INNOVATIONS IN FLOURISHING:
BEYOND COUNSELOR SELF-CARE
AND RESILIENCE!

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Learning Objectives

• Participants will be able to describe the 5 elements of Seligman’s Well-being theory
• Participants will be able to verbalize a minimum of 5 interventions that can be utilized to improve counselor happiness and flourishing
• Participants will identify a minimum of 3 assessment tools to utilize to assess well-being and happiness that they can utilize in their own lives and with the students they serve.

But So Much More!
“Unofficial Objectives”

• Acknowledge the difficult and often thankless work you do everyday

• Acknowledge the “Cost of Caring” and the reality of “Empathy Fatigue”

• Acknowledge that most of our work environments are just “not there yet” and that flourishing is a challenge

• Acknowledge that not everything will “fit” for you and that this is a highly individualized process

• Acknowledge that for some of us this may be harder (but very possible) due to many factors such as experiences of:
  • multiple traumas
  • oppression
  • disabilities
“Unofficial Objectives”
(Clearly a little audacious!)

- **Validate** and **encourage** you if you are already flourishing or have started that journey!
- We want to **ignite a spark** for those who may not have considered the concepts or maybe never even tried a positive psychology intervention in their own life!
- We want to provide you with **practical strategies and interventions**
- We hope you will begin to **dream, envision, brainstorm**, and ultimately **create** your unique version of **flourishing**!
Are You Ready?
Positive Psychology
#1 Myth it is all about “Being Positive”

“Even a happy life cannot be without a measure of darkness, and the word happy would lose its meaning if it were not balanced by sadness.”

Carl G. Jung
“Roots” of Positive Psychology
Positive Psychology
#2 Myth Strategies Only Applies to USA and for Wealthy Americans

- Extensive research across cultures and countries
- All socioeconomic levels
- Most notable researchers Ed Diener,
  Robert Biswais Diener
  Sean Acher
Positive Psychology
Myth #3 Only “works” for People Who have had “easy lives” and not experienced any “trauma” or “ongoing difficulty”

• “Counselor Case Studies”
  • 1 of us experiences chronic pain
  • 1 of us has a genetic heart condition
  • 1 of us had multiple childhood illnesses and nearly died
  • 1 of us experienced domestic violence, physical and emotional abuse growing up as well as alcoholism of a parent
  • 1 of us went through trauma as child
  • 2 of us went through the divorce of our parents
  • Both of us grew up in male dominated cultures which looked down upon women
  • Both of us were estranged from our fathers when they died
  • 1 of us had a father who was murdered and found in the trunk of a car days later
  • 1 of us had a mother who died suddenly as she tried to resuscitate her unsuccessfully
  • 1 of us has a brain injured child
Why I Wear Pearls
Positive Psychology is About Flourishing!
What is Flourishing?
Table Top Discussion
Theoretical Background

That's true in Theory...

But it's not true in another Theory.

Aren't theories great? In Theory.
Flourishing
Seligman (2011)

• More than just happiness or well-being
• Encompasses a wide range of positive psychology constructs
• Highly individualized
• Requires paying careful attention to building and maintaining it
• Seligman- Goal of Positive Psychology is to increase flourishing in life and on the planet
Flourishing: PERMA
Five Elements
(Objective #1)
Let's hear from Martin Seligman

- Positive Emotion
- Engagement-Flow
- Relationships
- Meaning
- Accomplishment
Self-Reflection
Genetic predisposition for half full vs. half-empty
Tal Ben-Shahar and Angus Ridgway (2017)
Sharp and 10X Leaders = Flourishing
Leadership Starts with Your Personal Flourishing

- Strengths
- Health
- Absorption
- Relationships
- Purpose
Flourishing
Dr. Lynn Soots

• Flourishing is the product of the pursuit and engagement of an authentic life that brings inner joy and happiness through meeting goals, being connected with life passions, and relishing in accomplishments through the peaks and valleys of life.”

• A process that requires action
Flourishing and Our Brains

The brain acts like a muscle: The more activity you do, the larger and more complex it can become. What you do in life physically changes what your brain looks like. You can wire and rewire yourself with the simple choice of which musical instrument—or professional sport—you play.

-Brain Rules by John Medina
Some Basic Neuroscience
Pre-Frontal Cortex is Our CEO of Resilience
Autonomic Nervous System

“AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM RESPONSE”

Sympathetic Response
“Fight or Flight”
(Stress)

Parasympathetic Response
“Rest & Digest”
(Peace)

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Normal brain  Depressed brain

"Get over it lots of people have it worse"

Depression
Neuroplasticity: Growing and Changing Our Brains!

- Our brains grow and adapt to change throughout our lives!
- Neurons that wire together-fire together
- We can create new neural pathways with new ways of responding
- SAFETY is essential for Neuroplasticity (Stephen Porgas)
- We can cultivate resilience through:
  - New Experiences-little and often
  - Positive relationships and secure attachments-re-attachments calm reactivity and buffer stress and trauma (Louis Cosolino)
  - Positive emotions as an antidote to negativity bias (Barbara Fredrickson)
Strategies and Interventions

(Objective #2)
Remember This One is For You But You Can Also Use Them With Students!

Goal is for you and your students to Flourish!

- Strategies from Positive Psychology and Resilience Neuroscience as well as:
  - Mindfulness
  - Wellness
  - CBT
  - DBT

- These strategies rewire our brains for resilience and flourishing!
- Be willing to try something new!
- Practice it with intention!
- Don’t give up!
- Get Support for Changes—“Flourishing Buddy”
- Consider Therapy if you have experienced multiple traumas
- Frequent and brief implementation of strategies are better
  - Instead of 1 x week for an hour try 3xs a day for 5 minutes
Two Additional Reminders

• “The problem is not that there are problems. The problem is expecting otherwise and thinking having a problem is a problem” - Theodore Rubin, American Psychiatrist

“A joyful life is an individual creation that cannot be copied from a recipe.” - Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
Somatic Techniques to Restore Balance of ANS
(Linda Graham) (Christine Neff)

• You need a 45 minute hour to flourish!
• Establish safety so brain can Relearn, Unlearn, Make New Connections
• 5-15Xs a day-little and often
• Stimulates Oxytocin
• Sigh to reset nervous system/Coughing
• Affectionate Breathing
• Hand on Heart Breathing
• Hugging
• Posture shifts
• Soles of feet
Somatic Techniques to Restore Balance of ANS
Continued
(Linda Graham) (Christine Neff)

- Progressive Relaxation
- Visualization is real to the brain
  - Soothing landscape
  - Evoke positive memory
  - Can be recalled as needed
- Compassionate friend for safety
Visualization Exercise
Mindfulness

Mind Full, or Mindful?
Mindfulness Meditation
Barbara Fredrickson

• 20 Minutes daily

• Improvements in:
  • Job satisfaction
  • Job performance
  • Confidence
  • Relationships
  • health
Meditation Vs. Savoring

Savoring

The way to develop the habit of savoring is to pause when something is beautiful and good and catches our attention - the sound of rain, the look of the night sky - the glow in a child's eyes, or when we witness some kindness. Pause... then totally immerse in the experience of savoring it.

— Tara Brach —

Meditation
Savoring
(Rick Hanson)

- Notice in the Hear and Now
- Recall a memory
- Make it vivid—really listen, look, taste, engage your senses and enjoy!
- Absorb it 10-30 seconds or more
- Repeat 6 times a day to imprint in long term memory
- Can combine with gratitude

"Once you start making the effort to “wake yourself up”—that is, be more mindful in your activities—you suddenly start appreciating life a lot more."

- Robert Biswas-Diener
Your Happiest Days Are Behind You
Robert Biswas-Diener, Ph.D.
In Praise of Smelly Travel
CBT for US Too!
Confronting Our Inner Critic

STOP It!
No Stinking Thinking

Be careful how you are talking to yourself because you are listening.
~Lisa M. Hayes

TELL THE NEGATIVE COMMITTEE THAT MEETS INSIDE YOUR HEAD TO SIT DOWN AND SHUT UP
~Ann Bradford
Integration of CBT Into Positive Psychology

• Pleasant activities scheduling
• Identify & Review of Success Experiences
• Mood Monitoring
• Relaxation Training
• Problem Solving
Power Pose
Amy Cuddy

- Impacts how others see us
- Impacts how we see ourselves
- Impacts our physiology—Our bodies change our minds when we pose!
- We can claim our power through our pose
- Use open and expansive pose
- Fake it until you become it!

Practice a Power Pose
- Sit or stand tall
- Weight even on seat bones and feet
- Chest lifted and open
- Shoulder blades down & back
- Chin lifted
- Core engaged
- Smile
Let’s See Your Power Pose!
Facial Feedback


Get That Genuine Smile 😊

According to studies, expressing a Duchenne smile is more important than beauty when it comes to:

1) Life Satisfaction
2) Having a happy and successful marriage.

Duchenne (Genuine) Smile
Both the Zygomatic major muscles and the orbicularis oculi muscles (eyes crinkle) are contracted.

Pan American/Botox (Fake) Smile
Only the Zygomatic major muscles are used. (Only mouth turns up)
Find Mentors that Flourish

• “All the world is full of suffering. It is also full of overcoming.” - Helen Keller

• Find Mentors that flourish not in spite of the trauma they have experienced but because of it” – Richard Teedeschi

• Healthy brains fire together
Benefits of Gratitude
http://happierhuman.com/benefits-of-gratitude/
The Gratitude Visit
What Went Well Exercise
Three Blessings

"Gratitude... goes far beyond saying ‘thank you’. When we are grateful, we affirm that a source of goodness exists in our lives."

– Robert A. Emmons
Gratitude for Web of Life

(Robert Emmons)

• Imagine people who we never meet that work to provide us with the ingredients that make our life easier and give thanks

• Imagine the people that we do know that help us each day

• Imagine the things we have that others may not have as easily as we do

• How might you express gratitude for these?
Tabletop Exercise
Web of Life

- As a group choose one of the Web of Life examples and come up with a list of as many people or things in your web of life that you are grateful for and then brainstorm how you might consider “giving thanks”. Share with bigger group if we have time.
Develop and Practice A Sense of Awe!
(Greater Good Science Center)

- Amazement for beauty, complexity
- Can combine with gratitude, savoring and mindfulness
- Can be found in:
  - Art
  - Music
  - Nature
  - Everyday experiences

"There are only two ways to live your life. One way is though nothing is a miracle and the other way is as though everything is a miracle."

- Albert Einstein
TABLETOP EXERCISE

Think of something or someone who inspires/evokes awe for you? Why? Share with your table and with the larger group if we have time.
Create Intentional Celebrations at Home and at Work!

- Infuse joy and laughter
- Create traditions, build relationships and memories that last
- Look for opportunities all around you to celebrate and invite others to join in or create your own personal celebrations
- Western KY Potlucks
The Doubler
(Achor, 2010)

• For 2 minutes per day think of one positive experience that happened in last 24 hours

• Bullet point every detail

• Brain cant differentiate between visualization and actual experience so you have just doubled the positive experience!

• Previous research from the University of Texas found that if you have a chronic neuromuscular disease, chronic fatigue and pain, and you do this for six weeks in a row, six months later, they can drop your pain medication by 50 percent.
Random Kindness Exercise

“Doing a kindness produces the single most reliable increase in well-being than any exercise we have tested” - Martin Seligman

Find one unexpected kind thing to do tomorrow for someone and just do it!
Conscious Kindness: Positive Emails  
(Achor, 2010)  
Positive Emotion, Meaning and Relationships

- Start each day with a positive email or text thanking or praising one person
- Chose a different person every day
- This builds social connection which is the greatest predictor of long term happiness
Stepping off the Hedonic Treadmill

Choose experiences over stuff!
Do things that really matter!!!
Create Memories!!
“Happiness, not money or prestige, should be regarded as the ultimate currency—the currency by which we take measure of our lives.”

— Tal Ben-Shahar
Determine your Strengths!

- [www.authentichappiness.com](http://www.authentichappiness.com)
- VIA- Values in Action Survey
- Take for free!
- 6 Virtues and 24 strengths
- 240 items
- 15 minutes to complete
- Taken by 1.3 million people world wide
Performance and Passion Strengths Reflection

• **Performance Strengths**
  • What are your natural talents?
  • What am I most successful at doing now and in the past?
  • What kinds of tasks are easiest for me to learn

• **Passion Strengths**
  • What excites and energizes me?
  • What do I love doing?

• **Peak Potential Zone** = utilization of both performance and passion strengths
Making a Difference-Creating a Life of Meaning

“Being Moved by Compassion”

Perfect PERMA

Tabletop Discussion

• What moves you to action in this world?
• What can you do to make the world a better place or contribute to the well-being of others? Work or home?
• May or may not have a spiritual component to it

"Compassion is one of the few things we can practice that will bring immediate and long-term happiness to our lives."
Health and Wellness

The Energy Creation Zone: Managing Depletion and Recovery

Blue Zone Lessons

• Healthy Diet
  • Lots of fruit and veggies—little meat
  • Mediterranean diet
  • Impact on Mood and Well-being

• Regular Physical Activity

• Lots of Rest
  • 8-10 hours

• Exercise
Take Your Vacations!


- Increases creativity
- Life satisfaction
- Increased empathy
- Increase family bonding
- Increased productivity

**Taking a Vacation Pays Off**

If you take at least 11 of your vacation days, you’re more likely to receive a raise or bonus.

**HAVE YOU HAD A RAISE OR BONUS IN THE LAST THREE YEARS?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
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![Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents who had a raise or bonus in the last three years, comparing those who took 10 or fewer vacation days to those who took 11 or more.](source: Project Time Off, 2016)
Forest Bathing or Shinrin-yoku

“The Nature Fix”- Florence Williams
“Your Guide to Forest Bathing” Amos Clifford

- Enhance wellness, health and happiness
- Decrease stress, improve immune system
- Association of Nature and Forest Therapy
- Ecotherapy

SHINRIN-YOKU:
(n) a Japanese word translated “forest bathing” — a visit to the forest for relaxation and to improve ones health.
Blue Space
(Amber Pearson-Michigan State)
Blue Mind-Wallace Nichols
Relationships
Authentic and Positive Bonds

• Biggest predictor of our happiness!

• Encouraging Positivity and Authenticity

• Psychological Safety

• Connecting in the Metro to decrease isolation

• Authentic relationships rather than 1000 Facebook friends
Future Diary: Projected Accomplishment Case Study
Positive Emotion, Engagement, Meaning and Accomplishment
Digital Scrapbook/Vision Board

- Capture Anticipated memory and actual past achievements
- Frames hope and dreams in a visual medium
- Tap into past achievements when discouraged
- Photos
- Videos
Learn Something New!
(Linda Graham)

- Creates new neural circuitry
- Adapt to change better
- Learning speed increase
- Make new relationships
- Best Protectors against Alzheimer's-50% decrease in risk

- Some of the best things to try for your brain:
  - New language
  - Play an instrument
  - Navigate a new city
Plan a Personal Play Date
Table Top Exercise

- Incorporate humor and laughter
- People you love
- Re-energizes us and buffers stress
Other Positive Psychology “Gurus”

- Barbara Fredrickson-UNC at Chapel Hill
- Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (Me-high-Cheek-sent-me-high)-Flow
- Chris Peterson- U of Michigan at Ann Arbor
  - Worked with Seligman on Learned Helplessness research in early 1990’s
  - VIA Institute on Character, VIA Classification of Strengths
- Tal Ben-Shahar-Harvard
- Sonia Lyubomirsky- U of California at Riverside
  - “The How of Happiness”
- Ed and Robert Biswas Diener
  - Positive Acorn
- Angela Duckworth- Achievement research
- Shawn Achor – “The Happiness Advantage”-Harvard
- Amit Sood, M.D. “Handbook for Happiness”-Mayo Clinic
Other Resources and Assessment Tools
(Objective #3)
Happiness Advantage: Linking Positive Brains to Performance
Shawn Achor