

Positive Psychology - A Short Course for U3a members

Q: What is Positive Psychology?

A: Positive Psychology is a *supplement* to what psychology traditionally does.

"Positive psychology is the scientific study of what makes life most worth living" (Peterson 2008).

Q: When did it come about?

A: In the late 1990s Martin E.P. Seligman, the founder of positive psychology, 'gathered together ...some of the leading people, among them Chris Peterson and Barbara Fredrickson, who worked on the positive side of life, and tried to create a field in which we asked the question: "What makes life worth living, and how can we build it?"'

The positive side of life is buildable. The target of positive psychology is well-being or flourishing.



The five zones of the mental health continuum

From: https://delphis.org.uk/mentalhealth/continuummentalhealth/#Mental_health_from_illness_to_wellness

What is The Focus of Positive Psychology?

There are many Positive Psychology Interventions which are simple activities that, if you use them, can enable you to improve your well-being. The interventions that are recommended have all been tested and found to be effective.

An example of a positive psychology intervention which comes from Martin Seligman is: "**three good things**":

"Every night for the next week, before you go to sleep, write down three things that went well today, and why they went well."

It turns out that when people do this, six months later they are less depressed and have higher positive emotion compared to placebo".

From: *Flourish: Positive Psychology and Positive Interventions*, Martin Seligman, 2010, p 237.

If you would like to make some positive changes in your life in the future to help you to move towards thriving and beyond, then please consider doing this short course.

If you are interested in this positive psychology short course, please email Priscilla Jordan on priscillagj2020@gmail.com or phone her on 0417 886 150; you will be emailed a PowerPoint presentation to help you decide whether to do it, or not.

If you do decide to do the short course, it will involve a one hour Zoom session once a week for 5 weeks at a time that suits all the participants. It will also involve some between sessions reading sent by email to support your learning.

The topics of the 5 sessions over the 5 week period are:

Session 1 - Positive Emotions;

Session 2 - Character Strengths;

Session 3 - Mindfulness;

Session 4 - Motivation and Resilience;

Session 5 - Habits and How to Make Some Positive Changes.