

Positive Psychology Evidence-based Self-help for Depression

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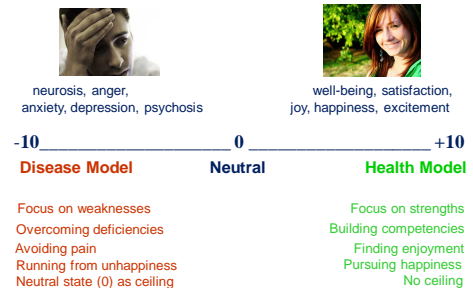
Positive Psychology Masterclass



An epidemic of depression

- 350 million worldwide suffering from depression.
- Leading cause of disability worldwide.
- Major contributor to the global burden of disease.
- Under 50% of those affected have access to effective treatment, in some countries this is <10% (WHO, 2012)
- 1960 – mean age of 1st onset of depression – 30
- 1995 - mean age of 1st onset – 14.5 years
- Recurrent disorder

The Health / Disease Continuum



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PPIs to Raise & Recover Well-being

Positive psychology interventions (PPIs) – ‘treatment methods or intentional activities aimed at cultivating positive feelings, behaviours or cognitions – **significantly enhance well-being** and **ameliorate depressive symptoms**’ (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009)

PPIs both increase positivity AND:

- Overcome milder cases of depression
- Relieve residual symptoms of major depression
- Build resilience to depression
- Prevent relapse into depression
- Take you from floundering to flourishing
- Prevention & Intervention
- Evidence-based self-help

A Positive Approach

Increase Positivity
‘to feel good’

Harness Strengths
‘to function well’



The Broaden & Build theory of Positive Emotions

Depression shuts you down. **Positive Emotions** open you up...

Broaden the range of thinking & action. Help you to think creatively, flexibly and productively when functioning adversely affected.

Build additional resources when you're depleted

- **Psychological:** resilience, optimism, identity, goal orientation
 - **Intellectual:** problem-solving skills, new information
 - **Social:** make new bonds, solidify relationships
 - **Physical:** develop physical strength & co-ordination
- Undo negativity** – your 'inner reset button' eg. how laughter relieves stress

Fredrickson, 2001; Cohn & Fredrickson, 2009 The PEP Lab www.unc.edu/peplab/home

Growing Positive Emotions

- Be open. Approach with lightness of touch – don't pressurise
- Create a mindset of positivity
- Accept the fleeting nature of positive emotions
- Keep some balance and accept negative emotions
- Engage wholeheartedly with positive experiences
- Find the positive meaning
- What's going right in life?
- Identify what you love doing and do it eg. keep a playlist (Quality of Life Therapy, Frisch, 2006)

Coaching for Positive Emotions

Aim: To overcome the negativity bias and increase positive emotion helping the client to spiral upwards towards a state of flourishing.

Tipping point is the **Positivity Ratio** – 3 : 1 positive to negative emotions.

Quantity of positive emotions counts more than **quality**.

Gratitude: 'Thank you Therapy'

"A **felt** sense of wonder, thankfulness and appreciation for life."

Emmons, 2007

Aim: Training the mind to notice the positives in life. To draw attention to what's good in life, what's right rather than what's wrong.

- Gratitude is an antidote to rumination.
- Deters negative emotions like envy, resentment.
- Develops optimism (glass half full in present & future)
- Mitigates against hedonic adaptation and envy.
- Boosts self-esteem

Tip: Good way to start coaching session/groupwork to note progress and help people into a resourceful state

Expressing gratitude "meta-strategy for achieving happiness" (Lyubomirsky, 2007).

Savouring...

the capacity to attend to, appreciate and enhance the positive experiences in one's life." Bryant & Veroff, 2007

Aim: To maximize enjoyment, squeeze all the juice out of it!

- **Slow down**
- Attend to intently, engage all senses
- S-t-r-e-t-c-h out the experience
- Reflect on the sources of enjoyment

Positive Reminiscence: Running through positive memories helps to bounce back from setbacks, acts as reminders of good times, re-savour the positivity.

Basking, Marvelling, Relishing, Luxuriating, Cherishing, Feasting, Delighting, Treasuring...

Meditation

Mindfulness Meditation

- MBSR, MBCT etc.
- Meditation produces changes in brain activation associated with **reductions in negative affect** and **increases in positive affect** (Davidson et al, 2003)
- Benefits: Less depression, anxiety, distress, hostility, negative thinking
- Reduction in severity of psychiatric & medical symptoms
- Improved mood & mood regulation

Loving Kindness Meditation

Benefits of regular practice: **increased positive emotion**, personal resources, mindfulness, pathways thinking, savouring of the future, environmental mastery, self-acceptance; greater purpose in life, enhanced social support received, improved positive relationships with others, and **decreased depression symptoms**. Kohn & Fredrickson, 2010

Practising Optimism

- Challenging Pessimism

Think like an optimist in bad events:
Not Me: Not Always: Not Everywhere

Optimistic explanatory style stops learned helplessness, pessimistic explanatory style spreads helplessness. Cognitive therapy can change an individual's explanatory style from pessimistic to optimistic, reducing depressive symptoms (Seligman et al, 1988)

+ Best Possible Self

- The goal is to experience the power of optimistic thinking by creating your ideal vision of your future self. This is based on valued goals rather than fantasy. Writing it down helps to gain insight, motivate & see pathways to the goal. (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006)
- BPS generates positive emotions and increases intrinsic motivation

Why Play to Our Strengths?

- Confidence
- Insight & perspective
- Energy & vitality
- Well-being
- Buffers against dysfunction & disorder
- Optimism (against depression)
- Courage, faith, hope, future-mindedness, perseverance all buffering strengths
- Resilience
- Performance
- Fulfilment
- Sense of direction
- Helps achieve goals

Clifton & Anderson (2001); CLC (2001); Gallup (2009); Peterson & Seligman (2004); Seligman, Steen, Park & Peterson (2005)

Strengths

- "We have discovered that there are strengths that act as buffers against mental illness" Seligman, 1998
- **Positive Therapy** shouldn't focus just on diagnosing & treating disorder but also recognise, **use & build on client's strengths & resources** (Hefferon & Boniwell, 2011)
- **Strengths not just symptoms.** Whole person assessment.
 - A deficit-approach reinforces negativity bias, encourages labelling/reduces holistic view of self and creates power differential in favour of clinician vs
 - + A strengths-based assessment creates an integrated understanding of the client so that "strengths can be marshalled to undo troubles."
- Using one's signature strengths in a new way lastingly increased happiness and **decreased depressive symptoms** over 6 months (Seligman, Steen, Park, Peterson, 2005)

Applying Strengths

Strengths in Coaching

- Identify your strengths & use them
- Apply strengths to achieve goals
- Apply strengths to resolve issues
- Strengths as a clue to meaning, purpose and a positive direction in life (meaning often lacking in depression).
- Use strengths for energy (energy lacking in depression).

Strengths in Therapy

- Use a 'positive narrative strategy' e.g. Positive Introduction
- Do a strengths survey... Use positive assessment scales
- Ask strengths-based questions during informal interviews
- Use icons of particular strengths
- Do a 360-feedback session
- Look at strengths-use during challenges
- Assess flourishing
- Apply strengths

Rashid & Ostermann, 2009

PPIs in Practice: The Bristol Approach to Well-being



Connecting people with what's possible to make Bristol a happier place.

web: www.happycty.org.uk
email: info@happycty.org.uk
tel: +44 (0)117 230 0128
twitter: @happybristol

Lightbox: The Happiness Project
The Happiness Habits: Community Well-being Programme
The Happiness Zones

Off campus and into communities

Social Contagion Theory

The inspiration for the Bristol approach comes from Harvard Medical Sociologist Nicholas Christakis.

- Our moods, habits and behaviours don't stop with us. They pass unconsciously through social networks for up to **3 degrees of separation**. They affect not only the people that we come into contact with, but also the people that they come into contact with and then the people that *they* come into contact with.
- So our level of well-being affects people we may never even meet, and in this way we hold a lot of power. **When we invest in our own happiness we are also investing in the happiness of the community and society we live in.**

THE HAPPINESS PROJECT


UNLOCKING PEOPLE'S CREATIVE POTENTIAL TO BE HAPPY

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
GRATITUDE WEEK	1	2-4 GRATITUDE WORKSHOP	3	4	5	6
APPRECIATION OF BEAUTY WEEK	8	9	10	11	12	13
MINDFULNESS WEEK	15	16	17	18	19	20
NURTURE & FITNESS WEEK	22	23	24	25	26	27
VITALITY & FLEXIBILITY WEEK	29	30	31			

MORE INFORMATION AND ONLINE BOOKING AT WWW.WEARELIGHTBOX.CO.UK

LIGHT BOX

<http://youtu.be/SYfu1Qe7hhQ>



The Happy City Initiative

Mission: To help develop happier people, places and planet – one city at a time.

Vision: A society where the shared goal is greater happiness for people and planet.

Guiding Principles:

- Happiness is a uniquely shared purpose for humanity
- Our greatest global challenges have, at their roots, the idea that the way to happiness is through increased consumption and the mark of success is what we own.
- Individually and collectively there are many things we can do to develop lasting happiness and community resilience that don't cost the earth (financially or environmentally).
- Money is a means not an end and should be an enabler not a driver of society.
- The solutions to the challenges we face are largely already there, but they need to be given much more attention and focus so they can be scaled and spread.

http://youtu.be/3gRpANVVP_k?1=1m22s www.happycity.org.uk



Community well-being programme

10 habits over 10 sessions


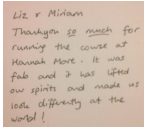
- Savour life's joys
- Express **gratitude**
- Use your **strengths**
- Live life with **meaning and purpose**
- Nurture your **relationships**
- Learn **optimism**
- Build your **resilience**
- Move & meditate**
- Set **goals** for a happier life
- Give. Practise acts of **kindness**




Happiness Habits Feedback

"The benefit that we've been deriving from our Monday sessions has been priceless! Compared to one-on-one therapy which costs a fortune, this is far more engaging and useful in my opinion as you feel an equal participant rather than a client/victim. Keep up the fantastic work."

"I would say that when you learn these things, you can leave the negative behind and be positive about life and the future."

"The course is really helpful for being able to recognise how to be happy for yourself and family and everyone who comes into contact with you. I loved it!"

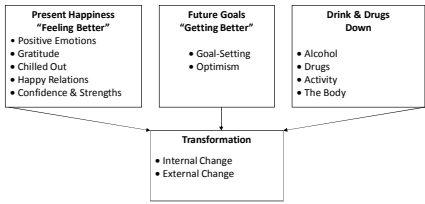
The Happiness Zones @ Project 28

8 week intervention for alcohol-misusing adolescents

- Feel Good Zone (Positive Emotions & Savouring)
- Future Zone (Optimism & Gratitude)
- Me Zone (Strengths)
- Chill Zone (Relaxation, Meditation)
- Change Zone (Motivation, Goal-setting)
- Me to You Zone (Relationships)
- Body Zone (Nutrition, Physical Activity)
- Bounce Back Zone (Resilience, Growth Mindset)

Results

- Statistically significant increases in Happiness (SHS), Optimism (LOT-R) & Positive Emotions (PANAS).
- Statistically significant decrease in Alcohol Dependence (SADD). Drinking fell by two-thirds



Present Happiness "Feeling Better"

- Positive Emotions
- Gratitude
- Chilled Out
- Happy Relations
- Confidence & Strengths

Future Goals "Getting Better"

- Goal-Setting
- Optimism

Drink & Drugs Down

- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Activity
- The Body

Transformation

- Internal Change
- External Change

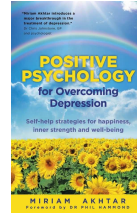
Akhtar, M. & Boniwell, I. (2010). Applying positive psychology to alcohol-misusing adolescents: A group intervention, *Groupwork*, 20(3), 6-31

Conclusions

- The programme resulted in increases in 4 dimensions of well-being – **hedonic, eudaimonic, physical and social**.
- Positive psychology techniques work well with vulnerable adolescents.
- Working within the 'health model' achieves results.
- Coaching is a powerful process with adolescents.
- PPIs can be used as treatment as well as prevention.

Positive Psychology for Overcoming Depression, Watkins, 2012

Positivní psychologie pro překonání deprese; strategie pro podporu štěstí, vnitřních sil a osobní pohody, Grada, 2014



1. The Positive Approach to Depression
2. The Positive Psychology Story of Happiness
3. Positive Emotions: The Upward Spiral to Well-being
4. Savouring the Moment
5. The Attitude of Gratitude
6. Meditation: the Mindful Approach
7. Learning Optimism: Self-defence for the mind
8. Resilience: Road to Recovery
9. Positive Connections: Other People Matter
10. Vitality: Mind, Body & Spirit
11. Strengths: You at Your Best
12. Positive Directions: Moving Forward

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