

SHINUI

the Network for Innovation
in Part-time Jewish Education

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Cultivating Thriving Lives: A National Conversation on Jewish Education

• a four-part webinar series •



Positive Psychology Meets Jewish Education

Sarah Rosenblum, MAPP
Thursday, 12/5/19, 1:00-2:00pm EST





Positive Psychology Meets Jewish Education

December, 5, 2019

INTRODUCTION

- Jewish education shift from surviving to thriving
- Jewish education needs to be revamped to meet 21st century student needs, encourage retention, choice, and create a positive and meaningful experience
- Positive psychology and positive education can assist with this revitalization helping students to find new meaning in longstanding Jewish values
- At its core, Judaism provides a guide for how to live a flourishing life based on mitzvot and middot

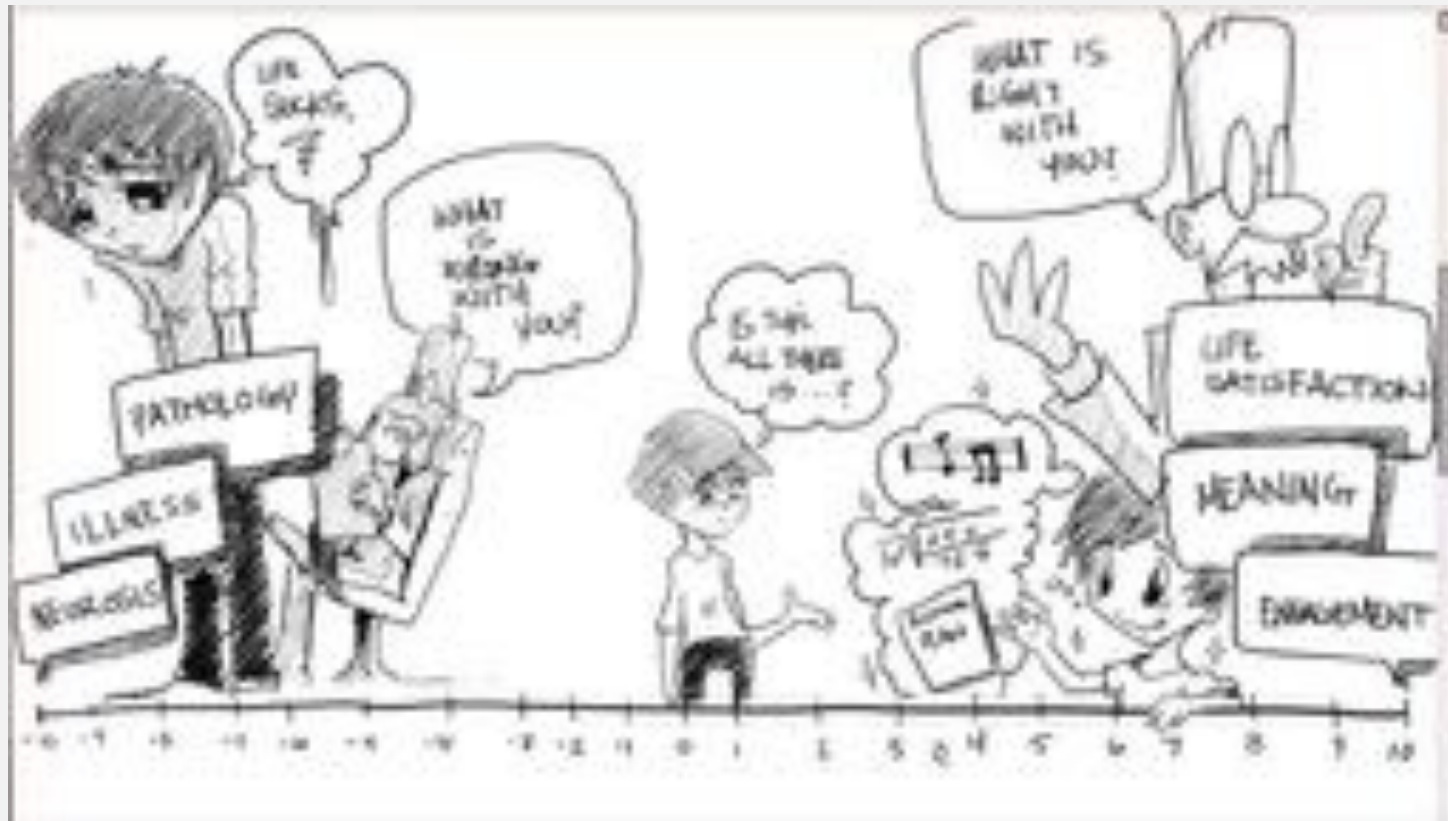
INTRODUCTION

- In the last session Dr. David Bryfman, CEO of the Jewish Education Project, shared his vision, “The purpose of Jewish education today is to ensure that Jewish tradition empowers people to thrive in today’s world”.
- Bryfman (2016), believes that the most critical component of the Jewish educational experience today is not the curriculum, Torah, educators, or the school, but the learners. He states that Jewish tradition should help individuals answer life’s key questions: “Who am I? Where do I fit in to this world? How can I live a more fulfilling life? How can I make the world a better place?”
- A Jewish education that helps students answer these questions will enable Jewish schools and students to flourish.

WHO HERE HAS HEARD OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY?

- What is the definition? In what context have you heard positive psychology being used?
- What do you first think of when you hear the word psychology? What about when you hear the words positive psychology?

LANGUISHING TO FLOURISHING

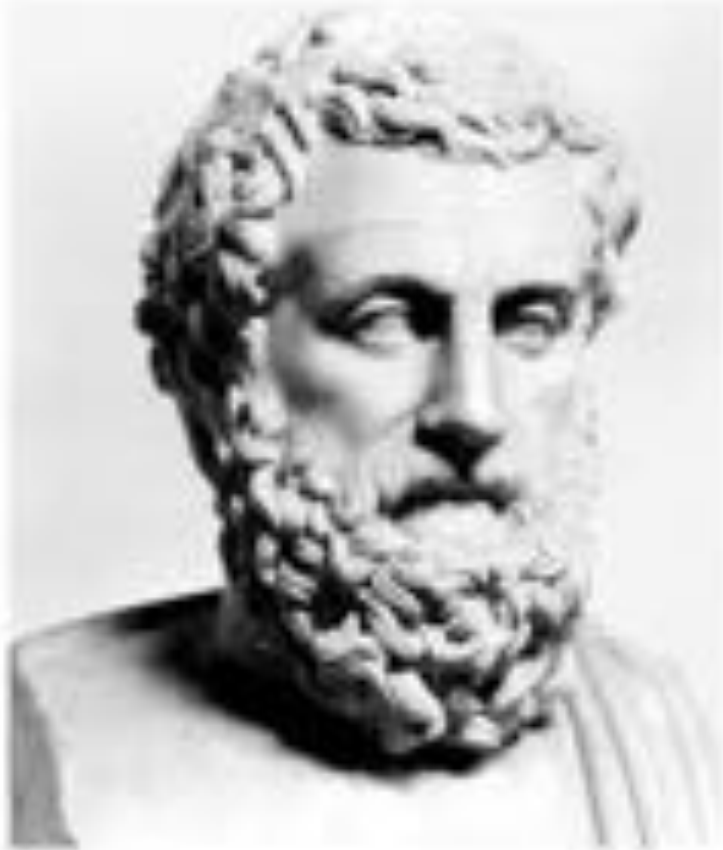


Positive Psychology



The *scientific study* of
what enables individuals &
communities to thrive.

International Positive Psychology Association



- ❖ The study of human happiness has intrigued philosophers, religious leaders, and psychologists throughout history.
- ❖ Aristotle is particularly notable for his philosophies on happiness and the virtuous life. He viewed happiness as an activity of the soul and essential for the good life (Melchert, 2002).

eudaimonia

(n.) lit. "human flourishing"; a contented state of being happy and healthy and prosperous

pronunciation | "U-de-'mOn-E-a

ENGLISH | ORIGIN: GREEK

The hedonic treadmill:

- ❖ After a while we adapt and keep seeking out more items, experiences, and objects that we think will make us happy but eventually we return to baseline level of well-being.
- ❖ We want to find eudaimonic well-being which is more lasting and focused on living a life of virtue instead of materialism

Hedonic vs. Eudaimonic Well-Being



The origins of Positive Psychology

❖ Martin Seligman is considered the father of positive psychology.

❖ During Seligman's presidency of the American Psychological Association in 1998 he created positive psychology, a visionary new direction to supplement the field of psychology.

❖ Dr. Seligman believed psychology should not only focus on how to treat mental illness or *fix* what is wrong with people, but to also study what makes life worth living (Seligman, 2011).



POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY CENTER

Chris Peterson and Martin Seligman created the Character Strengths and Virtues Manual as Positive Psychology's counterpart to the DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders)



The science of happiness have become the most popular elective courses at Harvard, Yale, and NYU- Students are interested in learning tools to help them thrive.

Why should they have to wait until college?





- ❖ Seligman's well-being model of PERMA includes the essential components for "the good life" (Seligman, 2011).
- ❖ PERMA stands for **p**ositive emotions, **e**ngagement, **r**elationships, **m**eaning, and **a**ccomplishment. Each element is an essential ingredient in a flourishing life and each can be cultivated through positive interventions to help promote greater well-being.

What are you grateful for this week?

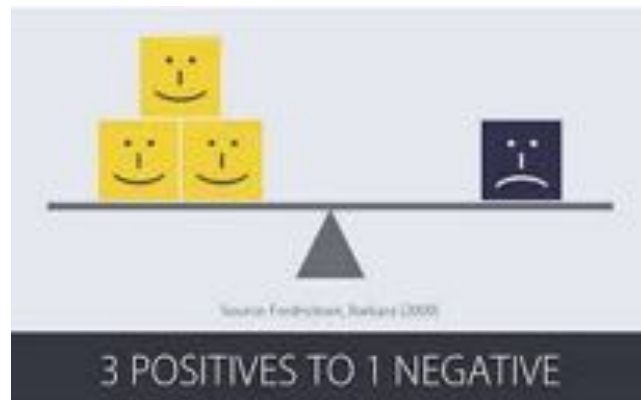


PERMA
P- Positive Emotions

How can we incorporate these top 10 positive emotions in positive education? What do we already do to tap into this? What is a new activity?

Positive emotions and Barbara Frederickson's work

PERMA
P- Positive Emotions



- What are examples of positive emotions?
It is not just yellow smile faces
- Fredrickson's top 10 forms of positivity:
Joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, inspiration, awe, and love.
- 3: 1 Positive to Negative Ratio
- Question: what positive emotions do you notice your students frequently experience in your Jewish programming?

Positive Interventions

PERMA
P- Positive Emotions

- Positive psychology is focused on applying research based techniques and positive interventions to cultivate well-being and boost positive emotions.
- Positive psychology's applied approach empowers individuals to implement well-being strategies autonomously and capitalize on strengths which promotes human flourishing.
- By creating a habit of positive interventions, such as counting one's blessings, meditating, savoring positive experiences, expressing gratitude, and displaying acts of kindness, individuals can arm themselves with skills to nurture well-being, even during challenging times (Lyubomirsky, 2007)



Engagement and Flow



Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi is the lead researcher on flow theory which he describes as a state of complete focus, "being in the zone", where nothing else seems to matter.

PERMA E- Engagement



Engagement/Flow



How to achieve flow in classroom:

- Minimize distractions
- Embrace student choice
- Provide scaffolding
- Share positive feedback
- Create immersive and hands-on experiences
- Monitor progress

**PERMA
R- Relationships**

**Positive Relationships
And High Quality
Connections**





PERMA
R- Relationships

How do you respond when colleagues and students share good news with you?

Active Constructive Responding:
How you respond to someone's good news- essential for positive relationships

Meaning: Activities that boost positive emotions

PERMA
M- Meaning



Examples: Best possible self exercise, gratitude letter, use a new strength each day, community service

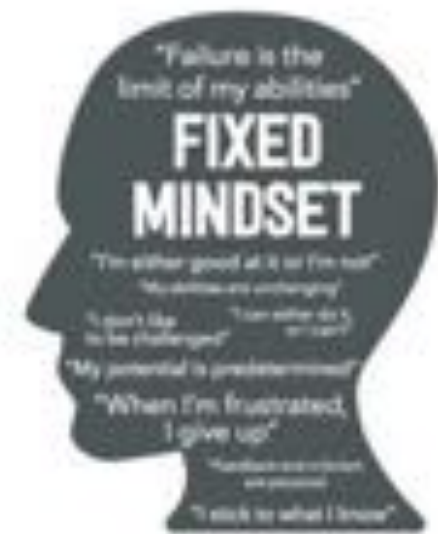
Emily Smith's 4 Pathways to increase meaning:

- ❖ Belonging
- ❖ Purpose
- ❖ Transcendence
- ❖ Storytelling



Accomplishment

PERMA
A- Accomplishment



Accomplishment- Goal Setting

THE SCIENTIFICALLY VALIDATED
DREAM- REALIZATION FRAMEWORK

1. WISH
2. OUTCOME
3. OBSTACLE
4. PLAN



1. WISH	Write a wish that you want to achieve (the goal). The wish should be difficult but achievable, specific and action-oriented.
2. OUTCOME	How will it feel when you accomplish this and what is the concrete outcome? Close your eyes and imagine it happened.
3. OBSTACLE	What is the biggest internal obstacle? This must be something that you have control over like "going to social media, checking my messages, being in a hurry"
4. PLAN	Write a plan. If (obstacle), then (action) For example "If I feel an urge to go to social media, I will take a breath and shut down my phone"

WOOP was developed by
Gabriele Oettingen

**Judaism and Positive Psychology:
What themes do you see naturally overlap?**

HAPPINESS





Let's continue the conversation!

**Feel free to reach out to Sarah directly at:
SarahERosenblum@gmail.com**

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Three things I am taking away:

Two questions you have:

One person that I need to talk to about this:

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Going from Strength to Strength: a Look at the VIA Character Strengths

Jillian Darwish, VA Institute
Thursday, 1/16/20, 1:00-2:00pm EST



Where Theory Meets Practice

Tess Levine, B'nai Jeshurun in Short Hills, NJ
Rachel Hoppel, Temple Beth Shalom in Needham, MA
Thursday, 3/5/20, 1:00-2:00pm EST



The Jewish Community Center
of Metropolitan Detroit



Jewish Learning Venture

References

- Bryfman, D. (2016, November 28). When you're happy and you know it - The true purpose of Jewish education. *EJewishPhilanthropy*. Retrieved from: <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/when-youre-happy-and-you-know-it-the-true-purpose-of-jewish-education/>
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