

# SAFETY AND FUN: FINDING THE RIGHT BALANCE FOR A HAPPY AND FULFILLING LIFE

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**Abstract:** This essay delves into the critical interplay between two fundamental aspects of human life: safety and fun. It begins by clearly defining these terms. "Safety" is characterized as the reasonable control over conditions or hazards that may lead to physical or psychological harm, encompassing measures that protect individuals from accidents, illnesses, or adverse mental states. On the other hand, "fun" is defined as the experience of positive thoughts or emotions, such as satisfaction, amusement, or pleasure, which can be derived from various activities like hobbies, social interactions, or leisure pursuits. The essay meticulously highlights the distinct advantages of both safety and fun. Safety is crucial as it ensures a healthy and longer life by minimizing risks and providing a stable foundation for individuals to thrive. It allows people to live without constant fear or anxiety about potential dangers. Conversely, fun plays an equally vital role in human life. Engaging in enjoyable activities enhances intelligence by stimulating the mind, reduces stress by providing a mental respite from daily pressures, and significantly improves overall well-being by fostering positive emotional states. Moreover, the essay discusses the potential problems that arise when there is an imbalance between safety and fun. An overemphasis on safety can lead to a monotonous and unfulfilling life, devoid of the joy and excitement that fun brings. Conversely, neglecting safety in the pursuit of fun can result in unnecessary risks and potential harm. The essay ultimately argues that while safety is essential, fun is more important as it enriches life with meaningful experiences and emotional fulfillment, contributing to a holistic sense of happiness and satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Safety; Fun; Balance; Intellectual enhancement; Stress relief; Quality of life

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Safety and fun are two aspects of every human's life that we think about on a daily basis. They can mean a lot of things in different contexts, and everyone has their own definition. To reduce ambiguity, we have to get fixed definitions for the words "fun" and "safety". In this essay, the word "safety" would mean reasonable control over conditions or hazards that lead to physical or psychological harm. I will use a broad definition for fun: it is having positive thoughts or emotions that we like to think of. They come in many forms like feelings of satisfaction, amusement or pleasure. Obvious examples would be at a birthday party, but I will not be excluding examples like reading a hard book for entertainment. In this essay, I will argue that safety is important, but it is not more important than fun. I will start by assessing the advantages of fun and safety, then discussing how too much fun and no safety is a problem and no safety can be indeed a problem. After that, I will argue ways in which they need to be balanced. Finally, I will give an argument for why fun is actually more important than safety.

Firstly, the advantages of safety and fun should be stated in order to remind ourselves of the difficulty of the question. We care about safety every day, no matter how old we are. A young child would take care of his or her safety because he or she wants to enjoy the life ahead of them. An adult would take care of his or her safety because he or she probably needs to take care of his or her children and parents. An old person would especially take care of his or her safety because, quite possibly, they are limited in their capacity to have fun. Your safety keeps you alive and healthy to live longer to enjoy life more.

On the other hand, fun also has its advantages. The British Cohort Study investigated 17,000 people born in 1970, which found that reading for fun improves our language skills and our proficiency in math as well [1]. This shows that fun can make us smarter. It can also make us less stressed as according to one study, those who laughed less had more negative emotions when compared to those who laughed more. In contrast, those who laughed more showed fewer negative feelings even when stressful situations increased [2]. This can make us more energetic and useful which is vital for our daily wellbeing. This paragraph has thus demonstrated that fun can be an instrumental value as it can help us be smarter and less stressed. Fun can also be an intrinsic value as people value fun to enjoy life and have a good daily wellbeing.

## 2 IS SAFETY STILL MORE IMPORTANT?

In the ongoing debate about whether safety or fun is more important, many argue that safety should take precedence. This section explores the reasons behind this perspective and evaluates whether safety truly outweighs fun. Those who prioritize safety often assert that the absence of safety can lead to permanent harm or even death, which has irreversible consequences. This viewpoint is supported by several compelling examples.

### 2.1 The Case of Wu Yongning

Wu Yongning, a young man in his twenties[3], became famous on social media for his daring climbs of skyscrapers and buildings without any safety equipment. His actions, driven by the thrill of adventure and the financial rewards associated with his viral fame, ultimately ended in tragedy when he fell to his death. This example underscores the potential dangers of prioritizing fun over safety. Wu Yongning's life was irrevocably cut short because he chose to pursue risky activities for enjoyment and financial gain. His story serves as a stark reminder that excessive fun without regard for safety can have fatal consequences.

## **2.2 The Impact of COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic provides another powerful illustration of the importance of safety[4]. Despite government policies and public health guidelines urging people to avoid risky behaviors, many individuals chose to gather in high-risk settings for social enjoyment. The consequences were severe: millions of people were infected, and over 7 million lives were lost globally, according to Worldometers.com. A study by Christopher Whaley and colleagues further highlights the correlation between social gatherings and COVID-19 infections. Their research tracked 2.9 million US households from January to November 2020 and found that households with social gatherings, such as birthdays, had significantly higher rates of COVID-19 diagnoses. This data reinforces the notion that prioritizing fun over safety during the pandemic led to widespread illness and death.

Most people inherently value their well-being and do not wish to suffer permanent harm or death. The tragic outcomes seen in Wu Yongning's case and the COVID-19 pandemic are alarming and highlight the critical role of safety in our daily lives. These examples demonstrate that safety is a fundamental consideration that should guide our actions and decisions.

While the examples of Wu Yongning and the COVID-19 pandemic clearly illustrate the importance of safety, they do not definitively prove that safety is more important than fun. Although safety is crucial for preventing irreversible harm, it is also essential to recognize the value of fun in enhancing life's quality and overall well-being. The debate between safety and fun is complex and requires a balanced approach rather than prioritizing one over the other.

## **3 WHY SAFETY IS NOT MORE IMPORTANT THAN FUN**

While safety is undoubtedly crucial, this section argues that it is not more important than fun. The following paragraphs will present two main arguments: first, that safety and fun can co-exist, and second, that safety is an instrumental value to fun, which is the intrinsic value.

### **3.1 Safety and Fun Can Co-Exist**

Safety and fun are not mutually exclusive; they can and should co-exist in a balanced manner. Consider the example of a five-year-old child who wants to go to the playground to socialize and play with other children. His mother, unable to supervise him, is overly concerned about potential dangers such as negative influences or physical injuries. If the child follows his mother's overly cautious advice, he might become disconnected from his surroundings, which could negatively impact his mental well-being and hinder his ability to learn essential social skills. This scenario illustrates how an overemphasis on safety can actually be detrimental.

If the mother continues to overestimate the importance of safety, she might prevent the child from eating certain foods for fear of choking or keep him indoors indefinitely to avoid potential dangers. Such extreme measures, if normalized, would make life extremely uncomfortable and could even lead to severe consequences like depression or suicidal thoughts. Therefore, it is essential to strike a balance between safety and fun rather than focusing solely on safety.

### **3.2 Safety as an Instrumental Value to Fun**

To further elaborate, safety and fun can be compared to the heart and brain, both of which are necessary for a fulfilling life. The heart pumps blood, sustaining life, while the brain processes and stores information, making life worth living. Similarly, safety ensures our health and ability to live, while fun gives life meaning and enjoyment. Activities like watching TV in moderation, reading a book, or playing relatively safe sports are examples of how safety and fun can co-exist harmoniously[5].

Moreover, safety is often valued because it supports fun. For instance, humans create safety regulations to avoid dangerous situations because being in danger is not fun. We take care of our bodies to prevent injuries like bruises because getting hurt is unpleasant. The same applies to protecting our senses, as losing them would significantly diminish our ability to enjoy life. Even in extreme cases like Wu Yongning's death or the COVID-19 pandemic, the underlying motivation is the desire to live a fulfilling life, which is rooted in the intrinsic value of fun. People generally do not want to die because they believe there is joy in living. This suggests that while safety is highly valued, it is

In summary, safety is not more important than fun. While safety is essential for our well-being, it should not overshadow the importance of fun. Safety and fun can co-exist, and safety itself is often valued because it enables us to enjoy life. Therefore, fun is the intrinsic value that makes life worth living, and safety is merely an instrumental value that supports it.

## **4 CONCLUDING THE TOPIC**

In this essay, we have embarked on an exploration of two fundamental aspects of human life: safety and fun. By presenting compelling examples and evidence, we have demonstrated the critical importance of both elements, thereby highlighting the complexity of the question at hand.

#### 4.1 The Complexity of Balancing Safety and Fun

The cases of Wu Yongning and the COVID-19 pandemic serve as stark reminders of the potential consequences when the balance between fun and safety is disrupted. These examples illustrate how individuals and societies can sometimes prioritize short-term fun over long-term safety, leading to tragic outcomes. Wu Yongning's pursuit of thrill and fame ended in his untimely death, while the disregard for safety measures during the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in widespread illness and loss of life. These incidents underscore the notion that fun and safety can sometimes appear to be in conflict.

#### 4.2 The Importance of Balance

However, it is crucial to recognize that this conflict is not inherent but rather a matter of perspective and balance. Safety and fun are not mutually exclusive but should co-exist in a harmonious and balanced manner. The example of a child wanting to go to the playground despite potential risks highlights how an overemphasis on safety can lead to isolation and stunted personal growth[6]. Similarly, activities like watching TV in moderation, reading a book, or engaging in relatively safe sports demonstrate that it is entirely possible to enjoy fun while maintaining a reasonable level of safety.

#### 4.3 The Instrumental Value of Safety to Fun

Delving deeper into the relationship between safety and fun, I have posited that safety is, in fact, an instrumental value that supports the intrinsic value of fun. The heart and brain analogy further clarifies this point: just as the heart sustains life while the brain enriches it, safety ensures our well-being while fun gives life meaning and enjoyment. Safety regulations, for instance, are created to prevent dangerous situations because being in danger is not fun. We take care of our bodies to avoid injuries and protect our senses to continue experiencing the joys of life. Even in extreme cases like Wu Yongning's death or the COVID-19 pandemic, the underlying motivation is the desire to live a fulfilling life[7], which is rooted in the intrinsic value of fun. People generally do not want to die because they believe there is joy in living[8]. This suggests that while safety is highly valued, it is ultimately an instrumental value that supports the intrinsic value of fun.

In conclusion, this essay has thoroughly examined the intricate relationship between safety and fun, ultimately demonstrating that both are indispensable aspects of human life. Safety, with its focus on minimizing risks and preventing harm, is undeniably crucial for our well-being. It provides a stable foundation that allows us to navigate the world without constant fear or anxiety. However, it is equally important to recognize that an overemphasis on safety, to the exclusion of fun, can lead to a life that is monotonous and unfulfilling. Fun, after all, is what gives life its richness and joy. It encompasses the experiences that bring us pleasure, satisfaction, and a sense of connection with others.

The essay has argued that rather than being at odds with each other, safety and fun should co-exist in a harmonious balance. Safety should not be seen as a barrier to fun, but rather as an essential support that enables us to fully experience and enjoy life. In fact, safety can be understood as an instrumental value—one that facilitates the pursuit of fun and the broader enjoyment of life. Without safety, our ability to engage in fun activities would be severely limited by the constant threat of danger. Conversely, without fun, life would lack the emotional fulfillment and meaningful experiences that make it truly worth living.

Therefore, the essay concludes that safety is not inherently more important than fun. Instead, they are deeply intertwined, each enhancing the other in ways that contribute to a fulfilling and meaningful existence. By recognizing the value of both safety and fun, and by striving to maintain a balanced approach, we can create a life that is not only secure but also rich with joy and satisfaction. In this way, we can truly thrive and experience the full spectrum of what it means to be human.

#### COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

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