

Abstract:

Physical activity yields affective benefits like mood improvement and a sense of accomplishment or a general sense of feeling good. However, existing interventions to promote physical activity typically do not make tracking or visualization of affective benefits a prominent part of the interface. We conducted a survey asking people about physical activity episodes that made them feel good and the impact of those episodes on their exercise intentions. We found that the affective benefits of exercise motivated respondents to become more active. In this paper, we report on the affective benefits that resulted from exercise, what users perceived as causing those affective benefits, and what impact feeling good from being active had on their intentions for future exercise. We discuss the implications of our findings for the design of interventions that use affective benefits to promote physical activity.

Connection to WISH:

This paper connects to the WISH theme this year through the notion of self-discovery. Our findings and discussion show how understanding the reasons why people enjoy different activities can be used to help users discover new forms of physical activity that they are likely to enjoy. While we are not concerned with rigorous self-experimentation, our findings provide a platform for users to understand some of the reasons for their selection and enjoyment of different forms of exercise, and thus to learn something about themselves. Our findings further guide the design and development of interventions that support users in exploring new activities to engage in based on what they learn about themselves. With interactive systems based on our findings, users can leverage their own data to explore new ways to achieve their goals and make use of the resources their environments and communities offer them.

Statement:

To my knowledge, submitting this as a research highlight to WISH does not conflict with the policies of the original publication venue (Pervasive Health 2017).