

Dr. Sara Spowart Says People Are Moving Beyond Comparison Culture to Redefine Happiness

More individuals are redefining happiness around authenticity, purpose, and personal values, says Dr. Sara Spowart

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, July 8, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For years, many have chased society's definition of happiness only to discover it does not fit their lives, values, or aspirations. In an age of endless scrolling and constant comparison, traditional markers of success such as careers, relationships, wealth, and milestones can leave individuals questioning whether they are getting life wrong. Increasingly, however, many are arriving in therapy with a different realization: they may have spent years building the life they thought they were supposed to want rather than the life that genuinely feels meaningful to them.

"The question I hear more often now isn't, 'How do I get what everyone else has?' but rather, 'How do I discover what actually matters to me?'" says [Dr. Sara Spowart](#), author of [You Are Love: The Discovery of Happiness](#).

While conversations about happiness are often framed around age or generation, Dr. Spowart has observed a broader shift in her clinical work. Increasing numbers of clients in their 50s, 60s, and 70s are seeking therapy, personal growth, and meaningful change in ways she has not seen in previous decades.

"Many older adults are embracing change and redefining what happiness means to them, while younger generations face constant pressure to measure themselves against curated versions of success online," says Dr. Spowart. "Across age groups, more individuals are rejecting one-size-fits-all definitions of happiness in favor of lives that reflect their own values and purpose."



Dr. Sara Spowart

Research on social comparison and well-being supports this dynamic. Studies suggest that individuals often judge their own happiness in relation to those around them, and that social networks can create the impression that others are happier or more fulfilled than they are. In an age of curated social media feeds and constant visibility into other people's lives, those comparisons can shape how individuals view their own success, happiness, and sense of purpose.

"The danger of comparison is that it assumes there is a single formula for happiness," says Dr. Spowart. "There isn't. What brings one person fulfillment may leave someone else feeling disconnected or empty."

Instead, Dr. Spowart encourages clients to focus on authenticity rather than expectation. Much of her work centers on helping individuals reconnect with their values, embrace vulnerability, remain flexible through life's transitions, and find a healthy balance between self-care and caring for others.

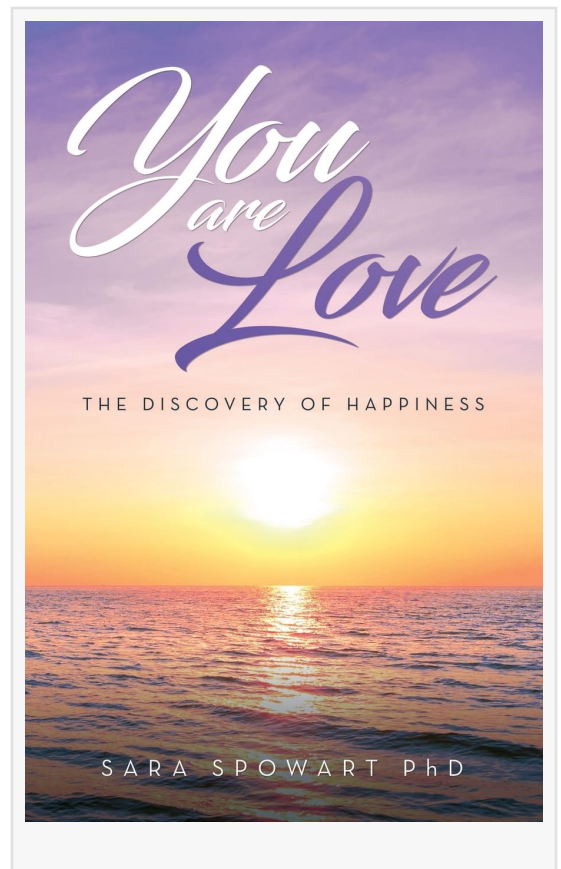
She also believes purpose often grows through service, meaningful relationships, and maintaining a broader perspective on what truly matters over the course of a lifetime.

"For many, therapy is becoming less about fixing problems and more about creating alignment between who they are and how they live," she says. "Individuals are permitting themselves to ask bigger questions: What kind of life feels meaningful to me? What relationships matter most? What do I want this next chapter to look like?"

As cultural expectations continue to evolve, Dr. Spowart believes society may be moving toward a healthier understanding of well-being, one that recognizes happiness is not a universal destination but a deeply personal journey. According to Dr. Spowart, this shift away from comparison and toward authenticity suggests that the true measure of happiness may no longer be how closely individuals' lives resemble someone else's, but how honestly they reflect their own values and priorities.

About Dr. Sara Spowart

Dr. Sara Spowart, LMFT, DMFT, PhD, MPA, MA, is a licensed marriage and family therapist, happiness researcher, and author of *You Are Love: The Discovery of Happiness*. With more than a decade of experience in mental health and university-level teaching, she specializes in compassion-based, individualized therapy that helps clients navigate trauma, anxiety, burnout,



relationship challenges, and life transitions while reconnecting with authenticity, purpose, and well-being.

To learn more, click here: <https://www.drсарaspowart.com/>

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