



Introduction to Wellbeing

Positive Psychology Basics (Hart, 2021)

Positive Psychology: The study of what makes life most worth living.

Focuses on strengths, virtues, and optimal functioning.

Hart (2021) introduces core concepts and principles of positive psychology, highlighting factors that contribute to wellbeing.

Defining Wellbeing

Wellbeing: A state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy.

Encompasses physical, mental, emotional, and social health. It's about feeling good and functioning well.

Koci & Donaldson (2023) emphasize the importance of actively caring for one's wellbeing.

Importance of Self-Care (Koci & Donaldson)

Physical Wellbeing Exercise, nutrition, sleep, and hydration contribute to physical health, energy levels and resilience.

Mental Wellbeing Mindfulness, stress management, and cognitive restructuring are essential.

Emotional Wellbeing Practicing self-compassion, emotional regulation, and developing healthy coping mechanisms are vital.

Wellbeing Frameworks

The Medicine Wheel

A holistic framework for understanding health and wellbeing from an Indigenous perspective.

Four quadrants represent different aspects of self: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Achieving balance across these areas promotes overall wellbeing.

Interconnectedness and harmony are emphasized.

Represents the interconnectedness of all aspects of a person's being:

- **Physical:** Health, Wellness
- **Mental:** Thoughts, Beliefs
- **Emotional:** Feelings, Relationships
- **Spiritual:** Connection to Self, Purpose

Seven Grandfather Teachings

Ethical principles guiding behavior and relationships in Indigenous cultures.

Wisdom: To cherish knowledge

Love: To know peace

Respect: To honour all creation

Bravery: To face adversity

Honesty: To face with integrity

Humility: To know yourself as a sacred part of the creation

Truth: To know all these things

Living by these teachings promotes strong moral character and positive relationships, contributing to wellbeing.

Happiness

Defining Happiness (Chapter 2, Hart)

Happiness: Often defined as a state of subjective wellbeing, characterized by positive emotions and life satisfaction.

Hart (2021) explores various perspectives on happiness, differentiating between hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing.

Hedonic vs. Eudaimonic Wellbeing

Hedonic Wellbeing Focuses on pleasure, enjoyment, and the absence of pain. Maximizing positive emotions and minimizing negative ones.

Eudaimonic Wellbeing Focuses on meaning, purpose, and self-realization. Living in accordance with one's values and achieving personal growth.

Key Difference Hedonic wellbeing is about *feeling good*, while eudaimonic wellbeing is about *living well*.

Factors Influencing Happiness

Genetics, environment, and personal choices all play a role in determining happiness levels.

Positive relationships, gratitude, acts of kindness, and mindfulness practices have been shown to increase happiness.

Focusing on personal strengths and pursuing meaningful goals can also enhance happiness.

GPSY Cheat Sheet: Wellbeing, Positive Psychology, Indigenous Wisdom

Wellbeing: PERMA Model (Seligman)

P - Positive Emotion	Feeling good; experiencing joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, and inspiration.
E - Engagement	Being fully absorbed in activities; experiencing ‘flow’ - a state of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment.
R - Relationships	Having strong, positive social connections; feeling loved, supported, and valued by others.
M - Meaning	Serving something bigger than oneself; finding purpose and significance in life through contributing to a cause or community.
A - Accomplishment	Pursuing success, mastering skills, and achieving goals; experiencing a sense of competence and efficacy.
PERMA & Wellbeing	The PERMA model suggests that wellbeing is not simply the absence of negative emotions, but the presence and cultivation of these five elements.

Positive Psychology: Core Principles

Positive psychology focuses on strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive. It is concerned with wellbeing, contentment, and satisfaction (in the past), hope and optimism (for the future), and flow and happiness (in the present).
Key Areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Positive emotionsPositive characterPositive institutions
Goal: To understand and foster the factors that allow individuals, communities, and societies to flourish.

The Medicine Wheel: Overview

Symbolism	Represents interconnectedness, balance, and harmony in life. Often depicted as a circle divided into four quadrants.
Four Directions	Each direction (East, South, West, North) represents different aspects of life, stages of life, elements, and colors. The specific representations vary among different Indigenous cultures.
Aspects of Self	Often associated with the four aspects of self: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Balancing these aspects is key to wellbeing.
Process of Healing	The Medicine Wheel can be used as a framework for understanding and promoting healing, growth, and wholeness.

Seven Grandfather Teachings: Core Values

The Seven Grandfather Teachings are a set of principles that guide ethical and respectful living. They are fundamental to many Indigenous cultures in North America.
The Teachings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Love: To know love is to know peace.Respect: To honour all creation.Courage: To face life with bravery.Honesty: To be truthful in all actions.Wisdom: To cherish knowledge.Humility: To know yourself as a sacred part of creation.Truth: To know all these things.
Application: Living in accordance with these teachings promotes individual and community wellbeing.

Intersections: Wellbeing, Psychology, and Indigenous Knowledge

Positive psychology’s focus on strengths, resilience, and meaning-making aligns with the values embedded in Indigenous knowledge systems like the Medicine Wheel and the Seven Grandfather Teachings.
Both Western psychological approaches and Indigenous perspectives emphasize the importance of social connections, purpose, and a sense of belonging for overall wellbeing.
Indigenous approaches often incorporate a holistic view of wellbeing, encompassing physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions, similar to some contemporary models in psychology.
Culturally adapted interventions that integrate positive psychology principles with Indigenous cultural values can be effective in promoting wellbeing within Indigenous communities.

Resilience Factors

Internal Factors	Optimism, self-efficacy, coping skills, emotional regulation, meaning-making, strong sense of identity.
External Factors	Supportive relationships, access to resources, community involvement, cultural connectedness, safe environment.
Resilience Defined	The ability to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness. Not simply bouncing back, but bouncing <i>forward</i> .
Cultivating Resilience	Developing coping mechanisms, seeking support, practicing self-care, fostering positive relationships, finding purpose, embracing change.

Applications of GPSY Principles

These principles can be applied in various settings to promote wellbeing:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Education: Creating positive school climates, fostering student strengths, teaching resilience skills.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Workplace: Promoting employee wellbeing, fostering positive relationships, creating meaningful work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Healthcare: Integrating wellbeing into treatment plans, promoting patient empowerment, fostering hope.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community Development: Building strong social networks, promoting civic engagement, addressing social determinants of health.

Self-Reflection Questions

Consider the following questions to reflect on your own wellbeing:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">What activities bring you joy and engagement?What are your strengths and how can you use them more often?What are your most meaningful relationships?What is your sense of purpose in life?What are you most proud of accomplishing?How can you incorporate the Seven Grandfather Teachings into your daily life?What practices help you to maintain balance and harmony?