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POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

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SYLLABI-BOOK MAPPING TABLE
Positive Psychology

Syllabi	Mapping in Book
BLOCK I: BASIC CONCEPTS OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY **UNIT 1 : Introduction** Positive psychology: Definition; goals and assumptions; Relationship with health psychology, developmental psychology, clinical psychology **UNIT 2: Positive Psychology** Introduction and historical overview of Positive Psychology, Positive prevention and positive therapy Module **UNIT 3 : Foundations of happiness** The meaning and measure of happiness - the science of happiness - biological foundation of happiness - the happiness system - the malleable brain - the secret of smiling - positive feeling as a compass - positive traits. **UNIT 4: Emotional intelligence, Well-being and Happiness** Positive emotions: Broaden and build theory; Cultivating positive emotions; Happiness- hedonic and Euaimonic; Well- being: negative vs positive functions; Judgement and decision making; Subjective well -being: Emotional, social and psychological well-being; Model of complete mental life	**Unit 1:** Introduction to Positive Psychology **(Pages 1-5);** **Unit 2:** History of Positive Psychology **(Pages 6-15);** **Unit 3:** Foundation of Happiness **(Pages 6-23);** **Unit 4:** Emotional Intelligence, Well Being and Happiness **(Pages 24-34)**
BLOCK II: PROCESS OF WELL BEING **UNIT 5: Positive Cognitive States and Processes** Resilience: Developmental and clinical perspectives; Sources of resilience in children; Sources of resilience in adulthood and later life; Optimism- How optimism works; variation of optimism and pessimism; Spirituality: the search for eaning(Frankl); Spirituality and well- being; Forgiveness and gratitude **UNIT 6 :Applications of Positive Psychology** Positive schooling: Components; Positive coping strategies; Gainful employment Mental health: Moving toward balanced conceptualization; Lack of a developmental perspectives. **UNIT 7: Subjective well-being** The science of happiness and life satisfaction, Resilience in Development, Concept of flow, Positive affectivity, Social construction of self-esteem 11 Module	**Unit 5:** Positive Cognitivestates and Processes **(Pages 35-44);** **Unit 6:** Application of Positive Psychology **(Pages 45-54);** **Unit 7:** Subjective Wellbeing **(Pages 55-62)**
BLOCK III: ROLE IN POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY **UNIT 8 Role pf personal control in Adaptive** Functioning Optimism, Hope, Self efficacy, goal-setting for life and happiness Module **UNIT9: Interpersonal relationship** Enhancement of closeness, compassion, forgiveness and gratitude, love, empathy and altruism Module **UNIT 10: Positive response to loss Role of humour** Spirituality Module 6: Application of Positive Psychology Living well at every stage of life, Positive Psychology for children, Positive schooling, Ageing well. **UNIT11:Strategies to enhance happiness** Enhancing pleasure, engagementand meaning-making; self-related processes.	**Unit 8:** Role of Personal Control in Adaptive **(Pages 63-77);** **Unit 9:** Interpersonal Relationship **(Pages 78-94);** **Unit 10:** Positive Response to Loss Role of Humour **(Pages 95-103);** **Unit 11:** Stratgies to Enhance Happiness **(Pages 104-110)**
BLOCK IV: CHALLENGES **UNIT12: Character strengths and virtues** Classification, assessment and nurturance; barriers in developing strengths and virtues. **UNIT13: Meeting life challenges** Nature, type and sources of stress, individual interpretations and responses, coping strategies and their assessment, promoting healthy coping strategies and life skills. **UNIT 14: Subjective well-being** Concept and indicators, life satisfaction and happiness, determinants of happiness; theoretical frameworks.	**Unit 12:** Character, Strength and Virtues **(Pages 111-119);** **Unit 13:** Meeting the Life Challenges **(Pages 120-128);** **Unit 14:** Subjective Well Being **(Pages 129-136)**

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Unit 1

Introduction to Positive Psychology

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Structure

1.1 Introduction

In today's world, society is facing extremely tough challenges in the form of global warming, natural disasters, economic recession, unprecedented homelessness, terrorism and the draining continuation of war. With all this sadness and horror, where in the world does a science based on testing happiness, wellbeing, personal growth and 'the good life' fit into the modern-day agenda? Thus, the new science of positive psychology emerges.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you will be able to understand the following concepts

- o Definition
- o Goals and Assumptions
- o Relationships with other branches

1.3 DEFINITION

Positive psychology focuses on wellbeing, happiness, flow, personal strengths, wisdom, creativity, imagination and characteristics of positive groups and institutions. Furthermore, the focus is not just on how to make individuals happy, thereby perpetuating a self-centered,

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narcissistic approach, but on happiness and flourishing at a group level as well.

Positive psychology concentrates on positive experiences at three time points: (1) the past, centering on wellbeing, contentment and satisfaction; (2) the present, which focuses on concepts such as happiness and flow experiences; (3) the future, with concepts including optimism and hope. Not only does positive psychology distinguish between wellbeing across time points but it also separates the subject area into three nodes:

■The subjective node, which encompasses things like positive experiences and states across past, present and future (for example, happiness, optimism, wellbeing);

■ The individual node, which focuses on characteristics of the 'good person' (for example, talent, wisdom, love, courage, creativity); and

■The group node, which studies positive institutions, citizenship and communities.

At its best, positive psychology has been able to give the scientific community, society and individuals a new perspective on existing ideas as well as providing empirical evidence to support the phenomenon of human flourishing.

1.4 Goals and Assumptions

Positive psychology focuses on wellbeing, happiness, flow, personal strengths, wisdom, creativity, imagination and characteristics of positive groups and institutions. Furthermore, the focus is not just on how to make individuals happy, thereby perpetuating a self centered, narcissistic approach, but on happiness and flourishing at a group level as well. We will look at how individuals and groups thrive and how increasing the wellbeing of one will have a positive effect on the other, leading to a win-win situation. the area of positive psychology is focused on what makes individuals and communities flourish, rather than languish.

Positive psychology concentrates on positive experiences at three time points: (1) the past, centering on wellbeing, contentment and satisfaction; (2) the present, which focuses on concepts such as happiness and flow experiences; (3) the future, with concepts including optimism and hope. Not only does positive psychology distinguish between wellbeing across time points but it also separates the subject area into three nodes:

the subjective node, which encompasses things like positive experiences and states across past, present and future (for example, happiness, optimism, wellbeing); the individual node, which focuses on characteristics of the 'good person' (for example, talent, wisdom, love, courage, creativity); and the group node, which studies positive institutions, citizenship and communities (for example, altruism, tolerance, work ethic) (Positive Psychology Center, 1998).

At its best, positive psychology has been able to give the scientific community, society and individuals a new perspective on existing ideas as well as providing empirical evidence to support the phenomenon of human flourishing.

1.5 Authentic happiness and the good life

What is the good life? Socrates, Aristotle and Plato believed that when people pursued a virtuous life, they would become authentically happy. Epicurus and later utilitarians preached that happiness was indeed the abundance of positive feelings and pleasures. Positive psychology has traditionally conceptualized authentic happiness as a mix of hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Hedonic happiness encompasses high levels of positive affect and low levels of negative effect, in addition to high subjective life. Eudaimonic wellbeing focuses more on the creation of meaning and purpose in life, although the distinction between these two concepts is subject to debate (Kashdan et al., 2008; Keyes and Annas, 2009; Tiberius and Mason, 2009).

The notion of 'authentic happiness' has been further broken down by Seligman to indicate a life that is a combination of a pleasurable life, an engaged life and a meaningful life. The pleasurable life encompasses feelings of positive emotions (for example, joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, inspiration, awe and love – Fredrickson, 2009), which are integral components to our success and wellbeing. Positive emotions widen our thought processes, which can be built up over time and banked to create a 'protective reservoir' upon which a person can draw from during unpleasant or distressing times.

The engaged life focuses on flow, engagement, absorption and wellbeing, while the meaningful life encompasses service to something higher than the self. Thus, individuals can find happiness with the pursuit of all three

'lives'. At present, the concept of authentic happiness is more a theory than a causal recipe for happiness (Rashid, 2009a). As positive psychology continues to grow and develop more longitudinal databanks, we will know more about how these three 'lives' work in harmony to enhance wellbeing.

Check your progress

1. Who is the father of positive psychology?
2. What is the main focus of positive Psychology?

1.6 Relationships with other Branch of Psychology

The British Psychological Society recognizes nine chartered areas of psychology: clinical, counseling, educational, forensic, health, neuro-psychology, occupational, sport and exercise, and teachers/researchers in psychology. However, where exactly does positive psychology fit within the accepted psychology disciplines? Positive psychology has rapidly grown in the past few years and spans a multitude of areas and disciplines. Positive psychologists would argue that psychology should also expand its focus to improve child education by making greater use of intrinsic motivation, positive affect and creativity; improve psychotherapy by developing approaches that emphasize hope, meaning and self-healing; improve family life by better understanding the dynamics of love, parenthood and commitment. They would argue that it should improve work satisfaction across the lifespan by helping people to find authentic involvement, experience states of flow and make genuine contributions in their work; that it should improve organizations and societies by discovering conditions that enhance trust, communication, and altruism; and that it should improve the moral character of society by better understanding and promoting the spiritual impulse.

One thing to note is that many researchers in these areas of expertise were working on them before positive psychology was even born. What suddenly makes some of these areas now 'positive psychology' rather than say clinical or sport psychology? For example, since the early 1980s, research has been conducted on how coaches and athletes can achieve peak performance. From the vast amount of data collected, theories about motivation, planned behaviour, mastery and success have

been cross-fertilized with other areas of psychology. In particular, sport psychology and performance psychology appear to seek the same outcome. Sport tends to look at the best performers and adapt their strategies to those who can improve further, as does positive psychology, which looks at those who are flourishing and shares this information with the normal population. The authors believe that collaboration with these two areas is essential for positive psychology.

1.7 Let's Sum Up

Positive psychology is the science of wellbeing and optimal functioning. There are three levels to positive psychology: the subjective node, the individual node and the group node. Positive psychology has a rich history within ancient Greek philosophy, humanism and several areas of mental health. Humanistic psychology is a close cousin of positive psychology, the main difference being positive psychology's focus on the use of the scientific method. We will cover a wide variety of topics, ranging from positive emotions to trauma and growth. Positive psychology is not simply a 'happiology'; it is intended as a supplement to 'psychology as usual'.

1.8 Unit End Exercise

1. Define positive psychology.
2. Explain various factors dealt by positive psychology.
3. Is positive psychology fit in the various disciplines of psychology? Justify your answer

1.9 Answers for Check Your Progress

1. Martin Seligman
2. Positive Psychology focuses on strengths rather than weakness.

1.10 Suggested Readings

1. Snyder, C. R., Lopez, S. J., &Pedrotti, J. T. (2010). Positive Psychology: The scientific and practical explorations of human strengths.2nd ed. Sage Publications, India.
2. Baumgartner, S. R., & Crothers, M. K. (2009). Positive Psychology. Pearson Education, India.

Unit 2
History of Positive Psychology

Structure

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Life's challenges may be harbingers of our triumphs. This balance of good and bad is sought throughout life. Indeed, this expectation of and desire for balance distinguishes Easterners' views of optimal functioning from the more linear path taken by Westerners to resolve problems and monitor progress. Easterners thereby seek to become one with the march of changes, finding meaning in the natural ups and down of living.

Ever adaptive and mindful, Easterners move with the cycle of life until the change process becomes natural and enlightenment (i.e., being able to see things clearly for what they are) is achieved. Unlike Westerners, who search for rewards in the physical plane, Easterners seek to transcend the human plane and rise to the spiritual one.

2.2 Objectives

After completing this unit, you will be able to understand the following concept

       Eastern perspectives

       Western perspectives

       Positive prevention

       Positive therapy

2.3 History of positive psychology

One of the criticisms of positive psychology is that the ideas are not new. Even the term 'positive psychology' was used by Abraham Maslow, many decades before Seligman (Maslow, 1954: 201). However Seligman has done a phenomenal job of bringing the thoughts and ideas of past researchers, philosophers and scientists back to our consciousness. We have identified four groups of individuals who were looking at 'the good life' before the discipline of positive psychology even existed.

2.3.1 Greeks

Aristotle's (384–322 BCE) greatest contribution to philosophy is arguably his work on morality, virtue and what it means to live a good life. As he questioned these topics, he concluded that the highest good for all humanity was indeed eudaimonic (or happiness). Ultimately, his work argued that although pleasure may arise from engaging with activities that are virtuous, it is not the sole aim of humanity (Mason and Tiberius, 2009).

2.3.2 Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism, created by Jeremy Bentham and carried on by John Stuart Mill, is a philosophy that argued that the right act or policy from government is that which will cause 'the greatest good for the greatest number of people', also known as the 'greatest happiness principle', or the principle of utility. Utilitarianism was the first sector that attempted to measure happiness, creating a tool composed of seven categories, assessing the quantity of experienced happiness (Pawelski and Gupta, 2009). Whereas philosophers before had assumed that happiness was not measurable, utilitarianism argued and attempted to demonstrate that it was indeed possible. Pawelski and Gupta (2009) proposed that utilitarianism influences some areas of positive psychology today, such as subjective wellbeing and the pleasurable life. Ultimately, positive psychology accepts

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that while pleasure is a component of overall wellbeing, it is not enough, and the inclusion of eudaimonic pursuits is necessary as a complement to utilitarian philosophy.

2.3.3 William James

A brilliant scholar, William James is best known for his contribution to psychology through his widely read text, The Principles of Psychology (James, 1890). James originally trained as a medical doctor at Harvard University, Boston, USA, before becoming interested in religion, mysticism and epistemology (Pawelski, 2009). His chapter, 'The Emotions', is most relevant for positive psychology to acknowledge. He suggests there that emotions come after we have physically acted out. For example 'common-sense says , we lose our fortune, are sorry and weep; we meet a bear, are frightened and run; we are insulted by a rival, are angry and strike. The hypothesis here to be defended says that this order of sequence is incorrect. That we feel sorry because we cry, angry because we strike, afraid because we tremble. (James 1890: 1065–6). This was one of the first examples, if not the very first example, of writing to connect emotions and expressions together. His years of intertwining physiology, psychology and philosophy still have an impact in philosophical issues surrounding the mind, the body and the brain today.

2.3.4 Humanistic psychology

Humanistic psychology emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s as a backlash to the predominant psychological theories of psychoanalysis, behaviorism and conditioning. The humanistic movement introduced and solidified qualitative inquiry as an imperative paradigm to research human thought, behaviour and experience, adding a holistic dimension to psychology. In a nutshell, humanistic psychology is the psychological perspective that emphasizes the study of the whole person.

Humanistic psychologists believe that: (1) individuals' behaviour is primarily determined by their perception of the world around them and their personal meanings; (2) individuals are not solely the product of their environment or their genes; and (3) individuals are internally directed and motivated to fulfill their human potential.

The main drive of humanistic psychology was to focus on mental health, specifically positive attributes such as happiness, contentment, ecstasy,

kindness, caring, sharing and generosity. Humanists felt that, unlike their behaviorist cousins, humans had choice and responsibility for their own destiny. This perspective ultimately views life as a process, with all humans beholding an innate drive for growth and fulfillment of potentials. The humanists even went as far as to include spiritual proprieties of the self, the world and wellbeing; an area that is controversial even in today's scientific societies.

Unfortunately, positive psychology didn't start off on the right foot with its humanistic cousins. In the beginning, there was a clear drive to separate positive psychology from the humanistic discipline, claiming a major difference in methodological inquiry. Positive psychology is the scientific study of wellbeing, and therefore uses the scientific method to test hypotheses. We believe that there is much that positive psychology can learn from and continue to learn about the humanistic movement and this need to separate from the humanistic appears divisive and unnecessary.

Humanistic psychology criticizes positive psychology for its short-sighted drive to separate itself from the humanistic discipline, as by adopting this approach, it has left out vital areas of research and methods of inquiry (qualitative) that limit the generalization of its main findings. Furthermore, humanistic psychologists feel that to prove that positive psychology is indeed 'scientific' it has overcompensated and stuck to quantitative inquiry. This is a very important historical fact that students must be aware of when undertaking their studies in positive psychology. We truly believe that in order to understand where we are in positive psychology we have to know where we have come from.

2.4 Eastern Perspectives

We also articulate the Eastern idea of the "good life" and discuss the associated strengths (embedded more in Eastern cultures than in Western ones) that assist Easterners in attaining positive life outcomes. Eastern views of the concepts of compassion and harmony as the two primary and necessary qualities for achieving the good life. Easterners thereby seek to become one with the march of changes, finding meaning in the natural ups and down of living.

Easterners move with the cycle of life until the change process becomes natural and enlightenment (i.e., being able to see things clearly

for what they are) is achieved. The previously neglected wisdoms of the Eastern traditions are being consulted to add different viewpoints about human strength.

In this chapter, we discuss Eastern perspectives and teachings in terms of their influences on positive psychology research and applications. First, we introduce the main tenets of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Hinduism and demonstrate how each tradition characterizes important strengths and life outcomes.

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2.4.1 CONFUCIANISM

Confucius, or the Sage, as he is sometimes called leadership and education are central to morality. Born during a time when his Chinese homeland was fraught with strife, Confucius emphasized morality as a potential cure for the evils of that time(Soot hill, 1968) The tenets of Confucianism are laden with quotations that encourage looking to the welfare of others. In fact, one of Confucius's most famous sayings is a precursor of the Golden Rule and can be translated, "You would like others to do for you what you indeed like for yourself" (Ross, 2003; Analects 6:28).

The attainment of virtue is at the core of Confucian teachings. The five virtues deemed central to living a moral existence are jen (humanity, the virtue most exalted by Confucius); yi (duty); Ii (etiquette); zhi (wisdom), and xin (truthfulness). The power of jen stems from the fact that it was said to encapsulate the other four virtues. The concept of yi describes appropriate treatment of others and can be defined as the duty to treat others well. The concept of Ii promotes propriety and good manners along with sensitivity for others' feelings (Ross, 2003). Finally, the ideas of zhi and xin define the importance of wisdom and truthfulness, respectively.

Confucian followers must strive to make wise decisions based on these five virtues and must be true to them as well. Continual striving for these virtues leads the Confucian follower to enlightenment, or the good life.

2.4.2 TAOISM

Lao-Tzu (the creator of the Taoist tradition) states in his works that his followers must live according to the Tao (pronounced "Dow" and roughly translated as "the Way"). Tao is the energy that surrounds

everyone and is a power that "envelops, surrounds, and flows through all things" (Western Reform Taoism, 2005, p. 1).

According to Taoist traditions, the \difficulty in understanding the Way stems from the fact that one cannot teach another about it.

Instead, understanding flows from experiencing the Way for oneself by fully participating in life. In this process, both good and bad experiences can contribute to a greater understanding of the Way On this latter point, the yin and yang symbol (described in more detail subsequently) reflects this ever-changing balance of opposing forces and desires.

Achieving naturalness and spontaneity in life is the most important goal in the Taoist philosophy.

2.4.3 BUDDHISM

The Buddha teaches that suffering is a part of being and that this suffering is brought on by the human emotion of desire. Such desire is reflected in the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism:

1. Life is suffering, essentially painful from birth to death.

2. All suffering is caused by ignorance of the nature of reality and the resultant craving, attachment, and grasping.

3. Suffering can be ended by overcoming ignorance.

4. The way to relief from suffering is the Noble Eightfold Path (right views, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right-mindedness, and right contemplation).

As long as craving exists, in Buddhist ideology, true peace cannot be known, and such existence without peace is considered suffering (Sangharakshita, 1991). This suffering can be lessened only upon reaching nirvana, which is the final destination in the Buddhist philosophy. Accordingly, nirvana is a state in which the self is freed from desire for anything (Schumann, 1974) More specifically, the premortal nirvana may be likened to the idea of the ultimate "good life." Post mortal nirvana may be similar to the Christian idea of heaven.

Like the other Eastern philosophies, Buddhism gives an important place to virtue, which is described in several catalogs of personal qualities.

Buddhists speak of the Brahma Viharas, those virtues that are above all others in importance (described by Peterson and Seligman, 2004, p. 44, as "universal virtues"). These virtues include love (maitri),

Compassion (karuna), joy (mudita), and equanimity (upeksa) (Sangharakshita, 1991). The paths to achieving these virtues within Buddhism require humans to divorce themselves from the human emotion of desire to put an end to suffering

2.4.4 HINDUISM

The main teachings of the Hindu tradition emphasize the interconnectedness of all things. The idea of a harmonious union among all individuals is woven throughout the teachings of Hinduism that refer to a "single, unifying principle underlying all of Earth" (Stevenson & Haber man, p. 46) The Upanishads discuss two possible paths after death: that of reincarnation (or returning to Earth to continue to attempt to achieve necessary enlightenment), or that of no reincarnation (meaning that the highest knowledge possible was achieved in life).

Hindu teachings are very clear about the qualities one must embody to avoid reincarnation: "To return to this world is an indication of one's failure to achieve ultimate knowledge of one's self" (Stevenson & Haber man, p. 53). Upanishads state, "A man turns into something good by good action and something bad by bad action" (Stevenson & Haber man, p. 54).

2.5 VALUE SYSTEMS

Cultural value systems have significant effects on the determination of strengths versus weaknesses (Lopez, Edwards, Magyar-Moe, Pedrotti, & Ryder, 2003). Whereas most Western cultures have individualist perspectives, most Eastern cultures (Japanese, Chinese, Vietnamese, Indian, and others) are guided by collectivist viewpoints (see also Chapter 18). In individualist cultures, the main focus is the single person, who is held above the group in terms of importance. Competition and personal achievement are emphasized within these cultures. In collectivist cultures, however, the group is valued above the individual, and cooperation is accentuated (Craig & Baucum, 2002). These different emphases on what is valued determine which constructs are considered strengths in each type of culture. The cultural orientation determines which characteristics are transmitted as the valued strengths to its members.

Check your progress

1. Who is the founder of Taoism?

2. Name the five virtues of Confucianism?

3. Write the eight fold path of Buddha

2.6 Positive Prevention

In the last decade psychologists have become concerned with prevention, and this was the theme of the 1998 American Psychological Association meeting in San Francisco. How can we prevent problems like depression or substance abuse or schizophrenia in young people who are genetically vulnerable or who live in worlds that nurture these problems? How can we prevent murderous schoolyard violence in children who have poor parental supervision, a mean streak, and access to weapons? Human strengths that act as buffers against mental illness: courage, future-mindedness, optimism, interpersonal skill, faith, work ethic, hope, honesty, perseverance, the capacity for flow and insight, to name several.

Much of the task of prevention in this new century will be to create a science of human strength whose mission will be to understand and learn how to foster these virtues in young people.

My own work in prevention takes this approach and amplifies a skill that all individuals possess but usually deploy in the wrong place.

The skill is called disputing (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emery, 1979), and its use is at the heart of "learned optimism." If we wish to prevent schizophrenia in a young person at genetic risk, I would propose that the repairing of damage is not going to work. Rather, I suggest that a young person who learns effective interpersonal skills, who has a strong work ethic, and who has learned persistence under adversity is at lessened risk for schizophrenia. This, then, is the general stance of positive psychology toward prevention. It claims that there is a set of buffers against psychopathology: the positive human traits. The Nikki principle holds that by identifying, amplifying, and concentrating on these strengths in people at risk, we will do effective prevention.

2.7 Positive Therapy

The "building of buffering strengths " or the Nikki principle. I believe that it is a common strategy among almost all competent psychotherapists to

first identify and hen help their patients build a large variety of strengths, rather than just to deliver specific damage-healing techniques. Among the strengths built in psychotherapy are

• Courage

• Interpersonal skill

• Rationality

• Insight

• Optimism

• Honesty

• Perseverance

• Realism

• Capacity for pleasure

• Putting troubles into perspective

• Future-mindedness

• Finding purpose

Assume for a moment that the buffering effects of strength-building strategies have a larger effect than the specific "healing" ingredients that have been discovered. If this is true, the relatively small specificity found when different active therapies and different drugs are compared and the massive placebo effects both follow.

One illustrative deep strategy is "narration." I believe that telling the stories of our lives, making sense of what otherwise seems chaotic, distilling and discovering a trajectory in our lives, and viewing our lives with a sense of agency rather than victimhood are all powerfully positive (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993). I believe that all competent psychotherapy forces such narration, and this buffers against mental disorder in just the same way hope does.

2.8 Let's Sum Up

Positive psychology is not a new branch of psychology. It has roots from ancient periods like Greeks, Athenian. The great philosophers like Aristotle, Socrates contributed more to positive psychology. Eastern perspectives are varies from western thoughts. All religious leader explained well about various virtues that leads the man to mortality. Each one of them described positive psychology in their own way.

2.9 Unit End Exercise

1. Write about Utilitarianism?

2. How humanistic psychology influences the positive psychology?

3. Explain the teachings of Buddhism.

4. Describe Taoism.

2.10 Answer for check your progress

1. Lao-Tzu.

2. Jen (humanity), li (etiquette), yi(duty), Zhi (wisdom), xin (truthfulness).

3. Rightvies, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right contemplation.

2.11 Suggested Readings:

1. Snyder, C. R., Lopez, S. J., &Pedrotti, J. T. (2010). Positive Psychology: The scientific and practical explorations of human strengths.2nd ed. Sage Publications, India.

2. Baumgartner, S. R., & Crothers, M. K. (2009).Positive Psychology. Pearson Education, India.

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Unit 3

Foundation of Happiness

Structure

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Understanding and facilitating happiness and subjective well-being is the central objective of positive psychology (Seligman, 2002). Happiness and well-being, in this context, refer to both positive feelings, such as joy or serenity, and to positive states such as those involving flow or absorption. As a scientific enterprise, positive psychology focuses on understanding and explaining happiness and subjective well-being and accurately predicting factors that influence such states. As a clinical Endeavour, positive psychology is concerned with enhancing subjective well-being and happiness, rather than remediating deficits. Thus, positive psychology complements rather than replaces traditional clinical psychology.

3.1 Objectives

After completing this unit you will be able to understand the following concepts:

- Measurement of happiness
- Biological factors of happiness
- Science of happiness

3.3 Meaning and measure of happiness

Happiness seems to be one of those terms that people understand until they try to define it. Indeed, defining happiness has turned out to be much more contentious than defining positive psychology. Even in philosophy, defining happiness is a troublesome issue. Positive psychologists often refer to two types of happiness: hedonic and eudaimonic. Briefly, *hedonic happiness* refers to how happy you feel whereas *eudaimonic happiness* involves being true to your authentic self. Researchers interested in eudaimonic happiness are most interested in whether individuals are using their capacities—both their general human capacities and their own peculiar individual strengths—to flourish in life. Most positive psychologists follow Aristotle in their understanding of eudemonia; nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that Aristotle was one of several different ancient Greek philosophers who took the eudaimonic approach to happiness. All of these approaches, however, emphasized the importance of fulfilling one's *true nature.*

In this sense, eudaimonic happiness is achieved when we fulfill our true human potential. We flourish when our life fulfills our human capacities. Aristotle tended to emphasize the importance of becoming a virtuous person. Importantly for Aristotle, it was the virtues that should be pursued, not happiness in and of itself. There are several advantages to the eudaimonic tradition of happiness. Perhaps most importantly, this approach does not divorce morality and virtue from the study of happiness. Most of us would agree with Aristotle in that a life simply filled with consumptive pleasure is not a happy life. Cows may have all the pleasure of eating grass and grain to their heart's content , but are they really happy? No. Aristotle would claim that the authentically happy life is also the virtuous life. The eudaimonic view of happiness is an important tradition that positive psychologists would be foolish to neglect. But there are a number of problems with this approach to defining happiness. First, it can come across as being overly prescriptive or even paternalistic. The eudaimonic definition of happiness basically tells people that they have to be doing certain things or they have to be developing certain qualities.

3.4 THE EFFECTS OF HAPPINESS

Martin Seligman (2002) has argued that positive and negative emotions may be distinguished from each other in terms of the degree to which they ink they are happy. Prepare us for win-lose or win-win transactions, or zero-sum and nonzero-sum games. From an evolutionary perspective negative emotions such as fear or anger are our first line of defense against threats. For example, fear and anger tell us that danger is probable or that harm is imminent. Negative emotions narrow our attention to the source of the threat and mobilize us for fight or flight. Negative emotions narrow our attention to the source of the threat and mobilize us for fight or flight Positive emotions broaden our attention so we become aware of the wider physical and social environment.

3.5 The science of happiness

Two important concepts emerge from this understanding of happiness: (a) happiness is enduring (it's not just that I feel pleased in the moment), and (b) happiness is global (I'm satisfied with my life as a whole, not just with select domains in my life).

Ancient Greek Ideas of Happiness

The rich Greek tradition of happiness involves much more than Aristotle and the eudaimonic approach described earlier. For example, many Greek philosophers followed a hedonistic approach to happiness. But even the most famous hedonists— the Epicureans—had a much more nuanced view of happiness than popular hedonism would suggest. Indeed, those of the Epicurean camp were much more likely to represent happiness as the ―pleasures of tranquility,‖ rather than the accumulation of raw unadulterated pleasure. One thing that seemed to distinguish the

Epicureans from the disciples of Aristotle, however, was that this tranquil, happy life could be an explicit goal, whereas for Aristotle any kind of psychic harmony was simply the result of the virtuous life. Even the Stoics—who strove to push pleasure and pain toward the margins of life— felt that inner psychological harmony was an important aspect of the virtuous life. Thus, for virtually all philosophers, the good life was a pleasant life, although they would emphasize different paths to this end.

McMahon has emphasized (2006, 2008), there was always something of a tragic theme in the Greek approach to happiness for it

seemed that happiness for the Greeks was never completely under one's control; for one never knew when luck, fate, or the capricious act of

some god might completely derail one's journey to happiness. McMahon emphasizes that this theme seems to come through in early Judeo–Christian thought as well, albeit in a notably different form.

Many theories of happiness have been proposed which can be categorized into three groups:

(1) Need and goal satisfaction theories,

(2) Process or activity theories, and

(3) Genetic and personality predisposition theories.

Need and goal satisfaction theories focus on the idea that the reduction of tensions, satisfaction of needs, and moving towards a valued goal leads to happiness. Process or activity theories state that engagement in an activity provides happiness. Csikszentmihalyi (1975) suggested that *people are happiest when they are engaged in interesting activities that match their level of skill.* He calls this the state of ―flow‖.

Other theorists argue that subjective well-being is influenced by personality dispositions. Some of these important traits are extraversion, neuroticism, hope, dispositional optimism etc.

Income is consistently related to subjective well-being. Age and sex are related to subjective well-being, but these effects are small. Marital status and religious activity are also positively correlated with subjective well-being. With the rise in empirical research on happiness, a central question is how happiness might be measured. A complete device might be impossible even in principle, since happiness might involve multiple dimensions.

3.6 Biological foundations of happiness

Happiness underlying factors are considerable from two dimensions: endogenic factors (biological, cognitive, personality and ethical sub-factors) and exogenic factors (behavioral, social cultural, economical, geographical, life events and aesthetics sub-factors). Among all endogenic factors, biological sub-factors are the significant predictors of happiness.

Genetic factors

Among all related genes with mood and emotional characteristics, effects of two genes investigated directly on happiness: *5-HTTLPRand MAO-A* studies suggested an association between *5-HTTLPR* and life satisfaction as a cognitive dimension of happiness ([8](#)–[11](#)). This gene is coding serotonin distribution in brain cells and therefore leads to mood regulation.

Brain and neurotransmitters

The emotion circuitry of the brain is complex, involving primarily structures in the prefrontal cortex, amygdale, hippocampus, anterior cingulated cortex, and insular cortex. These structures normally work together to process and generate emotional information and emotional behavior. Research has particularly focused on the prefrontal cortex which, unlike most other brain regions involved in emotion processing, shows asymmetric activation in relation to positive and negative emotions.

At the other hand, studies showed that positive and negative moods affected by brain chemical in several ways. Two of the most important neuro-transmitters that involved in mood are dopamine and serotonin. Positive mood and negative mood mediated by dopamine and serotonin levels.

Adrenaline

Adrenaline (also known as Epinephrine) is a hormone and a neurotransmitter that releases from Adrenal glands. Adrenaline has many functions in the body, regulating heart rate, blood vessel and air passage diameters, and metabolic shifts; Adrenaline release is a crucial component of the fight-or-flight response of the sympathetic nervous system.

Therefore, adrenaline produces similar effects to Cortisol, such as increased heart rate and immune system suppression. Researches indicate that urinary adrenaline is a good predictor of happiness. Individuals with higher levels of "personal growth" and "purpose in life" registered lower and more stable levels of salivary Cortisol and urinary Adrenaline.

Physical health

Medicine and psychological findings showed that positive emotion reactions against life events can influence in various ways on physiologic

characteristics. Therefore, several studies investigate the association between physical health and happiness. A group of researchers studied the general association between physical health and happiness and others investigate the relation between physical illness (hypertension, bulimia…) and happiness.

Recently, several studies concluded that positive mood in individuals is a strong predictor of physical health an there is a significant correlation between positive mood and physical health. Researchers stated that people with happiness experience a long life.

Check your progress

1. Name the Greek philosophers who contribute to positive psychology.
2. Name the neuro transmitters which induces the positive mood.
3. What is hedonic happiness?

The secret of smile

Smiling elevates your mood and creates a sense of well-being. "Each time you smile you throw a little feel-good party in your brain." The notorious party animals <u>dopamine</u>, endorphins, and serotonin start whooping it up when you smile. And a bonus: those endorphins serve as natural pain relievers and act as the body's own <u>opiates</u>.

According to Ron Gutman, the author of *Smile: The Astonishing Powers of a Simple Act*, "British researchers found that one smile can generate the same level of brain stimulation as up to 2,000 bars of chocolate."

3.7 Positive feelings

Seligman (2002) in his book *Authentic Happiness* classifies positive emotions into three categories: those associated with the past, the present and the future. Positive emotions associated with the future include optimism, hope, confidence, faith and trust. Satisfaction, contentment, fulfillment, pride and serenity are the main positive emotions associated with the past. There are two distinct classes of positive emotions concerned with the present: momentary pleasures and more enduring gratifications. The pleasures include both bodily pleasures and higher pleasures. Bodily pleasures come through the senses. Feelings that come from sex, beautiful

perfumes and delicious flavors fall into this category. In contrast higher pleasures come from more complex activities and include feelings such as bliss, glee, comfort, ecstasy and ebullience. Gratifications differ from pleasures in that they entail states of absorption or flow that come from engagement in activities which involve using our unique signature strengths. Sailing, teaching and helping others are examples of such activities. Signature strengths are personal traits associated with particular virtues defined

 the Values in Action Classification of Strengths (Peterson and Seligman, 2001). In the study of positive emotions and happiness a critical concern is finding a parsimonious way of distinguishing between reliable positive and negative affective states and it is to this that we now turn.

3.8 Let's Sum Up

Positive psychologists often refer to two types of happiness: hedonic and eudaimonic. Briefly, *hedonic happiness* refers to how happy you feel whereas *eudaimonic happiness* involves being true to your authentic self. Two important concepts emerge from this understanding of happiness: (a) happiness is enduring (it's not just that I feel pleased in the moment), and (b) happiness is global (I'm satisfied with my life as a whole, not just with select domains in my life)

Happiness underlying factors are considerable from two dimensions: endogenic factors (biological, cognitive, personality and ethical sub-factors) and exogenic factors (behavioral, social cultural, economical, geographical, life events and aesthetics sub-factors). Among all endogenic factors, biological sub-factors are the significant predictors of happiness. Genes, neurotransmitter, hormones and physical health influences the happiness of man.

3.9 Unit End Exercise

1. What is happiness?

2. Describe the Greek view of happiness.

3. Explain the biological Factors that Influences the happiness.

4. Smile – The key to success. Explain it.

3.10 Answers for check your progress

1. Aristotle, Socrates.

2. Dopamine, Serotonin.

3. What you feel.

3.11 Suggested Readings

Myers, D. (1992). *The Pursuit of Happiness.* New York: Morrow.

Seligman, M. (2002). *Authentic Happiness.* New York: Free Press.

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Unit 4

Emotional Intelligence, Well Being and Happiness

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Structure

4.1 Introduction

We would like you to stop for a minute and reflect upon the last time you felt 'really happy'. Have you done this? What did you think of? How do you now feel? Hopefully, you are now in a perfect place to learn about the interesting area of positive emotions. Emotions are part of being human. In fact, when we are unable to feel emotions, either good or bad, doctors put in place drastic measures to understand why and to intervene.

4.2 Objectives

After completing this unit, you will be able to understand the following concepts

- o Positive emotion
- o Types of happiness
- o Subjective well being
- o Complete mental health model

4.3 Definition of emotion

An emotion can be defined as a 'psychological state defined by subjective feelings but also characteristic patterns of physiological arousal thought and behavior's (Peterson, 2006: 73). Emotions tend to focus on a specific event or circumstance during the past, present or future. However, emotions are likely to be short lived and we are aware of them at the time of occurrence.

Moods, on the other hand, are different from emotions as they are 'free floating or objectless, more long-lasting and occupy the background consciousness' (Fredrickson and Losada, 2005: 121). Thus moods, unlike emotions, tend to be unfocused and enduring.

When psychologists began studying emotions, they focused on the term 'hedonic capacity', which refers to our ability to feel good (Meehl, 1975). Today, researchers focus on 'affectivity', which is defined as 'the extent to which an individual experiences positive/negative moods' (Peterson, 2006: 62). Positive affect is the extent to which someone experiences joy, contentment, and so on, whereas negative affect is the extent to which someone experiences feelings such as sadness or fear.

4.4 Positive emotions and well-being

Psychologists often employ the notion of affect as an umbrella term for various positive and negative emotions, feelings and moods we frequently experience and easily recognize.

Seligman (2002) in his book Authentic Happiness classifies positive emotions into three categories: those associated with the past such as satisfaction, contentment etc, the present and the future such as optimism, and hope. Momentary pleasures and more enduring gratifications are related to the present. Gratifications involve states of absorption that result from engagement in activities in which the unique signature strengths are utilized. Positive emotions have received little empirical attention since traditionally the focus was more on psychological problems and their remedies. Another reason could be that there is a habit among emotion theorists of creating general models of emotions which typically focus on negative emotions with positive emotions added later. Positive emotions facilitate approach behaviors. They motivate individuals

to engage with their environments and undertake activities which facilitate adaptation and survival.

4.5 The value of positive emotions

For years, psychology turned its attention to the study of negative emotions or negative effect, including: depression, sadness, anger, stress and anxiety. Not surprisingly, psychologists found them interesting because they may often lead to, or signal the presence of, psychological disorders. However, positive emotions are no less fascinating, if only because of many common sense misconceptions that exist about positive affect. We tend to think, for example, that positive affect typically, by its very nature, distorts or disrupts orderly, effective thinking, that positive emotions are somehow simple' or that, because these emotions are short lived, they cannot have a long term impact. Research has shown the above not to be the case but it took it a while to get there. It is only relatively recently that psychologists realized that positive emotions can be seen as valuable in their own right, and started studying them.

Negative emotions, like anxiety or anger, are associated with tendencies to act in specific ways, which are adaptive in evolutionary terms, i.e. the fight and flight response. Thus, fear contributes to a tendency to escape and anger to a tendency to attack. If our ancestors were not equipped with such effective emotional tools, our own existence could have been doubtful.

Moreover, negative emotions seem to narrow our action repertoires (or actual behaviors) when running from danger we are unlikely to appreciate a beautiful sunset. This function of negative emotions can help minimize distractions in an acute situation. Positive emotions, on the other hand, are not associated with specific actions. So what good are they, apart from the fact that they merely feel good? What is the point in feeling happy or joyful, affectionate or ecstatic?

The broaden and build theory of positive emotions, developed by Barbara Fredrickson, shows that positive affective experiences contribute and have a long lasting effect on our personal growth and development .

(a) Positive emotions broaden our thought action repertoires: First of all, positive emotions broaden our attention and thinking, which means that we have more positive and a greater variety of thoughts. When we are experiencing positive emotions, like joy or interest, we are more likely to

be creative, to see more opportunities, to be open to relationships with others, to play, to be more flexible and open minded.

(b) Positive emotions undo negative emotions: It's hard to experience both positive and negative emotions simultaneously, thus a deliberate experience of positive emotions at times when negative emotions are dominant can serve to undo their lingering effects. Mild joy and contentment can eliminate the stress experienced at a physiological level.

(c) Positive emotions enhance resilience: Enjoyment, happy playfulness, contentment, satisfaction, warm friendship, love, and affection all enhance resilience and the ability to cope, while negative emotions, in contrast, decrease them. Positive emotions can enhance problem focused coping, positive reappraisal, or infusing negative events with positive meaning, all of which facilitate fast bouncing back after an unpleasant event.

(d) Positive emotions build psychological repertoire: Far from having only a momentary effect, positive emotions help to build important physical, intellectual, social and psychological resources that are enduring, even though the emotions themselves are temporary. For example, the positive emotions associated with play can build physical abilities and self mastery, enjoyable times with friends – increase social skills.

(e) Positive emotions can trigger an upward developmental spiral: More than that, just as negative emotions can lead one into downward spirals of depression, positive emotions can trigger upward developmental spirals towards improved emotional wellbeing and transform people into better versions of themselves.

4.6 Broaden and build theory

Barbara Fredrickson (2000) has developed a new theoretical framework, the broaden-and-build model, that may provide some explanations for the robust social and cognitive effects of positive emotional experiences. In Fredrickson's review of models of emotions (Smith, 1991), she found that responses to positive emotions have not been extensively studied and that, when researched, they were examined in a vague and underspecified manner.

Furthermore, action tendencies generally have been associated with physical reactions to negative emotions (again, imagine "fight or flight"), whereas human reactions to positive emotions often are more cognitive than physical. For these reasons, she proposes discarding the specific

action tendency concept (which suggests a restricted range of possible behavioral options) in favor of newer, more inclusive term, momentary thought-action repertoires (which suggest a broad range of behavioral options; imagine "taking off blinders" and seeing available opportunities).

To illustrate the difference in that which follows positive and negative emotions, consider the childhood experience of one of the authors (SJL). Notice how positive emotions (e.g., excitement and glee) lead to cognitive flexibility and creativity, whereas negative emotions (e.g., fear and anxiety) are linked to a fleeing response and termination of activities. In testing her model of positive emotions, Fredrickson (2000) demonstrated that the experience of joy expands the realm of what a person feels like doing at the time; this is referred to as the *broadening* of an individual's momentary thought-action repertoire. Following an emotion-eliciting film clip (the clips induced one of five emotions: joy, contentment, anger, fear, or a neutral condition), research participants were asked to list everything they would like to do at that moment. Those participants who experienced joy or contentment listed significantly more desired possibilities than did the people in the neutral or negative conditions. In turn, those expanded possibilities for future activities should lead the joyful individuals to initiate subsequent actions.

Those who expressed more negative emotions, on the other hand, tended to shut down their thinking about subsequent possible activities. Simply put, joy appears to open us up to many new thoughts and behaviors, whereas negative emotions dampen our ideas and actions.
Joy also increases our likelihood of behaving positively toward other people, along with developing more positive relationships. Furthermore, joy ~duces playfulness (Frijda, 1994), which is quite important because such behaviors are evolutionarily adaptive in acquisition of necessary resources. Juvenile play builds (1) enduring social and intellectual resources by encouraging attachment, (2) higher levels of creativity, and (3) brain development (Fredrickson, 2002). It appears that, through the effects of broadening processes, positive emotions also can help *build* resources. In 2002, Fredrickson and her colleague, Thomas Joiner, demonstrated this building phenomenon by assessing people's positive and negative emotions and broad-minded coping (solving problems with creative means) on two occasions 5 weeks apart. The researchers found

that initial levels of positive emotions predicted overall increases in creative problem solving.

These changes in coping also predicted further increases in positive emotions. Similarly, controlling for initial levels of positive emotion, initial levels of coping predicted increases in positive emotions, which in turn predicted increases in coping. These results held true only for positive emotions, *not* for negative emotions. Therefore, positive emotions such as joy may help generate resources, maintain a sense of vital energy (i.e., more positive emotions), and create even more resources. Fredrickson (2002) referred to this positive sequence as the "upward spiral" of positive emotions.

Extending her model of positive emotions, Fredrickson and colleagues examined the "undoing" potential of positive emotions (Fredrickson, Mancuso, Branigan, & Tugade, 2000) and the ratio of positive to negative emotional experiences that is associated with human flourishing (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005). Fredrickson et al. (2000) hypothesized that, given the broadening and building effects of positive emotions, joy and contentment might function as antidotes to negative emotions.

4.7 Hedonic and Eudaimonic Happiness

Positive psychologists often refer to two types of happiness: hedonic and eudaimonic. Briefly, *hedonic happiness* refers to how happy you feel whereas *eudaimonic happiness* involves being true to your authentic self. Researchers interested in eudaimonic happiness are most interested in whether individuals are using their capacities—both their general human capacities and their own peculiar individual strengths—to flourish in life.

Most positive psychologists follow Aristotle in their understanding of eudemonia; nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that Aristotle was one of several different ancient Greek philosophers who took the eudaimonic approach to happiness. All of these approaches, however, emphasized the importance of fulfilling one's *true nature*. In this sense, eudaimonic happiness is achieved when we fulfill our true human potential. We flourish when our life fulfills our human capacities. Aristotle

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tended to emphasize the importance of becoming a virtuous person. Importantly for Aristotle, it was the virtues that should be pursued, not happiness in and of itself. There are several advantages to the eudaimonic tradition of happiness. Perhaps most importantly, this approach does not divorce morality and virtue from the study of happiness.

Most of us would agree with Aristotle in that a life simply filled with consumptive pleasure is not a happy life. Aristotle would claim that the authentically happy life is also the virtuous life.

The eudaimonic view of happiness is an important tradition that positive psychologists would be foolish to neglect. But there are a number of problems with this approach to defining happiness. First, it can come across as being overly prescriptive or even paternalistic.

The eudaimonic definition of happiness basically tells people that they have to be doing certain things or they have to be developing certain qualities or they aren't happy, regardless of whether they think they are happy.

But the real rub involves the issue of human nature. What really are our capacities as humans? What is my personal potential? What are the human needs that need to be satisfied in order to flourish? On this issue, even among eudaimonic theorists, there is little agreement. A related issue has to do with the measurement of this kind of happiness. Although measures have been developed for this construct (often referred to as measures of *psychological wellbeing*), are they really measuring eudaimonic happiness? A good measure of Aristotle's eudemonia would accurately assess whether we really are fulfilling our human potential.

4.8 Distinguishing the Positive and the Negative functions

Hans Selye (1936) is known for his research on the effects of prolonged exposure to fear and anger. Consistently, he found that physiological stress harmed the body yet had survival value for humans. Indeed, the evolutionary functions of fear and anger have intrigued both researchers and laypeople. Given the historical tradition and scientific findings pertaining to the negative effects, their importance in our lives has not been questioned over the last century.

Historically, positive affects have received scant attention over the last century because few scholars hypothesized that the rewards of joy and

contentment went beyond hedonic (pleasure-based) values and had possible evolutionary significance. The potentialities of positive affect have become more obvious over the last 20 years (Fredrickson, 2002) as research has drawn distinctions between the positive and negative effects.

David Watson (1988) of the University of Iowa conducted research on the approach-oriented motivations of pleasurable affects-including rigorous studies of *both* negative and positive effects. To facilitate their research on the two dimensions of emotional experience, Watson and his collaborator Lee Anna Clark (1994) developed and validated the Expanded Form of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS-X), which has become a commonly used measure in this area. This 20-item scale has been used in hundreds of studies to quantify two dimensions of affect: valence and content. More specifically, the PANAS-X taps both "negative" (unpleasant) and "positive" (pleasant) valence. The content of negative affective states can be described best as general distress, whereas positive affect includes joviality, self-assurance, and attentiveness. (See the PANAS, a predecessor of the PANAS-X, which is brief and valid for most clinical and research purposes.) Although negative and positive affects once were thought to be polar opposites,

Bradburn (1969) The Principles of Pleasure demonstrated that unpleasant and pleasant affects are independent and have different correlates. Psychologists such as Watson (2002) continue to examine this issue of independence in their research. In a recent study, he found that negative affect correlated with joviality, self-assurance, and attentiveness at only - .21, - .14, and - .17, respectively. The small magnitudes of these negative correlations suggest that, while negative and positive affect are inversely correlated as expected, the relationships are quite weak and indicative of independence of the two types of affect. The size of these relationships, however, may increase when people are taxed by daily stressors (Keyes & Ryff, 2000; Zautra, Potter, & Reich, 1997).

4.9 SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

Subjective well-being emphasizes peoples' reports of their life experiences. Accordingly, the subjective report is taken at face value. This subjective approach to happiness assumes that people from many cultures are comfortable in focusing on individualistic assessments of their affects

and satisfaction and that people will be forthright in such personal analyses (Diener et al., 2002). These assumptions guide the researchers' attempts to understand a person's subjective experiences in light of his or her objective circumstances.

4.10 DETERMINANTS OF SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

When examining college students' (from 31 nations) satisfaction in various life domains, financial status was more highly correlated with satisfaction for students in poor nations than for those in wealthy nations (Diener & Diener, 1995). Moreover, the people in wealthy nations generally were happier than those in impoverished nations. Within-nation examination of this link between income and well-being reveals that, once household income

Psychological well-being

Psychological well-being refers to the achievement of one's full psychological potential. The construct is central to the humanistic tradition. Professor **Carol Ryff** is the leading researcher in this area. She has developed a scale called The *Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being*. It measures multiple facets of psychological wellbeing as the following:

- autonomy
- environmental mastery
- personal growth
- positive relations with others
- purpose in life
- self-acceptance

Keyes et al. (2002) in a factor analytic study involving over 3,000 Americans aged 25-74 found that psychological well-being and subjective well-being were related, but distinct, constructs which correlated differentially with socio-demographic variables and personality.

Social well-being

Social well-being refers to positive states associated with optimal functioning within one's social network and community. It refers to an end state in which basic human needs are met and people coexist peacefully. There is an equal access to basic facilities such as water, food, shelter, health services etc.

Check your progress

1. Who developed Broaden and build theory?
2. What is psychological well being?
3. What is social well being?

4.11 Complete Mental Health: Emotional, Social, and Psychological Well-Being

Ryff and Keyes (1995; Keyes & Lopez, 2002; Keyes & Magyar-Moe, 2003) combine many principles of pleasure to define complete mental health.

Specifically, they view optimal functioning as the combination of emotional well-being (as they refer to subjective well-being; defined as the presence of positive affect and satisfaction with life and the absence of negative affect), social well-being (incorporating acceptance, actualization, contribution, coherence, and integration), and psychological well-being (combining self acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, environmental mastery, autonomy, positive relations with others). Taking the symptoms of mental illness into consideration, they define "complete mental health" as the combination of "high levels of symptoms of emotional well-being, psychological wellbeing, and social well-being, as well as the absence of recent mental illness" (Keyes & Lopez, 2002, p. 49). This view of mental health combines all facets of well-being into a model that is both dimensional (because extremes of mental health and illness symptomatology are reflected) and categorical (because assignment to distinct diagnostic categories is possible). This complete state model (Keyes & Lopez, p. 49; see Figure 7.5) suggests that combined mental health and mental illness symptoms may be ever-changing, resulting in fluctuations in states of overall well-being ranging from complete mental illness to complete mental health.

4.12 Let's Sum Up

Emotions are part of being human. In fact, when we are unable to feel emotions, either good or bad, doctors put in place drastic measures to understand why and to intervene. Seligman (2002) in his book Authentic Happiness classifies positive emotions into three categories: those

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associated with the past such as satisfaction, contentment etc, the present and the future such as optimism, and hope. Momentary pleasures and more enduring gratifications are related to the present.

Barbara Fredrickson (2000) has developed a new theoretical framework, the broaden-and-build model, that may provide some explanations for the robust social and cognitive effects of positive emotional experiences. Positive psychologists often refer to two types of happiness: hedonic and eudaimonic. Subjective well-being emphasizes peoples' reports of their life experiences. Accordingly, the subjective report is taken at face value. Psychological well-being refers to the achievement of one's full psychological potential.

4.13 Unit End Exercise

1. Define emotion.

2. Explain broaden and build theory.

3. What is psychological well being?

4. What is eudaimonic happiness? Explain in detail.

4.14 Answers for check your progress

1. Barbara Fredrickson

2. Psychological well-being refers to the achievement of one's full psychological potential.

3. Social well-being refers to positive states associated with optimal functioning within one's social network and community.

4.15 Suggested Readings:

1. Snyder, C. R., Lopez, S. J., &Pedrotti, J. T. (2010). Positive Psychology: The scientific and practical explorations of human strengths. 2nd ed. Sage Publications, India.

2. Baumgartner, S. R., & Crothers, M. K. (2009). Positive Psychology. Pearson Education, India.

Unit 5

Positive Cognitivestates and Processes

Structure

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Objectives

5.3 Resilience

       5.3.1 Components of resilience

       5.3.2 Resilience and body

5.4 Optimism

       5.4.1 Definition

       5.4.2 The neurobiology of optimism

       5.4.3 Dispositional optimism

       5.4.4 Explanatory style of optimism

       5.4.5 Development of optimism

5.5 Spirituality

       5.5.1 How spirituality works

5.6 Let's Sum Up

5.7 Unit End Exercise

5.8 Answers for check your progress

5.9 Suggested Readings

5.1 Introduction

The term resilience is now highly emerging concept in positive psychology. Resilience helps people to bounce back from their traumatic events. The resilience power differs from individual to individual. The optimism and spirituality helps the individual to come back to his routine. Those who have optimistic attitude can bounce back from any hardship. To some extent, spirituality improves the resilience.

5.2 Objectives:

On completion of this unit, you will be able to understand the following concepts

      o   Resilience and its process

      o   Optimism and its types

      o   Spirituality and its process

5.3 Resilience

Resilience is a multi-definitional construct. We define it here as 'the flexibility in response to changing situational demands, and the ability to bounce back from Resilience, Post-traumatic Growth and Positive Ageing negative emotional experiences' (Tugade et al., 2004: 1169). However, some researchers see resilience as more multifaceted than this. Lepore and Revenson (2006) separate resilience into recovery, resistance and reconfiguration. Recovery is simply the return back to baseline levels of functioning, whereas resistance is when a person shows no signs of disturbance (low distress) following a traumatic event (Lepore and Revenson, 2006). Finally, reconfiguration is when people return to homeostasis in a different formation: they have changed (either positively or negatively) from their traumatic experience.

5.3.1 Components of resilience

The next section will review the major components that have been identified throughout decades of research as facilitators of resilient individuals. These include: (1) reframing; (2) experience of positive emotions; (3) participation in physical activity; (4) trusted social support; (5) the use of personal and authentic strengths; and, of course, (5) optimism.

Werner and Smith in the 1970s–1980s identified several risk factors associated with non-resilient individuals. After following a cohort of babies from birth to mid life, they concluded that individuals who had the following risk factors were more likely to succumb that those who did not: low birth weight, low socio-economic status (SES), low maternal education and an unstable family structure (for example divorce or abuse) (Werner, 1993, 1996). The good news is that, despite these risk factors, anyone can 'retrain' to become more resilient. As previously mentioned, one of the biggest obstacles to healthy psychological function is negative/pessimistic ruminative thought. One of the main pathways to a more resilient self is changing negative or pessimistic thinking patterns and developing an optimistic explanatory style (Reivich and Shatte, 2002; Seligman, 2002). Based on the popular method from cognitive behavioral therapy (Beck, 1976), research has shown that when we are faced with a

challenging situation, employing the ABCDE technique, where A _ Adversity (the issue or event);

B _ Beliefs (automatic pessimistic beliefs about the event); C _ Consequences (of holding that belief); D _ Disputation (your conscious arguments against your pessimistic belief); and E _ Energization (what you feel when you've disputed your B effectively), can increase resilience and decrease depression levels (Gillham et al., 1995, 2007). Since pessimistic rumination is the precursor and the maintainer of depression (Papageorgiou and Wells, 2003), this technique is imperative for challenging destructive thoughts and creating more resilient individuals.

5.3.2 Resilience and the body

After the slaughter of six million people in the Holocaust, the survivors and those left behind have shown tremendous resilience (low PTSD) and growth in the face of adversity. Not only have we seen psychological growth but research has shown that, even all these decades later, survivors from the prison camps show significant physical health functioning (salutogenic) versus illness inducing (pathogenic) outcomes (Cassel and Suedfeld, 2006). Disclosure to others, marital history and religious observance have been proposed as mediators to both positive and negative long-term consequences (Lev-Wiesel and Amir, 2003).

Salutogenesis is implicitly linked to sense of coherence (SOC). Antonovsky (1979) originally developed SOC in an attempt to understand why some people are less likely to be affected by stressful environments than others. At the point of its discovery, SOC represented a departure from a pathological perspective dominant in medical and social sciences. SOC is defined as: a global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a persuasive, enduring though dynamic feeling of confidence that (1) the stimuli deriving from one's internal and external environments in the course of living are structured, predictable, and explicable; (2) the resources are available to one to meet the demands posed by these stimuli; (3) these demands are challenges, worthy of investment and engagement'. – (Antonovsky, 1987: 19)

In other words, to what extent one is confident that internal and external environments are predictable and there is a high probability that life situations will work out as well as can be expected. Comprehensibility

refers to a person's insight into their achievement and difficulties. We can hardly judge whether appropriate resources are at our disposal to cope with a task unless we believe that we have some understanding of its nature. Seeing and confronting stimuli as making sense in that they will be expected or if unexpected they will be ordered or explicable. Manageability refers to a high probability that things will work out as well as can be reasonably expected; the extent to which someone perceives that the resources at their disposal are adequate to meet the demands posed by the stimuli that are bombarding them. Manageability has some similarity to Bandura's concept of self-efficacy. Of course, this element is not sufficient on its own, as cognitive and motivational components are no less essential. Meaningfulness refers to the motivational belief that it makes emotional sense to cope, that, though life may have its pains, one wish to go on. People have areas of their life that they care about and that make sense to them. Thus, people with a weak SOC give little indication that anything in life seems to matter particularly to them.

5.4 OPTIMISM

5.4.1 DEFINITION OF OPTIMISM

In the Seligman theory of learned optimism, the optimist uses adaptive causal attributions to explain negative experiences or events. Thus, the person answers the question, "Why did that bad thing happen to me?" In technical terms, the optimist makes external, variable, and specific attributions for failure-like events rather than the internal, stable, and global attributions of the pessimist. Stated more simply, the optimist explains bad things in such a manner as (1) to account for the role of other people and environments in producing bad outcomes (i.e., an external attribution), (2) to interpret the bad event as not likely to happen again (i.e., a variable attribution), and (3) to constrain the bad outcome to just one performance area and not others (Le., a specific attribution).

5.4.2 The Neurobiology of Optimism and Pessimism

Investigators have reported that pessimism and depression are related to abnormal limbic system functioning as well as to dysfunctional operations of the lateral prefrontal cortex and the paralimbic system.

Indeed, depression appears to be linked to deficiencies in neurotransmitters (Liddle, 2001). Thus, antidepressant medications aim to increase the effective operation of these neurotransmitters. Likewise, research shows that serotonergic cells located in the dorsal raphe nucleus are reactive to perceived control.

Furthermore, there is a predictable, control-induced release of serotonin in the amygdala (Maier & Watkins, 2000). Depression also has been associated with depleted endorphin secretion and defective immune functioning (Peterson, 2000). Finally, Drugan and colleagues (Drugan, Basile, Ha, & Ferland, 1994) have found that, under select conditions of control, there is a molecule released by cells in the brain. Although this research is still in its early phases, it appears that there are neurobiological markers in the brain that are linked to perceived control and pessimism-depression thoughts.

5.4.3 Dispositional optimism

Dispositional optimism is a global expectation that more good things than bad will happen in the future. Scheier and colleagues argue that optimistic people, in the face of difficulties, continue to pursue their valued goals and regulate themselves and their personal states using effective coping strategies so that they are likely to achieve their goals (Scheier, Carver and Bridges, 2000).

5.4.4 Optimistic explanatory style

Optimistic people, according to this perspective, explain negative events or experiences by attributing the cause of these to external, transient, specific factors such as the prevailing circumstances. In contrast, pessimists explain negative events or experiences by attributing their cause to internal, stable, global factors such as being a personal failure. So optimists are more likely to say they failed an exam because the wrong questions came up or the atmosphere in the exam hall was not conducive to concentration. Pessimists, in contrast, are more likely to attribute failure to not being any good at academic work generally or to being stupid.

5.4.5 Development of optimism

The development of optimism is determined by parental mental health, the type of role modeling offered by parents and the degree to which parents encourage and reward optimism (Abramson *et al.,* 2000; Gillham, 2000; Seligman, 1998). Optimists are more likely to come from families in which neither parent had depression. Parents of optimists are good role models for using an optimistic explanatory style, attributing success to internal, global, stable factors and failures to external, specific, transitory factors.

Optimists come from families where their parents are understanding of their failures and attribute them to external rather than internal factors. Where youngsters come from families that have experienced major traumas (such as unemployment and poverty), they develop optimism if their families cope and recover from adversity.

Parents of optimists encourage their children to deal with setbacks in an optimistic way and differentially reinforce optimism and persistence. Pessimists are more likely to come from families in which parents are depressed, are role models for a pessimistic explanatory style, and differentially reinforce the development of pessimistic explanatory style. Where parents criticize children and attribute their failures to internal, global stable factors the children are more likely to grow up to be pessimists. Child abuse and neglect also renders children vulnerable to developing a pessimistic explanatory style and depression.

Check your progress

1. Define resilience.
2. What are components of resilience?
3. Define optimism and its types.

5.5 Spirituality

The term *spirituality* comes from the word *spirit* (to breathe) and there is general agreement that spirituality is a living, dynamic process that is oriented around whatever the individual may hold sacred. The *sacred* refers to concepts of God and transcendent reality as well as other aspects of life that take on divine character and significance by virtue of their association with the holy. Thus, the sacred can encompass material objects

(e.g., crucifix, American flag), special times (e.g., the Sabbath, birth and death), special places (e.g., cathedral, the outdoors), relationships (e.g., marriage, parenting), and psychological attributes (e.g., soul, virtues).

Spirituality can be defined as a search for the sacred, that is, an attempt to discover and hold onto the sacred and, when necessary, transform the sacred. In their search for the sacred, people take a variety of spiritual pathways. These paths include traditional or nontraditional organized religious beliefs (e.g., God, afterlife, karma), practices (e.g., prayer, meditation, rituals), experiences (e.g., mysticism, conversion), and institutions (e.g., church attendance, Bible study). Pathways to the sacred may also take nonreligious forms, such as walking in the outdoors, journaling, listening to music, scientific study, intimate relations with others, or participating in sociopolitical action.

Over the course of the lifespan, the search for the sacred can unfold in many directions.

For some, spirituality is a relatively smooth, stable process. For others, spirituality involves sharp shifts in spiritual pathways and understandings of the sacred itself. Some embed their spirituality in a traditional religious milieu. Others leave traditional religious settings and pursue more individualized spiritual pathways and destinations. Still others join and leave a variety of religious contexts, traditional and nontraditional, over their lives. Spirituality is, in short, a rich, complex, and multiform process.

5.5.1 How Spirituality Works

Having shown that many people in the United States are spiritually involved and that spirituality is linked to health and well-being, researchers are currently taking a closer look at how spirituality works in people's lives. Although this research is still in process, several preliminary conclusions appear to be warranted.

The Sacred Elicits Spiritual Emotions: The experience of sacredness is accompanied by a sense of transcendence (i.e., being connected to something that goes beyond oneself), boundlessness (i.e., infinite time and space), and ultimacy (i.e., being in touch with what is —really real‖).

Theologian Rudolf Otto noted that the idea of the divine is often accompanied by a *mysterium*, a complex of feelings of attraction (e.g.,

love, adoration, gratitude) and repulsion (e.g., repulsion, fear, dread). More recently, researchers have linked perceptions of the sacred to a variety of emotion-based responses, including peak experiences, mystical experiences, and feelings of responsibility, duty, humility, awe, elevation, and uplift.

The Sacred becomes an Organizing Force: As the source of powerful emotions, the sacred becomes a passion and a priority. People feel drawn to, or even grasped by, the sacred and, as a result, they begin to invest more and more of themselves in sacred pursuits. For example, studies have shown that people who sanctify the environment (i.e., view the environment as sacred) are more likely to invest financially in environmental causes. Similarly, people direct more of their time and energy to sacred strivings than non-sacred strivings. In the process of building their lives around the sacred, people look to the sacred to lend greater coherence to disparate thoughts, feelings, actions, and goals by integrating their competing aspirations into a unified life plan.

The Sacred becomes a Resource: Sacred beliefs, practices, experiences, values, and relationships often serve as resources that people can draw on for strength, support, and satisfaction in their lives. A large body of research points to the positive implications of several spiritual pathways for individual health and well-being. Prayer and meditation, beliefs in a loving God, attendance at religious services, positive spiritual coping, and perceptions of various aspects of life as sacred have all been associated with indices of greater psychological, social, physical, and spiritual well-being. For example, in one study of patients undergoing kidney transplant surgery and their loved ones, those who engaged in positive religious coping reported greater life satisfaction 3 months and 12 months after transplantation. In a meta-analysis of 42 studies on the effects of transcendental meditation, this practice was tied to a greater number of transcendental experiences and these experiences were, in turn, associated with significant psychological and physical change. Yet another longitudinal study focused on 100 people with HIV. People who reportedly became more spiritual and religious after their diagnosis showed significantly greater preservation of T-helper (CD4) cells and better control of their viral load over the 4-year period of the study.

The Sacred becomes a Source of Struggle: Despite the clear benefits of spirituality for health and well-being, spirituality can become a source of stress and strain when people perceive that the sacred has been threatened, damaged, or violated. In times of stress, people may experience divine struggles (e.g., feeling angry at, abandoned or punished by God), intrapsychic struggles (e.g., questions and doubts about dogma, beliefs, and behaviors), or interpersonal struggles (e.g., spiritual conflicts with clergy, family, friends, or others). Spiritual struggles such as these are by no means trivial. They appear to represent a fork in the road to decline or growth. On the one hand, spiritual struggles have been consistently and robustly tied to a variety of poorer outcomes, including poorer mental health, poorer physical health, and even greater risk of mortality. On the other hand, spiritual struggles have been linked to reports of greater stress-related growth and transformation. Researchers are currently attempting to identify those factors that determine whether spiritual struggles lead to growth or decline.

Check your Progress

4. What is spirituality?

5.6 Let's Sum Up

Resilience is defined as 'the flexibility in response to changing situational demands, and the ability to bounce back from tragedy. Resilience include: (1) reframing; (2) experience of positive emotions; (3) participation in physical activity; (4) trusted social support; and (5) optimism.

The optimist uses adaptive causal attributions to explain negative experiences or events. In technical terms, the optimist makes external, variable, and specific attributions for failure-like events rather than the internal, stable, and global attributions of the pessimist.

Dispositional optimism is a global expectation that more good things than bad will happen in the future. Optimistic people, according to this perspective, explain negative events or experiences by attributing the cause of these to external, transient, specific factors such as the prevailing circumstances.

The term *spirituality defined as* a living, dynamic process that is oriented around whatever the individual may hold sacred.

5.7 Unit End Exercise

1. Explain resilience and its process.

2. Describe optimism.

3. Explain types of optimism.

4. Describe spirituality.

5.8 Answers for check your progress

1. Resilience is defined as 'the flexibility in response to changing situational demands, and the ability to bounce back from tragedy.

2. The components of Resilience (1) reframing; (2) experience of positive emotions; (3) participation in physical activity; (4) trusted social support; and (5) optimism.

3. The optimist uses adaptive causal attributions to explain negative experiences or events. The types of optimism are Dispositional and explanatory style.

4. The term *spirituality defined as* a living, dynamic process that is oriented around whatever the individual may hold sacred.

5.9 Suggested Readings:

1. Snyder, C. R., Lopez, S. J., &Pedrotti, J. T. (2010). Positive Psychology: The scientific and practical explorations of human strengths.2nd ed. Sage Publications, India.

2. Baumgartner, S. R., & Crothers, M. K. (2009).Positive Psychology. Pearson Education, India.

Unit 6

Application of Positive Psychology

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Structure

> 6.1 Introduction
>
> 6.2 Objectives
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> 6.3 Components of positive schooling
>
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>
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>
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6.1 INTRODUCTION

Positive schooling: An approach to education that consists of a foundation of care, trust, and respect for diversity, where teachers develop tailored goals for each student to engender learning and then work with him or her to develop the plans and motivation to reach their goals. Positive schooling includes the agendas of instilling hope in students and contributing to the larger society. Gainful employment: Work that contributes to a healthy life by providing variety, a safe working environment, sufficient income, a sense of purpose in work done, happiness and satisfaction, engagement and involvement, a sense of performing well and meeting goals, and companionship and loyalty to coworkers, bosses, and companies.

6.2 Objectives

After completing this lesson you will be able to understand the following concepts like

- o Positive schooling
- o Gainful employment
- o Conceptualization of mental health

6.3 The components of positive schooling

The positive psychology schoolhouse as being built of six parts, from the ground up. We begin with the foundation, where we describe the importance of care, trust, and diversity. Then, the first and second floors of our positive schoolhouse represent teaching goals, planning, and the motivation of students. The third floor holds hope, and the roof represents the societal contributions and paybacks produced by our positive psychology school graduates.

CARE, TRUST, AND RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

We begin with a foundation that involves caring, trust, and respect for diversity. It is absolutely crucial to have a supportive atmosphere of care and trust because students flourish in such an environment. In attending award ceremonies for outstanding teachers, we have noticed that both the teachers and their students typically comment on the importance of a sense of caring. Students need as role models teachers who consistently are responsive and available. Such teacher care and positive emotions provide the secure base that allows young people to explore and find ways to achieve their own important academic and life goals (Shorey, Snyder, Yang, & Lewin, 2003).

Trust in the classroom has received considerable attention among educators, and the consensus is that it yields both psychological and performance benefits for students (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Collins, 2001). Trust is crucial from the earliest grades on up.

Watson and Ecken (2003) advocate what they call developmental discipline. This notion is derived from the principles of attachment theory which advocates helping those students who have insecure attachments to caregivers. Watson and Ecken write, "The building of caring and trusting relationships becomes the most important goal in the socialization of these children.

Another aspect of the positive psychology foundation for schooling involves the importance of diversity of student backgrounds and opinions in the classroom. This starts by encouraging students to become sensitive to the ideas of people other than those from their own ethnic or age cohort. This can be accomplished by revealing to students that they have much in common with those who are different from them.

COALS (CONTENT)

The component of goals is represented by the second floor of the strengths school house the most conducive targets are the stretch goals, in which the student seeks a slightly more difficult learning goal than attained previously. Reasonably challenging goals engender productive learning, especially if the goals can be tailored to particular students (or groups of students). It is important for students to feel some sense of input in regard to their teachers' conduct of classes. Of course, the instructors set the classroom goals, but in doing so they are wise to consider the reactions of their 389previous students. The success of class goals involves making the materials relevant to students' real-life experiences whenever possible (Snyder & Shorey, 2002).

PLANS

The first floor of the strengths schoolhouse is divided into plans and motivation, both of which interact with the educational goals on the second floor (and with content). Like building science on accumulating ideas, teaching necessitates a careful planning process on the part of instructors.

Yet another planning approach is championed by the noted social psychologist Robert Cialdini of Arizona StAnother consideration in raising students' motivations is to make the material relevant to them (Buskist et al., 2005). At the most basic level, when the course information is relevant, students are more likely to attend class, to pay attention, and to make comments during the lecturesate University (see Cialdini, 2005). Once Professor Cialdini has established a teaching goal regarding given psychological content, he then poses mystery stories for students. By solving the mystery, the student has learned the particular content.

HOPE

Hope is depicted in the attic of the positive schoolhouse. A hopeful student believes that she or he will continue to learn long after stepping out of the classroom. Or perhaps it is more apt to say that hopeful thinking knows no walls or boundaries in the life of a student who never stops learning.

SOCIETAL CONTRIBUTIONS

A final positive psychology lesson is that students understand that they are part of a larger societal scheme in which they share what they have learned with other people. As shown in the potentially nourishing cloud above the metaphorical schoolhouse in Figure 16.1, these societal

contributions represent the lasting "paybacks" that an educated person gives to those around him or her-whether this means teaching children to think positively or sharing insights and excitement with the multitude of others with whom they come into contact over the course of their lifetimes.

Check your Progress

1. Name the components of positive schooling.

6.4 Gainful Employment

Sigmund Freud who first made the bold statement that a healthy life is one in which a person has the ability to love and to work (O'Brien, 2003). In the many decades since Freud presented these ideas, the psychological literature has reinforced the importance of positive interpersonal relationships and employment. Gainful employment is work that is characterized by the following eight benefits:

l. Variety in duties performed

2. A safe working environment

3. Income for the family and oneself

4. A purpose derived from providing a product or service

5. Happiness and satisfaction

6. Positive engagement and involvement

7. A sense of performing well and meeting goals

8. The companionship of and loyalty to coworkers, bosses, and companies.

Gainful Employment: Happiness, Satisfaction, and Beyond

Happiness and satisfaction has key role in gainful employment. If a person is happy at work, chances are that his or her overall satisfaction with life will be higher (Hart, 1999; Judge & Watanabe, 1993). The correlation of job satisfaction with overall happiness is about .40 (Diener & Lucas, 1999). Employed people consistently report being happier than their counterparts without jobs (Argyle, 2001; Warr, 1987, 1999).There often is a reciprocal relationship in that one or more factors may influence each other to produce a sense of gainful employment. For example, performing well at work heightens the sense of satisfaction. But so, too, does the sense of satisfaction contribute to an employee's better performance in the work arena.

PERFORMING WELL AND MEETING GOALS

The happy worker is that such an employee has a sense of effectiveness and efficiency in performing his or her work activities (Hertzog, 1966). To test the notion that performance on the job relates to satisfaction, Judge, Thoresen, Bono, and Patton (2001) performed a meta-analysis (a statistical procedure for testing the robustness of results across many studies) of 300 samples (about 55,000 workers). They found a reliable relationship of approximately .30 between performance and general satisfaction. Career self-efficacy, which is defined as the personal confidence in one's capacity to handle career development and work related goal activities, has been significantly related to both success and satisfaction with one's occupational efforts and decisions (Betz & Luzzo, 1996; Donnay & Borgen, 1999).

Performing well at work is more likely to occur when workers have clear goals. Accordingly, when work goals are clearly delineated and employees can meet established standards, heightened personal pleasure and a sense of accomplishment result. In this regard, the high-hope leader's clear goal setting and facile communication provide lucid short- and long-term objectives for the work group

ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT

Engagement is the employee's involvement with his or her work, whereas satisfaction is what we might call employee enthusiasm at work (Harter et aI., 2002). Engagement is said to occur when employees find that their needs are being met. Specifically, engagement reflects those circumstances in which employees "know what is expected of them, have what they need to do their work, have opportunities to feel something significant with coworkers whom they trust, and have chances to improve and develop" (Harter et aI., 2002, p. 269).

VARIETY IN JOB DUTIES

If the tasks performed at work are sufficiently varied, satisfactions come more easily. Indeed, boredom at work can cast a pall. People should maintain as much variety and stimulation as possible in their work activities (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). One fairly common practice for maintaining variety in workers' duties in industrial and technological job settings is *cell manufacturing.* In cell manufacturing, groups of multi skilled workers take responsibility for an entire sequence in the production

process (Henry, 2004). These work teams then put their identifying insignia on the product or portion of the product

INCOME FOR FAMILY AND SELF

Without question, a minimum income is necessary to provide for the needs of one's family and oneself. Money is overrated as a source of happiness. For example, making money has been rated as more important than having a cohesive philosophy of life (Myers, 1992,2000).

SAFE WORK ENVIRONMENTS

Part of happiness at work is a safe and healthy physical environment where it is obvious that management cares about the welfare of workers. In the previously discussed meta-analytic report by Harter et al. (2002), perceived safety of the workplace was one of the most robust predictors of employee satisfaction.

6.5 The Strengths-Based Approach to Work

According to Clifton and Harter (2003), there are three stages in the strengths-based approach to gainful employment. The first stage is the identification of talents, which involves increasing the employee's awareness of his or her own natural or learned talents. The second stage is the integration of the talents into the employee's self-image; the person learns to define him- or herself according to these talents

The third stage is the actual behavioral change, in which the individual learns to attribute any successes to his or her special talents. In this stage, people report being more satisfied and productive precisely because they have begun to own and accentuate their strengths.

6.6 The Dark Side: Workaholics, Burnouts, and Jobs Loss
WORKAHOLICS

Some people, referred to as workaholics, become obsessed by their work-so much so that they cannot attend to the responsibilities of their friends and family. Workaholism also entails staying late on the job long Good Work after others have departed, and working much harder than others, almost to the point of seeking perfectionism (McMillan, O'Driscoll, Marsh, & Brady, 2001). For a workaholic, there is no balance in life activities, and this person even may begin to exhibit the Type A behavior pattern of hyper vigilance with regard to time constraints and angry outbursts at coworkers (Houston & Snyder, 1988).

BURNOUT

Burnout is cyclical. Initially, the employee has a high level of energy, but this begins to wane over time. The employee encounters severe time constraints in getting the work done, there are barriers to the work goals, the bosses tend not to give rewards and yet ask more and more of the employee because she or he is getting things done. Paradoxically, the effective, hard-working person is asked to do more. As this cycle continues, the employee becomes totally exhausted in both mind and body, and the burnout truly undermines the employee's ability to carry out the necessary duties of the job. When his or her energy is totally depleted, the employee needs time to recover and recharge.

LOSING YOUR JOB

Unfortunately, an all-too-common reality is that people lose their jobs. Being out of work is a very serious matter both psychologically and physically. For example, recent research actually has linked unemployment to early death (Voss, Nylen, Floderus, Diderichsen, & Terry, 2004).

Check your progress

2. What is engagement?

3. What is workaholics?

4. What is burnouts?

6.7 Balanced Conceptualizations of Mental Health and Behavior

Marie Jahoda (1958) characterized mental health as the positive condition that is driven by a person's psychological resources and desires for personal growth. She described these six characteristics of the mentally healthy person:

1. A personal attitude toward self that includes self-acceptance, selfesteem, and accuracy of self-perception

2. The pursuit of one's potentials

3. Focused drives that are integrated into one's personality

4. An identity and values that contribute to a sense of autonomy

5. World perceptions that are accurate and not distorted because of subjective needs

6. Mastery of the environment and enjoyment of love, work, and play.

At the beginning of the 21 st century, it is clear that the focus on the positive has lagged behind the attention paid to the negative. Only recently

has the work of Fromm and Jahoda been rediscovered, contextualized, and incorporated into refined conceptualizations of positive mental health.

Moving Toward Balanced Conceptualizations

When conceptualizing a case, rendering a diagnosis, and developing and implementing a treatment plan, we must strike a balance in the type and amount of information we gather and process. Specifically, we emphasize the need to address the following issues that contribute to less-than-optimal mental health care:

• Abnormal behavior seems to more easily gain the attention of the clinician, and aspects of normal behavior and healthy functioning (i.e., what is working in person's life) may not be considered meaningful in the diagnostic and treatment process.

• Attributions for behavior may overemphasize the internal characteristics of a person, whereas the environmental influences on behavior are not adequately addressed.

• Weaknesses and negative emotions often are deemed more salient to the diagnostic and treatment process than are strengths and positive emotions.

• Current behavior may not be considered in light of developmental history and milestones. Specifically, we may not address thoroughly the question, "Is this person's behavior consistent with expectations for his or her developmental history and age?"

• Behaviors often are interpreted without attention to information about the cultural contexts that could influence whether the behaviors are considered adaptive or maladaptive.

By resolving these challenges, we can produce more balanced views of people and how they change. The flaws in thinking associated with the *fundamental attribution error* and the *fundamental negative bias* contribute to our tendency to over-pathologize behavior and to view behavior in a manner that is neither comprehensive nor valuing of potential strengths. When trying to explain the behavior of others in social situations, we are prone to ignore external situational or environmental factors, and instead we attribute the behavior to the other person's internal characteristics (e.g., personality or abilities). This occurs even when the diagnosing clinician knows little about the person and how that person views the environment.

This flawed tendency is referred to as the fundamental attribution error (Nisbett, Caputo, Legant, & Maracek, 1973). On the other hand, when we explain our own behavior, we are more comprehensive in our conceptualization in that we probably take the environmental variables into account.

THE FOUR-FRONT APPROACH

In Beatrice Wright's four-front approach (1991; Wright & Lopez, 2002) to developing a comprehensive conceptualization about a person's weaknesses and strengths, as well as in regard to the influence of environmental stressors and resources, she encourages observers to gather information about the following four fronts of behavior:

1. Deficiencies and undermining characteristics of the person
2. Strengths and assets of the person
3. Lacks and destructive factors in the environment
4. Resources and opportunities in the environment

Balanced Conceptualizations of Mental Health and Behavior

Multiple and complex methods can be used to gather this information, but collaborating with the *actor* (the person being observed) can reveal the answers to these four questions: (1) What deficiencies does the person contribute to his or her problems? (2) What strengths does the person bring to deal effectively with his or her life? (3) What environmental factors serve as impediments to healthy functioning? and (4) What environmental resources accentuate positive human functioning?

6.8 Let's Sum Up

Positive schooling is an approach to education that consists of a foundation of care, trust, and respect for diversity, where teachers develop tailored goals for each student to engender learning. Positive schooling includes the agendas of instilling hope in students and contributing to the larger society.

Gainful employment is defined as work that contributes to a healthy life by providing variety, a safe working environment, sufficient income, a sense of purpose in work done, happiness and satisfaction, engagement and

involvement, a sense of performing well and meeting goals. Burnout is a negative effect on performance. An employee's feeling that, despite working hard, he or she is unable to do everything that needs to be done is called as burnout.

Abnormal behavior is hard-to-define most definitions of which include behaviors that are atypical or aberrant, maladaptive, or accompanied by psychological distress. It is also important to consider a person's context and culture when deciding whether their behavior is abnormal. Four front approach encourages assessment of a person's strengths as well as weaknesses. Observers using this approach gather information on (1) deficiencies and undermining characteristics of the person, (2) strengths and assets of the person, (3) lacks and destructive factors in the environment, and (4) resources and opportunities in the environment.

6.9 Unit End Exercise

1. Explain the components of positive schooling.

2. What is gainful employment? Explain.

3. What is dark side of the employment?

4. Describe front four approach of mental health.

6.10 Answers for check your progress

1. Goal, plan, Hope and social attribution

2. Engagement is the employee's involvement with his or her work, whereas satisfaction is what we might call employee enthusiasm at work.

3. Some people, referred to as workaholics, become obsessed by their work-so much so that they cannot attend to the responsibilities of their friends and family.

.4. An employee's feeling that, despite working hard, he or she is unable to do everything that needs to be done. The employee is tired and perceives a lack of reward from his or her job.

6.11 Suggested Readings

1. Snyder, C. R., Lopez, S. J., &Pedrotti, J. T. (2010). Positive Psychology: The scientific and practical explorations of human strengths.2nd ed. Sage Publications, India.

2. Baumgartner, S. R., & Crothers, M. K. (2009).Positive Psychology. Pearson Education, India.

Unit 7
Subjective Wellbeing

Structure

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Professor Mike Csikszentmihalyi has shown through extensive research that when people are engaged in challenging but controllable tasks that are intrinsically motivating they experience a unique psychological state, referred to as Flow. Self-esteem is not a unitary construct but is hierarchically organized with overall global self-esteem based on general judgments of self-worth and, beneath this, subtypes of self-esteem based on evaluations of self-worth in different contexts.

7.2 OBJECTIVES

On completion of this unit, you will be able to understand the following concepts lie

- o Resilience
- o Flow
- o Self esteem

7.3 Resilience

Resilience is a multi-definitional construct. We define it here as 'the flexibility in response to changing situational demands, and the ability to bounce back from Resilience, Post-traumatic Growth and Positive Ageing negative emotional experiences' (Tugade et al., 2004: 1169). However, some researchers see resilience as more multifaceted than this. Lepore and Revenson (2006) separate resilience into recovery, resistance and reconfiguration. Recovery is simply the return back to baseline levels of functioning, whereas resistance is when a person shows no signs of disturbance (low distress) following a traumatic event (Lepore and Revenson, 2006). Finally, reconfiguration is when people return to homeostasis in a different formation: they have changed (either positively or negatively) from their traumatic experience.

The major components that have been identified throughout decades of research as facilitators of resilient individuals are (1) reframing; (2) experience of positive emotions; (3) participation in physical activity; (4) trusted social support; (5) the use of personal and authentic strengths; and, of course, (5) optimism.

A ground breaking study conducted by Werner and Smith in the 1970s–1980s identified several risk factors associated with non resilient individuals. After following a cohort of babies from birth to mid life, they concluded that individuals who had the following risk factors were more likely to succumb that those who did not: low birth weight, low socio-economic status (SES), low maternal education and an unstable family structure (for example divorce or abuse) (Werner, 1993, 1996).

7.4 Flow

Flow experiences occur when we become engaged in controllable but challenging tasks or activities that require considerable skill and which are intrinsically motivating (Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 1997). For flow experiences to occur we must have a good chance of completing these tasks. There must be clear goals and immediate feedback. These tasks require total concentration so we become deeply and effortlessly involved in them, so much so that we no longer think of the worries and frustrations of everyday life. Our sense of self disappears when involved in these tasks and paradoxically the sense of

self emerges as strengthened after the task is completed. Time perception is altered during flow experiences. Hours can pass in what seem to be minutes and minutes can seem like hours.

Flow experiences may occur during reading, sports, involvement in creative arts and music or involvement in certain types of work. Examples of activities that have been shown in scientific psychological studies to lead to flow experiences include reading, sailing, chess, rock climbing, dancing, writing and gang motorcycling.

A state of flow is defined as *Focused concentration on what one is doing in the present moment. The* tasks that lead to flow experiences involve working towards clear goals and receiving immediate feedback about movement towards these goals, a deep level of concentration on the task is essential.

Merging of action and awareness: Since the person's full concentration is on the task there is a loss of awareness of the self.

Loss of reflective self-consciousness; A sense that one can control one's actions

Distortion of temporal experience: When we are involved in flow experiences our perception of time is distorted.

Experience of the activity as intrinsically rewarding: Activities that lead to flow experiences are said to be auto telic. Auto telic comes from the Greek words self (auto) and goal (telos). Autotelic experiences are those that arise from activities which are not done for some benefit but because the activity is intrinsically rewarding in itself.

Challenging activities that require skill: The tasks which lead to flow experiences must demand that we use our skills almost to their limits and that the task is one that can be completed.

Clear goals and immediate feedback: Tasks that lead to flow experiences have clear goals and feedback about movement towards these goals is immediate.

Dynamic equilibrium: In the state of flow, the individual operates at full capacity which is a state of dynamic equilibrium. There is a balance between perceived action capacities and perceived action opportunities which is a state of optimal arousal.

7.4.1 Following are the conditions of flow:

☐ A sense that one is engaging in challenges at a level which is appropriate to one's capacities.

☐ There are clear proximal goals and immediate feedback about the progress being made.

☐ Certain cultures and types of families are conducive to flow experiences (Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). All cultures have certain goals which citizens aspire for. They also specify social norms, roles, rules and rituals in accordance with which these goals may be achieved. Cultures in which the goals, norms, roles, rules and rituals closely match the skills of the population are more suitable for occurrence of flow experiences.

Work-based flow experiences are more common in cultures that permit people to have work roles that are neither boring nor overly challenging. Flow experiences are more common in cultures where religious rituals involve dance, singing or meditation etc. Flow experiences are more common in cultures where skilled games against well-matched competitors are widely practiced.

Activities that lead to flow experiences are said to be 'autotelic'. Autotelic comes from the Greek words self (auto) and goal (telos). Autotelic experiences are those that arise from activities which are not done for some anticipated future benefit but because the activity in itself is intrinsically and immediately rewarding.

7.4.2 Measurement of flow

Two main ways of measuring flow experiences have been developed (Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). The first involves completion of a questionnaire on one occasion only. The second is called the experience-sampling method. In the questionnaire method, quotations from people who have had flow experiences are given, e.g. 'My mind isn't wandering. I am not thinking of something else. I am totally involved in what I am doing. My body feels good. I don't seem to hear anything.' Respondents are then asked to indicate if they have had such experiences, and if so how often and in what contexts.

Flow, Attention, and the Self

According to Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1988), to understand flow experiences, we need to understand it through consciousness and the self. Consciousness is made up by subjective experience. The state of self emerges when consciousness becomes aware of itself.

Attention plays a crucial role in entering and staying in flow. Intense and focused concentration implies that attention is fully invested in the present activity. With the loss of self-consciousness in flow there is a fading of the awareness. Staying in flow requires that attention is invested fully on the task at hand.

Check Your Progress

1. What is flow?
2. What is autotelic?
3. What is the main determinant of flow?

7.5 SELF-ESTEEM

William James (1890) defined self-esteem as the feeling of self-worth that derives from the ratio of our actual successes to our pretensions. By pretensions he meant our estimation of our potential successes and this is informed by our values, goals and aspirations. This definition of self-esteem highlights that it is a construct which addresses the way we evaluate ourselves and measure our own sense of self-worth by comparing how we are and how we aspire to be. Self-esteem is not a unitary construct but is hierarchically organized with overall global self-esteem based on general judgments of self-worth and, beneath this, subtypes of self-esteem based on evaluations of self-worth in different contexts, such as within the family, school, work setting, leisure setting, or peer group (Mruk, 1999).

7.5.1 Development of self-esteem

Children whose parents are accepting of their strengths and limitations and set explicit high, but attainable standards, which they support their children in attaining, develop high self-esteem. High self-esteem is also associated with a consistent authoritative parenting style in which children are treated with warmth and respect and given opportunities to discuss directives and rules about good conduct. Higher self-esteem is

associated with achievement (not failure); having the power and skills to influence others (not powerlessness); acting in a way we perceive to be moral (rather than immoral); and being accepted and approved of by others (rather than rejected). Thus, self-esteem derives from our own evaluations of our worth based on an appraisal of our personal accomplishments, virtues and attributes as well as from our perceptions of the way we are evaluated by others.

Self-esteem is relatively stable over time, but may change at lifecycle transition points (Robins *et al.,* 1999). Self-esteem tends to be high in pre-schoolers. It then declines gradually during the pre-adolescent years. This gradual decline may be due to greater reliance on social comparison information and feedback from external sources such as peers and teachers. With the onset of adolescence there is a further drop in self-esteem but then it increases gradually over the course of adolescence. There is some evidence that improvements in self-esteem may occur at transitional points in adult life such as graduation from college, marriage, changing jobs, or moving house. In older adulthood there is a decline in self-esteem. Individual differences in self-esteem are relatively stable over time.

7.5.2 Improving self-esteem

Skills training may increase competence. This includes training in problem-solving skills, social skills, assertiveness skills, academic skills, and work-related skills, depending on the area of low competence.

Where a low sense of worthiness derives from poverty or social disadvantage, environmental changes such as occupational retraining, occupational placement, or social relocation to a less disadvantaged area may be appropriate. Where a low sense of worthiness is due to unrealistically high aspirations, despite a realistic level of achievement, then cognitive therapy may be required to help challenge their very high standards. People with low self-esteem have a cognitive bias to filter-out positive feedback inconsistent with negative self-evaluation, and cognitive therapy helps people re-calibrate this filter (Swann, 1997).

Check your progress

4. What is self esteem?

5. Which parenting style develops self esteem?

7.6 Let's Sum Up

Resilience is defined as 'the flexibility in response to changing situational demands, and the ability to bounce back from Resilience, Post-traumatic Growth and Positive Ageing negative emotional experiences'. The major components that have been identified throughout decades of research as facilitators of resilient individuals are (1) reframing; (2) experience of positive emotions; (3) participation in physical activity; (4) trusted social support; (5) the use of personal and authentic strengths; and, of course, (5) optimism.

A state of flow is defined as *Focused concentration on what one is doing in the present moment. The* tasks that lead to flow experiences involve working towards clear goals. Work-based flow experiences are more common in cultures that permit people to have work roles that are neither boring nor overly challenging. Activities that lead to flow experiences are said to be 'autotelic'. self-esteem as the feeling of self-worth that derives from the ratio of our actual successes to our pretensions. Children whose parents are accepting of their strengths and limitations and set explicit high, but attainable standards, which they support their children in attaining, develop high self-esteem.

7.7 Unit End Exercise

1. Explain resilience.

2. Write the condition of flow.

3. Explain self esteem.

4. How can we improve the self esteem?

7.8 Answers for check your progress

1. A state of flow is defined as *Focused concentration on what one is doing in the present moment.*

2. Activities that lead to flow experiences are said to be 'autotelic'.

3. Attention.

4. William James defined self-esteem as the feeling of self-worth that derives from the ratio of our actual successes to our pretensions.

5. Democratic Parenting Style.

7.9 Suggested Readings:

1. Snyder, C. R., Lopez, S. J., &Pedrotti, J. T. (2010). Positive Psychology: The scientific and practical explorations of human strengths.2nd ed. Sage Publications, India.

2. Baumgartner, S. R., & Crothers, M. K. (2009).Positive Psychology. Pearson Education, India.

Unit - 8
Role of Personal Control in Adaptive

Structure

8.1 Introduction

Every humans wish to lead a happy life. The happiness is influences by the inner qualities what we have ourselves. Optimism is the main characteristics of happiness. Those who have optimistic belief can lead a peaceful life. Optimistic thought brings hope in everything and develops self confidence.

8.2 Objectives:

After completing this unit you will be able to understand the following concepts like

- Optimism
- Hope
- Self efficacy
- Goal settings for life

8.3 Optimism

Optimism and pessimism refer to the positive and negative predictions that people make regarding their future. Some people look usually on the bright side of events, while others look on the dark side. Therefore, it can be said that optimists expect good things to happen to them while pessimists expect bad things to happen to them. Many studies have provided evidence for the optimistic bias.

Optimism has been linked to psychological and physical well-being. The study of optimism has contributed a lot to what we understand about optimism today.

There are several other constructs that are similar or related to optimism and they pose a methodological issue. Two of these concepts are hope and self-efficacy. People with high self efficacy expectancies believe that their personal efforts determine the outcome of events. Whereas self-efficacy looks at self as a causal agent, optimism takes a broader view of the potential causes at work.

Hope reflects the will as well as the ways. The confidence aspect in hope is similar to optimism however there is more emphasis on personal agency. Pessimism has been found to resemble the construct of neuroticism. Neuroticism involves a tendency to worry, and experience unpleasant emotions. Therefore, it can be said that a sense of pessimism is a part of neuroticism. Optimism and pessimism relate to people's expectations for the future.

Due to this they are linked to the expectancy-value theories of motivation. Expectancy-value theories assume that behavior is directed on the pursuit of goals. When a goal is important to someone, the greater is its value. Expectancy is a sense of confidence or doubt about whether goal can be attained or not.

8.3.1 Unrealistic and realistic optimism

Unrealistic optimism (Weinstein, 1989) describes the mismatch between dispositional optimism and actual probability of occurrence of events. It refers to the discrepancy between the inevitability of adverse circumstances and the anticipation of experiencing life as good.
Optimistic bias or unrealistic optimism has been demonstrated across a

wide variety of positive and negative events.

Realistic optimism is defined by Sneider (2001) as the tendency to maintain a positive outlook within the constraints of the available measurable phenomena situated in the physical and social world'. Realistic optimists believe they have more control over themselves, their lives and their destinies. A realistic optimist is defined as someone who looks on the bright side of life but at the same time has an understanding of reality. The main difference is between believing that one will succeed, and believing that one will succeed easily. This is the difference between being a realistic optimist and an unrealistic optimist.

8.3.2 Optimism and Subjective Well-Being

Since optimists are people who expect to have positive outcomes, they usually experience positive feelings. Pessimists expect negative outcomes and therefore they usually have negative feelings of anxiety, guilt, anger etc. Seligman (1998) reported that optimistic people experience less depression and increased enjoyment in social interactions. Several studies have reported a strong relation between an optimistic outlook about the future and happiness.

8.4 Hope:

According to Snyder et al. (1991) hope is a human strength manifested in our perceived capacities to clearly conceptualize goals (goals thinking), develop strategies to reach those goals (pathways thinking), and initiate and sustain the motivation for using those strategies (agency thinking).

Hope is conceptualized as a *dynamic* cognitive *motivational system*. According to this conceptualization, emotions follow cognitions and not the other way round. Hope leads to pursuit of *learning goals* and learning goals are positively related to success.

8.4.1 Hope theory

Hope theory has the following major components: goals, pathway thoughts, agency thoughts and barriers.

Goals: Goals are the targets of mental action sequences and are the cognitive component in hope theory. Goals provide direction for hopeful thinking.

Pathways Thinking: Pathway thoughts refer to the routes we take to achieve our goals and the perceived ability to produce these routes.

Agency Thinking: This is the motivational component in hope theory. Agentic thinking reflects the self-referential thoughts regarding moving along a pathway as well as continuing to progress along that pathway.

Barriers: Barriers block the attainment of our goals. The individual then has to make a choice to either give up or use pathway thoughts to create new routes. Snyder (2000) suggests that hope develops over the course of infancy, childhood and adolescence. Snyder proposes that there are no hereditary contributions to hope and it is a learned cognitive set. The basic cause and effect thinking contained in pathways thinking is acquired from parents and others. Snyder also proposes that strong attachment to caregivers is crucial for the development of hope. Traumas during the life course contribute to the lessening of hope.

8.4.2 Importance of Hope

Academic achievement: Hope is significantly related to academic achievement. Hopeful students are more confident of finding various pathways to reach desired goals, and the motivations to pursue those goals. Hence, low-hope students can benefit by interventions to raise their hopeful thinking.

Hope is positively associated with perceived competence. High-hope students are more optimistic, and perceive themselves as being capable of solving problems. Hope is related to positively with self-worth, life satisfaction and wellbeing.

Health: Hope predicts physical and mental health, subjective wellbeing, effective coping and healthy behaviors. People with higher levels of hope engage in more preventative behaviors like healthy diet and physical exercise. Higher hope is also related to benefits in dealing with injuries and disabilities.

Athletics: Higher hope has been positively related to superior athletic performances. Sports psychologists and coaches can use hope theory to enhance the performance of athletes.

Psychological Adjustment: Hope is related positively with positive affect and thoughts and negatively with negative affect and thoughts.

High-hope individuals also are less likely to use avoidance coping style. When people with high hope face an obstacle in reaching a goal, they try to find alternative goals. Higher levels of hope are related to more perceived social support, and more social competence.

Psychotherapy: Hope theory provides a framework for understanding the shared processes for helping people in psychotherapy. McNeal (1998) conducted a study of children and adolescents' hope before and after they had received psychological treatment in a residential setting. He found that significantly higher levels of hope were developed during that period. Hope theory has been used to develop successful individual and group interventions especially in depression.

Check your progress

1. What is unrealistic optimism?
2. What is pathway thinking?
3. Name the components in hope theory?

8.5 Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is the core aspect of Bandura's social cognitive theory. Bandura (1995) defined self-efficacy as the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations'. Self-efficacy involves the belief that one can effectively perform certain actions. Our efficacy beliefs determine our expectations about the outcomes of our actions and this in turn determines our behavioral performance. People's beliefs in their capabilities to obtain desired outcomes are very important as they determine the types of behaviors people will undertake and how much efforts they will put in. A related construct is Perceived Self-Efficacy which is the belief that one can perform difficult tasks and cope with failures. Perceived self-efficacy helps in setting of goals, putting of effort, persistence and recovery from failures.

Self-efficacy is usually treated as domain specific. But recently some researchers have also conceptualized a generalized sense of self-efficacy across a wide range of situations. There is a positive relationship between general self-efficacy and specific self-efficacy. According to Bandura (1995), individuals possess a self-system through which they exercise control over their thoughts, feelings, and actions. The self-system is made up of cognitive and affective structures which are involved in perceiving, regulating, and evaluating behavior. Self-efficacy makes a difference in people's feelings, thoughts and action. Low self efficacy is related with depression, and anxiety while high self-efficacy leads to accomplishments, reduces stress, and enhances well-being. A person with strong self-efficacy beliefs is able to lead a more self-determined life; consider difficult tasks as challenges and not as threats. Self-efficacy influences the level of stress one experiences while dealing with difficult circumstances. It also determines one's level

of accomplishments; level of effort and whether one's thoughts are positive or negative.

8.5.1 Sources of self-efficacy

According to Bandura (1997), there are four major sources of self-efficacy beliefs:

Mastery experiences: Mastery experiences are the most effective way of creating a high level of efficacy. Successes help in building strong self-efficacy beliefs whereas failures undermine it.

High self-efficacy beliefs come from past experiences of success.

Vicarious experiences: Self-efficacy beliefs also develop by learning from the experiences of people. Exposure to successful role models helps in enhancing self-efficacy. Competent models display effective skills through their behavior. Perceived similarity to the models influences the effect of modeling on self-efficacy. If the assumed similarity is more, the more influence the models' successes and failures will have on the person. When people observe the successes of others it enhances their self-efficacy beliefs required for attaining success.

Verbal persuasion: Another way of strengthening self-efficacy beliefs is through verbal persuasion. A person who is persuaded that he/she possesses the capabilities required to perform given tasks is more likely to put in greater effort as compared to one who has self-doubts. Social persuasion motivates people to try hard to succeed in the task. A person's self-efficacy is increased when he/she is encouraged by others that he/she is capable of successfully completing a task. Guidance from others helps in correcting one's performance.

Physiological/emotional states: Emotional arousal also influences self-efficacy. High negative emotional arousal may interfere with performance, whereas positive emotional arousal can enhance performance. Mood also affects people's judgments of their self-efficacy. Positive mood enhances self- efficacy, whereas negative mood diminishes it.

Imaginal Experiences: Apart from the four sources mentioned above, Maddux (1995) introduced imaginal experiences as another source of self-efficacy. He suggested that self-efficacy beliefs can be developed by imagining oneself behaving in hypothetical situations. These images may be derived from actual or vicarious experiences. They may also be developed by verbal persuasion in systematic desensitization and covert modeling. Imaginal modeling has been used successfully in interventions to enhance assertive behaviors (Kazdin, 1979).

Efficacy-activated processes
Self-efficacy beliefs affect functioning through four major psychological processes (Bandura, 1992).They are as follows:

Cognitive Processes: Most human behavior is determined by one's cognitions like thinking, decision making reasoning etc. Setting goals for oneself is influenced by how one appraises his/ her capabilities. People with strong self-efficacy beliefs set higher goal challenges for themselves and are more committed to achieving them. Self-efficacy beliefs also influence the expectations of people. People with strong self-efficacy beliefs, visualize success scenarios while those with low self-efficacy

visualize failure scenarios. Remaining task oriented during stressful situations is also affected by self-efficacy beliefs.

Motivational Processes: Self-efficacy beliefs help in regulating one's motivation. People form beliefs about what they can do. There are three different forms of cognitive motivators: causal attributions, outcome expectancies, and goals and self-efficacy beliefs play a role in each of these. Causal attributions affect motivation, and performance through self-efficacy beliefs. In expectancy-value theory, motivation is regulated by the expectation that a certain action will lead to certain outcomes. Self-efficacy beliefs determine the goals people set for themselves and the effort invested.

Affective Processes: People's beliefs in their coping capabilities influences how much stress they may experience. Self-efficacy to exercise control over stressful situations plays an important role in anxiety arousal. Stronger the self-efficacy beliefs about self-regulation, the more successful the person is in taking up health promoting behaviors.

Selection Processes: Self-efficacy beliefs influence one's life course by affecting the types of activities and environments people select for themselves. Any factor that affects choice behaviors has a huge impact on personal development. This is because the person will choose activities and environments which further enhance his development. In career choice and development too self-efficacy beliefs influence the course of life through the choices that one makes. When self-efficacy is high, the range of career options a person considers becomes high and it leads to greater interest in career options. Due to this there is better preparation for the attainment of the goal thereby leading to success.

8.5.2 Development of Self-Efficacy Beliefs

Self-efficacy beliefs start developing in early childhood as children go through various types of experiences. The growth of self-efficacy continues to evolve throughout life. According to Bandura (1967, 2001), there is a triadic reciprocal causal relationship between personal, behavioral and environmental factors. Cultural factors and power structure also play a very important role in developing self-efficacy beliefs. The

initial basis for developing a sense of efficacy is provided by the exploratory experiences of the child. Children who are successful in controlling environmental events are more competent in learning new efficacious responses. The role of family is very important role in the development of self-efficacy beliefs. Families differ in their capital: financial or material, human or non-material, and social resources (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002). Families with greater capital provide richer experiences which further enhance children's efficacy beliefs. Parents, who create opportunities for efficacious actions, help in the social and cognitive development of their children.

Peers act as models of self-efficacy. A great amount of social learning occurs among peers. One can judge one's self-efficacy beliefs by comparing with one's peers. Peer influence operates greatly through peer networks which are large group of peers with whom the adolescent associates (Schunk & Meece, 2005).

The school plays an important role in the development of the child's cognitive competencies. Children acquire knowledge and problem-solving skills at school. Adolescence is often characterized as a period of crisis and the ease with which one makes the transition from childhood to adulthood depends on self-efficacy beliefs.

During adulthood people have to cope with many challenges emerging from marital relationship, parenthood, and careers. Adults with a high level of self-efficacy know how to strike a balance between different relationships and between relationships and career. Those with a low level of self-efficacy are highly vulnerable to stress and depression since they are unable to cope with these challenges. Major life changes occur in later years due to retirement, loss of friends or spouse and diminishing physical and cognitive capabilities. Low self-efficacy leads to vulnerability to stress and depression in old age.

Importance of Self-efficacy

The importance of self-efficacy beliefs has been proved in various settings. Many recent researches have shown a relationship between self-efficacy and other outcome-related behaviors.

Self-Efficacy and Psychological Adjustment: General self-efficacy has been found to be negatively correlated with negative effect, anxiety, depression, anger, stress, and physical symptoms. Self-efficacy beliefs have also been found to be negatively related to clinical problems like phobias and addiction.

High self-efficacy has been found to be related to the management of stress, higher self esteem, better well-being, and better physical health. It also helps in overcoming substance abuse problems and eating disorders.

Self-Efficacy and Physical Health: Self-efficacy helps in explaining why people adopt healthy or unhealthy behaviors. Beliefs about self-efficacy influence health in many ways: First, self efficacy beliefs influence whether a person will adopt healthy behaviors, curb unhealthy behaviors, and maintain behavioral changes during difficulties. All the major theories of health behaviour include self-efficacy as a key component. Self-efficacy beliefs also influence biological processes that play a role in health and disease.

Self-Efficacy and Self-Regulation: Self-efficacy helps in understanding how we guide our own behavior in the pursuit of our goals. Self-efficacy beliefs influence the goals we set, our choices of goal-directed activities, level of effort, and the effectiveness of problem solving and decision making.

Self-Efficacy and psychotherapy*:* Self-efficacy theory helps in understanding how to increase a person's self-efficacy to overcome problematic situations. Self-efficacy theory suggests that psychotherapeutic interventions should also help in developing efficacy for successful problem solving. These strategies are based on the four sources of self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy and academic performance: In the academic domain self-efficacy has been found to be related to technological/computer literacy, writing; choice of academic major, teacher preparation, and mathematics learning. Students with strong self-efficacy beliefs usually challenge themselves with difficult tasks. These students put in a lot of effort to meet

their commitments, and attribute failure to controllable things. Self-efficacious students also recover quickly from setbacks, and are more likely to achieve their personal goals. Self-efficacy plays a vital role in educational attainment. Self-efficacy has powerful effects on learning. General self efficacy is also positively related to need for achievement.

Self-efficacy and work performance: The role of self-efficacy in improved performance at work is immense. Bandura (1986) observed the relationship of self-efficacy with increased effort and motivation. Martinko and Gardner (1982) found that low self-efficacy is associated with learned helplessness. Self-efficacy also predicts the range of career options considered, occupational interests and personal effectiveness as well as entrepreneurial activity. Efficacy beliefs influence employees motivation and performance in organizations.

Check your progress

4. What is self efficacy?

5. What are all the sources of self efficacy?

8.6 Life Goals

Life goals are what we want to achieve, and they're much more meaningful than just '*what we need to accomplish to survive*'. Unlike daily routines or short-term objectives, they drive our behaviors over the long run. There's no single psychological definition for them, and they aren't strictly a clinical construct, but they help us determine what we want to experience in terms of our **values**.

And because they are personal ambitions, they can take many different forms. But they give us a sense of direction and make us accountable as we strive for happiness and well-being—for our best possible lives.

Why Should We Set Goals in Life?

Lots of us have dreams. We know what makes us happy, what we'd love to try out, and we may have a vague idea of how we'd go about it.

 1. Setting Goals Can Clarify Our Behaviors

The act of setting goals and the thought we put into crafting them directs our attention to the *why, how,* and *what* of our aspirations. As such, they give us something to focus on and impact positively on our motivation.

Of course, there are limitations to the generalizability of this finding— simply setting goals won't drive the actions that lead us to success.

2. Goals Allow for Feedback

If and when we know where we want to be, we can assess where we are now, and essentially, we can chart our progress. This feedback helps us adjust our behavior accordingly (and when it's rewarding feedback, our brains release dopamine, e.g. Tread way et al., 2012). By allowing for feedback, goals let us align or re-align our behaviors, keeping us on track with our eyes on the prize.

3. Goal-setting Can Promote Happiness

When our goals are based on our values, they are meaningful. Meaning, purpose, and striving for something 'bigger' is a key element of happiness theory in positive psychology, and the 'M' in Seligman's **PERMA model** (Seligman, 2004).

Along with positive emotion, relationships, engagement, and accomplishment (which goals allow for), it makes up what we've come to known as 'The Good Life'.

In other words, life goals represent something besides the daily grind. They allow us to pursue authentic aims of our own choosing and enjoy a feeling of achievement when we get there.

4. They Encourage Us to Use Our Strengths

When we consider what matters the most to us, we can get more attuned with our inner strengths as well as our passions. Charting a course for ourselves is one thing, but using our strengths to get there comes with a whole set of other benefits.

Studies show that knowing and leveraging our strengths can increase our confidence (Crabtree 2002), boost our engagement (Sorensen, 2014), and even promote feelings of good health and life satisfaction (Proyer et al., 2013).

Using them in pursuit of our goals, therefore—even discovering what they are—can be a good thing for our well-being.

The Process and Steps of Setting Life Goals

You can (and easily will) find countless models for goal setting in the self-help literature. But what does positive psychology say about the process and steps of goal-setting? The following framework is taken from the well-known psychological capital intervention (PCI), and it uses three steps: goal design, pathway generation, and overcoming obstacles (Luthans et al., 2006).

1. Goal Design

The first step is to design our goals. When crafting goals, we need to remember the key premise of goal-setting theory—that they are intentions which guide our behavior. They are "targets for mental action sequences" (Synder, 2002: 250).

Ideally, by design:

- Goals should be concrete endpoints. That is, we should be able to measure our success because they are clear and detailed;
- They should be approach-based. This means we should easily be able to focus on moving positively towards their accomplishment, rather than on away from negative outcomes. ("Working toward" rather than "avoiding" something) (Coats et al., 1996); and
- We should be able to break them down into sub-goals if necessary so that we can celebrate little successes along the way (Snyder et al., 1991).

2. Pathway Generation

We now have personally meaningful life goals designed and we can start thinking about different potential pathways for achieving them. Luthans and colleagues' PsyCap Intervention invited participants to brainstorm multiple pathways without worrying at first about their feasibility. 'As many possibilities as they could think of', essentially, and not unlike 'there are no bad ideas in brainstorming'.

Participants then invited others to weigh in and add to their potential pathways. In the same way, you might ask friends, family, or someone in a

mentor-like position to help you come up with ideas on how to pursue your goals. What possible pathways might Jamie take to become a certified K1 teacher for asylum seekers in Svenborgia, for example?

The last part of pathway generation considers inventory pathways: what resources will you need to pursue pathway A, B, or C? Essentially, we refine our potential pathways—we think carefully about what we can realistically expect, and this leaves us with fewer, more viable options (Luthans et al., 2006).

3. Overcoming Obstacles

We have inherent beliefs about our ability to use pathways for goal success—our agency—and these are accordingly termed 'agency thought' (Snyder, 2002). This kind of thinking plays a particularly important role when we come up against obstacles, especially unexpected ones, as they can determine whether we pick ourselves up or just disengage.

When setting life goals, therefore, it helps to consider the possible barriers that might arise. Independently, we can self-reflect, thinking about our potential pathways as well as our strategies we might use to deal with them (Luthans et al., 2006). We might do this alone or with others, like in the pathway generation stage, and our focus here is to ready ourselves for contingencies.

8.7 Let's Sum Up

Optimism has been linked to psychological and physical well-being. The study of optimism has contributed a lot to what we understand about optimism today.

There are several other constructs that are similar or related to optimism and they pose a methodological issue. Two of these concepts are hope and self-efficacy. Unrealistic optimism (Weinstein, 1989) describes the mismatch between dispositional optimism and actual probability of occurrence of events

Hope is a human strength manifested in our perceived capacities to clearly conceptualize goals (goals thinking), develop strategies to reach those goals (pathways thinking), and initiate and sustain the motivation for using those strategies (agency thinking).

Self-efficacy is the core aspect of Bandura's social cognitive theory. Bandura (1995) defined self-efficacy as the belief in one's capabilities to

organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations'. Self-efficacy involves the belief that one can effectively perform certain actions.

8.8 Unit End Exercise

1. What is hope?

2. Describe hope theory.

3. Why self efficacy is important in our life?

4. Write the various steps in goal settings.

5. Why should we set goals in life?

8.9 Answers for check your progress

1. Unrealistic optimism (Weinstein, 1989) describes the mismatch between dispositional optimism and actual probability of occurrence of events.

2. Pathway thoughts refer to the routes we take to achieve our goals and the perceived ability to produce these routes.

3. goals, pathway thoughts, agency thoughts and barriers.

4. self-efficacy as the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations'.

5. Mastery experiences, Vicarious experiences, Imaginal experiences, Verbal persuasion and emotional state.

8.10 Suggested Readings:

1. Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (pp. 423-433). New York: Oxford University Press.

2. Peterson, C. & Seligman, M. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3. Seligman, Martin (2004), *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. New York: Free Press.

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Unit 9
Interpersonal Relationship

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Structure

9.1 INTRODUCTION

All the successful people are masters the skill of interpersonal relationship. The interpersonal skill is a essential ingredient for happy life. The factors like forgiveness, gratitude, empathy, and love helps to improve the interpersonal relationship. In this chapter, we discuss the factors that lead to successful life.

9.2 Objectives

After completing this unit, you will be able to understand the following concepts

- Forgiveness
- Gratitude

- Love
- Empathy and Altruism

9.3 FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness is one of the supreme human virtues. The idea of forgiveness is integral to many religious texts, scriptures and philosophical discourses. William Shakespeare in his classic work
The Merchant of Venice has considered mercy as the finest of all human qualities. In the Hindu religious mythology, a defining quality of all gods is the ability to forgive and punish. The idea and ability of forgiveness has been more often connected with the idea of divinity as compared to the ability to punish. In Buddhism a form of forgiveness called compassion has been considered a way of achieving Nirvana or salvation.

There is an increasing need in the society for an absolute understanding of forgiveness. Traditionally, forgiveness was conceptualized as acting on a mere moral or religious intention. Although several empirical articles have been published in research journals about forgiveness, those with a philosophical or psychological perspective appeared only a few decades ag(McCollough, Pargament & Thoresen, 2000). Adequate financial resources and research teams working on scientific research on forgiveness could create a global awareness for the significance of forgiveness research.

Forgiveness is a comprehensive word and it comes in many forms and varieties. Words like mercy, compassion, excusing, forgetting, etc., can be associated with the idea of forgiveness. Forgiveness is a positive pro-social behavior and the chances of its being confounded with the other kind of pro-social constructs like compassion or mercy are significantly high. As previously stated, forgiveness is a positive pro-social behavior which involves the presence of the victim, a perpetrator and a criminal act or wrongdoing from the perpetrator to the victim. If in response to the perpetrated wrongdoing the victim forgives the wrong doer then we call it an instance of forgiveness. Thompson et al (2005) descries forgiveness' as relieving oneself of the negativity fastened to the transgressor. The target of the consequent forgiveness may be either oneself or another person or the situation.

Further, a look at the existing research literature suggests that forgiveness has been defined either as a response, or as a personality characteristic, or as a characteristic of the social unit.

These three aspects of definitions have been discussed below:

☐ *As response*, forgiveness can be defined as a pro-social change in thoughts, emotions and/or behaviors of a victim toward the wrongdoer. Conceptualizations of forgiveness as a response are based on one primary feature: when people forgive, their thoughts and behaviors towards the offenders become less negative and more pro-social eventually. (McCollough et al, 2000).

☐ *As a personality characteristic,* forgiveness may be explained as a tendency to forgive others in diversified circumstances. Although most people fall around the mean of the population in a forgiveness unforgiveness continuum, the disposition to forgive itself may have certain aspects (Mullet et al, 1998).

☐ *As a characteristic of social units,* forgiveness may be described as a virtue similar to intimacy, trust or commitment. Some social institutions like families or marriages are characterized by a higher intensity of forgiveness, whereas other institutions, which cast out members who transgress, are characterized by less forgiveness.

9.3.1 Types of Forgiveness

Forgiveness can be distinguished between positive forgiveness and negative forgiveness. Positive (or emotional) forgiveness is a therapeutic process of absolute forgiveness, which also involves reinstituting positive feelings and thoughts toward the offender. Negative forgiveness, on the other hand, is a situation in which forgiveness is extended while brooding over the act of transgression. Negative forgiveness, also known as decisional forgiveness, involves mere overt inhibition of a retributive response, mostly in the interests of social acceptance. Yet, grudges are formed and sustained.

The two types of forgiveness indicate two distinct psychological processes. In pure positive forgiveness, cognitive restructuring is used to create the belief that retribution, of any kind is unnecessary. Retribution is instead a coping mechanism in situations where the hurt avoidance failed. Emotional forgiveness is not expected to improve psychological well-being

but to restore well-being following the negative feelings or grudges. Negative or decisional forgiveness, on the contrary, involves a dissonance in the thought process of the victim; his positive well-being maybe enhanced by the thought that he has forgiven the transgressor, but the negative effect of grudge holding and anger would sustain. However, the process of adapting to consonant thoughts about the transgression will occur in varying degrees, depending on variables such as the degree of hurt, or victim's capacity for forgiveness. The meta-analysis of

Wade et al. (2005) confirms a positive relationship between the time spent in group counseling and the intensity of forgiveness. It was concluded that changes in forgiveness patterns reflect the passage of time and strength of training to reduce negative forgiveness.

9.3.2 Applications

The concept of forgiveness has been applied in many situations and disciplines. Below are listed some of the major areas of human life where forgiveness has its applications.

□ *Forgiveness & Health:* Worthington et al (2006) pointed out that unforgiving responses lead to poor health, especially cardiovascular activity and blood pressure. People with high blood pressures, generally are less forgiving than those who are forgiving.

Researches also explain that forgiving people have better social support, are less likely to depend on alcohol or drugs, and are less prone to anxiety and depression. Acquiring the capacity to forgive can prove to be beneficial to families dealing with health issues (Friedman, 2009). Hence, forgiveness enhances your health.

□ *Forgiveness in Marriage:* Researchers studying forgiveness in interpersonal relationships are of the opinion that forgiveness is essential part of marriage and relationship dynamics. People who are capable to forgive experience greater levels of marital satisfaction and longevity, better communication, and enhanced intimacy. It also reduces the negative affect in the relationship. It is necessary to learn to forgive your spouse. It saves one from repression of emotions of sadness or anger toward the spouse, which could instead result in more negativity and frustration.

□ *Forgiveness as a Healing Process:* Forgiveness can help alleviate psychological problems like anxiety, stress, depression, etc. Also,

forgiveness has an impact on psychological well-being of an individual. It can be used to recover from psychological issues and to boost one's self-esteem and hopefulness (Enright, 2001). It is important to confront the issue and let go of the self-inflicted emotional pain and hurt.

9.4 Gratitude:

The word 'Gratitude' is derived from the Latin term *gratia*, which means grace, gratefulness, and graciousness. It's a concept that is close to kindness. Gratitude has been a very popular topic amongst the self-help book authors and also it attracts a lot of attention as it is a virtue that is extremely likeable and desired. However, gratitude like a few other positive psychology constructs e.g. courage hasn't received much attention. One reason that could be attributed to the lack of empirical research in this area could be the fact that this concept is difficult to empirically measure and put to test. Therefore, relationship of gratitude with health and well being variables stand speculative and are under scrutiny. The systematic study of gratitude had its auspicious beginning in 2000 under the purview of positive psychology.

Gratitude is different from the feeling of indebtness, which is an obligation of repayment. Gratitude can be seen as a motivator of behaviour wherein people work towards enhancing and improving relationships with the benefactor. Robert Emmons, a leader in the field of gratitude research, defines gratitude as the feeling that occurs when a person attributes a benefit received by him to another. According to McCullough, Kilpatrick, Emmons and Larson (2001) gratitude is seen as a moral affect as both the origins and consequences of gratitude are oriented toward the well-being of another person. It is a prosocial behaviour that has positive feelings both for the beneficiary and the benefactor.

9.4.1 Functions of Gratitude

McCullough and colleagues have put forth 3 functions of gratitude. First, as a **moral barometer** wherein gratitude signals a change in one's social relationships, for both the people and instills both these people with positive feelings. Second, as a **moral motive**, due to this act of kindness, the beneficiary is also reminded of other acts of gratitude that may have

happened in past and may take a chance to reciprocate these benefactors for their kindness, Third, as a **moral reinforcer**, wherein the beneficiary is instilled with an obligation to continue the tradition of helping other and thus reciprocate grateful acts to other people, which starts a chain of positive acts toward mankind.

9.4.2 Benefits of Gratitude

Gratitude is an emotional expression of thankfulness. It also has a very strong spiritual component wherein gratitude is seen as a source of connecting to each other. Gratitude allows an individual to appreciate everyday mundane activities with a sense of wonder and appreciation for life. Life becomes worth living if it has moments of gratitude. It has great impacts on an individual's psychological and emotional well-being as it provides continuous intrinsic rewards.

Gratitude has been linked with positive states such as happiness, pride and hope (Overwalle, Mervielde, & De Schuyter, 1995), experiences of extreme happiness (Gallup, 1998) and experiences of a meaningful and productive life (Emmons & Crumpler, 2000). It has empathy at its foundation in an interpersonal emotion that exists in an interpersonal context. Gratitude imbibes feelings of love and care. In this interpersonal context it is highly imperative to acknowledge the cost of the gift, the recipient must identify with the psychological state of the one who has provided it. The benefactor's giving is interpreted by the recipient as freely offered, and with that comes the acknowledgment that such offering might prove costly to or incur hardship for the benefactor. Such an understanding blends fittingly with some object relations formulations of gratitude, where it is seen as a major derivative of the capacity for love (Klein, 1957; Emmons & Shelton, 2002).

Gratitude is related to a host of positive outcomes, including subjective well-being, relational support, and prosocial behavior.

Feelings of gratitude are associated with less frequent negative emotions and more frequent positive emotions such as feeling energized, alert, and enthusiastic (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002).

It appears to broaden people's modes of thinking as they creatively consider a wide array of actions that might benefit others. This positive emotion also builds psychological and social resources (Emmons &

Shelton, 2002). Gratitude also builds people's skill for loving and showing appreciation. Their creativity enhances and they then find new ways to express their gratitude.

9.4.3 Cultivating Gratitude

It is important to understand that whether the virtue of gratitude can be cultivated? Does developing gratitude provide a depressed individual with a hope to live for? Or can it be used to alleviate distress and provide avenues for better positive living? There have been researches that have put forth steps through which an individual can develop the value of gratitude. Miller (1995) offers a 4 step guide: (1) Identify non-grateful thoughts; (2) formulate gratitude-supporting thoughts; (3) substitute the gratitude-supporting thoughts for non-grateful thoughts and (4) translate the inner feelings into outward action.

Shelton (2000) believed that developing a healthy moral life involves (1) a self awareness that one is moral, (2) developing gratitude (3) self examination of one's day and (4) encouraging one's self to increase moral responsibility. All these ways place a high degree of initiative that the individual will have to take to develop. Also engaging in and keeping a daily moral inventory also helps in developing gratitude.

Remembering one's acts of gratitude instills positive feelings that further motivate an individual to indulge in more subsequent acts of gratitude. This therefore, starts a cycle of gratitude. The acts that have been built over a period of time also act as buffers in protecting an individual from negative emotions such as guilt, depression, shame etc.

Making a personal commitment that one wants to invest psychic energy in developing a personal schema, outlook or worldview of one's life as a gift or one's very self as gifted holds considerable sway from the standpoint of positive psychology.

Indeed numerous groups (like _Alcoholics Anonymous') have absorbed this insight wherein people get together and view themselves as a gift. Thus, setting aside time on daily basis to recall moments of gratitude associated with even mundane or ordinary events, personal attributes one has, or valued people one encounters has the potential to interweave and thread together a sustainable life theme of highly cherished personal meaning just as it nourishes a fundamental life stance whose thrust is

decidedly positive (Emmons & Shelton, 2002).

Thus, this highly required virtue of gratitude needs to be inculcated in infants since their childhoods. They should be taught the importance of being thankful and gratitude. This virtue develops over a period that requires constant motivation and an environment that is provided by teachers and parents.

Check your progress

1. Define forgiveness.
2. Name the types of forgives
3. Define gratitude

9.5 LOVE

9.5.1 Defining Close Relationships

The relationships involved in our daily social interactions are very significant, but relationships involving friendship, romantic love and marriage are different and have a profound impact on our well-being throughout the life. Degree of intimacy is something that separates close relationships from casual relationships. It refers to the depth of understanding, trust, involvement, connection and whether or not the relationship is sexual. Therefore it is in this sense we can say that the close relationships are the most intimate ones. Brehm (2007) suggest six core characteristics that set intimate relationships apart from more casual relationships:

i. **Knowledge-** mutual understanding based on reciprocal self-disclosure.

ii. **Trust-** assumption that no harm will be done by the other person in the relationship.

iii. **Caring**- genuine concern for the other and ongoing monitoring and maintenance of relationship.

iv. **Interdependence**- intertwining of lives and mutual influence.

v. **Commitment**- intention to stay in the relationship through its ups and downs.

9.5.2 History of Research on Romantic Love

In Greek terms, four traditions in the history of love (Singer, 1984, 1987) can be noted: (a) **Eros**: the search for the beautiful, (b) **philia**: the affection in friendship, (c) **nomos**: submission and obedience to the divine; and (d) **agape**: the bestowal of love by the divine. In an attempt to give a

comprehensive history of love, Irving Singer came up with the classic —The Nature of Love, a book that comes in three large volumes (1984, 1987).The Nature of Love is a philosophical history of love from antiquity to the modern era. Hatfield (1988), Hatfield & Rapson (1996) proposed that passionate love, as an intense attraction, has existed in all cultures and all historical periods and is essentially a —human universal.‖

9.5.3 Models for Explaining Love

Theories of love are difficult to classify. Nevertheless, they may be grouped under two broad headings; naturalistic/biological and psychological/social.

Naturalistic/Biological Approaches: Recent studies have begun to explore some of the biological underpinnings of our need for belongingness. For example, oxytocin is a pituitary hormone which sometimes is referred to as the —cuddle hormone‖ because close physical contacts such as touching, hugging and kissing stimulate its release (Hazan, Campa & Gur-Yaish, 2006).

Oxytocin, along with vasopressin helps humans and about 3 percent of other mammal species to experience lasting, monogamous love. These two chemicals are associated with our ability to form memories of others and help us recognize other people. They're also released, along with dopamine, during sex. Oxytocin levels however are at their highest during sexual orgasm, in both men and women (Uvnas-Moberg, 1997).

In order to understand the brain's response to love, one must examine the brain and fully comprehend the myriad array of structures involved. One of the main structures involved with falling in love is the limbic system. The particular system is well known as being the part of the brain involved in emotional response. The limbic system is actually several structures combined, including the basal nuclei, the thalamus, and the hypothalamus. While all of these structures are vital, the hypothalamus is directly involved in both behavioral and sexual function. Combining these two important functions, one can see how the limbic system is so crucial to falling in love.

Evolution of Love

The question as to why humans love has been answered from an evolutionary perspective. We love because we are meant to reproduce. Species continue through reproduction, and continuation of the species is paramount in evolution. Since mating is the ultimate goal, then feelings of romantic love are merely a vehicle towards this goal. Mellen (1981) argued that the survival of the human species necessitated an emotional bond between breeding pairs of partners so that both partners would attend to their helpless infants. Adult humans are designed to respond to the cries and babbles of infants; and rush to feed them and pick them up. The burden of child care is so intense that it takes two parents to bring up even one baby. Buss (1988) defined love as consisting of behaviors enacted by both females and males that strengthen the bonding function and ultimately serve to perpetuate the human species.

Psychological/Social Approaches: Given the intense interest in love, psychologists over the past few decades have taken a different stand on this humane feeling of love. Few of these conceptualizations are discussed below:

Passionate and Companionate Love: Berscheid and Walster (1978) classified romantic love into passionate and companionate love. They defined passionate love as a state of total absorption of two lovers, typically involving strong sexual attraction, infatuation, exclusivity, and emotions that run full gamut from ecstasy to anguish.

Companionate love on the other hand is manifested in a strong bond and an intertwining of lives that brings about feelings of comfort and peace. It is slower-developing in comparison to passionate love and also, less emotional, calmer and more serene. The two forms can occur simultaneously or intermittently rather than sequentially (from passionate to companionate).

The Triangular Theory of Love:

In Sternberg's triangular theory of love, intimacy, passion and commitment each represent one side of a triangle describing love shared by two people (Sternberg, 1986, 1987). The **intimacy** component is primarily emotional or affective in nature and involves feelings of warmth, closeness and connection in the love relationship. The **passion** component is

motivational and consists of the drives that are involved in romantic and physical attraction, sexual consummation, and related phenomena. The **commitment** component is largely cognitive and represents both the short-term decision that one individual loves another and the longer term commitment to maintain that love. According to Sternberg, these three love components differ with respect to a number of properties, including stability, conscious controllability, and experiential salience.

Self-Expansion Theory of Love

Aron and Aron (1986, 1996), based on Eastern traditions (e.g., Hinduism) concerning the concept of self, proposed that humans have a basic motive for self-expansion. The emotions, cognitions and behaviors of love fuel one's ability to expand the self. This growth of self may incorporate physical possessions, as well as power and influence. Falling in love creates a rapid expansion of self-boundaries and therefore is pleasurable.

Attachment Approaches: This approach raises the intriguing possibility that some of our most basic, and perhaps unconscious, emotional responses to intimacy are shaped by the kind of relationship we had with our parents. It was developed out of the work of Bowlby (1969) and Ainsworth (1979), who studied the types of relationships that infants form with their caregivers. For example, Hazan and Shaver (1987) applied attachment theory to adult love relationships, noting that it provides an explanation for both the joys and the sorrows manifested in adult love and embraced the categories of secure, avoidant and anxious attachments. In 1991, Bartholomew and Horowitz further categorized the avoidant attachment type into dismissive and fearful.

9.6 Empathy & Altruism:

Human behavior is holistically guided by an interdependent nature and we spend a lot of time in our lives helping others in many different ways. From a small act of helping someone locate an address to volunteering to help victims of natural disasters, we engage in a lot activity, consciously or unconsciously that basically benefit someone else- a friend or stranger for that matter. But in terms of Psychology, the question lies in exploring the reasons behind this human nature to even put

themselves in danger to help someone else. However, when social psychologists started unfolding the pages of helping behavior in the late 1960s, they didn't ponder over the decision of why people helped, but rather on why people fail to help when we think they should.

Over the past 50 years however, the focus of helping behavior and its related ideas have changed and we find under its wraps the processes of empathy and altruism. Empathy is a kind of emotional response to the plight of another person. It is the ability to put oneself in the place of another person and feel what she/he does. Rather than mimicking someone else's emotions, it is about having an accurate sense of what she/he might be feeling like.

The term *altruism* is used to describe two distinct phenomena. The first is *behavioral altruism*, which refers to helping behavior that is either very costly to the helper or conveys no self-benefit for the helper. The second is *psychological altruism*, which refers to a motivation to increase the welfare of another as an end in itself. Although the latter definition is commonly used among psychologists and philosophers, the former is popular among researchers who study non-human animals.

Altruism is when we promote someone else's welfare even at the cost or risk of our own interests. It stands in opposition to being selfish and refers to a specific form of motivation that leads people to engage in behaviors that are aimed at benefitting others. It aims at increasing another's welfare. The reason for altruistic motivation is empathic concern. Empathic concern is another oriented emotional response driven by the perceived welfare of someone in need.

Universal egoism states that everything we do are ultimately aimed at self-benefit. Egoism is the motive to pursue some sort of personal benefit through targeted behavior. This personal benefit can take the form of relieving the negative emotions that an undesirable situation produces in us.

Proponents of pure altruism agree that the motivation for much of what we do is egoistic. But some of us to some extent are capable of being motivated with an ultimate goal of benefiting else. So they propose that altruism, if not completely, is a part of basic human nature, one that arises out of empathic motions like compassion, sympathy, tenderheartedness and the like.

Empathic Emotion:

An important source of altruistic motivation is other-oriented emotional reaction elicited in congruence with the perceived welfare of them. This reaction has variously been called empathy; sympathy; sympathetic distress; and compassion.

Eight uses of the term Empathy (Batson, 2009): In relation to the concept of empathy, there seem to emerge eight different standpoints, as given by Daniel Batson. These are being discussed below-

Knowing the thoughts and feelings of another person: Various researchers state knowing another person's internal state as empathy, cognitive empathy, or understanding.

Assuming the posture of an observed other or mimicking the neural response: Preston & de Waal (2003) put forth the idea that while trying to take the posture of an observed other, or trying to feel what the other person goes through, one goes through a state of mimicking the neural response. This not necessarily means imitating the motor behavior, but having similar kind of neural responses. The neural responses become similar because perception and action work on the same neural circuits. So as the perceptions become similar, so do the neural response

and thereby one starts to get a better glimpse of the other person's internal states.

Feeling as another person would feel: Feeling the same emotion that another person would feel is a common understanding of empathy. Philosophers call coming to feel as the other feels as sympathy.

Intuiting or projecting oneself into another's situations: This state also has been called ―projective empathy‖ (Becker, 1931). We try to project ourselves into another's situation and with the help of intuitive feelings, try to feel as they do.

*Imagining how another is feeling:*Wispe (1968) called imagining how another is feeling psychological empathy. Stotland (1969) spoke of an ―imagine other‖ perspective.

Imagining how one would feel in the other's place: Adam Smith (1759/1853) referred to this act of imagination as ―changing places in fancy.‖ Mead (1934) called it ―role taking‖. It is also known as ―perspective taking.

Being upset by another's suffering: The state of personal distress evoked

by seeing another in distress has been given a variety of names such as sympathetic pain; promotive tension; unpleasant arousal and empathy.

Feeling for another person who is suffering: The term empathy refers to an emotion that is *other-oriented* and is *congruent* with the perceived welfare of someone else. Congruence refers to the valence of the emotion- positive or negative. However congruence of emotion doesn't imply that the content of what you feel for the other person has to be the same.

Check your progress

4. What does agape mean?

5. Who proposed triangular theory of love?

The Empathy Altruism Hypothesis

Daniel Batson in the year 1991 forwarded the empathy-altruism hypothesis on the basis of findings that there are instances in which egotism doesn't hold as explanations to helping behavior. It proposes that empathic concern for a person who needs help produces altruistic motivation due to which one engages in helping behavior. Empathizing with another person increases the likelihood of helping that person. Proponents of egoistic alternatives however disagree and have to say that altruism results only from one of the three categories of empathy inducing egoistic motives i.e., reward seeking, punishment avoidance, and aversive arousal reduction. The advocates of empathy-altruism hypothesis do not completely deny the existence of egoistic motives for altruistic behavior, but they put forward that not all helping behavior is a hedonistic expression of human selfishness. Benefits to self are not always the ultimate goal for engaging in pro-social behavior; in fact they many times are unintended consequences. People help others even if there are no rewards.

Egoistic Alternatives to the Empathy-altruism hypothesis: Since the Renaissance, the dominating notion has been that altruism is guided by the motive of egotism. And modern scholars (Mansbridge, 1990, Wallach & Wallach, 1983) hold on to the position that we help others because it profits us to do so. Egotism-altruism camp, as they can be called, have to view that no matter how selfless our behavior might seem, but we engage in it only because there are underlying benefits for us, such as social appreciation, material rewards etc. The egotistical or self-benefitting

actions that involve altruism can take variant forms, but can be clubbed among three major forms.

Aversive-Arousal Reduction: The most frequently proposed egoistic explanation is the empathy helping relationship. It proposes that feeling empathy for a suffering person is unpleasant, and to eliminate these feelings that are causing distress, benefiting that person is a means to this self serving end.

The experiments testing this against the empathy-altruism hypothesis do so by varying the ease of escaping further exposure to a suffering victim. Since it states that empathic arousal is a result of seeing the victim suffering, one can reduce this arousal by helping behavior or by escaping away from the situation altogether. But escaping from the situation doesn't allow one to reach the altruistic goal of relieving the victim's distress. Therefore, the aversive-arousal explanation predicts elimination of the empathy-helping relationship when escape is easy; empathy-altruism hypothesis does not. Results of experiments testing these competing predictions have consistently supported the empathy-altruism hypothesis, not the aversive arousal reduction explanation. The chance for easy escape during an emergency situation reduces the likelihood of helping behavior only for people predominantly experiencing personal distress rather than empathy. Those experiencing a predominance of empathy will help irrespective of whether or not possibilities of escape are present. These results therefore cast serious doubt on this popular egoistic.

Empathy-Specific Punishment: A second egoistic explanation claims that through socialization people learn that obligation to help and shame and guilt for failure to help leads to empathy for someone in need. When faced with emergency situations they engage is self-talk of what will others think of them if they do not engage in helping behavior, or what perceptions they will hold about themselves. So in order to escape these feelings of guilt, shame etc., they engage in altruistic behavior. But here again, experiments have failed to support the egoistic idea and have rather patterned on the empathy altruism hypothesis (Batson, 1991).

Empathy-Specific Reward: The third egoistic explanation claims that people learn through socialization that special rewards such as praise, honor, and pride occur on helping a person for whom they feel empathy. This form of egoistic explanation has been tested and received no support

(Batson et al., 1988). But two variations of this explanation have been proposed. Cialdini et al. (1987) proposed the negative state relief explanation where they suggested that empathy experienced while witnessing another person's suffering is a negative affective state (sadness, sorrow), to relief which the person feeling empathy engages in altruistic or helping behavior. A second variation on an empathy specific reward explanation was proposed by Smith et al. (1989) where they proposed that empathically aroused individuals help in order to feel joy at the needy individual's relief. Experimental results consistently have supported the empathy-altruism hypothesis.

9.7 Let's Sum Up

Forgiveness is one of the supreme human virtues. The idea of forgiveness is integral to many religious texts, scriptures and philosophical discourses. Forgiveness is a positive pro-social behavior which involves the presence of the victim, a perpetrator and a criminal act or wrongdoing from the perpetrator to the victim. Forgiveness can be distinguished between positive forgiveness and negative forgiveness. Positive (or emotional) forgiveness is a therapeutic process of absolute forgiveness,. Negative forgiveness, on the other hand, is a situation in which forgiveness is extended while brooding over the act of transgression.

Gratitude is different from the feeling of indebtness, which is an obligation of repayment. Gratitude can be seen as a motivator of behaviour wherein people work towards enhancing and improving relationships with the benefactor. McCullough and colleagues have put forth 3 functions of gratitude. First, as a **moral barometer, moral motive**, moral reinforce. Degree of intimacy is something that separates close relationships from casual relationships. It refers to the depth of understanding, trust, involvement, connection and whether or not the relationship is sexual. Empathy is a kind of emotional response to the plight of another person. It is the ability to put oneself in the place of another person and feel what she/he does. The term *altruism* is used to describe two distinct phenomena. The first is *behavioral altruism*, which refers to helping behavior that is either very costly to the helper or conveys no self-benefit for the helper.

The second is *psychological altruism*, which refers to a motivation to increase the welfare of another as an end in itself.

9.8 Unit End Exercise

1. Explain the types of forgiveness.

2. Define gratitude and write the benefits of gratitude.

3. Explain the various types of love.

4. What is empathy? Explain

5. What is Altruism?

9.9 Answers for check your progress

1. Forgiveness is a positive pro-social behavior which involves the presence of the victim, a perpetrator and a criminal act or wrongdoing from the perpetrator to the victim.

2. Forgiveness can be distinguished between positive forgiveness and negative forgiveness

3 Gratitude is different from the feeling of indebtness, which is an obligation of repayment..

4**.** Agape means the bestowal of love by the divine.

5. Sternberg.

9.10 **Suggested Readings:**

1. Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (pp. 423-433). New York: Oxford University Press.

2. Peterson, C. & Seligman, M. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3. Seligman, Martin (2004), *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. New York: Free Press.

Unit 10

Positive Response to Loss Role of Humour

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Structure

10.1 Introduction

10.2 Objectives

10.3 Spirituality

      10.3.1 Benefits of spirituality

      10.3.2 Application of positive psychology

10.4 Positive youth development

10.5 Life taste of adulthood

10.6 Successful aging

10.7 Let's sum up

10.8 Unit end exercise

10.9 Answers for Check Your Progress

10.10 Suggested Readings

10.1 INTRODUCTION

India is a secular country in our country we have rights to follow any religion as own wish. The main purpose of the religion is it helps people to attain a peaceful life and reach the eternal life. The spirituality helps people to lead a happy life. The researchers proved that spiritual people have an inner peace in them and have a successful aging.

10. 2 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit you will be able to understand the following concepts like

- Spirituality
- Positive life in childhood and adulthood
- Successful aging

10.3 Spirituality

      The term _search for the sacred_ is a widely accepted description of spirituality. (Religion and religious behaviors represent the many ways in which the search for the sacred becomes organized and sanctioned in

society; for example, through the attendance of religious services and the frequency and duration of prayer.) In 2000, Hill et al. defined spirituality as "the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that arise from a search for the sacred" (p. 66). Pargament and Mahoney (2002) also defined spirituality "as a search for the sacred ... " Pathways involve systems of belief that include those of traditional organized religions (e.g., Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim),

These pathways to the sacred also may be described as spiritual strivings, which included personal goals associated with the ultimate concerns of purpose, ethics, and recognition of the transcendent (Emmons, Cheung, & Tehrani, 1998).

10.3.1 The Benefits of Spirituality:

Many positive psychologists (e.g., Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Snyder & Lopez, 2002) have hypothesized that a deep understanding of ourselves and our lives is enhanced by our search for the sacred. Indeed, as noted previously, spirituality is associated with mental health, managing substance abuse, marital functioning, parenting, coping, and mortality (summarized in Pargament & Mahoney, 2002; Thoresen, Harris, & Oman, 2001).

One examination of spiritual strivings reveals that these pathways to the sacred may lead to (or at least are associated with) well-being (Emmons et al,1998). Another examination of spiritual strivings suggests the search for the sacred may lead to what we consider to be the true benefits of spirituality in our lives: purpose and meaning (Mahoney et al., 2005). Despite the findings that demonstrate the benefits of searching for the sacred, the mechanisms by which spirituality leads to positive life outcomes are not clear.

10.3.2 Application of positive psychology
Positive therapy

Many psychologists who affiliate themselves with the positive psychology movement offer ideas on how to conduct 'positive psychology therapy'. The underlying principles are that therapy shouldn't focus just on diagnosing and treating disorder, maladjustment, suffering, etc. (Joseph and Linley, 2009; Rashid, 2009b). In addition, therapy should recognize,

use and build a patient's existing strengths and resources rather than view the client as flawed and disordered Positive therapy is not just concerned with enhancing strengths and qualities within the individual but also with the prevention of mental illness and ill-being (Seligman, 2002). There are issues with trying to decipher the effects of psychotherapy.

Rational emotional behavioral therapy (REBT)

Ellis's rational emotional behavioral therapy (REBT) was aimed at both helping individuals, with and without emotional problems, to deal with emotional distress as well as lead a fulfilling and happy life (Bernard et al., 2010). Based on the concept of rationality, this scientific model aimed at restructuring cognition, which enables individuals to harness their own inner strengths and abilities to live rational lives: 'rationality is characterized by positive emotions (pleasure, joy, excitement), an absence of dysfunctional negative emotions, a determination to solve life's problems and goal directed behaviour' (Bernard et al., 2010: 303). By doing so, individuals can experience short-term positive affect as well as long-term goal attainments and psychological wellbeing.

Quality of life (QOL) therapy

Quality of life therapy is a comprehensive approach that has been evaluated as a package, thus it is the sum of its parts (Frisch, 1998, 2006; Frisch et al., 2005).

Applying positive psychology to education

One of the fastest growing directions in applied positive psychology is within the domain of positive educational curricula. At the present time, several curriculums worldwide incorporate the principles of positive psychology to varying degrees.

The reasons for the focus on the development of wellbeing in children are twofold. On the one hand, Western countries are facing an unprecedented increase in childhood and adolescent depression. Positive education aims to develop the skills of wellbeing, flourishing and optimal functioning in children, teenagers and students, as well as parents and educational institutions. In doing that it adopts both the preventative and enabling developmental functions. Importantly, positive education is

underpinned by the principles and methods of empirical validation, which is what differentiates positive psychology from self-help initiatives.

Parenting

Parenting is one of those activities that people take for granted: most parents learn their skills from their parents and 'on-the-spot' in the process of bringing up their own children. Although there are different views on what constitutes 'good' parenting, child psychologists generally agree that it is essential to support healthy development, social adjustment, academic achievement and self-esteem.

Recent research in positive psychology took the question of positive parenting even further and identified seven Pillars of
 Parenting that focus on the psychological needs of children (Cameron and Maginn, 2008):

■ Care and protection – sensitivity to a child's basic needs shows the child that we care and that the child is important.

■ Secure attachment – appears to act as a buffer against anxiety and to operate as a protective mechanism.

■ Positive self-perception – essential to allow the development of a positive self-image.

■ Emotional competence – this ability underpins the successful development of relationships outside the family and may moderate susceptibility to and propensity for later mental health problems.

■ Self-management – prevents inappropriate behaviour when enticing or compelling outside factors try to intrude.

■ Resilience – resilient individuals seem to be able to understand what has happened to them in life (insight), develop understanding of others (empathy) and gain control over their life experiences (achievement).

■ a sense of belonging – research on relationships has established human beings as fundamentally social and highlighted the need to belong.

Positive psychology and business organizations

Positive organizing is the term used to describe the links between positive psychology and organizational theory, 'in general terms, it refers to the generative dynamics in and of the organizations that enable individuals, groups and organizations as a whole to flourish (Fredrickson

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and Dutton, 2008: 1). Positive organization scholarship regards organizations as macro contexts that shape positive states and positive outcomes for individuals, groups and whole organizations (Cameron et al., as cited in Fredrickson and Dutton, 2008: 1). Positive organizational behaviors is a vein of this work that focuses more narrowly on developed positive psychological states that enhance human performance.

Positive psychology interventions within health organizations

Unfortunately, there are several issues when attempting to apply positive psychology within healthcare settings (Harris and Thoresen, 2006), especially since strengths-based approaches are not commonplace. However, when applied to hospitals, community mental health centers and disorder-focused psychotherapy centers, the use of positive psychology based interventions (for example, forgiveness; self-efficacy training) can have a tremendous effect on healthcare settings that have traditionally been focused on reducing suffering rather than building strengths. Research has also shown that within healthcare work settings, such as nursing, organizational respect (defined as 'esteem, dignity, care for others' positive self-regard and the collective nature of organizational life', Ramarajan et al., 2008: 5) can have a significant effect on the reduction of burnout and emotional exhaustion of its employees (Ramarajan et al., 2008). Additionally, organizations can implement interventions to enhance organizational respect, which have been found to significantly reduce emotional tiredness (Ramarajan et al., 2008).

Positive psychology and public policy

Countries around the world have traditionally measured the wealth of their nation by gross domestic product (GDP). Robert Kennedy famously criticized this method of analysis, claiming that governments measure everything but what makes life worth living. Positive psychologists have made progress within the area of public policy, recommending the implementation of subjective wellbeing measures into a government's assessment of individuals and societal quality of life and subjective wellbeing (Diener et al., 2009). Not only can these tools give governments an idea of how 'happy' their people are, it can help distinguish between what projects and schemes actually increase/decrease their citizens' wellbeing. Governments around the world have heeded this information

(for example, Britain) and are currently employing wellbeing measurements in their general citizen polls (Stiglitz et al., 2009). Overall, the application of positive psychology to therapy, coaching, education, the organizational setting and public policy is rapidly growing. The increase in funding for evaluating larger scale and longitudinal programmes will further validate positive psychology within the psychological sciences.

Check your progress

1. What is spirituality?

2. Who proposed REBT?

LIVING WELL AT EVERY STAGESOF LIFE

The life span is described across childhood (birth to age 11), youth (ages 12 to 25), adulthood (ages 26 to 59), and older adulthood (age 60 to death)

10.4 POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The teachers, counselors, and psychologists who are committed to positive youth development recognize the good in our youth and focus on each child's strengths and potential (Damon, 2004). Building on Pittman and Fleming's definition (1991, p. ii, first line of our definition), we (Lopez & McKnight, 2002, p. 3) articulate how components of development interact over time to yield healthy adults:

Positive youth development should be seen as an ongoing, inevitable process in which all youth are engaged and all youth are invested. Youth interact with their environment and positive agents (e.g., youth and

adults who support healthy development, institutions that create climates conducive to growth, programs that foster change) to meet their basic needs and cultivate assets. Through [their 1 initiative (sometimes combined with the support of positive agents), momentum builds, and youth who are capable of meeting basic needs challenge themselves to attain other goals; youth use assets to build additional psychological resources that facilitate growth. Ideally, positive youth development generates physical and psychological competencies that serve to facilitate the transition into an adulthood characterized by striving for continued growth. the positive qualities of our youth combine (in an intentional manner) with the resources of the environment and positive agents (caring youth and adults) in the context of a program (see subsequent descriptions) to promote

healthy development. Healthy development is marked by the attainment of some of the following nine positive outcomes (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 1998) targeted by positive programs.

Check your progress

3. What is resilience?
4. Mention the life periods of adulthood?

10.5 The Life Tasks of Adulthood

Identity is typically developed during adolescence or early adulthood, when people's views, values, and interests begin to become their own rather than a reflection of their caregivers' beliefs. (Failure to develop a personal identity can preclude meaningful engagement with people and work.) With the development of identity, a person is more likely to seek an interdependent, committed relationship with another person and thereby achieve intimacy. Career consolidation is a life task that requires the development of a social identity. Engagement with a career is characterized by contentment, compensation, competence, and commitment. For many people, career consolidation, like the other tasks, is "worked on" rather than achieved tasks associated with generatively, people become involved in the building of a broader social circle through a "giving away" of self. As mastery of the first three tasks is achieved, adults may possess the competence and altruism needed to directly mentor the next generation of adults. In the context of a larger social circle, some people take on the task of becoming keepers of meaning. The keeper of meaning has perspective on the workings of the world and of people, and this person is willing to share that wisdom with others. The keeper protects traditions and rituals that may facilitate the development of younger people.

10.6 Successful Aging

The study of the positive aspects of aging (referred to as *positive aging, healthy aging, successful aging,* and *aging well)* is only several decades old. It will become a primary focus of psychological science, however, given the trends in American demography that will demand the attentions of scientists and the general public. The term *successful aging* was popularized by Robert Havighurst (1961) when he wrote about "adding life to years" in the first issue of *The Gerontologist.* Havighurst also primed

scholarly interest in healthy aspects of getting older. Rowe and Kahn (1998), summarizing the findings from the MacArthur Study of Successful Aging, proposed three components of successful aging: (1) avoiding disease, (2) engagement with life, and (3) maintaining high cognitive and physical functioning. These three components are aspects of «maintaining a lifestyle that involves normal, valued, and beneficial activities" (Williamson, 2002, p. 681). Vaillant (2002) simplifies the definition further by characterizing successful aging as joy, love, and learning. Social support is most potent when it is mutual; the support given is balanced by support received. Two kinds of support are important for successful aging: socioemotional support (liking and loving) and instrumental support (assistance when someone is in need).

10.7 Let's Sum Up

Spirituality means a search for the sacred. Pathways involve systems of belief that include those of traditional organized religions.

These pathways to the sacred also may be described as spiritual strivings, which included personal goals associated with the ultimate concerns of purpose, ethics, and recognition of the transcendent. In addition, therapy should recognize, use and build a patient's existing strengths and resources rather than view the client as flawed and disordered Positive therapy is not just concerned with enhancing strengths and qualities within the individual but also with the prevention of mental illness and ill-being. Positive psychology applied in various fields like education, business organizations, health organizations, public policy making etc. Identity is typically developed during adolescence or early adulthood, when people's views, values, and interests begin to become their own rather than a reflection of their caregivers' beliefs. The term *successful aging* was popularized by Robert Havighurst (1961) when he wrote about "adding life to years" in the first issue of *The Gerontologist.* Havighurst also primed scholarly interest in healthy aspects of getting older.

10.8 Unit End Exercise

1. Write about the benefits of spirituality?

2. Explain REBT.

3. Write about the application of positive psychology in various fields.

4. What is positive therapy?

5. What is successful aging?

10.9 Answers for check your progress

1. Spirituality means "the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that arise from a search for the sacred"

2. Ellis.

3. Bounce back.

4. Ages 26 to 59.

10.10 Suggested Readings:

 1. Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.), _Handbook of Positive Psychology_ (pp. 423-433). New York: Oxford University Press.

2. Peterson, C. & Seligman, M. (2004). _Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification._ Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3. Seligman, Martin (2004), _Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment_. New York: Free Press.

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Unit 11
Stratgies to Enhance Happiness

Structure

11. 1Introduction

We attempt to add to what you know about pleasure by going far beyond Freud's (1936) pleasure principle (the demand that an instinctive need be gratified regardless of the consequences) and by fostering an understanding of the many principles of pleasure that have been linked to good living. In this process, we present what we know about that which makes modern life pleasurable. We also summarize research that examines the distinctions between positive and negative affect. Here we explore the many definitions of happiness and well-being, qualities of pleasurable living.

11.2 Objectives

After completing this unit, you will be able to understand the following concepts like

- Positive emotion
- Pleasure principle
- Meaning of life
- Self determination theory and
- Self esteem

11.3 Pleasure Principle

The pleasure principle mainly depends upon affect and emotion. The effective management of emotion is the key for happiness. We must know the basic terms like affect, subjective well being etc. for better understanding.

AFFECT

Affect is a person's immediate, physiological response to a stimulus, and it is typically based on an underlying sense of arousal.

SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

Subjective well-being as a combination of positive affect (in the absence of negative affect) and general life satisfaction (Le., subjective appreciation of life's rewards). The term subjective well-being often is used as a synonym for happiness in the psychology literature.

11.4 Positive Emotions

Cornell University psychologist Alice Isen is a pioneer in the examination of positive emotions. Dr. Isen found that, when experiencing mild positive emotions, we are more likely (1) to help other people (Isen, 1987), (2) to be flexible in our thinking (Ashby, Isen, & Turken, 1999), and (3) to come up with solutions to our problems (Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987). Feeling positive emotion also can help in seeing problem-solving options and finding cues for good decision making (Estrada, Isen, & Young, 1997)

Building on Isen's work, Fredrickson (2000) has developed a new theoretical framework, the broaden-and-build model, that may provide some explanations for the robust social and cognitive effects of positive emotional experiences. Human reactions to positive emotions often are more cognitive than physical. For these reasons, she proposes discarding the specific action tendency concept (which suggests a restricted range of possible behavioral options) in favor of newer, more inclusive term, momentary thought-action repertoires (which suggest a broad range of behavioral options; imagine "taking off blinders" and seeing available opportunities). Fredrickson (2000) demonstrated that the experience of joy expands the realm of what a person feels like doing at the time; this is referred to as the broadening of an individual's momentary thought-action repertoire

Joy also increases our likelihood of behaving positively toward other people, along with developing more positive relationships. Furthermore, joy duces playfulness (Frijda, 1994), which is quite important because such behaviors are evolutionarily adaptive in acquisition of necessary resources. Juvenile play builds (1) enduring social and intellectual resources by encouraging attachment, (2) higher levels of creativity, and (3) brain development (Fredrickson, 2002).

It appears that, through the effects of broadening processes, positive emotions also can help build resources. Positive emotions help people build enduring resources and recover from negative experiences, Fredrickson and Losada (2005) hypothesized that positive emotions might be associated with optimal mental health or flourishing.

11.4.1 SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

Building on a utilitarian tradition and the tenets of hedonic psychology Diener (1984; 2000; Diener et al., 2002) considers well-being to be the subjective. More specifically, well-being involves our experience of pleasure and our appreciation of life's rewards.

Given this view, Diener defines subjective well-being as a combination of positive affect (in the absence of negative affect) and general life satisfaction.

11.4.2 HAPPINESS + MEANING = WELL-BEING

Psychologists who support the hedonic perspective view subjective well-being and happiness as synonymous. Alternatively, the scholars whose ideas about well-being are more consistent with Aristotle's views on *eudaimonia* believe that happiness and well-being are not synonymous. In this latter perspective, *eudaimonia* is comprised of happiness and meaning. Stated in a simple formula, well-being = happiness + meaning. In order to subscribe to this latter view of well-being, one must understand virtue and the social implications of daily behavior.

Check your progress

1. What is affect?

2. What is subjective well being?

11.5 Meaning and purpose in life

Throughout several areas of research and practice, the issue surrounding the meaning of life and meaning within life is essential to fulfilled individuals (Steger, 2009; Wong, 2009). Meaninglessness in life has been proposed to be akin to the existential fear of death. Researchers argue that when one is faced with meaninglessness, one can encounter several negative experiences. Thus, researchers would argue that the search for meaning and purpose is more relevant than the search for happiness (Wong, 2009). Researchers also argue that not only should we be measuring meaning in life but the structural properties of personal meaning systems, such as 'differentiation (how diverse the sources of meaning are), elaboration (how people construct their own links and connections between events to give life purpose) and coherence (how well do all the features fit together) measures' (Pöhlmann et al., 2006: 111). These measures enhance mental and physical health/wellbeing and predict life satisfaction (Pöhlmann et al., 2006).

Frankl's work on meaning is still important today. His concept of 'will to meaning' proposed three benefits of living a meaningful life, including: creative, experiential and attitudinal value. Since Frankl's contribution, researchers have identified seven major sources of meaning, found cross-culturally, including: achievement, acceptance, relationship, intimacy, religion, self-transcendence and fairness.

McGregor and Little (1998) analysed a diverse set of mental health indicators and concluded that the concept of wellbeing should be regarded as consisting of two elements: happiness (satisfaction with life, positive affect, negative affect) and meaning.

11.6 Self-determination theory (SDT)

Self-determination theory argues, like Maslow's hierarchy of needs, that there is an evolutionary adaptive function of three basic psychological needs. Autonomy is the tendency to self-regulate one's behaviour in accordance with personal volition (rather than external control). It is also the tendency to resist coercion, pressure, and control; to regulate one's behaviour in accordance with one's own needs (and situational affordances), which promotes better survival than organizing behaviour to meet external demands.

Competence is the tendency to be interested and open, to seek learning/mastery opportunities (promote acquisition of new skills). The need for competence manifests in early motor play, manipulation of objects, and exploration of surroundings. The tendency to experience satisfaction from learning for its own sake – and the tendency to explore and seek challenges. This need is shared to some degree with other mammals. Thus, competence is the ability to affect the environment and attain desired outcomes.

Relatedness is the tendency to feel connection and caring with group members (it promotes group cohesion and mutual protection). It is similar to Baumeister and Leary's 'need to belong' and overlaps with Bowlby's attachment need. This need can at times conflict with need for autonomy but normally it is complementary.

11.7 Self Esteem

The nature of his self-evaluation has profound effects on a man's thinking process, emotions, desires, values, and goals. It is the single most significant key to his behavior. To understand a man psychologically, one must understand the nature and degree of his self-esteem, and the standards by which he judges himself. Man experiences his desire for self-esteem as an urgent imperative, as a basic need. Whether he identifies the issue explicitly or not, he cannot escape the feeling that his estimate of himself is of life-and-death importance. No one can be indifferent to the question of how he judges himself; his nature does not allow man that option. Self-esteem has two interrelated aspects: it entails a sense of personal efficacy and a sense of personal worth. It is the integrated sum of self-confidence and self-respect. It is the conviction that one is *competent* to live and *worthy* of living.

Man's need of self-esteem is inherent in his nature.

Check your progress

3. What is competency?

4. What is self esteem?

Self-Confidence:

Since reality confronts him with constant alternatives, since man must *choose* his goals and actions, his life and happiness require that he be *right*—right in the conclusions he draws and the choices he makes. But he

cannot step outside the possibilities of his nature: he cannot demand or expect omniscience or infallibility. What he needs is that which *is* within his power: the conviction that his *method* of choosing and of making decisions—i.e., his characteristic manner of using his consciousness (his psycho-epistemology)—is right, right *in principle*, appropriate to reality.

An organism whose consciousness functions automatically, faces no such problem: it cannot question the validity of its own mental operations. But for man, whose consciousness is volitional, there can be no more urgent concern. Man is the only living species able to reject, sabotage, and betray his own means of survival, his mind. He is the only living species who must make himself competent to live—by the proper exercise of his rational faculty. It is his primary responsibility as a living organism. How a man chooses to deal with this issue is, psychologically, the most significant fact about him—because it lies at the very core of his being as a biological entity.

11.8 Let's Sum Up

The pleasure principle mainly depends upon affect and emotion. The effective management of emotion is the key for happiness Dr. Isen found that, when experiencing mild positive emotions, we are more likely (1) to help other people (Isen, 1987), (2) to be flexible in our thinking (Ashby, Isen, & Turken, 1999), and (3) to come up with solutions to our problems. Fredrickson (2000) has developed a new theoretical framework, the broaden-and-build model.

Joy also increases our likelihood of behaving positively toward other people, along with developing more positive relationships. Meaninglessness in life has been proposed to be akin to the existential fear of death. Researchers argue that when one is faced with meaninglessness, one can encounter several negative experiences. Thus, researchers would argue that the search for meaning and purpose is more relevant than the search for happiness.

Self-determination theory argues, like Maslow's hierarchy of needs, that there is an evolutionary adaptive function of three basic psychological needs. Autonomy is the tendency to self-regulate one's behaviour in accordance with personal volition (rather than external control). The nature of his self-evaluation has profound effects on a man's

thinking process, emotions, desires, values, and goals. It is the single most significant key to his behavior.

11.9 Unit End Exercise

1. Explain Isen theory of positive emotion.

2. Write about the purpose of life.

3. What is self determination theory?

4. Write about self esteem.

11. 10 Answers for check your progress

1. Affect is a person's immediate, physiological response to a stimulus, and it is typically based on an underlying sense of arousal.

2. Subjective well-being as a combination of positive affect (in the absence of negative affect) and general life satisfaction

3. Competence is the tendency to be interested and open, to seek learning/mastery opportunities (promote acquisition of new skills).

4. The nature of his self-evaluation has profound effects on a man's thinking process, emotions, desires, values, and goals.

11.11 Suggested Readings:

1. Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (pp. 423-433). New York: Oxford University Press.

2. Peterson, C. & Seligman, M. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3. Seligman, Martin (2004), *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. New York: Free Press.

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Unit 12

Character, Strength and Virtues

Structure:

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Yearley (1990) summarized the modern field of virtue ethics. First, the typical definition of a virtue in effect identifies it as a personality trait, that is, "a disposition to act, desire, and feel that involves the exercise of judgment and leads to a recognizable human excellence or instance of human flourishing". Moreover, virtues are not segregated mechanisms with automatic effects on behavior. Second, listed virtues are typically numerous, drawn from different levels of abstractness, and potentially in conflict. A hierarchy of virtues is therefore introduced by most philosophers to help determine when one or another virtue should be manifested. Third, in the act of displaying a virtue, someone does not think of the virtue per se or the way of life to which it is related. Fourth, enumerated virtues and their hierarchical organization depend on the way of life—the cultural ethos—in which they are embedded. Indeed, the way of life can dictate the content of a virtue.

12.2 Objectives:

After completing this unit, you will be able to understand the following concept.

- Classification of strength
- Strength finds themes
- VIA classification

12.3 Classifications and measures of strengths and positive outcomes

Subject matter of positive psychology can be classified into three domains (Seligman 2002):

The first domain is the pleasant life which deals with positive emotions about the past, present, and future. It aims to maximize positive emotions and minimize negative emotions. Next is the engaged life which deals with positive individual traits and engaging with interesting activities.

The meaningful life deals with positive institutions and refers to having meaning and purpose in one's life. Positive psychology is a young field. Even in its short history it has focuses on many aspects of happy and healthy living. However, there are some areas that have yet to be explored in depth. One of such areas is the intersection between culture and positive psychology. Positive psychology is often criticized for taking a Western perspective. It is also said that the concepts and theories of positive psychology apply more to developed countries who are now in a post materialistic era. Hence, positive psychology must take in from other cultures, concepts of good life and the factors affecting happiness.

Positive health refers to well-being beyond the mere absence of disease. Positive health aims to empirically identify health assets by determining factors that predict health and illness. The health assets include biological, subjective, functional health assets etc. Positive Health is patterned after positive psychology which focuses on the presence of specific psychological assets of PERMA—positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement.
(Peterson, Park and Seligman, 2005).

Clifton wanted to study what is right with people. He believed that talents could be studied in various settings. He stated that talents are natural. According to him, strengths are extensions of talent and it combines talent with related knowledge and skills. He also believed that success is closely related to personal talents, strengths and analytical intelligence. Clifton and his colleagues identified about three dozen themes of talents.

12.4 The Clifton Strengths Finder Themes

Achiever – People strong in this theme have a constant drive for accomplishing tasks. They like being busy and productive

Activator - People strong in this theme act to start things in motion and turn thoughts into actions

Adaptability - People strong in this theme easily accommodate to changes in plan. They prefer to go with the flow

Analytical - People strong in this theme require data to make sense of their circumstances.

Arranger - People strong in this theme enjoy juggling many tasks and variables to a reach an outcome

Belief - People strong in this theme attempt to find meaning behind everything that they undertake

Command - People strong in this theme take up positions of leadership

Communication - People strong in this theme use words to inspire action and are good conversationalists

Competition - People strong in this theme thrive on competition to be successful

Connectedness - People strong in this theme seek to unite others

Consistency - People strong in this theme believe in treating everyone the same

Context - People strong in this theme use the past to make better decisions in the present

Deliberative - People strong in this theme proceed with caution, and always seek to have a plan

Developer - People strong in this theme recognize and enhance the hidden potential in others

Discipline - People strong in this theme seek to make sense of the world by imposing order

Empathy - People strong in this theme understand the emotions of others.

Focus - People strong in this theme require a clear sense of direction.

Futuristic - People strong in this theme have a keen sense of the future.

Harmony - People strong in this theme seek to avoid conflict through consensus.

Ideation - People strong in this theme are able at finding underlying concepts that unite ideas

Includer - People strong in this theme instinctively work to include everyone

Individualization - People strong in this theme tap the uniqueness of individuals

Input - People strong in this theme constantly collect information for future use

Intellection - People strong in this theme enjoy thinking and thought-provoking conversation

Learner - People strong in this theme learn new things to feel successful

Maximizer - People strong in this theme try to take things from great to excellent

Positivity - People strong in this theme try to look at the bright-side to any situation

Relator - People strong in this theme prefer fewer, but deeper relationships

Responsibility - People strong in this theme follow their commitments

Restorative - People strong in this theme love to solve difficult problems

Self-Assurance - People strong in this theme stay true to their beliefs, and have confidence in their ability

Significance - People strong in this theme want to be seen as significant by others

Strategic - People strong in this theme are able to see a clear direction even in a complex situation

Woo – WOO stands for winning over other

12.5 The VIA Classification of Virtues and Strengths

Peterson and Seligman state that there is a language in psychology to talk about the negative aspects and what is wrong with people but an equal terminology to describe human strengths is lacking. The VIA classification provides such a language and provides a strength based approach to diagnosis and treatment.

The VIA classification began with the question of defining the concepts of strength and highest potential. It also aimed to assess the efficacy of a positive youth development program. Peterson, Seligman and other colleagues concluded that character included virtues, character strengths and situational themes.

The Values in Action Classification of strengths is a system in which distinctions are made between virtues, strengths and enabling themes. Virtues are core characteristics valued by moral philosophers, such

as wisdom or courage, and strengths are less abstract personality traits which may be used to achieve virtues. The 24 strengths associated with the 6 virtues of this classification system.

Distinguishing Virtues, Character Strengths, and Situational Themes

Virtues are the core characteristics which are valued such as wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. These six categories of virtue are considered to be universal. If a person possesses these virtues at above-threshold values he is considered to be of good character.

Character strengths are the psychological processes that display the virtues. Situational themes are habits by virtue of which people manifest certain character strengths in given situations.

Themes differ from character strengths in since they are located in specific situations. Themes in themselves are neither good nor bad; they can be used to achieve strengths but can also be used for wrong purposes.

Check Your Progress

1. Who proposed the strength finder theme?
2. What is the full form of VIA?

SIGNATURE STRENGTHS

Seligman (2002) distinguishes between two distinct classes of positive emotions concerned with the present: momentary pleasures and more enduring gratifications. While pleasures arise from sensual experiences, gratifications entail states of absorption or flow that come from engagement in activities which involve using signature strengths.

Sailing, dancing, reading, creative writing and teaching are examples of such activities. Signature strengths are personal traits on which particularly high scores are obtained, associated with particular virtues, defined in the Values in Action Classification of Strengths (Peterson and Seligman, 2001).

The VIA Classification of Virtues and Strengths

1. Wisdom and Knowledge – Cognitive strengths related to the acquisition and use of knowledge

Creativity

Curiosity

Judgment

Love of Learning

Perspective

2. Courage – Emotional strengths involving the will to achieve goals in the face of difficulties

Bravery

Perseverance

Honesty

Zest

3. Humanity - Interpersonal strengths

Love

Kindness

Social Intelligence

4. Justice

Teamwork

Fairness

Leadership

5. Temperance – Strengths that protect against excess

Forgiveness

Humility

Prudence

Self-Regulation

6. Transcendence - Strengths that make connections to the larger universe and provide meaning

Gratitude

Hope

Humor

Spirituality

Appreciation of beauty and

Excellence

The main areas of life in which it is important to use signature strengths are: (1) our relationships with our romantic partners; (2) our relationships with our children; (3) our work setting; and (4) in our leisure activities.

12.6 Barriers in developing strengths and virtues.

An individual can develop his strength at any phase of life. For that he needs some favorable, conditions. If the situation favors, he might be

the best human in this world. We can categorize the conditions into two categories, they are internal and external.

External factors:

The factors that affect individual strength from outside himself is called as external factors.

Time:

Time and tide wait for none", this proverb emphasize the importance of time. Those who are using time consciously will conquer this world. The secret behind all the successful peoples are time management. Time is the main attribute of all.

Supporting environment:

The well organized, loving family helps their member to develop the virtues. Parental role is incredible in personal development. Next to family to school and society plays crucial role in development of strength. Positive friends and encourages him to turn a good human **Boundaries and expectations.**

The world is not favorable to anyone to all the time. Life like a wheel. The ups and downs are very common in this world. We have to accept the reality and face the challenge placed in front of us. The less we expect more we get in our life. Supporting family members and

Friends walked with us helps to pass the hard times in our life.

Internal factors

The factors like attitude, willingness to learn, intelligent, skill commitment are the factors that develops the positive strength. These factors are person itself.

Commitment to learning

Learning is continues process. These who ready to challenge can adopt any difficult will learn lessons from the failures.

Skill:

Skill is an important aspect to human strength human skills like attitude, patience, commitment etc. encourages to develop a positive characters.

Attitude:

Attitude determines the attitude of the success. Positive attitude takes to the success life. Attitude changes individual's perspective on

various values. Better perspectives are the foundation for all the positive values.

Positive values

Positive values bring out the strength from inside of the individual moral and virtues. Moral values helps a man to develop the strength and motivate to express the values to the society whenever it is needed.

Check your Progress

3. What is signature strength?

4. What are the two broad categories of barriers in developing strength?

12.7 Let's sum up

Subject matter of positive psychology can be classified into three domains (Seligman 2002):

The first domain is the pleasant life which deals with positive emotions about the past, present, and future. It aims to maximize positive emotions and minimize negative emotions. Positive health refers to well-being beyond the mere absence of disease. Positive health aims to empirically identify health assets by determining factors that predict health and illness.

The VIA classification provides such a language and provides a strength based approach to diagnosis and treatment.

The VIA classification began with the question of defining the concepts of strength and highest potential. It also aimed to assess the efficacy of a positive youth development program. Seligman (2002) distinguishes between two distinct classes of positive emotions concerned with the present: momentary pleasures and more enduring gratifications.

12.8 Unit end exercise

1. Explain the Clifton strength finder

2. Write about the VIA classification

3. Write briefly about the barriers in developing human strength

4. How does family helps the individual to develop positive values.

12.9 Answer for check your progress

1. Clifton

2. Value In Action

3. Signature strengths are personal traits on which particularly high scores are obtained, associated with particular virtues, defined in the VIA.

4. External and internal

12.10 Suggested reading:

1. Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (pp. 423-433). New York: Oxford University Press.

2. Peterson, C. & Seligman, M. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3. Seligman, Martin (2004), *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. New York: Free Press.

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Unit 13

Meeting the Life Challenges

Structure

13.1 Introduction

The word stress means many things in modern life. In engineering, stress is the strain on a bridge when a heavy truck drives across it; stress is the response of the bridge to the truck's weight. But stress is also a stimulus. The truck is a "stressor" for the bridge, just as being fired from a job or facing a difficult final exam is a stimulus or stressor for a person. We concentrate on stress as the physiological response of the individual to a stressor.

13.2 Objectives

On completion of this unit, you will be able to understand the following concepts like

- Stress
- Coping skills

13.3 Stress

Scientists define *stress* as any challenging event that requires physiological, cognitive, or behavioral adaptation. Stress may involve minor, daily hassles, like taking an exam, or major events, such as going through a divorce. The most common daily stressors involve interpersonal

arguments and tensions (Almeida, 2005). T*raumatic stress* involves actual or threatened death or serious injury to oneself or others and a reaction of intense fear, helplessness, or horror.

13.3.1 Symptoms of Stress

Stress is a part of life. In fact, stress is an *adaptive* response to many aspects of living. Cannon (1935) viewed stress as the activation of the fight-or-flight response.

Psycho physiological Responses to Stress

Physiologically, the fight-or-flight response activates the *sympathetic nervous system:* Your heart and respiration rates increase, your blood pressure rises, your pupils dilate, your blood sugar levels elevate, and your blood flow is redirected in preparation for muscular activity (Baum et al., 1987; Koranyi, 1989). These physiological reactions heighten attention, provide energy for quick action, and prepare the body for injury (Sapolsky, 1992, 2003)

Illness and Chronic Stress When repeated over time, physiological reactions to stress can leave you susceptible to illness. Cannon (1935) hypothesized that this occurs because intense or chronic stress overwhelms the body's **homeostasis** (a term he coined), the tendency to return to a steady state of normal functioning. He suggested that, over time, the prolonged arousal of the sympathetic nervous system eventually damages the body, because it no longer returns to its normal resting state. Canadian physiologist Hans Selye (1907–1982), another very influential stress researcher, offered a different hypothesis based on his concept of the **general adaptation syndrome (GAS).** Seyle's GAS consists of three stages: alarm, resistance, and exhaustion. The stage of *alarm* occurs first and involves the mobilization of the body in reaction to threat. The stage of *resistance* comes next and is a period of time during which the body is physiologically activated and prepared.

13.3.2 Acute and Chronic Stressors

Although the function of coping remains the same, it is likely that the form of an individual's attempts at coping change over the course of

time. Both internal and external stressors can be acute or chronic. For example, someone may get an excruciating headache one afternoon that seems to appear out of the blue and lasts for a few hours. Another person may have a similar headache on the same afternoon that results from a chronic condition that often produces such headaches. The chronic versus acute nature of these presentations may determine the type of coping strategy in which each individual engages. Both individuals may take some medication, drink water, and go to bed for the remainder of the day. For the first person in this example, that is likely the end of the coping necessary for this particular event. For the second person, however, there are probably more components to this particular coping event that are required to meet the demands of the stressor as the chronicity of the condition will likely begin to impact the individual emotionally, financially, and interpersonally in addition to the initial physiological and psychological effects. It is likely that more chronic stressors require more complex and diversified attempts at coping. Chronicity then becomes another factor that influences the person, environment, and strategy transaction as some strategies that may be effective for individuals with particular acute stressors may not be as effective with particular chronic stressors and may ultimately worsen the condition.

Check your progress

1. What is stress?
2. What is homeostasis?
3. What are the three stages of GAS?

13.4 Coping

People cope with stress in many ways, good and bad. Two very important, alternative strategies are problem-focused and emotion focused coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). **Problem– focused coping** involves attempts to change a stressor. If your job is stressful, you look for a new one. **Emotion focused coping** is an attempt to alter internal distress. Before taking a big exam, you sit quietly and breathe deeply to calm yourself.

Predictability and Control Events are less stressful when we are better prepared to cope with them. Studies of animals and humans show that

predictability and *control* both dramatically reduce stress. For example, when a flash of light signals an impending shock, rats show a smaller stress response than when the shock is unsignaled (Sapolsky, 1992). The predictability apparently allows animals (and humans, too) to begin to cope even before the onset of a stressor.

Outlets for Frustration Physical activity also reduces physiological reactions to stress, even when the effort does not include problem-focused coping. For example, rats secrete less cortisol following an electric shock if they can attack another rat or run on a running wheel (Sapolsky, 1992). Sound like you at the gym—or dumping on your roommates? Having *outlets for frustration* does reduce stress.

Repression *Repression* is a generally maladaptive form of emotion-focused coping (Cramer, 2000; Somerfield & McCrae, 2000). People who report positive mental health but whom clinicians judge to have emotional problems (so-called "defensive deniers") show greater psycho physiological reactions to stress (Shedler, Mayman, & Manis, 1993). On the flip side, stress is reduced when people talk about their stressful experiences (Frattaroli, 2006; Harris, 2006; Pennebaker, 1990).

Optimism In contrast to repression, *optimism* is a healthy coping style. Optimists have a positive attitude about dealing with stress, even when they cannot control it. Pessimists are defeated from the outset. Positive thinking is linked with better health habits and less illness (Carver & Scheier, 1999; Kubzansky et al., 2001).

Emotion-focused coping

Emotion-focused coping, alternatively*,* is defined as efforts aimed at managing one's own emotional dysregulation. Examples of emotion-focused coping strategies include avoidance, seeking emotional support, venting of emotions, denial, and positive reappraisal. Historically, problem-focused coping has been associated with greater psychological well-being and emotion-focused coping has been associated with greater psychological distress.

Recently, there has been attention devoted to developing a model of emotion-focused coping that emphasizes the adaptive potential of

incorporating emotional processing into coping. Stanton and her colleagues (2002) defined *emotional-approach coping* as comprised of two separate factors: —emotional processing (i.e., active attempts to acknowledge and understand emotions) and emotional expression‖

(p. 152). Thus, emotional approach coping is similar in process to problem-focused coping in as much as the strategies are to move toward the stressor and the resulting emotional consequences, as opposed to away from the stressor. Additionally, this classification of coping strategies suggests that regulating one's own emotions through examination and acceptance (among other things) can be a useful endeavor in coping with both external and internal stressors.

Check your progress

4. What is emotion focused coping?

5. What is problem focused coping?

13.4.1 Adaptive and Maladaptive Coping

Although earlier accounts of coping described these efforts as neutral, there has been some recent debate in the coping literature as to whether all coping can be classified as —adaptive‖ or if there are particular coping strategies that would be classified as —maladaptive.‖ For example, many researchers and theorists have made the argument that coping strategies emphasizing escape or avoidance of stressors or a focus on one's own emotions (however, see previous discussion of emotion-approach coping) can be considered maladaptive. Problem-focused coping, most frequently, is described as an adaptive form of coping.

The primary difficulty in attempts to classify any coping strategy as either adaptive or maladaptive is that this classification effort is inherently tautological. In other words, if a particular strategy has adaptive outcomes then this is an adaptive strategy and if the outcomes are maladaptive or negative for the individual, the strategy is defined as maladaptive. Thus, removing the conflation of outcome and coping strategy calls into question some of the evidence that particular coping strategies are inherently maladaptive.

Another potential classification of adaptive and maladaptive coping is to focus on the individual differences related to coping and determine trait level distinctions. One such individual difference that has received

significant attention, particularly in the pediatric psychology literature, is resiliency. *Resilience* has been described as both a form of coping (e.g., traumatic growth) and an individual difference that results in *improved* functioning (physical, psychological, and/or emotional) in the face of significant stressors and adversity (e.g., protective factors). The research question is how an individual emerges from a situation that might traumatize others without developing or demonstrating some sort of pathology or lasting negative consequences. If the processes by which resiliency is manifested can be identified *and* if these processes are malleable, practitioners would be able to utilize the research on resiliency to teach   effective coping to others.

Just as the model of the cognitive transaction largely replaced a static model of stress and coping, it is likely that the most useful determination of the effectiveness or adaptability of a coping strategy will be in a transactional model that considers the person, the coping strategy, the environment, and the stressor. For example, from the time of defense mechanisms to emotion-focused coping, denial and avoidance have long been considered a maladaptive coping strategy or mechanism. It is not hard to imagine, however, a stressor, person, and situation for which denial or avoidance might be an adaptive coping strategy in the short term. There are countless examples in which an individual denies the odds of recovery and surpasses all expectations or an individual denies some physical or psychological discomfort in the short-run to move toward a larger, adaptive goal. Furthermore, current research suggests that at times active attempts to avoid thinking about stressors results in increased distress while other investigations demonstrate that actively avoiding negative information can result in decreased distress. It is possible that rigidly adhering to a specific set of coping strategies or rigidly refusing to develop new coping strategies may be evidence of a coping deficit and, therefore, leads to maladaptive outcomes for the individual.

13.4.2 Applications of Coping

There are several important applications of the previously identified coping concepts for a variety of mental and physical health problems. For example, attention to the measurement and potential manipulation of appraisal variables has recently gained attention in the chronic health and disability literature. As discussed previously, a number of recent studies

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have indicated that the appraisal process significantly impacts individual adaptation to illness and injury. This work stems from the transactional model of stress and coping and demonstrates the importance of individual variation in the adjustment process for persons with chronic health conditions. Future research is needed to develop specific interventions to target change in the appraisal process in medical settings.

Additionally, continued development of models and empirical investigations of positive growth through coping following acquired disability and adaptation of persons with chronic health conditions to their environments is warranted. Unfortunately to date, researchers ―have given only scant attention to positive growth and optimal living with chronic health problems, as well as the related searches for meaning, purpose, and fulfillment‖ (Elliott, Kurylo, & Rivera, 2002, p. 689).

Only recently has attention shifted to focus on more comprehensive models in this area. For example, Elliott, Kurylo, and Rivera (2002) propose ―an integrative and dynamic model‖ which conceptualizes adjustment following a disability in several broadbased domains. Within such a model, primary components may involve individual characteristics and the immediate social and interpersonal environment, both of which influence the phenomenological and appraisal processes that comprise elements of positive growth and subsequently predict mental and physical health outcomes. These components can be viewed within a developmental continuum to reflect the ongoing process of adaptation and growth both within the person and the environment, and the changes in the interactions between the two. Empirical investigations are also needed in the coping literature that examine the correlates and associated individual differences of positive growth following disability. Because ―loss events, especially those that are sudden or unexpected, often appear to initiate a personal evaluation or stocktaking of the meaning of one's life,‖ longitudinal studies that follow individuals from the time of injury of an acquired disability or chronic illness would be particularly useful in determining the course of such growth (Nolen-Hoeksema & Davis, 2002, p. 598). In addition, as disability and chronic health conditions also are viewed as social problems, investigation of social-environmental factors (e.g., family, socioeconomic status, community values) that influence individual adjustment (e.g., resilience, hope, motivation, personal values) and personality are needed.

Studies designed to understand specific growth processes and positive transformations following loss associated with a disability will serve to inform the development of future positive psychology interventions. Interventions aimed at fostering positive life changes and helping individuals find new meaning and growth within their loss experiences will be particularly important as those living with one or more chronic health conditions are expected to increase substantially over the next few decades with the aging of society.

13.5 Positive Psychology and Coping

The integration of positive psychology and coping constructs represents a promising new area of theory and research. Coping is one area of positive psychology that is common to all individuals. Although all attempts at coping do not necessarily result in growth and flourishing, all people cope with the demands of internal and external environments that tax resources available to the individual. Thus, all organisms cope in some way and understanding this potentially adaptive process and how to increase the effectiveness of such efforts is of fundamental importance to all people. Future investigations that provide new perspectives on successful coping and are amenable to empirical validation are needed. The degree to which such models and investigations can provide specific information about which strategies work, in what contexts, and for whom, will determine the degree to which such research can be applied to increase positive adaptations. Several recent investigations have begun to demonstrate preliminary support for fostering successful coping; however, further investigations in the area of intervention research are warranted and could potentially have enormous impact on coping.

13.6 Let's sum up

Scientists define *stress* as any challenging event that requires physiological, cognitive, or behavioral adaptation stress is an *adaptive* response to many aspects of living. Cannon (1935) viewed stress as the activation of the fight-or-flight response. Physiologically, the fight-or-flight response activates the sympathetic nervous system*:* When repeated over time, physiological reactions to stress can leave you susceptible to illness. Seyle's GAS consists of three stages: alarm, resistance, and

exhaustion. People cope with stress in many ways, good and bad. Two very important, alternative strategies are problem-focused and emotion focused coping.

Problem– focused coping involves attempts to change a stressor. If your job is stressful, you look for a new one. Emotion focused coping is an attempt to alter internal distress. The integration of positive psychology and coping constructs represents a promising new area of theory and research. Coping is one area of positive psychology that is common to all individuals. All organisms cope in some way and understanding this potentially adaptive process and how to increase the effectiveness of such efforts is of fundamental importance to all people.

13.7 Unit End Exercise

1. Explain stress and its symptoms.

2. What is coping and write about the types of coping?

3. Write briefly about emotion focused coping.

4. How does the positive psychology helps individual to cope the stressors?

13.8 Answers for check your progress

1. Stress as any challenging event that requires physiological, cognitive, or behavioral adaptation.

2. Homeostasis is the tendency to return to a steady state of normal functioning.

3. GAS consists of three stages: alarm, resistance, and exhaustion.

4. Emotion focused coping is an attempt to alter internal distress. Before taking a big exam, you sit quietly and breathe deeply to calm yourself.

5. Problem– focused coping involves attempts to change a stressor. If your job is stressful, you look for a new one.

13.9 Suggested Readings

1. Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (pp. 423-433). New York: Oxford University Press.

2. Peterson, C. & Seligman, M. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3. Seligman, Martin (2004), *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. New York: Free Press.

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Unit 14

Subjective Well Being

Structure

14.1 Introduction

Subjective well-being is a broad concept that includes experiencing pleasant emotions, low levels of negative moods, and high life satisfaction. The positive experiences embodied in high subjective well-being are a core concept of positive psychology because they make life rewarding.

14.2 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you will be able to understand the following concepts:

- History of happiness
- Theories of happiness and
- Determinants of happiness

14.3 History of happiness

Throughout history, philosophers and religious leaders have suggested that diverse characteristics, such as love, wisdom, and nonattachment, are the cardinal elements of a fulfilled existence. Utilitarians such as Jeremy Bentham, however, argued that the presence of pleasure and the absence of pain are the defining characteristics of a good life. Thus, the Utilitarians were the intellectual forerunners of subjective

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well-being researchers, focusing on the emotional, mental, and physical pleasures and pains that individuals experience.

14.4 Measurements of happiness

Early survey instruments usually posed a single question about people's happiness or life satisfaction. Psychometric evaluations of these simple scales showed that they possess a degree of validity. For example, Andrews and Withey (1976) found that global questions about people's overall evaluation of their lives yielded scores that converged well with one another. As the field matured, more multi-item scales appeared, with greater reliability and validity than the single-item instruments. Lucas, Diener, and Suh (1996) demonstrated that multi-item life satisfaction, pleasant affect, and unpleasant affect scales formed factors that were separable from each other, as well as from other constructs such as self-esteem. A number of happiness, affect, and life satisfaction measures are now available.

A major concern of researchers in the field is whether self-report instruments are valid. The use of multiple methods also allows researchers to understand how people construct subjective well-being judgments.

14.5 Theories of happiness

Many theories of happiness have been proposed since Aristotle's brilliant insights. These theories can be categorized into three groups: (1) need and goal satisfaction theories, (2) process activity theories, and (3) genetic and personality predisposition theories. The first constellation of theories centers around the idea that the reduction of tensions (e.g.,the elimination of pain and the satisfaction of biological and psychological needs) leads to happiness.

Goal theorists argue that individuals attain subjective well-being when they move toward an ideal state or accomplish a valued aim (the standard). Other researchers have extended this idea to incorporate the degree of discrepancy from other potential comparison standards.

Need and goal satisfaction theorists argue that the reduction of tension and satisfaction of biological and psychological needs and goals will cause happiness. One implication of tension-reduction theories is that happiness occurs after needs are met and goals are fulfilled. In other words,

happiness is a desired end state toward which all activity is directed. Csikszentmihalyi (1975) suggested that people are happiest when they are engaged in interesting activities that match their level of skill.

Both needs theorists and activity theorists argue that subjective well-being will change with the conditions in people's lives. When individuals are approaching their goals or are engaged in interesting activities, they should experience positive well-being. However, other theorists argue that there is an element of stability in people's levels of well-being that cannot be explained by the stability in the conditions of people's lives. These theorists argue that subjective well-being is strongly influenced by stable personality dispositions.

Check your progress

1. Name the happiness theories?
2. Who proposed need and goal theory of happiness?

14.6 Determinants of happiness

Well-being is a dynamic concept that includes subjective, social, and psychological dimensions. Psychological well-being, social well-being and health-related quality of life are constructs related to, but distinct from, subjective well-being. A number of factors that contribute to happiness are as follows:

Personality traits and happiness: Personality studies of happiness show that happy and unhappy people have distinctive personality profiles (Diener et al., 1999). Happy people in western cultures are found to be extraverted, optimistic, having high self-esteem and an internal locus of control. In contrast, unhappy people are found to be high on neuroticism. However, a significant relationship has not been found between intelligence and happiness.

Cultural factors partially determine the types of personality factors associated with happiness. In western individualistic cultures such as the USA, self-esteem and acting in congruence with one's personal beliefs and personality factors is associated with high levels of subjective well-being. However, subjective wellbeing is not correlated with these factors in eastern collectivist societies. Therefore, it can be said that cultural values

partially determine personality traits that affect subjective well-being, probably because these traits are associated with achieving culturally valued goals (Triandis, 2000).

Genetic and environmental basis for personality traits: *Evidence* shows that 50 per cent of the variance in major personality traits such as extraversion and neuroticism may be accounted for by genetic factors (Riemann et al., 1997). Whereas children with high activity levels and positive affect become extraverted, and hence more likely to be happy, children who are highly irritable and fearful show high levels of neuroticism in later life and so are more likely to show negative affectivity.

Optimism, self-esteem and locus of control are also personality traits which correlate with happiness. Secure attachment is also related to these personal strengths. Optimistic children learn their optimism from their parents who adopt an optimistic explanatory style (Seligman, 1998).

Heritability of a happiness set-point: Professor **David Lykken (1999),** in the Minnesota Study of Twins Reared Apart, found that about half of the variance in current happiness or subjective well-being is due to genetic factors. However, the set-point for happiness (stable point around which people's mood varies over periods such as a decade) is about 98 per cent determined genetically.

Culture and Happiness: Specific cultural and socio-political factors have also been found to play an important role in determining happiness (Triandis, 2000). In cross-cultural studies consistently been a relationship is found between subjective well-being and living in a stable democracy. Cultures in which there is social equality have higher mean levels of subjective wellbeing.

Subjective well-being is greater in individualist cultures than in collectivist cultures.

Happiness is also associated with important features of government institutions. Subjective wellbeing is higher in welfare states; in countries in which public institutions run efficiently: and in which there are satisfactory relationships between the citizens and bureaucracy members.

Relationships and Happiness

Marriage: Married people have been found to be happier than unmarried people, be they divorced, separated or never married (Myers, 2000). However, the least happy of all are people in unhappy marriages. Marriages in which people communicate clearly and respectfully and forgive each other's faults are usually associated with higher levels of satisfaction.

Kinship: Close ties between parents and children, between siblings, and between extended family members enlarge the social support network of an individual. Social support enhances subjective well-being and from an evolutionary perspective we are hard-wired' to derive happiness from this contact with our kinship network.

Friendship: Maintaining a few close confiding relationships has been found to correlate with happiness and subjective well-being.

Acquaintances: Co-operation with acquaintances, who are neither family nor close friends, is a potential source of happiness and a way of avoiding unhappiness due to loss of status and inequalities which inevitably arises from regular involvement in competition (Buss, 2000).

Religion and spirituality: Moderate correlations have been found between happiness and involvement in religious activity in North American studies (Myers, 2000). This could be due to the following reasons: *First*, religion provides a belief system through which people to find meaning and hope (Seligman, 2002). *Second*, the involvement religious activities like visiting the place of worship, doing charity etc provides people with social support. *Third*, involvement in religion leads to a healthier lifestyle.

The Environment and Happiness: More pleasant physical environments are moderately associated with happiness. Geographical location, housing, weather and the availability of music can all have short-term positive effects on well-being.

Geographical location and other aspects of the environment: Well being has been found to be associated with being in natural rather than

artificial environments. People report positive feelings in geographical locations where there is vegetation, water and panoramic views (Ulrich et al., 1991).

Good weather induces positive moods. When the sun is shining, when it's warm but not too warm, and when there is low humidity, people report more positive moods (Cunningham, 1979). Moderate correlations have been found between the quality of housing and life satisfaction.

Health: While subjective ratings of personal health correlate with happiness, objective health ratings made by physicians do not correlate with happiness (except where people are severely disabled) (Diener et al., 1999). The immune systems of happy people work more effectively than those of unhappy people (Stone et al., 1994).

Exercise: In the short term, exercise induces positive mood states and in the long term regular exercise leads to greater happiness (Sarafino, 2002).

Productivity and Happiness: Employment status, job satisfaction, and goal-directed activity are all associated with subjective wellbeing and there is also an association between education and happiness in certain circumstances.

Work: Employment status is related to happiness. Employed people are happier than those who are unemployed, and people in professional and skilled jobs being happier than those in unskilled jobs (Argyle, 2001). Job satisfaction and happiness have a moderate correlation of about r=0.4 (Diener et al., 1999).

Education: Education level is positively correlated with happiness and this relationship is particularly strong for low income groups in developed countries and populations in poorer countries (Diener et al., 1999).

Goal attainment: People report greater happiness on days when they achieve highly valued goals than on days when they achieve less valued goals (Diener et al., 1999).

Recreation and Happiness: Rest, relaxation, good food and leisure activities all have positive short-term effects on happiness (Argyle, 2001).ty of housing include geographical location, rooms per person, room size and availability of heating (Andrews and Withey, 1976).

14.7 Let's Sum Up

The positive experiences embodied in high subjective well-being are a core concept of positive psychology because they make life rewarding. Utilitarians said that the presence of pleasure and the absence of pain are the defining characteristics of a good life. These theories can be categorized into three groups: (1) need and goal satisfaction theories, (2) process activity theories, and (3) genetic and personality predisposition theories.

Goal theorists argue that individuals attain subjective well-being when they move toward an ideal state or accomplish a valued aim (the standard). Need and goal satisfaction theorists argue that the reduction of tension and satisfaction of biological and psychological needs and goals will cause happiness. Both needs theorists and activity theorists argue that subjective well-being will change with the conditions in people's lives. Personality studies of happiness show that happy and unhappy people have distinctive personality profiles. Optimism, self-esteem and locus of control are also personality traits which correlate with happiness. Secure attachment is also related to these personal strengths.

14.8 Unit End Exercise

1. Define subjective wellbeing.

2. Write theoretical perspectives of happiness.

3. Explain the determinants of happiness.

14.9 Answers for check your progress

1. Need and goal satisfaction theories, (2) process activity theories, and (3) genetic and personality predisposition theories.

2. Csikszentmihalyi

14.10 Suggested Readings:

1. Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (pp. 423-433). New York: Oxford University Press.

2. Peterson, C. & Seligman, M. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3. Seligman, Martin (2004), *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. New York: Free Press.