

The cat's meow: the emotional boost of cute videos

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(HealthDay)—The numbers surrounding the continuing cat video craze

are astounding. In one year alone, more than 2 million cat videos were posted on YouTube and had close to 26 billion views.

What's even more astounding is that all that time spent watching funny and adorable cat videos can actually be a positive use of your time—yes, watching Grumpy Cat can make *you* less grumpy.

When Penn State associate professor Jessica Gall Myrick was at Indiana University, she surveyed nearly 7,000 people to learn about cat-[video](#) viewing and how it affects mood. Her results: these videos do more than entertain. After watching them, people felt more energetic and positive, and had fewer negative emotions, like anxiety and sadness.

Though people often tune in when they're procrastinating about a work project, the ensuing [energy boost](#) may actually spur them to get back to the task at hand.

While not the same as actually having a cat on your lap, watching cat videos could provide some of the emotional comfort associated with pet therapy, and might one day be a low-cost alternative for it, the researchers said.

Cats benefited from the survey as well—Myrick made a donation on behalf of each participant to the foundation of cat video star Lil Bub. As testament to the size of this cat celeb's viewing public, Lil Bub's Big Fund for the ASPCA has raised more than \$300,000 for needy animals in just a few years.

If cats aren't your thing, you can still benefit from video viewing. Other research into the power of *kawaii*, the Japanese word for cuteness, has found that viewing whatever images you find to be cute—from puppies to penguins—can improve your focus.

More information: Can't narrow down which cat videos to try out? *People* magazine posted some of the most viewed [favorites](#) online.

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