

Positive Psychology Series: An Introduction

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Objectives

- Define Positive Psychology
- Describe a pilot clinical trial using positive psychology interventions (PPI) with cardiac patient population
- Invite you to engage in a series of 3 different PPIs, including completing questionnaires/surveys before and after

What is Positive Psychology?

- **Positive psychology** is an umbrella term for the study of positive emotions, positive character traits, and enabling institutions
- Intended to **supplement, not remotely to replace, what is known** about human suffering, weakness, and disorder
- Have a **more complete and balanced** scientific understanding of the human experience—the peaks, the valleys, and everything in between
- Happiness is not the centerpiece of positive psychology anymore

Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005



Well-Being Theory

- **PERMA Model**: 5 pillars (contributors) to well-being → FLOURISHING
- Positive Emotion
- Engagement
- Relationships
- Meaning
- Achievement



Positive Emotion

- Happiness
- Life satisfaction
- Hope
- Interest
- Joy
- Love
- Compassion
- Pride
- Amusement
- Gratitude



Engagement

- Achieving “flow”
- Loss of self-consciousness and complete absorption in an activity
- Living in the present moment and focusing entirely on the task at hand



Relationships

Feeling supported, loved, and valued by others

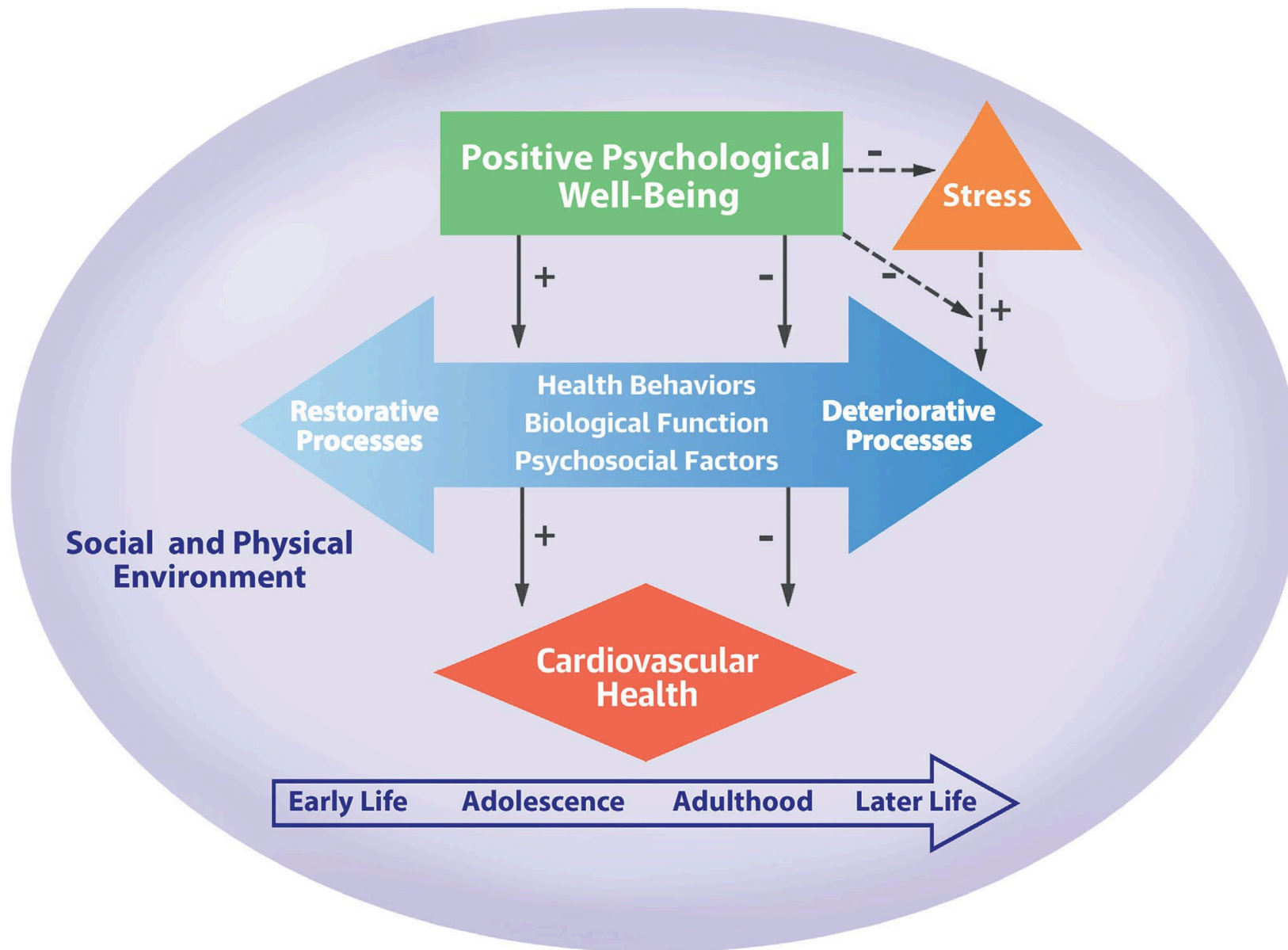


Meaning

- Intrinsic human quality is the search for meaning and the need to have a sense of value and worth
- Belonging and/or serving something greater than ourselves
- Having a purpose in life helps individuals focus on what is really important in the face of significant challenge or adversity.
- Having meaning or purpose in life is different for everyone

Achievement

- Achievement, mastery, or competence
- Sense of accomplishment is a result of working toward and reaching goals, mastering an endeavor, and having self-motivation to finish what you set out to do
- Look at their lives with a sense of pride
- Achieving intrinsic goals (such as growth and connection) leads to larger gains in wellbeing than external goals such as money or fame



PPIs for Patients with Heart Disease

- Preliminary randomized controlled trial (N = 55)
- Sample: people who have had treatment for cardiovascular disease (CABG or PCI for significant stenosis in at least 1 coronary artery)
- Randomly assigned to one of 3 different PPI protocols, or the control group
 - Seligman PPI
 - Lyubomirsky PPI
 - Fordyce PPI

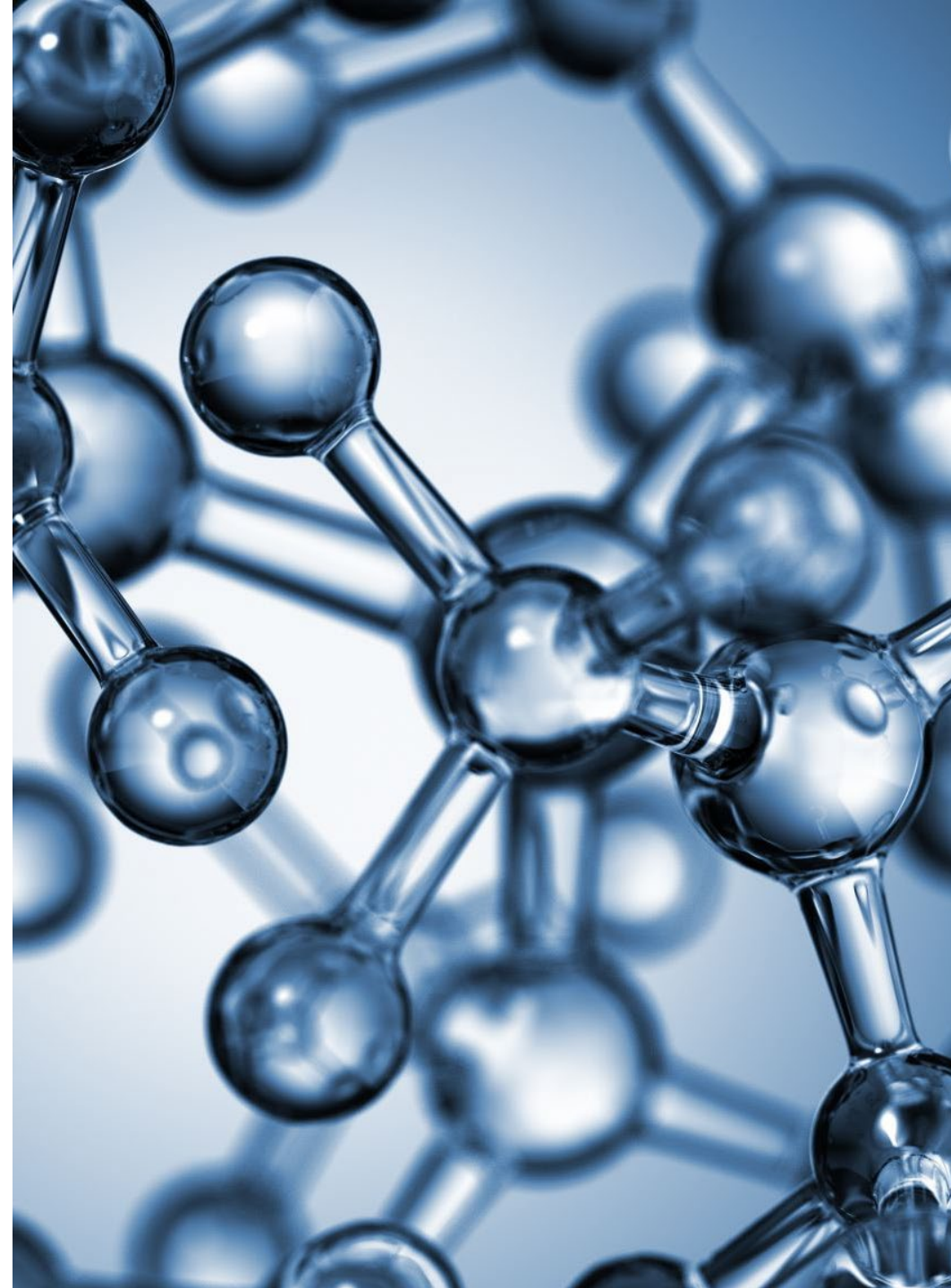
Measures

Measured changes in psychosocial variables:

- *Happiness*
- *Depression*
- *Life satisfaction*
- *Hope*

Measured changes in risk biomarkers:

- *Inflammation*
 - High sensitivity c-reactive protein (hs-CRP): primary outcome
 - Interleukin-1 (IL-1): secondary
 - Interleukin-6 (IL-6): secondary
- *HPA-axis Activity*
 - Cortisol Awakening Response (CAR_g)



Results: Psychosocial Variables

All PPI groups vs. Control group

- No differences between the 3 PPIs
- At 15-week follow-up, PPI participants had greater improvements in happiness, depression, and hope than the control group

Comparing specific PPIs with control group

- All 3 PPI protocol groups demonstrated improvements in happiness at 15-week follow-up

Results:
Biomarkers

Seligman and Fordyce PPIs led to significantly lower hs-CRP than control group at post-intervention after 7 weeks

Lyubomirsky PPI group had significantly lower cortisol awakening response than control after 7 weeks

Positive Psychology Intervention Series

You have the opportunity to engage in each of the 3 PPI protocols used in this study

Adaptation of each protocol will be presented

We ask you complete questionnaires and surveys to assess your experience and identify any changes



Commitment

Are you in?