

A very warm welcome to everyone. I am Lynette da Silva Fortes, from Carmel College of Arts, Science and Commerce.

Today I will be covering module #4 life below, at and above 0, a part of the first chapter introduction to positive psychology.

The session outline is Positive Psychology revisited, flourishing, languishing, interconnections of the good and the bad, after which you will be able to comprehend life below, at and above 0; describe flourishing and languishing behaviors and assess the development of positive psychology over the years.

The first subtopic positive psychology revisited.

Positive psychology for a long time has said that happiness and health are far more than the absence of unhappiness or illness. A lot of people think that the markers of happiness, wherein you are not depressed, not unhappy, not bored, not stressed, not confronting major challenges or failures and not arguing with your family or significant others, basically means that you are very happy in life. But actually it means that you are not unhappy and not dealing with a lot of emotional difficulties at the current moment.

Life at Zero is considered to be a neutral zone, wherein not much is wrong, but not much is right either. Now this can be in terms of your interest, purpose and joy in your life. Now, traditional psychology has emphasized for a long time, or it basically focuses on something called life below 0. Now what they study in this particular aspect or about human behavior is damaging effects of stress, bad marriages, dysfunctional families to genetic influences in mental illness. What goes wrong to produce misery is given more attention than what goes right to produce health.

Positive psychology tells us what needs to go right to bring our lives above 0. We have important contributions from Corey Keyes who spoke about the mental health model describing a continuum running from complete mental illness to complete mental health, he also extended the work of Carol Ryff that is work on foundations of psychological well being. Now after this, the criteria for positive health and optimal functioning were added to traditional symptoms, defining mental illness.

Now, based on both health and illness criteria, mental illness was defined as a high degree of mental illness symptoms and a low degree of mental health indicators. Complete mental health or flourishing was defined as absence of mental illness symptoms and the prominence of mental health symptoms.

Now, moderate mental health. It basically means that there is some degree of positive functioning and a low degree of mental illness symptoms. Then we have another concept which is called languishing, which is a low degree of positive mental health. Now, Keys describes languishing as a state of incomplete mental health, as there are very few signs of illness and even fewer signs of health.

Promotion of positive mental health is considered to be more important than just treating mental illness. It is also important to develop models of life which are on the positive side of 0. Our traditional mental health

services only focus on the remediation of distress. So people who are in languishing states, they're going to benefit more from learning how to live a positive life.

The next subtopic interconnections of the good and the bad.

Now positive psychology as we know, focuses on optimal functioning, flourishing and happiness. Positive psychology is not only about good experiences, not only about desirable personal qualities or some idyllic life in which everything is wonderful.

Now the goal of positive psychology is to promote a balance in psychology's understanding of human behavior. Now, how they do this, they focus on long neglected good things in life that is, positive health and happiness. Positive psychology complements rather than replaces understandings of how positive and negative life events and emotions are interconnected.

Psychologists know about human resilience for a long time and also positive outcomes growing out of negative experiences. As we know, no life is without turmoil, disappointments, conflicts and setbacks, and its shares of tragedies. Facing and overcoming challenges is considered to be an important impetus for personal growth and development. Now we have post traumatic growth research which talks about when people are faced with a lot of tragedies in their life, how they bounce back, either becoming more positive or becoming more negative. So post traumatic growth speaks about people adopting healthier lifestyles after going through a heart attack or if they have suffered from a stroke.

Now we have developmental and health psychologists who long before positive psychology, discovered resilience, post traumatic growth, motivations for health and happiness emerging from tragedy and life threatening events. Now they studied all these things before positive psychology incorporated them. We also have health psychology studies. They talk about positive emotions stemming from humour, love, caring supportive friends and family members, i.e., when you're sick, when you have a lot of family members surrounding you, how your chances of recovery are better. Now all these things help offset effects of stressful events or experiences in our lives. Now, before positive psychology positive traits like optimism, hardiness and self esteem, were connected to good outcomes and effective coping.

Now what positive psychology has done? What are the unique contributions of positive psychologists? They have clarified relative independence of the good and the bad. Now they have done this by developing empirically based positive criteria to define health and happiness.

Now previous assumptions about what psychologists had about different concepts in life are things like, they thought mental health means that you do not have any markers of mental illness. So absence of mental illness was considered to be mental health, so happiness was considered to be absence of distress or depression. Then you have happy marriages, which were considered to be with less conflict and animosity than unhappy ones.

Positive psychologists what they have done is they have developed new perspectives on these assumptions. The first perspective. They say absence of bad does not necessarily mean the presence of

good. Good relating and bad relating in a marriage are not simple opposites, that is, in a marriage, if there are not many fights or conflicts in a marriage, it does not necessarily mean that the couple is happy in the marriage.

Now the next perspective is the importance of positive emotional states to health and happiness to offset the bad. Now positive emotion benefits as we all know, it enhances our immune system's ability to fight disease. It improves our mental and emotional health. It promotes individual success and contributes to satisfaction in a marriage. Now positive emotions, as we all know, are good for us all the time. Good things contribute to a satisfying and very meaningful life.

And the third one before positive psychology, traditional psychology had very few voices and empirical studies describing health and happiness. Humanistic psychology noted the importance of positive functioning and the need to develop criteria for positive mental health. So we have new researchers who are devoting their lives to the study of positive human functioning. Positive psychology has moved from life above 0, this particular concept from the periphery to the center stage.

These are the references which I have used.

Thank you.