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RESEARCH ARTICLE



Well-being for a better world: the contribution of a radically relational and nature-inclusive conception of well-being to the sustainability transformation

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ABSTRACT

The current ecological crisis attests that the price of the human pursuit of well-being has been too high and that the conception of well-being behind this pursuit has been flawed. Building on research on sustainable well-being, well-being research in sociology, social policy, psychology, and philosophy; need theories, degrowth research, and ecopsychology, this article investigates what kind of narrative and conception of well-being could contribute to the transformation toward sustainability. The article first delves into the current popularity of the discourse on well-being, discussing both its pitfalls and promises, and explaining why well-being is a significant concept for the sustainability transformation, when appropriately defined and free of an economic bias. A relational, and therefore sustainable, approach to well-being, namely the Having-Loving-Doing-Being framework (shortened HDLB), is then presented and elaborated. Going deeper into the topic of relationality, the article then examines the tug-of-war between the notions of objective vs. subjective and hedonic vs. eudaimonic well-being, and clarifies the HDLB framework's position on these issues, elucidating why a radically relational and nature-inclusive - and in the last resort, non-dualist - approach, offers an exit from the polarity of these dichotomies.

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Introduction

Human societies are guided by stories people tell one another. The narrative that has brought us to the present situation is that of progress made possible by economic growth and advances in technology. According to this tale, humanity is steadily moving toward a brighter future. When it comes to material prosperity, particularly in certain parts of the world, this is not a mere fairytale. However, in many other aspects, the story has lost its credibility, as the price of the so-called progress has proven to be far too high. According to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity Ecosystem Services (IPBES 2019, 11-12), the rate of global change in nature during the past fifty years is unprecedented in human history, with around one million animal and plant species at risk of extinction. There is growing and uncontestable evidence that economic growth is harmful to our planet (e.g., Jackson 2009). The so-called Great Acceleration graphs show that since 1750, the steeply rising curves of concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, ocean acidification, tropical forest loss,

and so forth have followed the curve of growth of gross domestic product (GDP) (Steffen et al. 2015).

Despite the growing alarm, such as the global climate and environmental emergency declared by the European Parliament (2019), appropriate and proportionate measures are nowhere to be seen, and the grim statement of leading scientists (Ehrlich et al. 2012) that "humanity has never been moving faster nor further from sustainability than it is now," is more burning than ever. Neither have our social nor personal problems been solved: inequality and violence are rampant, extreme poverty has not been eradicated, mental stress and anxiety are commonly shared predicaments, and the list goes on. The current economic order has pithily been described as "unfair, unsustainable, unstable, and unhappy" (Trebeck 2019). This situation sets in motion a vicious circle because unhappy people cannot create a happy society, and an unhappy society cannot beget optimal conditions for fostering balanced individuals.

How can this be possible? After all, all humans wanted was the good life. This being the case, there must be something inherently rotten in the way the good life is conceived.

In this article, I investigate the narratives and conceptions of the good life - in other words, well-being - and how they could be improved to achieve ecological sustainability and sustainable well-being for all the denizens of Earth. In doing so, I share the view of IPBES (2019, 17) that transformations toward sustainability are more likely when efforts are directed at certain key leverage points where efforts yield exceptionally large effects. "Visions of a good life that do not entail ever-increasing material consumption" is the first point IPBES raises.

I begin my argumentation by delving into the current popularity of the discourse on well-being, explaining in the next section why well-being is a significant concept for the sustainability transformation when appropriately defined.¹ In the third section, I present a relational, and therefore sustainable, approach to well-being, namely the Having-Loving-Doing-Being framework (shortened HLDB). In the fourth section, I examine the tug-of-war between the notions of objective vs. subjective and hedonic vs. eudaimonic well-being, clarify the HDLB framework's position on these issues, elucidating why a relational - and in the last resort, non-dualist approach offers an exit from the polarity of these dichotomies. The article closes with a reflection on the importance of a nature-inclusive (that is, radically relational) conception of well-being. The argumentation builds on research on sustainable well-being; well-being research in sociology, social policy, psychology, and philosophy; need theories, degrowth research, and ecopsychology.

The increasing popularity of the discourse on well-being: faltering steps and promises

The concept of well-being enjoys ever-growing popularity in academia as well as in wider society. There has been an "extraordinary explosion of references" to well-being (White 2017, 121), so that now the word can be spotted "everywhere: in exhortations for individual action, in marketing goods and services," and "in a repositioning of the goals of government and policy intervention" (Atkinson 2013, 137). While many institutions have acknowledged the need to "broaden public and policy discourse" the (Hämäläinen and Michaelson 2014), there is, however, a reason to doubt the weight accorded to wellbeing in public and economic policy.

For decades, GDP growth has been the central aim of most societies, an indicator of progress as well as well-being, despite the fact that already Simon Kuznets, credited as the inventor of GDP, cautioned against equating this measure in such terms (Costanza et al. 2014). Despite mounting criticism of this kind of use (e.g., Stiglitz et al. 2009),

and recognition that besides economic growth, there are other aims for public policy, we are still far from a situation in which governments and intergovernmental organizations would unambiguously declare well-being as their main priority.

This is evident, for example, in the OECD's discourse on "the economy of well-being," in which the priority order is stated in no uncertain terms: "investing in people's well-being sets the foundations for stronger and more sustainable economic growth" (Llena Nozal, Martin, and Murtin 2019, 9). The same preference can also be detected in the program of the Finnish government (2019, 152): "We have not invested in the well-being and inclusion of people solely because we have had the financial resources to do so; instead, we have also wanted to become a prosperous nation." In the statement well-being is not described as an end itself, but as a means to something else: the wealth of a nation.

However, the level of material prosperity nations reach today does not guarantee the well-being of future generations. On the contrary, it may endanger it. It is also questionable how economic definitions in which well-being may mean "people working and paying taxes" (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2019) harmonize with people's subjective definitions.

Let us, for the moment, skip over this somewhat tepid commitment to well-being as well as the different or conflicting interpretations of the notion, and ask why it is a useful concept containing many sustainability promises particularly for the transformation.

First, the word well-being is positively charged. Who would not want to attain "a good or satisfactory condition of existence; a state characterized by health, happiness, and prosperity"? Moreover, this positivity includes both the individual and social levels, since well-being can be understood either as a beneficent personal experience or, more widely, as "a positive and sustainable state that allows individuals, groups or nations to thrive and flourish" (Huppert et al. 2004, 1331). Well-being is also an inclusive concept, relevant for everyone regardless of social position; a notion that unites rather than divides (White 2010, 159). It is also, as I show later, a concept that can transcend the anthropocentric bias that hallmarks the dominant worldview, appositely designated "human exemptionalism" (Catton and Dunlap 1980).

Second, the notion of well-being is holistic. On a personal level, it connects the mental and the physical as well as the immaterial and the material sides of existence. It can (or should) therefore repudiate the compartmentalization of people's lives according to professional specialization or sectoral divisions (White 2010, 159).

Third, the word well-being directs attention to people's own experiences, moving beyond external and "objective" macro-level measures of well-being (White, 2010, 160) - or rather, indicators considered to be descriptive of well-being. Well-being is inevitably a subjective experience. This is why external indicators such as longevity, education, or standard of living do not tell very much about people's wellbeing. One might even claim that there is no such thing as objective well-being. Perhaps this is why a number of researchers find it difficult to write about "objective" well-being without quotation marks (White 2016, 28). They (as well as I) hold that to complement "economists' abstractions" (Gasper 2004, 30), it is vital to learn about people's own experiences and to focus on "the personal," "the signature emphasis of well-being" (White 2017, 131).

Fourth, well-being is tied to motivation and aspirations. In the Macmillan dictionary, well-being is defined as "the satisfactory state that someone or something should be in." Well-being is something people or societies aspire to, and achieving wellbeing may even be the strongest source of motivation for human action. Well-being is, then, not only an outcome of something but also a force of action and change, both on the personal and the social level.

It has been suggested that the widespread talk about well-being is an indication of shared anxiety that our well-being is actually jeopardized (see White 2017). I interpret this anxiety as a sign of a deepening sense of crisis of the whole consumerist way of life and a growing and gnawing awareness of its ecological repercussions. The concept of wellbeing gives hope for a better future. For some, it may also entail an urge to replace the political agenda for economic growth with an agenda for well-being "for people and the planet," an expression increasingly found in publications across different disciplines and fields of life (e.g., Boyce 2019; Burch 2011; Merry 2019). The "will for well-being" could therefore be a catalyst for transformation. Ideally, it could help to steer "away from the currently limited paradigm of economic growth" (IPBES 2019, 33), and pave the way for seeking alternatives to the current, unsustainable social order. This was demonstrated, for instance, by the call of 238 academics on the European Union for a post-growth future in which human and ecological well-being takes priority over Guardian 2018).

We do not, however, live in an ideal world. As Sarah White (2010, 168) writes, "there is no doubt that there is amongst those advocating well-being a

lot of energy for change and especially to question the supreme value of economic growth. But for many, perhaps most of these, there is also a good measure of 'business as usual'." While the word well-being may be spotted anywhere, the same goes for economic discourse, with the latter often lurking behind the former. A Web of Science search for well-being and climate change publications (1900-2016) showed that only 848 studies referred to well-being in the context of climate change, in comparison to 6803 for income, and that a mere 100 studies referred to it in the context of climatechange mitigation, compared to 1306 for income (Lamb and Steinberger 2017). This is a serious omission and in line with the observation that current well-being approaches inadequately account for interdependencies and may even reinforce alienation and the exploitation of nature (Kjell 2011, 13). What kind of well-being approach would be more suitable, then? I argue that the keyword is relationality.

A framework of relational well-being: the Having-Doing-Loving-Being approach

In order to deliver on its promises and to serve the sustainability transformation, the discourse on wellbeing should be decoupled from economic growth and overly materialistic considerations. Well-being should, instead, be coupled with nature and be defined holistically. This could be done through the Having-Doing-Loving-Being framework (shortened HDLB) (e.g., Helne and Hirvilammi 2015, 2017, 2019): a relational, inclusive, needs-based, and multi-dimensional conception of well-being, in which well-being is perceived as fundamentally dependent on planetary ecosystems. Below, I present the approach concisely with some elaborations.

The HDLB framework comprises four dimensions of well-being, that is, four categories of needs: Having, Doing, Loving, and Being. The development of this framework was inspired by Erik Allardt's (1976, 1990, 1993) Having-Loving-Being theory of well-being.3 However, unlike in his formulation, in the HDLB framework, the dimensions of well-being are embedded in their ecosystemic foundation.⁴ This makes the approach relational not only in a social but also in an ecological sense. This is also what differentiates the approach from many, if not most, ways of defining well-being, and forms perhaps its most noteworthy contribution. Due to its ecosystemic grounding, the approach can also be characterized as radically relational, in the sense that it means (re)rooting human well-being in nature (radix, latin = roots). In the last resort, however, the

approach is non-dualist (see Helne 2019), as humans are inseparable from nature.

The ecosystemic embeddedness of well-being means that the dimension of Having - the need for subsistence - is firmly anchored in the material resources provided by ecosystems. The word "having" may sound misplaced in the context of the critique of unsustainable consumerist capitalism, but it refers to what Erich Fromm called "existential having." With it, he referred to the requirement to "have, keep, take care of, and use certain things in order to survive," stressing that existential having has to be distinguished from "characterological having," or (to use a perhaps less ambiguous term), excessive having. This, in turn, refers to a socially determined "passionate drive to retain and keep" (Fromm [1976], 1997, 69-70) The urge to excessive having is thus a corollary of the capitalist economy. In the HDLB framework, Having is also understood in an Aristotelian sense. Aristotle pointed out that human well-being requires that we are "sufficiently [emphasis added] equipped with external goods." He was strongly against excess, insisting that "we can do noble acts without ruling earth and sea; for even with moderate advantages can one act virtuously." (Aristotle [384-322] 2016, 23, 169).

Doing denotes meaningful activities that allow individuals to abide by their values. It has been argued that human beings have an inherent sense of morality and "a sense of sustainability" (Holden et al. 2018). From this perspective, caring for nature is an essential component of human well-being (Jax et al. 2018). Under the right circumstances, the deeply felt need to protect life may lead to an endeavor to be engaged in ethically and ecologically responsible activities. Returning to Aristotle ([384-322] 2016, 166), eudaimonia is "activity [emphasis added] in accordance with virtue." In the growth economies, however, it is not evident that the need to act in sustainable ways is endorsed.

Again, on account of the ecosystemic embeddedness of the HDLB approach, the conception of Loving differs from the most common ways of defining relationships pertinent to well-being by including relations not only with other humans but also with non-human animals and nature. Loving is, by definition, relational, and reaches out both into the past and into the future to include our parents and ancestors as well as our children and their children. Loving also encompasses geographical space: one can love one's back garden, the nearby forest, the African savannah, or the entire planet. When the dimension of Loving is comprehended in this wide sense, well-being can no longer be criticized for being an anthropocentric notion. It consequently

redeems its promise of being a unifying and holistic concept.

Finally, the dimension of Being includes physical and mental health and what could be called being fully human. In its latter meaning, Being is an experience of aliveness, authentic relatedness to the world, inner activity, presence, imaginativeness, selfactualization, growth, and freedom to be oneself (Fromm [1976], 1997, 21, 71-72, 139-140.) Being also includes spirituality and inner transformation. These, as the whole dimension of Being, deserve far more attention in well-being research, not least because they are crucial and deep leverage points for the sustainability transformation (e.g., Helne 2019; Woiwode et al. 2021).

Even though the HDLB framework contains four dimensions, in practice they are interconnected and overlapping. A person who, for instance, has found work that not only puts food on the table but that she finds meaningful and beneficial to other beings' well-being, is simultaneously actualizing the needs of Having, Doing, Loving, and Being. The dimensions thus portray the totality required for wellbeing, which means that well-being is actualized when all four needs are sufficiently fulfilled. It is also extremely important that their relationship is balanced (Sirgy and Wu 2009), because until now well-being has, to too large an extent, been identified with Having – and even with excessive having. The consequences for the Earth system and our psyches have been disastrous: the obsession of having, or the "affluenza," is directly connected to ecological devastation and unsatisfied, superficial lives. The HDLB approach, therefore, aims to shift the focus of human attention and activities from Having to the less material-intensive dimensions of Doing, Loving, and Being, which could have significant psychological and socioecological consequences. It might even contribute to reducing the alleged "toxicity" of some forms of the discourse on wellbeing arising from the omission of sufficiency, contentment, and sustainable ways of life (Atkinson 2020). Moreover, the framework indicates that economic growth is not a precondition of well-being, because due to the holistic nature of the latter, income and material resources cannot act as a substitute for its other dimensions.

Bridging the gulf between opposite conceptions of well-being

To recapitulate, the sustainability transformation requires a sound idea of well-being. However, the concept of well-being and how to define it cause disputes and raise passions. Scholars are particularly divided on two questions: whether to recur to an

objective or a subjective, or a eudaimonic or hedonic definition (see also Ereaut and Whiting 2008). In this section, I show how these dichotomies can be transcended through a relational conception of well-being such as the HDLB approach.

Some scholars (e.g., White 2017, 125-126) are quite critical of the concept of subjective well-being (as they understand it), and certain of them even contend that the predominant ways of conceptualizing and "practicing" subjective well-being are toxic and harmful to well-being outcomes (Atkinson 2020). I shall first discuss some forms of this criticism, and then show how thev circumvented.⁵

While social policy has often been focused on listing items that are thought to constitute "objective" well-being, interest in subjective wellbeing has increased (Dolan and Metcalfe 2012, 409-410). Subjective well-being also dominates wellbeing research within psychology and in the "economics of happiness." Some regard this as a dangerous trend that may lead to the adoption of an individualist ideology in well-being research (Fowers 2012, 2), in line with an atomistic ontology in which the person is seen as metaphysically separate from other persons (Christopher 1999). The crisometimes targets both hedonic eudaimonic approaches that are conceived of as conceptualizing "an individual's well-being in isolation; individualistically and in a decontextualized way, distinct from interdependent systems" (Kjell 2011, 5).

What makes individualism such a hazardous ideology is its close bond with consumerism. If subjective well-being is perceived as sitting squarely within today's individualistic culture (Christopher 1999, 144), the criticism is understandable. According to White (2017, 126), the "apparent innocence" of subjective well-being hides the notion's ideological side, that is, its affinity with market research. The measures of subjective wellbeing position people as consumers who rate how satisfied they are with their lives, which is interpreted as rating one's success. "It is difficult to imagine a context more likely to produce a 'false self," White (2017, 126) concludes.

The notion of subjective well-being is also feared to result in shoving the responsibility for well-being entirely on the individual, because subjective wellbeing is usually presented as resulting from inner characteristics - mindset, attitude, personality - rather than external factors (Atkinson et al. 2020, 1908). One concern is that this could lead to the retrenchment of welfare states or cutbacks of state-funded welfare. This could be done on the grounds that even people suffering from material deprivation may rate their quality of life as highly as those who are much better-off (White 2010, 166). If people are poor but happy, why bother?

Resentment against the notion of subjective wellbeing is thus closely related to the critique of neoliberalism and its dogma that people should always be responsible for themselves and their well-being. Subjective well-being is increasingly represented as a process of internal management and control, which may lead to demands of self-management and positioning failures of well-being as a failure of responsible citizenship (Atkinson 2013, 140-141). This lack of success could also be described as a failure in fulfilling one's responsibility to consume more and more (see also Davies 2015).

Research focusing on subjective well-being generally measures well-being by asking how satisfied individuals are with their life. Because of this, subjective well-being is sometimes assumed to be hedonic, that is, related to seeking pleasure (Huta and Ryan 2010, 738). Since hedonism can be regarded as consistent with the strivings of the growth economy in which the good life is synonymous with material affluence and increasing material satisfaction, the aptness of a hedonic definition of well-being in promoting sustainability has been cast in doubt (Brand-Correa and Steinberger 2017; Lamb and Steinberger 2017). Nevertheless, the notion has been popular in sustainability-oriented research, a topic to which I return later.

There are, however, counterarguments to these critiques. First, one should not confound the idea of subjectivity with how subjective well-being is usually measured (as satisfaction).

Second, subjective well-being need not be identified with the ethos of individualism. Instead, subjectivity can be understood relationally. Relational ontology – on which the HDLB approach is based – differs from individualistic and atomistic ontology in that its founding stone is relatedness to other people and the surrounding world. In what Barbara Muraca (2016, 19) has termed radically relational ontology, relations are conceived of as "ontologically prior to and constitutive of entities rather than being conceived as an external link(ing) between them." However, being a part of the Web of life does not exclude the subjectivity of human experiences. Our selves are relational (e.g., Gergen 2009), but our experiences are subjective. The concepts of relational self and relational well-being thus provide an account of subjectivity that can challenge dominant ideologies of the self (White 2017, 133) - their construct of a narrow, separate, and therefore a false self.

Third, because our selves are relational, our wellbeing does not depend entirely on ourselves. Instead, it always depends on our social and natural environment. Relational ontology thus contributes to warding off the danger of representing the individual in isolation (see also White 2010, 165). Relational ontology also signifies that the subjective and the "objective" are intertwined (see also Büchs and Koch 2017, 66) - to the extent that there are actually no grounds for making a distinction between them. Well-being thus emerges through the dynamic interplay of the two (White 2017, 127). Since we can only have our experience of our life situation, the "objective" merges "subjective," forming a non-dual entity.

The HDLB approach belongs to the category of needs-based theories of well-being. Needs are usually presented as being "objective" (Doyal and Gough 1991; Gough 2017b; Soper 2007), and indeed they are, in the sense that they are innate, universal, over-generational, and non-substitutable (Gough 2017a, 3; Max-Neef 1992). However, the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of a need is felt on a personal level. Because of this, the concept of needs cuts across the issue of subjectivity vs. objectivity.

The relational interplay or confluence of the subjective and the "objective" means that the responsibility for actualizing well-being can never be an exclusively individual affair. Because until recent years, well-being research has largely ignored nature's profound meaning for ensuring well-being, the HDLB approach spotlights the ecosystemic embeddedness of all the dimensions of well-being. This in no way excludes the social embeddedness of well-being. The prerequisites of well-being are social and ecological, beyond solely individual responsibility. Each of us, nevertheless, answers for our own part in the collective responsibility, in doing right by other beings and the planet.

Fourth, hedonia should not be confounded with subjective well-being, as hedonism represents a crude version of conceptualizing it (Gasper 2007, 60). Instead of assuming a priori that subjective well-being is hedonic, one should rather empirically test how it relates to both hedonia and eudaimonia (Huta and Ryan 2010, 738). Moreover, identifying subjective well-being with hedonia narrows down the scale of the former, excluding the "pleasures of virtue." This can also be detrimental to the eudaimonic conception of well-being, because eudaimonia may become pictured as something grim, a life of rigid righteousness and gloom.

Fifth, there is inherently nothing wrong with pleasure. Without it, human life would be joyless indeed. There are, however, harmful and less harmful ways of seeking enjoyment. To apply a term from need theory, there is a difference between not only needs and their satisfiers (Max-Neef 1992) but

also between pleasure and its satisfiers. One can, for example, get pleasure from eating either sustainably or unsustainably. Moreover, enjoyment need not refer to material consumption. On the contrary, hedonic pleasures can also be emotional-cognitive, such as enjoyment of togetherness or art (Huta and Ryan 2010).

This brings us to the sixth point. The contrast between hedonic and eudaimonic emphases has been perceived as a fundamental divide in wellbeing studies, perhaps even more so than the contrast between subjective and "objective" conceptions (Gasper 2009, 20-21). Yet the rift between hedonia and eudaimonia may be less deep than usually pictured.

This holds true even for Aristotle, the epitome of eudaimonic well-being theory. For him, eudaimonia was the highest human end, reached as a result of virtue. However, this in no way excludes the right kinds of pleasure. On the contrary, Aristotle deems virtuous actions not only good and noble but also pleasant in themselves. For him, eudaimonia "is the best, noblest, and most pleasant thing in the world." (Aristotle [384-322] 2016, 17, 20-21).

While Aristotle used the word eudaimon as a synonym of eu zên (living well) (Kraut 2018), in our time eudaimonia is usually translated as well-being, happiness, or flourishing. Blaine Fowers (2012, 5), preferring the last-mentioned translation, defines eudaimonia as "living a complete human life that is fully realized through virtuous activity." If this is not pleasurable, what is?

To give an opposite example, the theory of another Greek philosopher, Epicurus, is commonly characterized as hedonic. However, his ideas differ from hedonism as it is commonly understood, since they center on freedom from physical and mental suffering, living a peaceful and simple life, and attaining peace of mind (Konstan 2018). For Epicurus ([341-270] 2014), wisdom and pleasure go hand in hand: "It is impossible to live a pleasant life without living wisely and well and justly, and it is impossible to live wisely and well and justly without living pleasantly."

Since one can imagine such a thing as "wise hedonism," hedonism does not necessarily exclude deeds done for the planet, which explains the popularity of the hedonic notion of well-being in "green" social research and environmental research. These fields of study highlight the pleasures of sustainability, arguing that it is possible to decouple well-being from increasing consumption by focusing on other dimensions of well-being and that a sustainable society is compatible with an improvement in people's well-being, and does not require "unrealistic demands of altruism and morality" (O'Neill 2006,

160). In other words, the focus is on the "double dividend," a win-win situation of simultaneously reducing environmental impacts and improving well-being (Jackson 2008).

Psychological research has supported this possibility, as people's reports of their well-being and pro-ecological behavior have been found to be positively correlated (e.g., Brown and Kasser 2005; Kasser 2017). Numerous studies have revealed large correlations and convergence between hedonic and eudaimonic well-being also in other fields of life (O'Neill 2006, 168). This has led Disabato et al. (2016, 471-472) to the conclusion that evidence for the theoretical utility and empirical support for distinguishing the two is questionable. They nevertheless admit that the distinction has been helpful in describing and directing well-being research. This is to say that even if the line between the two may be a thin one, both concepts have a role to play. On the basis of their own findings, Huta and Ryan (2010) argue that hedonia and eudaimonia occupy both overlapping and distinct niches within a complete picture of well-being (see also Ryan and Deci 2001, 161). Put another way, achieving an acceptable and adaptive level of well-being requires both hedonia and eudaimonia (Atkinson et al. 2020, 1913); it is their combination that brings about the greatest and most diverse well-being (Huta and Ryan 2010; McGregor and Little 1998, 759; Rauschmayer et al. 2011, 8-9). In sum, eudaimonic and hedonic well-being are relational.

Why can, then, the Having-Doing-Loving-Being theory be characterized as eudaimonic (Helne and Hirvilammi 2019)? While this still is a valid description, it must be elaborated: the HDLB approach is does exclude eudaimonic but not able hedonia.

The HDLB approach is a needs-based theory of well-being, and such theories are counted among the eudaimonic well-being tradition. The approach, as I see it, is also eudaimonic in the etymological sense of the word. The adjective derives from eudaimonikos, "conducive to happiness," and the noun eudaimonia is composed of two parts: eu, (meaning "good") and daimon (meaning guiding spirit, lesser god or tutelary deity.⁶ Some researchers have defined eudaimonia as living in truth to one's daimon, or the true self (Forgeard et al. 2011; Waterman 2008), and this is also how I could characterize well-being, particularly on the dimension of Being.

The eudaimonic perspective has been described as focusing on the individual in his or her broader social context (Brand-Correa and Steinberger 2017, 44). Also in the HDLB approach, the highest good, well-being, is understood relationally. The hedonic

approach has been criticized for its atomistic approach as well as having no concern for future generations (Brand-Correa and Steinberger 2017, 44). However, it is possible to get pleasure from other people's well-being - perhaps even if they are not yet born. Survey data from several international and national databases shows that expecting the best (the worst) for future generations has a very large positive (negative) impact on subjective well-being (Bartolini et al. 2014). Moreover, according to John O'Neill (2006, 162-163), nothing in the hedonic position rules out concerns for future generations; combined with a suitable ethical theory it can even entail strong obligations for them.

An often presented criticism toward hedonic conceptions is that well-being should include not only what feels good but what is good (see White 2016, 18). Nonetheless, as discussed above, not all that feels good is ethically bad. The critique of hedonism best hits its target when the focus is on "radical hedonism," in which well-being is equated with maximum pleasure and the satisfaction of any desire or want one may have (Fromm [1976] 1997, 2-5), disregarding their content and the consequences of acting on their basis. However, the gratification of wants or desires need not be materialistic or harmful to oneself or one's environment. As Kate Soper points out, it is possible to cease to automatically connect satisfying wants with tangible goods and link them with more intangible and spiritual dimensions of satisfaction. She speaks of "alternative hedonism" in which consumerist forms of consumption are restricted but more sensory pleasures are enhanced through better health, more free time, and so forth (Soper 2007, 370). One might also introduce the concept of "hedonic eudaimonia" in order to shed light on the fact that eudaimonia does not have to exclude hedonia. All that feels good need not be unsustainable; even the contrary might be true.

As for the HDLB approach, well-being on each dimension of need satisfaction can be either hedonic or eudaimonic - or both.

Having: Capitalism is based on the dogma that people cannot and must not ever be satisfied. In a sense, the tenet holds true, because a life guided by material wants and oriented to excessive having is bound to be a dissatisfied one (e.g., Kashdan and Breen 2007; Kasser 2002; Solberg et al. 2004). By contrast, fulfilling one's needs of existential Having can be as well meaningful as pleasurable.

Doing: There is empirical support to the hypothesis that engaging in pro-ecological behavior helps to satisfy psychological needs (Kasser 2017, 5-6). Put another way, this kind of Doing is both ethically and ecologically responsible as well as deeply gratifying; hence eudaimonia allies with hedonia (as in any meaningful Doing).

Loving is an experience that is by definition pleasurable when speaking of real love (and not egoistic clinging and an urge to fill up an internal void). Loving is also connected to being ethical: one who loves wants only what is best for those he or she cares for, whether human or non-human. To love is to be responsible, to find meaning in life and hence, to feel good.

The dimension of Being is largely about selfactualization, being true to one's inner calling and one's self; flourishing as a human being. These experiences are hallmarks of eudaimonic well-being but also deeply satisfying and pleasurable states.

In summary, when our needs on all the dimensions of well-being are fulfilled in a balanced way, we are likely to live a life full of happiness and meaning. There is also the possibility of a substantial bonus if the hypothesis that people who are happy or at least temporarily in a pleasant mood engage in more proecological behavior holds true (Kasser 2017).

Conclusion

Richard Louv (2005) has coined the term "naturedeficit disorder" to serve as a description of alienation from nature and to emphasize the importance of exposure to natural settings for physical and emotional health. Today, "nature-deficit disorder" could be understood in an even grimmer sense: as the loss of nature and biodiversity, and the eco-anxiety many people consequently suffer from. The connection between subjective and planetary wellbeing, therefore, deserves more attention than ever. Pursuing well-being and sustainability can and must be done in tandem. Nature is a central constituent of human well-being - our eudaimonia, if you like, and in that case, the concept "nature-inclusive eudaimonia" (Knippenberg et al. 2018) is most useful, but why not speak of nature-inclusive hedonia, too?

For some, nature connectedness is a visceral feeling, and nature's significance for their well-being or the intrinsic value of nature needs no further justifications. However, due mainly to our technocratic and consumerist culture, there are many whose nature connectedness is weak or lacking. This is why we need public discourse focusing on nature's beneficial effect on health and well-being verified by extensive empirical evidence (see, e.g., Capaldi, Dopko, and Zelensky 2014; Capaldi et al. 2015; Trigwell et al. 2014). In other words, attention should be directed to relational well-being, that is, nature-inclusive eudaimonia and/or hedonia. Stressing the positive connection between well-being and nature in research and public and policy discourse could lead to more pro-nature thinking, behavior, and practices, which could, in turn, give considerable impetus to the sustainability transformation (see also Barrington-Leigh 2016; Richardson et al. 2020). Well-being has to be re-rooted in nature in every aspect, and this is what the Having-Doing-Loving-Being approach aims to do. Moreover, the approach turns the attention to those dimensions of well-being (those categories of needs) whose actualization is not dependent on material resources only, which undermines the goal of economic growth but accentuates growing as a human being. The framework, therefore, offers an alternative narrative of well-being to better guide individuals and societies toward more sustainable and satisfying ways of life.

The huge step human societies need to take in order to achieve sustainability can be described as a shift from human exemptionalism to a relational paradigm (Hirvilammi and Helne 2014). In different terms, but the same spirit, Andreas Weber has characterized the transformation that awaits us as a shift a technocratic, economic, and "Enlightenment paradigm" to an "Enlivenment paradigm." It is a worldview in which "lived experience, embodied meaning, material exchange and subjectivity are key factors" - a worldview in stark contrast to the dominant paradigm that "deliberately ignores the fact that we are subjective, feeling humans members of an animal species whose living metabolisms are in constant material exchange with the world" (Weber 2013, 11). Reminding ourselves of this relationality and the interconnectedness of personal and planetary well-being is an urgent task on a planet on the brink of collapse.

Notes

- 1. For discussions of "sustainability transformation," see, e.g., Abson et al. (2017), Salomaa and Juhola (2020), and UNRISD (2016).
- See http://dictionary.com.
- The HDLB categories are similar to Max-Neef's (1992) "needs according to existential categories," namely Having, Doing, Being, and Interacting. I have second-hand information that Max-Neef was familiar with Allardt's theory. Unfortunately, I did not verify this with Max-Neef himself before he passed away.
- Allardt (1990, 1993) did think that environmental factors should be taken into consideration in the assessment of a society's level of welfare, but he was quite critical of how he succeeded in this objective.
- 5. For further critique, see, e.g., Table 2 in Atkinson (2020).
- 6. See Online etymology dictionary.

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