

CNN NEWSROOM

Happiness Gender Gap; Tips For Finding Happiness

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FREDRICKA WHITFIELD, CNN ANCHOR: This hour, a question dividing men and women. Are you happy? The new general social survey reveals in the past three decades men have gotten happier while women are less happy. Do you believe it? Perhaps the picture either becomes clearer or cloudier when you hear the breakdown of some of the possibilities. Just take a look.

We understand according to the study, greater responsibilities sometimes for women collectively has greater responsibilities at home, at work, and in general in life and apparently women according to this study are worriers by nature. The survey says women worry more about geopolitical issues from national health care to the U.S role in the world to paying bills at home to planning for retirement. And then also further complicating the issue according to this study, there are more options which means less time for love, family, and for self.

So do you believe some of these discoveries? We kind of hit the streets and we asked the question.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Some of that is true because when women - from the women that I know and the women I see as they get older, they deal with different things. It seems as men get older they get more established, they somehow become more handsome. With women, you know, their body changes, their kids are going off to college, and you know, they have to fight a little harder to climb the corporate ladder.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: My education is done, I've got my career going, my child is in college, we have freedom. I think I keep getting happier. I don't think I've gotten unhappy.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I would say yes. I still think that there's a burden in our society on women that perhaps they're expected to do a little more.

Yes, I think the men are a little happier.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Why?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: It's a man's world.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Well, men make us crazy so -

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WHITFIELD: All right. Is it really that simple? This is what some of you were saying on my blog. Kevin says, "Yes, I believe that men are happier than women overall. Women allow themselves to stress about smaller things than men and allow their emotions to control their decisions, actions, and anxiety more than men do."

Katie says "I believe that men are much happier than women due to many events in society, men in society have always been privileged. For example, men received the right to vote before women and men had the right to own land. They even have the opportunities to be employed while women were forced to be housewives."

OK. So women out there, in particular, one would think with all of these incredible images of so many high-profile women worldwide, that one would think that perhaps women feel pretty good and very inspired about the future that maybe held for women. Just take a look at some of these women, high profile women in politics, on the world stage, in philanthropy, in business, et cetera. So what exactly is going on? What's with the disparity? What's with this new gender gap?

We've got an incredible panel that we've assembled here, and let's introduce some of them. Betsey Stevenson of the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania and also she really is in part responsible for helping to bring this into a national discussion. She helped analyze the study. She's with us. And Marcus Buckingham, a motivational coach and helping you to discover your strength. He's also a best-selling author. And Suzan Colon, a contributing editor with "O" magazine, also with us.

All right. Good to see all of you. So Betsey, I want to begin with you because you're kind of in part responsible for getting this kind of round table discussion going about who is happier, men or women? So give me an idea, how did you compile this study, the results of the study, let's bring down exactly, what were women and men being asked?

BETSEY STEVENSON, WHARTON SCHOOL, UNIV. OF PENNSYLVANIA: Men and women are being asked, depends on the survey that you look at. The longest running survey in the United States is the General Social Survey. And they ask taking things altogether, how happy would you say you are these days? Would you say that you're very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy.

And we found something that we found quite surprising, which was that in the 1970s women on average reported happiness that was greater than that of men. And what's happened since the 1970s is women's happiness has declined. Men's happiness has stayed the same or even increased a little bit.

WHITFIELD: And really the key words here are the subjective measures of happiness. Is that what really changed women's minds and men's minds about happiness?

STEVENSON: Well, these are definitely subjective measures of happiness. Now, we look at that

question about happiness. We also look at questions about how would you describe your life's satisfaction. So it seems to be something that's similar across all measures of asking subjectively how - about people's welfare, their life satisfaction, or their happiness. But of course, that's a subjective measure.

WHITFIELD: And what were the ages that we were talking about here?

STEVENSON: We're looking at a representative group of adults, anyone 18 and over that represents the U.S. population.

WHITFIELD: OK. All right. So I wonder, you know, Susan or is it Suzanne?

SUZAN COLON, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR, "O" MAGAZINE: It's Suzan.

WHITFIELD: Oh, Suzan. I'm sorry. OK. I'm wondering is this a topic of discussion at "O" magazine? Does this come as a surprise to you that so many women according to this survey would say we're less happy?

COLON: Well, I don't know if it's a surprise as much as something that we focus on regularly because at "O," the Oprah Magazine, the improvement of life in general is a priority. I think we're the only magazine that makes that a priority. So is it a surprise? I think, yes, across the board it is a bit of a surprise to us, but it's not good news, but it's good to know because awareness is key that taking action. So now that we know, we can do something about it.

WHITFIELD: All right. Well, that's interesting because Marcus, this is something that you have been focused on, the action part, taking action, how women, how men can harness their happiness. So, on the surface when you hear about this study, do you think, well not only is there a disparity in happiness, but maybe a disparity in how to achieve happiness or accept happiness?

MARCUS BUCKINGHAM, "HUFFINGTON POST": Yes, I think that's right. I mean, I think it is certainly surprising to see, as Betsey pointed out, with increased influence with increased influence and power and education over the last 40 years, you would have expected women's happiness to go up. The fact that it has gone down, I mean to your point, it probably is due to the fact there's an awful lot more choices, a lot more domains in which women are supposed to excel today. I think it's from the research that I've been a part of anyway, it's also women are, well they're harder on themselves than men.

WHITFIELD: What do you mean?

BUCKINGHAM: Well, we asked a representative poll of two or three years in a row actually of men and women this question - What does it take to excel or to be successful in life, leveraging your strengths or fixing your weaknesses? And men are split 50/50. So 50 percent of men say building on my strengths and 40 percent say fixing my weaknesses.

For women, 73 percent of women say fix my weaknesses. 27 percent of women say build my strengths. So in general as it stands right now, women are tougher on themselves in terms of

trying to fix their weaknesses in order to excel. And of course, if you got more and more domains of your life as a mother, as a sister, as an employee, in which you're supposed to Excel, then that could probably accelerate your dissatisfaction if you're spending more and more of your time characterizing yourself by who you aren't. Men seem to do that less.

WHITFIELD: Oh, great. So we're going to break down all of these things because we're hearing a lot. Josh Levs is already hearing a lot from our viewers who are chiming in with so many different thoughts on this. When we come right back, we're going to delve into that first thing. Do women have too much on their plate. Is that what is perhaps bringing less happiness?

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

WHITFIELD: OK. We are talking about are men happier than women? And one of the things we want to delve into here are the real dynamics of it. Do women in part have just too much on their plate. Apparently a lot of women who were surveyed and men who were surveyed said we simply just have too many responsibilities. So let's bring back our panel.

We got a great panel here. Betsey Stevenson of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania who in part helped bring this whole thing to the national attention. Marcus Buckingham, a motivational coach in helping you to discover your strength. He is also a best-selling author, and also a contributing editor of "O" magazine, Suzan Colon.

OK. Well, Betsey, let me begin with you. We have our Josh Levs here, too, who is hearing from all of you at home in so many different ways, shapes and form. So Betsey, let me begin with you. Because in your analysis of this study, you say, you know, that this is subjective - well, the subjective well-being of men and women is measured in part by this question.

Taken altogether, how would you say things are these days? Would you say that you are very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy, and in addition respondents are asked about their satisfaction with a number of aspects of their life such as their marriage, their health, their financial situation, and their job. And that helped you deduct and others deduct that a lot of women are saying they just have too much on their plate and this is why my happiness, I guess, points are dropping, right?

STEVENSON: Well, actually we find that it's not that easy to determine why is that women's happiness is falling. We do - it's actually a survey of teenage girls from something called monitoring the future where high school seniors, both boys and girls, are asked about how satisfied they are with their life and they're asked how happy they are, and they're also asked how important a range of issues in their life are, and what we find is that teenage girls relative to the teenage boys is they're telling us everything is becoming more important.

This is really echoing what Marcus just said, but they're telling us that being a good child, being a good parent when they grow up, being a leader in their community, being a good employee, all of these things have become more important and what it's costing them is time for leisure. So when you ask them what they're satisfied with and what they're unsatisfied with, the thing that they've become less satisfied with over time is time for themselves, time for having fun, and time

for just hanging out, their leisure time. So that point to something -

WHITFIELD: So a lot of pressures whether it be the young people who are part of this survey or maybe even, you know, adults who say, you know what, I just have too much going on and I'm trying to please a lot of people and a lot of things. There are great expectations. I don't have enough time for love. I don't have enough time for socializing. I don't have enough time for me.

Marcus, is this something that you have heard men and women saying for a long time now or particularly in this day and age in comparison to, say, 30 years ago?

BUCKINGHAM: Yes, well, spurred a lot by Betsey's work and looking at why are these trends going down. We over the last 18 months have spent a lot of time talking to women who have bucked this trend who said as one of the people on the street said I am actually happier now than I was. I feel as I get older I get happier.

And certainly for them they seem to be able to draw strength from life. They seem to be able to pay attention. Yes, they got many things that are part of their responsibility set as it were, but they seem to be able to pay attention to the moments within all of those different domains of their life as compared to most women I think who are challenged to take on more and more and in so doing feel somehow less. They're almost - I hate to generalize but they're also driven to distraction.

If you're distracted, you can't really pay attention to those elements of your life that invigorate you. So as you take on more and more you pay attention in a weird way to less and less and your life, even though you're doing more, empties out. So I think there's a lot of that going on.

WHITFIELD: So in a moment I want to ask you, you know, how you kind of pare it down. Because we really want to bring solutions because a lot of people can identify with this and feeling the pressure coming from all ends and they want to know, how do they make time for things that are important to kind of make them happy again, but, Josh, you have been hearing from people who are saying you know, what, I don't know if I really buy this, right?

JOSH LEVS, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Yes, the broad idea here that men are happier than women, almost everyone is agreeing with. We're getting a lot of skepticism about this survey, the reading of it. What I want to do is let Betsey and Marcus talked to us a little bit about this in behalf of so many questions that we're getting. Let's do this. I want to zoom in for a second.

Marcus, this is your story up at "Huffington Post." Actually, I really like this graphics because it helps people understand what we're talking about here. Real simple terms, the dotted white line is women's happiness over the years. The black straight line is men's happiness over the years. So this is the kind of thing that we're seeing, this kind of change. Women become less happy in these surveys, men becoming more happy over women.

Now, there's something else that was at "Huffington Post." This is from a professor. Carol Rivers, a professor at Boston University who says that there's this myth that the media peddling of the miserable woman. There's a quote in what she says, I want you to respond to. She says

"The differences between the sexes in the study are so small that generally they are less than one half of one percent. This tiny difference tells you nothing about men, women, or happiness."

Betsey, let's start with you. You're the statistician here. You've really crunched these figures. Help our viewers understand as someone really trusted in your field, why this general social survey is legit and why it really does provide this conclusion.

STEVENSON: Well, you know, the real question is it big or is it small? What we know is it's real. So the statistics tell us that it's statistically significant. So this is a real decline, but the question is it a big or small decline. I think that's actually a legitimate question but one that's hard to answer because we don't really know in the population how big is it to go from being very happy to not too happy? Is that something that would really be a big deal in your life? Is that going from earning from \$1 million a year to \$50,000 as year or to zero.

LEVS: It's happening but the proportion is in question.

Marcus, I also want to bring you in because you point out in one of your stories in "Huffington Post" that this isn't just one survey you are talking about. You have listed several others that, in your view, really provide the same conclusion.

BUCKINGHAM: Well, yes, this is Betsey and Justin (ph) work. But if you look at study after study after study, not just in the U.S. but around the world, what Justin (ph) and Betsey did was brought all these together and went look, there's an overall trend here that is going in exactly the opposite direction than what you would have expected. And in terms of the size of it, given that the GDP of the U.S. is gradually increased over the last 40 years.

That is by the way, probably what accounts for the gradual increase in men's happiness overall. You would have expected that that gradual slight increase in prosperity would have raised the spirits of men and women. The fact that over the course of the same time period that women's satisfaction and happiness has gone down against the grain, think that puts it in sharp contrast, and forces us to raise the question why. Why is it going in the opposite direction?

LEVS: So there's definitely change happening, Fred. We don't know if it's by a little or it's by a ton.

WHITFIELD: Go ahead. Real quick.

STEVENSON: Let me just give you an example that might resonate in today's economy.

WHITFIELD: Yes.

STEVENSON: The decline that we see for women is the type of decline that we would see in happiness from going from 4.5 percent unemployment to 12.5 percent unemployment in the population.

LEVS: That's big in that sense.

BUCKINGHAM: And, Josh, if that were to have happened, that would be splashed all over the front pages of the newspaper. If it had jumped eight percent, eight percent jump in unemployment, it would be everywhere. As Betsey says, that's the equivalent of what we're seeing in the decline satisfaction -

LEVS: But not over a month, it's over a much larger period of time. It's not like unemployment suddenly in that short of period of time but nevertheless it's a big change in society. I see what you're saying.

WHITFIELD: So Suzan, let me ask you, you know, among your readers with "O" magazine, I wonder if a lot of your readers are expressing 'I just have too much going on, it's difficult for me to time manage to get it all in,' and if the advice being conveyed to them to try to pare it down, to try to pick and choose, if that is acceptable or are people looking for much more comprehensive answers than that?

COLON: Well, I mean, to answer your first question, yes, this is something that we've been hearing since the inception of the magazine and it's one of the reasons that the magazine is entirely geared towards the reader. If you take a look through the pages of "O," the Oprah magazine, you will not find many articles on how to be a good parent or things like that.

I mean, we try to give advice within relationships. Clearly people have to go to work and sometimes there is, you know, an aggravating situation on the job. So we try to advise people on how to work happily and effectively within those situations, improving relationships and whatnot.

But to answer your second question, yes, they are looking for a little bit more specific advice. It's not enough to know the what. It's then what do I do about it and that's what we're trying to give them the tools to help them figure out.

WHITFIELD: OK. And we're going to have some more of those what do I do about.

COLON: Yes, exactly.

WHITFIELD: It's coming up later on. Because it really is important. People don't want to hear just the problem restated over and over again. They want some solutions. How do I move on from this point? But we also have to understand kind of what's rooted in the problem and come to find out according to this survey, men and women, they worry differently, and that, too, could be at the root of these disparities. (COMMERCIAL BREAK)

WHITFIELD: So we're trying to answer the question, are men happier than women? Well, according to this survey that has a lot of people talking overwhelmingly a lot of women say they are less happy. But apparently at the root of some of this, too, is the way in which men and women worry. They're all worriers, but they're also worriers, women are.

So let's bring back our panel, Betsey Stevenson. She's with the Wharton School University of Pennsylvania. She helped analyze this study. We also have with us Marcus Buckingham. He is a

motivational coach and also an author and Suzan Colon who is a contributing editor to "O" Magazine and Josh Levs is also listening to what you have to say via Facebook and our blog as well.

So let's talk, ladies and gentlemen, about this whole worrying issue. Apparently, according to this survey, am I getting this right, Betsey? A lot of women are worried about very big things such as health care, U.S. isolation on the world map, where is the U.S. in the big world picture? Finances, many of them even worry about their pensions. Whereas the flipside of that a big worry for men apparently is marital unhappiness. I can't wait to delve into this.

We also went out on the streets and we kind of gauged with people - what are you most worried about? What are you happy or unhappy about? This is what they had to say.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Having a career is definitely more important than starting a family for me right now. You know, I do not feel I'm in any position at all to start a family.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I think that's what makes you happiest, if you can stand on your own in your career, I think, then you're a stronger person. I really think so.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The people that focus on their careers, sometimes you can get trapped in that and you don't recognize things that are of true worth like relationships and like being with people that love you and, you know, you love them.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: My wife had a career. We helped her go back to school and get an advanced degree. That added to her professional resume, added to her professional experience and her happiness.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: If you have a good career, most of the time you're making good money. So the happier you are, the more things that you can go out and buy, you know, for yourself and family.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Career was important to my happiness.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WHITFIELD: OK. So is that, indeed, the case, career versus family time? Which one brings you more happiness? Let's bring back our panel here. Marcus, I want you to delve into this one because men and women do worry differently. It is they're gauging their happiness differently, too. How do we even the playing field?

BUCKINGHAM: Well, I think both men and women we know the two things that drive your happiness most are health and companionship. If you are unhealthy, you are less happier than if you're healthy, and that's men or women feel the same, and if you are married, you are happier than if you are single. In aggregate, there are exceptions to that, of course.

So I think for both men and women, the most important thing for our happiness whether it's career or whether we stay at home, the most important thing is we are healthy and that we have someone who wants to wait up for us when we're coming home at night. I don't think there's a difference and I don't know whether Suzan or Betsey would disagree. I don't know if there's a difference there between men and women. Health and companionship are the core of happiness.

WHITFIELD: So we also know that, Suzan, you know, balancing all of these things, we can't hear enough about people who say, you know, my biggest struggle is balancing, balancing the career, balancing the family, et cetera. What's the best advice on how men and women can balance so that perhaps they're not feeling like one of those two things, career or family, is stressing them out so much that it's robbing them of happiness?

COLON: That's an interesting question because I don't think it starts with just career or family. I think within those two very major parts of everyone's life, there starts to be offshoots. You know, with family, it's scheduling the kids' soccer games and all of the family reunions and the holidays and things like that. It builds within that one area.

And then with career it can also take on a much larger feeling. You know, both of these things get very big, and also, you know, women have been told in the past 30 years, you don't have to choose between the two. We could, you know, "have it all," and with that comes a great deal of responsibility. You know, things used to be much more clear cut.

You know, before that it was men had the careers, women had the family, and each was expected to take care of those two things. Now there's a lot of blending which has wonderful benefits but also things are not as clear cut as they used to be, and with that comes a great deal more responsibility and much less time for one's self.

WHITFIELD: Well, Betsey, you know, I would think just on this point that Suzan made, that that kind of blending, that kind of sharing would mean that would relieve people of certain burdens.

Certainly something that we would have expected to see. And it's one of the reasons we expect women to have gotten happier over this period relative to that of men, but that's just simply not what we see.

WHITFIELD: Why not? Why is that? STEVENSON: You know, I think that that's really the puzzle in this study that we did. It's the reason we called the paper "The Paradox of Declining Female Happiness" because we don't - the data doesn't actually point to one single answer. What we see is all women have become less happy.

Women who choose to stay home have become less happy over the last 35 years. Women who are happily married with kids have become less happy. Women who are single with kids have become less happy, and women who with no kids have become less happy. All of these groups have become less happy relative to men whether old women, young women. None of these point to one specific answer like trying to balance kids and the job.

WHITFIELD: OK. This makes it very, very complicated then, Marcus. If there's no common thread we're talking about men and women who have very different lives, we're not talking about a common denominator experience that is bringing happiness or robbing one of happiness, how in the world do we tackle this? How do we make sense of this kind of information?

STEVENSON: Well, the only way we did it was to go back to what Suzan was saying. We said let's go study the women that are becoming more satisfied and more fulfilled over the last 40 years. Let's go study those who have bucked that trend, and we actually asked five questions to find the people to go study.

We asked, how often do you have a chance to do things you really like to do? We asked how often do you feel positive anticipation about your day? How often do you get so involved in what you're doing during your day, you lose track of time? How often do you feel invigorated at the end of a long busy day? And then an overall question which was simply how often do you feel an emotional high from your life?

WHITFIELD: Oh and wait Marcus, because I think we actually built a screen of that. Because people need to see that. Sometimes visually when you hear all that information, and those questions, it really helps. So if we can pull those up, those five questions that Marcus often asks men and women to try and answer. Do we have that Eddie? It's coming.

WHITFIELD: It's coming.

I'm going to ask you to reiterate them while they come. So how often do you do what you like?

BUCKINGHAM: I mean, people always say what is happiness? What are the emotions that make it up? So we started with do you feel effective in your life? And the question we ask there is how often do you get a chance to really do the things you really like to do.

The second thing is flow. This feeling that time -- you get so concentrated, so focused on what you're doing, you lose track of time. So we asked that about how often do you get so involved in what you're doing you lose track of time? The second question we asked was about how often do you feel hope? How often do you feel positive anticipation about your coming day? And then the second to last question about the end of your day, do you feel your needs are fulfilled? We phrased that by going how often do you feel invigorated at the end of a long, busy day.

The last question was a summary question about overall how often do you have an emotional high in your life? So we asked these questions of representative samples of men and women over the last few years. And then we did in-depth interviews with about 50 women, who basically said every day to four out of five of those questions, to try find what, despite, as Betsy said, whether they were married or whether they had kids or whether they were 42 or 24, despite all their differences of race or age or focus in life, what, if anything, did these women have in common?

That was our --

WHITFIELD: And these questions really helped and allow for some sort of self-discovery. If you're answering every day or sometimes to some of these questions, you should be able to problem solve a little bit too for yourself, it would seem, Marcus.

We're going to talk some more about that. It would seem that -- with so many professional and educational options these days, it would seem that having all those choices would make life easier. Well, apparently men and women see that differently. Sometimes it offers more stress.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

WHITFIELD: Welcome back. We're asking the question are men happier than women? You would think, in this day and age, when there's so many images of particularly women upward mobility, and the potential is just amazing. Everyone from Michelle Obama to Angela Merkel, we're talking about the world stage. We're talking about inspiration in a philanthropic way, economic, and business heights that have been reached.

So one would think that a lot of women would feel very inspired by this, and it might relieve some of the stresses. Apparently it's quite the opposite. Too many choices, according to this new survey, that says it further complicates thing for a lot of women who have been surveyed.

So Betsy Stevenson is with us. She analyzed this survey. And she's joining us out of Pennsylvania. She's with the University of Pennsylvania. Marcus Buckingham is a motivational coach, and he's also a best-selling author. And Suzan Colon is also with us of "O Magazine," a contributing editor.

Betsy, you have to help explain this. How is it that too many choices brings on stress, particularly for women?

STEVENSON: So, first of all, let me clarify, this survey does not ask people whether too many choices have brought on stress. In fact, there's only one survey that I'm aware of. And that was a Virginia Slims poll that asked whether having more choices today made things better for women. And the overwhelming percentage of women, nearly three-quarters, said it made things better, and only a very small percent said it made things worse.

There is, of course, a theory out there that too much choice can make it hard for people to make decisions. It can be overwhelming. Psychologists have shown this. There's a famous study where you go to the supermarket and the more jam there is for you to choose from, the less likely you are to buy jam, because you get overwhelmed by the choices.

So this is certainly a possible hypothesis, but not one that we're able to confirm in our study.

WHITFIELD: Suzan, there's been this notion that a lot of women are feeling is little bit more stressed these days, particularly because, disproportionately, according to the US Labor Department, men are losing their jobs in this recession compared to women. So a lot more women are the bread winners at home. They're also carrying out that second shift. There are greater pressures.

What's the advice to a lot of women to try to -- women and men, because a lot of men are feeling some pressure that has come on from that new dynamic in the household, at least new dynamic in some households. What's the advice?

COLON: Well, I want to get back to one of the things that Marcus brought up before, which was a question that was asked in a survey; how often do you incorporate into your day something that you enjoy doing? And I think that one of the problems that I know that I have and many of my friends have is the idea of have to. I have to do this. I have to do that. I must get this done.

And there's not anything, you know, incorporated that people really like to do. One of the tips that we have in "O's Dream Big Book," where we have an entire section on happiness, because that's how important this is to our readers, is just for as little as an hour a day, or maybe even less -- I don't know -- incorporate into your day something that you enjoy doing.

We all have these very long to-do lists that don't include anything that has to do with enjoyment. Why is that? A lot of people would say the time crunch. Well, I have to get this done. I have to get that done. Is everything single thing necessary? And can we not just take a little time for ourselves to do something that we enjoy? It can make a huge difference.

WHITFIELD: Josh, what are our viewers saying?

LEVS: I'll tell you really quickly. We're getting tons of responses about this. A lot of people weighing in. I understand we have to go. But I'll just read you a couple quickly.

Sue is agreeing with a lot of what she's hearing today. She's saying, "it's impossible for anyone to have it all." She talks about women feeling like you're supposed to have it all. She says, "as a result, no matter what women do, they feel like a failure."

Let me seem if I can get one more. This came to me on Facebook. Alex saying "yes, men are happier than women. We know what we want."

But that said, coming up after this break, we're actually going to look at -- Marcus is saying, you know what, in the coming years, guys might be struggling more and more with a lot of things that women might be struggling with right now that might be preventing them from having happiness.

Plus, Fred, we have some pointers for how men and women can go about achieving that happiness. All coming right up.

WHITFIELD: Oh, we love that. You mentioned in that one email or blog about having it all. What is it? We all define it very differently. What is having it all? We're going to delve into that and find out other things you have to say about that.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

WHITFIELD: We'll get back to our question, are men happier than women? It's been the focus of this hour. But first, these top stories. Iran says it will let UN inspectors visit a newly identified uranium enrichment plant about 100 miles southwest of Tehran. But it's not saying when. The U.S. and other countries claim Iran violated international agreements by trying to keep construction a secret. They say Iran is trying to develop nuclear weapons. Iran has denied that claim.

President Obama probably can't keep his promise to close the US military prison at Guantanamo Bay, at least not by January of next year. That according to two senior administration officials, who told CNN that legal complications are delaying the progress. They say the administration still hopes to close the prison soon.

And an Ohio woman who was implanted with the wrong embryo has given birth to a baby boy. Caroline Savage (ph) learned about the fertility clinic's mix-up last Winter, but her family says she never considered terminating the pregnancy. The biological parents say they will be eternally grateful to Savage for her decision to have their child.

So we're asking the question now, so what does it mean to have it all? Money, fame, family, security? And do you need to have it all to be truly happy? What people are saying just might surprise you about whether men are happier than women.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

WHITFIELD: So here is the question: are men happier than women? We've heard some really interesting dialogue here. And now we want to know about having it all. What defines having it all? We don't all agree on that. And perhaps that's in part the problem.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: My opinion of having it all is not having to worry about food in the fridge.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: At 58, having it all I think is again being just happier in your skin, happy, you know, to -- understanding who you are and being OK with whatever that is.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Having it all is definitely being able to spend time with this little guy right here. Have a great wife at home or at work I should say right now. So I think right now we're having it all. Or I'm having it all pretty much.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I notice for you having it all -- I didn't hear you mention family, kids, nothing.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yes, I mean, you picked the wrong guy. I'm not a family-oriented person.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Like anyone else, I'd love to have enough money to be comfortable, or

even have a nice car, nice house. But to me all that is secondary to having a loving family.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: A comfortable lifestyle, what you need and not being stressed out about bills, but really having people who love you and support you and being happy. And health.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WHITFIELD: That's nice. We should be inspired. There's some really nice points there.

Let's bring back our panel. Betsy Stevenson of Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania. And she's in part one who helped bring this whole discussion to the national stage. And Marcus Buckingham is a motivational coach in helping you discover your strength. He's also a best-selling author, "Find Your Strongest Light." And Suzan Colon is a contributing editor of "O Magazine."

I know you guys like that you heard from people and their definitions of having it all. Our Josh Levs is with us, too. He's been hearing from so many folks on blog and Facebook. And Josh, what are people stating and what are they asking?

LEVS: Fred, this is an eye-opener for me, as a guy, too. We're getting a lot of amens to this one I was reading right before the break from this woman Sue on our blog, who is saying, women need to stop being told that they can have it all, because it puts this pressure. They feel like failures.

I promised before that break we were going to go to Marcus. Marcus, you told me before this show today, you think that in this environment today, where guys work and are expected to do a lot at home, too, they might start to face these same pressures as well. Is that what you see coming, men starting to trail on the happiness scale as well?

STEVENSON: If the challenge for women's happiness is they do have too many roles to play, the second shift, as it's been called, then men are going to start to feel that, too. Attitudinally and behaviorally, we are seeing a change. In 1977, 74 percent of men thought that men's roles should be the bread winner; women should take care of the home. Today, that number has fallen to 42 percent. That's almost exactly the same as the 38 percent of women who believe that women should be the primary caretaker of home, and the men should be the bread winner.

So today how you feel about the role of men and women in work and at home is not determined by your gender. So we're seeing some change attitudinally.

Behaviorally too. Men used to spend about an hour and a half less a day with their kids than woman. Today, if you're a Gen Y dad, you actually spend more time with your kid per week than a Gen X mom does. We've seen some change.

LEVS: What we're going to talk about is solutions. It's interesting, what you're talking goes right to something I'll repost on the blog today. This is a series of stories that I did interviewing dads about the pressures of being dads today. They said the same thing, the changing times.

Let's go to this screen. I know, Fred, you and I want to talk solutions a lot with our guests right here. Marcus, you told me three interesting things to help people seeking happiness. You said men and women, don't multi-task; purposely imbalance your life; and stop looking at the big picture. Start focusing on moments. Talk us really quickly through these.

STEVENSON: For this book, "Find Your Strongest Life," we interviewed these women who were bucking the trend. We tried to see what they had in common. The first thing is they don't multi-task. It turns out that women do not multi-task better than men. It turns out that men and women, all of us, are bad at doing tasks at the same time. Our IQ drops, men and women. Our IQ drops on average 10 percentage points when we try to do two things at once at the same time. So they don't do that very much.

They don't strive for balance. The image of a successful woman today is that she's a great juggler. But the core still of juggling is throwing, not catching. So if your entire life is spent as a juggler, you're throwing things away and you never hold on to anything long enough to really feel it.

These women actually caught moments in their life, and then intentionally pushed or imbalanced their life towards those moments that really fulfilled them.

The last point is yes, when we talked to these women, they didn't talk as much as I expected about grand hopes and dreams and future. They talked about what am I going to -- to Suzan's point, what am I going to do tomorrow? What are the moments of motherhood? Being a mother is made up of lots of different moments. What are the moments of being a mother that invigorate me?

One mom said, you know what, what got my life back on track was when I realized I don't like playing with my kids. I like to teach my kids stuff. But I don't like getting down on all fours and playing with them. I can let that go. Find a friend or a husband to do that or an uncle to do that. I'm going to help my kids to learn things. Those are the moments of motherhood that invigorate me.

LEVS: Coming up, we'll hear responses from the panel. Also, Fred, we're going to touch on pop culture and how that's affecting men and women.

WHITFIELD: That's perfect. That is in our final thoughts. Suzan, I can't wait to hear you elaborate a little more on that. That really is in sync with what you were saying, in terms of you have to pick and choose. You have to pare it down. Don't try to do it all. Their final thoughts right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

WHITFIELD: Some final thoughts as we have asked the question, are men happier than women? Our goal is to make sure that everybody is happy here. And we've gotten some great ideas and solutions to improve their lives.

Let's bring back our panel, including our own Josh Levs as well, Suzan Colon and Marcus Buckingham and Betsy Stevenson. Some final thoughts then, ladies and gentlemen, on how we can improve our lives.

Suzan, maybe you can touch on Marcus' last point, which kind of helped button up your initial point about you can't try to do everything. You've got to pick and choose, make some decisions about what you can tackle and thereby promote some happiness in your life.

COLON: Absolutely. I mean, I love the idea of creating imbalance in your life, because sometimes people forget that balance is actually a mixture of good and bad. What we're trying to do is increase the good here. And maybe that means decreasing our laundry list of things to do a little bit.

You know, one of the things that we have tried to encourage our readers to do in "O's Dream Big Book" is to strive or excellence based on their own strengths, you know, not to try to be all things to all people, but to do something as simple as maybe you want to incorporate meditation into your life just for ten minutes a day. That can make a huge difference in how you approach your day.

So we're encouraging little things, small steps, and maybe that idea of creating imbalance externally can create balance internally.

WHITFIELD: Interesting. And I know you've all gotten a big kick, I have, too, out of listening to what people have to say, those we have approached on the street. These are some thoughts that some folks had about happiness.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The men.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The men? Why? UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I would say that because most of them are married, most of them are happy with their mates. A lot of the women I know who are married sometimes they don't like their mates. And I think that contributes to their unhappiness.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I think men get less happy as they get older because they see themselves getting older. Same with women, too, in some cases. A lot of men have mid-life crises, and I think that stems from them getting less happy.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: No, not personally. I'm probably much happier now than I was when I was 20 or 30, more comfortable in my own skin.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I think she's right. I always think she's right.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And that's how you stay happy.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Oh, definitely.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WHITFIELD: OK. So 20 seconds each, final thoughts, Betsy, on happiness, how we all achieve it, and how we need to go forward from here.

STEVENSON: Well, I think the focus has been great today because it's not clear from an individual perspective we need to understand why women have become less happy over time, but we need to understand for each of us as individuals how we can become happier. And understanding the trend over time may not help us understand those individuals how to become happier.

So some of the things Marcus is saying are certainly things to think about. As policy makers, I would like policy makers to think about what's going on in society that made women get less happy over time.

WHITFIELD: Marcus, 20 seconds.

BUCKINGHAM Well, I think sometimes we get so close to ourself, we don't see how to draw strong moments from our lives. I would encourage your viewers, there's a test we developed called the strong life test. You can find at StrongLifeTest.com. If you wanted to find your strongest moments in life, we wanted to design this test to help you find an internal compass for yourself. I think that might be something that you could do immediately to help you begin to discern where strength can be found in your life.

WHITFIELD: And Suzan Colon?

COLON: I love what had that woman said about being comfortable in your own skin. That was a beautiful sentiment. I think instead of the idea of what is going to make us happy, you know, like I'll be happy if I have this, if I have that, let's reprioritize. And one of the things we try to do every month in "O Magazine" is to ask people what will make you comfortable in your own skin. Here is what you can do to find out. WHITFIELD: Nice. All right. And, Josh, 20 seconds on behalf of the many people who have been blogging you.

LEVS: Just going to end on this because it's fun. Let's zoom in to this one right here that I got on Twitter. A few people sent this. "Men are happier than women because men live with women and women live with men."

Oh, my goodness. Ouch. I will tell you, this conversation is going to continue. One thing I love about this show is the conversation does continue online. Do we have the graphic of where people can go? You have Facebook. You have twitter. You have the the blog, CNN.com/Josh. Go ahead and send your questions. Send your comments.

I am also going to post links to articles written by all our guests today, so you can explore this stuff for yourself. It doesn't end when Don Lemon comes here. Although we do love Don. The

conversation continues online.

WHITFIELD: He's happy, too.

OK, Betsy Stevenson, Marcus Buckingham, Suzan Colon, Josh Levs, thanks so much. And at home, thanks for your participation and hopefully we're all feeling a lot more happy now, all of us. See you tomorrow.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)