

Positive Psychology



"The Scientific study of human strengths and virtues." Prof. Martin Seligman.

Positive psychology is the scientific study of the "good life", or the positive aspects of the human experience that make life worth living. The discipline of positive psychology focuses on both individual and societal wellbeing.

There are many potential benefits of practising positive psychology, including an increase in self-esteem, improved relationships, and a greater outlook on life. Research in the realm of positive psychology has found that gratitude, social connection, and kindness are all critical to living our best lives.

Professor Martin Seligman

The PERMA Model

Positive Psychology

5 Pillars of Wellbeing

P - Positive Emotions

E - Engagement

R - Relationships

M - Meaning

A - Achievement



Prof Martin Seligman

Positive Emotions: Such emotions include feelings of pleasure, rapture, ecstasy, warmth, comfort, and the like. They have a strong sensory component and are tied to experiences or memories, as well as our attitude toward them. While transitory in nature, positive emotional states produce many long-term benefits, including: increased access to love, friendship, and community; openness to new ideas and experiences; strength and agility in the face of setbacks and challenging circumstances; and, creative, constructive, and generous thinking. And, of course, positive emotional states just feel better! Strategies for producing or amplifying such states include:

- Practising gratitude

- Rewriting your past by forgiving, forgetting, or recasting bad memories in a constructive light
- Putting present day troubles in a box, so they don't bleed all over everything else in your life
- Practicing mindfulness
- Savoring life's pleasures in the moment (*especially with others*)
- Taking stock of life annually and developing actionable plans to course correct

Engagement (a.k.a. "Flow): This state of mind occurs when pursuing activities for which we become thoroughly immersed and absorbed. They demand skill and effort and leverage our signature strengths. In their pursuit, our sense of self vanishes, and time seems to stop. When present in professional endeavours, they are a source of gratification that far outstrips wages and other tangible benefits.

Relationships: Human beings are social animals. As such, most of the enabling conditions for building a life worth living are relationship-oriented. In the company of close friends, family, and associates, we savour everyday moments, we experience the "flow" of seamless collaborations, we find purpose for our existence, and we share our triumphs and defeats.

Meaning: When our personal and/or professional endeavors contribute to the greater good, they provide fuel for deep commitment. A profound sense of satisfaction accompanies the knowledge that we are part of something greater than ourselves and that our lives matter.

Achievement: Mastery, victories, awards, and other tangible expressions of achievement often bolster well-being whether or not they are associated with positive emotion, "flow," or meaning. Something within us enjoys rising to a challenge and proving ourselves capable of a worthy result. We pursue these activities for their own sake.

Take a look at each of the PERM Model segments of wellbeing and create an action for each segment:

PERMA MODEL - How can I create:	ACTION
Positive Emotions	
Engagement (a.k.a. "Flow")	
Positive Relationships	
Meaning	
Achievement	

This will enable you to experience the benefits of practising positive psychology found from being grateful, social connections and kindness.

If you are interested in Dr. Seligman's work, here are two of his signature writings:

Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment by Dr. Martin E.P. Seligman, PhD (©2002)

Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being by Dr. Martin E.P. Seligman, PhD (©2011).

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