



Positive Psychology Academy

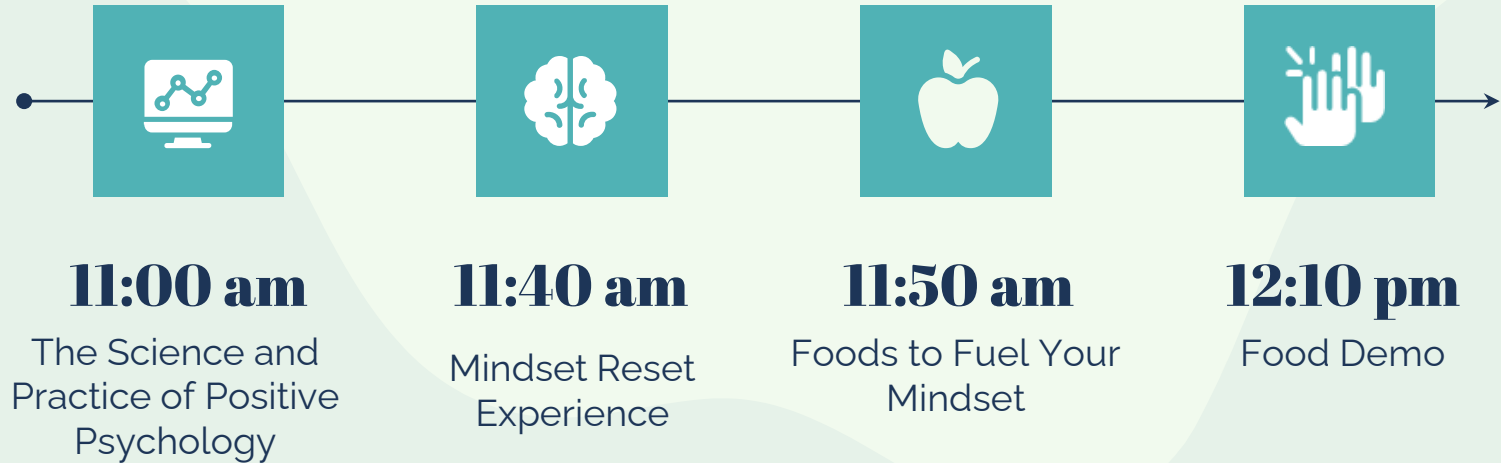
Ana Hernandez. Paige Kinucan, Miranda McGuire

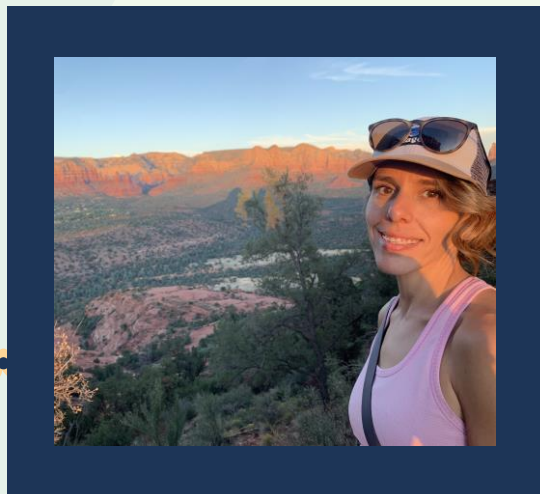


A division of Presbyterian Healthcare Services



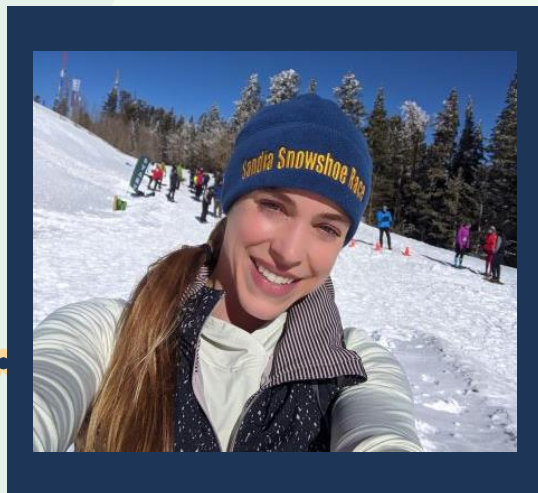
Today's Adventure





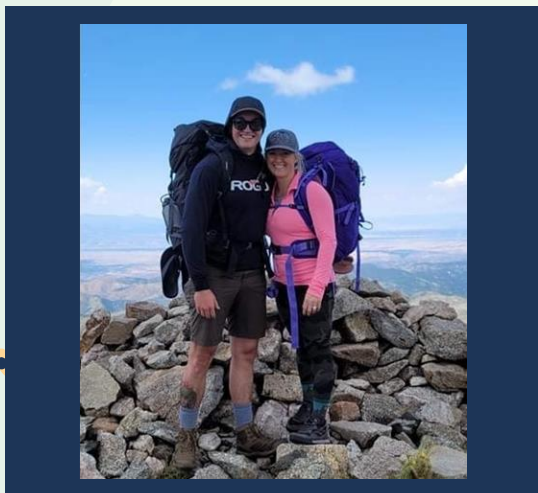
Ana

- I love all things holistic health and learning about human behavior.
- Love the great outdoors and meaningful conversations.
- Integrate and practice wellness best when I teach it.



Paige

- Time in nature helps fuel my positive mindset: I love cycling, hiking and snow shoeing.
- My top 3 good mood food cravings are dark chocolate, berries and nuts.
- My “best friends” span almost every decade of age. I enjoy learning from people with different backgrounds than my own.



Miranda

- I love to travel and experience everything the world has to offer, especially new coffee shops.
- I've competed in Las Vegas NV at a national weightlifting competition.
- I became especially interested in nutrition and holistic health when I became sick in 2011 and found that nutrition helped me avoid surgery.

Objectives

01

**The Science of
Positive Psychology**

02

**Leveraging your
brain's flexibility to
create habits for
happiness**

03

**Strategies to flex your
happiness muscles**

04

**The role of
nutrition in mood
and mindset**



Poll:

**How familiar are
you with Positive
Psychology?**



What is Positive Psychology?

A branch of psychology focused on the character strengths and behaviors that allow individuals to build a life of meaning and purpose—to move beyond surviving to flourishing.

What is life-giving rather than life-depleting?

Positive Psychology is...



As concerned with
strengths as with
weakness



As interested with
building the best
things in life as it is
in repairing the
worst



As concerned with
making people's lives
fulfilling/nurturing talent
as with healing pathology

Well-being/Happiness by way of.....

✿ 1. The Pleasant Life

2. The Good Life

3. The Meaningful Life





The Pleasant Life

- Experiencing positive emotion and having as many pleasures as possible
- Heritable (about 50%)



Happiness through positive emotion/pleasure





The Good Life



-Derive a state of “flow” or absorption in one’s work/passions/play that is intrinsically rewarding

-Use strengths to heighten experiences of work, love, and play



Happiness through engagement/being in flow





“The best moments in our lives are not the passive, receptive, relaxing times . . . The best moments usually occur if a person’s body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile”



- Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi





The Meaningful Life

-Knowing and using strengths in service of something larger than yourself.

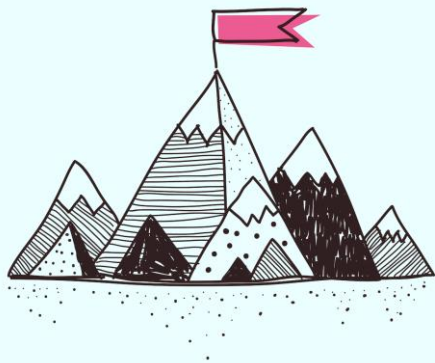


Happiness through service/purpose/accomplishment



Happiness Myths





The Arrival Fallacy

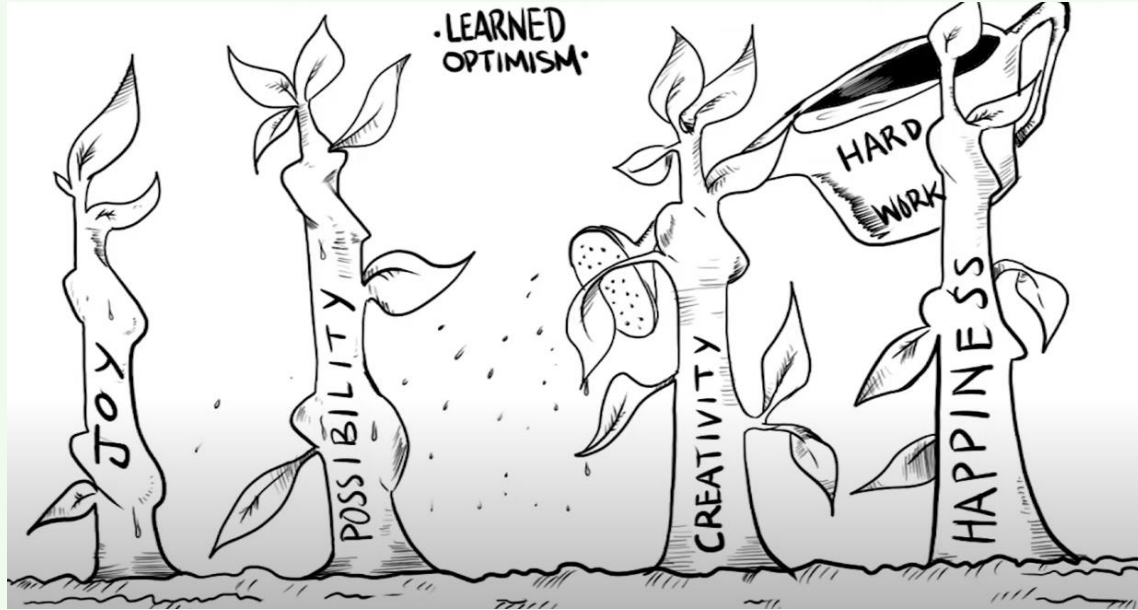
"I'll be happier when..."

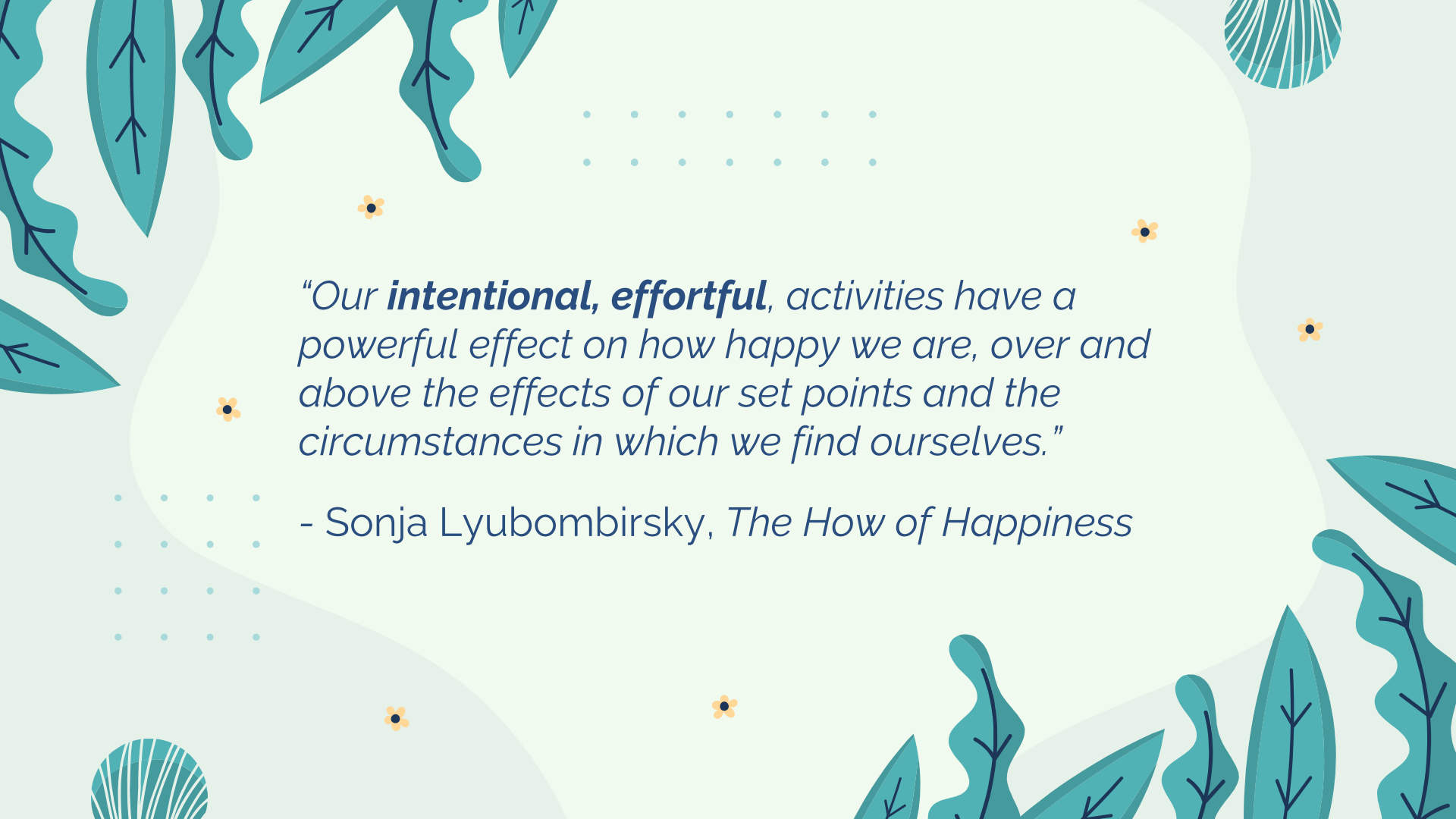
"It" comes with it's own constructs,
habits, and struggles.



GI Joe Fallacy

Knowing is only 25% of
the equation





“Our **intentional, effortful**, activities have a powerful effect on how happy we are, over and above the effects of our set points and the circumstances in which we find ourselves.”

- Sonja Lyubomirsky, *The How of Happiness*



Highlights from Positive Psychology Research

Where Happiness Comes From



Source: The How of Happiness, by Sonja Lyubomirsky

SCIENCE OF US

Money

People **overestimate the impact of money** on their happiness by quite a lot. It does have some influence, but not nearly as much as we might think, so focusing less on attaining wealth will likely make you happier. (Aknin, Norton, & Dunn, 2009)

Spending money on experiences provides a **bigger boost to happiness** than spending money on material possessions. (Howell & Hill, 2009)

Pleasure vs Meaning

The satisfaction of one's wants and needs boost happiness, but have virtually no impact on meaningfulness.

Focusing on obtaining what you want will increase your happiness, but you may have to supplement to get a deeper sense of meaning.

Givers vs. Takers

“Givers” experience more meaning, while **“takers”** experience more happiness.

If you find yourself lacking in meaning, try giving back to others, but if you are lacking in happiness, try being accepting of others' generosity to give yourself a boost.

Present vs. Past/Future

Happiness is present-oriented, rooted in the moment, while **meaningfulness is more focused on the past and future** and how they link to the present.

This finding suggests that you can focus on the present to increase your happiness, but you might consider thinking more about your past and future to find meaning.

The Power of Neuroplasticity

Any time we learn a new skill or are intentional about a new way of thinking or doing, we literally change our brain.





It's All About the Practice







Savoring



The act of stepping outside of an experience to review and appreciate it while it is happening.



Gratitude



A general state of thankfulness and/or appreciation.
Can include appreciating what is valuable and meaningful
for oneself or even recognizing the positive small and
trivial things in life.





Gratitude Practice

1

Keep a journal

Writing it down brings it to life. Be specific!

2

Write a thank you note

Deliver, email, text, or say it.

3


3 Good Things

Note them every single day

Movement

- Physiologically, movement creates biochemical changes within our body that are a pharmacy for our physical and mental health.
- Movement in nature “**green exercise**” has a powerful impact on anxiety and negative self-focused thinking.





“Looking at the evidence it’s not hard to conclude that our entire physiology is designed to reward us for moving.”

-Dr. Kelly McGonigal, Stanford University



Poll:

Movement connects us to something we desire.

From the list, choose all that you feel movement connects you to.

We have agency to shift
our mood/mindset
through movement.

Let's do 10 jumping jacks! Modify if needed.

Role of Mindfulness in Happiness



Takes us out of our default mode which has negative bias.



Changes in brain activity in subjects who have learned to meditate hold steady even when they're not meditating.



Studies show it can reduce depressive symptoms as much as depression meds.

Meditation Practice



As little as 5 minutes spent meditating or doing breathwork can result in a calmer, happier you.

Connection and Kindness

People who perform acts of kindness towards others not only get a boost in wellbeing, they are also more accepted by their peers.



(Layous, Nelson, Oberle, Schonert-Reichl, & Lyubomirsky, 2012);

Connection and Kindness

People who perform acts of kindness towards others not only get a boost in wellbeing, they are also more accepted by their peers.

Is there opportunity to seek out social connections more intentionally?



(Layous, Nelson, Oberle, Schonert-Reichl, & Lyubomirsky, 2012);

Reframing

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Used to create a different way of looking at a situation, person or relationship by changing its *meaning*.

It is the lens that we see reality that changes our experience of it and our ability to create a better world for us and others.

Go for realistic, not positive.

Change a word or sentiment behind a thought.



Reframing in Practice

Rejection



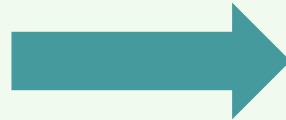
Redirection

Problem



Opportunity

Flaw



Asset

Flipping the Script

"I **have to exercise** today, I've been so lazy."

"Ugh, I hate these dinner dishes. **Again.**"

Driver cuts you off @\$%&#*

"I get to get outside today to ride my bike. I always feel so good when I move my body."

"I am so pleased I don't have to do this in the morning, can't wait until my peaceful cup of coffee"

"Holy cow. He must be learning to drive a standard or is having an emergency. Good luck buddy!"

Intentional, Effortful Acts



Reframing

A daily practice to create more positive emotion.



Savoring

Take pause to savor an experience.



Movement

Gift yourself movement that brings you joy!



Journaling

An opportunity for reflection.
Try 3 good things or gratitude.



Meditation

Consider letting an app lead the way!



Connections

Random Acts of Kindness
help us feel more
connected. We are mirrors.

What do you love doing?

Can you plan to do more of this and challenge yourself in order to experience flow?

Cultivating Habits

1

Environmental cues

Make better habits easy to do!

2

Positive Reminiscing

Bring to mind all successful experiences of exercising from the past.

3

Use Your Strengths

Consider how our strengths can be harnessed in the service of our intended changes.



CHANGE
YOUR
HABITS

CHANGE
YOUR
LIFE

Measure Your Happiness

PERMA: 23 questions to measure the basic dimensions of psychological flourishing.

- Positive emotion
- Engagement
- Relationships
- Meaning
- Accomplishment

Discover Your Strengths

Character Strengths Survey

VIA Institute

<https://www.viacharacter.org/>

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

**Tiny Changes,
Remarkable Results**

Atomic Habits

An Easy & Proven Way
to Build Good Habits
& Break Bad Ones



James Clear

HOW EXERCISE HELPS US FIND HAPPINESS,
HOPE, CONNECTION, AND COURAGE

THE JOY OF MOVEMENT

KELLY McGONIGAL, PhD

Bestselling author of *The Willpower Instinct*

A New Understanding of Happiness and
Well-Being – and How to Achieve Them



Flourish

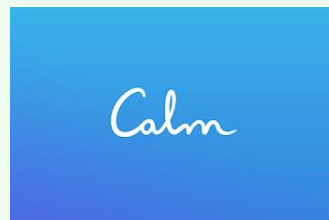
BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *AUTHENTIC HAPPINESS*

MARTIN
SELIGMAN

'One of the most creative and influential
psychologists of our time.'

Stephen Pinker, author of *The Better Angels of Our Nature*

Meditation Resources





The Science of Well-Being - Coursera from Yale

The Happiness Project by Gretchen Rubin

Happier Podcast by Gretchen Rubin

Oprah Super Soul Session by Shawn Achor



• • • • •
• • • • •

Thanks!

Do you have any questions?
nmrhca.wellness@phs.org

• • •
• • •
• • •
• • •

CREDITS: This presentation template was created by **Slidesgo**, including icons by **Flaticon**, and infographics & images by **Freepik**

Power of Connection

Experiment time!