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An Unexpected Upside of 2020: Nearly 60 percent of Couples Report Stronger Relationships and Increased Happiness with Their Sex Lives

Amidst a pandemic, eharmony's Fourth Annual "The Happiness Index: Love and Relationships in America" reports 71 percent of couples were glad they had someone to be with during the COVID-19 pandemic

LOS ANGELES, CA – 2020 was a year unlike any other. Despite the circumstances, nearly 60 percent of couples report stronger relationships with 7 out of 10 glad they had someone to be with during quarantine, according to the fourth annual "The Happiness Index: Love and Relationships in America," a national report commissioned by eharmony, the 'Here for Real Love' dating platform, and conducted by Harris Interactive.

As the year disrupted and altered life in countless ways, it's no surprise that Americans increasingly worried about its impact on their finances and well-being as well as their personal relationships. Qualities such as emotional support, happiness and intelligence became coveted commodities – the three most desirable traits in a relationship according to the data.

"The results of the Happiness Index support what we stand for at eharmony — while many aspects of our lives have changed over the past year, we see the human need to find love and be loved endures," said Gareth Mandel, Chief Operating Officer at eharmony. "We've seen this in the number of people who have met, virtually dated and found meaningful relationships on eharmony these past months, and it's reassuring that the majority of couples who have been in relationships throughout the pandemic have seen those relationships deepen and strengthen despite the unique uncertainties and challenges presented."

New this year, the study examined the relationship between happiness and home – a place where 85 percent of couples have spent more time. With a broad consensus that spending time in a shared home improves a relationship, the majority spent significant time and energy on reorganization (53 percent) and redecoration (41 percent).

The data also suggests a strong correlation between age and the perception that home upgrades will improve mental well-being, with Millennials and Gen Z agreeing with this claim most (63 percent). The desire for more space is stronger among younger people too (45 percent of those 21-42 years old vs. 28 percent of those 55+ years old).

"Given that most of us are spending more time at home than ever before, people are finding new and innovative ways to manage their well-being at home, whether it's carving out an exercise area or



creating a personal sanctuary,” Mandel said. “Mental wellness is crucial. When people feel their best, it not only benefits them, but also everything they do and everyone they interact with.”

70 percent of couples reporting spending more time together may explain why there is an increase in frequency of sexual behavior (three or more times per week) and why respect for each other (63 percent of couples) has captured the top spot for a positive impact on relationships due to the pandemic.

Optimism and uplifting results will not diminish the negative impact so many experienced in a trying 2020, but it does help to at least highlight the positive impact of the pandemic on love and relationships. Experiencing or having a meaningful connection with a partner has never been more important, desired or appreciated, and eharmony’s Happiness Index reflects that truth.

Key takeaways from the 2021 study include:

Sex Life

While relationships are more focused on quality time (53 percent) than sexual activity (11 percent), the 2021 study found that the frequency of couples having sex three or more times week has increased from 39 percent to 44 percent since 2020.

- 39 percent of couples say their sex lives have improved during the pandemic.
- 56 percent of respondents say sex is an important aspect of their relationship, but 48 percent say stress has a negative impact on their sex life with their partner.
- Sex seems to get better with age. Almost half (47 percent) say they enjoy sex more as they get older.

Personal Space

With more people spending additional time at home, both couples and individuals are looking for ways to make the most of their existing spaces.

- The desire for more space is stronger among young Gen Z and Millennials (45 percent) than Baby Boomers (28 percent).
- Gen Z and Millennials believe different space changes like better organization or investing in new decor can lead to better mental health.
- Women often want more space for sanctuary, men want it more for exercise and work.
- 43 percent of Millennials and Gen Z say they feel like they can’t get away from their partner/spouse in a shared space, while only 19 percent of Baby Boomers say this.

Politics

While the 2020 Presidential election led to increased polarization, couples did not feel the effects.

- 76 percent in relationships voted for the same candidate as their partner in the 2020 election.
- 62 percent of people discuss politics with their partner at least several times a week.
- Men reported being more likely than women to argue with their partner over politics (62 percent vs. 42 percent).



Mental Health

As the months went on, the year presented couples with countless new challenges, impacting how they communicated, set boundaries and tuned in to one another's needs and well-being.

- 36 percent of people believe their relationship has had a positive impact on their mental health. Men tended to agree with this more than women (43 percent vs 29 percent).
- Millennials and Gen Z people are most likely to believe this (44 percent of those 21-34 years old compared to 39 percent of those 35-54 years old and 26 percent of those 55+ years old).
- Women are more likely than men to say they spend time alone (46 percent vs. 34 percent) and get a lot of sleep (40 percent vs. 33 percent) to help with their mental wellbeing.
- Men and women find it equally unappealing when they perceive their partner is being bossy (20% each).

To learn more about the "The Happiness Index: Love and Relationships in America," visit eharmony's Happiness Index 2021 page at <http://bit.ly/happyinlove2021>, and join the conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using #happyinlove.

About "The Happiness Index: Love and Relationships in America" Report

"The Happiness Index: Love and Relationships in America" 2021 report was commissioned by eharmony and conducted by Harris Interactive. This is the fourth year of the Happiness Index survey. It was fielded online between January 8-18, 2021 and surveyed 2,038 participants. Participants (both heterosexual and LGBT) qualified if they were aged 21+ and were married, cohabiting or in a committed relationship. Results were weighted to be nationally representative by age, gender and region.

About eharmony

Los Angeles-based eharmony has helped over 2 million people find real love. As one of the original dating platforms, eharmony has been at the forefront of creating meaningful relationships based on its innovative Compatibility Matching System. The company operates in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia. For more information visit www.eharmony.com or download the app available on both [iOS](#) and [Android](#).

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