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The Quantum Entrepreneur: Consciousness-Based Training and the Observer Effect in Well-Being, Stress, and Optimism

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Abstract

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Entrepreneurs face elevated stress, burnout, and identity pressures despite unprecedented access to business tools. This study examines whether the root of this paradox lies in the internal observer rather than external conditions. Adults ($N = 36$ to 39 , approximately 25% confirmed entrepreneurs) completed a fourteen-week consciousness-based training program built on the Quantum S.O.U.R.C.E. Formula. Paired-samples analyses revealed significant improvements in dispositional optimism, stress across two hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal (HPA) axis pathways, and retrospectively rated happiness (Cohen's $d = 0.84$ to 1.67). Participants facing major life challenges showed the largest happiness gains ($d = 1.67$), a pattern inconsistent with simple hedonic interpretations. This paper introduces Quantum Happiness and the Quantum Entrepreneur as theoretical constructs grounded in observer-based transformation.

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1) INTRODUCTION

In the demanding world of entrepreneurship, the constant pressure to innovate, scale, and perform places entrepreneurs on a treadmill of strategy, productivity, and reinvention. They adopt new tools, marketing tactics, and business methods not only to gain competitive advantage, but also in pursuit of the happiness, freedom, and autonomy that entrepreneurship seemed to promise. Yet despite this continuous movement, many still experience stress, misalignment, recurring patterns of struggle, and a persistent gap between the life they envisioned and the one they are living. The current burden of distress among entrepreneurs is not only a mental-health issue. It is a crisis of perception, interpretation, and reality-construction.

What if the real bottleneck is not what an entrepreneur does, but who the entrepreneur is? What if the internal state from which decisions are made, challenges are interpreted, and reality itself is experienced constitutes the hidden variable that determines the trajectory of both the business and the person behind it? The framework proposed in the present work draws directly from quantum physics, specifically the observer effect. The core proposition is that entrepreneurs do not merely navigate reality. They participate in shaping it.

1.1. Entrepreneurial Distress and the Limits of External Solutions

Prior research confirms that entrepreneurs value self-direction, meaningful engagement, and control over their work—factors associated with higher job satisfaction compared to salaried employment^{1,2}. Yet large-scale reviews indicate

that entrepreneurs face elevated psychological strain, including long working hours, financial uncertainty, emotional demands, and persistent cognitive load^{3,4}. These stressors predict higher emotional exhaustion, anxiety, impaired recovery, and in some cases depressive symptoms and entrepreneurial exit, independent of business performance^{5,6}. Solo entrepreneurs face additional burden from social isolation and loneliness⁷. Approximately 30% of entrepreneurs report a lifetime history of depression, and roughly 50% report experiencing anxiety as a recurring challenge⁸. A paradox sits at the heart of the entrepreneurial experience. Although many individuals enter entrepreneurship seeking freedom and happiness, the accumulation of responsibility, uncertainty, and psychological attachment to the venture progressively erodes both perceived autonomy and well-being⁹. Current models largely emphasize external demands and behavioral stressors, offering limited insight into the deeper psychological, identity-based, and meaning-making processes through which entrepreneurs internally relate to their work and reality³. This unresolved tension underscores the need for new frameworks capable of explaining not only entrepreneurial stress and burnout, but how entrepreneurs' internal states of awareness shape their lived experience.

1.2. The Performance Case for a Consciousness Shift

An empirical performance argument also motivates the shift. Experimental research from the University of Warwick demonstrated that randomly assigned increases in happiness produced approximately 12% greater

productivity in controlled settings, while real-world unhappiness shocks systematically reduced output¹⁰. Field evidence from Oxford University's Saïd Business School tracked 1,800 workers over six months and found that those reporting higher happiness were 13% more productive—not because they worked longer hours, but because they used their time more effectively, converting more opportunities into results¹¹. A broader research synthesis concluded that the happiness-productivity relationship is generally positive and appears to operate through mechanisms including better health, greater activity, and stronger social functioning¹². If 12 to 13% improvements in happiness translate into measurably better performance, the question for any entrepreneur becomes: what might a 33% improvement imply? This is not a hypothetical number. It is the mean increase in subjective happiness observed among participants in the consciousness-based training program examined here.

The relevance extends beyond output numbers. Happier people tend to be more creative, make better decisions, build stronger relationships, recover faster from setbacks, and stay healthier^{13,14}. Positive emotions broaden the scope of attention and cognition, building durable personal resources that improve problem-solving and adaptive responding over time¹³. For entrepreneurs, these are not abstract benefits. They translate into better leadership, more coherent strategy, stronger client relationships, improved team dynamics, higher revenue potential, and a qualitatively different experience of the entrepreneurial journey itself. Longitudinal research from the

Framingham Heart Study has demonstrated that happiness spreads through social networks, with a nearby friend who becomes happy increasing one's own probability of happiness by 25%¹⁵. For entrepreneurs, an internal shift does not stop with the founder; it radiates to employees, clients, partners, and families.

1.3. The Quantum Observer: A Framework for Internal Transformation

In quantum theory, the act of observation influences the phenomenon observed¹⁶. The relevance to human experience is not direct equivalence, but conceptual guidance: both domains raise questions about whether observation is entirely separate from outcome. From the vantage point of quantum physics, the collapse of a wave function of possibilities into a specific outcome occurs when an observation is made. In the entrepreneurial context, this can be interpreted as how an entrepreneur's attention, expectations, and internal state determine which of many potential futures becomes experienced reality¹⁷. Entrepreneurs operate in volatile, uncertain environments; their internal state functions as a lens through which uncertainty transforms into either opportunity or threat.

This is the essence of what the present paper terms Quantum Happiness: a sustained state of expanded consciousness, coherence, and alignment with purpose that transcends the fleeting satisfaction of external achievements. It is not the pursuit of pleasure or the avoidance of discomfort. It is the recognition that the quality of experience is determined not by circumstance, but by the consciousness from

which circumstance is perceived. Spiritual traditions have long described this as the goal of life: not accumulation, but recognition of what one truly is beyond the roles, the titles, and the outcomes^{18,19}.

Neuroscience tells a convergent story. Perception is shaped by internal schemas built over years, which means that without changing the observer itself, even effective self-management offers only temporary relief^{20,21}. Research on neural correlates of meditation and contemplative practice has demonstrated measurable changes in brain structure and function associated with attention regulation, emotional processing, and self-referential thought^{22,23,24}. Sustained contemplative training can produce durable shifts in how experience is processed at the neural level. The hedonic treadmill^{25,26} demonstrates a complementary mechanism: individuals tend to return to a baseline level of happiness regardless of external achievements, suggesting that sustainable shifts in well-being require changes at the level of the observer, not merely at the level of circumstance. For entrepreneurs trapped in cycles of achievement followed by dissatisfaction, this carries particular weight.

Contemplative traditions arrive at a similar conclusion through a different route. Buddhist philosophy frames suffering as arising primarily from misunderstanding the nature of reality and clinging to impermanent forms¹⁸. The concept of moksha in Hindu philosophy refers to liberation of consciousness from identification, suffering, and reactivity. In Vedanta and non-dual traditions, practices of self-enquiry help disidentify from the egoic self and align with a deeper, unchanging awareness¹⁹. When

entrepreneurs anchor in this kind of expanded selfhood, they do not simply respond to external pressures—they create from a place of purpose, alignment, and inner freedom.

1.4. The Quantum Entrepreneur

When these domains are brought together, something coherent emerges. The Quantum Entrepreneur is introduced in the present paper as a theoretical construct: an entrepreneur who operates from Quantum Happiness as an internal foundation rather than from reactive survival. This is not a new strategy. It is a new state of being. The Quantum Entrepreneur has shifted from reactive survival to conscious creation, from hedonic chasing to eudaimonic alignment, from identification with circumstance to awareness of the observer behind it.

The program examined in this study provided participants with a structured framework called the Quantum S.O.U.R.C.E. Formula, developed as part of this doctoral research. It encompasses four pillars: (a) foundational training in the quantum science of consciousness, aimed at understanding how subjective reality emerges through perception and observation; (b) identity-oriented transmutation practices designed to shift the internal observer beyond recurring emotional, cognitive, and meaning-making patterns; (c) quantum creation processes grounded in intentional coherence and future-self alignment; and (d) embodiment practices developed to integrate these shifts into daily life, ensuring that conceptual insights translate into lived experience and sustained behavioral change.

The present research examines whether this consciousness-based training program

produces measurable shifts in dispositional optimism (via the LOT-R), stress levels (via the Identi-T Stress Assessment across two HPA-axis pathways), and subjective happiness, with particular attention to how major life challenges occurring during the program interact with these changes. While the sample is not exclusively entrepreneurial, approximately 25% of participants were confirmed entrepreneurs, and the patterns observed hold particular relevance for entrepreneurial contexts characterized by uncertainty, pressure, and identity involvement. Mindfulness- and consciousness-based approaches have been increasingly examined in entrepreneurial contexts in recent years^{27,28,29,30}, though the integration of quantum-informed framing with applied psychological measurement remains underdeveloped.

2) MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Research Design

The present work was a single-group pre-post study without a control group. Participants completed quantitative psychometric assessments before and after a consciousness-based training program, alongside engagement metrics and a contextual self-reflection variable. The analytic sample varied by measure because of missing responses, ranging from 36 to 39 depending on instrument completeness. The absence of a control group is acknowledged as a central limitation. To partially address this, the protocol collected a post-program self-reported variable indicating whether each participant had faced a significant life challenge during the training period (e.g., divorce, bereavement, job loss). This variable

was used post hoc as a naturalistic moderator, not as a control condition. Both subgroups received the intervention; the moderator analysis examined whether intervention effects were attenuated or amplified under conditions of elevated real-world stress.

2.2. Participants

Participants were adults voluntarily enrolled in the consciousness-based program. The sample comprised entrepreneurs (approximately 25%), professionals, health practitioners, coaches, and employees engaged in personal development. A non-probability purposive sampling approach was used because participation depended on voluntary enrollment rather than randomized recruitment. All participants included in the analytical dataset completed both assessment time points. The data were anonymized, and no demographic identifiers were retained to protect confidentiality.

2.3. Intervention

The intervention was a structured quantum consciousness program delivered over approximately fourteen weeks, built around the Quantum S.O.U.R.C.E. Formula. The program aimed to facilitate a perceptual shift from conventional reactive cognition toward an expanded framework integrating quantum principles, self-awareness practices, and coherence between intuitive and analytical processing. Sessions were delivered digitally and included educational content, applied meditation, introspection exercises, and reflective journaling. The program was framed as consciousness education and inner development training, not as clinical therapy.

2.4. Measures

2.4.1. Stress Assessment (Identi-T Stress Assessment)

Stress was assessed using the Identi-T Stress Assessment, a practitioner-oriented stress screening instrument used in functional and integrative health contexts³¹. This instrument evaluates perceived emotional and cognitive distress by tracking symptom frequency across two distinct HPA-axis pathways. The A+B+C pathway captures what is clinically termed an overactive stress response, characterized by elevated cortisol exposure and manifesting as anxiety, mental restlessness, or states of heightened arousal. The C+D+E pathway captures an inadequate stress response, associated with depletion of stress hormones and manifesting as poor concentration, mental fatigue, or chronic low energy. A score above 35 on either pathway indicates prolonged stress; a score of 35 or below indicates eustress. Because this instrument is a practitioner-oriented composite rather than a widely published standardized psychometric scale, findings from this measure should be interpreted as clinically informative but preliminary pending independent validation.

2.4.2. Revised Life Orientation Test (LOT-R)

Optimism was measured using the Revised Life Orientation Test, a widely validated instrument assessing dispositional expectations toward the future³². Higher scores reflect greater optimism. The LOT-R's reliability and validity have been demonstrated across cultures and contexts³³. Optimism is particularly relevant to entrepreneurship research, as it influences risk perception, resilience, and engagement with

opportunities^{34,35,36}.

2.4.3. Subjective Happiness (Retrospective Pretest)

Subjective happiness was assessed at the post-program time point using a retrospective pre-post single-item self-evaluation on a 0 to 100 scale. Participants were asked: "Now that you understand what happiness is, how happy were you before the program, and how happy are you now?" This format was intentional. The intervention aimed not only to improve well-being but also to transform participants' conceptual understanding of happiness itself, moving beyond surface-level associations with pleasure toward a deeper, eudaimonic comprehension. The resulting measure therefore captures perceived change through a revised frame of reference rather than a conventional prospective baseline-to-endpoint comparison. This approach is consistent with the retrospective pretest or "then-test" methodology discussed in the response-shift literature, where participants' internal standards change over time, making a retrospective pre-rating more valid than a conventional prospective baseline collected before the conceptual shift has occurred^{37,38}. Because this measure is a program-specific single-item assessment, findings should be interpreted as meaningful within the context of this study and preliminary pending replication with validated multi-item instruments.

2.4.4. Contextual Life-Experience Variable (Moderator)

Participants responded to a binary (yes/no) self-report question: "Have you faced a challenging situation during the program, such as a divorce,

the death of a relative, a job loss, etc., that might have negatively affected your life and happiness?" This variable was collected at the post-program assessment and functions analytically as a moderator, not as a control condition. Both subgroups received the intervention.

2.5. Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection occurred digitally using secure, encrypted survey forms. Participants completed baseline assessments before the first module for the standardized measures used prospectively in the study (LOT-R and stress assessment). At program completion, participants completed post-intervention assessments, including the same standardized measures and a retrospective pre-post single-item happiness appraisal. The time separation between assessments was approximately fourteen weeks. Standardized scoring protocols were applied and reverse-coded items were processed according to their scale instructions. The primary analytic approach involved paired-samples t-tests. Effect sizes were calculated using Cohen's *d*. Subgroup analyses were conducted based on the contextual life-experience variable. Pearson correlation coefficients examined the association between stress reduction and happiness gain. Clinical threshold analyses were conducted for both stress pathways. Analyses relied on available-case and pairwise complete data, so sample sizes vary slightly across outcomes and analytic subsets (typically *N* = 36 to 39).

2.6. Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted as part of the author's doctoral research registered with the host

university (institutional details are provided on the separate title page). Participants enrolled voluntarily in the training program and were informed, in writing and verbally on multiple occasions before and during the program, that the program was part of doctoral research and that assessment data would be used for that purpose. All participants provided informed consent on this basis. Data were anonymized prior to analysis. As this paper reports analysis of data collected under the registered doctoral protocol, no additional ethics approval was sought.

3) RESULTS

3.1. Sample Overview and Engagement

Of 36 participants with complete engagement data, the mean exercise completion rate was 57.78% (*SD* = 25.53). Average journaling frequency was 2.33 times per week (median 2 times per week). Average daily exercise duration was 22.8 minutes (median 25.5 minutes). Of the total sample, 47.2% reported facing a significant challenging situation during the program. Because results were calculated using available-case and pairwise complete data, the exact *N* reported in subsequent tables varies slightly by outcome and analytic subset.

3.2. Changes in Dispositional Optimism (LOT-R)

The mean pre-program LOT-R score was 16.18 (*SD* = 3.16) and the post-program score was 18.64 (*SD* = 2.18), representing a mean increase of 2.46 points. This difference was statistically significant, $t(38) = 5.587$, $p < .001$, Cohen's *d* = 0.89 (see Table 1).

Table 1*Paired-Samples t-Test for LOT-R (Overall)*

Comparison	M Diff.	SD	SE	t	df	p	d	N
Post – Pre	2.46	2.75	0.44	5.587	38	< .001	0.89	39

Moderator analysis revealed that participants who faced a major stressful event ($n = 18$) showed a mean LOT-R increase of 3.39 points (from 15.28 to 18.67), $t(17) = 4.275$, $p = .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.01$. Those who did not ($n = 21$) showed a mean increase of 1.67 points (from

16.95 to 18.62), $t(20) = 4.183$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 0.91$ (see Table 2). Notably, the high-stress subgroup began at a lower baseline and rose to approximately the same endpoint as the no-high-stress subgroup—a convergence pattern that reappears across outcomes.

Table 2*LOT-R Change by Life-Event Subgroup*

Subgroup	M Diff.	SD	SE	t	df	p	d	N	Pre → Post
Faced major life event	3.39	3.36	0.79	4.275	17	.001	1.01	18	15.28 → 18.67
No major life event	1.67	1.83	0.40	4.183	20	< .001	0.91	21	16.95 → 18.62

3.3. Changes in Stress Levels

The overactive stress response (A+B+C pathway) reflects heightened cortisol-driven stress: the pattern of anxiety, mental restlessness, and feeling overwhelmed. The

mean pre-program score was 35.61 (SD = 13.42) and the post-program mean was 24.53 (SD = 12.90), a reduction of 11.08 points, $t(37) = 5.176$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 0.84$ (see Table 3).

Table 3*Overactive Stress Response (A+B+C): Paired-Samples t-Test*

Comparison	M Diff.	SD	SE	t	df	p	d	N
Post – Pre	-11.08	13.19	2.14	5.176	37	< .001	0.84	38

The burnout-type stress response (C+D+E pathway) reflects depleted stress hormones: mental fatigue, poor concentration, and chronic low energy. The mean pre-program score was 39.84 (SD = 17.16) and the post-program mean was 26.58 (SD = 14.99), a reduction of 13.26

points, $t(37) = 5.296$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 0.86$ (see Table 4). The dominant baseline stress profile was this burnout-type pattern, mirroring the chronic exhaustion frequently reported in entrepreneurial populations.

Table 4*Burnout-Type Stress Response (C+D+E): Paired-Samples t-Test*

Comparison	M Diff.	SD	SE	t	df	p	d	N
Post – Pre	-13.26	15.44	2.50	5.296	37	< .001	0.86	38

3.4. Clinical Threshold Analysis

To examine whether participants crossed from a clinically significant stress state into a healthy range, threshold analyses were conducted. A score above 35 indicates prolonged stress; below 35 indicates eustress (normal, manageable stress that supports functioning). Results are presented in Table 5. At baseline, 52.6% of participants were in prolonged stress

on the overactive pathway. Of these, 75% crossed into the healthy range by program completion. On the burnout-type pathway, 57.9% started in prolonged stress, and 63.6% crossed into the healthy range. The single participant who crossed from healthy into prolonged stress on the overactive pathway showed only a marginal increase above the threshold, and this participant's happiness score still improved.

Table 5*Clinical Threshold Crossings for Both Stress Pathways*

Pathway and direction	N	%	Outcome
A+B+C: Above 35 → Below 35	15	39.5	Crossed into healthy range
A+B+C: Above 35 → Still above 35	5	13.2	Prolonged stress persists
A+B+C: Below 35 → Still below 35	17	44.7	Maintained healthy range
A+B+C: Below 35 → Above 35	1	2.6	Marginal increase
C+D+E: Above 35 → Below 35	14	36.8	Crossed into healthy range
C+D+E: Above 35 → Still above 35	8	21.1	Prolonged stress persists
C+D+E: Below 35 → Still below 35	14	36.8	Maintained healthy range
C+D+E: Below 35 → Above 35	2	5.3	Stress increased

3.5. Changes in Subjective Happiness

The mean retrospectively rated pre-program happiness score was 57.50 (SD = 19.38) and the current post-program happiness was 76.33 (SD = 14.01), a mean increase of 18.83 points or approximately 33%. The overall paired

analysis for this item used 36 complete paired happiness ratings; subgroup and correlation analyses drew on up to 38 available cases when the happiness item could be matched with contextual or stress variables. For the overall paired subset, $t(35) = 7.940$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.32$ (see Table 6).

Table 6*Subjective Happiness (Retrospective Pre vs. Post): Paired-Samples t-Test*

Comparison	Retro Pre	Post	Diff.	t	df	p	d	N
Happiness (0–100)	57.50	76.33	+18.83	7.940	35	< .001	1.32	36

3.6. Interaction With Major Life Challenges: The Observer-Shift Signature

Among participants who faced a major stressful event ($n = 18$), retrospectively rated pre-program happiness was 53.00 ($SD = 18.35$) and post-program happiness was 75.94 ($SD = 12.17$), a gain of 22.94 points or approximately

43%, $t(17) = 7.087$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.67$. Among those without major stress ($n = 20$), retrospective pre-program happiness was 61.80 ($SD = 19.05$) and post-program happiness was 76.95 ($SD = 15.21$), a gain of 15.15 points or approximately 25%, $t(19) = 5.081$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.14$ (see Table 7).

Table 7*Subjective Happiness by Life-Event Subgroup*

Subgroup	Retro Pre	Post	Gain	% Gain	t	p	d	N
Faced major life event	53.00	75.94	+22.94	43.3%	7.087	< .001	1.67	18
No major life event	61.80	76.95	+15.15	24.5%	5.081	< .001	1.14	20

Participants reporting major life challenges demonstrated gains comparable to, or in several cases greater than, those without such challenges. Both subgroups arrived at nearly identical post-program happiness levels despite the high-stress subgroup beginning from a substantially lower baseline. This convergence pattern is inconsistent with a simple demand-characteristics or expectancy-effects interpretation, which would be expected to operate symmetrically across subgroups. Under a hedonic-regulation interpretation, the high-adversity subgroup should show smaller gains, not larger ones. The observed amplification of gains under adversity is more consistent with a shift operating at a deeper level than circumstantial mood regulation—a shift at the level of the observer itself. For entrepreneurs

who routinely face financial uncertainty, team challenges, and personal strain, this pattern suggests that a consciousness-based approach may not merely survive adversity but use it as a catalyst for expansion.

3.7. Correlation Between Stress Reduction and Happiness Gain

Pearson correlations (see Table 8) showed that the reduction in stress, particularly on the overactive pathway, was meaningfully associated with improvements in subjective happiness. These correlations are based on the 38 cases for which both stress-change scores and the retrospective happiness-change score were available. The stronger association for the overactive pathway may reflect the particular responsiveness of anxiety-driven, overactive

stress patterns to consciousness-based and identity-oriented interventions.

Table 8

Pearson Correlations Between Stress Reduction and Happiness Gain

Variable pair	N	r	p	Interpretation
A+B+C reduction vs. happiness gain	38	0.369	.022	Statistically significant
C+D+E reduction vs. happiness gain	38	0.275	.095	Trend; not significant
Combined reduction vs. happiness gain	38	0.332	.042	Statistically significant

3.8. Summary of Key Empirical Findings

Across all measured outcomes, participants showed statistically significant improvements. Effect sizes were uniformly large (Cohen's $d = 0.84$ to 1.67). The most striking pattern was the interaction between life adversity and program outcomes: those who faced the most difficulty showed the greatest gains. Figure 1 summarizes the percentage changes across key outcomes.

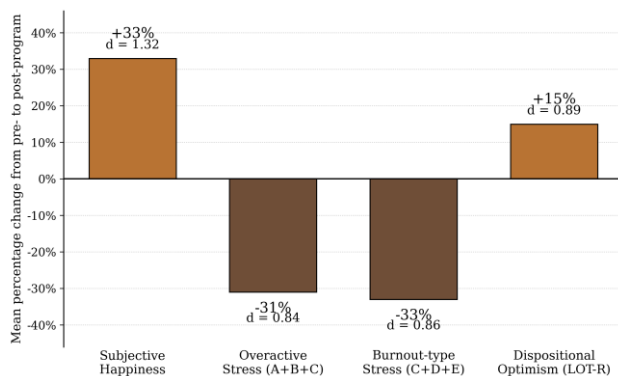


Figure 1. Approximate percentage change across key outcomes from pre- to post-program. Percentage changes are based on the mean pre- and post-program values. Because the underlying measures use different scales and analytic subsets, this figure serves as a visual summary rather than a direct cross-metric comparison.

4) DISCUSSION

4.1. Overview of Key Findings

Participants demonstrated meaningful changes in dispositional optimism, stress levels, and subjective happiness over the course of the program. These changes persisted even in the presence of significant life disruptions, and in several cases were amplified by adversity. The pattern of findings, particularly the moderator result, is difficult to explain through behavioral coping alone and points toward a deeper transformation at the level of the internal observer.

4.2. Alignment With Existing Research

These findings are consistent with research documenting the psychological costs of entrepreneurship. Stress management practices significantly influence entrepreneurs' mental health⁴. Emotional demands predict burnout when resources are insufficient³⁹. Daily recovery is impaired by identity entanglement⁶. Self-management practices can moderate stress, yet typically address only the behavioral level without shifting deeper identity patterns⁴⁰. Baseline stress profiles in the present sample mirror entrepreneurial populations. Over half of participants entered the program in prolonged stress, with the dominant pattern being HPA depletion—precisely the burnout signature described in the literature.

Prior work shows that even modest gains in happiness coincide with better productivity and stronger performance^{10,11}. The change observed here was larger. That does not justify a direct business extrapolation, but it matters. For entrepreneurs, a shift of this size could reasonably affect how they judge situations, relate to others, stay engaged under pressure, and sustain performance over time. The significant increases in dispositional optimism suggest that consciousness-based training may strengthen the psychological resources that protect entrepreneurs from depletion^{34,41,42}.

4.3. The Observer Effect in Human Experience

The central theoretical contribution of the present work lies in interpreting these patterns through the observer effect. In quantum physics, the act of observation participates in determining which outcome becomes actualized^{16,43}. While this cannot be directly transposed to human experience, it suggests something broader: observation may not be entirely passive. In human experience, perception appears to play a similar role.

Neuroscience points in the same direction. Perception is not a passive recording of the world; it is built through prior experience, expectation, and internal models^{20,21,44}. Attention then stabilizes some patterns and weakens others. That matters here. The intervention was designed to work at the level of the observer, not only at the level of coping. The effect sizes, together with the fact that gains held under adversity, suggest that participants were not simply handling stress more efficiently. Something about the frame from which stress

was met appears to have shifted.

This interpretation aligns with Goswami's⁴⁵ consciousness-based framework, in which human experience can evolve from survival-oriented identification toward expanded awareness. Schwartz, Stapp, and Beauregard⁴⁶ proposed a neurophysical model in which mental attention can direct neural activity, suggesting a mechanism by which sustained shifts in awareness could produce durable changes in brain function and behavior.

4.4. From Quantum Happiness to the Quantum Entrepreneur

The Quantum Entrepreneur represents a shift from doing to being. It is the identity of an entrepreneur who operates from aligned consciousness rather than reactive survival. Quantum Happiness is not merely an operating system. It is a sustained state of expanded consciousness in which the individual's relationship to reality itself has shifted. It arises when a person begins to understand the deeper nature of life, perception, and identity, and ceases to chase fulfillment exclusively through external achievement.

This addresses the hedonic treadmill at its root. The treadmill ensures that each achievement returns the individual to baseline^{25,26}. The Quantum Happiness model proposes that the set point itself can shift through a fundamental change in the observer. The data suggest such a shift is both possible and measurable. When the internal observer shifts, the external reality begins to shift with it: decision-making quality, leadership coherence, creative capacity, and the experience of meaning. The present findings suggest that such resilience may be

cultivated through a deeper shift in the observer state itself, not merely through behavioral coping.

4.5. Implications for Entrepreneurs

For entrepreneurs, these findings matter because strategy is never executed in a vacuum. It is carried out by a person whose attention, physiology, and emotional tone shape every decision. When uncertainty is chronic, recovery is poor, and identity is tied too tightly to the venture, the observer becomes a practical variable, not an abstract one^{3,4,6}. In that setting, lower stress burden, higher optimism, and higher happiness are not just nice subjective outcomes. They are conditions that can change judgment, persistence, relationships, and the durability of performance itself.

To appreciate the potential scope of these shifts, consider the observed changes: a 33% mean increase in retrospectively rated happiness, a 31% reduction in overactive stress, a 33% reduction in burnout-type stress, and a 15% increase in dispositional optimism. At baseline, over half of participants were in clinically prolonged stress; by program completion, 75% of those on the overactive pathway had crossed into the healthy range. A recent meta-analysis confirmed that optimism is the single most influential predictor of entrepreneurial performance variance, outperforming all Big Five personality traits, and is positively associated with both performance and well-being in entrepreneurial populations³⁶. Research using the LOT-R with 255 entrepreneurs found that dispositional optimism directly and positively predicts entrepreneurial success across multiple performance

indicators³⁵. Research on stress and cognition further shows that chronic stress shifts decision-making from analytical to intuitive processing, increasing bias and reducing the quality of strategic judgment^{47,48}. Taken together, the shifts observed in this study map directly onto the psychological conditions most strongly associated with entrepreneurial success, better decision-making, greater resilience, and sustained creative output.

4.6. Interpretive Caution and Limitations

These findings should be interpreted within the limits of a single-group pre-post design. The study does not establish causality, nor does it isolate the specific active ingredients of the intervention. The happiness measure was retrospective, which, while methodologically appropriate given the response-shift rationale, introduces the possibility of recall bias. The absence of a control group means observed changes could be partially attributable to the passage of time, regression to the mean, or expectancy effects. Despite these limitations, the consistency of results across measures, the large effect sizes, and the theoretically coherent interaction between adversity and outcomes suggest a pattern warranting serious attention and further investigation.

A further consideration concerns the paid-enrollment structure of the program. Participants voluntarily paid to take part, which carries competing implications. On one hand, such skin-in-the-game enrollment is associated in the intervention literature with higher engagement, lower attrition, and greater adherence. On the other hand, paid enrollment may introduce self-selection toward participants

already motivated to change, and may heighten expectancy-driven reporting in self-report measures. The retrospective-pretest happiness measure is particularly exposed to this second concern, although the moderator pattern observed here (larger gains under adversity rather than smaller ones) is not readily explained by a simple expectancy-effects account.

4.7. Future Research

The sample was not exclusively entrepreneurial. Future research should include entrepreneur-specific samples with randomized control designs, ideally comparing the full consciousness-based intervention against a matched active-control condition (for example, a general meditation or journaling program of equivalent duration and structure, without the quantum/observer content) and a waitlist-control arm. Inclusion of objective performance metrics (revenue, decision quality, team engagement) would extend practical relevance. Assessment of identity and consciousness measures alongside traditional constructs would allow more direct testing of the observer framework. Exploration of the mechanisms through which adversity interacts with consciousness-based training represents a particularly promising direction, given that this interaction is theoretically central to the observer-shift interpretation.

5) CONCLUSIONS

We do not only have a mental-health crisis. We also have a reality crisis. When life is misunderstood, people can spend years chasing the wrong solution. Entrepreneurs are especially vulnerable because the culture

around them keeps rewarding more doing, more tools, and more hustle. Yet when the observer does not change, the pattern tends to repeat. The same pressure reappears in a different form. Strategy changes. The entrepreneur does not.

The findings of this study suggest that something different is possible. When participants engaged in a structured consciousness-based training program built around the Quantum S.O.U.R.C.E. Formula, they demonstrated significant improvements in optimism, stress reduction, and happiness. The mean happiness increase of 33% substantially exceeds the 12 to 13% threshold shown in peer-reviewed research to produce measurable improvements in productivity and performance^{10,11}. Those who experienced the most adversity showed the greatest gains, arriving at the same post-program levels as those who experienced none. This pattern is not fully accounted for by behavioral adjustment or circumstantial improvement alone. It is more consistent with a shift in the internal observer itself.

The question is no longer how to fix the stress, the burnout, or the dissatisfaction. It becomes: who is the one experiencing it? And can that observer shift? The present paper proposes that the answer is yes. The Quantum Entrepreneur is not a new strategy. It is a new state of being. For entrepreneurs committed to changing the world, the invitation is clear: the greatest leverage lies in shifting the observer, and thereby unlocking a new level of personal fulfillment and business impact.

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