

# Positive psychology

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The interpretation matters ver often a lot more as we'll see than the information that goes in.

Happiness in much more contingent on our state of mind than our status or the state of our bank account.

soul grows more by subtraction than by additon

if there is a wow, the wow is that there is no wow.

Common sense is not that common. — Voltaire

thank you for reminding me of something that I've already known.

The ABC: affect, behavior, and cognition.

What is wrong is not the great discoveries of science information is always better than ignorance, no matter what information or what ignorance. What is wrong is the belief behind the information, the belief that information will change the world. It won't.

Abraham Maslow:

" If one took a course or picked up a book on the psychology of learning, most of it, in my opinion, would be beside the point that is, beside the 'humanistic' point. Most of it would present learning as the acquisition of associations, of skills and capacities that are external and not intrinsic to the human character, to the human personality, to the person himself."

"Humanistic philosophy offers a new conception of learning, of teaching, and of education. Stated simply, such a concept hold that the function of education, the goal of education the human goal, the humanistic goal, the goal so far as human beings are concerned is ultimately the "self-actualization" of a person, the becoming fully human, the development of the fullest height that the human species can stand up to or that the particular individual can come to. In a less technical way, it is helping the person to become the best that he is able to become."

Be all you can be.

Ask and ye shall you receive — Scripture

"What is most personal is most general."

"We must remember that knowledge of one's own depp nature is also simultaneously knowledge of human nature in general."

C.S. Lewis, "There is one thing and only one in the whole universe which we know about that we could learn from external observation. That one thing is ourselves. We have, so to speak, inside information; we are in know."

Martin Seligman: "The aim of positive psychology is to catalyze a change in psychology from a preoccupation only with repairing the worst things in life to also building the best qualities in life."

Questions very often create reality.

It is up to you to succeed.

I'll take action and action will increase our level of confidence. And then more hope and optimism is a result.

Hope and optimism become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

And when we don't see the seed of greatness, when we don't water it and shed a light on it, it withers and dies, which is unfortunately the fate of most human potential.

salutogenic question:

What is source of health?

What is the source of success?

What is the source of wellbeing?

How can we cultivate the seed of greatness in ourselves and families, in our communities and organizations, in our nation and in our world?

You are ill because you don't have enough health in your life, because you are not pursuing those things that make you healthy.

What make you healthy?

Pursuing meaning, purpose; cultivating healthy relationships.

Doing meditation actually literally transforms our brain, making us more susceptible to positive emotions and more resilient in the face of painful emotions.

How many people know that three times a week physical exercise, 30 minutes each time has the same effect as our most powerful psychiatric drugs?

"It may be that trying to be happier is as futile as trying to be taller and is therefore counterproductive." — "Happiness is a Stochastic Phenomenon".

Change is possible.

"That's it. That's my lot in life. I was born unlucky." And that, very often, becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. And she remains unhappy.

Lykken: "I made a dumb statement. It is clear that we can change happiness levels, up or down."

"let's also focus on what is working."

That is a radically different approach than studying just the average. Because what I am saying here is "let's not study the average", let's study the top five percent so that we can understand the phenomenon better.

Maslow said: human nature and human potential has been sold short, when we only study the average.

Maslow again: Few in number though they be, we can learn a great deal about values from the direct study of these highly evolved, most mature, psychologically healthiest individuals, and from the study of the peak moments of average individuals, moments, in which they become transiently self-actualized.

the "Growing-tip" statistics

"let's study what works best" — the second significant idea within research in positive psychology

"let's study what works" — first significant idea.

this is about individual change.

How about societal change?

We underestimate our capacity to affect change because we underestimate the growth of exponential function. We are influencing people and the world every minute of our lives.

Extreme circumstances make very little difference to our wellbeing.

The problem is not lower these high expectations. that doesn't matter. The problem is right versus wrong expectations. Not lower high expectations, that won't make a difference to our levels of wellbeing. What will make a difference to our levels of wellbeing is if we have right vs. wrong expectations.

The right expectation is to believe in change from within.

In fact, our readiness and potential to experience happiness is mostly depended on our state of mind, not on our status, or the states of our bank account.

It's about changing our perception, state of mind. It's about changing our interpretation of the world, of what's happening to us, of our achievements, of our failures. It's about what we choose to perceive, what we choose to focus on. It's about transformation, as opposed to the external information or the external success.

"It is for self-perfectioning that destiny calls us. "

We need a space of unconditional acceptance.

Over the next few months, you are going to be experiencing every single kind of emotion to the extreme and that's fine. It's natural. We all go through it.

Permission to be human.

When we try to suppress a natural phenomenon such as having a visual of the word when we say it, that thing just intensifies. The same applies to the painful emotions that are natural. And when we try to suppress them, they strengthen.

Rejecting our nature leads to suboptimal performance, emotionally as well as in terms of external performance.

Painful emotions are as much a part of human nature as the law of gravity is part of physical nature.

"nature to be commanded must be obeyed".

Active acceptance.

It means understanding that certain things I cannot change and certain things I can and ought to change.

to be true to reality.

"God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can change; and wisdom to know the difference."

The Dalai Lama, "Whether one believes in a religion or not, whether one believes in this religion or that religion, the very purpose of our life is happiness. The very motion of our life is towards happiness."

"Thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreases by being shared."

"Be the change you want to see in the world."

People mostly do what you do, rather than what you say.

People do what you do, not what you say. So you may want to spread happiness, through your word. But ultimately, the best way, the optimal way spreading happiness is to work on your own happiness, because then you are leading by example.

That applies to leadership. The most important thing about leadership is not what you say; it's what you do. The most important thing about parenting it's not how much you tell your child "honesty is important" but rather how honest you are. If you want to spread happiness, "Be the change you want to see in the world." By example.

"Belief as Self-Fulfilling Prophecies"

"Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish".

"If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with success, unexpected in common hours".

"Whatever you mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve."

"Whether you think you can or can't, you are right."

believe, and you will achieve; conceive, and it will be conceived.

"Beliefs in personal efficacy affect life choices, level of motivation, quality of functioning, resilience to adversity and vulnerability to stress and depression."

1. update schema
2. ignore or discard in external information
3. actively seek confirmation
4. creating a new reality
- 5.

positive or negative to back up our schema.

"I failed my way to success."

learn to fail, or fail to learn.

"you must never confuse faith that you would prevail in the end which you can never afford to lose with the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality whatever they might be."

False optimism sooner or later means disillusionment, anger and hopelessness.

Optimism, passion and hard work.

to raise self-esteem and that is to cope as opposed to avoid. to cope meaning to put yourself on the line. to take risks not when you're in your panic zone but when you're in your stretch zone.

Self perception theory

"To dare is to lose one's footing momentarily. Not to dare is to lose oneself."

The mind does not like inconsistency.

Cognitive therapy

<Way of the Peaceful Warrior>

But while I don't think that things happen for the best, I do believe that some people are able to make the best of things that happen, and there is a very big difference here.

We co-create.

“Fiction is more important than history.”

Martin Seligman: “The belief that we can rely on shortcuts to gratification and bypass the exercise of personal strengths and virtues is folly. It leads to legions of humanity who are depressed in the middle of great wealth and are starving to death spiritually.”

“We first make our habit and then our habits make us.”

1. Genetic genes 50%

In other words also with genes, people who don't work on their happiness even if they have the best of genes will not do as well as people with less happy genes who work on it. So work matter a great deal.

2. External circumstances. 10%

Two aspects within emotion: The first, gradual change. The Second, more acute change.

“Peak experiences often have consequences, They can do the same there as psychotherapy, if one keeps his goals right, and if one knows just what he is about, and if one is conscious of what he is going toward. We can certainly talk, on the one hand, of the breaking up of symptoms, like the breaking up of cliches, of anxieties, or the like; or on the other hand, we can talk about the development of spontaneity, and of courage, and of Olympian or Godlike humor and suchness, sensory awareness, body awareness, and the like.”

What you have is what you got and what you will get.

Changing your focus from self-discipline to rituals.

Why did everyone brush their teeth this morning, whereas no one, no one person out of more than 600 students fulfilled their new year's resolutions? Why? Because new year resolutions rely on self-discipline. Brushing our teeth relies on a ritual.

It was a ritual.

Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz: “Building rituals requires defining very precise behaviors and performing them at very specific times motivated by deeply held values.”

Rituals are not just important, they are absolutely necessary.

Maintaining a ritual, requires some self-discipline, but not a lot. Creating a ritual requires a lot of self-discipline.

We first make our habits and then our habits make us.

Loehr and Schwartz: “Incremental change is better than ambitious failure. Success feeds on itself.”

The Dalai Lama: "There isn't anything that isn't made easier through constant familiarity and training. Through training we can change; we can transform ourselves."

Pennebaker: "An artifact of our ambiguous and unpredictable world is the anxiety of not attaining completion and not understanding a simple cause-and-effect explanation for traumatic disturbances. Alas, we naturally search for meaning and the completion of events; it gives us a sense of control and predictability over our lives."

"A global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a pervasive, enduring though dynamic feeling of confidence that:

1. the stimuli deriving from one's internal and external environments in the course of living are structured, predictable and explicable (comprehensible, in other words);
2. the resources are available to one to meet the demands posed by these stimuli (internal resources and external resources: I can deal with it, I can manage);
3. these demands are challenges, worthy of investment and engagement (it's meaningful)."

This is what a journal does to a great extent. (1, 2, 3)



Abraham Maslow: "Being focused on a task produces organization for efficiency both within the organism and in the environment."

"Concerning all acts of creation there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: That the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would not have otherwise occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance which no man would have dreamed would come his way. I have learned a deep respect for one of Goethe's couplets: 'Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it!' Boldness has genius, magic and power in it."

What does lead to happiness?

Understanding the proper role of goals. And understanding that it's not the attaining of a goal that leads to happiness, but the having of a goal that leads to happiness.

The goals liberate us to enjoy the here and now.

"Happiness is not about making it to the peak of the mountain, nor is it about climbing aimlessly around the mountain; happiness is the experience of climbing toward the peak."

The key is to have the goal. The key is to have the commitment to whatever it is that I'm doing.

David Watson: "Contemporary researchers emphasize that it is the process of striving after goals rather than goals attainment per se that is crucial for happiness and positive affectivity."

Gwendolyn Brooks: "Live not for battles won / Live not for the-end-of-the-song / Live for the along."

"Identify the thing that you can do. And then out of those, identify the things that you want to do. And list them down. Make a list, long or short, whatever it is. Now out of the things you want to do, identify those things that you really want to do. And then look at them, and out of those things, identify those that you really really want to do and then do them."

Easier: "Becoming self concordant is a difficult skill, requiring both accurate self-perceptual abilities and the ability to resist social pressures that may sometimes push one in inappropriate directions."

"Life is too short to do what I have to do; It's barely long enough to do what I want to do."

Sometimes we need to delay gratification. The danger is that we enter this delayed gratification state for our entire lives. And that becomes the red-rose ... path. And that is what we need to be aware of. This is what we need to keep in back of our mind.

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"Do it better with pleasure."

We do do it better with pleasure if we pursue our passions.

Abraham Maslow: "It is certainly true that many of us evade our constitutionally suggested vocations (call, destiny, task in life, mission). So often we run away from the responsibilities dictated (or rather suggested) by nature, by fate, even sometimes by accident, just as Jonah tried-in vain-to run away from his fate."

What is your fate? What is your calling? What is your destiny? Just listen to the voice that suggests your vocation.

The most noble thing is to listen to that inner voice.

Gandhi: "Be the change you want to see in the world."

Ambani Carter: "Instead of focusing on what we can live with, we should be thinking about what we can't live without."

tips about setting goals:

1. write them down.
2. set lifelines: putting the spirit inside us. It's not I-will-do-the-following-soonish; It's "I will do the following by the first of July, 2009."

Langer said: "People can image themselves taking steps, while great heights seem entirely forbidden."

Ellen DeGeneres

Marva Collins

1. They set rituals for themselves
2. In addition to setting rituals, they particularly set rituals for both work and for recovery.

Stress was actually not the problem. In fact, what they found was stress was good for us! That stress actually cultivated resilience, strength and helped us be happier in the long run.

<The Power of Full Engagement>

"I can do the work of a year in 9 months, but not in 12."

So stress is not the problem. The problem is lack of recovery.

"Freedom is not worth having if it does not connote freedom to err."

George Eliot had this to say: "The important work of moving the world forward does not wait to be done by perfect men."

"If you want to increase your success rate, double your failure rate."

perfectionism: an incapacitating fear of failure that permeates our lives, especially those areas that we care about most.

It is an approach, a cognitive and emotional schema, that we hold toward the journey of our lives, toward the process of getting from point A to point B.

Nature to be commanded must be obeyed.

Pursuing excellence is about a constraint view of nature.

Versus failure as feedback, not enjoying failure.

“What kind of life do I want for myself?”

The first pillar of self-esteem is self-acceptance.

Second:

less likely to try.

“Do not do unto others what you would not have done unto yourself”

“Do unto others what you would do unto yourself.”

“Do not do unto yourself what you would not do unto others.”

“Do unto yourself what you do unto others.”

People do what you do, rather than what you say.

Psychological maturity is about the ability to willingly shift perspective.

It's the ability when we want to be immersed in the here and now, in the present. And it's the ability to, when we want, take a step back, zoom out both in time and in space, and ask the question, “is this really going to matter? Or in a year? Or in a grand schema of things, space? Is this really important?”. And at the same time, go back almost at will.

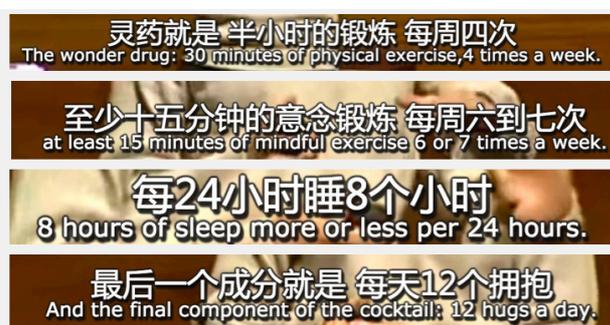
And again, it's easier said than done. But over time, we can train our mind through meditation, through cognitively reframing things.

We can train our mind to be able to make that shift almost at will.

3Ps: Permission. Positive. Perspective.

The wonder drug: cocktail

1. 30 minutes of physical exercise, 4 times a week.
2. at least 15 minutes of mindful exercise 6 or 7 times a week.
3. 8 hours of sleep more or less per 24 hours.
4. 12 hugs a day.



Ellen DeGeneres on the state of affairs.

“HERE AND NOW”.

William who teaches at Oxford: “Trying to get rid of depression in the usual problem-solving way trying to ‘fix’ what’s ‘wrong’ with us, just digs us in deeper. Rumination is part

of the problem, not part of the solution.”

Ruminating about it, trying to fix it very often makes it worse. And we would be better off just going to the emotion, going to the physical manifestation. Try it. See what's right for you. It may be right for you to you know, write half an hour on one occasion and then just meditate on it for 10 minutes. Or it may be right for you to only write about it.

as opposed to seeing it as a failure, just to see it as a learning opportunity.

breathing

Andrew Weil: “If I had to limit my advice on healthier living to just on tip, it would be simply to learn how to breathe correctly.”

I Carry Your Heart With Me (I Carry It In My Heart)

by E.E.Cummings

I carry your heart with me.  
I carry it in my heart.  
I am never without it.  
Anywhere I go, you go, my dear.  
And whatever is done by only me is your doing, my darling.  
I fear no fate.  
For you are my fate, my sweet.  
I want no world, for, beautiful, you are my world, my true.  
Here's the deepest secret no one knows.  
Here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud and the sky of the sky of a tree called life,  
which grows higher than the soul can hope or mind can hide.  
It's the wonder that's keeping the stars apart.  
I carry your heart.  
I carry it in my heart.

Because love, and especially lust and passion wears over time.

“the exotic is erotic.”

Who is the hottest woman and the hottest man in the world?

They love you just as much, if not more than you love them.

“Perfect love is rare indeed -for to be a lover will require that you continually have the subtlety of the very wise, the flexibility of the child, the sensitivity of the artist, the understanding of the philosopher, the acceptance of the saint, the tolerance of the scholar and the fortitude of the certain.”

“What makes some relationships thrive and grow stronger over time?”

John Gottman: “At the heart of my program is the simple truth that happy marriages are based on a deep friendship. By this I mean a mutual respect for and enjoyment of each other’s company. These couples tend to know each other intimately — they are well versed in each other’s likes, dislikes, personality quirks, hopes, and dreams. They have an abiding regard for each other and express this fondness not just in the big ways, but in little ways day in and day out.”

LOVE IS IN THE DETAILS. : It’s about knowing the little things, the big things. It is about sharing and being known.

Germain defines self-esteem as: “The judgment and feelings about the self.”

What would the most authentic life that I can lead?

### **How is it that you are like this?**

Why is it that there’s such high levels of conformity? Why is it that so many people go on the path that has been already taken and pre scribed by others?

do not take enough time to reflect and to think about those questions such as:

“What do I really, really want to do with my life?” to ask questions such as “What would I do in a world where no one would know what I was doing?”

three questions: “What is meaningful?”: “What is pleasurable?”; “What do I enjoy?”; and “What am I good at?”; “What are my strengths?”

learn to fail or fail to learn; there’s no other way.

Courage is not about fearless but about having fear and doing it anyway