

Positive Psychology

Adapted from the book Learning the Language of Addiction Counseling, Second Edition, page 204 by Geri Miller

Positive psychology began as a new area of psychology in 1998. Martin Seligman is considered the father of the modern positive psychology movement however the philosophy derives strength from the theories of humanistic psychologists—such as Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, and Erich Fromm. (Wikipedia)

The goal of positive psychology is to promote the good in life (stay happy, find meaningful work, volunteer for good causes), not just fix the wrong.

Focus is on what is *right* with people versus what is *wrong* with people

To help people does not simply mean to cease or reduce suffering, but also to help them live a fuller life.

Focus on client strengths versus symptoms and weaknesses

People need a positive reason to live (and a positive reason to get clean and sober)

Positive Psychology is about:

Valued Experiences – These can be past, present or future and includes having a sense of **flow** and happiness.

Positive Individual Traits – Includes

Capacity for love and vocation	Originality
Courage	Future mindedness
Interpersonal skill	Spirituality
Aesthetic sensibility	Talent
Perseverance	Wisdom
Forgiveness	

Civic Virtues – Includes

Responsibility	Civility
Nurturance	Moderation
Altruism	Tolerance
Work Ethic	

Flow – Focus in a task that involves concentration, skill, perseverance, and is enjoyed for its own sake with a sense of harmony and self-integration.