
- No further changes made after pilot surveys

### **To what extent are you suffering?**

[0=Not suffering at all, 10=Suffering terribly]  
[Ganzini et al., 1999]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - In CIs, an alternative 4-point response scale was also assessed: A lot, some, not very much, not at all; the stem wording remained the same for both scales
- Feedback from CIs: Several respondents asked for clarification about the meaning of "suffering," especially whether the question referred to physical or mental/emotional suffering
- Change after CIs: The 4-point scale was adopted and a clause was added for clarification: *To what extent are you suffering? This can be any type of physical or mental suffering.*
- No further changes made after pilot surveys

## Physical and Mental Health

### How much bodily pain have you had during the past 4 weeks?

[0=None, 10=Very severe] [Hays et al., 1993]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - In CIs, an alternative 4-point response scale was also assessed: A lot, some, not very much, not at all; the stem wording remained the same for both scales
- Change after CIs: The 4-point scale version was adopted
- No further changes made after pilot surveys

### About how many cigarettes do you smoke each day?

[Gallup Health Behaviors]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, the clause “if any” was added to soften language and avoid the appearance of presuming the respondent is a smoker
- No further changes made after CIs

### Approximately how many drinks of any kind of alcoholic beverages did you drink in the past seven days?

[Gallup Health Behaviors]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, the question wording was changed to provide some sense of what was meant by a drink: *Approximately how many full drinks of any kind of alcoholic beverages did you drink in the past seven days?*
- Feedback from CIs: Many respondents across countries were unsure about what constituted a “full drink”; vendors in several countries recommended a change to avoid seeming to assume that respondents drank some amount of alcohol in the past seven days
- Change after CIs: The question wording was further revised for additional clarification, and “if any” was added, as in the question about smoking: *Approximately how many full drinks of any kind of alcoholic beverages did you drink in the past seven days, if any? A full drink is a glass of wine, a can or bottle of beer, or a shot of hard liquor.*
- No further changes made after pilot surveys

### In the last seven days, on how many days did you exercise for 30 or more minutes?

[Gallup Health Behaviors]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, the question wording was changed to make the definition of exercise more inclusive: *On how many days did you exercise or engage in vigorous physical activities for 30 or more minutes in the past week?*
- No further changes made after CIs



**Think about the biggest threat to life you've ever witnessed or experienced first-hand. In the past month, how much have you been bothered by this experience?**

[0=Not bothered at all, 10=Extremely bothered]  
[Stewart et al., 2016]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - In CIs, an alternative 4-point response scale was also assessed: A lot, some, not very much, not at all; the stem wording remained the same for both scales
- Feedback from CIs: Participants in several countries asked for specific examples of what type of threat the question referred to — for example, whether it meant threats to themselves personally or more macro level threats such as a pandemic or economic downturn
- Change after CIs: The 4-point scale version was adopted and the phrase “during your life” was added for clarification: *Think about the biggest threat to life you've ever witnessed or experienced first-hand during your life. In the past month, how much have you been bothered by this experience?*
- After the pilot surveys, this question was removed in the six countries with the longest response times to keep the questionnaire streamlined; it was kept in all other countries

**Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?**

[Not at all, Several days, More than half the days, Nearly every day] [PHQ-2; Löwe, 2010]

- Little interest or pleasure in doing things
  - Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - No changes made
- Feeling down, depressed or hopeless
  - Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - No changes made

**Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?**

[Not at all, Several days, More than half the days, Nearly every day] [GAD-2; Löwe, 2010]

- Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge
  - Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - No changes made
- Not being able to stop or control worrying
  - Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - No changes made

## Character and Virtue

### I have forgiven those who hurt me.

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[BMMRS 10]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - In CIs, an alternative 4-point response scale was also assessed: Always, often, rarely, never. The stem wording was changed for the shorter scale: *How often have you forgiven those who have hurt you?*
- Change after CIs: The 4-point scale version was adopted
- No further changes made after pilot surveys

### Despite challenges, I always remain hopeful about the future.

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[Petersen and Seligman, 2004]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - In CIs, an alternative 4-point response scale was also assessed: Always, often, rarely, never. The stem wording was changed for the shorter scale: *Despite challenges, how often do you remain hopeful about the future?*
- No changes were made to original question wording, and the 10-point response scale was retained

### If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list.

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[McCullough et al., 2002]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Feedback from CIs: More so than in other countries, respondents in Indonesia gravitated toward top-scale point or top-two points; some explained that lower points would imply a lack of gratitude
- No changes made

### In the past month, have you donated money to a charity?

[Y / N] [Gallup World Poll]

- Only asked on the pilot surveys
- No changes made

### In the past month, have you volunteered your time to an organization?

[Y / N] [Gallup World Poll]

- Only asked on the pilot surveys
- No changes made



**Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits applies to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]

[Gosling et al., 2003]

- 1) \_\_\_ Extroverted, enthusiastic.
  - 2) \_\_\_ Critical, quarrelsome.
  - 3) \_\_\_ Dependable, self-disciplined.
  - 4) \_\_\_ Anxious, easily upset.
  - 5) \_\_\_ Open to new experiences, complex.
  - 6) \_\_\_ Reserved, quiet.
  - 7) \_\_\_ Sympathetic, warm.
  - 8) \_\_\_ Disorganized, careless.
  - 9) \_\_\_ Calm, emotionally stable.
  - 10) \_\_\_ Conventional, uncreative.
- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - Like the items in the Flourishing 12, no changes were made to the question wording or response scales for these items because this is a well-validated scale and no feedback proved significant enough to justify modifications

## Close Social Relationships

**If you were in trouble, do you have relatives or friends you can count on to help you whenever you need them, or not?**

[0=Never, 10=Always] [Gallup World Poll]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to the CIs, a minor adjustment was made to the question wording so that question wording would better align with the response scale: *If you were in trouble, how often could you count on people in your life, like relatives or friends, to help you whenever you need them?*
  - In CIs, an alternative 4-point response scale was also assessed: Always, often, rarely, never; the stem wording remained the same for both scales
- No changes were made following the CIs, and the 10-point response scale was retained

**Is there any one special person you know that you feel very close to; someone you feel you can share confidences and feelings with?**

[Y / N] [Nurses Health Study II, 2001]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Feedback from CIs: The phrase “share confidences and feelings” seemed difficult for a few respondents
- Change after CIs: The question wording was revised slightly: *Is there any one special person you know that you feel very close to? For example, someone you can confide in and share feelings with?*

**How often do you feel lonely?**

[0=Always, 10=Never] [Campaign to End Loneliness, 2015]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - In CIs, an alternative 4-point response scale was also assessed: Always, often, rarely, never; the stem wording remained the same for both scales
- No changes were made to the original question wording, and the 10-point response scale was retained

**How would you describe your sense of belonging to your local community?**

[0=Very weak, 10=Very strong] [Ross, 2002]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - In CIs, an alternative 4-point response scale was also assessed: Very strong, somewhat strong, somewhat weak, very weak; the stem wording remained the same for both scales
- Feedback from CIs: Respondents in many countries were unsure what type of “community” the question referred to; when probed by interviewers, they gave varying definitions
- Change after CIs: The 10-point response scale was retained, but the question wording was changed to ask about respondents’ country rather than community: *How would you describe your sense of belonging in your country?*
- No changes made after pilot surveys



**How often do you show someone in your community that you love or care for them?**

[0=Never, 10=Always] [Krause, 2006, modified]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - In CIs, an alternative 4-point response scale was also assessed: Always, often, rarely, never; the stem wording remained the same for both scales
- Change after CIs: The 10-point response scale was retained, but a small change was made to the question wording to address respondents' lack of clarity on the definition of "community": *How often do you show someone in your life that you love or care for them?*
- No changes made after pilot surveys

**Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the city or area where you live?**

[Satisfied, dissatisfied, unsure] [Gallup World Poll]

- Only asked on the pilot surveys
- No changes made

**In the last year, how often have you participated in community groups that are not religious (e.g., book clubs, sports, political organizations, etc.)?**

[More than once per week; weekly; a few times a month; a few times a year; never] [Aetna Wellbeing Assessment]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, the response scale was adjusted to: [Never, a few times a year, one to three times a month, once a week; more than once a week]
- Feedback from CIs: Again, several respondents asked for clarification about the meaning of "community groups"
- Change after CIs: The word "community" was removed to avoid confusion: *How often do you participate in groups that are not religious, such as book clubs, sports, or political organizations?*
- After the pilot surveys, the phrase "In the last year, how often have you" was altered to "How often do you" to ensure consistency with the religious service attendance question

### How much do you approve of the job performance of the leadership of this country?

[0=Completely disapprove, 10=Completely approve] [Gallup World Poll]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, a minor adjustment was made to the question wording and a 5-point response scale was adopted: *How much do you approve or disapprove of the job performance of the leadership of this country? [Strongly approve, somewhat approve, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disapprove, strongly disapprove]*
- Feedback from CIs: Several respondents sought clarification about the level of leadership the question was asking about
- Change after CIs: The question wording was changed to ask more specifically about the national government: *How much do you approve or disapprove of the job performance of the national government of this country?*
- No changes made after pilot surveys

### Everyone in my country trusts one another.

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[VanderWeele, 2019, modified]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - In CIs, an alternative 5-point response scale was also assessed: All, most, some, not very many, none; the stem wording changed for the shorter scale: *How many people in this country trust one another?*
- Change after CIs: The 5-point scale version was adopted
- No changes made after pilot surveys

### People like me don't have any say about what the government does.

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree] [Niemi et al., 1991]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Feedback from CIs: Since the statement itself is negative, "agree" is a negative (unfavorable) response, which seems to cause confusion at times.
- Change after CIs: The question wording was reframed as positive, and the response scale was simplified: *People like me have a say about what the government does. [Agree, disagree, unsure]*
- No changes made after pilot surveys



**I feel that I am often discriminated against because of my identity.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[The New Zealand Attitudes and Values Study, modified]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, the question wording and response were revised: *I feel that I am often discriminated against because of the groups I am a part of. [Strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree]*
- Feedback from CIs: Some respondents in a few countries were confused because they did not perceive that they belonged to any group
- Change after CIs: The response scale was revised, and a sentence was added to illustrate the range of “groups” respondents might consider: *How often do you feel discriminated against because of any group you are a part of? This might include discrimination because of religion, political affiliation, race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, or involvement in civic organizations or community groups. [Always, often, rarely, never]*
- No changes made after pilot surveys

**The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[Curtice and Bryson, 2001]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, a 5-point response scale was adopted: [Strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree]
- No changes made after CIs

**Whatever the circumstances, the law should always be obeyed.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[Curtice and Bryson, 2001]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, a 5-point response scale was adopted: [Strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree]
- No changes made after CIs

A final set of GFS questions explores respondents’ experiences with and perceptions of religion and spirituality, with the intent of helping researchers investigate the possible effects of religious beliefs and participation in religious communities on various aspects of well-being.

## Religion/Spirituality

### Which religion were you affiliated with when you were 12 years old?

[Gallup Poll]

- Only asked on CIs
- Prior to CIs, the question wording was adjusted: *What was your religion when you were 12 years old?*
- No changes made after CIs

### To what extent do you consider yourself a religious person?

[0=Not at all religious, 10=Very religious]

[BMMRS 37]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Change after CIs: Significant changes were made to the question wording and response scale; the new item was adopted from a 2021 survey module by the Global Wellbeing Initiative, administered as part of the Gallup World Poll: *In general, how often do you feel connected to a religion or a form of spirituality? [Always, often, rarely, never]*
- No changes made after pilot surveys

### I believe in life after death.

[Y / N / Unsure] [National Consortium on Psychosocial Stress, Spirituality, and Health]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, the question wording was adjusted to: *Do you believe in life after death, or not?*
- No changes made after CIs

### I believe that a god or higher power exists.

[Y / N / Unsure] [National Consortium on Psychosocial Stress, Spirituality, and Health, modified]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, the question wording was revised to be more inclusive: *Do you believe in one God, more than one god, an impersonal spiritual force, or none of the above? [I believe in one God, I believe in more than one god, I believe in an impersonal spiritual force, none of the above, unsure]*
- No changes were made after the CIs, but in a few highly traditional countries like Egypt, the options “more than one god” or “impersonal spiritual force” were omitted because they proved highly sensitive in those contexts; this holds for similar references in subsequent questions

### How well do you feel that each of the following words describe your view of God or a higher power?

[0=Not at all, 10=Very well] [Johnson et al., 2016, modified]

- 1) Helping
  - 2) Forgiving
  - 3) Commanding
  - 4) Judging
- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - Change after CIs: Changes were made to the question wording and response scale to be more inclusive and consistent with previous items: *How well do you feel that each of the following words describe your view of God, the main god you worship, or the force that guides your life? [A great deal, somewhat, not very much, not at all]*
  - After pilot surveys, a “not relevant” option was added to the response scale



**[Insert major religion from this country] is the most common religion in your country. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The teachings of [major religious figure] are very important in my life.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[Emavardhana and Tori, 1997, modified]

- Only asked on CIs
- Prior to CIs, this modified version of the question was adapted from a set of questions asking specifically about several major religious figures or texts
- Feedback from CIs: Some respondents were unsure how to respond if they followed a faith tradition other than country's most common religion
- Change after CIs: No changes made to the original question; however, a similar question was added to capture the importance respondents placed on the teachings of their own religion as well if this was different from the most common religion:
  - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The teachings of [insert major religious figure, according to response from previous question; if response to previous question is "no religion/atheist/agnostic," then omit this question entirely] are very important in my life. [0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]

**I feel loved or cared for by God or a higher power.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree] [Levin, 2000, modified]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, the question wording was revised to be more inclusive, and a 5-point response scale was adopted: *I feel loved or cared for by God, the main god I worship, or the force that guides my life. [Strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree]*
- Feedback from CIs: Some respondents in Islamic countries struggled with the question, noting that they view God's love as something that is not guaranteed, but which they continually strive for
- Change after CIs: The response scale was further simplified to: [Agree, disagree, unsure, not relevant]
- After the pilot surveys, a slight modification was made to the question wording with the addition of the word "spiritual": *I feel loved or cared for by God, the main god I worship, or the spiritual force that guides my life.*

**I find strength or comfort in my religion or spirituality.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[Underwood et al., 2002]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, a 5-point response scale was adopted: [Strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree]
- Change after CIs: The response scale further simplified to: [Agree, disagree, unsure, not relevant]

**I have had a profound religious or spiritual awakening or experience that changed the direction of my life.**

[Y / N] [Gallup Poll]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, a slight change was made to the question wording by adding “or not”: *Have you had a profound religious or spiritual awakening or experience that changed the direction of your life, or not?* [Y / N]
- No further changes made after CIs

**I feel God or a higher power is punishing me.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[BMMRS 20, modified]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, the question wording was changed to make it more inclusive: *I feel God, a god, or a spiritual force is punishing me.*
  - In CIs, an alternative 5-point response scale was also assessed: Strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree; the stem wording remained the same for both scales
- Feedback from CIs: Respondents in a few countries, including Germany, Indonesia and Turkey, were confused by this question, saying they saw the idea that God delivers “punishment” as inappropriate
- Change after CIs: The response scale was further simplified to: [Agree, disagree, unsure, not relevant]
- No changes made after pilot surveys

**People in my religious community are critical of me or my lifestyle.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[Shields Survey, modified]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
  - In CIs, an alternative 5-point response scale was also assessed: Strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree; the stem wording remained the same for both scales
- Change after CIs: The response scale was further simplified to: [Agree, disagree, unsure, not relevant]
- No changes made after pilot surveys



### **My religious beliefs are what really lie behind my whole approach to life.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]  
[DUREL; and in place of BMMRS 31]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, the question wording was modified slightly to include “practices”: *My religious beliefs and practices are what really lie behind my whole approach to life.*
  - In CIs, an alternative 5-point response scale was also assessed: Strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree; the stem wording remained the same for both scales
- Change after CIs: The response scale was further simplified to: [Agree, disagree, unsure, not relevant]
- No changes made after pilot surveys

### **I tell other people about my religion or spirituality even when they have different beliefs.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Change after CIs: The response scale was simplified to: [Agree, disagree, unsure, not relevant]
- No changes made after pilot surveys

### **How often did your mother attend religious services when you were around 12 years old?**

[Never, a few times a year, a few times a month, weekly, more than once per week]

- Only asked on CIs
- Feedback from CIs: Several respondents noted that attending “religious services” may not be as relevant in some religious traditions such as Buddhism; several respondents had trouble with the list of time-period response options, leading interviewers to suggest simplifying it to four options
- Change after CIs: The question wording was changed to be more inclusive: *How often did your mother attend religious services or worship at a temple, mosque, shrine, church, or other religious building when you were around 12 years old?*
  - The response scale was slightly altered to [At least once a week, one to three times a month, less than once a month, never]

### How often do you attend religious services?

[Never, a few times a year, a few times a month, weekly, more than once per week] [BMMRS 34]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, the response scale was slightly altered: [Never, a few times a year, one to three times a month, once a week, more than once a week]
- Feedback from CIs: The phrase “religious services” was confusing to several respondents in different countries, some of whom said it would be more appropriate to ask how often they visited their place of worship; some wondered if “services” included certain activities like volunteering; in Japan, the translation of “religious services” connotes a serious rare occasion (like a funeral) rather than a weekly service
- No changes made after CIs due to concerns that adding other examples of worship would cause respondent confusion; modifications in specific countries were not adopted to achieve as much consistency in question wording across countries as possible

### How often do you read or listen to sacred texts or other religious literature?

[Never, occasionally, daily, more than daily] [BMMRS 15, modified]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, the response scale was slightly altered: [More than once a day, about once a day, sometimes, never]
- No changes made after CIs

### How often do you pray by yourself, alone?

[Never, occasionally, daily, more than daily] [National Study of Youth and Religion, Wave 3 (2007-2008), modified]

- Asked on CIs and pilot surveys
- Prior to CIs, the question wording was changed to be more inclusive, and the response scale was slightly altered: *How often do you pray or meditate? [More than once a day, about once a day, sometimes, never]*
- No changes made after CIs



# Appendix 2

## Global Flourishing Study Intake Survey 2021<sup>1</sup>

**Please tell me your age.**

[Open-ended response]

**Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the city or area where you live or are you unsure?**

[Satisfied, dissatisfied, unsure]

**Is there any one special person you know that you feel very close to? For example, someone you can confide in and share your feelings with.<sup>2</sup>**

[Y / N]

**In the past month, have you donated money to a charity?<sup>2</sup>**

[Y / N]

**In the past month, have you volunteered your time to an organization?<sup>2</sup>**

[Y / N]

Now, I'm going to read some personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please tell me whether you generally agree, disagree, or neither agree nor disagree that the pair of traits applies to you, even if one trait applies more strongly than the other.

[Strongly agree, agree moderately, agree a little, disagree a little, disagree moderately, disagree strongly, neither agree nor disagree]

- Extroverted, enthusiastic
- Critical, quarrelsome
- Dependable, self-disciplined
- Anxious, easily upset
- Open to new experiences, complex
- Reserved, quiet
- Sympathetic, warm
- Disorganized, careless
- Calm, emotionally stable
- Conventional, uncreative

<sup>1</sup> The Global Flourishing Study Intake Survey will only be conducted using an interviewer-administered approach via face-to-face or telephone. The Annual Survey will be either interviewer-administered over the telephone or self-administered over the web depending on whether the respondent uses the internet. Here, we are presenting the telephone Intake Survey and web Annual Survey. Small variations in question wording may exist between the interviewer-administered and web-based versions of the Annual Surveys; also, volunteered "Don't know/Refused" answer options are only included for interviewer-administered surveys and not the web-based version of the Annual Survey. Respondent selection questions are asked at the beginning of the Intake Survey and gender is determined by the interviewer to reduce risk of offending the respondent.

<sup>2</sup> Question also appears on the Annual Survey in years 2-5.

**What was your religion when you were 12 years old?**

[Open-ended response]

*(If respondent says it was more than one religion, ask: Which religion did you identify with most?)*

- Christianity
- Islam
- Hinduism
- Buddhism
- Judaism
- Sikhism
- Baha'i
- Jainism
- Shinto
- Taoism
- Confucianism
- Primal, Animist, or Folk religion
- Some other religion [please specify]
- No religion/Atheist/Agnostic

**How often did YOU attend religious services or worship at a temple, mosque, shrine, church, or other religious building when YOU were around 12 years old? Did you attend at least once a week, one to three times a month, less than once a month, or never?**

[At least once a week, one to three times a month, less than once a month, never]

**How often did YOUR MOTHER attend religious services or worship at a temple, mosque, shrine, church, or other religious building when YOU were around 12 years old? Did she attend at least once a week, one to three times a month, less than once a month, or never?**

[At least once a week, one to three times a month, less than once a month, never]

**How often did YOUR FATHER attend religious services or worship at a temple, mosque, shrine, church, or other religious building when YOU were around 12 years old? Did he attend at least once a week, one to three times a month, less than once a month, or never?**

[At least once a week, one to three times a month, less than once a month, never]

**Could you tell me what your religion currently is?**

[Open-ended response]

*(If respondent says they have more than one religion, ask: Which religion do you identify with most?)*

- Christianity
- Islam
- Hinduism
- Buddhism
- Judaism
- Sikhism
- Baha'i
- Jainism
- Shinto
- Taoism
- Confucianism
- Primal, Animist, or Folk religion
- Some other religion [please specify]
- No religion/Atheist/Agnostic



*(Ask Christians only)*

**Which of the following denominations or churches do you most identify with, if any?**

- Catholic
- Orthodox
- Anglican/Episcopal
- Presbyterian/Reformed, such as [country-specific examples]
- Lutheran
- Methodist
- Baptist, such as [country-specific examples]
- Pentecostal/Charismatic denominations, such as [country-specific examples]
- Independent Church, Holiness, or Evangelical, such as [country-specific examples]
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints/Other Mormon tradition
- Jehovah's Witness
- Seventh Day Adventist
- (In Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa only): Prophetic, Ethiopian, or Zionist (AIC; African Initiated Church)
- Some other denomination [please specify]
- No denomination in particular (just Christian/just Protestant)

*(Ask Muslims only)*

**Which of the following sects or schools do you most identify with?**

- Sunni
- Shi'a
- No sect in particular (just Muslim)
- Some other sect [please specify]

*(Ask Hindus only)*

**Which of the following sects or denominations do you most identify with?**

- Vaishnavite
- Shaivite
- Shakta
- Smarta
- No sect or denomination in particular (just Hindu)
- Some other sect [please specify]

*(Ask Buddhists in Japan only)*

**Which group do you identify with most?**

- Nara
- Tendai
- Shingon
- Amida
- Nichiren
- Zen

*(Ask Jews in Israel and the U.S. only)*

**Which of the following denominations or traditions do you most identify with?**

*U.S. response options                      Israel response options*

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| ■ Non-religious                              | ■ Hiloni  |
| ■ Traditional                                | ■ Masorti |
| ■ Orthodox                                   | ■ Dati    |
| ■ Ultra-Orthodox                             | ■ Haredi  |
| ■ No denomination or tradition in particular |           |
| ■ Some other denomination [please specify]   |           |

*(Ask "No religion" respondents only)*

**Which of the following best describes you?**

[Atheist, agnostic, neither]

**Would you say you are spiritual, religious, both, or neither?**

[Spiritual, religious, both, neither]

**Is religion an important part of your daily life?**

[Y / N]

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The teachings of [insert major religious figure, according to response to previous questions] are very important in my life. Please use a 0 to 10 scale where 10 means "strongly agree" and 0 means "strongly disagree."**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]

**[Major religion of the country] is the most common religion in this country. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The teachings of [major religious figure for major religion in country] are very important in my life. Please use a 0 to 10 scale where 10 means "strongly agree" and 0 means "strongly disagree."**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]

**How well do you feel that each of the following words describe your view of God, the main god you worship, or the force that guides your life? A great deal, somewhat, not very much, or not at all?**

[A great deal, somewhat, not very much, not at all, not relevant]

- Helping
- Forgiving
- Commanding
- Judging

**Please think about your relationship with your mother when you were growing up. Would you say that relationship was very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad, or very bad?**

[Very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad, very bad, n/a]

**Did you feel loved by your mother when you were growing up?**

[Yes, no, n/a]

**Please think about your relationship with your father when you were growing up. Would you say that relationship was very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad, or very bad?**

[Very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad, very bad, n/a]

**Did you feel loved by your father when you were growing up?**

[Yes, no, n/a]

**In general, how was your health when you were growing up? Was it excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?**

[Excellent, very good, good, fair, poor]

**When you were growing up, did you feel like an outsider in your family?**

[Yes, no, n/a]

**In the past month, have you helped a stranger or someone you didn't know who needed help?<sup>3</sup>**

[Y / N]

3 Question also appears on the Annual Survey in years 2-5.



**How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? For each one, tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.**

[Strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree]

- Whatever the circumstances, the law should always be obeyed.
- The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels.

**How many children under 18 years of age are now living in your household?**

[Open-ended response]

**What political party do you identify with most?**

[Country-specific categories]

[Open-ended response]

**What is your [race/ethnicity/nationality]?**

[Country-specific categories]

[Open-ended response]

**Were you born in this country, or not?**

[Born in this country, born in another country]

**Can I please have the month and year you were born?**

[Open-ended response]

## Global Flourishing Study Annual Survey

Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to ten at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you, and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you.

**On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time?**

[0=Worst possible, 10=Best Possible]

**Just your best guess, on which step do you think you will stand in the future, say about five years from now?**

[0=Worst possible, 10=Best Possible]

Now continue to think about the ladder with the top of the ladder at ten being the best possible state or arrangement and the bottom of the ladder at zero being the worst possible state or arrangement.

**In general, how happy or unhappy do you usually feel?**

[0=Extremely unhappy, 10=Extremely happy]

**Overall, how satisfied are you with life as a whole these days?**

[0=Not satisfied with your life at all,  
10=Completely satisfied with your life]

**Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?**

[0=Not at all worthwhile,  
10=Completely worthwhile]

For these next questions, think about the ladder once again with the top of the ladder at ten being the best possible state or arrangement and the bottom of the ladder at zero being the worst possible state or arrangement.

**In general, how would you rate your physical health?**

[0=Poor, 10=Excellent]

**How would you rate your overall mental health?**

[0=Poor, 10=Excellent]

Still thinking about the ladder, with the top of the ladder at ten being completely true of me and the bottom of the ladder at zero being not true of me at all, please rate the following statements.

**I always act to promote good in all circumstances, even in difficult and challenging situations.**

[0=Not true of me at all, 10=Completely true of me]

**I am always able to give up some happiness now for greater happiness later.**

[0=Not true of me at all, 10=Completely true of me]

Still thinking about the ladder, with the top of the ladder at ten being strongly agree and the bottom of the ladder at zero being strongly disagree, please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

**I understand my purpose in life.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]

**I am content with my friendships and relationships**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]

**My relationships are as satisfying as I would want them to be.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]

**I have the freedom in my life to pursue the things that are most important to me.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]

**Despite challenges, I always remain hopeful about the future.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]



**If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]

**Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad.**

[0=Strongly disagree, 10=Strongly agree]

Still thinking about the ladder, with the top of the ladder at ten being always and the bottom of the ladder at zero being never, please answer the following questions.

**If you were in trouble, how often could you count on people in your life, like relatives or friends, to help you whenever you need them?**

[0=Never, 10=Always]

**How often do you show someone in your life that you love or care for them?**

[0=Never, 10=Always]

**How would you describe your sense of belonging in your country?**

[0=Very weak, 10=Very strong]

For these next questions, think about the ladder once again with the top of the ladder at ten being the best possible state or arrangement that you would want and the bottom of the ladder at zero being the worst possible state or arrangement.

**How often do you worry about being able to meet normal monthly living expenses?**

[0=Worry all of the time, 10=Do not ever worry]

**How often do you worry about safety, food, or housing?**

[0=Worry all of the time, 10=Do not ever worry]

**How often do you feel lonely?**

[0=Always, 10=Never]

**Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the city or area where you live?<sup>4</sup>**

[Satisfied, dissatisfied, unsure]

**Is there any one special person you know that you feel very close to? For example, someone you can confide in and share your feelings with. (If you have more than one person who you feel very close to select "Yes.")<sup>4</sup>**

[Y / N]

**In the past month, have you donated money to a charity?<sup>4</sup>**

[Y / N]

**In the past month, have you volunteered your time to an organization?<sup>4</sup>**

[Y / N]

**In the past month, have you helped a stranger or someone you didn't know who needed help?<sup>4</sup>**

[Yes, no, n/a]

**In general, how often do you feel you are at peace with your thoughts and feelings?**

[Always, often, rarely, never]

**In general, how often do you feel the various aspects of your life are in balance?**

[Always, often, rarely, never]

**In general, how often do you feel connected to a religion or a form of spirituality?**

[Always, often, rarely, never]

**How often do you feel very capable in most things you do in life?**

[Always, often, rarely, never]

<sup>4</sup> Question will appear on the Intake Survey in year one and subsequently in the Annual Surveys in years 2-5.

**How often have you forgiven those who have hurt you?**

[Always, often, rarely, never]

**How often do you feel discriminated against because of any group you are a part of? This might include discrimination because of your religion, political affiliation, race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, or involvement in civic organizations or community groups.**

[Always, often, rarely, never]

**How much do you approve or disapprove of the job performance of the national government of this country?**

[Strongly approve, somewhat approve, neither approve nor disapprove, somewhat disapprove, strongly disapprove]

**How many people in this country trust one another?<sup>5</sup>**

[All, most, some, not very many, none]

**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?<sup>5</sup> People like me have a say about what the government does.**

[Agree, disagree, unsure]

**To what extent are you suffering? This can be any type of physical or mental suffering.**

[A lot, some not very much, not at all]

**How much bodily pain have you had during the past 4 weeks?**

[A lot some, not very much, not at all]

**Think about the biggest threat to life you've ever witnessed or experienced first-hand during your life. In the past month, how much have you been bothered by this experience?**

[A lot, some not very much, not at all]

**Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?**

[Nearly every day, more than half the days, several days, not at all]

- Little interest or pleasure in doing things
- Feeling down, depressed or hopeless
- Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge
- Not being able to stop or control worrying

**How often do you attend religious services?**

[More than once a week, once a week, one to three times a month, a few times a year, never]

**How often do you participate in groups that are not religious, such as book clubs, sports, or political organizations?**

[More than once a week, once a week, one to three times a month, a few times a year, never]

**Do you believe in life after death, or not?**

[Yes, no, unsure]

**Have you had a profound religious or spiritual awakening or experience that changed the direction of your life, or not?**

[Y / N]

**How often do you read or listen to sacred texts or other religious literature?**

[More than once a day, about once a day, sometimes, never]

**How often do you pray or meditate?**

[More than once a day, about once a day, sometimes, never]

**Do you believe in one God, more than one god, an impersonal spiritual force, or none of these?**

[I believe in one God, I believe in more than one god, I believe in an impersonal spiritual force, none of the above, unsure]

<sup>5</sup> Question will appear on the Intake Survey in year one and subsequently in the Annual Surveys in years 2-5.



If you do not believe in a God, or gods, or spiritual forces, then the following questions may not be relevant to you. These questions are important so we would still like you to answer them, but you can select “not relevant” if the question is not relevant to you.

**Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements.**

[Agree, disagree, not relevant, unsure]

- My religious beliefs and practices are what really lie behind my whole approach to life.
- I find strength or comfort in my religion or spirituality.
- I feel loved or cared for by God, the main god I worship, or the spiritual force that guides my life.<sup>6</sup>
- I feel God, a god, or a spiritual force is punishing me.
- People in my religious community are critical of me or my lifestyle.
- I tell other people about my religion or spirituality even when they have different beliefs.

**About how many cigarettes do you smoke each day, if any?**

[Open-ended response]

**Approximately how many full drinks of any kind of alcoholic beverage did you drink in the past seven days, if any? Please enter the number below. A full drink is a glass of wine, a can or bottle of beer, or a shot of hard liquor.**

[Open-ended response]

**On how many days did you exercise or engage in vigorous physical activities for 30 minutes or more in the past week?**

[0=0 days, 7=7 days]

**What is your gender?**

[Male, female, other]

**What is your age? Please enter your age below**

[Open-ended response]

**What is your current marital status?**

[Single/Never been married, married, separated, divorced, widowed, domestic partner]

**How many children under 18 years of age are now living in your household? Please enter the number below.**

[Open-ended response]

**What is your highest completed level of education?**

[Country-specific response options]

**Which of the following best describes your employment status?**

[Employed for an employer, self-employed, retired, student, homemaker, unemployed and looking for a job, none of these/other]

**Do you have any health problems that prevent you from doing any of the things people your age normally can do?**

[Y / N]

**What is your total monthly household income in [country currency], before taxes? Please include income from wages and salaries, remittances from family members living elsewhere, farming, and all other sources.**

[Country-specific response options]

**Which one of these phrases comes closest to your own feelings about your household's income these days?**

- Living comfortably on present income
- Getting by on present income
- Finding it difficult on present income
- Finding it very difficult on present income

6 Question will appear on the Intake Survey in year one and subsequently in the Annual Surveys in years 2-5.

**Which of the following best describes the home you live in?**

- Someone in this household owns this home
- Someone in this household rents this home
- There are both owners and renters living in this home
- None of the above

This next question will be about abuse. Any information you provide will be kept confidential.

**Were you ever physically or sexually abused when you were growing up?<sup>7</sup>**

[Yes, no, unsure]

**Have you had a family member or close friend die from the coronavirus (COVID-19)?<sup>7</sup>**

[Yes, no, unsure]

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<sup>7</sup> Question appears in the Annual Survey in year one, only, and does not appear in the Annual Surveys in years 2-5.

## Appendix 3

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