

Positive Psychology Seligman Protocol #4-5: Strengths & Virtues

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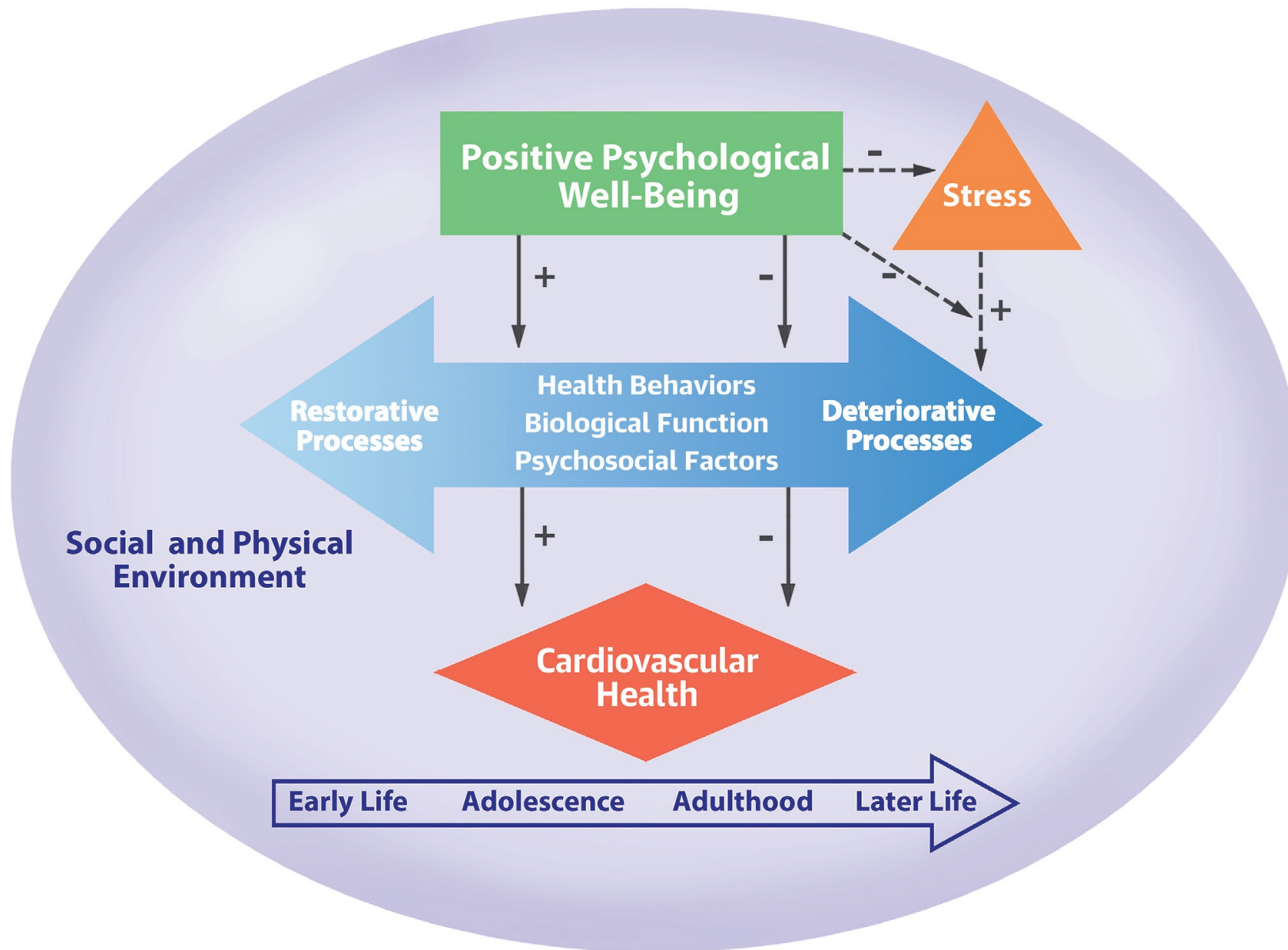
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Objectives

- Modules 4 & 5: “*Strengths & Virtues*”
 - Identify Your Signature Strengths
 - Use Your Signature Strengths

Goals

Increase



PPI Program Guidelines

- You are invited to **commit** to this program
- Complete the **surveys**
- Set **personalized goals** at the end of every class
- **Complete the “minimum dose”** for all positive psychology strategies between classes, when that is specified
- **Keep track** of what you do on a tracking sheet (self-monitoring form)

Seligman PPI

Module 1: Increase Satisfaction About the Past

Module 2: Enhance Happiness in the Present

Module 3: Optimism About the Future

Module 4: Renewing Strength and Virtue

Module 5: Valuing & Using Strengths & Virtues

Module 6: Enhancing Meaning in Life



Discussion

- Which positive psychology strategies have you tried so far?
- What was the result?
- What did you learn?



Renewing Strength & Virtue

Modules 4 and 5

What Are Character Strengths?

- Character strengths are the positive parts of our personality that make us feel authentic and engaged. They are a core and foundational part of who we are. Our strengths are linked to our development, wellbeing, and life satisfaction (Niemiec, 2013).



Positive Psychology & Character Strengths & Virtues?

- Martin Seligman and his colleagues studied all major religions and philosophical traditions and found that the same six virtues (i.e. courage, humanity, justice, etc.) were shared in virtually all cultures across three millennia.
- Virtues are considered too abstract to be studied scientifically
- Positive psychology researchers focused their attention on the strengths of character created by virtues
- Created tools for their measurement

Main criteria for character strengths

- Each trait should:
 - Be stable across time and situations
 - Be valued in its own right, even in the absence of other benefits
 - Be recognized and valued in almost every culture, be considered non-controversial and independent of politics.
 - Cultures provide role models that possess the trait so other people can recognize its worth.
 - Parents aim to instill the trait or value in their children.

Classification System

- **There are 6 classes of virtues that are made up of 24 character strengths:**
 - 1. Wisdom and Knowledge**
 - 2. Courage**
 - 3. Humanity**
 - 4. Justice**
 - 5. Temperance**
 - 6. Transcendence**



Wisdom and Knowledge

- These strengths are useful in helping us learn and gather knowledge.
 - **Creativity** (e.g. Albert Einstein's creativity led him to acquire knowledge and wisdom about the universe)
 - **Curiosity**
 - **Open-mindedness**
 - **Love of Learning**
 - **Perspective and Wisdom**





Courage

- These emotional strengths empower us to tackle adversity and how we tend to work through it.
 - **Bravery**
 - **Persistence**
 - **Integrity**
 - **Vitality**



Humanity

- These strengths come into play by helping us build and maintain positive, warm relationships with others.
 - **Love**
 - **Kindness**
 - **Social intelligence**



Justice

- With these strengths, we relate to those around us in social or group situations.
 - **Citizenship / Duty / Teamwork / Loyalty**: Being an active citizen who is socially responsible, loyal, and a team member.
 - **Fairness**
 - **Leadership**



Temperance

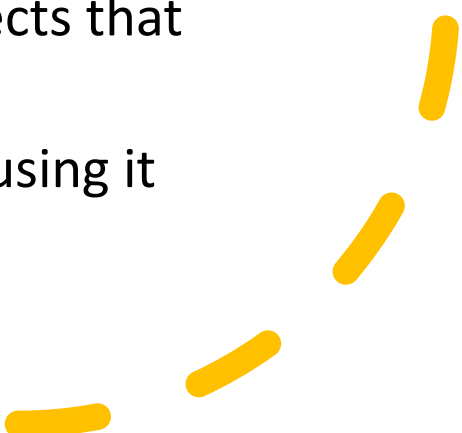
- Being forgiving, merciful, humble, prudent, and in control of our behaviors and instincts prevents us from being arrogant, selfish, or any other trait that is excessive or unbalanced.
- Strengths that are included in this virtue are those that protect against excess:
 - **Forgiveness and mercy**
 - **Humility and modesty**
 - **Prudence**
 - **Self-Regulation and Self-control**



Transcendence

- Strengths that accompany this virtue include those that forge connections to the larger universe and provide meaning:
 - **Appreciation of beauty and excellence**
 - **Gratitude**
 - **Hope**
 - **Humor and playfulness**
 - **Spirituality, or a sense of purpose**

What are Signature Strengths?

- A sense of ownership and authenticity
 - A feeling of excitement while displaying it, particularly at first
 - A rapid learning curve as the strength is first practiced
 - Continuous learning of new ways to enact the strength
 - A sense of yearning to find ways to use it
 - A feeling of inevitability in using the strength
 - Invigoration rather than exhaustion while using the strength
 - The creation and pursuit of personal projects that revolve around it
 - Joy, zest, enthusiasm, even ecstasy while using it
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Identify A Signature Strength

Strategy #1

VIA Survey of Character Strengths

- **The Values in Action (VIA) Survey of Character Strengths** is a 240-item face-valid self-report questionnaire intended for use with adults. The measure uses 5-point Likert-style items to measure the degree to which respondents endorse items reflecting the 24 strengths of character that comprise the VIA Classification. The survey takes about 25 minutes to complete, although there is no time limit.
- <https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/resources/questionnaires-researchers/survey-character-strengths>
- **WEBSITE TO TAKE VIA SURVEY & GET FEEDBACK ON STRENGTHS**
- <http://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu/>

Self-Rating Scale

- Complete the “Signature Strengths, Self-Rating Scale” created by Jonathan Haidt, PhD:
<https://www.karenwyattmd.com/strengths-self-rating-scale.pdf>
- Identify and rank-order your top 5 strengths



Signature Strengths Exercise

Strategy #2



Signature Strengths Exercise

- This week, create a protected time in your schedule when you will exercise one or more of your signature strengths **in a new way** either at home or in leisure, every day
- Examples:
 - Self-Control: choose to exercise rather than watch TV once this week
 - Perseverance: make a list of things you hope to accomplish in the day and then follow through on everything you listed
 - Curiosity: you might try a new way of doing something that you've never tried before



How VIA Signature Strengths Can Enhance Your Life

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkIZ93IAv-w>

Signature strengths: “You’re A Good Packer”

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Kc32NxxrVQ>
- Duration 5:35



Summary

- **Assess**: Use the official VIA Signature Strengths survey (available online), or the self-rating scale to identify your top 5 signature strengths
- **Identify**: Every day, search for ways that you can use and practice your top 5 strengths
 - Print or post your signature strengths at home and at work – remind yourself of them
 - Consider keeping a journal of your ideas
- **Use: Signature Strengths Exercise**
 - **Minimum Dose**: every day for 1 week
 - Schedule time to use 1+ strength(s) in a new way

References

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