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Positive Psychology: A Scholar-Practitioner Approach to Evidence Based Coaching

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Submitted to the Program of Organizational Dynamics in the Graduate Division of the School of Arts and Sciences in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Organizational Dynamics at the University of Pennsylvania

Advisor: William Wilkinsky

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Abstract
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Disciplines
Other Psychology

Comments
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POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY:

A SCHOLAR-PRACTITIONER APPROACH TO EVIDENCE-BASED COACHING

by

Karen S. Chance

Submitted to the Program of Organizational Dynamics
in the Graduate Division of the School of Arts and Sciences
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Organizational Dynamics at the
University of Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

2008

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY:

A SCHOLAR-PRACTITIONER APPROACH TO EVIDENCE-BASED COACHING

Approved by:

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Bill Wilkinsky, Ph.D., Advisor

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Erin G. Cross, M.A., Reader

ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I assert positive psychology is the science at the heart of coaching and argue it is an evidence-based coaching model. I provide a background of positive psychology and briefly discuss its history, evolution, psychological influences and current challenges. I discuss the nature of coaching, varying definitions and common themes. Critical questions surrounding Evidence Based Practice (EBP) and how can it be applied to coaching are also addressed. Examples of single, integrative and cross-disciplinary theoretical approaches to coaching are also explored. In my final chapter, I review and answer my thesis question of whether positive psychology is an evidence based approach to coaching, including an example from a recent client engagement. Coaching considerations for using positive psychology are explored as is the future of positive psychology coaching and research areas.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"The answers to many questions are already with us. Often we just need some help to bring them out."
(Mae Carol Jemison, M.D.)

In the following chapters, I examine and explore the theory of positive psychology and the evidence based coaching model to argue that as a science, positive psychology serves as well grounded, evidence based approach to coaching. Within this chapter, I provide a background of positive psychology and briefly discuss its history, evolution, psychological influences and explore current challenges.

The questions of what positive psychology is and why it is necessary to study will be answered in Chapter 2 through a literature review. Despite launching in 1998, the positive psychology movement has a long, notable past filled with many distinguished ancestors like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle as well as modern psychological influences from psychoanalysis, behaviorism, cognitive therapy and existential psychology. A review of early positive psychology research from 1928-1939, will demonstrate the search for and understanding of the meaning of life existed in psychology prior to World War II. During this time, psychology was focused on three specific missions: healing mental illness, improving lives and recognizing and nurturing talent (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). After World War II, the psychology landscape changed and scientific progress negatively impacted two of the fundamental missions in psychology: improving the lives of people and identifying and nurturing talent (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Equally important to positive psychology is the significant progress researchers have made in developing valid, stable and consistent assessments to focus on the quality of scientific tools to measure positive features of the human conditions (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). New scientific approaches measuring quality of life have been developed as "objective" social indicators and measurement of subjective well-being (SWB) (Diener & Suh, 1997). Further review of both approaches shows their inextricable link to understanding and solving fundamental problems facing societies and individuals (Diener & Suh, 1997). Notable research studies and emerging trends in positive psychology research are also discussed. Questions about whether positive psychology is a 'temporary blip' or a lasting movement secured by a generation of scholars will be presented at the end of the chapter. Huge knowledge gaps that may challenge positive psychology will be pointed out.

Chapter 3 begins with a brief discussion of the nature of coaching. Varying coaching definitions from practitioners are addressed, common themes linking them together are presented and an overview of different forms of coaching are defined and explained. The recognition of coaching as a cost-effective way to improve performance and the measurement of the business impact of coaching are also examined and supported by recent coaching studies conducted in the United States, United Kingdom and South Africa. Included in this chapter is the concept of an informed practitioner model of professional coaching as linked to other practitioner models in the behavioral and medical sciences as the informed practitioner approach forms the basis of an evidence-based coaching model. The critical questions surrounding Evidence Based Practice (EBP) and how can it be applied to coaching are also addressed. I also examine two client-centered,

theoretical frameworks having direct application to coaching: personal construct psychology and cognitive behavioral perspectives. Personal psychology constructs (PCP) theory, developed by George Kelly (1955), assumes we can reconstruct the way we think (van Oudtshoorn, 2006). A coaching theoretical model similar to PCP with clinical roots is the cognitive behavioral approach. This model was established by Aaron Beck (1976) for the treatment of emotional disorders. In examining the theoretical frameworks and philosophical underpinnings of the PCP and CBC coaching models, there are several similarities because both are client driven, psycho-educative models where the client is viewed as the problem-solver of her or his life.

A discussion of the new emerging field of positive psychology coaching concludes Chapter 3. This section presents integrative and cross-disciplinary theoretical approaches to coaching. I examine and discuss how transition and change models, cross-cultural issues and positive psychology can be applied to coaching. The integrative goal-focused approach to coaching is a multifaceted methodology for helping individuals and organizations create and sustain change (Stober & Grant, 2006). Three important models of transition and change useful in goal-focused coaching are explored: Bridges' (1986) Transition Model, Schlossberg's (1981) Adaptation to Transitions Model and Prochaska and DiClemente's (1984) Transtheoretical Model of Change (Stober & Grant, 2006). These models provide another framework to understand the client's relationship to the execution of goals (Stober & Grant, 2006). Rosinki (2006) posits coaching from a cultural perspective allows the coach to explore and leverage the influence of culture as it operates within client contexts thus increasing the coach's validity and applicability (Rosinki, 2003; Stober & Grant, 2006). This creates an opportunity to learn from

alternative cultural perspectives about critical areas and bridge coaching and interculturalism for a more global coaching process (Rosinki, 2003).

Positive psychology provides a robust theoretical and empirical foundation for life and executive coaching (Kauffman, 2006). Traditional psychology has focused on ways to make sick or unhealthy people better through clinically valid and empirical methods to support fixing what was wrong with them (Kauffman, 2006). Positive psychology, I assert, is the science at the heart of coaching[1]; I will examine emerging trends in theory and research and finally explore coaching applications. A review of primary and secondary positive psychology literature will demonstrate ways coaching practitioners can integrate learning into their current practices (Kauffman, 2006).

In chapter 4, I review and answer my thesis question of whether positive psychology is considered an evidence based approach to coaching. I also include an example from a recent client engagement for illustrative purposes. I then explore coaching considerations of using positive psychology and discuss the future of positive psychology coaching.

[1] This phrase is borrowed from Carol Kauffman (2006).

CHAPTER 2

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

"To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all."
(Oscar Wilde)

History and Background

In this chapter, I provide background of the theoretical frameworks underpinning positive psychology, briefly discuss its history, evolution, and psychological influences and finally explore current challenges. Positive psychology's goal is to help people live and flourish rather than merely exist and is a "view within scientific psychology that aims to achieve a balanced and empirically grounded body of research on human nature and social relations" (Keyes & Haidt, 2003, p. 3). Two stories shared by positive psychologists Martin Seligman and Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi illustrate how they each arrived at the conviction that a movement was needed in psychology. For Seligman (2000), it began shortly after being elected president of the American Psychological Association:

> The moment took place in my garden while I was weeding with my five year old daughter, Nikki, I have to confess that even though I write books about children, I'm really not all that good with children. I am goal oriented and time urgent, and when I'm weeding in the garden, I'm actually trying to get the weeding done. Nikki however was throwing weeds into the air, singing, and dancing around. I yelled at her. She walked away, then came back and said, "Daddy, I want to talk to you." "Yes, Nikki?" "Daddy, do you remember before my fifth birthday? From the time I was three to the time I was five, I decided not to whine anymore, that was the hardest thing I've ever done. And if I can stop whining you can stop being such a grouch." This was for me an epiphany, nothing less. I learned something about Nikki, about raising kids, about myself, and a great deal about my profession. First, I realized that raising Nikki is about this marvelous strength she has. I call it "seeing into the soul"---amplifying it, nurturing it, helping her to lead her life. Raising children, I realized is vastly more than fixing what is wrong with them. It is about identifying and nurturing their strongest qualities, what they own,

> and are best at, and helping them find niches in which they can best live out these strengths (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, pp. 5-6).

Unlike Seligman's revelatory conversation with his daughter, Csikszentmihalyi (2000) recognized the need for positive psychology in Europe during WWII (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). He recalls the dissolution of a smug world as he noticed how many successful and self-confident people became helpless and hopeless when the war removed their social supports (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Csikszentmihalyi (2000) observed some were reduced to empty shells because they lost their jobs, money or status; however, he also noticed a few individuals who kept their integrity and purpose despite the chaos and hardships. These profound experiences made Csikszentmihalyi (2000) think about the sources from which people drew strength. During this time, he came across some psychology papers that led him to believe the field held a possible solution because it addressed fundamental life issues using the natural and social sciences (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Csikszentmihalyi (2000) was searching for a "scientific approach to human behavior but never dreamed this could yield a value-free understanding and he has struggled to reconcile the twin imperatives that a science of human beings should include: to understand what *is* and what *could be*" (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 7; italics in original).

Although Seligman's and Csikszentmihalyi's (2000) reasons for launching a positive psychology movement were different, they both believed the time had come to remind their field that psychology encompassed more than pathology and problems, it should also be concerned with studying strength and virtue (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Both men feel treatment is not just about fixing what is broken, but also nurturing what is best (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Furthermore,

Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) assert psychology should not only be concerned with illness and health, but also be a much larger scope and become a branch of medicine. Hence, they suggest psychology is about "work, education, insight, love, growth, and play" (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.7). To counter historical psychology's disproportionate focus on pathology and repair, Seligman's and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) made a broader call for studying strengths and prevention (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003). Psychology is facing a watershed mark where central issues surrounding the understanding of human strengths are being revisited and redefined (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003). Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) argue "positive psychology does not rely on wishful thinking, faith, self-deception, fads, or hand-waving, because it tries to adapt to what is best in the scientific method to the unique problems that human behavior presents to those who wish to understand the complexity" (p. 7).

Positive psychology is the scientific study of affirmative experiences and individual traits, and the institutions facilitating their development (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). It focuses on average people to understand what is going well in their lives, how their lives are improving and how they live with purpose despite difficulties (Sheldon & King, 2001). The field is also concerned with well-being and optimal functioning through the scientific study of human strengths and virtues (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005; Sheldon & King, 2001). Thus, it is an attempt to urge psychologists to adopt a more appreciative perspective of human potential, motives and capacities (Sheldon & King, 2001). Yet, psychologists have little knowledge of what makes life worth living despite understanding about how people survive and endure

adverse conditions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Therefore, psychologists have scant knowledge about how people flourish under benign conditions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). In fact, "psychology since World War II became a science largely about healing and it concentrates on repairing damage within a disease of human functioning" (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 5). Such an exclusive focus on pathology within psychology neglects both the fulfilled individual and the thriving community (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). As a result, positive psychology aims to create a paradigm shift away from psychology's focus on repairing the worst things in life to studying its strengths and building positive qualities (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Sheldon and King (2001) argue "such an endeavor is difficult within psychology's reductionist epistemological traditions which train one to view positivity with suspicion, as a product of wishful thinking, denial or hucksterism" (p. 216). It is becoming clearer that normal functioning of human beings cannot be accounted for within a purely negative, or problem-focused, frame of reference because the majority of humans achieve a state of thriving, rating themselves as happy and satisfied with their lives (Myers, 2000; Sheldon & King, 2001).

Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) believe "the field of positive psychology at the subjective level is about valued subjective experiences which they identify as well-being, contentment, and satisfaction (in the past), hope and optimism (for the future) and flow and happiness (in the present)" (p. 5). At the individual and group levels, positive psychology is distinct. At the individual level, it represents positive individual traits, such as the capacity for love, vocation, courage, interpersonal skills, perseverance, forgiveness, spirituality, high talent and wisdom (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

In contrast, the group level is about civic virtues and the institutions moving individuals toward better citizenship, which include traits like responsibility, nurturance, moderation, tolerance and work choice (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Assumptions

Positive emotion, well-being and good character were not invented by positive psychologists, nor were they the first to call for them to be studied scientifically (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). Instead, positive psychologists like Duckworth, Steen and Seligman (2005) believe the contribution of positive psychology has been to advocate for these topics in mainstream scientific exploration and to bring research to the attention of various foundations and funding agencies to raise awareness and money for their study, and perhaps to provide a unifying conceptual framework. They believe the methodological approach of positive psychology can be recognized scientifically like clinical research by establishing "parallel classification systems, reliable, stable and valid methods of assessment, prospective longitudinal studies, experimental methods and efficacy and effectiveness studies of interventions" (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005, p. 634). The following quote from Robert F. Kennedy is a lamentation about the gross national product which can serve as an analogy to the field of positive psychology's grief about what might be called the "gross academic product" of psychology:

> The gross national product does not allow for the health of our children, the quality of their education, or the joy of their play. It does not include the beauty of our poetry or strength of our marriages: the intelligence of our public debate or the integrity of our public officials. It measures neither our wit nor our courage; neither our wisdom nor our learning; neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country; it measures everything, in short, except which makes life worthwhile (Gable & Haidt, 2005, p.103).

Kennedy's words are akin to the fundamental argument made by positive psychologists regarding the lack of understanding in psychology surrounding what makes life worth living and why people thrive despite difficulties. Gable and Haidt (2005) believe the "gross academic product" of psychology as it exists today provides an incomplete picture of human life. The recent positive psychology movement is focused on understanding a complete picture of human conditions which strives toward recognizing and examining how human strengths and frailties are linked (Gable & Haidt, 2005). In the second half of the 20th Century, psychology made significant progress in research related to depression, violence, self-esteem, management, irrationality and growing up under adverse conditions, but there is less research about character strengths, virtues and conditions leading to high levels of happiness or civic engagement (Gable & Haidt, 2005).

Ancestors and Cousins

The ideas fueling the development of positive psychology are not new (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 2006). Csikszentmihalyi (2006) asserts that universally "all cultures with time come to a consensus as to what the ideal life should be like and what steps one should take to reach it" (p. 5). There are many distinguished ancestors and modern cousins related to positive psychology (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). The 'good life' as the subject of philosophical and religious inquiry has been linked to the writings of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). For example, "the psychological tradition of optimal experience and optimal development can be traced as far back as Aristotle's concept of *eudaimonia* or

the theory that the goal of individual life is to achieve happiness by fulfilling one's potential" (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 2006, p. 15; italics in original).

Many of the concerns and values within positive psychology date back to the writings of many distinguished psychologists. William James (1902/1958), the father of American psychology, wrote about the term 'healthy mindedness' in *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902/1958), where he observed that at every age there are people passionately immersing themselves in the goodness of life despite hardships (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003). James' (1902/1958) research is valuable because it demonstrates the inextricable link between positive and negative features of the human condition and also illustrates how deeply aware he was of the sunny and dark sides of life (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003). Gordon Allport's (1958/1961) interest in positive human characteristics offered the concept of maturity to encompass qualities such as self-extension, warmth relating to others, emotional security and realistic self-perception (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003). In addition, positive psychology research can be linked to Abraham Maslow's (1968) advocacy for the study of healthy people rather than sick people, and Richard Cowan's (2000) research on resilience in children and adolescents (Gable & Haidt, 2005). Other notable influences on positive psychology are Sigmund Freud (1933/1977), Carl Jung (1955), Alfred Adler (1979) and Victor Frankl (1984) (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005).

During psychology's evolution within philosophy through the 18th Century and its development into a separate discipline in the 19th Century, positive psychologists suggest "the great psychological traditions of psychoanalysis, behaviorism, cognitive therapy, humanistic psychology and existential psychology contributed to our current

understanding of the positive aspects of human experience" (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005, p. 632). The field of psychology most closely associated with the study and promotion of positive human experience was humanistic psychology (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). Unlike reductionist and analytic approaches of psychoanalysis and behaviorism, humanistic psychology emphasized goals people strive for, their conscious awareness of striving and the importance of their own choices and rationality (Peterson, 2006). Therefore, humanistic psychology focused on fundamental questions about meaning and existence and moved away from mechanical causes (Peterson, 2006). Humanistic psychology's also overlaps with existentialism's critical idea that a person's experience is primary, and to understand any individual one must understand her or him subjectively from the inside and out (Peterson, 2006). Similar to humanists, existentialists see people as the products of their choices which are undertaken freely (Peterson, 2006). Existentialists believe there is no fixed human nature; rather each person becomes a unique individual by the way she or he chooses to define her or himself (Peterson, 2006). Urban (1983) asserts that in psychology both humanistic and existential perspectives share several emphases:

- significance of the individual
- complex organization of the individual
- capacity for change inherent in the individual
- significance of conscious experience
- self-regulatory nature of human activity (Peterson, 2006, p.9).

Theorists of humanism and existentialism believe psychologists must focus more attention toward an individual's way of seeing the world (Peterson, 2006).

Positive psychology's roots also have been traced to the academic humanist psychology movement where contributors include Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, Henry Murray, Gordon Allport and Rollo May. These men concerned themselves with many of the same questions positive psychologists grapple with today (Sheldon & Kasser, 2001). The work of Maslow (1971) and other humanistic thinkers were considered revolutionary because their work -- although scientific in nature and relying on empirical studies of human behavior -- demonstrated a distinct difference from other psychological systems as they emphasized specific philosophical beliefs about human beings (Buhler & Allen, 1972). Since humanistic psychology presents a positive model of human experience, humanistic psychologists view themselves as human beings first, and scientists second (Maslow, 1970). Maslow (1966) was impatient with "scientific psychology" because it did not deal with what is most important about people (Peterson, 2006). He wrote in the first issue of the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology's* introduction that humanistic psychology is comprised of:

> …a group of psychologists and men and women from other fields who are interested in those human capacities and potentialities that have no systematic place either in positivistic or behavioristic theory, e.g. creativity, love, self, growth, organism, basic need-gratification, self-actualization, higher values, ego-transcendence, objectivity, autonomy, identity, responsibility, psychological health, etc. (as cited in Sutich, 1961, pp. vii-ix).

In 1962, Maslow and his colleagues founded the Association of Humanistic Psychology (AHP) as a "revolt against mechanistic, deterministic, psychoanalytic and behavioristic orthodoxy in psychology" (Maslow, 1970, p. 249). The primary purpose of the *Journal* and Association was to explore the characteristics of behavior and emotional dynamics of studying full and healthy human living (Maslow, 1970). Maslow's (1962) work concentrated on self-actualization, the state in which people have access to the full range

of their talents and strengths (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). He cited these talents and strengths as characteristics of a self-actualized person, linked to current positive psychology research today (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Carl Rogers' (1961) research described the qualities of a fully functioning person (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003). Duckworth, Steen, and Seligman (2005) assert Rogers (1961) believed individuals possessed the power to improve their lives by discovering and expressing their authentic selves which he developed into his approach of client centered therapy (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). Marie Jahoda's (1958) book, *Current Concepts of Positive Mental Health*, presented a compelling argument for understanding and studying psychological well-being as a field of study in itself versus the absence of disorder or distress (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). Jahoda's (1958) research and argument serve as the premise of today's positive psychology movement (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and provide a conceptual framework for understanding the components of mental illness while arguing for the need for positive psychology (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). Based on mental health literature available at the time, Jahoda (1958) developed six processes contributing to mental health: acceptance of oneself, growth/development/becoming, integration of personality, autonomy, accurate perception of reality and environmental mastery (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005).

Early Research Focus

Prior to World War II, psychology was focused on three specific missions: healing mental illness, improving lives and recognizing and nurturing high talent (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Early positive psychology research was

demonstrated by “Terman’s (1939) studies of giftedness and marital happiness (Terman, Buttenweiser, Ferguson, Johnson & Wilson, 1938), to Watson’s (1928) writings on parenting and Jung’s (1933) work regarding the search for and discovery of the meaning in life” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 6). Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) noted after WWII two subsequent events changed the psychology landscape: in 1946, the founding of the Veterans Administration (now Veteran Affairs) which employed thousands of psychologists to treat mental illness and in 1947, the National Institute of Mental Health was created and academics learned they could obtain grants for studying pathology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Seligman (1994) believes these events yielded many benefits in the understanding of and therapy for mental illness; as a result, at least 14 disorders were cured or considerably alleviated through science (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Seligman (2000) noted a downside, however, in that scientific progress negatively affected the other two fundamental missions of psychology: improving the lives of people and identifying and nurturing talent (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). For Seligman (2000), the advances in psychology and research transformed the theories underpinning how psychologists viewed themselves (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This evolution became, metaphorically, victimology, where psychologists viewed themselves as a subset of the health professions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Consequently, the empirical focus of psychology shifted to assessing and curing individual suffering (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Research on psychological disorders and the negative effects of environmental stressors has grown abundantly and Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) assert practitioners began treating patients with

mental illnesses from a disease framework which only focused on repairing damage (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Assessment

As a result of the increased legitimacy and credibility in studying human strengths, it is critical to focus on the quality of scientific tools used to measure positive features of the human condition (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). Positive psychologists have made significant efforts in developing valid, stable and consistent assessments (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005) while still remaining concerned with abstract and concrete definitions of happiness that allow research to explain and measure happiness in individuals and groups (Peterson, 2006). A research study on happiness analyzed the emotional content of autobiographical essays written by nuns from the American School of Notre Dame, a United States teaching order (Peterson, 2006). Researchers Deborah Danner, David Snowdon and Wallace Friesen (2001) read 180 essays from sisters born before 1917 and scored them for emotional content by counting the number of sentences containing positive emotion words and the number of sentences containing negative emotion words (Peterson, 2006). Snowdon (2001) asserts Catholic nuns are good research subjects from the medical and psychological science viewpoint because their lives are constant for income, diet, education, access to health care and habits (Peterson, 2006). By the 1990s, 40% of the sample died and researchers investigated whether the emotional content of the essays written sixty years ago had any relationship with the nuns' longevity (Peterson, 2006). They found positive emotional content or happiness was related to longevity whereas negative emotional content was unrelated (Peterson, 2006). The data showed happier nuns, the upper 25% of essay

writers, lived an average of ten years longer than their less happy counterparts in the bottom 25% (Peterson, 2006).

Within the last two decades, two new scientific approaches of measuring quality of life have been developed: “objective” or social indicators and the measurement of subjective well-being (SWB) (Diener & Suh, 1997). The empirical study of well-being is significant because a greater understanding of social indicators and subjective well-being researchers believe both approaches hold direct relevance to fundamental problems facing societies and individuals (Diener & Suh, 1997). Social indicators are “societal measures that reflect people’s objective circumstances in a given cultural or geographic unit” (Diener & Suh, 1997, p.192). The central tenet of social indicators is that they are based on objective, quantitative data instead of individual’s subjective perceptions of her/his social environment (Diener & Suh, 1997). Social indicators, then, are indirect measures of how people feel about their life conditions (Diener & Suh, 1997). In contrast to the objectivity of social indicators research, SWB research focuses on individuals’ subjective experiences of their lives (Diener & Suh, 1997). SWB is concerned with a “respondents’ own internal judgment of well-being rather than what policy makers, academics, or others consider important” (Diener & Suh, 1997, p. 201). Despite impressions the term “subjective” implies lesser legitimacy in scientific research, SWB measurement possesses validity because it captures experiences important to the respondent (Diener & Suh, 1997). Although social indicators and subjective well-being measures are based on different definitions of quality of life and have conceptual and methodological differences, the incorporation of both approaches offers a comprehensive view of measuring the quality of life or human well-being (Diener & Suh, 1997).

Because of the increasing importance of SWB, there has been increasing research in the area (Diener, 1984). Although several scales for the assessment of affect exist (Bradburn, 1969; Kamann & Flett, 1983; Kozma & Stones, 1980), the measurement of general life satisfaction has received less attention (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985). SWB is referred to colloquially as "happiness;" and it is a person's evaluation of his or her life (Diener & Diener, 1996). Diener (2000) notes

> there are a number of separable components of SWB: life satisfaction (global judgments of one's life), satisfaction with important domains (e.g. work satisfaction), positive affect (experiencing many pleasant emotions & moods), and low levels of negative effect (experiencing few unpleasant emotions & moods) (p. 34).

Early SWB research looked at facets of happiness which relied on a single self reported item to measure each construct (Diener, 2000). Diener (2000) argues that in psychology there is rudimentary knowledge of SWB and calls for a stronger scientific base before unequivocal recommendations to societies and individuals can be made about how to increase happiness (Diener, 2000). Seligman (1988) notes well-being measures such as the five-item Satisfaction with Life Scale by Diener et al (1985), the four item Subjective Happiness Scale (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999) and the two item Fordyce Happiness Measures (Fordyce, 1988) are the most widely used assessments (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). These self-report measures correlate highly with one another, expert ratings, experience sampling measures, memory for positive versus negative life events, reports of family and friends and amount of smiling (Sandvik et al, 1993; Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005).

Measuring strengths of character is referred to as the "second happy life or the engaged life, which consist of using one's strengths and talents to achieve flow, and

demands measuring positive character traits: talents, interests and strengths" (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005, p. 637). Peterson and Seligman (2004) published the *Classification of Strengths* as their initial attempt to create a complimentary classification to the American Psychiatric Association's (1994) *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (DSM) (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). They followed the example of the DSM as an attempt to correct its shortcomings. The classification system they proposed includes ten criteria for 24 human characteristics determined to be strengths of character (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). Peterson and Seligman (2004) present the strengths as "organized in six virtues, broad categories of moral excellence that emerged consistently from historical surveys: wisdom and knowledge, courage, love, justice, temperance and transcendence" (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005, p.638). Duckworth, Steen and Seligman (2005) assert the classification of strengths created by Peterson and Seligman (2004) are distinguished from previous attempts to classify good character because of the assessment tools provided (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). Those assessment tools, such as the Value in Action Inventory of Strengths and the Values in Action for Young People, were refined and validated using large samples (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005), unlike some previous tools. Although both self-report inventories have not been used extensively with clinical populations, they have potential as diagnostic tools (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005) as they reveal to both client and therapist strengths they should use to build the foundations of treatment strategy (Saleebey, 1992; Seligman & Peterson, 2003).

Positive psychologists believe when strengths and talents are used, the usual reward is engagement and flow (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). Duckworth,

Steen and Seligman (2005) note that feeling engagement is unique because it does not generate pleasure in the hedonic sense, rather it is qualitatively different. An experience of flow is characterized by a loss of consciousness, complete immersion and the stopping of time as one is engaged and focused on the endeavor totally (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). Flow is devoid of thoughts and feelings because during the experience they are blocked (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). It is defined by Csikszentmihalyi (1990) as the experience associated with engaging one's highest strengths and talents to meet do-able challenges. Measuring flow is possible by using several self-report assessment strategies which include semi structured interviews, questionnaires and the Experience Sampling Method (ESM) (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005).

ESM was developed to detect emotional state variation over time by relying on subjects' responses to an electronic pager signaling at eight random times a day from 7:30am to 10:30pm for one week (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003). ESM yields up to 50 measures of happiness at specific moments during an average week because each time the electronic device signals, the respondents rate their levels of happiness (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003). Csikszentmihalyi and Hunter (2003) assert repeated measures taken over a representative period of a person's life can be useful in two ways:

> (a) as indicators of momentary happiness, which can help us understand the effect of immediate environmental circumstances;
> (b) and as personal traits derived from aggregating the repeated responses over a week's time, to derive a trait-like measure of personal happiness (p. 187).

The ESM approach is beneficial to use to separate the immediate context of happiness from more long term conditions (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003). Daniel Kahneman

(1999) argues for the theoretical importance of using ESM by describing it as “measuring point-instant utility—where an assessment of a person’s objective happiness over a period of time can be derived from a dense period of the quality of experience at each point” (p. 3). ESM is the most widely used approach for measuring flow and is not limited to reliance on retrospective evaluation like questionnaires and interviews (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1987).

The other happy life, called the meaningful life, consists of attachment to, and service of, something larger than oneself (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). Baumeister and Vohs (2002) noted that “the something individuals choose to connect with varies widely because some find meaning in their connections to family and friends, churches, synagogues or mosque; meaning in their work or a serious avocation” (as quoted in Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005, p. 639). Therefore, individuals seek meaning not from a single source, but rather from multiple, overlapping attachments (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005). Positive psychologists Duckworth, Steen and Seligman (2005) recommend using self-report measures focused on the meaning-making process to measure the meaningful life. Two widely used assessments include the twenty-item Purpose in Life Test (Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1969), a one-dimensional measure of how meaningful a respondent evaluates their life, and the Orientations to Happiness questionnaire (Peterson et al, 2005), which asks respondents to endorse three different ways to be happy through pleasure, engagement and flow and meaning (Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005).

Challenges

Is positive psychology new and revolutionary? It is too early to predict whether the positive psychology movement will be "a temporary blip or whether the ideas advanced by positive psychologists will be found useful by members of the next generation of scholars; or whether the results they find are convincing enough to be accepted as part of what defines our understanding of reality?" (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 2006, p.15). Thomas Kuhn (1970) describes a paradigm shift as radical changes in a scientific field marked by periods of stability where an overarching perspective dominates and dictates theory, research and application (Peterson, 2006). Every now and then, a new way of conceiving things is developed and creates a scientific revolution as the old paradigm is displaced and a new era of progress and stability begins (Peterson, 2006). Kuhn's (1970) arguments suggest that if positive psychology passes these tests, it will become a genuine paradigm shift in the human sciences (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 2006). Csikszentmihalyi (2006) suggests that although the field of positive psychology is appealing to many scholars, it lacks theoretical coherence as it is not unified by a central conceptual framework. However, over time the lack of a unifying theory could be remedied (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 2006). Indeed, Peterson and Seligman's (2004) volume *Character Strength and Virtues* provides a theoretical framework for most approaches to positive psychology that could be linked (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 2006).

Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi's (2000) point to huge knowledge gaps that may challenge positive psychology. One fundamental gap concerns the relationship between momentary experiences of happiness and long lasting well-being (Seligman &

Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Another area is the development of positivity: how much delayed gratification is necessary to increase the chances of long term well-being? A different challenge points to neuroscience and heritability, and the need for psychologists to develop biology of positive experience and positive traits. Clarification between positive experiences that are pleasurable and enjoyable will also be useful to the field (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) raise the questions which further highlight areas of growth and development for positive psychology: How can building optimism serve as a buffer against depression, schizophrenic or substance abuse? Will too much positive experience create a fragile personality? Is positive psychology a science that is descriptive or prescriptive? What is the relationship between positive traits like optimism and positive experience like happiness and being realistic?

Conclusion

In summary, positive psychology has a short history with a long past filled with distinguished ancestors, cousins and notable psychological influences. Positive psychologists since 1998 have created a movement where research, assessment, credibility and legitimacy is being developed and funded for studying what is right in the lives of others, what makes life rewarding and how institutions can facilitate positive experiences. In the next chapter, I will explore evidence based coaching and how it can be applied to positive psychology.

CHAPTER 3

EVIDENCE BASED COACHING

"You cannot teach humans anything. You can only help them discover it within themselves."
(Galileo)

The Nature of Coaching

Before presenting theoretical approaches to coaching and examining what constitutes an evidence-based approach, I will discuss the nature of coaching briefly. Hendrickson (1987) traces the origins of the word *coaching* from the Hungarian village of Kocs, where a comfortable covered wheeled wagon or carriage (*koczi*) was first developed to carry passengers through harsh terrain, protected from the elements (Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007). A brief history of coaching demonstrates it has been a part of our lives since the early hunter and gatherers taught by demonstration, guidance and practice (Liebling & Prior, 2003). Over the centuries, the term has had many different uses from athletics to academics (Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007).

Definitions of the coaching process vary in their degree of clarity and extent of emphasis on teaching or direct instruction versus the facilitation of self-directed learning (Stober & Grant, 2006). Many coaching practitioners assert it is more about asking the right questions than telling people what to do (Stober & Grant, 2006). Thus, coaching is a systematic process typically directed at fostering continuous self-directed learning and personal growth for clients (Stober & Grant, 2006). Stober and Grant (2006) propose the coaching is about helping individuals regulate and direct their interpersonal and intrapersonal resources to better attain their goals (Stober & Grant, 2006). Emphasizing a facilitation approach, Whitmore (1992) describes coaching as "unlocking a person's

potential to maximize their own performance -- it is helping them to learn rather than teaching them" (p.8). Similar to Whitmore (1992), Rosinki (2003) considers coaching a profession and important function of leadership as he sees it as the "art of facilitating the unleashing of people's potential to reach meaningful, important objectives" (Rosinki, 2003, p. 4). Likewise, the theme of facilitation is echoed by Hudson (1999), who suggests a coach helps a client become a more effective human being by accessing options (Stober & Grant, 2006).

Upon reviewing the coaching literature, there has been considerable work attempting to define coaching, although each definition has different nuances, there are common themes linking them together (Stober & Grant, 2006). Stober and Grant (2006) assert these themes include a collaborative and egalitarian approach to the coach and client relationship where focus is on the process of creating solutions and attaining goals rather than primarily analyzing problems. Additional core themes include the assumption that clients do not have clinically significant mental health problems; and coaches do not need high levels of expertise in the client's selected area of learning (Stober & Grant, 2006).

In the last 20 years, many forms of coaching have entered our organizational and personal lives: personal or life coaching, career coaching, performance coaching, new leader coaching, team coaching, relationship coaching and financial coaching have all become popular (Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007). Personal or life coaching primarily focuses on an individual's personal goals, thoughts, feelings and actions (Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007). It is concerned with how the individual can change his or her life for greater personal effectiveness and satisfaction (Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007). Career coaching

deals primarily with an individual's short-long term career objectives and helps her or him decide on career directions and then plan for reaching them over the short or long term career duration (Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007). Performance coaching addresses an employee's performance potential, job requirements and filling in performance gaps by shaping the job to maximize that specific individual's performance (Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007). New leader coaching helps leaders take on a new role and successfully define and implement their new business charter along with key constituents and teammates (Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007). Relationship coaching looks at specific relationships between individuals to shape or change those specific relationships for increased productivity and satisfaction (Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007). Finally, team coaching specializes in group dynamics and effectiveness (Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007).

Stern (2007) points out several coaching realms, from academic to sports to the more recent area of executive coaching (Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007). Since 'executive coaching' began appearing in the literature in the late 1980s, several different approaches have been presented. The most widely used model for change was developed by Kilburg (1996, 2000), which stems from a systems and psychodynamic approaches (Ducharme, 2004). Kilburg (2000) describes executive coaching as

> a helping relationship formed between a client who has managerial authority and responsibility in an organization and a consultant who uses a wide variety of behavioral techniques and methods to assist the client to achieve a mutually identified set of goals to improve his or her professional performance and personal satisfaction and consequently to improve the effectiveness of the client's organization within a formally defined coaching agreement (p.65).

Stern (2007) sees executive coaching as a personalized leadership development process created to build a leader's capability to achieve organizational goals in the short and long-

term. Executive coaching is conducted through one-on-one interactions, a relationship based on mutual trust and respect, and driven by data from multiple perspectives (Kilburg & Diedrich, 2007).

In recent times, coaching has been recognized as a cost-effective and focused way to improve individual performance (Leibling & Prior, 2003). It is not merely a technique or one time event, but a strategic process adding value both to people being coached and to the bottom line of the organization (Goldsmith & Lyons, 2006). According to Goldsmith and Lyons (2006), coaching establishes and develops relationships by surfacing (raw data gathering), addressing issues (through feedback), solving problems (action planning) and following through (results). Through the coaching process, people can identify and conquer obstacles hindering business results (Goldsmith & Lyons, 2006). Coaching can also be looked as a peer to peer language expressed through a dialogue of learning (Goldsmith & Lyons, 2006). Smith (2007) asserts the coaching process encourages empowerment of clients and stimulates high levels of motivation and the ability to make changes and achieve goals. Coaching also enables clients to shift paradigms around what is possible and allows them to create a space to think about and reflect on learning (Smith, 2007; Law, Ireland & Hussain, 2007). Coaches are proactive, fully involved in the process yet non-directive, not giving advice or telling clients what they should do (Smith, 2007).

Coaching is expanding rapidly as individuals and organizations experience its value and benefits (Smith, 2007). Based on United Kingdom coaching reports, Hall (2006) concludes “most people believe that coaching is beneficial for them and good for their business: for example, 35 out of 36 executives who received coaching in South

Africa reported that it delivered return on investment (ROI) to their organization" (as cited in Law, Ireland, Hussain, 2007, p.13). In a recent UK study, the perceived average benefit of ROI from 40 respondents was reported to be 5.7 times the initial investment (McGovern, 2001). The consulting firm Booz-Allen Hamilton (2006) conducted an ROI study to increase understanding of the business impact of executive coaching throughout their firm which provided an approach to assess the monetary value of executive coaching in firms. In this study, officers were interviewed about their expectations for executive coaching in eight business areas: improved teamwork, team member satisfaction, increased retention, increased productivity, increased quality of consulting, accelerated promotions, increased client satisfaction and increased diversity (Parker-Wilkins, 2006). Second, coaching produced intangible and monetary benefits for all business impact areas except diversity (Parker-Wilkins, 2006). Last, the findings resulted in a ROI of $3,268,325 which is close to 700% (Parker-Wilkins, 2006). (See Appendix A for detailed results and ROI calculation formula). The practical implications of the ROI study are significant and ongoing measurement of the value of coaching will certainly increase understanding of its business impact and utilization throughout other firms (Parker-Wilkins, 2006).

Palmer (2007) asserts psychology's contribution to coaching is often overlooked and that many coaching courses teach students to use a basic model to hold a conversation with a client, yet "the whole coaching program is taught within a psychological vacuum as very little or no psychological theory or research is covered that underpins the coaching practice" (as cited in Law, Ireland & Hussain, 2007, p. ix). Coaching practitioners Law, Ireland and Hussain (2007) conclude many coaching

practices are belief-based and lack psychological and academic underpinnings. Rushall (2003) describes belief-based coaching as a "common and traditional form of coaching that mixes personal experiences, some limited education about sport sciences, selected incomplete knowledge of current coaching practices, and self-belief" (as cited in Law, Ireland & Hussain, 2007). Rushall (2003) argues belief-based coaching serves as the foundation for most coaching practices whose knowledge base is subjective, biased, unstructured and lacks accountability (Law, Ireland & Hussain, 2007). Presently, the alternative to belief-based coaching is evidence-based practice, which gradually is becoming a trend within academic institutions and coaching related bodies. I will provide additional material on evidence based coaching later in this chapter.

Informed Practitioner Model

The concept of an informed practitioner model of professional coaching is linked inextricably to the reflective practitioner and scientist-practitioner models established in behavioral and medical sciences. Among reflective- and scientist-practitioner frameworks, practitioners are trained to have a working knowledge of research principles and methodologies which enable them to apply informed critical thought to the evaluation of their practices. Informed practitioners utilize relevant academic literature to design and implement evidence-based interventions with their clients (Haring-Hidore & Vacc, 1988). Barnett (1988) recognizes increased understanding by informed practitioners enables them to evaluate client progress while adhering to ethical practice (Stober & Grant, 2006). Parker and Detterman (1988) assert

> informed practitioners are not expected to be significant producers of research rather they should be positioned as educated consumers of research who utilize relevant research and critical thinking skills to

> improve their practices and intellectual understanding of coaching (as cited in Stober & Grant, 2006, p.4).

Shapiro (2002) states the scientist-practitioner model in behavioral sciences has been central to the professionalization of the behavioral sciences. For professional coaching training programs to move toward informed practitioner models, they must "explicitly address the theoretical and empirical foundations of coaching and also provide training in research methodologies, develop basic statistical data analysis skills and foster informed critical thinking skills in their student coaches" (Stober & Grant, 2006, p. 4). The informed practitioner approach forms the basis of an evidence-based coaching model.

Evidence Based Coaching

Evidence Based Practice (EBP) first developed out of medicine and has since influenced other fields (Stober, Wildflower & Drake, 2006). In examining EBP as an approach to coaching, several questions are raised. EBP has been a part of a controversial discussion about where research and theory relate to practice and where "artful" practice and "scientific" evidence meet (Stober, Wildflower & Drake, 2006). EBP is the "conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients [which] means integrating individual clinical expertise with the best available external clinical evidence from systematic research" (Sackett et al., 1996, p.71). Within this definition there are three main characteristics. First, EBP requires the practitioner, to use the best available knowledge in his or her field (Stober, Wildflower & Drake, 2006). Second, the EBP practitioner must integrate this knowledge with his or her own expertise (Stober, Wildflower & Drake, 2006). Third, the aforementioned integration must be accomplished in the context

of each client's individual situation (Stober, Wildflower & Drake, 2006). Stober, Wildflower, and Drake (2006) assert that when all three components are present, coaching interventions will be customized for each client with a comprehensive and practical framework.

Grant (2003) coined the phrase 'evidence-based coaching' to distinguish between it and professional coaching which is grounded explicitly in a broader and theoretical knowledge base versus coaching developed from the personal development genre (Stober & Grant, 2006). Rushall (2003) describes evidence based coaching as

> a restricted and relatively rare form of coaching. Its guides for practices are principles derived from replicated reputable studies reported by authoritative sources in a public manner… the accumulated knowledge of evidence-based coaching is objectively verified and structured. However, evidence-based coaching are developed in a fragmented scientific world (as cited in Law, Ireland & Hussain, 2007, p. x).

EBP is adapted from medical and social services and applied to the coaching profession to demonstrate the underlying assumption that translating research evidence into practice can optimize outcomes (Wampold & Bhati, 2004). Since coaching is an emerging profession, it is critical that coaches integrate evidence from coaching specific research and related disciplines with their own expertise and understanding of the uniqueness of each client (Stober, Wildflower & Drake, 2006). While coaching does not have an extensive body of research, it can draw significant evidence from psychology, adult learning, communication and other fields, which have influenced coaches' knowledge and practice (Stober, Wildflower & Drake, 2006). Advocates of evidence based coaching suggest that "using an evidenced based approach has the potential to raise the standards of practice and training, increase the credibility of coaching as an intervention and stretch the coach's thinking and practice" (Stober, Wildflower & Drake, 2006, p.1).

Single Theory Perspectives

In this section, I will examine two client-centered, theoretical frameworks having direct application to coaching: personal construct psychology and cognitive behavioral perspectives. Personal psychology constructs (PCP) theory, developed by George Kelly (1955), assumes we can reconstruct the way we think (van Oudtshoorn, 2006). For Kelly (1955), the assumption behind PCP is constructive alternativism, which proposes that all our current perceptions, insights and understandings are open to question and reconsideration (van Oudtshoorn, 2006). Constructive alternativism is Kelly's(1955) view that there is no objective reality or absolute truth, but only alternative ways of construing events (Pervin, 1993). It underlies PCP theory and is an explicit and recurrent theme throughout Kelly's discussion of psychotherapeutic techniques (Kelly, 1963). Kelly (1963) pursues the idea that "between the interplay of the durable and the ephemeral, we may discover more helpful ways the individual can restructure their life" (p.19). The philosophical roots of Kelly's (1963) theoretical position arise from the Old Testament's portrayal of man's progress and recognizing notable research by renowned psychologists, thinkers and philosophers. He uses a long range view because he is concerned about the factors leading to man's progress and acknowledges the blueprint of human progress has been labeled as "science." As a result, Kelly (1963) focuses his attention on "man-the-scientist" which incorporates all humankind in its scientist-like aspects, rather than biological aspects. Moreover, Kelly's (1963) work addresses specific aspects of humankind rather than a collection of human.

Like the theories of Freud (1904) and Rogers (1961), Kelly's (1963) personal construct psychology theory was developed out of contact with clients in therapy, so it

emphasizes the whole person, individual differences and the stability of behavior over time and across situations (Pervin, 1993). Kelly's (1955) theory is different from Freud (1904) and Rogers (1961), however, because it interprets behavior in cognitive terms, emphasizes the ways in which we perceive events, interpret these events in relation to existing structures and behave in relation. Kelly (1955) invited the clinician or therapist to regard people "as if" they were a scientist, because he believed psychologists operating as scientists try to control and predict behavior, but they do not assume their subjects operate on a similar basis. He suggests "this leads us to consider that it is the person who conducts his or her own personal experiments to test out their construing of events' and the test we use is our own behavior" (Kelly 1955, p. 5). Seeing the person as a scientist has further consequences as it leads to the view that we essentially are future oriented. Kelly (1955) asserts the future teases man[2], not the past, as man reaches out to the future through the window of the present. He suggests we have the capacity to "represent" the environment rather than merely respond to it, so individuals can construe and reconstrue, interpret and reinterpret their own environments (Pervin, 1993).

Kelly's (1955) theory is presented in the form of fundamental postulates and eleven corollaries (Bannister & Fransella, 1971). The postulates state a person's processes are channeled psychologically by the ways in which he or she anticipates events (Kelly, 1955). This implies a person is not reacting to the past so much as reaching out for the future and that a person checks how much sense she or he has made of the world by seeing how well her or his 'sense' enables her or him to anticipate it. It also implies a person reflects the kind of sense he or she makes of the world (Kelly, 1995). According to Kelly's (1955) theory, an individual's personality is his or her own

[2] I am using the term 'man' as Kelly originally referred to the client/patient as 'man'.

construct system, and if you want to understand a person, "you must know something about the events subsumed under these constructs, the way in which these constructs tend to function, and the way in which they are organized in relation to one another to form a system" (as cited in Pervin 1993, p. 235). How does one gain knowledge of a person's constructs? For Kelly (1955), the answer is direct; he suggests "you ask them to tell you what their constructs are" (as cited in Pervin 1993, p.235).

Kelly (1963) developed his own assessment technique called the Role Construct Repertory Test (Rep Test). The Rep Test elicits personal constructs and consists of two procedures: developing a list of persons on a Role Title List (list of roles/figures believed to have importance for all people) and developing constructs based on comparing triads of persons (Pervin, 1993). After modifying the Rep Test, Kelly (1963) later developed the repertory grid technique which measured his personal construct theory as a mathematical means of defining the relationship between elements and constructs (van Outsdhoorn, 2006). van Outsdhoorn (2006) asserts

> Kelly's repertory grid is one of the reflective tools that form the basis of a learning conversation as it helps individuals learn from their experience in a systematic way as the grid will help the client surface personal meaning of an event in terms natural to the learner allowing them to explore their own pattern of thought and feeling about a subject" (slide 6).

PCP identifies individual's constructions of experience and realities as the source of her or his behavior and then the reconstructed behavior as a test for the person's construction (van Outsdhoorn, 2006). van Outsdhoorn's (2006) presentation described PCP constructs as the glasses through which we view the world and our eyes as our values we use to see the world. Kelly's PCP (1955) theory resonated with me as a coach and the current model I am developing, as I agree an individual's ability to behave as a "scientist, the

philosophical position of constructive alternativism where there is no objective reality or absolute truth to discover but opportunities to construe events and interpret events and behaviors in order to make sense of them" (as cited in Pervin 1993, p. 228). According to Kelly (1955), life is a representation of reality allowing us to make and remake ourselves, so we are free to construe events but we are bound by our own constructions (as cited in Pervin, 1993). Thus, we are not victims of past history or of present circumstances unless we choose to construe ourselves as such (Pervin, 1993).

Although Kelly's (1955) theory has been presented as a cognitive theory of personality, yet he refused to attach any labels to it and rejected the term 'cognitive' because he felt it was restrictive; rejected phenomenology as being concerned only with subjective reality; and rejected behaviorism as being concerned only with objective reality(Pervin, 1993). Kelly's (1955) theory is concerned with both realities and he has described himself as a humanist because of his emphasis on what is possible, rather than inevitable as well as his interest in the entire person (Pervin, 1993). Pervin (1993) asserts "Kelly's theory can be viewed as primarily cognitive in its emphasis on the ways individuals receive and process information about the world, and in its use of the Repertory Test as a way of determining a person's concepts" (p. 266). Kelly's (1955) model, with its emphasis on constructs is a significant contribution to personality theory and his interpretation of behavior in terms of the individual's construing of events is useful in theory and in practice (Pervin, 1993).

A coaching theoretical model similar to PCP with clinical roots is the cognitive behavioral approach to coaching. This model was established by Aaron Beck (1976) for the treatment of emotional disorders. Beck (1976), a former psychoanalyst, became

disenchanted with psychoanalytic techniques and traditional approaches so he developed a cognitive approach to therapy (Pervin, 1993). His therapy is best known in the treatment of depression, but it also is relevant for a variety of psychological disorders (Pervin, 1993). The schools of thought devoted to the study and treatment of emotional disturbances include traditional neuropsychiatry, psychoanalysis and behavior therapy. These schools have striking differences in their theoretical frameworks and experimental and clinical approaches (Beck, 1976). However, they share one basic assumption "that the emotionally disturbed person is victimized by concealed forces over which they have no control" (Beck 1976, p.2). Influenced by the19th Century doctrine of physicalism, traditional neuropsychiatry searches for biological causes such as chemical or neurological abnormalities and applies drugs and other physical measures to relieve the emotional disorder (Beck, 1976). Psychoanalysis, whose philosophical underpinning "attributes an individual's neurosis to unconscious psychological factors and the unconscious elements are sealed off by psychological barriers that can only be penetrated by psychoanalytic interpretations" were also formed in the 19th Century (Beck, 1976, p.2). Behavior therapy, whose philosophical roots can be traced to the eighteenth century, regards emotional disturbances in terms of involuntary reflexes based on accidental conditionings that occurred previously in the patient's life (Beck, 1976).

Beck (1976) suggests the "three leading schools maintain that the source of a patient's disturbance lies beyond his or her awareness and they gloss over the conscious conceptions, specific thoughts and fantasies of the patient" (p. 2). He believed these three schools were wrong and suggested within a person's consciousness there exists elements responsible for the emotional upsets and distorted thinking leading them to seek

help (Beck 1976). Moreover, Beck (1976) posits that through proper instruction, the patient has at her or his disposal various rational techniques she or he can use to deal with these disturbing elements in her or his consciousness. He believed emotional disorders could be approached from an entirely different route where a person "has the key to understanding and solving his/her psychological disturbance within the scope of his/her own awareness" (Beck, 1976, p. 2). Therefore, the patient can correct the misconceptions producing his or her emotional disturbance with the same problem-solving apparatus he or she has been familiar using at various stages in her or his development (Beck, 1976).

This new approach to emotional disorders suggests an individual's problems are derived from distortions of reality based on erroneous premises and assumptions and such incorrect conceptions originate in defective learning during the person's cognitive development (Beck, 1976). For Beck (1976), the therapist helps a patient unravel his or her distorted thinking and learn alternative, more realistic ways to formulate her or his experiences. The cognitive approach brings the understanding and treatment of the emotional disorder(s) closer to the patient's everyday experiences and "the patient can regard this disturbance as related to the kinds of misunderstandings he/she has experienced numerous times during his/her life" (Beck 1976, p.3).

Cognitive behavioral therapy is a broad term encompassing a variety of intervention techniques ranging from largely cognitive to largely behavioral (Ducharme, 2004). Despite diversity within the field, there are three fundamental assumptions at its core (Ducharme, 2004). The first is cognitive appraisals of events can affect behavioral responses to those events, and how one interprets the reality of an event will affect one's decision in terms of how she or he reacts to the event (Ducharme, 2004). The second is

cognitions may be accessed, monitored and altered (Ducharme, 2004). When individuals become aware an event has resulted in a certain thought pattern, this awareness can aid in the subsequent monitoring and altering of these thoughts (Dobson & Dozois, 2001). Finally, the third assumption is changes to an individual's cognition can result in behavioral change (Ducharme, 2004).

Beck (1987) asserts psychological difficulties are due to automatic thoughts, dysfunctional assumptions and negative self-statements. Cognitive behavioral theory emphasizes that how we react to events is determined by our views of them and not by the events themselves, and through examining and re-evaluating our views we can develop and try out alternative viewpoints and behaviors that may be more effective in helping us problem-solve (Neenan & Palmer, 2001). When used with non-clinical groups, cognitive behavioral theory is called cognitive behavioral coaching (CBC) (Neenan & Palmer, 2001). CBC is a targeted approach to behavioral improvement, focusing on incremental change in segmented areas of an individual's behavior and is an intuitive approach appealing to many clients because of its simplicity and transparency (Ducharme, 2004). The primary aim of cognitive behavioral coaching is to help individuals develop action plans for change and encourage them to increase self-awareness of their thinking, moods and emotions (Neenan & Palmer, 2001). CBC's ultimate goal is for individuals to become their own coaches (Neenan & Palmer, 2001).

CBC does not offer quick fixes, but emphasizes sustained effort and commitment is required for a successful outcome (Neenan & Palmer, 2001). It does not give people answers to their problems or challenges, but through a collaborative process called guided discovery, helps them reach their own conclusions and solutions. Guided

discovery is based on Socratic questioning whereby the coach asks the person a series of questions to bring information into her or his awareness. According to Beck (1976), "Socratic questions are designed to promote insight and better rational decision making and questions should be phrased in such a way that they stimulate thought and increase awareness, rather than requiring a correct answer" (as cited in Neenan & Palmer, 2001, p. 1). The use of the Socratic approach encourages clients to find problem-solving strategies in themselves rather than being provided them by the coach (Neenan & Palmer, 2001). For the clients, the ability to draw on, or add to, their existing skills help them build greater self-reliance and confidence in their lives (Neenan & Palmer, 2001).

In examining the theoretical frameworks and philosophical underpinnings of the PCP and CBC coaching models, there are several similarities. The essential principles of PCP and CBC are the same: asking the client what's wrong to ascertain the issues, the client is in charge of her or his reality, the thoughts of the client determines her or his behavior, the client behaves in certain ways making sense to her or him and the client is an individual and unique in nature. Both models are client driven and psycho-educative as client is viewed as the problem-solver of her or his life and they seek to change the client's perspective of her or himself and her or his problems. Based on theoretical frameworks and philosophical underpinnings, the two coaching models believe the client has the ability to solve and understand her or his psychological issues once aware of it.

The CBC model could be useful for certain coaching engagements because it is result driven and focused, but it could be viewed as very specific and issue focused and not taking into account the person as a whole or going beyond surface level analysis. Yet, the PCP model which approaches the client's behavior from a cognitive view and

emphasizes the entire person and how they view receive and process information, is also limited because it is not result driven or focused on one particular issue. CBC could be viewed by clients as a very simplistic approach while using PCP may appear to be very complex and overwhelming for some clients.

Integrative and Cross Theory Approach

This section presents integrative or cross-disciplinary theoretical approaches to coaching. I examine and discuss how theories such as transition and change models, cross-cultural issues and positive psychology can be applied to coaching. The integrative goal-focused approach to coaching is a multifaceted methodology for helping individuals and organizations create and sustain change (Stober & Grant, 2006). Grant (2006) describes coaching as a process that fosters directed purposeful change in the pursuit of specific goals (Stober & Grant, 2006). He suggests three important models of transition and change can be useful in goal-focused coaching: Bridges (1986) Transition Model, Schlossberg's (1981) Adaptation to Transitions Model and Prochaska and DiClemente's (1984) Transtheoretical Model of Change (Stober & Grant, 2006). These models provide another framework to understand the client's relationship to the execution of goals (Stober & Grant, 2006).

Bridges (1986) model draws clear distinctions between change and transition and focuses on the role of emotional reactions to change (Stober & Grant, 2006). According to Bridges (2003), it is not the changes that matter, but the transitions themselves. He defines change as situational and external: the move to a new site, the retirement of the founder, the reorganization of team roles or the revision of the pension plan, whereas transition is defined as a psychological three-phase process people go through as they

internalize and come to terms with the details of the new situation change brings about (Bridges, 2003). Bridges (2003) asserts "getting people through the transition is essential if the change is actually to work as planned" (p. 3), and "changes of any sort succeed or fail on the basis of whether the people affected do things differently" (p. 5). Several important differences between change and transition are overlooked when people use them interchangeably (Bridges, 2003). When you think about change, you should focus on the outcome it produces, while transition focuses on the sense of closure you will need to leave an old situation behind (Bridges, 2003). This transition model involves the process of helping people through three phases:

1. Letting go of the old ways and the old identity people had. This first phase of transition is an ending, and the time when you need to help people deal with their losses.
2. Going through and in-between when the old is gone but the new isn't fully operational. We call this time the "neutral zone": it's when the critical psychological realignments and repatternings take place.
3. Coming out of the transition and making a new beginning. This is when people develop the new identity, experience the new energy, and discover the new sense of purpose that makes change begin to work (Bridges, 2003, pp. 4-5).

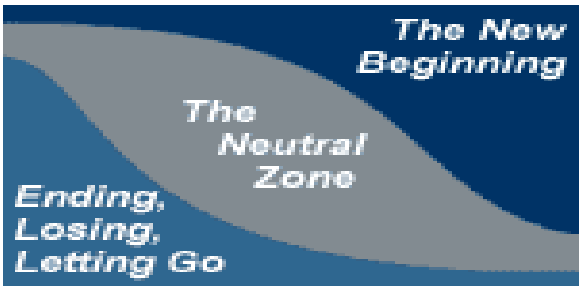

Figure 1.1 - Bridges' (2003) Change Model

The first phase in the transition process starts with an ending and a letting go. The next phase is the neutral zone, described as a

> …psychological no-man's land between the old reality and the new one where the old way of doing things is gone but the new way doesn't feel

> comfortable yet is considered an emotional wilderness which is painful but this phase is critical because it is the best chance for the individual and the organization to be creative, develop into what they need to become and to renew themselves (Bridges 2003, p. 7).

The neutral zone is thus both a dangerous and an opportune place and the core of the transition process (Bridges, 2003). The final phase is moving from the transition to the new beginning zone. The beginning zone can be described as psychological phenomena because it consists of a release of new energy in a new direction and becomes the expression of a new identity (Bridges, 2003).

Schlossberg's (1981) adaptation of Bridges' (1986) Transition Model outlines some key psychosocial factors mediating transition through change (Stober & Grant, 2006). He recognizes three sets of factors that affect a person's adaptation to change:

1. Characteristics of the transition itself.
2. Characteristics of the pre transitions & post transition environments.
3. Characteristics of the individual going through the transition (as cited in Stober & Grant, 2006, p. 171).

Schlossberg's (1981) transition model provides a framework for coaches to analyze an individual's difficulties with a particular transition (Stober & Grant, 2006). This model serves as a "cognitive roadmap for understanding reactions to life events and a guide for coaches and clients to analyze missing links between transition and adoption" (Stober & Grant, 2006, p. 171). Grant (2006) recognizes the benefits of transition models in providing a broad framework for understanding the transition process as it relates to major life events and to people's goals despite the fact that they do not "focus on psychomechanics involved in the adoption of specific behaviors, nor do they suggest the most effective strategies at different points in the change process as clients move toward their goals" (Stober & Grant, 2006, p. 172).

Another transition model, the Transtheoretical Model (TTM), originally was developed by Prochaska and DeClemente (1984) in reference to addictive behaviors such as smoking, drug and alcohol misuse (Stober & Grant, 2006). TTM is useful for coaches who need a change model focused on underlying psychological mechanisms related to the adoption of new behavior (Stober & Grant, 2006). Presently, this model has been applied successfully to a wide range of problem behaviors, health-related behaviors and individual and organizational change (Stober & Grant, 2006). TTM posits change involves a progressive transition through a series of six identifiable and overlapping stages:

1. *Precontemplation*. In this stage there is no intention to change in the foreseeable future.
2. *Contemplation*. Individuals in this stage are considering making changes, but have not yet made any changes.
3. *Preparation*. Here individuals have increased their commitment to change, intend to make changes in the near future, and often have started to make small changes.
4. *Action*. Individuals in this stage are engaging in the new behaviors, but have made such changes for only a short period of time (usually less than six months).
5. *Maintenance*. Individuals in this stage have been consistently engaging in the new behavior over a period of time (usually at least six months).
6. *Relapse*. Many attempts at change result in relapse – a return to the old behaviors (Stober & Grant, 2006, pp. 172-173).

Although progression through these stages can result in permanent change, for most individuals change is cyclical and many relapse into old behavioral patterns before maintaining new behavior permanently (Stober & Grant, 2006). For example, on average, individuals relapse six to eight times before moving into the maintenance stage; and as people progress through each of the stages they will experience a number of cognitive and motivational shifts (Stober & Grant, 2006).

Prochaska, DiClemente and Norcross (1998) presente an outline of guidelines for facilitating change based on TTM that apply to coaching practice (Stober & Grant, 2006).

First, coaches must not assume all individuals are in the action stage and ready to do the work necessary for change (Stober & Grant, 2006). Coaches need to assess the client's readiness for change. Second, coaches need to focus on facilitating a shift for clients from just thinking about their problems to actual behavioral change (Stober & Grant, 2006). Grimley and Lee (1997) assert "individuals who are reluctant to make changes are typically in the contemplation or preparation stages and they spend more time thinking about their problems than actually changing behavior" (as cited in Stober & Grant, 2006, p. 174). Third, coaches must anticipate their client's relapse. Marlatt (1996) describes relapse as a slipping back into old behavior and it is a normal part of the change process. Therefore, coaches need to include "relapse prevention-strategies to prepare the client for possible setbacks, minimize guilt and shame if relapse occurs, and help the client move back into action as quickly as possible" (Stober & Grant, 2006, p.174). Change is not easy and keeping clients focused on their goals and desired outcomes are central to the coaching relationship. To be effective, coaches need to be aware of the dynamics of change and "be able to align the goal and the coaching process to the client's readiness for change" (Stober & Grant, 2006, p. 174).

Rosinki and Abbott (2006) posit "coaching from a cultural perspective requires a willingness from the coach to explore and leverage the influence of culture as it operates within client contexts" (as cited in Stober & Grant, 2006, p. 255). Rosinki (2003) asserts integrating cultural dimension into coaching is a critical component to increasing a coach's validity and applicability in today's intercultural environment. This creates an opportunity to learn from alternative cultural perspectives about critical areas and bridge

both coaching and interculturalism to lead to a more global coaching process (Rosinki, 2003).

Global coaching encourages coaches and clients to "connect their personal journeys with the journeys of their families, work colleagues, organizations, communities and society" (Stober & Grant, 2006, p. 255). The global coaching process is one of creativity and possibilities deeply anchored in a belief in the human potential (Rosinki, 2003). In Rosinki's (2003) book, *Coaching Across Cultures,* he provides frameworks and tools to embark on global coaching process steps beginning with an in-depth assessment, articulating target objectives and progressing toward them to create clarity about my desires and helping me to honor them. Rosinki's (2003) cultural orientations framework (COF) provides a vocabulary and structure to talk about culture and cultural differences in a nonjudgmental manner. He argues that to create a cultural profile you need to reflect on the meaning of each dimension and think about your inclinations in situations you have experienced (Rosinki, 2003). To provide useful guidance, the coach must also have an understanding of the cultural dimensions and needs to use the suggested chapter exercises as practice to learn how to administer them. Rosinki (2003) provides coaches with an extensive coaching toolkit with regard to culture and cultural differences. The process of learning and doing the chapter exercises are useful in several ways: as a learning tool, the coach is able to practice administering the exercises, as well as build their understanding and comprehension of the cultural orientations framework. Using COF helps the coach assess cultures and cultural differences, discover new cultural choices, bridge different cultures, leverage cultural diversity and envision a desired culture (Rosinki, 2003).

As coaching is about communication and guided self-discovery, the implications of integrating cultural profiles in coaching practice is significant. Rosinki's (2003) perspective of the global coaching process ("global scorecard") is to serve a variety of stakeholders while integrating external and internal realities and evoking concepts of wholeness and unity (Rosinki, 2003). The global scorecard encompasses four interconnected categories "representing different areas of responsibility, people you want to take care of, and various stakeholders you have to serve" (Rosinki, 2003, p. 212). According to Rosinki (2003), the three step-process of global coaching facilitates a high-performance and high fulfillment journey for individuals and teams. The firsthand knowledge and experience of embarking on my own journey was the best way to learn about this coaching process. I concur with Rosinki's (2003) suggestion that coaches need to embark on their own journey to be credible and competent (Rosinki, 2003). In seeking to become a global coach, the experiential learning and development from Rosinki's (2003) models and global scorecard process demonstrates engaging and useful tools and frameworks coaches can use with their clients. As I reflected on the goals and behavioral actions I need to take to produce successful outcomes for the global scorecard, I realized the importance of changing my mindset and activity level to create consistent changes. I believe this process is a journey and not a destination; therefore it is a life long process. It is possible to attain a life journey of high performance and fulfillment, but you must be willing to commit to go through the refining process of self examination and development.

Positive Psychology Coaching

The new field of positive psychology provides a robust theoretical and empirical foundation for life and executive coaching (Kauffman, 2006). Traditional psychology has focused on ways to make sick or unhealthy people better through clinically valid and empirical methods to support fixing what was wrong with them (Kauffman, 2006). Positive psychology's mission is to "develop sound theories of optimal functioning and to find empirically supported ways to improve the lives of ordinary and extraordinary people" (Kauffman, 2006, p.219). In this section, positive psychology is discussed as the science at the heart of coaching; I examine emerging trends in theory and research and finally explore coaching applications. Positive psychology studies of positive emotion, flow, hope therapy and the classification of strengths can serve as resources that can be leveraged for potential coaching interventions (Kauffman, 2006). A review of both primary and secondary sources of literature on positive psychology will demonstrate ways coaching practitioners can integrate learning into their current practices (Kauffman, 2006).

Kauffman (2006) suggests at the "heart of positive psychology, like coaching, lies in the practitioner's choice to shift away from pathology and pain and direct it toward a clear-eyed concentration on strength, vision, and dreams" (Kauffman, 2006, p. 220). Williams and Davis (2002) argue that despite the intent to shift focus, many coaches are inculcated into the culture of therapy and find it challenging to transcend current mental models established in medicine (Williams & Davis, 2002). Kauffman and Scouler (2004) believe "coaching practitioners hold a deficit-conflict perspective of clients even when working with high executives and they point to one of the challenges as the psychological

language and assessment tools based on the medical model and culture of identifying pathology and problems" (as cited in Stober & Grant, 2006, p. 220). Therefore, huge ramifications face this current challenge in terms of what issues are framed, how clients are assessed and what coaching interventions are selected (Stober & Grant, 2006).

Using an explicitly positive psychology framework requires coaches to use language comprised of strength and vision as the solid foundation (Kauffman, 2006). Coaches who use a positive psychology orientation must resist inclinations to hone in on client's skill deficits or search for signs of depression or emotional conflict, and begin to explore how clients can harness existing strengths to identify their vision and change it into their reality (Kauffman, 2006). Instead of clinicians following the trail of tears, Kauffman (2006) advises coaches follow the trail of dreams and therefore shift their focus away from sources of pain and toward what energizes and moves their clients forward.

An additional challenge facing the coaching field is how to describe its effectiveness without using testimonials and anecdotes as the basis of evidence. As a result, coaches need to have an understanding of theoretical, scientific and empirical research to support their assertions of coaching effectiveness (Kauffman, 2006). The positive psychology movement has made significant efforts toward developing robust assessment tools, interventions and research methods to study human strengths and virtues (Kauffman, 2006). For example, Lopez and Snyder (2003) compiled a handbook of psychometrically comprehensive assessments to measure hope, optimism and spirituality (Kauffman, 2006). Notable positive psychologists and others including Ed Diener, Chris Peterson and Martin Seligman, have also developed standardized, reliable

and valid assessments which measure levels of well-being, strengths, approaches to happiness and life satisfaction. (Most of these measures are available for free download on Martin Seligman's website Authentic Happiness: http://www.authentichappiness.org). As a result of the positive psychology movement we can "diagnose strengths, hope, optimism, and love in precise and reliable ways as we measure anxiety or depression" (Kauffman, 2006, p. 221).

Frederickson (2001, 2002) developed an empirically grounded theory demonstrating how positive emotions help us thrive and her research examines the powerful daily benefits of positive emotion (Frederickson, 2001; Frederickson & Joiner, 2002). Her theory and research demonstrate it is possible to measure precisely how positive emotions can broaden people's momentary thought-action repertoires and build their enduring personal resources, ranging from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources (Frederickson 2001; Frederickson & Branigan, 2005). Another research study conducted by Losada (1999) on 60 business teams has shown positive emotions have a tremendous impact on how well teams function and how direct an impact it has on profitability (Kauffman, 2006). These studies provide compelling scientific and empirical support for why coaching might have a positive impact (Kauffman, 2006).

Answering the basic question of what makes people happy presents important implications for coaching. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) describes happiness as very much in "one's personal control, a condition that must be prepared for, cultivated and defended privately by each person" (as cited in Stober, Grant, 2006, p.225). Another pioneer in happiness research and in particular "subjective well-being," Diener (2000) has

conducted a series of national and international studies collecting data on thousands of subjects examining national norms, comparison among countries and different professions, to fully explore what makes people happy (Stober & Grant, 2006).

Understanding the research on what does or does not lead to happiness has implications for coaching. Happiness research studies suggest there is a role coaching can play to help clients make an upward shift in their happiness levels (Stober & Grant, 2006). For example, Fredrickson's (2001) research demonstrates "very small increases in positive emotion can tilt the overall balance and lead to significant differences in the extent to which people flourish or languish" (Stober & Grant, 2006, p.227). In addition to happiness research, Csikszentmihalyi (1990) has studied the capacity to be a full participant in life. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) describes optimal living as being involved fully with every detail of our lives, whether good or bad. By using the Experience Sampling Method on thousands of subjects, Csikszentmihalyi was able to assess what people feel at numerous points in a day and as a result of this research, he established conditions that generate positive experience (Stober & Grant, 2006). His research focus is primarily on "flow," the state when you are able to be immersed completely in what you are doing and time flies (Stober & Grant, 2006). Flow is sometimes referred to as 'being in the zone,' which is described as an "elusive, spiritual state available to a chosen few" (Stober & Grant, 2006, p. 227).

After examining the conditions that make flow possible for ordinary and extraordinary individuals, Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) research contrasts with the view of a chosen few experiencing flow and actually demonstrates that a number of conditions increase the likelihood for anyone to enter a flow state (Stober & Grant, 2006). Coaches

can learn to tailor Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) research on flow to help clients find their own way to access this high–performance state (Stober & Grant, 2006).

In Chapter 2, Peterson and Seligman's (2004) development of a classification system of strengths called Values in Action (VIA) Strengths Survey was introduced. The VIA Survey has proved useful for both coaches and researchers (Kauffman, 2006). Coaches can focus on clients' strengths and help them harness them as well as identify and increase less developed strengths. (The 24 character strengths and virtues organized by categories are listed in Appendix B). Of the 24 strengths, the five most closely associated with happiness are gratitude, curiosity, vitality, hope and the capacity to love and be loved. The Authentic Happiness Coaching (AHC) is based on positive psychology research and was developed by Seligman (2002). AHC serves as a scientifically and empirically grounded model providing coaching techniques and interventions that foster happiness (Stober & Grant, 2006).

Conclusion

Coaching is an emerging profession and widely accepted as an important tool for transforming the lives of others (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). Today, there are many forms of coaching and as a practice, coaching is expanding quickly as individuals and organizations experience and measure its impact and benefits. As it develops it will be critical for coaches to begin integrating evidence from coaching-specific research and related disciplines as well as their own understanding of each client and their unique needs (Stober, Wildflower & Drake, 2006). A recent trend signaling the maturing of coaching has been the "increased attention towards science as both a method and body of

knowledge to help guide practice" (as cited in Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007, p. 4). Many coaching practitioners have issued a call to embrace research as the powerful tool to improve the practice and effectiveness of coaching (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). Many theoretical approaches can be applied to coaching, many of which I outlined earlier in this chapter including Personal Construct Psychology (PCP), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Integrative and Cross theory approaches which include goal focused transition and change models as well as a cross-cultural framework. This chapter concludes with the assertion that the new field of positive psychology shows tremendous potential as a natural interface with coaching because it is grounded in scientific methodology and empirical research. The subsequent chapter, Summary and Conclusions, will review and answer the question of if positive psychology is an evidence-based approach, explore its coaching considerations and also discuss the future of positive psychology coaching.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

"If I study, I seek only the learning that…instructs me in how to die well and live well."
(Michel de Montaigne, 1580)

Is Positive Psychology an Evidence Based Model?

Coaching practitioners and positive psychologists argue that positive psychology is an evidenced based model. As mentioned in Chapter 3, evidence based practice is adapted from medical and social services and applied to coaching to demonstrate the underlying assumption that translating research evidence into practice optimizes outcomes (Wampold & Bhati, 2004). As coaching is an emerging profession, it is critical practitioners integrate evidence from coaching specific research and related disciplines with their own expertise and understanding of each client's uniqueness (Stober, Wildflower & Drake, 2006). Coaching can draw significant evidence from general psychology and more recently positive psychology research to influence knowledge and practice (Stober, Wildflower & Drake, 2006). Positive psychology has the potential to provide the theoretical and empirical underpinnings to the emerging profession of coaching (Kauffman, 2006). Evidence based support includes: the utility of focusing on a client's wholeness, fostering hope and helping a client strengthen his or her future vision, data supporting increases in joy and positive emotion, and the use of reliable and valid measurements (Kauffman, 2006). The positive impact on fostering cognitive and social skills can also be held to scientific scrutiny (Kauffman, 2006).

Coaching Considerations of Positive Psychology

There are many definitions and theoretical models of coaching. Most coaches believe coaching is a facilitation approach while other coaches use a direct instruction approach. Although there is a lack of consensus of what coaching is and how it works, there is overwhelming agreement that a collaborative coaching relationship is integral to the change process (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). In this chapter, coaching considerations for positive psychology coaching will be presented. Coaching from a positive psychology perspective consists of two important aspects: focusing on strengths and harnessing the power of positivity (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). A positive psychology coaching session should include formal measurements and an evidence based approach. By including validated coaching interventions there will be an increased chance for success in reaching desired outcomes. Before the actual coaching session, the coach needs to be positive minded and think positive thoughts about the client (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). To help facilitate that initial step, coaches can track what he or she likes about their client by writing down strengths, interest or any similarities (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007).

Dean (2007) encourages coaches to spend time before the session starts meditating on likable and positive qualities of the client to ensure a smooth beginning (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). The session should start with a strengths introduction, where the client introduces her or himself by sharing one of her or his strength and telling a short story when he or she used this strength (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). The application of baseline assessments like the VIA Character Strengths and General Life Satisfaction Scales are helpful measures that tap into the client’s personal resources

(Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). Positive psychology coaches assert that discussion of the clients' results from the character strengths survey can serve as a catalyst for client growth and change (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). Moreover, positive psychology research can inform coaching in many ways as coaching interventions can be given as homework assignments, instruction or 'coaching moments' during the session (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007).

For the above mentioned reasons, positive psychology is a powerful influence in my coaching practice. The following case serves as a brief illustration of how I use positive psychology as an evidence-based approach to coaching. This client engagement is a glimpse of how clients can hone in and leverage their strengths.

Case Example: Client Kendra

Kendra recently was promoted to senior major gift officer for Philadelphia University[3]. She is nervous the increased responsibilities will force her to neglect herself as she already has not worked out for over a year. Her goal is to take better care of herself because she is only in her mid 30's and was recently diagnosed with high blood pressure. In our initial meeting, I asked her for a positive introduction. As she shared her story, I listened for any natural strength revelations. After her introduction, I asked questions about her introduction to help her recognize and appreciate her strengths. In addition to the completing the VIA Strength Survey, I had Kendra complete the General Life Satisfaction Scale and the Pillars of a Balanced Sheet (See Appendix C) to have a baseline of assessments. Kendra completed these additional self-assessments for our second and third sessions.

[3] Both Kendra and Philadelphia University are pseudonyms representing the client and her employer.

According to her VIA Character Strengths Survey (See Appendix D), Kendra's top strengths include gratitude, authenticity, future mindedness, diligence and perspective. In our coaching sessions, I asked Kendra questions about her personal and professional lives to get a holistic view of her as a client. Listening to her personal strength story, her top strengths were confirmed. Kendra is a very strong person and has overcome dysfunctional family problems in her childhood to pursue advanced degrees and soar in her development career. In one of our coaching sessions, Kendra did a future envisioning session where she wrote what her life might look like if she lived a healthy, happy life while reaching the age of 100 years. Afterward, she wrote what her life may look like if she had only one year left to live.[4] The visioning exercises allowed Kendra to use her strength of future mindedness and think about how she would like to live a happy and healthy life. Having Kendra think about living for only one year reminded her that the exercise can be controlled in terms of what she would like to see happen in her life and changes she would like to implement. The great news for Kendra is she has time to start making life changes now. The General Life Satisfaction Scale results show she is genuinely happy.

Since Kendra possesses a wise outlook on life, I asked her to give advice to a friend regarding the goal of taking better care of herself. Drawing upon her strength, she had great ideas on how to improve her friend's lifestyle by eating healthier and adding exercise into her daily schedule. Kendra then created an action plan that is realistic for her to follow. She takes ownership of her whole life (work, personal, physical fitness) in a positive way as she already had the skills to accomplish her self-care goal; she simply needed support to bring the roadmap plan to light. Instead of feeling guilty about the

[4] These two visioning exercises were taken from Rosinki's (2003) *Coaching Across Cultures*.

past, Kendra was grateful for her blessings and excited at new opportunities to make significant lasting changes in her life. Using a positive psychology orientation to teach Kendra how to harness her personal strengths increased her ability to achieve her goal.

Future of Positive Psychology Coaching

Coaching is a rewarding endeavor because it deals with the best rather than the worst in people (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). Positive psychology as a life orientation perfectly blends with coaching. Since positive psychology's research is focused on what is right with individuals, there is scientific research and guidelines for living an engaged life both at home and at work (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). As a result, positive psychology helps answer important questions about personal change and growth and its research can be used to affirm coaching theories (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). As an applied science, positive psychology provides theories, assessments and interventions which are valuable additions to current coaching tools and practices regardless of theoretical orientation and type of coaching (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). There are benefits to adding positive psychology to coaching practices for both coaches and the profession as a whole (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). Using positive psychology research helps coaches gain a better understanding of how and why coaching interventions work. For coaches, positive psychology is an unexplored landscape full of exciting and dynamic possibilities (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007).

The future of positive psychology coaching will include many changes to the field, and coaches need to create strategies to keep up with new developments in research and theory. Current development resources include peer consultation groups, subscribing to positive psychology journals and listservs, attending conferences, reading new research

articles and books and accessing positive psychology websites (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). While writing this capstone paper, I received an email announcing the founding of a new organization: the International Positive Psychology Association (IPPA). The purpose of IPPA is to promote the science and practice of positive psychology and to facilitate communication and collaboration among researchers and practitioners around the world (IPPA Website). Positive psychology coaches suggest the future will include three distinct yet related elements: assessments, interventions and service delivery. As more research continues in positive psychology, "assessments of positive attributes will become more widespread, more sophisticated and easier to use (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007, p. 216). The development of new measures for coping, individual potential, professional growth, determination, curiosity, positivity, optimism and other related areas will offer new tools grounded in validated research and intervention, to ask clients about their strengths and help them identify skills and talents that can be harnessed to maximize full benefits (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). Recent trends like "digital management of administrative functions will continue to grow and online assessments will be less expensive, more convenient and easier to use than ever, providing added value to clients" (p. 216).

Coaching interventions today often use basic 'commonsense' tools coaches try out when the moment seems right. These interventions frequently work (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). Positive psychology coaches assert complex factors also contribute to the overall effectiveness of any given intervention (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). Scientifically testing coaching interventions have many benefits which include: "the ability to gain awareness of which interventions demonstrate the greatest promise, a

better understanding of which ones will work with which types of clients, for which types of problems, at what point in the coaching relationship" (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007, p.217). The future of positive psychology coaching will be linked inextricably with the increasing number of empirically validated interventions some of which Biswas-Diener and Dean (2007) assert will target specific client problems and populations. As the number of empirically grounded and validated positive interventions grow, the use of evidence based coaching, will become a major selling point for driving more coaching business within organizations. Coaching interventions based on positive psychology, then, will continue to "tap into inner resources, strengths, potential and feelings of well-being" (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007, p. 218).

In recent years, changes in technology have affected coaching because of increasing use of telecommunication devices (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). Coaches routinely organize bridge lines to meet with groups, VOIP Internet telephone lines to reduce global long distance charges, webcams for video conferencing and membership to diagnostic tools to build expertise in important issues like cross-cultural awareness (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). Biswas-Diener and Dean (2007) strongly believe the next decade in the coaching marketplace will include revolutionary new technologies that will impact how coaching services are delivered significantly. The use of web-based databases providing access to a broad range of research will enhance coaching practices while reducing the need for coaches to be firsthand experts (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). Moreover, these databases can help coaches build their confidence in growing their practices on scientific research, theory and interventions (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). In summary, positive psychology coaching serves as a promising answer to the

coaching profession's call for increased scientific grounding in empirically, validated interventions and assessments. Coaches can use positive psychology theory and research in their coaching practice because there is evidence to prove its effectiveness. While many coaches argue coaching is an art, it can be built on a science (Kaufmann, 2006). Evidence Based Practice has been a part of a controversial discussion about where research and theory relate to practice and where "artful" practice and "scientific" evidence meet (Stober, Wildflower, & Drake, 2006). Now is the opportune time for practitioners to transcend the notions of art versus science and become adept in developing both skills.

As I conclude, these final questions remain: Where do we go from here with positive psychology research and the field of coaching? What are important areas for future research? What research aspects would interest me in further graduate study? In reviewing literature on the challenges and gaps in knowledge of positive psychology, my future task will be to understand factors that build strengths and examine both the role of positive experience and the function of positive relationships with others (Gable & Haidt, 2005). Seligman's (2002) three pillars of positive psychology also point to an area of potential further research. There has been significant research on two areas: positive subjective experience (subjective well-being) and positive individual characteristics (strengths and virtues), but much less research on the third pillar (positive institutions). Positive psychologists need to examine the role of positive institutions in creating more meaningful and engaged lives. Personally, I am interested in measuring the impact of churches and a belief system in increasing happiness in believers.

Another important knowledge gap and research potential is the role of culture. Positive psychology cannot be just a Western endeavor (Walsh, 2001 as quoted in Peterson, 2006). Peterson (2006) asserts positive psychologists should attempt to identify cultural practices worldwide contributing to the good life within societies. Such future research on culture and positive psychology combined with Rosinki's (2003) coaching model from a cultural perspective will be critical in increasing a global coach's validity and applicability in today's intercultural environment. Integrating coaching, positive psychology and interculturalism will lead to a more informed global coaching process.

Drawing upon positive psychology research will be helpful in my coaching practice. It is my hope to further my research and coaching practice established on a multi-disciplinary theoretical approach that is evidence based and grounded in the theories of positive psychology and cross cultural framework. As coaches, when we study our own human potential, understand our individual character strengths and cultural profiles, we embark on a self-reflective journey preparing to be a more credible and competent global coach. I end with a famous quote by Socrates: "the unexamined life is not worth living." To reframe it positively and personalize it: my beliefs as a learner, graduate student and coach in studying what is right with people and coaching from a strengths perspective is indeed a worthy calling to living my own good life filled with self-examination and fulfillment.

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APPENDIX A

The results – close to 700 percent return on investment (ROI)

1. Monetary benefits were identified by 61 percent of the leaders in seven of the eight business impact areas.
2. Total monetary benefits = $3,268,325.
3. Four impact areas were identified as having produced at least $500,000 of annualized benefit to the business:
   - Improved teamwork ($981,980).
   - Quality of consulting ($863,625).
   - Retention ($626,456).
   - Team member satisfaction ($541,250).
4. Total cost of coaching = $414,310
   - Cost number was fully loaded with costs associated with administering and managing coaching, fees to the coaches, opportunity costs, etc.

The ROI calculation formula is:

(($3,268,325 - $414,310)/414,310) x 100 = 689%

APPENDIX B

The VIA Classification of Strengths and Virtues

Strengths of knowledge: related to acquiring and using new information.

1. Creativity
2. Curiosity
3. Love of Learning
4. Perspective (wisdom)
5. Open-mindedness

Strengths of courage: related to maintaining willpower in the face of opposition.

6. Bravery
7. Persistence
8. Integrity
9. Vitality

Strengths of humanity: centering around relationships with others.

10. Capacity to love and receive love
11. Kindness
12. Social intelligence

Strengths of justice: supporting the best possible interaction among a group.

13. Citizenship
14. Fairness
15. Leadership

Strengths of temperance: protecting from excess.

16. Forgiveness/mercy
17. Modesty/humility
18. Prudence
19. Self-Regulation

Strengths of transcendence: forming connections with a larger whole.

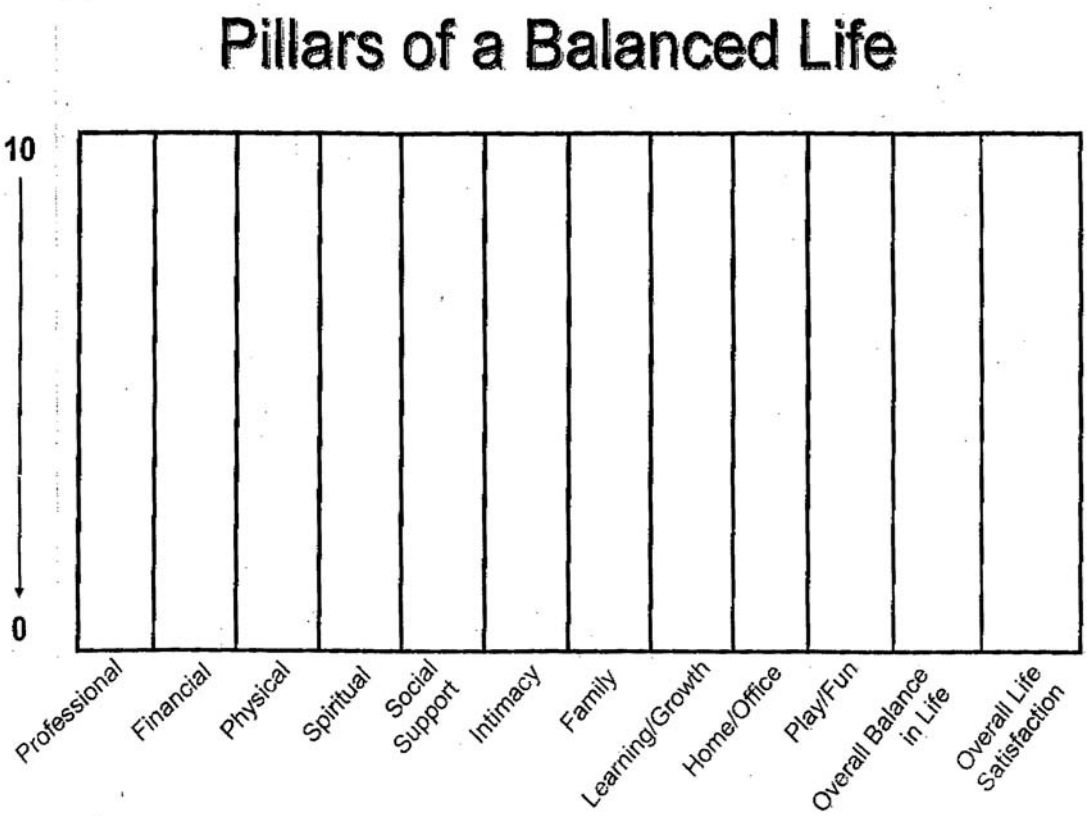
20. Appreciation of excellence and beauty
21. Gratitude
22. Hope
23. Humor
24. Spirituality

24 Values in Action (VIA) Strengths

Creativity (originality, ingenuity): Thinking of novel and productive ways to conceptualize and do things.
Curiosity (interest, novelty-seeking, openness to experience): Taking an interest in ongoing experience s for its own sake; exploring and discovering.

Open-mindedness (judgment, critical thinking): Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; weighing all evidence fairly.
Love of learning: Mastering new skills, topics, and bodies of knowledge, whether on one's own or formally.
Perspective (wisdom): Being able to provide wise counsel to others; having ways of looking at the world that make sense to oneself and to other people
Bravery (valor): Not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain; acting on convictions even if unpopular.
Persistence (perseverance, industriousness): Finishing what one starts; persisting in a course of action in spite of obstacles.
Integrity (authenticity, honesty): Presenting oneself in a genuine way; taking responsibility for one's feeling and actions
Vitality (zest, enthusiasm, vigor, energy): Approaching life with excitement and energy; feeling alive and activated
Love: Valuing close relations with others, in particular those in which sharing and caring are reciprocated.
Kindness (generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, altruistic love, "niceness"): Doing favors and good deeds for others.
Social intelligence (emotional intelligence, personal intelligence): Being aware of the motives and feelings of other people and oneself.
Citizenship (social responsibility, loyalty, teamwork): Working well as a member of a group or team; being loyal to the group.
Fairness: Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice; not letting personal feelings bias decisions about others.
Leadership: Encouraging a group of which one is a member to get things done and at the same maintain time good relations within the group.
Forgiveness and mercy: Forgiving those who have done wrong; accepting the shortcomings of others; giving people a second chance; not being vengeful
Humility/ Modesty: Letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves; not regarding oneself as more special than one is.
Prudence: Being careful about one's choices; not taking undue risks; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted.
Self-regulation (self-control): Regulating what one feels and does; being disciplined; controlling one's appetites and emotions.
Appreciation of beauty and excellence (awe, wonder, elevation): Appreciating beauty, excellence, and/or skilled performance in various domains of life.
Gratitude: Being aware of and thankful of the good things that happen; taking time to express thanks.
Hope (optimism, future-mindedness, future orientation): Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it.
Humor (playfulness): Liking to laugh and tease; bringing smiles to other people; seeing the light side.
Spirituality (religiousness, faith, purpose): Having coherent beliefs about the higher purpose, the meaning of life, and the meaning of the universe.
(Taken from the Values in Actions Institute webpage: http://www.viasurvey.org/)

APPENDIX C



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APPENDIX D

Client (Kendra) VIA Top Strengths Survey Results

Top Strength: Gratitude
- awareness of good things that happen to her, and never taking them for granted

Second Strength: Honesty, authenticity, and genuineness
- honesty, not only by speaking the truth but by living her life in a genuine and authentic way

Third Strength: Hope, optimism, and future-mindedness
- expects the best in the future, and diligently works to achieve it
- the future is something that can be controlled

Fourth Strength: Industry, diligence, and perseverance
- hardworking
- takes satisfaction in completing tasks

Fifth Strength: Perspective (wisdom)
– possesses wisdom
-. friends value her perspective and ask her for advice
- Her viewpoint makes sense to others and herself