

Positive Psychology Crash Course

BLOCK I

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Contents-Foundations of Positive Psychology

1. Introduction to Positive Psychology
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Introduction to Positive Psychology

Unit : 1



What is Positive Psychology?

“Positive Psychology is the **scientific study of the strengths** that enable **Individuals and communities to thrive**. The field is founded on the belief that people want to lead **meaningful and fulfilling lives**, to cultivate what is **best within themselves**, and to **enhance their experiences of love, work, and play.**”

“Positive Psychology aims to understand and **build the emotions**, and the **strengths** and **virtues** that enable individuals and communities to **thrive**.”

Positive Psychology has **three central concerns: positive experiences, positive individual traits** , and **positive institutions**.” Angela Duckworth, Paul Rozin, & Martin Seligman.

Founders of Positive Psychology

- First founded in 1998 by **Martin Seligman**,, Known as **Father of Positive Psychology**
- His work revolved around the topics of **learned helplessness positive psychology, depression, resilience , optimism, and pessimism.**
- **President of the American Psychological Association** (in 1996) and he chose **Positive Psychology as the presidential theme** for his tenure.
- Aim was to shift focus from a '**disease model**' and to **focus what makes a happy, meaningful and fulfilling life.**



ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

- **Philosophical roots:** Ideas related to **well-being and the good life** have been discussed since ancient times by philosophers such as ***Aristotle, who spoke of "eudaimonia" means "flourishing, happiness or good life"***
- **Humanistic Psychology:** In the mid-20th century, humanistic psychologists like Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers emphasized human potential, ***self-actualization, and the importance of personal growth and fulfillment.***
- **Early Influences :** In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, William James, discussed concepts related to positive psychology, such as the ***psychology of religion and the science of happiness.***
- In the 1940s and 1950s, Maslow introduced the hierarchy of needs and the concept of **self-actualization, focusing on the potential for human growth and the pursuit of peak experiences.**

Establishment of Positive Psychology

- Initial planning meetings to create positive psychology took place via **Akumal (Mexico) conferences (Akumal I 1999 & Akumal II 2000)**
- Psychologists who shared his vision attended the meetings and drafted the **first manifesto known as the “Akumal Manifesto”/ “Positive Psychology Manifesto (public declaration).”**
- In his 1998 **APA presidential address**, Seligman called for a **shift in psychology’s focus from pathology and mental illness to positive aspects of human experience.**
- 1990s and Early 2000s: Seligman, along with Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and other scholars, began to develop **the theoretical foundations of positive psychology.**

AIM AND SCOPE (1st wave- Martin Seligman)

- **Aim:** The primary aim of the first wave is to focus on *what makes life worth living, including factors that promote happiness, resilience, and personal growth.*
- It aims to *study positive emotions, character strengths, and supportive institutions scientifically.*

Scope:

- **To study Character Strengths and Virtues:** Identify character strengths such as wisdom, courage, forgiveness, etc.
- **Flow and Engagement:** Studying experiences of **deep absorption** and **focus** in activities, as described by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's concept of **"flow."**

- **Positive Emotions:** studying emotions such as joy, gratitude, and hope, and their role in enhancing well-being .
- **Studying Positive Relationships** in fostering well-being.
- **Exploring factors that contribute to Resilience and Coping**
- Understanding factors that contribute to **Subjective Well-being**

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY 2 – AIMS AND SCOPE (PAUL T. WONG)

- Positive Psychology was criticized for not addressing human adversities , negative emotions and suffering.
- **Paul T Wong**, a clinical psychologist & Canadian Professor of Psychology promoted Existential Positive Psychology.
- In Wong's view, **suffering is as much required for flourishing and growth as the experience of positive emotions.** Therefore, he terms his vision as **“Existential Positive Psychology of Flourishing Through Suffering.”**

Aim: The primary aim of PP 2 is a more **balanced, integrated, framework for studying and promoting well-being.**

- Acknowledging the importance of both positive and negative emotions, experiences, and traits in achieving a meaningful and fulfilling life.
- Investigating how individuals and communities grow stronger through adversity.

Scope :

- Recognizing the dynamic interplay between **positive and negative experiences.**
- Examining how individuals adapt to and grow from adversity, loss, and trauma.
- Exploring existential and spiritual dimensions of life, such as purpose, values, and meaning-making in the face of suffering (Viktor Frankl's logotherapy).

Comparison of the Two Visions/Waves of Positive Psychology

FIRST WAVE

- Focuses on the positive only
- Avoids the topics of suffering and death
Emphasizes positive emotions.
- Direct pursuit of happiness may backfire

SECOND WAVE

- Focuses on both the positive and the negative.
- Embraces the topics of suffering and death.
- Topics of suffering and death, as preconditions for authentic happiness.
- Emphasizes responsible action.
- Direct pursuit of meaning leads to authentic happiness.

Comparison of the Two Visions/Waves of Positive Psychology

FIRST WAVE

- Flourishing is achieved by **focusing on the positive and avoiding the negative**.
- Truncated understanding of well-being.
- Dichotomous (two completely opposing ideas) and binary due to its distinction between positive and negative experiences.
- Based on empirical findings from psychological laboratories.
- Based on individualist culture.

SECOND WAVE

- Flourishing achieved only through confronting the dark side of human existence.
- Complete understanding of wellbeing in midst of suffering.
- Dialectical (considering opposite facts) and interactive.
- Based on empirical findings from psychological and real life laboratories .
- Based on individualist and collectivist culture.

Well-being

- Shah and Marks (2004, p. 2) state that **“Well-being is more than just happiness. In addition to feeling satisfied and happy, well-being means developing as a person, being fulfilled, and making a contribution to the community.”**
- Well-being encompasses several dimensions such as ***emotional stability, life satisfaction, and a sense of purpose.***
- Ed Diener’s (1984) concept of **Subjective Well-Being (SWB)** is associated with two elements **(1) positive and negative affect (2) and life satisfaction.**
- It is the **predominance of an affect** (either positive or negative) one over the other that is indicative of high or low well-being.

Bradburn (1969) noted that **high psychological well-being indicates more positive affect** than negative affect and low psychological well-being indicates the vice-versa.

In positive psychology literature, **SWB is associated with the ancient Greek notion of hedonic which implies seeking pleasure.**

Carol Ryff (1989) questioned the **idea of limiting the notion of well-being to pleasure-seeking**, as is usually called **Ryff's concept of Psychological Well-being (PWB), which goes beyond one's affective experiences.**

It focuses on knowing to what extent a person has been able to develop one's self in terms of **six different psychological dimensions viz., autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance.**

PWB is equated with the **Greek notion of eudaimonia which means seeking meaning life, flourishing, happiness or good life " .**

PERMA Model of Well-being

- The **PERMA model** of well-being, developed by Martin Seligman, is a foundational framework in positive psychology.
- It identifies **five key elements** that contribute to **human flourishing and a fulfilling life**.
- In his 2011 book Flourish, Dr. Martin E.P. Seligman, defined **5 pillars of well-being** that he calls PERMA.

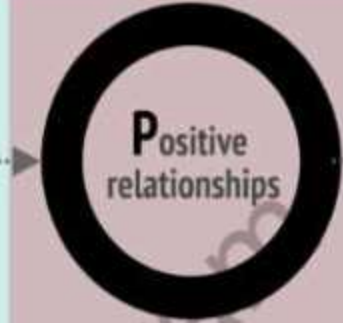




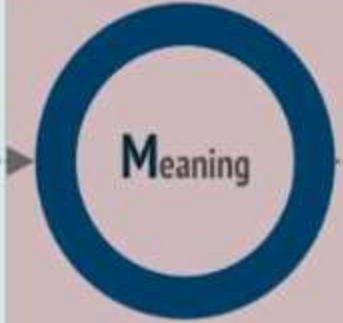
Positive emotions are a prime indicator of a flourishing individual and happily, these can be cultivated or learned.



Most people have experienced getting lost in a good book or movie and losing all sense of time.. Engagement is very similar to psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow, where the individual lives in the present moment by focusing completely on a moderately difficult task.



Human beings have a natural desire to connect with others and be part of a tribe, group, organization, school, or circle.



Many psychologists believe happiness and wellbeing result from a creative and meaningful life, and not from the blind pursuit of material wealth and pleasure.



The PERMA model suggests a sense of accomplishment results when individual works toward their goals and achieves mastery, competence, or success.

PERMA Model

- **Positive Emotions (P)** : experience of pleasurable feelings that contribute to an individual's sense of happiness and well-being. E.g. joy, hope, love, gratitude.
- **Engagement (E)** : refers to the deep involvement and immersion in activities that lead to a state of flow. It can be found in a variety of activities, such as work, hobbies, sports, and creative pursuits.
- **Relationships (R)**: Building and maintaining positive, supportive, and meaningful connections with others. Having close and supportive relationships helps individuals cope with stress and adversity.

- **Meaning (M)** : refers to having a sense of purpose and finding significance in life activities and experiences.
- It involves connecting with something larger than oneself and contributing to a greater cause.
- E.g. Engaging in work that aligns with personal values and contributes to societal good, Building and maintaining meaningful connections with family, friends, and community.
- **Accomplishment (A)** involves setting and achieving goals that provide a sense of pride and fulfillment. **SMART Goals**: Effective goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Setting SMART goals helps in providing clear direction and motivation.

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND OTHER AREAS OF PSYCHOLOGY

- **Clinical Psychology and Positive Psychology:** Clinical Psychology follows a medical model focused on removing symptoms to restore normalcy and health because the absence of illness was considered as the primary criterion of health. *Positive psychology complements this by emphasizing strengths, resilience, and well-being.*
- Positive psychology interventions (PPIs), **such as gratitude journaling or strength-based therapy, are used alongside traditional therapies** like cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT).

- **Developmental psychology & positive Psychology** : Developmental psychology explores human growth and change across the lifespan, while positive psychology emphasizes optimal development at each stage.
- Positive psychology contributes to understanding how strengths, resilience, and character traits (e.g. self-regulation) develop and flourish from childhood to old age.
- A concept that has demonstrated the relation of development psychology to positive psychology is “**posttraumatic growth**” (PTG). It is the opposite of “posttraumatic stress disorder” (PTSD)

- **Social Psychology and Positive Psychology:** Social psychology examines how **individuals are influenced by their social environments.**
- Positive psychology focuses on **how social connections, community, and relationships contribute to well-being.**
- Concepts like gratitude, altruism, etc. are explored in both fields.
- **Neuropsychology and Positive Psychology:** Neuropsychology studies the **brain-behavior relationship.**
- Positive psychology draws on **neuroimaging and neuroscience to understand how activities like mindfulness or gratitude practices affect brain regions associated with happiness and resilience.**
- Research shows that **practicing gratitude activates the prefrontal cortex**, a key area for **emotion regulation and long-term well-being.**

- **Health Psychology and Clinical Psychology:** Health psychology examines how psychological factors influence physical health.
- Positive psychology emphasizes how optimism, resilience, and positive emotions contribute to better health outcomes.
- **Personality Psychology and Clinical Psychology:** Personality psychology studies individual differences, including traits like extraversion or agreeableness.
- Positive psychology identifies traits and strengths (e.g., grit, optimism) that contribute to well-being and success. E.g. Classification of Strengths in positive psychology complements trait-based models like the Big Five in personality psychology.

- **Organizational Psychology & Clinical Psychology:** Organizational psychology examines workplace dynamics and performance.
- Positive psychology focuses on creating work environments that foster engagement, meaning, and satisfaction. E.g. Positive psychology's PERMA model is applied in organizations to boost employee engagement, collaboration, and job satisfaction.
- **Cognitive Psychology & Clinical Psychology:** Cognitive psychology investigates mental processes like memory, attention, and decision-making.
- Positive psychology explores how positive emotions and mindsets influence cognitive processes.
- Positive psychology research has shown how optimism and hope affect cognitive flexibility and problem-solving abilities.

RESEARCH METHODS AND ASSESSMENTS IN POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Unit II

Aims of Research

- **finding out relationship** between different things, e.g., relationship between emotion regulation and mental health.
- **studying the differences**, e.g., how do children differ in their emotion regulation from adolescents, or studying gender difference with regard to resilience or forgiveness.
- **analyzing the influence or impact** of one thing on another, e.g., how parenting style affects emotion regulation of children.
- **predicting things**, e.g., if a child has higher emotion regulation, it would predict better mental health in the child and also at later stages of life.

Quantitative Research

- **Quantitative research** focuses on collecting numerical data to **measure and analyze constructs** related to positive psychology.
- It involves the use of **structured tools, such as surveys and experiments, to quantify variables and establish patterns or relationships.**
- **Descriptive research:** 'a type of research that aims to accurately and systematically **describe a situation, or phenomenon.**
- Descriptive research answers questions such as "What is happening?" "How often does it occur?" and "What are the characteristics of the phenomenon?"
- **In descriptive research, there is no manipulation or control of variables.**

Correlational research: ➤ is a type of **non-experimental research method** used to examine the relationship between **two or more variables**.

- The primary goal is to determine whether there is an association between the variables and, if so, to understand the nature and strength of that relationship.
- **Measurement of Variables:** In correlational research, all variables are measured without any manipulation by the researcher. Data can be collected through various means, such as surveys, observations, archival data, or experiments.
- **Statistical Analysis:** The strength and direction of the relationship between variables are assessed using statistical methods, such as **correlation coefficients**.
- **Positive Correlation:** A positive correlation indicates that as one variable increases, the other variable also increases (e.g., height and weight).
- **Negative Correlation:** A negative correlation indicates that as one variable increases, the other decreases (e.g., age and memory).

- **Experimental Research:** To establish **cause-and-effect relationships** by manipulating **one variable (independent variable)** and observing its effect on **another (dependent variable)**.
- **Focus:** Answering "why" and "how" questions using controlled environments.
- **Methods:** laboratory experiments, field experiments etc. E.g. Testing whether a mindfulness intervention reduces anxiety levels in participants.

Examples of Quantitative Research

Surveys and Questionnaires: Researchers use surveys or questionnaires to collect data from a large number of participants.

Experiments: In experimental research, researchers manipulate one or more independent variables to observe their effect on an dependent variable. E.g. effect of forgiveness on psychological well-being.

Observational Studies: Quantitative observational studies involve systematically recording numerical data about subjects without manipulating any variables.

Correlational Studies: These studies examine the relationships between two or more variables.

Longitudinal Studies: Quantitative longitudinal studies involve collecting data from the same subjects over an extended period.

Qualitative Research

- Qualitative research is a method of inquiry that focuses on **understanding and interpreting the meaning, experiences, and perspectives of individuals or groups.**
- The emphasis in qualitative research is on the **description and narration of the data** rather than on analysis and measurement.
- It focuses on the **experience of the participant.** However, it may not be generalized.

Common Methods of Qualitative Research

Interviews: One-on-one interviews, whether structured, semi-structured, or unstructured, are a common method for collecting in-depth information on participants' experiences.

Focus Groups: Focus groups involve facilitated discussions with a small group of participants.

Observation: Researchers may observe participants in their natural environment to understand their behaviors, interactions, and the context in which they occur.

Case Studies: Case studies involve an in-depth examination of a single case or a small number of cases.

Ethnography: Ethnography involves immersive observation and participation in a community or culture to understand its practices, values, and social dynamics. It often involves long-term fieldwork.

Common Methods of Qualitative Research

Content Analysis: This method involves analyzing textual, visual, or audio data to identify patterns, themes, or meanings. It is commonly used in media studies, literature reviews, and social research.

Narrative Analysis: Narrative analysis focuses on the stories that people tell about their lives or experiences. It explores how individuals construct meaning through storytelling.

Mixed Methods Research

- Mixed methods research is a research approach that **combines both quantitative and qualitative methods within a single study** or a series of studies.
- **Combination of Methods:** Mixed methods research involves collecting, analyzing, and integrating **both quantitative (numerical) and qualitative (non-numerical) data**. This can occur within the same study or across multiple studies.
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RESEARCH METHODS IN POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Positive psychology mainly focuses on three broad areas of research:

- (i) **positive experiences of the individual** (it studies the subjective experiences, affective and cognitive states of the individual, contentment with the past, happiness at present, and hopefulness for the future, thus contributing to flourishing of the individual)
- (ii) **positive individual personality traits** (it studies the character strengths and virtues in the individual that will help the person to thrive)
- (iii) **positive institutions** (it studies the factors and interpersonal dynamics that contribute to the well-being of the institution/organization as a whole)

Assessment methods in **positive psychology**

- Assessment methods in **positive psychology** are designed to **measure and evaluate constructs related to well-being, strengths, and flourishing.**
- It include a variety of tools and techniques that help researchers and practitioners understand factors contributing to positive emotions, resilience, engagement, and meaning in life.
- **Self-Report Questionnaires and Surveys** : tools to assess subjective experiences and perceptions.
- e.g. **Measuring Strengths and Virtues: VIA Character Strengths Survey:** Identifies 24 universal character strengths.
- **Happiness Scale:** measures levels of happiness and contentment.

- **Observational Methods:** used to evaluate behaviors, expressions, and interactions that reflect positive traits and emotions.
- E.g. *Tracking facial expressions to assess the presence of joy, Observing prosocial behavior, such as acts of kindness*
- **Experience Sampling Method (ESM):** collects real-time data on an individual's emotions, thoughts, or activities throughout the day.
- Using a smartphone app to log positive emotions during different times of the day or while engaging in specific tasks.

- **Psychophysiological Measures:** measure biological and physiological indicators of positive psychological states. E.g. **Brain Imaging (fMRI, EEG):** Examines neural activity associated with positive emotions and well-being. **Measuring cortisol level** in blood.
- **Technological Tools and Digital Platform:** Technology-based assessments are becoming increasingly popular for their convenience and scalability.
- E.g. Apps for mindfulness tracking or gratitude journaling (e.g., Headspace, Happify).

Psychological testing in positive psychology

Psychological testing in positive psychology involves the use of standardized tools and measures to assess constructs such as well-being, strengths, resilience, optimism, and other positive traits.

It is essential for designing interventions to enhance flourishing.

Key Areas Assessed in PP

- **Positive Emotions:** Measures emotional states such as joy, gratitude, and hope.
- **Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS):** Evaluates positive and negative affect.
- **State Hope Scale:** Assesses goal-oriented hope.

- **Strengths and Virtues:** Identifies individual strengths based on virtues.
- **VIA Character Strengths Survey:** Measures 24 character strengths, such as kindness, gratitude, and creativity.
- **Gallup StrengthsFinder (CliftonStrengths):** Identifies top personal strengths for success and growth.
- **Optimism and Resilience:** Focuses on individuals' ability to recover from adversity. E.g. **Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R):** Measures dispositional optimism.
- **Engagement and Flow:** Assesses states of deep involvement and immersion in tasks. E.g. **Flow State Scale (FSS):** Evaluates experiences of flow in activities.

Eastern and Western Perspectives on Positive Psychology

Unit III

Indian Positive Psychology

- IPP integrates traditional Indian philosophical concepts with the principles of positive psychology, focusing on **promoting well-being, happiness, and flourishing in life.**
- The strategy of Indian Psychology (IP) is to maintain **harmony with nature** go beyond the pursuit of self-interest and offer **to maintain balance (Samya)**
- **Taittiriya Upanishad** describes idea relating to **Ananda (well-being)**
- **Ananda** is a state of **true happiness or bliss** that comes from **self-realization and spiritual awakening.**
- The pursuit of **Ananda** involves **transcending temporary pleasures to achieve lasting inner joy and contentment.** This concept aligns with the positive psychology focus on **eudemonic well-being,** which is about finding **deeper meaning and purpose in life.**

- The centrality of the self/person, Jiva (person) in IP (Rao,2004)
- Central themes involves **Consciousness**, Svanubhava/Self-experience, Mukti/ Nirvana/ Moksa/liberation from suffering (liberation from repeated cycles of pleasure and pain and abiding in well-being)

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND INDIAN PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

- PP emerged as a **protest against the deficit model and emphasis on pathology**.
- Indian psychology has its roots in the realization of the dominance of Euro-American psychology in India.
- IP discusses concepts like svāsthya, sukha, dukha, ānañda, ārogya, and prasannatā (state of well-being from contentment to intense joy) etc.
- IP discusses on strengths such as paropakāra, sāhasa, dhairya, kshamā, śānti, ādhyātma (highest self/soul), pragyā (highest form of wisdom) and śīla (morality) etc, however the frame work is different from PP.
- Its frame work is based on **higher state of consciousness that transcends the limits of ordinary awareness and space-time constraints**.

Yoga and Well-being

Yoga is said to be equanimity .

“Yoga can be defined both as the effort to restore harmony within the body- mind complex and as the effort to reunite the individual human spirit with its essential Truth” (Schweig ,2007)

Patanjali, the author of Yoga Sutras, defines yoga as a process of restraining the mind (Chitta) from various modifications (Vritti).

Vritti: various mental activities, thoughts, or waves that disturb the mind.

Chitta Vritti refers to fluctuations can include thoughts, emotions, memories, desires, and other mental activities that prevent the mind from being still and focused.

These fluctuations involve real perception (Pramāṇa), wrong perception (Viparyaya), imagination (Vikalpa), knowledgebased on sleep (Nidrā), and memory (Smriti).

Practice (Abhyāsa) and detachment from desires (Vairāgya) are the two means to still the movements of the mind.

- The famous sutra "***Yoga Chitta Vritti Nirodha***" translates to "***Yoga is the cessation of the fluctuations of the mind.***" So that one could achieve a ***state of pureness and clarity of mind.***
- The main cause of pain is ***the association or identification of the Ātman with the seen (Prakriti)*** and the remedy lies in their dissociation.
- ***Yoga is not much of a union with an ultimate Reality, but as disunion (viyoga), or disconnection, from the ego personality.*** However when the ***spiritual practitioner has succeeded in transcending the ego, he or she simultaneously realizes the Self, or Spirit.***

The Pursuit of Dharma and Human flourishing

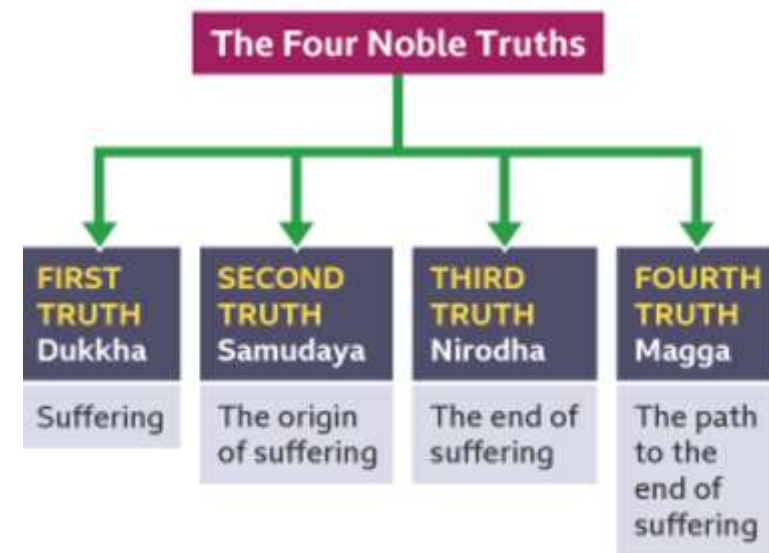
- **Dharma** implies **virtues and extends to duties** which allow maintenance and sustenance of life. In the social context the **duties are performed based on one's position in society and stage of life.**
- Human flourishing is brought about by **balancing and pursuing the life goals or purusharthas.**
- According to Vaiśeṣik school of Indian thought, dharma includes both prosperity in this world (***Abhyudaya***) and **liberation (*Nihsreyas*) from suffering and pursuing Moksha. Thus material development and spirituality both have importance.**
- 4 life goals (Puruśārthas) i.e. dharma (ethical duties), artha (prosperity), kāma (pleasure), and moksha (liberation) are equally important.
- Mahābhārata identifies **supreme dharma with compassion (dayā), forgiveness kshamaā), and truth (Satya).**

Inclusive Vision

- "**Ahambrahmāsmi**" (I am Brahman" or "I am divine") is a profound declaration of the unity between the individual self and the ultimate reality.
- It encapsulates the essence of Advaita Vedanta, which teaches that the ultimate truth is the non-dual nature of existence where the self and Brahman are fundamentally one.
- "**Udāra caritānām tu vasudhaiva kutumbakam**" is a well-known Sanskrit phrase from the ancient Indian text, the **Mahopanishad**, a part of the Mahābhārata.
- "**For those who are noble in character, the entire world is a family.**"
(noble characteristics- compassion, empathy, and altruism.)

Buddhist Perspective of Pleasure & Pain

- In Buddhism, **Dukkha** is the first of the Four Noble Truths and encompasses all forms of suffering, including physical pain, emotional distress, and dissatisfaction in life.
- **Sukha** (happiness or pleasure) is seen as **temporary and fleeting**, often leading to further attachment /craving leading to more suffering.
- The path to liberation (**Nirvana**) involves **understanding the nature of Dukkha**, **overcoming the causes of suffering (craving and ignorance)**, and **transcending the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth (Samsara)**.



- **Advaita Vedanta Perspective of Pleasure & Pain**
- **True happiness (Ananda)** is not found in sensory pleasures but in the realization of the self's oneness with Brahman, the ultimate reality.
- In Advaita Vedanta, **both pleasure and pain are considered illusory (Maya) and transient.**
- They are products of ignorance (Avidya) of the true nature of the self.
- In this state, the opposites of pleasure and pain are transcended, leading to a state of eternal bliss (Sat-Chit-Ananda).
- Pleasure or pain is independent of the object because the same object produces pleasure in one person and pain in another or in the same person at different times (J.N.Sinha, 1985).

- **Bhagavad Gita perspective of Pleasure & Pain**
- The Bhagavad Gita emphasizes **equanimity in the face of pleasure and pain.**
- Arjuna is taught to **perform his duties (Karma) without attachment** to the outcomes, **maintaining a steady mind** in success and failure, pleasure and pain.

•**Sat:** truth, absolute being or existence– that which is enduring and unchanging

•**Chit:** consciousness, understanding and comprehension

•**Ananda:** bliss, a state of pure happiness, joy and sensual pleasure

Key Features of the Indian and Western Perspectives

INDIAN VIEW

- Holistic View of the Self-in relation to the larger cosmos & spiritual context.
- Continuity across various life forms
- Social individualism
- Non-linear growth in life
- The temporal (relating to time) (marked by time past, present, future)and atemporal existence of human being
- Emphasis on self–discipline
- Functional belief in multiple worlds (material-transitory and spiritual-eternal)
- Knowledge as moral and sacred

WESTERN VIEW

- Anthropocentric (ignores the presence of others) and individual-centered worldview.
- Belief in dualism and acceptance of a dichotomy between subject and object (self is separate from cosmos)
- Liberal individualism and belief in freedom
- Belief in progress and growth
- Self-interest, pursuit of wants and preferences
- Functional belief in materialism
- Knowledge (science) as amoral (value-free) and secular

CHARACTER STRENGTHS AND VIRTUES: INTERPERSONAL STRENGTHS AND WELL-BEING

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Unit IV

INTERPERSONAL STRENGTHS AND WELLBEING

- Interpersonal strengths refer to the abilities and talents that enable individuals to interact effectively with others.
- These strengths enhance our social connectedness, build our social resources and enrich our interpersonal relationships.

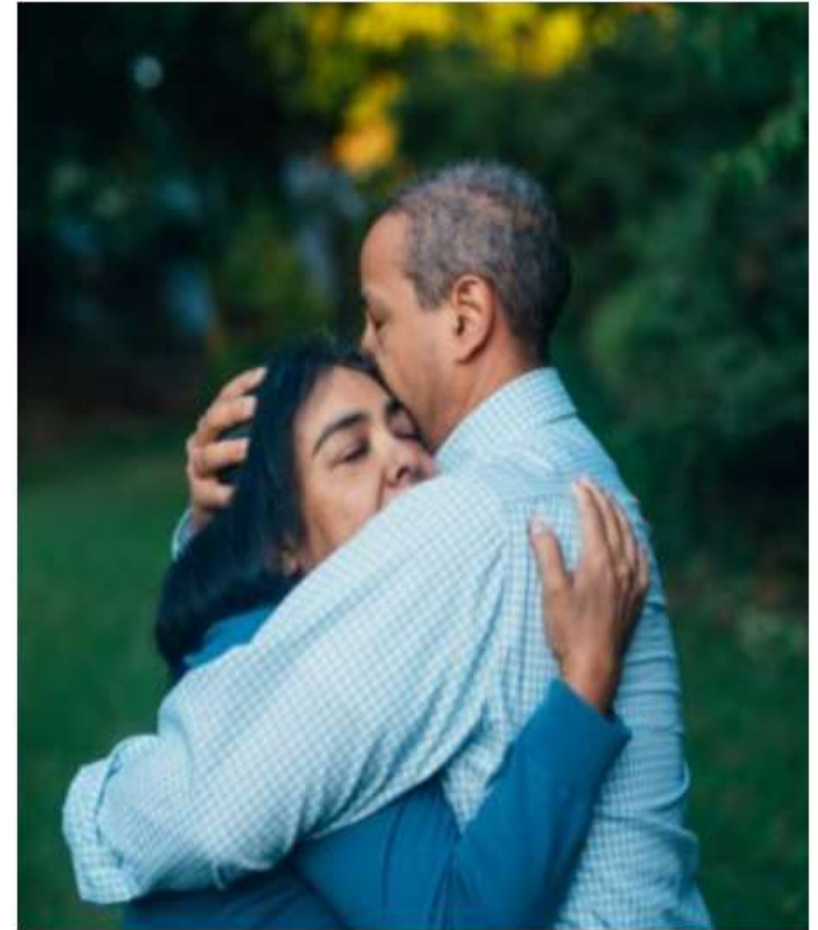
These include:

- **Forgiveness**
- **Gratitude**
- **Kindness**
- **Empathy**



Forgiveness

- Forgiveness is one's capacity to let go.
- Forgiveness is a character strength that belongs to the virtue category of temperance.
- Temperance refers to moderation. This virtue category includes those strengths that allow us to moderate or restrain our thoughts, feelings and behaviour. Thus, the strengths of temperance 'temper' our responses and prevent us from extremes.
- The positive trait of forgiveness protects us from the excess of hatred.
- It is the ability to let go of an unpleasant situation, not because of internal states like shame/ fear/guilt, or external motivation like bribes or threats, but because of a positive strength of character.
- It involves a deliberate decision to release feelings of anger, bitterness, and the desire for revenge against someone who has wronged against us.
- Forgiveness and mercy are a social strength (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).



Key Concepts

Decisional Forgiveness is a cognitive and behavioural intention to put aside revenge or avoidance and reconcile with the transgressor (Lichtenfeld et al., 2015). However negative emotions still linger. This is known as hollow or superficial forgiveness.

Emotional Forgiveness: This refers to the replacement of negative emotions with positive feelings such as empathy, compassion, and love for the offender. This is true forgiveness.

Self-Forgiveness: This involves forgiving oneself for past mistakes or wrongdoings, which is crucial for mental health and personal growth.

What forgiveness is not ?

- **Forgiveness is Not Condoning or Excusing-**It does not mean that you approve or justify the offender's behavior.
- **Forgiveness is Not Forgetting-** We can forgive someone while still remembering the offense. The memory may remain, but the emotional charge associated with it is diminished.
- **Forgiveness is not reconciliation-** It is an internal process, whereas reconciliation involves the restoration of a relationship. We could forgive someone without continuing to have a relationship with them, especially if the relationship is unhealthy or unsafe.
- **Forgiveness is Not Weakness-** It is a social strength & a character strength.
- **Forgiveness is Not Immediate-** it's okay to take time to heal and work through your emotions before arriving at forgiveness.
- **Forgiveness is Not Conditional-** It does not depend on the offender's actions, apologies, or changes in behavior. It is something we do for your own peace and well-being.
- **Forgiveness is Not a One-Time Event-** a continual process, especially for deep or repeated hurts. It may need to be revisited and reaffirmed over time.

1. Spiritual orientation and religious beliefs promote forgiveness.

2. People with a tendency to ruminate find it more difficult to forgive.

Forgiveness Therapy consisting of four phases:

1. Exploring one's negative feelings about the offense
2. Deciding to forgive.
3. Working towards developing a better understanding of the offender.
4. Discovering empathy and compassion for him or her.

This program showed a decrease in depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress symptoms and increase in self-esteem, forgiveness, environmental mastery, and finding meaning in suffering in women who had experienced emotional abuse from their spouses.

Forgiveness can be an important aspect in couples therapy especially when dealing with infidelities.

Forgiveness & well-being

Longitudinal studies have shown that forgiveness is associated with increased psychosocial well-being and reduced psychological distress (e.g., depression).

High levels of forgiveness also show higher levels of positive emotions and social integration (Long et al., 2020).

True forgiveness reduces anxiety, brings a sense of inner peace and strengthens the immune system (Weir, 2017).

Individuals who display higher levels of forgiveness are also more prone to donate towards charity or engage in volunteering (Karremans et al., 2005).

Forgiveness has been linked to lower blood pressure, a stronger immune system, and better heart health.

Practicing forgiveness can help individuals bounce back from adversity and trauma more effectively.

What is Gratitude?

- Gratitude belongs to the virtue category of Transcendence.
- Transcendence is the act of rising above something to a superior state. The character strengths listed under this category are those that help us to connect to the larger universe and provide meaning to our lives.
- Gratitude includes a sense of appreciation towards someone or something, a sense of beneficence (act of goodness/ kindness) towards the other, and a motivation to act kindly towards the other (Fitzgerald, 1998).
- Gratitude fosters kindness and love, and therefore contributes to deeper interpersonal connections.



Benefits of Gratitude



Gratitude is linked to higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction.



Decrease in feelings of envy, resentment, and depression.



Low stress levels, Better sleep, lower blood pressure, and stronger immune function.



Increased feelings of connectedness and positive interpersonal relationships.

Gratitude and Well-being

Psychological benefits of practicing gratitude have been observed in the following ways:

- greater optimism
- greater religiousness and spirituality
- strengthening of interpersonal relationships
- improved self-regulation
- enhanced happiness and well-being
- better physical and mental health

Gratitude Interventions



Gratitude Journaling: Writing down things you are grateful for on a regular basis.



Gratitude Letters: Writing and delivering letters of thanks to people who have made a difference in your life.



Gratitude Meditation: Meditative practices focused on reflecting on things you are thankful for.



Gratitude Visits: Visiting someone to express gratitude in person.

What is Kindness?

- Kindness is a **character strength under the virtue category of Humanity**.
- Strengths of humanity include positive traits that are manifested in the form of **caring one-to-one relationships with others**.
- It involves actions that are **intended to benefit others, driven by compassion, empathy, and a genuine desire to help**.
- Kindness, generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, and altruistic love describe **a type of other-orientation; an orientation where you give attention and affection to the other for their own sake and not because they serve some purpose for you**.
- Acts of true kindness are not performed with an expectation of a favor being returned.

Benefit of Kindness



Acts of kindness boost positive emotions and overall life satisfaction.



lower stress levels and enhance emotional resilience.



Kindness is associated with lower levels of depression and anxiety.



Acts of kindness have been linked to physical benefits such as lower blood pressure and improved immune function.



Studies suggest that engaging in kind behavior can contribute to a longer life.



Improved Social Connections.

Compassion and altruism

- Compassion and altruism are closely related concepts in positive psychology, both of which involve a concern for the well-being of others and actions taken to help them.
- Compassion, **experienced as loving-kindness**, involves **taking action to reduce the other's suffering**.
- In the Buddhist tradition, **compassion is understood as karuna**.
- Altruism is the **selfless concern for the well-being of others, characterized by actions taken to benefit others without expecting personal gain**.
- It is often driven by intrinsic motivation to help.
- True selflessness removes the **egoistic boundaries between 'me and them'** and **sees all humanity as one**.

Empathy

- The ability to recognize, understand, and share the thoughts and feelings of another person. It involves both cognitive and emotional components.
- Empathy has not been categorically included in the VIA classification of character strengths.
- It is, however, closely related to the **strengths of forgiveness and gratitude** (Breen et al., 2010).
- It has been listed as one of CliftonStrengths® under the Relational theme.
- It allows us to understand **situations and experiences from another's perspective and to be in tune with the feelings of others.**

Components of Empathy

Cognitive Empathy: Perspective-Taking: The ability to see things from another person's point of view & Comprehending how someone else might feel in a given situation.

Emotional Empathy: Automatically feeling what another person is feeling & sharing the emotional experience of another person

Compassionate Empathy: Empathic Concern: Not only understanding and sharing in another's emotions but also feeling compelled to help if they are in distress.

Empathy and Well-being

- **Empathy at workplace**
- Empathy is increasingly being studied in the context of the workplace. It has been found that **employees with empathic managers show fewer somatic complaints (Scott et al., 2010).**
- An empathic individual would **not only sense the employees' negative emotions but also be attuned to positive ones, e.g., an employee's happiness and excitement at having completed a big project would be sensed and shared by an empathic manager.**
- **Empathy in individual wellness**
- Low Stress levels and enhanced immune function.
- Greater resilience & flexibility.
- Increased happiness and life satisfaction.
- Sense of purpose in life
- Healthier Social relationships.

CHARACTER STRENGTH



- A ***strength*** can be defined as a natural capacity for behaving, thinking, or feeling in a way that allows for **optimal functioning & performance** in the pursuit of ***valued outcomes*** (Linley & Harrington, 2006).
- This definition implies that a ***strength is partly innate or instinctive***.
- It is something that an individual has a ***natural inclination*** towards. These strengths are seen as essential elements of the good life, ***promoting well-being and human flourishing***.
- They are a **collection of personal abilities** that buffer against mental health disorders and **positively impact our overall health and wellbeing** (Bromley, Johnson, & Cohen, 2006).

Benefits of Using Character Strengths

- brings about greater understanding, perceptivity, and perspective in your life provides a sense of direction, creates a feeling of vitality and energy.
- helps to buffer against stress.
- generates hope and optimism.
- enhances confidence and self-esteem.
- fills one with a sense of joy and fulfillment.
- increases motivation and helps achieve one's goals.
- Improves engagement and performance at work.

3 Key Features that help us recognize our Signature Strengths

- Essential- our signature strengths feel like an integral part of who we are. These strengths represent our positive traits. Others may use these to describe us.
- Effortless - using our strengths feels natural and easy. Doing an activity that feels effortless and experiencing a sense of flow in the process indicates that we are using our strength.
- Energizing - expressing signature strengths is invigorating and intrinsically motivating. You feel energized doing activities that put these strengths to use, and you look forward to engaging in such activities again.

MEASUREMENT OF STRENGTHS

01

The Values in
Action (VIA)
Classification of
Strengths and
Virtues

02

Clifton's
StrengthsFinder®

03

The Search
Institute's 40
Developmental
Assets

VIA Classification of Strengths and Virtues

- Character Strengths are the **positive parts of your personality** that impact how you **think, feel, and behave**.
- VIA Classification of Strengths and Virtues- Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman devised the Values in Action (VIA) framework to conceptualize character strengths.
- It identifies **24 universal character strengths** that are considered essential for **human flourishing and well-being**. These strengths are grouped into **six broad categories**, known as **virtues**, which serve as the foundation for individuals' positive behaviors, thoughts, and emotions.

The 6 Virtues and their Associated Strengths:

- **Wisdom and Knowledge**
- **Creativity:** Thinking of new and original ways to do things.
- **Curiosity:** An interest in exploring and learning about the world.
- **Judgment (Critical Thinking):** The ability to think things through and examine them from all sides.
- **Love of Learning:** A deep interest in acquiring new skills and knowledge.
- **Perspective:** The ability to see things from a broader or longer-term viewpoint and share that wisdom with others.

- **Courage**
- **Bravery:** Facing challenges or fears despite feeling afraid.
- **Perseverance:** Persisting in a course of action despite difficulties or delays.
- **Honesty (Authenticity):** Being truthful, sincere, and transparent with oneself and others.
- **Zest:** Approaching life with excitement and energy; living life with enthusiasm.



- **Humanity**
- **Love:** Being able to form close, loving relationships with others.
- **Kindness:** Doing good deeds for others without expecting anything in return.
- **Social Intelligence:** Understanding and navigating social situations; being aware of others' emotions, motives, and needs.





- **Justice**
- **Fairness:** Treating all people equally and impartially.
- **Leadership:** Inspiring and guiding others to work toward a common goal.
- **Teamwork (Citizenship):** Working cooperatively with others for the good of the group or community.
- **Temperance**
- **Forgiveness:** Letting go of resentment and anger towards others.
- **Modesty (Humility):** Having a realistic sense of one's abilities and accomplishments, not seeking excessive attention or praise.
- **Prudence:** Making careful and thoughtful decisions, avoiding rash behavior.
- **Self-Regulation (Self-Control):** Managing one's emotions, behaviors, and impulses in healthy ways.

- **Transcendence**
- **Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence:** Recognizing and appreciating beauty, excellence, or skill in the world and others.
- **Gratitude:** Acknowledging and being thankful for the good things in life.
- **Hope:** Expecting a positive future and believing in the possibility of a better tomorrow.
- **Humor:** Finding the lighter side of life and bringing joy to others through laughter.
- **Spirituality:** Seeking and experiencing a sense of meaning, purpose, and connection to a higher power or the universe.



The Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets

- The Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets are a set of research-based, positive qualities and experiences that are essential for young people's healthy development.
- These assets are divided into two categories: external and internal into two groups of 20 assets each.
- The model suggests that the more assets a young person has, the more likely they are to succeed in school and life, and the less likely they are to engage in risky behaviors.
- The Search Institute's Developmental Assets (Benson et al., 1998) framework focuses on children - what makes children healthy, resilient and flourish?
- **Developmental Assets** are the relationships, opportunities, and character strengths that are strongly related to children and youths' well-being (Scales, Roehlkepartain, & Shramko, 2017).

- These developmental assets are assessed using a 156-item survey - Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors.
- The 40 assets are divided into **two categories**:
- **External Assets** (the support, opportunities, and resources young people receive from the world around them).
- **Internal Assets** (the skills, attitudes, and behaviors that young people develop on their own).

EXTERNAL ASSETS

Support

1. **Family Support:** Family life provides high levels of love and support.
2. **Positive Family Communication:** Young person and her or his parents communicate positively and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents.
3. **Other Adult Relationships:** Young person receives support from three or more non-parent adults.
4. **Caring Neighbourhood:** Young person experiences caring neighbours.
5. **Caring School Climate:** School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
6. **Parent Involvement in Schooling:** Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.

Empowerment

7. **Community Values Youth:** Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
8. **Youth as Resources:** Young people are given useful roles in the community.
9. **Service to Others:** Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.
10. **Safety:** Young person feels safe at home, school and in the neighbourhood.

Boundaries & Expectations

11. **Family Boundaries:** Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.
12. **School Boundaries:** School provides clear rules and consequences.
13. **Neighbourhood Boundaries:** Neighbours take responsibility for monitoring young people's behaviour.
14. **Adult Role Models:** Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behaviour.
15. **Positive Peer Influence:** Young person's best friends model responsible behaviour.
16. **High Expectations:** Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.

Constructive use of Time

17. **Creative Activities:** Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theatre or other arts.
18. **Youth Programs:** Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs or organizations at school and/or in the community.
19. **Religious Community:** Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.
20. **Time at Home:** Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.

INTERNAL ASSETS

Commitment to Learning

21. **Achievement Motivation:** Young person is motivated to do well in school.
22. **School Engagement:** Young person is actively engaged in learning.
23. **Homework:** Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.
24. **Bonding to School:** Young person cares about her or his school.
25. **Reading for Pleasure:** Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.

Positive Values

26. **Caring:** Young person places high value on helping other people.
27. **Equality and Social Justice:** Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.
28. **Integrity:** Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.
29. **Honesty:** Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy."
30. **Responsibility:** Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.
31. **Restraint:** Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.

Social Competence 😊

32. **Planning and Decision Making:** Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.
33. **Interpersonal Competence:** Young person has empathy, sensitivity and friendship skills.
34. **Cultural Competence:** Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.
35. **Resistance Skills:** Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
36. **Peaceful Conflict Resolution:** Young person seeks to resolve conflict non-violently.

Positive Identity 👍

37. **Personal Power:** Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me."
38. **Self-Esteem:** Young person reports having a high self-esteem.
39. **Sense of Purpose:** Young person reports that "my life has a purpose."
40. **Positive View of Personal Future:** Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

Clifton's Strengths Finder

- Clifton Strengths, formerly known as StrengthsFinder, is a popular personal development tool created by the Gallup Organization.
 - It was developed by Donald Clifton and Edward Anderson from the Gallup Corporation.
- Donald O. Clifton** is often referred to as the "father of strengths-based psychology" and the creator of the Clifton Strengths Assessment.
- It is designed to help individuals identify their unique strengths and talents.
 - They defined ***strength as the ability to provide consistent, near-perfect performance in a given activity*** (Hodges & Clifton, 2004).
 - According to them, **strength is a combination of talent, knowledge, and skill.**

Strength = Talent + Knowledge and Skill

- **TALENT:** naturally recurring pattern of thought, feeling, or behavior that can be productively applied.
- These natural tendencies can be developed into strengths when combined with knowledge and skills.
- **Innate:** Talents are naturally occurring; they are not learned but are inherent to the individual.
- **Consistent:** They represent patterns that consistently manifest in various situations.
- **Productive:** When harnessed effectively, talents can lead to successful outcomes and high performance.
- **Individual:** Each person has a unique combination of talents that distinguishes them from others.

- **SKILLS:** defined as the ability to perform specific tasks or activities. Skills are learned and acquired through practice, training, and experience.
- Skills are **not innate** but are developed over time through learning and practice.
- They are **specific to particular tasks or activities**, such as technical skills, communication skills, or leadership skills.

Talents and Themes

According to Clifton Strengths® Finder, there are **thirty-four strengths or talents** that can be organized into the following **four themes (groups of similar talents)**:

EXECUTING	INFLUENCING	RELATIONSHIP BUILDING	STRATEGIC THINKING
People with dominant Executing themes know how to make things happen.	People with dominant Influencing themes know how to take charge, speak up, and make sure the team is heard.	People with dominant Relationship Building themes have the ability to build strong relationships that can hold a team together and make the team greater than the sum of its parts.	People with dominant Strategic Thinking themes help teams consider what could be. They absorb and analyze information that can inform better decisions.
Achiever Arranger Belief Consistency Deliberative Discipline Focus Responsibility Restorative	Activator Command Communication Competition Maximizer Self-Assurance Significance Woo	Adaptability Connectedness Developer Empathy Harmony Includer Individualization Positivity Relator	Analytical Context Futuristic Ideation Input Intellection Learner Strategic

CHARACTER STRENGTHS AND VIRTUES

INTRAPERSONAL STRENGTHS & WELL- BEING

UNIT V



Intrapersonal Strengths

Intrapersonal strengths are the internal qualities and abilities that enable individuals to be more aware of their internal attitudes and inner processes.

It helps an individual **manage emotions, thoughts & behaviors effectively, adjust well to situations and people, pursue and achieve goals, achieve success in life, and become better versions of oneself.**

They contribute to both hedonic (pleasure-seeking) as well as eudemonia (finding happiness through meaning & purpose) well-being.

e.g. self-awareness, self-regulation, resilience, self motivation and self reflection.



Difference between Interpersonal & Intrapersonal Strengths

INTERPERSONAL

- Interpersonal refers to interactions and relationships between two or more people.
- Interpersonal skills include kindness, communication, empathy, teamwork, conflict resolution, and active listening. It's about understanding and managing relationships with others.

INTRAPERSONAL

- Intrapersonal refers to what occurs within an individual's mind.
- It's about understanding your own emotions, thoughts, and behaviors and how to manage them effectively.
- Intrapersonal skills include self- forgiveness, self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, and introspection.



MINDSET - FIXED, GROWTH AND MULTICULTURAL

- In positive psychology, **mindset** refers to the **established set of attitudes or beliefs that an individual holds**, which significantly **influences their perception of themselves, their abilities, and their potential for growth and success.**

Mindset' refers to a **set of beliefs that shapes how you make sense of the world**, and **influences the way you think, feel, and behave** in various situations, particularly when facing challenges or pursuing goals.



Types of Mindsets

The Mindset Theory, developed by psychologists Carol Dweck and Ellen Leggett in 1988, is a psychological framework that explains **how individuals' beliefs about their abilities and intelligence can influence their behavior, motivation, and success.**

It suggests that **people can have two mindsets or attitudes about intelligence.**

Entity or Fixed Mindset- Intelligence is considered to be **fixed**, and assumes **that talents, abilities, and understanding are more-or-less fixed or unchangeable.**

A person with a fixed mindset believes that talents are innate and s/he is born with them – “you are the way you are”.

A fixed mindset can **limit personal growth, learning, and achievement because it discourages taking risks and embracing challenges.**

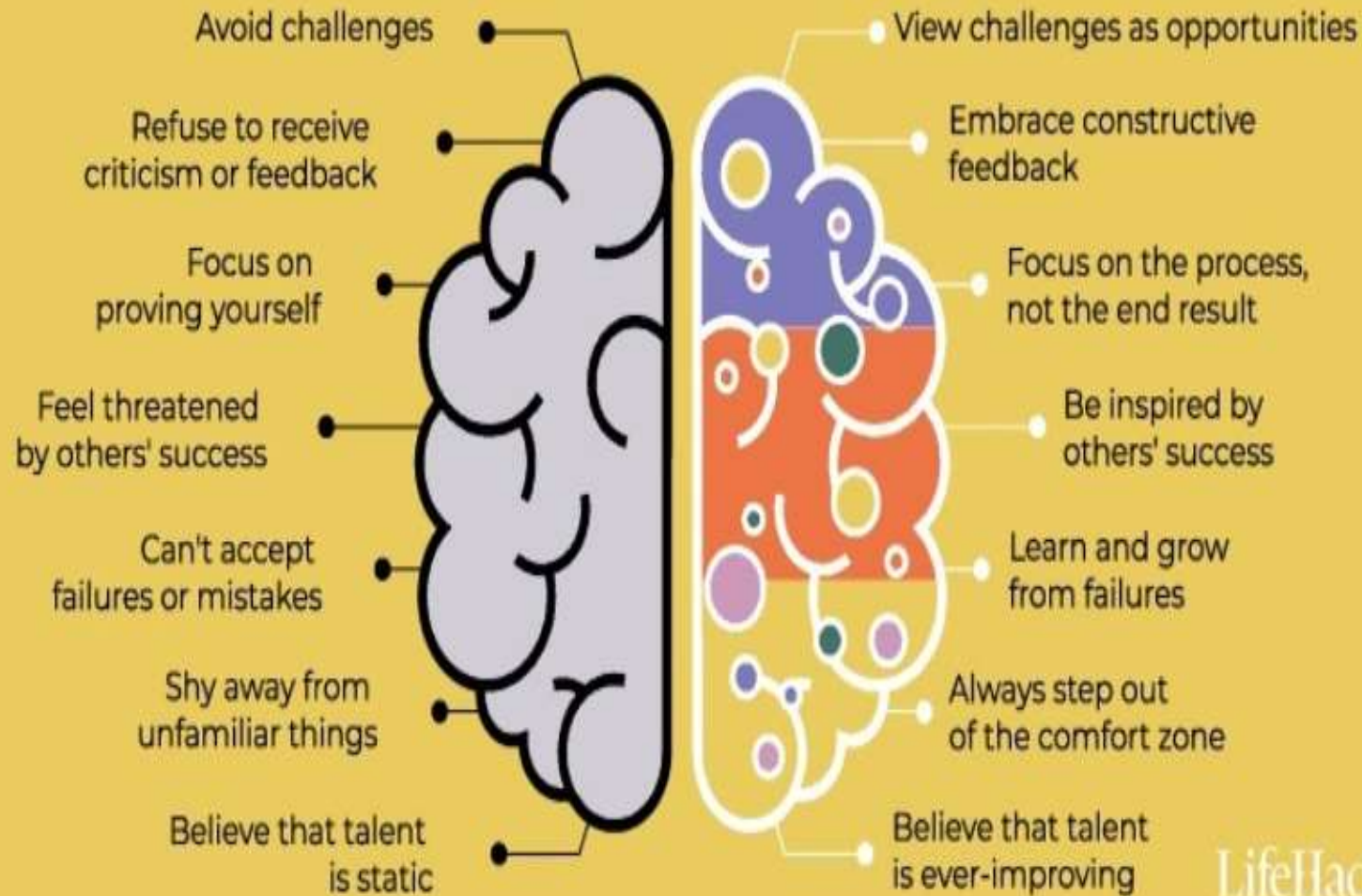


Incremental or Growth Mindset

- Intelligence to be flexible, and changeable.
- It is assumed that **talents, abilities, and understanding can be cultivated, expanded, and refined.**
- They embrace challenges, **persist through difficulties**, see effort as a path to mastery, and are inspired by others' success.
- **Failures are seen as opportunities to learn and improve.**
- A growth mindset fosters resilience, motivation, and perseverance in adversities.



Fixed Mindset vs Growth Mindset



How to Cultivate a Growth Mindset in Yourself

- Embrace challenges and view them as opportunities for growth and learning.
- Learn from failure by reflecting on what went wrong and how you can improve your approach in the future.
- Seek out feedback.
- Be open to learning from others, as this can help you develop new skills and improve your performance.
- Require a willingness to take on challenges and push oneself out of one's comfort zone. However, with practice and dedication, it is possible to develop a growth mindset and reap the benefits of this approach to personal growth and success.

The Science Behind the Development of a Growth Mindset

- **NEUROPLASTICITY**

It is the brain's ability to change and adapt in response to new experiences and challenges. As we engage in challenging activities such as learning new skills or in problem solving, brain forms new neural connections and strengthens the existing connections. This leads to increased overall performance and cognitive abilities.

- **EFFORT & PERSISTENCE**

A person with a growth mindset understand that success is not innate but a result of hard work and persistently put efforts even when faced by challenges.

- **RE-INFORCEMENT**

language we use to praise and encourage others can have an impact on their mindset. Those who receive praise for their effort see themselves as capable of improving through their own efforts, than solely relying on their natural talents.



Multicultural/Global Mindset

In positive psychology, a **multicultural or global mindset** refers to the ability to navigate and thrive in culturally diverse environments by understanding, appreciating, and respecting different cultural perspectives.

It is a mindset that emphasizes openness, adaptability, and inclusivity, allowing individuals to engage effectively with people from various cultural backgrounds.

Key Components of a Multicultural/Global Mindset:

- **Cultural Awareness:** Understanding Cultural Differences, recognising beliefs, customs, and behaviors of different cultures. Being aware of one's own cultural background and biases and understanding how these influence perceptions and interactions.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Valuing cultural differences and avoiding ethnocentrism (the belief that one's own culture is superior).
- **Adaptability:** The willingness to adapt one's behavior and communication style to different cultural contexts. Being receptive to new and different ideas, perspectives, and experiences.

- **A multicultural mindset is defined as a level of understanding having the following key components :**
- The availability of a specific knowledge domain, i.e., culturally specific knowledge.
- The ability to process information against this knowledge domain.
- The ability to monitor one's thoughts and thought processes, i.e., engage in metacognition.
- The ability to respond in a culturally appropriate manner (Peterson et al. 1996).



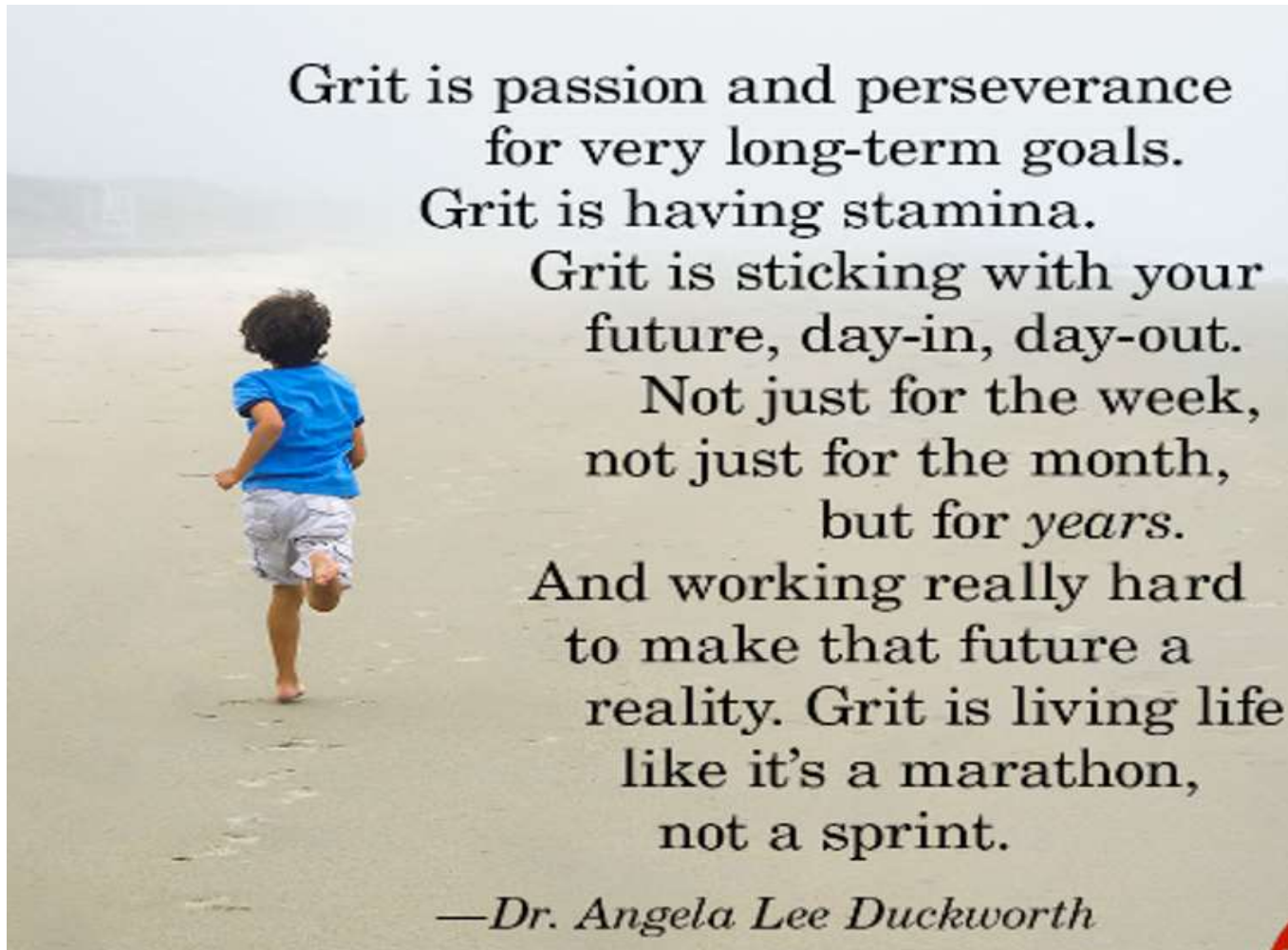
Factors that cultivates Global Mindset

- **Drive**—interest, curiosity and confidence while interacting in a multicultural environment.
- **Knowledge**—meaningful understanding of the similarities and differences between cultural groups, without resorting to stereotyping.
- **Strategy**—awareness and ability to plan effectively keeping these cultural differences in mind.
- **Action**—being able to adapt when relating and working in multicultural settings.





GRIT AND DETERMINATION



Grit is passion and perseverance
for very long-term goals.

Grit is having stamina.

Grit is sticking with your
future, day-in, day-out.

Not just for the week,
not just for the month,
but for *years*.

And working really hard
to make that future a
reality. Grit is living life
like it's a marathon,
not a sprint.

—*Dr. Angela Lee Duckworth*



What is Grit ?

- The concept of **GRIT** was developed by psychologist **Angela Duckworth**. She introduced and popularized the idea in her research, which focuses on the role of grit—a combination of passion and perseverance—in achieving long-term goals.
- Duckworth's research demonstrated that grit is a more significant predictor of success than talent or intelligence alone.
- **Key Aspects of GRIT:**
- **Passion:** A deep and enduring commitment to one's interests and goals over time.
- **Perseverance:** The sustained effort and determination to overcome challenges and obstacles in pursuit of long-term goals.



Comparing GRIT to other Psychological Constructs

- Grit resembles **conscientiousness** in that both are focused on **completing a task and doing it well**. However, while conscientiousness pertains to short-term tasks, **grit emphasizes long-term stamina**.
- Grit differs from the need for achievement. Individuals high on the need for achievement are driven by relatively immediate positive reinforcement/success obtained in the pursuit of moderately challenging goals. **Gritty individuals deliberately choose and continue to persevere in long-term goals that are not immediately rewarding**.
- **A growth mindset** is a precursor to cultivating grit.
- Gritty individuals are **resilient** which is the ability to bounce back from stress.

Psychological Characteristics of Gritty Individuals

- **Interest:** Gritty individuals have a strong, enduring passion for their long-term goals. They maintain their interest in their goals over long periods, avoiding frequent changes in focus or direction.
- **Capacity to practice:** Gritty individuals are driven to challenge themselves and strive to become better at the task they are doing by continuous practice.
- **Purpose:** Gritty individuals often have a strong sense of purpose that drives their passion and perseverance. They find a deeper meaning in what they do and sustain motivation despite hurdles.
- **Hope :** Gritty individuals have a strong sense of hope and optimism that they will achieve their long-term goals. A growth mindset leads to optimistic self-talk. Individuals with growth mindset, see challenges and difficulties as opportunities to grow and improve.

- **Self-Discipline:** Gritty individuals can delay gratification (immediate rewards) in favor of long-term achievements. They are willing to forgo short-term pleasures to stay focused on their long-term goals.
- **Emotional Regulation:** Gritty individuals are good at managing their emotions, especially in stressful or challenging situations.

Benefits of Possessing Grit and Determination

- A notable study by Datu (2021) delves into these connections, highlighting the significant role grit plays in various aspects of life.
- **Academic achievement-** Grit has been related to academic achievement in middle school, high school, secondary school, and undergraduate students in countries across the world.
- It has also been related to learning engagement, college satisfaction, and leadership skills among military cadets.
- **Career outcomes** - Gritty individuals are less likely to change jobs frequently.
- Individuals with grit are also less likely to drop out of demanding career training programs like medical residency or military training.
- It is associated with higher teacher retention and teaching effectiveness among teachers in the United States, and higher work performance in Chinese Insurance employees.

- **Work-related functioning** - Grit is associated with lower levels of work burnout, and engagement in counterproductive work behaviors (e.g., laziness, fraud, workplace bullying, absenteeism, etc.).
- It is associated with greater work engagement and positive leadership behaviors.
- **Well-being and positive psychological outcomes:** Grit is associated with higher levels of life satisfaction and psychological well-being.
- It is also associated with better **self-esteem, optimism and mental health, prosocial behavior, and good habits.**
- Grit is also associated **with lower levels of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation, lower perceived stress, and lower levels of substance use.**
- Students with higher grit are also **less likely to engage in unhealthy internet use, compulsive buying, and gambling behaviors.**



SELF-COMPASSION

What is Self-Compassion ?

- Self-compassion is **compassion directed inward**.
- It involves **being sensitive to our distress** and a **desire to reduce that distress**.
- In positive psychology, **self-compassion** is defined as the ***practice of treating oneself with kindness, understanding, and support, especially during times of failure, suffering, or difficulty.***
- **Key Components of Self-Compassion:**
- Self-compassion, as conceptualized by psychologist Kristin Neff, consists of three main components:
- **Self-Kindness:** Self-compassion involves being gentle and kind towards ourselves when we falter, are distressed, or feel incompetent and inadequate.
- Rather than resisting, denying, or **beating ourselves up for our shortcomings**, we **look at them with kindness, being patient with our flaws.**

- **Common Humanity:** Recognizing that *suffering, failure, and imperfection are part of the shared human experience*. It helps individuals feel connected to others rather than isolated in times of adversity.
- In times of distress, we often ask ourselves, *“Why me?”* *By doing so, we are indirectly telling ourselves that bad things only happen to me, and everyone else’s life is perfect.* This is a *distorted view of reality* created by tunnel vision.
- By understanding that **life challenges and personal failure are universal, we feel less isolated and alone in our pain.**
- **Mindfulness:** Mindfulness in self-compassion involves being aware of one's thoughts and feelings in the present moment without getting carried away by them.
- It means *observing negative emotions with clarity and balance, rather than exaggerating or suppressing them.* We observe our thoughts and feelings as they are, without judgment (e.g., “I feel hurt/upset”).

Importance of Self-Compassion

- **Evolutionary importance:** Self-compassion helps individuals manage stress and reduce the physiological impacts of stress, such as elevated cortisol levels. By mitigating stress, self-compassion supports better decision-making and problem-solving, which are crucial for survival.
- **Mental health and well-being:** Greater self-compassion is linked to **less anxiety and depression**.
- Self-compassion is associated with greater wisdom and emotional intelligence (Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007).
- They are less likely to **ruminate on or suppress negative emotions**, are in touch with their feelings, and regulate emotions more effectively.
- Self-compassionate individuals are also likely to (Williams, Stark, & Foster, 2008). **take more initiative and procrastinate less**
- Self-compassion also positively affects interpersonal relationships. It promotes **emotional connectedness, acceptance, freedom, and independence in relationships while reducing verbal or physical aggression**.

- Self-compassion helps soothe the threat system by offering kindness and understanding to oneself instead of harsh self-judgment.
- When we treat ourselves with the same care we would offer a friend in distress, we reduce the intensity of the threat response.
- By practicing self-compassion, we can diminish the internal critical voice that often amplifies the threat response, leading to a more balanced emotional state.
- Self-compassion allows us to pursue goals with a sense of balance, recognizing our efforts and limitations without becoming consumed by the need for perfection. This reduces the stress and pressure associated with constant striving.



I forgive my ~~CRIME~~

Self- Forgiveness

What is Self – Forgiveness?

Self-forgiveness can be defined as **“a willingness to abandon self–resentment in the face of one’s own acknowledged objective wrong, while fostering compassion, generosity, and love toward oneself”** (Enright, 1996, p. 115).

(Resentment is a complex emotion, a combination of disappointment, disgust (a strong feeling of dislike), and anger)

Self-forgiveness is the **process of forgiving oneself for wrongdoings, mistakes, or failures.**

It involves **letting go of self-blame, guilt, and negative self-judgment.**

Self-forgiveness includes **acknowledging responsibility for the offense, experiencing remorse or guilt, and then moving toward self-acceptance and letting go of the negative emotions associated with the offense.**



Three components of Self- Forgiveness

- **Experiencing and letting go of negative emotions directed at oneself-** Prolonged anger, shame, remorse, and other negative emotions associated with an offense, can become toxic.
- **Fostering positive emotions directed towards oneself:** As we release negative emotions, one should also cultivate positive emotions such as compassion, kindness, and love.
- **Accepting responsibility:** Self-forgiveness does not mean absolving ourselves of the blame. On the contrary, it means accepting responsibility for the transgression and showing a willingness to work through it.

Differences

Intrapersonal/Self-Forgiveness

- **Type of wrongdoing**-Behaviours, thoughts, desires, feelings
- **Focus of forgiveness**- Harm to self or to another
- **Empathy** Inhibits forgiveness
- **Reconciliation** with victim required
- **Focus of avoidance**-Transgression-related stimuli (e.g victim, situations, thoughts)
- **Vengeful feelings** towards Self
- **Benevolent feelings** towards Self
- **Consequences of unforgiveness**- extreme

Interpersonal Forgiveness

- **Type of wrongdoing**-Behaviours
- **Focus of forgiveness**- Harm to the victim
- **Empathy** facilitates forgiveness
- **Reconciliation** with the victim is not required
- **The focus of avoidance**- offender
- **Vengeful feelings** toward the offender
- **Benevolent feelings** towards the offender
- **Consequences of Unforgiveness** is Moderate

Determinants of Self- Forgiveness

- Hall and Fincham (2005) describe various factors that determine/influence one's experience of self-forgiveness. Some promote intrapersonal forgiveness, while others make it more difficult.
- **Guilt:** Guilt is an emotional response that occurs when a person believes they have violated a moral standard or caused harm to someone else.
- It often involves feelings of remorse, regret, and responsibility for one's actions.
- Guilt is often the **starting point for self-forgiveness**.
- Guilt also fosters **empathic concern** in the offender towards the victim. This empathy can, at times, **interfere with the process of self-forgiveness and lead to increased shame & remorse making self-forgiveness difficult**.

- **Shame as a Determinant of Self-Forgiveness**

- Shame is an intense, painful feeling of being fundamentally flawed, unworthy, or bad as a person.
- Unlike guilt, which focuses on a specific behavior ("I did something bad"), **shame focuses on the self ("I am bad"). Such negative evaluation is more destructive for the self and is likely to result in unhealthy self-punishment.**
- **Socio-Cognitive**
- **Role of attributions in Self- forgiveness: Internal vs. External Attributions:** Internal attributions involve blaming oneself for an event (e.g., "I failed because I'm not smart enough"), whereas external attributions place the blame on outside factors (e.g., "I failed because the test was unfair"). External, unstable, and specific attributions for one's own behavior may facilitate self-forgiveness.
- **Stable vs. Unstable Attributions:** Stable attributions suggest that the cause of the event is consistent over time (e.g., "I always mess up"), while unstable attributions imply that the cause can change (e.g., "I messed up this time, but I can do better in the future") and can help in self-forgiveness.
- **Global vs. Specific Attributions:** Global attributions apply a cause to many areas of life (e.g., "I'm a failure in everything"), while specific attributions limit the cause to a particular situation (e.g., "I failed this test, but I'm good at other things"). Specific attributions help in Self- forgiveness.

- **Offense related: Conciliatory behavior** - these are actions performed by the offender to appease the victim, amend the wrongdoing, or seek forgiveness for it, e.g., apologizing, compensating, compromising, etc.
- Performing such actions is more likely for the victim to forgive, thereby reducing our guilt and facilitating self-forgiveness.
- **Perceived forgiveness from the victim or Higher power** - whether you are forgiven by the victim for your transgression or not, if you perceive that you have been forgiven, it is easier to practice self-forgiveness.
- **The severity of the offense** - the more severe the offense, the more difficult it is for the victim to forgive and the offender to self-forgive.
- Despite the severity of the offense and its negative outcomes, the offender may realize that there are some positive consequences. For example, one may feel that the experience has taught them a lesson and helped them grow as a person.
- Realization of such positive after-effects fosters more positive emotions and makes it easier to forgive oneself.