A unified approach to well-being: The development and impact of an undergraduate course

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A Unified Approach to Well-Being: The Development and Impact of an Undergraduate Course

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

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Dedication

To Pi and Ina.

Beginning with preschool recitals and train rides to the firm, you instilled within me the value of education and the knowledge that I could be anything. Thank you for your unparalleled love, guidance, support and encouragement. I am proud to follow your example.
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ABSTRACT

With the rise of positive psychology, there has been a burgeoning literature on the construct of well-being. Unfortunately, as is the case with much psychological research, the literature is not assimilated and integrated into a broad model for understanding psychology and human nature writ large. Connecting such research to a deep theoretical and philosophical model is particularly important with a construct like well-being because it both is a complicated and central construct for the field. There were two main objectives to the study. First, the goal was to develop a college student course on well-being that was conceptually grounded in Henriques' (2011) unified theory of psychology and one that college students would understand, engage in, and find valuable. The second objective was to explore the extent to which the course impacted student well-being, as assessed by a variety of measures. To address these objectives, a course was developed, and 25 students enrolled and participated in it during the fall of 2011. A second group of 26 students who were enrolled in an alternative psychology course elective also completed the battery of well-being measures and thus served as controls. Results were promising; significant differences on a number of measures of well-being and emotion were found for the intervention group but not for the control group. The implications and limitations of the current research are discussed.
Chapter I

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Applied and professional psychology has historically focused heavily on psychopathology, thus leading the field to become highly medicalized. Recognizing this focus, in the late 1990’s positive psychology was formed as a response to the medicalization of psychology. Positive psychology has since developed as a subfield of psychology that moved the focus away from exploring pathology and towards better understanding human strengths, resilience, and positive functioning.

Although the move towards positive psychology was needed and provided the field with a more balanced view of human functioning, its differentiation as separate from more traditional domains of psychology has had the consequence of contributing to the fragmentation within the field. Furthermore, the lack of an agreed upon consensus as to the goal or topic of positive psychology and how constructs like happiness and well-being are conceptualized has further led to fragmentation and the proliferation of competing paradigms.

Concerned with the lack of a definition and agreed upon subject matter, the proliferation of unconnected research findings, and the conceptual fragmentation throughout psychology, Henriques (2003, 2004, 2008) has offered a new unified theory of psychology (Henriques, 2011) that aims to assimilate and integrate key insights from the field into a more coherent whole. The goal in so doing is that psychology can then generate a more cumulative base of knowledge grounded in a sophisticated philosophical and theoretical system that can both hold and describe the complexities of human nature.
With the unified theory of psychology providing a lens used to assimilate and integrate key insights from positive psychology into a coherent map of well-being, two purposes of the current study emerged. The first purpose was to develop and effectively deliver a course on well-being that uses the unified approach to conceptualizing people as a theoretical framework and also incorporates the latest research in psychology and well-being. The second purpose was to determine if such a course would enhance college student well-being.

To effectively investigate the second question, the research project assessed and compared the well-being of the experimental group to a control group. The experimental group consisted of students enrolled in the well-being course, which was placed on the heading of, the Psychology of Adjustment. The control group consisted of undergraduate psychology majors enrolled in a psychology elective course. The goals of the course, as outlined in the syllabus, were to focus on the concept of adjustment and well-being through a unified psychological lens by exposing students to the current research in the field and fostering self-reflective exploration. Students were required to think critically, analytically, and reflectively both about themselves and the world around them.

Inherent in the course was a personal project that asked students to take a self-reflective examination of their own adjustment and well-being. To foster this process, students were guided through several self-report measures as well as a semi-structured interview. The completion of these measures was crucial to their successful completion of the course, as it sought to provide valuable insight into their individual functioning. After students were provided with the results from these measures, the information was anonymously combined into a cohort of the class and it was used as data for the study.
The study thus yields valuable information pertaining to both the in-depth assessment of well-being, the elements that result in changing well-being and a determination if, as a group, the course improves the students well-being or not.

To assess student well-being, a battery of measures was developed which included the Scales of Psychological Well-Being – Short Form (Ryff, 1989a), Psychological Well-Being Narrative Form (Henriques, n.d.), Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985), Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1979), Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Hills & Argyle, 2002), the Well-Being Interview (Asselin, 2012) and a supplemental coping questionnaire. These measures were given twice, prior to the course and following. An abbreviated battery, consisting of four measures, was then administered at approximately four months following completion of the intervention. Results were that for the experimental condition, but not the control, significant pre- and post-test differences were found on the Psychological Well-Being Narrative Form, the PANAS Negative Emotions scale, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire and the WBI Overall, Satisfaction, Emotion and Coping subscales. Additionally, significant interaction effects were seen on the Overall and Emotions subscales from the WBI. No significant changes were noted at follow-up testing.
Positive Psychology

The Emergence and Rationale of Positive Psychology. Prior to World War II there were three missions of applied and professional psychology. The first was to cure mental illness, the second was to make the lives of all people more productive and fulfilling, and the third was to identify and nurture high talent (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). After World War II, the founding of the Veterans Administration (now Veteran Affairs; VA) in 1946 and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in 1947 provided alternative economic motivation and quickly changed the field of applied psychology. The establishment of the VA provided professional psychologists a prosperous venue for treating mental illness in a growing population. Similarly, the establishment of NIMH provided research oriented and academic psychologists funding for studies related to pathology.

These developments led the field towards becoming increasingly medicalized and viewing itself as the subfield of medicine concerned with mental illness (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Consider, for example, how psychological disorders are often thought to be analogous to medical diseases. Specifically, psychological disorders are often conceptualized as the result of inner malfunction, thus making the role of psychologists as clinicians hired to heal. “The clinician’s task is to identify (diagnose) the disorder (disease) inside the person (patient) and to prescribe an intervention (treatment) that will eliminate (cure) the internal disorder (disease)” (Maddux, 2002, p. 14). Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) make a similar point, stating that
professional psychology's focus was treating mental illness, which was accomplished by repairing “damaged habits, damaged drives, damaged childhoods, and damaged brains” (p. 6).

Further ingraining the illness ideology and medicalization of clinical psychology is the fact that such foundations are inherent within the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM; current edition, DSM-IV-TR; American Psychiatric Association, 2004). The DSM is the guiding structure for understanding, diagnosing and treating psychopathology and has been increasingly utilized since its first edition was published in 1952. Although it provided a needed organizational structure, a potential problem that arose was that the DSM categorizes and pathologizes the human experience, thus moving away from alternative explanations, individual experiences of reality and reactionary circumstances. Maddux (2002) claimed that the entanglement between the profession of clinical psychology and the structure of the DSM inevitably leads to pathologizing. He recommended that psychologists adopt an iconoclastic attitude toward the DSM, a move he believes is necessary for psychology to move away from the illness ideology.

In sum, social, cultural and economic factors ushered professional psychologists towards the first mission of applied psychology, curing mental illness, but away from the final two, improving productivity and nurturing high talent. Barone, Maddux, and Snyder (1997) identified four basic assumptions regarding the scope and nature of psychological adjustment and maladjustment. The first assumption is that clinical psychology is concerned with psychopathology. Second, the nature of psychopathology within clinical populations is inherently different than the nature of problems of healthy
functioning within nonclinical populations. The third assumption is that psychological disorders are analogous to medical diseases, and the fourth assumption is that it is the role of the psychologist to identify and treat disorders.

As a specific response to the above-mentioned concerns and observations regarding the current state of clinical psychology, positive psychology became formalized as a subfield of psychology during Martin E. P. Seligman’s 1998 Presidential Address to the American Psychological Association (Seligman, 1999). Promoted by his address, the formalization of positive psychology attempted to move away from a preoccupation with pathology and repair and toward the recognition of the positive qualities of individual functioning. In 2002 Seligman issued a restatement of the conceptualization and goal of the field and stated:

Psychology is not just the study of disease, weakness, and damage; it is also the study of strength and virtue. Treatment is not just fixing what is wrong; it is also building what is right. Psychology is not just about illness or health; it also is about work, education, insight, love, growth, and play. And in this quest for what is best, positive psychology does not rely on wishful thinking, self-deception, or hand waving; instead, it tries to adapt what is best in the scientific method to the unique problems that human behavior presents in all its complexity. (Seligman, 2002a, p. 4)

The proliferation of ideas, studies, articles and researchers within the subfield of positive psychology has led to many differing yet overlapping definitions. In 2005, the *Journal of Positive Psychology* stated, “Positive psychology is about scientifically
informed perspectives on what makes life worth living. It focuses on aspects of the human condition that lead to happiness, fulfillment and flourishing.”

Seligman, Steen, Park, and Peterson (2005) consider positive psychology to be an umbrella term for the scientific exploration of positive emotions, positive character traits, and enabling institutions. Although developed in response to concerns, positive psychology was not created to replace the focus on human suffering and psychopathology. Rather it was developed with the intention to supplement what is already known in order to foster a more complete discipline and understanding of human functioning including both positive and negative aspects.

Additionally, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) describe positive psychology at three levels: subjective, individual, and group. The subjective level incorporates the past, present and future and is about valued subjective experiences; specifically, it involves, “Well-being, contentment, and satisfaction (in the past); hope and optimism (for the future); and flow and happiness (in the present)” (p. 5). The individual level represents, “Positive individual traits; the capacity for love and vocation, courage, interpersonal skill, aesthetic sensibility, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future mindedness, spirituality, high talent, and wisdom” (p. 5). The final level, the group level, concerns “Civic virtues and the institutions that move individuals towards better citizenship [such as] responsibility, nurturance, altruism, civility, moderation, tolerance, and work ethic” (p. 5).

Linley, Joseph, Harrington, and Wood (2006) propose three possible future directions for positive psychology. The first is that positive psychology becomes obsolete due to the fact that it has become effectively integrated into psychology. A
second possible future is that positive psychology becomes somewhat integrated into psychology so that researchers and clinicians understand the full range of human functioning, but there remains specialties. Finally, the third is that the desired integration fails and positive psychologists continue as specialized and marginalized within the broader field of psychology.

As described below, the present work is an exercise in integration and hopes that, with the appropriate meta-theoretical framework, the first future direction will be realized by the effective assimilation and integration of the many different approaches into a single coherent framework. Perhaps the most central concepts in positive psychology have been happiness and well-being. These constructs are reviewed below, setting the stage for integration into a larger theoretical system.

**Happiness: An Undefined, yet Central Construct**

While the focus of positive psychology has evolved over its short history, happiness was originally central construct. What is it to be happy? What makes a happy person? How can happiness be found? Indeed, long before the formal discipline of psychology, scholarly interest in happiness can be traced through history and linked to pre-Socratic philosophers.

Philosophers and religious icons have suggested that the keys to happiness can be found in love, wisdom, money, youth, and the Eastern notion of non-attachment. Democritus suggested that happiness comes not from possessions but from the ways in which people reacted to life circumstances (Tatarkiewicz, 1976). Then, with the philosophies of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, Democritus’ conceptualization became less
prevalent. Eudemonia prevailed and happiness became associated with possessing the greatest goods (Tatarkiewicz, 1976).

Although these philosophers agreed that happiness was due to goods, there was little agreement as to which goods were most desirable or sought after. Aristotle believed that the most valuable good was realizing one’s fullest potential (Waterman, 1990). Rousseau wrote happiness to be a good bank account, a good cook, and good digestion, and Thoreau claimed that happiness was a byproduct of activity. In the third century B.C., Aristippus of Cyrene, suggested that happiness derives from an extreme form of hedonism in which individuals pursue immediate pleasure and enjoyment (Tatarkiewicz, 1976). Aristippus’ version of hedonism related to the sum of many pleasurable activities and thus was impossible to maintain. As a result, hedonism was adopted by the Epicurians who attempted to more carefully maximize pleasure by introducing a degree of prudence (Diener, Napa Scollon, & Lucas, 2003). Utilitarians suggested that happiness resulted from the presence of pleasure and the absence of pain. This developed through time and modern economists argue that people ought make choices that maximize utility. Regardless of the means, measure, or endpoint of happiness, happiness as a construct of interest has been present for thousands of years.

Wilson (as cited in Diener, 1984) stated that when it comes to understanding happiness, little has been accomplished since the early philosophers. As such, psychologists sought to fix this by moving away from philosophizing and by beginning to empirically study questions such as: What is happiness? Can happiness be measured? and; What causes happiness? For example, Flugel (1925) asked participants to record and reflect upon emotional events and reactions. Then following the Second World War,
researchers began polling individuals about their happiness and life satisfaction using questionnaires.

The study of happiness continued and closely associated with the formal launch of positive psychology, Martin Seligman (2002b) presented Authentic Happiness Theory, which aimed to provide fundamental, theoretical and scientific explorations into happiness. Authentic Happiness Theory recognized three elements of happiness: 1) positive emotion; 2) engagement; and, 3) meaning. Common amongst each element is the idea that individuals choose each for its own sake rather than choosing it due to external motivation or reinforcement (Seligman, 2002b). Seligman further supports the divide of happiness into these three elements stating that they more easily measure and better-define the construct of happiness as opposed to the colloquial understanding of the term happiness itself.

The first element, positive emotion, relates to feelings (e.g., pleasure, warmth, comfort, joy, love) and a life based on positive emotion is referred to as the “pleasant life.” Engagement, which is the second element, refers to Csikszentmihalyi’s notion of flow. Flow involves the state when an individual is completely absorbed in what he or she is doing but at the same time the individual is highly effective in expressing skill and is not consciously thinking about his or her actions (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991, 1997; Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993). Flow occurs when there are perceived challenges that neither overmatch nor underutilize existing skill and when there are proximal goals and immediate feedback about the progress being made. Seligman refers to a life in flow as the “engaged life”. The third, and final, element of happiness is meaning. Meaning, or purpose, may derive from a sense of belonging or service towards something bigger
than the self; for example, family, religion, or school. In sum, Authentic Happiness Theory, which at one point was the basis for positive psychology, is about happiness and states that happiness consists of positive emotion, engagement and meaning.

From early philosophers to modern scholars, a lack of a coherent and agreed upon definition of happiness has remained a problem for the field. As such, a shift in conceptualization has occurred from exploring the construct of happiness to exploring the construct of well-being. As a result, there are various different yet overlapping approaches to conceptualizing well-being. Most notable are the theories of subjective well-being (SWB) and psychological well-being (PWB), but well-being has also been described in terms of hedonic and eudemonic approaches and most recently in terms of flourishing or PERMA.

**Subjective Well-Being**

Subjective well-being is understood to be the self-appraisals of individuals’ lives based on cognitive evaluations (e.g., How satisfied are you with your life?) and affective evaluations (e.g., How often do you feel the presence of joy or satisfaction? How often do you feel distraught or unfulfilled?; Diener, Napa Scollon, & Lucas, 2003). In its initial conceptualization, Diener (1984) suggested three hallmarks of SWB. The first is that it is subjective, meaning that it is determined by the individual and thus based on or influenced by personal experiences. The second is that SWB includes not just the absence of negative factors, but also the presence of positive factors. The third hallmark is that measures of SWB include global assessments of all aspects of the person’s life. Building upon these factors, SWB is now thought to include positive affect, negative affect, global judgments of life satisfaction, and domain judgments of satisfaction. Each
component is to be understood individually, but also in relationship to the other components. This suggests that well-being is built from current appraisals of emotions, broad judgments of life satisfaction and judgment of domains such as work and relationships.

To demonstrate the components of SWB Diener et al. (2003), present a hierarchical model in which each of the four constructs (positive affect, negative affect, life satisfaction and domain satisfaction) exists on multiple levels (see Appendix A for an adaptation of the model). The highest level is the overarching construct, subjective well-being. From this perspective, it is thought to reflect a general representation of one’s life. On the second level are the four components of well-being – positive affect, negative affect, global satisfaction, and domain satisfaction. Each component on this level is independent yet moderately correlated and conceptually related. The lower levels are specific sub-components related to the larger section.

The inclusion of positive and negative affect as concepts in SWB were first introduced when Jahoda (1958) suggested that rather than focusing only on mental illness, positive states should also be included in the study of well-being. Positive and negative affect are meant to reflect basic experiences of ongoing events and are considered to be moods and emotions. Bradburn (1969) empirically examined Jahoda’s notion and found that positive affect and negative affect are independent constructs that both contributed to subjective well-being. In other words, rather than being different ends of a continuum, positive and negative affect are thought to be separate factors that are influenced by different variables. Furthermore, this discovery suggested to the field
of psychology that the simple removal of negative emotions would not guarantee the experience of positive emotions (Diener, Lucas, & Oishi, 2002).

The third component, life satisfaction, was first introduced by Andrews and Withey (1976) and is considered a global estimate of the quality of an individual’s life. Diener et al. (2003) note that the global estimates of life satisfaction are cognitive judgments. It is necessary that individuals are able to examine the conditions of their lives, weigh the importance of the conditions, and then evaluate their lives on a scale (e.g., satisfied to unsatisfied). It is important that the measurement of domain satisfaction include all relevant domains. Since it would be a cognitively demanding task to consider and weigh each aspect of one’s life, individuals rely on shortcuts to make these judgments. Often people’s life satisfaction is based on the information present at the time of questioning (Diener et al., 2003). For example, rather than considering all domains, people consider the domain that is most currently important (i.e., work, love, health) and appraisals about that information is used to make judgments about overall life satisfaction. Despite using shortcuts to assess SWB, researchers have found that there is substantial stability over time (Ehrhardt, Saris, & Veenhoven, 2000) and that individuals select domains that are relevant and relatively stable.

The fourth component, domain satisfaction, was initially suggested by Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976), and refers to an individual’s evaluation of specific domains; for example, domains such as work, marriage, health and leisure. Diener (1984) noted that the domains that are closest and most immediate to individual’s personal lives are the domains which most impact SWB. Furthermore, the domains of importance are first culturally determined and then within cultures, subject to individual
preference. For example, Diener, Lucas, Oishi, and Suh (2002) found that happy individuals rated their personally best domains most heavily whereas unhappy individuals rated their personally worst domains heaviest. In sum, based on the concept of SWB, a happy person is one who experiences high levels of pleasant emotions and low levels of negative emotions, and has high satisfaction, both in general and in specific life domains.

**Measuring Subjective Well-Being.** Measures of SWB have evolved just as the concept of SWB has evolved. Initial measures included one-item global measures with questions such as, “How do you feel about your life as a whole?” On such measures, individuals were instructed to respond on 7-point scales ranging from “delighted” to “terrible” (Andrews & Withey, 1976). Fujita and Diener (2005) point out that despite the brevity of global measures, the test-retest reliability is .55 over 17 years. More recent self-report measures of well-being have become slightly longer. Scales such as the PANAS (Positive and Negative Affect Scale; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) and the Satisfaction With Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985), have multiple items and strong psychometric properties (Diener, 2000). Kurtz and Lyubomirsky (2011) review methodological advancements in the study of well-being, and then suggest that the future of well-being research include not only laboratory assessment of well-being but also real-time assessment through the utilization of technology.

One method of collecting data on well-being is the naturalistic experience-sampling method (ESM). ESM allows researchers to assess participant’s SWB randomly throughout the day by asking for self-report measures of well-being. Often this is completed via technology such as pagers, which signal participants to take a moment and record their current well-being and/or current activity (Conner, Tennen, Fleeson, &
Barrett, 2009). Due to limitations, such as the financial expense for researchers and the required of time and cooperation for participants in ESM, Kahneman, Krueger, Schkade, Schwarz, and Stone (2004) suggested a short-term daily diary called the day reconstruction method. In this method participants are asked to break their day into episodes and create a detailed account of each episode. Although less costly, the day reconstruction method is still time consuming.

Regardless of the method, self-report or ESM, several possible biases in the collection of SWB data have been recognized (Kahneman et al., 2004). Schwarz and Strack (1999) suggest that measures of SWB can be influenced by mood or situational factors at the time of responding. For example if a respondent had just heard good news prior to completing the survey he or she is more likely to rate him or herself higher on a measure of SWB than an individual who had just heard bad news prior to completing the form. Similarly, measures of SWB can also be influenced by recent by minor situational circumstances. An additional critique by Schwarz and Strack (1999) relates to the order and grouping of items as an influence on how an individual may rate him or herself. They suggest that if a group of questions is more negative in nature then the individual may rate him or herself more negatively when compared to a group of questions that are more positive. Similarly, when questions are presented more positively, the respondent is more likely to rate him or herself positively due to the availability of a positive appraisal.

Social desirability is another factor influencing the reliability and validity of measures of SWB (Diener, 2000; Paulhus, 2002). Individuals may be driven to respond to questions in a way that strays from their true view of self towards a way that portrays them in a positive manner. This is due to their awareness of others and a desire to be
viewed positively. Furthermore, Andrews and Withey (1976) and Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976) point out that when individuals are asked to assess their well-being, they consider domains that are personally or culturally most valued rather than making an equivalent appraisal of each domain. This concern has the potential to lead to variable assessments both within and between individuals.

**Psychological Well-Being**

Despite the popularity of subjective well-being research, Ryff (1989a) raised questions concerning the subjective approach. She critiqued it as being overly simplistic and lacking theoretical support. Ryff concluded that SWB failed to address psychological functioning and that a comprehensive view of well-being ought to include positive psychological functioning. To address these concerns, Ryff investigated past theories and theorists whose work aimed at defining positive psychological functioning (e.g., Maslow’s conception of self-actualization, Rogers’ view of the fully functioning person, Jung’s formulation of individuation, and Allport’s conception of maturity), life span developmental perspectives (e.g., Erikson’s psychosocial stage model, Buhler’s basic life tendencies that work toward fulfillment of life, and Neugarten’s description of personality change in later life), and Jahoda’s suggestion for including positive criteria in defining mental health, rather than the lack of negative symptoms.

Recognizing the importance of subjective evaluations of well-being, Ryff (1989b) also sought to develop a perspective that was grounded in theory. As such, her review of past research led her to believe that the similar features of positive psychological functioning could be integrated into a parsimonious conceptualization of well-being. Ryff (1989b) proposed a perspective that views well-being as a multidimensional
psychological construct comprised of six dimensions: self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth (Ryff & Singer, 1996).

The first dimension, self-acceptance, is the presence of positive attitudes toward oneself. Throughout the literature, self-acceptance is one of the most prevalent themes and is considered a central feature for mental health (Ryff & Singer, 1996). An individual high in self-acceptance “possesses a positive attitude toward the self; acknowledges and accepts multiple aspects of self, including good and bad qualities; feels positive about past life” while an individual low in self-acceptance “feels dissatisfied with self; is disappointed with what has occurred in past life; is troubled about certain personal qualities; wishes to be different than what he or she is” (Ryff, 1989a, p. 1072).

Positive relations with others, the second domain, emphasizes the importance of warm, trusting interpersonal relationships and considers the ability to love as central to mental health. An individual high on this dimension “has warm, satisfying, trusting relationships with others; is concerned about the welfare of others; capable of strong empathy, affection, and intimacy; understands give and take of human relationships” and a low scorer on this dimension “has few close relationships with others; finds it difficult to be warm, open, and concerned about others; is isolated and frustrated in interpersonal relationships; not willing to make compromises to sustain important ties with others” (Ryff, 1989a, p. 1072).

The third dimension, autonomy, reflects the quality of independence. A high scorer on autonomy “is self-determining and independent; able to resist social pressures
to think and act in certain ways; regulates behavior from within; evaluates self by personal standards” and a low scorer “is concerned about the expectations and evaluations of others; relies on judgments of others to make important decisions; conforms to social pressures to think and act in certain ways” (Ryff, 1989a, p. 1072).

Environmental mastery, the fourth dimension, emphasizes the individual’s ability to choose or create environments that foster psychological well-being and mental health. An individual high in the dimension of environmental mastery “has a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment; controls complex array of external activities; makes effective use of surrounding opportunities; able to choose or create contexts suitable to personal needs and values” while an individual low in this dimension “has difficulty managing everyday affairs; feels unable to change or improve surrounding context; is unaware of surrounding opportunities; lacks sense of control over external world” (Ryff, 1989a, p. 1072).

Purpose in life, which is the fifth dimension, includes an individual’s feelings towards and understanding of a purpose or meaning to life. An individual who scores highly in this dimension “has goals in life and a sense of directedness; feels there is meaning to present and past life; holds beliefs that give life purpose; has aims and objectives for living” whereas a low scoring individual “lacks a sense of meaning in life; has few goals or aims, lacks sense of direction; does not see purpose of past life; has no outlook or beliefs that give life meaning” (Ryff, 1989a, p. 1072).

The sixth and final dimension of PWB is that of personal growth. This dimension reflects the need for individuals to continue developing potential and to grow and expand as people. A high scoring individual is one that “has a feeling of continued development;
sees self as growing and expanding; is open to new experiences; has sense of realizing his or her potential; sees improvement in self and behavior over time; is changing ways that reflect more self-knowledge and effectiveness” and a low scoring individual “has a sense of personal stagnation; lacks sense of improvement or expansion over time; feels bored and uninterested with life; feels unable to develop new attitudes or behaviors” (Ryff, 1989a, p. 1072).

Each of these dimensions, represented by high and low scoring criteria, represent overlapping themes in the literature on personal growth, life-span development and mental health. The compilation of such areas provides a cohesive conceptualization of well-being based on relevant theoretical frameworks. From this perspective, well-being and mental health involve “processes of setting and pursuing goals, attempting to realize one’s potential, experiencing deep connections to others, managing surrounding demands and opportunities, exercising self-direction, and possessing positive self-regard” (Ryff, 1989a, p. 1072).

Based on this formulation, Ryff (1989a; 1989b) sought to develop a theoretically informed, structured, self-report instrument to accurately assess PWB. A construct-oriented approach was utilized which began by operationalizing each of the six dimensions and then creating bipolar scale definitions based on high and low scorers, as described above. Following preliminary evaluations, 32 items (16 positive and 16 negative) were identified for each dimension. The measure was then administered to 321 adult male and female participants. Results suggested acceptable preliminary psychometric properties, which were further explored in later studies. Furthermore, Ryff’s current conceptualization was compared to existing measures of psychological
functioning [i.e., the Affect Balance Scale (Bradburn, 1969), the Life Satisfaction Index (Neugarten et al., 1961), Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), The Revised Philadelphia Geriatric Center Morale Scale (Lawton, 1975), and Levinson’s (1974) three locus of control subscales and Depression Scale (Zung, 1965)] and tests of convergence were completed.

Such explorations revealed that prior assessments of well-being lacked key aspects of positive functioning as noted as important by Ryff. For example, while self-acceptance and environmental mastery were strongly correlated with measures of life satisfaction, affect balance, self-esteem and morale, there was a lack of convergence with the dimensions of positive relations with others, autonomy, purpose in life, and personal growth. Overall, this suggests that past conceptualizations and subsequent measures of well-being have been “somewhat narrow” and that at this time there existed a gap between the theory of well-being and empirical study of well-being (Ryff, 1989a, p. 1077).

**Hedonic and Eudaimonic Conceptualizations of Well-Being**

Despite growing popularity and attention paid to the construct of well-being, and despite the focused study of both SWB and PWB, a lack of ability to form a consensus persisted and, as a result, the field remained divided. Recognizing this as not only a contemporary debate but also as a historical debate dating back to early philosophers, Ryan and Deci (2001) looked beyond well-being as categorized by subjective and psychological theories and attempted to understand it in different terms. Based on their research they were able to divide the study of well-being into two broad traditions: hedonic and eudaimonic.
**Hedonic Well-Being.** The hedonic approach to well-being focuses on happiness and defines well-being in terms of maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain. Unsurprisingly, hedonic pleasure has a long history and dates back to the fourth century B.C. philosopher Aristippus who suggested that happiness is the compilation of hedonic moments. Through time, this notion has received support and criticism, but nonetheless, has remained and has been adopted by current psychologists. For example, in a volume titled, *Well-being: The Foundations of Hedonic Psychology*, Kahneman, Diener, and Schwarz (1999) looked more closely at hedonic theories and defined hedonic psychology as the study of “what makes experiences and life pleasant and unpleasant” (p. ix). Ryan and Deci (2001) suggest that according to the conceptualization of Kahneman et al. (1999), well-being and hedonism are equivalent and therefore clearly align the goal of hedonic psychology as increasing happiness.

**Eudaimonic Well-Being.** Conversely, the eudaimonic approach to well-being steps away from subjective measures of happiness and focuses upon meaning and self-realization. Aristotle was the first credited with recognizing the eudaimonic position, as he believed hedonic happiness to be vulgar and that a hedonic view of happiness made humans “slave-like” followers of desire (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Instead, Aristotle claimed that happiness could be found in the expression of virtue, or in doing what is worth doing and believed that eudaimonia referred to living life to its fullest potential.

Eudaimonic research has focused on discerning the factors that allow individuals to fulfill their potential. Steger, Kashdan, and Oishi (2008) recognize two theories associated with the eudaimonic approach to well-being: Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), and Psychological Well-Being (Ryff & Singer, 1998). Eudaimonic well-
being is reached when, according to Self-Determination Theory, three psychological needs (relatedness, autonomy, and competence) are met. And, according to Psychological Well-Being eudaimonic well-being is met when high levels of the six constructs (relatedness, autonomy, personal growth, self-acceptance, purpose in life, and environmental mastery) are met. Overall, both theories suggest that people can reach their full potential, or attain eudaimonic well-being, by satisfying specific needs. Both theories also suggest that there are “eudaimonic activities” that foster well-being (Steger et al., 2008).

Eudaimonic theories of well-being also point out that not all activities which result in feelings of happiness will lead to well-being and may not be well-valued by the individual. For example, opiates, are a pleasure producing chemical that lead to feelings of happiness. Opiates are also a chemical often misused or abused thus not believed to promote wellness. The eudaimonic perspective thus suggests that subjective happiness, or happiness as an end result, should not and cannot be equated with well-being. Despite functioning as an ongoing and informative intellectual debate, the two conceptualizations of well-being remain distinct, and thus there remains no unified conceptualization of well-being.

**Well-Being Theory: From Happiness to Flourishing**

In *Authentic Happiness*, Seligman (2002b) asserted that the primary topic of positive psychology was happiness, the way to measure happiness was life satisfaction and the goal of positive psychology was to increase life satisfaction, therein increasing happiness. Recently, the foundation of Seligman’s positive psychology changed from a theory of Authentic Happiness to a theory of well-being (i.e., Well-Being Theory).
Stating that he now “detests” the word happiness (Seligman, 2011, p. 9), Seligman claims that the topic of positive psychology is well-being, the way to measure well-being is through flourishing, and the goal of positive psychology is to increase flourishing.

Explaining the change from happiness to well-being, Seligman (2011) claimed that the term happiness is monistic, simplistic and colloquial. Recognizing happiness as overly simplifying the fundamental goal of the human condition, Seligman suggested that there are more contributing factors, barriers, and motivators of behavior than pure happiness. This is similar to the above-noted difficulties in defining happiness, epitomized by the fact that no consensus has been reached regarding the definition of happiness, and therefore, its components have remained undefined. Further taking away from the strength of happiness as a scientific term is the popularity of the term amongst lay individuals who use it to connote anything positive and is represented by a trite yellow smiley face.

Seligman (2011) offered additional critiques of his own Authentic Happiness Theory. Authentic Happiness Theory was designed as having three components, each of equal weight and importance, which contribute to happiness. This is problematic since in lay understanding happiness is typically linked to the experience of positive emotion, but not to engagement or meaning. As such, feeling “happy” is considered synonymous with feeling “pleasant”, or “joyful”, but not with feeling “engaged” or “meaningful”. In other words, when an individual assesses whether he or she is happy, he or she is likely considering mood, regardless of level of engagement and meaning. Therefore, mood seems a better indicator of happiness than engagement or meaning. In sum, the first
The inadequacy of Authentic Happiness Theory is the idea the original three-pronged theory of happiness is not ecologically supported.

The second inadequacy of Authentic Happiness Theory, according to Seligman (2011), has to do with the importance given to life satisfaction. In Authentic Happiness Theory increasing life satisfaction is the goal of positive psychology. Seligman suggests that this is problematic since life satisfaction is a subjective report, which is highly based on mood at the time of the question. Therefore, measures of life satisfaction are not adequately measuring the targeted construct since as described above, respondents are not considering engagement and meaning.

Seligman's (2011) third critique of his prior formulation is that the three components, positive emotion, engagement and meaning are some – but not all – of the factors that people choose for their own sake. Inherent in this inadequacy is the fact that Seligman asserts that to be a component of a theory, the component must be chosen for its own sake and must not serve another purpose. Through this inadequacy he suggests that there are more components than the three originally specified, that contribute to happiness, or what he now refers to as well-being.

To build his new theory and differentiate it from Authentic Happiness Theory, Seligman (2011) suggests that Well-Being Theory is different because in Well-Being Theory the topic of positive psychology is not a “thing” (i.e., no longer happiness) but is now a construct. The construct, now well-being, is distinguishable from a “thing” because according to Seligman, it has many measureable elements that each contribute to well-being, but none of which alone define well-being. From a critical vantage point, one could argue that this is an unclear distinction that seems to be more a change of
semantics. In Authentic Happiness Theory, happiness was also presented as a construct, and it was argued by Seligman that positive emotion, engagement and meaning each contributed to happiness, but none alone defined happiness. While Seligman is clear in that he believes his first theory was flawed for the reasons above, he does not provide rationale additional to the distinction of a “thing” and a “construct” for how Well-Being Theory is improved.

To promote Well-Being Theory, Seligman (2011) uses the acronym, PERMA and states that the construct of well-being is comprised of five elements, which are: positive emotion, engagement, meaning, positive relationships, and accomplishment. Notably, the first three components (positive emotion, engagement and meaning) are taken directly from Authentic Happiness Theory (with minor adaptations) and only positive relationships and accomplishment are novel to Well-Being Theory.

The greatest differences are the change of the title and topic, from Authentic Happiness to Well-Being and the addition of two elements, relationships and accomplishments. Seligman (2011) states however that PERMA are “not mere self-reports of thoughts and feelings of positive emotion, of how engaged you are, and of how much meaning you have in life, as the original theory of authentic happiness” (p. 15). The precision of this distinction is questionable given that three of the five PERMA constructs appear to remain self-reports with the addition of what appear to be self-reports of relationship and accomplishments.

Seligman (2011) claimed that three properties must be present for something to be an element of PERMA. The first, “it contributes to well-being”, second, “many people pursue it for its own sake, not merely to get any of the other elements”, and third, “it is
defined and measured independently of the other elements (exclusivity)” (p. 16).

Without further explanation Seligman defines each of the five elements and how they meet the three properties.

Positive emotion and engagement remain very similar in Well-Being Theory from that of Authentic Happiness Theory and are both measured subjectively through self-report. The only difference for positive emotion is that no longer are happiness and life satisfaction the end goal of the theory but now they are merely considered being part of the subjective appraisal of positive emotion. The third element retained from Authentic Happiness Theory, meaning, has a subjective component but is not solely subjective in its measurement. It is subjective in that the ratings are determined by the individual, based on his or her perceived level of meaning. But, according to Seligman (2011), this also presents limits since the degree of perceived meaning can later change. Although he recognized this as subjective and thus permeable, he did not appear to offer any suggestions for how to accurately or objectively assess meaning. Accomplishment, the fourth element, and first element new to Well-Being Theory, is included because Seligman states that it can be pursued for its own sake. The fifth and final element, and second new to Well-Being Theory, is positive relationships. Seligman points out that most of the positive events in individual’s lives involve the physical or supportive presence of other people.

One notable criticism of Seligman's (2011) formulation is that although he describes the elements and state that each are part of well-being, there is no provided formula or understanding of how much or in what way each contributes. For example, is having five close friends any better or worse in terms of an individual’s well-being than
one or fifty? And if positive emotion (i.e., happiness and life satisfaction) are lacking but
accomplishment is high, how does that impact overall well-being? Furthermore, while
noting that positive emotion, engagement and a portion of meaning to a degree are
measured subjectively, he does not describe how the other elements, achievement,
positive relationships or the other portion of meaning are measured objectively. What is
his objective measure of relationships? And what meets an appropriate degree of well-
being? One relationship? Ten relationships? Fifty relationships?

Most unclear about Seligman's (2011) descriptions of the five elements is why
they are nested within the three criteria that determine each as a valid element. Seligman
provides no rationale as to why each criterion is necessary or even as to why it is
necessary to have criteria. In terms of the two new elements, the second criteria,
elements that are pursued for their own sake, is most problematic as it is hard to
differentiate what is pursued for its own sake versus what is pursued for positive emotion,
meaning or engagement. Seligman recognizes this difficulty in terms of positive
relationships and says, “I do not know the answer to [whether positive relationships are
pursued for their own sake] with any certainty, and I do not even know of a crucial
experimental test…” (p. 22). He then goes to describe studies of evolutionary
psychology and concludes “the big social brain, the hive emotions, and group selection
persuade me that positive relationships are one of the five basic elements of well-being”
(p. 23). Regardless of the rationale provided, the question still remains as to why it is so
important for an element to be pursued for its own sake.

In a possible attempt to ground Well-Being Theory in theory as supported by
scientific evidence, Seligman (2011) states that each of the five pillars of PERMA are
supported by “strengths and virtues”. Here he appears to be referring to his 24 signature strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), which is a system that attempts to operationalize positive human functioning. Specifically, Seligman (2011) says, “deploying your highest strengths leads to more positive emotion, to more meaning, to more accomplishment, and to better relationships” (p. 24). Despite this claim and others which say that supporting each pillar are the signature strengths, Seligman fails to suggest specifically how the strengths support PERMA or what combination of strengths is most likely to lead to PERMA or really anything else regarding the strengths which he quickly claims to be the basis for his theory. This link between PERMA and the strengths is symbolic of much of *Flourish* in that connections and prescriptions are made and stated as evidenced fact but any support for such connections or suggestions is missing.

As noted above, the goal of Authentic Happiness Theory was to increase happiness while the goal of well-being theory is to increase the amount of flourishing (Seligman, 2011). Huppert and So (as cited in Seligman, 2011) explored flourishing and came up with three mandatory “core features” and six “additional features” to define what it is to be flourishing. They concluded that to be flourishing an individual has to have all three core features and three of the six additional features. The core features consist of: positive emotions, engagement/interest and meaning/purpose. The additional features consist of: self-esteem, optimism, resilience, vitality, self-determination, and positive relationships. In sum, positive psychology, as it is now defined by Seligman, is the study of well-being, as measured by PERMA and with the goal of increasing flourishing. While this helps to operationalize how someone might score on a measure of well-being or how one high on well-being might present, the similarity in factors only
confuses Seligman’s point. In other words, if Seligman agrees with Huppert and So’s conceptualization of flourishing and the components of a flourishing individual and one who possesses the elements of PERMA overlap, then why make a new theory rather than support Huppert and So?

Although Well-Being Theory represents an improvement from the more simplistic Authentic Happiness Theory, Well-Being Theory remains limited. Most notably problematic in *Flourish* is first, the lack of theoretical grounding—much of it appears delivered forth from Seligman’s reflections, rather than built from a systematic argument regarding the nature of psychology or the human condition more generally. Second, the lack of sound empirical support is problematic. Seligman (2011) provides a reasonable narrative as to why Authentic Happiness theory is lacking, one argument stating that it is not based on a theory, but he then seems to repeat similar patterns with Well-Being Theory, which also does not appear to be theoretically grounded, or at least not presented as such in this book. While it is hard to deny that relationships and accomplishment likely contribute to overall well-being, thus marking an improvement from his original theory, Seligman provides little theoretical context as to explain why such constructs are important. Similarly, he claims that accomplishment was added due to the comments of one of his students (referred by his student as “success and mastery”), but he does not explain what makes accomplishment important, or one of the five included constructs, but not physical health or the presence of goals.

Furthermore, obviously lacking from the book is empirical support for the theory. Seligman (2011) makes many claims as to the value of positive psychology or the effectiveness of the prescribed exercises but does not acknowledge from where he gains
such confidence. For example, “The people who work in positive psychology are the people with the highest well-being I have ever known” (p.2). An educated reader should question this and wonder about where the data may be to support that claim. Throughout the book many such claims are put forward without any scientific backing. This is true even for some exercises that are scientifically supported, but not so in this book. For example, his kindness exercise where he suggests that the reader “find one wholly unexpected kind thing to do tomorrow and just do it. Notice what happens to your mood” (p. 21).

It is possible that Seligman's (2011) lack of theoretical explanation and scientific evidence is due to the books indeterminate state as neither wholly a scholarly contribution nor altogether a self-help book. It is as though Seligman is attempting to reach both audiences. *Flourish* is Seligman’s first written presentation of his new theory, and to date, no articles or chapters have been published on PERMA or Well-Being Theory. As such, it appears that Seligman’s targeted audience is scholarly and a means of promoting his new theory to the field. On the other hand, the book reads much like a self-help book and the targeted audience is the general population interested promises of exercises to enhance their own well-being.

In sum, Well-Being Theory is Seligman’s newest explanation of positive psychology. The main points are that well-being is now the topic of positive psychology, no longer happiness and unlike happiness well-being is a construct not a “thing”. Secondly, well-being consists of five measureable elements, positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and achievement. Each element was included based on three criteria (that it contributes to well-being, that is pursued for its own purpose and
that it is measured independently from other elements). The main critiques of Well-Being Theory are the lack of theoretical grounding and the lack of empirical support.

**Critiques of Positive Psychology**

Despite the continual growth of positive psychology over the last two decades, the subfield is not without its critics. One critique has to do with the name, which carries pejorative implications as the positive antidote to negative psychology (Held, 2005). Other prominent critiques include the failure of positive psychology to acknowledge philosophical and psychological antecedents (namely that of humanistic psychology), a questioning of the need for a movement of positive psychology and the resulting fragmentation, and its weakness in theoretical support.

Critics of positive psychology suggest that the ideas behind the movement date back much further than positive psychology’s official formulation. While providing an overview of the past, present and future of positive psychology, Linley et al. (2006) stated that the ideas of positive psychology have “always been with us” and date back to William James in the early 1900’s. At the same time, they also suggest that it wasn’t until the official formulation of positive psychology that the concepts became a “holistic and integrated body of knowledge.” (p. 4)

Most notable are the similarities between humanistic psychology, established by the 1960’s, and positive psychology, officially formulated in the late 1990’s. Particular similarities exist with Rogers’ (1961) work on the fully functioning person and Maslow’s (1968) self-actualization and the study of healthy individuals. In sum, the argument is that much of positive psychology is based on the work of humanistic psychologists, yet recognition is missing.
Although some positive psychologists have disputed this claim, McDonald and O’Callaghan (2008) review the issue and agree with Taylor’s (2001) argument, stating that that:

Positive psychology has failed to acknowledge philosophical and psychological antecedents, that positivist experimental psychology (the basis of positive psychology’s epistemology) should not dictate what is and is not first rate science, and that positive psychology is a controlling elite, chosen and certified by each other, whose standards must be adopted by all others whether they like it or not. (p. 128)

Another common critique has to do with the distinction of positive psychology from the greater field psychology, and the consequent fragmentation or faddism. In Sundararajan’s (2005) review, she recognizes two versions of positive psychology, one strong and the other weak. Sundararajan’s strong version of positive psychology refers to the aim of researchers and practitioners to convey an understanding of positive human functioning that is empirically sound. Her weak version refers only to the need to study positive human functioning to balance the field. She cautions that the movement towards positive psychology is like a swing of a pendulum. Warning that if positive psychology is no more than a “shuffling [of] research agendas” (p. 35) then the pendulum, now hanging in the domain of positive psychology, will swing back towards the more traditional or “negative” studies of psychology. She argued that both aspects of human functioning, positive and negative, ought be investigated and prioritized by the field. This critique, while common, is not recognized only by critics, but also by proponents as well. Diener (2003) hopes that, “Positive psychology is a movement that will eventually
disappear because it becomes part of the very fabric of psychology. Thus, it will fade as a campaign precisely because it has been so successful.” (p. 120)

Sundararajan (2005) also compares positive psychology to a donut stating that missing from the core of positive psychology is a moral map. This critique, ultimately, reflects the perceived lack of theoretical and philosophical backing, common amongst other critics as well. Fineman (2006), for example, reviews both the attractions and shortcomings of positivity, which he terms a positive neo-humanistic turn. After defining positivity and reviewing the fields of both positive psychology and positive organizational scholarship, Fineman examines four themes, two of which are, the appropriateness of a positiveness perspective and the separation of positive from negative (see Fineman, 2006 for a complete review of all four points).

Fineman (2006) provides historical basis for positivity and aligns this perspective with humanistic psychology while contrasting it to a Freudian psychodynamic perspective. He suggests that while the movement towards positive psychology was needed and welcomed, the perspective is deterministic and totalizing. Specific to this point is the fact that positive psychologists have characterized a “good life” and created a picture of a “positive person” that exists regardless of situation or ideological context. He suggests that a more nuanced perspective would be less prescriptive and more influenced by circumstance. Fineman suggested that a better conceptualization of positivity would be: in this situation, given these factors, a “good life” and a “positive person” is one who fits this characterization. An understanding such as this allows for positivity to be amenable to differing situations or with different factors. He provided an example of whether or not a suicide bomber would be considered a “positive person”.
From one understanding, that of a patriotic American, such an individual would likely be seen as a terrorist. On the other hand, someone from an extremist group would likely view the individual differently seeing him or her as completing a supreme personal sacrifice in the name of “God’s will”. In sum, Fineman points out that circumstance and perspective are important factors when considering what is good and therefore a prescribed notion of positivity is not appropriate.

Recognizing that positive psychologists have often made clear the distinction between positive emotions and negative emotions, in his second of four points, Fineman (2006) argues against the separation thesis as a basis for positive psychology. Fineman disagrees that positive emotions (happiness, love, and hope) are the only precursors that lead to additional positive states and that negative emotions (fear, anxiety, embarrassment and hate) are the precursors for more negative states. Rather, he and others (e.g., Lazarus, 2003) suggest that positive and negative emotions function as a dialectic, and that they be likened and considered inextricable and mutually informing. Negative experiences, they recognize, like positive ones, can lead to positive appraisals, meaning and growth. Fineman draws from psychoanalytic theory to show that the exclusive focus on positive emotions can result in avoidance or suppression of anxiety, which may lead to suffering and impaired social development.

Taking much of these concerns as a whole, Held (2005) saw the methodology of positive psychology as well as the content areas of positive psychology as neither new nor novel to the field of psychology. As such, she asks why there was, or is, the need for a distinction within psychology. Similarly, Sheldon and King (2001) insist that positive
psychology is, “nothing more than the scientific study of ordinary human strengths and virtues…. As such, we argue that positive psychology is simply psychology.” (p. 216)

Positive Psychology and the Problem of Fragmentation in the Field

Recognizing both strengths and critiques, the movement towards positive psychology was a needed response to a discipline that historically demonstrated a strong focus on the negative side of human functioning. The positive psychology movement has contributed to significant advancements in theory and research and provided a more complete understanding of human behavior, mental health, and mental illness. At the same time, there has been discourse as to whether positive psychology competes with or complements the greater field.

Although positive psychology does offer the field a general topic area with which many different sub-disciplines of psychology can connect (e.g., neuroscience, developmental, social and personality), it also potentially contributes to the field’s fragmentation. To recognize how it might do this, it is essential to be aware of the problem of fragmentation itself. Henriques (2011) recently reviewed the conceptual and theoretical fragmentations that have plagued the discipline since its inception. He recounted how, Sigmund Koch, one of the premier intellectuals of the field, was given the charge by the American Psychological Association to define the field and ultimately concluded that the field could not be effectively defined. Koch (1993) summed up his position on the matter as follows:

The 19th-century belief that psychology can be an integral discipline, which led to its institutionalization as an independent science, has been disconfirmed on every day of the 112 years since its presumptive founding. When the details of that
history are attended to, the patent tendency has been toward theoretical and substantial fractionation (and increasing insularity among the “specialties”), not toward integration. (p. 902)

Echoing other authors (e.g., Yanchar & Slife, 1997), Henriques (2011) outlined five broad domains of conceptual difficulty with which the field has struggled, but has never successfully overcome: 1) Problems of definition and subject matter; 2) Problems of Philosophy of Mind and Behavior; 3) Problems of Mission, Epistemology, and Values; 4) Problems of Disconnected Domains of Causality; and 5) Problems of Proliferation. When one looks at how positive psychology has interacted with the larger field, one can see that the critical appraisals have much in common with what Henriques’ claims to make up core, foundational problems in the field.

Problems of proliferation were mentioned earlier. Many have criticized positive psychology for not explicitly acknowledging or building on the work from the early humanists. Problems of definition are also clear. Consider, for example, that Seligman et al. (2005) stated that positive psychology was not created in contrast to psychology but rather as a catalyst aimed at changing the focus of psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Nonetheless, by making positive psychology a movement it can be argued that positive psychology only furthered the fragmentation already prevalent within psychology by creating a positive psychology that was in direct contrast to a “negative psychology”. For example, in Authentic Happiness, Seligman (2002b) states, “Positive Psychology aims for the optimal balance between positive and negative thinking… Positive psychology is a supplement to negative psychology, not a substitute” (pp. 288-289). Not only is this problematic in that it refers to mainstream psychology as
“negative psychology” but it also presents a confusing message. On the one hand, Seligman appears to call for integration of both negative and positive, and on the other, he seems to call for separate and distinct psychologies. Gable and Haidt (2005) attempt to ameliorate the issue stating, “[P]ositive psychology does not imply that the rest of psychology is negative, although it is understandable that the name may imply that to some people.” But the problem remains, how is positive psychology defined in relationship to the rest of the field?

Regardless of the term and theoretical shortcomings, positive psychology is not currently integrated into the larger field of psychology, but rather resides outside the mainstream. Oades, Robinson, Green, and Spence (2011) point this out by recognizing the teaching of positive psychology as occurring as ‘special topics’ or at the postgraduate level rather than within traditional course requirements. In a similar vein, Held (2005) asked, “Is fragmenting psychology with polarizing rhetoric good for the discipline?”

Recognizing the fragmentation and addressing many of the relevant critiques of positive psychology, Linley et al. (2006) suggest five areas of consideration. The first is to synthesize the positive and the negative. Second, build on historical antecedents and existing knowledge. The third suggestion is to integrate across levels of analysis, using the insights of neuroscience to understand positive psychological and social functioning. The fourth is to build constituency and reach out to powerful stakeholders. And finally, the authors suggest being mindful of the distinction between a descriptive science that defines and delineates free of value and a prescriptive science.

Given the problem of fragmentation, Henriques (2011) argues that what is needed is a conceptual structure that has the capacity to assimilate and integrate new findings in a
way that results in cumulative knowledge. He offered such a framework, and a major point of the current work was to explore the extent to which that framework can provide the philosophical and theoretical grounding for the construct of well-being.

**The Unified Theory: Addressing the Problem of Fragmentation**

The Unified Theory (UT) is a framework that Henriques (2011; see also Henriques, 2004, 2005, 2008; Quackenbush, 2005; 2008; Shaffer, 2008) argued can provide the philosophical and theoretical structure needed to assimilate and integrate key insights from the various paradigms in the field. The UT is relevant for positive psychology and research on well-being because it potentially provides a meta-theoretical perspective that can assimilate and integrate the key lines of research into a coherent theoretical formulation that will result in cumulative knowledge.

Broadly speaking, the UT attempts to do three things. First, it introduces four theoretical formulations that interconnect in a way that allows psychology a much needed macro-level view to assimilate and integrate key findings from across the major paradigms. Second, it directly addresses “the problem of psychology” by offering the field a clear definition, conceptual foundation and shared language. Finally, the UT offers psychology, and the academy at large, a new scientific humanistic worldview (Henriques, 2005; 2011). This last point is especially pertinent to the study of well-being because the construct has many important and complicated philosophical elements to it. For example, Henriques (2011) argued that well-being is a central guiding construct that bridges human values and science (see a similar argument by Harris, 2010).

A detailed outline of the UT has recently been offered (Henriques, 2011) and readers are referred to that work for more specific descriptions of the theory. The
objective here is to describe the key components of the UT that have relevance for well-being research and to provide an overview of how the unified theory led to the development a holistic conceptualization of well-being. As mentioned, the UT consists of four new ideas, which are as follows: 1) the Tree of Knowledge System; 2) Behavioral Investment Theory; 3) the Influence Matrix, and 4) the Justification Hypothesis. In the sections that follow, each component is briefly described.

**The Tree of Knowledge System.** The broadest component of the UT is the Tree of Knowledge (ToK) System (Figure 1). Henriques (2003) argued that psychologists lack a meta-level view from which to conceptualize their subject matter and define their field, and he offered the ToK System as a remedy for this problem (Gilbert, 2004). To the modern psychologist, the ToK System probably corresponds most directly to the biopsychosocial conception of human functioning, which is the notion that we need to understand human behavior from these various levels of interpretation (Henriques & Stout, 2012). Consider, for example, that virtually every student of psychotherapy learns to use the biopsychosocial model as a broad heuristic tool for conceptualizing the various aspects of their patients' functioning. This model is a useful heuristic that allows a clinician to quickly identify and organize relevant information to the client’s overall functioning and systemic issues (Engel, 1977). However, the generic biopsychosocial model has a number of inadequacies, including generalizations that may be too broad, a lack of resolution regarding problems of reduction and emergence, and the absence of explanations for how and why certain domains of human functioning are separate from others (i.e., why are there three levels, what exactly are those levels, and how do they interrelate to one another). In contrast, the ToK System offers a new view of the
biopsychosocial model that helps to amend these deficiencies. First, it begins by segmenting reality into dimensions of complexity – Matter, Life, Mind and Culture – which results in a Physico-Bio-Psycho-Social view of human functioning (Henriques, 2003). The explicit differentiation of the physical from the biological speaks to the new way that the ToK System organizes reality and how it offers a new way to understand issues of reductionism and emergence.

Figure 1. The Tree of Knowledge system

The separate dimensions of complexity in the ToK diagram are intimately connected to two of the three other pieces that make up the UT, Behavioral Investment Theory and the Justification Hypothesis. These ideas are what are known as “joint points” in the ToK System. Joint points are the links between the dimensions of complexity (Henriques, 2003). They provide the theoretical framework that explains
how the higher dimension evolved out of the lower dimension. From the vantage point provided by the ToK System, the modern evolutionary synthesis is the joint point between Matter and Life because it is biology’s unified framework, and provides the basic frame for understanding the evolution of biological complexity (Mayr & Provine, 1998). Using the ToK diagram, we can then ask: Are there joint points between Life and Mind and between Mind and Culture? The short answer is yes, and Behavioral Investment Theory and the Justification Hypothesis are the respective theories.

**Behavioral Investment Theory.** Utilizing the meta-epistemological framework provided by the ToK System, Henriques (2003) argued that scholars should be thinking in terms of a “joint point” between “Life” and “Mind”. That joint point would be found in the central, organizing principle of the nervous system. From a review of multiple brain-behavior paradigms (e.g., neuroscience, behavioral science, ethology, cognitive science etc.), Henriques argued that there was, in fact, a shared implicit understanding of the conceptual nervous system that cut across the various approaches to animal behavior. That formulation is the idea that the nervous system functions as a computational control system that computes animal actions on an investment value system developed via evolution and learning. Henriques further claimed that the basic psychological sciences would benefit from organizing their insights around this implicitly shared frame and he suggested it could be called Behavioral Investment Theory.

BIT consists of six fundamental principles that are generally well known in animal behavioral science but are often not put together in a way that is effectively communicated to professional psychologists (Henriques, 2011). They are as follows:
1) The Principle of Energy Economics: The fact that animals must, on the whole, acquire more workable energy from their behavioral investments than those behaviors cost; otherwise their complex arrangements will breakdown and eventually they will die.

2) The Evolutionary Principle: Inherited tendencies toward the behavioral expenditure of energy should be a function of ancestral inclusive fitness.

3) The Principle of Behavioral Genetics: The notion that genetic differences result in differences in behavioral investment systems.

4) The Computational Control Principle: The idea that the nervous system is the organ of behavior and it functions as an information processing system.

5) The Learning Principle: The notion that behavioral investments that effectively move the animal toward animal-environment relationships that positively covaried with ancestral inclusive fitness are selected for (i.e., are reinforced), whereas behavioral investments that fail to do so are extinguished. The learning principle incorporates both associative and operant conditioning processes.

6) The Principle of Development: There are various genetically and hormonally regulated life history stages that require different behavioral investment strategies.

BIT consolidates existing theoretical perspectives and, in conjunction with the holistic vision afforded by the UT, allows for previously separate lines of thought and research to be coherently integrated (Henriques, 2003). Specifically, BIT allows for the assimilation and integration of major perspectives in mind, brain, and behavior,
including: 1) evolutionary biology and genetics; 2) neuroscience; 3) behavioral science; 4) computational/cognitive science; and, 5) developmental and dynamic systems theory.

**The Influence Matrix.** The Influence Matrix (IM) is an extension of BIT to human social motivation and emotion, which means that it incorporates the principles of energy economics, evolution, behavioral genetics, computational control, learning, and development. The IM is also represented in a diagram (Figure 2), one that maps the architecture underlying the way humans process social information, develop social goals, and are guided by emotions in navigating the social environment.

![Figure 2. The Influence Matrix diagram.](attachment:image.png)
Looking at the diagram, the motivations are inside the circle, whereas the emotions are listed on the outside. Starting with the motivations, notice the two boxes inside the circle, one toward the upper right and the other toward the lower left, labeled high and low relational value, respectively. These boxes represent core motivational templates that function as reference ideals. The first foundational assumption of the IM is that the experience of relational value is an indicator of social influence. Social influence, defined as the capacity to get other individuals to act in accordance with one’s interests, is a resource all humans are motivated to acquire. That is, like nutritious food, social influence reflects a basic, primary need and desire. It is, of course, not the only foundational motivation humans have, but it is theorized to be a central one. People “measure” their social influence via the experience of relational value (see Leary, 2005).

The second foundational assumption is that there are three conceptually distinct dimensions underlying the computation of social influence in adults, Power (dominance–submission), Love (affiliation–hostility), and Freedom (autonomy–dependence). According to the IM, higher levels of relational value and social influence are associated with higher levels of power and affiliation and a healthy balance between autonomy and dependency. In contrast, lower levels of social influence are associated with hostile and submissive orientations and relative extremes of independence or dependence.

The IM posits that human relational processes can be conceptualized as a form of social exchange, whereby people are negotiating the acquisition of social influence with one another. To effectively negotiate such exchanges, individuals have motivational and emotional structures that allow for the representation of one’s self-interests and the interests of important others. Dominance, autonomy, and hostility, along with the
emotions of pride, anger, and hate orient an individual toward promoting one’s own self-interests. In contrast, the poles of affiliation, submission, and dependency, along with the emotions of shame, guilt, and love orient the individual toward the importance and validity of others’ interests relative to one’s own. The IM posits that in the course of engaging in social exchange, individuals will represent both their own interests and the interests of others. If the exchange is mutually beneficial, both parties will experience an increase in their sense of social influence. However, if there is conflict, both sides of the self-other dialectic become activated. Consequently, interpersonal conflict often produces a state of intrapsychic conflict, whereby individuals experience inclinations both to challenge and defy based on self-interests and accommodate and defer based the other’s interests. Of course, there are some individuals who tend to almost exclusively emphasize self-interests and become dominant, hostile, prideful and angry, whereas other individuals become submissive, dependent, guilty and shameful.

**The Justification Hypothesis.** The fourth and final component of the UT is the Justification Hypothesis (JH). Just as BIT was the joint point between (Organic) Life and (Animal) Mind within the ToK system, the JH is the joint point between (Animal) Mind and (Human) Culture. According to the UT, human behavior represents a different and additional dimension of complexity relative to animal behavior. This fundamental difference is human self-consciousness and culture mediated via symbolic language.

The JH interprets both human self-consciousness and culture as *justification systems*. Justifications are the linguistic reasons we use to legitimize our claims and actions, and justification systems are interlocking networks of specific justifications that legitimize a particular version of reality (Shealy, 2005). Using the lens of the JH, one can
see that processes of justification are ubiquitous in human affairs. Arguments, debates, moral dictates, rationalizations, and excuses, as well as many of the more core beliefs about the self, all involve the process of explaining why one’s claims, thoughts, or actions are warranted. In virtually every form of social exchange, from warfare to politics to family struggles to science, humans are constantly justifying their behaviors to themselves and to others. Moreover, justification processes are a uniquely human phenomenon. Other animals communicate, struggle for dominance, and form alliances. But they don’t justify why they do what they do. We are the justifying animal.

The JH consists of three basic postulates (Henriques, 2003). The first is that the evolution of language created a new and unique adaptive problem for our hominid ancestors, namely the problem of social justification, which is the fact that the evolution of language resulted in humans becoming the first animal in evolutionary history that had to justify why they did what they did. Effectively justifying one’s actions is obviously crucial now, as can be seen in the research examining the way explanatory styles impact other people’s attitudes and behaviors (Antaki, 1994). And because humans have always been intensely social creatures, there is every reason to believe that it was an essential problem to solve in our ancestral past (Barkow, 1992).

The second postulate of the JH is the claim that the human self-consciousness system functions as a justification system that constructs narratives for why one does what one does in a manner that takes into account one’s social context and relative degree of social influence, and filters out unacceptable images and feelings. Henriques (2003; 2011) has reviewed a large body of work in cognitive, social, developmental and neuropsychology, cognitive dissonance, self-serving biases, implicit and explicit
attitudes, reason giving, and the nature of self-knowledge and showed that language-based beliefs are in fact organized in a manner that tends to facilitate social justification. For example, people tend to alter their beliefs to maintain a narrative of themselves as effective, helpful and intelligent, people will consciously maintain socially acceptable nonprejudicial attitudes, yet demonstrate subconscious biases against minorities, and people will tend to explain actions that result in favorable outcomes in terms of stable, internal causes, whereas actions that result in unfavorable outcomes are explained in terms of transient, external causes.

The third postulate is that the JH provides the basic framework for understanding cultural levels of analyses. This is because the concept of large-scale justification systems providing the rules and patterns for acceptable behaviors is consonant with modern conceptions of human culture (e.g., Shaffer, 2008). From this vantage point, laws, moral dictates, and even religious and philosophical beliefs are all seen as justification systems writ large that offer the individual roadmaps on what behaviors are socially acceptable. These large-scale cultural justification systems offer beliefs and values about what is morally right and wrong and make claims about how one should organize their personal and public lives accordingly (Henriques, 2011).

**The Unified Approach to Well-Being**

To date the study of well-being has included many theories and measures, most notably that of subjective well-being, psychological well-being and authentic happiness theory (now well-being theory or PERMA). While such contributions have served to enhance the study of positive factors of human functioning, there still remains weakness in theory and measurement as well as competition between approaches. Held (2005)
recognizes the mixed messages of psychologists stating that on the one hand a distinction between “positive” and “negative” remains prevalent and promoted, but on the other, there appears to be a desire for the integration of positive psychology into mainstream psychology. Held (2005) asks, if such integration is desired, as Seligman and others are frequently cited stating, then *how* is such integration possible?

It is suggested here that the integration of positive psychology within psychology is possible with the help of a unified frame. The unified approach to well-being, established by Henriques (2011), consolidates existing theories into a single comprehensive conceptualization of well-being using the Unified Theory. This addresses the concern of competition between approaches as it recognizes the important contributions of various researchers and theories and assimilates them into a comprehensive and compatible whole. Furthermore, the unified approach to well-being is drawn directly from theories not only in well-being (e.g., SWB, PWB, flow, etc.) but it also is grounded in the unified theory and therefore, is connected to the larger field of psychology rather than functioning as an offspring or subdivision. This contributes to the greater goal of assimilating and integrating the field of psychology as outlined by Henriques (2011).

**The Unified Component Systems Approach.** Henriques (2011) developed the unified theory with the primary purpose of providing a more comprehensive and coherent meta-theoretical framework for the profession of psychology. Along those lines, Henriques argued that the four pieces that make up the UT could then be used as a lens to connect the science of psychology with the profession, unify the primary paradigms in
professional psychology, and provide a comprehensive approach to conceptualizing people in a way that linked modern personality with psychopathology and psychotherapy.

In a similar vein, Magnavita (2008) argued that the pathway to unification is through the identification of various systems that range from the neurobiological through the intrapsychic to the sociocultural and that this should be combined with the recognition that various interventions target specific subsystems of this whole to effect change. Magnavita (2005) identified the intrapsychic level as being mediated by neurobiological processes and consisting of broad, interconnected domains or systems that are frequently the focus of intervention. He identified four intrapsychic subsystems, which included: 1) the attachment system, with refers to the constellation of relational needs and internal working models; 2) the affective system, which refers to the emotional feeling states of the individual; 3) the defensive system, which refers to the ways in which individuals consciously or unconsciously structure their internal experience to maintain equilibrium and comfort; and 4) the cognitive system, which refers to the schema or information processing templates that individuals have for making sense of the world. As we will see, the current approach overlaps largely with Magnavita’s formulation. Figure 3 provides a map of the unified component systems based on the unified theory, and it is a formulation that shares many similarities with Magnavita’s (2005) unified component system approach. Specifically, the Unified Component Systems (UCS) approach, conceptualizes an individual across three contexts and five characteristic adaptational systems.
To briefly describe this process of conceptualization, consider the diagram as a whole as consisting of various components. Notably, there are four general, yet interrelated, aspects. First, the circle in the middle of the diagram represents the individual in question. This would include the totality of the individual’s psychological systems and processing. Second, on the left side of the figure, are the three contextual systems in which the individual’s psychological systems are imbedded: the biological, the developmental, and the social.

The three contexts of the UCS approach are the Biological, Learning and Development, and Sociocultural Contexts. The Biological Context refers to an individual’s evolutionary history, genetic makeup, and current functioning of physiology and anatomy (Henriques, 2011). In an assessment context, this is done through investigating a number of specific areas, such as: prior history of family illnesses, known allergies, infections, diseases, and temperamental side effects.
The Learning and Developmental Context looks to examine the impact of early life experiences and present events on current functioning. This is done through taking into account patterns of investment, navigation of life stages, and developmental pathways (Henriques, 2011).

The final context of the UCS approach is the Sociocultural Context. This takes into consideration the societal and relational spheres into which the individual is integrated. This is accomplished through evaluating an individual across the macro, community, and micro levels of functioning (Henriques, 2011). Henriques (2011) distinguishes between these levels by identifying that on the macro level, the customs, values, and norms of the larger society of which the individual is operating is explored. He adds that the community level takes into consideration things resembling the cultural tones of the community that the person is involved in and their socioeconomic status. This is in comparison to the micro level of functioning, which examines relationships with family and friends.

Specific to thinking about an individual’s psychological functioning are five intrapsychic systems of adaptation (Henriques, 2011). These systems of adaptation are what the trait theorists McCrae and Costa (2008) refer to as characteristic adaptations and what the social cognitive personality theorist Walter Mischel calls Cognitive-Affective Processing Units. Conceptual work based on the UT and a systematic attempt to coherently integrate major approaches in psychotherapy ultimately gave rise to the present formulation of five systems of adaptation. The first of these, the Habit System, investigates an individual’s daily routines, activities, sleep hygiene, dietary patterns, substance use, exercise routine, and sexual activity. In doing so, this system provides the
clinician with a deeper understanding of basic levels of mental processes (e.g.: sensory motor patterns, procedural memories, and reflexes; Henriques, 2011). The next system that Henriques highlights is the Experiential System. This takes into consideration various affective states, such as: nonverbal feelings, images, and sensory aspects of an individual’s life (2011). The third system as outlined by Henriques is the Relational System. This system is said to take a close look at an individual’s interpersonal relationships, and the various motives and feeling states that guide their involvement in the relationship (2011). The fourth system of adaptation is the Defensive System, which corresponds to phenomena like cognitive dissonance and psychodynamic defense mechanisms and refers the way in which an individual regulates their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. Additionally, this system also taps into how a person experiences (copes with) and navigates (how resilient they are) stressful events (Henriques, 2011).

The final system of the UCS approach is the Justification System. Henriques explains that this system takes into account the way in which an individual uses language to better understand and express their beliefs and values. In doing so, they utilize language to help legitimize their behavior, while at the same time expanding their self-narrative and where they fit into the larger system (Henriques, 2011).

With the understanding that the contextual and intrapsychic systems are influencing the individual, this map recognizes current and future environmental affordances and stressors. This is represented on the far right side of the diagram.

When taken as a whole, this framework provides a clear visualization of the key components inherent in human functioning and lends itself towards providing a framework for complete conceptualization. As an offspring of the unified theory, the
unified approach to conceptualization recognizes the already prevalent conceptualizations (i.e., cognitive, behavioral, psychodynamic, etc.), but does so in a way that allows space for the validity of each. In other words, this framework does not view one system (e.g., habits or justifications) as more important than another but rather recognizes the interconnection of each. Furthermore, it allows for a client-centered approach in that based on client presentation, the clinician can focus upon the area most in need of attention.

The Well-Being Interview

An earlier project utilized the UCS approach and the literature on well-being reviewed above, especially work from Carol Ryff, Ed Diener and Martin Seligman, to develop the Well-Being Interview (Asselin, 2012). The WBI is a structured, clinician-administered assessment of well-being. It is the first of its kind as it is the only existing clinician administered measure designed explicitly to provide a comprehensive assessment of an individual’s psychological well-being. The WBI consisted of ten domains that were grouped into three broad sections: 1) Domains of Life Satisfaction; 2) Domains of Adaptation, and 3) External Domains. Each of these three sections are comprised of distinct domains that assist in further defining well-being.

In constructing Section I, the WBI drew from a number of current theory’s, such as Diener’s concept of satisfaction with life, Csikszentmihalyi’s theory of Flow, Ryff’s domain of purpose in life, Watson, Clark, and Tellegen’s research on positive and negative affect, and Seligman’s concept of happiness. The WBI domains that comprise this section are: A) Satisfaction; B) Engagement; and C) Purpose. The Satisfaction domain is a general measure of how satisfied people are with their life as a whole. This
takes into account how they feel at a given point in time (positive vs. negative affect) as well as an overall evaluation of life satisfaction. The second domain of the WBI is Engagement. This domain is a measure of one’s level of engagement and involvement in social, leisure and productive activities. It specifically looks at one’s level of interest in activities, their level of excitement in life and activities, and event planning. The final domain in Section I is Purpose, which is a general assessment of the purpose and significance of the individual’s life. This domain looks to evaluate an individual’s level of life meaning, desire to make a difference, concern with larger social issues, and connection to religion.

Section II of the WBI consists of various Domains of Adaptation. This section, which was constructed using the UCS Approach, looks to assess an individual’s awareness of self, daily functioning, and their understanding of self in relation to others. One can also see influence from Ryff’s (1989b) domains of Self-Acceptance, Positive Relations with Others, and Autonomy. Specifically, the WBI domains included in Section II are as follows: A) Health and Habits; B) Emotions; C) Relationships; D) Coping; and E) Identity.

The first domain under Section II, Health and Habits, is an evaluation of the individual’s medical, physical and nutritional health and the extent to which they engage in healthy habits. This is accomplished through assessing an individual’s performance in the following areas: experience of physical pain, chronic health issues, ability to fulfill daily tasks (e.g.: attend work, school, etc.), exercise habits, diet, substance use, and sleep hygiene. Given the range of areas this domain encompasses, it was believed to be important to separate it into two distinct categories: Medical Health, and Fitness and
Healthy Habits. In doing so, the WBI is better able to assess the full range of areas, while giving respect to their individual differences.

The next domain located under Section II is Emotions. This domain evaluates an individual’s awareness and ability to identify emotions, as well as their ability to regulate their own emotions. In order to accomplish this, the Emotions domain takes into account an individual’s ability to experience a range of emotions, ability to regulate emotions, level of positive emotions experienced, and the level of negative emotions experienced.

The third domain of Section II on the WBI is the Relationship domain, which examines the quality, depth, and connectedness of the individual’s relationships. This domain takes into account the level of connectedness, communication, fondness, and love across family, peer, and romantic relationships. The Coping domain looks to investigate the individual’s ability to encounter and endure significant stressors without becoming overwhelmed with negative emotions, or disconnected from their feelings. This is evaluated across an individual’s ability to bounce back from stress/negative events, avoidance of feelings, how are crisis’s handled, ability to take criticism from others, vulnerable feelings and/or threats, ability to adapt to situations, and their levels of stress.

The final domain under Section II of the WBI is the Identity domain. This domain is a general assessment of an individual’s view and awareness of sense of self. In order to accomplish this, the domain takes into account an individual’s level of confidence, ability to make decisions, awareness and/or understanding of the “real you”, openness, acceptance of limitations or weaknesses, and feelings of pride in self and accomplishments.
The third and final section of the WBI has been constructed to assess the stressors and affordances that an individual is exposed to, as well as, an appraisal of their trajectory in life. This section was created with Ryff’s domain of Environmental Mastery and Personal Growth in mind. Section III: External Domains is comprised of two domains: A) Environmental Influences and B) Trajectory. The first domain in this section is an assessment of two separate facets that an individual’s is exposed to, stressors and affordances. The stressors section looks to evaluate the extent and significance of current mental, emotional, and physical demands. This is taken into consideration with the opportunities and possibilities for enrichment, engagement, and fulfillment the individual has exposure to (affordances). This part of the domain takes a closer look at the individual’s financial means, living situation, occupation/work, and other opportunities they are afforded. The final domain under Section III of the WBI is Trajectory. This is an appraisal of the individual’s life path. Specifically, it explores whether or not they have goals, plans, hopes and dreams. If they do, this domain also investigates whether the individual seems to be making forward progress towards achieving them. The specific areas that this domain looks to assess is future outlook, goals, hopes, personal growth, and if they are progressing.

What is unique about the WBI is that it is designed to be administered by a clinician in order to obtain a more objective and comprehensive evaluation of an individual’s level of well-being. This is made possible through a combination of subjective appraisals, objective evaluations, and objective observations. Overall, the WBI provides the examiner with a hierarchy of fourteen unique scores, reflecting the individual’s levels of well-being across a number of conceptual areas.
Each of the domains is comprised of four different styles of questions. This is in order to provide the examiner with a variety of qualitative and quantitative data. The initial question in each domain prompts the individual to provide a subjective narrative assessment of their functioning in relation to the given domain, and to provide supportive examples. This allows for the administrator to acquire a rich qualitative narrative from the individual. The WBI then provides the individual with a descriptive definition of the domain in question, and then details what someone who is high in the domain looks like, versus someone who is low in relation to the given quality. The individual is then asked to rate himself on a 7 point Likert scale. From there, the next style of question utilized on the WBI are forced choice prompts: “yes”, “no”, or “maybe/sometimes”. This allows the examiner to gather specific data pertaining to each of the domains in a quick and concise manner. Finally, each of the domains ends with a prompt for the administrator to provide their own clinician rating of the individual based upon each of the responses acquired from the given domain. Similar to the subjective ratings, this prompt also uses a 7 point Likert scale.

Included at the end of the WBI is a page long form that objectively rates the individual’s presentation. Here, the examiner can provide his or her own narrative in relation to any significant interpersonal factors present (e.g.: motivation, engagement, dress, speak, mental status, etc.). This is in order to provide a more vivid depiction of the client.

The WBI thus yields the following data for each domain: 1) an objective score based on the narrative response; 2) a subjective rating of functioning in the domain that ranges from 1 to 7; 3) a score obtained from the specific forced choice data, and 4) an
overall objective rating provided by the examiner that ranges from 1 to 7. In the present study the subjective rating of functioning in each domain, the forced choice data and the overall objective rating provided by the examiner were used to form an overall well-being score. The objective score based on the narrative was not included since its scoring procedures had not yet been finalized.

As noted above, each of these areas of assessment provides the examiner with a way to assess the individual’s level of functioning in relation to the given domain. It is believed that when each of these scores is combined, the examiner is presented with a more complete view of the individual’s level of well-being.

**The Teaching of Positive Psychology**

Well-being has been linked with success and happiness; and, in a meta-analysis, Lyubomirsky, King and Diener, (2005) showed that individuals considered happy are physically healthier, are more successful in their employment and have more satisfying relationships. According to the Broaden-and-Build theory well-being promotes increases in learning since positive mood promotes broader attention and as a result increased learning (Fredrickson, 1998; Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005). As such, Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich and Linkins (2009) propose that well-being ought be taught in secondary schools for three reasons: as an antidote to depression; as a vehicle for increasing life satisfaction; and, to improve learning and generate creative thinking. Pawelski (2003) notes the need for character development and states that educators should consider both character and development and its means and measures. Given the relationship between well-being and personal and professional success and the goal of colleges and universities to prepare students for future success, institutions of higher education appear to be a
uniquely suited environment for enhancing well-being (Oades, Robinson, Green & Spence, 2011). Nonetheless, colleges and universities are often considered high-striving and competitive, where much of the curricular attention is placed on traditional academics rather than lessons aimed at improving well-being. Furthermore, according to Gallagher (2003) there has been an increase in the incidence and severity of student mental health problems across colleges and universities. This increase has led to an increase in demand on university-based mental health services but no such increase in staffing or availability of resources. In an effort to appropriately address the mental health needs of students, many universities are becoming more creative in their approaches by referring students to community services or offering group-based services.

Oades et al. (2011) recognize this imbalance and suggest that the principles of positive psychology may be useful in influencing the culture of higher education by placing a higher value on well-being. In this light, Oades et al. (2011) suggest a movement towards “positive education” which may be able to support the need for more creative avenues for fostering student mental health. Positive education has been defined by Seligman et al. (2009) as, “education for both traditional skills and happiness” (p. 293) and then refined by Oades et al. (2011) as, “the development of educational environments that enable the learner to engage in established curricula in addition to knowledge and skills to develop their own and others’ wellbeing” (p. 432).

Oades et al. (2011) suggest that positive education occurs from an organizational level and includes five key contexts within universities: the classroom and formal learning environments; social environments; local community; faculty and administrative work environments; and, residential environments. While organizational change is needed to
truly transform institutions of higher education towards a model of positive education, and for organizational change each of the five contexts must be addressed, the focus of this paper will be on the first component, the classroom and formal learning environments.

Some suggestions for creating an environment of positive education in the classroom include: curriculum development using positive psychology constructs, positive mood inductions, creativity exercises, teaching flow, encouraging exercises of flow, mindfulness training, strengths-based assignments, having students involved in the curriculum or assignments and designing assignments that promote learning, not only assess learning (Oades et al., 2011).

**Previous well-being projects.** Through the Penn Resiliency Program (PRP), the Strath Haven Positive Psychology Curriculum (SHPPC) and the Geelong Grammar School Program (GGSP) projects, Seligman and colleagues sought to test the empiricism of well-being programs. The goal of PRP is to provide a curriculum that “increases students’ ability to handle [common] day-to-day stressors and problems… promote optimism by teaching students to think more realistically and flexibly about the problems they encounter… teach assertiveness, creative brainstorming, decision making, relaxation and several other coping and problem-solving skills” (Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich & Linkins, 2009, p. 297). Over 20 years and 21 studies at the primary and secondary education levels have suggested that PRP produces positive and reliable improvements in the well-being of students (for a comprehensive review of findings, see Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich & Linkins, 2009). Of note, Seligman (2011) says that the PRP “reliably prevents depression, anxiety and conduct problems in young adults.” (p. 83)
Noting the PRP’s effect on emotional variables, such as resilience, the SHPPC was designed to build character strengths, relationships, and meaning as well as raise positive emotions and reduce negative emotions. The SHPPC was implemented in a high school where 347 ninth graders were randomly assigned to a language arts class in which a positive psychology curriculum was implemented or to a control language arts class. Students, parents and teachers blind to condition completed questionnaires prior to the intervention, following the intervention and for a two-year follow-up. Students’ strengths, social skills, behavioral problems, grades, and enjoyment of school were tested. Findings from the SHPPC suggested that the positive psychology program improved the curiosity, love of learning and creativity of students. It also increased students’ enjoyment and engagement, as well as language arts grades and writing skills through the follow-up. Students in the positive psychology condition were also noted to have improved social skills and reduced bad conduct. In sum, Seligman (2011) concludes, “well-being should be taught and that it can be taught.” (p. 85)

The next phase in Seligman and colleagues quest for positive education sought to answer whether positive psychology can be implemented in entire schools rather than specific classrooms. The GGSP implemented an entire positive psychology program at the Geelong Grammar School, a boarding school in Australia. In the GGSP positive psychology has been embedded into academic courses, athletics, counseling, religious education and extracurricular activities. An example of a change towards positive education is a public speaking assignment in which the original prompt was “Give a speech on a time you were embarrassed or made a fool out of yourself” to “Give a speech about when you were of value to others.” Although current empirical data is not available at this
time, Seligman suggests that the program was “enormously successful” (Seligman et al., 2009, p. 304).

In 2002 Vanderbilt University created an initiative to support character development in a strategic plan that called for a “new curriculum in moral reasoning, ethical values, and the role of the individual in a democracy... [that urges] consideration of a distinctive and challenging curriculum in moral reasoning, ethics, and character development” (Pawelski, 2003, p. 10). The plan was cross disciplinary and targeted various schools within Vanderbilt’s campus. As part of the plan, James Pawelski was hired and he created a course the Foundations of Character Development.

Pawelski’s course drew upon philosophy, psychology and applied human development with the aim of providing students a better understanding and cultivation of character. William James’ views on habit formation were used as a building block of the course as students were helped to become aware of their habits, were encouraged to reinforce positive habits and break negative ones. Specifically, through readings, discussions and experiential learning, somatic habits, linguistic habits, habits of focus, and habits of belief were examined (see Pawelski (2003) for a more detailed review of his course). Initial analysis of the course revealed significant ($p < .01$) pre/post changes on the Life Orientation Test, the Beck Hopelessness Scale, the Hope Scale, and on composite scores of the Attributional Style Questionnaire. Additionally, students rated the course highly favorable by rating the course with a 4.78 out of 5 on a measure of social validity. In sum, preliminary findings suggested that the class aimed at improving character development had positive effects on students. Pawelski points out that these are
preliminary findings and additional analyses and future repetitions are needed, but no additional studies were available at the time of this review.

Arkoff, Meredith, Bailey, Cheang, Dubanoski, Griffin and Niyekawa (2006) tested the effectiveness of a life-review group as a means to increase well-being in post-secondary students. Participants were college freshmen enrolled in an introductory psychology course and were assigned either to the experimental life-review group \( n = 30 \), or a control group \( n = 36 \). The life-review group was a 14-week group that met for 50 minutes each week. It was led by a current or retired faculty member and consisted of five to seven students. The curriculum for the course was The Illuminated Life: Your Lifebook (Arkoff, 1999), which led students through 14 “life questions” and subsequent exercises. Pre and post-group analyses revealed significant increases for the life-review group on two of the six Ryff scales of psychological well-being [i.e., self acceptance scale \( p < .01 \) and environmental mastery \( p < .001 \)] but non-significant changes in the comparison group. Thus suggesting that participation in the life-review group enhanced student’s view of themselves and their ability to effectively manage their environments. Furthermore, social validity ratings indicated that on a four-point scale (e.g., 1 = poor to 4 = excellent), students rated the overall program with a mean score of 3.35, students rated interest in the program with a mean score of 2.96 and students rated helpfulness of the program with a mean score of 2.8. Possibly explaining this discrepancy is the fact that students entered the group with specific goals that they felt were not reflected in the Ryff scales or that were outside the scope of the current investigation. As such, future studies may benefit from including pre measures of expectations or goals.
Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Project Overview and Research Questions

There were four broad research questions tackled in the course of this project. First and most basically, could an undergraduate course be effectively developed that utilized the unified approach to conceptualizing people to incorporate key elements of well-being based on the latest research in psychology? Second, could that course be delivered in an effective way to undergraduate students? Third, and of primary interest, could the impact of the course be measured and compared with a like control condition? And fourth, how would the participant’s level of well-being at follow-up compare to data collected at time two?

This project was undertaken because a preliminary review of the literature suggested that the answer to the first question was yes. The course is described in detail in Appendices B through G. The course was organized by the unified approach to conceptualizing and in my estimation covers the primary elements of well-being in a comprehensive and coherent manner.

The second question was evaluated primarily on student performance and student evaluations. Namely, the course would be deemed to be effectively delivered if: a) participation was high; b) students engaged in the course and performed well on course content, and c) students evaluated the course positively. The results section reviews data on this question. The prediction was that students would participate, engage and perform well, and give positive evaluations.
The third question of whether the course had a positive impact on the participants’ well-being was addressed by quantitative and qualitative data collection, prior to the course, during the course, and after the course. In addition, data on a comparative group of college students in different psychology classes were obtained at the same pre- and post-intervention time periods. The fourth question exploring the effect of the intervention at follow-up was addressed by collecting data approximately four months following completion of the course.

**The Development of the Psychology of Adjustment Course**

With the unified approach to conceptualizing people and the ten domains of well-being from the WBI serving as a conceptual backbone, a one semester undergraduate course was created that combined typical course requirements with positive psychology interventions. The aim of the course was to see if the teaching and practice of well-being, in the context of an undergraduate course, could improve well-being. With this in mind, Psychology 235: The Psychology of Adjustment was created and offered as an elective to psychology majors. The course was titled The Psychology of Adjustment because it was already established as such in the course catalog but the specific content was open to interpretation by the instructor and approved by the Department Head.

**Course Structure.** The course consisted of four main components: 1) course lectures; 2) small group discussions; 3) traditional course assignments; and, 4) the personal project. The fourteen-week course included eleven weeks of content classes, one class where students completed a midterm, one intake/orientation class, and one exit/debriefing class. The first ten content classes were based on the ten domains of well-being. As such, the readings, lectures and assignments went in order through each of the
domains (i.e., week 1: satisfaction; week 2: engagement, etc.; see Appendix B for the course syllabus). The eleventh week functioned as a review of each domain and reiteration of how each domain relates to the construct of well-being. The intake and exit interview days allowed for the collection of pre- and post-data as well as served as an opportunity to orient the students to the course and then debrief the students, respectively.

**Course Lectures.** Each of the eleven content areas was presented in a two and a half hour course that met once weekly. Class time was then divided into two components. The first component was didactic and that of a typical discussion-based lecture. In this component, current research on positive psychology, psychological adjustment and well-being were covered. Students were expected to have completed the course readings prior to class. Therefore, class lecture were meant to reinforce material already learned and focus was paid to the practical application of psychological theories and behavior change techniques to enhance personal awareness and self-development.

**Small Group Discussion.** Following the first half of class, students were randomly assigned to one of four small groups. Each group lasted in duration for one hour and was facilitated by one of four doctoral-level clinicians. The purpose of the small groups was to allow students the opportunity to develop, challenge and experience course material in a practical way. Students were asked to reflect on personal experiences, as they were comfortable. While the group facilitator was present with the group each week, the role of the facilitator evolved; students were more heavily supported by group facilitators at first and then were encouraged to self-lead by the end of the semester. Each week the group leaders received an outline of the weekly topic, a copy of the PowerPoint’s, assigned readings and a list of suggested discussion points (see
Appendix C). Group leaders were instructed to lead the conversation only as needed so that groups could work towards autonomy and rely on the group leader primarily to facilitate topic discussions and safety in disclosure. Each group leader had past experience being a member of a process group and leading process or psychoeducational groups.

Following each group, group leaders were asked to rate their group members to help determine group participation and provide the researcher feedback for future groups (see Appendix D). To assess group participation and engagement, each member was first noted to be either present or absent. Students who were present, were then rated on a five point continuum [1= Does not participate and is not engaged; 3= Does not participate but is engaged (i.e., actively listening but not sharing); 5= Appropriate participation and engagement (i.e., takes turns sharing and listening)].

**Course Assignments.** There were four sources of grading inherent in the course: 1) class participation; 2) a research paper; 3) exams (midterm and final); and 4) a personal project. Class participation was considered a crucial component of the course. Students were expected to come to class having read the assigned readings and to contribute their reactions and thoughts during class discussion. It was also an expectation that students would reflect on their own experiences and were open to hearing others, particularly in the small group component of the course. The expectations regarding group participation were clearly emphasized in the syllabus with the following:

As mentioned, it is expected that students participate in both didactic and experiential sections and prior to enrolling in the course students should be aware of the commitment. While it is not mandatory to share personal experiences, it is
mandatory to attend the group and be open to sharing and respectfully hearing others. That being said, if something changes and a student becomes unwilling to participate, it is the student’s responsibility to immediately contact the course instructor to discuss the situation and consider alternatives.

The student’s class participation grade was 25% of their overall grade. Two thirds of the participation grade was based on their participation in small group and were derived from the above described 5-point weekly ratings made by the group leader and one third was determined by the course instructor based on in-class participation. Twice throughout the semester students received written feedback from the instructor regarding their participation and possible areas of improvement.

The research project, comprising 20% of the final grade, required the students to select a topic within well-being and complete an eight to ten page APA-style academic paper. The midterm and final exam each contributed to 15% of the final grade. The midterm exam was completed in class and included multiple choice questions, short answer, and brief-essay responses. The final exam was completed as a take home exam consisting of three essay questions.

The personal project comprised the final 25% of the student’s overall grade. The personal project was a self-reflective examination of each student’s adjustment and well-being. The personal project consisted of five components: initial self-assessment, weekly ratings, weekly homework and journaling, follow-up self-assessment and final reflection.

The initial and follow-up self-assessments were synonymous with the assessment battery. All students in the class, regardless of their status as a research participant, were required to complete the Well-Being Battery for the purpose of the self-assessment.
Upon completion of the follow-up assessment, all students were provided a summary of their scores, on both the intake and follow-up, as personal data for their project.

The personal project also required successful completion of weekly homework and journals. The homework assignments were not academic in nature, but consisted of empirically supported self-interventions designed to improve a particular domain of well-being and adjustment. In addition to completing the self-intervention, students were asked to document and reflect (journal) on the task. The assignments were checked every three weeks to ensure thoughtful completion. The final component of the personal project, the overall reflection, entailed the student putting together each part and reflecting on its entirety. In sum, the personal project was put together in a portfolio and was reflective of the entire semester and the student’s experience. See Appendix E for an in depth description of the components of the personal project and Appendix F for a complete listing of homework and journal assignments.

**Recruitment Process and Participants**

Study participants were initially comprised of 57 undergraduate students enrolled at James Madison University (JMU), in Harrisonburg, Virginia. A convenience sampling technique was utilized to form the experimental and control groups.

**Experimental group.** Twenty-five participants were included in the experimental group (19 females, 6 males; $M_{age}=20.32$ years, $SD=4.55$, Range: 18-42 years). Twenty-four of the 25 participants were between the ages of 18 and 20. Sixteen students were enrolled as sophomores and nine students were enrolled as juniors. Twenty-three students identified their ethnicity as White, one as Asian American and one as Other, specifying “mixed/multicultural”.
The experimental group participants were recruited from students enrolled in the fall 2011 course, “Psychology 235: Psychology of Adjustment”. The department of psychology advertised this course as an elective for admitted psychology majors. See Appendix G for the course description used to enroll students. All interested students were asked to email the course instructor and they were provided additional information, including the request for research participation. Then, pending the student’s status as a psychology major, interested students were granted permission to enroll in the course on a first come, first served basis.

All students who enrolled in the course were then invited to participate in the study as participants. The fact that course requirements had a dual function (i.e., typical course assignments and request for research participation) was clearly communicated to students prior to their enrolling in the course and again discussed during the first class. Students in Psychology 235 transitioned to research participants only if they understood and agreed to the conditions, as described in the informed consent (see Appendices H and I) and repeated in the syllabus. Specifically, students understood that they could remain in the course as students without having to be a participant; all students, regardless of participant status, were required to complete the same assignments; and, the course instructor would not be aware of whether or not the student elected to participate in the study. Students also understood that they could withdraw from participating in the research with no penalty to their class grade. The potential conflict of interest between researcher and course instructor was managed since the course instructor was not aware of student’s status as research participants. All students enrolled in the course agreed to participate in the research.
**Control group.** During the intake assessment, thirty-three participants were included in the control group (26 females, 6 males, $M_{age}=20.63$ years, $SD=1.48$, age range: 18-26 years). Two students were enrolled as sophomores, 17 students were enrolled as juniors, 12 students were enrolled as seniors and one student declared being a “fifth year” senior. Twenty-eight students identified their ethnicity as White, two as Black, and two as Asian American. Twenty-six of the original 33 participants (21 females, 5 males) completed the exit interview, representing a 79% retention rate. The 26 students ranged in age from 18 to 23 ($M=20.46$, $SD=1.14$). There was one sophomore, 15 juniors, nine seniors and one “fifth year” senior.

Convenience sampling was used to recruit for the control group. Based on the suggestion of the Head of the Department of Psychology, the instructors of three 200 level elective psychology courses were contacted. The professors were asked, and later agreed, to offer their students extra credit, in exchange for participation in the study. The researcher then entered the classrooms during the first week of classes to explain the study, the conditions of participation and requirements for extra credit. Students understood that participation was voluntary and that in order to receive extra credit, students were required to complete the intake assessment and the exit assessment. Of those who expressed interest, the first 35 who successfully scheduled an intake appointment were invited to participate in the study. Of the 35, 33 attended their scheduled meeting, thus becoming participants.

**Follow-up.** In the experimental condition, 17 of the original 25 participants (14 females, 3 males) completed the follow-up questionnaire, representing a 68% retention rate. The students ranged in age from 18 to 42 ($M=20.7$, $SD=5.5$). Similarly 14 of the
26 participants (14 females, 0 males) in the control condition completed the follow-up questionnaire, representing a 54% retention rate. The students ranged in age from 18 to 22 ($M=20.1$, $SD=.997$).

**Research Design**

This study assessed the well-being of an experimental group and a control group through the administration of pre- and post-measures using within and between group designs. Participants in the experimental and control groups completed an intake assessment during the first two weeks of the fall 2011 semester. The intake assessment consisted of self-report measures and a clinician-administered interview. The assessment was identical for all participants regardless of condition. Participants in the experimental condition were then exposed to the requirements for the Psychology 235 course. Following the conclusion of the semester, the experimental and control participants completed an exit assessment, which was identical to the intake. Then, approximately four months later, all participants were invited to participate in a follow-up assessment, which consisted of a shorter version of the initial assessment. Enrollment in the course, Psychology of Adjustment, or another psychology elective, denoted the independent variable. Participant ratings on the measures included in the Well-Being Battery denoted the dependent variables. A schematic representation of the research design is presented in Figure 4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Time 1</th>
<th>Time 2</th>
<th>Follow Up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scales of Psychological Well-Being-SF</td>
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<td>XC</td>
<td>XC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Well-Being Narrative Form</td>
<td>XC</td>
<td>XC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Life Scale</td>
<td>XC</td>
<td>XC</td>
<td>XC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS</td>
<td>XC</td>
<td>XC</td>
<td>XC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale</td>
<td>XC</td>
<td>XC</td>
<td>XC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Happiness Questionnaire</td>
<td>XC</td>
<td>XC</td>
<td>XC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Well-Being Interview</td>
<td>XC</td>
<td>XC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Coping Questions</td>
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<td>XC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Evaluation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4. Schematic representation of the research design.*

(Note. X = completed by the experimental condition; C = completed by the control condition).

**Measures and Measurement Timeline**

Throughout the course of the study, The Well-Being Battery was administered to all participants twice (time one, time two) and the shortened version was administered for the follow-up. The Well-Being battery consisted of seven measures, including six self-report measures and a structured interview. The follow-up battery consisted of five self-report measures.

**The Well-Being Battery.** The self-report measures included in the Well-Being Battery were administered on-line, via Qualtrics. The mean completion time for the battery was 26.76 minutes (SD = 11.10 minutes), range: 11 - 76 minutes. In addition to an assessment of demographics, the following measures were included in the questionnaire.
Scales of Psychological Well-Being – Short Form (SPWB-SF; Ryff, 1989a). The SPWB-SF consists of 120 items, with 20 items representing each of six theoretically derived dimensions of psychological well-being (self-acceptance, environmental mastery, purpose in life, positive relationships with others, personal growth, and autonomy). Each item is answered on a six-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 6 = Strongly Agree). Out of the 120 items a 54-item version was created and used in this study, with nine items written to represent each of the six subscales. The measure is scored based on each subscale with possible scores range from 9 to 54 for each subscale. Burns and Machin (2007) reported Cronbach Alpha levels demonstrating high internal reliability for the six dimensions of PWB (environmental mastery, .812; personal growth, .791; purpose in life, .796; self-acceptance, .857; autonomy, .817; and, positive relations .802). See Appendix J.

Psychological Well-Being Narrative Form (Henriques, n.d.). This is a six-item measure that utilizes Ryff’s six dimensions of well-being (environmental mastery, purpose in life, personal growth, autonomy, self-acceptance, positive relations with others). The scale consists of a narrative prompt that captures the essence of each dimension. Each narrative provides differentiated examples of thoughts or behaviors that a person might experience if he or she demonstrates the given quality to either a high or low degree. Given these examples, the respondent would infer where they believe they currently fall and indicate their response along the 7-point Likert-type scale. Validity evidence for the scale demonstrated that the scale had predictive, incremental validity for both depression and self-esteem and generated expected, moderate to strong correlations with the original Ryff scale (Asselin, Edmunds, Glover & Henriques, 2010). See Appendix K.
**Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985).** The Satisfaction with Life Scale is a five-item measure primarily composed of questions related to satisfaction with one’s life. Each of the five questions are answered on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Total scores for the SWLS can range from 5 (low satisfaction) to 35 (high satisfaction). Gable, Reis, Impett, and Asher (2004) report the internal consistency coefficient for this scale as 0.93. See Appendix L.

**Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark & Tellegen, 1988).** The PANAS is a 20-item self-report measure used to assess positive affect and negative affect. The measure includes 10 positive affect adjectives and 10 negative affect adjectives. Watson et al. (1988) define positive affect as “the extent to which a person feels enthusiastic, active, and alert” and negative affect as “a general dimension of subjective distress and unpleasurable engagement that subsumes a variety of aversive mood states.” (p. 1063) For each adjective, participants are asked to “indicate to what extent you have felt this way during the past week?” by answering on a five-point Likert scale (1 = never, 5 = frequently). Possible scores range from 10 to 50 on both the positive and negative subscales. The reliabilities of the PANAS scales are acceptably high with Cronbach’s alpha of 0.89 for positive affect and 0.85 for negative affect. The correlation between the positive and negative scales is low at 0.15. See Appendix M.

**Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1979).** This Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale aims to measure global self-esteem. The scale consists of 10 items, and asks participants to rate their level of self-respect and degree of satisfaction with themselves in general on a 4-point Likert-type scale. Previous studies have reported alpha reliabilities as
ranging from .72 to .88 (Gray-Little, Williams, & Hancock, 1997) and .88 to .99 (Robins, Hendin, & Trzesniewski, 2001). See Appendix N.

**Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ; Hills & Argyle, 2002).** The OHQ is an abbreviated measure derived from the OHI (Oxford Happiness Inventory; Argyle, Martin, & Crossland, 1989). The OHQ was created as a board measure of happiness and consists of 29 multiple-choice items. Hills and Argyle (2002) adapted the OHI to develop the OHQ by creating 29 single items that are answered on a six point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 6= strongly agree). Hills and Argyle (2002) reported high scale reliabilities with alpha values of .92 for the OHI and .91 for the OHQ. See Appendix O.

Also included in the Well-Being Battery are two measures administered in the form of a structured interview.

**The Well-Being Interview (WBI; Asselin, 2012).** This instrument is a clinician administered, structured clinical interview designed to assess well-being in others. Based on the conceptualizations of subjective well-being and psychological well-being along with contributions from the subfield, positive psychology, the WBI is a measure that is fundamentally rooted in theory. A detailed description of the measure and scoring is included in the previous chapter. For the purpose of this project, the participant’s subjective rating of function in the domain (ranging from one to seven), forced choice data (yes, no and maybe/sometimes) and the clinician’s overall objective rating (ranging from one to seven) were used to form an overall score for each subscale. The following subscales were assessed: Overall Well-Being, Satisfaction, Engagement, Purpose, Medical Health, Fitness Habits, Emotion, Relationships, Coping, Identity, Stressors, Affordances and Trajectory.
**Supplemental Coping Questions.** As an informal measure of the participants’ methods of coping, the clinician-administered interview also included supplemental questions related to coping. Following the administration of the WBI, participants were administered a supplemental measure, which prompted:

You just rated your overall well-being as [insert number from WBI]. Imagine that you just experienced a big stressor or stressors and about a week later your level of overall well-being drops. What are some things you could do over the course of the following week to make yourself feel better? What strategies could you employ?

Based on this prompt the participants then provided the examiner a list of possible actions they would employ (i.e., go for a walk, talk to a friend). The participants were then asked two follow up questions. First, they were asked to rank each provided solution in the order in which they would utilize it (i.e., first, second, third, etc.). Second, participants were asked how likely they would be to utilize each of the provided responses on a scale from 0 (it is highly unlikely that I would do this) to 4 (it is highly likely I would do this). See Appendix Q.

Open-ended responses to the supplemental coping questions were coded based on category and whether it was adaptive or maladaptive (see Appendix R for coding). All responses were coded blind of condition. After coding, all responses were analyzed and a total number of unique and adaptive strategies were added for each participant. For example, say a participant listed four coping strategies: “go to the gym”, “work out”, “drink alcohol” and “call a friend”. “Go to the gym” and “work out” would each be coded under the category of “exercise” and “drink alcohol” would be considered maladaptive.
Therefore, when counting the total number of unique and adaptive coping strategies this participant would have two (exercise and seek social support).

**Administration of the Measures.** The self-report measures comprising the Well-Being Battery were administered via a Qualtrics survey. The data at various selection points were linked in the Qualtrics survey by a four-digit subject number (e.g., the last four digits of their student cards). Doing so allowed the participants to be identified by their subject number throughout the semester and also ensured that the participant’s responses were kept as confidential as possible. Once the questionnaire portion of the Well-Being Battery was completed, each participant sat for the face-to-face interview with a research assistant, which consisted of the WBI and supplemental questions.

All participants were administered the Well-Being Battery once as an intake assessment (time one), between the dates of 8/29/11 and 9/9/11, once as an exit assessment (time two), between the dates of 11/28/11 and 12/9/11 and once as a follow-up assessment between the dates of 4/18/12 and 4/28/12. Because completing the Well-Being Battery at times one and two were part of the requirements for the course, Psychology 235, all experimental participants completed the online battery during class with interviews occurring within seven days to ensure that they were completed prior to the first content class. The participants in the control condition were emailed a link of the online battery and upon completion of the survey students were contacted to schedule the interview portion of the battery. Participants in the experimental condition were then exposed to the Psychology 235 course, which functioned as the intervention.
At time two, for the exit interview, all participants were reminded that they would again be completing the Well-Being Battery. All participants were emailed a copy of the link and asked to complete it within one week. Participants were also scheduled for the interview within a two-week time frame.

Ten doctoral students in clinical and school psychology were trained to administer the WBI. Since all administrators already had experience conducting clinical interviews, they were encouraged to use these skills in conducting the WBI. Specific to the WBI, training included familiarizing the administrators with the format of the measure and how to provide the clinician ratings. Data from the interview portion of the Well-Being Battery was recorded manually by the administrators and marked only by subject number.

Hypotheses

1. A course on well-being and adjustment organized by the unified theory can be developed in a manner that comprehensively addresses key domains of human well-being.

2. This course will be sought by students, who will be actively engaged, demonstrate good performance and evaluate the course positively.

3. The course will have a minimal, but positive, impact on measures of well-being, assessed by comparing the experimental and control conditions in terms of: 1) qualitative data; 2) standardized self-report measures of well-being; and 3) a standardized structured interview of well-being. Data will be obtained prior to, and after the intervention.
4. Data collected at time three will not statistically differ from data collected at time two suggesting that any changes observed from time one to time two will remain.
Chapter IV

RESULTS

Overview of Analyses

Four primary research questions organized the approach to this project. First, could a course on well-being be developed and organized around the unified component systems approach that comprehensively encompassed the major domains of well-being examined in positive psychology? The results of the efforts in this endeavor are presented in the design of the course (see Appendices B through G), where readers can judge for themselves the extent and comprehensiveness of the material presented. The second question pertained to whether the course was successful. To answer this question course evaluations and student performance were assessed.

The third and primary question was to examine the potential effect the intervention had on the well-being of the participants. To answer this question and to assess whether the intervention could enhance well-being, both qualitative and quantitative measures were collected. The quantitative data was administered and collected via the Qualtrics program and then each of the seven measures of well-being included in the assessment package were assessed using two-way repeated measures ANOVAS. The primary interest was in examining for a time (pre and post) by condition (experimental and control) interaction. Effect sizes were also computed for these analyses (partial-eta-squared). Secondary analyses examined within group changes for time (pre and post) using repeated measures t-tests.

The fourth research question sought to determine whether changes observed from time one to time two would remain at a follow-up, which occurred approximately four
months following completion of the course. To answer this question and to assess whether the effects of the intervention remained, quantitative measures were collected via the Qualtrics program. Then, each of the measures of well-being included in the follow-up was assessed using repeated measures $t$-test to look for within group changes for time (post and follow-up).

**Findings from the Psychology of Adjustment Course**

The intervention course was conducted in the fall of 2011 and was successfully completed by 25 students. To determine the whether the course was successful, course evaluations and student performance were assessed. At the end of each semester all students in the department of psychology are invited and strongly encouraged to fill out a course evaluation that is completed electronically and submitted anonymously to the Head of the department. Twenty of the twenty-five students (80%) completed the survey. All questions were framed on a six-point scale ranging from zero (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). Table 1 depicts means and standard deviations for evaluation questions. Additionally, ten students provided a brief narrative when asked for “comments and suggestions” (see Appendix S). Overall, ten out of ten narratives when examined are considered to be indicative of a positive experience.
Table 1

*Means and Standard Deviations for Departmental Course Evaluation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Mean(^1)</th>
<th>Mean(^2)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>(SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor seems knowledgeable about this course.</td>
<td>4.75 (.44)</td>
<td>4.69 (.61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor facilitated critical thinking.</td>
<td>4.70 (.47)</td>
<td>4.44 (.79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor is enthusiastic about the course.</td>
<td>4.90 (.31)</td>
<td>4.70 (.79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor effectively communicated with students.</td>
<td>4.55 (.60)</td>
<td>4.46 (.83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The organization of the course facilitated learning.</td>
<td>4.60 (.82)</td>
<td>4.38 (.87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor was helpful.</td>
<td>4.80 (.41)</td>
<td>4.44 (.81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor created an environment that promoted my learning.</td>
<td>4.60 (.50)</td>
<td>4.42 (.84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor made expectations for assignments and exams clear.</td>
<td>4.20 (1.0)</td>
<td>4.43 (.84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor provided useful/timely feedback.</td>
<td>4.55 (.60)</td>
<td>4.41 (.85)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) *Psychology 235: The Psychology of Adjustment*

\(^2\) *Departmental course evaluations for all fall 2011 courses*

In addition to the official departmental course evaluation, all students completed a course specific evaluation created by the course instructor. This was included in order to assess student’s homework compliance, course satisfaction and suggestions for future courses. Students were asked four questions about each week’s homework assignment. First, students were asked when the homework assignment was completed (during the week it was assigned, after the week it was assigned, or was not completed). Second, they were asked whether they found the homework assignment helpful (1= not at all helpful; 5= extremely helpful). Third, students were asked how likely they were to use
the activity in the future (1= not at all likely; 5= extremely likely). And finally, students were asked how thoughtfully they completed the assignment (1= not at all thoughtfully; 5= extremely thoughtfully). Table 2 present means and standard deviations for questions related to homework completion. For a listing of assigned homework, see Appendix F.
Table 2

*Frequency of reported date of homework completion and Means and Standard Deviations for degree of thoughtful completion of homework, the degree of which students found the activity helpful and the likelihood of using the activity in the future.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homework completed within assigned week*</th>
<th>Degree of thoughtful completion of assignment</th>
<th>Found the activity helpful</th>
<th>Likelihood of using activity in the future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N) (%)</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>22 (100%)</td>
<td>4.62 (.498)</td>
<td>4.29 (8.45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>21 (95%)</td>
<td>4.38 (.669)</td>
<td>3.86 (.854)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>20 (91%)</td>
<td>4.38 (.740)</td>
<td>4.19 (.873)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>17 (77%)</td>
<td>4.38 (.740)</td>
<td>4.19 (.981)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>20 (91%)</td>
<td>4.43 (.746)</td>
<td>4.52 (.680)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>16 (73%)</td>
<td>4.24 (.768)</td>
<td>4.0 (.775)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>17 (77%)</td>
<td>4.57 (.676)</td>
<td>4.38 (.928)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>13 (95%)</td>
<td>4.10 (.889)</td>
<td>3.81 (.928)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>12 (55%)</td>
<td>4.57 (.676)</td>
<td>4.33 (.966)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>14 (64%)</td>
<td>4.33 (.658)</td>
<td>4.38 (.805)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>13 (59%)</td>
<td>4.33 (.796)</td>
<td>4.24 (.831)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: \(n=22\); Only 22 of the 25 students responded to this questionnaire regarding homework completion. * All assignments were reported as completed during the assigned week, or after the assigned week, there were no reports of not completing the assignment.*
Students were then asked general evaluative questions about the course including:
Was this course helpful outside of class in personal situations? Would you recommend
the course to another student? And, would a course like this be beneficial outside of the
department of psychology?

When asked whether the course was helpful outside of class in personal situations
21 students (91%) responded at either the “agree” or “strongly agree” level, one
responded with a neutral response (4%) and one responded at the “strongly disagree”
level (4%). When asked whether students would recommend the course to a peer, 22 out
of 23 students responded affirmatively (96%) and when asked whether the course would
be beneficial outside of the department of psychology 21 out of 23 students responded
affirmatively (91%). For all questions, two students did not respond.

Of those who responded affirmatively stating that they believed that the course
would be helpful outside of the department of psychology, 52% thought it would be
beneficial as a high school course, 52% thought it would be beneficial as part of a
community or religious group, and 90% thought it would be beneficial as a therapy
group. Additional benefits were seen within the college setting, as 81% thought the
course would be beneficial as a freshman seminar or general education course, 52%
reported it would be beneficial as a senior seminar and 29% thought it would be
beneficial within a different major.

Open response questions were also included and students were asked: How has
this course influenced you? What have been the most helpful elements of the course?
And, what would you change about the course to make it better?
When asked how the course has influenced students, 24 responses were provided. Responses reflected increased self-awareness, enhanced self-reports of happiness or optimism, and improved coping strategies. One student wrote, “[This course] has really given me insight on myself and others. I have learned so much about subjective well-being that I never knew before. The information I learned was actually interesting and useful and I can see myself using what I've learned in real life.” Another student responded, “This course has made me reevaluate how I view my daily thoughts and habits in regards to how they relate to my well-being. On a daily basis I use something I learned in this course.” See Appendix T for a complete listing of all responses.

As shown in Appendix U, when asked what the most helpful elements of the course were 10 responses indicated the homework and journals, eight indicated the small group, seven indicated a specific lesson, lecture or homework, four found the APA style paper or guidance on how to write an APA style paper as most helpful, and four reported that the class was most helpful in terms of future career planning or assistance on a personal issue.

When students were asked what they would change about the class, 20 responses were provided (see Appendix V for a complete listing). Four students responded that they would change nothing about the course, four students reported wanting to increase the frequency of class meetings, seven students reported wanting to change something about the requirements of the course (i.e., less readings, collect homework weekly, etc.), four students provided suggestions for the instructor’s teaching style (i.e., slower PowerPoint, more organization) and three students provided suggestions for the small group (i.e., increase small group time, decrease small group time, etc.).
To assess the component of the research question as to whether the course was successful. Student’s grades were used as an outcome measure of performance. As described in the methods section, overall student grades were formed based on class participation, the research paper, exams (midterm and final) and the personal project. Out of twenty-five students, 13 (52%) received an A, five received an A- (20%), four a B+ (16%), two a B (8%), one a B- (4%) and one a C+ (4%). In sum, all students passed the course at or above a 78 out of 100 and the class average was a 95.3 out of 100.

In addition to student evaluations the four doctoral-level group leaders were also asked to complete an anonymous evaluation of the course. To see all responses please refer to Appendix W. Overall, four out of four group leaders provided favorable responses when asked what it was like running the group. Four out of four group leaders also provide favorable responses when asked their perception of the student’s experience. For example, one group leader wrote, “They would come in each session and say how much they enjoyed it and looked forward to it each week. They mentioned telling their parents and friends about the class and how they were able to relate the topics to their own lives. They even said how much better they felt about being able to discuss issues (i.e., stress, emotions, relationships) in the environment of the group”.

**Descriptive Data**

Due to the convenience sampling and potential for a self-selection bias, comparisons were made of sample demographics at time one to determine differences between the control and experimental groups prior to exposure to the intervention. Chi-square tests were run on gender, ethnicity, and year of school while a t-test was run on
grade point average and age. Table 3 presents a summary of the demographic backgrounds of the sample.

Table 3

Demographic Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$(n = 32)$</td>
<td>$(n = 25)$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>20.63</td>
<td>20.32</td>
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<tr>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>92</td>
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<td>Hispanic</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year of School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The groups were comparable on these variables with one exception. The chi-square test indicated significant differences between the two groups with regard to year of college $\chi^2(3) = 25.88 \ p < .001$. The control group had higher percentages of juniors and seniors.

To further determine the presence of pretest differences between the control and experimental comparison groups, an independent means $t$-test was computed on the mean score differences for each scale. As seen in Table 4 at time one, the mean score differences for the two groups were not statistically significant ($p > .05$) on any of the primary variables that were examined for this project, although there were some variables that approached significance. Even for those marginally significant variables, there was no clear cut pattern, and a general conclusion is that neither group appeared to have substantially higher well-being than the other.
Table 4

*Independent samples t-test values on measures of well-being*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Intervention (n= 25)</th>
<th>Control (n= 32)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Life Scale</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>-0.483</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>.631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWB Narrative Form</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>.922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Happiness Quest.</td>
<td>141.96</td>
<td>134.6</td>
<td>-1.689</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS: Positive Emotions</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>0.497</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS: Negative Emotions</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>0.269</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.789</td>
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<td>33.4</td>
<td>-0.778</td>
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<td>.440</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ryff: Autonomy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ryff: Environmental Mastery</td>
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<td>-1.212</td>
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<td>.231</td>
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<td>Ryff: Self Acceptance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ryff: Purpose in Life</td>
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<td>Ryff Positive Relations</td>
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<td>45.4</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff Personal Growth</td>
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</tr>
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<td>101.4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>8.6</td>
<td>1.065</td>
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<td>.292</td>
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<tr>
<td>WBI: Engagement</td>
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<td>8.6</td>
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<td>.520</td>
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<td>WBI: Purpose</td>
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<td>8.7</td>
<td>-0.053</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.958</td>
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<tr>
<td>WBI: Medical Health</td>
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<td>9.1</td>
<td>1.816</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Fitness Habits</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>1.687</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Emotion</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>0.218</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Relationships</td>
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<td>8.4</td>
<td>0.82</td>
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<td>.487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Coping</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Identity</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.276</td>
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<tr>
<td>WBI: Stressors</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>-0.365</td>
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<td>WBI: Affordances</td>
<td>8.8</td>
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<td>54</td>
<td>.521</td>
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<td>WBI: Trajectory</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>1.078</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supplemental Coping</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<td>0.531</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>.598</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* *p < .05.*
The Well-Being Battery: Time One and Time Two

In order to explore group differences between time one and time two and answer the third and primary research question, two-way repeated-measures ANOVAs were conducted for each scale. Means and standard deviations for the comparison groups at both time one and time two are presented in Table 5 for each scale or subscale. The results of the analyses are presented in Table 6. The primary interest was in examining for a time (one and two) by condition (experimental and control) interaction. If the analyses revealed significant differences, then there were differential levels of change between the groups on these variables.
Table 5

*Mean (SD) values for the Experimental and Control Group at Pre and Post Time Points*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Experimental (n=25)</th>
<th>Control (n=26)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M (SD)</td>
<td>M (SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Life Scale</td>
<td>42.2 5.4</td>
<td>42.9 4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWB Narrative Form</td>
<td>33.6 3.9</td>
<td>35.5 4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Happiness Questionnaire</td>
<td>142 17.9</td>
<td>146.6 15.9</td>
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<td>PANAS: Positive Emotions</td>
<td>39.4 5.7</td>
<td>39.0 6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS: Negative Emotions</td>
<td>19.3 4.9</td>
<td>16.1 4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale</td>
<td>34.2 4.0</td>
<td>35.8 3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Autonomy</td>
<td>40.5 6.5</td>
<td>40.6 5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Environmental Mastery</td>
<td>43.6 6.4</td>
<td>42.7 5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Self Acceptance</td>
<td>46.5 5.3</td>
<td>46.3 4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Purpose in Life</td>
<td>44.6 5.0</td>
<td>44.0 4.4</td>
</tr>
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<td>Ryff Positive Relations</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>WBI: Medical Health</td>
<td>8.5 1.5</td>
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Table 6

One-way repeated-measures ANOVA values on measures of well-being (Time X Group)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>$\eta^2$</th>
<th>$F^*$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Life Scale</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.233</td>
<td>.631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWB Narrative Form</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.406</td>
<td>.527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Happiness Questionnaire</td>
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<td>.020</td>
<td>.887</td>
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<td>.007</td>
<td>.350</td>
<td>.557</td>
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<tr>
<td>PANAS: Negative Emotions</td>
<td>.076</td>
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</tr>
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<td>.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Ryff: Personal Growth</td>
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<td>.382</td>
<td>.540</td>
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<td>.026*</td>
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<td>4.035</td>
<td>.050</td>
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<td>WBI: Engagement</td>
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<td>2.9</td>
<td>.095</td>
</tr>
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<td>WBI: Purpose</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.885</td>
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<td>WBI: Medical Health</td>
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<td>.022</td>
<td>.884</td>
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<td>WBI: Fitness Habits</td>
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<td>.281</td>
<td>.598</td>
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<td>8.78</td>
<td>.005*</td>
</tr>
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<td>WBI: Relationships</td>
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<td>.669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Coping</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Identity</td>
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<td>3.21</td>
<td>.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Stressors</td>
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<td>.099</td>
<td>.754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Affordances</td>
<td>.608</td>
<td>.405</td>
<td>.527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Trajectory</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>1.284</td>
<td>.263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Coping</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>.101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $^* df = (1, 49)$. * $p < .05$.

**Interactions.** The Well-Being Interview Overall score, and the Well-Being Interview Emotions score had significant interaction effects in the predicted direction,
with the intervention group demonstrating more change in the positive direction on these measures than the control group.

**Comparison of Group Effects.** A second way to analyze the impact of the intervention is to compare the changes in the experimental and control group from Time 1 to Time 2 on each dependent variable to determine if one group, hypothesized to be the experimental group, demonstrated more significant positive changes between time one and time two than the other group. While this analysis is somewhat less strident in the conclusions that can be drawn, such analyses are reasonable to examine given the relatively limited sample size and exploratory nature of the study.

Paired-samples *t*-tests were conducted to compare the two conditions on the changes in each of the major dependent variables at time one and time two. As can be seen in Table 7, paired-samples *t*-tests indicated significant differences between time one and time two for the experimental condition on the following measures: 1) Psychological Well-Being Narrative Form; 2) the PANAS Negative Emotions scale; 3) The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale; 4) The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire; 5) The WBI Overall Scale; 6) The WBI Satisfaction Scale; 7) The WBI Purpose Scale; 8) The WBI Emotion Scale; 9) The WBI Coping scale; and, 10) the Supplemental Coping Questionnaire. Table 8 shows that the only significant difference found in the control group was on the WBI Purpose scale. These findings support the third hypothesis.
Table 7

Repeated measures t-test values on measures of well-being for the experimental group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>t(24)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Life Scale</td>
<td>-1.013</td>
<td>.321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWB Narrative Form</td>
<td>-2.96</td>
<td>.007*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Happiness Questionnaire</td>
<td>-2.074</td>
<td>.049*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS: Positive Emotions</td>
<td>0.281</td>
<td>.781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS: Negative Emotions</td>
<td>3.266</td>
<td>.003*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale</td>
<td>-2.679</td>
<td>.013*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Autonomy</td>
<td>-0.214</td>
<td>.832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Environmental Mastery</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>.497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Self Acceptance</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>.862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Purpose in Life</td>
<td>0.616</td>
<td>.544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Positive Relations</td>
<td>-0.094</td>
<td>.926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Personal Growth</td>
<td>-0.278</td>
<td>.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Overall</td>
<td>-2.262</td>
<td>.033*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Satisfaction</td>
<td>-4.025</td>
<td>.001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Engagement</td>
<td>-1.381</td>
<td>.181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Purpose</td>
<td>-2.115</td>
<td>.045*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Medical Health</td>
<td>.452</td>
<td>.655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Fitness Habits</td>
<td>1.038</td>
<td>.310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Emotion</td>
<td>-4.919</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Relationships</td>
<td>-0.427</td>
<td>.674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Coping</td>
<td>-2.136</td>
<td>.044*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Identity</td>
<td>-2.55</td>
<td>.018*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Stressors</td>
<td>1.951</td>
<td>.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Affordances</td>
<td>-0.788</td>
<td>.439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Trajectory</td>
<td>-1.056</td>
<td>.302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Coping</td>
<td>-2.20</td>
<td>.038*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* *p < .05
Table 8

Repeated measures t-test values on measures of well-being for the control group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>t(25)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Life Scale</td>
<td>-1.337</td>
<td>.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWB Narrative Form</td>
<td>-1.49</td>
<td>.149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Happiness Questionnaire</td>
<td>-1.497</td>
<td>.147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS: Positive Emotions</td>
<td>1.253</td>
<td>.222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS: Negative Emotions</td>
<td>0.291</td>
<td>.773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale</td>
<td>-0.428</td>
<td>.673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Autonomy</td>
<td>-1.585</td>
<td>.126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Environmental Mastery</td>
<td>-0.942</td>
<td>.356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Self Acceptance</td>
<td>.199</td>
<td>.844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Purpose in Life</td>
<td>-0.173</td>
<td>.864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Positive Relations</td>
<td>.556</td>
<td>.583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Personal Growth</td>
<td>.558</td>
<td>.582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Overall</td>
<td>.810</td>
<td>.425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Satisfaction</td>
<td>-4.35</td>
<td>.667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Engagement</td>
<td>.989</td>
<td>.332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Purpose</td>
<td>-2.354</td>
<td>.027*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Medical Health</td>
<td>.723</td>
<td>.476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Fitness Habits</td>
<td>.399</td>
<td>.694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Emotion</td>
<td>-.372</td>
<td>.713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Relationships</td>
<td>.235</td>
<td>.816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Coping</td>
<td>.670</td>
<td>.509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Identity</td>
<td>-.731</td>
<td>.471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Stressors</td>
<td>1.862</td>
<td>.074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Affordances</td>
<td>.160</td>
<td>.874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBI: Trajectory</td>
<td>.708</td>
<td>.486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Coping</td>
<td>-.778</td>
<td>.444</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * p < .05
The Well-Being Battery: Time Two and Time Three

Approximately four months following termination of the course, all participants in the control and experimental conditions were invited to complete an abbreviated version of the Well-Being Battery. Sixty-eight percent ($n=17$) of the participants in the experimental condition and 54% of participants ($n=14$) in the control condition completed the follow-up. Paired-samples t-tests were conducted to compare the administered measures of well-being in each condition at time two and time three. No statistically significant differences were evident for the experimental condition or for the control condition. See Table 9 for means and standard deviations across the three times and see Table 10 findings from the paired-samples t-tests. This finding supports the fourth hypothesis.
Table 9

*Mean (SD) values for the Experimental and Control Group at Pre, Post and Follow-Up Time Points*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Experimental</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time 1 (n=25)</td>
<td>Time 2 (n=25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Happiness Questionnaire</td>
<td>142 (17.9)</td>
<td>146.6 (15.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS: Positive Emotions</td>
<td>39.4 (5.7)</td>
<td>39.1 (6.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS: Negative Emotions</td>
<td>19.3 (4.9)</td>
<td>16.1 (4.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale</td>
<td>34.2 (4.0)</td>
<td>35.8 (3.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Autonomy</td>
<td>40.5 (6.5)</td>
<td>40.6 (5.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Environmental Mastery</td>
<td>43.6 (6.4)</td>
<td>42.7 (5.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Self Acceptance</td>
<td>46.5 (5.3)</td>
<td>46.3 (4.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Purpose in Life</td>
<td>44.6 (5.0)</td>
<td>44.0 (4.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Positive Relations</td>
<td>48.5 (5.1)</td>
<td>48.6 (4.51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Personal Growth</td>
<td>48.0 (4.3)</td>
<td>48.1 (4.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10

*Repeated measures t-test values on measures of well-being from Pre-test to Follow-Up*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Experimental t(16)</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Control t(13)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Happiness Questionnaire</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>.074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS: Positive Emotions</td>
<td>-1.14</td>
<td>.269</td>
<td>-1.35</td>
<td>.204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS: Negative Emotions</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>.886</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>.434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>.179</td>
<td>-.374</td>
<td>.715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Autonomy</td>
<td>-.392</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>-.488</td>
<td>.635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Environmental Mastery</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>.923</td>
<td>-.120</td>
<td>.906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Self Acceptance</td>
<td>-1.73</td>
<td>.103</td>
<td>.410</td>
<td>.690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Purpose in Life</td>
<td>-.961</td>
<td>.351</td>
<td>.854</td>
<td>.411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Positive Relations</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.955</td>
<td>-.226</td>
<td>.825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryff: Personal Growth</td>
<td>-1.039</td>
<td>.314</td>
<td>-.376</td>
<td>.714</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* *p* < .05
Chapter V

DISCUSSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This investigation aimed to compare the effectiveness of a course designed to enhance well-being by comparing self-report and clinician-administered measures between an intervention and control group. To do so, the study sought to answer four broad questions. The first was whether an undergraduate course on well-being could be effectively developed that is not only based on existing theories but also uses the unified approach to conceptualizing people as an integrative framework. It was hypothesized that a course in well-being could be created that was organized based on the unified theory that also comprehensively addressed the key domains of human well-being. The second research question asked whether the course could be delivered in an effective way to undergraduate students. It was hypothesized that students would perform well and would positively evaluate the course. The third and primary research question asked whether there would be a measurable and comparable difference in the effect between the intervention and control groups. It was hypothesized that the course would have a minimal, but positive impact on measures of well-being within the experimental condition but not the control condition. The fourth and final research question sought to see whether changes between pre- and post-test remained at follow-up testing. It was hypothesized that levels of well-being would remain consistent from time two to time three.

To address the first research question readers were directed to Appendices B through G, which presented the course content. In sum, the course was designed using the unified approach to well-being as its backbone in the sense that each week’s lecture
corresponded with one of the ten domains of well-being. Then, within each domain, the prominent theories of well-being were explained and relevant findings were introduced. Further integrating existing research and theory into the course, each week an evidence-based intervention was selected and assigned as a homework assignment. Through utilization of such a design, course material was presented in a manner that was logical and coherent and that represented integration within the field rather than perpetuating fragmentation.

In terms of the second research question, course evaluations and student performance were assessed to determine whether the course was effectively delivered to the undergraduate students. Based on the course evaluations completed by the department of psychology as well as the course evaluations completed independently by the instructor, it is believed that the course was effectively delivered based on the almost unanimous favored evaluations. Student grades were also assessed as a means to determine student performance. The class average was a 95.3 out of 100 and all students passed the course receiving grades ranging between an A and C+. Overall, this suggests that a course on well-being was effectively created and delivered.

To address the third, and primary research question, which sought to determine whether group differences between time one and time two existed within the experimental and/or control groups, responses from the Well-Being Battery were assessed. The strongest test of this hypothesis was a repeated measures comparison between the two groups on the measures of well-being. If found significant, this would provide evidence showing that the well-being of participants in the intervention group improved significantly more than the well-being of participants in the control group.
From the Well-Being Battery, two scales showed significant interaction effects in the predicted direction. The Overall Well-Being scale and the Emotions subscale of the Well-Being Interview showed that the experimental condition improved significantly more than the control condition. This suggests that the intervention had a positive effect in improving the well-being of participants in the experimental condition, as assessed by these scales. Furthermore, although not clinically significant, three scales (the PANAS negative emotions, WBI Satisfaction subscale and the WBI coping subscale) approached significance and possibly with a larger sample, significance would have been reached.

Although only two scales showed significant changes based on the more robust repeated measures ANOVA comparison, additional tests were conducted. The weaker, yet important, paired-samples t-tests, were used for each measure to look for differences from time one to time two in both the intervention and control groups. As described above, significant differences between time one and time two for the experimental condition, but not the control condition, were found on the Psychological Well-Being Narrative Form, the PANAS Negative Emotions scales, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire. Additionally, within the WBI the Overall Scale, the Satisfaction subscale, the Emotion subscale, and the Coping subscale showed significant differences within the experimental group but not the control group. These significant pre/post changes in the appropriate direction support the hypothesis that the intervention had a positive impact on well-being. Additionally, the significant improvement within the experimental condition, but not the control condition, on the supplemental coping questions, further suggests the effectiveness of the intervention.
Despite hypothesizing that the intervention would have a positive effect on increasing well-being, there was a realistic skepticism regarding whether the impact would be evident in the measures. This skepticism is due to the fact that one’s well-being is considered to be reasonably stable over time (Eid & Diener, 2004). Additionally, the concept of the hedonic treadmill (Brickman & Campbell, 1971) and the revised adaptation theory of well-being (Diener, Lucas, & Scollon, 2006) suggest that individuals have a set point of happiness and that emotional experiencing is similar to the process of sensory adaptation, meaning that people become habituated to their emotions just like people become habituated to a sound or smell.

As such, while it is expected that levels of well-being occasionally change, it is also expected that ultimately the level of well-being will return to an individual set-point or baseline. Possibly what differentiates the previous findings reflecting the stability of well-being over time to the current findings which found a positive effect in improving well-being is due to the fact that the above cited studies did not set out to improve well-being through an intervention, as was attempted in this study. In other words, while the findings from the control group showed the well-being of participants to be stable over time, the experimental group, which was exposed to the Psychology of Adjustment course, was taught ways to effectively improve well-being, perhaps changing their original well-being set-point. As such, it would be expected that follow-up data neither continue to improve nor decline when compared to data collected at time two.

To test this notion, follow-up data was collected approximately four months following completion of the course. The main research question explored here was to see whether compared to time two if the participant’s levels of well-being would remain the
same, return to the time one baseline, or continue to improve. It was hypothesized that
time three data would remain the same as time two data. Supporting this hypothesis,
results indicated no significant change in well-being from time two to time three as
assessed by the given measures.

Further providing explanation for why a time one to time two change occurred in
the experimental condition, has to do with the type of activity. Lyubomirsky, Sheldon,
and Schkade (2005) state that arguably one of the most promising means of altering the
happiness of individuals is an intentional activity. They define an intentional activity
broadly as, “discrete actions or practices in which people can choose to engage [and that]
requires some degree of effort to enact.” (p. 118) There was considerable overlap in the
author’s description of intentional activities and the homework that were assigned for the
present study, for example exercising, reframing and striving for goals.

Significance

In a departure from previous research, the current study provides a theoretically
informed, philosophically grounded and empirically driven approach to conceptualizing
and improving well-being. Historically, humanistic psychologists have contributed
philosophical and theoretical reasoning and positive psychologists have contributed
empiricism. Generally speaking, what each discipline lacks however, is the best of the
other. While positive psychology research has included impressive empirically driven
studies, it has been lacking in the theoretical and philosophical foundations and while
humanistic psychology has strong theoretical and philosophical foundations, it has been
lacking in empiricism. As such, the significance of the current study lies in its use of the
Unified Theory as a theoretical foundation that incorporates and integrates key
perspectives within psychology, while also providing a philosophical standing that promotes a shared sense of dignity and well-being and then, the testing of the proposed theory and philosophy through an experimental design.

Furthermore, from a more applied perspective, the current study offers exciting possibilities for the future of prevention and intervention. The findings of the current study, although warranting additional research, suggest that the well-being of students can be improved, as assessed by the distributed measures, in the context of an undergraduate course.

**Limitations**

As with any research study, there are certain limitations. The current study was a first look at the constructs and proposed intervention. Due to the exploratory nature of the present study, limitations exist that caution against the generalizability of the findings and as will be discussed in the following section, many exciting possible lines of future research exist.

An initial limitation relates to the recruitment and enrollment of students in both the control and experimental condition. The convenience sampling approach, in that students self-selected into either the Psychology of Adjustment class or one of the control elective courses, limits comparability and may suggest group differences prior to the intervention. This was recognized and managed by comparing demographics and baseline scores on the Well-Being Battery between groups, but nonetheless an improved design would have randomly assigned participants into the conditions.

The variability of instructor style and personality is also related to the comparability of the conditions. McGrath and Noble (2010) show that positive teacher-
student relationships can contribute significantly to students’ well-being and learning outcomes. As such, future studies would ideally have the same instructor teach both conditions or would randomize conditions to multiple teachers thus avoiding this potential bias. Relatedly, due to the limited sample size and exploratory nature, no analyses or tests of integrity were conducted comparing differences and similarities between the four small groups. As such, it is possible that group differences exist.

An additional limitation of the study has to do with the multiple components of the intervention and therefore the difficulty attributing the improvements within the experimental group to a specific component or the combination of components. The current study included three main components (course lectures, course assignments, and small group) and then each of the possible combinations. Additionally, within each of the three components were more minute aspects (i.e., 10 lectures within course lectures and 10 groups within small groups) and therefore it is possible that one of the smaller aspects had a greater effect on the results. Due to all of the components, the design of the current study failed to allow for conclusions to be drawn that indicate whether or not it was one component or a unique combination of components that contributed to the overall improvements in well-being in the experimental condition.

The demand characteristics of the experimental group is another limitation regarding exact interpretation of the magnitude of the impact of the study. On the one hand, the experimental group showed many more pre-post significant differences, suggesting important changes. On the other, a careful examination of the mean scores, and the general lack of interaction findings raise significant questions about the true nature of what changed. Furthermore, there were clearly demand characteristics that
might be at play since students in the experimental group were aware of the study, taught and engaged in topics closely linked to what was assessed, and likely could have guessed what was a better response.

In addition, much of the anticipated support for the course had to do with the students actively engaging in and completing the homework assignments. It was assumed that engaged completion of the assignments would improve well-being. Although it would be nice to assume that all students completed the homework on time and in a thoughtful manner, it is difficult to assess, and not likely. It is more realistic to assume that some students completed the homework assignments after the due date or that some students did not actively engage in the assignments but rather completed it quickly with the intent of just being finished. This potential limitation was anticipated and the current study attempted to address it by asking students’ questions related to their timely and thoughtful completion of each assignment (as presented in Table 4). Students revealed responses that suggested thoughtful completion, although due to the nature of self-report questions this continues to remain a potential limitation. In sum, the difficulty associated with monitoring assignment compliance is a potential limitation that would suggest less of an effect than if all participants thoughtfully completed the assignments.

Furthermore, the nature of the current sample limits generalizability. More specifically, the current sample was homogeneous in terms of age, life situation, ethnicity and overall functioning. Due to the fact that all participants were enrolled in a four-year university, a general assumption of higher functioning can be made. In other words, we were taking a group of individuals with an already high level of well-being and functioning and exposed them to an intervention aimed at further increasing well-being.
While the intervention proved to have an effect on improving well-being in this sample, questions remain whether the same effect would be present in a different, less high-functioning, sample.

**Future Directions**

The present study represented a pilot investigation aimed at testing the effectiveness of a course designed to enhance the well-being of undergraduate students. Due to the limitations of the study and the exploratory nature, a direct causal relationship cannot be made. It is the hope that future research can more carefully and closely explore the current intervention to determine what are the most effective components, what is the most effective means of delivery and to increase generalizability of the intervention by attempting to implement it with different populations.

Specifically, by parsing apart the different components a more clear understanding of the mechanisms behind the observed change would be understood. This may occur first by comparing the effectiveness of the didactic course on positive psychology or well-being that includes the assignment of evidence based interventions as homeworks to the same course in terms of content that does not include the interventions as homework. Another level of exploration would test the effects of the course alone to the effects of the small group alone to a course similar to the one in this project that combined the course and the small group. This would help researchers understand whether it was mainly the small group, the course, or the combination which had the observed effect.

After more carefully understanding the effective component or combination of components future studies might expand these findings by adapting the intervention to
different populations. Of primary interest to this researcher is in creating a downward expansion of the research so that it can be applied to children and adolescents. Ideally, it could function as a preventative measure aimed at teaching the components of a healthy lifestyle and adaptive coping strategies prior to the emergence of psychopathology that may become incorporated into the school curriculum. A future longitudinal study could compare the long-term effects of the intervention on well-being, self-esteem, coping and other outcome measures such as depression, anxiety or stability of relationships to a control group.

Arkoff et al. (2006) point out that a particularly difficult time for students occurs near their entrance to college, as such, it is wondered whether a course of this nature would also be suitable for a freshman seminar or orientation experience. Similar to other orientation or freshman seminar courses, this course combines both academic lessons with more personalized life and developmental lessons. Therefore making this course ideally suited for students during a transitional phase.

If not serving as a preventative measure, future explorations may also look at an adapted version of the intervention and develop it into a 10-week psychoeducational group aimed at improving the well-being of members. Specifically, it may be effective for patients diagnosed with affective disorders, adjustment disorders or possibly more pervasive personality or relational disorders.

Additional lines of research would also more carefully explore the WBI as a measure of well-being. Since to date the current study is only the second study using the WBI, additional research looking at the reliability and validity is warranted. For a complete review of suggested adaptations and future studies see Asselin (2012).
Appendices

Appendix A

Hierarchical model of subjective well-being (Diener et al., 2003)
Appendix B

Course Syllabus

The Psychology of Adjustment
Psyc 235
Fall 2011
(Miller Hall 1107/Monday 1-3:30pm)

Instructor: Kimberly E. Kleinman, Ed.M., NCSP
Office: Miller G033
Office Hours: By appointment
Phone: (540) 568-2875
Email: kleinmke@dukes.jmu.edu

Group Facilitators: Mark Menzies menziemr@dukes.jmu.edu (group room: Miller G007)
Mary Tabit tabitmb@dukes.jmu.edu (group room: Miller G006)
Lauren Mays maysle@dukes.jmu.edu (group room: Miller 1109)
Vesna Hart hartvx@dukes.jmu.edu (group room: Miller G008)

Required Text
Weekly readings will consist of two to four chapters or articles related to the topic. All readings will be available in the library or posted on blackboard.

Course Description
Welcome to Psychology of Adjustment! Psyc 235 is a three-credit course designed to focus on the concept of adjustment and well-being through a psychological lens. The main goals of this course are to expose you to the current research in the field and to assist you in thinking critically, analytically and reflectively, both about yourself and about the world around you.

The two and a half hour course will meet once weekly. Class time will be divided into two components. The first component will be didactic and that of a typical discussion-based lecture. In this component we will cover current research on psychological adjustment, positive psychology, and well-being. Particular attention will be paid to the practical application of psychological theories and behavior change techniques to enhance personal awareness and self-development.

The second component, which will consist of approximately one hour, will take the form of small group discussions in which students will have the opportunity to develop, challenge and experience course material in a practical way. Students will be asked to reflect on personal experiences, as they are comfortable. Students will be supported by group facilitators at first and be encouraged to self-lead by the end of the semester.

In essence, I hope this course will support you in developing insight and awareness into your self, your body, your mind, your environment, your mental health, and your life.
Research
Those enrolled in the course will also have the opportunity to be directly involved in psychological research. During the first and last week of the course, instead of a typical class you will be led through an entrance/exit evaluation. Completion of these evaluations will be crucial for your personal project but will be graded pass/fail (i.e., completed/did not complete). Furthermore, evaluations will be anonymous and will be used collectively as part of the instructor’s doctoral research and for evaluation of the course. The James Madison University Institutional Review Board has approved the project (8/22/11) and informed consent forms will be provided and discussed the first day of class. While students may withdraw from participating in research at any time, it is important to consider this facet before enrolling as students are expected to enter the class open to participation.

Course Objectives
Students completing this course should be able to:

1. Learn an integrative framework for conceptualizing adjustment and well being.
2. Learn techniques from some of the leading schools of psychotherapy that can be applied to enhance adjustment and well-being.
3. Develop a greater understanding of one’s own interactions of thoughts, feelings and behaviors.
4. Learn ways to apply those techniques to foster your own well-being and adjustment.

Attendance
Since the class meets only once/week a significant amount of material will be covered on each day. Therefore it is expected that students attend each class. Consider this schedule prior to enrolling in the course and if you know that you will be missing class, consider whether this is the right course for you. That being said, while each student is encouraged to attend every class, if you have to miss a class, you need to notify the instructor in advance. Failure to do so will result in a significant decrease (10%) in your grade. Furthermore, missing more than one class will also result in a 10% decrease in your grade.

Religious Accommodations
If you anticipate missing a course for religious observation notify the instructor no later than the end of the Drop-Add period the first week of the semester. Due to the weekly nature of the course, one absence will be manageable but more than one absence will present as a problem.

Adding/Dropping the Course
The deadline for adding a fall 2011 semester class through e-campus without academic unit permission is Tuesday, September 6, 2011. Between Wednesday, September 7, 2011 and Thursday, September 15, 2011, academic unit permission is required to add a class
for fall semester 2011. The last day to withdraw from a course and receive a "W" grade is Thursday, October 27, 2011. No exceptions will be made to these deadlines.

**Participation**
For the didactic component you are expected to have read and thought about the assignments before class so you can actively engage in conversation. You will be graded on your degree of thoughtful participation. A rubric for weekly participation will be posted on blackboard and completed after each class. Twice throughout the semester you will receive written feedback from the instructor regarding your participation.

For the experiential component of the course you are expected to be *open* to participating and you are *encouraged* to participate, as you feel comfortable. That being said, you will not be graded on the degree to which you participate. You instead will be graded on your presence (i.e., attendance) and openness (i.e., your willingness to participate and your openness to what your classmates share). Since this will depend on many factors, before negative grades are given, you will be approached by your group facilitator and/or course instructor to discuss your comfort with the process. You are also *highly* encouraged to approach your group facilitator or course instructor with any concerns you may have.

**Students with Disabilities**
If you have a diagnosed disability which will make it difficult for you to carry out the course work as outlined, or which requires accommodations, contact the Office of Disabilities: [http://www.jmu.edu/ods/](http://www.jmu.edu/ods/).

**Academic Honesty**
Students are expected to abide by the honor code as stated in the student handbook. Cheating and plagiarism by university standards and rules are not permissible and are considered an honor code violation, which will need to be reported and which will result in a failing grade for the assignment and/or the course. The JMU Honor Code is available from the Honor Council Web site: [http://www.jmu.edu/honor/code.shtml](http://www.jmu.edu/honor/code.shtml). Don’t do it – it’s not worth it!!

**University Closure/Class Cancellation**
Occasionally JMU cancels classes due to inclement weather or for other official reasons. You should consult the JMU web site, the JMU radio station, or other local stations for updates on days that there might be a closure. If classes are canceled, class may or may not be rescheduled. I will post an announcement on Blackboard and send an email message describing my plans as soon as I am able. In the absence of any specific information, you should plan for the class time to be made up during the official make-up time designated by JMU. If the closure occurs on the day of a scheduled exam, you should plan for the exam to be administered during the next class meeting.

**Methods of Evaluation**

**Class participation (25%).** Class participation is a crucial component of the course. Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned readings and to
contribute their reactions and other thoughts during class discussion. In addition, it is an expectation in this class that students will reflect on their own experiences and be open to hearing others, particularly in the second (group discussion) component. Twice throughout the semester you will receive written feedback from the instructor regarding your participation and possible areas of improvement.

As mentioned, it is expected that students participate in both didactic and experiential sections and prior to enrolling in the course students should be aware of the commitment. While it is not mandatory to share personal experiences, it is mandatory to attend the group and be open to sharing and respectfully hearing others. That being said, if something changes and a student becomes unwilling to participate, it is the student’s responsibility to immediately contact the course instructor to discuss the situation and consider alternatives.

**Personal Project (25%).** A key element to this course is the self-reflective examination of your own adjustment and well-being and the development of a “personal project” that will be undertaken with the goal of improving some aspect of your life. This project, which will be discussed in detail during the first class, will take the format of a portfolio and will include: an initial self-assessment of your own well-being, weekly rating, the documentation and reflection (journaling) of empirically-supported self-interventions (homeworks, described below), a follow up self-assessment and overall reflection.

Included in your personal project will be an intake and exit evaluation (occurring during class). These “evaluations” are not evaluative in nature but will rather serve as pre and post measures of your own personal well-being and functioning. They will be completed anonymously and you will be graded pass/fail (i.e., completed/did not complete). Furthermore, it is likely that these anonymous measures will be included in the doctoral research of the instructor. This will be discussed further in class and consent forms will be reviewed and signed.

**Homework (included in the Personal Project).** Related to each week’s topic you will be assigned or asked to choose one empirically-supported self-intervention to complete during the week. Specific interventions will be discussed in detail during class. These assignments will not be academic in nature but will rather target an aspect of your own well-being and adjustment (for example, increased exercising or writing a gratitude letter).

**Journals (included in the Personal Project).** In addition to completing the self-intervention (homeworks) you will be asked to document and reflect (journal) on the task.

*The completion of homeworks and journals will be mandatory for successful completion of the personal project but will not be graded individually.*

**Paper (20%).** Well-being is a “hot topic” in psychology that has many fascinating components to it (psychological, moral, social, biological, philosophical). To enhance your analytic understanding, you are to complete an 8-10 page APA-style academic paper
on a topic related to well-being. You are highly encouraged to meet with the instructor prior to beginning to discuss your topic.

**Midterm and Final (30%).** These two tests will consist of multiple choice and/or essay. They will be designed to ensure that you are reading the material and have digested the main points.

**Notes**

**Research:** As discussed above certain assignments will be included in the doctoral research of the course instructor. While your participation in research is optional, the completion of all assignments is required. Each assignment has been designed primarily to facilitate the goals of the class and secondarily to be included as anonymous data. Therefore, even if you withdraw from the research you are still expected to complete the assignments.

**Late Assignments:** Unless specifically noted, assignments turned in late will not receive full credit. Ten percent of the total value of the assignment will be docked for each day turned in late. Assignments will NOT be accepted more than one week past the due date.

**Note:** All written assignments are expected to be double spaced, 1 inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman font. Assignments not completed in this style will be returned, unread with a score of zero.

**Grading Scale**

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## Course Schedule

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<td>(to be read prior to class on date listed; designed to be read in the order listed)</td>
<td>(weekly homeworks and journals will be assigned in class and are due the following class)</td>
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<td>Introduction/Intake Evaluation</td>
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| 9/12  | Interests, Engagement and Involvement in Life | Session 2   | Required: HPP: CH7: The Concept of Flow Csikszentmihalyi (1999) – If we are so rich, why aren’t we happy?  
Supplemental: Wrzesniewski et al. (1997) – Jobs, Careers, and Callings: People’s Relations to Their Work | Homework/Journal 3                                                         |
| 10/10 | MIDTERM EXAM                          | Session 6   | Required: PHS: CH3: The Human’s Greatest Strength: Other Humans Dunn et al. (2008) – Spending Money on Others Promotes Happiness  
HPP: CH32: The Psychology of Forgiveness  
Supplemental: Coan et al. (2006) – Lending a Hand: Social Regulation of the Neural Response to Threat | Participation Pts. Part 1                                                   |
| 10/17 | Relationships                        | Session 6   | Required: HPP: CH32: The Psychology of Forgiveness  
Supplemental: Coan et al. (2006) – Lending a Hand: Social Regulation of the Neural Response to Threat | Homework/Journal 6 Due: Journals 4-6 check                                 |
| 10/24 | Coping Defenses and Resiliency       | Session 7   | Required: HPP: CH43: Positive Responses to Loss: Perceiving Benefits and Growth  
HPP: CH6: Resilience in Development  
Mechanisms: Their Role in Positive Psychology

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<td>Required: Kurtz &amp; Lyubomirsky (2008) – Toward a Durable Happiness</td>
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HAPPY THANKSGIVING!! NO CLASS!

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FINALS – TBA

Due: Personal Project


All readings are posted on blackboard under the date assigned

Note: This syllabus (including grading and the course schedule) is subject to change. Students will be notified of any changes in class. Please refer to the syllabus posted on Blackboard for the most updated version.
Appendix C

Suggested weekly discussion points for small group

Small Group #1: Satisfaction with life

- Introductions/ Discussion of signature strength
  - For homework each student had to do the authentichappiness.org signature strength search and their assignment was to prepare to introduce themselves using their signature strength
- Confidentiality
- Rules
  - To determine with group… suggestions…

*Here are some suggested topics/activities but ideally you can just have a naturally flowing conversation... if not use these as starters for conversation.*

- Bad is Stronger than the Good: Examine negative focus of traditional psychology by examining examples and reasons for the differential impact of negative information.
  - Think of a case in your own experience where a small bit of negative information dramatically altered an otherwise positive relationship.
  - Why do you think the negative information has such a powerful impact?
  - Does negative information always have a negative impact? What effect do you think all the “smear” ads had in the recent presidential campaign?
- “Authentic Happiness”
  - Martin Seligman asked whether or not we would choose to be hooked up to a “happiness machine” that would keep us in a constant cheerful state.
  - Would you choose to be hooked up? Why or why not?
  - Is perpetual cheerfulness an ideal state?
  - What would we lose?
  - Does cheerfulness need unhappiness to be experienced and valued? Why do we have so many different emotions?
- Happiness is Everything, or is it?
  - If you had to choose between being healthy (mentally & physically) or happy, which would you choose and why?
  - What do you believe is the relationship between health and happiness?
  - Does one cause the other?
  - Is one the foundation for the other?
  - What would be examples of behaviors that increase health, but decrease happiness and behaviors that increase happiness, but decrease health?
  - Can you be healthy and unhappy? Happy and unhealthy?
Small Group #2: Interests, Engagement, and Involvement in Life

So ideally you are going to just have natural conversation about this topic... here are some possible discussion points...

- What interests you?
- What do you wish you were interested by?
  - I wish I were interested by running... but I’m not 😁
- Do you find that your actual interests and your ideal interests align? Do you think there is a time in your life when they will?
- How do the decisions you make, the relationships you keep, help/hurt this?
- Do you find yourself engaged by things in your daily life?
- Are you engaged in class?
- Have you ever decided to stop doing something, or make changes, because you were not engaged?
  - Switch majors... new friends... etc.
- What are you involved in?
- What do you want to be involved in?
- Do these align?
- How do you stay involved while being in the “JMU-bubble”? Is this something you even think about?
- Before learning about flow, have you ever noticed yourself “in flow”?
- Personally, how does being in flow affect you?
- How can flow be negative? (maladaptive behaviors can lead to flow; certain personality types; etc.)
- How could you increase flow? Would you want to increase flow?
- Do you believe money plays an important role in an individual’s life?
- Do you agree with the research suggesting that beyond a certain point the amount of money you earn makes little difference in your level of happiness?
  - Basically the article I review in class says after you have enough money to get basic needs met money does not “buy” happiness... shocker 😁
- Do you agree that the super-rich aren’t much happier than the rest of us?
- Despite what they may say, do you think most people believe that more money will make them happier?
- Do you believe that America has a “class” bias in which the amount of money you make affects how you are treated and regarded by others (e.g., respect, admiration, influence).
- Do you think that Americans generally are very concerned about appearances and that money and possessions are an important part of their self-image and having the “right” look?

Small Group #3: Meaning and Purpose in Life

- Do you have a purpose in life?
  - What is it?
  - Where did it come from?
Who influenced it? What influenced it?
- If you didn’t have a purpose what would you need to have one?
- What is the difference between purpose and meaning?
- What gives you meaning?
- Religion and Well-Being
  Note: Don’t forget that this is a delicate subject... but with sensitive handling, students generate some interesting opinions and insights into the differences between religious/spiritual beliefs that do and beliefs that do not seem to enhance well-being.
  - Research has defined “religiosity” largely by church attendance and participation in religious practices (e.g. prayer, religious studies). Studies have focused primarily on Western Christian religions (e.g. Catholic, Protestant, Lutheran). Overall, research finds that “religiosity” is associated with small but consistently positive health and well-being benefits. However, research also makes clear that for some people religion may detract from rather than enhance well-being. Based on your own life experiences and observations consider the following questions.
  *** More important that your own beliefs is that you present a well-rounded view of the topic… so anticipating (and prejudicing) JMU students to be one way… be prepared to present the other so they can be engaged in respective dialogue that may not directly align with their beliefs ***
  - What would you say are the major individual and social benefits of religious faith and spiritual beliefs? When, why and how does religion enhance well-being in your opinion?
  - What would you say are the major potential negative individual and social aspects of religious faith and spiritual beliefs? When, why and how can religion detract from well-being in your opinion?
  - What aspects of an individual’s psychological make-up and what aspects of religious beliefs might explain the differences between the effects described in your answer to question 1 and 2 (i.e., positive & negative effects of religion)?
  - How would each of these concepts explain the differences between your answer to question 1 and to question 2 (i.e. positive & negative effects of religion)?

Small Group #4: Health and Fitness Habits
- General habit system
  - What are their habits like… eating, sleeping, exercising, socializing, partying, smoking, relaxing, etc.
  - What are the habits of “most” college students like?
    - Is this healthy?
    - Will this change once you graduate?
    - Why is it this way? What about this environment lends itself to this lifestyle?
- Changing habits
- What habits do you want to change? Why? For how long have you wanted to change it? Have you tried before? What would make it hard/easy to change it? Etc.
- Physical responses to stress
  - How do they know when they are getting stressed? Do they feel it? Are they good at sensing it before it escalates?
  - If you become aware of your stress earlier can you do anything differently?
- Yerkes-Dodson Law
  - Basic thoughts… Does this apply? Who functions best where?
  - When are they within the optimal level of stress? When are they below (procrastinating)? Above (cramming)?

Small Group #5: Emotions and Emotion Regulation

At this point you are at the halfway point of the group. They should be getting used to it and feeling more comfortable. See how you can begin transitioning to more of a process group by asking open-ended questions and facilitating conversation. Be sure to monitor group member’s feelings and engagement and make sure everyone has a voice... let’s make this a positive process experience!

- General Questions
  - What emotions are you most comfortable feeling?
  - What emotions do you prefer not to feel?
  - Would you say most people are aware of their feelings? Were you aware of them before talking about them today?
  - Why is emotional intelligence important?
  - Is it hard to regulate your emotions? What makes it easier? Harder?
  - Can you be friends with someone who has a hard time regulating emotions? What makes it harder or easier to be friends with them?
  - If you could only feel one emotion what would it be? Why?
  - Is it better to be over-regulated or under-regulated? What are you?
  - During times of stress do you tend to go towards one or the other?
  - Are there gender differences?
  - Are there age differences?

- The Value of Positive Emotions
  - They learned and read about Fredrickson’s Broaden and Build Theory… this should be a discussion based upon that theory
    - How do positive emotions build personal resources? Example?
    - Can you think of a counter-example to her theory? That is, a negative effect of a positive emotion?
    - How is this apparent in their lives?
Small Group #6: Relationships

Based on our meeting last week remember to try and step back your role as group leader and start to just lead the process... ask more open ended questions and just put it out there to the group to discuss... be aware of what is going on in the group and who is and is not talking... if you notice someone hasn’t talked then feel free to “invite” them to share (no one has to)... also be aware of who is talking a lot and don’t be afraid to “pause” that person... “Xxx I want to hear what you have to say but we haven’t heard from everyone yet” or “Xxx hold on a second, I think Xx was going to say something” ... the goal is to be less and less directive while keeping them generally on track... you can check out the slides to see the general topics covered and ask them about that or anything related to relationships!

General Questions:
- How important are relationships to your PERSONAL well-being?
- Do you notice that based on how you are getting along with your friends, family, and significant other your mood changes?
- Can you compartmentalize (put away) your feelings if you get in a fight with someone and be normal with other relationships? Duties?
- How would you describe your attachment?
- Can you see the adult attachment of yourself or close others as formed in infancy?
- Can other things impact attachment? For example, is it possible that you were securely attached to a caregiver as a child but as an adult you have problems with relationships?
- How can you practice “active/constructive” statements?
- Is that something you have to practice?
- When do you find yourself making one of the other 3 kinds of responses?
- If you are in a “healthy” relationship do you always make active/constructive statements?
- What about the 4 horsemen? Which horseman do you find yourself typically getting stuck in?
- Would any one be more common in your relationships?
- Would any one be a sign to “get out” of a relationship?

Small Group #7: Coping, Defensiveness and Resiliency

- What are their experiences with resilience and loss?
- Do they see posttraumatic growth?
- How can people have the effects of PTG without confronting tragedy and loss directly? That is how might people get to life’s bottom line (what’s really important) in a “gentler” and less emotionally intense and traumatic manner?
- What are personal internal/external causes of resilience?
- What helps people make it through tough times?
- What is your “go to” defense mechanism?
- Which defense mechanisms are scariest?
- Which defense mechanisms are most common?
Small Group #8: Narrative Identity

- Who do you talk to when you are upset?
- Do you ever find that your thoughts are jumbled until you start speaking, or more likely after you finish speaking things make sense?
  - Why is this?
- What is a narrative?
- Why is making a narrative important?
- Have you made one?
- Do you journal? How do you express yourself?
- If you were asked to (they are asked for HW) would you jump right in and tackle the big issues or stay in the safety zone?
- Can you see how core and intermediate beliefs are developed?
- What about the automaticity of automatic thoughts?
- How do your thoughts and feelings relate?

Small Group #9: Stressors and Affordances

- What are some of your stressors?
- How are stressors different for college students than non-college students?
- What would stressors be like for your peers who chose to do something different after college?
- Why do we always feel like our stressors are bigger or worse than others stressors?
- Is this common?
- What are affordances?
- How do affordances help with stressors?
- Is it easier to recognize stressors or affordances? Why?
- What can we do to not get wrapped up in our stressors?
- Is there ever a stressor that is too “stressful”? In other words too much to handle?
- How does our body tell us when stress is too much?
- What can we do to help with the stress (ideally they will say some of the HW assignments)

Small Group #10: Trajectory

- What is the importance of a sense of purpose?
  - How do goals provide a sense of purpose?
- What are personal goal examples?
  - Where do they come from (internal, external)?
  - Has being away from home changed any goals?
- Is there a difference between individuals with clear goals and those without?
- How can not having clear goals be advantageous?
- What type of journey must you take to arrive upon meaningful goals?
- Is there a difference in motivation if your goals are intrinsic or extrinsic?
- Are goals more meaningful if you came upon them on your own?
- What does it take to separate the goals of your parents, community, expectations from goals of yourself?
- How does your day to day life reflect your goals?
- Is your major reflective of goals?
- Are some majors more reflective of goals than others?
Appendix D

Group leader rating scale: Weekly participation

Group Facilitator: __________________ Week: ______________

Participation Points: Please rate each group member on their degree of participation.

1: Does not participate and is not engaged
3: Does not participate but is engaged (i.e., actively listening but not sharing)
5: Appropriate participation and engagement (i.e., takes turns sharing and listening).

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Topics covered:


Suggestions:
Appendix E

Personal Project

**Psyc 235: Psychology of Adjustment**

**Personal Project**

The culmination of the course will be the successful completion of a Personal Project. The personal project is a self-reflective examination of your own adjustment and well-being with a goal of improving some aspect of your life.

The project will take the format of a portfolio and will include:

1. Initial self-assessment
2. Weekly ratings
3. Weekly homeworks and journals
4. Follow-up self-assessment
5. Final reflection

**Project Organization**

Your personal project should be submitted as an organized binder with 13 sections:

- Section I: Initial Assessment and reflection
  - Results
  - Reflection
- Section II: Week 1
  - Homework
  - Journal
- Section III-Section XI: Week 2 – Week 10
  - Homework
  - Journal
- Section XII: Section Follow-up assessment and reflection
  - Results
  - Reflection
- Section VIII: Final reflection
  - Comparison of Initial and Follow-up assessment
  - Documentation and reflection of weekly ratings
  - Overall Reflection

**Component Overview**

**Self-Assessments**

Part of what revolutionized Positive Psychology and the study of well-being was the use of empirical data as support. Therefore, your personal reflections (homeworks and journals) will be supported by empirical data. Data will be collected in three formats
throughout the course. You will complete an initial self assessment, weekly ratings, and a follow-up self-assessment.

**Initial Self-Assessment and Follow-up Self-Assessment**
These self-assessments will be completed during class. They will involve completing an on-line questionnaire and participating in an in-person interview with one of the graduate teaching assistants. All information will be kept confidential and will be completed using a self-selected identification number.

**Weekly Ratings**
Each week you will complete a 5-10 minute weekly rating. You are to complete the rating 24 hours before class. Specifically, the weekly rating will be available from Sunday at 1pm until Monday at 1pm. It is your responsibility to complete each weekly rating during the appropriate interval. Failure to do so will result in a deduction of points. In the final section of the portfolio, you will graphically depict your weekly rating and comment or reflect on your scores. For example, if one week you notice a spike you may want to explain why you believe it happened.

**Self-Assessment Reflections**
Once you receive the results of your self assessment you are to review them and write a 2-5 page (double-spaced) reflection for the initial and follow-up assessment (you do NOT have to do one for the weekly ratings). Your reflection is to include a brief summary of the results and more importantly how you feel about the results. Are they accurate? Do you agree? Does this represent who you are and what you think?

**Homeworks**
Related to each week’s topic you will be assigned or asked to choose one empirically-supported self-intervention to complete during the week. Specific interventions will be discussed in detail during class. These assignments will not be academic in nature but will rather target an aspect of your own well-being and adjustment (for example, increased exercising or writing a gratitude letter).

**Journals**
In addition to completing homeworks, each week you are to document and reflect (journal) on the task. Most weeks you will be provided with a prompt that is meant to direct your thoughts and process. Journals should be 1-2 pages double spaced and should reflect original thought and experience related to the topic and can take any form you see fit. Your journals should NOT re-teach the material or re-explain the assignment, I want you to think critically about the material and assignment and consider how it relates to your own well-being and functioning.

**Overall Reflection**
Complete a 3-8 page (double spaced) final reflection. A detailed explanation of this will be provided later in the course, once you are able to begin this. In the meantime, think
big picture. What did you learn? How has this impacted your well-being? What will you continue to do? What did you like? Was this useful? Were the assessments accurate portrayals of your well-being? Etc.

### Grading

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>%age</th>
<th>Grading Rubric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Self-Assessment</td>
<td>Pass/Fail</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>15% Completed 0% Did not complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly ratings</td>
<td>Pass/Fail</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20% completed 10 15% completed 9 10% completed 8 5% completed 7-4 0% completed 3-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly homeworks</td>
<td>Graded</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3 – Exceptional 2 – Good 1 – Less than expected 0 – Did not hand in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly journals</td>
<td>Graded</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3 – Exceptional 2 – Good 1 – Less than expected 0 – Did not hand in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up self-assessment</td>
<td>Pass/Fail</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>15% completed 0% did not complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final reflection</td>
<td>Graded</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>3 – Exceptional 2 – Good 1 – Less than expected 0 – Did not hand in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Due Dates and Late Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Policy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly ratings</td>
<td>Must be completed within 24 hour window</td>
<td>Not accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly homework and journals</td>
<td>9/19: Journals 1-3 10/17: Journals 4-6 11/14: Journals 7-10</td>
<td>5% off of homework and journal grade for each day late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entire Project</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>5% off of entire grade each day late</td>
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Appendix F

Homework and Journal Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homework (to be completed after the class assigned and prior to the following class)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
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1. **Homework**: Complete the VIA Signature Strengths test at www.authentichappiness.org
   a. You will need to register and get a password, but if you are concerned about privacy, give bogus information on the registration form. However, you want to indicate you are a college student, give correct age and sex and area code to get accurate normative comparisons for tests results.
   b. Copy the test result grid and print/save it… YOU WILL NEED THIS LATER!
   c. Jot down your top 5 strengths… come to class prepared to talk about one of your signature strengths and a time when you capitalized on it

2. **Journal**: Do you want to be happier? Does anyone not want to be happier? What are you willing to do to make yourself happier? What works for you? What makes you happier? Are you willing to take time each day to make yourself happier? Will it last? What will reverse the effects?

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<tr>
<th>Satisfaction with Life</th>
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1. **Homework**: Use your top signature strength in new way each day this week. Brainstorm ideas of new ways to use your strength and then fill out the “New Uses of My First Signature Strength” record form. Write down the feeling you had after using your strength each day. If you encounter obstacles using your new strength don’t give up… try another one! Each day make sure you try!

2. **Journal**: How well were you able to use your signature strength in a new way?
   a. How did your plan match to what you were able to do? Did you have any difficulties that made it hard to use your strength? How did you problem solve? What accommodations did you make?
   b. Talk about two examples of new ways you used your signature strength during the week and reflect on your feelings related to the strength.
   c. Choose two of your other strengths and reflect on how you already use them in your daily life.
   (Suldo & Michalowski, 2007)

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<tr>
<th>Interests, Engagement and Improvement in Life</th>
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1. **Homework**: Incorporate flow into your daily routine. Think of an activity that you consider low-skill and low-challenge. How can you make this into a flow experience? During this week, each day experiment on how to do so. You may use the recommendations from Lyubomirsky (2007) and adapt it to your everyday life
   a. Control Attention
   b. Adopt new values
   c. Learn what flows
   d. Transform routine tasks
   e. Flow in conversation
   f. Smart leisure
   g. Smart work
h. Strive for superflow

2. **Journal**: What activity did you choose to turn into a flow activity? What were the qualities of this situation that make it a non-flow experience for you? How did you make the activity challenging or engaging for you while you were doing it (how did you turn it into flow)? Describe your flow experience. What did you do and how do you feel during and afterwards? How often do you engage in this activity? How often do you wish you engaged in this activity (realistically)? Why did you enjoy it? Did it produce the benefit discussed in class? How could you make it even more challenging in the future? Do you think you could use these techniques in other non-flow activities in your life?

(Lyubormirsky, 2007; Kurtz, 2011)

### Meaning and Purpose in Life

1. **Homework**: Choose one day this week and on this day (but no others) commit 5 acts of kindness. Acts of kindness are behaviors that benefit other people or make others happy, typically at the cost of your time or effort. Since you are doing five they can be small. Try to pick 5 different ones so you don't get bored. Jot down your acts of kindness on the record form.

2. **Journal**:
   (1) Discuss your acts of kindness in terms of positive feelings about the present, ensuring that the acts performed benefited someone else at the cost of your time and/or effort.
   (2) Reflect on your purpose in life? What gives you meaning? Are you connected to larger issues? Do you consider yourself religious? Do you consider yourself spiritual? For you, how are the two related and how are the two different? How is your life impacted by religiosity and spirituality? How is the world impacted by religion? By spirituality? Be sure to consider all sides of the issue… good and bad, belonging and genocide…

(Suldo & Michalowski, 2007)

### Health and Fitness Habits

1. **Homework**:
   a. Option 1: Start moving! 5-7 days this week engage in physical exercise. It can range from being part of a formal, organized and refereed sport to at home alone on a yoga mat… just do something. Exercise professionals traditionally advise that you calculate your maximum heart rate (most simply defined as 220 minus your age) and strive to work out at a level between 65 and 80 percent of that figure. So, if you are 20 years old, your maximum heart rate is 200, and the range to aim for is between 130 and 160. See the exercise recommendation handout.
   b. Option 2: If you already exercise regularly, continue to do so but this week get one extra hour of sleep each night. Think about when you normally go to bed, factor in when you normally wake up and add one extra hour of sleep.
   c. Option 3: Do both!
   d. Option 4: Pick a new habit and try to break it!

2. **Journal**: Which option did you choose? What were your exercise/sleep patterns like before this week? How did you change it this week? How was it changing it (easy, hard, etc.)? Will you keep it up?

(Lyubormirsky, 2007)

### Emotions and Emotion Regulation

1. **Homework**: Practice mindfulness meditation each day for 15-20 minutes. You can begin with 10 minutes and work your way to 20 if you like. The point of this exercise is to simply observe your thoughts and feelings with an open and non-judgmental attitude, not to achieve
some specific result. Carefully read the handout for specific instructions.

2. **Journal**: Before and after each day’s meditation write a few notes about the thoughts, feelings, difficulties, or questions that came to mind before, during and after sitting. At the end of the week review your notes and write a brief description of your mindful practice experience. Does it make sense that the cultivation of mindfulness through mindfulness meditation can lead to enhanced well-being? Discuss and explain your opinion.

(Lyubormirsky, 2007)

### Relationships

1. **Homework**: Letters of gratitude and forgiveness.
   a. **Forgiveness**: Write a letter of forgiveness to someone who has transgressed against you, but you now feel able to forgive. That is, someone who has caused you hurt, harm, embarrassment, or loss, turned against you when you needed them, or betrayed your trust. In your letter describe the a) transgression, b) how it made you feel, and, c) the basis for your forgiveness (i.e., how and why are you able to forgive this person).
   b. **Gratitude**: Write a letter of gratitude to someone who has provided you with significant support, encouragement, insight, or help. In your letter describe a) what the person did for you, b) why you are grateful to them, and c) the effect his or her help had on your life.

   *Note: Letters do not have to be given to the person to whom you wrote it... but if you feel up to it... why not!*

1. **Journal**:
   a. **Forgiveness**: What effect did writing this letter have on your feelings towards this person? If you were to give your letter to the person, how do you think he or she would react? How might your relationship change? How would you describe the differences between an act of forgiveness that is genuine and one that is not? What kind of forgiveness does your letter represent? Explain.
   b. **Gratitude**: What effect did writing this letter have on your own feelings and your feelings towards the person receiving your gratitude? If you were to give this letter to the person how do you think he or she would react? How might your relationship change?

### Coping, Defensiveness and Resiliency

1. **Journal**: Write about a disagreement you had this week. Who was it with? At what point did it escalate? Did it continue to escalate? How? Was there a resolution? Was there a compromise?
   a. First analyze your position. What did you want? What was your main point? What was the other person not hearing, doing, and saying?
   b. Analyze the other person’s position. What did the person want? What was the person’s main point? What were you not hearing, doing, and saying?
   c. What defense mechanisms were each of you using?
   d. Taking the other person’s perspective (which you wrote about above) how could things have resolved differently.

2. **Bonus Homework**: (optional, but recommended) If you feel like your perspective has changed and if you feel like it this is a safe person/situation, talk to the person you had a disagreement with. See how your new insight might change the tone of the discussion.

### Narrative Identity

1. **Homework**: Spend a minimum of 20 minutes each day writing for at least 4 consecutive days. Follow this prompt: “For the next four days, I would like you to write about your very deepest thoughts and feelings about the most traumatic experience of your life. In your writing, I’d like you to really let go and explore your very deepest emotions and thoughts.
You might tie your topic to your relationships with others, including parents, lovers, friends, or relatives, to your past, your present or your future, or to who you have been, who you would like to be, or who you are now. You may write about the same general issues or experiences on all days of writing or on different traumas each day.”

While this assignment is mandatory sharing it is optional. If you feel comfortable, please include your writing in your final portfolio for feedback and discussion. If you prefer to keep your writings private, when you include it in your portfolio please staple the entry together with a blank sheet on top stating that you wish for this to not be read. I will gladly respect your wishes but do want to see that it was completed. Additional information will be discussed in class.

2. **Journal:** Reflect on your experience. How was it to write about a difficult experience? How did you feel before, during and after? Did you see any benefits? Would you continue to do utilize this coping strategy in future situations?

(Lyubomirsky, 2007)

### Stressors and Affordances

1. **Homework:** Intentionally use optimistic thinking one time each day this week. Note the situation and optimistic thought on the record form.

2. **Journal:**
   1. Sit in a quiet place and take 20-30 minutes to think about what you want your life to be like in 1, 5, or 10 years from now. Visualize a future for yourself in which everything has turned out the way you’ve wanted. You have tried your best, worked hard, and achieved all your goals. Now write down what you imagine.
   2. Looking at your optimistic thinking record form, did thinking optimistically produce any positive feelings about the situation? Was it difficult to do so? Anything you liked or didn't like about the activity?

(Suldo & Michalowski, 2007)

### Trajectory

1. **Homework:** Using Lyubomirsky’s (2007) recommendations for committed goal pursuit, list and briefly describe 3 of your most significant short-term life goals and 3 of your most significant long-term life goals. Create a general timeline for each of your goals. For example, if one of your goals is to “pass Psyc 235” you would work backwards from passing the class to today, what are the steps you have to take (pass final, study for final, finish final paper, do x, y, z for final paper, bring the teacher an apple (just kidding), etc.).

2. **Journal:** What is the relationship between your long- and short-term goals? What makes your long-term goals personally significant? Where did they come from?

### Conclusion

1. **Journal:**
   1. Each of your homeworks have been an empirically supported intervention shown to increase well-being and/or happiness. Did you notice any changes in your well-being/mood with any specific homeworks? What about overall? If you are feeling down or a friend is feeling down would you recommend one over another? Is there anything that you will continue to do after this course?
   2. Revisit week 1 knowing what you know now… Do you want to be happier? Does anyone not want to be happier? What are you willing to do to make yourself happier? What works for you? What makes you happier? Are you willing to take time each day to make yourself happier? Will it last? What will reverse the effects?
   3. Final thoughts… reactions… suggestions…
Appendix G

Course description used to enroll students

The Psychology of Adjustment (Psyc 235) is a three-credit course designed to focus on the concept of positive psychology, well-being and personal adjustment from a psychological lens. The main goals of the course are to expose you to the current research in the field and to assist you in thinking critically, analytically, and reflectively, both about yourself and about the world around you. The two and a half hour course will meet once weekly (Monday 1-3:30pm). Class time will be divided into two components. The first component will be didactic and that of a typical discussion-based lecture covering current research on positive psychology, psychological adjustment and well-being. Particular attention will be paid to the practical application of psychological theories and behavior change techniques to enhance personal awareness and self-development. The second component, which will consist of approximately one hour, will take the form of small group discussions in which students will have the opportunity to develop, challenge and experience the course material in a practical way. Students will be asked to reflect on personal experiences, as they are comfortable. Discussions will be supported by group facilitators at first and then students will be encouraged to self-lead by the end of the semester. If you are interested in enrolling in this course, please contact the instructor, Kimberly Kleinman, at kleinmke@dukes.jmu.edu for additional information.
Appendix H

Informed Consent Form – Control Group

Consent to Participate in Research

Identification of Investigators & Purpose of Study
You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Kimberly Kleinman and Dr. Gregg Henriques from James Madison University. This study is investigating the concept of well-being. Specifically, our aim is to further explore and understand well-being and adjustment in college students as well as take a closer look at how well-being has been defined, and what the various domains are which influence well-being. Well-being can be most commonly referred to as healthy mental functioning.

Research Procedures
Should you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to sign this consent form once all your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. This study consists of a survey and an in person interview that will be administered in Miller Hall at James Madison University. The survey consists of an online survey that will be administered to individual participants through Qualtrics. You will be asked to provide answers to a series of questions related to well-being. The interview is a structured clinical interview that will assess your level of well-being. Questions will be presented in the following formats: open-ended, forced choice, and likert scale rating responses. Appointments will be scheduled with the researchers that will last approximately 30 to 60 minutes in duration. The willing participants will meet the researcher in the counseling suite of Miller Hall.

Time Required
Participation in this study will require approximately 30 – 60 minutes of your time.

Potential Risks & Benefits
The investigator does not perceive any more than minimal risks from your involvement in this study. Potential benefits from participation in this study include helping us learn more about the construct of well-being, and if it can be measured in a more objective manner.

Confidentiality
The results of this research will be used in the writing and potential publication of a doctoral dissertation; as well as, presented at national psychology conferences. While individual responses are confidentially obtained and recorded, data is kept in the strictest confidence. The researchers will know if a participant has submitted a survey, but will not be able to identify individual responses, therefore maintaining anonymity for the survey. At no time will participant's individual survey item responses be associated with their name. Completion of the semi-structured interview will be hand and video recorded. Participant names and identification codes will be kept separate from their responses. This list will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the primary investigators locked office. Recordings of the interview will be made on DVD's, and kept in a locked file cabinet in the primary investigators locked office as well. These DVD's will be destroyed after the interview is transcribed and de-identified. The results of this project will be coded in such a way that the respondent's identity will not be attached to the final form of this study. Aggregate data will be presented representing averages or generalizations about the responses as a whole. All data will be stored in a secure location accessible only to the researcher. Upon completion of the study, all
information will be destroyed. Final aggregate results will be made available to participants upon request.

**Participation & Withdrawal**
Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose not to participate. Should you choose to participate, you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind.

**Questions about the Study**
If you have questions or concerns during the time of your participation in this study, or after its completion or you would like to receive a copy of the final aggregate results of this study, please contact:

Kimberly E. Kleinman, Ed.M., NCSP  
Department of Graduate Psychology  
James Madison University  
Email Address: kleinmke@dukes.jmu.edu

Gregg Henriques, Ph.D.  
Department of Graduate Psychology  
James Madison University  
Email Address: henriqgx@jmu.edu  
(540) 568-7857

**Questions about Your Rights as a Research Subject**
Dr. David Cockley  
Chair, Institutional Review Board  
James Madison University  
(540) 568-2834  
cocklede@jmu.edu

**Giving of Consent**
I have read this consent form and I understand what is being requested of me as a participant in this study. I freely consent to participate. The investigator provided me with a copy of this form through email. I certify that I am at least 18 years of age. By clicking on the link below, and completing and submitting this anonymous online survey, I am consenting to participate in this research.

*LINK*

______________________________________    ______________
Name of Participant (Printed)  
______________________________________    ______________
Name of Participant (Signed)  Date

______________________________________    ______________
Name of Researcher (Signed)  Date
Appendix H

Informed Consent Form – Experimental Group

Consent to Participate in Research

**Identification of Investigators & Purpose of Study**
You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Kimberly Kleinman and Dr. Gregg Henriques from James Madison University. This study is investigating the concept of well-being. Specifically, our aim is to further explore and understand well-being and adjustment in college students as well as take a closer look at how well-being has been defined, and what the various domains are which influence well-being. Well-being can be most commonly referred to as healthy mental functioning.

**Research Procedures**
Should you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to sign this consent form once all your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. The study consists of anonymously combining the results from your Intake and Exit evaluation from the requirements of the Psyc 235: Psychology of Adjustment course for the purpose of data collection. There is no additional time or requirements requested.

**Time Required**
No additional time will be required outside of what is required for successful completion of the course.

**Potential Risks & Benefits**
The investigator does not perceive any more than minimal risks from your involvement in this study. Potential benefits from participation in this study include helping us learn more about the construct of well-being, and if it can be measured in a more objective manner.

**Confidentiality**
The results of this research will be used in the writing and potential publication of a doctoral dissertation; as well as, presented at national psychology conferences. While individual responses are confidentially obtained and recorded, data is kept in the strictest confidence. The researchers will know if a participant has submitted a survey, but will not be able to identify individual responses, therefore maintaining anonymity for the survey. At no time will participant’s individual survey item responses be associated with their name. As part of the course, completion of the semi-structured interview will be hand and video recorded. Participant names and identification codes will be kept separate from their responses. This list will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the primary investigators locked office. Recordings of the interview will be made on DVD’s, and kept in a locked file cabinet in the primary investigators locked office as well. These DVD’s will be destroyed after the interview is transcribed and de-identified. The results of this project will be coded in such a way that the respondent’s identity will not be attached to the final form of this study. Aggregate data will be presented representing averages or generalizations about the responses as a whole. All data will be stored in a secure location accessible only to the researcher. Upon completion of the study, all information will be destroyed. Final aggregate results will be made available to participants upon request.
Participation & Withdrawal
Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose not to participate. Should you choose to participate, you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. This includes your option to withdraw from research without penalty to your grade or performance in the context of the Psyc 235 course.

Questions about the Study
If you have questions or concerns during the time of your participation in this study, or after its completion or you would like to receive a copy of the final aggregate results of this study, please contact:

Kimberly E. Kleinman, Ed.M., NCSP
Department of Graduate Psychology
James Madison University
Email Address: kleinmke@dukes.jmu.edu

Gregg Henriques, Ph.D.
Department of Graduate Psychology
James Madison University
Email Address: henriqgx@jmu.edu
(540) 568-7857

Questions about Your Rights as a Research Subject
Dr. David Cockley
Chair, Institutional Review Board
James Madison University
(540) 568-2834
cocklede@jmu.edu

Giving of Consent
I have read this consent form and I understand what is being requested of me as a participant in this study. I freely consent to participate. The investigator provided me with a copy of this form through email. I certify that I am at least 18 years of age. By clicking on the link below, and completing and submitting this anonymous online survey, I am consenting to participate in this research.

____________________________________  ______________
Name of Participant (Printed)

____________________________________  ______________
Name of Participant (Signed)  Date

____________________________________  ______________
Name of Researcher (Signed)  Date
Appendix J

Scales of Psychological Well-Being – SF

The following set of questions deals with how you feel about yourself and your life. Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Somewhat Disagree Slightly Agree Slightly Agree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

1. Most people see me as loving and affectionate.
2. In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.
3. I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons.
4. When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out.
5. Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me.
6. I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people.
7. The demands of everyday life often get me down.
8. I live life one day at a time and don’t really think about the future.
9. In general, I feel confident and positive about myself.
10. I often feel lonely because I have few close friends with whom to share my concerns.
11. My decisions are not usually influenced by what everyone else is doing.
12. I do not fit very well with the people and the community around me.
13. I tend to focus on the present, because the future nearly always brings me problems.
14. I feel like many of the people I know have gotten more out of life than I have.
15. I enjoy personal and mutual conversations with family members or friends.
16. I tend to worry about what other people think of me.
17. I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life.
18. I don’t want to try new ways of doing things - my life is fine the way it is.
19. Being happy with myself is more important to me than having others approve of me.
20. I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities.
21. I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world.
22. My daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant to me.
23. I like most aspects of my personality.
24. I don’t have many people who want to listen when I need to talk.
25. I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.
26. When I think about it, I haven’t really improved much as a person over the years.
27. I don’t have a good sense of what it is I’m trying to accomplish in life.
28. I made some mistakes in the past, but I feel that all in all everything has worked out for the best.
29. I generally do a good job of taking care of my personal finances and affairs.
30. I used to set goals for myself, but that now seems like a waste of time.
31. In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in life.
32. It seems to me that most other people have more friends than I do.

33. I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality.
34. People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.
35. I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.
36. I am good at juggling my time so that I can fit everything in that needs to be done.
37. I have a sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time.
38. I am an active person in carrying out the plans I set for myself.
39. I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others.
40. It’s difficult for me to voice my own opinions on controversial matters.
41. I do not enjoy being in new situations that require me to change my old familiar ways of doing things.
42. Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.
43. My attitude about myself is probably not as positive as most people feel about themselves.
44. I often change my mind about decisions if my friends or family disagree.
45. For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.
46. I sometimes feel as if I’ve done all there is to do in life.
47. I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me.
48. The past had its ups and downs, but in general, I wouldn’t want to change it.
49. I have difficulty arranging my life in a way that is satisfying to me.
50. I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago.
51. When I compare myself to friends and acquaintances, it makes me feel good about who I am.
52. I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important.
53. I have been able to build a home and a lifestyle for myself that is much to my liking.
54. There is truth to the saying that you can’t teach an old dog new tricks.
Appendix K

Psychological Well-Being Narrative Form

The following set of questions deals with how you feel about yourself and your life. Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers. Read each description carefully and then rate where you think you fall on the seven point scale provided.

1. Please rate your levels of self-acceptance, which refers to the degree positive attitudes you have about yourself, your past behaviors and the choices that you have made. Someone with high self-acceptance is pleased with who they are and accepting of multiple aspects of themselves, both good and bad. In contrast, individuals with low self-acceptance are often self-critical, confused about their identity, and may wish they were different in many respects.
   1. Very low in self-acceptance
   2. Low in self-acceptance
   3. Somewhat low in self-acceptance
   4. Neutral or sometimes high and sometimes low
   5. Somewhat high in self-acceptance
   6. High in self-acceptance
   7. Very high in self-acceptance

2. Please rate the overall quality of your relationship with others. An individual with positive relationships feels connected, respected, and well-loved. They can share aspects of themselves, experience intimacy, and usually feel secure. In contrast, individuals with poor relationships often feel unappreciated, disrespected, unloved, disconnected, hostile, rejected, or misunderstood. They tend to feel insecure and sometimes alone or distant from others.
   1. Very poor relations with others
   2. Poor relations with others
   3. Somewhat poor relations with others
   4. Neutral or sometimes positive and sometimes negative
   5. Somewhat positive relationships with others
   6. Positive relations with others
   7. Very positive relations with others

3. Please rate your sense of autonomy. Individuals with high levels of autonomy are independent, self-reliant, can think for themselves, do not have a strong need to conform, and don’t worry too much about what others think about them. In contrast, individuals low in autonomy feel dependent on others, are constantly worried about the opinions of others, are always looking to others for guidance, and feel strong pressures to conform to others’ desires.
   1. Very low in autonomy
   2. Low in autonomy
   3. Somewhat low in autonomy
4. Neutral or sometimes high and sometimes low
5. Somewhat high in autonomy
6. High in autonomy
7. Very high in autonomy

4. Please rate your sense of mastery over the environment, which is the degree to which you feel competent to meet the demands of your situation. Individuals high in environmental mastery feel they have the resources and capacities to cope, adjust and adapt to problems, and are not overwhelmed by stress. Those with a low level of environmental mastery may feel powerless to change aspects of their environment with which they are unsatisfied, feel they lack the resources to cope, and are stressed or overwhelmed.

   1. Very low in environmental mastery
   2. Low in environmental mastery
   3. Somewhat low in environmental mastery
   4. Neutral or sometimes high and sometimes low
   5. Somewhat high in environmental mastery
   6. High in environmental mastery
   7. Very high in environmental mastery

5. Please rate your level of personal growth. Individuals with high levels of personal growth see themselves as changing in a positive direction, moving toward their potential, becoming more mature, increasing their self-knowledge, and learning new skills. Individuals low in personal growth feel no sense of change or development, often feel bored and uninterested in life, and lacks a sense of improvement over time.

   1. Very low in personal growth
   2. Low in personal growth
   3. Somewhat low in personal growth
   4. Neutral or sometimes high and sometimes low
   5. Somewhat high in personal growth
   6. High in personal growth
   7. Very high in personal growth

6. Please rate the level of your sense of purpose in life. Individuals with a high sense of purpose see their life as having meaning, they work to make a difference in the world, and often feel connected to ideas or social movements larger than themselves. Such individuals have a sense that they know what their life is about. Individuals low in this quality often question if there is a larger purpose, do not feel their life makes sense, and attribute no higher meaning or value to life other than the fulfillment of a series of tasks.

   1. Very low in sense of purpose
   2. Low in sense of purpose
   3. Somewhat low in sense of purpose
   4. Neutral or sometimes high and sometimes low
   5. Somewhat high in sense of purpose
   6. High in sense of purpose
   7. Very high in sense of purpose
Appendix L

Satisfaction with Life Scale

DIRECTIONS: Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number in the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Slightly Disagree
4 = Neither Agree or Disagree
5 = Slightly Agree
6 = Agree
7 = Strongly Agree

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.
3. I am satisfied with life.
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.
Appendix M

The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS)

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that work. **Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now, that is, at the present moment.** Use the following scales to report your answers:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Very slightly</th>
<th>2 A little</th>
<th>3 Moderately</th>
<th>4 Quite a bit</th>
<th>5 Extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Or not at all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Interested</td>
<td>___Irritable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Distressed</td>
<td>___Alert</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Excited</td>
<td>___Ashamed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Upset</td>
<td>___Inspired</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Strong</td>
<td>___Nervous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Guilty</td>
<td>___Determined</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Scared</td>
<td>___Attentive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Hostile</td>
<td>___Jittery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Enthusiastic</td>
<td>___Active</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Proud</td>
<td>___Afraid</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix N

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Instructions: Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. If you strongly agree, circle SA. If you agree with the statement, circle A. If you disagree, circle D. If you strongly disagree, circle SD.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. SA  A  D  SD
2.* At times, I think I am no good at all. SA  A  D  SD
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities. SA  A  D  SD
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people. SA  A  D  SD
5.* I feel I do not have much to be proud of. SA  A  D  SD
6.* I certainly feel useless at times. SA  A  D  SD
7. I feel that I’m a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. SA  A  D  SD
8.* I wish I could have more respect for myself. SA  A  D  SD
9.* All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. SA  A  D  SD
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself. SA  A  D  SD

Note: Items with an asterisk are reverse scored.
Appendix O

The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS. Below are a number of statements about happiness. Would you please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each by entering a number alongside it according to the following code:

1=strongly disagree; 2=moderately disagree; 3=slightly disagree; 4=slightly agree; 5=moderately agree; 6=strongly agree.

You will need to read the statements carefully because some are phrased positively and others negatively. Don’t take too long over individual questions; there are no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers and no trick questions. The first answer that comes into your head is probably the right one for you. If you find some of the questions difficult, please give the answer that is true for you in general or for most of the time.

1*. I don’t feel particularly pleased with the way I am (-)
2. I am intensely interested in other people
3*. I feel that life is very rewarding
4. I have very warm feelings towards almost everyone
5. I rarely wake up feeling rested (-)
6. I am not particularly optimistic about the future (-)
6. I find most things amusing
7. I am always committed and involved
8. Life is good
9. I do not think that the world is a good place (-)
10. I laugh a lot
12*. I am well satisfied about everything in my life
13*. I don’t think I look attractive (-)
14. There is a gap between what I would like to do and what I have done (-)
15. I am very happy
16*. I find beauty in some things  17. I always have a cheerful effect on others  
18*. I can fit in everything I want to  
19. I feel that I am not especially in control of my life (-)  
20. I feel able to take anything on  
21*. I feel fully mentally alert  
22. I often experience joy and elation  
23. I do not find it easy to make decisions (-)  
24. I do not have a particular sense of meaning and purpose in my life (-)  
25. I feel I have a great deal of energy  
26. I usually have a good influence on events  
27. I do not have fun with other people (-)  
28. I don’t feel particularly healthy (-)  
29*. I do not have particularly happy memories of the past (-)  

Notes. Items marked (-) should be scored in reverse. * Indicates components of the OHQ short scale. The sum of the item scores is an overall measure of happiness, with high scores indicating greater happiness.
Appendix P

The Well-Being Interview

The Well-Being Interview

Client ID: ___________________________ Date of Birth: ___________________________

Date of Interview: ___________________ Clinician’s Name: _______________________

Preamble:
The purpose of this interview is to gain an understanding of how you are currently feeling about yourself and your life. You will be asked a number of questions to help get a sense of how you are functioning in relation to a number of areas, including: satisfaction with life, relationships with family and friends, attitudes, general outlook, daily habits, sense of purpose, resiliency, and overall happiness.

Instructions:
The first part of each section will ask you to provide a general narrative in regards to how you have been feeling in relation to a specific area of well-being. Please look back over the past months and offer a brief description and evaluation of how you are doing in that domain. Specific ‘yes’ or ‘no’ questions will be asked to better clarify your experiences.
Section I: Domains of Life Satisfaction

A. Satisfaction

In a couple of sentences, please describe for me your levels of life satisfaction. Feel free to provide examples:
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

An individual with high life satisfaction feels pleased with most major domains, is at peace with the past, and generally feels fulfilled and happy. In contrast, someone with low life satisfaction often wishes things were different, experiences problems in several major areas and often feels unhappy or unfulfilled. Given this please rate your level of life satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 7:

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low                       Medium                       High

I’d now like to ask you a few specific questions. Please answer yes, sometimes (maybe) or no.

| 1. Do you consider yourself to be happy? | Yes | Sometimes | No |
| 2. Do you think you are flourishing as a person? | Yes | Sometimes | No |
| 3. Overall, are you satisfied with your life? | Yes | Maybe | No |
| 4. Are there things you’d change about your life if you could? | Yes | Maybe | No |

ADMINISTRATORS RATING OF CLIENT’S LIFE SATISFACTION

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low                       Medium                       High
B. Engagement

In a couple of sentences please describe your level of engagement in life and the number and kinds of activities that you find enriching, interesting, or pleasurable. Feel free to provide examples:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Someone who is high in engagement often feels there is not enough time in the day to do all the things that could be done, often is involved in interesting or exciting activities and frequently planning what to do next. In contrast, someone low in engagement often feels bored, uninterested, or that they are just going through the motions. Given this please rate your level of engagement in life on a scale of 1 (low) to 7 (high):

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low            Medium              High

I’d now like to ask you a few questions about your engagement in life. Please answer yes, maybe (or somewhat or sometimes), or no.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Are there many activities that you find entertaining, interesting, or exciting?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <em>Do you often feel bored and that there is nothing to do?</em></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you have many hobbies or interests?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you feel you engage life to the fullest?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ADMINISTRATORS RATING OF CLIENT’S LIFE INTERESTS, ENGAGEMENT, AND INVOLVEMENT
C. Purpose

In a couple of sentences, please describe for me the degree of purpose or meaning you believe that your life has. Feel free to provide examples:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

A person with a high sense of purpose sees their life as having meaning, they work to make a difference in the world, and often feel connected to ideas or social movements larger than themselves. Such individuals have a sense that they know what their life is about. Individuals low in this quality often question if there is a larger purpose, do not feel their life makes sense, and attribute no higher meaning or value to life other than the fulfillment of a series of tasks. Given this please rate your degree of purpose or meaning in life on a scale of 1 to 7:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

I’d now like to ask you a few specific questions. Please answer yes, sometimes, or no.

<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you feel connected to higher causes or forces?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you feel like your life can make a difference for the better?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you feel like your life has a purpose?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you sometimes feel as if life has no meaning?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section II: Domains of Adaptation

A. Health and Habits

Medical Health

In a couple of sentences please reflect on your medical health and the degree to which you are a healthy individual. Feel free to provide examples:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

An individual high in medical health rarely has physical pain, does not have chronic health problems, and is able to accomplish the tasks in daily living without a problem. In contrast, a person low in medical health often has pain or discomfort, frequently misses work or requires visits to the doctor or has to continually manage problems related to their biological functioning. Given this please rate your level of medical health on a scale of 1 to 7:

1             2             3             4             5             6             7

Low                  Medium                  High

I’d now like to ask you a few specific questions. Please answer yes, sometimes, or no.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Are you usually free of pain or discomfort?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you have chronic health problems?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Overall, do you consider yourself a healthy person?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Does poor health negatively impact your happiness?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Administrators Rating of Client’s Medical Health

1             2             3             4             5             6             7

Low                  Medium                  High
Fitness and Healthy Habits

Please describe for me your level of physical fitness and the extent to which you engage in healthy habits. Feel free to provide examples:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

An individual high in fitness and healthy habits regularly exercises, has healthy body shape and weight, has good strength, flexibility, and endurance, and engages in healthy eating and sleeping patterns. In contrast, a person who is low in fitness and healthy habits rarely exercises, feels weak or easily run down, and does not have healthy eating or sleeping patterns and may regularly use unhealthy substances. Given this please rate the degree to which you engage in health habits on a scale of 1 to 7:

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low                 Medium                High

I’d now like to ask you a few specific questions. Please answer yes, sometimes, or no.

Exercise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you regularly engage in exercise (3x week or more)?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Do you have good endurance (e.g., could run a mile)?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you sometimes feel weak or out of shape?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Are you overweight?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Sleeping and Eating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Do you have good sleep habits?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Do you eat a balanced diet?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><em>Do you frequently over-eat or starve yourself?</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Substance Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><em>Do you smoke more than a half pack of cigarettes a day?</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Do you regularly drink alcohol?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Do you use illegal substances regularly?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Administrators Rating of Client’s Fitness and Healthy Habits**

1. Low
2. Medium
3. High

---

1. **Sleeping and Eating**
2. **Substance Use**
3. **Administrators Rating of Client’s Fitness and Healthy Habits**
B. Emotions

Please take a minute to think about your emotional life, including the emotions that you often feel and emotions that you may try to regulate or not experience. In a couple of sentences, please provide an appraisal of how you are functioning in the domain of emotions and emotion regulation. Feel free to provide examples:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Someone who is functioning well in this domain is able to experience the full range of emotions, is able to regulate their emotions when necessary, and generally feels more positive as opposed to negative feeling states. In contrast, someone who is having trouble in this domain has difficulty in effectively controlling their emotions or connecting to them appropriately, often feels overwhelmed or afraid of their emotions, and tends to feel more negative than positive feeling states. Given this please rate the degree to which you engage in emotional regulation on a scale of 1 to 7:

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low               Medium               High

I’d now like to ask you a few specific questions about your emotions. Please answer yes, maybe (or somewhat or sometimes), or no.

1. Do you feel more positive than negative feeling states?  
   | Yes | Maybe | No |
2. Do you experience a significant amount of anger or hostility?  
   | Yes | Sometimes | No |
3. Do you experience a significant amount of guilt or shame?  
   | Yes | Sometimes | No |
4. Do you experience a significant amount of joy and contentment?  
   | Yes | Sometimes | No |
5. Are you able to connect with how you feel?  
   | Yes | Sometimes | No |
6. Do you act on your emotions in a way you later regret?  
   | Yes | Sometimes | No |

ADMINISTRATORS RATING OF CLIENT’S EMOTIONS AND EMOTION REGULATION

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low               Medium               High
C. Relationships

Please take a minute to reflect on the quality of your relationship with others. Feel free to provide examples:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

An individual with positive relationships feels connected, respected, and well-loved. They can share aspects of themselves, experience intimacy, and usually feel secure. In contrast, individuals with poor relationships often feel unappreciated, disrespected, unloved, disconnected, hostile, rejected, or misunderstood. They tend to feel insecure and sometimes alone or distant from others. Given this, please rate the quality of your relationships with others on a scale of 1 to 7:

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low          Medium      High

I’d now like to ask you a few specific questions about your relationships. Please answer yes, maybe (or somewhat or sometimes), or no.

Family of Origin

<p>| | | | | |</p>
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<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you feel well-connected to your family of origin?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Growing up, did you have a good relationship with your parents?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did you have serious, longstanding conflicts with members of your family?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Was your family close to a positive ideal?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Peers and Friends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you get along well with your peers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you have good friends you can trust?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you feel lonely or isolated?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Do you feel your peers don’t respect you?</td>
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</table>

### Romantic Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Are you satisfied with your romantic relationship(s)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you know how to love and be loved romantically?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <em>Are you concerned you will not find a happy romantic relationship?</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <em>Are you experiencing significant conflicts in your romantic life?</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Administrators Rating of Client’s Relationship Quality

![Rating Scale Diagram]

- Low
- Medium
- High
D. Coping

Please take a minute to describe your capacity to deal with stressors, and consider the extent to which you feel you are effective in managing your life and coping with difficulty in a resilient way. Feel free to provide examples:

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

Individuals high in resiliency and who have good coping strategies are able to deal with significant stressors without becoming overwhelmed with negative emotions or completely disconnecting from their feelings. They also have good insight into what makes them tick. In contrast, people who have difficulty in this area often feel insecure and overwhelmed or try not to deal with what is bothering them. Given this, please rate your ability to cope effectively and be resilient on a scale of 1 to 7:

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low          Medium       High

I’d now like to ask you a few questions about your coping. First, could you share a little bit about the kinds of things that make you feel defensive or vulnerable and explain how you cope?

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________
Now, I want to ask a few specific questions. Please answer yes, maybe (or somewhat or sometimes), or no.

<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Do you use humor to cope?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Do you try to avoid painful feelings?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Are there parts of yourself or your life that you try not to think about?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Do you deal well with criticism?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Have you ever had a crisis you could not deal with?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Do you normally feel calm, relaxed, or centered?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Do you have the ability to “bounce back” and recover from adversity?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Do you have the ability to adapt to most situations?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Do you often feel vulnerable, insecure, or threatened?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ADMINISTRATORS RATING OF CLIENT’S COPING, DEFENSIVENESS, AND RESILIENCY**

1. Low  
2.  
3. Medium 
4.  
5. High
E. Identity

Please take a minute to reflect on who you are and how you evaluate your self. Consider the degree of positive and negative attitudes you have about yourself, your past behaviors and the choices that you have made. In a couple of sentences, please describe your attitudes about your self. Feel free to provide examples:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Someone with a positive view of self is pleased with who they are and accepting of multiple aspects of themselves, both good and bad. In contrast, individuals with a negative view of self are often self-critical, confused about their identity, and may wish they were different in many respects. Given this, please rate your overall view of self on a scale of 1 (negative) to 7 (positive):

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Negative Neutral Positive

Now, I want to ask a few specific questions about your self. Please answer yes, maybe (or somewhat or sometimes), or no.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Do you see yourself as an admirable person?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Do you constantly second guess your decisions?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Do you wish you were someone else?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Are you confident in your abilities?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Do other people know “the real you”?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Are you able to accept your limitations or weaknesses?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Do you take pride in what you have accomplished in life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Are you often critical or disappointed in yourself?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now, I want to ask a few specific questions about your self. Please answer yes, maybe (or somewhat or sometimes), or no.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Do you see yourself as an admirable person?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Do you constantly second guess your decisions?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Do you wish you were someone else?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Are you confident in your abilities?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Do other people know “the real you”?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Are you able to accept your limitations or weaknesses?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Do you take pride in what you have accomplished in life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Are you often critical or disappointed in yourself?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section III: Stressors and Affordances, and Trajectory

Section III: External Dimensions

A. Environmental Influences

In a couple of sentences, please describe the demands and stressors you have faced or are facing over the past months. Feel free to provide examples:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Consider, for example, your financial situation, the responsibilities placed on you by your work (or studies) and your current living situation. Given this, please rate your level of life stressors and demands on a scale of 1 (low) to 7 (high):

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low          Medium          High
REVERSE SCORED

Now, I want to ask a few specific questions about domains that frequently cause stress. Please answer yes, maybe (or somewhat or sometimes), or no.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Are you stressed about your finances?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Does your living situation cause you significant stress?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does your occupation/studies place heavy demands on you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ADMINISTRATORS RATING OF CLIENT’S STRESSORS AND AFFORDANCES

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low          Medium          High
REVERSE SCORED
In a couple of sentences, please describe the opportunities you have in your environment for enrichment, pleasure or fulfillment. Feel free to provide examples:

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Consider your access to technology, your financial resources, the opportunities given to you by your work (or studies). Given this, please rate your opportunities for enrichment, pleasure or fulfillment on a scale of 1 (low) to 7 (high):

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low           Medium         High

I’d now like to ask you a few specific questions. Please answer yes, maybe (or somewhat or sometimes), or no.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you have the financial resources to buy what you want?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Does your living situation give you the opportunities to have comfort as well as new, interesting experiences?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does your occupation/studies give you enriching opportunities?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ADMINISTRATORS RATING OF CLIENT’S AFFORDANCES

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low           Medium         High
B. Trajectory

In a couple of sentences please reflect on where and/or the direction you feel your life is headed. Feel free to provide examples:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Consider whether you feel you are on a good developmental pathway and that things will continue to get better (or, perhaps, remain very good). Or if you feel that you have stagnated or feel somewhat stuck or maybe even that things will get worse. Given this, please rate your level of satisfaction with your life trajectory on a scale of 1 to 7:

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low           Medium       High

I’d now like to ask you a few specific questions. Please answer yes, sometimes or no.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you feel things are getting better?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you feel like you are growing as a person?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you feel stuck or in a rut?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you think your best days are behind you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ADMINISTRATORS RATING OF CLIENT’S LIFE TRAJECTORY

1             2             3             4             5             6             7
Low           Medium       High
ADMINISTRATORS RATING OF CLIENT’S PRESENTATION

Now that you have completed the WBI, please take a moment to describe the client’s overall presentation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>How would you describe the client’s level of engagement?</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>How would you describe the client’s level of engagement?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Where their responses believable?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Did they have good insight/awareness of self?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Was their mood congruent with affect?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Were they oriented to state, place, and time?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Did the client openly and thoughtfully respond to prompts?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you responded NO to any questions, please describe why:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Additional comments (for example regarding the client’s level of engagement in the process, cooperation, amount of eye-contact, dress, speech (volume, rate, tone), and/or anything else that may have stood out about them or the way in which they interacted with you):

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

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_____________________________________________________________________
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_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Appendix Q
Supplemental Coping Question

Supplemental Measure

Participant ID: __________
Examiner initials: __________
Date: __________

EXAMINER (read italics):
You just rated your overall well-being as [INSERT NUMBER FROM WBI]. Imagine that you just experienced a big stressor or stressors and about a week later you notice that your level of overall well-being drops. What are some things you could do over the course of the following week to make yourself feel better? What strategies could you employ?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Order</th>
<th>Likelihood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EXAMINER (read italics):
You said that you could try [NUMBER PROVIDED ABOVE] number of thins to make yourself feel better. Which would you use first? Second? Etc.

EXAMINER (read italics):
You said that you would [READ BACK #1]. How likely are you to use this strategy?
You said that you would [READ BACK #2]. How likely are you to use this strategy?

(CONTINUE UNTIL EACH STRATEGY HAS BEEN RATED.)
### Appendix R

**Supplemental coping question coding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Adaptive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talk to friends or family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage religion</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go for a walk</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek social support</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat (i.e., candy, sweets)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distract and avoid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study or maintain on time management</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time alone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek professional help (i.e., therapy)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategize or problem solve</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help others</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consult a professional (i.e., teacher, coach)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow routine</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain healthy sleep hygiene</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in activity (i.e., music, art, shopping, driving, reading)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in a relaxation activity</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch TV, play video game or go on computer</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go home/visit family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize emotions</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self talk/think positively/don’t dwell</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maladaptive strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No strategy (i.e., “get over it”)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix S

**Departmental course evaluation comments and suggestions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>This course has been one of my favorite courses here at JMU so far. Even though, lecture was long she made the material somewhat fun to learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The group discussion portion of this class was very useful in class as well in our overall subjective well-being. I would recommend it to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>This should be a regular course at JMU it is very helpful and fun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I loved this class, and hope to take more with Kleinman in the future!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A little scattered, but all in all one of my favorite classes/teachers here at JMU. :)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Loved it!!! :)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>This course was amazing. I loved everything we learned about and see how it will actually be useful in everyday life. My favorite part was our group sessions because it gave us the chance to actually put to use what we learned. I would recommend this class and more specifically this teacher to anyone in any major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Interesting and fun class. Discussion groups were amazing. Thanks for a great class!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>This was a really interesting class with a really great teacher. Kimberly is so nice and really helpful. I asked her questions about my paper when I first started writing it and she sent me an email shortly after really enthusiastic about helping me. She really cared about this class and I hope so enjoyed it as much as we did.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Awesome class! Favorite thus far</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix T

Instructor Evaluation: How has this course influenced you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>It encouraged me to consider my well-being more and take a more active role in increasing my happiness and doing more things to make me happier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I definitely learned that it's in my best interest to overcome bad things in a reasonable amount of time and not to dwell on things. I also learned a lot of basic things that I'll soon learn in my 210 class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I have definitely felt an effect in my life due to this class, I am more aware of my emotions and surroundings and overall happier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I have definitely seen how this course has influenced me in my everyday life, I think overall I am a happier person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I now realize how much I determine my happiness and know practical ways that psychologically increase levels on happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I think that this course helped me understand exactly WHY I had certain emotions at different times and come to understand and accept them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I think this course has helped me have a more positive and optimistic outlook on life. It has definitely challenged me in many ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>It gave me a new way of thinking about well being. It also gave a lot of new tools and ways to cope with normal life things going on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>It has definitely made me see things in a different light and has allowed me a significant amount of time to reflect upon myself and what I want out of life. This class came at exactly the right time for me because I was at somewhat of a crossroads at the beginning of the semester and was feeling a little lost. I'm definitely in a better place now :)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>It has helped me to find different ways of coping with stress. I especially liked the homework where we had to write about our most traumatic experiences over the course of four days. It made me reflect on some of the emotions I felt then and now. It also made me question my character, and how some of those events have influenced the person I've become.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>It has made me realize my strengths and weakness pertaining to well being.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>it has really given me insight on myself and others. I have learned so much about subjective well-being that I never knew before. The information I learned was actually interesting and useful and I can see myself using what I've learned in real life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>It made me more mindful and aware of my strengths and weaknesses. I did not realize there were so many facets of well-being!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>It really has made me think about my life, my lifestyle choices, and my relationships with others in ways that I never was asked to think about before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Its made me think from a different perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>This course has been very beneficial to me. I really enjoyed a lot of the homeworks and think that they really made me reflect on my life which contributes to well-being.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 17      | This course has enabled me to see myself from a different perspective. The homework assignments were truly therapeutic in regards to seeing where you have been, where
you are and what path you are on in life. The process of writing, in my humble opinion, is extremely important and keeping a journal is a practice I try to maintain on at least a weekly basis. I also really liked the small group and found myself looking forward to it, it was really cool to learn about my classmates and see that while we are each unique, we have a lot of similarities and common goals and objectives that brought us together to form a bond regardless of race, age, religion, sexual orientation, etc. Just an awesome experience!

18 This course has helped me learn why people act certain ways. It has also helped me deal with stress and anxiety in my life.

19 This course has helped me re-evaluate the little things of my daily life.

20 Finding a balance between stress and relaxation is necessary and something this class has helped me to do. You have equipped me with all the tools I need to have a happy and enjoyable daily life.

21 This course has made me reevaluate how I view my daily thought and habits in regards to how they relate to my well-being. On a daily basis I use something I learned in this course.

22 This course was emailed to me right after a very painful breakup, so it has definitely reinforced ideals that have helped me to move forward in a healthy way and to reflect back on events in my life. It has also proven to me that I am very happy person and that I need to keep that in mind when I am having a bad day. This has been my favorite course at JMU (I'm in my 5th semester now!) I am going to utilize this course everyday (already use it daily). Thank you!!

23 A little bit.
Appendix U

Instructor Evaluation: What have been the most helpful elements of the course?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Flow, the character strengths course, THERAPY GROUP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Honestly, the big paper assignment was most helpful to me. It was also the one I got frustrated a little with. My stress level went up past the optimal level a couple of times during the process of writing it. I now have my first APA style paper under my belt and have some constructive criticism to take with me and utilize when I write the next one (of many more to come!). So it was the best and the &quot;worst.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I had a really hard time dealing with a break up before I took this class. After writing about it every week that it was relevant, I stopped being sad about the topic and grew indifferent. I was sick of thinking about it and dwelling on the issue so now I’m over it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I have thoroughly enjoyed the homework and journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I just really like the concept of flow! I try to get in flow as often as I can now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I really enjoyed the small group sessions, they are what made the class so great.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I think that the small group was the most helpful element. The six of us became extremely close and it taught all of us that we are not the only ones going through various experiences. It also taught us how to reach how and be open to others. It was a judgment-free environment and after each session I left feeling lighter and happier than when I entered. I wish that I could talk with that group every Monday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>learning about the 10 domains of well being, having assignments to practice the different domains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Learning small ways to make my daily life a more positive experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Making me realize how to cope with stress in the best way possible, as well as realizing some underlying thoughts I had repressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Small groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Some of the homeworks and journals that we had to write were extremely helpful and I know that I will be able to use them in the future when necessary. This course also helped me think about different options for careers that I never thought about or knew about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The group discussion and the class lectures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The group sessions were really helpful in trying to apply some of the lecture material to our personal lives. We shared things with complete strangers, and had some interesting discussions from it all. I also liked learning about some of the different ideas psychologists have had such as Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy. I was glad to have had the opportunity to look into his ideas more when writing the research paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The homeworks really helped be understand the concepts, and be able to use them again in everyday life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The homeworks, they taught me things I can do in everyday life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The PowerPoint’s always explained everything nicely. I loved group because it did not feel like class. The guidelines for the paper were extremely helpful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>The small group section and discussion was very helpful, especially when discussing personal matters.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>The sometimes useful homeworks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>The weekly assignments. Also, the Literature Review was really helpful. I think it was great practice and I learned a lot of information that will be really helpful for future classes and paper writing experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>The weekly homework assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>We learned so much about ourselves, and different ways to cope with stress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Working on focusing on the positives rather than the negatives all the time (especially during these crazy exam weeks)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix V

Instructor Evaluation: What would you change about the course to make it better?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I can't think of anything I truly disliked, but PowerPoints did go a little fast at times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I really liked everything. I think maybe for small groups: have more specific questions for the instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I wish it was more than just once a week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I would not require so much reading, I think often times you id a better job explaining the reading to the class than the reading did anyways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I wouldn't change anything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I wouldn't really change much about this course everything related to each other in a logical manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Just a tad bit more organization to the course, at times it felt hectic and confusing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Less group time and more class time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Less journals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>less reading per week, sometimes it was hard to do homework, journal, and read lots of long articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Less readings, they were pretty long and I felt you explained them better anyways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>maybe a little more organization. it might also be beneficial to have the journals actually due every week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Maybe having the grades be on more than just a small handful of assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Meet twice a week! 😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>More clear instruction of final project, more clearly defined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Not having to do a journal for every single assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Shorter time with our groups!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>The only thing I can think of is having class time earlier in the semester to start talking about and working on our lit review. Of course we knew about it all semester but were not really given the opportunity to ask questions and discuss it until a week before it was due.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>The only thing that I would change about this course is to make small group longer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Try and increase meeting meeting times.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix W

Group leader course evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Leader A Responses</th>
<th>Group Leader B Responses</th>
<th>Group Leader C Responses</th>
<th>Group Leader D Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What was it like running your group?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Very good. I did have some anxiety prior to starting and first couple of weeks, but having prepared themes and questions for each session was extremely helpful.</strong></td>
<td><strong>It was a balance between allowing them to be &quot;adults&quot; and wanting to intervene and keep them on task.</strong></td>
<td><strong>It was such a great experience! It was exciting and challenging, and I was able to experience the student’s interpretations of the material from a more novel viewpoint since I’ve been learning/studying about it for so long. They gave me a different perspective. I looked forward to every session and was sad to say goodbye!</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specifically, what did you enjoy?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Focus on positive psychology, working with college population that is healthy (more or less-no severe pathology).</strong></td>
<td><strong>In general, working with a group (group process).</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hearing their perspectives on each other's stories, remembering how crazy it is to be at their age with so many competing tasks, issues, messages, relationships.... Seeing how thoughtful and mature they can be as well as how immature at other times.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specifically, what did you find less enjoyable?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Can't think of anything.</strong></td>
<td><strong>IDK. It was all OK or better.</strong></td>
<td><strong>There were times when the students would come in and not relate to any of the material and I found myself watching the clock (mainly weeks 2 and 3). They had very little to say on meaning and satisfaction in life... these might have been a better topics later in the course.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the most part, I really enjoyed running the group. It was an insightful experience to see what aspects of material the students were able to grasp more quickly and easily than other aspects. In addition, I liked having the opportunity to see how they could relate to the material personally (it was really interesting).

Very good. I did have some anxiety prior to starting and first couple of weeks, but having prepared themes and questions for each session was extremely helpful.

It was a balance between allowing them to be "adults" and wanting to intervene and keep them on task.

It was such a great experience! It was exciting and challenging, and I was able to experience the student’s interpretations of the material from a more novel viewpoint since I’ve been learning/studying about it for so long. They gave me a different perspective. I looked forward to every session and was sad to say goodbye!

The students themselves were very diverse in terms of like experience and personalities; I enjoyed working with and getting to know each of them. I (and I think the students too) really enjoyed the wrap-up exercise.

Focus on positive psychology, working with college population that is healthy (more or less-no severe pathology).

In general, working with a group (group process).

Hearing their perspectives on each other's stories, remembering how crazy it is to be at their age with so many competing tasks, issues, messages, relationships.... Seeing how thoughtful and mature they can be as well as how immature at other times.

It was difficult to navigate the traditional process group versus a discussion of material group. I had some difficulty at first figuring out what my role was in relation to this. I think in the future it might be interesting to use different mediums versus straight discussion, or introduce materials into group outside of required class readings.

Can't think of anything.

IDK. It was all OK or better.

There were times when the students would come in and not relate to any of the material and I found myself watching the clock (mainly weeks 2 and 3). They had very little to say on meaning and satisfaction in life... these might have been a better topics later in the course.
What was difficult for you as a group leader?

| It was difficult to foster equal participation by each group member. It was also a challenge to get the students to dive below the surface at times. When the students became uncomfortable/didn't know what to say to members who shared something personal they would look to me to fill that role- I had hoped that over time they would be more of a support to each other which was true in some cases but not holistically speaking. | I had a participant in the group who was at times challenging to handle given what she is dealing with. I think we used her stories and input in a way that was helpful to other group members, and we worked on creating a supportive community as a way of modeling what it means to use relationships to increase well-being. | Trying to balance some education when they did not correctly interpret course information, knowing how much to be guiding the process, and the rating system was somewhat speculative given the limited personal information that was shared in group. | At first I felt like I had to prepare a lot of material, but as the students began to open up, I was able to take a more backseat role. It was difficult trying to keep the students on track with the material in class. They would often speak in tangents, and I found it difficult to decide when to intervene or when to let them process. |

For you personally, what were the more memorable topics?

| I liked talking about relationships and I also really enjoying talking about stressful experiences and the way they have coped with these experiences. I also enjoyed talking about Freud's defense mechanisms and examples they drew from their own lives. | Meaning and Purpose in Life Relationships Narrative Identity | Defenses was fun. Seeing what they did with that. Also stressors and affordances got a lot of mileage--they have a lot of interpersonal stress at this age. | The most memorable topics were definitely the topics on emotions and relationships. There seemed to be such a shift of trust and openness in the group as they were all able to talk in depth and authentically about them. I learned the most from these two sessions than the other sessions combined. The students realized that they had many similar stories and reactions. |

What overall suggestions do you have for the next time?

<p>| Reliability training for well-being interview; examples of responses and ratings that should be assigned; having the students prepare materials for group to discuss (maybe even circulating the questions you sent us to them also); possibly shortening the group time by 10-15 minutes | None. | Maybe some prompts for the students to bring. If they had a thought during the week they might bring it to the group written down so they wouldn't forget. IDK about class time, perhaps less slides but the more discussion in class, perhaps, they would discuss less in group. | More guidance on what the sessions should look like... It was my first time running a group so I had to learn a lot from trial and error. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What could have been done to better support your role?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think sitting in on class probably would have been helpful; also doing the readings the students did (however, would not have been consistently feasible to be totally honest)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anything else?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I just wanted to say thank you for all of your support and organization throughout this process. And, for what it's worth, whether it comes out in the data or not, the students I interviewed seemed like they had made some real differences in their lives ad their well-being had improved.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What was your perception of the student's experience?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There were times when the students would vent and other times when they seemed excited about the material and the class examples, etc. I think overall they enjoyed the experience but would have preferred slightly less work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In your opinion, what did the students enjoy about the **COURSE**?

| | I think that it was an insightful experience for many of them in terms of how they think, feel, and act and the effect this has on their well-being. | Focus on well-being, topics relevant to where students are developmentally | I think they liked the journals and some of the practical homeworks. This came up a few times, that they were surprised to see some techniques working. | I think they simply enjoyed the material. They thought it should be mandatory to take a course like this because it "just makes sense." They were able to relate it to their own lives and the lives of people around them. |

In your opinion, what did the students enjoy about the **GROUP**?

| | Having the opportunity to ask questions and learn about their classmates' experiences. | When topics were more personal, such as attachment and personal stress, they seemed to be engaged. They seemed to like humor and some understanding that if something personal was shared I was there to ask about their feelings, if it was OK to continue discussion of that topic, etc. i.e., "safety" | Opportunities to talk about issues that developmentally matter in their life | They said that they would talk about things they couldn't talk about with their friends because their friends didn't understand. I think they enjoyed the environment of the group and the sense of safety they had sharing their thoughts and feelings about the material. They were always respectful of each other even when there was disagreement. |

In your opinion, what did the students dislike about the **COURSE**?

<p>| | They mentioned that it was a lot of reading/assignments. | Not sure | Too much content, or too many slides processed quickly in class was mentioned. | They didn't like the amount of work involved in the journals. Some of them expressed the journals being hard for them to complete and that it brought up negative feelings. There were times when they felt the material was presented too quickly and that they didn't fully comprehend it. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In your opinion, what did the students dislike about the GROUP?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Since it's unlike a traditional classroom setting, I think it made it harder for them to not participate which seemed to be challenging for some. I think they felt like several members dominated the group (I would agree at times). I think they zoned out when I would talk about additional research/knowledge I had on the subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on their feedback mid semester, they did not like that at times I relied a lot on questions that you offered as a guide; they disliked serious tone in some of the sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They varied on how much they wanted the process to be guided. I think there was some annoyance with a very involved member talking a lot and frequently driving conversation. This was a balance between pulling the quieter ones in, directly making all share, and just letting it go, which usually meant entertaining a lot of the one member's stories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think it was mixed. There wasn't a lot of structure to the group which some people seemed to enjoy and others seemed to want more. There was definitely some awkward silences throughout the semester and they probably would have enjoyed it more if I had been able to navigate through the material with more process oriented questions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


York: Oxford University Press.


University Press.


