Building Sustainable and Flourishing Learning Environments in Education, through integration of Positive and Coaching Psychology

Claudia Owad
Outcomes

- Integrating Positive Psychology & Coaching Psychology

- Theory & Application:
  - Strengths based theories
  - Systems Thinking
  - Coaching ripple effect
  - Whole school audits

- Integration – micro & macro impact

- Embedding & enhancing sustainable change
Key Principals

- Learn it
- Live it
- Teach it
- Embed it
The F word
Mental Health Spectrum

(Well-being Institute, University of Cambridge, 2011)
Integration

Positive Psychology

Coaching Psychology
Well-Being & Engagement

High Mental Health

PLODDING       FLOURISHING

FUNCTIONING

Low Engagement / Goal Striving       High Engagement / Goal Striving

LANGUISHING

NON-FUNCTIONAL & FUNCTIONAL

&

DISTRESSED & DISTRESSED

Low Mental Health

Grant (2012)
Keyes (2007)
Activity

• In pairs: briefly discuss what you are currently doing in your school context?
  • Positive psychology applications?
  • Coaching psychology applications?
  • Both....?
Positive Psychology Defined

Positive psychology is the scientific study of what enables individuals and communities to thrive" –

International Positive Psychology Association.
Positive Psychology Umbrella
many theories and key areas of research

- Positive emotions & wellbeing
- Character strengths
- Mindfulness
- Meaning & purpose
- Mindset
- Flow
- Hope
- Self determination Theory
- PERMA
- Grit
Positive Psychology: The Why

• Improve wellbeing
• Increase engagement
• Create positive emotions
• Increase resilience, GRIT and mental toughness
• Create growth mindsets
• Increase goal attainment
“A one-to-one conversation that focuses on the enhancement of learning and development through increasing self awareness and a sense of personal responsibility, where the coach facilitates the self-directed learning of the coachee through questioning, active listening, and appropriate challenge in a supportive & encouraging environment.”

(van Nieuwerburgh 2012)
Coaching Psychology: The How

- Coaching conversations:
  - Are quality conversations
  - Create insight, self-awareness and reflection
  - Promotes learning and development
  - Requires active listening
  - Supportive and encouraging
  - Encourages responsibility and accountability
  - Are solution focused
“Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.”

Stephen R. Covey (1932-2012)
InspirationBoost.com
VIA Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues

**Wisdom**
- Creativity: Originality; adaptiveness; ingenuity
- Curiosity: Interest; novelty-seeking; exploration; openness to experience
- Judgment: Critical Thinking; thinking things through; open-minded
- Love of Learning: Mastering new skills & topics; systematically adding to knowledge
- Perspective: Wisdom; providing wise counsel; taking the big picture view

**Courage**
- Bravery: Value; not shrinking from fear; speaking up for what’s right
- Perseverance: Persistence; industry; finishing what one starts
- Honesty: Authenticity; integrity
- Zest: Vitality; enthusiasm; vigor; energy; feeling alive and activated

**Humanity**
- Love: Both loving and being loved; valuing close relations with others
- Kindness: Generosity; nurturance; care; compassion; altruism; “niceness”
- Social Intelligence: Emotional intelligence; aware of the motives/feelings of self/others; knowing what makes other people sick

**Justice**
- Teamwork: Citizenship; social responsibility; loyalty
- Fairness: Just; not letting feelings bias decisions about others
- Leadership: Organizing group activities; encouraging a group to get things done
- Prudence: Careful; cautious; not taking undue risks

**Temperance**
- Forgiveness: Mercy; accepting others’ shortcomings; giving people a second chance
- Humility: Modesty; letting one’s accomplishments speak for themselves
- Self-Regulation: Self-control; disciplined; managing impulses & emotions
- Spirituality: Religiousness; faith; purpose; meaning

**Transcendence**
- Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence: Awe; wonder; elevation
- Gratitude: Thankful for the good; expressing thanks; feeling blessed
- Hope: Optimism; future-mindedness; future orientation
- Humor: Playfulness; bringing smiles to others; lighthearted
Strengths Application

- Individual
- Classroom
- Team
- Organisation
- Identification and spotting
- Conversations...
Strengths at work

Strengths
Knowledge – Assess
Strengths Use – Leverage
Strengths Spotting – Relate
Strengths speed sharing

• What are two of your top strengths?
• What are one or two strengths you would like to develop more?
Strengths Research

• **Hope, Love, Zest, Gratitude & Curiosity** associated with higher levels of well-being (Peterson, Park & Seligman, 2004)

• **Academic achievement** among school children is predicted by temperance strengths and by perseverance (Peterson & Park, 2009)

• **Teaching effectiveness** is predicted by teacher zest, humour and social intelligence (Duckworth et al, 2009)
Play to strengths

- Happier
- More confident
- Higher self-esteem
- Increased energy & vitality
- Experience less stress
- Are more resilient
- More likely to achieve goals
- More engaged@work
- More effective at self development

- Perform better at work!
Introducing a New Theory of Well-Being

PERMA

Positive Emotions
Engagement
Positive Relationships
Meaning
Accomplishment
Positive Emotions
Broaden-and-Build Theory
*Positive Emotions Create Upward Spirals*

**Positive Emotions**
Joy, Love, Contentment, Interest, Happiness

**BROADEN**
Expands Inventory of Thoughts and Action

**BUILD**
Develops Physical, Mental and Social Resources

**TRANSFORM**
Advances Personal Growth and Creates More Positive Emotions

PROPERTY OF HAPACUS, LLC
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Emotions <strong>Broaden</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thought-Action Repertoires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy ........................... play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gratitude ..................... creative giving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serenity ...................... savor &amp; integrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest ........................ explore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope .............................. yearn for positive change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pride ............................ dream big</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amusement .................. shared laughter, insight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspiration .................. aspire to excellence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awe ............................. accommodate the new</td>
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<tr>
<td>Love .............................. all of the above</td>
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Multi Player Thumb Wrestle
Reflective Question

• Think of a time when you felt good at work.... What were you feeling?
Engagement
Mind Full, or Mindful?
Reflective Question

• What engages you and gets you into flow?
IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS
"The quality of our conversations, determines the quality of our relationships"
TAKE A SEAT & MAKE A FRIEND
Reflective Question

• Describe a time when you have had a positive connection/conversation with a colleague - what did you say and do?
CREATE MEANING
What creates meaning and purpose?

- Purpose
  - Hobbies
  - Spiritual
  - Gratitude
  - Belonging
    - Social
    - Cultural
    - Professional
Reflective Question

- What gives you meaning personally and professionally?
Accomplishment
Reflective Question

• List two achievements you have made since the beginning of the year?
Self-Determination Theory

- **Competence**: need to be effective in dealing with environment
- **Humans’ three basic needs**
  - **Autonomy**: need to control the course of their lives
- **Relatedness**: need to have a close, affectionate relationship with others
Coaching a Growth Mindset

5 Questions to Develop a Growth Mindset

What did you learn from today’s performance?

What steps did you take to make you successful today?

What are some different strategies you could have used?

How did you keep going when things got tough?

What can you learn from your opponent today?

5 Feedback Comments to Develop a Growth Mindset

This will be a challenging concept to learn, but I believe you can master it.

You haven’t got it yet, but you will if you keep working and thinking about it.

I really appreciated your effort today.

It is okay to take risks, that’s how we learn.

Getting better takes time and I see you improving.

@BelievePHQ
@SportPsychDunc
Snyder’s Hope Model

1. **Goals:** Provide targets for motivation and action.

2. **Pathways:** Strategies to achieve the goals.

3. **Agency:** Motivation to implement the pathways.

The business case

- Empirical research has growing research & evidence that links between positive psychology (specifically strengths based approaches) & coaching, has a positive impact on wellbeing

Positive Education

Explicit & Implicit

• **Explicit** – teaching the skills of resilience, achievement & well-being to staff, students, parents and broader school community; PPIs.

• **Implicit** – creating a positive school culture (incorporating a coaching culture) through language, policies, procedures, visuals and broader environment.
Why Positive Education?

**Positive Emotions, Learning & Achievement!**

- Increased creativity and flexibility of thought;
- Improved conceptual reasoning and long-term memory;
- Improved positive/negative emotional ratio;
- More resilient in stressful situations;
- More compassion/tolerance towards others.
Applied Integration

- UEL- integrated degree: Master in Applied Positive Psychology & Coaching Psychology
- Special Interest Group in Coaching Psychology – APS, BPS
Integration

• Where to start?
• Current practices & applications?
• Focus?
• Training /PD
  • Formal or informal
  • Internal or external
Systems Thinking

• Understanding how parts of the system influence one another through observing interactions and patterns

• Instead of isolating small parts of the system, it works by expanding one's view to take into account the larger picture
Impacts of Systems thinking

Positive Psychology

• Broaden & Build
• Positive emotions
• PERMA
• Mindfulness
• Meaning & Purpose
• Wellbeing & flourishing

Coaching

• Intentional conversations around patterns and impact
• Probing and challenging questions and conversations
• To teaching and learning
Coaching Ripple Effect

**Theory**

- Coined by Dr Sean O’Connor (2013)
- Examines coaching beyond the individual who is receiving the coaching
- People who are directly connected to people being coached also receive positive benefits

**Application**

- Individual
- Team
- System
- Different stakeholders
  - Staff
  - Students
  - Parents
- Coaching Psychology & Positive Psychology connection
Whole School Audit

APPRCIATIVE INQUIRY

DREAM
What might be?

DISCOVERY
What gives life?
The best of
What is...

POSITVE
CORE

DESTINY
Empower, learn,
adjust and DO

DESIGN
What should be the
Ideal?

Source: Cooperrider et al.

Systems develop
in the direction
of questions we ask.
PERMA Audit
Integration

**Micro Impact**
- Increases wellbeing of individuals
- Promote engagement
- Creating meaning & purpose
- Prompt Self reflection

**Macro Impact**
- Systems approach and thinking
- Create energizing & positive hubs
- Broad and comprehensive
- Positive implications to teaching and learning
Embedding & Enhancing Sustainable change

- Purpose & direction?
- Audit - current state
- Intention – desired state
- First steps?
- Review and reflection
- Next steps?
- Repeat
Next steps...

What is your first step?
Key Principals

• Learn it
• Live it
• Teach it
• Embed it
Thanks & stay connected...

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