

***Happiness: A Journey to Contentment: How to bring
positive psychology constructs to the therapeutic
process***

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Reflection

- There is almost one time that is important - Now! It is the most important time because it is the only time when we have any power.”

-Leo Tolstoy



What is Positive Psychology?



- Shift in psychological approach from a disease model to focus on strengths and not pathology” (Seligman, 2000).
- Development of a new branch of psychology 1999-2010
- Positive psychology: started to become mainstream in 1998 by Martin Seligman. A supplement/extension of past theories.
- Dr. Martin Seligman Director of the Positive Psychology Center at University of Pennsylvania.
- Beliefs of nurturing strengths, resilience, and emotional health and what influences positive emotions.
- Asking the bigger question “What makes people happy”
- Robert Holden PhD, The Happiness Project.
- Character strengths, and positive emotions.
- Positive Neuroscience.

Happiness/Wellbeing (Seligman Theory)

- Positive Emotion (What we feel, pleasure, warmth, comfort)
- Engagement (Flow, loss of self in an activity)
- Meaning (Belonging and serving something that is bigger than yourself).



8 Week Happiness Course

- Robert Holden PhD.
- Happiness baseline 50/50
- Summer of 1992 conducted a research project with Holden's happiness course.
- Findings
- Author of "Be happy: Release the power of happiness in you!"



Holden's 8 principles to being happy

- 1. The gift of happiness
- 2. The happy self
- 3. Choosing your life
- 4. Joy unlimited
- 5. The heart of happiness
- 6. Everyday abundance
- 7. Love and happiness
- 8 Happiness now!
- (Holden, 2009)



Happiness Genie Exercise/Results



- Wealth or happiness?
- Success or happiness?
- Fame or happiness?
- Attractiveness or happiness
- Sex or happiness?
- Health or happiness?
- Enlightenment or happiness?
- Authenticity or happiness?
- Love or happiness?

(Holden, 2009)

Happiness Paradigms



- Achievement paradigm (efforts, action, accomplishments).
- Possessions paradigm (having, getting, and external objects having instead of being mode).
- Reward paradigm (not natural needing a medal, how to feel good enough, waiting for reward.)
- Destination paradigm (Searching the pursuit of happiness, future, if I get there then I will be happy).
- Choice paradigm (A state of mind, cognitive, inner peace, choice to be happy “a inside job”).
- Identify paradigm (A way of being, true nature, inside/outside, the soul is joy) 😊

(Holden, 2009)

What is happiness for??

- A Temporary escape?
- A Irrational responses to life?
- A Psychiatric disorder?

- Happiness is our purpose in life and we can choose to be happy.
- Find our true identity by living our values.
- Self-realization.
- Who are you? Do you know who you really are?
- The unconditioned self, always happy



Measure your Happiness



Answer these questions and rate with the scale above.

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.
3. I'm satisfied with my life.
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.



Score 31-35 extremely satisfied, 26-30 Very satisfied, 21-25 slightly satisfied, 20 neutral point, 15-19 Slightly dissatisfied, 10-14 dissatisfied, 5-9 extremely dissatisfied.

(Edward Diener, 1980)

When are you happy?

Exercise Time

- How often are you very happy?
- List at least 5 times you were very happy
- Date of the last time you experienced it
- What were you doing or experiencing
- What have you learned about yourself?



Self-Acceptance

- You cannot find happiness you are here to extend it
- Self-acceptance
- Honest with self
- Improved awareness
- Accountability for your life



How do we limit Happiness?



- Self-criticism
- Self-neglect
- Self-denial
- Self-centered
- Self-annihilated
- Self-doubt
- Self-exhaustion
- Self-control

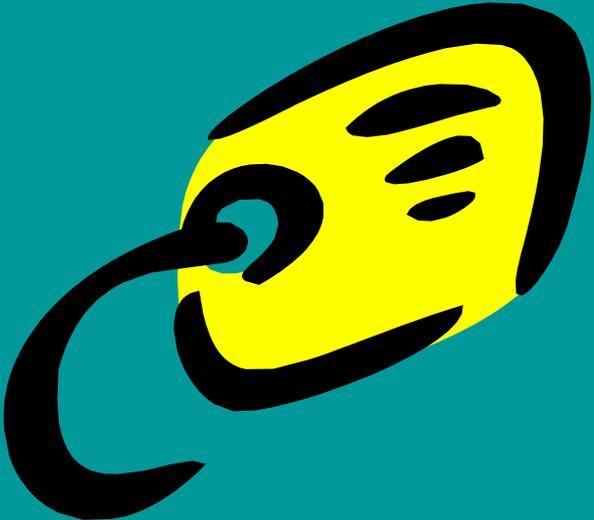


How do we increase happiness?

- Treat ourselves with honesty and compassion
- Even happy people are unhappy from time to time
- Improve awareness of true self and acceptance of all emotions.



3 Mistakes we make with emotions

- Misidentification (labels)
 - Judging self
 - Resistance
- 
- Acceptance of all feelings and emotional inquiry. Moods come and go as if a guest in our homes. Remain neutral even gifts with uncomfortable emotions.



Interview the emotions



- 1. Meeting the feeling
- 2. Naming the lesson
- 3. Acceptance of the gift
- 4. Ask for help
- “If you are alive you need help” We are not meant to do life on our own.

(Holden, 2009)



Statistics on Happiness

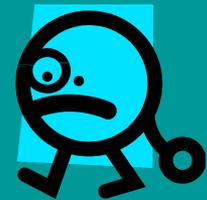
- Overall income does not determine happiness.
- Most individuals say they are living a good life.
- Family and relationships bring the most happiness.
- Have gratitude.
- Help others.
- Learn to forgive
- Take care of your body
- Savor life's joys
- Strategies to deal with stressors.

(Wallis, 2005)



Is there a dark side to happiness?

- Critics of Positive Psychology constructs and research findings
- Balance of both happiness and sadness and both emotions are necessary
- Only focus on the positive does not allow for an environment to work through trauma and adversity.



Welcome Back



How to use Positive Psychology in the Therapeutic Process

- Building client rapport and relationship.
- Create hope and change through strength focused approach.
- Positive treatment planning
- Balancing both positive and negative thoughts and beliefs that contribute to overall mental health.



The Therapeutic Process

Goals

- Assist clients to identify what is working.
- Define strengths
- Explain balance of Wellness vs. Disease
- Self-acceptance
- How to deal with emotions
- Power of positive affirmations
- Restoring hope for clients.



Therapeutic Approach

- Strength based (Joining with the client)
- Identify the weaknesses/strengths
- Create a gratitude list (use during each session)
- Happiness Journal (To review each session)
- Brainstorm goals & objectives for the treatment plan using positive psychology concepts
- Encouragement, optimistic, empowering, and growth potential.



Happiness Strategies to Teach Clients

- Life's simple pleasures
- Friendships
- Self-talk
- Personal resilience
- Acts of kindness
- Gratitude
- Sense of humor
- Strengths



Strength-Based Treatment Planning

- Define client strengths.
- Define specific measurable goals.
- Define specific steps to achieve each goal.
- Combine positive psychology concepts and testing measures into strategies for success.
- Monitor progress 1-10 scale to determine progress and modifications to goals as needed.



Positive Psychology Tests & Assessments

- Action Inventory of character strengths.
- Clifton strength-finder
- Positive-negative affect schedule
- Satisfaction life scale



Four-Front Assessment Approach

- 1. Define areas of weakness
- 2. Define areas of strengths
- 3. Define and rate deficits regarding the environment of client
- 4. Define and rate positives in the clients environment

- (Magyar-Moe, 2009).



Treatment Plan Example



- Define Problem: *Depression*
- Goal: *Reduce depression*
- Action Plan: *Review gratitude list daily and combine with exercise for 30 minutes.*
- Evaluate Progress: *Beginning each session review strengths, action plan and how client is progressing. If progress made continue action plan. If not making progress, need to redefine strengths and create alternative plan. Balance both positive and negative behaviors that may be impacting success.*
- *Praise client for progress and motivation for change.*

Lets Review



- What is Positive Psychology?
- How can we implement into the therapeutic process?
- How do we use positive psychology to develop treatment plans?
- Can Positive Psychology assist clinicians in positive health and wellness?
- Can we really choose to be happy?

Happiness 😊

- Everyone can choose to be happy
- The power and impact of thoughts and perceptions
- Focus on strengths and wanting what you have.
- Improve your workplace wellness and provide a balanced approach with clients.



Websites for additional information

- www.behappy.net
- www.successintelligence.com
- www.robertholden.org
- www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu
- www.psychcentral.com
- www.pewresearch.org

Reflection

- For every minute you are angry you lose sixty seconds of happiness.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson



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