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TOWARD THE INSTRUCTION OF A POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY:
LESSONS FOR AN UNDERGRADUATE COURSE

A dissertation submitted to the Wright Institute Graduate School
of Psychology, in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Psychology

by
JEFFERSON ERIC NERNEY
MAY 2002

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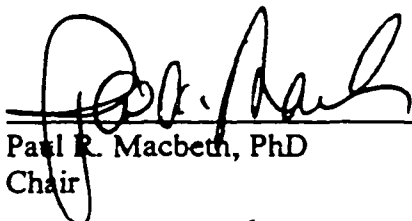
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the Wright Institute Graduate School of Psychology.



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MAY 2002

TOWARD THE INSTRUCTION OF A POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY:
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by
JEFFERSON ERIC NERNEY

The period from the 1998 APA Presidential Address through the 2002 publication of The Positive Psychology Handbook inaugurated a new era for the scientific study of positive psychology. In this project the concept of positive psychology is described and presented as a series of lesson plans appropriate for undergraduate college instruction. Thirty-two individual class outlines are provided as a framework for possible future implementation of a formally articulated California Community College course offering. Additionally, the first 16 class outlines are paired with detail transcripts of proposed lectures, exercises, class interactions, and processes. These detail transcripts serve as descriptive rather than prescriptive illustrations of how the material in these classes might be effectively presented.

The content of these lessons is drawn, in part, from Martin Seligman's seminar on positive psychology currently being offered at the University of Pennsylvania. The material composition of this project, while including Seligman,

Csikzentmihalyi, and Myers, also places an emphasis on the previous generation of positive psychologists: May, Maslow, and Rogers.

The conceived purposes of these lessons are (a) as an interventional and educational inoculate against an array of mental and emotional discomforts, and (b) as a system of salutogenic development supporting the healthy individual and the thriving community. An introduction accompanies the class documents to illuminate the historical context, structure, and motivation for the project.

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Dedicated to the memory of my big brother Jerome Nerney, Jr.

Blind-struck and pulled to shred by the schizophrenia.

With his own hand took freedom back. and his life.

*“Climb the mountains
and get their tidings.
Nature’s peace will
flow into you
as sunshine flows
into trees.
The winds will blow
their own freshness
into you,
and the storms,
their energy
while cares will drop
away from you
like the leaves
of Autumn.”*

John Muir (1941)

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments.....	iii
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Brief Historical Overview.....	2
Method.....	5
Structure.....	6
Purpose	8
II. COURSE Syllabus.....	14
Syllabus: Toward the Instruction of a Positive Psychology Lessons for an Undergraduate Course	14
Week 1	14
Week 2	14
Week 3	15
Week 4	15
Week 5	15
Week 6	15
Week 7	15
Week 8	15
Week 9	16
Week 10	16
Week 11	16
Week 12	16
Week 13	16
Week 14	16
Week 15	16
Week 16	16
Seligman’s Syllabus: Psychology 262-301-709	18
Primary Source Reading	19
Homework Exercises Accompanying Seligman’s Positive Psychology Seminar—Psychology 262-301-709, Spring 1999 (Seligman, 1999c).....	19

III. CLASS OUTLINES.....	21
Class 1: Introductions.....	21
Class 2: Historical Context of Positive Psychology.....	21
Class 3: Introduction to Positive Psychology	24
Class 4: Positive Psychology Network.....	27
Node 1: Positive Experience	27
Node 2: The Positive Individual	31
Node 3: The Positive Community	37
Class 5: Student Presentations of Positive Psychology Network	41
Class 6: Happiness and Sum of Emotions (Lytton)	42
Class 7: Introduction to the Demographics of Happiness (Myers).....	44
Class 8: Demographics of Happiness (Myers).....	46
Class 9: What Makes Life Satisfying (Myers).....	48
Class 10: The Satisfied Mind (Myers)	50
Class 11: Traits of Happy People (Myers)	52
Class 12: Midterm	55
Class 13: Trait Deficiency	56
Class 14: Introduction to Flow (Csikzentmihalyi).....	58
Class 15: The Flow Model (Csikzentmihalyi).....	60
Class 16: Estrangement, Massive Collusive Denial, Reconnection (May)	62
Class 17: Becoming a Person (Rogers)	64
Class 18: Is Relationship Possible? (Rogers)	68
Class 19: General Law of Interpersonal Relationships (Rogers).....	69

Class 20: The Good Person, B-Values, Meta-pathologies (Maslow)	73
Eight Ways in Which One Self-Actualizes.....	75
Class 21: Optimism, Pessimism, Achievement, Health (Seligman)	76
Class 22: Learned Helplessness (Seligman).....	79
Class 23: Explanatory Style (Seligman).....	82
Class 24: Depression and Cognitive Therapy (Seligman).....	85
Class 25: Peace of Wild Things (Berry).....	88
Class 26: Sensory Awareness (Gunther)	89
Class 27: Nutrition: Local, Organic, Seasonal, Sustainable (Cool)	89
Class 28: Yoga: Breathing and Stretching (Christensen)	90
Class 29 and Class 30: Student Presentations.....	90
Class 31: Open Discussion	91
Class 32: Class Party, Final Thoughts, and Group Photo.....	92
IV. CLASS DETAILS.....	93
Class 1: Introductions.....	93
Procedure:	93
Class 2	99
Lecture: Historical Context of Positive Psychology	100
Well-Being Scale from Auke Tellegen's Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire (MPQ)	109
Class 3	111
Lecture: Introduction to Positive Psychology	111
Class 4	120
Introduction to Positive Psychology Network class exercise	120

Class 5	124
Integrating the Nodes.....	125
The Cayman Meeting: The Roots of a Positive Life.....	128
Truly Extraordinary People Meeting.....	129
The Templeton Positive Psychology Award.....	130
Class 6	131
Lecture: Happiness	131
Class 7	139
Getting Present Exercise	139
Discussion of Sum of Emotions Homework.....	140
Lecture: Demographics of Happiness (Myers)	140
Class 8	146
Getting Started Exercise	146
Lecture: From David Myers, The Pursuit of Happiness (1992)	146
Class 9	156
Introduction to Class Exercise	156
Class Exercise (resumes)	157
Class 10.....	159
Lecture: “A Satisfied Mind” from David Myers (1992), The Pursuit of Happiness.....	159
Class Exercise – Count Your Blessings	167
Class 11.....	170
Lecture: Traits of Happy People	170
Self-Esteem	172
Responsibility Exercise	174
Sense of Personal Control.....	177
Optimism	178
Extraversion	179
Class 12.....	181
Midterm	181
Class Study Exercise	183
Dyad Exercise: Self-rating the Four Traits of Happy People	185
Lecture: Trait Deficiency.....	186

Class 14.....	189
Lecture – Introduction to Flow, The Psychology of Optimal Experience by Mihali Csikzentmihalyi (1991)	189
Class 15.....	200
Lecture: Flow and The Flow Model (from Csikzentmihalyi	200
Flow Model Handout.....	210
Class 16.....	211
Lecture: from Rollo May’s Man’s Search for Himself (1953)	211
Lab: What Are You?	217
V. CONCLUSION	224
REFERENCES	226

I. INTRODUCTION

Many in the field of mental health, including those within the professional community of psychologists, are engaged in a timely enterprise to discover the taxonomy of positive psychology. As evidenced by spiraling rates of diagnoses for affective, conduct, somatic, and relational disorders, a crisis of need exists for strengthening individual, interpersonal, and civic mental health. This project is a part of the current effort to incorporate consensual elements of positive mental health into public discussions and instructional programs. In this project mental health is seen as an aggregate of salutogenic learning. Salutogenic is defined as "health-causing." Here the attempt is made to formulate a set of instructional templates designed to illuminate one representation of the instruction of positive psychology while encouraging the acquisition of associated positive psychological skills, including the behavioral and cognitive practices required for their maintenance.

Positive mental health in a state of optimal expression is described by John Lilly as "[+/-24] consciousness" (1972, p. 148); by Carl Rogers (1961, pp. 49-58) as "congruence"; by Mihaly Csikzentmihalyi (1991, p. 1) as "flow"; by Martin Seligman (1999d, p. 1) as "positive"; by Aristotle as "the good life" (trans. 1953, p. 73); by William James (1901/1958, p. 76) as "the secret motivation for all that men do"; by Charlie Bird as "it" (Eastwood, 1986); by Abraham Maslow (1968, p. 97; 1971, pp. 45-50) as "self-actualization"; and by Rollo May as "choosing self" (1953, p. 168).

The lesson plans presented in this paper have developed from key informants within the general rubric of the mental health field, although not all of the experts come from the discipline of psychology.

Brief Historical Overview

In Aristotle's The Nicomachean Ethics, written 2500 years ago and named for his son Nicomachus, the good man is a canon and measure of absolute excellence. Aristotle formulates the ethics of how men become good and why happiness can and should be the goal into 10 ethics. In the first of his 10 ethics, The Object of Life, he grabs the crux of the thing quickly, asking "What is the Good for man?" The current fruit of positive psychology may well have been seeded over 2500 years ago by the simple confidence of his answer: "It must be the ultimate end or object of human life: something that is in itself completely satisfying. Happiness fits this description" (Aristotle, trans. 1953, p. 73).

In 1890, William James published the watershed document of American psychology, Principles of Psychology. He called psychology "the Science of Mental Life" and formulated a theory of consciousness wherein, "It is nothing jointed; it flows. In talking of it hereafter let us call it the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life" (James, 1890/1955, p. 184). In James' theory the primary function of consciousness is to choose. Choice is seen as central to the evolving, adapting organism. "It [consciousness] is always interested more in one part of its object than in another, and welcomes, and rejects, or chooses, all the while it thinks" (p. 239). "The mind, in short, works on the data it receives very much as a sculptor works on his block of stone" (p. 239). Into this flowing, choosing consciousness he restates Aristotle's question, "What is human life's chief concern?" and answers, "It is happiness. How to gain, how to keep, how to recover happiness, is in fact for most men at all times the secret motive of all they do, and of all they are willing to endure" (James, 1901/1958, p. 76). Another seed pressed into the soil of future psychological exploration.

After William James and for the next 50 years or so, American psychology was dominated by behaviorism. John Watson's promise that behavioral psychology could observe, describe, explain, predict and control behavior played well to the military and industrial elite who funded universities and endowed Department of Psychology chairs within those universities.

Psychology as the behaviorist views it is a purely objective branch of natural science. Its theoretical goal is the prediction and control of behavior. Introspection forms no essential part of its methods, nor is the scientific data dependent on the readiness with which they lend themselves to interpretation in terms of consciousness. The behaviorist, in his efforts to get a unitary scheme of animal response, recognizes no dividing line between man and brute. (Watson, 1913, pp. 158-59)

At the height of the behaviorists' influence, Mihaly Csikzentmihalyi saw the value of a positive psychology while growing up in Europe during World War II.

As a child, I witnessed the dissolution of the smug world in which I had been ensconced. I noticed with surprise how many adults I had known as successful and self-confident became helpless and dispirited once they were removed from social supports. Without jobs, money, or status, they were reduced to empty shells. Yet there were a few who kept their integrity and purpose despite the surrounding chaos. Their serenity was a beacon that kept others from losing hope. They were not necessarily the most respected, better educated, or more skilled individuals. This experience set me to thinking: What sources of strength were these people drawing on?...It was these few who held the key to what humans could be like at their best. However, at the height of its behaviorist phase, psychology was being taught as if it were a branch of statistical mechanics." (Csikzentmihalyi, 2000, p. 6)

In the 1960s, humanistic psychology brought new hope to those who chafed under the bit of behaviorism. Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow were among many whose humanistic vision helped shape American culture at that time. Humanistic psychology did not develop a strong scientific data base, nor did it follow particularly rigid scientific principles. It was a visionary practice but not yet a discipline. The experiential imperative of America circa the 1960s allowed humanistic psychology to morph into the self-help

movement that abandoned any need for scholarly standards. Awash in the “let-it-all-hang-out, anything goes” fashion of the times, humanistic psychology lost its academic edge. Humanistic Psychology also came under extreme fire by the burgeoning fundamentalist Christian movement in the 1970s and 1980s. The fundamentalists saw humanism and the human potential movement as a direct challenge to divine authority and subsequently demonized all things humanistic.

Post-World War II America also found professional psychology committed to easing the suffering of those with mental illness. Martin Seligman writes that this time since World War II has seen great advance in helping those with mental illness. While he sees this advance as a wonderful and necessary step, it looks to him as if the field of psychology is half-baked.

It concentrates on repairing damage within a disease model of human functioning. This almost exclusive attention to pathology neglects the fulfilled individual and the thriving community. The aim of positive psychology is to begin to catalyze a change in the focus of psychology from preoccupation only with repairing the worst things in life to also building positive qualities. (Csikzentmihalyi & Seligman, 2000, p. 6)

Today positive psychology is becoming an established force in the field of psychology. The Handbook of Positive Psychology (Snyder, 2002) has just been published by the American Psychological Association (APA); the 2-year-old Templeton Positive Psychology Award is the richest and most sought-after prize in all of psychology; the American Psychological Association now has an entire division devoted to the study of positive psychology; and all the while, researchers and practitioners seek to identify methods of intervention that will build strength into people’s lives.

The field of positive psychology at the subjective level is about valued subjective experiences: well-being, contentment, and satisfaction (in the past); hope and optimism (for the future); and flow and happiness (in the present). At the

individual level, it is about positive individual traits: the capacity for love and vocation, courage, interpersonal skill, aesthetic sensibility, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future-mindedness, spirituality, high talent, and wisdom. At the group level, it is about the civic virtues and the institutions that move individuals toward better citizenship: responsibility, nurturance, altruism, civility, moderation, tolerance, and work ethic. (Csikzentmihalyi & Seligman, 2000, p. 6)

Method

Well-regarded authors and mental health practitioners serve as key informants in the development of characteristic qualities, exercises, and lessons included in the “Toward the Instruction of a Positive Psychology – Lessons for an Undergraduate Course.” These characteristics, exercises and lessons are considered by these selected experts to be essential to positive human mental health. Lesson plans featuring these salutogenic qualities are constructed into a model for a semester-length course appropriate for undergraduate college instruction, either as a standalone elective psychology course, or with modifications, as an articulated transfer Psychology 1A survey course with a positive psychology emphasis. Expert informants will be selected from a review of current and historic literature. This review of material is from the academic rubric of humanistic-positive-health psychology.

Suggested for the future course, should it be formally approved for instruction, are appropriate pre- and post-measures of life satisfaction and depressive indexes as demonstrators of effect on students from the course as a whole. Measures such as the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and Ed Denier’s Well Spring Measure of Life Satisfaction would serve this aim. Measures such as Auke Tellegen’s Multi-Dimensional Personality Questionnaire – Subjective Well-Being scale and Lenore Radloff’s Center for Epidemiological Studies of the National Institute of Mental Health Depression Test are included at several points during the semester to inform student self-awareness and to

demonstrate effect of specific assignments, experiences, and labs. A further suggestion is made, toward the future implementation of such a course, to utilize several standard instructional Psychology 1A survey courses as a control measure for the positive psychology instructional emphasis. That design control will await a followup study. Here the chosen quest is to simply present a series of lessons, harvested from the abundant literature, that might serve as a directional model toward the development of a formal positive psychology curriculum. Such a curriculum, according to Seligman, Csikzentmihalyi, Denier, and others, if not necessary, is of extreme importance to strengthen and better prepare students facing the arduous task of developing lives of mental and physical health in the 21st century.

Structure

The structure of this project involves a series of 32 individual class outlines. These outlines are presented in order at the front of the paper. After the outlines, the detail transcripts of the first 16 lessons are included, in order, as an illustration of how the material might actually be presented. In this way, 16 of the 32 classes will be modeled in their entirety.

An outline with key concepts and terms is listed, along with hoped-for learning outcomes, exercises, assessments, assignments, and a transcript with detail. The detail transcript for each of those first 16 classes is an imagined verbatim transcript of the class in real time, as might be presented by an undergraduate instructor. This detail is provided to illustrate how the content of the lesson sets might be presented in lectures and activities. The material here is the focus; the detail presented is merely a demonstration vehicle for its delivery. Each time and place is unique, each instructor is an individual.

and each class of students will have unique styles, skills, personalities, and interests that will render any class presentation idiosyncratic. The first detail transcript, class 1, is an attempt to illustrate one process of class cohesion through group, dyadic, and individual introductions. It contains little content, and is included only as a demonstration of process. The class 10 detail transcript includes a bit of instructional indulgence. Part of the lecture is devoted to an unreferenced model of intellectual consistency. It is used here only as an example of how an undergraduate instructor might customize the material to include an area of personal interest.

Each lesson plan is designed for presentation during 90-minute class hours. This schedule is organized to fit into a 16-week California Community College semester. There are 48 mandated contact hours for such a course, per Title V of the 1990 edition of the California Educational Code. The course is also conceived, at some point, to be formally submitted to the West Valley Mission Community College District Curriculum Committee for acceptance as an articulated transfer course in the Social Sciences Division. Such submission will likely not take place during the period of this dissertation project. The actual submission process, and ultimate acceptance or rejection of the material as suitable for articulated instruction, is lengthy and not seen as a function for this paper.

Readings from several texts and articles are assigned. Lectures, discussions, exercises, and assignments are all presented from the readings except as noted. Material in the lectures is paraphrased or quoted directly from the readings, except as noted. The intent of the lectures, except as discussed above, is to provide an accurate representation of the material created by the expert authors. The selection and organization of the

material is in some measure grown from Professor Seligman's seminar on positive psychology, offered currently at University of Pennsylvania as Psychology 262-301-709. Additional assigned readings were identified from this writer's review of literature relating to the understanding, acquisition, and maintenance of healthy, positive, or salutogenic practices as they illuminate healthy experience, the healthy individual and the healthy community.

A note concerning the medium of this project is that each lesson is reduced to keystrokes on a page. It is a flat presentation. The material is not flat: it bristles with profound potential for life change. The experiential qualities of this material were intended by the authors to facilitate self-discovery, enhance self-awareness, and result in the personal growth of healthier humans. The expert authors had no small designs. They intended their material to change the world. They hoped their work would lead humans to a richer and healthier experience of living. In the detail transcripts, the instructor's voice is provided without the modulating presence of an actual classroom filled with students. As a result, kindly put, the voice does not always sound smoothly natural. It is indeed made up. For the purposes of this project that limitation is seen as a mechanical necessity. In a classroom setting, the presentation of this material will build on the energy, realizations, and enthusiasm of the participants in the room. The force of the experience will grow and shift in emphasis depending on the group's engagement with it in real time and space.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to offer another voice to the current chorus calling for positive psychology to serve as a fundament of improved individual and civic mental

health. As an instructional template this project is designed in the foremost as a potential preventative against the implacable currency of mental illness. The idea for this course came from the work of author, researcher, educator, past president of the American Psychological Association, Martin Seligman of the University of Pennsylvania.

Seligman decided after his tenure as president of the American Psychological Association to put his vision of a positive psychology into an undergraduate instructional reality. As president of the APA, he had suggested that the field of psychology should focus on developing and appreciating human strengths as a companion to its traditional role of healing the broken and damaged. In the Spring of 1999 Professor Seligman decided to teach an undergraduate course in positive psychology. His experience with the course was described in an APA Monitor article published a few months after the course concluded. It was the first time such a course had been offered. Seligman loved the experience, as did his students.

Positive psychology was a course that seemed to grab all of the young burgeoning psychologists in the room by the throat and say "Hey! The world should be smiling a lot more than it is! What are you going to do about it?" I have decided to teach it again next year. (1999a, p. 2)

Classes 4 and 5 of this document capitulate the activities of the Positive Psychology Network formed by Seligman in April of 1999 as an organized attempt to move the science and influence of positive psychology into the fore of psychology generally. Seligman sees American culture at an unprecedented choice point at the dawn of the new millennium. He explains in his Positive Psychology Network Concept Paper:

Left alone on the pinnacle of economic and political leadership, the United States can continue to increase its material wealth while ignoring the human needs of its people and that of the rest of the planet. Such a course is likely to lead to increasing selfishness, alienation between the more and the less fortunate, and eventually to chaos and despair.

At this juncture the social and behavioral sciences can play an enormously important role. They can articulate a vision of the good life that is empirically sound while being understandable and attractive. They can show what actions lead to well being, to positive individuals, and to flourishing community. Psychology should be able to help document what kind of families result in the healthiest children, what work environments support the greatest satisfaction among workers, and what policies result in the strongest civic engagement.

I now propose to consolidate this new field by creating a network of its leading scholars and researchers. The network will encourage collaborations among researchers on Positive Psychology and will hold conferences and meetings. These collaborations will fold the best younger investigators into the network and its ongoing research. The network will reach out to leading scholars and practitioners in allied social sciences whose concern is understanding and building positive institutions and positive communities. (Seligman, 1999b, pp. 1-2)

The specific purpose of this paper and its inspiration came from the Positive Psychology Network Concept Paper quoted above. In the conceived structure of the PPN, each member of the network would be expected to generate work product.

The success of the network can be evaluated by the quality and visibility of articles, books, and grant requests as well as by the spread of the field in the education and research focus of other scientists. So we will evaluate the success of the network by explicitly quantifying increased conventional funding major conspicuous publications, new and tenured faculty, citation rate, and graduate and *undergraduate course offerings* [italics added], and the like in the field of Positive Psychology over the course of the four years of the network. (Seligman, 1999b, pp. 3-4)

This paper is a small attempt to participate in this historical moment of the evolving mission and purpose of the field of psychology. This author has taken the past APA president's message to heart. This collection of salutogenic lessons is one step along the collaborative path toward the establishment of positive psychology as an instructional staple of post-secondary education.

In speaking to the necessity of why positive psychology should be so promoted now, Seligman is again eloquent in the opening chapter of the new text, Handbook of Positive Psychology.

What foregrounds this approach is the issue of 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 generally vulnerable or who live in worlds that nurture these problems? How can we prevent murderous schoolyard violence in children who have access to weapons, poor parental supervision, and a mean streak? What have we learned over fifty years is that the disease model does not move us closer to prevention of these serious problems. Indeed the major strides in prevention have largely come from a perspective focused on systematically building competency, not correcting weakness.

We have discovered that there are 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. (Seligman, 2002, pp. 3-4)

These buffers against psychopathology are positive human traits. Identifying and strengthening these traits in people who are at risk is a preventative practice of current social necessity. Seligman refers to a "nosology of human strength—the UNDSM-I, the opposite of the DSM-IV" (2002, p. 6). This author's purpose in the attempt to create a college-level course in positive psychology is the placement of well-known psychological teachings within the developing affect, cognitions, and behaviors of undergraduate college students as potential buffers against the afflictions of modern culture.

Professor Seligman refers to his process of "learned optimism" (classes 21 and 22) as an inoculation against depression. The positive psychology lessons as proposed here seek to nominate additional inoculates against a host of malaise, disease, estrangements, anxieties, stresses, low self-esteem, low self-awareness, and general dissatisfaction with life.

Potential benefits flowing from the presentation of these lessons are described in the "Hoped-for Learning Outcomes" section at the end of each class outline. Some of

these hoped-for benefits include the development of the qualities, techniques, and experience of self awareness; congruence among experience, awareness, and communication; self-actualizing values and behaviors; the ability to recognize and remediate deficiencies in personality; understanding the difference between defensive and healthy self-esteem; the traits and practices of positive subjective well-being; knowing the characteristics of flowing personal growth and how to unblock it; the power of attention combined with intention; the personal conditions necessary for successful, healthy relationships, understanding the causes and amelioration of depression; the wisdom and practice of being responsible; appreciation of the restorative peace of nature; and how to eat, breathe, and move in health.

The premise for the instruction of these lessons is that a stronger, more aware, more personally capable individual will be better able to resist the deconstructive forces of modern stress, and the predispositions to pathogenic conditions. The healthier individual is seen as being more available to the enjoyments of life and more able to courageously and creatively contribute fully to self, family, and community.

The intention to lay one stone along the cobbled path toward the formal establishment of post-secondary positive psychology instruction is the motivation for this project.

Sigmund Koch, the recently deceased titan of critical analyses of psychological theory and practice, had one big idea. He saw a fundamental shift in late 19th century that would orient thought and culture throughout the 20th century. The change he saw was movement from agency to rules.

From a world in which individuals took greater initiative and greater risks, based on their own sensibility, creativity, and responsibility (agency), to a world in

which thought and action are more and more rationalized, bureaucratized, and routinized (ultimately reduced to a set of rules). From free fallible, and meaningful action, humans have turned toward more controlled, definitionally correct, ameaningful behavior. This shift from open-minded, authentically responsive activity to prescriptive, rule and method-bound behavior was the “root pathology” (epistemopathic syndrome) of the modern world. (Leary, 2001. p. 427)

Professor Koch’s courageous insight sounds a cautionary note for the consideration of these undergraduate lessons. The material is approached in a lesson-set format for ease of presentation but, as previously discussed, not with an intention toward prescriptive adherence. The good reader will entertain the following material with a cant of interest as an experienced cook might sense the fragrance of a newly re-blended, but traditional, seasoning.

II. COURSE SYLLABUS

The syllabus that follows is representative of a basic document that accompanies most undergraduate college courses. The syllabus previews for incoming students the material, grading procedures, expectations, and timelines along which the semester's work will flow. Following this syllabus is Martin Seligman's syllabus (1999c) for his Positive Psychology seminar, included here for comparison purposes.

Syllabus: Toward the Instruction of a Positive Psychology

Lessons for an Undergraduate Course

This class will meet for 90 minutes, twice a week, for 16 weeks. There will be an open-book essay-style midterm exam; however, there will be no final exam. A notebook journal containing class notes, returned assignments, responses to specific exercises and the material generally, will be turned in at the end of week 15. As this course is designed as an interactive participatory experience, students are responsible for completing all assignments on time. Grades will be based on: attendance 25%, class participation 25%, assignments 15%, midterm 15%, and notebook journal 20%.

Week 1

Topics: Introductions / Historical Context of Positive Psychology

Read: handout—Handbook of Positive Psychology (pp. 3-9, 541-543), Myers (pp. 23-86)

Week 2

Introduction to Positive Psychology / Positive Psychology Network

Read: Positive Psychology Network Concept Paper

Week 3

Class Presentations / Sum of Emotions / Happiness

Write: One page response to class activity.

Read: Myers (87-126)

Week 4

Demographics of Happiness

Read: Myers (to end), Plato's Allegory of the Cave

Consider: Old age, reward or punishment?

Week 5

What Makes Life Satisfying?

Activity: Be aware of how you experience nature

Week 6

Traits of happy people / midterm

Review: All readings and materials in preparation for midterm

Week 7

Trait Deficiency / Introduction to Flow

Read: Csikzentmihalyi through p. 116

Consider: Personal experience of the "four traits" and of "flow"

Week 8

Flow Model / Estrangement, Massive Collusive Denial, and Reconnection

Read: Continue Csikzentmihalyi

Write: One page on personal experience of "flow"

Reflect: On lab exercise

Week 9

On Becoming a Person

Read: Rogers handout (introduction, chapters 3 and 18)

Week 10

Congruence and Relational Law / Needs, Values, and Self-actualizing

Write: One page on "What Makes Relationships Work For Me" and one page on "What Makes Relationships Not Work For Me"

Week 11

Learned Optimism / Learned Helplessness

Read: Seligman (chapters 1-5)

Week 12

Explanatory style / Depression and cognitive therapy

Week 13

Peace of Wild Things / Sensory Awareness

Read: Berry handout

Experience: nature

Week 14

Local, Organic, Seasonal, and Sustainable Nutrition / Yoga Wellness

Read: American Psychologist handout

Week 15

Student Presentations of Criticism of Positive Psychology From AP Handout

Week 16

Integration / Party / Class Photo

Texts:

Csikzentmihalyi, M. (1991). Flow. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

Myers, D. G. (1992). The Pursuit of Happiness. New York: Avon Books, Inc.

Seligman, M. E. P. (1990). New York: Learned Optimism, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Find on Internet: Positive Psychology Network Concept Paper and Plato's

“Allegory”

Handouts from instructor

Seligman's Syllabus: Psychology 262-301-709

Positive Psychology
 Martin Seligman (1999c)
 Spring 1999
 University of Pennsylvania

We will meet every Tuesday from 12 noon until 2 p.m. Each student will co-lead one of the classes. Each student will write a short weekly paper about their best thought or questions about the readings and prepare a final portfolio. There are no examinations. Grades will be based on the final portfolio and class participation, plus any extra papers you chose to write, as well as listserv participation. See exercises below.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Primary Source</u>
1/12/99	Well-Being	PH 1 -5
1/26/99	Traits	PH 6 -10
2/2/99	Optimism	LO 1 -5
2/16/99	In The Realms	LO 6 -11
2/23/99	Changing Pessimism	LO 12 -15
3/2/99	Heritability	H 1 – 9
3/16/99	Techniques through time	H 10 – 16
3/23/99	Flow	F first half
3/30/99	Flow	F second half
4/6/99	Emotional Intelligence	EI 1 – 6
4/13/99	Emotional Intelligence	EI 7 – 13
4/20/99	Reprise	

Primary Source Reading

The Pursuit of Happiness (PH)

David G. Myers. Avon (originally Aquarian)

Learned Optimism (LO)

Martin Seligman. Pocket Books, 1991

Flow (F)

Mihaly Csikzentmihalyi. Harper Row, 1991

Happiness (H)

David Lykken. Golden Books, 1999

Working With Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Daniel Goleman. Bantam, 1998

Homework Exercises Accompanying Seligman's Positive Psychology

Seminar—Psychology 262-301-709, Spring 1999 (Seligman, 1999c)

Write up one page each week on each exercise:

1. Introduction. Each student (starting with the professor) introduces self by telling a story about a strength. 3 minutes each. Other students responds – issue is how to listen well and sympathetically to bragging. Write story up.
2. Next week. Re-introduce yourself. Enhance ability too tell, interpret, and listen to strength stories. Ask a friend to tell you about their greatest strength or virtue.
3. Well-being and moral well-being. Do something entertaining. Do something philanthropic, calling on skill. Write up feelings, during and after.
4. Traits. Create a module on how to build a particular moral trait in a child.
5. Help-seeking and help-giving. Take an area in which you need someone's help. Ask someone from the class to help you.
6. Optimism. What was the most creative thing you ever did?

7. Gallup-like questions. Write a Gallup Poll question for each of the 17 Cayman Traits (e.g., intimacy, I feel loved. Future-mindedness, I set goals, and I reach them).

8. The National Research Council Grand Challenge. Present your vision of a scientific development, which will greatly contribute to a positive human future.

9. You are named Minister of Play for the Positive Psychology Network. Design a meeting that maximizes positive well-being and therefore creative thinking during the meeting.

10. Design and live a beautiful day.

11. Your single best thought during the semester.

III. CLASS OUTLINES

Class 1: Introductions

1. Instructor's introduction and welcoming remarks
2. Class Introductions
 - The Name Anchor
 - Dyad introductions
 - Class discussion
3. Hoped-for learning outcomes
 - Initiation of group cohesion
 - Experience of sharing self with others
 - Self-awareness of response to group activity (safety/comfort/pleasure-vulnerability/resistance/discomfort)
4. Assignments: Obtain and look over texts

Class 2: Historical Context of Positive Psychology

1. Interactive Attendance (10 minutes)
 - Choosing a volunteer
 - Set up present experience response
 - Perform roll call and present experience response
2. Well-Being Scale (20-30 minutes)
 - Introduce and give instructions for W-BS from Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire
 - Class completes W-BS

- Class self-scores W-BS
- Discussion

3. Lecture: Brief Historical Context of Positive Psychology (45 minutes)

- Salutogenic defined
- Aristotle – Nicomachean Ethics
 - The Object of Life – Happiness
 - A Good Man
 - Happiness is not Pleasure
- Discussion

Lecture (resumed)

- Aristotle (continued)
 - The Good Life
 - Eudamainia
 - Euzoia
 - Eupraxia
 - Doctrine of Mean

4. Break (10 minutes)

- Positivism
 - Bacon
 - Comte

5. Lecture (continued)

- William James

- Consciousness
- Life's chief concern
- Behavioralism
 - Watson
 - Denounces consciousness
 - Substitutes prediction and control of behavior
- Setting the stage for Positive Psychology
 - Post-World War II focus on the science and practice of healing
 - Focus on pathology neglects healthy functioning
 - Three concerns of Positive Psychology
 - Positive experience
 - The positive individual
 - The positive community
- Humanism and the Human Potential Movement
 - Autogenic manifestation
 - Theorists Rogers, Maslow, and May
 - Lack of hard science approach marginalizes influence
 - Self-help movement
 - Christian fundamentalists see it as usurping God's authority
 - Humanists forebears of Positive Psychology

6. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Continuing sense of personal safety through self-disclosure and the disclosures of others

- Learning to be aware of one's experience in the moment
- Learning to communicate that experience
- Learning a personal set point of subjective well-being
- Learning the nature of personality surveys
- Learning a brief contextualizing history of Positive Psychology

6. Assignments:

Read:

Ryff & Singer (2002). "From Social Structure to Biology." In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), Handbook of Positive Psychology (pp. 541-553). New York: Oxford University Press, Inc.

Myers, D. G. (1992). The Pursuit of Happiness (pp. 23-86). New York: Avon Books, Inc.

Write: One page describing a person you admire – what you admire – why you admire it.

Class 3: Introduction to Positive Psychology

Two 90-minute classes

1. Interactive attendance (10 minutes)
2. Lecture: Introduction to Positive Psychology (60-70 minutes)
 - Martin Seligman and Mihali Csikzentmihalyi
 - Call for a new psychology
 - Disease Model vs. Positive Function Model
 - Three aspects of Positive Psychology
 - Positive Experience
 - The Positive Individual
 - The Positive Community

3. Discussion

4. Lecture (resumed)

- Carol Ryff and Burton Singer
 - Call for new era of Science of Positive Functioning
 - Neurobiology that underlies psychosocial flourishing
 - Consilience of theory across disciplines
 - Biopsychosocial nexus
 - Well-being operationalized
 - Definitions of Theory-Guided Dimensions of Well-Being
 - Self-acceptance
 - Positive relations with others
 - Autonomy
 - Environmental mastery
 - Purpose in life
 - Personal growth

5. Teams Activity Presentation of “Dimensions” High and Low Scores (20 minutes)

6. Break (10 minutes)

7. Lecture (continued)

- Ryff and Singer
 - Suggested research
 - Consilience of positive psychosocial function with biological health
 - Allostatic load
 - Cerebral activation asymmetry
 - Immune competency
- Martin Seligman
 - Network of Positive Psychology

- Three nodes
- 4-year service
- Seed crystal for positive social science
- Evaluative criteria
 - Funding
 - Publications
 - Citation rate
 - Number of graduate and undergraduate courses
 - This class is one of the counted undergraduate courses

8. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Continuing immersion in group dynamic
- Developing confidence participating in discussions, at board, and as team members
- Understanding basic concepts of Positive Psychology
- Becoming acquainted with some of the developers of Positive Psychology science
- Exposure to the science of biopsychosocial resilience – terms and concepts
- Introduction to The Positive Psychology Network
- Understanding class's place in the development of Positive Psychology

9. Assignments

Read:

Myers, D. G. (1992). The Pursuit of Happiness (pp. 23–86). New York: Avon Books, Inc.

Seligman, M. E. P. (1999b). Positive Psychology Network Concept Paper
<http://www.positivepsychology.org/ppgrant.htm#Cayman>.

Class 4: Positive Psychology Network

1. Interactive attendance (10 minutes)
2. Introduction to group activity (15 minutes)
3. Group activity (60–65 minutes)

The three student groups should cover, with detail, the material from the following outline.

Node 1: Positive Experience

Node Chair: Ed Diener, University of Illinois

- Most eminent researcher in field of “subjective well-being”
- Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*

1. Defining concerns:

- States related to Happiness and conditions in which these subjective experiences occur
- Study of positive states directed toward the past
 - Well-being
 - Contentment
 - Satisfaction
- Study of positive states directed toward the future
 - Optimism
 - Hope
 - Spirituality
- Study of positive states directed toward the present
 - Flow
 - Joy

- Flexible attention
- Pleasure
- Ebullience
- Communion
- Quality of life equals the amount of positive subjective experience in that life
- Subjective positive experience reflects an individual's evaluation of his or her own life
- Modes of evaluation or appraisal
 - Cognitive judgments
 - Pleasant emotions
 - Physical pleasure
 - Pleasant interest
- Modes of appraisal representing long-term, or big-picture evaluations
 - Life satisfaction judgments
- Modes of appraisal representing shorter-term, biologically based evaluations
 - Physical pleasures

2. Subjective positive experience is important:

- SPEs reflect a person's values - indicate how s/he is achieving outcomes in life
- SPEs are democratic – represent a person's own evaluations of life, not an "expert's"
- SPEs have desirable outcomes for community
- SPEs are a rich field for concerted research

3. Demographic variables per Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (Psychological Bulletin, 1999)

- Men and women = same levels of global satisfaction with life
 - Women twice the rates of depression and greater level of pleasant emotions
- Life satisfaction stable over adult life span, but intense emotions decrease with age
- Many people adapt quickly to both good and bad circumstances
 - Those with multiple disabilities from birth and widows often do not adapt well
- People adapt to some things quickly, some slowly, and some not at all
 - People in extremely poor countries are less happy than where physical needs are met
- Optimism seems to be key for individuals who adapt quickly to bad events
- People find greater life satisfaction when they work for things they value
- People find less life satisfaction when they work for things of immediate pleasure
- Life-task activities related to an person's goals are crucial for SPE
- Hedonism does not maximize positive experience for most people
- Wealth has very small effect on subjective well-being

4. Cultural differences matter

- Both economic and cultural factors are determinants
 - Latin cultures in South America = higher levels of satisfaction than income suggests

- Confucian cultures of Pacific Rim = lower levels of satisfaction than income suggests
- Different psychological variables correlate to feelings of well being in different cultures
 - Self-esteem better predictor of satisfaction in individualistic cultures, than collectivist
 - In individualistic culture positive emotions predict life satisfaction
 - In collectivist cultures people's personal feelings subordinate to evaluations of the group

5. Positive disposition (focus: how and why values and goals create subjective well-being)

- Major predictor of subjective well-being is temperament, but only a portion is genetic
- Other part is learned positive outlook on life, e.g. hope, trust, self-esteem, and optimism
- Strongly held values and related goals also major contributor to life satisfaction
- Clear goals and making progress working toward them increase subjective well-being

6. Beneficial outcomes of subjective well-being

- Happy people contribute more to their communities
- Happy people have better relationships with others
- Happy people are more creative

- How and why SWB contributes to behavior that benefits others and the community
- Is there a point of diminishing returns? An optimal level of life satisfaction?

Node 2: The Positive Individual

Chair: Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, University of Chicago

Leading investigator of “flow” and its relationship to artistic, intellectual, and entrepreneurial creativity.

1. Defining Concerns

- Strengths of character
- “The good life”
 - Study of: purpose, growth, productivity, self-determination, genius, legacy building, sacrifice, creativity, future-mindedness, parenting, courage, empathy, wisdom, and philanthropy
- Salutary debunking of Victorian complacency
 - We are not as rational as we believed
 - Economic interests, not benevolence, rule our actions
 - Values are not universal - often rooted in narrow cultural prejudices
- Relativistic framework cannot distinguish good from bad in actions, lives, or societies
 - Beyond superficial differences what qualities do communities everywhere prize?
- Traditional relativistic social sciences cannot answer questions that matter most to people

- What is a good life?
- How does one become a good person?
- What purpose can give meaning to life?
- These questions traditionally philosophical or theological, but no data to support it
- Node 2 will generate an empirical agenda re the Positive Individual & the Good Life

2. Conceiving the characteristics of a fulfilling life

- Subjective positive experience is important but not the only component of a positive life
- People also want to have:
 - The personal traits that make such experiences possible
 - Real connections to other people and to the world
 - Actual engagement in certain activities, not merely the experience of them

3. Relationships and connections

- Love and Intimacy: meaningful relationships, including friendships; loving and being beloved
 - These ties improve longevity and the subjective positive experience of life
 - How do these ties develop?
 - With competitively and individualistically trained children, how do we teach relational skills?
- Satisfying work
 - Second most necessary component of quality of life

- How do children learn occupational attitudes in changing job market?
- What work conditions are necessary for employee satisfaction and commitment?
- Helping others
 - Altruistic people who care for others and are supportive, report higher happiness and over-all life quality
 - What are the roots of altruism?
 - What are the best practices to support it?
- Being a good citizen
 - Active public participation on decline
 - Participation is a prerequisite for the ongoing health of the community
 - What personal qualities and support such involvement?
 - What conditions militate against it?
- Spirituality: connection to a deeper meaning or reality
 - In all cultures, a feeling of relatedness with the cosmos seems necessary to mobilize the hopes and energies of the populace.
 - Is this still necessary in the 21st century?
 - What new forms might spirituality take?
- Leadership
 - Recognition and support of youth with leadership potential is essential for continued growth of a culture
 - We have few mechanisms in place to accomplish this
 - What can be done to enable potential leaders?

4. Individual qualities

- Principles and integrity
 - A good life ends with a feeling of integrity – the person lived up to his/her dream
 - How do adults compromise principle for “bottom line”? How do children learn?
- Creativity – many institutions are organized to stifle originality and creativity
 - Paradox: These qualities improve individual lives and help society to grow
 - What are the best practices in institutions to develop and preserve original thinking?
- Perseverance – is part of originality – creativity requires both
 - Requires self-discipline – current child-rearing appears to lack this learning
 - How do we best provide young people with lifelong tools of self-discipline?
- Courage is most admired quality
 - Those who face obstacles with equanimity, not devastated by fear of death, run risks for their principles, are likely to lead a good life, and serve as model for others
 - Is this a trait that can be learned?

5. Life regulation

- Purposive future-mindedness
 - Great differences exists between people in the degree to which considerations of the future affect their present behavior

- Asian students are usually more happy when doing things related to future goals
- Americanized students are more unhappy in such circumstances
- How do we learn to defer immediate gratification?
- Individuality
 - Ideally, a well-lived life should lead to the unfolding of a person's potentials in an integrated, complex personality with links to others
 - What turning points, at different stages of one's life, are most important in this process?
- Self-regulation
 - The role of reasoned intelligence in guiding one's decisions
- Wisdom – the capstone of a good life
 - How does such a trait develop in childhood and adolescence?
 - How is it supported in adulthood?

6. Focal issues for Node 2

- More precisely formulate and measure these 14 characteristics
- Carry on research to discover to what extent the different characteristics are correlated or group into clusters
- Consider whether other characteristics are necessary or should be added to the list
- Investigate the factors that are conducive to the development of these characteristics over time, and how institutions such as various family types and schools support them

7. Three main questions that will organize the Node's work:

- Do these 14 dimensions provide an exhaustive inventory of the "Good Person" and the "Good Life?" If not, do they explain most of the variance?
- What do we know about the developmental roots of these traits? How much of them might be inherited, how are they learned, how are they transmitted?

(1) If we target 3-5 most urgently needed traits of a good life, what kind of interventions could we devise to increase the frequency of such traits?

Following on these determinations, we would begin to contact partners in schools, businesses and other institutions with a view of applying knowledge to the improvement of the quality of life.

8. The Big Purpose of Node 2

- Pursue the referenced questions with a view to integrate knowledge, stimulate research, and develop a conceptual framework that represents the full range of positive dimensions in the human condition.
- The dissemination of such knowledge should result in a major contribution to human well-being.
- Just as the greatest contribution of modern medicine to longevity has been the prevention of disease through advocacy of healthy physical conditions—such as pure water, safe foods, and clean environments—perhaps the greatest improvement the social sciences can bring about is to help define the conditions of a psychologically positive life.

Node 3: The Positive Community

Node Chair: Kathleen Hall Jamieson

Professor Jamieson is Dean of Annenberg School of Communication, University of Pennsylvania, and a leading expert on political rhetoric.

1. Defining concerns:

- Groups and institutions that can promote or sustain, as opposed to minimize, human flourishing
- Research and implement ways in which institutions such as legislative bodies, schools, the press, and public service can promote civility, reciprocity, tolerance of diversity, equality, and opportunity
- Node 3 assumes that structures institutionalized by the community affect the members within it by creating or undercutting the impulse to engage in civic activities
- Healthy communities are: productive, efficient, fair, and tolerant whose members have a strong sense of personal control and a strong sense of engagement with the community
- Builds on the sociological view that there are social facts (e.g. productivity, civility, volunteerism) that are more than simply psychological facts about the individual
- Explore how social facts, the self, and society are translated into symbols
- Produce and organize research that will help parents, teachers, reporters, and leaders create healthy schools, families, workplaces, neighborhoods, and nations

2. Conceptual issues:

- Positive experiences and good lives must be embedded in a supportive community
- Personal happiness is highest in societies that are relatively prosperous, protect civil liberties, and preserve peace
- How do these societal conditions contribute to individual well-being?
- What personal qualities lead to societal engagement and institutional change?
- Against the backdrop of diminishing resource and explosive population:
 - What kind of education and child rearing best lead to an understanding of the limits of consumption?
 - To understand the interdependence of human communities? Of other life-forms?
- There are reciprocal causal chains between personal and societal well-being: happy people need good societies, and vice-versa.
- Node 3 will study these causal chains
 - At micro level, the relationship between family structure and individual well-being
 - At mid-level, impact of neighborhoods and cities and the ecosystem
 - At macro level, content of mass media, legislative bodies, and economic changes
- Individual relationship to community in schools, legislative bodies, and the press

3. Education

- As individuals can learn helplessness or optimism, institutions and their representatives can inculcate assumptions of success or failure that can expand or constrict possibilities
- As psychology has focused on the disease/damage/deficiency model, so too has education
 - Rather than examine why children from some groups fail, ask why some children in those same groups succeed
 - Rather than assuming that a culture is homogeneous and must be marked as dominant or minority, assume facets of a culture can be ennobling or enervating to the individuals within it

4. Deliberative groups such as Congress

- Civility is respect for other deliberators and acceptance of the legitimacy, if not the correctness, of opposing views
- Comity provides for a deliberative body to hear out differing opinions as a healthy part of the process for achieving consensus
 - In recent years incivility has characterized our representative bodies
 - Assuming civility is the desirable norm, what can be done to improve this condition?

5. The Press

- Most of what is known about government and politics is mediated by the mass media

- Past 20 years have seen media, broadcast and print, have increasingly focused on what is negative to the exclusion of what is positive
 - Speeches of presidential candidates attack less than 15% of the time, but news reports of those speeches feature “attacks” 50% of the time
 - The most hyperbolic quote, not the most representative will get coverage
 - Public perceives that campaigns are far more attack-driven than they actually are
 - By focusing on “attack” the press encourages candidates to increase the amount and stridency of their attacks
- Node 3 will examine the role of the press in a healthy community

6. Focal issues for Node 3

- Education and child rearing that best promote understanding of limits of consumption and interdependence of human communities
- Role of press in a healthy community
- What motivates people to participate in a voluntary organization?
- What prompts willingness to sacrifice private benefits for greater goods?
- What can be done to increase individual and group satisfaction with both the process and products of deliberative bodies?

7. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Survey of emerging field of positive psychology
- What is positive experience, positive personality, and positive community
- Developing self-awareness

8. Assignments: Prepare for group presentations

Class 5: Student Presentations of Positive Psychology Network

1. Attendance (Instructor takes silent role today while students are in groups)
2. Welcoming encouragement for student and group readiness for “Node” presentations
(2 minutes)
3. Break into “Node” groups for final preparations before class presentations
(10 minutes)
4. Set up room for presentations per each Node’s needs (5 minutes)
5. Node presentations (60 minutes – 3 groups @ 20 minutes each)
6. Instructor presents Network’s plan for how the Nodes will be integrated (5 minutes)
7. Closing comments by instructor (2 minutes)

(If time remains instructor introduces “Cayman Meeting,” “Exceptional Person,” and “Templeton Awards.” If no time, then simply provide descriptive handout)

8. Hoped-for learning outcomes
 - Developing confidence and self-esteem through presentational activity
 - Reinforcement of sense of safety in class
 - Practice of social extraversion
 - Feeling a sense of “community” in individual cohorts (Nodes) and in classroom
 - Familiarity with Positive Psychology Network’s three Nodes: Positive Experience, the Positive Person, and the Positive Community
 - Understanding of the interrelatedness of the three Nodes
 - Initial formulation of where Positive Psychology fits into the field generally
 - Developing a critical awareness of [the student’s] personal relationship to the concepts of positive psychology

9. Assignments

Write: One-page personal response to Node presentations. Can be about the process or the material.

Read: Prepared for discussion - Myers, D. G. (1992). The Pursuit of Happiness (pp. 23 –86). New York: Avon Books, Inc.

Class 6: Happiness and Sum of Emotions (Lytton)

1. Prepare chalkboard prior to class
2. Interactive Attendance (10 minutes)
3. Lecture – Happiness (15-20 minutes)

David Lytton: Happiness, 1999

- Twins study on heritability of traits
- Hedonic and anhedonic
- Dysthymia and depression
- Happy genes

Reminder of safety in classroom

- Personal sharing voluntary
- Class not group therapy
- Instructor has referrals and resources

David Myers: The Pursuit of Happiness, 1992

- Happiness or fame?
- Humans seek success – measured by sex and money
- Dutch psychologist Veenhoven
 - Studies Happy and Unhappy people
 - Self reports and peer reports

- Depression is a sign of health - an adaption like physical pain
- Emotions are biological
- Happiness is not ephemeral euphoria

University of Michigan and University of Chicago Survey Questions to class (15 – 20 minutes)

1) Taking all things together, how would you say things are these days?

Would you say you are Happy? Pretty happy? Or not too happy?

2) How satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?

Are you very satisfied? Satisfied? Not very satisfied? Not at all satisfied?

4. Class discussion – involve all students who are willing to share

Points to bring out:

- How did you arrive at your answers? What went into your evaluations?
- How did you know? What specific things, feelings, and behaviors were considered?

Continue discussion until class has exhausted topic

5. Break (10 minutes)

6. Assign and discuss assessment: Sum of +/- Emotions (15 minutes)

7. Administer Beck Depression Inventory (15 – 20 minutes)

8. Hoped-for learning outcomes:

- Continuing sense of safety and confidence in process of classwork
- Exposure to Myers and Lytton
- Exposure to psychological terms and concepts
- Exposure to concept of heritable “hedonic set point”

- Developing self-awareness of personal relationship to happiness and depression
- Exposure to psychological assessment instruments

8. Assignments:

Read: Myers (pp. 87 – 126)

Write: Responses to “Sum of Emotions”

Class 7: Introduction to the Demographics of Happiness (Myers)

1. Getting Present exercise (10 minutes)

- Breathing
- Awareness
 - Physical
 - Emotional
 - Cognitive

2. Discussion of Sum of Emotions homework (20 minutes)

3. Lecture (50 minutes)

Introduction to Demographics of Happiness from David Myers, The Pursuit of Happiness

- Discrepancy in reports of happiness and satisfied with life
 - Repression of painful feelings?
 - False consciousness?
 - Massive collusive denial?
 - Epistemopathic syndrome?
 - Pollyanna syndrome?
- Wealth and happiness

- Dutch survey of 170,000 Europeans
 - Links between democracy and happiness
 - Wealth equals happiness?
 - Discussion
- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
 - Introductory presentation of motivational theory with board diagram
 - Physiological
 - Safety
 - Belongingness
 - Esteem
 - Actualization

4. Break (10 minutes)

5. Lecture (resumed)

- Wealth and depression
 - Ordinary pleasures
 - Seneca
 - Keillor
 - Myers
 - Discussion

6. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Exposure to rudiments of bringing awareness into present moment
- Self-awareness of emotional experiences
- Recent emotional orientation (positive or negative)

- Introduction to demographics of Happiness
- Introduction to self-reporting biases
- Contemplation of materialism

7. Assignments

Read: Handout — Plato's "Allegory of the Cave" from Republic
Myers, The Pursuit of Happiness (to p. 143)

Consider: Old age: Is it a reward or a punishment?

Class 8: Demographics of Happiness (Myers)

1. Interactive attendance (10 minutes)
2. Getting Started exercise: Discussion of homework, "reward or punishment" (15 minutes)
3. Lecture (55 minutes)

Continuation of Demographics of Happiness from David Myers, The Pursuit of Happiness

Age

- Less than 1% of variation in subjective well-being attributed to age

Health and Physical Fitness: Mens sana in corpore sano

- UCSF study of two groups of heart attack survivors
- Clinician's Digest (handout) – Aerobic exercise as treatment of depression
- University of Kansas study – Exercise as treatment of dysthymia
- Chronic anger and resentment vs. health

Gender

- Class quiz
 - What we know about gender and happiness (score in class)
- University of Illinois study – females see facial cues more accurately than males
 - Females have more empathy than males
 - Females do not have more subjective well-being than males

Siblings

- Presence or absence of siblings has no statistical effect on an individual's SWB

Break (10 minutes)

Lecture – Demographics of Happiness (resume)

Disability

- Presence or absence of disability has no statistical effect on an individual's SWB

Race

- Slight benefit in terms of subjective well-being if white and educated
- Strategies utilized by groups traditionally discriminated against
 - Value those things at which they excel
 - Attribute problems to prejudice
 - Compare selves to others in the group

Attractiveness

- Class assessment (group activity)
 - Correlation between self-report of personal attractiveness and satisfaction with life

- Compare class results with University of Michigan study
 - Those considering self highly attractive score higher in life satisfaction than others
 - Discussion: How shall we think about this? About ourselves?
4. Intro to next lecture – A Satisfied Mind
- Happiness is relative
 - Continuing pleasure wears off
5. Hoped-for learning outcomes
- Heightened critical thinking regards aging and what makes life worth living
 - Exposure to demographics of happiness
 - Discovery of limiting assumptions regards ability to experience happiness
 - Practice producing simple correlative measures
 - Awareness of the role personal perception of attractiveness plays in SWB
6. Assignments
- Read: Myers, The Pursuit of Happiness (to the end)
- Review: Plato's Allegory of the Cave
- Write: One page – What makes life satisfying for you?

Class 9: What Makes Life Satisfying (Myers)

1. Attendance (from turned-in homework)
2. Set up group exercise (10 minutes)
 - Create 5 groups of approximately 6 students each
 - Arrange desks in work groups pattern
3. Group exercise: What Makes Life Satisfying? (40 minutes)

- Each group compiles lists from individual's homework
- Each group member must contribute one or two qualities, experiences, or things that make life satisfying for him or her
- Group adopts a representative name for itself
- Group members question each other and themselves about how and why an entry was put on the list
- When satisfied with their list, the group chooses a member to copy list onto board under heading of group's name

4. Break (10 Minutes)

5. Class exercise (30 minutes)

- Instructor leads first while duplications on meta-list are marked and themes are noted
- One at a time, each group presents its list of what makes life satisfying to the class
- Class critically explores the meaning and the source of the qualities, experiences, and things presented
- Individual and collective values and beliefs are examined
- Cultural influences are considered
 - Family of origin cultural influences
 - Current American cultural influences
 - Religious beliefs
 - Family of origin beliefs
- Class members responsible for copying meta-list for their class notes

- Facilitated as a further group exercise (e.g., some students copy list, some reproduce them for the group, some buy the workers a cup of coffee)

6. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Continuing sense of safety and competence for individuals within group
- Developing self-confidence as class members make presentations
- Developing critical self-awareness of personal values and beliefs
- Introduction to role that cultural factors play in satisfaction with life
- Discovery of common unifying themes
- Discovery of enjoyment in the learning process

7. Assignments:

Read: Finish The Pursuit of Happiness

Experience: Nature and your relationship to it

Class 10: The Satisfied Mind (Myers)

1. Interactive Attendance (10 minutes)

2. Lecture: A Satisfied Mind (50 minutes)

Social comparisons:

- Uplifting effects of comparing downward
- Downing effects of comparing upward

Intellectual consistency (the hobgoblin of small minds)

Multi-Axial Consistency Model

- Dichotomy axis
- Situational axis
- Consequential axis

- Personal Congruence axis
- Reciprocal axis

Discussion

3. Lecture: Count Your Blessings

- The man with old shoes
- The rabbi and the farmer
- The head and the hammer
- Maslow

4. Discussion

5. Break (10 minutes)

6. Class exercise – Well-being and comparison

- Comparing downward correlates with higher life satisfaction?
- Comparing upward correlates with lower life satisfaction?

7. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Awareness of effects of comparisons on life satisfaction
- Exposure to concept of intellectual consistency
- Experience of participating in experimentation to test an hypothesis

8. Assignments:

Read: Myers (chapter 6)

Class 11: Traits of Happy People (Myers)

1. Attendance (10 minutes)

2. Announcement of tri-term (10 minutes)

- Next class
- Open notes – open books
- Respond to one of four questions that will be on board at beginning of class
- 2-3 pages / 4 pages maximum
- Reassurances

3. Lecture – Traits of Happy People (from Myers' The Pursuit of Happiness)

(10 minutes)

Happy disposition

- Temperament more important than demographics
- Best predictor of behavior is past behavior
- Stability of emotions across life-span

Four traits:

(a) Self-esteem (S-e)

- Roots and fruits of one's sense of self
- Self-esteem affected by injury and threat
 - Threat to S-e creates defensiveness
 - S-e wounded by humiliation results in hostility
 - S-e wounded by insecurity results in harsh judgmentalism
- S-e usually built on foundation of self-serving bias
 - Credit to self for victory

- Blame to others/things for failure

4. Responsibility exercise (35-40 minutes)

Dyads "A"s and "B"s

Part 1:

- Think of a time when something good happened to you. Describe it in a way that makes you completely responsible for it. Your partner must believe your story. When your partner holds the "thumbs up" sign, STOP.
 - "A"s go first (3 minutes)
 - "B"s next (3 minutes)

Discuss:

- How did it feel to be responsible for your success?
- Difference between telling and listening
- What qualities made stories believable?
- What qualities made stories suspect?
- Other aspects of exercise class wants to discuss

Part 2: Same dyads

- Tell the same story of success except this time make your partner believe that you had nothing to do with it. Take no credit for the success. It happened because of other people or circumstances. When your partner believes you, "thumbs up" sign signals, STOP.
 - "A"s go first (3 minutes)
 - "B"s next (3 minutes)

Discuss:

- What was the experiential difference between being fully responsible and not being responsible at all for the success?
- What were the physical differences? Posture? Speech rhythm, tone?
- Did either position feel more powerful? Easier? Which? Why?
- Other aspects of exercise class wants to discuss?

5. Break (10 minutes)

6. Lecture (resume): Four Traits of Happy People (20 minutes)

(a) Self-esteem (continued)

- Positive self-illusions
- Self-esteem as a defensive construct
- Healthy self-esteem

(b) Sense of personal control

- Hell is to drift, Heaven is to steer
- Sense of control in life is most dependable predictor of well being
- Internal locus v. external locus of control
 - Political ideologies
 - Education

(c) Optimism

- Psychologist Inglehart
- Norman Vincent Peale
- Virgil
- Myers' recipe for well being

(d) Extraversion

- Extraverts live longer, healthier lives
- Experience better relationships and social support than introverts

7. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Learning the four traits of happy people
- Understand defensive and healthy self-esteem
- Awareness of hostility and harsh judgmentalism as responses to injured self-esteem
- Experience differences in being responsible, or not responsible for one's life
- Continuing development of self-awareness
- Continuing sense of safety within group

8. Assignments:

Review readings and notes for open-book midterm.

Consider: Are you the captain or a passenger in your life?

Class 12: Midterm

Midterm (90 minutes)

Instructions: Choose one of the four questions on the board today and respond as completely as you can to it. For those of you who like guidelines, the minimum length of the paper is two pages. The maximum length is four pages. Neatness counts. If your instructor can't read what you write, you will not get a passing grade. Please make your work legible. You may use your books, handouts, notes, or a menu from the local delicatessen. That's up to you. Your instructor will generally look for how well you have understood the material and how well you are able to relate it to your own experience and

viewpoint. Make sure that your name is on your work when you turn it in. When you have finished, you are free to leave. Be as quiet as you can when you do leave if others are still working on their paper.

Okay? Any paralyzing test anxiety in the room? Good. You are a wonderful group, and everyone one of you will do well on this exercise.

Four questions on the board:

1. Compare yourself to the Positive Psychology Network's three concepts of: Positive Experience - The Positive Individual - The Positive Personality.

2. Explain Plato's "Allegory of the Cave" as it may relate to everyday life here in Santa Clara County.

3. Remembering the Rabbi's treatment of the Farmer's problem: What stories did your family tell that gave you understanding about life? Tell the story and what it has meant to you.

4. What was your response to learning about Myers' "Demographics of Happiness" and "Traits of Happy People"? Were you surprised by any of the material? Are you curious about other demographics or traits that may have been left out? Do you agree with Myers and the researchers he cites?

Class 13: Trait Deficiency

1. Return and discuss midterm (15 minutes)
2. Class study exercise (30 minutes): Well-being and comparing upward or downward
 - Score assessments
 - Compare Means

- Comparing Upward and life satisfaction scores
- Comparing downward and life satisfaction scores

3. Discussion

4. Dyad exercise (20 minutes)

- Self-rating on the four traits of happy people
- 5-point Lykert scale for each trait

5. Discussion

6. Break (10 minutes)

7. Lecture – Trait Deficiency (15 minutes)

- What do we do if we aren't strong in some, or all, of the traits?
- Act as if
- William James
- Myers

8. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Learning how studies work from participation in class survey
- Self-awareness of personal traits relative to the traits shared by happy people
- Exposure to autogenic behavior as a correction of deficiency

9. Assignments:

Continue self-awareness in relation to the four traits

Read: Csikzentmihalyi, Flow, chapters 1-4

Class 14: Introduction to Flow (Csikzentmihalyi)

1. Morning check-in (10 minutes)
2. Lecture – Introduction to Flow, The Psychology of Optimal Experience by Csikzentmihalyi (Part 1 – 35 minutes)

Optimal functioning

- Aristotle on goals and happiness
- Chick-sent-me-hi, Me-hi
- Happiness does not “happen” to us
- Happiness does not depend on external events
- Happiness must be prepared for, cultivated, practiced, and defended privately
- Control of inner experience is as close to happy as we can get
- Frankl: Happiness and success cannot be aimed for – must be as unintended consequences
- Optimal experience is a function of growth

Mihaly's happy data collection

- At first interviews with people who love what they do
- Development of technique to measure subjective well-being
- 1,000,000 subjects electronically paged (8 random pages per day for 1 week)
- Each page results in written record of what the subject is feeling and thinking

Inner experience

- Order in consciousness is the goal
- Pursuit of goals concentrates attention, creates order
- Religious traditions seek to free consciousness from threat of chaos and biological urges

- Psychoanalytic tradition seeks to free consciousness from impulses and social mores

3. Break (10 minutes)

4. Lecture resumes (35 minutes)

Why hasn't consciousness evolved?

- Thousands of years of wisdom say the same things with only imperceptible change
- Emancipation of consciousness is not cumulative
- Complex expertise must be practiced continuously
- Modification of habits and desires is erosively slow
- Wisdom is also achieved within cultural and temporal limits

Purpose of consciousness

- Dynamic experience of life and self
- Intention as motivational
- Attention as focal
- Dimensions of consciousness / processing speeds and limits
- Chunking expands consciousness

What we do with consciousness

- Consciousness is underutilized
- Eating, hygiene, and leisure = 50% of conscious processing
- Attention is the coin of psychic life
- Personality traits are references to patterns of attentional structure

5. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Introduction to Csikzentmihalyi
- Continued learning about what happiness is and isn't
- Reinforcement of growth as optimal functioning
- Continued exposure to data collection methods
- Exposure to concepts and dimensions of consciousness
- Understanding of intention and attention

6. Assignments:

Read: Flow, through page 116

Read: Allegory of Cave handout

Be aware: Your personal experience of flow

Class 15: The Flow Model (Csikzentmihalyi)

1. Morning interaction (10 minutes)

- Pass around roll sheet
- Distribute Flow Model handout
- Student comments

2. Review previous class notes (10 minutes)

- Optimal functioning
- Csikzentmihalyi's data collection
- Attention and intention
- Self
- Consciousness

3. Lecture: Flow and the Flow Model from Csikzentmihalyi's Flow (60 minutes)

Psychic entropy

- Disordered Consciousness
- Distracts attention from goals
- Positive or negative?

Flow or optimal experience

- Awareness congruent with goals
- Psychic energy effortless
- Causes Self to be more complex
- Differentiation and Integration
- Pleasure v. enjoyment
- Growth of self – complexity of self
- Eight elements of Flow experience

The Flow Model

- Diagram handout
- Challenge – skills
- Anxiety – boredom
- How and why we grow with Flow

Obstacles to Flow

- Mental disorders – schizophrenia
- Social disorders – Anomie and Alienation
- Anomie – anxiety and attentional disorders
- Alienation – Boredom and self-centeredness

4. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Familiarity with concepts of Flow
- Elements of Flow
- Understanding how Flow works
- Recognition of blocks to Flow
- How Flow creates personal growth
- Developing awareness of Flow in own life

5. Assignments:

Read: Flow

Write: One page (2-page maximum) relating a personal experience of Flow – use Flow diagram and relate eight elements of Flow to the same personal experience.

Class 16: Estrangement, Massive Collusive Denial, Reconnection (May)

1. Morning greetings and breathing exercise (10 minutes)
2. Lecture – from Rollo May's Man's Search for Himself (30 minutes)

Disconnection from harmony with nature

- Subject to anxiety and emptiness
- Anxiety v. fear
- Neurotic anxiety
- Answer to anxiety is awareness
- Estrangement from nature matters but we agree to massive collusive denial

The Quantitative Humanness scale

- Fully human: courageous humility, realistic and mature
- Human diminution: self-inflation and conceit
 - Pride is a cover for anxiety

- The person who feels compensates by being a bully
- The person who feels inferior compensates by being a braggart
- Fascism is an example of social anxiety and human diminution
- Self-awareness is the technique for moving from diminution to humanness

An individual's level of health is equal to his/her level of self-awareness

- ABCs of self-awareness
 - Affect (feelings) – Behavior (actions) – Cognitions (thoughts)
 - Awareness of ABCs begins with awareness of the body
 - Infant's core experience is an awareness of physical presence
- First, the ABCs
- Second, learn what you uniquely want to do and be
- Third, reconnect with nature

3. Break (5 minutes)

4. Lab (30 minutes)

- Introduction to concepts of: experience / wants / expectation / avoidance
- Set up for four question dyad exercise
- Four question dyad exercise
 - What are you experiencing?
 - What do you want?
 - What do you expect?
 - What are you avoiding?

5. Debrief (10 minutes)

6. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Introduction to May's concept of the relationship between "anxiety" and "disconnection from nature"
- Exposure to Quantitative Humanness scale
- Exposure to the qualities of self-awareness
- Exposure to techniques of self-awareness
- Experience of self-awareness
- Experience of resistance to self and other
- Experience of connection to self and other

7. Assignment: Reflect on personal experience of class

Class 17: Becoming a Person (Rogers)

1. Daily check-in – attendance (10 minutes)
2. Lecture – from Carl Rogers On Becoming a Person (50 minutes)

Interpersonal relationships are the lens through which we understand ourselves and others

- Rogers' therapy based on understanding and accepting self through interactions with another
- Primary therapeutic tool is the insistence on "I" statements – responsibility for accurate awareness and expression of experience
- "Most mistakes in personal relationships can be accounted for in terms of the fact, I have for some defensive reason, behaved in one way at a surface level, while in reality my feelings run in a contrary direction." (p. 17)
- "I am more effective when I can listen acceptantly to myself and I can be myself by letting myself BE what I AM (hungry, bored, angry, loving). It becomes

easier for me to accept myself as a decidedly imperfect person, who by no means functions at all times in the way I would like to function.” (p. 17)

Change:

- “When I accept myself as I am, then I change.” (p. 17)
- We can’t change into something new until we know what we’re changing from
- When one knows and accepts where one is and what one is, change will occur organically almost without one even knowing

Understanding:

- To be understood has positive value to others and ourselves
- It is rare that we understand precisely what the meaning of another’s statement is to him or her
- Typically we compare, evaluate, and judge another’s communication based on how it might change ourselves rather than really understanding its idiosyncratic meaning
- An individual’s unconscious is generally in charge of what is permitted into perception. This unconscious selective perception is a protective behavior.

Experience:

- “I can trust my experience. My total organismic sensing of a situation is more trustworthy than my intellect. My experience is wiser than my intellect.” (p. 22)
- Evaluation by others is not a guide for me. I listen...but never as a guide. My experience is my highest authority.” (p. 25)

- The facts are always friendly....Every bit of evidence...leads one...closer to what is true. The truth can never be harmful or unsatisfying or dangerous.”
(p. 25)
- “What is most personal is most general.” (p. 26)

Three conditions of relational success:

1) Reality – Be aware of your own feelings. Don't present an outward façade of one attitude while actually holding another at a deeper or unconscious level. By providing the genuine reality which is in you, the other person can successfully seek for the reality within him/her. BE REAL.

2) Warm regard – Have such for the other as a person of unconditional self-worth, of having value no matter what his/her condition, behavior, feelings.

3) Sensitive empathy – To understand the other's thoughts and feelings as the other sees them. To accept the other's thoughts and feelings as he/she sees them. To do this allows the other to be freed from moralistic or diagnostic evaluations which are always threatening.

- When an individual discovers the capacity to use relationship for change it is a move forward toward maturity. This is the growth tendency. Rogers calls this move forward toward maturity and self-actualization the mainspring of life.
- Rogers' approach is a drive theory of personality. Classic Freudian drive theory conceives of sex and aggression as the steam engine of life. Rogers sees the drive as "...the urge evident in all organic and human life – to expand, extend, become autonomous, develop, mature – the tendency to express and activate all

the capacities of the organism, to the extent that such activation enhances the organism or the self.” (p. 35)

General hypothesis of a healthy relationship:

- “If I can create a relationship characterized on my part: by a genuine transparency, in which I am my real feelings; by a warm acceptance of and prizing of the other as a separate individual; by a sensitive ability to see his [or her] world and himself [or herself] as he [or she] sees them;

Then the other individual in the relationship: will experience and understand aspects of himself [or herself] which previous he [or she] has repressed; will find himself [or herself] becoming better integrated, more able to function effectively; will become more similar to the person he [or she] would like to be; will be more self-directing and more self-confident; will become more of a person, more unique and more self-expressive; will be more understanding and acceptant of others; will be able to cope with the problems of life more adequately and comfortably.” (p. 37)

3. Class discussions (30 minutes)

4. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Exposure to Rogers’ theory of relationship and its function in self-development
- Concepts of change, understanding, and experience
- Three conditions for a successful relationship
- General hypothesis of a healthy relationship
- Continuing development of self-awareness

5. Assignment: Read Rogers handout (Introduction and chapters 3 and 18)

Class 18: Is Relationship Possible? (Rogers)

1. Morning salutations and attendance (10 minutes)
2. Discuss previous class lecture and readings – Introduction to Carl Rogers (10 minutes)
3. Lecture (20 minutes) from Carl Rogers On Becoming s Person (1961)

The following material will also be reproduced as a handout for class exercise: Is a healthy, mature, growth-oriented relationship possible for me? Ask:

1) Can I be perceived by the other as a trustworthy, dependable, and consistent in a deep sense? Am I dependably real? Is what I'm feeling matched by my awareness of my associated attitude?

2) Can I be expressive enough as a person that what I am is communicated unambiguously? Are my words giving one message, contradicted by my subtle communication which confuses the other and leads to distrust? Is my defensiveness keeping my experience out of my awareness?

3) Can I let myself experience positive attitudes toward the other including warmth, caring, liking, interest, and respect? Would expression of such feelings lead to demands, disappointment or rejection? Is it safe to relate?

4) Can I be strong enough as a person to be separate from the other with thoughts, feelings, and rights of my own? Am I hardy enough to understand that I won't be destroyed by the other's anger, dependence, or love?

5) Am I secure enough to permit the other their separateness? Can I give him [or her] freedom to be? Or do I feel that he [or she] should follow my advice, remain somewhat dependent on me, and mold himself [or herself] after me?

6) Can I be with this individual as a person who is in the process of becoming, or will I be bound by his [or her] past, and by my own past? If I accept the other as something fixed, already classified by his [or her] past, then I am reinforcing a limited hypothesis. If I accept him [or her] as a person in the process of Becoming, then I am doing what I can to confirm and make real his [or her] potentialities.

4. Dyad exercise (20 minutes – 10 minutes for each)

Students choose a partner to work through their own status relative to these six conditions of readiness for a healthy, mature, growth-oriented relationship.

5. Class discussion of dyad exercise (10 minutes)

6. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Knowledge of Rogers' prerequisite personal conditions for a healthy relationship
- Self-awareness of student's own status relative to these conditions

7. Assignment: Read Rogers handouts (Introduction and chapters 3 and 18)

Class 19: General Law of Interpersonal Relationships (Rogers)

1. Morning greetings and attendance (10 minutes)

2. Lecture (30 minutes): from Carl Rogers On Becoming a Person (1961)

Congruence

- Matching of experience with awareness with communication
- An infant's experience of hunger is matched with his [or her] awareness of hunger and subsequent communication (crying)
- In adults

- Incongruence between experience and awareness results in behaviors of defensiveness and denial
- Incongruence between awareness and communication results in behaviors of falseness and deceit.

Tentative formulation of a General Law of Interpersonal Relationships

- “The greater the congruence of experience, awareness and communication on the part of one individual, the more the ensuing relationship will involve: a tendency toward reciprocal communication with a quality of increasing congruence: a tendency toward more mutually accurate understanding of the communications: improved psychological adjustment and functioning in both parties: mutual satisfaction in the relationship.” (p. 344)
- “Conversely the greater the communicated incongruence of experience and awareness, the more the ensuing relationship will involve: further communication with the same quality: disintegration of accurate understanding, less adequate psychological adjustment and functioning in both parties; and mutual dissatisfaction in the relationship.” (p. 345)

3. Class exercise / discussion

Work through with class an example of General Law in action: “Smith and Jones”
(following material is reproduced on handout which also includes General Law above)

1) Any communication of Smith to Jones is marked by some degree of congruence in Smith.

2) If all cues from speech, tone, and gesture are unified because they spring from a congruence and unity in Smith, then there is much less likelihood that these cues will have an ambiguous or unclear meaning to Jones.

3) Consequently, the more clear the communication from Smith, the more Jones responds with clarity. His response will have more clarity and congruence because he experienced Smith's communication as unambiguous.

4) The more congruent Smith is in the topic, the less he has to defend himself in this area, and the more he is able to listen accurately to Jones' response. When we express genuine feelings, we are more free to listen. When we present a façade, it needs to be defended. This defense will inhibit our hearing of what the other is communicating.

5) To the degree Smith is congruent Jones feels empathetically understood as he sees himself and how he perceives the topic.

6) For Jones to feel understood is for him to experience positive regard for Smith. To feel understood is to feel that one has made some kind of positive difference in the experience of another, in this case Smith.

7) To the extent that Jones (a) experiences Smith as congruent or integrated in this relationship; (b) experiences Smith as having a positive regard for him; (c) experiences Smith as being empathetically understanding, is the degree that the conditions for a healthy relationship are established.

8) To the extent that Jones is experiencing these characteristics of a healthy relationship he finds himself experiencing fewer barriers to communication. Hence he tends to communicate himself more as he is, more congruently. Little by little his defensiveness decreases.

9) Having communicated himself more freely with less of defensiveness, Jones is now more able to listen accurately, without a need for defensive distortion, to Smith's further communication. This is a repetition of step 4, but now in terms of Jones.

10) To the degree that Jones is able to listen, Smith now feels empathetically understood (as in step 5 for Jones); experiences Jones' positive regard (parallel to step 6); and finds himself experiencing the relationship as healthy (in a way parallel to step 7). Thus Smith and Jones have become reciprocally healthy for each other.

11) This causes in each changes in personality in the direction of greater unity and integration, less conflict allowing more time for effective living. These are changes toward maturity.

12) Limiting element in this chain is the introduction of threatening material. For example, if Jones (in step 3) includes in his more congruent response new material which is outside the realm of Smith's congruence, then Smith may not be able to listen accurately. Consequently, Smith defends himself against hearing what Jones is communicating and responds with ambiguous communication, and the process begins to occur in reverse.

4. Hoped-for learning Outcomes

- Understanding Rogers' concept of Congruence
- Introduction to one model of relational success
- Continuing development of self-awareness relating to relationship

5. Assignments:

Read: again all of the Rogers material

Write: 1-2 pages on what makes a relationship work for you / 1-2 pages on what makes a relationship not work for you.

Class 20: The Good Person, B-Values, Meta-pathologies (Maslow)

1. Morning check-ins and attendance (10 minutes)

2. Lecture (50 minutes)

From Abraham Maslow's The Farther Reaches of Human Nature (1972)

Maslow's theory: the drive to become self-evolving, an autogenic good person

- Evolution means selecting, and therefore choosing and deciding, and this means valuing
- Values are Maslow's standard of conscious human evolution

Hierarchy of needs – motivation model

- Humans are motivated by satisfying an hierarchical structure of needs. Each, in ascending order, must be satisfied before the next need can be successfully approached.
- First are deficiency needs: physiological and safety
 - Physiological needs: air, water, food, and shelter
 - Safety needs: security that air, water, food, and shelter will remain available
- Social needs are next: belonging and esteem
 - Belonging describes the need for social affiliation, to belong to a group and feel connected with others
 - Esteem needs represent the need for within-group recognition
- Self-actualizing motivations emerge once the needs of physiology, safety, belonging, and esteem have been satisfied. Here a person may enter a state of transcendence wherein contribution to the collective is the norm, and the personal experience of joy is familiar

Meta-values, or Being Values (B-Values) appear from a self-actualizing state and serve two purposes:

1) To avoid illness, or human diminution, in order to maintain forward developmental motion

2) To achieve fullest growth or humanness

- The degree of accomplishment of these two purposes form the quality of an individual's experience of life

B-Values: truth, goodness, beauty, unity, dichotomy transcendence, uniqueness, perfection, completion, justice, simplicity, comprehensiveness, effortlessness, playfulness, self-sufficiency, meaningfulness

Deprivation of B-Values result in meta-pathologies: alienation, anomie, anhedonia, loss of zest in life, meaninglessness, indifference, boredom, existential vacuum, noogenic neurosis, apathy, desacralization of life, depression, death wishes, sense of being useless, hopelessness, helplessness, doubt, despair, anguish, joylessness, futility, and cynicism

3. Class discussion time (30 minutes)

4. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Introduction to Maslow's theory of motivation
- Self-awareness of how the Hierarchy of Needs model is at work in each class member's life
- Exposure to meta-values and associated meta-pathologies

5. Assignments: Read Maslow handout, "Eight Ways in Which One Self-Actualizes"

Eight Ways in Which One Self-Actualizes

From A. H. Maslow's *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (1971, pp. 45-50)

1) Experiencing fully, selflessly, with full concentration, totally absorbed, unself-consciously

2) Think of life as a process of choices, one after another. At each point there is a progressive choice and a regressive choice; a movement toward defensiveness and fear, or toward growth. To make the growth choice a dozen times a day is to move a dozen times a day toward self-actualization

3) Self-actualization implies that a self exists. Listen to it. Make a hush. Cut out distractions. Close your eyes and hear yourself respond to the question.

4) When in doubt, be honest. Look within yourself for answers and ways to be responsible. Know that feeling of the moment of choosing responsibility. Each time we take responsibility, there is an actualizing of the self. Looking to self and listening to self, being honest, taking responsibility, and making a growth choice rather than a fear choice guarantee a better life.

5) Be prepared to be unpopular. To be courageous rather than afraid is something that will scare others and make them doubt themselves, which in turn they will project toward you.

6) Self-actualizing means using one's intelligence – working to do well the thing that one wants to do: practice piano, write a dissertation. Learn to be surprised by joy, to recognize peak experiences when they occur. Peak experiences are transient moments of self-actualizations.

7) Break up illusion. Learn what we are not good at. Learn what our potentials are not. Rid the false notion.

8) Resacralize. In youth we distrust values because hypocrisy often teaches values. Desacralization occurs as a defense against hypocrites.

Class 21: Optimism, Pessimism, Achievement, Health (Seligman)

1. Greetings and attendance (10 minutes)

2. Lecture (50 minutes) from Martin Seligman's Learned Optimism (1990)

Two habits of thinking about the same event:

- Pessimists believe that bad events will last a long time and will undermine all they do, and also that the bad events are their own fault.
- Optimists tend to believe that defeat is a temporary thing and its causes are confined to only the one event. Defeat is not seen as their fault, rather circumstances, misfortune, or other people brought it about. Bad situations are thought of as a challenge to try harder. Optimists live longer and are generally healthier, especially into middle age.

Pessimism is escapable:

- Not by affirmation, or Pollyannaism, or boosterism, but by learning new cognitive skills
- Root of pessimism is helplessness, wherein one's perception is that nothing one does will affect what happens to him/her
- For those who believe, as the pessimist does, that misfortune is our fault, is enduring, and will undermine everything we do, more misfortune will befall.
The way we perceive the world will be the way the world is for us.

Depression:

- Depression is the ultimate expression of pessimism
- Classic Freudian view of depression is that it is the result of anger turned back on the self. Infantile rage toward mother for abandonment projected onto the part of self representing the maternal. Replays in relationships throughout life-span.
- Biological view sees depression as an illness of the body. Possibly an inherited defect on an arm of chromosome number 11 resulting in lack of dopamine and dopamine-like chemistry. Treat with drugs or Electro-Convulsive Therapy (shock treatment)
- Seligman asks, what if depression is not an illness, but a severe low mood? What if depression is, in fact, a reaction to present troubles? What if depression arises from mistaken inferences we make from the tragedies and setbacks we all experience over the course of a life? What if depression occurs merely when we harbor our pessimistic beliefs about the cause of our setbacks? What if we can unlearn pessimism and acquire the skills of looking at setbacks optimistically?

Achievement:

- Popular view of achievement is that success is a result of talent and desire. Failure is lack of either desire or talent.
- Seligman sees optimism as the third component. What if the traditional view of the components of success is wrong? What if the third factor, either optimism or pessimism, matters as much as talent and desire? What if we can teach this to our children?

Health:

- Historically health is viewed as a fully physical state determined by one's constitution and habits, and the avoidance of infectious organisms.
- Seligman insists that our patterns of thought are a significant component to our health.
- Optimists have better health than pessimists. Immune systems function better in optimists than pessimists. Optimists live longer than pessimists.
- Learned optimism can change the experience of one's life. Seligman sees events in life as either successes or failures of personal control.
- Personal control requires understanding: learned helplessness and explanatory style.
- Learned helplessness is the giving-up reaction, the quitting response that follows the belief that whatever one does doesn't matter.
- Explanatory style is the manner one habitually explains to himself or herself why events happen. It modulates learned helplessness. An optimistic explanatory style stops helplessness, whereas a pessimistic explanatory style spreads helplessness. One's way of explaining events determines how helpless one can become, or how energized in the face of setbacks.
- Seligman calls this "the word in our heart" (p. 16). That word is either yes or no.

3. Class discussions (20 minutes)

4. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Concepts of optimism and pessimism and how they may affect life's experience
- Concepts of the causes of depression

- How optimism and explanatory style can influence experience, achievement, and health

5. Assignments: Read Seligman (chapters 1-3).

Class 22: Learned Helplessness (Seligman)

1. Salutations and attendance (10 minutes)

2. Lecture (50 minutes) from Martin Seligman's Learned Helplessness

Learned helplessness

- Seligman and Steve Maier demonstrate learned helplessness at U Penn in 1965
- Experiments overturned basic tenets of behavioral psychology: that organisms can learn responses only when responses are tied to reward and punishment. In new fact an organism's responses can be unrelated to reward and punishment.

Triadic experiment – three dogs yoked together

First day:

- Noxious stimulus is brief electric shocks
- First dog is taught that the shock may be stopped by pressing a bar with his nose
- Second dog learns that nothing he does will stop the shock. The shock is only stopped when the first dog presses the bar.
- Third dog receives no shock.

Second day:

- Dogs each put in two compartment boxes with a low wall separating the two components. Electric shock is transmitted to one side of the low wall.

- Dogs that learned, on previous day, that they could stop the shock by pressing a bar, now sought to escape the shock by hopping over the low divider wall. That worked as there was no shock on that side of the wall.
- The dogs that had received no shock the day before, likewise escaped by jumping over the low wall.
- Dogs that had learned, the day before, that nothing they did would relieve the shock just lay down on the floor of the box and continued receiving the shocks. They never found out that they could escape the shocks simply by jumping over the low wall.

Lessons:

- Mental events are causal. Voluntary behavior is motivated by what one expects the behavior to result in.
- The dogs that had become passive and helpless to escape the shock were dragged by experimenters, back and forth across the low wall and were “cured.” Once the dogs could see that their own actions mattered and did work to stop the shock, they were 100% cured of helplessness.

Profound secondary lesson:

- Seligman and Maier found that dogs taught this mastery as puppies were immunized against learned helplessness throughout their lives.

Learned helplessness and humans

- Donal Hiroto of Oregon State University designed experiment for human subjects testing the same principles as Seligman and Maier. Participants were put into three groups.

First part of Hiroto's experiment:

- First of the three groups brought into a room while a loud noise was turned on. They were given the task of learning how to turn off the noise. No matter which buttons, dials, knobs, or switches they tried, nothing worked to stop the noise.
- Second group could turn off the noise with the right combination of button pushing.
- Third group was not subjected to noise.

Second part of experiment:

- Participants were brought on a different day to a different room and found a shuttle-box similar to the two-compartment box used in Seligman's experiment with the dogs.
- As a participant put their hand on one side of the box, an annoying sound would begin. If they moved their hand to the side of the box the noise would stop.

Results:

- The people who were first exposed to inescapable noise just sat with their hand in the shuttle-box without even attempting to move or stop the noise. They didn't even try, even though time and place had changed, making the situation almost completely different from the first part of the experiment.
- The people who in the first part of the experiment were exposed to escapable noise, or no noise at all, learned to stop the noise quite easily by moving their hands to the other side of the shuttle-box.
- All human subjects were debriefed and left without lingering helplessness.

Exceptional result:

- One in three people whom experimenters tried to make helpless would not succumb, and likewise for 1 in 3 dogs.
- One in 10 people who were not subjected to the noxious noise stimuli during the first part of the Oregon State experiment, nonetheless sat passively with their hand in the shuttle-box without attempting to move or stop the noise. Likewise, 1 in 10 dogs was “helpless” from the start.
- Exceptional result explained by individual explanatory style – the predominant way of explaining bad events in life learned in childhood and adolescence. Stems from one’s view of one’s place in the world: valuable and deserving or worthless and hopeless.

3. Class discussions (30 minutes)

4. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- >The Learned Helplessness model and how it relates to depression
- >That there is a way out of Depression and learned helplessness
- >Exposure to scientific method and experimental design in the field of psychology
- >Self-awareness of personal status relative to learned helplessness

5. Assignments: Read Seligman (chapters 4 and 5)

Class 23: Explanatory Style (Seligman)

1. Lecture (50 minutes) from Martin Seligman’s Learned Optimism

Three dimensions to explanatory style (Permanence, Pervasiveness, Personalization) and Hope.

Permanence and bad events

- People who give up easily believe the causes of bad things that happen to them are permanent, that bad events will continue, always being there to disturb their lives.
- People who see bad events in absolute terms, such as always and never, have a permanent pessimistic explanatory style
- People who do not succumb to helplessness see the causes of negative events as temporary.
- Those who see bad events in terms of “sometimes” and “recently” use such qualifying language to blame bad things on transient conditions, and have an optimistic explanatory style.
- The idea of permanence is critical because we all fail at times, and we are all rendered helpless sometimes. The quality of our life is determined largely by whether we rebound from hurt and setbacks in a short period, or are we debilitated in a lasting way.

Permanence and good events

- When explaining good events the optimist attributes them to permanent causes such as personal traits and abilities.
- The pessimist attributes good events to temporary conditions such as luck, unusual effort, or fortuitous timing.

Pervasiveness: specific v. universal

- Permanence is about time – pervasiveness is about space.

- People who make universal explanations for their failures give up on everything when failure strikes in one area.
- Catastrophizing when things go wrong, or allowing life to come undone when failure occurs is the mark of universality.
- People who make specific explanations for failures may become helpless in one part of their lives yet continue on strongly in others.
- Containing the experience of failure to a discreet aspect of life is a specific explanatory style.

Personalization: internal v. external

- Personalization is the least important of the factors of explanatory style. It is important for how we feel about self, but pervasiveness and permanence determine what we do and how long we are helpless.
- If, when bad things befall us, we blame self, we are internalizing; lowered self-esteem results.
- If, when bad things befall us, we blame others or circumstances, we are externalizing and self-esteem does not lower.
- On the whole, people who externalize bad events like themselves more than internalizers do.

Hope

- Finding temporary and specific causes for misfortune is the art of hope.
- Optimism is a life preserver, and hope makes it float.
- Temporary causes limit helplessness in time, and specific causes limit helplessness to the original situation.

- Permanent causes produce helplessness far into the future, and universal causes spread helplessness throughout all aspects of life. Finding permanent and universal causes for misfortune is the architecture of despair.

2. Class exercise (30 minutes)

Take Lenore Radloff's Center for Epidemiological Studies of the National Institute of Mental Health test for depression (CES-D) (pp. 59-63 in Learned Optimism).

3. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Features of Seligman's concept of explanatory style
- Self-awareness of explanatory style in student's own life
- Personal assessment of depression

4. Assignments: Read Seligman (chapters 4 and 5)

Class 24: Depression and Cognitive Therapy (Seligman)

1. Check-ins and attendance (10 minutes)

2. Lecture (50 minutes) from Martin Seligman's Learned Optimism

Depression

- Many types of depression. Some are organic: bipolar depression; unipolar depression; if one of pair of identical twins is depressed, the other is more likely to be depressed than if the two were non-twin siblings or were fraternal twins.
- Bipolar depression is treated effectively with medications.
- Unipolar depression is often drug resistant and treated with electroconvulsive therapy (shock treatment).
- Vast majority of depressions are psychological in origin.

- Seligman sees an epidemic of depression primarily resulting from problems in living and specific ways of thinking about those problems. This is Seligman's learned helplessness theory.
- Learned helplessness can be cured by: showing subject that his or her own actions will now work to alleviate the problem, or by teaching subject to think differently the cause of his or her problems / failure.
- Learned helplessness can be prevented if before the experience with helplessness occurs, the subject learns that his or her actions make a difference.
- The earlier such mastery is learned, the more effective the immunization against helplessness.
- Psychological depression caused by learned helplessness features the belief that one's actions, whatever they are, will be futile. This belief is engendered by defeat or by uncontrollable situations.
- Seligman studied with psychiatrist Aaron Beck and psychologist Albert Ellis. Both Beck and Ellis believed that depression is caused by improper thinking, irrational beliefs, and awful characterizations of self and future.
- What looks like a symptom of depression – negative thinking – is actually the disease. Depression from this perspective is neither bad brain chemistry nor anger turned inward. It is a disorder of conscious thought.
- Depression affects women twice as often as it does men. Common theory about why involves cultural tendencies of men to act rather than reflect, and women to contemplate their depression, mulling it over and over, trying to analyze and

determine its source (obsessive rumination). This is a statistical generality and not true for specific individuals.

- From Beck and Ellis comes the beginning of a new psychotherapy called cognitive therapy. Cognitive therapy can create optimistic explanatory style and halt rumination.

Five tactics of cognitive therapy:

1. Learn to recognize automatic thoughts at the time one feels the worst. These automatic thoughts are one's explanations and often permanent, pervasive, and personal.

2. Learn to dispute the automatic thoughts by marshaling contrary evidence.

3. Learn to make different explanations called re-attributions, and use them to dispute automatic thoughts.

4. Learn how to distract self from depressing thoughts.

5. Learn to recognize and question the assumptions about life and self that underlie automatic thoughts

- Cognitive therapy works because it changes pessimistic explanatory styles into optimistic ones.

3. Class discussions (30 minutes)

4. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Exposure to understanding depression
- Introduction of Ellis and Beck and cognitive therapy
- Self-awareness of depression and current understanding in students' lives

Class 25: Peace of Wild Things (Berry)

1. Experience of nature field trip (90 minutes)

To closest area of peaceful natural beauty

Meet at arranged location and time

Activity: Nonverbal class period. Each student silently reads handout of Wendell Berry (1968) poem and peacefully interacts with natural environment. Instructions given for each student to do their best to protect the peace of one another's experience.

This poem is dedicated to Joe "Highrock" Giove, having discovered the autumnal beauty of the Maryland woods that had been waiting for him patiently for almost three decades.

THE PEACE OF WILD THINGS

By Wendell Berry

When despair for the world grows in me
And I wake in the middle of the night at the least sound
In fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
Rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
Who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above the day-blind stars
Waiting for their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

2. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- That peace is available
- That peace and natural beauty are of value
- Self-awareness of relationship to nature

3. Assignment: None

Class 26: Sensory Awareness (Gunther)

1. Guest presenter (90 minutes)

Presenter from the holistic–body work community. Esalen Institute of Big Sur, California will provide presenter, from the Esalen tradition of joy, mystery, experience, feeling, awareness, aliveness, and love.

- Presenter leads class in exercises of sensory awareness and awakening from Bernard Gunther’s book, Sense Relaxation Below Your Mind (1968)

2. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Self-discovery through awakening senses
- Continuing development of feelings of personal trust and within-group safety.
- Deepening of affinity for classroom community as a model for future group interactions

3. Assignment: None

Class 27: Nutrition: Local, Organic, Seasonal, Sustainable (Cool)

1. Guest presenter (90 minutes)

Jesse Ziff Cool will present from her book Your Organic Kitchen.(2000)

- Local, organic, seasonal, and sustainable foods and farming
- Demonstrate to class preparation of produce in a simple meal or dish. Class will participate

2. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Concepts of local, organic, seasonal, and sustainable food and farming
- Rudiments of preparing simple meal or dish
- Experience of self and community as part of a balanced ecological system.

3. Assignment: None

Class 28: Yoga: Breathing and Stretching (Christensen)

1. Guest presenter (90 minutes)

Yoga instructor will provide an introduction to yoga and wellness from The American Yoga Association Wellness Book, by Alice Christensen (1996)

- Information given and exercises led relating to: healing separateness, the five vital energies, anxiety, depression, insomnia, back and neck pain, weight management, diet, and meditation

2. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Introduction to basic yoga practices
- Continuing self-discovery of mind and body wellness

3. Assignment: None

Class 29 and Class 30: Student Presentations

1. Morning ablutions (10 minutes each class)

2. Student presentations (80 minutes per class)

From handout of “Comments” section of American Psychologist, Journal of the American Psychological Association (January 2001, Vol. 56)

This comment section includes 16 articles critical of the call for a science of psychology built on the concepts of positive psychology as presented in the American Psychologist magazine, January 2000 Special Positive Psychology edition. The January 2001 Comment section also includes Martin Seligman and Mihaly Csikzentmihalyi responding to the criticisms.

Individual students or small groups will present ideas from each article along with their own evaluation of the criticism.

3. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Balanced view of the concepts of positive psychology presented during the semester
- Continuing self-awareness
- Continuing skill and confidence development

4. Assignment: None

Class 31: Open Discussion

1. Open class discussion (90 minutes)

Discuss any questions or concerns the class may have regarding any of the material covered during the semester

2. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Integration of questions and concerns from material as presented over semester
- Expression of personal experience from class participants

3. Assignments: None

Class 32: Class Party, Final Thoughts, and Group Photo

1. Class photo, small party, and final thoughts (90 minutes)

2. Hoped-for learning outcomes

- Integration of previous 31 classes

3. Assignments:

- Breathe well
- Eat well
- Think well
- Act well
- Love well
- Keep all agreements
- Help one another
- Pay attention
- Honor family
- Revere nature
- Trust self
- Love self
- Sense of humor

IV. CLASS DETAILS

Class 1: Introductions

1. Name anchor for class of 30 to 35 students

Note: Instructor's remarks are not in quotation marks. Student's imagined remarks are in quotation marks. Process directions are in parentheses.

Procedure:

Move all desks/chairs into large circle.

Instructor provides directions.

We will now learn and commit to memory each and every one of our names. Yes, we will. Be there doubters among you? In the next 15 minutes each of us will know every other person in the class by first name. We'll do it by starting with you.

(Instructor picks a student at any point in the circle to begin – often this person is immediately to the instructor's left)

Now as the person who is getting us started, your only job is to say your first name. Go ahead, try it.

(Often the student will say, "My name is Clare.")

Instructor then corrects with good humor. That was good, Clare, but your only job is to say your name. Try it again.

"My name...whoops. Okay, let me start again"

(class is usually laughing now)

"... Clare."

That's perfect. Now the student to your left will go next.

(addressing the student to Clare's left)

Now your job is to point gently at Clare and say Clare, then say your own name.

Okay? Let's go.

(student points and says)

"Clare...Lonnie."

Great, Lonnie. Now the person on your left will point gently, remember to always point gently, at Clare and say Clare, then point to Lonnie and say Lonnie, and then say her own name. Do we have it now?

(There may be a few more stumbles getting the form together but by the third person most groups have got it. There will be some nervous twitters around the room as students on the instructor's right will realize that they will be called on to remember nearly 30 names by the time the process reaches them.)

Have courage. I promise you that we'll succeed at this.

(Instructor should be enjoying him/herself wonderfully by now. The group progresses all the way around the circle. Of course, though the increasing repetition of the names this is accomplished fairly easily, but with excitement and a sense of success as the final two or three students are called on to recite all of the names in the class. A fun ending to this is for the instructor to get up after the student to his/her right finishes. The instructor then begins saying something about how easy that was. If the mood in the room has been established properly, there will be a chorus of good-natured challenge and demand for the instructor to name each student in class. The instructor complies with genuine recognition of each student.)

2. Dyad introductions for class of 30-35 students

Procedure: From the circle each student will visually, nonverbally, locate another student to meet and introduce him/herself to. They will then move to sit together. Again nonverbally each pair decides who will be "A" and who will be "1." This accomplished, they await further directions from instructor.

Instructor gives directions:

Does everyone know what nonverbal means? That's right, no words exchanged. We will begin this next exercise nonverbally and then segue into hypoverbalism. You will now each meet one of the people whose name you've just learned. You will meet that person and introduce yourself and also listen while he or she introduces him/herself to you. Here's how we'll do it. First, look around the circle. Remember, no talking. Find someone who looks as different from you as possible. Maybe even find someone that you might not approach were it not for this exercise. The tricky part here is that the person you look for must also look back for you. In other words you will have to nonverbally agree to be partners while still in your seats. When you think you've found a partner, nod your head toward that person. If they nod back, you're a pair. If the person doesn't nod back then you must continue your visual search for a partner. We'll continue until everyone is paired up. We have an even number so this will work perfectly.

(If there is an odd number of students, instructor notes that he/she will be with the unpaired person)

As you agree to be a pair, stand up and move so that you are next to each other. Remember, all of this is done without talking. Does everyone understand the procedure so far?

(Instructor answers any questions and does his/her best to keep everyone quiet but enthused.)

All right. Let's get quiet and speak with our eyes. Begin.

(This process should take about 2 to 3 minutes. Instructor occasional will have to remind a recalcitrant student or two that this is a nonverbal process. Instructor should be light-hearted and focused. There may one or two little adjustments the instructor will need to assist with, but the task will be accomplished)

Okay. Everyone has found someone. Now find two seats together. Move desks so that you will have some privacy together. Remain nonverbal through this. Work together. Be sensitive to one another. Pay attention to one another. Go.

(Now comes a great shuffling and moving of backpacks and desks until each pair is settled.)

Now that you have found a partner your next nonverbal task will be to decide who goes first. The first person to speak will, from then on, be referred to as an "A." The second speaker will be referred to as a "I." Remember this is again a nonverbal task. Each pair decide who will go first. Okay, are we complete?

(Instructor monitors process and helps, per need, as this step is taken by class)

All right. Now we're set up and ready to roll. "A"s, when I say begin, start telling your partner about yourself. Tell this person what you would like them to know about you. No one should tell their partner anything they don't wish to, but beyond that restriction express yourself in a free and unfettered manner. "I"s, your job is to pay attention and hear what your partner is saying. While you are listening, try not to make judgments or comparisons, or make personal associations to the material. In other words,

see if you can simply listen as another person introduces themselves to you. Each speaker will have 3 minutes to introduce themselves. I'll call out stop when we've reached time. Questions? Ready "A"s? Ready "I"s?

(Instructor looks for agreement or confusion and responds to either. And when the group is ready ...)

Begin.

(Instructor moves through the room, intervening, smiling, with a finger to his/her lips if any of the "listeners" are talking. Instructor's role is to maintain a positive, high-energy flow to the proceedings while keeping time. When 3 minutes have passed ...)

Stop.

(There may be some continuing conversation. Instructor calls "stop" again if necessary.)

Okay. Now "A"s will be listeners. Remember your job is to listen, not judge, or compare, or make associations. "I"s, begin.

(The process repeats with "I"s talking and "A"s listening. When 3 minutes have passed...)

Stop. Yes. Now we're getting somewhere. Let's put the desks back in the circle.

(This should take about 3 minutes. If any questions or comments occur during this period, instructor responds in a way that should reinforce the "positive" nature of the experience. In other words, at no time during the entire process should the instructor act as if directions and procedures are more important than the people participating.)

How was that?

(Class discussion ensues. Points could include, what it was like “just listening”? Was it possible not to judge, compare, or make associations while listening? Do you feel you got to know your partner? Which was easier, introducing yourself or listening to your partner introduce him/herself? Discussion flows until a natural pause occurs.)

Now, I’d like maybe three pairs to volunteer to introduce each other to the class. Are there three pairs willing to “do it” in front of the whole group?

(Instructor picks the three voluntary pairs from raised hands, shouted willingness, or cajoled compliance. Whatever it takes to get three pairs willing to process for the group.)

All right, we have our volunteers, how about if you two go first. Now let’s let “I”s go first this time. Which of you was the “I”? Okay, please introduce your “A” to the rest of us.

(The chosen pair will then perform the introductions. Instructor moves the process forward as appropriate. When the “I” is through, then the “A” is encouraged to perform. After they’re done the instructor turns to the group.)

Any questions for these two?

(Questions are handled. The next pair is then readied for their introductions to the group. The same process is repeated for the second and the third pair until introductions are completed. Class is again asked if any questions remain. Discussion regards the experience of any of the introductory exercises continues until natural pause, or class ends.)

Class 2

Attendance

Procedure: For each new class, instructor picks one student to come to the podium and perform roll call duty. The chosen student calls out each class member's name from master list while instructor marks attendance on official roll sheet. As students respond to their name being called, they answer with a word that describes their present experience of self.

Instructor: Good morning (or evening, or afternoon) it's good to see you all again today. Each class we'll take roll, but I really have difficulty with the routine of that process so I'd like us to do it a little differently in this class. I need a volunteer to help me. Who is willing to come up front and help us out? Each class a new volunteer will take a turn so everyone will be up here sometime this semester.

(If no volunteer emerges, then a likely candidate is chosen. Usually a volunteer will offer him/herself)

Great. Habib, come on up. Now your task is to call out each student's name from this sheet. Now you folks (to class), when your name is called don't answer with "here" or "present" or "yeah" or "yo." Your job is to answer with a word that describes what your present experience of self is. For instance, if you just had a good breakfast, you might say "sated" or if you received a good grade in your last class, you might say "relieved" or "stoked." If you don't want to be here today you might say "resistant." It is the experience of your self in the moment that you are describing. Be as accurate and creative as you can. If you need two or three words, that's okay, but no more than three.

We are going to get to know each other and ourselves this semester so we may as well jump in and enjoy it. Start with me Habib, I'll demonstrate.

"Professor Nerney."

Sleepy but prepared. Okay, Habib. start at the top and work through the roster. Go ahead.

(Volunteer calls each name and students respond with various degrees of enthusiasm and participation. Instructor's task is to follow the process sensitive to each student, encouraging and acknowledging as appropriate. The task is to engage the class in present time and experience while continuing the process of introductions.

Thanks, Habib. We did good. We did so well in fact that I'm going to give you all a pop quiz. Anyone's anxiety level just raise? Relax, this a test you'll score yourself. It's the Well-Being scale from the Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire created by Auke Tellegen at The University of Minnesota.

(Instructor hands out the questionnaire and goes over the instructions. Once everyone understands the task they begin. Test takes approximately 10 minutes.)

If everyone is completed let's score it.

(Instructor hands out second sheet including scoring key and goes over scoring with the class. Class discusses. Scoring and discussion takes approximately 10 minutes.)

Lecture: Historical Context of Positive Psychology

That was a simple beginning to our study of positive psychology. Subjective well-being is what we'll look at for the next 15 weeks. Now we have a personal set point to begin our study. If we do our work well together, this class may even be good for us. What a concept! What is Positive Psychology? What does Salutogenic mean? Where

does this notion of Positive Psychology fit with the rest of the field? I'll try to answer these questions today.

The salutogenic model of health was put forth by Yale University sociologist Aaron Antonovsky in his 1985 book, Health, Stress, and Coping. Antonovsky's work was a breakthrough for the medical and behavioral sciences. He argued that science approached the relationship between stress, illness, and health backwardly. He saw that it would be more useful if researchers focused on the factors and forces of health, rather than following their traditional orientation toward sickness and disease.

Salubrious means good for the health. Salutary is defined as producing a beneficial result for health. Genic is defined as "of a gene" (Cayne, et al., 1987, p. 881). Salutogenics in this paper is used to identify the qualities of health causing behaviors and practices that support their acquisition and maintenance. The salutogenic curriculum on which we have embarked is designed as a course to identify what positive subjective mental health looks like, what some of its component qualities may be, and some of the practices that may be useful in developing and maintaining positive mental health in our own lives.

About 2500 years ago, in Greece, a philosopher known as Aristotle lived, thought, and argued. One of his most enduring and influential works is The Nicomachean Ethics. It is on your suggested reading list, and when you first look at it, you will feel its familiarity. Much of our Western culture's moral philosophy can be traced to this document. The Ethics were a demonstration of how men (persons) become good and why happiness can and should be every person's goal. In the first of his 10 "ethics," The Object of Life, he asks, "What is the good for man?" His answer is "happiness." The

“good man” while at the time spoken, was certainly not inclusive as to gender. In our class when we see the masculine pronoun we’ll see it as historically interesting but not relevant in our world. When we see the masculine reference let’s decode it in our minds as “person.” The “good man” (for our purpose, the good person), came to be a measure of absolute excellence. “A good man, like a good lyre player, performs with an expertise. His expertise is at being human and he must exercise that expertise to the best of his ability”(Thomson,1953, p. 28).

In his world-view, happiness (from the Greek: eudaimonia), “provides a life of enjoyment, but not pleasure.” Our first lesson then, is that happiness does not equal pleasure. “A constant succession of pleasures is a life suitable for cattle”(Thomson, 1953, p. 30).

In the next few weeks we’ll come to this question from several directions, but today what do you take from this? Is happiness pleasure? What is the difference between enjoyment and pleasure? Is there a difference?

(Class discussion, but not with an aim to answer the questions with finality, but to stimulate thinking toward a fuller realization in the coming weeks.)

Let’s get back to Aristotle for a bit. Another of his provocative positions held that “The good man is a producer of his own happiness, and at best only incidentally that of others. Happiness is to be my goal, not in the generous sense that I am to aim at a general increase in the commodity, but in the selfish sense that I am to seek the enlargement of my portion of it” (Thomson, 1953, p. 31). Comments? Is this selfish or heroic?

(Discuss if class requires, otherwise steam forward.)

Two other concepts featured in Aristotle's schema for a good life, or one filled with eudaimonia, are euzoia (well-living) and eupraxia (well-acting). Conjoined these qualitative states produce "one who makes a success of [his/her] life and actions – who realizes [his/her] aims and ambitions, and who fulfills [him/herself]" (Thomson, 1953, p. 34). Note: His/her pronouns not in original text. Masculine pronoun was used exclusively.)

How does one become a well-living, well-acting, and happy person in Aristotle's formula? Any thoughts?

(A few comments might come from class at this point. Hear them out and when appropriate provide Aristotle's answer.)

The Doctrine of the Golden Mean, or more plainly, Doctrine of the Mean according to Professor Aristotle suggests

...observe the mean. Be moderate in all things. Avoid excess as you avoid deficiency. To be courageous, shun some, but not all fear. Take a middle course in matters of fear. To be temperate, shun some, but not all objects of desire. Take a middle course. (Thomson, 1953, p. 23)

Being happy, according to this philosophy, "...is unlike, say being intelligent, it is not a matter of having some power or disposition: it is a matter of exercising one's power and realizing one's dispositions" (Thomson, 1953, p. 35).

Let's take a break. Be back in your seats in 10 minutes. Really. Ten minutes.
(Break, then resume)

We left off 2500 years ago as Aristotle was tilling the soil for future positive psychologists. By the way, positive psychology is not your great-great-grandmother's "positivism." In the 16th century, Francis Bacon, the English philosopher, proposed that observation and experimentation are the only sources of substantial knowledge. The 19th

century French mathematician, August Comte, built on Bacon's work and made explicit the philosophy of positivism through his belief that human thought passes through three stages: theological, metaphysical, then finally positive. In this classic philosophical doctrine, "positive" refers to observable, solid, replicable reality. In our study, remember, positive psychology refers to subjective well-being.

Let's fast-forward to the late 19th century, and to who many see as the father of American psychology, William James. In Principles of Psychology (1890/1955, p. 184), he describes human consciousness as a flowing "stream of thought" whose primary function is to choose. Choice is seen as central to the evolving, adapting human organism. "It [consciousness] is always interested more in one part of its object than in another, and welcomes, and rejects, or chooses, all the while it thinks" (James, 1890/1955, p. 184). James, like Aristotle, frames his interest large. "What is human life's chief concern?" he asks. His answer, from The Varieties of Religious Experience (1902/1958): "It is happiness. How to gain, how to keep, how to recover happiness, is in fact for most men at all times the secret motive for all they do, and of all they are willing to endure" (p. 76).

So why, we might ask, with this ancient and consistent lineage, is "positive psychology such a new venture? William James notwithstanding, up until World War II psychology was dominated by behavioral psychology. From Pavlov (1849-1936) to Watson (1878-1958) to Skinner (1904-1990), psychologists believed that behavior could be fully influenced utilizing the appropriate conditioning and reinforcement techniques.

John Watson described the force of Behavioralism. "Its theoretical goal is the prediction and control of behavior. Introspection forms no essential part of its methods,

nor is the scientific data dependent on the readiness which lend themselves to interpretation in terms of consciousness" (Watson, 1913, p. 158). Watson defied "mentalistic psychology and [Freudian] psychoanalysis claiming it had too little science and offering Behaviorism as a replacement" (Leahey, 1994, p. 188). Watson demanded that these mentalists prove that consciousness existed. In place of "the fantastic, secretly religious, traditional mentalistic psychology, behaviorism substituted a positivistic, scientific psychology of description, prediction, and control of behavior" (Leahey, 1994, p. 193).

Again let's note here the use of the term positivistic as meaning scientific rather than referring to our study of positivism.

The behaviorist then has given society...a new weapon for controlling the individual....It is demanded by society that a given line of conduct is desirable, the psychologist should be able with some certainty to arrange the situation or factors which lead the individual most quickly and with the least expenditure of effort to perform that task. (Leahey, 1994, p. 193)

It's amusingly informative to know that Dr. Watson's second career was that of an advertising executive.

In other words, there was very little concern for the subjective consciousness of individuals. During the reign of Behaviorism, the notion of subjective consciousness, and any sort of psychodynamic psychology was thought of only as an enemy to be overthrown by the righteousness of true psychological science wearing only the uniform of behaviorism. This movement evolved and its parochial standards eroded as the value and practice of psychology focused on easing the pain of those suffering from mental illness.

After World War II, "...the field of Psychology has become a science and practice of healing. It concentrates on repairing damage within a disease model of human functioning. This almost exclusive attention to pathology neglects the flourishing individual and thriving community" (Seligman, 2002, p. 3). Martin Seligman, distinguished author and researcher, proposed at the outset of his tenure as 1998 president of The American Psychological Association to change the focus of "the science of the profession from repairing the worst things in life to understanding and building the qualities that make life worth living" (2002, p. 3). He called the new orientation of the field Positive Psychology. It is described as being concerned with three general areas:

1. Positive Experience
2. The Positive Individual
3. The Positive Community

Before we go into Seligman and Csikzentmihalyi's call for a new psychology, let's spend a moment with Humanistic Psychology. Humanistic Psychology is the immediate antecedent of Positive Psychology and emerged in the late 1950s and 1960s. If we have time today we'll also look at Ryff and Singer's work on the portrayal, or operationalizing, of the positive. Then we'll get into the new positive psychology of subjective well-being.

Humanism and the Human Potential Movement was a revolutionary approach to understanding humanness. Far from the duality of mind and body, humanists saw an individual responsible for their own circumstance and their own reality, God-like in a self-creating fashion. People were seen as carriers of an innate human drive to expand to full potential, to self-fulfillment and to self-actualization. Humans were seen as

autogenetic organisms capable, through consciousness, of choosing their own experience and their responses to that experience, thereby manifesting their own reality, unique and some might have said, divinely inspired.

Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, and Rollo May were among many whose humanistic vision helped shape American culture throughout the revolutionary times of the 1960s. Humanism and Humanistic Psychology became a victim of its own success. It did not develop a scientific database, nor did it follow particularly rigid scientific principles. It was an experiential exercise wherein results flowering in one's life would presumably serve as adequate empirical evidence of the theory's value. Humanism was long on anecdotal evidence that could not stand the hard light of scientific scrutiny. It was a visionary practice but not yet a discipline. The feel-good imperative of America circa the 1960s allowed Humanistic Psychology to morph into the self-help movement of the 1970s and 1980s that abandoned any need to assert scholarly standards. Awash in the "let-it-all-hang-out, anything goes" fashion of the times, Humanistic Psychology lost its academic edge. Humanistic Psychology also came under fire by the burgeoning fundamentalist Christian movement of the 1970s and 1980s as a direct challenge to divine authority. Subsequently all things "humanistic" were demonized by the followers of that movement.

We will read Rogers and Maslow and May among others in this course. We may see aspects of the old "humanism" in light of the new observable, replicable science of positive psychology.

Let's stop here for today. If you haven't read Seligman's chapter yet, do so. If you have, read it again. Also read Ryff and Singer, and keep going on Myers. Any questions?

Comments? Check your syllabus for homework. You've got some. Love yourself, listen to each other, help your neighbor. See you next week.

Well-Being Scale from Auke Tellegen's
Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire (MPQ)

(MPQ items © University Minnesota Press)

These items are statements that you might use to describe your opinion, interests, or feelings. To the right of each item there is a scale like this: T t f F. The of the four possible answers is: T = Definitely True, t = Probably True, f = Probably False, F = Definitely False.

So, if the statement or item is definitely true for you, then you should circle the T like this: (T) t f F. If the statement or item is probably true for you (or more true than false), then you should circle the t like this: T (t) f F.

- | | |
|--|---------|
| 1. I am just naturally cheerful. | T t f F |
| 2. My future looks very bright to me. | T t f F |
| 3. It is easy for me to become enthusiastic about things I am doing. | T t f F |
| 4. I often feel happy and satisfied for no particular reason. | T t f F |
| 5. I live a very interesting life. | T t f F |
| 6. Every day I do some things that are fun. | T t f F |
| 7. Basically I am a happy person. | T t f F |
| 8. I usually find ways to liven up my days. | T t f F |
| 9. I have several pastimes or hobbies that are great fun. | T t f F |
| 10. I seldom feel really happy. | T t f F |
| 11. Most mornings the day ahead looks bright to me | T t f F |
| 12. Most days I have moments of real fun or joy. | T t f F |
| 13. I often feel sort of lucky for no special reason. | T t f F |
| 14. Every day interesting and exciting things happen to me. | T t f F |
| 15. In my spare time I usually find something interesting to do. | T t f F |
| 16. I am usually light-hearted. | T t f F |
| 17. For me life is a great adventure. | T t f F |
| 18. Without being conceited, I feel pretty good about myself. | T t f F |

To find your total well-being score, give yourself a 3 for every item answered T, a 2 for every t, a 1 for every f, and a 0 for every F. For item 10 you must reverse the scoring so that T equals 0 and F equals 3. The maximum possible score is $18 \times 3 = 54$. To compare your score with the middle-aged people in the large test samples, look at Table 2.1. If your score on the Well-Being scale was 47 or higher, then your current happiness level is higher than 90% of men and higher than 88% of women. A score of 37 puts you right in the middle; half of both sexes score 37 or less. If your score was 37 or higher, then today, at least, you are probably feeling better currently about your life than half or more of your neighbors and friends. Today's score can be influenced by a recent enjoyment. Or a recent upset. To get an estimate of your average happiness level, we should repeat the test monthly, and average your scores.

Well-Being Score	Men: Percentile	Women: Percentile
47	90	88
43	80	77
41	73	68
39	63	61
37	50	50
35	39	39
33	30	30
31	21	22
26	10	10

Class 3

Interactive attendance (10 minutes)

Lecture: Introduction to Positive Psychology

Let's jump on it today. As we've seen, Positive Psychology has roots in Western culture dating back 2500 and flowing with some continuity up through the present. Currently Positive Psychology is at the vanguard of psychological thinking. The American Psychologist, The Journal of the American Psychological Association, published a special issue on happiness, excellence, and optimal human functioning for their millennial January 2000 edition. The lead, introductory article by Martin Seligman of University of Pennsylvania and Mihaly Csikzentmihalyi of Claremont Graduate University is an announcement of what amounts to a directional sea change in the practice and application of professional psychology.

Their call is to develop a new sort of psychologist. One who can "...articulate a vision of the good life that is empirically sound while being understandable and attractive. They can show what actions lead to well-being, to positive individuals, and to thriving communities" (Csikzentmihalyi & Seligman, 2000, p. 5). Seligman and Csikzentmihalyi readily acknowledge the dimension of the task before them.

"...psychologists have scant knowledge of what makes life worth living. They have come to understand quite a bit about how people survive and endure under conditions of adversity. However, psychologists now very little about how normal people flourish under more benign conditions" (2000, p. 5).

Seligman has written several papers that each describe the field of professional psychology since World War II as becoming a science focused primarily on healing. "It

[psychology] concentrates on repairing damage within a disease model of human functioning. This almost exclusive attention to pathology neglects the fulfilled individual and the thriving community. The aim of positive psychology is to begin to catalyze a change in the focus of psychology from preoccupation only with repairing the worst things in life to also building positive qualities” (Csikzentmihalyi & Seligman, 2000, p. 5).

Toward the end of our last meeting, I listed on the board the three areas of concern for the study of positive psychology. Who remembers them? Okay, who wrote them down and knows how to look them up in their notes? Thank you, that’s exactly right.

1. Positive Experience (What makes one moment better than the next?)
2. The Positive Personality (What are the components of “positive” character?)
3. The Positive Community. (What are civic virtues?)

At the subjective level, the field [positive psychology] is about positive experience: well-being, optimism, flow and the like. At the individual level it is about the character strengths – Love, vocation, courage, aesthetic sensibility, leadership, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future-mindedness, and genius. At the community level it is about the civic virtues and the institutions that move individuals toward better citizenship: responsibility, parenting, altruism, civility, moderation, tolerance, and work ethic. (Seligman, 1999b, p. 2)

Let’s talk about this for a minute. What do you folks think about this? Why would we want to change from a disease model approach to a constructional model of positivity?

(Discuss. Engage students with material. The basic answer is that we as a culture have the relative affluence to focus on things other than survival. To that end we have the critical knowledge and ability to become interventionists. Psychology as a field can begin

to identify the qualities that are health infusing and prescribe their acquisition and maintenance. This may serve to inoculate those at risk for debilitating and disruptive conditions and behaviors. Continue as is fruitful.)

The first issue, then, is to identify what well-being is and who has it? Carol Ryff and Burton Singer, in their chapter from The Handbook of Positive Psychology (2002), "From Social Structure to Biology / Integrative Science in Pursuit of Human Health and Well-Being," are concerned with "consilience" or the "linking of facts and theories across scientific disciplines." They cite as their touchstone a 1948 World Health Organization definition of health as "state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (World Health Organization, 1948, p. 28). Their interest is in understanding the neurobiology that underlies psychosocial flourishing. "This is a call to embark on a new era of science on positive functioning conceived as a biopsychosocial nexus, that is, the salubrious joining of mind and body" (Ryff & Singer, 2002, p. 548).

The first impediment to their study is the general lack of previous scientific research on the positive things in life. Why would that be? Why such low priority for the study of health?

(Discuss. Points to bring out may include: allocation of resource – the ease of obtaining grant money to fund the study of illness versus the study of strength. Illness requires immediate treatment while strengths, requiring no treatment, may be seen as a luxury for research. Maybe more weight is given to negative states of experience due to our evolutionary mechanisms. Pain and dysfunction are signals that something is wrong

in our system so their presence demands our attention. Health and strength, on the other hand, signal that all is well, the priority for attention is lowered.)

One of Ryff and Singer's difficulties with the lack of scientific research on optimal functioning is the lack of a standard instrument that operationalizes well-being. Do you all understand the word operationalize? Who can educate us here?

(Science students in class will usually answer. If not, explain.)

Great. They wanted a standardizing measure of reference so they could communicate with others exactly what they meant when they talked about well-being and positive health. This standardized measure would allow them to conduct "consilience" research with stable definitions of qualitative concepts. To that end, Ryff and Singer have provided a provisional model of six dimensions of well-being and propose three research directions that may illuminate how these dimensions influence health. The six dimensions are their attempt to "provide conceptual starting points for developing assessment instruments" (2002, p. 542).

Let's look at their six dimensions first, then we'll take a quick look at their proposed areas for research.

Here are the Definitions of Theory-Guided Dimensions of Well-Being. Included are the conceived meanings of high and low scores on the envisioned assessment instruments.

(Do this on board with two teams of three volunteers each who have good chalkboard skills, or at least claim to have such skill. One team will write the high scorer's description, the second team the low scorer's. The members of each team will alternate writing so that each team member will write two descriptions. Have fun working

out the directions and who will go first, second, and so on. Class should be encouraging their peers during this process. Team members must also get agreements from different classmates to provide copy of accurate notes from the exercise. Class should also be engaged and playful with the material. Instructor puts the six Dimensions headings on the board and then proceeds with reading the descriptions of high and low scorers for team members to transcribe.)

Self-acceptance.

High scorer: possesses a positive attitude toward the self; acknowledges and accepts multiple aspects of self, including good and bad qualities; feels positive about past life.

Low scorer: feels dissatisfied with self; is disappointed with what has occurred in past life; is troubled about certain personal qualities; wishes to be different than what he or she is.

Positive relations with others.

High scorer: has warm, satisfying, trusting relationships with others; is concerned about the welfare of others; capable of strong empathy, affection, and intimacy; understands give-and-take of human relationships.

Low scorer: has few close, trusting relationships with others; finds it difficult to be warm, open, and concerned about others; is isolated and frustrated in interpersonal relationships; is not willing to make compromises to sustain important ties with others.

Autonomy.

High scorer: is self-determining and independent; is able to resist social pressures to think and act in certain ways; regulates behavior from within; evaluates self by personal standards.

Low scorer: is concerned about the expectations and evaluations of others; relies on judgments of others to make important decisions; conforms to social pressures to think and act in certain ways.

Environmental mastery.

High scorer: has a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment; controls complex array of external activities; makes effective use of surrounding opportunities; is able to choose or create contexts suitable to personal needs and values.

Low scorer: has difficulty managing everyday affairs; feels unable to change or improve surrounding context; is unaware of surrounding opportunities; lacks sense of control over external world.

Purpose in life.

High scorer: has goals in life and a sense of directedness; feels there is meaning to present and past life; hold beliefs that give life purpose; has aims and objectives for living.

Low scorer: lacks a sense of meaning in life, has few goals or aims; lacks sense of direction; does not see purpose in past life; has no outlooks or beliefs that give life meaning.

Personal growth.

High scorer: has a feeling of continued development; sees self as growing and expanding; is open to new experiences; has sense of realizing his or her potential; sees improvement in self and behavior over time; is changing in ways that reflect more self-knowledge and effectiveness.

Low scorer: has a sense of personal stagnation; lacks sense of improvement or expansion over time; feels bored and uninterested with life; feels unable to develop new attitudes or behaviors.

(Excuse the volunteer teams with the thanks of the class. Applause!!! If there are questions or comments, respond.)

Okay, now that we see what Ryff and Singer are using as operational definitions for positive health, let's take a quick look at how they propose to study the effects of these feelings, attitudes, and behaviors on biological health. The three research directions they have proposed, and are probably working on at this very moment, are: (a) an examination of allostatic load, (b) cerebral activation asymmetry, and (c) immune competence. Calm down, we'll make a little sense out of this stuff.

(Go slowly, the intent here is exposure to new material and development of interest, not rigorous scientific training.)

One at a time. Allostatic load refers to a

...measure of cumulative wear and tear on numerous physiological systems (cardiovascular, metabolic, hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal [HPA] axis, and the sympathetic nervous system). Longitudinal aging research has shown that high allostatic load predicts incident cardiovascular disease, cognitive impairment, declines in physical functioning, and mortality. The key question for positive health, however, is whether psychological and social strengths decrease the likelihood of high physiological wear and tear (decrease the allostatic load)? In

other words, does well-being serve a protective function?" (Ryff & Singer, 2002, p. 548)

Ryff and Singer do have some preliminary evidence that suggests well-being does serve a protective function.

The second research direction they propose is "cerebral activation asymmetry." This refers to the science of emotion, or affective neuroscience. Studies have demonstrated (Davidson, 1995, 1998; Sutton & Davidson, 1997) that some people show greater left than compared to right (hence asymmetry) prefrontal activation in response to emotional stimulation. These individuals are more likely to show positive affect (emotion) and are less prone to depression. The point is made that many in the field of affective neuroscience have studied the brain mechanisms involved with depression, but there remains a lack of research to "probe the neural circuitry of human flourishing" (Ryff & Singer, 2002).

The third direction they recommend for study is immune competence. Over the past 25 years, the specter of HIV, ARC, and AIDS has directed the performance of research that ties psychosocial factors with immune function. Ryff and Singer note that the emphasis of this work has been on exposure to stressors (loss of job, discrimination, loss of relationship, etc.) and the subsequent compromise of immune system functioning. Ryff and Singer call for attention to "The positive counterpoint that would link, for example, zestful engagement in living, or loving and nurturing social relationships to cellular immunity" (2002, p. 548).

Questions? Comments?

(Discuss if class contributes.)

Let's finish up today with a little more of Martin Seligman's work in support of the new psychology. The professor proposes,

...to consolidate this new orientation by creating a network of its leading scholars and researchers. The network will encourage collaborations among researchers on Positive Psychology, will hold conferences and meetings, and will prime pioneering empirical research. These collaborations fold the best younger researchers into the network and its ongoing research. The network will reach out to leading scholars and practitioners in allied social sciences whose concern is understanding and building positive institutions and positive communities.

The network will consist of three nodes: Positive Subjective Experience, The Positive Individual, and the Positive Community....Over the four years of the network, it is our intention to expand from a base in positive psychology to become the seed crystal of a Positive Social Science, linking to related work in economics, sociology, political science, anthropology, philosophy, and law. (Seligman, 1999b, quoted in Ryff & Singer, 2000, p. 548)

Professor Seligman and his collaborators will evaluate the network's success by, "quantifying conventional funding, major conspicuous publications, citation rate, new and tenured faculty, and graduate and undergraduate course offerings in the field of Positive Psychology over the four years of the network"(1999b, p. 2).

Without question this is a call to revolution. We all want to change the world. Seligman and his cohort are saying to us, "Come ahead, let's go to work building a better world." This class that you are in today is a part of the revolution. We are one of the undergraduate courses that will be counted at the end of the network's four-year service. Next class we'll break down the three areas of positive psychology in terms of how this network will approach them.

Questions? Comments?

All right, that's enough for today. Hand in your papers from yesterday. Look at your syllabus for any homework. Do your reading. Hug somebody. Think something good about yourselves tonight.

Class 4

Interactive attendance (10 minutes)

Introduction to Positive Psychology Network class exercise (15 minutes)

Questions? Comments? Issues? Is there anything anyone simply has to say before we begin?

(Deliver with humor and encouragement. Handle any student responses appropriately. This is another opportunity to model positive regard for individuals and the group (e.g., the instructor must maintain the integrity of the learning environment – when someone interrupts or speaks disrespectfully, it is the instructor’s job to make sure that every student knows that their voice may be heard and that as individuals they will be valued. Information on how that trick is accomplished can be found in the artistic-idiosyncratic-expression side of the teaching house.)

Today you folks are going to do the work. I like the sound of that. Here’s the set-up. Remember at the end of last class we talked a little about Martin Seligman? He and some of his peers put together an organization to be known as the Positive Psychology Network. Their vision is that through the scientific study of positive experience, the positive personality, and the positive community, the world may become a better place. Their intention is to expand from their base of positive psychology and become the “seed crystal of a Positive Social Science, linking to related work in economics, sociology, political science, anthropology, philosophy, and law.” (Seligman, 1999b, p. 3)

Professor Seligman and his colleagues have planted and unfurled their banners of change on the ground of established psychological study. They point the direction for a new science of positive psychology. The Positive Psychology Network is their attempt to

function as a positive leadership consortium consulting with professionals serving nearly every aspect of individual and civic life. This is a big mission they have undertaken. It may well change the world for the better. Today is our opportunity to understand them a little better.

How many of you went on the internet and copied Seligman's Network Concept paper? And how many of you brought it? Great. Good job. Now for the remainder of you lucky people, I have brought copies. I say lucky because you all are going to become The Positive Psychology Network today.

(Distribute copies of the Network Paper.)

We are going to break into three groups. Each group will have to determine how their work will be accomplished. In other words, who will do what and how and when? Yes, that's certainly one of your central tasks. Each of you is a young psychologist in training. Be aware of how you interact with the group. How you feel about your interactions and how you feel about the others in your group. Be aware while you are performing your tasks. Ahh! Your tasks. That's right, but first, let's get the groups in order. Start over here by the window and count off 1, 2, 3 and then 1, 2, 3 again, and 1, 2, 3 again and again. Remember what your number is as you call it out. That will be the number of the group you're in. Got it? Okay, count off.

(Students count off until everyone has a number. They are further instructed to gather their belongings and move into new areas according to their group numbers. This is usually accomplished by each of the three groups moving to a different corner of the classroom. Minimal instruction allows more independent thought and action on part of

students. Instructor makes sure the groups are situated and then continues task description.)

The three areas composing the Network's study are...what? That's right: Positive Experience, The Positive Individual, and The Positive Community. Those will be the three groups. The three areas are referred to as Nodes. What's a node? No botanists? No gardeners? Okay, I'll do it then. A node is a joint or a knob on a plant stem from which leaves grow. While you study the material in your Node think about what "leaves" might sprout from such work.

Node 1 is the Positive Experience group. Node 2 is The Positive Individual group, and Node 3 is The Positive Community Group.

(Informal process ensues while each group chooses what Node they will represent. Maybe coin flips will have to be employed if there is competition for certain Nodes. Instructor will facilitate the process, again with positive expression. Instructional congruence, in a Rogerian sense, is seen as an essential aspect of course success. The material content will convey the ideas of positive psychology, while a positive presentation will enliven it.)

Your task is to acquaint the class with your node. Take the remainder of class today and work in your groups. You will become experts on your Nodes. Next class you will make a presentation to the class with a complete introduction of your Node and its work. I'll prepare an additional section on "Integrating the Three Nodes" .I'll also report on other sections of Seligman's paper including, "The Progress Report on Positive Psychology." The Grand Cayman Senior Scholars, the Truly Extraordinary People Meeting, and The Templeton Positive Psychology Award. Got it?

Your mission is threefold: One, become experts on the material related to your Node. Do that by discussing the material as you read it together. Two, determine how you will present the material to the class. Be creative. It will be your subject, teach it to us in a way that we will remember. Three, present the material to the class. You'll have about 20 minutes for each group. Any questions?

(Repeat as necessary and answer questions until groups are working on their tasks. Rotate to each group while they work. Give encouragement, answer questions, pose questions.)

Class 5

Interactive attendance (10 minutes). (This process will continue through week 6 or until the end of census period.)

Set up for class presentations (10 minutes)

All right, today we are in the presence of expertise. Of excited advocacy and the passionate exhortations of true believers. Is that right?

(The students will be in a range of preparedness for the coming presentation. Their individual moods will reflect whether they've done their homework. Instructor's job is to get the teams ready and confident regards their performances. This is done by reading the individual students' presence and interceding, or not, as appropriate. Follow the energy, so to speak.)

Let's break into our Nodes for about ten minutes to check in and go over our scripts once more. Come on you guys, up and at 'em. We can do this. We will do this. We're going to have some fun with this. Yowsa, yessiree, gonna have us some fun today.

(Generally, the group will be excited and, for the most part, prepared. Each node will gather and go over last minute reminders and plans. The actual presentations might vary from a standard panel presentation to enactments of popular TV game shows. Instructions from last class meeting insisted only that every member of the group must take part in the presentation. Beyond that, creativity rules.)

Okay, let's bring our attention back to the room. We don't have to start with Node 1 unless we want to. Is there a Node that wants to go first?

(Usually, one will want to get it over with and volunteer to lead. Again it's a matter of following the energy in the room.)

Fine. Let's get started. How does your Node want the room set up?

(Instructor facilitates room reorganization in support of presentation.)

Now while we're setting up for the first Node, the rest of you are not allowed to sit together in your nodes. Why? Why would I, why would we, not want you to sit together in your Nodes? Exactly, no one would pay attention to the presenting Node. Many of you would be going over last minute details of your own presentation and not available to learn from the other presentations. So we're going to honor the Node in front of the class by investing in them our undiluted attention. Today we are going to be skeptical scientists attending the first West Coast meeting of the Positive Psychology Network. We want to learn what you each have to teach us. So let's get going. Are you ready. Node 1 (2 or 3)?

Great, let's get to it.

(As each Node is presented, instructor makes sure appropriate information is transmitted. Instructor asks questions and guides discussions as they emerge. After the last Node concludes, everyone takes part in appreciative applause. If time permits, instructor presents Integrating the Nodes, The Cayman List, The Exceptional Person, and The Templetton Award.)

Integrating the Nodes

You have all done wonderful work. Each group has grasped the central themes and tasks of Nodes. How will the Nodes communicate with each other? After all "positive experience," "the positive person," and "the positive community" are just three areas of study. In the real world they are so interdependent it would be very difficult to isolate any one from the other. Previously, research on these areas has been focused on

one particular node or another. However, much of the learning and new growth will occur between and among the nodes. The Positive Psychology Network states explicitly that one of their prime functions will be a study of the interrelations. That focus on interrelatedness is a unique feature of the Network's mission.

The network will encourage interactions among the individuals in the different nodes. The Network and node chairs will stay in close contact physically, let me change that to "the node chairs will be in contact in person," as well as electronically. The chairs will then communicate closely with node members to keep everyone informed. The Network Director, Martin Seligman, will meet with the three node chairs regularly and they will include two "senior fellows" in these meetings. Two senior fellows does not refer to a couple of old guys, but rather to two distinguished scientists. Often senior fellows are old guys, but not necessarily.

- Among the issues that integration will focus on include the following:
- How are the positive subjective experiences related to positive personal traits?
- In what ways do positive subjective experiences result from the exercise of these traits?
- How are the positive individual characteristics related to the organization of society?
- Is society to be judged by the extent that it produces people with these characteristics?
- Should society attempt to maximize the level of the lowest scores along these characteristics; or the average level of achievement along them. or what?

- Does focusing upon these characteristics, and upon human fulfillment, alter the way we look at the traditional social options, and upon distributive issues?

Any questions about what these mean?

(Discussion will likely occur as students work to understand some of the implicit ramifications of the questions.)

There is one final area the Network integration team is concerned with. They refer to it as "Tiling and Framing." The vision is that each node will provide "tiles" for the mosaic of positive psychology. What will "frame" the mosaic? Actually, Seligman uses the word "firewall" to describe his concept of framing. His concern is legitimacy. Over the past 30 years or so, the subject matter of positive psychology has fallen into the province of "new age" gurus and feel-good con artists. The psychology section at the bookstore is not filled with psychology texts, but with hundreds of books heralding the "newest" forms of healing and health. These books are written with no academic or scientific standards. None. People say and write whatever they want and people read and believe whatever they want. Crystal healing energy and phrenology and obsessive angel worship may well all produce some effect in some people, but until these claims are able to withstand scientific scrutiny, they add very little to our body of knowledge. Positive Psychology intends to erect a firewall between such claims and the science it is creating.

The systematic study of positive psychology presents some challenges unique to the subject. For many individuals, the quality of life is enhanced by beliefs and practices that traditionally have remained outside the scope of scientific investigation. For instance surveys demonstrate that religious commitment correlates with personal happiness. This raises the issue that what positive scientists must study will lead to areas considered too

soft for science. Seligman is clear that this field of positive psychology must articulate and empirically research positive motivation wherever the study leads. Their firewall really is the skeptical, self-correcting methods that have made empirical epistemology the most accurate reflection of reality. In other words, to boldly go where no science has gone before we must more than ever rely on scientific principles and methods to guide our study.

The Cayman Meeting: The Roots of a Positive Life

A group of positive psychologists met in February of 1999 in the Cayman Islands to enumerate the potential components of a good life. I'd like to add here that one potential element of a good life is to get to go to the Cayman Islands on a university's budget to discuss the good life. Humor aside, the hoped for list of components would form the basis of a research agenda on positive psychology and positive social science. The first order of business for the group was to discuss cultural specificity that might render a "good life" so culture bound as to make it irrelevant. The diverse group attempted to look for qualities prized cross-culturally. This resultant list will be offered continually for additional cultural relevance. Currently the list is considered local to present time and culture.

The 17 characteristics the group came up with cluster into three categories: (a) connections outward, (b) individual qualities, and (c) life regulation. The list is nonexclusive and nonexhaustive. The characteristics are:

- Love and intimacy
- Satisfying work/occupation
- Helping others/altruism

- Being a good citizen
- Spirituality
- Leadership
- Aesthetic appreciation
- Knowledge of life larger than self
- Principles and integrity
- Creativity
- Play
- Feeling SWB
- Courage
- Purposive future-mindedness
- Individuality
- Self-regulation
- Wisdom

What would you change about this list? Add? Subtract? Is this what your list would look like?

(Discuss as appropriate.)

Truly Extraordinary People Meeting

In March of 1999 the American Psychological Association sponsored another meeting of leaders in the field of positive psychology. The group included experts in both child research and adult research. They wanted to examine how best to understand excellence, or genius. They did not want to use the traditional approach of achievement

measures of artistic and scientific genius. They mapped a new framework with five kinds of excellence that will change our exclusive achievement-oriented approach to giftedness.

The other four domains in the framework are:

- Relationships
- Responsibility
- Spirituality
- Life as a work of art.

This broadening of the concept of giftedness is more inclusive and more inspiring than solely achievement giftedness.

The Templeton Positive Psychology Award

The John Templeton Foundation of Radnor, PA has agreed to sponsor the largest cash award ever given to a psychologist, an annual \$100,000 prize for outstanding research in the field of positive psychology. Second place will be given \$50,000, third \$30,000, and fourth place will be awarded \$20,000.

The contest is open only to those no more than 12 years out of their doctorates who have attained academic appointment of Assistant Professor or higher in either the United States or Canada.

This award is developed for you, for the psychologist-scientist of the future.

Everyone was wonderful today. You did yourselves proud. Thank you for your work and presentations. Check your syllabus for homework. Next class we're going to talk about what happiness is and what it's not. Do something nice for someone in your family.

Class 6

Interactive attendance

Prior to lecture put on board several literary quotes that seek to capture "happiness." They may include, as David Myers has in The Pursuit of Happiness, the following:

"Make us Happy. Make us good." (Robert Browning) (Meyers, p. 21)

"Joy is the fire that keeps our purpose warm and our intelligence aglow." (Helen Keller) (Meyers, p. 21)

"A cheerful heart is good medicine. A downcast spirit dries up the bones." (Proverbs) (Meyers, p. 21)

Lecture: Happiness

Today we'll begin to look at "happiness." We'll break it down and see what it is and what it isn't. At least we'll see what David Myers has to say about it. You've all been doing your reading haven't you? Good. Myers, The Pursuit of Happiness (1992) is the most quoted reference on happiness in the current literature. David Lytton also has an excellent book called Happiness written in 1999. His book is on your suggested reading list. It covers much of the same material that Myers does, but in a slightly more scientific fashion. Lytton's area of research was twins study. He adds a well worked view of genetic factors relative to hedonic set points. What is hedonics? Did someone say orth-hedonics? (Laughter) The clinical use of a similar word is anhedonia, or a lack of pleasure in living. Dysthymics are anhedonic. Wait a minute, some of your faces just went blank. Who knows what dysthymia is? (If no one answers) Well, that's probably a good thing. Dysthymia is a long-term, low-grade depression. It is a debilitating condition

that can rob a person's vitality and interest in participating in the things that bring joy to life. The person is sad a lot or down in the dumps. The person usually remains functional but the mood and energy level is low. The DSM-IV-TR differentiates dysthymia from depression by saying the symptoms are usually "less severe" than depression (APA, 2000, p. 377). So we've gone from "anhedonia" to "dysthymia" and in a round about manner have defined hedonics, or have we? What does hedonic mean?

(Someone will offer the answer, or close to it.)

That's right, it is from the Greek "hedone" meaning pleasure. The "an" in anhedonia, again from the Greek, means "without." Anhedonia is without pleasure. The hedonic set-point that Lytton refers to is our individual "...talent for happiness...happy genes passed along to us selectively. People...differ in their average feelings of well being....Nearly all psychological traits and tendencies- irritability, extroversion, aggressiveness, enthusiasm, fearfulness, even I.Q. vary over time...Happiness is notoriously variable in this way" (Lytton, 1999, p. 33).

Does that make sense? Sometimes we are very aggressive, other times not so, but some people overall are more aggressive than others. The same with happiness. Some folks have a higher hedonic set-point than others. That is part of what we will study here. What does that higher set point look like? What are its component qualities? How can we adjust our own set-point, if it is a little low? By the way, the short test we took to determine our level of subjective well-being was developed by Auke Tellegen (1988), who is David Lytton's research partner. The SWB measure was developed for their work on monozygotic and dizygotic twins. You guys look those terms up. Whoever comes up with the answer next class will get a little extra credit.

One thing I want to stress here is that we are safe in this room. Each of you is in control of the level of personal sharing that he or she participates in. We have embarked on a study of positive psychology. As we continue throughout the semester there may be areas that we cover, or assignments, or exercises that we participate in that may bring up uncomfortable feelings. That is the nature of psychological studies, but this class is not group therapy. I hope that it is therapeutic for us all, but that is not the intent. We are here to learn. Maybe even we are here to increase our subjective well-being through the understanding of the material our expert authors will provide us with. We'll see how that turns out, but first and foremost I want us all to feel safe in our experience here together. Much of our learning will be interactive, some of it may bring difficult or uncomfortable material to the surface of our consciousness. None of you, not one of you, is required to share any personal information or feelings that you are not comfortable sharing. Any time that you feel uncomfortable, let me know. We can talk after class. If any of you need help, I can offer several appropriate referrals. Does everyone understand what I'm saying? Good. Questions? Comments?

(Discuss as necessary.)

Okay, let's jump into Myers. He cites a psychologist from Florida, Michael Fordyce (1978), who asks, "Imagine someone could grant you Happiness or Fame and Fortune. You could have all the adulation and money you've ever dreamed of – OR – you could be joy-filled day after day, but possess only life's necessities. Which would you choose?" (Myers, 1992, p. 19).

(Discus and engage as much of the class as possible.)

Myers says, in a paraphrase of Freudian id concepts, that the search for happiness and/or relief from misery motivates most of human behavior. Remember Freud's concept of the ID as the aspect of our consciousness that seeks to minimize pain and maximize pleasure. Are you all familiar with the Freudian concepts of id, ego, and superego?

(Provide basic orientation if necessary.)

Myers goes on to say that humans are primarily success-seeking and that success is evaluated through the measures of sex and money. True? True for you?

(Discuss any new thoughts the class may have in this regard.)

Dutch psychologist Ruut Veenhoven (1988) studies self-reports of behavior and peer ratings of people who feel happy or unhappy. He takes what individuals report about themselves and then compares it with how people close to those individuals rate them. In this fashion he's able to get a pretty close approximation of what the actuality is. His findings describe unhappy or depressed people as tending to be lethargic, brooding, socially withdrawn and even hostile. He makes the point that there is a sense to the suffering, a method to the madness. Depression, he says, is a sign of health. Like physical pain, psychological pain warns us of dangers or threats of loss. A negative mood signals that all is not well, motivating people to ruminate and reassess rather than making snap decisions as carefree people might.

This is a good way to see depression. The problem, of course, is that people sometimes become stuck in their unhappiness and lack the skills to feel better about things. We'll get to ways of becoming unstuck a little later in our semester.

Veenhoven contrasts unhappy people with what happy people are like: energetic, decisive, flexible, creative, sociable, more trusting, more loving, more responsive, able to

tolerate more frustration, less likely to be abusive, forgiving, able to see long-term rewards over immediate small pleasures. Literally, happy people look on the bright side.

Myers reports that emotions are biological events. Our immune systems fight disease more effectively when we're happy rather than depressed. When depressed, the number of certain disease-fighting cells decline. Stressed animals and distressed and depressed people are more vulnerable to disease.

Myers reminds us that happiness is a state of mind and body, of physical-material well-being and inner well-being. Subjective well-being, as we've been learning, is a pervasive sense that life is good. It is an ongoing perception that this time in one's life, or even life as a whole, is fulfilling, meaningful, and pleasant. Joy, Myers says, is not ephemeral euphoria, but a deep and abiding sense that despite the day's troubles, all is, or will be well. Great words from Dr. Myers, "ephemeral euphoria" (Myers, 1992, p. 24).

What's that mean? What is he saying here?

(Discuss until class understands that Myers is saying happiness is not temporary pleasure.)

You guys want to take a 10-minute break? Okay, but you have to raise your left hand in the peace sign and promise to be back in your seat in 10 minutes. Promise? Let's see, come on up with those hands. Okay. Go.

(10-minute break)

Myers talks about a survey by research teams from the University of Michigan and the University of Chicago interviewing "tens of thousands" of people. He didn't provide specific references so I couldn't pull up these studies, but let's take his word for

them. The survey teams asked deceptively simple questions. Write them down as I put them on the board.

1) Taking all things together, how would you say things are these days? Would you say you are Happy? Pretty Happy? Or Not too Happy?

2) How satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Are you Very Satisfied? Satisfied? Not very Satisfied? Not at all Satisfied?

Go ahead and deliberate for a moment or two, then circle the answer that best fits how you would answer the questions. Consider each question separately.

(After a few minutes bring class attention together and discuss student answers to the survey questions. Bring out from students how they arrived at their answers. What went into their evaluations? What specific things, feelings, or behaviors were considered?)

It's good we're thinking about these sorts of things. It allows us to become more aware of our experience and more aware of ourselves. I'm going to give you some homework for next week. On another sheet of paper write...

(Assign and describe this orally and write it out on the board.)

Sum of +/- Emotions

Response question: During the past few weeks have you ever felt...?

Instructions: Mark one "+" for each time you remember feeling a positive emotion as suggested by the following positive emotion questions.

Mark one "-" for each time you remember experiencing a negative emotion as suggested by the following negative emotion questions.

Sum the total of +s and -s.

Positive Emotion Questions:

- Particularly excited or interested in something?
- Proud because someone complimented you on something?
- Pleased about having accomplished something?
- On top of the world?
- That things were going your way?

Negative Emotion Questions:

- So restless you couldn't sit long in a chair?
- Very lonely or remote from other people?
- Bored? Depressed or Very Unhappy?
- Upset because someone criticized you?

Does everyone understand the assignment? You will end up with a total amount of +s and a total amount of -s. Your task is place the "response question" in front of each of the positive and negative emotion questions to form a complete sentence. For example, let's take the first positive emotion question: "During the past few weeks have you ever felt particularly excited or interested in something?" If you have felt that way, count the number of times that you've felt that way and place a corresponding number of "+"s next to the question. If you can remember feeling that way six times, then put six "+"s down. Go through each of the questions this way and add up total "+"s and "-"s. Clear?

(Discuss until class understands assignment)

(Answer any questions as necessary)

Bring the "Sum of Emotions" completed to next class. Do your reading. Think about something wonderful that you did for someone else. Think about something wonderful that you want for yourself in the future. See you next week.

Class 7Getting Present Exercise

Good morning. How is everyone today? Hmm. Let's forego the usual attendance process today. When you turn in your homework I'll take roll off of that. So please be sure to identify yourself with the last four digits of your social security number on the back side of your assignment. If you didn't do your homework, of course I'll be heart-broken, but none-the-less, turn in a sheet of paper with your name on it and the date. At least in that way you'll get credit for being here today.

All right. Is everyone comfortable? Are you all pleased with your seat selection? Do you all feel attentive and participative today? Deep breath everyone. That's right. Inhale to a four-count, hold for a two-count, and exhale for a four-count.

(Demonstrate)

Again, in, two, three, four, hold, one, two, and out, two, three, four. Yes that's good, again. That's it, once more.....ahhh. Let's check in with our awareness: How does the body feel? If you feel tension in it, where? Keep breathing. Shrug your shoulders, roll your neck, do what you can to release some of that tension. How about thoughts and emotions? Are you experiencing any intrusive thoughts or intense emotions that might prevent you from being fully present with us here this morning? If so, continue to breathe and simply acknowledge that this is the case, and accept that your feelings and thoughts are currently as they are. Remember that you are safe in this room. Yes. Let's bring our attention and awareness fully into the room now. Look around you, see your classmates, take a look at your fabulous instructor, and drink in our academic ambiance, such as it is. Good. Any comments?

Discussion of Sum of Emotions Homework

Take out your homework, let's talk about that. Any surprises? Were you more happy or less happy than you thought? Was it difficult to assess your emotions like this? (Discuss student reactions to assignment of recording recent positive and emotional experiences. Allow students time to express their experience of the process of assessment, and their feelings relative to seeing the sum of their own emotions. Move discussion around the room. Watch for students who do not seem engaged. Make special effort to include them. As appropriate, move on.)

Lecture

Today we'll continue to look at what "happiness" may or may not be and who is happy and who is not. Or should that be "whom"? Current estimates by those who study this subject report that approximately 10–15% of people are happy. This means 85 to 90% of us are not happy. According to Myers, statistically, 80% of North Americans indicate that they are fairly satisfied or very satisfied with their lives. Are these people lying? How can 90% of us be unhappy and 80% of us be satisfied with life? Are all the people who were surveyed for the sample lying? The answer is likely more complicated than that. The original psychology professor, Sigmund Freud might say that we delude ourselves by repressing painful feelings. That could account for some of the discrepancy. Karl Marx, you know Karl Marx? History majors?

(Someone in class will illuminate Marx for the group.)

Thank you. Well, Marx might contend that we have formed a "false consciousness" to protect ourselves from the misery and injustice that surrounds us.

Rollo May, the giant of humanistic psychology, might argue that we suffer from “Massive Collusive Denial.” Psychologist Sigmund Koch might explain the apparent discrepancy by suggesting that our attempts to insure continuous safety for ourselves has created a deficiency in spontaneity and creativity resulting in a fundamental estrangement from our actual experiential selves. In your suggested reading is a paper (Cite, 2001) about Dr. Koch on the occasion of his death last year. I recommend that you all read about his “one big Idea” which put forth the notion that our increasing need to produce and insure affluence and safety has led to a culture of risk-averse individuals and institutions. He thought the notion preposterous that every behavior and procedure was codified and manualized. Koch thought that we learn by making mistakes. He saw that a fundamental shift had occurred in the late 19th century that would orient thought and culture throughout the 20th century. The change he saw was from

...agency to rules....From a world in which individuals took greater initiative and greater risks, based on their own sensibility, creativity, and responsibility, to a world where thought and action are more and more rationalized, bureaucratized, and routinized –ultimately reduced to a set of rules. From free fallible, and meaningful action, humans have turned toward a more controlled, definitionally correct, ameaningful behavior. This shift from open-minded, authentically responsive activity to prescriptive, rule and method bound behavior was the root pathology or epistemopathic syndrome of the modern world. (Leary, 2001, p. 427)

Do you agree with Koch? Do you think we’ve lost our edge? Have we become afraid to look at life straight ahead? How do you attribute the disparity between statistical reports of happiness and reports of life satisfaction?

(Discuss and define terms as is fruitful.)

Myers explains the reported differences between how we report happiness and satisfaction by telling us that people who are afraid or uncertain of rating themselves will

usually slant their answers toward the positive. Research psychologists Matlin and Stang call this phenomenon the “Pollyanna Principle” (1978). Let’s look at our own experience. When looking back, do you tend to remember the pleasant more than the unpleasant? We do tend to let this type of positive thinking predominate. So probably most folks aren’t consciously lying when they say they are fairly to very satisfied with life, even when 80% are not happy at all. Myers brings up an interesting issue. If people are such poor reporters of their subjective experience, what value do these subjective self-report studies have? Science answers this question with the concept that if a report tends toward a positive direction, there is still value by looking at results relatively. If everyone is fudging the relative positions hold steady.

What do you suppose is the relationship between wealth and well-being? Health and well-being? Gender and well-being? Political system and well-being? Who is happy? Who isn’t?

Let’s look at the demographics of happiness. University of Michigan psychologist Ronald Inglehart studied the well-being of Europeans (1990). He surveyed 170,000 Europeans. He found that Danes, Swiss, Irish, and Dutch are happier than French, Greek, Italians, and Germans. Inglehart found a strong link between people living in a stable democracy and well-being. So, are the richest people happy? What do you think? (Class will respond with variety. Focus on students being critical of their positions. Facilitate their building opinion on evidence)

Inglehart says no. Based on 170,000 surveys, his findings reveal that people are happier when their basic material needs are met, but he also finds that there is a point of diminishing returns. Does this make sense? People need to have their bellies full and a

roof over their head, clothes on their back, and to know where their next meal is coming from. Material necessities will dominate a person's consciousness until those needs are met. Remember Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs? We will be discussing Maslow's theoretical concept in greater detail later in the semester, but the bare bones of it are that people are primarily motivated by a hierarchical structure of needs. Until each basic need is satisfied in an ascending order, an individual cannot be motivated by a higher need. Our most basic needs are physiological: food, air, water, shelter. Once those needs have been met we are motivated by safety: Will we have air, food, water, and shelter tomorrow? Once we are secure in that need for survival over time, we are motivated by a need for belonging. According to Maslow (1943), we have a need for connection with a group – to feel that we belong with someone(s). When we have that connection established, we are able to be motivated by a need for esteem within the group. Not just to belong, but to be somehow special or regarded with special attention. When all of these conditional needs have been fully met, we are free to experience the need to become self-actualized. This need is characterized by contribution, of giving back, and of supporting others as an altruistic expression of being. These needs are described as being in an ascending spiral, meaning that we cycle up through each of the motivational needs again and again in our lives. Often in life setbacks occur: the loss of a loved one, or of a job, or of an ability. When the life we've put together is somehow deconstructed, we face again the same order of needs that must be satisfied. Each time we return to a previously met set of needs, theoretically, we are more aware and better able to transcend upward once again. Does that have sense to it? Questions? Comments?

(Discuss Maslow's Hierarchy in an abbreviated fashion with classic pyramid chart on board.)

(Break)

Lecture

In the very rich and the very poor, the experiences of defeat and despair, hope and courage, distribute themselves equally. To the question: "Does happiness rise in relation to affluence?" the answer is no. However, the extremely wealthy are 10 times as likely to experience depression. What might explain this?

(Discuss briefly.)

Myers utilizes literary references to illuminate this relationship between wealth and happiness. The Roman statesman Seneca wrote over 2000 years ago:

Our forefathers...lived every jot as well as we, when they provided and dressed their own meat with their own hands, lodged upon the ground and were not yet come to the vanity of gold of gems...which may serve to show us, that it is the mind, and not the sum, that makes any person rich...No one can be poor that has enough, nor rich, that covets more than he has. (from Seneca's Morals, in Myers, 1992, p. 44)

In a more recent reference, Garrison Keillor (1989) in his monologue "What Keeps Our Faith" suggests

...is everywhere in daily life, a sign that faith rules through ordinary things: cooking, small-talk, story-telling, making love, tending animals and sweet corn and flowers, and sports, music, books, raising kids, all the places gravy soaks in and grace shines through. Even in times of elephantine greed and vanity, the campfires of the gentle are always close. (in Myers, 1992, p. 45)

Myers' point of view is captured in his own words, "the river of happiness is fed far less by wealth than by streams of ordinary pleasures" (1992, p. 45).

What do you think?

(Discuss until end of class.)

Be good to each other. Be good to yourselves. You did well today. Next class we'll continue on the demographics of happiness. We'll start with the remarkable nature of how we adapt. Your homework is to think about whether old age is a reward or a punishment, and why.

Class 8

Interactive attendance

Getting Started Exercise

Do you remember the assignment from last class? Old age. Is it a reward or a punishment? We need to enlist two volunteers with good penpersonship. Hitomi and Shareeka. Good. Which of you wants to be Reward and which Punishment? Okay, Hitomi you write PUNISHMENT on that side of the board. Shareeka you write REWARD. Now the task for the rest of you guys is to provide your thoughts on what makes old age, one or the other.

(Discuss fully. Student volunteers to write on board under the two headings: REWARD or PUNISHMENT. From the class students will suggest reasons why old age should be considered one or the other. As the lists are generated, facilitate critical thinking from the group. Opinions should be questioned as to what thought process and evidence went into their formation. What makes a life worth living is essentially the question under examination.)

Lecture: From David Myers, The Pursuit of Happiness (1992)

That was good. You always make me think about what I think I know. I hope I can do the same for you. Let's go on with our perusal of Myers and The Pursuit of Happiness. We left off last time discussing who is and who isn't so happy. We'll continue to work through the demographics of happiness. If we have time today, we'll also look at what mental satisfaction is. On the heels of our discussion regards old age, Myers suggests a common sense assumption that adolescents and the elderly would be the least happy. For instance, young people are not allowed to do many things. They are

bound by lawful limitations and are in the control of care-providers. The elderly are in a similar situation, relying on caregivers, and losing the skills and identity they once possessed. Apparently this common-sense assumption is false. People of all ages report common feelings and moral fluctuations. Myers cites Arizona State University psychologists Okun and Stock, who culled through 100 studies and found <1% of variation in well-being is related to age. Inglehart – remember our University of Michigan psychologist who surveyed Europeans? – found the same degree of variation to hold true throughout his 170,000 interviews in 16 nations.

If not age, then what might predict happiness?

(Ask class for the answer. Someone will likely provide it.)

In every study, for adults of all ages, one predictive constant is health and physical fitness. In a UCSF study conducted by cardiologists Meyer Friedman and Diane Ulmer (1984), middle-aged heart attack survivors were separated into two groups. The first group was given standard advice concerning medications, diet, and exercise. The second group was given the same advice plus counseling on ways to slow down and relax their pace of life. The counseling suggested walking and talking more slowly, smiling at others, and laughing at themselves, admitting mistakes, taking time to enjoy life – you know, stop and smell the roses – and renewing religious faith. In three years, the second group had had half as many repeat heart attacks as the first group. Let's go over that one more time, just so we hear it.

(Repeat while writing on board pertinent data.)

Myers refers to another longitudinal study over 16 years, following 17,000 middle-aged Harvard alumni (1997, p. 77). The results were clear and simple: Those who

exercised regularly lived longer. A related study of a large company, Control Data Corporation employees, found that those who exercised regularly had 25% fewer sick days. Several recent studies have reported that aerobic exercise is the most effective treatment for depression. Better than antidepressant medications, better than therapy, better than therapy plus medication which in the recent past has come to be the gold standard treatment for depression. Aerobic exercise fights the blues. There does not appear to be dispute in this regard. People who exercise are not as sick and they live longer. Among the additional benefits of regular exercise are self-confidence and self-discipline. These qualities are the basis of psychological hardiness and resiliency.

Lisa McCann and David Holmes (1984) of the University of Kansas took mildly depressed (dysthymic) students and set up three treatment groups. At the end of a 10-week treatment regimen, the groups were evaluated. The first was taught relaxation techniques and their moods had improved. The second group was given aerobic exercise and they dramatically improved. The third group was given no specific treatment and their conditions neither improved nor worsened. Science hasn't yet nailed down the specific "whys" of the effects moderate exercise has on positive emotions. Is it because those who exercise see themselves as looking and feeling younger? Is it because of lowered blood pressure? Is it because exercise produces endorphins and other mood-enhancing brain chemistry? Is it because of increased body warmth, muscle relaxation, and sounder sleep? The answer is likely yes to all of those answers.

(On board: "Mens sana in corpore sano: Sound mind in a sound body.")

Our appraisal of threat and challenging situations affects our blood pressure. Chronic anger and resentment triggers the release of hormones that accelerate the build

up of deposits in the heart's vessels. Persistent psychological distress depresses the immune system, decreasing our resistance to disease. So rage and jealousy and blame and other negative emotions do hurt us. Relaxation, meditation, and optimism boost our immune system function and strengthen the healing process.

What else might factor in to who is most happy? How about gender? Who is happier? Men or women? What do we know about men and women? Let's take a short quiz and see what we find. I need a board volunteer. Yeah, come on down Jalou. I'll read a series of questions and ask for a show of hands after each one. You guys vote either true or false when asked to. Jalou will tally up the Trues and the Falses and we'll see what we think. Ready? Here goes.

1) Men report higher levels of well-being than do women? Who thinks that's true? Raise your hands. Okay, Jalou, do you have a count? Good. Now who thinks it's false? Jalou?

2) Women report more happiness and fulfillment if their lives feel rushed rather than free and easy? Hands up for true. Got 'em Jalou? Okay, hands up for false.

3) Full-time homemakers have happier husbands? True? False?

4) Women are more likely than men to become depressed and to express joy?
True? False?

5) Men are more likely than women to attempt suicide? Hands up for True?
False?

6) Women tend to feel somewhat tense, irritable, or depressed during the two or three days before the onset of menstruation? True? False.

Jalou, would you put a big check-mark by the appropriate column for each question? 1, 3, 5, and 6 are FALSE. 2 and 4 are TRUE. This data comes from Inglehart again, although Myers claims that the same findings have been reported in a new study of 18,032 university students surveyed by 68 researchers in 39 countries. There are gender differences in many things, but not in well-being and life satisfaction. In well-being and life satisfaction the sexes are equal (Myers, 1992, p. 80).

A University of Illinois study (Fujita, Diener & Sandvick, 1991)) found females to have more empathy due to their skill at reading nonverbal and emotional cues. The experiment was designed with a series of 2-second film clips showing facial expressions. Females in the study were more accurate describing the actual emotion than were males. This empathy differential does not apparently translate into increased well-being or satisfaction with life. Given women's sensitivity to nonverbal cues and their higher rates for depression, is it likely that women commit suicide more often than men?

(Class will give every answer.)

The answer is no. Women attempt suicide at a much higher rate than men, but men succeed in suicide 2 to 3 times more often than women. Men are also 5 times more likely to be alcoholic, and 8 times more likely to commit violent crime. Reality does not support saying that women or men are more susceptible to disorder. There are strong connections between different types of psychological disorders and gender (Myers, 1992, p. 84).

(Discuss as is fruitful) How about siblings? Are people with brothers or sisters more happy than those without? No. People with and without siblings are equally likely to be excited and engaged with life and to be happy and unhappy. Sibling status is not a

predictor of life satisfaction or happiness. What else is out there that might be a real difference in people's experience of happiness? There is something. How about disabilities? Does having a disability factor into a person's happiness?

(Discuss briefly.)

Let's take a break. Ten minutes.

(Break)

Lecture (resume)

A study by Ed Diener and Kathleen Chawalski (1988) of the University of Illinois demonstrated something truly remarkable. Able-bodied students were surveyed: 50% were happy, 22% were unhappy, and 28% percent were neutral on the question. Disabled students were likewise surveyed. 50% were happy, 22% were unhappy, and 28% were neutral on the scale. We are adaptive creatures. We adapt to both good and bad circumstances. We'll talk more about this in the next few classes, but what do you guys make of this? People with disabilities were equally as happy as people without.

(Discuss)

We now know that even having a disability is not a significant reducer of happiness. But there is that one thing that will really matter to our evaluation of life satisfaction and happiness. Does anyone have an idea about this one factor that seems to make a difference in a person's self-report of happiness? No, it doesn't matter where you live, big or small town, Europe, Japan, North America, all are about equally happy. There is a marginally significant statistical finding that being white and highly educated accounts for a small amount of variance in happiness. Okun and Stroock (1987) at Arizona State credit race and education with less than 2% of the person-to-person variations in

well-being. Individual variations within any such group are tremendously greater than the average differences between races and educational groups. African-Americans do not suffer from lower self-esteem or higher rates of depression. The National Institute of Mental Health's 1980s study, *Psychiatric Disorders in America*, show that depression and alcoholism among blacks, whites, and Latinos are roughly equal (Myers, 1992, p. 86).

(Discuss briefly if comments are forthcoming)

Despite the realities of bias and discrimination, groups at risk: people of color, people with disabilities, and women keep self-esteem healthy in three ways according to social psychologists Jennifer Crocker and Brenda Major. "Women value the things at which they excel. Women attribute problems to prejudice. And they do as we all do- they compare themselves to those in their own group" (Myers, 1992, p. 86).

Any response? Comments? Questions?

(Discuss as appropriate.)

Let's try a quick assessment and see how we stack up to a surveyed sample of nearly 4000 college students. Get a fresh sheet of paper. Fold it in thirds the way you would fold a business letter. (demonstrate) No names on these papers. At the top of the page evaluate your physical attractiveness from the following terms (write on board) "homely," "average," "nice looking," or "stunningly beautiful/handsome." Write one of the terms down that in your heart of hearts you believe yourself to be, and then fold the top third of the paper down to cover your answer so your snoopy neighbors don't see. Got it?

(Demonstrate folding top of paper down to cover selected answer.) Everybody have that done? One more minute. Okay, now on the bottom third of your paper we're going to draw a standard 7-point Lykert Scale. (Demonstrate on board.) Start on the left with 1

being “very dissatisfied with life,” 2 – “dissatisfied,” 3 – “somewhat dissatisfied,” 4 – “neither dissatisfied nor satisfied with life,” 5 – “somewhat satisfied,” 6 – “satisfied,” and 7 – “very satisfied with life.” Now clearly mark where you fit on the scale. Think about how you are generally, not necessarily how you feel this particular moment. Got it? Questions? Good, when you’ve made your self-assessment, fold the bottom up to enclose all the writing. It should look just like a business letter folded and ready for an envelope. (Demonstrate.) Remember, no names. Turn these in and then we’ll do us some figurish. I’ll need an addled assistant, no I mean an able assistant. Who? Thanks Sonia, come on up. Write our four attractiveness headings on the board: homely, average, nice looking, stunningly beautiful, or handsome. Okay, I’ll read out from each sheet, first the attractiveness measure and then the numerical value corresponding with our life-satisfaction scale. Sonia will write down the numeral beneath the appropriate attractiveness descriptor. What we’re going to do is average out these numbers and see what we come up with. Got it, Sonia? Yeah, just make column of numbers below each heading. At the end add them up and average them. Got it? Good. Here goes.

(Read each student’s paper for the volunteer to write on board and find averages.)

What do we have?

(Elicit comments.)

There is one group that consistently rate themselves as more satisfied with life than others. People who see themselves as physically attractive are significantly more satisfied with life than those who do not consider themselves so. On the same seven point Lykert scale with 1 being very dissatisfied and 7 being highly satisfied with life, those considering themselves as “homely” averaged 4.8. Those considering themselves as

“stunningly handsome or beautiful” averaged 6.4. This was another University of Michigan study of a national sample of 3,700 people (Myers, 1992, p. 107).

(Discuss.)

Myers includes a lot of supportive qualifiers for those of us needing reassurance at this news. Primarily we should know that this is based on self-evaluations, not a beauty pageant table of judges. It is how we feel about ourselves. Remember, he says, “Attractiveness is relative. ET was as ugly as Darth Vader until you got to know him” (Myers, 1992, p. 107).

From the Roman statesman Cicero comes, “The final good and supreme duty of wise people is to resist appearance.” And from Prince Charming to Cinderella, “Do I love you because you are beautiful, or are you beautiful because I love you?” William Shakespeare observes that “Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind” (Myers, 1992, p.107).

And de St. Exupery’s (1943) The Little Prince ennobles us with his excellent truth, “All that is important is invisible to the eyes. It is only with the heart that one sees rightly” (p. 87).

The beauty of this prose and the truthfulness of these concepts are designed to protect our self image from degrading comparisons to others whom we might consider more attractive than ourselves. In a world where appearance matters, it helps to see ourselves as being attractive.

Next class we’ll dive into the specific traits of happy people: let’s finish up today tackling mental satisfaction. What makes a satisfied mind? Ignorance? Dogma? Balance? How do people come to have a satisfied mind? Luck? Random chance? Religion? Love?

Drugs? Money? Once satisfied, does a mind remain so forever? Maybe not. A beautiful, anonymous Chinese proverb advises us that “We are never happy for a thousand days and a flower never blooms for a hundred.”

Is that true? Are happiness and mental satisfaction temporary conditions?

(Encourage class input for brief discussion.)

Myers includes Steven Hawking, the Cambridge physicist and author who also has a physically disabling neurological disease, to explain how this can be:

“When’s one’s expectations have been reduced to zero, one really appreciates what one has” (Hawking, 1990, p. 89).

Happiness is a relative state. Happiness relates to our prior experience and our ability to adapt. “What once was a luxury can feel like poverty. Better a rising experience than a continually high one....Continued pleasures wear off...it is always contingent upon change and disappears with continual satisfaction” (Frijda, 1988, p. 351).

Oops! We’re out of time. I guess that’s a wrap. Your homework is to write one page describing what makes life satisfying for you. Check your syllabus. Questions? Parting shots? Help someone. Love yourself a little more than usual. See you next time.

Class 9Introduction to Class Exercise

Welcome to our ninth meeting. How is everyone today?

(Engage class in settling-in conversation.)

Is everyone comfortable? Good. Good. Vell, ve hav veys to change zat. First we'll count off. Start over here on the left. Go down each row from the front and back up each row from the back. Count off: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. I want us to end up with five groups of six. Come on, quit your groaning. Let's go.

(Count is completed)

Now it's time to find room for your group. You guys have done this before. Four corners and one group in the middle will work, but suit yourself. `ere we go. `ere we go.

(When class has settled into groups.)

Our task today for the next 30 to 40 minutes has to do with your homework. You all have it don't you? That's great, just great. Take out those homework sheets. Be sure they have your name on them because you'll be turning them in at the end of class today. They will serve as our attendance today so if by some slim chance your dog ate it or it is not with you for some other perfectly believable reason, make sure you turn in a paper with your name on it, and the date, so you'll get credit for being here today. Okay? Good. Good. Now the assignment was to write one page about what makes life satisfying for you.

I'd like you each to discuss your menu of satisfying things with the other members in your group. Everyone will participate by contributing at least one or two things that satisfy you. Things that make life worth living. Each group will create a

master list of “What Satisfies Us.” That master list will be your work product. Each entry on the list should have a student’s name next to it as a demonstration that everyone contributed. If more than one in the group put down the same contribution, put each name next to the entry. That’s the material task, to produce an actual list, but the more important part of the exercise is to share with one another and to evaluate your own choices. Ask one another questions of clarification so that you each understand what the contributor is describing. I want you to really hear what others find satisfying, and why. I want you to evaluate your own criteria for what you find satisfying. When you’re done with your master list there should be between 6 and 12 entries on it. Pick a section of the board, put your group’s name on the top, and write your list out so we can all share it. When everyone’s work is on the board, we’ll take our break. Questions? Yes, your group’s name. That’s also a part of the task. Give yourselves an identity. Come up with a name that describes the qualities your group embodies. Generate critical discussion around that process as well. Got that? Good, any other questions?

(Respond to questions as necessary)

All righty then. Let’s get “satisfaction” on the table. I’ll circulate among the groups. And away we go.

(Process goes until complete)

Break

Class Exercise (resumes)

The qualities of experience I see represented on the boards are very interesting to me. I’m looking forward to hearing about them. Which group would like to begin? How

about the “Elysian Fields” group? Who is the spokesperson for that group? Okay, Jesse, come on up and run through your list for us. First, tell us about the name of your group. Where did “Elysian Fields” come from?

(Each group’s spokesperson, in turn, presents their list and describes the process of naming the group. Other students from the same group remain seated but are included in questioning and comments. The class explores the meaning of each group’s life satisfying qualities and experiences. Items common to all, or most, lists are noted. Repeated items are marked. Themes are noted. A master list for the class is created. Discussion focuses critical recognition on specific qualities of life experience captured through the exercise. Class members are responsible for reproducing the master list for their individual notes. This process of reproduction may also be facilitated as a further group activity as some students volunteer to record the master list, and others volunteer to make copies for everyone. The practice of collaboration among group members is acknowledged and encouraged.)

Good work today. Each group presented thoughtfully and entertainingly. Any final thoughts or comments?

(Respond as appropriate.)

Next class we’ll see what Myers has to say about what makes a satisfied mind. We’ll be finishing up with The Pursuit of Happiness soon. So now is your chance to read it if you haven’t so far. See you next week. No specific reading or writing assignments, but I would like you all to look for beauty in nature. Practice the experience of nature. Take a walk, watch the sunset, look at the soil beneath your feet. Think about where you are in relation to nature. Who are you in relation to nature?

Class 10

Interactive attendance

Lecture: "A Satisfied Mind" from David Myers (1992), The Pursuit of Happiness

Welcome again to the long running classroom presentation of Salutogenics Are Us. If this semester was a horse race, we'd be leaving the first turn and entering the back stretch. Everyone doing all right? Any questions? Comments? Things that must be said? Okay. Today I'll do a lot of talking again. Your job, as always when I go on and on at the front of the class, is to ask questions when you need to and make points when you can. By now I've learned that very few of you are shy about this process. Much of the material we'll cover today is from Myers, The Pursuit of Happiness.

For some of us happiness or life satisfaction is relative to other people's attainments or lack of attainments. Myers posits a theory of "social comparison" (1992, pp. 59-62) which holds that there are uplifting effects of comparing downward. In other words by seeing people who are worse off than you, you will feel better about yourself. Myers quotes mid-20th century author and philosopher Ambrose Bierce from his satirical The Devil's Dictionary (1911) in support of his thesis: "Happiness is an agreeable sensation arising from the contemplation of another's misery" (Bierce, quoted in Myers, 1992, p. 60).

Is this true? What do you think? Do we feel better when we see others doing poorly?

Bierce's point is humorously made, but seems to construct mental satisfaction on a slippery slope. Once one engages in external comparisons to feel better about oneself, he or she has opened the door only half way. The other side of course is that we will also

have to compare ourselves with those perceived as better off. To permit only one side of the equation to enter consciousness, the downward comparison in this case, I would think that one will be little satisfied and in possession of an underdeveloped psychology. In my view, on this question, Dr. Myers seems to leave the train tracks of mental health and push his engine of happiness down the road to mental diminution. Intellectual consistency, or the cognitive ability to thoroughly perceive and consider all dimensions of a question without bias, is the hallmark of a strong and fearless mind.

Let's look at a few for instances. Is it okay for your boyfriends or girlfriends to cheat on you? No? Well is it okay for you to cheat on your boyfriend or girlfriend? No, again, but with a half beat of hesitation from most of you. Be aware if there was any difference in your response time, and ask yourself why?

How about this: Is it okay to cut in an out of freeway traffic if the other cars are going slower than you want to go? Yes? Come on, be honest. Show of hands. Let's talk about that. Is it okay to frighten your grandparents? Is it all right to risk the lives of Grandma and Grandpa for insignificant purposes? No? Well, many of your grandparents are often frightened by people like you speeding in and out of traffic all around them. They are at risk of death because of impatient behavior exactly the same as your own behavior. How do you reconcile that?

(Discuss as fruitful.)

Let's take it a step further. If you considered your freeway behavior in light of the vulnerability of people like your grandparents, would you change your aggressive driving habits?

Maybe, maybe not? In law school there is a very old saying, from where I know not. I heard it first from my father, who was a lawyer. It goes: Intellectual consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds.

I'll share my interpretation of this old saw with you. I think it means that when we are confronted with a question, there are at least two sides or dimensions to it, and usually many more than that. Listen to the beautiful brevity of Shakespeare's expression of our existential dilemma, "To be or not to be, that is the question" (from Hamlet, Act III, Scene 1).

How do we respond to such an apparently simple wonderment? Not only does the obvious "yes" or "no" dichotomized axis require attention, but there may also be more. A situational axis, a consequential axis, a personal congruence axis, and a reciprocal axis may also exist. Some of these axes are similar to one another, but each contains a slightly different look at choices. Perhaps when each of these axes are automatically considered before adopting a behavior or taking a position, we are on the track of intellectual consistency. And intellectual consistency is a powerful perceptual tool. If we are not able to consider the multidimensionality of the choices we encounter in the arc of our living, we are constrained from exercising the fullest freedom of our individual creativity. We will be haunted by the "hobgoblins" of intellectual inconsistency.

Quickly, because we are moving away from our expert informant Dr. Myers, and into the personal observations of your instructor. I'll forge ahead this time to finish up on it. I'll try not to do it again.

The concept of a situational axis is concerned with under what conditions the considered answer-choice is appropriate. An obvious for instance would be, is it okay to

hit people? No. Right? We all know that. We teach our children not to hit from the earliest age. While hitting a person is not generally a good behavioral answer to most situations, under certain conditions it may be the only answer that would save your life, or the life of someone in your family, or even win a football game. Not that you would consider hitting someone in every situation, but rather you would know that such a response is available as an appropriate behavior under situational circumstances. Understanding the range of behavioral possibility is important. It reveals, and makes available to you, options along a continuum of possible behavior. Options strengthen our ability to interact with ourselves and with the world around us.

The consequential axis within our conceived intellectually consistent person would represent the possible results of our positions and our actions. If I cheat on the exam, I will pass. I will also be a cheater. What effect will being a cheater have on my sense of self, my integrity, my strength, my overall success as a person? I've already talked myself out of cheating and I haven't even considered that I might get caught. If I have sex with this person what are the consequences? Will there be emotional or psychological risk for either of us, or for others we might be involved with? What outcomes are possible? Once we expand the question beyond "Am I going to get lucky?", the depth of our experience of life expands also.

What I call the congruence axis is from a concept developed by a brilliant psychologist who we will study in a few weeks. Carl Rogers (1961) proposed congruence as an alignment between a person's experience, their awareness of their experience, and their communication of their experience. For example, if in conversation with my girlfriend, my voice is rising, my speech becomes more pressured and I am obviously

angry, and she says "Don't get angry." I might yell back at her, "I'm not angry, I just want you to understand me." Has this happened to anyone else in the room? In the example, I am simply not being congruent. It was obvious to her that I was angry, but I was only aware of trying to get her to see that I was right and she was wrong. I was unaware of my actual experience. My communication denied my actual experience.

Needless to say, this would be an argument I would consistently lose with my girlfriend. Although I doubt she would be around very long if I yelled at her in conversation. I know I wouldn't hang around someone who yelled at me more than once. So can we be intellectually consistent when we are out of congruence? Will our answers to any question during a time of incongruence be accurate?

If our communication does not match our awareness, or if our awareness does not match our experience, we are either being manipulative, defensive, or simply unaware. None of these states is a positive, healthy place to reside psychologically or emotionally. When faced with life's often confusing options, considering our personal congruence is another powerful tool in our development of intellectual flourishing.

The reciprocal axis is another cognitive process exercise that can either weaken or strengthen our movement toward intellectual mastery, or consistency. It might more accurately be referred to as the goose and gander axis. In other words, do we hold that what is good for one is good for the other? Reciprocal consideration is one more way to stretch open our minds. As we approach questions of behavior, are we considering ourselves as different from others, or do we see ourselves of equal value operating within the same reality as others? If I give myself permission to lie and cheat on my spouse, do I give her permission to lie and cheat on me? If I give myself permission to engage in petty

theft from an employer, do I give permission to others to steal from me? If it is good for the goose, is it good for the gander?

Intellectual consistency is about seeing life dimensionally and behaving according to our most complete awareness. It is effort, developing and following this sort of axial procedure as we approach every question we encounter. It is also a great source of personal power. Okay, I'm getting off my little soapbox now. Any questions?

Comments?

(Respond to class discussion.)

Back to David Myers and his technique of comparing downward to make yourself feel better. The intellectually consistent person would of course say, I'm better off than these folks, but I'm worse off than these others. Once we compare downward, if we are awake, we must also compare upward. That means there are smarter, funnier, more talented, prettier people who are better lovers, have better jobs, go to better schools, and live in nicer houses than we do. So I'm not sure about the effectiveness of this comparison process. If what Myers wants us to do is to count our blessings, I understand. Maybe that's what he's saying. See the good things that you have and are. That I agree with. What do you think? You guys have read Myers. Is that what he's saying?

(Discuss. Possible points include how advertising sells products by having people compare "upward." "If I buy that new car, I'll be a hit with the babes.")

Counting our blessings seems to be a healthy practice that Myers endorses. He includes the old fable of a man walking down a street a street complaining that his shoes were old and out of style, when he passes a man walking very slowly and carefully because he had no shoes. The first man realizes his fortune and says to himself, "at least I

have shoes, I should count my blessings.” The shoeless man complains bitterly to himself as he is passed by the man with shoes, “I’m so low I don’t even have shoes, how could my life be any worse?” The shoeless man continues down the street and sees a man swinging himself along on crutches because he has no feet. The shoeless man feels immediately better about his circumstance. He counted his blessings.

Myers quotes Shakespeare’s Hamlet to support his point here: “There is nothing good or bad, but thinking makes it so” (1992, p. 62).

Can everything be a blessing if we choose to see it as such? The values we assign to the experiences of our lives make up the sum of an individual’s state of mental satisfaction. Remember our previous assignment of counting positive and negative emotions? A wonderful story included in The Pursuit of Happiness illustrates this concept of. the way we interpret a situation relates to our satisfaction with it. This is the story of how a rabbi helped to make a troubled man happy.

A farmer seeks a rabbi’s counsel because his wife nags him, his children fight, and his surroundings are in chaos. The rabbi says, “Move all of your chickens into the house.” The farmer does so but returns to the rabbi because the chaos and upset have gotten worse in his house. The rabbi says, “Keep the chickens as they are but move the milk cow into the house.” The farmer does as he is instructed and the calamity in his house becomes unimaginable. He returns to the rabbi. The rabbi says, “Today you will move your horse into the house.” The farmer has his doubts, but trusts the rabbi, and he does as he’s bidden. His household becomes even worse and he becomes fearful and upset nearly to the point of psychosis as he returns to the rabbi once again. The rabbi says, “Now we’re getting somewhere. Go home and remove all the animals from your

house and clean your house completely.” The farmer does as he’s told and he returns to report to the rabbi, “With the animals gone we are a family again. We are so calm and peaceful. How can I thank you for all that you’ve done?” The rabbi only smiles (Taylor, 1989, pp. 167-168).

This story reminds me of another bit of doggerel my father used to sing in full Irish brogue. He used it to illustrate the same point as the rabbi made, I think. I’ll recite it now, but I’m not going to try the brogue.

Oh I like to hit myself on the head with a hammer
 Right on the very top
 It may sound like a foolish thing to do
 But it feels so good when I stop. (Unknown)

A further comment on satisfying the mind in the midst of life, included by Myers comes from Abraham Maslow. Maslow first tells us something and then asks us something: “All one has to do is go to the hospital and hear all the blessings people never knew were blessings; being able to urinate, sleep on your side, scratch an itch, etc. Could this exercise in deprivation educate us faster about gratitude for all of our blessings?” (Maslow, 1972, p. 108).

What about all this? The man with old shoes? The farmer and the rabbi? The ability to urinate?

(Discuss fully)

Our criticism earlier of the dangers of downward comparisons seem to have occurred to Dr. Myers also. He concludes this section on the satisfied mind with a cautionary recipe: “Strive to restrain our unrealistic expectations, go out of your way to experience the reminders of the blessings in your life, make your goals short-term and sensible, choose comparisons that will breed gratitude rather than envy” (1992, p. 67).

We're late with our break. Let's take 10 and then we'll wrap up with a short assessment.

(Break)

Class Exercise – Count Your Blessings

Psychologists Jennifer Crocker and Lisa Gallo (1985) from SUNY at Buffalo created a study to test the wisdom of that old song, "Count Your Blessings One By One." The way we're going to do this is create two groups in class. You'll stay in your seats for this, but let's count off: One, two. One, two. One, two. Got it? We want to end up with half the class being "1"s and have the class being "2"s.

(Class counts off.)

Good. Now, this is an experiment so you should all approach it with a sense of integrity. Do what is asked of you as accurately as you can. Report what is asked of you as accurately as you can. You are scientists participating in an actual experiment. Bring your best focus to the performance of this task. Okay?

Now I'll give a handout to the "1"s, and I'll give a different handout to the "2"s. When you are done bring your work product up to my desk. When you've done that, you're free. You can go. I'll see you all next week. Check your syllabus for homework.

Handout for "Two"s
(from Crocker & Gallo, 1985)

Complete the following sentence five times:

I wish I were _____

I wish I were _____

I wish I were _____

I wish I were _____

I wish I were _____

Please complete the following sentence by circling the best available answer provided.

At this moment I feel: a) terrible. b) not so good. c) good. d) really good. e) fabulous.
about my life.

Handout for "One"s
(from Crocker & Gallo, 1985)

Complete the following sentence five times

I'm glad I'm not a _____

I'm glad I'm not a _____

I'm glad I'm not a _____

I'm glad I'm not a _____

I'm glad I'm not a _____

Please complete the following sentence by circling the best available answer provided.

At this moment I feel: a) terrible, b) not so good, c) good, d) really good, e) fabulous.
about my life.

Class 11

Interactive attendance

Lecture: Traits of Happy People

From David Myers (1992), The Pursuit of Happiness

Good morning. Today I'll do some talking, we'll do some exercises together, and by the end of the day we should know something about what makes happy people happy. We'll look at the basic traits of happy people according to our happiness guru David Myers. We are almost through The Pursuit of Happiness so I'm sure you've all been doing the reading and will be able to ace a comprehensive quiz on it next class.

Questions? Does anyone have something they just have to say before we begin?

(The students will likely be in an uneasy state of shock when hearing about a "comprehensive quiz" for the first time. Someone will likely voice the group's concern.)

Not to worry. Be happy. I was playing with you a little bit about the quiz. just wanted to get your attention. Next class you will do an assignment in class that will be turned in and serve as a mid-term for this first part of our semester. It will be open notes and open book. I will present you with a question that will be on the board when you come in to the classroom. Your task will be to respond to the question thoroughly. Shouldn't take more than 3 or 4 pages. Don't worry about it, but do review your notes and Myers' book and all the reading assignments that you've been given so far. Make sure to bring all the handouts you've been given thus far. Questions?

(Respond to questions, calm anxieties, and bring humor and enthusiasm for the material back into the room.)

Okay. Look around the room. How many of us look like we are happy people? How would we know? What is happy? We've looked, with Dr. Myers as our guide, at the demographics of happiness and the roles of health, wealth, gender, and age as they relate to well-being. Now let's look at the elemental traits that are found to be common to happy people. Myers cites Paul Costa, a psychologist with the National Institute on Aging, who tell us that personal well-being is primarily influenced by enduring character traits (1987). This means that while demographics are not significant variables in who is happy, disposition certainly is. A person with a happy disposition will be able to recover from ills and setbacks more readily than a person who does not. What makes up a happy disposition?

The best predictor of behavior is past behavior. The best predictor of whether a person will behave in a violent fashion is whether that person has behaved violently in the past. The best predictor of a student's grades is not test scores, but rather the student's past grades. Likewise, the best predictor of an employee's job performance is not, according to Myers (1992, p. 104) "an interviewer's intuition," but the employee's past job performance. What then might help us in predicting a person's well-being in the future? Of course, their level of well-being in the past. Myers refers to a University of California at Berkeley longitudinal study begun in the 1920s. It tracked teenaged boys for 50 years. What the researchers found was a stability of emotion across the life span (p.106). Simply put, the researchers discovered that cheerful teenagers turned into cheerful adults. Psychological and emotional states can be changed. Character traits can be modified, but without conscious effort to change we are essentially what we have been.

This is not to say that those of us not blessed with a sunny disposition are condemned to live our lives in gloom. Before we get into what can be changed and how to do it, let's look at who these happy people are. Myers asks: "Who are these people who stay basically up despite life's downs? Why, for them, is the balance point between opposing emotions set at a more positive level than for others?" (1992, p. 106).

What matters most, according to Myers, are four traits: self-esteem, sense of personal control, optimism, and extraversion.

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem has been one of the most written about and researched topics in the behavioral sciences. From 1980 to 1990, thousands of scholarly articles appeared every year. By 1990, 4,000 articles per year were being published on the "roots and fruits of one's sense of self" (Myers, 1992, p. 108). Results from all that work demonstrate something that likely is not a surprise, namely that happy people like themselves. Hans Strupp (1982), a psychologist from Vanderbilt University, describes the negative opposite of positive self-esteem.

...as soon as one listens to a patient's story one finds unhappiness, frustration, and despair which find expression in diverse forms of pathology including somatoform symptoms, neurotic symptoms and maladaptive character styles...basic to all these difficulties are impairment in self-acceptance and self-esteem. (quoted in Myers, 1992, p. 108)

When our self-esteem is threatened we become defensive. How does that play out in real-life behavior? Robert Cialdini and Kenneth Richardson (1980) at Arizona State University asked students on their campus to participate in a 5-minute "creativity test." Some of the students were scored and told "You have scored relatively low." Other students were scored and told they "scored relatively high." Then each group was asked

evaluative questions about a rival school, the University of Arizona. The question the researchers were looking at was whether the students' sense of failure on the "creativity test" would affect how they would rate their rival school? It did. Those who had "scored relatively low" gave higher ratings to their own school and lower ratings to their rival school. They put down the other school when their self-esteem was threatened. Those whose self-esteem wasn't threatened did not denigrate the other school.

A study of English-speaking Canadians by Meindl and Lerner (1984) gave subjects a humiliating experience – accidentally knocking over a stack of someone's ordered computer cards, which had been rigged to fall when the subject pulled out a chair to sit down. With the subject's self-esteem temporarily wounded, they responded to questions about French-speaking Canadians with increased hostility.

Myers makes the point that when self-esteem is wounded by feelings of humiliation, one becomes more hostile. When self-esteem is wounded by feelings of insecurity, one becomes harshly judgmental of others.

It also turns out that there is a self-serving bias built into the structure of an individual's self-esteem. We accept more responsibility for good deeds than bad. Our stories often describe responsibility for our successes more readily and fully than for our failures. According to Myers, we tend to credit our prowess for victories and cite bad breaks or the actions of others for our defeats (1992, p.111). We say, "What have I done to deserve this?" for our failures. We don't usually ask that same question when success finds us. Is that true?

Responsibility Exercise

Let's do a little exercise here and see what we find. This is a dyad exercise, so find a partner. You know the drill. Go ahead, you can move to be with someone especially chosen or stay put and turn to the person next to you. When you settle in with a partner, decide which of you will be "A" and which "B." Okay? Are you all partnered up and "A"s and "B"s? Good. "A"s will go first.

"A"s, think of a time or a situation wherein something good happened to you. Describe it to your partner in such a way that makes you completely responsible for everything positive that occurred. In other words, take full and complete credit for everything good that happened to you. You must do this in a way that "sells" your partner on the truth of your story. Partners may ask questions. After 3 minutes, time will be called and it will be "B"s turn to tell their story to "A"s. You guys understand what we're doing? Great, let's go. "A"s, take it away.

(After 3 minutes)

Stop. Everybody take a breath. Okay, "B"s, now it's your turn. Start telling your story of a good thing that you were completely responsible for. Begin.

(After 3 minutes)

Stop. Okay. Let's talk about that. How did this feel? How was it different telling versus listening? What made a story believable? What made a story sound suspect? How did it feel to take responsibility for your own success?

(Discuss fully with class their experience of the process.)

Well, that was good. We aren't done yet. Let us take a different tack. "A"s, let's start with you again. Return to the same story but with a difference. Tell the story from

the point of view that you had nothing to do with your success. Explain how everything that happened was beyond your control. Got it? No? Okay. Your job this time is to tell the same story you told before, only now you are going to take no credit for the success. You will attribute the success to other factors and people. And you must sell it to your partner. Make your partner believe it. Okay? Got it? Good. "A"s begin.

(After 3 minutes)

Stop. It's time for "B"s to turn it around. Ready "B"s? Okay. Begin.

(After 3 minutes)

Stop. Let's talk. How was this? What was the difference for the tellers? The listeners? Was it easier to take credit? Did giving away credit feel foreign? Comfortable?

(Discuss fully)

(Break)

Lecture (resume)

This self-assessment of responsibility provides one of the great smiles of statistical psychology. Ninety percent of us rate ourselves as better than average. We consider ourselves more ethical, and generally superior to our peers. Myers quotes Garrison Keillor's Lake Wobegone monologue (1985) where "all the men are good looking, all the females strong, and all the children above average" (Myers, 1992, p. 111).

Self-serving perceptions underlie conflicts ranging from the arms race to marital misery. Compared to happily married people, unhappy couples exhibit far greater self-serving bias by blaming the partner when problems arise. In one survey, divorcing people were ten times more likely to blame the spouse for the breakup than to blame themselves. (Myers, 1992, p. 112)

Self-serving bias seems to be the air most of us breathe. Do we feel inferior when we compare ourselves to others who have more money, better looks, more success? Does

that comparison lower our self-esteem? Lowered self-esteem leads to harsh judgmentalism. Harsh judgmentalism can lead to an assortment of negative consequences including: conflict and physical danger, anxiety, depression, loss of romantic relationship, and estrangement from family. One adaptive response to these consequences is to reinforce our self-esteem through the acquisition of positive illusions. Positive self-illusions protect us from anxiety and depression, and help us to sustain our mental and physical health.

This view is described by University of Washington psychologist, Jonathon Brown (1991), as "...modest self-enhancing illusions. Like Japanese rail trains we function optimally when riding high, just off the rails. Not so high that we gyrate and crash, yet not so in touch that we grind to a halt" (quoted in Myers, 1992, p. 112).

Does this mean that reality doesn't really suck, it grinds? Sorry I couldn't pass that one up. Psychologists Robert Raskin and Jill Novacek (1991) feel the need to refine our concepts of self-esteem. Currently they see self-esteem being produced as a defensive construct. They would like to see self-esteem clearly understood as and facilitated as a matter of homeostatic health. Generally, the defensive self-esteem these psychologists describe is built on deficiency. It is a self-esteem that hungers for validating approval and which may consciously or unconsciously develop a self-esteem that fulfills an individual's grandiose self-ideal. This "defensive self-esteem" maintains itself by managing the impressions the individual creates, and by denying threats and pain. The contrast is to:

...a healthier self-esteem that is positive but realistic. Because it is based on the genuine achievement of realistic ideals, and on feeling accepted for what and who one is – tainted perhaps by the positive biases that pervade happy outlooks –

healthy self-esteem provides a less fragile foundation for enduring joy. (Myers, 1992, p. 113)

Does this make sense? How do you respond to these ideas?

(Discuss.)

Sense of Personal Control

Myers' next trait that happy people have is a sense of personal control in their life. He quotes George Bernard Shaw's Don Juan in Hell: "Hell is to drift – Heaven is to steer" (Myers, 1992, p. 113).

Angus Campbell from the University of Michigan after reviewing the available literature argues, "Having a strong sense of controlling one's life is a more dependable predictor of well-being than any other objectively studied condition" (1981, p. 237).

Happy people believe they choose their destinies. They operate from an internal locus of control. What does locus mean? Right, location. Happy people have an inner sense of power. People who feel that their lives operate from an external locus of control believe that other people and outside circumstances control their destinies. This self-view is not a powerful one. It sounds helpless doesn't it?

When animals or humans feel a lack of control over their lives, the result is a paralysis of will, passive resignation, inertness, and apathy. Loss of control eventuates low morale, greater experience of stress, reduced health, and poverty. Think about political systems. What have you learned about how communism operated and why it failed? Think about how democracy has operated and thrived. These two social systems illustrate this point beautifully. In communism the state had complete control over the individual's life. All of the negative qualities we just listed were abundant in the lives of individuals living in a communist state. Contrast to democracy where options create

opportunity, putting control for the circumstances of one's life in one's own hands. We will spend a week or two on this topic later in the semester when we look at Martin Seligman's work on Learned Helplessness.

Your homework for the next week is to pay attention to whether you are the captain of your destiny or just a passenger along for the ride.

Optimism

Myers' third trait of happy people is optimism. What is optimism? Right, seeing the glass half-full instead of half-empty. Ronald Inglehart (1990), remember him, the psychologist who surveyed Europeans to determine the demographics of their happiness? He found in his research that countries (e.g., France), where distress and cynicism prevail, life satisfaction and happiness are minimized. Health too is compromised. Through blood tests we are able to measure the strength of our immune functions and link that information to an individual's surveyed sense of well-being. Hundreds of such studies have shown that pessimism breeds vulnerability to disease while happiness increases immune function.

Norman Vincent Peale is regarded as the father of modern positive thinking. His 1952 best selling book, The Power of Positive Thinking, has influenced two generations now of salespeople and athletic coaches. His philosophy was simple: Positive thinking puts one in the best position to receive positive results. The converse also holds true in Dr. Peale's view. Negative thinking is generally associated with negative results. Myers quotes the ancient Roman Virgil, from The Aeneid: "They can because they think they can" (1992, p. 118).

The caution here, and writ large, is to be on guard against Pollyannaism, otherwise known as the perils of unrealism. Do you understand Pollyannaism? It's those folks who, in the face of desperate circumstance, pretend that everything is just wonderful. It is optimism in the unhealthy extreme. Myers warns us that the actual "...recipe for well-being is not positive or negative but a mixture of ample optimism, a dash of pessimism to prevent complacency, and enough realism to discriminate what we can and cannot control" (1992, p. 119).

Extraversion

Myers' final trait, extraversion, is a simple recognition that happy people are outgoing. In every study that Myers reviewed, he found that extraverted people were more pleasant and joy-filled than isolated introverts (1992, p.120). Belonging to a social group is long established and accepted as a basic human need. Have we done Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs yet? No? We will. We'll talk about this basic human social need.

Robert Emmons and Ed Diener (1985) of the University of Illinois studied students and then restudied them four years later as alumni, they found that extraverts had been more successful in their lives. Compared to introverts, more extraverts got married, found satisfying employment, and had more close friends.(

Why is this? What do you think? Of course. Extraverts are more involved with people. They interact in a greater circle of friends and take part in more social activity. There is more affection and social support for them to take advantage of. Social support, according to Myers (p. 121) is "an important well spring of well being."

Are we out of time? Okay, well we'll have to call it a day before we get to the most important part of the lecture. We haven't found out yet what to do if we take stock

of ourselves and realize that we are deficient in Myers' traits. How do we change? Can we change? Or are we condemned to a life of unhappiness? Be optimistic. There is certainly hope, as well as behavioral technology to get us moved from the "low self-esteem, external locus of control, pessimistic, isolation" side of the ledger. Honest. I'm naturally optimistic, but constitutionally deficient in every other of Myers' traits. And I'm doing fine. So don't fret if you see yourself on the unhappy side of the trait axis right now. You're going to be okay. Really.

Next class I'll spend the first 15 minutes or so with what to do about trait deficiency, and then you guys can do your tri-term paper. I'll have several questions on the board from areas that we've covered so far. Your job will be to choose one of the questions and respond from your experience, class notes, and reading assignments. Two or three pages will be sufficient, four is a maximum. It will be open book and open notes. Don't worry, be happy. Oh, one last thing. Don't you dare cut next class. There will be no makeup exams. If you miss it, you're in deep stuff. I know that emergencies occur, but you had better come up with a brilliant one if you aren't here. Got that? Good. Questions? Okay. Be good to yourselves and to each other.

Class 12Midterm (90 minutes)

Instructions: Choose one of the four questions on the board today and respond as completely as you can to it. For those of you who like guidelines, the minimum length of the paper is two pages. The maximum length is four pages. Neatness counts. If your instructor can't read what you write, you will not get a passing grade. Please make your work legible. You may use your books, handouts, notes, or a menu from the local delicatessen. That's up to you. Your instructor will generally look for how well you have understood the material and how well you are able to relate it to your own experience and viewpoint. Make sure that your name is on your work when you turn it in. When you have finished, you are free to leave. Be as quiet as you can when you do leave if others are still working on their paper.

Okay? Any paralyzing test anxiety in the room? Good. You are a wonderful group. and everyone one of you will do well on this exercise.

Four questions on the board:

1. Compare yourself to the Positive Psychology Network's three concepts of: Positive Experience - The Positive Individual - The Positive Personality.
2. Explain Plato's "Allegory of the Cave" as it may relate to everyday life here in Santa Clara County.
3. Remembering the Rabbi's treatment of the Farmer's problem: What stories did your family tell that gave you understanding about life? Tell the story and what it has meant to you.

4. What was your response to learning about Myers' "Demographics of Happiness" and "Traits of Happy People"? Were you surprised by any of the material? Are you curious about other demographics or traits that may have been left out? Do you agree with Myers and the researchers he cites?

Class 13

Discuss midterm, issues, concerns, first part of course, and outline remaining semester (15 minutes).

Class Study Exercise (30 minutes)

Remember the handouts you completed about a week ago? “I’m glad I’m not a blank” and “I wish I were a blank.” You also circled one of five choices that best expressed how you felt about your life in that moment. Good, I see nods of recognition and memories struggling to engage. Okay. We are going to score them now and see how our results matched up with Crocker and Gallo’s from State University New York at Buffalo. I have the surveys that you guys turned in right here.

What was the survey trying to capture? We were talking, at the time, about comparing ourselves upward and downward. In this survey we wanted to see how the students in the room felt about their lives immediately after comparing themselves either upward or downward. “I wish I were _____” is an upward comparison. In it the subject is asked to wish to be something s/he is not. I wish I were a hip hop star, or a pro baseball player, or a wealthy person, or an accomplished scientist, or whatever. The theme is that I am something currently and I wish I was something else.

The other handout contained what? Right. “I’m glad I’m not a _____” which is a downward comparison. I am something now and I’m glad I’m not some other thing. This establishes that you are more content being what you are than what the other choices on the table might be. Let’s add these scores up and see what we get. Gallo and Crocker found that people felt better about themselves when they compared downward.

We need four volunteers, to work in pairs. Let's find four folks who haven't been up to the board yet. Let's spread the work around. Yeah, Rita, come on down. Okay, and Sunny. You two will be the "I wish I were a _____" team. And Paul and Jano, you'll be the "I'm glad I'm not a _____" team. Choose which of you wants to write on the board, and which wants to read aloud. Sunny and Paul, okay you guys got the chalk. Both of you pick a board, and then put up along the top of your board: A, B, C, D, E, and then draw lines down between each letter to create five separate columns. Good. Rita and Jano, your job is to read the letters that were circled on your survey sheets. Take turns so that Rita will call out one circled letter, Sunny will put a stroke mark under the corresponding letter to count it, and then Jano will do the same for Paul. Do we have it? What we want to end up with is the total numbers of each circled letter on the two surveys. So we'll know how many "A"s, how many "B"s, and so on for each of the surveys. Remember, the letters represent whether we felt terrible, not so good, good, really good, or fabulous, after we'd performed either upward or downward comparisons. Questions about what we're doing?

(Go over set up and instructions until everyone has them.)

Great let's start adding them up. You start Rita, and then Jano. Okay? Good. Go.

(Process continues until all letters are counted.)

Good. Now, since the "A" represented "terrible" and "E" represented "fabulous," let's assign a "1" to each "A," "2" to each "B," "3" to each "C," "4" to each "D," and "5" to each "E." Okay. Good. Let's add up all the numerical value of our letters now. For our upward comparison survey statement, "I wish I were a _____," we have: 0 "fabulous" (0×5 points = 0), 3 "really good" (3×4 points = 12), 7 "good" (7×3 points = 21), 4

“not so good” (4 x 2 points = 8), and 1 “terrible” (1 x 1 point = 1). What’s the total? 42.

What’s the Mean? $42/15 = 2.8$.

Let’s do it for the downward comparison survey statement, “I’m glad I’m not a _____.” 2 “fabulous” (2 x 5 = 10), 5 “really good” (5 x 4 = 20), 6 “good” (6 x 3 = 18), 2 “not so good” (2 x 2 = 8), and 0 “terrible.” What’s the total? 56. What’s the Mean? $56/15 = 3.7$. Is that right? We concurred with the SUNY study’s findings. Our sample was smaller, but, like the other study, it was composed of college students. What do we learn from this?

(Discuss fully. Points may include: comparing downward makes us feel better about ourselves / the samples or survey may be somehow flawed.)

Dyad Exercise: Self-rating the Four Traits of Happy People (20 minutes)

Let’s keep this in mind as go forward. When we left off last week, we had identified the four traits of happy people according to Myers. Today we are going to do the dyad thing again. Look around the room and nonverbally find a partner. Pack up your bags and move next to each other. Give yourselves a little space from your neighbors so you can talk comfortably. Good. I’ve written on the board the four traits: self-esteem, sense of personal control, optimism, and extraversion. In conversation with your partner I’d like you to rate yourself relative to each of the four traits. This is informal and for your own information. Use a 1 through 5 scoring system. 1 being absent of the trait, 3 being moderately possessed of the trait, and 5 being the complete embodiment of the trait. Everyone have the task? Good. We’ll stop in 15 minutes and take a break. When we come back from break we’ll talk about what we can do if we have deficiency in any of the traits. Go.

Break (10 minutes)

Lecture: Trait Deficiency (15 minutes)

From David Myers (1992), The Pursuit of Happiness

We've looked at our own relationship to the traits, and we've seen what traits combine in those people who are happy and satisfied with life. Self-esteem, optimism, personal control, extraversion. What do we do? Those of us to whom these traits do not come naturally? Are we destined for a life of unhappiness and negative outcomes? NO! Emphatically the answer is NO!

What do we do? How do we get beyond our trait deficiencies? One method is highly effective: Fake it. Act as if. Pretend self-esteem, feign optimism, simulate outgoingness, choose to perform as if you are in control of your life. By acting as if we are the embodiment of those traits in which we are deficient, we actually, gradually, lose the deficiencies: "...making our way into this new thinking may feel phony, but that will pass" (Myers, 1992, p. 125).

His suggestion is to go ahead and be positive, entertain a healthy self-esteem, feel in control of our lives, present an optimistic, outgoing, sunny disposition. In other words, fake it till you make it. By pretending and through the emulation of positive states, we are actually closer to the experience. If we are pretending to be up, at the every least, in those moments we aren't being down. We are engaged in the act and actions of happiness even if the organic experience is not authentically joyful. By not acting downtrodden we open the door of emotional opportunity. We give ourselves a chance to experience a more positive state. What do you think about this?

(Discuss until class is onboard.)

Over one hundred years ago, William James said the same thing. Who was William James?

(Give some background – American-theology-philosophy-psychology.)

James makes the way clear for us. “If we wish to conquer undesirable emotional tendencies in ourselves...we must assiduously, and in the first instance, cold-bloodedly, go through the outward motions of these contrary dispositions we prefer to cultivate” (quoted in Myers, 1992, p. 126).

If we do not feel optimistic, we must nonetheless speak its name. If we do not possess positive self-esteem, we must nonetheless begin to love ourselves. If we are not in control of our life’s circumstance, we must find ways to be. And if we are not outgoing socially, we must yet rise from our seat of isolation and find someone and some others to smile with and talk with. These are the beginnings of our freedom.

Myers says the predispositions we bring into the world do leave room for nurture’s influence, and for our own conscious actions. Actions we choose to take leave a residue of that action inside of us. Each time we act, we amplify the underlying idea or tendency. Myers believes that “we can act our way into a new way of thinking as easy as it is for us to think ourselves into a new way of acting” (1992, p. 123).

Going through the motions can actually trigger the emotions. That what actors have always relied on.

(Discuss until class period ends. Points might include the importance of the people and the relationships in your life.)

Your homework is to continue to assess where you are in your lives relative to the Four Traits of Happy People. For the time being, don’t make any sudden changes. Just

look. Pay attention to where you are and how you are in your daily routines. Keep checking yourselves out. Okay? Good. Listen to each other, help each other.

Class 14

Morning check-in (10 minutes)

Lecture – Introduction to Flow, The Psychology of Optimal Experience by Mihali

Csikzentmihalyi (1991)

We begin our view toward the concept of optimal functioning with Csikzentmihalyi's paraphrasing Aristotle. "More than anything else men and women seek happiness. Every other goal is valued only because we expect that it will make us happy" (Csikzentmihalyi, 1991, p.1).

Is that true? Are we directed toward our goals out of a practice of valuing happiness more than anything else? What do you think?

(Discuss in full students' perspective on what motivates us.)

Before we look at Flow, how about someone pronouncing the author's name for us. That's right, how do we pronounce Mihaly Csikzentmihalyi?

(Discussion – light-hearted, respectful, but nonetheless anchoring the name of this important psychologist into the students' consciousness.)

So now we have it. Eh? So Mihaly Csikzentmihalyi is pronounced: Me – Hi Chick-Sent- Me – Hi. Professor Csikzentmihalyi, from the University of Chicago, suggests we consider several things as we study this material. The first thing he tells us is that:

Happiness is not something that happens to us. It is not the result of good fortune or random chance. It is not something that money can buy or power command. It does not depend on outside events, but rather on how we interpret them. Happiness in fact, is a condition that must be prepared for, cultivated, and defended privately by each person.

People who learn to control their inner experience will be able to determine the quality of their lives, which is as close as any of us can come to being happy. (Csikzentmihalyi, 1991, p. 3)

Victor Frankl, an Austrian psychologist, is quoted by Csikzentmihalyi from Man's Search for Meaning (1963): "Don't aim at success, the more you aim at it and make it a target, the more you are going to miss it. For success, like happiness, cannot be pursued; it must ensue...as the unintended side-effect of one's personal dedication to a course greater than oneself" (1991, p. 3).

Csikzentmihalyi suggests that the finest moments in our lives are not passive and relaxed, but when we're pushed (body or mind) to the limit in a "... voluntary effort to accomplish something worthwhile and difficult....Optimal experience is something we make happen" (Csikzentmihalyi, 1991, p. 4). It is through this participation in stretching ourselves, in willing ourselves to growth, that we are able to determine the content and quality of our lives.

What do we think about this mystical-sounding wisdom? How does this guy know what he's talking about? Did he go to a meditation class one day and all this came to him in a vision?

(Entertain comments, discuss.)

Csikzentmihalyi had an interest in the question of how people felt when they most enjoyed themselves, and why? His first studies consisted of a "few hundred experts" (1991) such as artists, athletes, surgeons, chess masters and musicians. He chose people from these professions because he saw them as people who were engaged in exactly what they enjoyed doing. He collected the accounts of his expert subjects and formulated a theory of optimal experience he called flow. He defined it as: "...the state in which

people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it” (p. 4).

Professor C. (Csikzentmihalyi) actually developed a plan to measure an individual’s subjective experience. At first, he and his colleagues gathered data through interviews and questionnaires. Over time they developed a new method for measuring the quality of subjective experience. His technique, the Experience Sampling Method, asked people to wear an electronic pager for a week and record what they were feeling and what they were thinking each time the pagers went off. The participants were paged randomly eight times a day. The information he gathered became, “...a running record, a written film clip of his or her (respondents) life made up of selections from its representative moments” (1991, p. 4). More than 100,000 such data sets had been collected by the time Csikzentmihalyi’s Flow was published in 1991. Researchers from Canada, the United States, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Australia have joined in the study, so the data base continues to grow.

Csikzentmihalyi has built this work on the premise that if we can understand how subjective states are shaped, then we can master them.

“Everything we experience – joy or pain, interest or boredom – is represented in the mind as information. If we are able to control this information we can decide what our lives will be like....The optimal state of inner experience is one in which there is order in consciousness. This happens when psychic energy – or attention – is invested in realistic goals, and when skills match the opportunity for action. The pursuit of a goal brings order in awareness because the person must concentrate on attention on the task at hand and momentarily forget everything else....A person who has achieved control over psychic energy and has invested it in consciously chosen goals cannot help but grow into a more complex human being. By stretching skills, reaching toward higher challenges, such a person becomes an increasingly extraordinary individual. (Csikzentmihalyi, 1991, p. 6)

(Discussion: the concept of flow, the power and results of goal directed behavior, and whatever else the class associates to the topic.)

Csikszentmihalyi argues that the primary reason that it is so hard for us to find happiness is simply that the universe was intended for that purpose. This reality produces frustration which becomes compounded by our unconscious adherence to a Maslowian needs structure. Whenever some of our needs are met we immediately want more. Professor C. refers to this condition as "chronic dissatisfaction" standing in the way of our contented fulfillment. "Only direct control of experience, the ability to derive moment-by-moment enjoyment from everything we do, can overcome the obstacles to fulfillment" (1991, p. 8).

Above the Temple at Delphi the oracle's ancient wisdom contained two words: Know Thyself. Csikszentmihalyi calls this the simple truth – that control of consciousness determines the quality of life. He acknowledges our old friend Aristotle for prefiguring the idea of Flow. Aristotle recognized "virtuous activities of the soul" to primarily involve self-awareness and the features of personal consciousness. For centuries, Christian monastic orders, yoga and Taoism all sought a similar outcome, to: "free inner life from the threat of chaos, on the one hand, and from the rigid conditioning of biological urges on the other, and hence to become independent from social controls that exploit both" (1991, p. 21).

The more recent attempt to free our consciousness from the control of impulses and social mores was psychoanalysis. Herr Freud called the two tyrants that struggle for directorship of the mind the id and superego. He called the first a "servant of the genes" and the second, "society's lackey." He saw both as representing the "Other." In

opposition to these two stands the ego, which “represents the genuine needs of the self connected to the concrete environment” (Freud, 1921, p. 261).

Since people have known for thousands of years the basic truths about what it takes to become free and in control of one’s life, why do we remain so unskilled in the face of our unhappiness? The thinkers and sages of each generation seem to throw down the gauntlet of challenge to their contemporaries. They call on us to become freed from the forces of our inner oppressions, and yet our personal, calamitous realities remain intransigent. Well? Why? Why are we still so helpless in the face of our unhappiness?

(Discuss students’ ideas.)

Csikszentmihalyi suggests two reasons for our lack of progress in mastering the skill of happiness. First, he says, the sort of knowledge or wisdom one needs for emancipating consciousness is not cumulative.

It cannot be condensed into a formula; it cannot be memorized and then routinely applied. Like other complex forms of expertise, such as mature political judgment, or a refined aesthetic sense, it must be earned through trial and error experience by each individual, generation after generation...it is not enough to know how to do it; one must do it, consistently, in the same way as athletes or musicians who must keep practicing what they know in theory....Progress is relatively fast in fields that apply knowledge to the material world, such as physics or genetics. But it is painfully slow when knowledge is to be applied to modify our own habits and desires. (1991, p.21)

That’s his first reason. Does it make sense? Is that why we are still stuck?

Because to become unstuck is a discipline that most of us don’t find value with?

Practicing being self-aware is just too much trouble? Is that it?

(Receive comments.)

The second reason Dr. C. provides us to explain our lack of progress is that the knowledge of how to control consciousness is culturally and temporally specific. He explains:

The wisdom of the mystics, the Sufis, the great yogis, or of the Zen masters might have been excellent in those times and cultures. But when transplanted to contemporary California those systems lose quite a bit of their original power. They contain elements that are specific to their original context, and when accidental components are not distinguished from what is essential, the path to freedom gets overgrown by brambles of meaningless mumbo jumbo. Ritual form wins over substance, and the seeker is back where he [or she] started. (1991, p. 21)

What's he mean by that?

(Discuss accidental components not distinguished from essential, and ritual v. substance.)

Break (10 minutes)

Lecture resumes.

Csikzentmihalyi talks about consciousness as a system representing the world within and without the organism. The purpose of consciousness, he thinks, is to provide information to the organism so it can be evaluated and acted upon by the body. Consciousness is seen as a clearinghouse for, "sensations, perceptions, feelings, and ideas. Without consciousness we'd know what was going on, but respond reflexively, instinctually. With consciousness we can weigh what our senses tell us and act, inventively" (1991, p. 26).

Everything happening in the mind is the result of evolutionary biological behavior seen as electrical changes in the central nervous system. Through the lens of neurochemistry and anatomical structure is not how most of us look at consciousness. We tend to look at consciousness as a phenomenological model. We focus on events –

phenomena – as we interpret and experience them. Csikzentmihalyi explains,

“Consciousness is intentionally ordered information which corresponds to subjectively experienced reality” (p. 26).

We are then selectively perceptual; organisms, allowing only the most parsimonious slice of available data to be received onto the stage of our working consciousness. “[Consciousness] is like a mirror [but] one that selects and actively shapes events and imposes on them a reality of its own. The reflection consciousness provides us is what we call ‘our life’ – the sum of all we have heard, seen, felt, hoped, and suffered from birth to death” (1991, p. 27).

Csikzentmihalyi says that intentionality is the force that keeps the information in our consciousness ordered. Intentions arise whenever we become aware of desiring something or wanting to accomplish something. Intentions act as magnetic fields moving our attention toward some objects and away from others. Intention is neutral. Intention doesn't describe why we are motivated toward some objects and away from others, only that we are.

Consciousness is limited. We can't keep track of too many things concurrently. Thoughts must follow one after another or the process becomes incoherent. For example, while we are thinking about a problem we can't truly be experiencing happiness. Csikzentmihalyi cites the limitations of measured consciousness. The central nervous system is capable of processing, at most, seven undifferentiated bits of information such as sounds, visual stimuli, recognizable nuances of emotion or thought, at one time. The shortest time to discriminate between one set of bits and another is approximately 1/18 of a second. That works out to 126 bits of information per second (7×18), or 7,560 bits per

minutes, almost half a million bits per hour, multiplied by 16 waking hours each day over a 70-year life span, accumulates to 185 billion bits of information in a lifetime (1991, p. 29).

(This is done on board.)

When we consider that this total includes the entirety of our lives – every thought, memory, feeling, and action, it doesn't seem to be all that much. How many of you are awake right now? Good. At least some of you are. Actually most of you are. For those of you following what I am saying, 40 bits of information is being processed each second. Using our 126 bits of information per second, it would be theoretically possible to understand what three people are saying simultaneously. We wouldn't be able to process the tone of their voices or their expressions or wonder about the meaning of their words.

Those of you that aren't putting your attention on the instructor's words are processing at a lower or higher rate depending on if you are drowsily fading away, or doing Kegels and practicing the multiplication tables simultaneously. You don't know what Kegels are? Someone can explain please. Laughter is good. Yah.

Chunking is a term used to describe how we are able to expand the limits of consciousness. Through evolutionary adaptation the central nervous system has learned to put groups of bits information together, "chunking" them so that processing capacity continues to expand. An example of this is driving a car or riding a bicycle. Many of the activities involved in driving and riding become automated for us. When we first are learning those skills, our consciousness is completely engaged with all the mechanical operations and sensory data we are required to process for the safe operation of the vehicles. After we have become proficient through practice, we are able to let go of the

conscious exclusivity of the activity. We are freed, in other words, to be conscious of other things while we are driving or riding.

Considering whether consciousness is an open system or a closed one is a matter for interesting debate, but for most of us it is a dialog without practical implications. We generally operate at well below our processing capacities even though our time is spoken for. Eating and associated tasks related to food consumption takes how much of our time every day?

(Work through this: thinking about food, purchasing it, preparing it, eating it, cleaning up from it, etc.)

Csikzentmihalyi claims that time consumed in eating-related activity is approximately 8% of our waking life. If we lived in the bush, away from civilization, and had to hunt, fish, trap or grow, the tasks related to food consumption would take a great deal more of our time. But for now, here in our classroom, let's figure about 8%. What else takes up our available consciousness?

(Discuss students' perceptions of what other activities engage our consciousness.)

Good. We've identified a lot of what our expert Dr. Csikzentmihalyi has suggested. Bodily functions and hygienic enterprises account for another 7 or 8% of our time. Between eating and physical ablutions, we've gone through about 15% of our available consciousness. In our modern world, most cultures invest approximately 33% of available time in leisure activities. Approximately half of that time is spent on television, a passive, low-processing demand activity. Nearly 50% of our consciousness is expended on eating, hygiene, and leisure. If we add commuting and a day job to this equation, we are just about at 100% capacity. So while we are capable of consciously

processing at 126 bits of information per second and 7,560 bits per minute, most of us are operating at significantly lower rates. Csikzentmihalyi admonishes us to have a care.

“What we allow into our consciousness is extremely important; it is, in fact, what determines the content and quality of life” (1991, p. 30).

The last thing we’re going to cover today is attention. Remember a short while ago we talked about intention. Intention motivates consciousness toward one specific field instead of another, attention focuses available conscious resource on the features and opportunities of that field. Attention is psychic energy. Attention selects the relevant bits of information from the potential millions of bits available at any one moment. Attention retrieves appropriate references from memory to evaluate a present event (such as an errant driver careening toward you on the expressway), and then chooses the appropriate thing to do. The mark of a person in control of his/her consciousness is the ability to focus attention, be oblivious to distractions, to concentrate as long as it takes to achieve a goal, and no longer.

The way we describe personality traits such as extravert, high achiever, paranoid, etc. all refer to specific patterns that people use to structure their attention. Attention is the coin of psychic life. We invest it widely and its return places our lives in the range between misery and joy. Attention determines what will and will not appear in consciousness. Attention, again, is psychic energy. The individual fashion of our self-creation is determined by how we invest this energy. The key to our individual investment strategies is to understand that this energetic attention of ours is under our command and control. Attention may be the single most effective tool in our ongoing task of improving the quality of our experience.

Csikzentmihalyi wants us to see consciousness not as a linear system but as a dynamic one, as attention shapes the self, and is in turn shaped by it.

... the self is in many ways the most important element of consciousness, for it represents symbolically all of consciousness's other contents, as well as the pattern of interrelations...it is a dynamic mental representation we have of the entire system of our goals...experience depends on the way we invest psychic energy on the structure of attention. This in turn, is related to goals and intentions. These processes are connected to each other by the self. (1991, p. 33-34)

(Discuss attention, intention, the self, consciousness and whatever else students need to express.)

The people who are in control of their consciousness usually enjoy the normal course of everyday life. That's a practice we will attempt. That is one choice we each have, to either focus our consciousness, or allow it to be diffuse. Discipline and reverse your consciousness. Use it or diffuse it.

Read Flow again for next class. Make it your intention to pay attention to the moments of your day when you are in Flow. Give someone in your family a little extra love, they need it. See you all next class.

Class 15

Morning interactions and distribute handout: The Flow Model (10 minutes).

(In this process the roll sheet is passed around the class for students to initial the appropriate box by their name and the Flow Model handout is distributed. While this is being performed students are encouraged to talk about anything related to class.)

Review (10 minutes).

We've got a bit of a full day so let's get started. Last class we began to look at the work of Professor Mihali Csikzentmihalyi from the University of Chicago. Pull out your notes and let's get grounded in what we know already from Dr. C.

Antonia, would you please be our board person today. Not bored person. Board person. Thanks. Okay, from your notes: What were some of the concepts from our introduction to Flow?

(On board should be review and discussion of lecture from class 14 – thoughts about optimal functioning, data collection, attention and intention, the self, and consciousness.)

Good work. Thank you Antonia, you have wonderful board presence and superb penpersonship. What you say class? Give it up for Antonia.

(Good-natured applause.)

Lecture: Flow and The Flow Model (from Csikzentmihalyi (30 minutes)

What is psychic entropy?

(Entertain responses.)

It is when the internal order of the self is disrupted. Csikzentmihalyi tells us that this is a condition that allows consciousness to become disordered. It is a disregulation of

the self that interrupts its effectiveness. It occurs when new and threatening information conflicts with our existing intentions and distracts us from completing our goals. When this happens, our attention is diverted toward undesirable objects such as pain, fear, rage, anxiety, and jealousy as our energy becomes ineffective. This disruption in the internal composition of Self compromises our goals as they are perceived in our consciousness. Depending on how central the specific goal is to Self and how severe the threat is to it, a proportional amount of attention will have to be given to it leaving less available psychic energy (or attention) to deal with our remaining goals (1991, p. 37). Can we come up with examples to illustrate this concept?

(Discuss as a neutral, even potentially beneficial condition – allowing reevaluation of the appropriateness of the goal and refocusing of goal directed behavior.)

We begin with the entropy so we can slide into the Flow. The Flow Csikzentmihalyi describes for us is the opposite of psychic entropy. Flow, or the optimal experience, is a condition of order in consciousness. When information coming into awareness is congruent with goals, psychic energy flows effortlessly. There is no need to worry or question adequacy in this state. If one does stop to think about their actions and goals in a state of Flow it's all good,

“...the evidence is encouraging: you are doing all right. The positive feedback strengthens the Self and, more attention is freed to deal with the outer and inner environment. Optimal experience resides in those situations where attention can be freely invested to achieve a person's goals because there is no disorder to straighten out, no threat for the Self to defend against.” (1991, p. 39)

Flow causes the Self to become more complex. Growth from this developing complexity results from two broad psychological processes: differentiation and Integration. Csikzentmihalyi defines differentiation as: “a movement toward uniqueness

as separate from others” (1991, p. 41). His definition for Integration is “the opposite – a union with others, with ideas, and entities beyond Self” (p. 41).

A Complex Self is one that succeeds in combining those opposite tendencies of differentiation and integration. The Self, according to Csikzentmihalyi., becomes more differentiated as a result of the experience of Flow. He attributes this to the fact the when one meets and overcomes a challenge, one feels more capable, accomplished, and skilled. After each experience of Flow, an individual becomes more unique and less predictable. Complexity can be considered negatively, from the perspective of being difficult or confusing.

That may be true, but only if we equate it with differentiation alone. Yet complexity also involves a second dimension – the integration of autonomous parts. A complex engine, for instance, not only has many separate components, each performing a different function, but also demonstrates a high sensitivity because each of the components is in touch with all the others. Without integration, a differentiated system would be a confusing mess... Flow helps to integrate the Self because in that state of deep concentration consciousness is unusually well ordered. (1991, p. 41)

If a Self is not integrated and only differentiated, it is possible that powerful individual accomplishments may occur. The risk is for that Self to become lost in self-absorbed egotism. On the other hand, a person focused exclusively on integration may be securely connected but lack the autonomy to pursue his/her individual path and goals. Dr. C. makes it clear that we need to invest equal amounts of our precious psychic energy into differentiation and integration, so the Self will become truly complex and we may avoid both the selfishness of the only-differentiated, and the conformity of the only-integrated.

There are two more concepts we should look at here: pleasure and enjoyment. When a person needs and receives sleep, food, rest, sex, or pleasure, organismic

homeostasis may be restored and relief from accompanying psychic entropy should follow. But, and this is a big but to notice, psychological growth will not occur as a result of such restoral. Pleasure is a diverting relief from entropy but it does not produce psychological growth. We can and do experience pleasure without investment of psychic energy (electrochemical energy) or effort. Without such energetic investment there is little to induce a variety of brain centers to be electrically stimulated. Without stimulation there is no growth.

Enjoyment comes from investing energy into goals that are new. Enjoyment comes from meeting an expectation, or satisfying a need, and then going beyond what was expected, needed, or imagined. Not necessarily pleasurable in the moment, but often accompanied by a sensation of new development or change. We are more complex after a challenging tennis match or a challenging conversation than we are when our time is passed through activity without challenge. Enjoyment is characterized by motion forward, a feeling of novelty or accomplishment.

Pleasure and enjoyment, what do you think of this difference? Is this your experience? Let's also talk about differentiation and integration. Who will start?

(Discuss.)

Complexity results from investing energy into new goals. A child's concentration while learning is often a real enjoyment. Each instance of learning adds to the complexity and growth of the developing Self. When the institution of formal education is imposed on children the excitement of new mastery often wears out. As the enjoyment of learning is lost it becomes easy to settle into the narrow Self developed in adolescence. The big risk in this case, is losing the experience of enjoyment through learning. If people lose the

enjoyment of learning they can and do become complacent and feel that, "...psychic energy invested in new directions is wasted unless there is a good chance of reaping intrinsic rewards. When that occurs one may end up no longer enjoying life, and pleasure becomes the only source of positive experience" (1991, p. 47).

This situation is the breeding ground for a life of shallow materialism, escapism, and quiet desperation. According to Professor Csikzentmihalyi's model, there are eight elements of enjoyment. These elements have been collected from the sampling surveys in which people reflect on how it feels when their experience is the most positive. During the description of that positive experience, nearly everyone surveyed mentions at least one if not all of the following conditions. Remember the 100,000 people who were paged eight times a day to capture a running record of their experience? That is the research where the following eight elements come from. These conditions support the development and maintenance of Flow (optimal experience).

(On board)

1. The experience usually occurs when we confront tasks we have a chance of completing.
2. We must be able to concentrate on what we are doing.
3. The task must have clear goals.
4. The task must have immediate feedback.
5. One acts with deep but effortless involvement that removes from awareness the worries and frustrations of everyday life.
6. One feels an exercise of control over his/her actions.

7. Concern for self disappears, yet paradoxically the sense of self emerges stronger after the Flow experience is over.

8. Sense of the duration of time is altered – hours pass as minutes and minutes can seem stretched into hours (1991, p. 49).

The combining of these elements through activity causes a deep enjoyment that many people are willing to expend a great deal of energy to feel. Some examples could include: sailing, writing, gardening, painting, conversing, adventuring, and playing sports or music. Look for challenging activities that require skill. That's where you will find flow.

Let's look at the Flow Model handout. We see that when and how Flow occurs is the result of confluence among four conditions. Or, when the right combinations of these four subjectively recognized conditions – Challenge, Skills, Anxiety, and Boredom – come together, there is an experience of Flow. Dr. Csikszentmihalyi reports that in every flow activity, regardless of the specific type of activity or experience, there is one common quality reported: "It provided a sense of discovery, a creative feeling of transporting the person to a new reality. It pushed the person to higher levels of performance, and led to previously undreamed-of states of consciousness. In short, it transformed the self by making it more complex. In this growth of the self lies the key to flow activities" (1991, p. 74).

In the diagram, "A" represents Alex engaged in learning to play tennis. The most important dimensions of the experience, challenge and skills, are represented on the two axes. The vertical axis is Challenge from Low to High, the horizontal axis represents Boredom, again from Low to High. The diagram shows Alex at four different points in

time. (A_1) is when he first begins to play. He has few tennis skills and his only challenge, at first, is to hit the ball over the net. Because the challenge level matches his skill level, he may well enjoy the experience. He will probably be in flow. He will not be able to remain there long. If Alex keeps practicing, he will increase his skills and become bored merely hitting the ball over the net (A_2). Or maybe he is matched against a superior player and realizes how limited his own skills are, and how great the challenges are before him. This will lead to some anxiety (A_3) about his ability. Since neither boredom, or anxiety are positive experiences, Alex will want to return to the flow state he initially experienced. What will he do? Look at the diagram.

If he is bored (A_2) and wants to be in flow again, he must increase the challenge he faces. He could do this by attempting new shots or by playing a partner who is a little better than he is. This new goal of facing a little higher challenge should get him back into flow.

If he is anxious (A_3), the best way back into flow is to increase his skills. Practicing what he already knows and learning more about how to play would be the best way back to flow. Csikzentmihalyi points out that there is another way. Alex could simply reduce his challenge and return to the flow where he started. This is hard, Dr. C. tells us, because once you are aware of a challenge, it is nearly impossible to pretend it doesn't exist.

In the diagram, A_4 is more complex than A_1 . A_4 involves greater challenges and demands greater skills. Flow is a fluid process. It is this dynamic feature that explains why Flow activities lead to growth and discovery. We cannot enjoy doing the same thing at the same level for long. We do grow bored or frustrated. Our desire to enjoy ourselves

again pushes us to stretch our skills, or discover new ways to use them. The more we master a particular activity, the more we seek to increase the level of challenge. And the more richly textured and complex we become. We grow.

(Discuss students' relationship to awareness of personal growth.)

Break (10 minutes)

Lecture resumes (10 minutes).

Not everyone has the same access to Flow. Mental disorders inhibit some people's ability to experience this type of personal growth. Schizophrenics, for example, are subject to stimulus overloading. A schizophrenic's disability requires his/her to notice and process irrelevant stimuli. They must process information whether or not they want to. This over-inclusion of stimuli makes it difficult for people with schizophrenia to keep things out of their consciousness. Since they must attend to everything at once, they are never really able to attend to any thing. This results in anhedonia. Who knows what that means? What's the root? Is there a linguist in the house? Hedon, hedonia, hedonism. Right! Pleasure, but with "an" in front of it. What means that? Right again. No pleasure or lack of pleasure. Good job.

Another set of disorders is in the realm of social psychology and they also restrict an individual's access to Flow experiences. Anomie and alienation are such conditions. Anomie, or lack of rules, is the name given by French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1892/1951) to a condition in a society where.

...it is no longer clear what is permitted and what is not. When it is uncertain what public opinion values, behavior becomes erratic and meaningless. People who depend on society to give order to their consciousness become anxious. Anomic situations might arise when the economy collapses, or when one culture is destroyed by another, or they can also occur when prosperity increases rapidly.

and old values of thrift and hard work are no longer as relevant as they had been. (Csikzentmihaly, 1991, p. 86)

Alienation is the opposite side of the social coin. Alienation occurs where people are forced by the social system to act in ways that are contrary to the attainment of their goals. For example, a person who must work to put rice and beans on the table for his/her family, at some mindless repetitive task in a factory or a mall, day in and day out, is a likely candidate for feeling alienation. So too is a person in a country where most of the day is taken up waiting in food lines.

Csikzentmihalyi explains, "When a society suffers from anomie, Flow is difficult because it is not clear what is worth investing psychic energy in; when it suffers from alienation the problem is that one cannot invest psychic energy into what is clearly unavailable" (1991, p. 86).

These social obstacles are functionally equivalent to two individual psychological difficulties: attentional disorders and self-centeredness. At both levels, the personal and the societal, what prevents Flow from occurring is either the fragmentation of attentional processes (anomie and attentional disorders), or their excessive rigidity (alienation and self-centeredness). At the individual level, anomie corresponds to anxiety, and alienation corresponds to boredom. Where we live has a great bearing on our ability to grow and flourish. What about all this? Come on, let's talk.

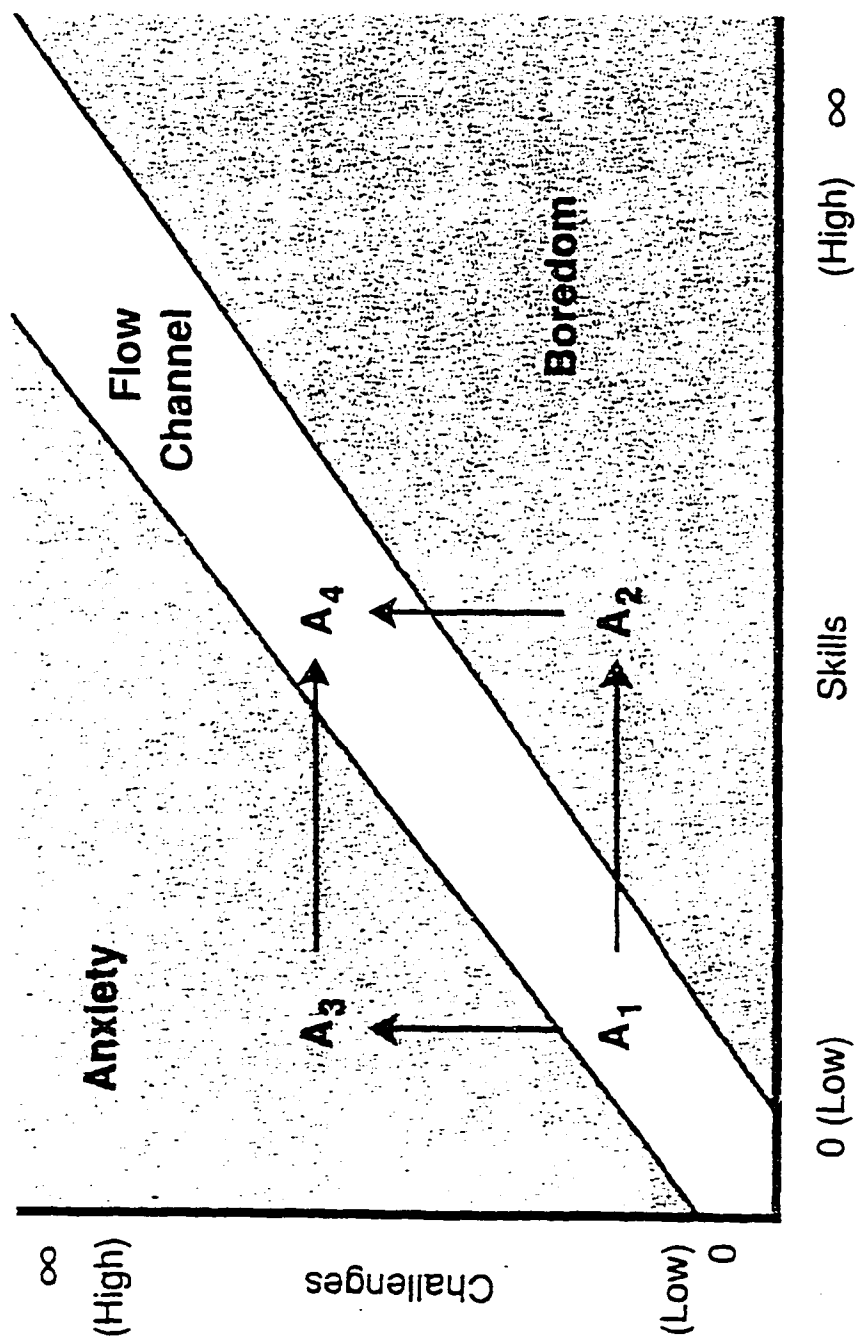
(Discuss Flow and social organization, disagreements with Csikzentmihalyi's theory, and whatever else the class finds relevant.)

We've run out of time today. Your homework is to work the Flow diagram and the eight elements of optimal experience. If you didn't copy them off the board, they're on page 49 of Flow. Your job is to pick an activity in your life that feels like the

experience of Flow Csikzentmihalyi describes. Write a one-page description of the activity and how you feel doing it. Also include which of the eight elements are true for you while performing your activity. Clear? Questions? Okay. You go. Have a little Flow out there. Grow out there. Help others to do the same.

FLOW MODEL HANDOUT

(reprinted from Csikzentmihalyi, 1991, p. 74)



environment with other species. We have become disenchanted. Nature has become separated from our individual subjective emotional lives.

Our connection to nature, according to May (1953), is being destroyed by emptiness and anxiety. This disconnection from our natural world has produced within us a sort of perpetual anxiety. He differentiates this anxiety from fear,

In fear we know what threatens us, we are energized by the situation, our perceptions are sharper, and we take steps to run or in other appropriate ways to overcome the danger. In anxiety, however, we are threatened without knowing what steps to take to meet the danger. Anxiety is the feeling of being caught, overwhelmed; and instead of becoming sharper, our perceptions generally become blurred or vague...a gnawing within...[anxiety] is the human being's basic reaction to a danger to his existence or to some value he identifies with his existence. (1953, pp. 39-40)

Normal anxiety is anxiety that is proportional to the threat or actual danger in a situation. All of us experience this anxiety as we face the crises of our lives. The more a person is able to successfully negotiate these crises – moving out on one's own away from parents, establishing a career, becoming intimate in a new way as romance blossoms and a family of the next generation is created — the less that person is beset by neurotic anxiety.

Neurotic anxiety is disproportionate to real danger and comes from an unconscious conflict within oneself.

Neurotic anxiety comes from psychological conflicts. The person feels threatened, but it is as though by a ghost; he [or she] does not know where the enemy is or how to fight it or flee from it. These unconscious conflicts usually get started in some previous situation of threat which the person did not feel strong enough to face, such as a child's having to deal with a dominating and possessive parent....The real problem is then repressed" (May, 1953, p. 43)

Neurotic anxiety is often what brings people to therapy. The traditional therapeutic method to free oneself from the neurotic anxiety is to reawaken the originating experience that one was afraid of and work through the experience as if it

were an experience of normal anxiety. This is often accomplished successfully with the facilitation and support of a competent therapist.

His concern, at least in this book, is to look at the normal side of anxiety and its relationship to a person's self-awareness.

Anxiety, like a torpedo strikes underneath at the deepest level, or core, of ourselves, and it is on this level that we experience ourselves as persons, as subjects who can act in a world of objects. Thus anxiety in greater or lesser degree tends to destroy our consciousness of ourselves. (May, 1953, p. 44)

He uses as an example an army in a battle. As long as the enemy attacks from the front, the soldiers fight on even though they are afraid. If the enemy attacks at the command center and destroys communication with the troops, then chaos reigns and directionless panic sets in. This illustrates the most difficult feature of anxiety: a disorienting loss of who we are and what we should be doing. May sees the answer to this problem in awareness itself. Just as anxiety can destroy our awareness, our awareness can also destroy the anxiety.

That is to say, the stronger our consciousness of ourselves, the more we can take a stand against and overcome anxiety...Our task, then, is to strengthen our consciousness of ourselves, to find centers of strength within ourselves which will enable us to stand despite the confusion and bewilderment around us. (1953, p. 45)

To this end the unique qualities and will of each individual must be brought to light and used as a foundation for work that contributes to society, but is not "melted down in the collectivist pot of conformity" (May, 1953, p. 47). Our first task is to find the source(s) of our anxiety.

One symbol of the anxiety May sees is our withdrawal from nature's openness. Sky is the classic symbol of vastness – the symbol of our imagination's unfettered, soaring flight. We fear it now. For some it's the threat of skin cancer, for others it's the

larger issues of ozone depletion and global warming. Pollution browns and grays-out the depth of our sky, turning ugly its beauty. We fear meteorites and jets crashing out of the sky and into our homes, space stations falling out of orbit, suicide pilots, bombs, and missiles. In addition to our fear, we now sell the beauty of our sky. Commercialism and explosive residentiality brings bright light to illuminate our world at night – to protect us – to direct us – to sell us stuff. This compulsion to alter our nature and its look has decimated our ecosystems for commercial and residential expansion at a cost of the loss of plant, animal, and bird habitats and populations. Our natural resources are depleted, sold or given away to industrial users who strip mine, clearcut, and erode the cohesion of our original environmental context. We have literally stolen the stars from ourselves. The night sky is no longer bright with light from a billion suns; it glows now with a wash of incandescent commercialism. This is our malady and the fountainhead of our anxiety.

In sum, May says we are able to participate in this processing of estrangement from our nest, and distance from the nature that makes us human through a massive collusive denial. We simply deny these issues of estrangement from our collective awareness and fill our days and nights with pursuits of comfort and avoidances of discomforts.

Dr. May posits a scale to measure ourselves against. The Quantitative Humanness Scale is marked by the poles of Human Diminution on one end and Fully Human on the other. Fully Human represents the capacity for self-relatedness in which a person fulfills his/her potentialities only as s/he consciously plans and chooses. The Diminution end of the scale refers to the quality of failure in the human organism to fulfill its potentialities.

Let's all take out a sheet of paper and mark this scale down: Human Diminution on one end and Fully Human on the other. Remember, Fully Human is a condition of conscious autogenesis. That means conscious self-creation. Human Diminution refers to someone who is not fulfilling his or her potentialities. Put your X down on the scale where you are right now. Go ahead. Be honest with yourself. This fearless self-honesty is central to change. We cannot change until we know where we are. In order to change we must know where we are changing from and toward what we are changing to. We need a place to begin our change and that place is where we are now.

(Discuss change, May's scale, students' self-scoring, and other reactions to the lecture so far.)

If any organism fails to fulfill its potentialities, it becomes sick. Just as your legs would wither and die if you never walked. But the power of your legs is not all you'd lose. The flowing of your blood, your heart action, your whole organism would be the weaker. And in the same way if man does not fulfill his potentialities as a person, he becomes to that extent constricted and ill. This is the essence of neurosis – the person's unused potentialities, blocked by hostile conditions in the environment and by his own internalized conflicts, turn inward and cause morbidity. (May, 1953, p. 95)

May offers directions to us in terms of recovering our full humanness. He points out that "courageous humility" (p. 97) is the mark of the realistic and mature person. On the other hand, self-inflation and conceit are generally seen as external signs of inner emptiness and self-doubt. A show of pride is the most common cover for anxiety. "The person who feels weak becomes a bully, the inferior person a braggart; a flexing of muscles, much talk, cockiness, an endeavor to brazen it out, are symptoms of covert anxiety in a person or a group" (p. 98).

Do you guys know what fascism is? Hitler? Mussolini?

(Discuss if necessary.)

“Tremendous pride was exhibited in the face of fascism. Mussolini and Hitler both strutted with exaggeration. Fascism itself though is a development of people who are empty, anxious, and despairing, and therefore willing to seize on megalomaniac promises” (May 1953, p. 98).

The importance of self-awareness as in “How do I feel right now?” is central to May’s mission to urge humans back to fullness. He cautions against effervescence and Pollyannaism, calling those postures sentimentality rather than sentiment – affectation rather than affect.

(Discuss this so students relate to previous calls [Myers] to guard against Pollyannaism – also to understand form over substance [sentimentality rather than sentiment].)

The importance of an experience of the “I” as the active subject who is doing the feeling is central to May’s take on therapy. As such we will learn from him now what he thinks is necessary to become free and conscious humans. He suggests that we first become aware of our own ABCs.

(On board: Affect [emotions], Behaviors, and Cognitions [thinking].)

Our affect, behaviors, and cognitions all require an awareness of the presence of our physical being. We must become sensitive to our physical selves first. “...[the] body as experienced by the infant is the first core self” (May, 1953, p. 105).

May first admonishes us and then provides an observation as a warning.

You must become yourself. To the extent you do not, you will be ill, and you will become well only to the extent that you do become yourself....There is a strong secondary gain to illness. Illness gives focus to free-floating anxiety. It provides something concrete and seemingly out of one’s control to worry and think about. (1953, p. 110)

Science can take away our illness but it does not take away people's anxiety, emptiness, guilt, and purposelessness. This is notwithstanding the glut of chemistry on the market being sold as magic bullets for these conditions. Antidepressants and antianxiety pills may help a person in crisis get through the moment, but when the pills stop, the depression and the anxiety will not have gone anywhere. May proposes a simple-sounding path away from illness and toward full humanness.

First step: Become aware of your feelings, thoughts and actions (ABCs). Second step: Become aware of what you, as a uniquely individualistic entity, wants. The final step is to recover our relationship with the unconscious aspects of our self, which is related to nature. He sees that our estrangement from nature and from our own natures is due to surrendering our energy to unconscious areas of our personality. We are often engaged in the defensive adjustments of protecting our personality from a full awareness of our core selves.

Take a pee break, but only 5 minutes, really. After 5 minutes I'll lock the classroom door so that we can participate in our lab exercise. Yes, that one, the "most powerful interpersonal exercise on the planet."

Break (5 minutes)

Lab: What Are You? (40 minutes)

Now that we're back from our break, we are going to do something quite extraordinary. Please find a partner in the room that you feel comfortable with and move together so that you'll be comfortable looking directly toward one another. By this point I'm hopeful that you all will feel comfortable with almost everyone in the room. When we actually begin the exercise, you will both be standing about an arm's length apart

from each other. This is an exercise attributed to ancient Zen training; however, I'm not sure of where exactly it originated. I learned of it in Palo Alto in the 1970s. There were several groups called "growth" groups operating independently as part of the Human Potential Movement being explored by Rollo May, Fritz Perles, Richard Alpert, Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, and many other psychologists and MDS of the time. These are the predecessors to David Myers, Mihali Csikzentmihalyi, Ed Diener, and other contemporaries who are engaged in the current study of Positive Psychology. The group I learned this from was called The Sage Experience and was operated by Brandon Poso-St. John. He was a remarkable teacher who died in 1985 at the age of 38.

(On board: One area covered by a large sheet of paper, and one area with the following: Experience is physical, Wants are a fantasy, Expect is what usually happens, Avoidance is where growth is.)

A few concepts to consider are the meanings that we'll put with these words. Experience is a physical sensation. If I say I'm experiencing fear, what I'm saying is that my chest feels constricted, my breathing is shallow, my sweat is pouring down my forehead, my stomach is cold, and I feel like running. This is what May has told us. Experience is a physical registration of our inner and outer world. May wrote about self-awareness and our estrangement from nature. This will be our first step into self-awareness and back to nature. We are going to pay attention to our bodies today. Let's try. Everyone take a few deep slow breaths. Oh yeah, all the way in, fill up those bellies like balloons. Then out all the way, all of it out, hahhhhhhhhh, oh yeah. That's it right there. Good. Now tune in to your body. What do you feel? What are your hands doing? What is your body saying to you this moment? Take a silent inventory. (Pause 1 minute.)

Maybe we could start at the feet and work up. How do you feel sitting in that chair? What is your body experiencing? What are feet doing? How do your feet feel in your shoes? Are they resting evenly on the floor? Your legs, are they in contact with the chair? How are you sitting? Are you relaxed? Keep moving up. Is there tension anywhere in your body? In your shoulders? Neck? Feel any tension or stress? Locate where in the body it is and note how you are aware of it, and then breath. Always breath. Let's stay here a little longer. How does your breathing feel? Is it deep and regular? Labored? Do your clothes pinch or bind or rub anywhere? How does their touch feel on your body? This is how we become aware. We first become aware of the body and all that it communicates to us. Yes, open your eyes when you're ready and slowly bring your awareness out from your body and into the room.

That was the first step, getting in touch with the holder of our experience, our physical being. We are first a body. Our first experience was physical. Our first awareness was and still is physical. The more time you spend being aware of your body, the more conscious you will become. The more you are attuned to the experience of your body, the closer you will be to the real forces that shape your life. When I ask what are you experiencing, I'm asking what your body is telling you.

Want is a fantasy. What do I want? I want a car that starts and a girl that won't quit. I want what I don't have although I don't really know what I have because I'm not usually paying attention to my current experience. Right? When I ask what do you want, I'm asking about your dreams. It's an imagining. What I want is different from what I need. Needs, remember according to Maslow, are at first physical and then about social connectedness. We'll look at Maslow in a little more depth in a couple of weeks. For now

let's understand that "wants" are a product of cognitive musings. Something to organize extra or stray psychic energy around. Wants may well represent what our ideal life or ideal self might be. But we don't know that in the moment. We only imagine that.

Expectation is based on what usually has happened. Things seem to happen again and again. If we are used to all of our dreams coming true and all of our difficult situations working out to our advantage. Then we will likely expect that that will continue. The converse, or negative results expectation is also likely. If we expect things to not quite work out for us, they probably won't. In the '60s this concept came from semanticist and SFSU president S. I. Hayakawa, who coined a term for this phenomena, the self-fulfilling wish prophesy (Hayakawa, 1941).

What do I expect? Oh, well, I expect that even though I want a car that starts, I'll be stuck with the one I have until it finally breaks down and then I'll get stuck with another piece of @#&* garbage. Expectations are usually buried deeply within us and exist ready-made just out of the field of our consciousness. They are automatically prepared for us out of what has previously happened in our lives and how we have previously dealt with those things that have happened. Expectations can severely limit our access to change.

Avoidance is often where growth resides. Well, it is. We avoid things for a reason. Sometimes that reason is because we know harm will come to us if we don't avoid whatever it is. Usually it is not harm that we avoid, it is fear. We are afraid of what might be if we do or think a certain thing. If I tell the truth to my girlfriend she'll leave me, then I'll feel lonely and unloved. I'm afraid of being lonely and unloved, so I'll avoid even thinking about telling her the truth. I avoid finishing school and becoming a success

because everyone else in my family has difficult problems and it would be disloyal of me to achieve beyond where they are capable. If I outdo my family, I am afraid it will harm them, or make them feel bad about themselves. Out of loyalty and protectiveness I will avoid success. Avoidance is a defense against our fear.

Our connection to these four concepts – Experience, Want, Expectation, and Avoidance – will serve to bring us through our exercise.

(Lift paper covering the questions on the board)

Here are the questions:

1. What are you experiencing?
2. What do you want?
3. What do you expect?
4. What are you avoiding?

The exercise is a series of four questions. You will answer these questions as they are posed by your partner. You will answer them again and again until both you and your partner are clear that you are telling the simplest truth you have available. Sometimes this takes five or six or seven or more repetitions. The number of repetitions doesn't matter. What does matter is that you bring your attention to yourself through the facilitation of another. Your only task is to answer as honestly as you can while being aware of changes in your experience. In other words, being aware of the changes in your physical awareness.

When you are the listener only ask the questions. Nothing else. Stay with your partner by maintaining eye-to-eye connection. Ask the questions in order, starting over after each time you have gone through them. When you both are sure that the answerer

has truly answered, come to a stop. Breathe for a minute or two and then slowly switch roles, with the answerer now asking the questions and the questioner now answering.

Questions? Comments? Resistances? Concerns?

(Respond as necessary.)

What is going to happen? This is an experimental exercise. We will see what occurs. Our hypothesis is that as we become more aware of our experience we will express it more clearly. As we express our awareness more clearly, and the truth of our experience more accurately, our bodies may become more relaxed and less defensive. If we become less defensive, our experience of ourselves should change somehow, and that will allow us new access to material we may not have been aware of previously. This is good stuff. Before we begin, let's agree to keep whatever we hear from the other confidential. Can we agree to maintain the privacy of each other's communication? If you don't think you can maintain the other's privacy, please leave now. Okay? Anyone not able to agree to this? Good.

(Demonstrate the process for the class with a partner. Model how each question is answered.)

Okay, are you guys ready? One of you hold up a finger to signify that you will be the first questioner. Silently agree with each other who will go first. Okay. Look at the eyes of your partner. Now look into the eyes of your partner. This doesn't mean you are going steady with the other, or that you are in any way romantic. Let any laughter or discomfort at such intimacy go. Be aware of any fear that comes up because of being open with another person. Silently acknowledge any feelings of discomfort at being so open with another person. Be aware of resistance. Let the resistance go. We are scientists

engaged in an experiment. No harm will come to us here from being open with our peers. Both of you breath now – allow the other to see into your eyes, to see into you. Allow the other to make connection with you. Allow yourself to see into the other’s eyes, to see into the other. Allow yourself to make connection with the other.

Questioners begin. “What are you experiencing?” Answerers listen to your body as you respond. Continue ... when you both feel that answerer is aligned with his or her experience throughout the process, nod your heads at each other, take a breath or two and then switch roles and continue. When both are complete, take your seats and quietly discuss your experiences of the process. When everyone has completed, we’ll debrief. (Process begins and should take no more than about 15 to 20 minutes. Instructor circulates lightly and provides any assistance necessary.)

How was that?

(Discuss until class ends.)

V. CONCLUSION

This compilation of material is meant to serve as a template for the future implementation of a potential undergraduate positive psychology course. Until the intention to instruct this course is realized, we are left to speculate on its actual meaning. Lessons writ flat on vellum, though carved from princely wisdom, miss the rough handling of fresh minds. Interactive participation is required, not only to learn from these lessons, but also to configure them. This material is offered in support of self-discovery, and is best experienced by persons in the present, in the same way a song is best heard performed live.

“Toward the Instruction of a Positive Psychology: Lessons for an Undergraduate Course” will need to be taught in order for useful evaluative information to be gained from it. Real-time intrapersonal and interpersonal responses to the various concepts, exercises, discussions, and activities will serve as in-the-moment telemetry designing and redesigning how the material will be presented. Feedback concerning which material should be featured and which should be de-emphasized, or eliminated, will emerge as a function of the interactive expression and energy among the participants. In this fashion alone will the actual dimensions of the course materialize.

Following its presentation, the course should be refined through continuing research and assessment, regarding which aspects of the material were most meaningful. Longitudinal feedback at target intervals would seem to be a useful technique for gathering this type of data. For instance, immediate student feedback at the completion of the course concerning specific areas of the experience could be compared with more reflective student feedback of the same areas, at 6 months, a year, and 2 years.

The humanistic model of developing self-awareness and self-discovery, at the basis of these lessons, is seen as providing a platform of dissemination that is exponential rather than linear. That is, each of the participants, having equal access to self, will be able to internalize the experience of the class and actually have the ability to teach it. It is intended that they be able to teach it, both to themselves and to others. An each-one, teach-one result is a goal of the presentation of these lessons. That goal, too, will require longitudinal evaluation.

Sigmund Koch's big idea was discussed in the Introduction section of this project. In the project's Conclusion, another big idea will close the discussion.

Abraham Maslow quotes Carl Rogers: "How does it happen that the deeper we go into ourselves as particular and unique, seeking for our own identity, the more we find the whole human species?" (1971, p. 187)

The place where we discover the most tightly held of our personal secrets, there too, we find our brothers and sisters. The acceptance of this seeming paradox is central to the purpose of positive psychology as a vehicle for bringing about a world in which healthy individuals build thriving communities through the appreciation of self, other, and the natural environment.

Maslow describes this as a goal of all education:

Discovering your specieshood, at a deep enough level, merges with discovering your selfhood. Becoming (learning how to be) fully human means both enterprises carried out simultaneously. You are learning (subjectively experiencing) what you peculiarly are, how you are, what your potentialities are, what your style is, what your pace is, what your tastes are, what your values are, what direction your body is going, where your biology is taking you, i.e., how you are "different" from others. And at the same time it means learning what it means to be a human animal like other human animals, i.e., how you are "similar" to others. (1971, p. 187)

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