



Principles of Positive Psychology: A Review

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Abstract

A science of positive subjective experience, positive individual traits, and positive institutions promises to improve quality of life and prevent the pathologies that arise when life is barren and meaningless. Hope, wisdom, creativity, future mindedness, courage, spirituality, responsibility, and perseverance are ignored or explained as transformations of more authentic negative impulses. For this reason the origins as well as an outline of the interest scope of this relatively recent, dating back only over 10 years, trend are shown. A crucial question has become in this context the examination of the relationship between the positive psychology and the education, particularly regarding the potential linked to the prospect of the so called strong points”. The founding fathers as well as the supporters of the positive psychology try to propagate it in the therapy and in the fields of organization and education. In the following text some selected concepts of the positive psychology and the corresponding examples of their practical use in the form of the so called positive prevention and intervention programs in the domain of education are described.



Key words: creativity, future, mindedness, education, organization etc.

Introduction

According to the World Health Organization, mental depression is the main cause of disability, and had become by the year 2000 the fourth gravest health problem throughout the world and the DALY- indicator in the website of the World Health Organization. WHO experts estimate that by 2020 depression will have become the second largest health problem in the world. Also, the foremost proponents of positive psychology expect an epidemic of depression which will be particularly dangerous in view of the fact that depression increasingly affects younger people. According to the DALY indicator, in the age group 15–44 years depression is now the second greatest cause of disability, while suicide is one of the most frequent causes of death across the world, especially for young people. Positive psychology has also emerged in specific reaction to the deteriorating social indicators in



many economically and socially developed countries, because the progress of their economies, the growing wealth of states and their citizens, is not matched by an increase in life satisfaction, i.e. to mental well-being.

Principles of Positive Psychology

A powerful way to boost your happiness in life is by leveraging the principals of positive psychology. As its name suggests, positive psychology focuses on growth by building on what's positive. It helps you by tapping into positive emotions such as curiosity, awe, surprise and more. It emphasizes developing a person's emotional intelligence, well-being and happiness. Some of the most insightful books I've read on positive psychology include Positive Intelligence. the basic concepts of positive psychology to impact leadership and performance in a positive way.

1. Focus on your strengths.

Any action and thought that you continually work on, you strengthen. In your own life, look for skills and interests that play to your strengths. If you're someone who can write a good article, loves numbers or has any other personal desire, it's a good idea to work on that by doing online courses. Also, network with people in the same field — you may find new directions for your career and learn new things When you continue to work on what you're good at and feed your best values and emotions, you begin to create your best self. In time, you'll have the mental toughness to meet challenges easily.

2. Express gratitude.

When you express gratitude, you bring your attention to the positive aspects of your life. Practicing gratitude rigorously and on a daily basis is a powerful way to retrain your brain. As you focus on what's good in your life, it will become a normal way of living. Create a gratitude journal to help you consciously and deliberately count your blessings. By working on your "gratitude muscle," you'll find that you've reached an attitude of positivity.

3. Find the silver lining.

I believe that happy people are those who can point out the positive in every situation. Positive psychology encourages people to work toward finding a helpful lesson in every



challenge. This attitude is extremely powerful and useful because you need to have a proactive mindset to manage important issues. Take steps to apply this important principle in your life by finding the silver lining in small problems. As you rewire your brain to pick solutions and look at positives, you'll find it easier to troubleshoot bigger and harder issues.

In this way, positive psychology can lead to long-term happiness because you feel confident in your ability to handle changes in life.

4. Move toward rather than away.

When it comes to achieving goals, there are two main approaches: the carrot or the stick. In other words, your goals are either taking you away from something that's challenging or toward something that helps you grow. Make a list of your goals, and ask yourself if they are taking you toward a great outcome or away from an unpleasant situation. Can you switch your "away" goals into "toward" ones? For example, if you're trying to learn new skills and are motivated by the fear of losing a job, you'll be preoccupied and stressed and will find it hard to learn. Transform your goal by focusing on the possibility of getting a new and rewarding job in a new place. This takes you toward a happier goal and taps into positive energies. Observe your feelings when you check your goals. In my experience, your "toward" goals will make you feel uplifted, expanded and heading toward growth. Away goals are more about self-preservation and protection. Turn your goals into something you move toward in your life. You'll tap into positive feelings such as excitement and courage to keep you motivated.

5. Be present.

It's easier to make the other principles a part of your behavior when you're more present. It's only when you're in the moment that you're able to make deliberate choices in the direction you want to go. How do you become more present? I start by taking deep breaths and following the movement of air within my body. Pay close attention to the movement of your chest, your stomach and the sensations within. For a few seconds, you've become completely present. If you find it hard to focus on the present moment for long periods of time, try to do so for just ten seconds. In his book *Positive Intelligence*, Shirzad Chamine recommends practicing PQ reps, or small moments of being present, 100 times a day. You can do this



while showering, walking and even while eating — which will help you enjoy your food more and understand when you're not hungry. Keep repeating these 10-second sessions as many times as you can, and you'll soon feel charged and energetic.

6. The Tetris Effect

According to Achor, the brains of people who repeatedly play video games became stuck in a “cognitive afterimage,” which causes them to see the game wherever they go. “Playing hour after hour of ‘Tetris’ actually changes the brain,” he says — new neural pathways are created. People can get stuck that way, too, he says. Especially accountants, lawyers, and other professionals trained to be critical. Lawyers “depose” their children, accountants make spreadsheets of their wives’ faults. But you can create a “positive tetris effect” — i.e., train your brain to get stuck in a positive afterimage using happiness, gratitude, and optimism. Make a list of three good things at the end of the day, and your brain will have to scan for positive events. “This trains the brain to become more skilled at noticing and focusing on possibilities for personal and professional growth and seizing opportunities to act on them,” Achor says, adding that it pushes out the negative experience.

7. Social Investment

In times of stress and crisis, many people retreat into their shells and cut off communication with their friends and loved ones. But happy, successful people do the opposite: “Instead of turning inward,” says Achor, “they actually hold tighter to their social circle.” Forming social bonds increases oxytocin, reducing anxiety and improving concentration and focus. So many studies on illness find that support groups increase sufferers’ chances of survival. the Harvard men study followed 268 men from college in the 1930s to the present, and found that social relationships mattered more than anything else, regarding health, success, and happiness.

Social relationships — they don’t always have to be deep — help people at work and at home to manage stress, lower cortisol, and get over conflict. “At Harvard, I found a 0.7 correlation between happiness and social support,” Achor says. “Social support is as predictive of longevity as smoking and obesity, and can make you 10 times more engaged.”

Grow with the principles of positive psychology.

Positive psychology focuses on building what’s good in your life. You’re more likely to experience growth and happiness when your mind is in a positive space. You’ll focus on



emotions such as awe, surprise, joy and other vibrant feelings. We've looked at some of the principles of positive psychology that could help you. Now, give them a try in your life.

Conclusion

Positive Psychology enjoys, as hardly any of the new trends in psychology ever did before, a high degree of popularity and spontaneous recognition among numerous scholars and outsiders alike. It is a brilliant example of well-selling scientific knowledge with multiple aspects: therapeutic, educational, in human resource management, in organizational management, and so on. There are many examples which demonstrate that the findings of positive psychology can be applied practically beyond the immediate domain of psychology. However, this relatively fresh trend of thought is not completely without controversy. It is outside the scope of this article to quote and discuss the criticism attracted by positive psychology. Nevertheless, it should be noted that most of it is constructive. The rising indicators of depression among young people throughout the world, and their low levels of life satisfaction, referred to even as a “depression epidemic”, are for positive psychologists a strong argument in favour of implementing the presented developments in the field of education. Positive education is defined by those psychologists both as an education which improves the teaching of traditional subjects, and as an education for happiness also.

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