

## Frequently asked Questions about BeyondThePurchase.Org

### **What is consumer behavior?**

Consumer behavior is simply the ways in which we choose to (and sometimes choose not to) spend our money.

### **Why do you want to study that?**

The way we spend our money impacts our life (including impacting our happiness). We are interested in the ways people can spend their money to increase their happiness.

### **But money can't buy happiness!**

There are a lot of factors that impact how happy a person feels, including many that have nothing to do with money. All the same, research has shown that the way you spend your money can affect your happiness!

After your bills are paid and the cupboard is full, you're left with what's called "discretionary income." We're interested in what you and others choose to do with this money.

Don't worry if you don't always spend your money "the right way." Even the researchers at Beyond the Purchase are guilty of impulse buys or thinking that shiny new gadget will change the way they do things, only to find it buried under a pile of junk months later. We are interested in ALL the ways people spend their money, not just "smart" ways.

### **How do you measure happiness?**

Happiness is a broad concept and depending on how you're talking about, it goes by many names: well-being, life satisfaction, quality of life. You will notice we have several surveys designed to measure the many ways in which we can experience happiness. A researcher starts first with a question, then decides which specific aspect of happiness best applies to her question.

We understand that sometimes survey questions are vague, but they really are written with a lot of thought. Anyone can see the difference between "Overall, how happy would you describe yourself?" and "How happy are you at this moment?" It is best to answer the question exactly as it is written.

### **Will you know which results are mine?**

Nope. While we do see that you've responded to Surveys X, Y, and Z, we have no way of knowing who you are. This is a limitation intentionally built into our data collection methods, and it is required by the ethical training we received as researchers.

## **How do you use the data you collect?**

Beyond The Purchase exists to collect information from a wide variety of people about their spending habits, happiness, values, and personality traits. We use the information we collect to help answer

As a field, psychologists are interested in the way people think and act. Specifically, in our lab we are interested in the ways people think about and act with their money and how that affects their happiness.