

Chapter I

Introduction

Positivity in life is an important catalyst for well-being. The expression and experience of positivity can vary for different individuals. For some, it is the experience of hope, happiness, and contentment, and many other such positive emotions, while for others, it can be directed towards other people in ways such as compassion, altruism, kindness, and spreading cheer. Positivity, when directed towards oneself or others, or even towards one's actions or environment, is the best cement to hold together one's feeling of wellness and flourishing. Psychology as a subject has for a very long time concentrated on abnormality and its management. Psychologists focused on the study and research of abnormality, its various manifestations, and the treatment of abnormality. There was a clear demarcation between what is considered normal and those behaviours that are considered abnormal.

Origin of Positive Psychology

Positive psychology is defined as “the scientific study of positive human functioning and flourishing on multiple levels that include the biological, personal, relational, institutional, cultural, and global dimensions of life” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The origin of positive psychology can be dated back to the development of the humanistic approach to psychology. Abraham Maslow coined the phrase "positive psychology" and first used it in his 1954 book “Motivation and Personality”. The final chapter of this book, titled "Towards a Positive Psychology," describes how psychology and psychologists have so far underestimated human potential and focused more on certain negative or pessimistic constructs.

“The positive emotions, i.e., happiness, calm, serenity, peace of mind, contentment, and acceptance, have not been studied. Neither have compassion, pity, charity. Fun, joy, play, games, sport, are not sufficiently understood. Ecstasy, elation, zest, exhilaration, gaiety, euphoria, well-being” (Maslow, 1954, p 283). “The science of psychology has been more successful on the negative than on the positive side. It reveals that much about man's shortcomings, his illness, and sins, but little about his potentialities, virtues, achievable aspirations, or his full psychological height” (Maslow, 1954, p 283).

An in-depth study of the history and origin of psychology can, however, identify several forerunners for positive psychology. Confucius, an early and significant thinker from China 2,500 years ago, focused on the value of healthy social connections for everyone's and society's well-being. Socrates, a Greek philosopher, studied the precise methods of investigation that philosophers had created to comprehend the physical universe. However, Socrates focused his attention on the human world and used these techniques to examine the best ways to live this life. He had a significant impact on Plato, who authored numerous dialogues covering a variety of subjects important to this development. Virtue, justice, bravery, piety, truth, pleasure, creativity, beauty, and love are some of the subjects covered. Aristotle, Plato's most well-known pupil, wrote extensively about human flourishing and the qualities required to achieve it. The origins of positive psychology can be found in the ancient Greeks. Aristotle was fascinated by the good life, moral, intellectual virtues, and eudaimonia (translated from Greek as happiness). Jeremy Bentham's utilitarian philosophy gave this idea of eudaimonia a new perspective. According to Bentham, happiness is the only thing that people should seek after, and it is also the only thing that is worthwhile. Bentham's philosophy has influenced many contemporary philosophers and psychologists. (Driver, 2022)

Furthermore, one of the core ideas of positive psychology, mindfulness, has its origins in age-old Eastern spiritual traditions like Zen Buddhism. Also, the roots of the practice of gratitude and kindness can be traced back to religious origins. Almost all religions have some form of spiritual practices that focuses on doing good to others and being grateful to God.

William James, Father of American Psychology, is another significant early proponent of positive psychology (Taylor, 2001). He was interested in why some people were able to prosper and overcome hardship while others experienced mental health issues. According to him, the key to determining what constitutes ideal human functioning is having a clear understanding of subjective experience. William James referred to this as "healthy mindedness" and argued that psychology should have a branch dedicated to examining human abilities and how best to unleash their full potential in various types of individuals (Froh, 2004).

Other thinkers who contributed to the field of positive psychology include Goldstein's (1995) organismic theory was originally published in 1939, Jahoda's (1958) ideas on positive

mental health, and Shoben's (1957) notion on normal personality. Additionally, Rogers (1963) and the notion of a fully functioning person can be seen as sharing ideas that are now frequently used by positive psychologists. Erikson (1964), in his book "Childhood and Society," outlined the normative and epigenetic psychosexual developmental stages. Additionally, Fromm's book "The Art of Loving" makes an effort to understand love and its various manifestations as an art. This book also deliberates joy, love, and numerous other positive emotions.

Numerous authors contrast positive psychology with humanistic psychology, and some even criticize the founders of positive psychology for failing to give humanistic psychology the credit it rightfully deserves (Rich, 2001; Waterman, 2013; DeRobertis & Bland, 2021).

Modern Understanding of Positive Psychology

However, Martin Seligman and his associates are responsible for the modern roots of positive psychology. Martin Seligman's development of positive psychology as a subfield of psychology in the late 1990s paved the way for the creation of a discipline that focuses on human well-being and the circumstances, traits, and qualities that promote success and flourishing. Positive psychology has also been defined as "the scientific study of positive experiences and positive individual traits and the institutions that facilitate their development" (Duckworth, Steen, & Seligman, 2005). Seligman chose to concentrate on the central idea of positive psychology, which led to his election as the American Psychological Association's (APA) President in 1996.

Seligman first became interested in those who managed to avoid developing depression before turning his attention to ways to treat it. Subsequently, Seligman comprehended that he and his many colleagues utilized their profession to help people who were already unhappy, such as those who were suffering from trauma, sadness, anxiety, or wrath. In other words, psychology as a subject was principally initiated as a sickness model, which had a number of drawbacks:

- The first weakness was moral; psychology started pathologizing victims and became victimologists. The understanding of human nature assumed that mental disease would strike a person like a tonne of bricks, and the study of psychology disregarded ideas like free will, responsibility, preference, and character.

- The second disadvantage was that by focusing primarily on mental ill health, psychology neglected to improve the happiness, productivity, and fulfillment of relatively trouble-free people's lives. Also, psychology entirely overlooked human genius and subjective efforts to enhance the eminence of life.
- The third drawback was that the study did not develop interventions to make people happier because researchers were attempting to repair disease rather than improve positivity (Seligman, 2004).

These concepts propelled Seligman to introduce a new era of research into the causes of human happiness and fulfillment with his central thesis-that mental wellness encompassed more than just the absence of illness (University of Pennsylvania, 2022). However, Seligman started his profession researching depression. His work at the University of Pennsylvania in 1967 allowed him to uncover the concept of “Learned helplessness” (Seligman, 1975). Learned helplessness describes a phenomenon where an animal or individual gives up trying to escape an unpleasant or potentially harmful situation that they perceive to be out of their control. They just give up and accept that the situation will continue no matter what they do (Maier & Seligman, 2016). The concept of learned helplessness was discovered by psychology researchers Steven F. Maier and Martin Seligman (1972). Since dogs are given training through classical conditioning to expect an electrical shock after hearing a tone, they had initially observed them acting helplessly. Following that, the dogs were positioned in a shuttle box with two chambers separated by a thin wall. On one side of the base there was electricity, but not on the other. Even though it would have only required them to jump over a small obstruction to escape, the dogs who had previously undergone classical training made no attempts to do so (Seligman, 1972). The dogs in these studies who could not evade the shocks ultimately learned to be helpless. Since they had already experienced shocks, they had a cognitive belief that nothing that they did would halt the shocks.

According to Seligman, the same case of learned helplessness as seen in animals can be observed in humans who give up trying to cope with a situation because they believe that any attempt may not bring relief and helplessly accept the situation. Thus, it is a trauma that cannot be avoided and leaves people feeling helpless. According to research by Seligman, this is one of the causes of depression (Seligman, 1975). According to Seligman, the perception of having no

control over a situation's outcome contributes to clinical depression and other mental diseases of a similar nature. Furthering this research, Seligman with his many colleagues analysed the components of learned helplessness. There are three components of learned helplessness: contingency, cognition, and behaviour. The terms contingency (the conviction that there is a relationship between events and behaviours), cognition (how people think about these relationships), and behaviour (the actions people take as a result of observing the relationship between actions and events) are used to describe the belief in this relationship (Johnson & Lambert 2011).

Explanatory Style

The way that acquired helplessness affects individuals may also depend on their attributional or explanatory preferences. According to this theory, a person's innate way of explaining events influences whether they experience learned helplessness. There are three dimensions to this sense of attribution that make an individual either vulnerable to helplessness or not. The first dimension is determining whether the negative event is transitory or permanent in nature. For instance, if a person is rejected by a loved one, does that person assume that the rejection will last, and that s/he is unlovable, or does that person assume that the other person is simply fickle? Therefore, it is evident that people who habitually think that negative events disappear with time are less likely to experience helplessness, while those who think that negative events are permanent experience helplessness. The second dimension was either local or universal. For instance, if a student fails an examination, does the student think that s/he is stupid and can never pass any examination, or, on the contrary, does the student think that this is just one examination, one paper, and that there will be more fruitful opportunities in the future? The third dimension is about the control that one has over negative or bad happenings. Does one think that bad events are controllable, or are they uncontrollable? The aforesaid three dimensions, when examined closely, reveal if a person has an optimistic or pessimistic explanatory style. A pessimistic or negative explanatory style is characterized by a tendency to hold oneself accountable for unfavourable events and to perceive them as inevitable and inescapable (Peterson & Park, 1998). Learned helplessness can aggravate a number of psychological conditions, including anxiety, stress, depression, phobias, shyness, and loneliness

(Vollmayr & Gass, 2013). Pessimists are people who think that bad or negative events are permanent, pervasive and uncontrollable, whereas optimists are people who think that negative happenings are transient, just one situation, and not their fault. The pessimists are called “catastrophizers” by Seligman (2011). Seligman, hence, attempted to study learned optimism as a positive alternative to learned helplessness. A protective factor that helps prevent depression is optimism. Optimistic children are at much lower risk of developing moderate to severe depression as they enter puberty than pessimistic children, according to a longitudinal study by Seligman and his colleagues that followed children through childhood, puberty, and then adulthood (Seligman, 2018b). Optimism is a skill that can be learned. Reducing anxiety and depression and boosting resilience can be achieved by teaching people how to constructively challenge their pessimistic explanatory style and learn optimistic explanatory techniques (Seligman, 2011).

Seligman and Peterson attempted to create an alternative to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM). The DSM is a manual used by psychologists to identify psychological disorders. It gives a list of symptoms that are associated with many disorders and provides a manual for diagnosing them. They created a list of character strengths and virtues as a substitute for the traditional manual. They conducted research to compile a list of highly regarded virtues, looking at various historical cultures from the ancient Greeks to the present. The basis for their book, *Character Strengths and Virtues*, was this categorization system (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). This book listed six virtues: “wisdom or knowledge, courage, transcendence, justice, humanity, and temperance” (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Under these six virtues are listed 24-character strengths. These character strengths signify those positive traits that can be built up to create flourishing.

In the late 1990s, rapid development took place in the branch of positive psychology. In 1999, the inaugural Positive Psychology Summit was held. In 2002, there was the first ever international conference on positive psychology (Compton, 2005). The general public started paying more attention in 2006, when a positive psychology course at Harvard University started to get a lot of attention (Goldberg, 2006). The First World Congress on Positive Psychology was held in June 2009 (Pileggi, 2009).

Theory of Authentic Happiness

There are numerous tasks people do on any given day. They do some tasks because they feel that doing them would make them feel good. For example, enjoying an ice cream. Some tasks are done because it is duty and responsibility to perform them, for example, attending the parent teacher meeting at the child's school. Some other tasks are done because they give lives a sense of purpose and meaning, for example, donating money, or helping an elderly person. Very similarly, the theory of authentic happiness has been described as comprising three elements:

- The search for positive emotion: The pleasant life
- The quest of engagement or flow: The engaged/ good life
- The mission for cultivating meaning and purpose: The meaningful life (Seligman, 2004).

The Pleasant Life

When people do an activity solely for the sake of feeling good, they search for joy, pleasure, satisfaction, contentment, rapture, warmth, comfort, ecstasy, and so on. This life is called a pleasant life. Here the individual seeks only pleasure, and all tasks that s/he does is directed towards experiencing a positive emotion. If one learns to enjoy and value such fundamental joys as good company, the outdoors, and the bodily requirements, s/he will live a pleasant life. The pursuit of pleasures, such as those found in delicious cuisine, excellent wine, shopping, time spent with friends, vacations, automobiles, and homes with all luxuries, is how most people define happiness. Seligman (2004) in his book, "Authentic Happiness: using the new positive psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment" (Seligman (2004), discusses about how a person tries to participate in as many great life experiences as possible, and how they would like to be able to enjoy or extend these experiences throughout time. He discussed interventions that help people live a happy life in the past, present, and future (Meier, 2012). While having happiness in all three senses is ideal, it does not always occur. For instance, one could be happy and content with the past while being bitter and pessimistic about the present and future. Similar to this, it is possible to enjoy a lot of the present while harbouring grudges against the past and losing hope for the future. An individual can change

how they feel about the past, how they think about the future, and how they experience the present by becoming more aware of each of the three various kinds of happiness (The Pleasant Life, the Good Life, and the Meaningful Life – NSC Blog, n.d.).

To combat regret over the past, Seligman employs strategies like forgiveness and gratitude, which are frequently found in the teachings of old teachers and philosophers. Seligman claims that American culture is a "ventilationist society" where it is "considered honest, just, and even healthy to express anger". He makes the observation that this is often seen in therapy used to address worries, difficulties, and issues. Seligman, on the other hand, praises the East Asian propensity to handle challenging circumstances in a calm and modest manner. He cites research showing that people who do not give into their negative feelings and instead employ various coping mechanisms to deal with life's stresses also tend to be happier (Seligman 2002).

Focusing on Forgiveness and Gratitude: Happiness in the Past.

Forgiveness and gratitude are two important techniques that create a pleasant life. One of the most primitive strategies for responding to perceived injustice is the desire to exact revenge (Black, 1998). This desire has been a part of human civilization for a long time. Human nature is firmly rooted at the biological, psychological, and cultural levels in the propensity to seek revenge or exact revenge after being humiliated or victimized. Studies on old world primates by primatologists reveal that some species, including chimpanzees and monkeys, coordinate retaliatory actions in response to being harmed by another animal (Aureli, et al., 1992; de Waal, 1996; Silk, 1992). This occurs sometimes, even after an extended period of time has passed. Most people are somewhat motivated to avoid or exact retaliation against the offender when they are disrespected by a friend, abandoned by a partner, or confronted by an enemy (Snyder & Lopez, 2001). An alternative to this view of revenge and aggression is forgiveness. Throughout history, numerous religious figures have exclaimed that forgiveness is the way to embracing goodness and leading a spiritual life. The adverse effects of unforgiveness have been researched and found to have a detrimental effect on the physical health of the individual (Lavelock et al., 2015). According to many researchers, forgiveness is

distinct from pardoning (a legal term), condoning (that involves defending the offense), excusing (meaning an offense was committed because of alleviating situations), forgetting (implying that the recollection of an act has faded or glided out of “mindful awareness”), and denial (meaning that there is a refusal to recall the disturbing situation as it is humiliating or embarrassing). The research into forgiveness and its effects began by defining forgiveness. (Enright & Coyle, 1998). Most people interpret forgiveness as a positive attitude, feeling, or deed towards the offender (McCullough et al., 2001a).

The act of forgiving a person, including oneself, is frequently described as a distinct, deliberate, voluntary internal process of letting go of antipathy, bitterness, anger, resentment and the need for revenge and retribution. Forgiveness is a psychological process that involves a forgiver's ability to let go of negative emotions, thoughts, and feelings associated with the transgression and to actively choose to accept the transgression as a part of the past without expecting anything in return (Souders, 2019). Forgiveness and particular personality qualities are associated. Empirical research has shown that those who are more likely to forgive others tend to be more amiable, emotionally stable, spiritual, and religious than those who are less likely to do so (Lijo. 2018). Positive psychology often views forgiveness to be a character trait and a virtue that anyone seeking a more profound and long-lasting well-being should attempt to cultivate. Forgiveness is one of the character strengths under the virtue of temperance. This is a virtue that guards against overindulgence in all facets of life (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Effective communication, healthy teamwork, job satisfaction, self-esteem, creative problem solving, adaptability in the face of change, and productivity are all enhanced by forgiveness. Being unforgiving leads to resentment and vengeance (Peterson, 2006).

Another character strength that can be used to increase happiness is gratitude. Gratitude is a feeling of positivity that is typically directed at people or things that have given us pleasure or benefits. Gratitude is the opposite of resentment (Riskin et al., 2019). Emmons and McCullough (2003) examine and outline gratitude as a two-step process: “identifying that one has obtained a positive outcome” and “recognizing that there is an outside source for this positive outcome” (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). One major concept that is frequently linked to happiness is gratitude. Gratitude is a character strength that falls beneath the virtue of transcendence (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The cultivation of gratitude has been found to

improve mental health and general well-being. Gratitude is a potent feeling that can aid in the growth of abilities that create networks to the larger world and deliver meaning and purpose to one's life. An individual is more likely to feel happy and grateful when they are conscious of all that is good in their life. Since it tends to foster the virtues of compassion and love, gratitude is frequently linked with empathy and a sense of connection to others (Smith et al., 2020).

According to Jans-Beken et al. (2010), gratitude is deeply associated with happiness. There are countless advantages to feeling and expressing thankfulness (Wood et al., 2010). Gratitude helps to develop a sense of connectedness to the people, places, and things in their lives. It has been found to be connected with positive emotions, life satisfaction, optimism, and self-esteem (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Research shows that gratitude is one of the most important "predictors of well-being and other desirable life outcomes" (Portocarrero et al., 2020).

Research with 84 students who maintained a gratitude journal revealed that those who kept the journal reported higher goal directed behaviour, which also led to higher levels of academic motivation (Nawa & Yamagishi, 2021). Gratitude is a choice to overall well-being.

There are a large number of benefits of practicing gratitude. Lyubomirsky, in her 2007 book, "The How of Happiness: A new approach to getting the life you want" (Lyubomirsky, 2007), lists many advantages of practicing gratitude in life. The first can be outlined as the use of gratitude as a routine practice has been found to increase the savouring of all positive experiences that one comes across. Taking pleasure in small experiences helps one overcome the burden of a dull and troubled existence. Secondly, gratitude improves one's self-esteem and self-confidence. A simple realization as to the number of good things that one is thankful for, goes a long way in boosting one's self-image (Fredrickson et al., 2003). A third benefit can be seen in the fact that gratitude helps one cope with the trauma and stress that one faces in life (Lyubomirsky, 2007). A qualitative study conducted on people who get home from the hospital after a debilitating illness reveals that their gratitude levels are high as they feel that they have defeated an illness or even death. They value and savour each moment of their lives and enrich them, feeling thankful for each day given to them as a gift (Malin, 2003).

Fourthly, practicing gratitude fosters non materialistic thinking and improves one's moral values. Grateful people are less likely to commit crimes or lie. They value human life more and are less likely to harm others (Lyubomirsky, 2007). A fifth perspective of gratitude is

that it helps one to focus on social inclusiveness. The bonding and connectedness experienced by people who keep a gratitude journal are found to be higher than those who do not (McCullough et al., 2001b; Algoe et al., 2008). In other words, gratitude aids in building better relationships and social connections. Sixthly, having a strong sense of gratitude deters one from making comparisons with others and helps one be content with one's own life (Lyubomirsky, 2007). A seventh advantage is that having gratitude prevents the development of negative emotions such as envy, jealousy, resentment, and anger (Lyubomirsky, 2007; McCullough et al., 2002). Lastly, having a sense of gratitude helps one not to take the positivity in life for granted. This causes continuous appreciation for the gifts that one has and streamlines continuous happiness.

Focusing on Mindfulness and Savouring: Happiness in the Present.

Seligman believes that improving one's state of happiness in the present by using mindfulness to focus on the present, stretching positive experiences, and breaking undesirable habits are the best ways to do this (Seligman, 2010). Savouring is one such technique, along with mindfulness, that can help one improve one's state of happiness at present. Savouring can involve taking pleasure in even routine activities like going for a walk or taking a warm bath. Seligman (2010) discusses that prolonging the enjoyment of a positive experience can lead to happiness. Also, a happy memory can be created by taking a moment to savour the experience. For example, if one has a good meal, they can take a moment to savour the taste, smell, and enjoyment of the meal.

The ability to feel hopeful and optimistic is a prerequisite for future happiness. By adopting a growth mindset, one can learn to adopt a positive outlook on life (Seligman & positive psychology: theory and practice, 2010). An individual with a growth mindset thinks that their skills can be improved and developed with effort and practice. According to Seligman (2010), having a growth mindset makes it easier to have hope and optimism for the future. Having a growth mindset makes it more likely that one will be successful in the future.

Hope and Optimism: Happiness in the Future.

Hope and optimism are two factors that help one look forward to the future. Hope, future mindedness and optimism all represent an emotional, cognitive, and motivational

perspective all directed towards the future. When there is a sense of hope and optimism, one is more likely to be happy in the future. In truth, hope frequently perseveres through difficult situations like famine, war, and poverty. Optimism does not inexorably vanish in the face of misfortune. No human being can avoid going through difficult life events, but hope cultivates a perspective of life that builds and enables optimism and a reality check even in the most tiresome situations. Hope can be defined as “a positive cognitive state based on a sense of successful goal directed determination and planning to meet these goals” (Snyder et al., 1991). In other words, hope “is like a snap shot of a person’s current goal directed thinking, highlighting the motivated pursuit of goals and the expectation that those goals can be achieved” (Snyder et al., 1991). Hope is an emotion that a person feels when they believe that a desired goal is possible to achieve. In accordance with Snyder's Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991), hope is a virtue that sustains and endures human life and comprised of three distinct but connected elements:

- Goals Thinking: the clear formulation and conceptualization of goals that are worthwhile and valuable
- Pathways Thinking: the competence to create clear techniques to accomplish such goals
- Agency Thinking: the capacity to establish and maintain the motive to employ the chosen techniques.

Goal thinking starts with the supposition that human beings' activities are always purpose driven. Goals are therefore the objects of mental task sequences and provide the cognitive element that serves as an anchor for the theory of hope (Snyder, 1994a; Snyder, 1994b). Whether they be short term or long term, goals must be significant enough to inhabit conscious thought. Goals must also be practical and achievable, yet they often include some element of ambiguity. According to research, people who have been interviewed claim that hope thrives in the presence of transitional goal attainment probabilities (Averill, Catlin, & Chon, 1990). This suggests that goals that are uncertain and hard to achieve are more conducive to hope than goals that are easily achieved. In addition, goals must be congruent with one's own values (Snyder, 1994a). Goals must be intrinsically motivating.

Pathways thinking is the means by which goals are achieved. This is the cognitive element of the theory of hope that is concerned with the process of how goals are reached. These are the precise paths one creates to accomplish one's objectives. If the initial path doesn't work, one can use problem solving techniques to locate an alternative. People with high hopes know that obstacles will inevitably arise and that success may need multiple attempts. The people with high hope levels always make sure that they focus and plan well. The path to any goal can be multiple, and the means by which one achieves a goal may be different than the goal itself. People who are hopeful anticipate success and have multiple pathways to success. If one path does not take them to the desired goal, then they come up with a plan "B" or even more plans and pathways to reach the desired goal. They do not hesitate to work hard untiringly to reach their goals. They also use problem solving techniques to find alternative paths to their goals. They do not give up easily (Snyder, 1994b). The pathways model of hope (Snyder, 1994b) is concerned with the cognitive element of hope. This model is concerned with the process of how goals are reached.

The motivational constituent of hope is called "agency thinking" according to Snyder's theory of hope (Snyder, 1994a). Hope propels one to look forward and work for desired outcomes, feeling confident and motivated despite challenges, looking at the brighter side of things and focusing on opportunities rather than looking at the obstacles as burdens (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The belief that one can use their paths to get where they want to go is the main concept of agency thinking. The self-referent ideas about beginning to travel along a journey and enduring to go forward in that pathway is reflected in agentic thinking. Self-talk agentic statements like "I can do this" and "I am not going to be stopped" are embraced by persons with high hopes (Snyder et al., 1998). This refers to the degree of commitment, assurance, and human capability to really follow those different routes to the desired future. Here, it is necessary to have faith in self and to feel enthused to proceed. This has to do with emotional capability. Thus, "hope is the positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (1) agency (goal directed energy) and (2) pathways (planning to meet goals)" (Snyder, Irving, & Anderson, 1991). It has to be comprehended that pathway thinking influences agency thinking, that is, if one clearly locates the path to success, it motivates him or her to be more proactive and pursue it. Also, the reverse is true: better agency

thinking fosters better pathway thinking; if there is a high level of motivation and determination to succeed, then more pathways become clear and the chances of success increases. So, pathways and agency thinking influence each other and are reciprocal. They both lead the individual towards a growth-oriented state of mind, which is the most important aspect of success (Snyder, 1994a).

Better hope fosters better optimism, which is better positivity in thought. In their revised helplessness model, Abramson, Seligman and Teasdale (1978) focused on the explanations that people gave for significant bad life events. Seligman (2011), in a development of those concepts, bases his theory of optimism on the attribution process. He states that people who are optimistic explain their successes as due to their own personal effort and ability and attribute their failures to situational factors. They see the glass as half full instead of half empty. In this sense, the “optimistic attributional style” is the outline of externalized unpredictable, varying, and particular provenances for failures as opposed to internal, global, constant and stable structures that were the emphasis of the aforesaid helplessness model. Seligman (1984), in his optimism theory, explains the importance of explanations or attributions that one gives oneself when a negative outcome occurs. A person with a pessimistic or helpless attribution thinks that this particular bad event is permanent, pervasive, and will have long term consequences for their whole life. They feel that nothing is in their control and that they are helpless to change the outcome. Also, they believe that they are the ones who are at fault and take up all the blame for the negative happenings. The pessimist is not able to think beyond the mishap and is blinded to the choices available to them to make the situation better. They feel powerless and are unable to take any action to make the situation better. On the other hand, a person with an optimistic or hopeful attribution feels that this bad event is temporary, specific, and will have a limited impact on their life. They feel that they are in control of the situation and can do something to change the outcome. The optimist feels that this is just one bad thing that has happened and that they can make it better (Seligman, 2011).

Explanatory style, according to positive psychology, refers to how people explain the reasons behind events or outcomes that influence their lives. It has to do with how people make sense of and provide meaning to the things that happen to them. Seligman (2011) describes

explanations as “how people understand things that happen to them”. Positive explainers frequently attribute happy outcomes or situations to internal, dependable, and universal causes. They think that good things happen to them because of their own efforts, skills, or character traits. For instance, people may credit their intelligence, skills, or diligence if they are successful in completing a task. Positive outcomes are seen by them as evidence of their expertise, and they anticipate more of the same in the future. This upbeat mindset can support resilience, motivation, and general well-being. Individuals who have a negative explanatory style, on the other hand, frequently attribute unfavourable events or results to outside, erratic, and specific forces. They think that unfortunate things happen because of circumstances, bad luck, or other people's deeds. For instance, if they do not succeed at something, they can blame bad luck, the task's complexity, or someone else's involvement. Instead of seeing unfavourable experiences as a reflection on their character or talents, they see them as passing circumstances that are unique to the context. This pessimistic view may cause an individual to feel hopeless, be less motivated, and be more susceptible to depression and anxiety. The explanatory style is not fixed and can be impacted by a variety of elements, such as experiences, upbringing, and individual beliefs. By assisting people in identifying their strengths, developing resilience, and cultivating an optimistic view, positive psychology tries to encourage a positive explanatory style that can lead to greater well-being and happiness (Seligman, 2011).

The relevance of unfavourable outcomes is implicit in the optimism theory, and a goal related quality is present to explain how optimistic people try to separate themselves from unfavourable results. However, in hope theory, the emphasis is placed on the agency and guiding thinking about the anticipated goal, with the objective being placed on achieving desired future positive goal related outcomes. The outcome must be extremely important in both theories, but the hope theory emphasizes this more. The hope theory, in contrast to Seligman's optimism theory, also specifically discusses the causes of both happy and negative emotions.

The Good Life

The second element of happiness is “flow,” or engagement. In flow, one loses sense of time, focuses and concentrates intensely, and becomes one with the activity. It is a sense of

losing oneself in work, in music, or in an engaging task. Flow is also known as being in the zone or being in the flow. In flow, one is able to perform at one's best. Flow is different from the earlier mentioned pleasant life in that when people are asked what they feel, they usually say, "nothing". They merge with the task and are so cognitively occupied that there are no resources to feel anything at all. The state of flow is what is referred to as a peak experience (Seligman, 2010). There are no shortcuts to achieving flow. A person in flow needs to achieve their highest possible level of skill and competence in order to be in flow. Being in flow requires a lot of hard work and effort. Snyder (1994a) explains that the good life is the result of a life that is lived with meaning and purpose.

Flow.

Flow was first used in the book "Beyond Boredom and Anxiety" by Csikszentmihalyi in 1975. Flow is a state of one's life when one is totally and fully engaged in an activity and is oblivious to the other things happening around him or her. This state entails total and absolute absorption in the task at hand, intense concentration and focus on the activity, and being totally involved in the moment now. The concept of flow plays a huge role in making lives meaningful (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). Flow, according to Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2002), gives an optimal experience—an experience of intense harmony with the surroundings, where one loses sense of time and space and is totally immersed in the activity. This is also described as a state of intense joy and peacefulness (Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). The concept of being in flow is very similar to the concept of peak experiences given by Maslow (1964).

When a person is in flow, there is a decline of self-consciousness, living strictly in the current moment, intense emphasis and concentration, intrinsic motivation to do the task at hand, and a clarity of goals. This state of flow gives a person an autotelic experience. "An autotelic is someone or something that has a purpose in, and not apart from, itself. It is defined as an experience that is intrinsically rewarding and is a goal in itself. An autotelic experience is one that is satisfying on its own and is not dependent on another experience" (Definition of Autotelic, n.d.).

When the optimum balance of struggle and strength is revealed, flow, or engagement, occurs (Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre, 1989). Only a distinct, very pleasurable, optimal state of consciousness should be used to conceptualize and operationalize flow (Abuhamdeh, 2020). This concept of flow is also very similar to the notion of mindfulness, which is used to describe the state of being in the present moment. Seligman used this concept of flow to describe a state of being totally involved in an activity, a state of being fully engrossed in the activity and hence losing all sense of oneself, which he called “engagement” in his theory of well-being (Seligman, 2011).

Kindness as Engagement.

Being kind is an act of satisfaction rather than pleasure. It encourages an individual to use strengths to rise to the situation and take on a task. Kindness involves complete engagement and the absence of self-consciousness rather than a continuous stream of good emotions like joy. It is not about what one feels, but how one acts (Seligman, 2012). It is interesting to note that unlike happiness, which is an emotion, gratitude and kindness are actions and behaviours. They are both about what people do, not how they feel. Kindness is a state of mind. It is a way of being (Stoerkel, 2019). A study reported that people who donate have a decreased risk of heart problems and diseases. Also, among the elderly population, their risk of dying reduces when they volunteer in any way (Carter, 2011).

Ancient religions all emphasize the value of kindness and the advantages of being kind. For instance, Buddhism is based on the principles of kindness and compassion towards others. Buddhist teachings emphasize the need to develop compassion for others. There is a necessity for first being aware of the suffering of others and then developing an intense need to alleviate the pain and suffering of the other person. One needs to have a specific altruistic attitude in which one takes on the responsibility of assisting others if one wants to regard the happiness and welfare of others strongly. It takes a lot of compassion, caring about other people's pain, and a desire to act to create such a unique mindset. A great sense of love is a prerequisite for having such a powerful energy of compassion because it hopes for the happiness of all sentient beings when it sees them in pain, just as a mother wishes for her precious child (The Dalai

Lama, 2020). Furthermore, to develop such an attitude of altruism, one needs to practice by observing the activities of an ideal model, one who is kind and altruistic.

The Meaningful Life

The third element of the authentic happiness theory is the pursuit of meaning or purpose in life. A meaningful life involves an intent of direction, purpose and an intent of having a reason to get up in the morning. This purpose is often beyond oneself, thinking about the goodness and welfare of others and spreading goodness among family, community, or society. Positive emotion that is cut off from the formation of character produces emptiness, inauthenticity, depression, and, as one gets older, the agonizing realization that one will be just wasting away till s/he passes away (Seligman, 2002). Seligman asserts that this fairly depressing passage has no quick fixes for happiness. While living a life of joy may make one feel happier, exploring the meaning of life can help him/her achieve deeper, longer lasting contentment. One is prone to letting their potential be eroded by a routine, fake, and pointless pursuit of pleasure without using their unique talents and developing their values for a cause greater than themselves (Seligman, 2012). The meaningful life, as defined in positive psychology, “as a condition of being in which people feel that their lives have meaning, fulfillment, and purpose. It involves a deeper sense of participation and connection to something bigger than oneself and beyond simple enjoyment or pleasure” (Seligman, 2012). Martin Seligman and other scholars in the field of positive psychology have delved deeply into the idea of meaningful existence. A meaningful life must include living with a deep sense of purpose and in accordance with one's ideals. It entails choosing and pursuing objectives that are personally meaningful and enhance one's well-being and the well-being of others (Seligman, 2004). Another aspect of living a meaningful life is participating in activities that enthrall and completely engulf people, resulting in a state of flow. A state of flow is characterized by total engagement and delight in a task, where time passes quickly and people feel deeply focused and content. A fulfilling existence depends on having social ties and meaningful interactions. A sense of belonging, support, and shared experiences are provided by creating and fostering meaningful connections with others, such as friends, family, and the community (Seligman, 2004).

An important component of a meaningful existence is having an impact on others and contributing to something bigger than oneself. Acts of generosity, selflessness, or service to others can give people a sense of fulfillment and purpose. The key to living a meaningful life is pursuing personal development, self-improvement, and realizing one's greatest potential. It involves confronting difficulties that are an obstacle to personal development, defining and attaining goals, and engaging in endless learning. It is crucial to remember that the definition of a meaningful life is individualized and prone to change. What gives one person purpose and fulfillment may not do the same for another. According to positive psychology, understanding one's individual strengths, values, and passions is crucial for cultivating a life that feels important and purposeful (Seligman, 2002; Britton, 2008). Life satisfaction, job satisfaction and contentment are very important for one to achieve a meaningful life. Research shows that individuals who engage in careers that are close to their passions have a better chance of leading a meaningful life. Work as a means to an end with the conviction that it advances the greater good causes a "calling orientation" (Britton, 2008). A garbage collector with a calling orientation can believe that their work contributes to a cleaner, better society. People with this perspective frequently find greater purpose in their jobs. This leads to a better sense of satisfaction and contentment, which are vital for a meaningful life (Britton, 2008).

In the aforesaid pages, the journey of happiness through the pleasant, good and meaningful life has been traced. It is also important to note that happiness is not a matter of chance, but a choice. This is because one can only be happy when he or she is in a state of contentment. Contentment is a state of being where one is in a state of satisfaction with what one has. One can be content with the little s/he has and still be happy (Seligman, 2002). This state of happiness can also be measured. According to Seligman, (2002) happiness can be clearly expressed and understood using a formula.

The Happiness Formula

When Seligman and his colleagues started working with happiness and its different dimensions, they were concerned with the fact that people could possibly increase their happiness by changing certain concepts in their thoughts, feelings, and actions. Everyone needs enduring, long lasting happiness in their lives. A sense of contentment is not just related to certain situations alone but more long term. This led them to come up with a formula to

measure happiness (Seligman, 2002). In his book, “Authentic happiness: Using the new positive psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment” (Seligman, 2002), he outlines the happiness formula thus:

“ $H=S+C+V$ ”, where “H indicates the enduring level of happiness, S symbolizes the set range, C shows the circumstances of one’s life, and V represents factors under one’s voluntary control” (Seligman, 2002). The first question that strikes is that what is enduring happiness?

Enduring vs Momentary Happiness

Enduring happiness is long lasting happiness that is not influenced by a specific event, a specific situation, a specific experience, or a specific relationship. It is not based on the current situation or on momentary experiences. It is the happiness that is achieved when one is free from the influence of external circumstances. An enduring happiness does not have clauses, causes, or conditions. It is a state of deep contentment and satisfaction. Whereas, momentary happiness is the happiness that is caused by a particular event, situation, experience, or relationship. For instance, a work promotion, enjoying ice cream with a friend, a supportive family member, a new hobby, or a new job. It is a momentary burst of joy that comes from a particular situation or experience (Seligman, 2002). Enduring happiness is not a collection of momentary happiness bursts. It is a long-lasting state that is not affected by any external factors.

To attain such enduring happiness, one must concentrate on adding up the set range, the circumstances, and the voluntary control that one has. Each individual has a specific range of happiness that s/he always falls back into. This range is fixed and largely inherited. This is called the set range of happiness. When an individual's happiness has a set range, for instance, if there is an extremely happy event, the happiness level goes up, but very soon falls back to the set range. Also, if his/her affectivity was generally low on positivity, the actions and behaviour would support this, i.e., they would avoid socialization and prefer to avoid social contact. The vice versa is also true, in that, when the set range sets the happiness range high, s/he constantly seeks out positive company and socializes to increase the happiness. This is called “The Happiness Thermostat” (Seligman, 2002). This thermostat is largely inherited and controls the range of happiness. It is the genetic make-up that determines the set range of happiness. If a

family member is always happy and content, that person's set range of happiness is high. However, if a family member is constantly unhappy, the set range of happiness is low.

The Hedonic Treadmill

The hedonic treadmill or hedonic adaptation is a term created by Seligman and colleagues to pronounce the tendency of human beings to return to a state of happiness that is a set range by taking positivity for granted (Seligman, 2002; Pennock, 2016). An earlier famous study on the hedonic treadmill looked at two clusters of people: those who had won large lottery wins and those who had been injured in accidents and were now affected with paralysis (including paraplegic and quadriplegic individuals). According to the findings, neither of the groups was happier than the other in the long run (Brickman et al., 1978). In fact, the victors of lottery and the people who were paralyzed initially felt happy and sad respectively immediately after the event. These feelings were short lived, and members of both groups quickly returned to their pre-intervention levels of happiness. Brickman and Campbell's (1971) initial idea of the hedonic treadmill claimed that people rapidly respond to both positive and negative stimuli but, in a short period of time, return to their set point. So, according to this theory, one can only attain as much happiness as their genes allow them, nothing more and nothing less. This concept shows that happiness is totally uncontrollable and is fated.

The research done by Lyubomirsky et al. (2005a) and Diener et al. (2006) provided a revision of this idea. Lyubomirsky and Diener brought a clear understanding of the need to measure happiness as a part of daily lives. This was an important step in the right direction. Diener (2006) reports that among three-fourths of the sample studied, the happiness set point is not a neutral or medium value but set above the neutral, well along the positive side of the continuum. Even though everyone has a fixed point, recent study demonstrates that it differs greatly from person to person. A person's happiness set point is influenced by personality factors, and well-being is mildly inherited. Therefore, people may be predisposed to differing levels of well-being depending on their personality features (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005b).

According to the idea of a set point, everyone's level of happiness is constant and uniform. However, more recent research by Diener et al. (1999) challenges this hypothesis by contending that happiness is made up of various well-being related elements, some of which

might move in opposition to one another. For instance, one might experience a drop in both positive and negative emotions while experiencing an increase in life satisfaction. The fundamental tenet is that several manifestations of well-being can advance simultaneously in various directions. This also brought forward the argument that happiness and well-being are also determined by situations and circumstances. Given the paucity of studies on this particular subject, examining the levels of well-being in many countries may provide some light on this. It may be possible that situations can have a long-term consequence on well-being if there are significant variations in well-being between countries then, these variances can be forecasted from the objective and measurable attributes of those countries. For instance, according to one study, a country's higher than average wealth and support for human rights are reliable indicators of its citizen's well-being. Researchers also found that nine parameters, including the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per person, political stability, life expectancy at birth and divorce rates, may account for 85% of the variation in well-being between countries (Diener et al., 2006).

So, many more studies were conducted to assess changes in happiness levels throughout life. A 17-year longitudinal study by Fujita and Diener (2005) included a large number of German nationals and assessed variations and changes in the fundamental level of well-being. Despite the strong stability in the happiness ratings, the researchers discovered that 24% of individuals still had a remarkable change in their level of happiness, and 9% of people varied by two standard deviations or more. It would appear that a lasting change in happiness is feasible. Further research revealed that there are individual changes in the hedonistic adaptation process that are not explained by the baseline level of happiness (Fujita & Diener, 2005).

According to research by Fredrickson et al. (2008), practicing loving-kindness meditation can provide surges of positive emotions that can outweigh the hedonic treadmill's effects. Researchers contend that by educating people about the structure of their thoughts, this type of mind training practice modifies fleeting emotional sensations but also reshapes persistent personality traits. Making use of loving-kindness meditation also aids in dispelling myths regarding what causes pleasure and well-being. Meditation may eventually open the door to insights that alter perspectives on self and others, boosting empathy and compassion.

Though the “S” variables put an upper limit on the happiness of human beings, factors that are under voluntary control, such as the “C” and “V” variables, can be controlled by the individual and help boost happiness. Life's circumstances can undoubtedly affect a person's happiness, but they cannot exclusively control it. A range of elements, such as environmental conditions, psychological makeup, and personal perspectives, can have an impact on happiness, which is a complex and varied emotional state. Outside factors such as a person's health, relationships, finances, and living arrangements can all have an impact on their overall well-being and happiness. Feelings of joy and pleasure can be influenced by favourable circumstances, such as having connections that are helpful or completing personal goals. On the other side, unfavourable situations, such as going through hardships or facing significant obstacles, might make it harder to stay happy. In a global study on the life satisfaction index in comparison to purchasing power, it was found that the factors that had a significant impact on the happiness of the population were not materialistic. The study found that the most important factors in happiness are the political, economic, and social environment, the psychological environment, and the family environment. The physical environment has little impact on people's happiness. The study also found that the influence of a person's genetic makeup on happiness is very small. The study reported that many countries, such as the United States, which had high purchasing power, scored high on life satisfaction. But, surprisingly, countries like India, China, and Nigeria, where the purchasing power was low, scored high values in life satisfaction (World values study group, 2007). This survey was conducted in 29 countries all over the world and had thousands of respondents. All this data led researchers to believe that money does not bring happiness to individuals. This prompted a flurry of studies attempting to link happiness to income and other materialistic factors (Richins & Dawson, 1992; Diener, Horwitz, & Emmons, 1995; Diener & Suh, 1997; Sirgy, 1998). An interesting study was conducted in the slums of Calcutta, Kenya, a town in central California, and the Greenland Tundra by Biswas-Diener and Diener in 1992, and reported in 1995 (Diener et al., 1995a). The researchers conducted interviews with 32 sex workers and 31 slum dwellers in Calcutta about their lives and their opinions on what makes life worth living. In their interviews with the sex workers, the researchers found that they were very happy with their lives. The researchers were surprised that the sex workers were happier than the slum dwellers in Calcutta and the women in Kenya. Many Calcutta women were dissatisfied with their earnings, but they were content

that they could support their families and care for their children (Biswas-Diener & Diener, 2002; Biswas-Diener & Diener, 2006). Many other studies were conducted to understand the effect of external circumstances such as marriage, age, gender, having positive or negative emotions etc (Mastekaasa, 1994; Diener & Suh, 1998; Mroczek & Kolarz, 1998). All these studies show that being married has a positive effect on happiness but not a causal effect on happiness, while age and gender have no effect on happiness.

The next factor, which becomes the most important factor in the happiness formula, is “V”, which are the components under voluntary control. Some of the factors under voluntary control are about how one reacts to the events and situations of the past, is it with regret, or anger, or gratitude and forgiveness. Circumstances in one’s life can create positive and negative reactions in that person. Positive and negative emotions only have a weak negative association. This implies that if one experiences a lot of unpleasant emotions, one might experience a little less positive emotion than usual. But it does not mean that one is headed for a life of misery. Similarly, having a lot of happy feelings in one's life will only marginally shield one from sadness (Bradburn, 1969). The past, present, or future can all be the subject of positive emotions. Hope, optimism, faith, and trust are some of the positive emotions for the future.

Emotions that are associated with the present include pleasure, joy, tranquilly, zest, ebullience, ecstasy and (most significantly) flow; these being some of the sensations that most people seem to comprehend when they refer to the term, “happiness”. Satisfaction, happiness, fulfillment, pride, and peace are some of the positive feelings regarding the past.

Knowing these three types of emotions are distinct and need not be intertwined is critical. Being content in all three senses is ideal, but it does not always occur. For instance, it is conceivable to be content with the past while being bitter and gloomy about the present. Also, it is definitely possible to be regretting the past, but joyous at present, and hopeful of the future. Very similarly, it is possible to be thankful about the past, but unsure about the future. At one time in the history of psychology, psychoanalysis emphasized the importance of talking out the negative feelings of the past, a form of catharsis as a cure. But many times, it was observed that dwelling in the past was a destructive action. This caused the person to feel negatively about the past, and not enjoy the present or the future. It is not uncommon for people to become so preoccupied with the past that they cannot enjoy what is going on now or plan for the future.

Then, evolved the cognitive revolution, where Beck's Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, became very popular and was of the notion that one's thoughts and beliefs have a profound impact on how one felt. By changing the thoughts, one can change one's perception of negative events and overcome the depressive thoughts and feelings associated with the past.

Positive psychology has a very exciting take on emotions and their effect on a person's mental health. According to Seligman, there is a membrane that encloses emotions, but it is quite permeable and goes by the term "adaptation". Surprisingly, the evidence suggests that there is a brief upswing in mood when happy and a downswing when unpleasant events occur. However, mood normally returns to its predetermined range within a little while. This shows that emotions are likely to subside if left undisturbed. Through "emotional osmosis", their energy permeates the membrane, and the person quickly reverts to their initial state. However, when feelings are expressed and ruminated over, they increase and confine one to a never-ending cycle of reliving wrongs from the past. This vicious cycle is a common feature of depression (Seligman, 2002). The two factors that hinder tranquilly, contentment, and happiness are a lack of appreciation for and overemphasis on the negative occurrences in the past. There are two methods to move these emotions regarding the past into a state of happiness and contentment. The ability to savour and appreciate the positive past experiences is enhanced by gratitude, and the ability to forgive weakens the ability of the negative past experiences to rewrite history (and possibly convert negative memories into positive ones) (Seligman, 2012).

Gratitude and forgiveness are both under voluntary control. When one is able to forgive, s/he will be able to give up the desire for revenge and resentment. One can move on with their lives once they have forgiven and are no longer consumed by the negative emotions of the past. Gratitude, similarly, is an emotion that is induced by the feeling of having received a benefit or a favour. The person is in a state of thankfulness, and the positive emotion is experienced when the person is grateful for the favour. Gratitude, heightens the positives in the past, and hence, removes any regret or resentment from the past. Seligman, professes a gratitude exercise, where it is actively practiced regularly to help let go of the past negativity and embrace the positivity in life.

Because good emotions are more fragile, the human brain has evolved to make sure that battling bad emotions will prevail over them. The only way out of this emotional desert is to alter the thoughts by erasing, eliminating, or repressing negative memories from the past. However, no documented techniques directly improve forgetting or memory suppression. In fact, making overt attempts to stop thinking will make it more likely that the person will think about the forbidden item (for instance, try not to think of a red rose for the next five minutes, it will make one visualize and think about it). This leaves forgiveness as the only practical rewriting technique that preserves the memories while removing and even transforming the sting. Forgiveness turns resentment into neutrality or even memories that are tinted with positivity and make life satisfying and contented. Forgiving others does not harm or hurt the perpetrator, but the victim can set themselves free by forgiving. Relief from forgiving is great. Those who forgive are probably in better physical health than those who do not, especially in terms of their cardiovascular systems. Forgiving someone, when followed by peace-making, can significantly improve one's relationship with them (Seligman, 1999). Forgiveness does not come easily. The following technique is designed to forgive and heal, remove resentment, and eliminate the possibility of future conflict.

REACH: Five Steps to Forgiveness

Dr. Everett Worthington, an eminent tutor of psychology at the University of Texas, had the most difficult experience of his life, when his aged mother was raped and beaten to death in 1996. He then documented his personal journey towards a forgiving life and did extensive research on forgiveness. Worthington devised a five-step plan, a programme designed to forgive and heal. This programme is called "REACH" (Worthington, 2001). An explanation of each of the concepts that make up the acronym, REACH is given below:

R- Recall the hurt

One must acknowledge their injury if they want to recover. Worthington advises taking calm, deep breaths and visualizing the event in order to accept it. Decide not to be sarcastic (i.e., harsh and nasty), not to see oneself as the victim, and not to see the other individual as a fool. Make the choice to be forgiving. Make the decision to treat the person with respect rather than seeking retribution.

E - Empathise with your Partner

Emotionally connect with other people. Empathy is the capability to imagine oneself in another person's shoes. Assume the other person is seated in the chair across. Speak to him/her. Be completely honest. Then, after one has spoken, take a seat in his/her chair. Converse with the fictitious person in a way that is helpful to understand why this person might have committed the error. Trying to think of practical reasons for an unlawful or unpardonable act, gives more reason to move on. This act of putting oneself in another person's perspective builds empathy. Even if this act does not warrant empathy, it can create compassion or even sympathy. This allows forgiveness.

A - Altruistic Gift

As a selfless, charitable gesture, extend forgiveness. Each individual can recall a time when they mistreated someone and that person has forgiven them, whether it was a parent, teacher, or friend. Imagine how it is to feel forgiven. Many individuals say they felt light and liberated. And they did not want to let that individual down by making a mistake once more. One can provide the same gift to someone who wronged them by forgiving them selflessly. Giving the other person the gift of forgiveness is freeing and brings great relief for the person from the emotional baggage of the negative act.

C - Commit

As soon as one has expressed forgiveness, make a note to oneself saying something as straightforward as, "Today, I forgave (person's name) for hurting me". This forgiveness lasts longer as a result.

H - Hold onto Forgiveness

In Worthington's groups, participants are encouraged to compose a "certificate of forgiveness", a letter of apology to the offender, a poem or song, or to confess the forgiveness act to a close friend. These are all agreements for pardon that proceed to the last stage. Additionally, one can commit themselves in writing because one will almost certainly be inclined to question whether one truly forgave. One can go over the material again. One did pardon and forgive. Writing notes is reaffirming the act of forgiveness and not letting it fade (Worthington, 2001).

Optimism and hope are two other factors that are under voluntary control. These two factors are closely linked to each other, and when efforts are made to voluntarily increase them, happiness results. Optimism can be learned and built into people's thinking patterns by changing the explanatory style that they use when thinking about events. Hope can be built by taking action to make things better. Hope is also built by spending time with people who are optimistic and encouraging (Seligman, 2018b). Seligman (2018b) gives a technique to overcome pessimistic thinking by using the "ABCDE model", where A represents Adversity, B signifies Belief, C denotes Consequences of the belief, D embodies Disputation of the belief, and E symbolises the Energization that occurs when the negative belief is dispelled. So, taking voluntary action to dispel negative beliefs, energises optimism and hope (Seligman, 2002).

Other than the Western concept of happiness, there are numerous other versions to happiness. One such concept is the Buddhist meaning of happiness.

Buddhist Concept of Happiness

When there is discussion about happiness, one of the most famous thought processes that has researched everlasting happiness is from the Buddhist viewpoint. His Holiness the Dalai Lama was invited to give a series of talks by the Gere Foundation in 1999. Noteworthy among them are the concepts of happiness given by the Dalai Lama, who said that all human beings have an inborn desire to attain happiness and not wanting to suffer. The very purpose of one's life according to the Dalai Lama is to experience happiness and hence attain inner peace (Dalai Lama & Vreeland, 2008).

Buddhists hold the belief that it is an individual's responsibility to warrant the quality and vitality of his/her existence, happiness, and the resources available to them. The key towards leading a purposeful life lies in transforming the emotions that are experienced, as this becomes the most efficient method to invite future happiness for self and for others around them. No one has the power to compel people to change their minds, not even the Buddha. One must willingly choose to do so. Therefore, the Buddha declared, "You have control over your own thoughts". One's efforts must be grounded in reality. The individual must convince themselves that the methods they are employing will lead to the outcomes they desire. Persons cannot rely solely on blind faith. It is crucial that they carefully examine the path they intend to

take in order to determine what is effective and what is not, so that the efforts can be successful. The Dalai Lama believes this is essential if one wants to experience genuine happiness in life (Dalai Lama, 2012).

If one maintains a positive mindset, even when faced with hostility, s/he will not lack inner tranquillity. However, if the mindset tends to be negative, prejudiced by fear, distrust, vulnerability, or self-hatred, or feeling helpless, then though in the company of the closest companions, in pleasant environment and comfortable surroundings, one will not experience true happiness. Hence, the mental outlook plays a significant role in determining the state of contentment (Dalai Lama & Vreeland, 2008). A smart intellect, possessing a unique combination of serenity and empathy, holds the capacity to evolve into a genuinely tranquil mind that delivers happiness to self and the people in the surroundings. Buddhism extols the virtue of inner peace through the power of compassion. It is possible to achieve genuine happiness through the elimination of one's negative emotions and the practise of compassion and forgiveness.

Criticisms of the Authentic Happiness Theory

In the authentic happiness theory, there exist three limitations. At the outset, the commonly understood definition of happiness is closely associated with being in a joyful state. Happiness primarily pertains to positive emotions. Critiques compellingly argue that the “authentic happiness theory” arbitrarily reconceptualises happiness by incorporating the desires for purpose and engagement alongside beneficial emotions. Engagement and meaning do not solely rely on one's feelings, and although they may actively pursue them, they cannot be regarded as integral components of what happiness encompasses (Seligman, 2012).

The second inadequacy in the authentic happiness theory pertains along the lines of a fortunate position of life satisfaction in the assessment of happiness. In this theory, happiness is operationally defined through the prominent indicator of life satisfaction, which is an extensively studied measure that asks individuals to give a rating for their life satisfaction on a scale from 1 to 10, ranging from extremely unsatisfactory (a score of 1) to utmost satisfaction (10). The overarching objective of positive psychology is to enhance the level of life satisfaction globally. It has however been discovered that the degree of life satisfaction that

individuals report is influenced by their emotional state at the specific instant that they are asked the question. On average, more than 70% of the reported life satisfaction is determined by the individual's mood, while less than 30% is influenced by their perception of how well their life is progressing at that very moment. A mood-oriented perspective on happiness condemns almost half of the global population classified from low positive affective to a state of being unhappy. Despite their lack of joyfulness, this group characterized by low mood may possess greater levels of engagement and meaning in life compared to individuals who are more mirthful. Introverts exhibit significantly less cheerfulness than extraverts. Additionally, life satisfaction fails to consider the level of meaning and engagement individuals have in their work or their relationships with loved ones. As life satisfaction predominantly measures one's cheerful mood, it is therefore not entitled to be at the core of any comprehensive theory striving to transcend mere happiness (Seligman, 2012).

The third inadequacy in the theory of authentic happiness lies in the fact that positive emotion, flow, and purpose do not encompass all the elements people select for their own sake. "For their own sake" is the key concept here: for something to be considered a fundamental contributor in a theory, it must not serve any other purpose. This theory also does not contend to many individuals who strive for achievement purely for the sake of achievement. A more comprehensive theory would delineate the specific components of people's choices. Consequently, the theory of well-being begins with a resolution of these three criticisms (Seligman, 2012).

Well-being

Well-being is a more comprehensive term compared to happiness and comprises several independent constructs, not just positive emotion and happiness. The objective of life in the authentic happiness theory was life satisfaction. But, in the theory of well-being, the aim and objective is flourishing. Seligman (2012) identifies five factors or elements that comprise well-being. Flourishing is "a state where people experience positive emotions, positive psychological functioning and positive social functioning, most of the time" living "within an optimal range of human" functioning (Seligman, 2012).

PERMA: A Model of Well-being

An attempt to understand and measure happiness, well-being, and flourishing led Seligman to the PERMA model (Seligman, 2012). PERMA is an acronym, where “P” symbolizes Positive emotions, “E” represents Engagement, “R” denotes Relationships, “M” implies Meaning or purpose in life, and “A” emphasizes Accomplishment. The PERMA model attempts to explain the key components of happiness and how to achieve them. The PERMA model is the foundation for positive psychology, and the building blocks of an individual’s happiness and well-being. The PERMA model is an attempt to understand and measure happiness, well-being and flourishing (Seligman, 2012). This model, according to Seligman, is the true conceptualization of positive psychology. This model signifies that absence of mental illness does not by itself signify mental health. Mental health and wellness are far more encompassing, involving positive emotions, engagement, good relationships, purpose and meaning in life and accomplishments. (Seligman, 2018a).

A thorough examination of each component is necessary for a deeper comprehension of the PERMA concept. Each of these elements has an equal and significant role in the happiness and well-being of an individual. A higher-level paradigm that predicts the success of groups, communities, organizations, and nations is produced by the PERMA model of well-being, which was developed by Forgaard, and his colleagues including Seligman in 2011.

Positive Emotions

Positive emotion is the primary construct of the theory of well-being and constitutes “the pleasant life”, which is given in the “authentic happiness theory” (Seligman, 2012), which was explained in the earlier pages. Positive emotion encompasses much more than just happiness. Joy, hope, contentment, pride, love, and excitement are just a few of the positive emotions that are connected to one’s experience of life and success (Seligman, 2018b). Positive emotions have an effect that extends well beyond making one smile. The individual performs better at work and school, physical health improves, relationships are strengthened, and persons are more creative, risk taking, and hopeful about the future when they are feeling well. Positive feelings are contagious. One feels happier when they see smiles. One smiles when they hear other people laugh. And others respect and enjoy such a person’s presence when s/he shares

positive emotions with them. Positive emotions can be cultivated or developed, and are one of the primary indicators of well-being (Fredrickson, 2001). These good emotions can be experienced, enjoyed, relished, savoured, and then integrated into daily life (along with future representations for one's life through visualizations), which improves characteristic thinking and acting. Positive emotions can boost resilience to life's stresses and offset the undesirable effects of negative emotions (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). Hence, to develop the social, psychological, intellectual, physical, and emotional capacities that support bouncing back through resilience and general well-being, people should experience more positive emotions (Madeson, 2017).

According to many studies, each of the PERMA elements has a significant positive relationship with commitment within organizations, vitality, physical health, and job and life satisfaction (Kern et al., 2014). According to Forgeard et al. (2011), PERMA predicts mental distress more accurately than previous reports of distress. This suggests that actively dealing with the PERMA's constituent parts not only enhances well-being but also lessens psychological distress.

Engagement

An individual is fully engaged when they give all of their abilities, skills, and concentration to a daunting task. According to Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, such an involvement takes the person to an enhancing experience called flow that is so gratifying and fulfilling that people are keen to involve in it for its own sake rather than what they will attain from it (Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre, 1989). The reward is inbuilt and inherent in the action itself and not from external sources. Flow is the state of being when one's abilities are precisely matched to a difficult task, pursued in quest of a clear objective, with swift response and feedback on advancement towards the objective. Self-awareness fades away, focus is completely consumed in the present moment, and the insight of time is warped retrospectively, that is, time stops (Seligman, 2012). Engagement can come from a variety of sources, including reading a book, listening to a song, or doing one's job, cooking, a talent in any other area, an artistic endeavour, or even a hobby. Most people have experienced the feeling of getting sucked into a book or "one's own world" because of something so captivating. Getting involved in something that

makes one feel engaged also makes one happy, even if it has nothing to do with one's job or is viewed as frivolous by others. A woman in her mid-thirties who enjoys playing the violin, for instance, might be able to do so and, while doing so, might momentarily forget about the present and live in the music.

Engagement, or this concept of flow, arises when the optimal balance of challenge offered by the task and strength or skill is initiated (Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre, 1989). Using one's top character strengths surges one's chances of experiencing flow. According to engagement research, those people who are aware of their strengths and try to use them in innovative ways every day for one week, report feeling happier and not as much of depression even six months later (Seligman et al., 2005). Happiness is one of several consequences of engagement, but the concept of flow or engagement is by itself far more powerful than the concept of just being happy.

Relationships

An individual's every interaction with the persons around them such as friends, family, and community as a whole are considered relationships. Feeling valued, cherished, and supported by others is referred to as the importance of relationships, an important aspect of well-being. In the PERMA paradigm, relationships denote experiencing love, support and value from others. This is grounded on the notion that humans are intrinsically social beings, and thrive on good relationships (Seligman, 2012). There is enough evidence for this in our environment, but as one gets older, communal relationships start becoming even more important.

Strong social networks have been associated with better physical health in older persons, and the social environment has been confirmed to be vital in preventing cognitive deterioration (Siedlecki et al., 2014). Meaningful, close and intimate personal relationships are closely related to happiness and psychological well-being. These positive feelings and support can arise from both short-lived social connections with unfamiliar persons and enduring relations with immediate family, peers, extended family, and friends. Research indicates that one significant function of such social networks is their capacity to spread happiness, joy, contentment, cheer, and laughter (Chuck, n.d.).

When one of the proponents of positive psychology was asked to describe what relationships meant to him, he said, “other people”. Positive is a term that is seldom experienced alone. Most of the common experiences of positivity, for example, uproarious laughter, incredible joy, a sense of elation, and a feeling of intense meaning, are all shared with other people in the environment that surrounds them. When one is with others, they are more inclined to experience positive emotions than negative ones (Seligman, 2012). Relationships with other people are a critical component of health and happiness, and their presence has a wholesome effect on one’s good health and overall well-being (Seligman, 2012).

Meaning

The concept of meaning can be defined as “the act of belonging to and serving something that is believed to be greater than oneself”. To derive a sense of “meaning and purpose”, individuals can involve themselves in various communal establishments, such as family, religion, science, work establishments, justice, the political viewpoints, many of the community, and social causes like environmental conservation. Another inherent aspect of humans is the inherent quest for purpose and the aspiration to possess a sense of worth and value. Seligman (2012) deliberated meaning as the act of belonging to and/or contributing to something larger than oneself. By having a sense of meaning and objective in life, individuals can prioritize those factors that truly matter during significant challenges or adversity.

The pursuit of meaning and/or purpose in life varies from person to person. It may be sought through a professional, a communal or social or even a political cause, a creative enterprise, or a spiritual belief. Meaning can also be discovered through one's career or through engagement in additional, supplementary, volunteer, or community activities. Individuals who report having a resolution, purpose and meaning in life tend to have a longer life span, higher life satisfaction, and experience fewer health issues (Kashdan et al., 2009). Most authors suggest that meaning and purpose can be found in all of life's activities. There are positive experiences such as the birth of a child, falling in love, a life altering decision, the expression of deep feelings, etc. that can be meaningful. At the same time, negative experiences such as the loss of a loved one, death or divorce, victimization, or witnessing a crime can all have deep meaning and trigger a purpose in life. The meaning of life has been an ongoing topic of

discussion in positive psychology. Victor Frankl has done tremendous work on finding meaning in life. His 1984 book, “Man's Search for Meaning” is considered one of the most influential books in psychology on finding meaning and purpose in life. Frankl (2006) discusses the meaning of life as creating or achieving something that is more than oneself, experiencing something fully, and changing one’s reaction to suffering. Frankl was of the opinion that, though suffering cannot be avoided, people can change their perceptions and reactions to the suffering and meaning of life (Frankl, 2006). In the pursuit of meaning, Frankl suggests three distinct forms of experience: through actions, the encounter with values mediated by various means such as art or relationships, and the experience of suffering. Although the third option is not necessarily exclusive of the first two, according to Frankl's framework, suffering became a viable avenue through which to discover meaning and encounter values when the other opportunities were absent (Frankl, 1988).

Another explanation of the meaning of life comes from the work of George and Park (2016), who gave three concepts to understand the meaning of life. The first concept is comprehension, that is, understanding, or the extent to which people feel that their own lives are coherent and understandable. The second concept is purpose, which is defined as the extent to which people perceive their lives to be guided and motivated by important life goals. The third element is mattering, that is, the extent to which people believe their presence is meaningful, relevant, and valuable to the world.

Accomplishment

Achievement, winning, success, accomplishment, a sense of doing something is pursued for its own sake, even if one is completely successful or not. Accomplishment is a sense of flow, a pleasure in doing something irrespective of the result of the task. People who live the accomplishing life style frequently lose themselves in their work, frequently chase pleasure with vigour, frequently experience pleasant emotion (however fleeting) when they succeed, and occasionally succeed in the service of something greater. In spite of this, accomplishment is a basic and distinct component of well-being, and this addition brings well-being theory closer to providing a more detailed explanation of the choices made for their own reason.

Working towards and accomplishing objectives, doing a task successfully, and having the motivation to finish the current task all contribute to a feeling of achievement. This encourages wellbeing since individuals may reflect on their lives with pride (Seligman, 2012). Success in a task includes the ideas of firmness, a persistence and desire for achieving goals that are set. However, success is also linked to an internal resolve, an inherent fundamental drive towards working for something only for the sake of doing the activity. This happens when flourishing, happiness and well-being are desired (Quinn, 2018). In contradiction to pursuing external goals like fame, money, and other external rewards, achieving internal goals like bonding, relationship building, building friendships and maintaining them, yield greater augmentations and benefits in well-being (Seligman, 2013). Establishing a sense of mastery over a particular field of interest or accomplishing significant or difficult tasks in one's life or at work is the foundation of achievement in PERMA. Achievements and successes are a concept an individual gives to himself/herself by attempting, engaging in, and trying anything other than what they are already skilled at. This is also applied to how they recognise their actions and achievements by not underestimating them by comparing with others but by doing so in a way that permits them to build up on them and remember the kinds of inspiration and emotions they gave them (Seligman, 2012). When compared to extrinsically motivated goals, accomplishments made through intrinsic motivation and the pursuit of improvement are more likely to lead to thriving and a sense of well-being. Nothing compares to the sense of accomplishment. Although achievement is the last part of the PERMA model, not one element is more significant than another. Angela Duckworth, from Penn State University, developed the concept of grit, a determination and perseverance to achieve goals over even months or years. The ability to sustain this hard work and be determined also adds to the sense of accomplishment, something that can be savoured and recalled for inspiration whenever the individual faces a new challenge (Duckworth, 2016). The sense of accomplishment, when savoured, gives the gift of positivity continuously, the positive feeling associated with accomplishment gets multiplied by using savouring of the achievement (Pollay, 2007). It is simple to identify which of the most significant strengths enabled one to reach one's most notable successes when one looks back on the past. There will be a pattern in life as a result of this: many of the best accomplishments were made feasible by utilizing one's top strengths. Underlying patterns of personal qualities and how they have influenced life's successes can be

identified by looking at accomplishments. This is a goldmine of knowledge about the person and his/her capabilities, which can then be freely applied to any upcoming task and objective by the person (Pollay, 2007).

Comparison between Happiness Theory and Well-being Theory

The theory of authentic happiness is unidimensional, that is, it only considers how one feels. It contends that this leads one to pick the life pathways in an effort to optimize these emotions. The five pillars of the well-being theory are the strengths, which serve as the foundation for each of the five elements. Both in terms of technique and content, the theory of well-being is plural: Positivity is a subjective concept that is determined by one's thoughts and feelings. Meaning, relationships, achievements and engagement can have personalized subjective as well as objective observable quantified measures. If one just subjectively feels good, it may not be a sufficient measure of one's well-being. The conclusion from this is that well-being cannot be limited to mental states, as it involves both positive feelings and positive mental states along with having meaningful relationships, and achievements that are worthy and valuable. One's personal choices in life give each one of us opportunities to achieve optimal levels in all these five constructs of PERMA. The major differentiation between these two theories hence, ensues from individual choices at the present moment. Happiness theory personifies the choices as ultimate to momentary and enduring happiness, while well-being theory is more integrated in its approach. Both these theories however agree that there is a final common objective, that is to maximize happiness in one's path and give the individual choices to opt for it voluntarily and deliberately.

Flourishing

The objective of positive psychology from the well-being theory viewpoint is to increase the levels of flourishing. Flourishing is defined “as the state of having a good life. It combines having a positive attitude with functioning well”. A high level of flourishing is equated with good mental wellness, which is in turn a measure of mental health (Hupert, 2009). Many longitudinal and cross-sectional studies have reported that increased levels of well-being and flourishing have been associated with a variety of desirable outcomes, including academic creativity and efficiency, excellent health, positive connections, prosocial conduct, and

longevity (Huppert & So, 2013; Keyes, 2002; Diener et al., 2006). Known as PERMA (positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment), these five elements are “the best approximation of what humans pursue for their own sake” according to Seligman (2011), and they together are said to characterise well-being. Specifically, Ryff's six eudemonic psychological well-being dimensions, five social well-being components, and hedonic/emotional well-being (happiness or life satisfaction) are all integrated into Keyes measure (Keyes, 2002).

In an attempt to understand the concept of flourishing better, Huppert and So (2013) conducted an analysis in 23 countries belonging to the European Union. They cite that other than the concepts included in the PERMA, certain additional concepts such as optimism, self-esteem, positive relationships, resilience and self-determination are included under the umbrella of well-being and flourishing. The overall conclusion on this journey from abnormality of the clinical preview to the positivity and happiness origin of the positive psychology to the new understanding of it that comprehends that happiness alone is not enough for an individual but overall flourishing is necessary for true well-being. It is critical to understand that flourishing is not a "trait" - that is, it is not a quality that one can either possess or lack. It is an active, dynamic process that demands work. This is advantageous because it shows that everyone can succeed if they put out the necessary effort. It is also crucial to note that flourishing does not just relate to the absence of mental disease or despair. Keyes asserts that a sizable portion of those who succeed do so despite having a serious depression diagnosis (Keyes, 2002; Seligman, 2011).

Broaden and Build Theory of Positive Emotion

This theory was put forth by Brabara Fredrickson in 1998, and has garnered a lot of attention, along with the theories of authentic happiness and well-being. Fredrickson's theory's central thesis is that although positive emotions broadens and widen the thought-action repertoires, while negative emotions limit and restrict them. This enables one to respond to emotional cues by selecting from a variety of possible thoughts and actions. This viewpoint contends that when one is healthy, s/he is free to be creative, animated, curious, and experimental, and that these behaviours present opportunities to acquire new social,

physiological, and cognitive abilities. For instance, happiness in children encourages play. Play therefore encourages the development of essential competencies and skills that build physiological, social and psychological resources that go a long way in their lives (Boulton & Smith, 1992; Dolhinow & Bishop, 1970). Similar to how enthusiasm and love, two positive emotions, encourage the growth of social skills and expertise, respectively. The phrase broaden and build was coined to help people acquire a variety of personal resources by extending their thought action repertoires through the experience of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 1998). When these cases are taken into consideration, it becomes evident why this phrase was chosen. Once the emotions that drove their acquisition have passed, these instruments may still be useful to people by building their strengths.

The Pandemic Effects

All the above-mentioned theories of positive psychology mention certain constructs that are protective and help building a strong positive sense of well-being within the individual that helps the person cope with life stressors and overcome all ill effects of negative events that happen in the surrounding environment. The COVID 19 pandemic posed a great challenge to all mental health theories that had been put so far. The social isolation, fear, loneliness and other negative effects of the pandemic caused havoc to mankind world over. There was a resurgence in the emphasis given to health, and also the combined effects of physical and mental health creating immunity during the pandemic. Those who were infected, those who were caretakers, those who lost their near and dear ones, those who lost their livelihoods, all suffered during the pandemic. Several stories of brotherhood, kindness and altruism during the pandemic emerged; forging that humanity can together defeat any pandemic.

Certain questions emerged during the process of recovering from the pandemic. Are the theories of positive psychology enough to explain the flourishing during trauma? Will there be any change in the importance that human beings give to the positive psychology constructs so far researched? What are those positive psychology constructs that will help an individual overcome the trauma related to the pandemic? Are positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishments enough at this point of time? What are the needs of the individual going through duress?

The above questions brought the researcher to initiate this study into some new constructs that are emerging and considered important during the present scenario. Positive psychology constructs such as compassion emerged as big factors in the view of the present pandemic and post pandemic scenario. A recent large-scale study conducted on 4057 participants from 21 countries (Matos et al., 2022) reported that the threat of the pandemic caused increased levels of depression, stress and anxiety. Also, a low feeling of social safeness was perceived during the pandemic. This study also reported that there is a protective role played by compassion and self-compassion. Having high levels of compassion and self-compassion meant lower levels of stress, anxiety and even depression. This also led to higher levels of social safeness, higher hope and resilience in all the 21 countries that were studied. Many such studies (Galea, 2020; Learning Briefs, n.d.; Li, Wu & Wu, 2022; Hatun & Kurtça, 2022) fortify the need to study more positive psychology constructs even other than those given in the authentic happiness theory or the well-being theory.

Need for the Study

Early research in psychology followed only a preventive paradigm. Studies focused on reducing abnormalities in individuals rather than promoting positive aspects. Positive psychology as a branch of psychology was founded by Martin Seligman (2011) and colleagues with the objective of promoting positive concepts and developing flourishing and hence, building well-being. As a result, many positive psychology assessments and interventions mushroomed, most of them focusing on assessing developing optimism, hope or happiness, empathy, strength etc. Sin and Lyubomirsky (2009) explained positive psychology interventions, as psychological interventions that basically focuses on increasing positive emotions, positive thoughts, and hence positive behaviour. According to Sin and Lyubomirsky, all the interventions in positive psychology place emphasis on improving happiness through positive thinking and emotions and also sustaining these effects for the long term. Parks and Schueller (2014) identified seven types of positive psychology interventions namely focused on savouring, gratitude, kindness, empathy, optimism, strength building and meaning.

The present research aims to develop a comprehensive need based positive psychology assessment scale and a positive psychology-based intervention module. The intervention was

developed after a need survey undertaken with a sample of 2780 adult representatives of the population for which the assessment and intervention is aimed at. The survey asked participants to rate the positive psychology construct important for their well-being during the pandemic. Twenty-six positive psychology constructs were given for rating. The twenty-six constructs were generated through an item pool after an initial online interview with 150 adults. The survey results identified that four main constructs of positive psychology (compassion and self-compassion, achievement of purpose in life, relationship building and enhancing positive emotions) are the most needed in the COVID and Post COVID scenario. The rationale for this study is that this assessment inventory and intervention with the acronym, C. A. R. E (where “C” symbolizes compassion and self-compassion, “A” signifies achievement of purpose in life, “R” stands for relationship building, and “E”, implies enhancing positive emotions) is a one stop solution to assess and cultivate all these positive psychology constructs in a brief period of one month and start the journey towards well-being. Moreover, the survey also suggested that many facets of the population required a simple, easy to use intervention to care for their mental health and well-being. Hence, it was decided by the scholar to embark upon this research study.