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# Northumbria academic to take part in BBC Radio 3 Free Thinking Festival

A Northumbria University academic is taking part in a BBC Radio 3 debate as part of the station's Free Thinking festival.

Senior Lecturer in Health Psychology, Dr Vincent Deary, will take part in the 'Happy Talk' event at the Sage Gateshead on Saturday 1 November.

The discussion will address questions such as "How much self-knowledge do you need to be happy - and to what extent can you achieve this alone?" These questions are similar to those posed by Dr Deary in his new book, *How We Are*, which explores the nature of habit and the difficulty of making changes in our daily lives.

"The discussion is very relevant to my book, which takes a close look at human nature – who we are and how we work," explains Dr Deary.

"Psychology sometimes forgets that we are also bodies, living and acting in particular contexts, with other people, and that our habits will also be embodied in these contexts. We need to think about what "happiness" means for a given individual at a given point in their lives, and what kind is realistically attainable. What might happiness look like for them: peace, equanimity, purpose, pleasure, rest from strife or purposeful struggle?"

Now in its ninth year, the Free Thinking festival brings together leading thinkers for a weekend of debate, ideas, music and performance, with many of Radio 3's usual programmes coming live from the Sage Gateshead.

Dr Deary will be joined on the panel by Paul Dolan, Professor of Behavioural Science at the London School of Economics and the author of *Happiness by Design*, and Beatrix Campbell, a writer who received an OBE for 'services to equality'. BBC broadcaster Philip Dodd will chair the discussion.

"As a Newcastle local, I was keen to support such an important cultural event in the North East," added Dr Deary. "I certainly hope the festival will help to make topics like this engaging, interesting and accessible to the public."

The discussion will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3's Free Thinking programme following the festival.

Free tickets for this event are available from -  
<http://www.sagegateshead.com/event/happy-talk/>

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