

## POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Positive psychology is the new field in mental health service. Martin Seligman is the founder of Positive Psychology. It's a new branch of psychology which focuses on the empirical study of such things as positive emotions, strengths-based character, and healthy institutions. It demonstrated that it is possible to be happier — to feel more satisfied, to be more engaged with life, find more meaning, have higher hopes, and probably even laugh and smile more, regardless of one's circumstances. It is clear that mental health was not the mere absence of mental illness. Clinically the positive status of mental health also should be ensured when disorder ended. For the advancement of the field of clinical psychology in Bangladesh we need to introduce the concept of positive psychology. Mental health is more than the mere lack of mental disorders. The

positive dimension of mental health is stressed in WHO's definition of health as contained in its constitution: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

Positive psychology is the scientific study of positive experiences and positive individual traits, and the institutions that facilitate their development. A field concerned with well-being and optimal functioning, positive psychology aims to broaden the focus of clinical psychology beyond suffering and its direct alleviation. Its proposed conceptual framework parses happiness into three domains:

- Pleasure,
- Engagement, and
- Meaning

The positive psychology believes that the word "happy" is scientifically unwieldy. We parse the subject matter of positive psychology into three domains; three kinds of lives exemplify each domain (Seligman 2002).

### The Pleasant Life

The first domain, the pleasant life, concerns positive emotion about the past, present, and future. Positive emotion about the past includes contentment,

satisfaction, and serenity. Positive emotion about the present includes the somatic pleasures (i.e., immediate but momentary sensory delights) and the complex pleasures (i.e., pleasures that require learning and education). Positive emotion about the future includes optimism, hope, and faith. The pleasant life is a life that maximizes positive emotions and minimizes pain and negative emotion. This captures what is usually intended by the class of hedonic theories of happiness.

### The Engaged Life

The second domain is the engaged life, which consists of using positive individual traits, including strengths of character and talents. By strengths of character, mean qualities considered virtuous across cultures and historical eras (e.g., valor, leadership, kindness, integrity, originality, wisdom, and the capacity to love and be loved). Strengths are distinguished from talents insofar as they appear more malleable and subject to volition, and insofar as they are worthy ends in themselves and not just means to a greater end.

### The Meaningful Life

The third domain of positive psychology is the meaningful life, which entails belonging to and serving positive institutions. An incomplete list of institutions that can cultivate positive emotion and positive traits includes mentoring, strong families and communities, democracy, and a free press. We believe that positive traits and positive emotions flourish best in the context of positive institutions. Because meaning derives from belonging to and serving something larger than oneself, a life led in the service of positive institutions is the meaningful life.

We see each of these three lives, the Pleasant Life, the Engaged Life, and the Meaningful Life, as three different roads to happiness, each with its own respectable provenance.

Four different personal traits that contribute to positive psychology:

- subjective well-being,

Positive psychology interventions are worthwhile in therapy for two reasons. First, positive interventions, by definition, build pleasure, engagement, and meaning, and we believe they are therefore fully justifiable in their own right. Second, we believe that building positive emotion, engagement, and meaning may actually counter disorder itself.

- optimism,
- happiness, and
- Self-determination.

• **Subjective well-being:**

The first article in this set is a review of what is known about subjective well-being written by Edward Diener (2000), whose research in this field now spans three decades. Subjective well-being refers to what people think and how they feel about their lives--to the cognitive and affective conclusions they reach when they evaluate their existence.

• **Optimism:**

In One dispositional trait that appears to mediate between external events and a person's interpretation of them is optimism. This trait includes both

- little optimism (e.g., "I will find a convenient parking space this evening") and
- big optimism (e.g., "Our nation is on the verge of something great").

• **Happiness:**

David Myers (2000) presents his synthesis of research on happiness in the third article of this section. His perspective, although strictly based on empirical evidence, is informed by a belief that traditional values must contain important elements of truth if they are to survive across generations.

The other two candidates for promoting happiness that Myers considers are economic growth and income (not much there, after a minimum threshold of affluence is passed) and **close personal relationships** (a strong association). Positive psychology interventions are worthwhile in therapy for two reasons. First, positive interventions, by definition, build pleasure, engagement, and meaning, and we believe they are therefore fully justifiable in their own right. Second, we believe that building positive emotion, engagement, and meaning may actually counter disorder itself. A science of positive subjective experience, positive individual traits, and positive institutions promises to improve quality of life and prevent the pathologies that arise when life is barren and meaningless.

Most. Nazme Ara Begum, M.Phil (Part- 1), Dept. of Clinical Psychology, University of Dhak

❖ অবহেলা নয়, পারিবারিক সহযোগিতা ও আন্তরিক সেবাই মানসিকভাবে অসুস্থ ব্যক্তিকে  
ফিরিয়ে দিতে পারে পুনর্জীবন

