

Flourish With Adult ADHD



Mindy Schwartz Katz
ADHD Symposium January 23, 2016

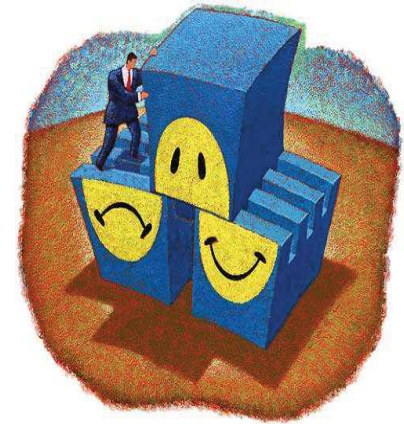
What We'll Cover

- Brief summary of positive psychology concepts and their relevance to ADHD
- Evidence-based tools and the research behind them:
 - ✓ Mindset
 - ✓ Strengths
 - ✓ Positive emotion

Positive Psychology and ADHD

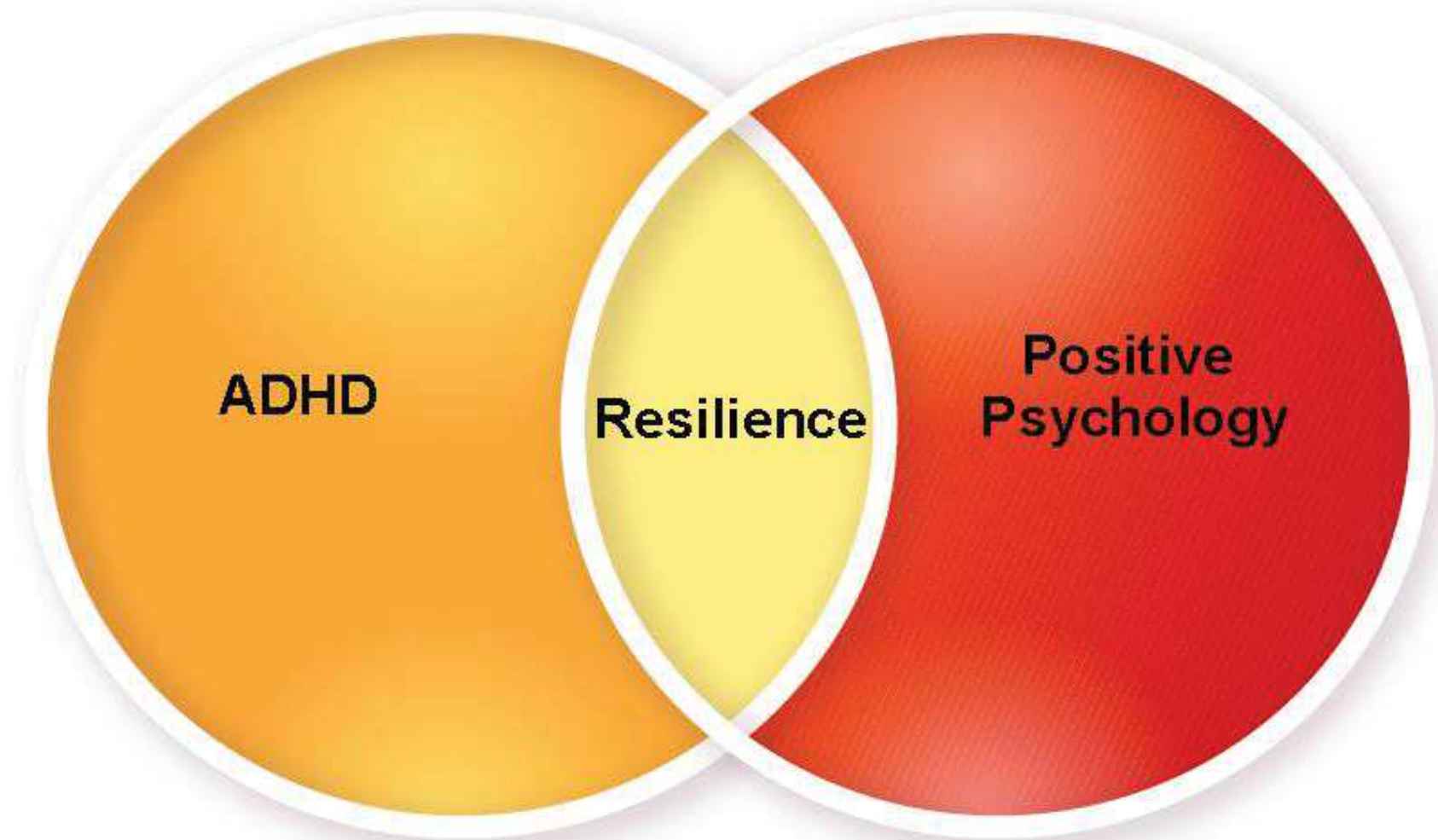
Positive psychology research is verifying what people with ADHD experience on a daily basis - they are

- happier
- healthier
- more successful
- and more resilient



when they create habits, rituals and structures that engage strengths and encourage a focus on the positive.

The Intersection for Flourishing



Dilemmas of ADHD

- Disorder of performance, not skill or understanding
- Knowing what to do, but not being able to do what you know
- Consistent inconsistency
- Focus on what's wrong
- Negative emotions, frustration, hopelessness, brain freeze, overwhelm
- Giving up or not trying
- Lack of self-esteem and self-efficacy

Positive Psychology

- Looks at what is right, rather than what is wrong, with people
- Focuses on when people are at their best, but doesn't ignore the negative
- Supports individual and group flourishing
- Includes research on hope, happiness, strengths, courage, resilience, and other positive aspects of human functioning

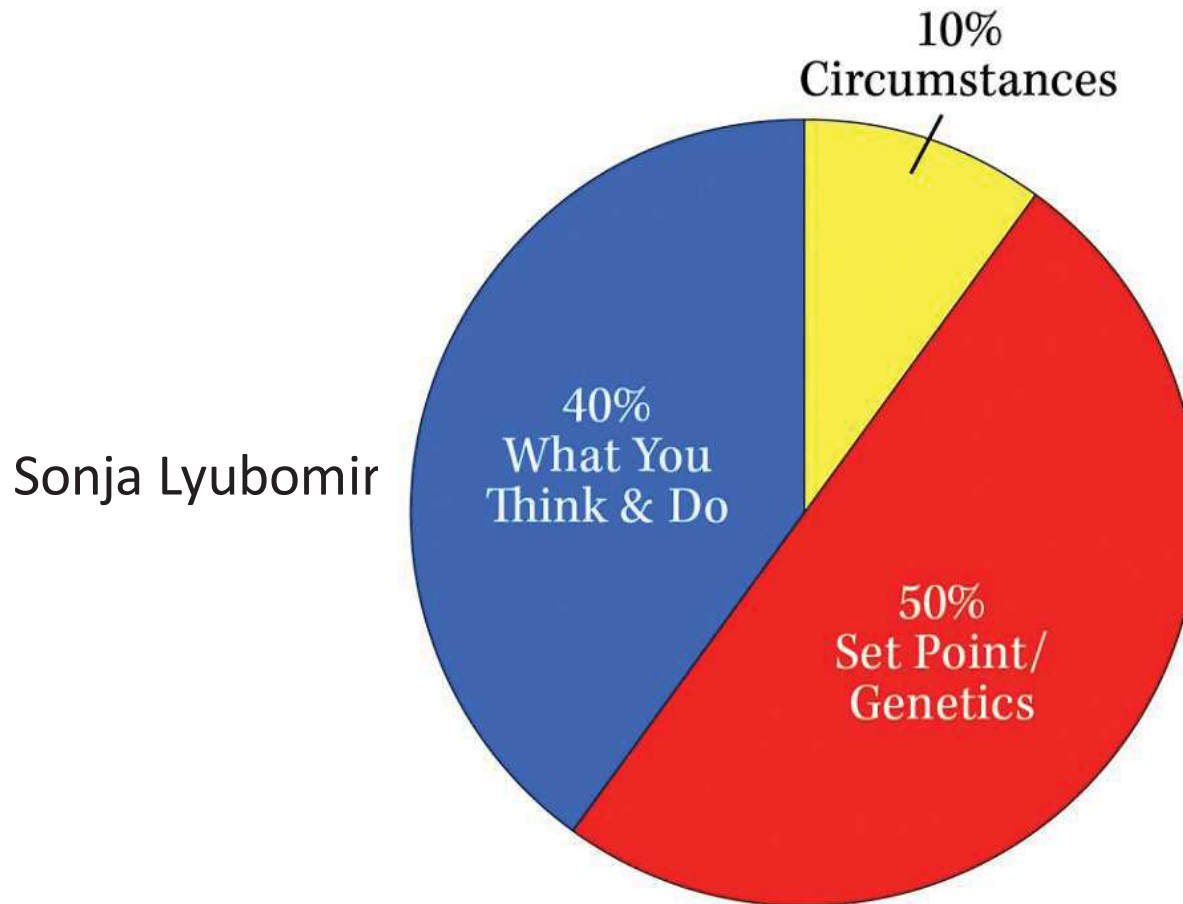
Happiness Leads to Success



A meta-analysis of positive psychology research found that happiness leads to success in nearly every domain, including work, health, friendship, sociability, creativity and energy.

Lyubormirsky, King & Diener (2005)

Factors Influencing Happiness

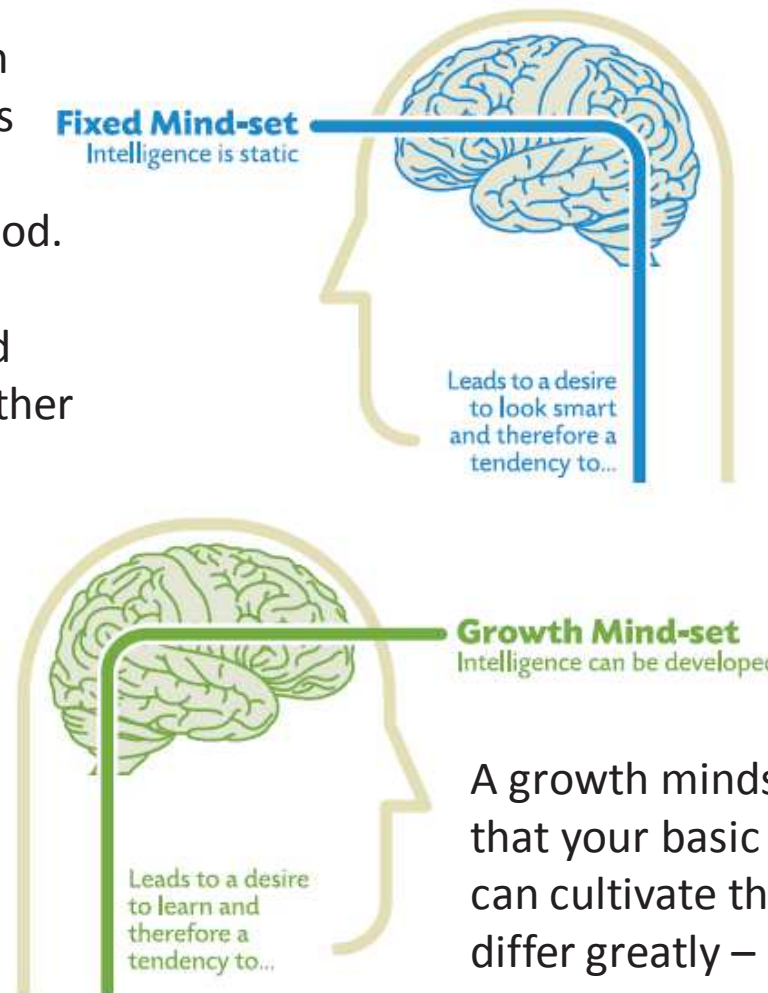


True or False?

- You can learn new things but you can't really change how intelligent you are.
- You can always change basic things about the kind of person you are.

Mindset

A fixed mindset comes from the belief that your qualities are carved in stone – who you are is who you are, period. Characteristics such as intelligence, personality and creativity are fixed traits, rather than something that can be developed.



A growth mindset comes from the belief that your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through effort. Yes, people differ greatly – in aptitudes, talents, interests, or temperaments – but everyone can change and grow through application and experience.

Change and Growth Are Possible

“When people believe their basic qualities can be developed, failures may still hurt, but failures don't define them. And if abilities can be expanded – if change and growth are possible – then there are still many paths to success.”

- Carol Dweck

Building a Growth Mindset

Say...

- I really worked hard on that project and my improvement shows.
- I like the way I tried all kinds of strategies until I finally found the one that worked for me.
- I'm excited about how I am stretching myself.
- We all have some learning curves. It may take more time for me to catch on, but my hard work will pay off.

Ask...

How did I make that happen?

What different strategies did I use?

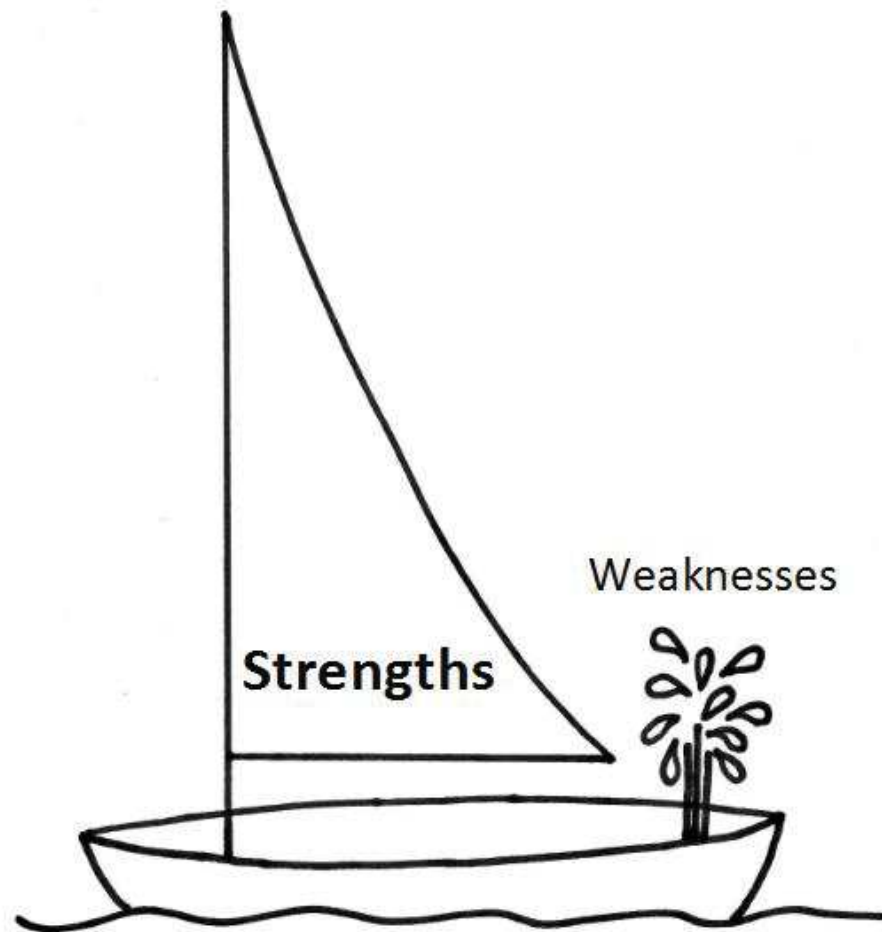
What could I do differently next time?

Don't Say...







Smart, Cute, Great, Best, Pretty, Good, Quick, Clever, Beautiful, Lovely.

- You learned that so quickly. You're so smart.
- Look at that drawing. Are you the next Picasso or what?
- You're so brilliant. You got an A without even studying.

Our Strengths Are Our Sails

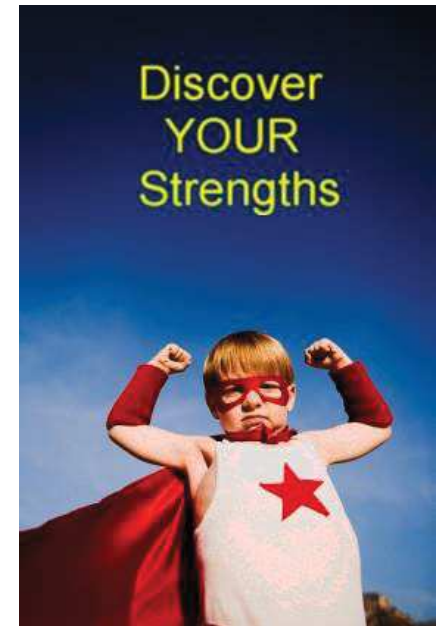


VIA Survey of Character

WISDOM	CREATIVITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Originality • Adaptive • Ingenuity 	CURIOSITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest • Novelty-Seeking • Exploration • Openness 	JUDGMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Thinking • Thinking Things Through • Open-mindedness 	LOVE OF LEARNING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastering New Skills & Topics • Systematically Adding to Knowledge 	PERSPECTIVE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wisdom • Providing Wise Counsel • Taking the Big Picture View
COURAGE	BRAVERY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valor • Not Shrinking from Fear • Speaking Up for What's Right 	PERSEVERANCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistence • Industry • Finishing What One Starts 	HONESTY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authenticity • Integrity 	ZEST <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vitality • Enthusiasm • Vigor • Energy • Feeling Alive 	
HUMANITY	LOVE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both Loving and Being Loved • Valuing Close Relations with Others 	KINDNESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generosity • Nurturance • Care & Compassion • Altruism • "Niceness" 			SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of the Motives/Feelings of Self/Others • Knowing what Makes Other People Tick
JUSTICE	TEAMWORK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizenship • Social Responsibility • Loyalty 			FAIRNESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just • Not Letting Feelings Bias Decisions About Others 	LEADERSHIP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing Group Activities • Encouraging a Group to Get Things Done
TEMPERANCE		FORGIVENESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercy • Accepting Others' Shortcomings • Giving People a Second Chance 	HUMILITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modesty • Letting One's Accomplishments Speak for Themselves 	PRUDENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careful • Cautious • Not Taking Undue Risks 	SELF-REGULATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Control • Disciplined • Managing Impulses & Emotions
TRANSCENDENCE	APPRECIATION OF BEAUTY & EXCELLENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awe • Wonder • Elevation 	GRATITUDE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thankful for the Good • Expressing Thanks • Feeling Blessed 	HOPE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimism • Future-Mindedness • Future Orientation 	HUMOR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playfulness • Bringing Smiles to Others • Lighthearted 	SPIRITUALITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religiousness • Faith • Purpose • Meaning

Questions About Strengths

- What are some of the things from your past about which you are most proud?
- What energizes you in the present?
- What are you looking forward to in the near future?



Building Strengths by Using Them

Questions to identify and talk about your strengths:

- How did my strengths show up in that situation?
- How am I using (or might I use) my strength of _____ in this particular situation?
- What are ways I can build my strengths by using them in different ways?

Advantages of Positive Emotions

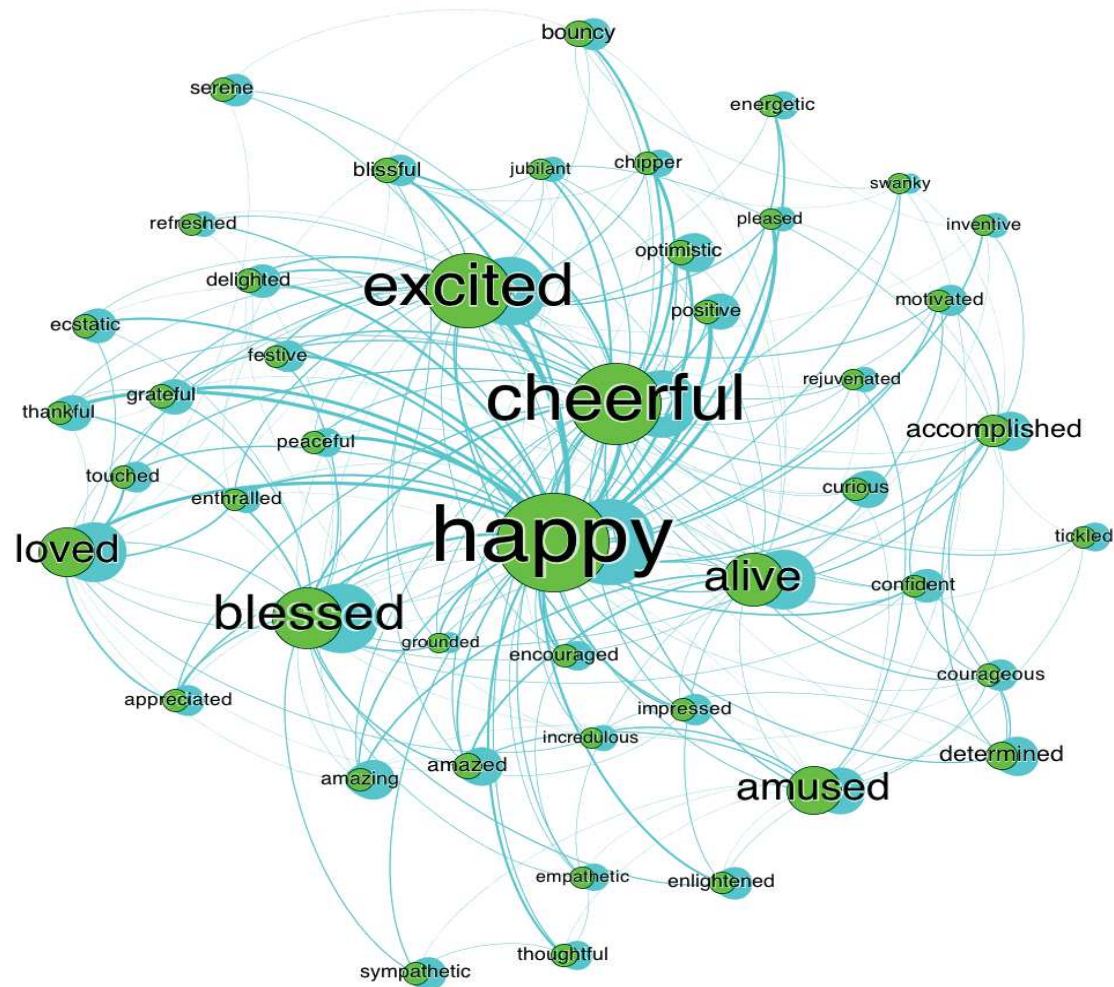
Positive emotions...

- fuel resilience
- broaden our thinking and build our resources
- trigger upward spirals toward optimal functioning - feeling good now and increasing the likelihood of feeling good in the future



Positive Emotions: Building a Vocabulary

- Joy
- Gratitude
- Serenity
- Interest
- Hope
- Pride
- Amusement
- Inspiration
- Awe
- Love



Building Positivity

“When you appreciate the good, the good appreciates.” – Dr. Tal Ben-Shahar

- When have things truly gone your way, perhaps even better than you expected?
- When has someone gone out of their way to do something good for you?
- When have you and others infected one another with irrepressible laughter?

Notice Your Mindset

Play to Your Strengths

Ritualize Gratitude

Boost Happiness



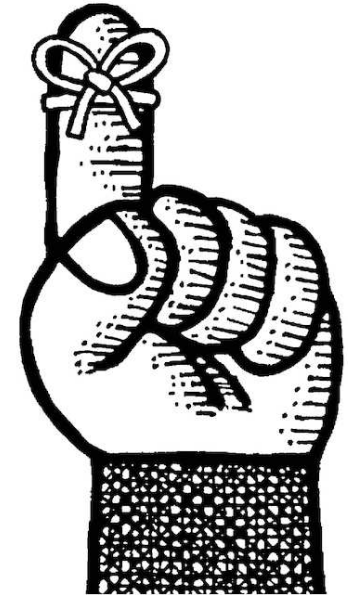
Happiness Boosters

- Live in the moment
 - Sing
 - Hug
 - Keep a gratitude journal
 - Dance
 - Plan a vacation
 - Exercise
 - Laugh
 - Spend quality time with loved ones
 - Go outside
 - Express gratitude
 - Smile
- Play
 - Meditate
 - Hang out with a happy friend
 - Focus on what works
 - Play with a pet
 - Go for a walk
 - Listen to music you love
 - Donate or raise money for charity
 - Take a nap
 - Read
 - Be kind



Putting It Into Practice

- What do you want to do?
- What do you need?
- When (and where) will you do it?
- How will you remember?



Contact Information

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Your Life – Plan B

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PlanB.com*

Resources

- Greater Good - www.greatergood.berkeley.edu/
- Positive Psychology Center (UPenn)
www.positivepsychology.org
- CHADD (Children & Adults with ADHD – www.chadd.org
Attention Magazine
- ADDA (Attention Deficit Disorder Association) -- www.add.org
- VIA - www.viacharacter.org