The Value of Positive Perspectives

Video Clip: Celebrate What’s Right with the World
Positive Psychology

- A mental health continuum
- Role of positive character
- Role of positive states
- Role of positive organizations
Exercise:
Relive a Frustrating Event
Aspects of Anger
Exercise:
Relive a Joyful Event
Aspects of Joy
Working Definition of Emotions

- Brief
- Multi-component systems
- Initiated by meaning assessments
- Distinct from other affective phenomena
How Pos Emotions Differ from Neg Emotions

- Fewer ties to pathology
- Less salient
- More frequent
- More diffuse
- Seldom concern threats
Specific Action Tendencies

- Fear . . . . . . . . . . . escape
- Anger . . . . . . . . . . . attack
- Disgust . . . . . . . . . . expel
- Guilt . . . . . . . . . . . make amends
- Shame . . . . . . . . . . disappear
- Sadness . . . . . . . . . withdraw
Specific Action Tendencies

- Contentment . . . inaction
- Joy . . . . . . . free activation
- Affection . . . . . approach
- Relief . . . . . cessation of vigilance
Thought–Action Tendencies

Specific Action Tendencies
Breadth of Momentary Thought-Action Repertoire

Negative Emotions Narrow
Positive Emotions Broaden
Descriptions of Seven Positive Emotions

- Joy
- Interest
- Contentment
- Pride
- Gratitude
- Elevation
- Love
Joy

- **CONTEXT:** safe, familiar, progress
- **TENDENCY:** play
- **OUTCOME:** acquire skills
Interest

- CONTEXT: safe, novel, mysterious
- TENDENCY: explore
- OUTCOME: gain knowledge
Contentment

- **CONTEXT:** safe, certain, low effort
- **TENDENCY:** savor & integrate
- **OUTCOME:** modify self- & world-views
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Pride</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CONTEXT:</strong> credit self for good outcome</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TENDENCY:</strong> dream big about future</td>
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<td><strong>OUTCOME:</strong> achievement motivation</td>
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Gratitude

- CONTEXT: receive altruistic gift
- TENDENCY: creative giving
- OUTCOME: social bonds, skills for loving
Elevation

- **CONTEXT:** witness altruism
- **TENDENCY:** become a better person
- **OUTCOME:** gain morality & compassion
Love

- CONTEXT: safe, close relationships
- TENDENCY: play, explore, savor, dream
- OUTCOME: social support
Positive Emotions **Broaden** Thought-Action Repertoires

- Joy ................. play
- Interest ............. explore
- Contentment ...... savor & integrate
- Pride ............... dream big
- Gratitude .......... creative giving
- Elevation .......... become better
- Love ............... all of the above
Positive Emotions **Build**

Durable Personal Resources

- Physical resources
- Social resources
- Intellectual resources
- Psychological resources
The Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions

The Value of Positive Emotions
Barbara L. Fredrickson, Ph.D.
www.PositiveEmotions.org

MORNING BREAK
Research Evidence

Empirical Support for the Broaden-and-Build Theory
The Broaden Effect

- Positive emotions broaden people’s attention and thinking.
Exercise: Study the back of your hand

Given this feeling,
What do you want to do right now?
Exercise: Relive a joyful event

Given this feeling,
What do you want to do right now?
Reflect & Share:

Did Your Thought-Action Repertoire Broaden?
Empirical Strategy

- **Between-Ps Manipulation:**
  - Contentment
  - Joy
  - Neutral
  - Anger
  - Fear

- **Dependent Measure:**
  - Breadth of Thought-Action Repertoire
  - Global-Local Visual Processing
Breadth of Thought-Action Repertoire

Content

Joy

Neutral

Anger

Fear

Global-Local Visual Processing
Global Preference

Self-Other Overlap

BF – Initials _____

Please think of your best friend, and write their initials above. Then circle the picture below that best describes your relationship with your best friend.
Cross-Race Face Recognition

- Own-race bias (ORB): Poor recognition of faces of a different race

- Cross-race recognition impaired by racial categorization
Empirical Strategy

- **Context:** White Ps learn 28 faces
- **Between-Ps Manipulation:**
  - Joy
  - Neutral
  - Fear
- **Dependent Measure:**
  - Recognition Sensitivity ($d''$) to White versus Black faces
Positive Emotions
Eliminate the ORB

Empirical Strategy

- Context: Race categorization task
- Between-Ps Manipulation:
  - Joy
  - Neutral
  - Fear
- Dependent Measure:
  - Categorization Sensitivity (d”) to mostly White versus mostly Black Morphs
Positive Emotions Reduce Race Sensitivity

Johnson & Fredrickson (under review).
The Broaden Effect: Summary

- **Cognitive**
  - Thought-Action Repertoires
  - Global Visual Processing

- **Social**
  - Self-Other Overlap
  - Cross-Race Face Recognition
  - Blurs Racial Boundaries
The Resilience Effect

- Positive emotions are an active ingredient within trait resilience
The Undo Hypothesis

- If negative emotions narrow and positive emotions broaden ... then positive emotions should be efficient antidotes for the lingering aftereffects of negative emotions.
Exercise: Visualize a car careening towards you ...

- Then – a blessing – you’re safe.
- Now, think of someone you love.
- REFLECTION: What did you notice?
Empirical Strategy

- **Context:** Speech Anxiety
- **Between-Ps Manipulation:**
  - Contentment
  - Joy
  - Neutral
  - Sadness
- **Dependent Measure:**
  - Duration of Cardiovascular Reactivity
Responses to Speech Preparation

- Heart Rate**
- Finger Pulse Amplitude**
- Pulse Transit to Finger**
- Pulse Transit to Ear**
- Diastolic Blood Pressure**
- Systolic Blood Pressure**

** p < .001
Duration of Cardiovascular Reactivity

Duration of Cardiovascular Reactivity

Empirical Strategy

- Assessed early in 2001:
  - Trait Resilience
  - Psychological Resources

- Assessed after September 11th:
  - Depression
  - Psychological Resources
  - Negative and Positive Emotions
Resilience Predicts Depression after 9/11 . . .

![Diagram showing the relationship between Psychological Resilience and Depressive Symptoms with $\beta = -0.24^{*}$, where $^{*} p < .05$.](image)

through Positive Emotions

Resilience Predicts Growth after 9/11 . . .

Psychological Resilience \( \beta = .27^* \)

Increases in Psychological Resources

* \( p < .05 \).

Positive Emotions

Psychological Resilience

β = 0.01

β = 0.59***

β = 0.48**

Increases in Psychological Resources

***p < .001; **p < .01.

Reflection: Pos Emotions in Crises in your Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities for PEs in Crises</th>
<th>How may those PEs have benefited you or your client?</th>
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The Resilience Effect: Summary

- Cardiovascular Recovery
  - Cultivated Positive Emotions
  - Trait Resilience
- Depression Resistance
  - Reactions to 9/11
  - Reactions to Therapeutic Crises
The Build Effect

- Over time, positive emotions build consequential personal resources and increase well-being.
Empirical Strategy

- **Context:** Diary Study, 28 days
- **Daily Measures:**
  - Positive and Negative Emotions
- **Pre- and Post-Measures:**
  - Trait Resilience
  - Subjective Well-being
Positive Emotions uniquely linked to growth

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<tr>
<th>Daily Positive Emotions</th>
<th>Increases in Resilience</th>
<th>Increases in SWB</th>
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<tr>
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<td>$r = .31^{***}$</td>
<td>$r = .34^{***}$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daily Negative Emotions</td>
<td>$r = -.16$</td>
<td>$r = -.14$</td>
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$^{***}p < .001.$
Positive Emotions Increase SWB by Building Resources

New Directions

- To test whether and how positive emotions build efficient social coordination and high-quality connections between people.

with Michael D. Cohen
Social Coordination

“the interlocking, reciprocally-triggered action sequences of individuals working toward a common goal”

with Michael D. Cohen
High-Quality Connections

Connecting to another person in ways that bring:

- felt vitality
- felt mutuality
- life-giving physiological changes.

Empirical Strategy

- **Context:** Cooperative card game
- **Between-Dyads Manipulation:**
  - Joy
  - Neutral
- **Dependent Measures:**
  - Efficiency of social coordination
  - Implicit model of other
  - Group identity; High-quality connection
Hypothesized Results

- Positive emotion produces more efficient social coordination.
- Positive emotion produces more accurate implicit models of the other.
- Positive emotion increases perceptions of group identity.
- Positive emotions build high-quality connections.
The Build Effect: Summary

- Psychological Growth
  - After 9/11
  - In trait resilience & well-being

- Social Cohesion (work in progress)
  - High-quality connections
  - Social coordination
The Value of Positive Emotions
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The Flourish Hypothesis

- Positive affect is an active ingredient within human flourishing.
How much positive affect is needed to flourish?
Hints:

- Positivity Offset

- Negativity Bias
  (a.k.a. “bad is stronger than good”)
Case: People in Therapy

- No remission: 0.7:1
- Typical remission: 2.3:1
- Optimal remission: 4.3:1

Case: Marriages

- Ailing marriages: 0.8:1
- Thriving marriages: 4.9:1

Case: Business Teams

- Low-performance: 0.4:1
- Medium-performance: 1.8:1
- High-performance: 5.6:1

Empirical Strategy (Losada, 1999)

- Observed 60 business teams
  - High Performance (n = 15)
  - Medium Performance (n = 26)
  - Low Performance (n = 19)

- Coded all speech acts
  - Positive-Negative
  - Inquiry-Advocacy
  - Self-Other

- Created a nonlinear dynamics model of observed interactions
Dynamics of Losada’s Business Teams

Emotional Space

Inquiry / Advocacy

Empirical Strategy

- **Context:** Diary Study, 28 days
- **Between-Ps Classification:**
  - Flourishing
  - Languishing
- **Dependent Measure:**
  - Ratio of Positive to Negative Emotions
The Losada Line
Pos : Neg = 2.9 : 1

What happens at higher levels of positive affect?
Pos : Neg = 100 : 1

Emotional Space

Inquiry / Advocacy

How much positive affect is needed to flourish?

Pos : Neg $\geq$ 2.9 : 1
Pos : Neg $< 11.6 : 1$
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Capturing Positivity Ratios
Calculate your positivity ratio for today...

- On a 0-4 scale, on which:
  - 0 = not at all
  - 1 = a little bit
  - 2 = moderately
  - 3 = quite a bit
  - 4 = extremely

- What is the most ________ you’ve felt today?
What is the most ______ you have felt today?

- Amused, fun-loving, silly
- awe, wonder, amazement
- content, serene, peaceful
- glad, happy, joyful
- grateful, appreciative, thankful
- hopeful, optimistic, encouraged
- interested, alert, curious
- love, closeness, trust
- proud, confident, self-assured
- angry, irritated, annoyed
- ashamed, humiliated, disgraced
- contemptuous, scornful, disdainful
- disgust, distaste, revulsion
- embarrassed, self-conscious, blushing
- repentant, guilty, blameworthy
- sad, downhearted, unhappy
- scared, fearful, afraid

Day Reconstruction

- **Step 1:** Reinstate the target day in working memory (i.e., “yesterday”)
  - Identify the full sequence of all “episodes” of your morning, your afternoon, and your evening.

- **Step 2:** Complete a short survey for each episode within the target day.

Augmenting Positivity Ratios
Reducing Negativity

- Eliminate sarcasm
- Selective media exposure
- Minimize exposure to known irritants
- CBT toolbox
Increasing Positivity

- Assumption: Positive emotions stem from finding positive meaning

- Findings:
  - Positive reframing
  - Infusing the ordinary w/ pos meaning
  - Active problem-solving
  - Using signature strengths
  - Sharing positive experiences
  - Being kind
Exercise: Guided Meditation
Reflect & Share

Did the meditation augment your positive emotions?
Other strategies to increase positivity

Video clip: Fish!
Themes in Fish!

- Play
- Make their day
- Be there
- Choose your attitude
### Enablers and disablers of PEs in your practice

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<tr>
<th>ENABLERS (cultivate / protect PEs)</th>
<th>DISABLERS (prevent / disrupt PEs)</th>
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Positive Affect Transforms People
The Value of Positive Emotions?

- Broaden attention and thinking
- Fuel psychological resilience
- Build consequential personal resources
- Seed human flourishing