



PS330 – POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY
IES Abroad London

DESCRIPTION:

While psychological science has made tremendous strides in understanding pathology, explaining weaknesses and treating illness, the past two decades have seen the birth of a new wave in psychology – one that explores human flourishing. What is a good life? What makes people flourish? How can building our strengths and virtues help us thrive? Through our exploration of the latest psychological research in Cognition (*thoughts*), Affect (*feelings*) and Behavior (*actions*), we will discover the science behind a good life and examine the factors that contribute to well-being.

Why Positive Psychology and why now? During their semester abroad, students often find themselves outside of their comfort zones. As they accumulate a wealth of experiences, knowledge, and connections, students may naturally engage in self-reflection about their own lives. This class offers a unique opportunity to not only learn about the science of well-being, but also to put these empirical findings into practice. Each week we will consider a different intervention from Positive Psychology that the students will apply in their own lives and reflect on in their journals. The course strives to add to the students' knowledge of the psychology of happiness, but also, to their understanding of their own well-being. As a crucial insight from any study abroad program, this exploration can nudge the students to take a step closer to themselves, while being far away from home.

Each week, students are expected to engage in self-reflection and, at times, to share their insights with their classmates and the instructor. While every effort is made to create a safe and warm in-class atmosphere, students who may not wish to share their self-reflections publicly will be offered other accommodations (for example, by having 1:1 discussion with the instructor).

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

ADDITIONAL COST: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Lectures, Discussions, Group exercises, Presentations

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Participation- 10%
- Learning Journal- 20%
- Exam 1- 25%
- Presentations- 20%
- Exam 2- 25%

Course Element

A rubric for student participation will be posted on Moodle and shared with students at the beginning of the term.

Learning Journal

The students will keep a digital Learning Journal, where they will record their reflections about the course and integrate the course concepts into their lives. Each week, they will write an entry in their Journal (200-500 words) based on the reading assignments, activities or classroom discussions and upload it on Moodle at the end of each week. The students should strive to write observations that are thoughtful and meaningful to them and reflect deeply on how the concepts that we covered in class relate to their own lives. Some questions to consider for Learning Journal entries for each week:



- 1) What was the most interesting/inspiring finding, theory, or practice you discovered from this week's class and readings?
- 2) In what ways is this idea useful to you personally?
- 3) How can you apply these new insights to add to your well-being?
- 4) What aspects of the lectures do not resonate with your lived experience of well-being?

In addition, the students will use their Learning Journals to record various experimental assignments for each week (for example, Gratitude Letter, Strengths Reflections, Positive Relationships, and Best Possible Self).

At the end of the course, the students will receive a final grade for their Learning Journal entries, which will constitute 20% of their overall grade for the course.

Exam 1: Midterm (in-class) will comprise 5-6 short essay questions covering the contents of Week 1-Week 6

Presentations: My Well-Being Recipe Having explored a wealth of scientific research on well-being, it's time for *me-search*. The students will review and incorporate scientifically validated components of a good life from Positive Psychology findings and develop a personalized formula for their own well-being. Some questions to guide them along:

What ingredients will I choose for my happiness recipe?

- 1) What do I need to be happy?
- 2) What does flourishing mean for me?
- 3) What contextual considerations are critical for my well-being?
- 4) What theories are relevant for explaining what makes me happy?
- 5) A reflection of the process of developing their personalised well-being recipe

During their presentations (10 minutes + 5 minutes discussion), the students will support each one of their chosen ingredients with findings from psychological science, including theories, experiments, and interventions. Then, they will infuse flavor and meaning into their recipes by incorporating examples from their own personal life experiences. All presentations as well as a written, detailed outline of their presentations will be handed in at the end of Week 10. All those who are not presenting are listening intently to come up with follow up questions for the presenter. Engaging during the presentations is critical for every student.

Grading rubric for presentations:

Content (60 points)

The student gives a succinct yet complete overview of the appropriate literature and has identified and explained the specific concepts, theories, and interventions relevant for their formula. The student draws on examples and insights from their own life to formulate a hypothesis for a well-being recipe for themselves.

- Explaining and critically evaluating psychological research, findings, and concepts that were covered in class (25)
- Application of findings to own life, reflections, examples, case studies (30)
- Demonstrating the link between research and Application (5)

Delivery (30 points)

The student tells an engaging, clear story that combines previous scientific findings with their life examples and uses the slides to draw attention to important points.

- Clarity and proper structure (10)
- Slides (10)
- Eye contact/engagement/oratory (10)

Discussion (10 points)

The student can engage in a productive, critical discussion about their presentation and can aptly respond to questions about it.



Final exams: (In-class) This will comprise 5 short essay questions covering your understanding of positive psychology interventions as well as some reflections on your well-being recipe, including strengths, limitations of the well-being recipe and opportunities for further research.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify key concepts and findings from the field of Positive Psychology.
- Describe how scientific methods can advance the understanding of human flourishing.
- Review and put into practice scientifically validated strategies for living more fulfilled and happier lives.
- Articulate commonly held misconceptions about happiness.
- Develop confidence as public speakers by presenting in front of the class.
- Engage in critical thinking through classroom discussion and debates.
- Explore and reflect on the drivers of their own well-being.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Since IES Abroad London courses are designed to take advantage of the unique contribution of the instructor, and the lecture/discussion format is regarded as the primary mode of instruction, class attendance is mandatory and will be taken for every class. In addition, students are expected to be on time for classes, course-related excursions, and tests. Some courses include mandatory trips outside of regular class hours, i.e. on weekends. Students will be made aware of the specific dates of such trips well in advance and are required to attend. If a student misses a class without an excuse, this will lead to a deduction of their final grade of one-third of a letter grade for every additional unexcused absence (for example, A- to B+).

Excused absences are permitted only in case of:

- Health issues (including a doctor's note);
- A recognized religious holiday traditionally observed by the particular student;
- A grave incident affecting family members;
- Conflicting academic commitments, only when communicated well in advance;

Any other absences (such as missing a flight) are unexcused. If a student shows a pattern in (excused and unexcused) absences, students may be subject to an Academic Review including but not limited to a letter sent to their school and a probationary period or exclusion from the program.

CONTENT:

Choose an item	Content	Assignments
Week 1	Introduction to Positive Psychology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is Positive Psychology? Why seek a more complete, balanced view of human functioning? What makes a good life or a life well-lived ? Historical perspectives: influences from different philosophical traditions. Global hotspots of positive psychology research - A look at bibliometric reviews. 	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seligman, M. E. (2002). Positive psychology, positive prevention, and positive therapy. <i>Handbook of Positive Psychology</i>, 2, (p. 3-12) (9 p.) Diener, E. (2009). Positive psychology: Past, present, and future. <i>Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology</i>, (p. 7-11) (4 p.) Seligman, M. (2018). PERMA and the building blocks of well-being. <i>The Journal of Positive Psychology</i>, 13(4), 333–335. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2018.1437466 Fadiji, A. W., Khumalo, I. P., Wissing, M. P., & Appiah, R. (2024). A bibliometric review of positive psychology and well-being research in Africa. <i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>, 15, 1384362. Wang, F., Guo, J., & Yang, G. (2023). Study on positive psychology from 1999 to 2021: A bibliometric analysis. <i>Frontiers in psychology</i>, 14, 1101157. Joshanloo, M., & Weijers, D. (2024). Ideal personhood through the ages: tracing the genealogy of the modern concepts of wellbeing. <i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>, 15, 1494506.

Choose an item	Content	Assignments
Week 2	<p>What is well-being In this session, we will explore humanity's relentless quest for happiness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is well-being (hedonic vs. eudaimonic well-being)? • How is it measured in science? • What are the benefits of happiness? • Myths about happiness: why do we often get it wrong? • Waves of positive psychology. • Cross-cultural perspectives of well-being. • What is happiness in the African context? 	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diener, E., Lucas, R. E., & Oishi, S. (2002). Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and life satisfaction. <i>Handbook of Positive Psychology</i>, 2, (p. 63-73) (10 p.) • Bao, K. J., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2013). The rewards of happiness. <i>The Oxford Handbook of Happiness</i>, (p. 119-133) (14 p.) • Diener, E., & Tay, L. (2017). A scientific review of the remarkable benefits of happiness for successful and healthy living. <i>Happiness</i>, (p. 90-117) (27 p.) • Lomas, T., Waters, L., Williams, P., Oades, L. G., & Kern, M. L. (2021). Third wave positive psychology: Broadening towards complexity. <i>The Journal of Positive Psychology</i>, 16(5), 660-674. • Schueller, S. M., & Seligman, M. E. (2010). Pursuit of pleasure, engagement, and meaning: Relationships to subjective and objective measures of well-being. <i>The Journal of Positive Psychology</i>, 5(4), (p. 253-263) (10 p.) • van Zyl, L. E., Gaffaney, J., van der Vaart, L., Dik, B. J., & Donaldson, S. I. (2024). The critiques and criticisms of positive psychology: A systematic review. <i>The Journal of Positive Psychology</i>, 19(2), 206-235. • Wissing, M. P. (2022). Beyond the "third wave of positive psychology": Challenges and opportunities for future research. <i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>, 12, 795067. • Ratele, K., & Rustin, C. (2023). African-Centered Psychological Perspective on Happiness. <i>The Qualitative Report</i>, 28(10), 2936-2952. <p>Assignment: Measure your happiness levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the Authentic Happiness Inventory via UPenn's Authentic Happiness Website. This quiz offers a scientifically validated measure of your happiness levels. Please record your score in your Learning Journal. You will take the quiz again at the end of the semester to see whether there were any changes to your baseline score after completing the course.

Choose an item	Content	Assignments
Week 3	Positive emotion (Part1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This week we will explore the role of positive emotions (sometimes referred to as the “tiny engines” of Positive Psychology) in human flourishing and how our daily experience of positive emotions can function as nutrients for our well-being. What is an emotion? Positive vs. negative emotions. The Broaden and Build Theory of positive emotions. Sustainable model of happiness. The effect of positive emotions on well-being. Positivity resonance and upward spirals. 	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. <i>American Psychologist</i>, 56(3), (p. 218-226) (8 p.) Lyubomirsky, S., King, L., & Diener, E. (2005). The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success? <i>Psychological Bulletin</i>, 131(6), (p. 803-855) (52 p.) Kok, B. E., Coffey, K. A., Cohn, M. A., Catalino, L. I., Vacharkulksemsuk, T., Algoe, S. B., ... & Fredrickson, B. L. (2013). How positive emotions build physical health: Perceived positive social connections account for the upward spiral between positive emotions and vagal tone. <i>Psychological Science</i>, 24(7), (p. 1123-1132) (9 p.) Klausen, S. H., Emiliussen, J., Christiansen, R., Hasandedic-Dapo, L., & Engelsen, S. (2022). The many faces of hedonic adaptation. <i>Philosophical Psychology</i>, 35(2), 253-278. Esch, T., & Stefano, G. B. (2005). Love promotes health. <i>Neuroendocrinology Letters</i>, 26(3), (p. 264-267) (3 p.) Diamond, L. (2014). Romantic love. In Tugade, M. M., Shiota, M. N., & Kirby, L. D. (Eds.). <i>Handbook of positive emotions</i>. Guilford Publications (p. 311-328) (17 p.) Desai, K., O'Malley, P., & Van Culin, E. (2024). Impact of heartfulness meditation practice compared to the gratitude practices on wellbeing and work engagement among healthcare professionals: Randomized trial. <i>Plos one</i>, 19(6), e0304093. <p>Assignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find a research article on hedonic treadmill and write down three key points on how this model explains how you experience positive emotions.

Choose an item	Content	Assignments
Week 4	Positive emotions (Part 2) A close look at some positive emotions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 positive emotions • Gratitude • Love • Life satisfaction 	Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emmons, R. A., & Shelton, C. M. (2002). Gratitude and the science of positive psychology. <i>Handbook of Positive Psychology</i>, 18, (p. 459-471) (12 p.) • Keltner, D., & Haidt, J. (2003). Approaching awe, a moral, spiritual, and aesthetic emotion. <i>Cognition and Emotion</i>, 17(2), (p. 297-314) (17 p.) • Fredrickson, B. L., Cohn, M. A., Coffey, K. A., Pek, J., & Finkel, S. M. (2008). Open hearts build lives: positive emotions, induced through loving-kindness meditation, build consequential personal resources. <i>Journal of personality and social psychology</i>, 95(5), (p. 1045-1062) (17 p.) • Guardian forest bathing article (1 p.). Assignment: Gratitude letter. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a letter of gratitude to someone who has made a difference in your life. Spend some time reflecting on how this person has touched your life in big or small ways, why he or she is meaningful to you, and then, incorporate those feelings of thankfulness into your writing. If possible, deliver the letter in person, or read the letter to them out loud. Reflect on how writing this gratitude letter made you feel in your Learning Journal.
Week 5	Eudaimonic (psychological well-being) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In this session, you will be able to answer the question of what makes for a fully functioning life. • What are the components of eudaimonic well-being. • What models explain eudaimonic well-being. • What is a meaningful and purposeful life? • Cross-cultural understanding of eudaimonic experiences. 	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niemiec, C. P. (2024). Eudaimonic well-being. In <i>Encyclopedia of quality of life and well-being research</i> (pp. 2212-2214). Cham: Springer International Publishing. • King, L. A., & Hicks, J. A. (2021). The science of meaning in life. <i>Annual review of psychology</i>, 72(1), 561-584. • Steger, M. F., O'Donnell, M. B., & Morse, J. L. (2021). Helping students find their way to meaning: meaning and purpose in education. In <i>The Palgrave handbook of positive education</i> (pp. 551-579). Cham: Springer International Publishing. • Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. H. (2008). Know thyself and become what you are: A eudaimonic approach to psychological well-being. <i>Journal of happiness studies</i>, 9, 13-39. • Joshanloo, M., & Weijers, D. (2014). Does thinking about the meaning of life make you happy in a religious and globalised world? A 75-nation study. <i>Journal of Psychology in Africa</i>, 24(1), 73-81. Assignment: Concept Map of meaningful experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a concept map of what a meaningful life would be like. This should include the things that do foster meaning in your life. The concept map can include pictures and written text. Include this map in your learning journal

Choose an item	Content	Assignments
Week 6	Character strengths and virtues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This week we will explore one of the key pillars of Positive Psychology: character strengths. What are positive traits and character strengths and how do they inform human flourishing? What are character strengths? How to measure them? The Values in Action (VIA) survey. Strength-based approaches in parenting, workplace, relationships, self-actualization. Re(discovering) your own character strengths. 	Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2009). Classifying and Measuring Strengths of Character. Oxford handbook of Positive Psychology, (p. 25-33) (8 p.) Niemiec, R. M. (2013). VIA character strengths: Research and practice (The first 10 years). In Well-being and cultures (p. 11-29) (18 p.) Peterson, C., Ruch, W., Beermann, U., Park, N., & Seligman, M. E. (2007). Strengths of character, orientations to happiness, and life satisfaction. The Journal of Positive Psychology, 2(3), (p. 149-156) (7 p.) Rashid, T. (2015). Positive psychotherapy: A strength-based approach. The Journal of Positive Psychology, 10(1), (p. 25-40) (15 p.) Waters, L., Loton, D., & Jach, H. (2019). Does Strength-Based Parenting Predict Academic Achievement? The Mediating Effects of Perseverance and Engagement. Journal of Happiness Studies, (p. 1-20) (19 p.) Assignment: Discover and experience your signature character strengths. Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the VIA character strengths test. The survey comprises of 240 questions and gives you a ranking of your 24 strengths. In your Learning Journal, write down your top 10 character strengths. Choose a few signature strengths from the list and for the next week, find ways to use these strengths in different ways every day. In addition, make a “strength date” with one of your classmates (or someone else who has taken the VIA survey). Consider which signature strengths you share and plan an activity (around 1 hour) where you both tap into your strengths together. For example, if kindness is one of the strengths you share, do a kind deed together. The premise of this activity is to witness and experience your signature strengths in action, while at the same time, sharing time with each other. Feel free to take a picture of your “strength date” for reflection in your Learning Journal and during class.
Session Exam 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid-term exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam

Choose an item	Content	Assignments
Week 8	<p>Positive cognitive states</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do cognitive states and processes shape well-being? This week we will explore the significance of the following states: Optimism Self-efficacy Creativity Flow 	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carver, C. S., Scheier, M. F., & Segerstrom, S. C. (2010). Optimism. <i>Clinical psychology review</i>, 30(7), (p. 879-889) (10p.) Nakamura, J., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2014). The concept of flow. In <i>Flow and the foundations of positive psychology</i> (p. 239-263) (24 p.) Maddux, J. E. (2012). Self-efficacy: The Power of Believing You Can. <i>Handbook of Positive Psychology</i> (p. 277-287). (15 p.) Simonton, D. K. (2012). Creativity. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds.) <i>Handbook of Positive Psychology</i> (15 p.) <p>Assignment: Best possible self.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This week we will be doing the Best Possible Self exercise, which has been shown to be one of the most popular and effective interventions in Positive Psychology to improve well-being, optimism, and positive affect (you can find a recent review of literature on this exercise here). Take 30 minutes (or longer if you need more time) to imagine a future (let's say in the next 20 years), where you have grown in all the ways you would like to, and everything has gone as well as it possibly could. Write about it in your Learning Journal. You can imagine different areas of your life, including your family life, your career, your physical & mental health, your romantic life, etc. How would your best possible life look like? What is your best possible self like? What do others say about you? For more detailed instructions on how to complete this exercise, please see here: https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/pdfs/optimism_intervention.pdf

Choose an item	Content	Assignments
Week 9	<p>Interpersonal Processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Other people matter.” This week we will explore positive social connections and their fundamental role in our well-being. • Why other people matter? • Romantic love, positive families, friendships • What hurts relationships? • How to nurture positive relationships • Supportive listening • Compassion vs. empathy • Forgiveness • Kindness • Relationships at the core of well-being in interdependent cultures. 	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appiah, R., Wilson-Fadiji, A., Schutte, L., & Wissing, M. P. (2020). Effects of a community-based multicomponent positive psychology intervention on mental health of rural adults in Ghana. <i>Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being</i>, 12(3), 828-862. • Neff, K. D. (2011). Self-compassion, self-esteem, and well-being. <i>Social and Personality Psychology Compass</i>, 5(1), (p. 1-12) (12 p.) • Rowland, L., & Curry, O. S. (2019). A range of kindness activities boost happiness. <i>The Journal of Social Psychology</i>, 159(3), (p. 340-343) (3 p.) • Fishbane, M. D. (2007). Wired to connect: Neuroscience, relationships, and therapy. <i>Family Process</i>, 46(3), (p. 395-412) (17 p.) • House, J. S., Landis, K. R., & Umberson, D. (1988). Social relationships and health. <i>Science</i>, 241(4865), (p. 540-545) (5 p.) • Gable, S. L., Reis, H. T., Impett, E. A., & Asher, E. R. (2004). What Do You Do When Things Go Right? The Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Benefits of Sharing Positive Events. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 87(2), (p. 228-245) (17 p.) • Joshanloo, M., & Weijers, D. (2024). Ideal personhood through the ages: tracing the genealogy of the modern concepts of wellbeing. <i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>, 15, 1494506. • White, S. (2015). Relational wellbeing: A theoretical and operational approach. <p>Assignment: Make a social connection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This week, put effort into making new social connections on as many days as possible. It may be a brief chat with someone from your dorm, or a classmate you don’t usually interact with. Or you might take more time to nurture an existing connection with someone who is important to you – a family member at home, a close friend. The significance of this exercise is in making a genuine social connection with another person. Reflect in your Learning Journal about how taking time to nurture a social connection made you feel.

Choose an item	Content	Assignments
Week 10	<p>Positive psychology interventions</p> <p>Positive Behaviors This week we will examine the mechanisms behind Positive Psychology interventions, and how our actions can foster our well-being.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do interventions work? • Examples of successful positive psychology. • Interventions. • Two case studies: Yoga and PPI in South Africa/Inspired Life Program. • A critical look at positive education interventions in non-Western contexts. • Mindfulness. 	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lyubomirsky, S., & Layous, K. (2013). How do simple positive activities increase well-being? <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i>, 22(1), (p. 57-62) (5 p.) • Layous, K., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2014). The how, why, what, when, and who of happiness: Mechanisms underlying the success of positive activity interventions. <i>Positive emotion: Integrating the light sides and dark sides</i>, (p. 473-495) (22 p.) • Oettingen, G., & Reininger, K. M. (2016). The power of prospecting: mental contrasting and behavior change. <i>Social and Personality Psychology Compass</i>, 10(11), (p. 591-604) (13 p.) • Siegel, R. D., Germer, C. K., & Olendzki, A. (2009). Mindfulness: What is it? Where did it come from? In <i>Clinical handbook of mindfulness</i> (p. 17-35) (17 p.) • Appiah, R., Wilson Fadji, A., Wissing, M. P., & Schutte, L. (2022). The inspired life program: development of a multicomponent positive psychology intervention for rural adults in Ghana. <i>Journal of Community Psychology</i>, 50(1), 302-328. • Meiring, Van Eeden, & Wilson Fadji (forthcoming). A qualitative exploration of the feasibility of a Yoga-based positive psychology intervention for promoting well-being at a South African Higher Education Institution <p>Assignment: Meditate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether you are new to meditation or have an established meditation practice, this week, spend (at least) 10 minutes each day meditating. Feel free to use guided meditations or apps available to you. If you are among the many who find meditation challenging at first, think of it as building an essential well-being boosting skill that you can use in your life. Reflect on your meditation experiences in your Learning Journal. • Read the Inspired Life Program by Appiah et al. (2022) and highlight one intervention that you can resonate with in your learning journal

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Week 11	Positive health Good health is a central pillar of well-being. This week we will investigate scientific findings on various health behaviors that serve as crucial pathways to leading a good life and nurturing our physical and mental well-being. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress • Sleep • Exercise • Vagus nerve • Health behaviours 	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoits, P. A. (2010). Stress and health: Major findings and policy implications. <i>Journal of health and social behavior</i>, 51(1_suppl), (p. 41-53) (12 p.) • Pressman, S. D., Gallagher, M. W., & Lopez, S. J. (2013). Is the emotion-health connection a “first-world problem”? <i>Psychological science</i>, 24(4), (p. 544-549) (5 p.) • Grossman, P., Niemann, L., Schmidt, S., & Walach, H. (2004). Mindfulness-based stress reduction and health benefits: A meta-analysis. <i>Journal of psychosomatic research</i>, 57(1), (p. 35-43) (8 p.) • Seligman, M. E. (2008). Positive health. <i>Applied Psychology</i>, 57(s1), (p. 3-18) (15 p.) • Callaghan, P. (2004). Exercise: A neglected intervention in mental health care? <i>Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing</i>, 11, (p. 476-483) (7 p.) • Veenhoven, R. (2008). Healthy happiness: Effects of happiness on physical health and the consequences for preventive health care. <i>Journal of happiness studies</i>, 9(3), (p. 449-469) (20 p.) • APA (2004). More sleep would make us happier, healthier and safer. <i>Psychology in Action: American Psychological Association website</i>. February 2004. http://www.apa.org/action/resources/research-in-action/sleep-deprivation.aspx (2 p.) Assignment: Exercise & Sleep. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For this week’s activity, we are going back to the basics – exercise and sleep. For as many days in the week as possible, try to get some (at least 20 minutes) exercise. This doesn’t have to be a marathon-level training. Go for a brisk walk; take your bike to class; do yoga with a friend; put your headphones on and dance to your favorite songs. The point is to become intentional about getting physical activity (maybe more than usual) and noticing any changes in your mood. Next up: sleep. Try to get at least 7 hours of sleep on as many nights as possible this week. At the end of the week, reflect in your Learning Journal about any changes in your physical/mental well-being after your exercise and sleep challenge.

Week 12

Resilience

Leading a good life means being able to rise back up from inevitable setbacks. This week we will explore resilience – the human capacity to withstand hardships.

- What is resilience?
- Nurturing resilience
- Models on resilience and posttraumatic growth.
- Growth mindset vs. fixed mindset.
- Post-traumatic growth.
- Positive and resilient communities.

Readings:

- Masten, A. S., Cutuli, J. J., Herbers, J. E., & Gabrielle-Reed, M. J. (2009). Resilience in development. In C. R. Snyder, & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *The handbook of positive psychology*, 2nd Edition ed., New York, NY: Oxford University Press. (p. 117-131) (14 p.).
- Cadell, S., Regehr, C., & Hemsworth, D. (2003). Factors contributing to posttraumatic growth: A proposed structural equation model. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 73(3), (p. 279-287) (9 p.).
- Joseph, S., Murphy, D., & Regel, S. (2012). An affective–cognitive processing model of post-traumatic growth. *Clinical Psychology & Psychotherapy*, 19(4), (p. 316-325) (9 p.).
- Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). Mindsets that promote resilience: When students believe that personal characteristics can be developed. *Educational Psychologist*, 47(4), (p. 302-314) (12 p.).
- The Road to Resilience, APA
<https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience> (7 p.).
- Theron, L., & Van Breda, A. (2021). Multisystemic enablers of sub-Saharan child and youth resilience to maltreatment. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 119, 105083.
- Compton, W. C., & Hoffman, E. (2019). Positive institutions and cultural well-being. *Positive psychology: The science of happiness and flourishing*. SAGE Publications. (p. 347-367) (20 p.).
- White, M. A., & Murray, A. S. (2015). Building a positive institution. Evidence-based approaches in positive education. Springer, Dordrecht. (p. 1-26) (25 p.).

Assignment: Write a self-compassion letter to yourself.

- Think of a recent difficult or stressful experience from your life. Be sure to pick an experience that you are comfortable writing about. Write a self-compassion letter to yourself, in the second person, about this experience. Allow yourself to remember the situation. Then acknowledge your feelings or thoughts, as well as what you had hoped for or needed at that moment. For example, “Dear Jane, I know that you are feeling [sad/stressed, etc.]; You were really [looking forward to.../trying your best to..., etc.]” Write about the stress you experienced, as well as the core needs underneath it: a desire for health, safety, love, appreciation, connection, achievement, etc. Remind yourself about our common humanity: “Everyone make mistakes, fails, experiences anger, stress, loss, disappointment, etc.” Mentor yourself with some compassionate advice or encouragement, as if you were talking to a loved one. What would you say in the same situation to someone who is dear to you? *How* would you say it (e.g. gentle voice, caring words)? After writing the letter, consider reading it out loud to yourself, or putting it away for when you need self-compassion. Research shows that when study participants wrote a self-compassionate letter to themselves for seven days in a row, they continued to experience increased happiness six months later, when compared to a control group (Shapira, et al, 2010).

Choose an item	Content	Assignments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that you don't have to share the content of your self-compassion letter with me if you don't wish to. In class, we will reflect on the experience of self-compassion and how it felt to write the letter, rather than the content of the letter itself.
Week 13	Applied Positive Psychology and Future Directions Careers that use Positive Psychology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive Psychology in schools Positive communities Social well-being Integrating multiple perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New research methods Alternative perspectives on well-being Integrating Positive Psychology with Psychology Values Cross-cultural considerations 	Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compton, W. C., & Hoffman, E. (2019). Positive institutions and cultural well-being. <i>Positive psychology: The science of happiness and flourishing</i>. SAGE Publications. (p. 347-367) (20 p.). White, M. A., & Murray, A. S. (2015). Building a positive institution. Evidence-based approaches in positive education. Springer, Dordrecht. (p. 1-26) (25 p.). Compton, W. C., & Hoffman, E. (2019). A look towards the future of positive psychology. <i>Positive psychology: The science of happiness and flourishing</i>. SAGE Publications. (p. 379-395) (16 p.). Lopez, S. J. (2009). The future of positive psychology: Pursuing three big goals. In <i>The Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology</i>. (p. 89-98) (9 p.).
	Final exam	Student Presentations & submission of report

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

- None

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- <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/01/theres-more-to-life-than-being-happy/266805/>
- <https://www.leawaters.com/blog/how-to-spot-your-childs-strengths-these-3-indicators-can-help>
- https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/loving_kindness_meditation



- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/between-cultures/201805/in-helping-others-you-help-yourself>

VIDEOS:

- https://www.ted.com/talks/robert_waldinger_what_makes_a_good_life_lessons_from_the_longest_study_on_happiness/recommendations/140459
- https://www.ted.com/talks/martin_seligman_the_new_era_of_positive_psychology?language=en#t-1335298
- https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_the_surprising_science_of_happiness
- Greater Good Science Center: Positive Emotions Open Our Mind <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7dFDHzV36>
- Want to be happy? Be grateful | David Steindl-Rast <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtBsl3j0YRQ>
- Taoism: The concept of Flow <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtGtqmC5wU4>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0EM45CpeQb4>

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY:

Dr Wilson Fadji obtained her PhD in 2015 from Stellenbosch University and is currently a senior lecturer at De Montfort University, Department of Psychology. She has taught several undergraduate and postgraduate Psychology modules including but not limited to Qualitative research methods, Well-being and positive psychology, Psychology and education, Psychology and Health and Inclusive Education. Her research interest lies in contextual understanding of well-being indicators and well-being studies in Africa.