

Positive Psychology and Wellbeing in the Workplace

Presented by:

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Topics

Intro to Positive Psychology

- What is happiness?
- PERMA- Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment

Part One: Positive Workplace Interventions

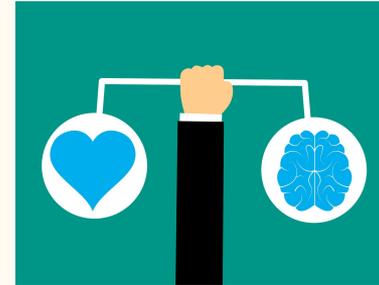
- Gratitude
- Mindfulness
- Compassion & Self Compassion
- Flow
- Character Strengths
- Positive Reframing
- Finding meaning
- Human connection

Part Two: Clinical Psychology Workplace Interventions

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Managing Psychological Projection
- Emotional Regulation
- Coping Skills

Self Care Planning

- S.M.A.R.T Goals: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time bound



Question #1



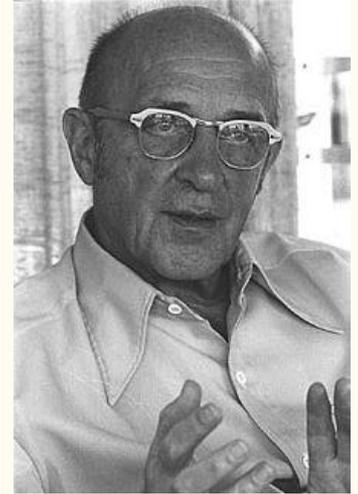
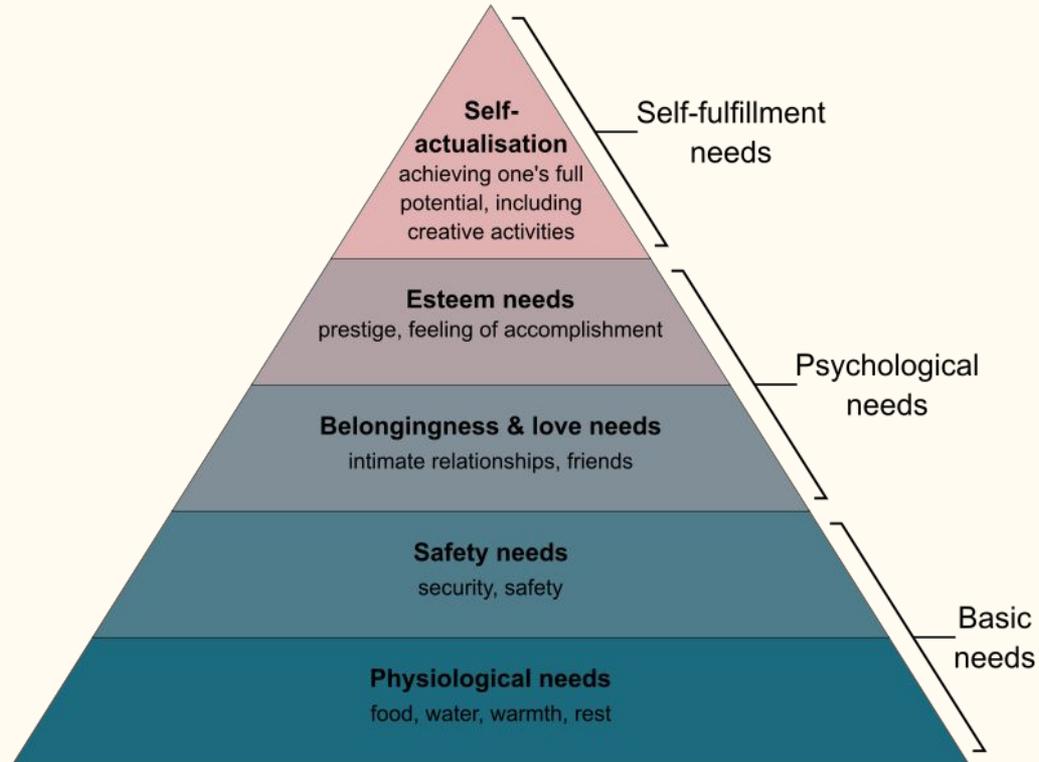
What do you hope to learn during today's presentation?

- a. How to increase my work satisfaction
- b. How to become happier and more optimistic
- c. How to create a positive workplace culture
- d. All of the above!

Humanistic Psychology of the 1960's



Abraham Maslow



Carl Rogers

Positive Psychology

- Success does not precede happiness, happiness precedes success!
- Focus on **strengths** rather than pathology
- Choosing a **Growth Orientation** over Deficit Orientation
- Are you **thriving** or merely surviving?

“The good life is a process, not a state of being.” -Carl Rogers

PERMA Theory of Wellbeing

- **Positive Emotions:** *Increasing positive emotions results in more happiness, productivity, and creativity*
- **Engagement:** *Experiencing enjoyment and flow in your work*
- **Relationships:** *Humans thrive when they feel socially and emotionally connected to others*
- **Meaning:** *Finding a sense of purpose in your work*
- **Accomplishment:** *Setting realistic goals allows us to flourish*

(Martin E. Seligman)

We Can Increase Positivity Through Practices!

- Gratitude
- Mindfulness
- Compassion & Self Compassion
- Flow
- Character Strengths
- Positive Reframing
- Finding meaning
- Human connection



Gratitude

- Practicing gratitude on a regular basis has been shown to increase **positive emotions, promote health, and increase happiness!**
- **“Three Good Things”** Daily Practice
- Innovative applications in the workplace
 - List “appreciations” as agenda item in meetings
 - Gratitude nominations/shout outs
 - Lead by example



Mindfulness

- Paying attention in the present moment, on purpose, nonjudgmentally
(*Jon Kabat-Zinn*)
- **Meditation:** decreases stress, increases attention and positive feelings
- **Dispositional mindfulness:** awareness of thoughts, feelings, sensations, and behaviors during the workday. Benefits:
 - Appreciation of your career
 - Increased attention and productivity
 - Ability to reflect on emotional state and its influence on work
 - Increased interpersonal effectiveness: better communication with consumers/colleagues



Mindfulness During Stressful Times

- **This is a moment of suffering**
That's *mindfulness*.
 - ~This hurts.
 - ~This is stress.
- **Suffering is a part of life**
That's *common humanity*. Other options include:
 - ~Other people feel this way.
 - ~I'm not alone.
 - ~We all struggle in our lives.
- **Extend kindness to yourself**
That's *self compassion*.
 - ~May I give myself the compassion that I need
 - ~May I learn to accept myself as I am
 - ~May I forgive myself
 - ~May I be strong
 - ~May I be patient

Question #2

Mindfulness is...

- a. Being detail oriented
- b. A state of daydreaming
- c. Paying attention in the present moment nonjudgmentally
- d. Only achievable during meditation



Compassion as a Managerial Strategy

- Inciting fear and punishing has been found to be counterproductive
 - High stress levels reduce creativity and compromise reasoning abilities
- Benefits of **Compassionate Leadership**:
 - Lower stress levels
 - Increased capacity for innovation and creativity
 - Employee loyalty and trust
 - Fewer sick days
 - Decreased turnover
 - Increased engagement and productivity



Self-Compassion Precedes Compassion for Others

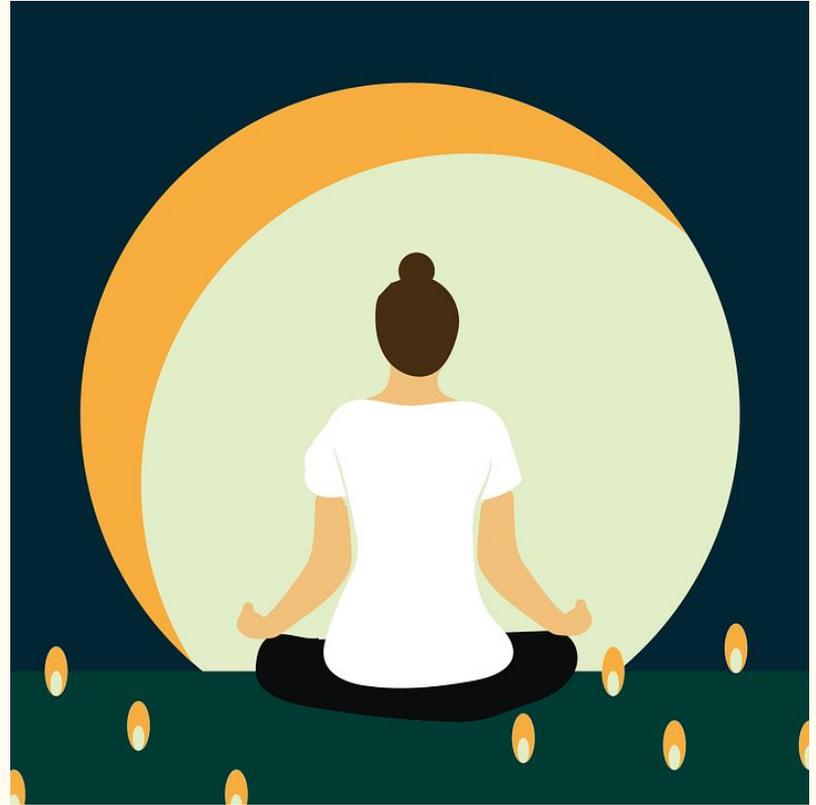
- Why are we hard on ourselves? Why is it challenging to be kind to ourselves?



- Culture
- Upbringing
- Desire for control
- Fear of “losing edge”
- Other reasons?

Mindfulness Increases Compassion

- Research backed “Loving-kindness” Meditation has been found to:
 - increase capacity for empathy and compassion
 - increase positive emotions
 - decrease chronic pain & migraines
 - reduce biases toward others
 - curbs self criticism



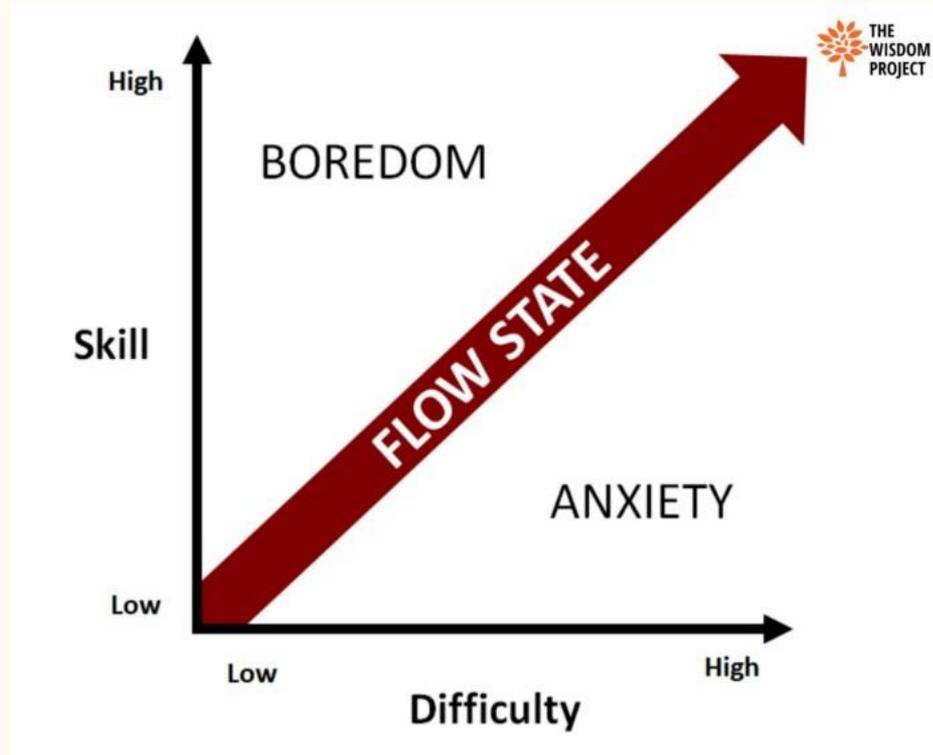
Flow

- Research by **Mihály Csíkszentmihályi** on creativity and productivity found that secret to optimal performance is deliberately and frequently entering a state of **flow**
- A state of mind in which a person becomes fully immersed in an activity
- Creating a workplace conducive to flow:
 - Clear, well-defined goals
 - Communicate feedback
 - Match strengths to tasks
 - Reduce micromanaging



Cellist Yo-Yo Ma

Optimal Conditions for Flow



Building Upon Your Character Strengths



- <https://www.viacharacter.org/>
- Deployment of character strengths at work relates to job satisfaction and meaning at work
- If you can find the intersection between **skills, interests, values, and strengths**, you are likely to build a team rich with internal motivation, engagement, and connection.

VIA Character Strengths



- **Cognitive:** creativity, curiosity, judgment, love of learning, perspective
- **Emotional:** bravery, perseverance, honesty, zest
- **Interpersonal:** capacity to love and be loved, kindness, social intelligence
- **Justice:** teamwork, fairness, leadership
- **Temperance:** forgiveness, modesty, prudence, self-regulation
- **Transcendence:** appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humor

(Values in Action VIA Institute)

Positive Reframing

- Highlighting the possibilities of challenging workplace tasks!
- **Growth orientation:** looking for growth opportunity in a “negative” situation
- **Negativity bias** refers to our proclivity to attend to negative information far more than positive information
- Use Cognitive Behavioral Therapy to reframe



Question #3



Positive Reframing in your occupation **includes all except...**

- a) Ignoring your emotional experience
- b) Highlighting the possibilities of challenging tasks
- c) Focusing on potential growth
- d) Challenging previous negative perceptions

Finding Meaning

- Meaning **IN** your work: *a sense that the job contributes to the greater good*
- Meaning **AT** your work: *a sense that one is helping others to contribute and reach goals*
- Use the power of perspective to find ways that **your actions are meaningful**
 - Examples: Helping a colleague, providing a necessary service, bringing peers together, creating a supportive work culture, encouraging employees
- Organizational psychologist **Adam Grant**:
 - Research on connecting employees to meaning
 - Job crafting

Human Connection



- Investing in relationships is the greatest way to influence our happiness!
 - Increases feelings fulfillment, positive emotions, and wellbeing
- **Facilitating Organizational Socialization:** increase opportunities for human engagement through virtual groups, focus groups, collaborative projects, contacting colleagues

Breakout Room #1

- What would happiness in your career look like?



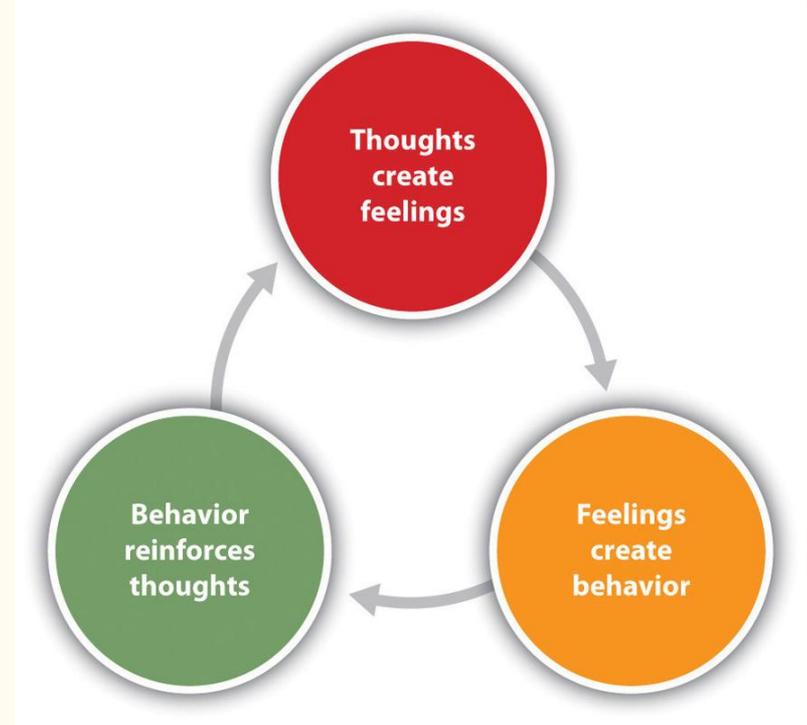
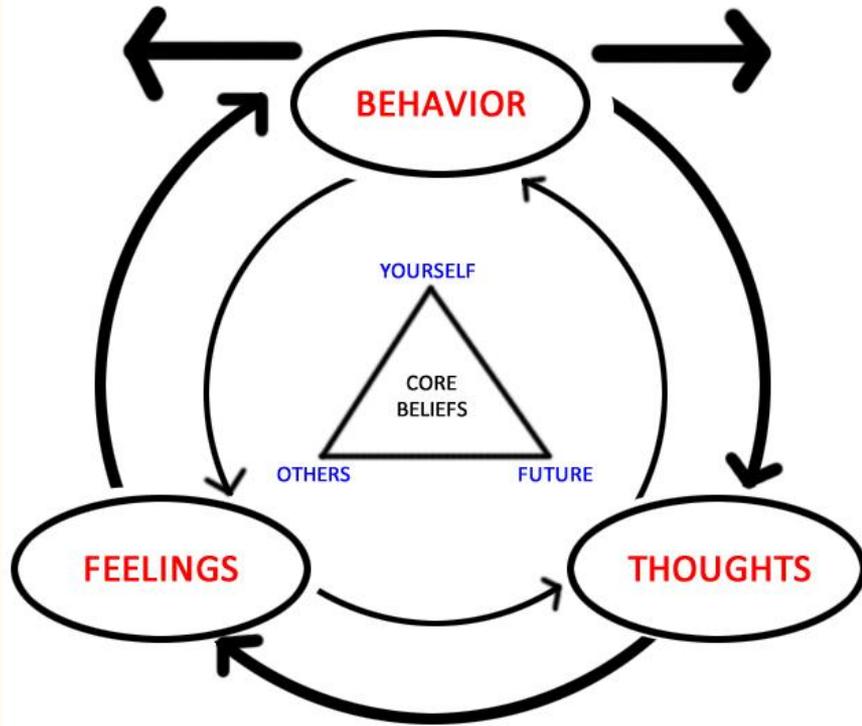
- How can you incorporate positive psychology practices to reach your optimal work potential and happiness?

Tending to Your Emotional Needs

1. Validate your experience
2. Challenge Thoughts with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
3. Managing Psychological Projection and Displacement



Utilize Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)



Types of Cognitive Distortions

All or nothing thinking



Sometimes called 'black and white thinking'

If I'm not perfect I have failed

Either I do it right or not at all

Over-generalizing

"everything is always rubbish"
"nothing good ever happens"

Seeing a pattern based upon a single event, or being overly broad in the conclusions we draw

Emotional reasoning



Assuming that because we feel a certain way what we think must be true

I feel embarrassed so I must be an idiot

should must

Using critical words like 'should', 'must', or 'ought' can make us feel guilty, or like we have already failed

If we apply 'shoulds' to other people the result is often frustration

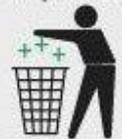
Mental filter



Only paying attention to certain types of evidence

Noticing our failures but not seeing our successes

Disqualifying the positive



Discounting the good things that have happened or that you have done for some reason or another

That doesn't count

Labelling



Assigning labels to ourselves or other people

I'm a loser
I'm completely useless
They're such an idiot

Personalization

"this is my fault"

Blaming yourself or taking responsibility for something that wasn't completely your fault

Conversely, blaming other people for something that was your fault

Jumping to conclusions



$2 + 2 = 5$

There are two key types of jumping to conclusions:

- **Mind reading** (imagining we know what others are thinking)
- **Fortune telling** (predicting the future)

Magnification (catastrophising) & minimization



Blowing things out of proportion (catastrophising), or inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important

CBT in Workplace Relationships

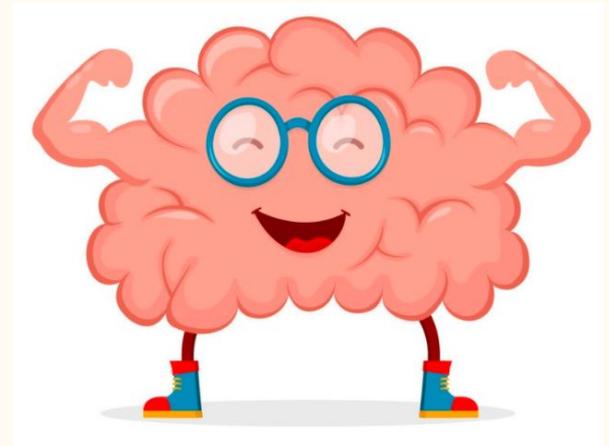
- What are some distortions you may have about colleagues/bosses/clients?
- How is this impacting the way you communicate? (e.g. they are lazy, they are jerks, they are incompetent)
- What is an alternative thought? (e.g. maybe they are facing hardships: a sick relative, loss of job, mental illness, etc.)

Choosing your perspective helps your wellbeing, productivity, and happiness.



Identify, Evaluate, and Challenge!

1. **Identify** a belief that may be a cognitive distortion
2. **Gather evidence** that contradicts the belief and evaluate objectively
3. **Challenge** belief through
 - behavioral changes
 - positive/rational self talk
 - keep a thought log
 - remember the evidence!



Question #4



True or False?

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is an evidence-based intervention for changing distorted thoughts through behavior.

Managing Psychological Projection and Displacement

1. Notice your patterns
2. Validate your feelings
3. Regulate your emotional reaction
4. Change your habitual behavior



Example: While on a call you notice your chest feels tight and hot which usually signifies anger. Validate that it is okay to feel angry. Use coping skills to bring down your heart rate and calm your nervous system. Instead of snapping at the consumer, interact with more kindness and understanding.

Emotional Regulation



- PLEASE Acronym
 - Treat Physical Illness
 - Eat Healthy
 - Avoid Mood Altering Drugs
 - Sleep Well
 - Exercise
- Utilize CBT Skills
- Opposite Action: When feeling a strong negative emotion, act in the opposite manner than you would expect. This helps us regulate the emotion and return to a calmer state of mind (e.g. when feeling angry talk quietly and speak kindly)

Question #5



All of the following could aid in Emotional Regulation except...

- a) Going for a morning run
- b) Sleeping 8 hours per night
- c) Meditating daily
- d) Drinking excessive coffee

Quick Grounding Techniques & Coping Skills

- Eat a strong mint or gum
- Smell a strong pleasant fragrance (essential oils, scented lotion)
- Run your hands/wrists under cold or warm water
- Splash cool water on face
- Drink cool water
- Stretch your body
- Listen to nature sounds or music
- Go for a walk
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation Therapy (PMRT)
- Box breathing
- Guided meditation
- Use healthy distractions (comedy, call a friend)
- Phrases to say aloud or in your head: “It’s okay to feel this” “This will pass”



[Box Breathing](#) [PMRT](#) [WebMD](#)

Let's Practice!

- Loving-Kindness Meditation
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation Therapy (PMRT)



S.M.A.R.T Goals



Self-Care Planning Activity

- Set **S.M.A.R.T Goals** (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time bound)
 - Example 1: I will run for 45 minutes 3x per week for the next month
 - Example 2: I will meditate daily for 10 minutes for the next two weeks
 - Example 3: I will attend therapy weekly for the next 3 months
- Rehearsal of **Psychological Skills**:
 - Example 1: I will practice PMRT if I feel agitation while on a call
 - Example 2: I will complete the “3 Good Things” gratitude practice at the end of each work day
 - Example 3: I will practice mindfulness while at the workplace through paying attention to my thoughts, feelings, sensations, and behavior. I will pay attention to my experience with kindness toward myself.

Question #6



I plan to implement a **S.M.A.R.T Goal** that incorporates...

- a) Physical activity
- b) Mindfulness and/or Meditation
- c) Gratitude practice
- d) Something else!

Breakout Room #2

CBT Skills:

- What are some cognitive distortions you have about colleagues/bosses/clients?
- How do these thoughts affect your communication/productivity?
- What are some alternative thoughts? Alternative behaviors?

Goal Planning:

- What **S.M.A.R.T Goals** would you like to create to help you reach your highest potential?



“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”

Viktor Frankl