Wellbeing at Work

NZ managing resilience in the workplace symposium

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Geelong Breathing

- Breath One. Take a deep breath in through your nose and fill your lungs with as much air as possible. As you are doing so, notice your physical body and any points of pain or tension. As you breath out slowly through your mouth, imagine you are pushing or releasing any tension away. Feel yourself sink into your chair or the floor if you are standing.

- Breath Two. Take a deep breath in through your nose and fill your lungs with as much air as possible. Now as you breathe out think about what you are grateful for right at this very moment. Not what you are grateful for that has happened in the past, or looking towards the future, but right in this very moment think about one thing you are grateful for and exhale slowly. Say to yourself "Right now I am grateful for...".

- Breath Three. Take a deep breath in through your nose and fill your lungs with as much air as possible. Now as you breathe out think about your frame of reference and what intentional state you want to be in right now. Do you intend to be kind? Do you intend to be open minded? Do you intend to be peaceful? Whatever intention you wish to have at this present moment, cultivate it when you exhale by saying to yourself "My intention right now is to be...".

Today's session

- Know stuff + do stuff (knowledge + experience)
- Focus on wellbeing science + positive psychological interventions
- Aaron
  - Positive psychology and models of wellbeing
  - Wellbeing at work
- Anne
  - Five elements of wellbeing and meaningful work
  - Positive Organizational Behaviour and Psychological Capital

Positive assessment

- Let's do a "back of the napkin" assessment:

How happy are you right now, in life?

- What would you pay / give / do / sacrifice / commit to in order to be, on average, one point happier?

10 - Extremely happy

9 - Very happy

8 - Pretty happy

7 - Mildly happy

6 - Slightly happy

5 - Neutral

4 - Slightly unhappy

3 - Mildly unhappy

2 - Pretty unhappy

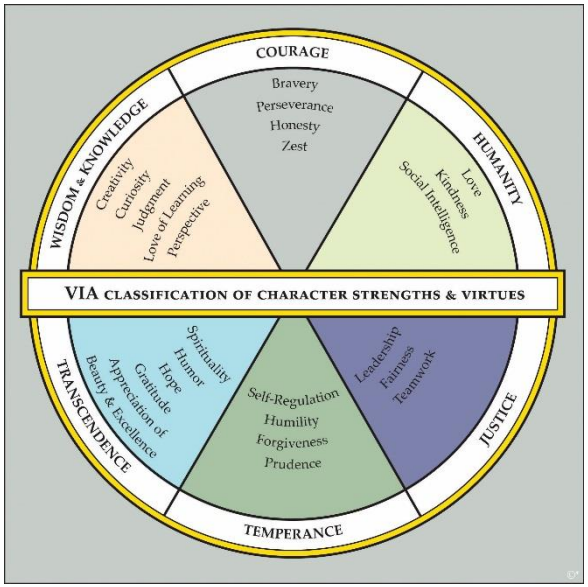
1 - Very unhappy

0 - Extremely unhappy

Positive introductions

- Step 1: Pair up.
- Step 2: In 2 minutes (1 minute each), tell a story – a thoughtful narrative with a beginning, middle and end – that illustrates **when you are at your best at work**.
- Note: Swap when you hear the bell the first time after 1 minute, and then stop completely when you hear the bell the second time after 2 minutes.

Key point: Wield your strengths, they are paths to engagement and Enjoyment.



What is positive psychology?

- "There are two complementary strategies for improving the human condition. One is to relieve what is negative in life; the other is to strengthen what is positive. Mainstream psychology focuses largely on the first strategy; Positive Psychology emphasizes the second" - *Martin Seligman*

- "Positive psychology is the scientific study of what enables individuals and communities to thrive" - *International Positive Psychology Association*

What is positive psychology?

- Positive psychology is a branch of psychology that conducts scientific inquiry into the factors that help individuals, communities and organisations thrive by building on their strengths and virtues.
- Positive psychology is the study of topics as diverse as happiness, optimism, hope, flow, meaning, subjective wellbeing and personal growth.
- Positive psychology aims to expand psychology from its focus on repairing the negatives in life to also promoting the positives in life.
- Positive psychological interventions (empirically validated techniques and strategies to increase wellbeing) have been used effectively in schools to improve academic outcomes, in businesses to improve work relationships and engagement, and in communities to improve health.
- **What is optimal human functioning?**

What is positive psychology?

- Positive Education
- Positive Health
- Positive Assessment
- Positive Psychotherapy
- Positive Organisations

Keyes

Flourishing

- ***Emotional Wellbeing***
  - Positive affect (happy)
  - Positive affect (interested)
  - Life satisfaction
- ***Social Wellbeing***
  - Social contribution
  - Social integration
  - Social actualisation
  - Social acceptance
- ***Psychological Wellbeing***
  - Self-acceptance
  - Environmental mastery
  - Positive relationships
  - Personal growth
  - Autonomy
  - Purpose in life

Huppert & So

Flourishing

- ***Positive Apprasial***
  - Positive emotion
- ***Positive Functioning***
  - Engagement
  - Competence
  - Meaning
  - Positive reslationships
- ***Positive Characteristics***
  - Emotional stability
  - Vitalty
  - Optimism
  - Resilience
  - Self-esteem

Diener et al.

Flourishing

- Purpose and meaning
- Positive relationships
- Engagement
- Social contribution
- Competence
- Self-acceptance
- Optimism
- Self-esteem

Seligman et al.

Flourishing

- Positive emotion
- Engagement
- Positive relationships
- Meaning and purpose
- Accomplishment / competence

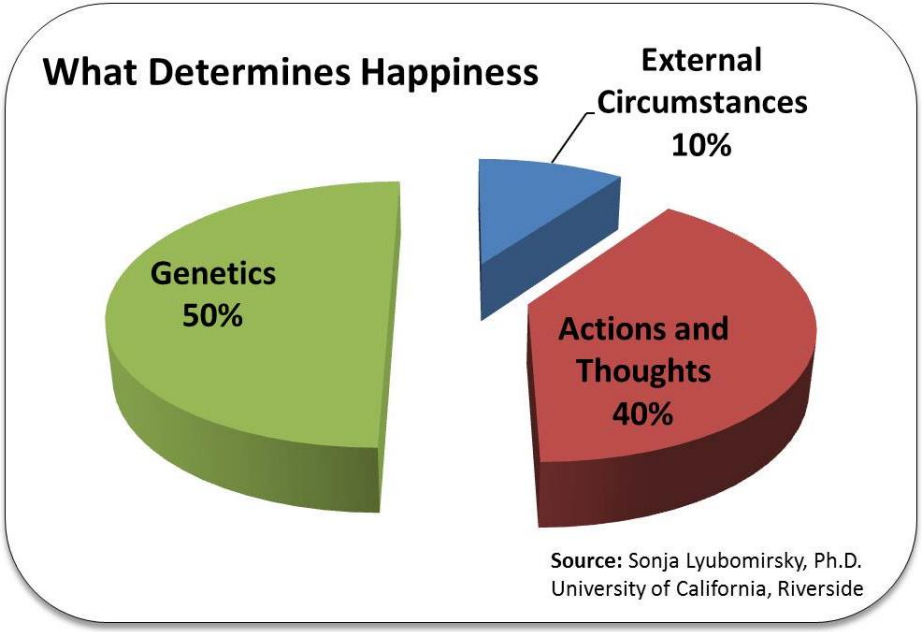
Answers

- The good life is best construed as a matrix that includes happiness, occasional sadness, a sense of purpose, playfulness, and psychological flexibility, as well autonomy, mastery, and belonging/connection.

- It's not just about learning to be more positive – it's about using scientifically-informed tools and strategies to make our thinking more flexible, accurate, clear, and expansive. This thinking will lead to happiness and more healthy behaviours.

Is happiness within your control?

- The way we choose to act, and the way we choose to think have a substantial impact on our personal wellbeing.
- Yes genetics play a big role, but turns out our external circumstances don't necessarily have to have a big hold on our wellbeing.
- Wellbeing is a CHOICE: daily practices in life have a big impact on wellbeing.



Let’s try this one

- Step 1: Pair up with a partner, get a pen ready, as well as a blank A4 page…
- Step 2: Raise a hand in the air when you're ready…
- Step 3: Without looking down at your blank page, and ONLY looking at your partner’s face, you have **1 minute** to draw a portrait of your partner, starting on the bell!
- Step 4: Sign your name, date it, and swap pictures with your partner…

Five ways to wellbeing

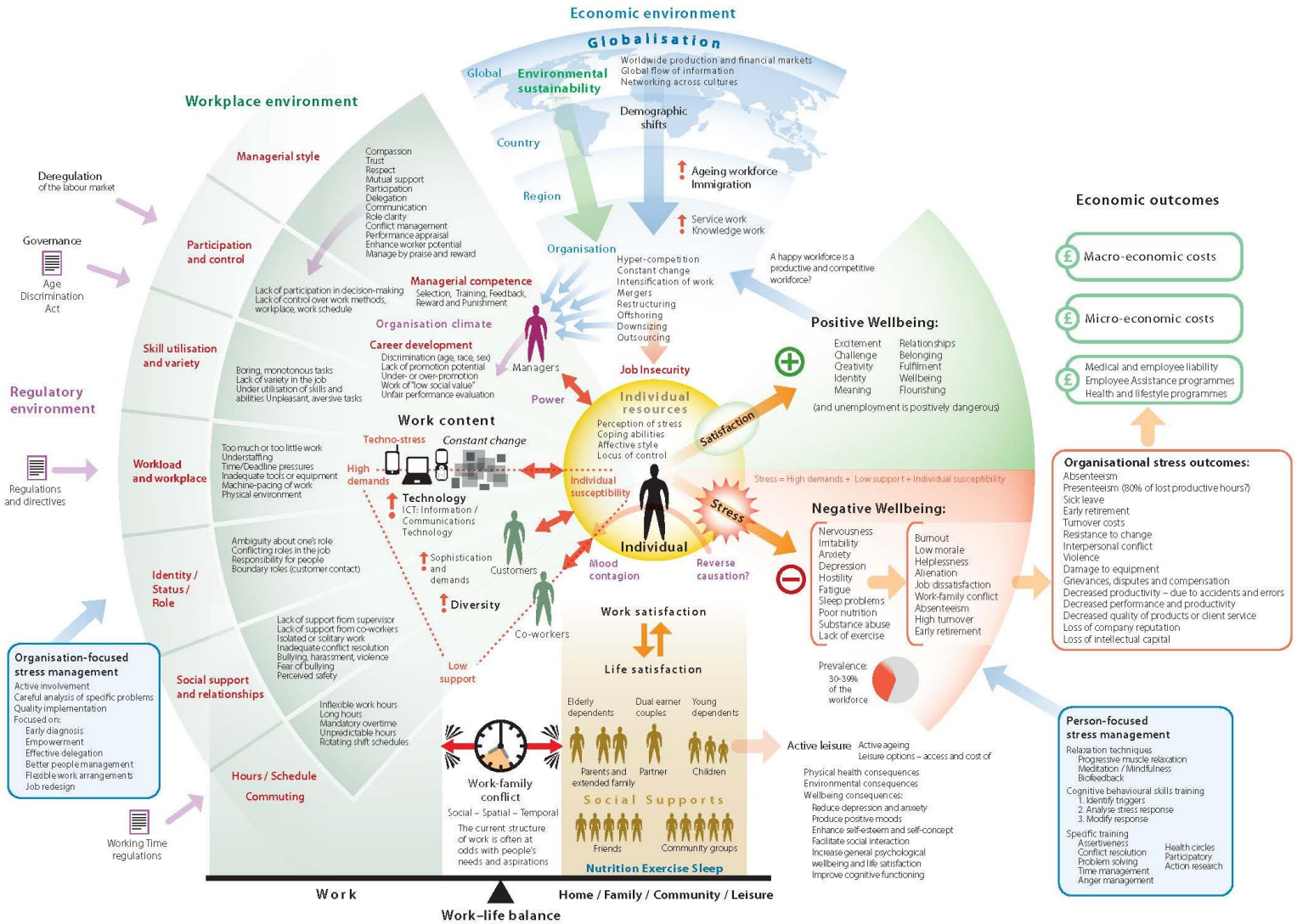
- Connect – Make connections with friends, family, colleagues and neighbours. When you build these connections they help enrich your life with new experiences and opportunities.

- Be Active – Get moving. Walk, skip, run, dance – move your muscles. Exercise not only makes you feel good, it keeps you healthy. Pick a physical activity that you enjoy.

- Take Notice – Be mindful. Be curious. Like a child, see the wonder and beauty of the world. Notice the things around you – the weather, the landscape, the mood and feelings of the people around you. In noticing you learn to appreciate the things that matter.
- Keep Learning – We never stop learning. Keep trying something new – a new course you've been wanting to do or a more challenging task at work. Challenges keep us on our toes and increase our confidence and excitement in our day.

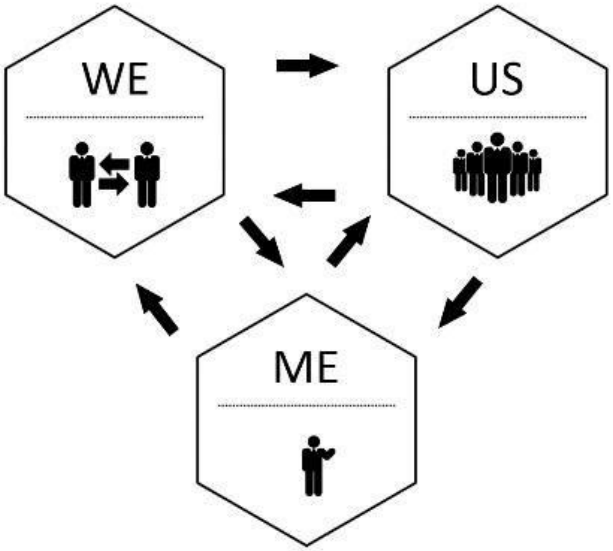
- Give – Be generous with your time, your knowledge and your talents, giving to friends, family and even strangers. Be thankful, smile at people, and volunteer. Sharing to a wider audience gives you a greater reward than just doing things for yourself.

Work wellbeing



Work wellbeing

- Jarden, A. (2016). *Introducing workplace wellbeing to organizations: The "Me, We, Us" model*. Positive Work and Organizations: Research and Practice.
- When focusing on organizational wellbeing, wellbeing assessments and workplace wellbeing program: can happen at three distinct levels regardless of organization structur or size – at the employee level (Me), at group level (We), and at the organizational level (Us) – as depicted on the right



Five essential elements of wellbeing

8 Sources of meaning at work

Purpose

1. *Contributions beyond yourself* – the sense that your work is helping others; having the experience that you are making a positive contribution to the lives of others

Self-realization

2. *Learning* – when your work offers ongoing opportunities for personal growth
3. *Accomplishment* - Deriving satisfaction from constantly improving the standard and performance of your work

Prestige

4. *Status* - Working for a 'high-status' organization or having a position that confers respect, recognition, and a sense of worth
5. *Power* - Meaning comes from acquiring and exercising power (incl. power for good)

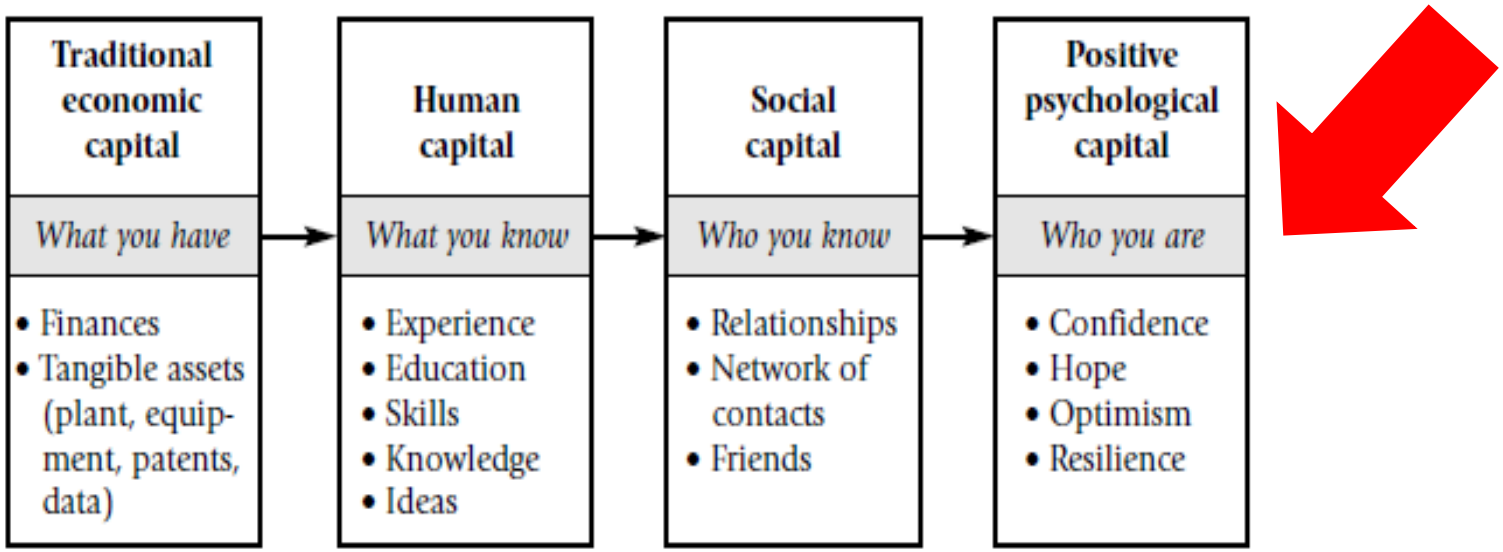
Social

6. *Belonging to a community* – Deriving a sense of friendship from work
7. *Agency* – having a sense of real involvement; feeling that your ideas are listened to and that your contribution has an impact on the organization's performance
8. *Autonomy – having the* freedom to do your own work and master your task

Which of these sources of meaning are important to you?
Which do you derive from your current workplace?

Positive Organizational Behaviour (POB)

- POB focuses on situational characteristics that can be developed and improved through intervention in the workplace
- Positive Organizational Behaviour (POB) leads to building positive organizational capital (PsyCap) (Fred Luthans)
- Research shows that increasing PsyCap has a positive impact on job performance and job satisfaction
- 4 dimensions: Confidence, Hope, Optimism, Resilience

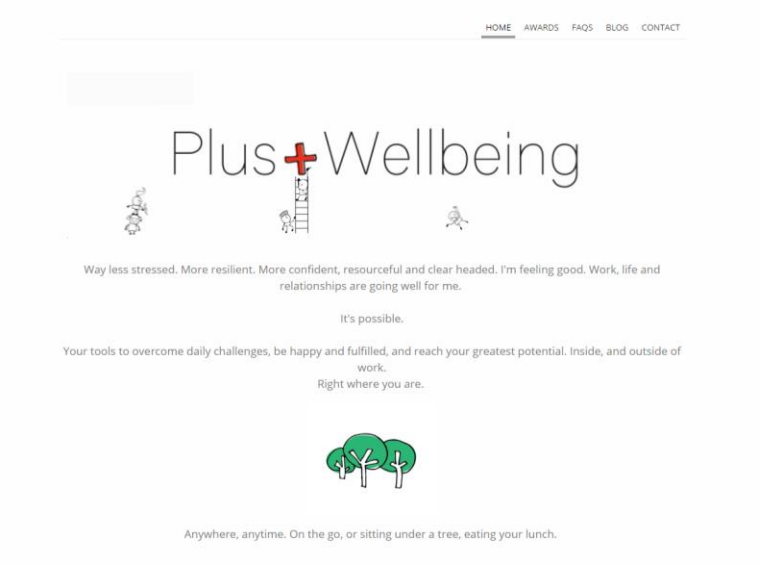


Resilience in POB

- Resilience: A positive way of coping with anger or distress
- An ability to recuperate from stress, conflict, failure, change or increase in responsibility
- Capacity to “bounce back” from adversity or even dramatic positive changes
- Three characteristics that set resilient people and organizations apart from others:
    1. Capacity to accept and ‘face down’ reality (so be a realist rather than an optimist)
    2. The ability to find meaning in life (and draw on values in the process of doing so)
    3. The ability to improvise (bricolage)

Wellbeing and resilience online

www.ourpluswellbeing.com



www.workonwellbeing.com

A wellbeing overview

- Invest time and effort in family connections
- We are social creatures so be enmeshed in a community of friends - deep and meaningful relationships
- Know your personal values and live by them. Similarly, know your purpose and what derives meaning for you
- Know you personal strengths and find ways to exercise them every day
- Develop and optimistic thinking style
- Invest your money in experiences rather than things
- Be in work, and work that you enjoy
- Be grateful
- Savour the now regularly – rather than the past or future
- Slow down – perhaps meditate?
- Be curious
- Look after your health (the below 5 can make approximately 14 years difference to your life expectancy - the quality of both your current life and those extra 14 years)
  - Eat real food – not too much, and mostly plants
  - Exercise regularly – and different types: aerobic, resistance, flexibility, balance
  - Drink alcohol in moderation
  - Don't smoke
  - Get enough quality sleep

Caveat: Genetics and upbringing also make a slight bit of difference, but since you can't do too much about those, don't worry about them…

Thanks

- These slides are available at:

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