

How can positive psychology improve mentoring relationships?

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Mentoring and positive psychology

Mentoring: career and personal success and satisfaction

- Mentoring → increased productivity, **career satisfaction, and life satisfaction.**
- **Everyone can benefit** from mentoring in important ways, regardless of status, position, or level of expertise.

How mentors can help mentee flourish?

- Identify
 - Goals
 - Strengths
- Benefits
 - Identifying goals increases optimism
 - One can use strengths to reach the defined goals

What is positive psychology

- optimal human functioning
 - Career, personal life
- well-being/growth is not simply the absence of malfunction/problems

How can positive psychology enhance mentoring?

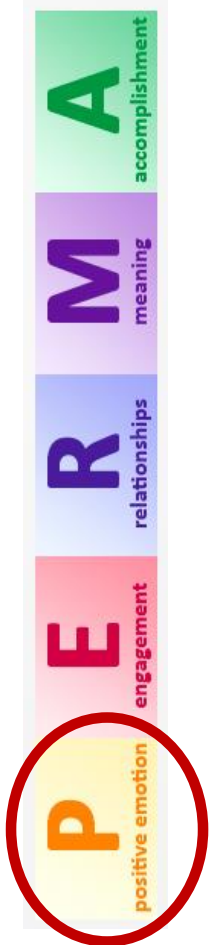


P. E. R. M. A.

- A concept developed by Martin Seligman (University of Pennsylvania)
- Ingredients for well-being

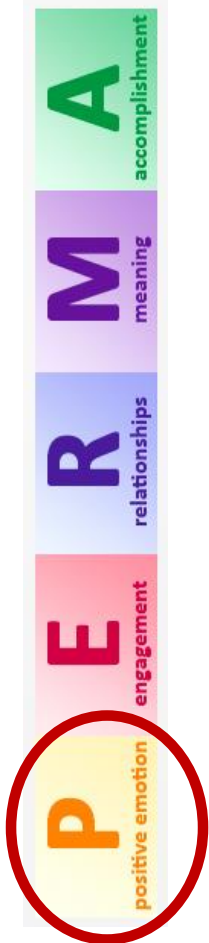


P. E. R. M. A. - Positive Emotion



- setting higher goals
- persistence
- less stress
- better team cooperation
- improved problem solving
- broader thought–action repertoire

Exercises for increasing positive emotion

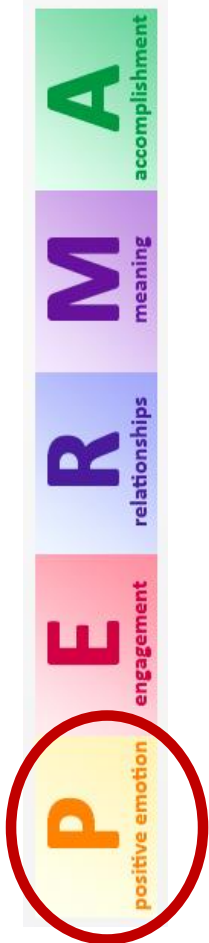


- **‘The gratitude journal’**

- three good things (big or small)
- increased focus on positive events

“A patient’s family told me earlier today that I just did a nice job of explaining their son’s illness.”

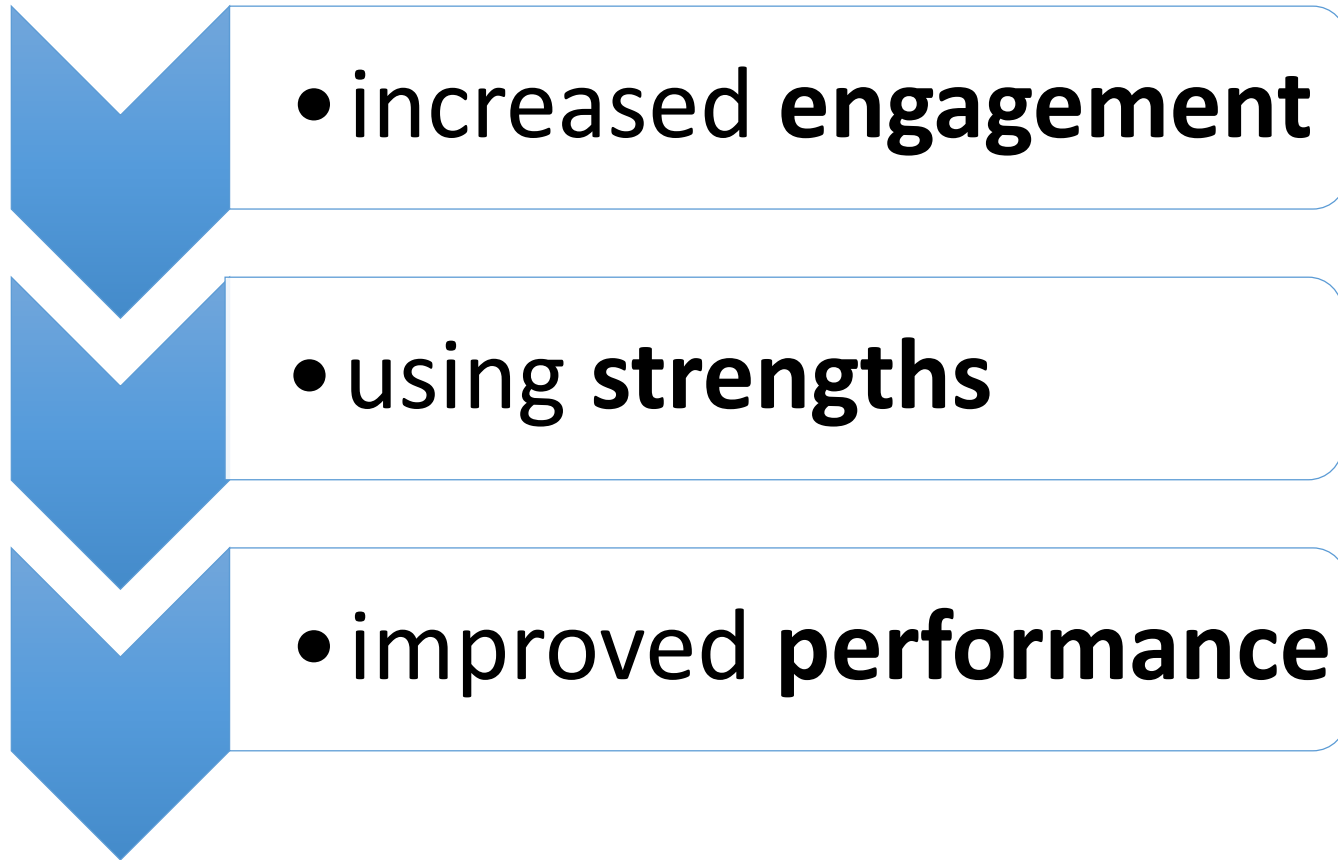
Exercises for increasing positive emotion

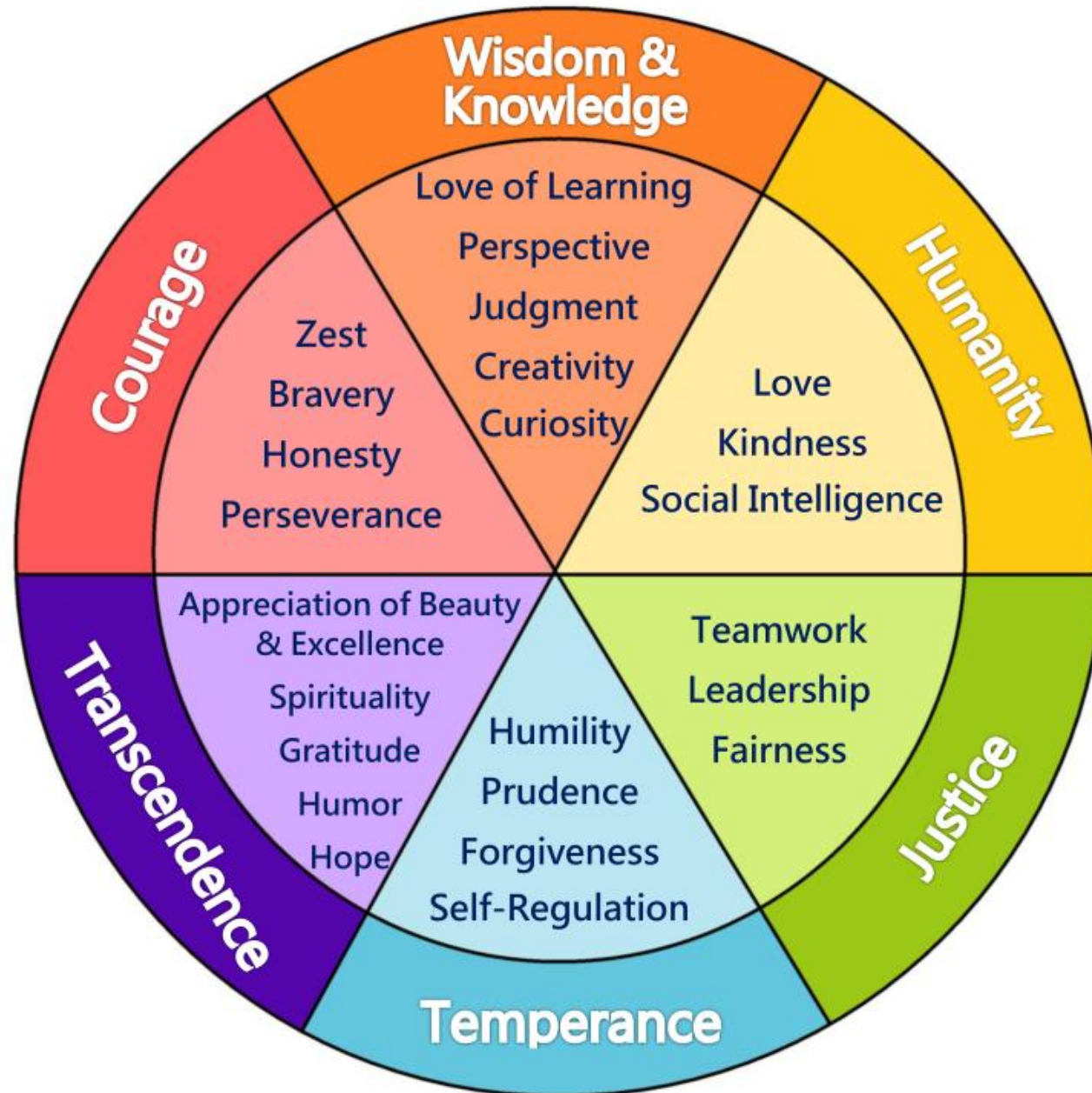


- **‘One door closes, another one opens’**
 - opportunities opened as a result of a negative event

“I had a conflict with a colleague last week. After reflecting about it, I see an opportunity for me to learn to be more patient in stressful situations”

P. E. R. M. A. - Engagement





How to increase engagement

- **‘Finding your signature strengths’**
 - write a one-page story illustrating character strengths
 - complete VIA-IS questionnaire online (www.viacharacter.org)
 - connect goals with values and strengths

Judgment/critical thinking/open-mindedness.

The statement ‘When the topic calls for it, I can be a highly rational thinker’

Graded 1-5, ‘Very much like me’ - - - - ‘Very much unlike me’

P. E. R. M. A - Relationships



- **Survival** is tied to skills to connect with others.
- **Drive** for connection, love, intimacy with other humans
- These connections have the **power to affect how we feel.**

How to increase connection

- **'The gratitude visit' exercise**

- Instruct the mentee to think of someone to whom they are very grateful, but who they have never properly thanked.
- Ask them to compose a letter to them describing their gratitude, and read the letter to that person by phone or in person.
- This exercise it may shift a mentee's memory away from the unfavourable aspects of past relationships to savouring the good things about interactions with others.

How to increase connection

- **'Gift of time' exercise**

- instruct to offer at least three “gifts of time” by contacting/meeting three persons about whom they care in a week (these meetings should have been additional to their planned activities for the week).

Example: Advice mentee to schedule regular meetings with more junior colleagues where he/she can support them

→ enhanced commitment to the profession through increased connectedness

P. E. R. M. A. - Meaning



- Meaning in life

- the extent to which people comprehend, make sense of, or see significance in their lives, *accompanied by*
- a sense of purpose, mission, or overarching aim in life.

- Correlates with

- psychological well-being, academic achievement, work adjustment and physical health.

How to increase meaning

- **‘Biography’ exercise**

- Ask mentees to imagine that someone is interested in writing their career biography. What would they want their biography to say? Ask them to write a 1–2 page essay summarizing what they would like to be described for, as doctors, the most.

Example: The medical school graduate who returns to practice in her rural area where she is the only physician looking after her community.

P. E. R. M. A. - Accomplishment



- Achievement → self-esteem → sense of accomplishment
- This **insight about oneself** and one's abilities strengthens
 - internal motivation
 - self efficacy
 - resilience against adversity

How to increase accomplishment

- Ask mentees to
 - reflect on past accomplishments
 - celebrate success
 - avoid comparisons to others' goals and accomplishment

Conclusions

Conclusion

- Mentorship extends beyond fixing what does not go well
- Mentors can help mentees utilize strengths that help to buffer against adversity and help them thrive
- Mentorship can help both professionally and personally

Thank you – kiitos!

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