

## Savoring and Huna's Essential Principles

Most people agree that increasing happiness is a good thing. According to the American Declaration of Independence, the pursuit of happiness is an unalienable right. Happiness is generally accepted as a measure of well-being. In addition to elevating the personal joy and satisfaction experienced by individuals, increasing happiness in our lives also benefits society in general. In his book, *Huna: Ancient Hawaiian Secrets for Modern Living*, author, Serge Kahili King, PhD makes this same point by observing the negative effects of unhappiness.

Unhappiness (including anger, resentment, guilt, sadness, sorrow, and grief) is the worst plague that besets the modern world. Individually, it probably causes more illness than any other single factor; socially, it destroys people, communities, and nations. When combined with fear, it wreaks the most terrible havoc imaginable in every aspect of life. (King, *Huna* p.185)

Dr. King suggests that the most effective antidote to unhappiness is forgiveness,

Since unhappiness comes from resisting what was, what is, or what you imagine will be, forgiveness of someone or something for not being or doing what you want will decrease resistance, diminish unhappiness, and cause happiness to rise up naturally. (King, *Huna* p.186)

As a student and practitioner of Huna philosophy, I accept and embrace Dr. King's analysis so far as it pertains to diminishing unhappiness. Of course, to the extent that unhappiness negates happiness, reducing unhappiness, by definition, results in more happiness. But, as Dr. King recognizes, savoring can make happiness rise beyond that which occurs as a result of relieving unhappiness. (King, author's notes) There are behaviors and thoughts that generate, intensify, or prolong positive feelings in response to positive events. This process is called savoring and many Huna practices incorporate it. I am not suggesting that Huna practitioners do not teach or practice savoring. They have a variety of specific techniques for savoring, although the term savoring is not always used in Huna philosophy. See for example, Stewart Blackburn's article on how being an adventurer shaman with a penchant for variety, contrast and novelty and embracing intensity, change, risk, power, and the fun of living leads to happiness. (Blackburn, *Reflections on Being an Adventurer*) or Dr. King's use of blessing to achieve happiness by blessing all that is good, the good that is in all people and all things, all the signs of happiness you see, hear, or feel in people or animals, and all the potentials for happiness that you notice around you. (King, *Huna* p.104 citing the booklet, *The Aloha Spirit*; King, *The Little Pink Booklet of Aloha*, p.3-4) In this article I attempt to encourage Huna practitioners to place more emphasis on recognizing the preconditions to savoring and the practicing additional savoring techniques as are being taught in modern positive psychology. Incorporating more of these positive psychology techniques into Huna philosophy is consistent with the Huna principle of Pono which, in part, stands for the practitioner feeling free to change mindsets, shift belief systems, and create or modify techniques in order to achieve the best effects in a given situation. (King, *Huna*, p.5)

There is evidence that some people are genetically predisposed to feel positive feelings more strongly. (Byrant, *Savoring* p.199 citing Diener, *Most people are happy* (1996); Headey, *Understanding happiness* (1992); and Lykken, *Happiness* (1999)) It is a logical extrapolation from this evidence that, for those people, happiness would rise, or rise more, when they encounter positive experiences because they feel them more strongly. This article focuses on them as well as those who are not predisposed as they are because for the vast majority of us, happiness will rise, or will rise more, when it is cultivated and nurtured regardless of one's genetic predisposition.

Happiness increases as the level of joy we get from positive experiences in our lives increases. Examples of positive experiences would include a tourist viewing the sunrise from the rim of Haleakala on Maui, a diner tasting an exotic dish in a gourmet restaurant, and a hiker soaking in a geothermally heated pool under the stars after a long day of backpacking. The amount of joy we get from positive experiences depends on how we think and act in response to them. When we savor an experience, we are aware of pleasure and appreciate the positive feelings we are having. I first learned about the savoring process from reading a graduate school psychology textbook written by Fred B. Bryant, Professor of Social Psychology at Loyola University in Chicago and Joseph Veroff, Professor and Research Scientist Emeritus at the University of Michigan, entitled *Savoring: A New Model of Positive Experience* (2007).

Following Dr. Bryant and Dr. Veroff's model, I propose in this article that it would be valuable for Huna philosophy to place more emphasis on behaviors and thoughts that generate, intensify, or prolong positive feelings in response to positive events. Further, I suggest these principles of positive psychology are consistent with Huna

philosophy. My goal is to suggest that when Huna practitioners facilitate healing and counsel others in coping with negative conditions and events, they consider teaching, where appropriate, how to savor the positive experiences in our lives and thereby increase happiness, joy, and pleasure in life. Further, savoring not only enhances the overall quality of our lives, but also strengthens our immune system and promotes physical health.

Huna as taught by Serge Kahili King, Ph.D., who was adopted as the grandson of Joseph Kahili and trained in his tradition, comes from the kupua tradition of the Kahili family from the island of Kauai. Huna is a Hawaiian word meaning "secret," but it also refers to the esoteric wisdom of Polynesia. Kupua, another Hawaiian word, refers to a specialized healer who works with the powers of the mind and the forces of nature. (King, [www.huna.org/html/huna.html](http://www.huna.org/html/huna.html)) Huna is more a philosophy than anything else. It's not a religion. It's a way of perceiving the world and how things work that is very ancient. There are many types of healing that derive from it, but it itself is not a method of healing. The seven essential principles of Huna are:

**The World Is What You Think It Is. (Ike)** You create your own personal experience of reality through your beliefs, expectations, attitudes, desires, fears, judgments, feelings and consistent thoughts and actions.

**There Are No Limits. (Kala)** There are no real boundaries between you and your body, you and other people, you and the world, or you and God. Separation is an illusion. And, there are unlimited potentials for creativity.

**Energy Flows Where Attention Goes. (Makia)** The thoughts and feelings that you dwell on, in full awareness or not, form the blueprint for bringing into your life the nearest available equivalent experience to those same thoughts and feelings. Directed attention is the channel for the flow of biological as well as cosmic energy.

**Now Is The Moment Of Power. (Manawa)** You are not bound by any experience of the past, nor by any perception of the future. You have the power in the present moment to change limiting beliefs and consciously plant the seeds for the future of your choosing. As you change your mind, you change your experience. There is no real power outside of you, for God is within.

**To Love Is To Be Happy With. (Aloha)** The universe and human beings exist because of love. In Huna, love involves the creation of happiness. It is not just a side effect. Everything works better, and is better when this principle is followed consciously.

**All Power Comes From Within. (Mana)** There is no power outside of you because the power of God or the Universe, works through you in your life. You are the active channel for that power; your choices and decisions direct it. No other person can have power over you or your destiny unless you allow it.

**Effectiveness Is The Measure Of Truth. (Pono)** In other words, all systems are arbitrary, so feel free to use what works.

(DiCarlo, Interview With Dr. Serge King, 1996)

Huna wisdom may be applied to anything, but it is particularly well suited to accomplishing goals, achieving success, and turning dreams into deeds. (King, Huna p.17) Interestingly, Huna's seven essential principles also embody the essentials for increasing happiness in our lives through the positive psychology techniques that enhance savoring. Further, applying the seven principles of Huna to our lives consistent with the notion of savoring increases happiness in our lives, makes us more healthy, and benefits society in general. This article is limited to drawing comparisons between Huna's seven essential principles and savoring. Additional work should be undertaken to compare Huna's notions of multiple selves and multiple levels of reality to the principles of savoring. To begin then, what are the positive psychology principles of savoring and what can we do to experience more joy in our lives?

Dr Bryant and Dr. Veroff postulated that there had to exist a positive counterpart to coping. With coping, our thoughts and behaviors dampen or cut short bad feelings from negative events. With savoring, on the other hand, thoughts and behaviors generate, intensify, or prolong positive feelings in response to positive events.

(Bryant, Art of Savoring) There are techniques that can be taught that increase our ability to savor positive experiences that are consistent with, and many times contained within Huna philosophy. Further, by learning how to cultivate savoring, defined as the capacity to attend to, appreciate, and enhance the positive experiences in one's life, people can better enjoy love, truth, beauty, community, God, sexuality, spirituality, or whatever preferred values and individual goals one deems important. Thus savoring is a boon to positive fulfillment in life. (Bryant, Savoring p. xi)

Dr. King appears to agree with Dr. Bryant's and Dr. Veroff's notion of controlling our response to events in our lives. He too has suggested that, despite being unable to control events, we can control our response to them.

Naturally, there are things and events that we can't control, but we can always control our response to them. And, the more skill we can use in our response, the more influence we have on those things and events even if we cannot control them... if you are the captain of a sailboat, you can't force the wind and the currents to do what you want. But if you are a skillful captain, you can adjust your sail and your rudder to the wind and the current in order to get where you want to go. (King, Huna p.164)

By following Huna's principles in the right way, we can prolong and intensify positive feelings in response to positive events in our lives which increases happiness. This is because the notion of savoring is consistent with Huna's principles. Savoring is a form of controlling our response to events in our lives.

Dr. Bryant and Dr. Veroff also use a sailboat metaphor. It was suggested by D.T. Lykken in his book *Happiness: The Nature and Nurture of Joy and Contentment*. He suggested that our baseline level of happiness is like the level of a lake and we are in a sailboat on it. The height of our boat is our level of happiness. Waves are positive events and troughs are negative events. After they subside we return to the baseline level of happiness. Expanding on this metaphor, Dr. Bryant and Dr. Veroff suggested that coping is sailing one's boat so as to avoid troughs and steer out of troughs that one cannot avoid, whereas savoring involves sailing one's boat so as to find the waves one wants to encounter and make them bigger and longer lasting, if one chooses. (Bryant, Savoring pp.199-200) Or, following Dr. King's metaphor, as "captain" of our "sailboat" (i.e. our lives) we can "adjust our sail and rudder" (e.g. apply the principles of savoring in response to positive events) "to get where we want to go" (e.g. increased happiness in our lives). Although, we cannot always *control* when, or if, positive events occur in our lives, we can *control* our response to them to more fully savor them. I emphasize the word *control*. It should be noted that Dr. King would suggest that while we cannot control when or if positive events come into our lives, we can *influence* them to come into our lives. (See, Huna principle, Energy flows where attention goes (Makia) above). This is not a notion advanced by Dr. Veroff and Dr. Bryant. Nonetheless, Huna philosophy clearly encompasses the notion of controlling our response to events in our lives to relieve tension and eliminate anger.

Dr. King recognized in his article, *Who Owns Your Happiness?*, that application of the Huna techniques Dynamind, Blanket Forgiveness, and Permission do not bring about happiness although, they do provide relief from major tension and eliminate anger. In his article, Dr. King states that he realized that his unhappiness was related to things that had happened in the world that he was unhappy about -- things that he didn't like and that he didn't feel he could do anything about. Upon realizing this, he pondered why he had to be unhappy about things he could not do anything about which led to his realization that he had fallen into what he called one of the oldest unhappiness traps in the world. He had made his happiness dependent on the behavior of other people and, in effect, made them the owners his happiness, able to dole it out to him by choice, by whim, or even unintentionally. Dr. King declared that his happiness no longer belonged to him. He commented,

I was amazed to find out how much my happiness depended on so many little things like temperature, sunshine, food preparation, news, voice tones, whether machines worked the way I wanted them to or not, bills, bank account levels, the availability of things, whether other people were happy or not, and on and on and on. (King, *Who Owns Your Happiness?*)

So the question becomes -- if we eliminate the sources of unhappiness in our lives, will we be happy, or at least happier?

In his article, *The Art of Savoring*, in *Natural Solutions* magazine, May 2006, Dr. Bryant, asks the reader, Imagine that you could handle every problem or hassle in life, traffic jams, family squabbles,

illness, the DMV-- no matter the difficulty you could overcome it and in the face of adversity, you could resolve every fear, overcome all pain and stress, and cope effectively -- thus freeing yourself of any depression, anxiety, or distress.

Then, he posits, "You would be happy and find joy, right?" Dr. Bryant's answer -- "Not necessarily." A student of Huna would recognize that Dr. Bryant's list of difficulties and adversities are just the kind of things that the practice of Huna philosophy addresses and cures. However, I believe Huna practitioners would benefit by incorporating more specific techniques (e.g. savoring) that increase the level of happiness in our lives beyond that which might arise from overcoming difficulties and adversities.

According to psychological research, being able to cope with negative events has little to do with being able to find joy in positive ones. In other words, just because you're not down doesn't mean you're up. And just because good things happen doesn't mean you necessarily enjoy or appreciate them. Rather, finding joy is both an art and a science. Research indicates that the level of joy we get from positive experiences depends on how we think and act in response to them. We don't automatically feel joy and happiness when good things happen to us. But, we *do* have the capacity to. We *can* attend to, appreciate, and enhance positive experiences in our lives. (Bryant, *Art of Savoring*) Pragmatic Huna philosophy grew out of an exceptionally keen observation of life by Polynesian kahunas of esoteric knowledge. Huna's ethics include happiness or pleasure in the practice of the seven principles (King, *Huna* pp. 6 & 15). I believe Huna philosophy is actually rich with ways to increase savoring in our lives, if we look for them. In this article, I intend to identify those ways that are contained within Huna's seven essential principles, to suggest that more emphasis be placed on them, and to encourage other practitioners of Huna to recognize our capacity to increase happiness through developing savoring skills and to applying those skills where appropriate in the practice of Huna.

When it comes to feeling joy in life, it's just as important to avoid thinking negatively as it is to think positively. All too often savoring gets lost in the stress of everyday living and thus, beautiful views pass unnoticed, scrumptious desserts are swallowed untasted, and relationships with friends and family go underappreciated. I believe this condition is what Dr. King was addressing in his article, *Who Owns Your Happiness?* when he suggested that his happiness was inhibited by stress caused by things he could do nothing about. Although we may have no shortage of positive experiences, attending to them, appreciating them, and enhancing them requires the practice of savoring. And, savoring is inhibited by negative thinking. On the other hand, elimination of negative thinking only creates a condition precedent to savoring. Therefore, it does not necessarily give rise to increased happiness unless subsequent savoring occurs.

So what are the relevant concerns to be addressed in achieving happiness offered by Dr. Bryant and Dr. King? In his article, Dr. King set about the process of "buying up" all those shares of his happiness owned by others. His aim was to create a sole corporation where he owns all the stock in his happiness, where he was the only one to decide whether he feels happy or not. Dr. Bryant, explains that it may be a tall order to forego thinking about the social concerns that compose the world we inhabit. People have a finite amount of attentional resources they can use to optimize their emotional experience. Worrying and thinking about pressing problems deplete these attentional resources and reduce people's ability to savor. (Bryant, *Savoring* p.205) Therefore, both Dr. Bryant and Dr. King are suggesting that reducing stressors and distractors in our lives (e.g. reducing the number of people who "own" our happiness or reducing the number of social concerns we think about) will give rise to conditions conducive to savoring. But, are our attentional resources finite?

One Huna principle suggests that "There are no limits. (Kala)" (i.e. there are unlimited potentials for creativity). Presumably this would mean there are no limits on our attentional resources. Huna philosophy suggests that our creativity (i.e. attentional resources) is limited by "filtered limitation", a term of art which means limitations imposed by ideas and beliefs that inhibit creativity rather than enhance it, such as beliefs that engender helplessness and hopelessness. Obsession with suffering filters out contrary experiences making it nearly impossible to do anything about the suffering. Filtered limitations generate focus without the potential for positive action. (King, *Urban Shaman* p.60) Eliminating filtered limitation would expand attentional resources, which are, therefore, not limited according to Huna philosophy. And, eliminating filtered limitation can be accomplished by reducing stressors and distractors (e.g. obsession with suffering).

Kala is defined as: to loosen, untie, free, release, remove, unburden, absolve, let go (Pukui, p.120). By loosening, untying, freeing, releasing, and unburdening the part of our attentional resources used up by worry (i.e. filtered limitations) we expand our capacity to savor life. Further, Kala also is defined as: to forgive, pardon, or

excuse. (Pukui, p.120). As explained further below, worry is fruitless and cannot prevent negative outcomes. Through forgiveness, pardon, and excusing, one can free oneself of wasting attentional resources on worrying. Recognizing that we can free ourselves of wasting resources on fruitless worry leads to expanding our ability to savor life. Believing that there are no limits is a way of granting oneself tremendous freedom, but its corollary is total responsibility for one's actions and reactions. (King, Huna p.3) This corollary suggests that we should take responsibility for our reactions to worry and do more than eliminate it. We should learn to practice savoring.

My good friend, a healer and lightworker from the Big Island of Hawaii, recently confided to me that her happiness was increasing only gradually. She attributed it to discovering a new peace within herself from realizing that she had gifts (talents) to share with others. I suggested to her that she, and other healing facilitators I have met, are many times primarily focused on correcting problems rather than teaching people how to enjoy pleasure in life. I referred her to Dr. Bryant's article, *The Art of Savoring*, as a way to help her accelerate the increase in her happiness. Her response after reading it was enlightening. She said that focusing on correcting problems "is exactly what I have been doing. I thought if I healed all the pain I would find joy. I *did* realize I needed to really "savor" the good times but, this (article) goes much further." So, how are Dr. Bryant's principles of savoring further reflected in Huna philosophy? And, what are the techniques that can be used to increase savoring and thus happiness in our lives? First, we must examine what savoring is.

Explaining the purpose of his book, *Savoring: A New Model of Positive Experience* (2007), Dr. Bryant comments that there has emerged a vibrant new discipline within the field of psychology known as "positive psychology". Among psychologists studying positive psychology there has been relatively little analysis of the processes underlying positive experience. What the field lacks are cogent ideas about the dynamics of positive experience, ideas about the processes that link positive events or positive personality styles with positive emotions. Savoring refers to the processes through which people actively derive pleasure and fulfillment in relation to positive experience. (Bryant, *Savoring* p.xiii)

How Dr. Bryant and Dr. Veroff chose the word savoring for this branch of psychology helps us to understand what the term means. First, they noted that they needed to distinguish between the process of attending to joy and the joy itself. They needed a word to denote the positive counterpart of coping. The term had to refer to the processes rather than to the outcome of enjoyment, and it had to convey the dynamic, interactive, transactional nature of positive emotions. Many words came to mind: rejoicing, reveling, delighting, basking, luxuriating, appreciating, cherishing, enjoying and relishing, for example. But, savoring most vividly captures the active process of enjoyment, the ongoing interplay between person and environment. Savoring conveys metaphorically a search for the delectable, delicious, almost gustatory delights of the moment. Dr. Veroff and Dr. Bryant extended the meaning of savoring, in the psychological context, beyond sensory experience such as taste, to attending more complex cognitive associations. Therefore, savoring can refer to well-being derived from accomplishments or social connections. People savor attending to their pleasurable communion with nature or to their uplifting transcendence in God, taking pleasure from doing a difficult task, reflecting on the joy of watching their children grow up, or from countless other positive feelings. After his retirement, Dr. Veroff wrote the following in his notes about savoring.

Outside the window framing my computer monitor are the lush greens of early summer mornings in Michigan. The sun gently illuminates shades of the verdant wild marsh on my left, thicker textured woods in front of me, and grazes of three cedars and one small ash tree on my right. I can barely see the sky. I gaze at the scene awaiting the inevitable bird that interrupts the landscape with more flashy color. I'm not disappointed. A cardinal, solitary at the moment but sometimes with a mate, does his thing beneath the yew branches. A mourning dove perches on a dead limb of a willow in the marsh, and goes through a preening display for a good five minutes. I am savoring this ten-minute interruption from the ordinary flow of life, looking around me, and appreciating the visual blessing of life I lead in the natural world. Had I been outside, I'm sure my appreciation of this scene would extend to the sounds and smells, and the almost erotic feel of the sun on my arms. This is what it is all about, I tell myself. Savoring life. Enjoying its everyday bounty. This is what I wasn't doing in my life before retirement. This is what I'm now doing before I die. For so long I had been too busy as an academic researcher-professor-administrator at the University of Michigan to savor everyday life. Who had time to savor when you led a busy, involved, responsible professional life in the United States at the turn of the 20th century? (Bryant, *Savoring* pp.9-10)

Through dozens of studies conducted by Dr. Bryant with thousands of adults and hundreds of children in

the U.S., Canada, Australia, and Japan, he discovered a reliable set of strategies that people use to help them savor positive experiences. These studies have shown that the greater their skill at savoring, the greater the joy people feel in response to positive events. What's more, the ability to savor highly predicts how happy people say they are. Mindful savoring connects us with countless positive experiences—from marveling in awe at a beautiful sunset, to luxuriating in a warm Jacuzzi, to basking in the pride of our accomplishments. Research suggests savoring not only enhances the overall quality of our lives, but also strengthens our immune system and promotes physical health. Additionally, survey research following large representative samples over time has found that positive emotions in general also can improve short-term physical health and lessen the risk for illness. (Bryant, Art of Savoring) So, what can we do to bring more savoring into our lives?

According to Dr. Bryant and Dr. Veroff, three critical preconditions must exist in order for savoring to occur. To put them in context, take for example the young mother who rarely let herself feast on pleasure because she is too concerned about what her family needs. Even if no one is knocking on her door for consolation or help, she imagines that they might be. Sooner than savor, she would make plans to help someone. In planning and preparing birthday parties for her children, she rarely savored the games and festivities she organized for the celebration because she was so busy worrying about the social dynamics of the party. It was only the next day, when she was without external obligation, that she could watch the video tape of the party and savor the celebration retrospectively. This occurs not just with social responsibilities, but with every other concern in the hierarchy of motives. If a need is unmet – if we're hungry, unsuccessful, frustrated, oppressed, or unloved – then savoring cannot easily occur. (Bryant, Savoring p.10) Or, consider Dr. King's preoccupations that prevented his happiness, "temperature, sunshine, food preparation, news, voice tones, whether machines worked the way I wanted them to or not, bills, bank account levels, the availability of things, whether other people were happy or not, and on and on and on."

The three preconditions to savoring proposed by Dr. Bryant and Dr. Veroff are:

First, people must be relatively free of pressing social and esteem needs. Second, people must be focused on attending to their present experience. And third, people must have some degree of awareness of the positive feelings they are experiencing. (Bryant, Savoring p. 204)

For people who savor their lives easily, these preconditions arise quite automatically. But what about people who find it hard to savor, who have trouble breaking free of distracting thoughts, staying present-focused, or being mindfully aware of positive feelings? Interestingly, if we examine Huna philosophy with these preconditions in mind, we see that the application of Huna's seven principles enhances them. In other words, the ancient Hawaiians knew how to savor life.

Consider the first precondition, being free of pressing social and esteem needs. Dr. Bryant suggests actively discounting any thoughts or external stimuli that might interfere with savoring by reinterpreting these distractions as being temporarily irrelevant. Individuals who worry until they no longer feel like continuing, stop worrying sooner than those who worry until they feel they have generated as many potential solutions as possible. One method is to set aside a fixed amount of time in which to worry constructively and then stop worrying. If one wants to experience happiness, then one should devote one's attention to pursuing it, and not to fruitless worrying about possible catastrophes that worrying cannot prevent. (Bryant, Savoring p.206) Similarly, Huna philosophy addresses being free of pressing needs. "You cannot get wet from yesterday's shower. You cannot get full from tomorrow's meal." (King, HunaQuest) Worrying will not do any good. Dr. King explains:

Nearly all of our fear comes from remembering past pain or danger and projecting it into a future possibility. And, nearly all of our anger comes from remembering past wrongs and projecting them into the future, too. I'd say that 90 percent of our present moment experience contains nothing to be fearful or angry about. While you are fully centered in the present moment you are not thinking about the past and you are not worried about the future. In the moment, unless you are currently experiencing some kind of traumatic or upsetting situation, there is nothing to make you feel fearful or angry, and so your body relaxes, your emotions calm down, and your mind clears. (King, Huna pp.83-84)

Accordingly, the basic Huna principle "Now Is the Moment of Power." (Manawa) enhances the first precondition to savoring. This is more fully explained below.

Consider being focused on attending to your present experience. Dr. Bryant suggests employing “intentional mindfulness qualities.” They are: (a) nonjudgmental orientation (i.e. impartial witnessing or not concerning oneself with evaluation), (b) openness (i.e. seeing things as if for the first time, and (c) acceptance (i.e. being focused on things as they are in the present). Becoming nonjudgmental might require consciously reminding oneself not to evaluate one’s ongoing experience. Becoming open to novelty might require purposefully doing or trying something different for a change. Becoming more present-focused might require putting away one’s appointment book and removing one’s wristwatch. (Bryant, Savoring p.207)

The obvious Huna principle related to being focused on things as they are in the present is “Now Is the Moment of Power” (Manawa). You have to admit that neither the past nor the future have any power because you can’t touch them, taste them, feel them, see them, smell them, or react to them in any way. For all practical purposes they don’t even exist. Memories of the past exist in the present and you can alter your relationship to them – change your thinking about them – and thereby change their effect on your life. Think of the future as a blank slate and you can give yourself permission to try anything. (King, Huna p.20-21)

Manawa is defined as time, turn, season, date, chronology, period of time and for a short time, infrequent - but, it is also defined as affections, feelings, disposition, heart, seat of emotions. (Pukui, p.237) Therefore, in this context manawa can mean that now is the moment of power *and* this is where your disposition, feelings, affections, heart, and seat of emotions exist – not in the future where worrying is focused. Ancient Hawaiian thought related everything, including memories and expectations, to the present moment. Such a concept leaves no time for guilt or worry and is a perfect example of Hawaiians’ ability, even today, to live in the present moment. (King, Huna p.11) Further, it demonstrates their understanding of savoring life and its preconditions.

The obvious Huna principle related to nonjudgmental orientation is “To Love Is To Be Happy With” (Aloha), and its corollary, Love increases as judgment decreases. (King, Urban Shaman p.70) Love (aloha) is being in the presence of someone or something (alo), sharing joy (oha), and sharing life (ha) (King, Huna p.22, citing Kaufman, Barry, To Love Is to be Happy With, Toronto, Canada, Ballantine, 1977) Criticisms of yourself or others cause your body to tense. (King, Huna p.102) A nonjudgmental orientation relaxes tension and permits savoring. Aloha, a fundamental principle of Polynesian philosophy, increases the ability to savor life.

Next, consider enhancing attentional focus on pleasurable aspects of one’s ongoing experience. Dr. Bryant suggests that savoring is not simply experiencing pleasure or enjoyment. Savoring involves taking the perspective of an inquiring journalist toward one’s own pleasurable experiences and then reporting these inquiries to oneself. Therefore, avoid polyphasic activity (multitasking). Be meta-aware. Ask yourself, “If I knew I would be struck dead by lightning six months from today, how would I live until then” (i.e. when you encounter a positive experience imagine it is the last time you will ever go through the particular experience). This will make the present much more vivid and salient; and imagining one will never again experience the particular moment dramatically accentuates the positive features and feeling involved making it easier to notice and appreciate those aspects of the moment that are most readily savored. (Bryant, Savoring p.208) The related Huna principle is “Energy Flows Where Attention Goes” (Makia). Whatever holds your interest will also tend to attract your emotional and physical energy. Successful people direct and hold their attention on something by conscious choice. (King, Huna p.19) Makia is defined as an aim, motto, purpose; to aim or strive for, to concentrate on. But, is also means pin, nail, wedge, spike, stake, bolt; to nail, bolt; to drive stakes, as in surveying; to fasten (Pukui, p.229) – as if to suggest fastening or pinning one’s attention to something. Further, pinning, nailing, and fastening is a form of attraction between two things. Whenever you are engaged in sustained focused attention on anything, such attention channels the energy of the universe into manifesting the physical equivalent of the focus. The manifestation is not just the equivalent of what you are looking at, saying, listening to, or doing. It is the equivalent of the sum total of your entire attention, including habitual expectation. (King, Urban Shaman, pp.62-63) This ancient Huna principle suggests that happiness will manifest from engaged sustained focus on pleasure from positive experiences. And, that the ancient Hawaiians knew how to savor by focusing on the pleasurable aspects of ongoing experience.

“Talk story” is a Hawaiian way to savor. Talk story is defined as Hawaiian Pidgin for chatting, but can mean more in that the term comes from a strong cultural tradition of storytelling. In Hawaii, chatting often involves telling stories to express ideas, experiences, feelings, etc. (Blankenship, Hawaiian Language & Pidgin Glossary) People often savor the past by reminiscing. And, narrative truth does not have to conform to historical truth. Embellishing the past in the form of story telling is a wonderful way to savor. Likewise, people can savor the future by anticipating. Even more interesting people can increase savoring the present by anticipating reminiscing in the future (anticipated recall) and further increase present savoring by reminiscing about the anticipation one felt before

(recalling anticipation). (Bryant, Savoring, Chapt. 6) Similar to Dr. Bryant's suggestion that narrative truth does not have to conform to historical truth is the Huna practice of Haipule. You cannot change the past but, you can change a memory of the past. Haipule means prayer. Hai is defined as offer or present. Pule is defined as prayer, asking; blessing, reinforcing; spell, or change something. The change must be in the present. Memories of the past can be changed by changing present memory. Haipule is a process for using affirmation, imagination, and action to create a new "dream" that when it has enough energy becomes reality (King, HunaQuest and King, Urban Shaman p.133) Haipule changes historical truth to a new present memory. This is an example of the Huna principle, "The World Is What You Think It Is", (Ike) Ike means: to see, know, feel, perceive, be aware, understand. In its active form of ho'ike it means: to show, demonstrate, explain, reveal, experience. The general idea in the Huna philosophy is that our way of seeing the world determines our experience of the world (King, Huna p. 18). If you accept that the world is what you think it is, consciously and unconsciously, then it only makes sense to work on changing your beliefs for the better in order to have a better life. Life will be good to the degree that your thinking is good. You can't hide from your beliefs. (King, Huna pp.12-13) Again, Hawaiian Huna philosophy facilitates savoring life.

Dr. Bryant has gathered ten insights into savoring, along with concrete suggestions aimed at helping us enhance savoring in our lives. Data show that particular strategies work best for particular situations and personality types. People don't use all ways of savoring at the same time but employ different savoring techniques for different kinds of positive experiences and at different times to optimize enjoyment.(Bryant, Art of Savoring) Dr. Bryant is suggesting that you find the methods that work best for you. This is reflected in the Huna principle of "Effectiveness Is the Measure of Truth" (Pono). We learn most of our skills by trial and repetition of what works. Pono is a concept of goodness, rightness, or appropriateness. In ancient culture it meant the greatest good for the greatest number. The truth of your actions will be demonstrated by the results as they are experienced by all involved. (King, Huna p. 15) Whether you are striving for riches or recognition, intimacy or friendship, health or fitness, (or happiness), take a look at how your striving is affecting you personally, the people around you, and the world around them. When the results are good, they are pono. Therefore, the Huna principle of pono is consistent with finding the savoring techniques that are most effective.

Dr. Bryant's insights and suggestions are below. Remember as you read them, that savoring is a *process* not to be confused with the feeling of joy or happiness. Imagine the rush of pleasure that comes from a positive event. That is happiness. Now, compare and contrast that with really savoring that event -- luxuriating in the feeling, letting time slow down, emptying your mind of all distractions and just savoring it as if it were all that existed. See the potential for increasing the happiness. This is how savoring increases happiness. It is a *process*. Happiness is the result. Increasing happiness is the goal. Savoring is how one gets more of it.

One: Share your good feelings with others. Whether you're celebrating a birthday with close friends or hiking through a meadow with a loved one, tell the other person what you appreciate about the moment. Sharing is the strongest predictor of the level of enjoyment someone feels. In fact, studies of people's reactions to positive life events have found that people who share their positive feelings with friends have higher levels of overall happiness than people who do not share their feelings. If you're by yourself, no problem. Research shows that merely thinking about sharing the memory of an ongoing positive experience later with other people works just as well, perhaps because, in part, the desire to share the memory later with friends can motivate us to notice pleasurable details we might otherwise miss. The Huna principle of, "To Love Is to be Happy With." (Aloha) is related to sharing and precisely on point. If you define love as the behavior of being happy with someone or something, then increasing your loving is a practical thing to do. The ancient wise ones who developed these ideas noted the curious fact that happiness increases as happiness increases, meaning that you have to spread it around to keep it going. As you practice love (aloha), you increase love and happiness for all concerned. (King, Huna p.14) Hawaiians had many terms for "friend" that signified varying degrees and types of friendship. Hoaloha (beloved companion), for example, is a general term for friend. Makamaka (face to face) is a friend with whom you share freely. Aikane (probably "dependable") is a close, personal friend of the same sex. Pili'alo'alo (sticky love) is a romantic friend. 'Au ko'i (axe handle), a trusted friend. In modern times a psychological study of happiness showed that it was mostly attained by people with at least one close relationship and a circle of supporting friends. Pili kau, pili ho'oilo: Together in the dry season, together in the wet season. (King, A Friendly Kind of Love) The Huna principle of aloha enhances savoring when positive experiences are shared with friends.

Two: Take a mental photograph. When building memories, people search for, notice, and highlight the things they find most enjoyable. In the process, people not only pinpoint pleasurable aspects of the situation and enhance the intensity of joy in the present, they also form clearer and more vivid memories they can more easily recall and share with others in the future. This is also a good way of bringing yourself into the present moment

consistent with the Huna principle of “Now Is the Moment of Power” (Manawa). All you have right now are memories of things in the past. It’s your memories that you respond to now. (King, Huna p.20) Further, noticing and highlighting the most enjoyable things is consistent with the Huna principle “Energy Flows Where Attention Goes” (Makia). Things you lose interest in fade into the background of your life along with the things that never interested you in the first place. (King, Huna p.19) Highlighting things that you find most enjoyable brings them into the foreground where they can be savored.

Three: Congratulate yourself. This style of savoring involves “patting yourself on the back” mentally and exalting in the warm glow of pride associated with a positive outcome. Research shows that the more people mentally affirm themselves when they do well, the more they report enjoying the particular outcome. Self-congratulation promotes savoring by attributing responsibility for success to oneself. Congratulating yourself is a form of “To Love Is to be Happy With” (Aloha). Loving yourself increases self esteem and makes you happy with yourself. In the pages his book *Urban Shaman* where he discusses the Huna principle of “To Love Is to be Happy With” (Aloha), Dr. King asks the reader:

For one full minute sit quietly, close your eyes, and compliment yourself unceasingly for any good quality, characteristic, or behavior you can think of. If negative responses or self-criticisms arise keep on complimenting. When you’ve finished be aware of your feelings and sensations. You will almost always feel a lot better. (King, *Urban Shaman* pp.73-74)

Four: Sharpen your sensory perceptions. You take a bite of delicious cheesecake. Close your eyes to block out visual distractions and concentrate on the rich taste to intensify the flavor. Sometimes competing sights, sounds, or smells can interrupt the flow of positive feelings and dampen savoring. In these cases, blocking out distractions can enhance savoring by sharpening your focus of attention on the pleasure itself. This is another example of “Energy Flows Where Attention Goes” (Makia) and “Now Is the Moment of Power” (Manawa).

Five: Shout it from the rooftops. Laugh out loud, jump up and down, and shout for joy. Outwardly expressing positive feelings can intensify them by providing our minds with physical evidence that we are, in fact, joyful. In several experiments, people instructed to express their feelings in observable ways while watching a humorous video reported more enjoyment than people instructed not to express their feelings. This is a good example of “To Love Is to be Happy With” (Aloha). Expressing your joy is an expression of loving yourself for your accomplishments and makes you happy. In Huna philosophy, speaking words of positive events builds energy. Further, the increased breathing and positive posture will also bring about happiness. Expressing positive feelings in observable ways will also bring attention to them. Another Huna principle that comes to mind is “Energy Flows Where Attention Goes” (Makia). “Words are useful in helping to direct or redirect our attention. Directing or redirecting attention can have powerful effects... words can play a useful role...They evoke associations, associations stir up memories, and memories influence behavior” (King, Huna pp.44-45) In addition, according to Huna philosophy, this will cause more positive events to flow into your life.

Six: Compare the outcome to something worse. By comparing the good experience with a less pleasant one, you’ll have a frame of reference by which to judge the actual experience’s merits—and it will make that experience seem even better. Case in point, in several studies participants receiving grades or achievement scores were instructed to think about either how their scores could have been worse or how they could have been better. Imagining a worse outcome increased appreciation of success, while imagining a better one lowered appreciation. This is what Dr. Bryant and Dr. Veroff call downward hedonic contrast, cognitive evaluations that make one’s current state seem better in relation to relevant comparative standards. This is a variation of the Huna principle of “To Love Is to be Happy With” (Aloha). One way to increase happiness is to count your blessings. Seek out and feel appreciation for all the good things you can find. (King, Huna p. 31) Dr. Bryant’s suggestion is a variation of this principle because he proposes developing an appreciation for the good things (i.e. the positive event in your life) in a different way -- by creating a frame of reference that elevates the positive event (i.e. how things could have been worse). This also relates to number eight below. It should be noted that Huna philosophy does not suggest focusing attention on negative outcomes such as imagining how things could have been worse because such focus tends to attract that kind of thing into one’s life. On this point, Huna philosophy and Dr. Bryant’s and Dr. Veroff’s suggestion are at odds.

Seven: Get absorbed in the moment. Try not to think, but rather just get totally immersed or engrossed in the positive event. Savoring through absorption involves deliberately avoiding mental reflection in favor of simply experiencing the ongoing positive event as it is unfolding. In line with a Buddhist viewpoint, being in the moment

does not involve judging what you're experiencing, but rather being mindfully aware of the feelings you're experiencing at the moment. People often report enjoying themselves most after "flow" experiences—those moments when they became totally absorbed in what they were doing and lost all sense of time and place. People most often experience flow when their skills perfectly match the demands of a particular activity. Of course, this is an expression of the Huna principle, "Now Is the Moment of Power" (Manawa).

Eight: Count your blessings and give thanks. You can find more joy by reminding yourself of your good fortune and expressing gratitude for it. Don't forget that this strategy has two parts. Counting blessings, the first part, involves pinpointing what you're grateful for and why you appreciate it. The second step is expressing gratitude. Research indicates that saying "thank you" can actually increase our joy by making us more consciously aware of our positive feelings. With effort over time, you can cultivate an "attitude of gratitude" that becomes a habit, giving you a grateful disposition. Developing such a habit is related to the Huna principle of, "Energy Flows Where Attention Goes" (Makia) blessing positive events and outcomes actually attracts more of them into your life. Of course, it is also related to, "To Love Is to be Happy With" (Aloha) as discussed in number six above.

Nine: Remind yourself of how quickly time flies. Think about how fleeting the time is, how much you wish it could last forever, and tell yourself to savor it now. Realizing how short-lived time is and wishing it could last forever can motivate you to seize the moment while it's unfolding. If you think this strategy contradicts tip number seven (get absorbed in the moment), you're right. You can't think about the "fleeting nature of time" while simultaneously trying simply to absorb the experience without thinking about it at all. In other words, some ways of savoring are incompatible with each other. But each strategy offers a different tool—meant for different situations and different personality types—for finding more joy. Seizing the moment focuses attention on the here and now consistent with the Huna principle, "Now Is the Moment of Power" (Manawa). Realizing how short-lived time is and wishing it could last for ever invokes, "To Love Is to be Happy With" (Aloha).

Ten: Avoid killjoy thinking. Avoid the temptation to think about other places you should be and other things you should be doing. When it comes to feeling joy in life, it's just as important to avoid thinking negatively as it is to think positively. Research shows that the more killjoy thoughts people have in response to a personal achievement, the less they tend to enjoy it and the sooner their enjoyment fades. Across many studies, depression and low self-esteem make people more likely to engage in killjoy thinking. This is consistent with the Huna principle of, "All Power Comes from Within" (Mana). All the power that creates our experience comes from our body, mind, and spirit. Nothing ever happens to us without our participation. Therefore, no one else makes you unhappy. You make yourself unhappy. If the power was in you to create it, then the power is in you to change it. (King, Urban Shaman p.74) We have the power to change killjoy thinking. This is also an application of, "The World Is What You Think It Is" (Ike). Negative thinking reduces energy and thinking positively makes your personal experience of reality through beliefs, attitudes, and desires more filled with happiness.

In conclusion, we have seen that the techniques and skills of the process of savoring to increase happiness in our lives are consistent with Huna's seven essential principles. Further, applying the seven principles of Huna to our lives consistent with the process of savoring holds the potential to increase our level of happiness, make us more healthy and benefits society in general. Huna practitioners already teach or practice some savoring and they have a variety of specific techniques for savoring, although the term savoring is not always used in Huna philosophy. However, I believe the process of savoring as contained in positive psychology offers many more skills and techniques that should be incorporated into Huna philosophy. In my experience as a Huna practitioner, I have found that the reasons a high proportion of people seek out Huna philosophy is because they have a problem or discomfort to correct, or they are on a spiritual quest to satisfy an unfulfilled need. Accordingly, it is only natural that in response, Huna philosophy addresses those reasons, usually by offering techniques to help people cope. I believe this is also reflected by the emphasis within Huna philosophy on healing. This is not to say that healing should receive any less emphasis in Huna philosophy than it currently does. Having the capacity to cope with adversity is vital to life. On the other hand, savoring is the positive counterpart to coping. Isn't one goal of any philosophy of life to maximize well-being? And, doesn't that goal require an emphasis on increasing pleasure and happiness through techniques such as savoring as well as an emphasis placed on coping? Huna philosophy with added emphasis on positive psychology skills and techniques of savoring, has potential to increase happiness and pleasure for anyone, including those who consider themselves healthy and spiritually fulfilled. Therefore, I believe it would make Huna's appeal more universal. Accordingly, I encourage Huna practitioners to place more emphasis on the recognition of the preconditions to savoring and the practice of additional savoring skills and techniques such as are being taught in modern positive psychology by Dr. Bryant, Dr. Veroff, and other positive psychologists as an integral part of Huna teaching and counseling.

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