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Organizations as Agents for Well-Being: How an Organizational Orientation to “Do Good” Could Lead to Flourishing

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It has been proposed that flourishing individuals enable flourishing organizations which leads to a flourishing world. However, is it also possible that by focusing on building a flourishing world a reciprocal elevation of organizational flourishing and individual flourishing can occur? This paper discusses well-being, the progression of research regarding organizational orientation to do good, and mirror flourishing. The amplification effect of virtuousness, along with the heliotropic effect, provide support to the theorized concept of mirror flourishing. In addition, this paper proposes a study design using appreciative inquiry to conduct interviews to better understand how an organization’s orientation to do good impacts employee flourishing.

Keywords

Flourishing, Organizations, Appreciative Inquiry, Positive Organizations, Virtuousness, Mirror Flourishing, Positive Institutions, Doing Good, Sustainable Development Goals, PERMA, Positive Impact Company, Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainability, Flourishing Enterprise, Heliotropic Effect

Disciplines

Industrial and Organizational Psychology | Industrial Organization | Organizational Behavior and Theory | Organization Development | Other Business | Other Psychiatry and Psychology | Other Psychology | Other Social and Behavioral Sciences | Other Sociology | Social Psychology

**Organizations as Agents for Well-Being: How an Organizational Orientation to “Do Good”
Could Lead to Flourishing**

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MAPP 800: Capstone Project

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August 1, 2022

Abstract

It has been proposed that flourishing individuals enable flourishing organizations which lead to a flourishing world. However, is it also possible that by focusing on building a flourishing world a reciprocal elevation of organizational flourishing and individual flourishing can occur? This paper discusses well-being, the progression of research regarding organizational orientation to do good, and mirror flourishing. The amplification effect of virtuousness, along with the heliotropic effect, provide support to the theorized concept of mirror flourishing. In addition, this paper proposes a study design using appreciative inquiry to conduct interviews to better understand how an organization's orientation to do good impacts employee flourishing.

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Introduction

In the final pages of *Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Well-Being* (2011), Martin Seligman introduced a long-term goal for the science of positive psychology. This goal is to live in a world in which 51% of the world's population is flourishing by the time we find ourselves in the year 2051. Seligman admits that while the benefits that will follow the attainment of this goal are certain to be tremendous, achieving it comes with tremendous challenges. A world in which over half the population is flourishing is no small task. How can we achieve this ambitious goal? Seligman (2011) continues by acknowledging a few paths by which, collectively, this goal can be achieved. Amongst these collective components and paths are positive businesses, which Seligman (2011) describes as a business that focuses on elements of well-being rather than exclusively on profits.

While it may have been believed for a time that a business must ultimately make a choice between delivering on financial gain for its shareholders or being morally responsible, it now seems evident that these are not mutually exclusive (Laszlo, 2008; Pavez et al., 2021). Research supports the notion that organizations can do well financially, as well as do “good” through engagement in corporate social responsibility practices, sustainability efforts, and an emphasis on the triple bottom line (Aguinis, 2011; Glavas & Mish 2014; Laszlo, 2008; Garay & Font, 2012; Lin & Liu, 2017). The literature on “doing good” spans from triple bottom line (Elkington, 1997; Glavas & Mish, 2014; Colbert & Kurucz, 2007) to corporate social responsibility (Aguinis, 2011; Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Glavas, 2016), firms of endearment (Sisodia et al., 2014), B-Corps (Chen & Kelly, 2015), positive impact companies (Pavez et al., 2021), innovations for mutual benefit (Dhar & Fry, 2022), and more. Some researchers question if in some cases sustainability or corporate social responsibility practices are aimed at doing less bad

than they are at truly doing “net good” leading and guiding us to a flourishing future (Pavez et al., 2021). These scholars suggest that organizations should shift their focus from the intent to do less harm to making a positive impact and flourishing.

As Pavez et al. (2021) note how positive impact companies are oriented to elevate well-being, increase economic prosperity, elevate flourishing, as well as contribute to a regenerative environment, Cooperrider and Fry (2012) theorize that the benefits of doing good “out there” may result in reciprocal increases to personal and organizational flourishing. More specifically, the authors present a notion of mirror flourishing. Mirror flourishing is described as the flourishing that occurs to us reciprocally when we participate in or experience action that helps others, nature, societies, or our world flourish (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012). Cameron and Winn (2012) provide an additional consideration through their speculation of the amplification effect of virtuousness, or the inclination towards more virtuousness when we experience virtuousness. These propositions may be even further supported by the theory of emotional contagion which suggests that our emotions are transmissible from one individual to the next (Christakis & Fowler, 2011).

This paper will review additional research that supports and suggests the existence of a relationship between organizations that do good externally and the flourishing that is reciprocally experienced internally. While the literature reviewed seems to support the notion that this mirroring effect exists, there is little research that asks the question, *how does an organization's orientation to do good impact individual flourishing within the organization?*

Section I - Positive Psychology and Individual Flourishing

Introduction to Positive Psychology

To begin this exploration, let us first examine the history of the science of positive psychology and discuss flourishing at the individual level. In the years preceding World War II, psychology had predominantly adhered to three missions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). These missions included developing cures for mental illness, making human's lives more productive and more fulfilling, and uncovering high talent and nurturing that talent. Following World War II, psychology placed a greater emphasis on curing mental illness (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), to the extent that it was almost exclusively focused on healing (Seligman, 2002). Fixated on reparation, psychology largely abandoned the consideration of individual fulfillment, thriving, and the elements that make up the best in life. The emphasis on fixing individual suffering brought about an abundance of research on psychological disorders, however, psychology had become one-sided (Seligman, 2000).

In the recognition of this imbalance, and in partial response to his own work on human suffering, Martin Seligman initiated a monumental shift by proposing positive psychology in his 1998 presidential address to the American Psychological Association (Seligman, 2002; Seligman, 2011). Positive psychology is described as the scientific study of human flourishing (Peterson, 2006). It is the exploration of what goes right in life. It seeks to increase well-being through the utilization and elevation of our collective and our individual human strengths (Seligman, 2011). Positive psychology's aim to improve well-being is not in opposition to traditional psychology, but rather it is a complement to the existing emphasis on addressing mental illness (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Furthermore, positive psychology sets itself

apart from self-help through its adherence to scientific rigor and the use of the scientific method (Peterson, 2006).

Well-being Theory

In 2011, Seligman introduced well-being theory, and along with it, the PERMA model of well-being. In contrast to his previously presented authentic happiness theory, which held increased happiness as the ultimate goal of the theory (Seligman, 2002), the goal of well-being theory is to increase flourishing in the world, as well as in the individual's life (Seligman, 2011). This model is comprised of five different elements which Seligman (2011) explains collectively contribute to one's well-being, while each element is also pursued for its own sake. These elements include (P)ositive emotions, (E)ngagement, (R)elationships, (M)eaning, and (A)chievement (Seligman, 2011). While one element alone does not constitute well-being, improvements in each attribute contribute to an overall improvement in individual well-being and ultimately lead to flourishing. The PERMA model allows for the measurement of well-being and thus a way to enhance and better understand well-being altogether. While there are other models of well-being including subjective well-being (Diener, 1984), ICOPPE (Prilleltensky, 2016), a multi-dimensional model of well-being proposed by Ryff (1989), and others, the overarching goal of the well-being theory presented by Seligman (2011) is to increase flourishing for the individual and the world. This goal parallels the considerations of this paper, as it further explores the theorized relationship of increased flourishing in the world and the mirroring that occurs which simultaneously elevates individual well-being (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012).

Elements of PERMA

Positive Emotions

Positive emotions comprise the first element of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model. Positive emotions are the emotional states or experiences that are typically described as a feeling of happiness (Fredrickson, 2009). However, positive emotions are not limited to feeling happy. These emotions include joy, gratitude, awe, love, excitement and more. Fredrickson (2001) proposed the broaden-and-build theory, that suggests, beyond feeling good, frequency of these feelings expand our awareness and help us to build and develop our psychological and social resources. Experiencing a range of positive emotions can broaden our awareness, helping to develop personal resources, while also expanding our individual capacity to adjust and respond to events and circumstances throughout life (Fredrickson, 2001). Consistent exposure to positive emotions can make it easier for an individual to engage with those emotions again later.

Engagement

The second element of the PERMA model, engagement, is described as being immersed or absorbed in an activity (Peterson, 2006). Engagement, like positive emotions, is measured subjectively (Seligman, 2011). Interestingly, when we experience optimal levels of engagement, known as being in a flow state, the experience is often accompanied by the absence of thoughts and feelings (Seligman, 2011). In addition, it is only through retrospect that an individual is typically able to acknowledge the positive affect that coupled the experience (Seligman, 2011). Flow is experienced when one becomes immersed or engaged to the extent that the individual loses track of time and an awareness of oneself (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). Flow also requires that the individual is equipped with the appropriate skill level in proportion to the challenge of the task they are engaged with (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). If the individual has a skill

level that exceeds that of the challenge, then they may find themselves experiencing boredom. If the challenge is greater than their capabilities, then they might experience frustration. An equilibrium is required to experience flow. A flow experience is typically followed by a desire to find oneself in a state of flow once again (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Relationships

Relationships, the third element of PERMA, are considered by many to be a critical element of well-being (Lyubomirsky, 2007; Peterson, 2006; Peterson & Seligman, 2004, Seligman, 2011). Some consider positive relationships to be the most important element of well-being (Prilleltensky, 2016). It has been shown that an individual's satisfaction with life is connected to the positive close relationships they have (Diener & Seligman, 2002). However, we also experience connections with other people that might not be a part of our close relationships, but these interactions can have a positive impact on us nonetheless (Fredrickson, 2013). Specifically, when we have interactions that energize and give life to both people in the interaction, these are considered to be high-quality connections (Dutton, 2003). These high-quality connections can allow us to experience an increase of positive emotions. Additionally, we may find ourselves experiencing high levels of engagement through playful interactions which can result in an increase of positive feelings while inviting others in and strengthening our high-quality connections (Stephens et al., 2011).

Meaning

Seligman (2011) describes meaning as a sense of belonging to something that is larger or greater than oneself, and service to that something. Victor Frankl (1963) proposed that meaning is found through experiences that elevate us, endeavors of creativity, and from the growth and reflection stemming from suffering or negative experiences. Emily Esfahani Smith (2017)

suggests that there are four pillars of meaning including, transcendence, belonging, purpose, and storytelling. Others have highlighted the development of efficacy, personal values to differentiate right from wrong, purpose, and self-worth as key elements of meaning (Baumeister & Vohs, 2002). Steger (2009) explains that there have been many studies of meaning and there have been overlaps and variances in its definition, yet purpose and significance seem to be at the core of many of these definitions.

Accomplishment

The last element of the PERMA model, accomplishment, describes another avenue people exercise to attain well-being (Seligman, 2011). It seems that individuals pursue accomplishments for the sake of accomplishment itself. People aim to achieve their goals, exemplify mastery, and outright win in various aspects of life. When people accomplish their goals, they often experience positive emotions (Seligman, 2011). Accomplishment can guide us to an experience of feeling happy, fulfilled, and satisfied (Bradford, 2016). However, how do we accomplish our long-term goals? One answer is grit. Grit is having the combination of passion and perseverance to reach long-term goals (Duckworth et al., 2007). Research indicates that grit is a better predictor of success than IQ, and that it may be just as important of a factor in achievement as talent, if not more so (Duckworth et al., 2007).

Three Pillars of Positive Psychology

Before Seligman (2011) introduced PERMA, Christopher Peterson (2006) suggested that the field of positive psychology could be deconstructed into the topics of positive subjective experiences, positive individual traits, and positive institutions. Collectively, these three topics make up the three pillars of positive psychology. Positive subjective experiences are momentary and dissipate. These include gratification, pleasure, and happiness. The second of the three

pillars, positive individual traits, includes character strengths, values, and talents. These individual qualities are longer lasting and are a part of who we are. The third pillar, positive institutions, can include families, businesses, schools, or other human systems. Specifically, Peterson (2006) defines positive institutions as those groups or institutions that elevate and enhance our well-being. A later definition is proposed by Cooperrider and Godwin (2011), which describes positive institutions as the organizations and societal or cultural structured practices which lift up and further develop our highest strengths, combining and amplifying these strengths, while also refracting these strengths in ways that benefit our world and lead to flourishing. For the purposes of this paper, this definition defines what will be referred to as a positive institution.

Section II – Organizational Orientation Toward “Doing Good”

The Meaning of Doing Good

As discussed previously, this paper is concerned with how an organization’s orientation to do good impacts employee well-being. Having looked at well-being, let us now examine what it means to do good. Research on what it means for an organization to do good has continuously evolved. Some common terms associated with organizations doing good include corporate social responsibility (Aguinis, 2011; Aguinis & Glavas, 2012), sustainability (Laszlo, 2008), and triple bottom line (Glavas & Mish, 2014; Elkington 1997). Much like the research on doing good altogether, some of these terms have been defined differently and experienced their own evolutions through research (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). Some researchers argue that the language used in the past is outdated and place an emphasis on doing less harm rather than actually doing good (Laszlo & Pavez, 2022). While negating harm is certainly important, it is not the same as

working toward good, having a positive impact (Pavez et al., 2021), or contributing to full spectrum flourishing (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012).

Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability

Aguinis (2011) explains that the history and definition of terminology used to describe organizational responsibility and corporate social responsibility (CSR) has changed over time leaving us with different language and meanings as literature on the topic has evolved. Having recognized the broadness of language and definitions, Aguinis and Glavas (2012) conducted a literature review of CSR, in which they aimed to provide a theoretical framework that would allow for future variables and the potential for future knowledge of CSR to accumulate more systematically. One commonly accepted definition of CSR is ‘context-specific organizational actions and policies that take into account stakeholders’ expectations and the triple bottom line of economic, social and environmental performance’ (Aguinis, 2011). While this definition highlights actions and policies of the organization, it is important to note that these actions and policies are directly impacted by, and implemented at, all levels including the individual, institutional, and organizational (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). A later definition, adding additional clarity to the CSR discussion, was provided by Glavas and Kelley (2014) stating that CSR includes caring for the environment and the well-being of other people while simultaneously working towards creating value for the organization. The authors continue by explaining that CSR is demonstrated and established through an organization’s developed operations and practices, and the impact and relationship that those practices have on the environment and all the organization’s stakeholders.

Through their review of CSR, Aguinis and Glavas (2012) identified some commonalities and differences of CSR in practice. Their review identified themes at the institutional level of

analysis, the organizational level of analysis, and the individual level of analysis. At the organizational level, they found that organizations engaged in CSR mostly for reasons such as predicted economic outcomes. However, there was also evidence that suggested organizations pursue CSR because it aligns with their organization's values. The authors also identified that there was a positive relationship between economic outcomes and CSR. At the individual level of analysis, it was determined that motivation to engage in CSR for the individual was influenced by the individuals' values and their personal concern with specific issues. Additionally, individuals experienced benefits from engagement in CSR practices including a positive influence on individual attitudes, performance outcomes, and behavior (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). While CSR represents one framework for doing good, other terms and definitions have arisen which may better capture the idea of doing good. Nonetheless, CSR research has largely contributed to the current state and discussion of doing good although it may be defined differently today as we shall see in the coming parts of this paper.

Triple Bottom Line: Doing Well and Doing Good

The CSR literature largely leans on the triple bottom line framework which was introduced by John Elkington in 1997. The framework of triple bottom line proposed by Elkington (1997) includes social and environmental performance in addition to what was the already heavy, and almost exclusive, emphasis on economic performance. Aguinis (2011) suggests that the definitions of corporate social responsibility, and similar terminologies, built upon this framework and have included at least one of these additional elements. Firms that adhere to this framework have been referred to as triple bottom line firms (Glavas & Mish, 2014). These firms seek to be responsive both from an ecological and social standpoint, while also seeking to achieve economic prosperity. The three parts of triple bottom line have also been

referred to by the three P's of people, planet, profit (Glavas & Mish, 2014; Elkington, 1997). Triple bottom line firms separate themselves through their intentional focus on collaborative advantage as opposed to competitive advantage (Glavas & Mish, 2014). Because of their focus on collaboration, they help to develop new markets in which other organizations can also grow and benefit. Additionally, these firms seek to use resources that can be easily substituted, found commonly, and that are ultimately sustainable. In all, the triple bottom line firm exhibits an alternative approach to operation that is not limited to the sole pursuit of economic benefit, but also emphasizes the importance of contributing to positive social and environmental benefits, thus demonstrating that other firms can also intentionally develop their own purpose beyond maximizing shareholder value (Glavas & Mish, 2014).

While doing good is its own reward, research suggests that doing good also has positive performance outcomes for organizations (Glavas & Mish, 2014; Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Cameron et al., 2004). There are evident benefits for organizations to intentionally work towards the triple bottom line rather than economic prosperity alone (Aguinis, 2011). Not only is it good for organizations to do good, but organizations can *do well by doing good*. In the authors' literature review of CSR, Aguinis and Glavas (2012) identify several specific outcomes, both internal and external. These benefits include:

- Higher employee engagement
- Customer loyalty
- Positive evaluations of the organization
- Economic benefits including being more attractive for investors and return on assets
- Positive relationships with stakeholders

- Product or service as a leading choice for customers
- Higher attraction for potential employees
- Employee retention
- Better employee relations
- Improved product quality

Although this list is not an exhaustive one, it provides a good representation of some of the benefits of “doing good.” These positive outcomes are noteworthy considering that a primary motivation for organizations to engage in CSR has historically been for economic outcomes (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). However, it has been shown that organizations also do good for the sake of doing the right thing (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012).

Firms of Endearment

The research on what have been called Firms of Endearment provide additional support to the discussion of doing good and doing well. Historically, terms such as compassion, love, and empathy were not typically associated with business (Sisodia et al., 2014). However, there have been an increasing number of organizations that intentionally embrace these terms and others. These are organizations which seek to endear themselves to their stakeholders, through the purposeful alignment of interests of all their stakeholders (Sisodia et al., 2014). These organizations are referred to as firms of endearment (FoE). For these organizations, it is imperative that all stakeholders prosper, and that no stakeholder groups excel at the cost of or detriment to other stakeholders. An original set of FoE’s were identified by way of examining these criteria of meeting stakeholder needs. Specifically, FoE’s were identified by first asking people to name some organizations that they felt they loved, and then the field was thinned by examining these organizations’ commitment to society, partners, investors, customers, and employees (SPICE) (Sisodia et al., 2014). A secondary analysis considered these organizations’

relationships to additional stakeholder groups such as governments, suppliers, and communities, resulting in a list of 28 companies, of which 10 were private. Following the identification of these FoE's, researchers compared the publicly traded firms to the S&P 500. Across a ten-year period, the FoE's economically outperformed the S&P 500 by delivering shareholder returns of 1026% as opposed to the 122% for the S&P 500 (Sisodia et al., 2014). Additionally, when this timeline was later extended to a period of fifteen years, FoE's outperformed the S&P 500 once again, but this time by a ratio of 14:1. This fifteen-year period also included the "Great Recession" that took place between 2007 and 2009, which may be indicative of the resilience of FoE's (Sisodia et al., 2014). While these organizations may have some differentiations in described values, Sisodia et al. (2014) suggest that 'people centered' summarizes the culture of any FoE.

B-Corporation

A B-corporation, or what is better known as a B-Corp, is an enterprise that is not solely concerned with shareholder returns, but instead aims to deliver value and create benefit for all its stakeholders and is motivated by purpose (Honeyman et al., 2019). These organizations recognize that business can be a force for good. Through their business practices, they actively seek to provide benefit to all stakeholders while simultaneously avoiding being the cause of any harm or damage. Furthermore, they recognize that in order to achieve this objective, they must lean into each other and are collectively responsible for the future. However, to be considered a B-Corp, an organization must be certified through B-Lab, a non-profit organization (Honeyman et al., 2019). The certification process requires a rigorous examination of company including its environmental impact, relationships with its customers, involvement in the community, and more. According to *The B Corp Handbook* (Honeyman et al., 2019), the benefits of becoming a

certified B-Corp can include talent acquisition, elevating performance, higher employee engagement, greater credibility, and more. However, the benefits of being a B-Corp are disputed by some scholars (Diez-Busto et al., 2021). Chen and Kelly (2014) examined 800 B-corps over a period of six years and found that these organizations exhibited an average revenue growth rate that outpaced that of similar public organizations. However, the researchers also found that when compared to public and private competitors, there was no indication that the B-corps outperformed the competition in employee productivity growth rate. Meanwhile, other researchers show that the growth rate of B-Corps was shown to be significantly higher than competitors (Romi et al., 2018). In addition, these researchers found that B-Corps showed higher levels of employee productivity as opposed to companies that were not B-Corps. Also, it is important for future research to differentiate between organizations that are certified as B-Corps by the non-profit B-Lab and other organizations that could be considered Benefit Corporations (Diez-Busto et al., 2021).

Positive Institutions

In an introduction to positive psychology Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) produced a framework for the science of positive psychology, and with it came a discussion of positive institutions. Positive institutions make up the third of the three pillars of positive psychology, preceded by positive subjective experiences and positive individual traits (Peterson, 2006). Peterson and Park (2003) explain that a positive institution facilitates positive individual traits which then facilitate positive subjective experiences. A later definition of positive institutions is presented by Cooperrider and Godwin (2011). The authors describe positive institutions as the organizations and societal or cultural structured practices which lift up and further develop our highest strengths, combining and amplifying these strengths, while also

refracting these strengths in ways that benefit our world and lead to flourishing. For the contents of this paper and its discussion of positive institutions, this definition presented by Cooperrider and Godwin (2011), best captures what will be referred to as a positive institution throughout. Cooperrider and Godwin (2011) explain that in order to better understand positive institutions we must explore how organizations can lift, illuminate, and enhance our individual strengths so that they extend beyond the organization itself and into the world. As organizations and people continue to come together and pursue ways to do good, they leverage their strengths in order to create better organizations and a better world altogether (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012).

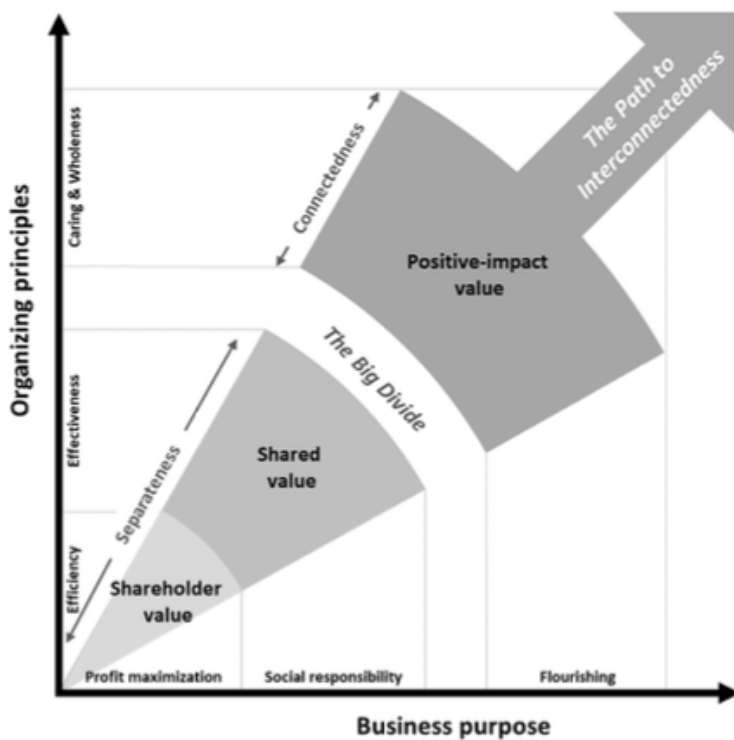
Net Positive Impact Companies

Within the literature cited above, some organizations have sought to minimize damage and do less bad. While this is certainly progress, is doing less harm the same as doing good? Positive impact companies are companies that are seeking to have a net positive impact (Pavez et al., 2021). More specifically, these are organizations that exemplify a commitment to making positive impacts economically, environmentally, and socially. These organizations work towards profitability as any other business would; however, they are driven by a purpose. Their purpose is to increase flourishing as well as prosperity (Laszlo & Pavez, 2022). As depicted in figure 1, positive impact companies seek to deliver on positive impact value (Pavez et al., 2021). Organizations have historically sought to deliver on increasing shareholder value by increasing the profits for the organization's shareholders. This is represented in the first stage. The second stage highlights shared value. In this scenario, an organization recognizes the value of practicing social responsibility. However, the organization is motivated to deliver on shared value to please stakeholders to ultimately outperform competitors and succeed (Pavez et al., 2021). The third stage is where the positive impact companies exist. These organizations are driven to increase

human well-being, make a positive impact on the natural environment, and improve their economic prosperity (Laszlo & Pavez, 2022; Pavez et al., 2021). In this third stage, flourishing at the individual level and flourishing for the planet altogether becomes a goal.

Figure 1

Phases of Organizational Flourishing



Note. The image shows the path to interconnectedness, crossing the big divide and becoming a positive impact company. From “Positive-impact companies: Toward a new paradigm of value creation” by Pavez, I., Kendall, L. D., & Laszlo, C., *Organizational Dynamics*, (p. 3), 2021. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Reprinted with permission.

United Nations Global Goals

As discussed briefly earlier, some researchers suggest that doing good is not synonymous with doing less bad (Laszlo et al., 2014). While doing less bad is an improvement, it is not necessarily the same as doing good. If a manufacturing plant creates a zero-carbon footprint, it is

better than not, but if it generates carbon free energy to the grid from its operations, it is creating a net positive impact. The goal should be to do more good! As shown previously, there have been a number of different ways to assess doing good out there, but we can now turn to the seventeen United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) (2020) as a guide for positive impact. The seventeen goals shown in figure 2, adopted by the UN in 2015 represent a call for action and provide a pathway to building a better future for all. These goals are the blueprint for a vision of transformation to be achieved by the year 2030 (SDG, 2020). While this is admittedly ambitious, it is also clear that the need for change has never been more urgent (SDG, 2020). This call for action has been heard and answered by scholars, practitioners, and business' as they have come forward to do their part (Godwin & Truebridge, 2021; Hoek, 2022; Lazlo & Pavez, 2022; Dhar & Fry, 2022).

Figure 2

The UN global goals for sustainable development



Note. The image shows the seventeen UN sustainable development goals. Adapted from “*Global Goals Resources*”, by Global Goals, 2022, (globalgoals.org).

Innovations for Mutual Benefit

Dhar and Fry (2022) examine innovations for the mutual benefit (IMB), which they define as business innovations which not only result in economic prosperity for owners/investors, but that also benefit or fulfill the SDGs. The authors analyzed 36 medium sized for-profit companies to explore what factors contribute to innovations for business and society benefit. They found that IMBs flourish when leaders and organizations are socially and ecologically embedded and take a long-term view of the enterprise. This inspires innovations that prioritize positive impacts beyond shareholder value creation. These innovative ideas are successfully implemented through collaborative boundary spanning, awareness building, and circular value chains. The sample of firms studied came from a large data base of IMBs from a world inquiry referred to as Aim2Flourish.

Aim2Flourish

In 2009, Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) opened the Fowler Center for Business as an Agent of World Benefit (BAWB) (CWRU, 2022). Creating a world in which individuals flourish, nature thrives, and business is able to prosper is the center’s primary purpose. The center was home to a worldwide search for stories and examples of business innovations that resulted in a benefit for the business as well as society known as the World Inquiry Project (Fry, 2017). In 2013 it seemed as though ‘sustainability fatigue’ was taking hold. What followed was the recognition that doing less bad is not the same as doing good, making a positive impact, and contributing to flourishing (Laszlo et al., 2014) resulting in a call for a shift (Fry, 2017). The BAWB’s AIM2Flourish program was born out of this shift from mitigating

negative impact and towards full-spectrum flourishing (Fry, 2017). The AIM2Flourish program uses Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider & McQuaid, 2012) to inspire conversations regarding the function of business in our world (Dhar & Fry, 2022; Fry, 2017). Building upon the success of the World Inquiry Project, in the new program students seek out and research business innovations that make a positive impact on one or more of the UN SDGs while also making a positive impact on business prosperity economically (Dhar & Fry, 2022; aim2flourish.com). The stories are collected on the AIM2Flourish platform. On the online platform ([AIM2Flourish.com](https://aim2flourish.com)), there is currently a collection of 4110 stories to date (2022).

Flourishing Enterprise

The focus of sustainability, intentionally or not, has historically been on how to do less harm (Laszlo et al., 2014). However, rather than emphasizing doing less bad, what if organizations sought to make a positive impact? Given the historical aim of sustainability, the need for a shift has been evident, thus, “flourishing” is a suggested framing of ambition for organizations to aspire to (Dhar & Fry, 2022). Flourishing has the capacity to invite in all parts of a human system in ways that sustainability does not (Laszlo et al., 2014). This shift from sustainability to flourishing can be thought of synonymously with the shift from surviving to thriving. It also seems to parallel the shift from psychology’s emphasis on mending illness to the birth of positive psychology as a complementary focus on what makes life worth living (Seligman, 2002). Additionally, Laszlo et al. (2014) suggest that if flourishing is the goal, consequences may include a deeper sense of community and connectedness to our world, an environment at work that fosters a greater consideration and care for others, and ultimately an organization that itself is flourishing. A flourishing enterprise is one in which innovation is

abundant, individuals are inspired to bring the greatest version of themselves to their organizations, and all stakeholders experience sustainable value (Cooperrider & Selian, 2022).

Laszlo et al. (2014) describe how flourishing individuals can contribute to flourishing organizations leading to a flourishing world in a cycle that could then again lead to an increase in flourishing for the individual. The authors start by explaining how the individual can experience flourishing by way of reflective practices such as meditation. This notion that meditation can positively influence our well-being is supported by several researchers including Fredrickson and others (2008) work on loving kindness meditation and positive emotions, and Hutcherson et al. (2008) research showing the positive impact it has on our social connectedness. Laszlo et al. (2008) explain that as the individual elevates their own sense of flourishing and interconnectedness, they may be equipped with a greater care and consideration for the world. When this is met with an organizational commitment to flourishing, an amplification may occur resulting in a flourishing enterprise that is poised to deliver on economic prosperity and benefit for the world (Laszlo et al., 2014). Cooperrider (2014) adds to the discussion of this process of flourishing individuals leading to flourishing enterprises which lead to a flourishing world. He adds that perhaps it is also possible that by working towards a flourishing world, the individual and the organization experience an increase in their own flourishing.

Section III – Organizational Orientation and Well-Being

Mirror Flourishing

“We but mirror the world. All the tendencies present in the outer world are to be found in the world of our body. If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change.” -*Gandhi* Could it be that the reverse is also true? Is it possible that by focusing on changing the world, we can in fact change ourselves?

What if it were the case that when an organization orients itself to do good and work towards elevating the amount of flourishing in the world, its people internally simultaneously experience increases in flourishing? As a potential answer, Cooperrider and Fry (2012) present and define this as mirror flourishing. Mirror flourishing is described as the flourishing that occurs to us reciprocally when we participate in or experience action that helps others, nature, societies, or our world flourish (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012). In the context of organizations, this would suggest that when an organization does good, its employees and stakeholders experience benefits to their well-being. The authors go as far as to suggest that this orientation to do good may be ‘the most significant human development opportunity of the 21st century’ (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012, p. 3).

Cooperrider and Fry (2012) identify three things that drove them to the writing of the article and its proposition of mirror flourishing. The first was the recognition that when the whole of an organization is called upon to develop and design sustainability solutions for the greatest problems in our world, the best of human enterprise is exhibited more quickly, powerfully, and consistently than in any other circumstance (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012). Secondly, the authors look to the field of positive psychology, and its exploration of the good life and human strengths, as they ask the question of when is it that the call to do good elevates and brings out the best in individuals? The third was born out of experience. Specifically, David Cooperrider took part in a series of lectures along with Martin Seligman. As Seligman discussed what would become well-being theory and PERMA, Cooperrider shared examples of organizations coming alive while he simultaneously recognized that each of the stories he shared denoted an organization that was a leader in doing good. Thus, when people are joined together

to collectively do good, these individuals experience the elements of PERMA leading to flourishing for themselves and others (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012).

Mirror flourishing implies that there is no border between doing good externally and flourishing internally, but rather that doing good out there and flourishing internally at the individual level are connected (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012). Mirror flourishing is the simultaneous flourishing we experience when we are a part of or witness positive activity that helps facilitate flourishing in the world, in nature, or in others (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012). This perspective allows us to see the relationship between organizations and the world not as two separate parts, but through a lens that highlights the potential for individual flourishing by way of doing good in the world. As organizations work to do good externally, they concomitantly bring out the best internally and help their people to flourish as they elevate their capacity to grow, their resilience, their positive relationships, and their individual positive traits (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012). The authors continue by exploring how an organization's aim to do good might connect and call upon the strengths of the organization as well as the individual strengths of its people. These individual strengths can benefit each element of PERMA, lead to flourishing, and can positively influence our optimism and resilience (Mayerson, 2020).

Mirror Neurons and Emotional Contagion

We all exist within a network of other people that extends beyond our friends and family (Christakis & Fowler, 2011). Christakis and Fowler (2011) elaborate by explaining that we can even be moved and influenced by occurrences that we know nothing about through our social network. We are connected to others, a part of something much greater than ourselves, and are affected by the interactions we have with others. This notion is further supported by emotional contagion theory. Emotional contagion is described as the adoption of another individuals'

emotions that happens automatically (Singer & Tusche, 2014). Simply put, it means that emotions can be passed from one person to the next (Godwin & Truebridge, 2021). Also, Christakis and Fowler (2011) add that emotional contagion is supported by a biological mechanism that allows us to experience something that we only observed in other people. This biological mechanism is called the mirror neuron system.

Neuroscience research on mirror neurons may provide additional support for emotional contagion and to the proposition of mirror flourishing (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012). A mirror neuron is a neuron that is activated when an individual engages in a specific motor activity, or when they witness, observe, or experience that same activity (Kilner & Lemon, 2013). If these neurons are not only activated when we perform a specific action, but when we observe it, this suggests that the process of action and of observation may be closely related (Godwin & Truebridge, 2021, Kilner & Lemon, 2013). When we witness someone experiencing an emotion, these mirror neurons are activated so that we too experience this emotion. In essence, this indicates that an individual can feel the emotion from witnessing it in others just as if they had engaged in the act that brought about that emotion themselves (Godwin & Truebridge, 2021). Mirror neurons and social contagion theory may provide support to the idea of mirror flourishing and further aid the proposition that witnessing an elevation of flourishing in the world may simultaneously increase flourishing for the individual.

Virtuousness

As Peterson and Seligman (2004) explored and defined character strengths and virtues, critical aspects of individual well-being and human flourishing, Cameron and Winn (2012) express that virtuousness emerges from human collectives that engage virtues. Virtuousness is a combination of virtues. Cameron and Winn (2012) present three assumptions regarding

virtuousness and Cameron (2022) describes a fourth assumption later. The first, the eudaemonic assumption, suggests that people are inclined to do good purely for the intrinsic value of doing and being good. Virtuousness implies a pursuit of what is best, of eudaimonia, not simply an avoidance of the negative or realizing other material rewards. Eudaimonia is the Aristotelian word for happiness; however, it more accurately means flourishing or well-being (Melchert, 2002). Secondly, the inherent value assumption suggests that pursuing virtuousness for benefits beyond that of virtuousness itself is no longer virtuousness (Cameron, 2022). That is to say, virtuousness should be pursued for its own sake, and it is its own reward. If one were to pursue virtuousness for other outcomes, it would no longer be virtuousness due to the individual's or organization's desire to attain other outcomes. The amplification assumption proposes that virtuousness develops and sustains positive energy (Cameron & Winn, 2012). Virtuousness requires no motivating factor beyond itself, and it self-perpetuates while simultaneously amplifying. When we observe virtuousness, it propels us toward more virtuousness (Cameron, 2022). The fourth assumption, the fixed-point assumption, differentiates virtuousness from ethics (Cameron, 2022). Ethics change with time, may vary depending on the situation, and are typically not universal. While ethical practices are subject variations depending on the circumstance, such as in an elementary school as opposed to an accounting practice, virtuousness acts as a fixed point because it is representative of the goodness we aspire to regardless of the situation (Cameron, 2022).

Heliotropic Effect

Cameron and Winn (2012) elaborate on the third assumption, the amplification of virtuousness, by describing the heliotropic effect. In essence, the heliotropic effect suggests that all living things and all living systems are attracted to and lean towards positive energy and that

which is life giving, while simultaneously moving away from negative energy and that which depletes life. This occurs in nature with plants. For plants, the source of that which is life giving and positive is the sun. In the case of virtuousness, when we experience virtuousness we lean into it, and witnessing virtuousness reinforces and further cultivates more virtuousness (Cameron & Winn, 2012). Fredrickson (2009) adds that positivity is an essential part of human growth, and in the same way that plants turn toward the light, people turn toward positivity.

Broaden and Build and Upward Spirals

Before Seligman (2011) presented the PERMA model and described a long-term goal for positive psychology, he and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) articulated an objective for the field which was to identify and understand that which allowed us and our communities to flourish. Barbara Fredrickson's answered the call through an exploration of the role of positive emotions in positive psychology (Fredrickson, 2001). In doing so, she identified a relationship between when an individual experiences positive emotion and the growth that ensues. Some of these positive emotions can include joy, love, pride, and interest. While these positive emotions may be distinct, they, amongst other positive emotions, are united by their ability. Fredrickson (2001) presented the broaden and build theory of positive emotions, which proposes that positive emotions can broaden our thought-action repertoires and build our long-term individual resources. These resources can include intellectual, psychological, social, and physical resources. When we experience positive emotions with increased regularity, our capability to access our positive emotions more frequently is improved (Fredrickson, 2013). Expanding upon her broaden and build theory, Fredrickson suggests that engagement with positive emotions can result in upward spirals. The upward spiral theory proposes that positive emotions can lead to an upward spiral elevating an individual's well-being (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002). More

specifically, it suggests that positive emotions can knit an individual to new well-being behaviors and elevate their psychological inclination for an array of well-being behaviors (Fredrickson, 2013). This occurs by way of nonconscious motives, a wanting or desire, that is initiated from positive emotions. When we experience positive emotions, we naturally want to experience more.

Virtuousness in Organizations

The amplifying effect of virtuousness suggested that when we see or experience virtuousness, we experience an inclination towards more virtuousness (Cameron & Winn, 2012). This idea is further enhanced by the heliotropic effect (Cameron & Winn, 2012) and equally applicable is Fredrickson's (2001) broaden and build and upward spiral (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002) theories. In the organizational setting, when people within the organization experience virtuousness, the individuals, and the organization, experience a broadening of emotional, social, and intellectual capacities and capabilities (Cameron & Winn, 2012; Fredrickson, 2009). Additionally, when individuals witness virtuousness, they are likely to act in a similar fashion (Cameron, 2022). This aligns with the heliotropic effect, exemplifying that living things and living systems are inherently attracted to positive energy (Cameron & Winn, 2012).

Virtuousness, by definition, is pursued for its own sake, yet this does not deny virtuousness the positive outcomes that may result (Cameron, 2022). While it is true that virtuousness is its own reward, identifying the connections between virtuousness and performance outcomes may provide additional incentives to engage in virtuousness for leaders to consider (Cameron & Winn, 2012). Cameron et al. (2011) conducted a study that examined a combined 70 organizations from the health care and financial services industries over multiple years. At the onset of the study, leaders worked to integrate virtuousness within the culture of the

organizations. Performance measures and virtuousness was measured in the organizations. The results indicated that the organizations that exhibited higher levels of virtuousness also scored significantly higher in performance measures. These specific measures included lower employee turnover and higher performance financially (Cameron, 2022; Cameron et al., 2011). The organizations that exhibited improvements in virtuousness over two years experienced greater benefits in the years that followed as opposed to those that did not show improvements in virtuousness. In other cases, when organizations were faced with the adversity of downsizing, those with higher levels of virtuousness saw significantly greater customer retention, lower turnover, and higher productivity compared to other organizations (Cameron, 2022; Cameron & Caza, 2002; Cameron et al., 2004). Additionally, virtuousness has been tied to well-being outcomes such as positive emotions, satisfaction, and physical well-being (Cameron, 2022), and when individuals experience virtuousness at work, it has been linked to higher levels of each of the elements of PERMA (Seligman, 2011; Cameron, 2022). Altogether, organizations considered to be virtuous are a great benefit to the world as they increase flourishing, experience higher performance measures, and broaden and build the capabilities of the organization and its members.

Mirror Flourishing and Elements of Well-Being

Positive Emotions

Cooperrider and Fry (2012) suggest that when organizations take positive action socially, ecologically, or otherwise, it brings about positive emotions, the P in PERMA. These emotions can include hope, inspiration, optimism, gratitude, pride, and more. Hope is often born out of scenarios in which we may be fearful of what might be, but crave and seek out something better (Fredrickson, 2013). Hope might arise from seeing the many problems in our world but yearning

for a better future. Inspiration can be found in experiencing the great deeds of others (Fredrickson, 2013). We can find ourselves feeling inspired by the acts of others or even the acts of organizations as they aim to do good. Gratitude transpires from individuals acknowledging others as a source of good things in our lives (Fredrickson, 2013). We may experience feelings of gratitude when we witness the organizations we are a part of actively participating in positive change. Optimism is a form of positive thinking in which a person has positive expectancies for their future (Carver et al., 2010). An individual with an optimistic disposition believes that things in their lives are going to go well (Milona, 2020). Optimism has been shown to be positively correlated with individual subjective well-being (Milona, 2020; Carver et al., 2010).

Meaning

While Glavas and Godwin (2012) identify the relationship between employees' perception of their company's CSR and organizational identification, Aguinis and Glavas (2017) discuss how individuals engage in sensemaking and finding meaning in their work. Aguinis and Glavas (2017) propose that sensemaking is a mechanism through which individuals experience CSR and derive meaning from work. Individuals within organizations may have a work orientation in which they see their work as an avenue to make improvements to the world (Aguinis & Glavas, 2017). These individuals are likely to derive meaning from the CSR of their organization. Furthermore, an individual that has a strong moral identity, an identity that finds moral standards central to one's sense of self, is likely to experience meaningfulness through work when their organization is engaged in CSR activity. Additionally, the authors suggest that individuals within organizations, that focus on doing good for stakeholders and pursue additional positive outcomes beyond financial gain, are experiencing more than just a reaction to the actions and behaviors of their organization. These individuals are acting with intentionality as

they make sense of their organizations actions and derive meaningfulness from their work (Aguinis & Glavas, 2017). Thus, the individual experiences increased meaning which contributes to their well-being.

Adding to this discussion, Grant (2007) submits that individuals within organizations care about having a positive impact on the lives of others. In addition, Grant (2007) proposes that employees experience an increased motivation to make a prosocial difference the greater that difference or impact is perceived to be by the employee. When the employees identify that their actions are connected to the outcomes of other people's lives, they may be more inclined to engage in that behavior (Grant, 2007). This perception of making a meaningful impact is part of the fuel required to sustain motivation for continuing the behavior. However, there is a caveat. This perception of impact is insufficient alone. Paralleling with what Aguinis and Glavas (2017) stated, Grant (2007) explains that the individual must have values that suggest they care about these outcomes.

Aguinis and Glavas (2017) explain that while the relationship between CSR and individual well-being is understudied, there is research on meaning and individual well-being. Future research can further explore the relationship between CSR and meaning, as well as other areas of employee well-being. As organizations work to do good externally, they simultaneously bring out the best internally and help their people to flourish as they elevate their capacity to grow, their resilience, their positive relationships, and their individual positive traits (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012).

Summary

What makes life worth living? What makes up the good life? Martin Seligman (2011) argues that it is the elements of PERMA that make up the good life and collectively contribute to

flourishing. The PERMA model was born along with Seligman's well-being theory and the articulation of a goal to increase amount of flourishing in the world and in the life of the individual. Laszlo et al. (2014) described how through reflective practices individuals can experience flourishing and these flourishing individuals can enable flourishing enterprises. Then, these flourishing enterprises can make a net positive impact and contribute to a flourishing world. However, can it be that this sequence can start with a focus on building a flourishing world leading to flourishing organizations and flourishing people? Mirror flourishing, theorized by Cooperrider and Fry (2012), would suggest that the answer is yes! The authors speculate that by working toward a flourishing world and elevating the amount of flourishing in our world, individuals and organizations might experience a reciprocal increase in flourishing (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012; Cooperrider, 2014). This notion is further supported by the amplifying effect of virtuousness which suggests that witnessing or experiencing virtuousness draws us toward more of the same (Cameron & Winn, 2012). This is further sustained by what is referred to as the heliotropic effect, the inclination of all living things to lean into what is positive and life giving (Fredrickson, 2009; Cameron & Winn, 2012). So, in addition to the sequence from the flourishing individual to the flourishing enterprise to the flourishing world (Laszlo et al., 2014), it could be that an enterprise can focus on contributing to a flourishing world resulting in consequences that include flourishing individuals and a flourishing organization (Cooperrider & Fry, 2012; Cooperrider, 2014). By doing good "out there" the individual and the organization can flourish. In the wake of this recognition rests the question of how; *how does an organization's orientation to do good impact individual flourishing?*

Section IV – Study Design

Preface and Purpose

As we have seen in the previous section, several researchers and scholars point to the existence of a relationship between an organization's orientation to do good and employee well-being. However, there is little that exists today that answers the question of how. Thus, this section presents a proposal for a study design guided by the overarching research question: *How does an organization's orientation to do good impact employee flourishing?*

A Shift in Organization Development

Historically, organizational development (OD) used a diagnostic approach for change (Bushe & Marshak, 2009). In Diagnostic OD, an assumption exists that there is an objective reality which can be examined, and from which data can be gathered to assess, compare, and be leveraged for the implementation of change. In essence, in Diagnostic OD, one would begin with a diagnosis of an organization and compare this diagnosis to what is an optimal model or existing standards for organization. From there, methods and interventions are used to remedy existing problems identified through the diagnosis in the pursuit of a desired or ideal future state (Bushe & Marshak, 2009).

In contrast, Dialogic OD suggests that organizations are dialogic systems in which the actions of the organization, the group, and the individual are the result of self-organizing as well as realities shaped by the stories, conversations, and narratives of individuals' experiences and the meaning they draw from them (Bushe & Marshak, 2014). In Dialogic OD, an underlying assumption is that there is no ideal model, no one right way for an organization to organize (Bushe & Marshak, 2009). Advancing that notion, Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) suggest that there is only one limitation when it comes to how we organize, which is their imagination and

decision to agree upon what is possible (Bushe & Marshak, 2009). Additionally, a Dialogic OD perspective suggests that each and every situation is unique, and thus there is no guarantee that what worked for one group is going to work for another (Bushe & Marshak, 2014). Dialogic OD adopts the social constructionist idea that organizations are changed, created, and conveyed through the images, narratives, and conversations (Bushe & Marshak, 2014). Or as Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2010) state, social constructionism indicates that the process that maintains, transforms, and creates our reality is human communication. Perhaps one of the greatest deviants from historical OD and towards Dialogic OD is Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and its divergence from diagnosis towards an inquiry into the best of what is (Bushe & Marshak, 2009).

Appreciative Inquiry

AI is defined as the study of what gives life to a human system when it is at its best (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). A helpful way of further understanding of AI can be found through observing its root words of appreciate and 'inquire. To appreciate is to value, to recognize the best in our world and in people, to identify and affirm strengths, and to recognize what gives life to a system (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). To inquire is to discover and to explore. It is to ask questions and to be open to what is possible (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). AI is a philosophy and practice with a foundation rooted in the assumption that all living systems have strengths which can be uncovered and tapped into as a source for transformation (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). AI is centered around a series of principles. These are values and beliefs regarding change and organizing (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). Five of the fundamental AI principles include are the constructionist principle, simultaneity principle, poetic principle, anticipatory principle, and positive principle (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Cooperrider et al., 2008).

1. Constructionist Principle: Our world is created through the words that we use. It is through conversation that meaning and reality is forged.
2. Simultaneity Principle: Change occurs simultaneously with our questions, and thus inquiry is in fact intervention. There is no separation between inquiry and change.
3. Poetic Principle: There is no limitation on what we can choose to study. Additionally, it matters what we choose to study. It creates and describes our world.
4. Anticipatory Principle: People and human systems will move in the direction of what they anticipate and of what they hold as images of the future.
5. Positive Principle: When we ask positive questions, it leads to positive outcomes. The more positive that a question is the more positive an outcome will be.

One method of putting AI into action is through the 4-D cycle (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). The cycle can be leveraged in whole system change initiatives, a group meeting, or in order to guide a conversation. The cycle starts with the identification of an affirmative topic, followed by the four stages of discover, dream, design, and destiny (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). An affirmative topic can be on anything, that the individuals within an organization believe gives life to that system (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2008). It is also important to be mindful of the impact of the afore mentioned principles when creating an affirmative topic. In the discovery phase, the emphasis is on discovering the best of what is and identifying what gives life. In the dream phase, the focus is on identifying what might be and envisioning results. The design phase focuses on co-constructing, innovation, and the consideration of what should be. These are followed by the destiny phase, in which the focus is now on organizational and personal commitments and pathways forward (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010).

An integral part of the discovery phase is the Appreciative Interview (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). These interviews provide people with an opportunity to tell speak, spark curiosity, and bring forth the best in individuals and the organization. Additionally, they help stories to surface that shed light on existing strengths, identify potentials, and bring to life positive possibilities. Questions asked in appreciative interviews are created with the intent to uncover and identify what and who an organization is when that organization is at its best (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). Furthermore, appreciative questions elicit play, creativity, and imagination. Good appreciative questions are not concerned with data alone, but rather with relationships and experience as well.

Method

The development of this study has been guided by the research question, *how does an organization's orientation to serve and "do good" impact employee flourishing?* A series of interviews will be conducted with employees from an organization which has the orientation to do good. The interview process will leverage Appreciative Inquiry to not only progress the understanding of the research question, but to discover "the best of what is" through interviews. The interviews will lean on the AI methodology described above, and specifically focus on the discover and dream phases of the 4-D cycle. Upon conclusion of the inquiry, the intention is to feedforward the strengths, the potential of what could be, and the identification of what is most alive in the organization when it is at its best as gathered from the dialogue with the employees.

Interview Questions

In the third section of this paper, we reviewed existing research that illuminated an existing, or in some cases a speculative, relationship between an organizations orientation to do good and elements of well-being. This existing research provides some specifics to explore

within some of the elements of PERMA through the interview questions (i.e., pride for positive emotions). The questions are crafted with the consideration of what the literature has identified while also leveraging the Appreciative Inquiry methodology (Cooperrider & Godwin, 2011).

Opening questions:

1. Think back to when you first decided to join this organization. What was it that initially attracted you? Describe to me what it was about the organization's mission or values that made you want to be a part of the organization.

Probe:

- Now please share what it is today that most excites you and energizes you about being a part of this organization.
2. The past few years have been full of turmoil, disruptions, uncertainties, and stressors- but also many examples of resilience, courageousness, caring, and creativity. Please think back to one of your moments with this organization, a highpoint that stands out because you recall feeling hope, pride, engaged and a part of doing something meaningful. Tell a story about that highpoint experience

Probes:

- How do you remember feeling at that time?
- What was it about You that helped make that such a memorable moment?
- What was it about the surrounding context that helped; the organization, leadership, work climate or something else that contributed to this experience?

Topic Question:

Sometimes, when you hear senior leadership or other colleagues talking about this organization's mission or purpose to do good, to benefit external stakeholders, or to improve the environment, it resonates in a meaningful way with you. Beyond just words, you feel it has some importance or relation to the job you are doing. We would like to learn more about these moments when Purpose, Mission, Values, etc. actually make a difference in how you approach your daily work. Please recall a time or experience when you were motivated or positively influenced in your work from being reminded about, or hearing others discuss, the organization's orientation to do good.

Positive Emotions

1. Reflect on a high point moment, a time when you were experiencing a great sense of pride in your work here. Describe to me what this experience was like.

Probes:

- Describe any other emotions you may have experienced during this moment.
 - Who else was involved in this high point moment you experienced?
 - How did the corporate mission to do good contribute to the experience and feelings you described?
2. When have you felt the most proud to be a part of this company?
 - Why?
 - Tell me more about what was happening when you felt this sense of pride?

- In what way did the company's efforts to do good in the world contribute to the pride you felt?

Engagement

1. Think of a time when you have felt the most alive, engaged, and committed to your work. What were you doing and what were you feeling during that experience?

Probes:

- Was there anything about the organization or leadership that contributed to this experience?
- In what ways did your coworkers contribute to engagement and commitment you experienced?
- Was there something regarding the organization's mission and/or values that helped cultivate this feeling of being alive?

Relationships

1. Tell me a story about the best experience you had as a team in your time here.

Probes:

- In what ways did you feel connected to your team members?
- What was it about the organization's mission to do good that contributed to this moment of connection?

2. Recall a moment when you were a part of a team in this organization that you felt made a positive impact on the lives of others. Describe that experience.

Probes:

- What about this company's mission to make a positive impact do you feel contributed to the success of your team?
- What role did you play in your team's success and in contributing to the positive impact?

Meaning

1. Since joining this organization, when have you experienced the most profound sense of meaning and purpose in your work?

Probes:

- In what ways did this organization's commitment to caring and to contributing to flourishing in the world play a role in this?
 - What other feelings accompanied this moment of meaningfulness?
 - How did your role in the organization contribute to this experience?
2. How does the organization's commitment to doing good affect you?

Probes:

- Tell me of a time when you were part of doing good.
- What was your role? Were you part of a team?
- How did you feel about your contributions and about your organization? What specifically made you feel that way?

Accomplishment

1. In the last six months, recall a time when you felt the highest sense of accomplishment.

Probes:

- What was that like?
- What thoughts did you experience that may have helped you achieve success?
- What role did the organization's mission play in your sense of accomplishment?

Dream Questions

1. Imagine it is five years from now. You come to work and, as if a miracle has occurred, everything is as you always wished it could be. We attract and retain the best talent because we have become known and recognized for our ability to do well by doing good. Our stated corporate mission to help build a world in which everyone and nature prospers is not just words or green speak. We live this mission each day in everything we do. Everyone flourishes because they see and feel the link between their job and service to a higher purpose. So, what do you see going on? Describe what you are doing in your work that is so important and meaningful to you?

Probes:

- How did we get here from where we were in 2022?
- What is it that you are doing in your work that is most meaningful and exciting?
- What impact does our doing good in the world have on you and your team?
- What were some of the biggest changes or innovations that we created to get to this point?

- What does our organization stand for that motivates you to contribute and bring your best self to work each day?
- What are you most proud of when it comes to being a part of this organization?

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