

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF DISSERTATIONS AND THESES

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ABSTRACT

A number of studies on positive psychology have been published in peer reviewed journals since the birth of the field in 1998.

Objective: The objective of this annotated bibliography is to give the reader an overview of dissertations and theses on positive psychology. Many of these include studies that have not been published elsewhere.

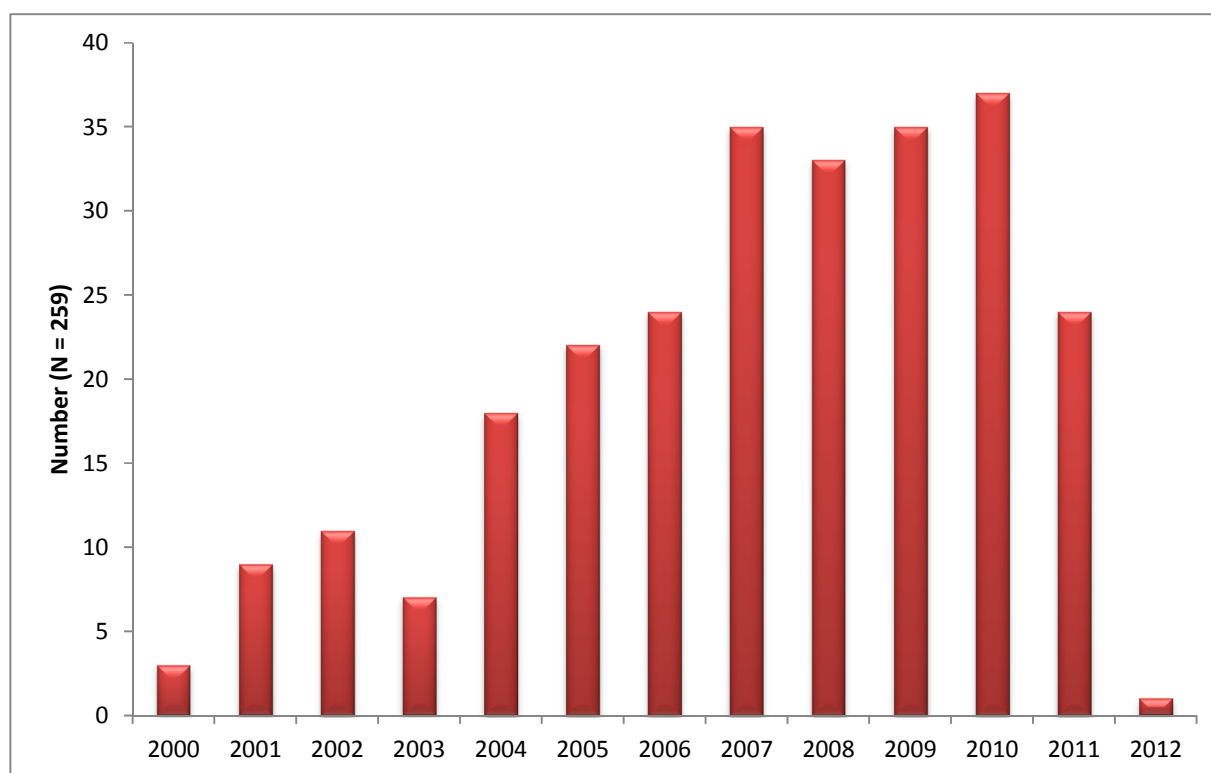
Design: The dissertations and theses were identified through searches in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Database - the world's most comprehensive collection of dissertations and theses with 2.7 million searchable citations to dissertation and theses from around the world from 1861-2011.

Methods: This annotated bibliography focuses on dissertations and theses that explicitly use the terms 'positive psychology' in their abstracts. The original abstracts are included and the material is coded for type, empirical content, and type of study. The references are sorted in opposite chronological order and alphabetical order.

Results: In total, 259 references from 2000 to December 2011 met the selection criteria. The number of dissertations has been growing until 2007 and seem to have reached a plateau around 35 dissertations per year.

Conclusion: All attempts have been made to ensure that this document is as accurate as possible. Due to the complexity of cataloguing and categorizing the materials, some details may have been overlooked in the review process. If you have suggestions for changes or additions, please contact Saiyyidah Zaidi-Stone.

REFERENCES PER YEAR



REFERENCES

2012

n = 1

Gillies, J. (2012). A phenomenological examination of transsexuals' experience of the standards of care assessment requirement for sex-affirming interventions. Walden University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this study was to understand what the experience of having a mental health assessment was like prior to obtaining hormones or sex affirming surgery. The World Professional Association for Transgender Health publishes standards of care (SOC) for professionals working with individuals who identify as transgender or gender variant. The SOC include a psychological assessment by a mental health provider prior to obtaining the irreversible medical hormonal or surgical interventions. Some transgender people claim that this assessment process hinders them from obtaining the medical interventions. A lack of research on the lived experience of transgender people regarding this assessment process prevents substantiation of the claim. A tripartite theory consisting of optimal transgender development, less than optimal transgender development, and positive psychology provided the theoretical foundation. The research questions were designed to elicit the participants' experiences about the benefit or hindrances in obtaining hormones or surgery that they experienced in the assessment process. This qualitative research design employed interview questions for phenomenological inquiry. The data were analyzed via thematic analysis, and a variety of methods of ensuring trustworthiness included, among others, using prolonged cultural engagement, triangulation and member checking. The sample consisted of 14 transgender or gender variant individuals. The following themes emerged: length of assessment, impact of the therapist, informed consent versus hoops, and recommendations. Specific recommendations include eliminating the timeframes in the standards of care, proper, specific training of therapists in transgender care, and the use of an informed consent approach of treatment. Social change implications include a potential shift from a gatekeeping model, focused on preventing regret, to an informed consent model, focused on creating a positive transition experience, for those wishing to obtain hormones or undergo sex affirming surgery.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

2011

n = 24

Murphy, M. (2011). The happiness agenda: A comparison of perspectives from positive psychology and american buddhist psychology on the pursuit of well-being. California Institute of Integral Studies. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The study addressed the paradoxical or ironic nature of the processes involved in seeking happiness. Both positive psychology and American Buddhist psychology note certain "self-defeating" dynamics at work in the direct pursuit of well-being. Positive psychology recognizes the futility of what it calls the

"hedonic treadmill"--grasping after lasting happiness through chasing and acquiring material wealth or success. Buddhism perceives how something akin to this process persists in more nuanced ways. Magid refers to the subtle levels at which a project of self-improvement (what he calls the "secret practice") can operate beneath the surface in even experienced Buddhist meditators, not to mention non-practitioners. This project often remains outside of awareness, and one of the main aims of Buddhist practice is to bring to light the distorted, or illusory, nature of such self-centered attachments and omnipotent thinking. The pursuit of happiness through self-improvement and control that Buddhism finds so problematic may be endemic to positive psychology, even when it manifests in less than overtly hedonistic forms. Buddhist psychology may provide a corrective to the subtle current of self-enhancement running through positive psychology.

The dissertation employed the integrative literature review format. According to Torraco, this form of research critically reviews, analyzes, and integrates the relevant literature on a topic, providing new perspectives or a creative synthesis of ideas. The dissertation explored how two philosophically very different approaches to the psychology of happiness converge on the same problem. A number of paradoxical aspects of the pursuit of happiness were investigated in light of the theoretical and practical perspectives of positive psychology and American Buddhist psychology. The most fundamental distinctions between positive psychology and American Buddhist psychology revolve around their divergent epistemologies and the associated difference in their views of the self. In addition to considering the implications of these differences to issues of meaning and value, the dissertation compared practical applications and treatment modalities based on both perspectives, including a comparative analysis of approaches to psychotherapy, the psychological well-being of cancer patients, and hospice care.

Thesis, conceptual.

Farmer, J. (2011). The development of the personal strengths intervention (PSI) to improve self-determination and social-emotional levels in postsecondary students with learning disabilities and/or ADHD: A multiple baseline study. University of South Florida. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Students with learning disabilities and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) decreased academic and social-emotional outcomes when compared to their peers without disabilities. Self-determination, positive psychology, and cognitive theories of learning offer suggestions for improving these outcomes. The purpose of this study was to develop The Personal Strengths Intervention (PSI) and investigate its impact on levels of self-determination and the social-emotional functioning of postsecondary students with learning disabilities and/or ADHD. PSI integrates key elements of self-determination, positive psychology, and cognitive theories. ADHD multiple baseline design with seven participants was used to examine the intervention effects over time. Results indicate PSI demonstrates content, face, and social validity. The results from the examination of the impact of participation in PSI on self-determination and social emotional levels were inconsistent. Visual analyses, effect sizes, and multilevel modeling of the time series data indicated there was little to no intervention effect across participants. However, results from the visual analyses and effect sizes revealed there were some intervention effects for particular participants. For participants who demonstrated intervention effects, effects ranged from small to large for self-determination dependent variables and small to moderate for social-emotional dependent variables. Pre- post-assessment results indicated there was an increase in self-determination and positive affect associated with participation in PSI. There were no changes in subjective well-being or negative affect. Results from a longitudinal qualitative trend analysis and final interviews with participants indicated

improved self-determination and social-emotional levels. A discussion of possible explanations for the finding and implications is included. Suggestions for future research are provided.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Gavian, M. (2011). The effects of relaxation and gratitude interventions on stress outcomes. University of Minnesota.

Research suggests that positive emotions play an important role in mental and physical health outcomes including combating the effects of stress. Research has also shown that positive emotions decrease autonomic nervous system reactivity and build personal resources, initiating an "upward spiral" of well-being (Frederickson, 2003). Two methods discussed in the literature to increase positive emotions are relaxation (e.g., progressive muscle relaxation; PMR) and gratitude interventions. Both are associated with positive physical and mental health outcomes including increased positive outcomes (e.g., quality of life, relaxation, sense of control, happiness) and decreased negative outcomes (e.g., depression, anxiety, health complaints). However, research on both PMR and gratitude interventions is limited in certain respects. Research on PMR focuses primarily on negative physical and mental health outcomes, whereas gratitude research relies heavily on correlational data.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of relaxation and gratitude interventions on physical and mental health outcomes, including reactions to stress. Using a controlled three group experimental, prospective design, 247 college students were randomly assigned to one of three groups (PMR, gratitude, control) for one week. At the end of the intervention, subjects participated in a stress-inducing activity. Baseline, pre-stress induction, post-stress induction and one-month follow up assessments were obtained. Both positive (i.e., life satisfaction, serenity, relaxation, positive affect, perceived control), negative (i.e., depression, anxiety, stress) and health indicators (i.e., physical symptoms) were measured. Results indicated that PMR is an effective intervention: At post-intervention, those in the PMR condition reported significantly more perceived control and serenity than both the gratitude and control groups. Those in the PMR group also had significantly lower negative affect than the control group. Group differences in stress and physical health symptom ratings, although marginally significant, revealed results again in favor of PMR. At follow up (30 days later) the PMR group maintained significantly lowered negative affect than the control group. There were no effects of the gratitude intervention on any outcomes nor were there group differences in stress reactivity. The role of positive psychology interventions in buffering stress and improving mental health functioning is discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Pezent, G. (2011). Exploring the role of positive psychology constructs as protective factors against the impact of negative environmental variables on the subjective well-being of older adults. Texas A&M University.

The present study explored how older adults adapt to the negative changes that often occur as people age. This study sought to provide a comprehensive investigation of how the positive psychology variables of hope, optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy might work together to serve as protective factors against the potentially deleterious impact of negative environmental variables on the subjective well-being of older adults. The negative environmental variables examined in this study included declining health status, lower social support, and negative life events (e.g., loss of spouse, reduced income, etc.). In this study, the subjective well-being in older adults is defined as an overall sense of satisfaction with life, high positive affect, and low negative affect. This study examined three primary hypothesized models, each investigating how positive internal dispositional factors (as measured by taking the composite of hope,

optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy), work together to mediate the relationship between the components of subjective well-being and a different environmental variable for each model. Several alternative path analyses models were also run based on modifications to the model that achieved good fit, with the goal of evaluating whether the individual positive psychology constructs either fully or partially mediated between certain environmental variables and each of the components of subjective well-being. Although no adequate fits were attained for the models evaluating social support and negative life events, results of this study showed an adequate fit for the model evaluating the positive psychology cluster as a mediator between health status and the subjective well-being components; more specifically, the positive psychology cluster was shown to mediate the relationship between perceived health and two of the three components of subjective well-being (life satisfaction and positive affect). In addition, correlation analyses revealed that the positive psychology variables were all significantly correlated with each other, as well as with the participant reports of life satisfaction, positive affect, and perceived health. These findings suggest that participants who reported higher levels of the positive psychology constructs experienced higher satisfaction with life and positive affect, and perceived themselves as having a lower occurrence of health problems. Overall, these results provide additional evidence for the protective role that hope, optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy may play in maintaining the well-being of older adults.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Athan, A. (2011). Postpartum flourishing: Motherhood as opportunity for positive growth and self-development. Columbia University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The overall purpose of this study was to expand the area of focus from examinations of maladaptation to include the positive aspects of motherhood. Its main objective was to identify mothers who might demonstrate transformational growth as they transition from the prenatal to postpartum period. Participants were 467 primiparas and multiparas women who completed self-report measures on their subjective well-being (positive/negative emotions, life satisfaction) and psychological functioning (stress and coping, growth). Results demonstrated the presence of higher ratings of reward versus cost expectations with regard to parenting satisfaction. A unique subset of Highly Satisfied (HS) mothers was identified with lower negative emotions and higher positive emotions on pre-and post-birth ratings. Furthermore, HS group's scores on negative emotions decreased longitudinally, while their positive emotions spiraled upward. Logistic regression models were used to predict probability of HS group belonging. The term 'flourishing' was borrowed to distinguish mothers who were: (a) highly satisfied in parenting; (b) attained and accrued more positive and less negative emotions over time; (c) used fewer negative coping skills relative to positive ones; (d) described the strains of motherhood as an opportunity for personal gain; and (e) rated themselves as having experienced beneficial growth. This study is distinctive in applying positive psychology and developmental perspectives simultaneously to examine the domain of motherhood and to emphasize positive adaptation in mothers. It is also the first to propose a unique descriptor to the field of maternity for this phenomenon: Postpartum Flourishing.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Budd, L. (2011). The lived experience of being raised in quaker silent meeting: A heuristic inquiry. Capella University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The field of meditation has become an increasingly important area of research to the field of psychology as evidence mounts of the benefits provided regarding both physical and mental health. Although there has been some study of long-term meditators, the majority of studies have focused on the areas of

Transcendental or Buddhist meditation practice with individuals who began practice as an adult or were raised outside of the United States. The unprogrammed meeting Quaker sect, also known as The Society of Friends, is of interest due to their unusual approach to developing spirituality through shared silent worship. The Quakers are the only known group to raise children with such a practice within the United States and have not been studied in this context. A qualitative heuristic research methodology was utilized to discover the meaning and essence of the experience of being raised in Quaker silent meeting, in order to begin to understand the impact of raising children in the United States from birth with a silent practice. Ten individuals raised from birth in Quaker silent meeting were interviewed to better understand the developmental impact of being raised in Quaker silent meeting. The researcher's experience was also included. Being born and raised into Quaker silent meeting develops a way of being that consists of valuable traits from focused attention, listening, commitment to equality, universal connectedness, strength, genuine belief of that of God in everyone and empathy, and living consciously. The results of this study indicate the importance of including the Quakers, as a population, into the positive psychology and meditation research as well as providing some insight into a path that can contribute to increasing resilience in children.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Laracy, M. (2011). The role of the experience of beauty in psychotherapy. The Institute for the Psychological Sciences. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The experience of beauty is inherently fulfilling for the human person and, as such, appears to be relevant to mental health and the practice of psychotherapy. However, beauty has been given relatively little attention in clinical psychology, even if treatises on the topic abound in other disciplines. With the advent of positive psychology, there has been increasing emphasis on that which makes for a good human life, and in this context appreciation for the topic of beauty has emerged in the psychological literature. The goal of this dissertation is to articulate a clear framework for understanding beauty and then to identify implications of experiencing beauty for the practice of psychotherapy.

There are recent accounts of appreciation for and engagement with beauty in positive psychology. Aesthetics has also become a source of interest among neuroscientists and evolutionary theorists. Several of these theories and perspectives are reviewed and critiqued. It is argued that scientific methods are not able to provide an adequate understanding of beauty and its role in mental health. In turn, a phenomenological account of beauty that is grounded in philosophical realism is provided. This account of beauty is linked to mental health based on a biopsychosocial-spiritual model of the human person. The latter part of this dissertation is focused on implications and applications for psychotherapy. It is argued that a therapeutic stance attentive to beauty facilitates a strong therapeutic alliance, effective intervention, and protection for the therapist against burnout. A beauty-based perspective on structuring the office space, assessing clients, and planning interventions is then provided. Rather than a new and distinct therapeutic orientation, experiencing beauty is presented as a vital dimension of human life that can inform the work of psychotherapy in various ways. Paths for future research are suggested; however, this initial inquiry supports the conclusion that psychotherapists would benefit from incorporating a beauty-based perspective into their work in order to facilitate symptom-reduction and, ultimately, human flourishing.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Wajsblat, L. (2011). Positive androgyny and well-being: A positive psychological perspective on gender role valence. Hofstra University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The exploration of gender differences has assumed a prominent role in the well-being literature (Kashdan, Mishra, Breen & Froh, 2009), particularly within the scope of positive psychology. Previous theories of gender role behavior have sought to identify the relation between gender role orientation and well-being. One such theory is that of psychological androgyny, which is the relative balance of stereotypically masculine and feminine personality traits. Although a substantial body of research supports the role of androgyny with regard to a range of well-being outcomes (see Stake, 1997), theoretical and methodological limitations restrict androgyny theory from representing a paradigm of mental health. Recent efforts to address these concerns have resulted in the exploration of differentiated gender role traits, that is, those aspects of masculinity and femininity that are seen as socially desirable or undesirable. As a result, the present study will add to the gender and well-being research by exploring the effect of differentiated gender identities on aspects of well-being. In addition, the present study seeks to add to the growing positive psychology literature by exploring gender role behavior within a prosocial context.

Using a quasi-experimental design, 225 undergraduate and graduate students were grouped into one of seven gender role categories, including positive and negative androgyny, masculinity and femininity, and undifferentiated (A+/A-, M+/M-, F+/F-, Au), as per self-report. In Phase 1 of the study, participants completed a series of well-being inventories and were asked to provide the name and contact information of a significant other who was contacted to complete a brief well-being inventory on behalf of the participant. In Phase 2, a confederate researcher offered participants the opportunity to engage in a voluntary prosocial behavior.

Exploratory factor analyses were conducted to determine the factor loading of all dependent variables. It was hypothesized that there would be a main effect for gender valence, with A+, M+, and F+ participants all reporting higher levels of well-being than their negative counterparts, and A+ relating to the highest levels of well-being. In order to further explore the construct validity of gender role valence, it was hypothesized that A+ would add significant variance to overall well-being while controlling for the Big 5 Personality Traits, which have been consistently related to manifold aspects of well-being.

Results of the current study indicated that Life Satisfaction, Positive Affect, Negative Affect, and Subjective Happiness all loaded on the same latent variable, termed Subjective Well-being while the Scales of Psychological Well-Being and Gratitude similarly loaded on a the latent variable, termed Psychological Well-Being. An ANOVA procedure indicated a main effect for gender valence across self- and other-report of well-being while the pattern of means across all self-report dependent variables indicated that A+ produced the most optimal well-being. When controlling for the Big 5 Personality traits, A+ did not add significant variance to self-report of well-being. Further analysis of the component factors of the Big 5, however, indicated that A+ did add significant variance to self-report of well-being when controlling for Neuroticism and Extraversion. Strengths and limitations of the present study and directions for future research are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Cramer, J. (2011). A chronicle of the new movement called positive psychology. Saybrook Graduate School and Research Center. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This research elucidates the short history of a new branch of psychology called Positive Psychology and identifies the founders and key scholars in this movement with a review of literature that illustrates the

various theories that preceded the movement. A discussion of the reaction of Humanistic Psychologists to the controversial statements made by Positive Psychologists was presented. The author presents an historical account and draws conclusions based upon the primary authors and public interpretations in academic literature beginning with the inception of the movement in 1998 at the American Psychological Association meeting in San Francisco through the present. In conclusion, this research discusses initial signs of potential movement beyond controversy, which could unite both psychologists in the humanistic tradition and psychologists in the Positive Psychology.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Curtis, D. (2011). A multiple case study to explore how psychological courage and self-determination influence transformational change. Saybrook Graduate School and Research Center. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Researchers and practitioners of humanistic and positive psychology are currently expanding theories and methods to discover how strengths-based approaches can be applied to enhance individuals' well-being and self-development. The purpose of this study was to customize a one-to-one quality of life coaching intervention, grounded in Self-Determination Theory, and then to investigate how adults demonstrate characteristics of a courageous mindset during times of personal and professional change. This mixed methods study utilized an 8-week, multiple case study design. Eight adults participated in 6 1-hour tele-coaching sessions. Multiple sources of data were collected: a pre-assessment Values in Action Inventory of Character Strengths (VIA-IS) survey, a pre-post Quality of Life Inventory (QOLI) questionnaire, researcher notes, and post-session semi-structured interview transcriptions. The coaching intervention included the VIA-IS and QOLI profile reports, and HeartMath resources. The findings on 3 participants are presented in individual case descriptions and the findings on the remaining 5 participants are presented in tables of themes. An interpretative qualitative cross-case analysis was used to collect, analyze, and interpret the data for all 8 participants. The qualitative findings described (a) how the coaching methodology empowered individuals to fulfill their psychological needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competency; (b) how participants expressed and strengthened characteristics of psychological courage and shifts in motivation over 8 weeks; and (c) the overall effectiveness of the coaching intervention. This study specifically contributes to the emerging field of applied coaching psychology. These results support the value of utilizing a self-determination framework to investigate the process of transformational change in a non-clinical adult population.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Bygrave, C. (2011). The power of love: An examination of the measures, antecedents, and outcomes of love of the job. Saint Mary's University (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The overall objective for this dissertation research was to provide construct validity for the emerging love of the job LOJ model (Barling and Inness, 2007; Kelloway et al., 2010), to evaluate its measurement, and to situate it as a more powerful predictor of organizational and individual outcomes than other similar constructs. In line with the theme of positive psychology and the emerging field of positive organizational behaviour, it is hoped that the research findings of a significant connection between love of the job and well-being will lead to "employee happiness and health as viable goals in themselves" (Bakker and Schaufeli, 2008, p.148). This two-phase research project involved quantitative analysis of survey data collected from 310 Certified General Accountants and Certified Management Consultants in Canada between May and September 2010. The first study provided empirical support for LOJ as a three-factor model comprised of large and equal amounts of passion, commitment and intimacy. This study also

provided discriminant validity by distinguishing the LOJ construct from job satisfaction and job engagement. Finally, study one provided evidence of association between LOJ and reciprocity of the organization, turnover intention, organizational citizenship behaviour, and psychological well-being. Study two was based on longitudinal data from 204 Certified General Accountants and Certified Management Consultants and provided evidence that reciprocity predicts LOJ and that LOJ predicts turnover, organizational citizenship behaviour, well-being and job satisfaction, but not productivity.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Vasher, B. (2011). Evaluating the relationship between subjective well-being and self-reported efficacy among K-12 teachers. Northcentral University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Many K-12 public school teachers experience job dissatisfaction, burnout, and feelings of inferior teacher efficacy. While subjective well-being research has increased, the well-being of educators has rarely been examined. Under the theoretical framework of positive psychology, subjective well-being was conceptualized as life satisfaction, engagement, positive affect, and negative affect. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to investigate the relationship between subjective well-being and teacher efficacy (beliefs in one's ability to educate students successfully), in a purposive convenience sample of 120 educators in a school district in Southeastern Michigan. The participants, predominantly female (81.7%) and White (98.3%), with an average age of 46.32 years (SD = 10.38 years), completed the Satisfaction with Life Scale, the Orientations to Happiness Scale, the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule, and the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale. Bivariate correlations and multiple linear regression were utilized. The Pearson correlation results indicated life satisfaction was not significantly related to teacher efficacy; engagement was not significantly related to teacher efficacy after controlling for the predictor variables; positive affect was significantly related to teacher efficacy, $r(118) = .45, p < .001$; and negative affect was significantly and negatively related to teacher efficacy, $r(118) = -.29, p = .001$. Multiple linear regressions were computed to determine the contribution of the predictor variables to teacher efficacy after controlling for age, years of teaching experience, and number of students. Multiple regressions showed that the seven control and predictor variables explained 26% of the variance in Teacher Efficacy scores, $R^2 = .26$, adjusted $R^2 = .22$, $F(7,105) = 4.71, p < .001$. In the multiple regression analysis participants with higher Positive Affect scores ($\beta = .43, p < .001$) and participants with lower Negative Affect scores ($\beta = -.25, p = .007$) tended to have higher Teacher Efficacy scores. Recommendations include the development of a process to educate teachers on ways to increase well-being. Future research could include similar investigations with larger samples of teachers and with teachers in other geographic areas. Both positive psychologists and educators would benefit from collaboration in investigating ways to build resilience and well-being for school teachers.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Gookin, J. (2011). Development of A psychometric scale to measure challenge (stress) type and intensity in wilderness education students. Prescott College. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study developed a psychometric scale to measure types and intensities of challenges (stressors) on wilderness education expeditions. This new tool can help assess developmentally appropriate challenges on wilderness education, but it also has a higher utility.

A broader aim was to shift a base metaphor about stress in wilderness education from fear (Ewert, 1986b) to challenge. Stress scientists made this clarification with Selye (1974), but common language implies that stress and fear are both "bad" and primarily psychological constructs; while challenge is more open to

being either positive or negative, as well as either a physical or mental test of abilities. This shifts educators' attitudes away from conventional psychology focused on treatment of pathology and towards positive psychology, which refocuses on productive, healthy, and enjoyable lifestyles (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) and optimism (Seligman, 2006). This epistemological shift theoretically transforms wilderness education by using a conceptualization for challenge that is more open to eustress and other positive life experiences. A psychometric scale development methodology (DeVellis, 2003) was used. Students were asked what their greatest challenges were, and then constant comparison (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) was used to reduce 648 perceived challenges to 19 challenge items. A validation sample (n=296) showed that all items contributed to the scale's internal reliability and showed that the data range had adequate normal distribution. The Outdoor Situational Fear Inventory (Young et al, 1995) was co-administered to a subsample (n=30) to test for discriminant validity of the challenge scale. The resulting scale was internally consistent ($\alpha = .851$) with 19 items and 3 factors with strong loadings including intrapersonal (.908), interpersonal (.763), and program and environment (.814). The challenge scale measures some but not all of the facets of the OSFI. This new scale offers a tool to wilderness educators to measure programmatic challenges that are developmentally appropriate.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Dawson, L. (2011). Single-case analysis of sand tray therapy of depressive symptoms in early adolescence. The George Washington University.

Sand tray therapy has been used in the treatment of a wide variety of mental health problems in children, adolescents, and adults since the 1920s, but attempts to demonstrate its value have been limited largely to qualitative case studies. This study used a more rigorous design, a single-case analysis with multiple baselines of varying lengths across participants, to determine if sand tray therapy by itself can have an effect in reducing symptoms of depression in young people aged 11 to 14. As a largely non-verbal therapy focusing on client strengths and available resources, sand tray therapy can be enjoyable and appealing to this age group. It incorporates elements of positive psychology, allowing clients to assert control and to engage in a complex creative process that may enhance feelings of competency and self-worth.

Four participants were enrolled in the study and symptoms were assessed with several standardized paper-and-pencil questionnaires given to participants and their mothers. Primary data on depressive symptoms was collected with a five-question survey that each participant answered every other day by telephone. The baseline was randomly varied for each participant and ranged from 6 to 18 days.

Assessment with the five-question survey continued on the same schedule throughout the course of treatment, which consisted of once-weekly sand-tray sessions for 12 to 14 weeks. At the end of treatment, symptoms were again assessed with the same battery of questionnaires. Three of the four participants showed overall improvement in depressive symptoms as measured both by the five-question survey and by standardized instruments, although improvement did not follow the hypothesized pattern of steady and stable gains. Examination of the therapy process in detail revealed individual differences in the ways in which participants engaged in the therapy. The study shows some benefit may be obtained in using sand tray therapy with young adolescents suffering depressive symptoms. Implications of the study in the treatment of adolescents as well as in the study of sand tray therapy process are discussed.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Scatliff, A. (2011). The development and investigation of a theory of illumination systems in informal networks of adults. Fielding Graduate University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The goal of this formative study was to explore a 7-step model, Illumination System, designed and developed by the researcher, to attain a greater understanding of adult learners and to encourage and support their learning processes within informal settings. The objective of the study was to explore how adults could work together as they follow the first 3 steps of the model, and to discover emerging themes that were important to understanding ways to encourage informal learning and collaboration among adults. The study involved a 4-week pilot program conducted in 2007 with a total of 12 people, all members of the researchers' social network. One group met in person (N=7) and the other communicated online (N=5). Follow-up interviews in 2010 with pilot study participants provided their perspectives on the factors that facilitate and impede the learning based upon the 7-step Illumination System model. In addition, a cross-section of specialists in education, positive psychology, innovation development, and creative studies, were interviewed to help gauge the potential effectiveness of this educational model. Action research was used as the process for incorporating elements of formative evaluation and developmental intervention. Findings: At the end of 4 weeks all participants reported that they enjoyed the experience and that they had experienced moments of illumination. Further, the study found that adults may have emotional and structural needs that go deeper than solely being able to access online or in-person participatory learning communities. This feedback and other informal conversations illustrated that passive entertainment, depression, and level of maturity can impede participants' capacity to follow the Illumination System. Overall, specialists were able to see the potential benefit of this model as a promising approach for encouraging adult learning.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Wahl-Thouin, T. (2011). The effects of positive psychology training for group home staff on runaway youths. Walden University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Research has shown that more than 50% of runaway youths who are placed in residential group homes run away again. The theories and practices of positive psychology guided a quantitative, pre-experimental, one-group, pretest-posttest research design for the purpose of comparing baseline runaway rates and aggressive behaviors rates of youths in group homes with post intervention rates after staff had received positive psychology training. The research questions addressed whether the pre-to-post rates would differ. Participants were 27 behavioral health technicians who worked directly with group home clients. Participants attended 8 hours of training in positive psychology techniques (2 hours per week for 4 weeks). Data were collected on runaway rates and aggressive behavior rates from the group homes 2 months prior to and 2 months after the training intervention. Runaway rates decreased 30% and aggressive behavior rates decreased 60%. A Z test to measure proportional prepost differences indicated that both rates decreased significantly. The results of this study may provide opportunities for staff to build positive trusting relationship with group home clients based on principles of positive psychology and may decrease occurrences of running away from group homes, which would have positive implications for social change.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Goldshtrom, Y. (2011). Emotionally expressive language in writing and its relations to graduate students' stress levels and GPA. Walden University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Students' academic performance and health may be related to the coping strategies they employ while negotiating the demands of college life, an association anticipated by Pennebaker's inhibition-confrontation theory. Yet this association has only been examined among traditional college students,

typically undergraduates. In this cross-sectional study, the relationships between the amount of emotions expressed in a single written essay, stress level, and GPA were examined among a sample of online graduate students (N = 116). Also examined was whether social and academic integrations, as measured by the Institutional Integration Scales (IIS), moderated the relationship between emotional expression and GPA. Based on analyses from the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count program, results showed an unexpected positive correlation between amount of negative emotional words disclosed in writing and GPA. Program level and Academic and Intellectual Development; a subscale of IIS, also correlated with GPA. None of the moderation analyses were significant. The findings showed that the students who earned the highest GPA were also those who wrote the most about negative feelings about their past traumatic event. These findings are not compatible with Pennebaker's inhibition-confrontation theory or with positive psychology theories. Future studies may determine whether these conflicting findings are the results of the methodology used in the present study, or whether the theories on which the study was based need further revision. The study contributes to the literature on student success and expands it by focusing on the growing population of online graduate students; it may also aid faculty and administrators to better understand factors associated with student academic success.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Savage, J. (2011). Increasing adolescents' subjective well-being: Effects of a positive psychology intervention in comparison to the effects of therapeutic alliance, youth factors, and expectancy for change. University of South Florida. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study investigated the variance in subjective well-being (SWB) of early adolescents (n = 54) exposed to a positive psychology intervention aimed at increasing positive affect and life satisfaction as well as decreasing negative affect through intentional activities (e.g., gratitude journals, acts of kindness, use of character strengths, optimistic thinking). Understanding how to increase SWB among youth is important because of its associations with positive indicators of psychological and academic functioning. However, prior research is limited regarding interventions targeting SWB in youth and excludes the relation of common factors of therapeutic change. Based on the literature regarding therapeutic change, youth factors (i.e., parent support, social self-efficacy), therapeutic alliance, and participant expectancy for change were investigated to determine possible relation beyond the effects of intervention. Results of simultaneous multiple regression analyses indicate that specific common factors (i.e., expectancy, child-rated alliance, social self-efficacy), but not the SWB intervention, significantly relate to positive affect; further, data trends indicate the probable relation of positive psychology intervention to life satisfaction. Other data trends and indications for future research are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Goldblatt, I. (2011). How positive psychology may enhance mothers' adjustment to chronically ill children: A support and prevention program. Alliant International University, San Francisco Bay. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Families of chronically ill children experience great emotional distress, and endure significant lifestyle changes related to caring for an ill child. Because mothers in particular tend to assume the primary caretaking responsibilities for their ill child, they experience significantly higher levels of anxiety and depression, increases in isolation, and higher levels of parenting stress in comparison to other family members. The few interventions available to mothers thus far provide only modest and anecdotal improvements to their mental health. In fact, no current treatment has proven effective in relieving

maternal depression. The concepts of positive psychology may greatly benefit mothers who are coping with their chronically ill children, as they aim to strengthen inner traits and emotions in order to build robust coping responses and resiliency. This dissertation created a support and prevention manual using the concepts of positive psychology. This manual is written for a therapist to lead an 8-week treatment program that targets 8 to 10 mothers with chronically ill children between the ages of 2 and 5 years old at the Ronald McDonald House of San Francisco (RMHSF). This program incorporates various empirically validated techniques from other support and prevention programs, and instructs the therapist to teach the concepts of positive psychology by offering support, psychoeducation, and positive psychology interventions that target and improve a mother's current emotional state and outlook on life, help her learn to identify and utilize her personal strengths, and enhance her sense of coherence, namely her comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness. The manual also instructs the therapist to educate mothers on how to structure their ill child's life experiences in ways that foster a strong sense of coherence in their child. This manual was reviewed by Ms. Becky Higbee-Sumner, a child life specialist at the UCSF Medical Center, and subsequently revised based on her feedback.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Goorin, L. (2011). That's not what your friends say: Does self-reported posttraumatic growth translate into friend ratings of improvement? Columbia University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Posttraumatic growth (PTG) is a prolific construct under study within both trauma and positive psychology literature alike. Many of these studies rely predominantly on cross-sectional, retrospective self-report data. Recent studies have attempted to subject PTG to more rigorous scientific standards of measurement. In this study, we examined posttraumatic growth measured longitudinally among survivors of the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attack, in order to explore whether participants' reports of posttraumatic growth were associated with, supported or contradicted by friend ratings of improvement. In this context, participant-reported posttraumatic growth was consistently linked with friend ratings of deteriorating functioning, providing evidence that posttraumatic growth is undermined by friend ratings. These findings suggest that self-reported PTG may inadequately predict functioning as rated by alternative, more objective measures, and that PTG may reflect negative psychological adjustment.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Lowry, R. (2011). A survey of youth yoga curriculums. Temple University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Introduction: Yoga is increasingly recommended for the K-12 population as a health intervention, a Physical Education activity, and for fun. What constitutes Yoga however, what is taught, and how it is taught, is variable. The purpose of this study was to survey Youth Yoga curriculums to identify content, teaching strategies, and assessments; dimensions of wellness addressed; whether national Health and Physical Education (HPE) standards were met; strategies to manage implementation fidelity; and shared constructs between Yoga and educational psychology. Methods: A descriptive qualitative design included a preliminary survey (n = 206) and interview (n = 1), questionnaires for curriculum developers (n = 9) and teachers (n = 5), interviews of developers and teachers (n = 3), lesson observations (n = 3), and a review of curriculum manuals. Results: Yoga content was adapted from elements associated with the Yoga Sutras but mostly from modern texts, interpretations, and personal experiences. Curriculums were not consistently mapped, nor elements defined. Non-Yoga content included games, music, and storytelling, which were used to teach Yoga postures and improve concentration, balance, and meta-cognitive skills. Yoga games were non-competitive and similar to PE games. Teaching strategies included guided inquiry

and dialoguing. Assessments were underutilized and misunderstood. Lessons were created to engage students across multiple dimensions of wellness; cultivate self awareness, attention, and concentration; and teach relaxation skills. Spiritual wellness was addressed using relaxation, self-awareness, partner work, and examining emotional states. Developers adapted curriculums to meet HPE standards when needed. Participants considered Yoga appropriate across all developmental stages and could be adapted to meet specific needs. Developers tended not to manage fidelity; strict control was perceived as contrary to Yoga philosophy. Curriculum manuals were resources, not scripts. Continuing education included workshops, videos, and online forums. Emerging themes included attention, awareness, meta-cognition, and self-regulation as learning objectives; dialoguing as a teaching strategy; and the influence of mindfulness and positive psychology on curriculum design. Conclusions: Emerging themes suggest additional areas of research. Curriculums need codification, defining, and mapping of elements including the alignment of teaching strategies with assessments. The benefits of Yoga, beyond the physical postures, need further study.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Peila-Shuster, J. (2011). Retirement self-efficacy: The effects of a pre-retirement strengths-based intervention on retirement self-efficacy and an exploration of relationships between positive affect and retirement self-efficacy. Colorado State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

A quasi-experimental waitlist comparison group design investigated if a strengths-based retirement workshop, based in positive psychology, helped to develop retirement self-efficacy. Retirement self-efficacy, as defined by this study, is one's belief, or confidence, in her/his ability to successfully negotiate the retirement transition to find purposeful and affirmative life engagement upon entering this new life chapter. The study also explored relationships between positive and negative affect and retirement self-efficacy. The convenience sample of adult volunteers ($n = 66$) were primarily white and highly educated, with a blend of males ($n = 29$) and females ($n = 37$). The sample was divided into a control/waitlist treatment group ($n = 34$ and 29 , respectively) and an initial treatment group ($n = 32$). Results indicated that those participating in a strengths-based workshop made greater gains in retirement self-efficacy, with those in the waitlist treatment group making greater gains ($p = .002$, $d = .65$) than those in the initial treatment group ($p = .068$, $d = .22$). Overall, approximately 59% of participants made gains in retirement self-efficacy, and about 31% had decreases. It was also found that negative affect was more strongly correlated to pre-workshop retirement self-efficacy ($r = -.50$) than was positive affect ($r = .26$). Furthermore, while not reaching statistical significance, results indicated that participants with high negative affect made greater gains following the workshop ($d = .36$) than did those with low negative affect. Implications from these findings suggest that while strengths-based approaches hold promise in helping individuals develop greater retirement self-efficacy, it is a process that must also integrate one's readiness for change. Thus, a series of workshops or continued career counseling may benefit individuals approaching or in retirement. Additionally, it is important to consider that those with higher negative affect appear to have less retirement self-efficacy, but may make greater gains in developing it upon receiving a strengths-based intervention. Recommendations from this study point to the importance of defining and designing one's next life chapter rather than adhering to the notion that retirement is a pre-defined endpoint.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Moehle, M. (2011). A mixed methods study exploring strengths-based mentoring in clinical practice and student teacher development. The University of Nebraska - Lincoln. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

As teacher education programs further emphasize clinical experiences, the role of university student teaching supervisor becomes increasingly important, as does research on supervision practices. Practitioners and researchers in the fields of positive psychology, management, and teacher education have argued that mentors who employ characteristics of strengths-based practices may best foster mentee development. This mixed methods study explored university supervisors' mentoring practices from a strengths-based perspective to determine if the mentoring approach used had any association with changes in student teachers' resilience, academic optimism, teacher sense of efficacy, pupil-control ideology, and teacher locus of control. An approach based on the data transformation variant of a convergent mixed method design was used. Participants included 42 student teachers in elementary, middle grades, secondary, and P-12 undergraduate teacher education programs and their university supervisors, all from one university in Appalachia. Based on quantitative analysis of survey responses from student teachers in this population, academic optimism increased and resilience and teacher locus of control decreased. Qualitative analysis resulted in a theoretical model describing how approaches to supervision emerged among university supervisors and how supervision practices varied in terms of strengths-based characteristics. Data transformation of the qualitative data resulted in a single categorical quantitative variable indicating if supervisors' used a strengths-focused, neutral, or deficit-focused approach. Based on trends in the mixed data, a strengths-focused approach to supervision may have a positive association with changes in student teachers' academic optimism, pupil control ideology, and teacher sense of efficacy. A deficit-focused approach may be associated with an increase in internal teacher locus of control. Data is included to show correlations among and between pretest and posttest scores for resilience, academic optimism, teacher sense of efficacy, pupil-control ideology, and teacher locus of control. A discussion of the findings suggests that the approach used by a university supervisor, a student teacher's previous employment experiences with children, the student teacher's gender, and the local culture had an association with differences in student teachers' development. Suggested implications of the findings also include the need for more research on student teacher supervision and the need for forums to discuss student teacher supervision practices.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative, quantitative.

Andrews, T. (2011). Renewal for psychotherapists: A grounded theory exploration of "renewal" during sessions. California Institute of Integral Studies. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The directive to focus the research in a positive direction (renewal) is taken from the field of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) and is meant to further develop additional concepts related to human flourishing (Becker & Marecek, 2008). Informed by studies of therapists whom the current researcher hypothesized to be experiencing "renewal" (Dlugos & Friedlander, 2001; Miller, 2007; Skovholt & Jennings 2004), the researcher recruited and interviewed 10 licensed psychologists using a semi-structured interview format. Gathering the data and analyzing it using grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), the researcher used the information given by the participants to create (i.e., "ground") the theory of renewal based on their own experiences. The researcher explored two central research questions: (a) Is there a discernible theory of renewal that explains the experiences of the selected psychologists? and (b) What are the central guideposts in the development of a state of renewal? Although the researcher was unable to determine these central guideposts, he/she did successfully develop a theory of renewal. Through this study, the researcher introduces an original definition of

"renewal" that was created using interview material collected from counseling psychotherapists. This definition includes major elements of renewal that are highly related to the therapist's experiences and minor elements that are less related. The major elements of renewal include therapists feeling a sense of increased emotional and mental energy, vigor, dedication, attention, absorption, adaptiveness/openness, and clarity of direction in the moment. Furthermore, renewal allows therapists to match their challenge with their capacity, exclude unnecessary information, and feel energized and not drained by their work. Other aspects of renewal include the therapist's capacity to have greater interpersonal connections with clients in session and having a distorted sense of time. Finally, renewal was found to be connected to a sense of greater purpose or transcendence of the work, significant pre- and post-license events, and therapists' participation in intentional learning. Less highly related, or minor elements of renewal include aspects of mindfulness, creativity, meaning, and spirituality. Taken together, the findings allowed renewal to be developed successfully as a theory.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

2010

n = 37

Aylyn, A. (2010). Resurrection ferns: Resiliency, art, and meaning constructs among survivors of trauma or difficult life events. University of Alberta (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The phenomenon of resilient recovery from traumatic events has been postulated from a multitude of several different theoretical orientations. The current thesis study contributes to what Glen Richardson (2002) described as the linkage between the theoretical traditions of positive psychology and the 3rd wave of resiliency research. More specifically, this study supports the linkage between resiliency and the spiritual/interpersonal experience of human beings, through the multi-modalities of both narrative and art. One of the most intriguing aspect of this thesis study is that 63 per cent of the 27 respondents (who had experienced either traumatic or difficult life events), attributed their resiliency to their belief systems of immortality. Furthermore, such issues of immortality appeared to be connected in some way with what participants in this study described as "spirituality." Of the remaining 10 participants, three believed that the human spirit returned to God and did not recycle and the remaining 7 participants attributed their resiliency to other aspects such as personal strength, closeness to nature, social action, creativity, camaraderie with others and so on. Finally, in the narrative tradition, this author kept personal thesis journal notes to herself as she encountered the various participants in this study. A selection of such thesis notes are interspersed in between participants' self-defined resilient stories. Such interwoven narratives form what narrative researcher Laurel Richardson (1997) discussed as the "collective story," in which the voices of those who have been disenfranchised can be both heard and honoured.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Purdum, M. (2010). The effects of positive emotion, negative emotion, flourishing, and languishing on cardiovascular risk. University of North Texas. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Positive psychology has led a movement that concentrates on positive characteristics. The current study examined the relationship between positive emotions, negative emotions, flourishing, languishing, and cardiovascular functioning. The study uses guided imagery to help participants recall a negative emotional event and positive emotional event in a counterbalanced order. The reverse order allowed us to examine

the differential contributions of stress buffering versus facilitated recovery effects to higher levels of heart rate variability (HRV). The study also examined the relationship between mental health categories and known cardiovascular disease risk. Univariate analysis of variance revealed that positive emotions can serve as a stress buffer and dampen cardiovascular responses to a negative event. Also, analysis revealed a trend for the prediction that positive emotions can facilitate cardiovascular recovery following a negative event. Exploratory analysis did not reveal differences between a facilitated recovery group and a buffering group for cardiovascular measures. Future studies should include tighter control to help compare the differential influences of stress facilitation and stress buffering on cardiovascular functioning. The results from the study indicate that it is still too early to tell whether mental health buffers those individuals from developing CVD, and to answer whether languishing increases the risk of CVD. Longitudinal studies of young individuals without a prior history of any risk of CVD and who are flourishing or languishing might help provide answers to these questions.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Morris, D. (2010). Sources of teaching self-efficacy: A scale validation. Emory University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this study was to validate a scale designed to assess the sources of K-12 teachers' (N = 144) perceptions of efficacy. Four related objectives guided this investigation. First, I explored the psychometric properties of a scale crafted to measure the sources of teaching self-efficacy. Second, I sought to identify the independent contribution of each of the hypothesized sources to self-efficacy. Third, I assessed mean differences in the sources of teaching self-efficacy as a function of teachers' experience and level of education. Fourth, I examined the relationships among teaching self-efficacy, its sources, and teachers' satisfaction, stress, collective efficacy, optimism, authenticity, and invitations. Through analysis of descriptive statistics and factor analysis, I reduced the initial pool of 61 items to an 18-item scale. The retained scale included four subscales corresponding to the four sources hypothesized by Bandura. Social persuasions and physiological and affective states predicted teachers' overall self-efficacy. Teachers who had more than five years of experience reported more positive and less negative mastery experiences and social persuasions than did those with five or less years of experience. The hypothesized sources did not differ as a function of teachers' level of education. Teaching self-efficacy was weakly and often nonsignificantly related to positive psychology constructs (i.e., teachers' authenticity, optimism, and invitations). The four hypothesized sources tended to be moderately associated with these variables. This study represents an encouraging though preliminary step in the measurement of the sources of teachers' self-efficacy.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Rollock, M. (2010). Couples' joint activity and perceived relationship quality: Exploring the comparative effects of joint community service vs. play. University of Massachusetts Boston. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The interpersonal functioning of couples in committed relationships has predominantly been examined using a medical model perspective of identifying and ameliorating problems in distressed couples, and doing so in an individualistic manner without considering their socio-cultural contexts. Researchers advocating multicultural approaches in the field of positive psychology promote the development of strength-based interventions with non-distressed couples that attend to collectivistic aspects of relationship functioning (Hawkins, Fowers, Carroll, & Yang, 2007). Engagement in value-driven, prosocial behavior has been found to increase one's sense of purpose and mental health functioning, though it is

unclear how it influences relationship functioning in couples who volunteer together, an example of such behavior. Joint engagement in play activities has also been found to enhance relationship quality. Research comparing these paths for individuals has consistently demonstrated that the former is a more robust predictor of positive psychosocial outcomes than the latter. The present study prospectively compared the effects of joint volunteering for community service and joint play on the perceived relationship quality of a community sample of non-distressed couples. Drawing upon Behavioral Self-Regulation theory, the Thriving with Social Purpose framework and Marital Systems theory, a measure was created to assess whether couples' enhanced shared social purpose mediated the proposed association between joint volunteering and perceived relationship quality. Couples' Relationship Quality was significantly enhanced by engaging in joint community service and play activities even after accounting for the significant effects of behavioral and socio-demographic characteristics. Differences were not found between these two conditions in the effects on relationship quality. Couples' Shared Social Purpose was significantly positively correlated with perceived relationship quality at pretest. Fifty-one couples were randomly assigned to each condition. Significant changes in Shared Social Purpose within and between conditions were not observed, though participants reported a significant increase in their shared vision for their relationship. Also, participants' perceived adequacy of social support from partners was not associated with outcomes. This study advances the research comparing eudemonic and hedonic paths to well-being to the realm of interpersonal functioning and does so in a culturally thoughtful and strength-based manner. Theoretical implications, study limitations, and future directions are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative, quantitative.

Griess, S. (2010). Perceived parenting style and its relationship to hopefulness, happiness, and optimism in a college student sample. University of Northern Colorado. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this study was to investigate differences among positive psychology traits of happiness, hopefulness, and optimism, between three perceived parenting styles in 291 undergraduate college students. It was hypothesized that students identifying with the reared authoritative parenting style would endorse higher levels of hopefulness, happiness, and optimism than the permissive and authoritarian parenting styles. Multivariate and discriminant analyses were conducted to test the hypotheses. Data analysis in this study supported that the perceived authoritative parenting style contributed to higher levels of optimism than the authoritarian parenting style. The development of optimism or lack thereof can become a means of clinical intervention both individually and in providing parenting interventions. Based on the studies relating optimism to coping skills, identifying levels of optimism in students can help provide ideas for clinical intervention. The hypothesis that the perceived authoritative parenting style would contribute to the development of higher levels of optimism than the perceived permissive style were inconclusive due to the limitations of using multivariate analyses. The hypotheses suggesting that the perceived authoritative parenting style would also contribute to the development of higher levels of happiness and hopefulness were not supported in this study.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Luci, K. (2010). Resilient programs for resilient survivors: The components and practices of well-established programs for survivors of torture. James Madison University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Current literature on the rehabilitation of torture survivors is largely focused on trauma and its negative sequelae. With the increasing recognition of the value of positive psychology during the past decade, the inclusion of the constructs of resilience and attachment may help to balance the current framework of the

rehabilitation field. This qualitative study investigates evidence of resilience and attachment already existent within rehabilitation programs serving survivors of torture around the world. The Pathways to Resilience (P2R) Survey for Programs for Survivors of Torture was designed to obtain both a detailed description of common practices and components of such programs and to elicit evidence of resilience and attachment behaviors within the programs and between the programs and their partner organizations. The survey was completed by representatives from 6 programs located in 5 different regions of the world. A priori and grounded theory coding techniques were used to analyze responses to the survey's open-ended questions. Evidence emerged to support the hypothesis that rehabilitation programs demonstrate the four general factors of resilience (social support, making meaning, regulating emotions, creative coping) as well as attachment behaviors reflecting the safety and exploration components of the Circle of Security® (within the programs themselves and between programs/organizations). A more intentional adoption of the theoretical constructs of resilience and attachment by the rehabilitation field is proposed.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Osimo, J. (2010). An examination of neuroscience findings in attention, self-regulation, mindfulness, and narrative language. potential links in psychotherapeutic interventions. Pepperdine University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This dissertation focuses on neuroscience research in attention and self-regulation and neuroplastic effects that have been found in mindfulness and narrative language. The review links neuroscience findings in mindfulness techniques and narrative language components and hypothesizes that similar effects in psychology interventions in MBCT, DBT, ACT, and positive psychology are possible. The aim of the analysis is to identify methods that enhance well-being through therapeutic interventions and make recommendations for future research. A discussion regarding MBCT's meditative techniques that use attention and self-regulation is addressed. The MBCT narrative component of naming is reviewed. The discussion concludes that willfully engaging in mindfulness based exercises potentially activates the action-monitoring circuitry of the prefrontal cortex. DBT's use of attentional mindfulness based interventions through observing, and describing are hypothesized to have self-regulatory effects by increasing activation in the prefrontal cortex and decreasing stimulation to the amygdala. DBT's use of a narrative language strategy through reappraisal of emotions into three mind states; emotion mind, reasonable mind, and wise mind is hypothesized to engage the prefrontal cortex, anterior cingulate cortex and the amygdala, major brain structures employed in self-regulation. The ACT intervention of acceptance is used as an illustrative example of how the model employs reconstruction of narratives through a mindfulness process. It is concluded that labeling and reappraisal have a neurophysiological impact through self-regulatory processes and enhanced approach behavior. Five positive psychology interventions reviewed are the gratitude visit, you at your best, three good things, using signature strengths and using signature strengths in a new way to assess potential neural influence. It is hypothesized that three good things and using signature strengths in a new way had the longest lasting effect from sustained attention to positive mental material and may have contributed to self-generating neural strengthening. The discussion proposes that attentional and self-regulatory processes disengaged habitual patterns through attention to positive stimuli and repetition. It is proposed that integration of character strengths and virtues into therapeutic interventions may strengthen self-regulatory processes by switching attention to positive stimuli and increase well-being. Recommendations are made for integrating attention and reappraisal strategies into therapeutic interventions to enhance well-being.

Thesis, empirical, literature review.

Danish, S. (2010). Yoga, attachment and well-being. Adelphi University, The Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Yoga is an ancient practice passed down for the last 5000 years. It has become increasingly popular in the modern western world. The word "Yoga" comes from the Sanskrit word meaning "union." The traditional practice of yoga is a discipline that joins the body, mind, and spirit. It is practiced with the intention of living a balanced life and to join with the universal divine. This eastern way of thinking about well-being has cross-pollinated with western notions of what it means to be happy through time. However, it is finding even greater traction with the advent of positive psychology. Bolstered by studies in attachment, development and neuropsychology the realm of the non-verbal and the physical are beginning to be understood with greater clarity in regard to emotional and interpersonal functioning. In an effort to learn more about positive psychological practices, this study was designed to explore the relationship of yoga as it is practiced in a modern western culture with outcomes of well-being, distress, and spiritual union. Furthermore, it is widely believed that attachment has a significant role in well-being. This study was also designed to validate that finding and to investigate the ways in which yoga relates to attachment and its mechanisms. Measures of well-being were chosen from the MIDUS study, which is the only national study to have measured all facets of subjective well-being. The MIDUS study delineated three empirically distinct dimensions of well-being: emotional, psychological and social. Distress was measured with the Brief Symptom Inventory, which includes measures of depression, anxiety, aggression, and psychoses. Spiritual union was measured with the Hood Mysticism scale, which assesses "an individual's sense of unity with the outside world and/or with "nothingness", which may or may not be religiously interpreted." Finally, the Relationship Scales Questionnaire was used to assess adult attachment in close relationships. In a sample of 246 people who completed an anonymous on-line survey, a significant relationship was found between adult attachment and well-being and adult attachment and distress. Yoga was found to have a significant relationship with mysticism. Although yoga was not found to have a significant relationship with well-being, distress and attachment when assessed in multivariate tests, there was evidence of specific significant relationships within aspects of emotional and social well-being in the univariate tests of between-subject effects. Thus, it appears that secure adult attachment in close relationships and well-being are connected. Yoga, although not found to be related to adult attachment in this study does appear to be fulfilling a positive psychological role impacting spiritual, social and emotional psychological health.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Jenkins, P. (2010). A case study of collective thriving at work. Capella University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

A single case study research design was used to explore the factors that contribute to collective thriving at Eileen Fisher, Inc. The company was selected for this study on the basis of having been named among the 50 best small and medium-sized companies to work for in America for six consecutive years (2004-2009). In-depth, focused interviews of 11 employees at the company's corporate offices in Irvington, N.Y., and New York City were conducted. Additional documents such as the company's website, internal newsletter, and "Great Place to Work" application were included in the data analysis. The outcome of this study points to 6 main factors that contribute to collective thriving: (a) High-Quality Relationships, (b) High Challenge, (c) Inclusiveness, (d) Transparency, (e) Whole Person, and (f) Eileen: The Woman and Company. The results of this study suggest that a strong company culture that supports individual and

collective growth and employees' well-being is at the core of collective thriving. From this core, high-quality relationships among people appear to moderate the relationship between demanding work projects and thriving. This study also points to the importance and value of addressing the "whole person" at work, including offering opportunities for individuals to explore interests and passions, to volunteer, and to nourish the well-being of body, mind, and spirit. This study contributes to the literature in positive psychology, specifically related to positive institutions and the power and impact high-quality relationships can have in the workplace. This study advances the literature on collective thriving and provides support for the possibility that a collectively thriving organization is better prepared to deal with uncertain conditions and challenges facing organizations.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Dagenais-Desmarais, V. (2010). Du bien-etre psychologique au travail: Fondements theoriques, conceptualisation et instrumentation du construit. Universite de Montreal (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Despite growing concern by researchers and practitioners about psychological health at work, the concept of well-being in the workplace is still misunderstood in the scientific community. Indeed, little effort has been made to develop knowledge about psychological well-being at work that is tied to the reality of employees. This thesis aims at developing a conceptualization of psychological well-being at work and a related psychometrically reliable instrumentation. To do so, two studies were carried out. First, an exploratory qualitative study was conducted among 20 French-speaking Canadian workers to identify, using critical incidents they experienced, manifestations of psychological well-being. The manifestations were classified according to a 2-axis model, namely, the reference level at which psychological well-being at work is experienced and the directionality through which it emerges. This model was then compared to existing context-free conceptualizations of psychological well-being; this analysis offered support to the model's convergent and divergent validity. Second, the Index of Psychological Well-Being at Work (IPWBW) was created based on the manifestations identified in the qualitative study, in order to ensure the latter's content validity. An experimental form of the questionnaire was administered to 1,080 Quebec workers. Exploratory factor analyses revealed an internal structure of 25 items and 5 dimensions, representing a second-order construct. The construct validity of the model was established by analyzing the intercorrelation pattern with various context-free measures of psychological well-being and distress. The results support the convergent validity of the instrument and demonstrate its divergent validity. Finally, the questionnaire shows satisfactory internal consistency. By way of conclusion, the results of the two studies are interpreted in the light of current knowledge on psychological well-being; the limits of the studies are outlined; and avenues for future research are proposed.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Giudici, M. (2010). Post traumatic growth, positive assets, and strengths in post hurricane Katrina survivors. Fielding Graduate University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study focuses on the lived experiences of Hurricane Katrina survivors on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Specific research questions include (1) What traits or strengths help some maintain and regain emotional well-being post trauma and (2) What should be the focus of post trauma interventions. Participants include 9 males and 8 females who previously resided and returned to the Mississippi Gulf Coast after Katrina made landfall on August 29, 2005. The interviews occurred 4 years after the storm, thus all participants first completed the Post Traumatic Growth Inventory as a primer to reengage participants with their

cognitive and emotional experiences of that time. They then completed a 7 question, open-ended interview designed to look for strengths and assets of survivors of trauma. A strength and asset approach was used in this investigation because the highest success in living and deepest emotional satisfaction comes from building and using one's signature strengths (Seligman, 2002). The phenomenological method for this study, inspired by the work of Clark Moustakas (1994) and John Creswell (2007), was designed to uncover the essence of the lived experience from the survivor's point of view by making use of rich narrative dialogues (Moustakas, 1994). While there is extensive postulating about the elements that contribute to positive outcomes from trauma experiences (e.g., Bonanno, 2004; Burt & Katz, 1987; Calhoun & Tedeschi, 1990) this is one of the first to document those from the lived experience captured by narrative. Participants were generous and graphic in their stories of struggle to find basic necessities, fear for their safety, concern for loss in their community, and conflict with basic faith beliefs, all during oppressive and relentless heat and dysentery. The participants experienced many similar emotions, such as initial fear, shock, anxiety, and disorientation resulting from physical losses such as homes, material objects, and familiar buildings. However, 4 critical themes emerged that participants believed were responsible for their positive growth in recovery. The emergent themes of (a) family and community, (b) God and spirituality, (c) goal-focused forward thinking, and (d) using the event to become a 'better person' support the postulated theoretical work on positive posttraumatic growth.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative, qualitative.

Bastanfar, R. (2010). An examination of the relationship between psychoanalytic development of the self and attributions and expectation for events: An attempt at bridging positive psychology and kohut's self-psychology. Michigan State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Two studies pertaining to the theory of psychoanalytic self psychology were performed. The first study was an attempt to relate the self psychological developmental constructs of grandiosity and goal-instability with different constructs of optimism in positive psychology. A canonical correlation analysis was performed using a student population (N=200). Significant results were found testing across two canonical functions (Wilk's lambda (λ) = 0.754, $F(8, 390) = 7.337$, $p < .000$) with the first canonical function accounting for 95.6% of variance in the relationship between the two variable sets. The second study was an attempt to replicate the factor structure of an English version of the Self-Object Needs Inventory (Banai, Mikulincer, & Shaver, 2005) with an American student population (N=199). Confirmatory factor analysis was not able to find a close enough fit between study data and the proposed 5-factor model found by Banai et. al., 2005. Findings in both studies are explored with attention to implications and application to the field of counseling psychology.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Larson, L. (2010). The Larson empowerment model: A transpersonal model of change for private practice. The University of the Rockies. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The Larson Empowerment Model is a transpersonal model of psychotherapy based upon an integration of components derived from transpersonal psychology, humanistic psychology, positive psychology, and quantum theory. The basic premise of the Larson Empowerment Model assumes humans are more than their physical being and are connected to everyone and everything in the universe. Additionally, the model proposes humans' core selves are intrinsically good and their basic goal is to achieve happiness, joy, and satisfaction in life. The model assumes people become disempowered by internalizing incorrect beliefs that they are unworthy, isolated and disconnected, and they have lost sight in the possible attainment of

life's ultimate achievement: happiness. The goal of this model is to empower clients through facilitating identification with their spiritual selves, their innate goodness, and their interconnectedness with all that is. Finally, the dissertation includes a manual for use with a detailed therapy approach for other transpersonal therapists in private practice. The model could benefit from future research by applying an assessment measure to validate the efficacy of the model's intervention.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Miller, S. (2010). Fostering organizational wellbeing: A longitudinal examination of physical and attitudinal correlates in worksite health promotion. Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The current investigation was designed as an evaluation of a worksite health promotion program with the goal of examining its effectiveness in terms of physical and attitudinal changes over the course of a 12-month evaluation. Because of the call for counseling psychologists to examine health through an interdisciplinary lens, the study examined variables from a variety of disciplines including health psychology, vocational psychology, occupational health, and positive psychology. Using a pretest-posttest design, employees completed measures of job satisfaction, career optimism, perceived stress, optimism, absenteeism, and Presenteeism (on the job productivity). In addition, health screening information was compared from the onset to the completion of the evaluation to determine if health factors improved at the organizational level over time. Results indicated that employees did not significantly improve in terms of health indicators (e.g., cholesterol levels, weight loss), levels of job satisfaction, career optimism, or perceived stress. In addition, results revealed no significant relationship between initial optimism levels and either health or psychological outcomes. Potential explanations for the lack of significant results is discussed including the economic climate in which the evaluation occurred, as well as cultural and organizational issues that may have contributed to a lack of improvement in wellness.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Dumain, K. (2010). Optimism, hope, problem solving, and runaway behavior in adolescents in the dependency system. Pepperdine University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this study was to explore the psychological constructs of optimism, hope, and problem solving in a specific population of runaway adolescents in the dependency system. Originally, a quantitative study using hierarchical multiple regression analysis was planned but, due to low response, a qualitative study of data collected from 4 adolescents was conducted. Optimism was measured using the Life Orientation Test-Revised and the Children's Dispositional (Trait) Hope Scale. Problem-solving style and abilities were operationalized using the Social Problem Solving Inventory-Revised. Data were obtained from 4 adolescents in the dependency system who had histories of significant runaway behavior. The research questions were (a) How do runaway youth perceive their levels of hope, optimism, and problem-solving approaches? (b) How optimistic are runaway youth? (c) What problem solving styles do they have? and (d) Are there any apparent similarities in the above constructs with these youth? The propositions for the study were that runaway youth would be less likely to be optimistic, less hopeful, and more likely to display dysfunctional problem-solving styles. Results supported both previous research and propositions in the study. These adolescents, all with high numbers of runaway incidents, presented with generally low optimism and low to moderate hope. Three of the 4 adolescents presented with dysfunctional problem-solving styles, including negative problem orientation and impulsivity/carelessness style. Two of the 4 adolescents displayed avoidant problem-solving styles and (surprisingly) 2 displayed

rational problem-solving styles. Optimism and problem solving have been correlated in the literature and the current study supported that correlation. Also as predicted, the adolescents in this study presented with low optimism and low to moderate hope. Given that this population has not been studied within a positive psychology context, the current study elucidates the need for further attention to this specialized population. Historically, the population has been studied from a symptom-focused and pathological perspective; a strengths-based, positive psychology approach would assist in bringing change, hope, and optimism to these marginalized youth.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Smith, P. (2010). Psychosocial learning environments and the mediating effect of personal meaning upon satisfaction with education. University of California, San Diego and California State University, San Marcos. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

A mixed methods study was conducted to investigate the relationships between psychosocial learning environments and student satisfaction with their education as mediated by Agentic Personal Meaning. The interdisciplinary approach of the study integrated the fields of Learning Environment Research (LER), Existential Meaning Research (EMR), and Positive Psychology Research (PPR). A review of the literature within each field is provided. The mixed methods study included a quantitative phase in which a postulated model was tested using structural equation modeling to determine goodness-to-fit with data obtained from secondary and college level students in two progressive private schools in India. Findings indicate that the learning environment variables, Teacher Support, Task Orientation, Cooperation, Student Cohesiveness, Involvement, and Equity were significantly correlated with student Satisfaction with Education and with Agentic Personal Meaning. Findings also provide evidence that existential meaning and life-purpose mediates the relationships between the psychosocial learning environment variables, Teacher Support, Task Orientation, and Cooperation, and the outcome variable, student Satisfaction with Education. A qualitative phase explored through focus group interviews of school leaders and teachers how they foster meaning and purpose in the lives of their students. The data indicated that deep interpersonal relationships between students and teachers, freedom and opportunities for students to explore their interests through a wide variety of co-curricular activities, and an intention among teachers to expressly inspire students to become conscious, all taking place within a strong community context, serves to promote the development of meaning and purpose in the lives of students.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative, quantitative.

Barnes, L. (2010). The effects of organizational cynicism on community colleges: Exploring concepts from positive psychology. The Claremont Graduate University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study tested the negative relationships between organizational cynicism and organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior, and the positive relationship between organizational cynicism and turnover intention within the context of higher education. Going beyond previous research efforts, this study identified how these relationships are diminished through the moderating effects of positive affectivity and orientations to happiness (hedonism, eudemonia, and engagement). Four-hundred and seventy-three employees (473) of a community college district responded to an email solicitation to participate in the study. Respondents were members of one of three classifications of employees: classified staff, certificated faculty or managers (classified or certificated). Employees who held cynical attitudes were less committed to the organization, engaged in fewer behaviors above and beyond their job duties, and were more likely to leave the job, thus confirming predicted relationships. Positive affectivity

was not shown to interact with organizational cynicism such that the relationships between organizational cynicism and organizational commitment, turnover intention, and organizational citizenship behavior were different for employees who were higher in positive affectivity as compared to those lower in positive affectivity. Orientations to pursue happiness did not moderate these relationships either; their relational patterns were no different for employees who pursued full-lives (i.e. simultaneously pursuing high levels of hedonism, eudemonia, and engagement) as compared to those who pursued empty-lives (i.e. simultaneously pursuing low levels of each). As main effects, those high in positive affectivity were actually found to be more committed to the college district and more engaged in citizenship behavior. This was also true of employees who found happiness through eudemonic and engaging pursuits rather than hedonistic pursuits. Key findings of this study and their implications for the field are highlighted. Challenges, strengths, and suggestions for future research on organizational cynicism are offered with concepts from positive psychology in mind. The bold suggestion is made to invite, not dismiss, the cynic to engage in the discourse; thus offering voice to areas of inadequacy within the organization and its culture which may in fact need due attention and solutions applied that are derived from a positive rather than a negative perspective.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Gudan, E. (2010). Gratitude-based interventions for treating ruminative depression. The Institute for the Psychological Sciences. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This thesis proposes gratitude-based interventions to ameliorate depression characterized by rumination. Gratitude focuses the individual's attention on benefits received from another in an upward spiral, in contrast to the negative spiral characteristic of depression. Both state and trait gratitude are correlated with multiple positive outcomes. This dissertation develops and compiles methods for depressed persons to access the positive benefits of gratitude through an incremental sequence of gratitude-based interventions based upon the approach of positive psychology, within the framework of cognitive behavioral therapy. Although the psychoeducational and behavioral interventions proposed have not yet been empirically tested, the author reviews literature suggesting their effectiveness.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Denovan, A. (2010). Investigating student stress from a positive psychology perspective. Sheffield Hallam University (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

This project aimed to understand why some undergraduates cope better than others with stress. It adopted a positive psychology approach. Study 1 assessed the contribution of psychological strengths and personality to stress levels, academic performance (assessed by Grade Point Average), and subjective well-being (SWB) using a sample of 306 undergraduates. Study 2 examined adjustment to university five months into the academic year, comparing this with the baseline data from Study 1 (N=192). Hierarchical multiple regressions showed that across both studies strengths of optimism, self-efficacy, and positive affectivity were predictive of greater SWB. Stressor exposure had a negative relationship with strengths and SWB in both studies, as did emotion and avoidance coping. At time 1, emotional stability was positively associated with SWB, and extraversion was positively associated with SWB at time 2. In a follow up qualitative study of 11 undergraduates using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, the transition, academic assessments, finances, employment, and housemate difficulty emerged as significant sources of stress. Strategies of social support, preparation, planning, positive reappraisal, and acceptance helped students cope with stress. Psychological strengths

of self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and self-control facilitated the adjustment and ability to cope. A positive psychology intervention was conducted, in which the Three Good Things exercise was applied to enhance SWB and reduce perceived stress (PS). The experimental and control group consisted of 63 and 49 first year undergraduates respectively. Mixed MANOVAs found no main effect of the intervention; however SWB and PS levels significantly changed over time. Individual differences in strengths of optimism, self-efficacy, and positive affectivity, and differences in application of coping strategies and strength congruent behaviour are factors which help explain why some undergraduates cope better than others with stress.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Widger, C. (2010). Utilizing virtue and attachment theory in predicting marital quality. Rosemead School of Psychology, Biola University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This research is focused on understanding the interplay of dispositional and behavioral variables in married individuals and follows the current trend in psychological literature by emphasizing the power of internal dispositions. The focus of marital research is shifting away from behavioral patterns associated with quality of life, such as, communication skills, and moving toward character traits or dispositions, such as virtues, because many researchers have noted that individuals may perform behaviors associated with increased marital well-being, but if the individuals attempting to practice the behaviors possess character traits or dispositions inclined to avoidance, anxiety, or emotional instability, then it is likely that the individuals will not experience increased marital satisfaction. This study utilizes both virtue ethics literature and positive psychology research to seek a more thorough understanding of the dynamics of virtue within marriage. I suggest that virtues are complex dispositional tendencies that incline a person to live well and flourish in community. In addition, practicing virtuous behaviors can build psychological resiliency and trigger an upward spiral toward improved personal and relational wellbeing. Promoting virtue may be one way to provide a motivational framework that spurs on this upward spiral.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Mitas, O. (2010). Positive emotions in mature adults' leisure travel experiences. The Pennsylvania State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Research in positive psychology has shown that positive emotions initiate beneficial processes, culminating in quality of life. Tourism research has suggested that leisure travel is a substantial source of positive emotions. These two areas of research have not connected, however, leaving the processes that foster and follow from positive emotions in the leisure travel context relatively unknown. The purpose of this dissertation is to explain positive emotions associated with leisure travel in terms of their development over time and in terms of the processes that link social contexts to positive emotions. The population studied is mature adults (individuals over the age of 45). Mature adults are an important and lucrative travel market, as well as a population segment that enjoys elevated levels of positive emotions. This dissertation uses a mixed-method approach that combines psychographic and ethnographic perspectives to study the positive emotions of mature adults in two leisure travel experiences. The dissertation is formatted as two article manuscripts. The first manuscript focuses on the processes linking mature adult leisure travelers' social contexts to positive emotions. Socioemotional selectivity theory is the conceptual foundation. This manuscript takes an interpretive ethnographic method approach, using fieldnotes from participant observation of the two experiences studied as well as conversations with key informants. Findings include four processes: amusement from humor, warmth from friendship, interest in activities, and sublime reactions to loss. These findings reveal the importance of social contexts to positive emotions

and suggest that norms among communities of leisure travelers and meaningful, personally relevant activities and interpretations foster emotionally positive leisure travel experiences. The second manuscript focuses on the day-to-day development of positive emotions before, during, and after leisure travel. This manuscript uses a psychometric method perspective, modeling overall positive emotions as well as love, joy, interest, and contentment with mixed-effects linear equations based on the peak model of positive emotion in leisure travel. The peak model suggests that positive emotions increase before leisure travel, remain elevated during, and decline after. Findings were consistent with the peak model for positive emotions overall, joy, and interest. As a whole, the findings of this dissertation carry several theoretical and practical implications. The findings confirm that leisure travel is emotionally positive and contribute to existing knowledge the specific importance of joy, interest, contentment, awe, and amusement. Also, the findings specific to the processes of friendship form a contrast to socioemotional selectivity theory, showing that mature adults engage new friendships as well as established ones. The findings also suggest that in future intervention studies positive psychologists should pursue leisure travel as a context where individuals' positive emotions may be increased. Finally, the findings suggest that fostering positive emotions before and after leisure travel may further improve the value of leisure travel experiences.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative, quantitative.

Scheu, K. (2010). An exploratory study of psychological strengths among members of the gothic subculture. University of La Verne. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study was designed to explore and challenge the negative stereotypes associated with the Gothic subculture. Goths have typically been portrayed as depressed, suicidal, and violent. The Positive Psychology perspective was used as a framework for exploring levels of subjective well-being reported by the group as compared to a normal university sample. The Gothic sample consisted of 104 adult participants, representative of the Gothic subculture in terms of demographics. The sample was equally representative of both genders, largely Caucasian, middle-class, college educated, non-traditionally religious, and contained a significant proportion of alternative sexualities. The university student sample of 108 adults was found to be highly representative of the normal population from which it was drawn. Groups were compared on measures of subjective happiness, satisfaction with life, positive affect, negative affect, meaning in life, and social desirability. The Gothic sample was found to rate themselves lower on levels of self-evaluated level of happiness and appeared less impacted by social desirability pressures. Goths did not differ from the comparison group with regards to: life satisfaction, the experience of positive or negative affect, and meaning in life. The Gothic subculture was conceptualized and presented in terms of a distinct culture with a unique set of values and beliefs. It is proposed that the multicultural framework of psychological practice should encompass subcultural elements into consideration as relevant client variables. By increasing understanding of a misrepresented group, it is hoped the resultant prejudice and discrimination against the group may be lessened.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Rohde, D. (2010). Occupational and economic acculturative stress, job-related outcomes, and personal resources among low-wage earning latinos. Alliant International University, San Diego. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Demographic shifts in the United States are changing the face of the American workforce. While Latinos now account for 35.9% of the California population, their income lags behind that of other ethnic groups. A number of occupational and economic acculturative stressors have been identified for Latinos living in the

Southwest that have been shown to be related to various psychopathologies. An interesting paradox has emerged, showing that Latino immigrants present approximately half the prevalence rate of psychopathologies as do native-born Latinos. Reasons for the nativity paradox are unclear. There currently is a paucity of research examining Latinos in the workforce and the role of stress on occupational outcomes. This research addressed this dearth in the literature, and brought an examination of the paradoxical findings of previous research with Latino groups to a work related context. This research examined the relationships of occupational and economic acculturative stress with burnout, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions in 114 immigrant and 14 native-born Latinos working in low-wage positions for a Southern California restaurant chain. Recent research supports a positive psychological approach to understanding stress and coping. A proactive coping style is part of this trend, and has been shown to have a negative effect on occupational burnout. Optimism and social support are also a part of a positive psychology approach and have been shown to buffer against the deleterious effects of stress-related burnout. Path analyses found burnout exerted significant indirect effects in the relationships between occupational and economic acculturative stress, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. Proactive coping and social support produced significant main effects on burnout, but failed to moderate the relationship between stress and burnout. Low sample size for the native-born Latino group reduced statistical power for between-group comparisons. Immigrants reported experiencing significantly less effective social support than did the native-born group. Results suggest that increased levels of occupational and economic acculturative stress may influence burnout, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions in Latino workers. Individuals with greater personal resources were more resilient to burnout.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Hilber, T. (2010). A qualitative study of midlife in women born within 1955--1964: The trailing edge group of the baby boomer cohort. Alliant International University, San Diego. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Female baby boomers, the trailing edge group born within the years of 1955 and 1964 are currently experiencing middle age. Middle age has typically been perceived by society and professionals as a negative developmental phase. Using a feminist and positive psychology framework, a qualitative semi-structured interview guide queried and investigated nine trailing edge baby boomer women's midlife experiences including their occupational, educational, physical and emotional health, and family and relational changes and experiences. The study resulted in 20 major themes and five minor themes regarding the participants' perceptions and experiences, including themes within leaving young adulthood, changes in health, optimism, personal integration, and the current view of midlife. The trailing edge baby boomer women, between the ages of 45 and 54, endorsed an overall positive outlook on middle age, despite experiencing menopause and declining health, as well as minor difficulties with technology and employment changes. Declining health is consistent with research on middle age developments, yet a midlife crisis was not endorsed as a perception or experience of middle age. This finding is inconsistent with Levinson's theory that middle age is a disorganized and negative period of life (Levinson, 1978; Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee, 1976). These results demonstrated optimistic attitudes on opportunities and life in general, which is consistent with feminist and positive psychology theories regarding relationships and life satisfaction. Concepts such as multiple marriages and relational changes appear to be consistent with this optimism and personal growth through acceptance and positivity. Important relationships may lead to more positive perceptions and experiences in life, thereby increasing satisfaction and optimism. This study also illustrated midlife as a time of personal integration with growth and self-awareness that can produce even more positivity and encouraging outlooks on life. Trailing edge

baby boomers have been influenced by social and cultural revolutions, such as the women's rights movement. The impact of these societal changes may have affected their values and assumptions about life. Their socialization experiences and exposure to significant shifts in society for women may be attributed to their acceptance to changes, such as health, employment, and multiple marriages and therefore imparting optimistic views of midlife. For these trailing edge baby boomer women midlife is a time or attaining personal integration in all facets of their life (Stewart & Healy, 1989).

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

McMahon, C. (2010). A phenomenological study of stress and coping in the fire service. Our Lady of the Lake University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Most of the information currently available about stress and coping in the fire service resulted from quantitative data, gathered after major, large-scale incidents. This study examined issues of daily incident stress and coping for five experienced firefighters from a mid-sized North Texas community. It also examined their coping styles and techniques against the principles of positive psychology, and sought to add to an understanding of firefighter culture. Findings were that chronic, daily exposure to firefighting tasks and traumatic events was as stressful as exposure at major incidents. Despite this, these men generally cope well. Coping was often relationship based, and positive psychology principles played a role in building resilience and managing distress. When coping failed, the firefighters rarely used employee assistance programs, or EAPs. They recommended that mental health professionals learn about firefighter culture and stressors in order to work effectively with this population. Additional ways in which psychologists can be of service to this high risk group are also discussed.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Thomas, R. (2010). The phenomenology of obsessive compulsive disorder from the perspective of the adult support group attendee. Antioch University Seattle. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This qualitative phenomenological dissertation utilizes the empirical descriptive phenomenological method, a modified Husserlian (1931) approach developed by A. P. Giorgi (1975, 1985, 1997) in order to lend voice to a vulnerable population of eight (four men and four women) adult Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) sufferers while also gleaning a greater understanding of their in vivo (or lived) experience. Though extensive quantitative research into the disorder exists, this study utilizes the words of the participants and searches for emergent themes amongst their collective experience. This study addresses the treatment gap of this crippling disorder, increases community awareness, and allows for emergence of positive psychology themes. Results include situated descriptions of each participant, the emergence of six significant themes: Phenomenology of Symptoms, Experience with Treatment, Coping and Resiliency, Interpersonal Relationships, Co-morbidity, and Support Group Attendance, and a collective structural statement of their overall experience. Though severity of symptomatology varied amongst the participants, an overwhelming and pervasive sense of doubt, mistrust, and lack of control over one's own thoughts, feelings, and/or behaviors permeated the data. In addition, participants described feelings of personal shame and stigma from living with their disorder. Furthermore, all displayed coping mechanisms skillfully adapted to their particular personalities and symptomatology. Unexpectedly, all participants included in this study were involved in a support group at the time of their interview, leading to rich and detailed description of their experiences at both personal and collective levels. Support group participation clearly benefited all participants in providing a safe and accepting environment in which to share their experiences, learn the experiences of others, and gain perspective on their disorder. Furthermore, support

group helped them to form community, learn about current 'best treatment' standards, and receive psycho-education and short-term exposure-response prevention interventions from mental health professionals directly tailored to their symptomatology.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Mills, M. (2010). Rethinking the hedonic treadmill within the context of broaden and build theory: Developing resources through positive employees. Kansas State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Entrenched within the sphere of positive psychology, the present series of studies takes a progressive approach to understanding and furthering the practical application of constructs subsumed within the subfield of positive organizational behavior (POB). The progression begins with Study 1, which analyzes the factorial structure and psychometric footholds of the primary measurement instrument for Psychological Capital (PsyCap), one of the newer positive psychological constructs. This study suggested that both the measurement of this construct in addition to its factor structure may need to be reevaluated in order to best conceptualize the multifactorial nature of this variable. In turn, Study 2 involves resilience, one of the four aspects of PsyCap, and suggests that it may play an important role in molding employees' work experiences. Specifically, Study 2 explores the relations between workload and eudaimonic and hedonic well-being over a two-week period, finding that workload is negatively related to eudaimonic well-being, but, interestingly, positively related to hedonic well-being. However, hypotheses suggesting that resilience and role salience may independently moderate workload's relations with eudaimonic and hedonic well-being were not supported. Finally, recognizing the potential value of these positive psychological constructs (resilience and well-being in particular) for employers and employees alike, Study 3 aimed to develop interventions capable of increasing individuals' positive personal resources, whereby they may enhance their ability to endure work challenges and even thrive in the face of such challenges. Findings indicated that the intervention targeting resilience did not result in significant differences between a control group and the intervention group. The intervention targeting well-being resulted in no differences in hedonic well-being, but did evidence differences on the personal growth aspect of eudaimonic well-being. Overall, these three studies taken together speak to the applicability of positive organizational behavior constructs in the workplace, and how such constructs might be enhanced in employees.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Martin, O. (2010). The development of emotional closeness between siblings: A qualitative and positive psychology study. Alliant International University, San Diego. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study explored the development of emotional closeness between siblings from the theoretical perspectives of positive psychology and family systems. Emotionally close adult sibling pairs from intact families were interviewed about their sibling relationships, family experiences, and their perceptions of contributing factors to the development of their emotional closeness from childhood through adolescence and into various stages of adulthood. Method: Using qualitative research methods, 12 individuals (i.e., six sibling pairs) responded to semi-structured interviews exploring the characteristics of emotionally close sibling relationships in adulthood, as well as the family contexts of such relationships including, parental and multigenerational influences on the development of emotional closeness between siblings. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed using the Constant Comparative Method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), resulting in 10 major themes and 3 overarching analytical categories, including several new findings. Multigenerational genograms were used for additional assessment of participants' family systems. Participants varied in age (i.e., age 23 to 63), level of education (i.e., some high school to

college graduate), income (i.e., less than 20K to more than 40K), race (i.e., Native American and Caucasian American), gender pairing (i.e., sis-sis, bro-bro, and bro-sis), and age-spacing (i.e., narrow and wide). Results: Emotionally close adult sibling pairs valued and utilized unconditional love in their sibling relationship, resolved sibling conflicts quickly, and experienced increased emotional closeness in adulthood. Parents of emotionally close siblings designated one parent as a full-time home-maker/stay-at-home parent, intervened in childhood sibling conflicts by teaching about unconditional love and the value of siblings as potential life-long sources of support for each other, and treated siblings fairly.

Multigenerational family patterns included close sibling and other family relationships, sibling and family supportiveness, shared spiritual beliefs and shared spiritual beliefs. Family time was also highly valued across generations. Clinical implications, including multigenerational and multicultural implications are discussed as well as limitations of the study and suggestions for future research. A clinical guide for enhancing sibling relationships is also provided for clinicians, siblings, parents, and family members.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

McCabe, B. (2010). Character strengths and positive institutions: Effects on psychological wellness. University of Cincinnati. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The current study explored relationships among religiosity, forgiveness, perceived institutional support, and psychological wellness, using positive psychology and the ecological counseling approach as the theoretical framework. There were two hypotheses tested in the current study. The first hypothesis was that there would be differences between a public and religious-affiliated school on measures of character strength, perception of institution, and psychological wellness. The second hypothesis was that religiosity and forgiveness influenced psychological wellness with perceived institutional support as a mediating variable. The Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (McCullough, Rachal, Sandage, Worthington, Brown, & Hight, 1998) was used to measure the tendency to avoid or seek revenge from a person who has harmed them. The Modified Brief Multidimensional Measure of Religiosity/ Spirituality (Fetzer Institute, 1999) was used to measure participants' active involvement in religious beliefs and practices. A Positive Institution Inventory was created by the researcher to measure participants' perception of their institution to enable their character strengths. The Psychological Well-Being Scales (Ryff, 1995) were employed to collect participants' evaluation of their own psychological health, specifically in the following areas: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life, and self acceptance. The instruments were administered to 172 undergraduate students from two Midwestern universities, one public and the other religious-affiliated. Chi-square test results revealed significant gender and class disproportionality between the public and religious-affiliated schools. Therefore, a two-way between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of gender and school (i.e. public vs. religious-affiliated) on levels of religiosity, forgiveness, positive institution, and wellness subscales. There were no significant interactions or main effects found significant. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to examine the relationship among predicting variables (forgiveness & religiosity) and the outcome variable (psychological wellness), with the mediator being positive institution. The results yielded a marginal fit for the hypothesized model. A modified version of the original model was tested, revealing a good fit. However, forgiveness was not found to have any impact on either perception of institutional support or psychological wellness. The findings from this study did not support the hypothesis that perceived institutional support mediated character strengths and psychological wellness. The limitations of this study, as well as recommendations for future research, are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Barber, J. (2010). An examination of happiness and its relationship to community college students' coping strategies and academic performance. Morgan State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this study was to examine happiness and its relationship to the coping strategies and academic performance (grade point average) of community college students. The independent variable was happiness and the dependent variables were coping strategies and self-reported GPAs (academic performance). A commuter community college campus located in an urban-suburban area with a focus on student-centered learning and improving academic performance was chosen. The study focused on 139 student participants between the ages of 18 and 53. With a focus on positive psychology's framework, well-established questionnaires with reported measures of reliability and validity were used. The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ), the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ), and the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients (Pearson r) were used to compute and test hypotheses. The mean happiness score for this sample of community college students was 4.44 with a standard deviation of 0.65. This mean happiness score indicated a moderate, but normal level of happiness. With a mean happiness score of 4.44, this sample of community college students' happiness level is slightly above the national average for happiness (Diener, 2000; Hills & Argyle, 2002). The OHQ was found to be positively correlated with the WCQ subscale positive reappraisal ($r = 0.27$, $p = .001$), and negatively correlated with the WCQ subscale, escape-avoidance ($r = -0.23$, $p = .01$) suggesting that students had higher scores on the happiness scale if they used positive reappraisal often and escape-avoidance seldom as a coping strategy. The OHQ and the WCQ were used to measure the students' happiness and coping strategies, respectively, and were framed within the study of positive psychology. These instruments had reported reliability and validity of OHQ, $\alpha = 0.92$, and the WCQ, α between 0.61 and 0.79. The findings of this study explained the correlation between happiness and coping strategies, and happiness and academic performance (GPA) of community college students. Overall, the study found that happy or moderately happy students tended to cope just as well as those students who had high happiness scores. The mean GPA for this sample of students was 2.85. There was no correlation between community college students' happiness and GPAs. Recommendations and suggestions for community college counselors, leaders and other constituents were made pertaining to how this research information aided in understanding community college student happiness and its relationship to the strategies these students used to cope.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Kaltenstein, A. (2010). Character strengths in youth with a history of multiple out-of-home placements. Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the character strengths of youth who have been in out-of-home placements. Considerable literature examines youth's negative experiences in out of-home-placements, as well as the weaknesses in these youth. The existing literature tends to omit the exploration of strengths in these individuals either due to or despite their negative life circumstances. Therefore, the present study explores the character strengths of two groups of youth: (1) those who have been in multiple (identified in this study as three or more) out-of-home placements; and (2) those who have been in less than three placements. The purpose of exploring and comparing these two groups is to help identify strengths in youth despite or possibly due to having a high number of negative life experiences. After a brief introduction, there is an extensive literature review outlining research on resilience, out-of-home care, and positive psychology. Next, the study's methods are outlined, which involved a chart review for clients

admitted to one of the three short-term residential programs, as well as an online survey (VIA-Youth) assessing the youth's character strengths. The data and results are then presented and discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Krichiver, T. (2010). Positive psychology and the Jewish holiday calendar: A resource manual for small groups. Pepperdine University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Research indicates the Jewish community could benefit from additional resources aimed at supporting the psychospiritual needs of community members. While clergy and mental health professionals often collaborate to address these needs, there is no model that utilizes psychologists in a non-clinical setting for the purpose of integrating common positive psychology and spiritual concepts. The literature reveals many commonalities between positive psychology strengths and Jewish holiday themes. The purpose of this study was to develop a resource manual for psychologists and rabbis. The primary aims of the manual were to (a) utilize positive psychology to enhance psychospiritual development within the Jewish community; (b) explicitly connect positive psychology and Judaism through common themes; (c) provide opportunities for active personal integration of these common psychological and spiritual concepts; and (d) apply positive psychology through experiential small groups in synagogue settings. The specific objectives of the study included (a) an extensive review of the literature to identify the intersection between positive psychology and Judaism; (b) the collection of informal data from rabbis, Jewish professionals, clinical psychologists, and positive psychologists, to assess the need for additional resources; (c) the development of the resource manual; and (d) a critique of the manual by an expert psychologist and rabbi to evaluate the accuracy and relevance toward its intended population. Major issues in the evaluation results led to recommendations that the author formalize ground rules, direct greater attention to screening and recruitment procedures, and expand the experiential aspects of the groups. Further development of the manual may focus on utilizing additional research in positive psychology in conjunction with consultations with positive psychology experts to increase and deepen the experiential elements of the groups.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Cole, C. (2010). A qualitative study designed to understand the relationship between positive organizational behavior and life concerns. Capella University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The study investigates Luthans's theory about positive organizational behavior (POB) and Life Concerns (LC). POB is defined as the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace. The researcher has further defined POB as simply "work with enthusiasm." POB can also be described as an integration of positive psychology to organizational settings. The author believes that this integration would improve people's inner strengths and enhance performance as employees and team players. Luthans's concept of POB creates an environment that encourages individual and team growth and humanistic traits that develops self-efficacy and optimism. Life concerns are our family organizational commitments to our spouse and children. These life concerns are responsibilities for family support and supervisory needs as spouse and parent. The researcher would like to provide a greater understanding about the typical American family who strives for a balance between POB and LC. The study seeks to identify the characteristics for balance to improve organizational settings.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Kokinda, L. (2010). The effects of meditation on openness, awareness, and acceptance: A correlational study. Alliant International University, Los Angeles. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The new field of positive psychology has provided opportunities to shift areas of focus for clinical research from traditional Western perspectives to more integrative Eastern interventions. This study investigated the correlation between length of time practicing meditation and characteristics rooted in awareness, acceptance, and openness. Measures completed by 108 participants explored wisdom, creativity, emotional intelligence, cognitive failures, mindfulness, personality, and satisfaction with life. Although all correlations between length of time practicing meditation and the constructs being examined were rendered insignificant once controlled for the effects of personality, promising future areas of focus for research were identified.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Stimpson, M. (2010). The intersection of positive psychology and teachers' dispositional fitness: A delphi study. Loyola University Chicago. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

U.S. educators of the 21st century have witnessed renewed attention given to the importance of teacher dispositions as a component of the requisite tripartite of knowledge, skills, and dispositions. In this Delphi study, two previously unaligned constructs, positive psychology and teacher dispositions, were synthesized for the purpose of: (a) identifying the most compelling teacher dispositions that infuse positive psychology into positive classroom communities, and (b) suggesting observable behaviors that are indicative of teachers' dispositional fitness in positive classroom communities. Using the Positive Teacher Dispositions Index (PTDI), a panel of educators, consisting of classroom teachers, university faculty, and educational administrators selected 18 teacher dispositions as most compelling in a positive classroom community. Delphi panelists also recommended observable behaviors as exemplars of teachers' dispositional fitness. The results substantiate the high level of favorability and integrative compatibility between positive psychology and teacher dispositions. Implications suggest a potential exigency for grade-appropriate dispositions and a need to extend the minimal dispositional assessment requirement for teacher-candidates by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) beyond the dispositions to be fair and to believe that all students can learn.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Dyck, L. (2010). Resonance and dissonance in professional helping relationships at the dyadic level: Determining the influence of positive and negative emotional attractors on effective physician-patient communication. Case Western Reserve University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This research is a qualitative and quantitative study based on an archival examination of the relationships between the demonstration of behavioral affect as represented by positive and negative emotional attractors (PEA and NEA) and medical student effectiveness in a clinical diagnostic intervention, namely, the Clinical Skills Exam (CSE). The research question is "Does a medical student's overall positive versus negative emotional tone influence his or her effectiveness in a clinical diagnostic encounter with a standardized patient (SP)?" The study analyzed 116 videotaped CSE encounters between medical students from the Class of 2009 at a medical school in a major mid-western university and SPs. A codebook of themes was developed from a sample of encounters between the Class of 2008 medical students and SPs which was used to code the behavior of the Class of 2009 medical students during the encounters. The associations among PEA and NEA themes and medical student effectiveness as measured by SP scores of the encounters, Faculty scores of notes written by medical students

immediately after the encounters, and differential diagnosis scores were determined using moderated multiple regression (MMR) analysis. Medical student MCAT scores were examined as a possible moderator of the associations. MMR analyses found a significant positive association ($p < .05$) between PEA and the SP scores; near significant positive association ($p < .10$) between PEA and the Faculty scores of student notes; significant positive association ($p < .05$) between NEA and the Faculty scores of student notes; and a significant negative association ($p < .05$) between MCAT scores and the SP scores. A near significant positive moderating effect ($p < .10$) of MCAT scores on the association between PEA and the Faculty scores of student notes was also found.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative, qualitative.

Howell, N. (2010). Appreciative advising from the academic advisor's viewpoint: A qualitative study. The University of Nebraska - Lincoln. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Appreciative Advising represents a revolutionary new approach to the field of academic advising. Based on Appreciative Inquiry, which was developed by David Cooperrider at Case Western Reserve University in the 1980's, Appreciative Advising is also influenced by positive psychology, reality therapy, and strengths based advising. The Appreciative Advising model makes use of positive, open-ended questions and the development of a reciprocal relationship between student and advisor to help students achieve their academic and career goals. Pioneered by Bloom, Hutson, and He, Appreciative Advising is fully student centered and shows great promise in helping students from a wide variety of backgrounds achieve academic success. Bloom, Hunter, and He expanded on the 4-D model of Appreciative Inquiry to develop the six phases of Appreciative Advising - Disarm, Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver, and Don't Settle. This study explored the perceptions of nine academic advisors using the Appreciative Advising approach in three different institutions of higher education to identify ways and to what extent using Appreciative Advising impacted their advising practice and their job satisfaction. The majority of the academic advisors interviewed believed that Appreciative Advising had positively impacted them in four ways: (a) Appreciative Advising had enabled them to better utilize their strengths, skills, and talents; (b) Appreciative Advising had provided a framework that enabled them to be more effective academic advisors; (c) Appreciative Advising had enabled a stronger advisor/student relationship, resulting in greater job satisfaction; and (d) Appreciative Advising had positively impacted relationships outside of the advisor/student relationship with co-workers, family, friends, and others.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

2009

n = 35

Schwartz, H. (2009). Thankful learning: A grounded theory study of relational practice between master's students and professors. Antioch University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Master's education in the social sciences provides a unique opportunity for students and teachers. Students often bring extensive professional and life experience to the classroom, as well as clarity regarding their academic goals. Professors who teach on the master's level are distinctly committed to the teaching mission and see their students' experience as valuable to their own growth as teachers and to the ongoing development and vitality of their academic programs. The purpose of this study is to explore what goes on in relational practice between master's students and professors. Ten matched pairs of

recent alumni and professors (from six different schools) were interviewed. Participants reflected on their relationships while the student was enrolled in the master's program, and the evolution of their relationships in the alumni context. Grounded theory dimensional analysis was employed to analyze the interview data. Six dimensions each emerged from the professor and student data respectively. The professor dimensions are: Orienting, Self-organizing, Valuing, Advancing, Bounding, and Regenerating. The student dimensions are: Engaging, Navigating, Developing, Connecting, Reconstructing, and Collaborating. The professors' Regenerating and the students' Reconstructing are the core dimensions. A combined exploration of the professor and student dimensional analyses surfaced six theoretical propositions: energizing the relationship, teaching and learning are bidirectional, difference is potential, asymmetrical primacy, working close to the boundaries, and the connection paradox. This study draws from literature in the following domains: relational cultural theory, positive psychology, positive work relationships, mentoring, adult development, and adult learning. The wisdom of these literatures combined with the findings of this study, provide a deep consideration of the relational space and experience of master's students and professors, exploring elements such as mutuality, boundaries, friendship, professional development, positionality, humor, connection and collaboration. The electronic version of this dissertation is at OhioLink ETD Center, www.ohiolink.edu/etd

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Johnson, S. (2009). Happy women and the influence of enabling institutions. Capella University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of enabling institutions on women's levels of subjective happiness. Enabling institutions include those that encourage and produce the "psychological good life" in the individual. In-depth, digitally recorded interviews were conducted with 38 subjectively happy women. This descriptive study utilized the grounded theory approach to analyze the in-depth interviews. Data analysis followed the procedures of grounded theory beginning with initial coding, followed by focused coding, and concluding with theoretical coding. It was discovered that after the first 12 transcripts had been analyzed that the data had reached the point of saturation. An additional three interviews were randomly selected from the remaining interviews to confirm the results. Consequently, no second interviews were needed. The qualitative data that was gathered through the analysis of these one-on-one interviews was used to identify the role of enabling institutions on women's levels of subjective happiness. It explored both the woman's experience of the influence of enabling institutions in their lives and their perspective concerning the specific institutional characteristics that influence their sense of subjective happiness. This study contributes to the development of a theory concerning the influence of enabling institutions on women's overall levels of subjective happiness. It also supports the idea that researcher's in the field of positive psychology broaden to include a fourth pillar which would give relationships its own pillar as opposed to including it under the third pillar, that of positive or enabling institutions.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Seitz, K. (2009). A grounded theory investigation of the relationship between positive psychology coaching and thriving. Capella University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this qualitative, grounded theory study was to understand the relationship between positive psychology coaching and thriving in the workplace. Thriving was defined as a marked sense of learning, vitality, energy, and connectivity to others and the work, and positive psychology coaches

included coaches who are trained in strengths-based, appreciative, co-active, and positive psychology coaching methods. Twenty people who had participated in positive psychology coaching as a method for achieving change in attitudes, behaviors, or skills were interviewed to understand the key activities of the coaching process that contribute to thriving as well as to understand the individual outcomes of thriving and how they contribute to emotional well-being and vitality. Data analysis indicated a need to revise the definition of thriving since coachees did not distinguish between states of vitality and energy and thriving is more temporal than originally predicted. Other findings revealed that positive psychology coaches utilized strengths-based assessments and activities to help coachees learn how to identify, use, and regulate their strengths, the results of which led to three types of transformation. Coachees experienced personal transformation in their connectivity to others and their work by making personal changes in themselves and how they interacted with others. Physical transformation occurred as coachees learned to recognize changes in their bodies, energy levels, and state of flow. Emotional transformation occurred as coachees changed their self-perception, self-worth, and self-efficacy. As they changed their self-concepts, coachees were able to reframe their attitudes and thinking, become more resilient, and change their careers to align their work with their values and strengths. This study is unique in that it is the first to investigate positive psychology coaching and thriving, and it did so from the coachees' perspective, which is seldom investigated. Understanding how coachees transform, the processes that enable transformation to occur, and the outcomes that are possible is important since organizations are investing significant resources in coaching and human development processes. Finally, positive psychology coaching is a change methodology coachees can use to create sustainable change that enhances their well-being, relationships, and careers--all factors that can lead to personal fulfillment.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Eftimie, N. (2009). The immigrant, master of the two worlds: An interpretation of the immigrant's transition seen from the perspective of mythological heroes. University of Calgary (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this thesis is to look at the experiences of voluntary immigrants through the perspective of the mythological hero as described by Joseph Campbell (1968) and Carol S. Pearson's (1989). This thesis attempts to demonstrate that by examining the meaning of the mythological stories of different cultures, we can uncover the essence of life's transformations. This research finds connections among the modern theories of migration by offering an explanation of the biculturalist model of acculturation adopted by immigrants, the adventures of the hero's journey by looking at the archetype of the mythological hero, and at the new branch of positive psychology by extending areas such as optimism, love, life satisfaction, and spirituality. Guided by the framework of Heuristic Methodology my research was based on interviews with six participants, all voluntary immigrants representing five different cultures: Russian, Iranian, Cameroonian, Chinese, and Austrian. The study also includes reflections upon my own experience of immigration. Findings include numerous themes emerging from the main stages of pre-migration, migration, and post migration. The creative synthesis offers an analogy between the immigrants' journey and their admired heroes. Implications of the study for counseling professionals, society, literature on immigration, co-researchers, and for other individuals facing similar experiences are discussed. This study also suggests ideas for future research that can considerably extend our knowledge about human development. This study demonstrates some of the heroic qualities of the immigrants as revealed in their strengths and successes in this new society.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Moze, M. (2009). A theory of surrender: Understanding psychological surrender with comparison to ego defense. California Institute of Integral Studies. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This theoretical dissertation was an investigation of psychological literature to research the underdeveloped topic of psychological surrender and compare it to ego defense. An extensive review of ego defense literature includes specialized focus on theoretical controversies. The sparse, disconnected literature on surrender was bound and analyzed, revealing themes that collectively describe the nature of the phenomenon. Integration of literature on ego development, ego strength, positive psychology, and systems theory enabled a broader framework within which to theorize. A conceptual theory of the overall nature of defenses was constructed, and it is posited that defenses can develop beyond the stage of maturity. A conceptual theory and developmental model of surrender were generated, and core nomenclature was established. Surrender is not defeat; it is concluded to be a transformative psychological phenomenon that is oriented toward learning, works in service of the innate desire to grow, is motivated by curiosity, and is a distinct alternative to defenses as a response to anxiety and conflict. It was determined that surrender and defenses work in dynamic synergy in the process of sociocultural and psychological development. Numerous, specific suggestions are offered for future research efforts.

Thesis, conceptual, theoretical.

Cote, J. (2009). Enhancing problem-solving skills for childhood internalizing and externalizing disorders. Concordia University (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The following theoretical research will present, based on a concise literature review, the outline for a new art therapy program intended for latency-aged children diagnosed with internalizing disorders with or without comorbid externalizing features. Grounded in a cognitive-behavioral model and informed by positive psychology, the proposed program will aim to strengthen resilience and increase problem-solving skills through short-term, solution-focused group interventions. The rationale for developing such a new art therapy program is based on literature suggesting that most existing treatment programs are devised primarily for either internalizing or externalizing disorders despite the well documented comorbidity of such childhood mental issues. Furthermore, literature supports the need to devise more age-appropriate interventions for latency-aged clients based on the recognition that many effective intervention programs fail when applied to pediatric populations as these programs may not be suited to meet the developmental needs and cognitive abilities of this young age group.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Ringebach, R. (2009). A comparison between counselors who practice meditation and those who do not on compassion fatigue, compassion satisfaction, burnout and self-compassion. The University of Akron. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

One hundred sixty-four professional counselors completed an on-line survey that included the PRO-QOL (Professional Quality of Life Scale) and the SCS (Self-Compassion Scale). Participants also completed a demographic questionnaire that included length of meditation practice and other self-care practices. Results of a MANCOVA revealed that the meditation practice group (N=62) reported significantly higher levels self-compassion, while showing lower levels of burnout than their non-meditating peers (N=102) when controlling for Social Desirability. Further, the current study found that measures of self-compassion were positively associated with measures of compassion satisfaction ($r = 0.387$, $p = 0.01$) and negatively associated with measures of burnout ($r = -0.525$, $p = 0.01$) and compassion fatigue ($r = -0.452$, $p = 0.01$).

These results are congruent with the promising research that has been conducted on the relatively new construct of self-compassion, suggesting its utility and value to the growing fields of positive psychology and professional wellness. In addition, post hoc analyses (ANCOVA) revealed that self-care time was found to have a significant impact on compassion satisfaction, suggesting that individuals who practice more than 5 hours of self-care per week have higher levels of compassion satisfaction than their colleagues who reported less self-care time. Limitations included a convenience sample of participants (recruited from state associations and professional list serves) and a fairly stringent definition of meditation practice (at least 60 minutes per week, at least 6 months of practice). Implications for training and practice, which includes the responsibility of training programs to include formal instruction in self-care practices, are presented along with recommendations for future research.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Kayal, H. (2009). Exploring the sense of coherence and coping strategies of therapists and their impact on working alliance and therapeutic outcome. University of Essex (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

With the emerging interest in positive psychology, this study focused on salutary concepts (health promotion), namely the Sense of Coherence (SOC) and coping strategies of therapists. The study has two parts, firstly exploring and describing the SOC and coping strategies of therapists and the relationship between these variables. Secondly, it examines the impact of these variables on the working alliance and therapeutic outcome. The study is naturalistic cross-sectional in nature and aims to explore and describe the SOC and coping strategies of therapists. However, it has longitudinal aspect to it as well (pre-therapy, following third session and in discharge). Other client and therapist related variables were taken into account. The sample consisted of 40 therapist-client pairs from an adult mental health psychology department. Results showed SOC to be relatively low amongst therapists in the sample. Coping strategies which therapists utilized in dealing with their stressors seemed to be more engagement-focused than disengagement-focused. A relationship was found between coping strategies and SOC. In answering the second part of the study, regression models showed that SOC and coping strategies did not have a clear association with the working alliance as perceived by clients and therapists. A surprising finding was the lack of relationship between working alliance and therapeutic outcome. Despite the limited power due to the small sample size this study shows that SOC and coping strategies do seem to impact on the outcome of therapy.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative, qualitative.

McCabe-Fitch, K. (2009). Examination of the impact of an intervention in positive psychology on the happiness and life satisfaction of children. University of Connecticut. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Positive psychology is a relatively new perspective in psychology, which shifts the focus from treating suffering and disorder to that of endorsing health and happiness. Recent research has begun to examine different interventions, such as those that focus on gratitude, which aim to increase happiness and well-being among an adult population (Seligman, Steen, Park and Peterson, 2005). There is, however, a shortage of research which examines the use of such interventions with children or adolescents. The purpose of the present study was to evaluate the use of exercises in positive psychology, specifically those dealing with gratitude, as a way to increase the happiness and life satisfaction of children. Participants included 50 middle school students recruited from a private Catholic school located in the New York City area. Students were administered multiple scales examining baseline measures of happiness and life satisfaction. Students were then randomly assigned to the control or experimental

group. Students in the experimental group received instructions on how to complete two assignments in positive psychology; a Gratitude Letter and Three Good Things in Life. Students in the control group received instructions on how to complete a control task called Life Details. Students in both conditions were given one week to complete the assignments. Post-test data was gathered at the end of the week. Follow-up data was collected approximately two-months after completion of the assignments. Results revealed small to moderate effect sizes at follow-up for happiness as measured by the Subjective Happiness Scale and the item measuring "Happy" on the Positive and Negative Affect Scale. Such results suggest that certain exercises in positive psychology, especially those which focus on gratitude, may be efficacious in promoting happiness and life satisfaction in middle school children.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Estrada, R. (2009). An examination of love and marital satisfaction in long-term marriages. University of Denver. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

There has been little marital research that focuses on contributing factors to successful long-term marriage and even less focus on the role that love plays in long-term marriage. As a means of furthering this research, the purpose of the current study was to examine levels of satisfaction in couples in long-term marriages and to identify contributing factors to an enduring marriage. This study also examined the significance of love and changes in love after 35+ years of marriage. Through the use of qualitative methodology, five couples who were self-identified as "happy" in their marriage and who had been married at least 35 years were interviewed. Each couple was first interviewed together and then each spouse was interviewed separately. As might have been expected, couples defined happiness in their marriage in ways that are similar to what they identified as being the "key" to their marriage. Compromise, faith/religion, forgiveness, communication (ability to talk things through and resolve conflict), spending time together, and sharing common interests were common themes identified among the couples as being the "key" to their enduring marriage. Other aspects of positive marital experience that were mentioned, but not as frequently, were sharing the same values, maintaining romance, being tenacious, being considerate of each other, showing appreciation, trust, and patience, limiting arguments/disagreements, and respecting one another. Each spouse identified love as being an important aspect of their marriage and stated that it was why they stayed in their marriage. However, none of them identified love as being the "key" to their enduring marriage. All of the spouses mentioned a change in love over the course of their marriage, whether it was the type of love, meaning of love, feeling of love, or development of love. This study has implications for couples therapy and has contributed to research in love and happiness in long-term marriage and positive psychology.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Henningsgaard, J. (2009). Interrelations among personality, religious and nonreligious coping, and mental health. The University of Southern Mississippi. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Religion's involvement in the coping process remains an underexplored area of coping research despite most psychologists agreeing that religion is integral to this process for many individuals. Interestingly, there is some disagreement among psychologists regarding whether religious coping can be "reduced" to nonreligious coping (Siegel, Anderman, & Schrimshaw, 2001). To better understand how religious and nonreligious coping contribute uniquely to the prediction of mental health outcomes, the study's first and second goals were to determine the incremental validity of each type of coping, above and beyond the other. The study's third goal was to determine whether select coping strategies mediated the relationships

between personality and mental health, thereby elucidating the nature of their interrelations. Finally, to further the aim of positive psychology, the current study incorporated positive mental health outcomes into its analyses, as well as negative mental health outcomes. A sample of 300 college students completed a packet of questionnaires that included measures of religious and nonreligious coping strategies, personality, depression, anxiety, stress, hopefulness, quality-of-life, and life satisfaction. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to test the incremental validity of religious and nonreligious coping strategies; whereas structural equation modeling was used to explore whether any of the coping strategies mediated the relationships between personality and mental health. Results suggest that religious and nonreligious coping both provide unique information about mental health outcomes. However, religious and nonreligious coping strategies appear to relate differently to mental health, depending on whether positive or negative outcomes are studied. This finding provides further evidence that a state of flourishing is something different from the mere absence of pathology.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Brooks, J. (2009). Midshipman character strengths and virtues in relation to leadership and daily stress and coping. Howard University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Positive values, character strengths and virtues have long been emphasized in military doctrine as crucial to effective leadership. Positive psychology, therefore, may be uniquely suited to conceptualize the development of military leaders. This study explored the use of a positive psychology framework (character strengths and virtues) to investigate leadership in a military sample - both in general, and in relation to daily stress & coping. Ninety-three students at the US Naval Academy completed assessment questionnaires and were asked to record their daily stressors, and subsequent coping behaviors on a website every day for two weeks. It was hypothesized that: (a) Midshipmen who perceived themselves as more effective leaders would have different signature character strengths than those who perceived themselves as less effective leaders; (b) Midshipmen who perceived themselves as transformational leaders would have different signature character strengths than those who perceived themselves as transactional leaders, (c) Midshipmen, who responded to leadership stressors with higher degrees of confidence in their ability to handle those stressors, would have a greater number of signature strengths within the virtue domain of Courage; (d) Midshipmen who perceived themselves as more effective leaders would report less daily stress; (e) Midshipmen who perceived themselves as more effective leaders would report more problem focused coping. Findings indicated that participants who perceived themselves as effective leaders did not have significantly different signature character strengths than those who perceived themselves as less effective leaders. Results were also not significant for a similar signature strength comparison for transformational vs. non-transformational leadership. However perceived leadership effectiveness did moderately correlate with decreased daily stress. In addition, the hypothesis that the perception of oneself as an effective leader would predict more problem focused coping was true, but only for male participants. Supplementary analysis revealed that perceiving oneself as a transformational leader predicted less daily stress and more problem focused coping for men. For female midshipmen, perceiving themselves as transformational leaders did not predict less daily stress, however it was associated with positive reinterpretation as a coping mechanism. These findings have implications for future gender research on leadership stress and coping.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Howard, A. (2009). An exploratory examination of positive and negative emotional attractors' impact on coaching intentional change. Case Western Reserve University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Few research studies have tested hypotheses from an integrated, multilevel theoretical model on coaching intentional change. Drawing on Intentional Change Theory (ICT) and supporting cognitive emotion and social complexity perspectives on positive and negative affect, this dissertation presents the first empirical investigation on the differential impact of inducing positive emotion vs. negative emotion in real time executive coaching sessions. Nineteen coaching recipients were randomly assigned to two coaching conditions. In the PEA condition the coachee's own hopes, strengths, desired future (the Positive Emotional Attractor) was the anchoring framework of a one-time, hour-long coaching session. In the NEA condition the coachee's own perceived improvement needs, weaknesses, present reality (the Negative Emotional Attractor) was the anchoring framework. Two central ICT propositions were tested. Hypothesis 1 predicted that PEA participants would show higher levels of positive emotion during appraisal of 360-degree feedback results and discussion of change goals than NEA participants. Hypothesis 2 predicted that PEA participants would show lower levels of stress immediately after the coaching session than NEA participants. Regression analyses found that the PEA group showed significantly lower levels of negative emotions ($p = .05$) and anger ($p = .02$) and focused more on personal interests and passions ($p = .01$) as compared to the NEA group. These findings lend preliminary support to the proposition that framing a coaching session around a coachee's PEA elicits positive emotions that broaden a person's momentary thought-action repertoire, whereas framing a session in the NEA elicits negative emotions that narrow this array. Further, demonstrated time series changes in expressed sadness or depression (.01) and future (.04) offer preliminary support to the ICT proposition that recurrent PEA-NEA arousal, and associated interplay of positive and negative emotion, characterize intentional change. The prediction on post-coaching level of stress was not supported.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Rasmussen, K. (2009). The role of optimism in the interpersonal psychological theory of suicidal behavior. Oklahoma State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Scope and Method of Study. The purpose of the present study was to explore the role of the positive psychology construct of optimism as a protective factor against suicidal ideation. A possible relationship between Joiner's interpersonal-psychological theory of suicidal behavior and the construct of optimism was investigated by examining the ability of optimism to act as buffer against perceived burdensomeness, thwarted belongingness, and acquired capability to engage in self-injury in the prediction of suicidal ideation. Participants were 452 undergraduate students attending Oklahoma State University who received course credit for their participation. The study was conducted online using the PsychData website. Participants completed several questionnaires regarding mood, attitudes toward the future, and psychological symptoms. Separate hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to test each hypothesis. **Findings and Conclusions:** Overall results supported the role of optimism as a protective factor against suicidal ideation. Results supported the hypotheses that optimism would serve as a buffer against the effects of thwarted belongingness and perceived burdensomeness in the prediction of suicidal ideation; however, similar results were not found regarding the acquired capability to engage in self-injury. Optimism moderated the effects of thwarted belongingness and perceived burdensomeness, such that high levels of thwarted belongingness or perceived burdensomeness significantly predicted suicidal ideation in those low in optimism, whereas neither thwarted belongingness or perceived burdensomeness significantly predicted suicidal ideation in those high in optimism. Findings did not support the acquired

capability to engage in self-injury as a predictor of suicidal ideation; it is proposed that the role of an acquired capability may apply only to suicidal behavior as opposed to suicidal thoughts. Overall findings support the use of therapeutic

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Moak, J. (2009). A content analysis of client expressions of coping in psychotherapy sessions. Pepperdine University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Historically, psychological research has tended to focus on pathology, disorder, and so called "mental illness." Positive Psychology and its historic context (e.g., Humanistic Psychology) sets the tone in which the dissertation research was conducted. The purpose of the present study was to qualitatively examine adult psychotherapy clients' expressions of ways or instances of coping as they related to social-support and escape-avoidance coping during initial sessions at a university's community counseling centers and clinics. Five adult therapy clients representing a range of presenting issues were observed during one of their initial psychotherapy sessions. Content analysis of the videotapes using the modified Change and Growth Experiences Scale (CHANGE) coding system yielded moderate inter-rater reliability for relationship quality scales ($K = .47$) pre-coder discussion and strong agreement ($K = 1.0$) post-coder discussion. Results for coding of protection/avoidance yielded low inter-rater reliability ($K = .25$) pre-coder discussion and strong coder agreement ($K = 1.0$) post-coder discussion. CHANGE analyses revealed that clients tended to express less positive perceptions of social support and more negative perceptions of social support. Additionally, all clients tended to express and engage in moderate levels of escape-avoidance coping. Results from the present study were consistent with research that indicates that perceptions of the supportiveness of family and friends are strongly related to mental wellbeing (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Lakey, Cohen, & Neely, 2008; Sarason, Sarason, & Gurung, 2001), and avoidance coping strategies are consistently associated with psychological distress (Charleton & Thompson 1996; Zeidner & Saklofsky, 1996).

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Brough, E. (2009). Positive emotions and sexual desire among healthy women. University of Michigan. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Sexual desire disorders are highly prevalent, account for a significant proportion of sexual problems, and affect important aspects of women's lives. Sexuality research has traditionally focused on dysfunction models, rather than human strengths approaches. Recently, positive psychologists have developed models and methods to examine human strengths. This study used Frederickson's Broaden and Build model to examine links between positive emotions and sexual desire among women. Positive emotions words were examined relative to sexual domains frequently cited in clinical studies, and compared to sexual cognitions which have been linked to positive sexual outcomes in past studies.

One hundred sixty five women answered questionnaires sent via a secure online assessment and survey tool. Analysis revealed that (a) women use more positive than negative words to describe desire; (b) the frequency of using positive words related favorably to sexual desire; (c) positive emotion word use did not correlate with other measures of sexual satisfaction and functioning; and (d) women who used positive emotion words also expressed more positive sexual cognitions about the self. A clearer understanding of the role that positive emotions play in sexual desire using a positive psychology approach may provide a useful framework for researchers, educators, and clinicians who seek to develop successful strategies to help women increase sexual desire.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Pelz-Sherman, D. (2009). Well-being and mitigating factors for depression among adolescents with high functioning autism and asperger's syndrome. Fielding Graduate University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This dissertation will focus on functional relationships between autism, depression, reported well-being, and degree of participation in engaging activities among adolescents. Symptoms of depression in adolescents with high-functioning autism (HFA) which here includes Asperger's syndrome (AS) are considerable, yet little is understood about the relationship between autism, adolescence, depression, and environmental factors, or how symptoms of depression correlate with participation in activities of interest. Participation in interactive activities has been recognized to ameliorate the symptoms of autism (T. Attwood, 2007; S. Ozonoff, G. Dawson, & J. McPartland, 2002) and has been recommended for prevention and treatment of symptoms of depression in neurotypical adolescents (L. Machoian, 2005; S. H. Spence, 2008), but participation in engaging activities has not been researched with specific regard to depression and well-being within the autistic adolescent population. This dissertation discusses development and depression in neurotypical adolescents using Erikson's (1968) stage theory of development, Bandura's (1986, 1997) model of self-efficacy and social learning, and Csikszentmihalyi's (1997; Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1986) theory of the value of engagement to well-being to provide a framework for the investigation of specific behavioral factors characterizing depression and their relationship to well-being in adolescents with HFA. Finally, interest and engagement in middle childhood are explored and research specific to depression comorbid with autism is reviewed in order to approach the following research question: Do adolescents with HFA who participate in highly engaging, semi-structured activities have lower levels of depressive symptoms and report evidence of well-being to a greater degree than adolescents with HFA who do not participate in engaging activities?

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Collins, K. (2009). Examining a strengths-based approach to employee engagement and the mediating effects of strengths self-efficacy. Alliant International University, Los Angeles. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of strengths-based feedback on engagement and its components of absorption, dedication and vigor. The study utilized the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES). It was proposed that upon receiving strengths related feedback based on the Clifton StrengthsFinder® (CSF) assessment, participants would have higher engagement if the feedback was personalized based on their specific strengths than if the feedback was general. Additionally, utilizing social cognitive theory, strengths self-efficacy (SSE) was proposed to mediate the relationship between feedback and engagement. The participants were 68 employees recruited from a variety of organizations. They were randomly assigned to one of three groups: the Control Group, Generalized Feedback Group or Personalized Feedback Group. Both treatment groups took the CSF, however participants in the Generalized Feedback Group received general feedback on strengths and how they can help at work. The Personalized Feedback Group received personalized feedback about their strengths via an online Gallup website. Subsequently, both Treatment Groups took the SSE and UWES measures, and completed demographic items. The Control Group did not take the CSF; however, they took the SSE and UWES measures, and completed the demographic items. An omnibus MANOVA test revealed that there were no significant differences among the three groups in terms of their engagement and self-efficacy; thus, the study's hypotheses were not supported. There was, however, a significant positive correlation between strengths self-efficacy and engagement across all participants. In addition, the study used a

newly developed SSE measure and contributed to its validation. Results of an exploratory factor analysis performed on the 34-item SSE scale's items concurred with a previously reported more parsimonious two-factor 16-item scale. Overall, the study contributed to the literature on engagement and positive psychology by demonstrating the positive link between strengths self-efficacy and engagement. However, it also revealed that receiving strengths feedback alone is not sufficient to impact strengths self-efficacy and engagement. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct further explorations into the mechanisms driving the strengths and engagement relationship.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Zienkewicz, L. (2009). Student intrinsic strengths: Role in success in community college online and face-to-face courses. Northern Arizona University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Current data reveal increased enrollment in online courses at community colleges nationwide and at the same time attrition or withdrawals from online courses remains higher than from face-to-face courses. Research has shown that positive psychology in educational settings, including present-day techniques of identifying and developing students' intrinsic strengths, leads to positive educational outcomes. When implemented into the college classroom, strengths-based education results in greater self-confidence and greater academic self-efficacy. The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not a relationship exists between student intrinsic strengths and successful completion of online and face-to-face college courses. During spring 2009, data from The Gallup Organization's StrengthsQuest tool and demographic survey were collected from online and face-to-face student participants at a large, urban southwestern community college. At the conclusion of the semester, final semester grades were gathered from the college's student information system. Of the 120 face-to-face students and 109 online students, the top 10 strengths from a list of 34 strengths were compiled for each group. Chi-square test of independence compared data for significance. It was found that specific strengths play a role in the final grade outcome of community college online and face-to-face courses. For the online students, there were six strengths (Achiever, Learner, Relator, Input, Harmony, and Includer) that showed a statistically significant relationship to successful completion of online college courses. The Achiever and Learner strengths were unique to the online students. For the face-to-face students, there were six strengths (Responsibility, Empathy, Positivity, Adaptability, Restorative, and Developer) that revealed a statistically significant relationship to completion of college courses. For the four strengths (Realtor, Input, Harmony, and Includer) shared by both groups, there was a statistical significance for both the online and the face-to-face participants when alpha equaled .001. 3

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Smith, A. (2009). Sex offenders and probation officers who supervise them: How relevant are strengths-based approaches? The University of Wales College of Cardiff (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

This thesis explores the supervisory relationship between sex offenders and supervising probation officers, now called offender managers, and whether strengths-based approaches to rehabilitation and risk management can be usefully utilized. The strengths-based approaches considered are: desistance, the Good Lives Model, motivational interviewing, narrative therapy and solution-focused therapy. One-off in-depth interviews were conducted with 15 probation officers and 15 sex offenders, mainly across two probation areas, with one sex offender coming from a third area. A qualitative research approach was taken, with the intention of gaining insight into the subjective experience of officers and sex offenders involved in community supervision. The research is also influenced by positive psychology, focusing on

what can be learnt from offenders who, to varying extents, have successfully taken part in probation supervision and have not re-offended. The thesis illustrates how sex offenders face significant challenges in overcoming stigma and establishing a non-offending, pro-social identity and a satisfying lifestyle in the community, twin foci of much strengths-based thinking. Also illustrated is how probation officers experience significant anxiety about supervising sex offenders in a risk-averse society which renders it problematic to focus on potential strengths rather than on potential dangers. However, it is argued that, despite these difficulties, it is possible for probation officers to employ strengths-based approaches. It is posited that existing risk management systems and cognitive-behaviour groupwork, informed by the Risk, Needs Responsivity Principle, can be valuably augmented by a renewed valuing of the one-to-one therapeutic relationship, a core component of the strengths-based approach.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Adler, A. (2009). Erich Fromm's analytic social psychology: Testing the relationships among cooperation, aggression and trait biophilia. University of Leicester (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

Erich Fromm's biophilia, a theory of personality development incorporating an interaction between existential needs and the socio-economic environment, was a significant element of Fromm's Analytic Social Psychology. Despite an enduring influence, Fromm's theory of biophilia has been largely untested in the literature. Fromm argued that biophilia was the optimum way to conceptualize malignant aggression, and that the introduction and reward of cooperation was the best way to increase levels of biophilia, and thereby reduce levels of destructive behaviour in a population. It was the aim of this thesis to investigate whether the introduction and reward of cooperation would increase biophilia, and decrease aggression, in a population. In Studies One to Six, a trait biophilia scale was developed and psychometric validity and reliability established. In Studies Seven to Nine, scale predictive validity in comparison to existing trait measures was investigated in theoretically appropriate areas including online behaviour, positive psychology and pro-environmental behaviour. In Study Ten, a game theory paradigm for introducing and rewarding cooperation was developed, and the relationships among biophilia, cooperation and aggression were investigated. Contrary to Fromm's theory, a positive association between aggression and cooperation, and negative associations between those and biophilia were found. In addition, the effects of introducing and rewarding cooperation were investigated, and again contrary to Fromm's theory, introducing and rewarding cooperation produced an increase in aggression and a reduction in biophilia. These findings may reflect an inherent tension with Fromm's theory between the use of existential needs, that were argued to be the product of competitive natural selection, and the use of cooperative interventions derived from Marxist theory. It is proposed that the relationships among biophilia, cooperation and aggression may be mediated by frustration.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Snyder, S. (2009). School-based positive psychoeducation in early adolescents: Effects on happiness, depression, anxiety, school engagement, and persistence. Hofstra University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Research suggests that voluntary activity accounts for 40% of individual happiness and can be purposefully manipulated to make meaningful changes in one's reported level of happiness (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005a; Tkach & Lyubomirsky, 2006). The current study explored the utility of a school-based positive psychology psychoeducation curriculum on increasing the subjective well-being of youth. In addition, the effects on depression, anxiety, school engagement, physical health, and

persistence were also measured. Using a small-n multiple baseline design across treatments, 14 high achieving 8th grade students were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: a positive psychoeducation (PPE) group, an attention control group, and a no-treatment control group. The PPE group was exposed to a manualized positive psychology curriculum. The attention control group was exposed to weekly supportive group counseling. Self-reports and teacher-reports were completed on subjective well-being, depression, anxiety, and school engagement. Records were reviewed on absences and nurse visits. A behavioral measure of persistence (i.e., an unsolvable puzzle) was also completed at pre-test and post-test. It was hypothesized that individuals in the PPE group would increase in self-reported levels of positive affect, life satisfaction, and school engagement. They were also hypothesized to increase on teacher-reported levels of student engagement and number of homeworks completed per week, and persistence. Individuals in the PPE group were expected to decrease in self-reported levels of anxiety, depression, and negative affect. In addition, they were expected to decrease in total number of weekly absences, and nurse visits, as measured by a review of the school records. Individuals in the attention control group and no-treatment control group were expected to remain at baseline on all measures. Data were analyzed by visual inspection and ipsative-z analysis. The results demonstrated minimal support for the hypotheses. Participants in the PPE group, attention control group, and no treatment control group remained relatively stable on all measures. Increases were noted on the behavioral persistence task from pre-test to post-test for 3 of the 5 PPE group participants, 0 of the 4 attention-control group participants, and 2 of the 5 participants in the no treatment control group.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Baucum, C. (2009). A study on intrinsic motivational needs and engagement of leaders. Capella University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This research involved studying the relationship between the intrinsic motivational needs of leaders and their engagement in their work. The study used the Basic Needs Satisfaction Work Survey (BNSW) (Deci et al., 2001) as an indicator of motivation, and a positive psychology use of Maslach's Burnout Inventory Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS) (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996) as an indicator of engagement. The BNSW is based on the motivation construct in Self-determination theory (Dec & Ryan, 2002) that postulates that all people have three basic psychological needs, which are autonomy, competency, and relatedness. The research used full-time, Protestant ministers as a sample of leaders. A general ministry survey, created for this study and consisting of demographic, organizational, and ministry related questions, was also administered. Multiple regression analysis was used to determine which of the sub-factors of motivation--autonomy, competency, or relatedness--were the best predictors of engagement in leaders. The demographic and organizational data were analyzed using moderated multiple regression (MMR) analysis. The analysis found a significant ($p < .001$) correlation between motivational needs and engagement. The study found that personal stress, relationship with lay leaders, church personality, and independent financial security factors had a moderating effect on the correlation between autonomy and engagement. Independent financial security also moderated the correlation between relatedness and engagement. Post hoc analysis indicated that autonomy was the only sub-factor of motivation in stepwise regression analysis that predicted a pastor's desire to leave the ministry. Implications and further research are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Carthen, J. (2009). A phenomenological inquiry of the psychological antecedents of preferred leadership behavior in a sports context. Regent University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Sport is a microcosm of society; and it is able to transcend economic, cultural, and racial boundaries. A review of the literature suggests a dearth of research exists that explores the preferred leadership style of elite athletes in a competitive sport setting. This research endeavor postulates that if leaders are able to harness the tremendous influence enjoyed by those upon the platform of athletics, they will have an entree into much deeper and larger philosophical discussions concerning integrity, values, virtue, and what the ancient historical writers called "Arete" or the discipline of optimal behavior in all things. The exploratory research question for this study is as follows: How do elite competitive athletes perceive, experience, and respond to positive psychological capacities demonstrated by their coaches? These sorts and types of leadership inquiries will inform future generations of leaders and followers which will lead to a greater understanding of not only elite competitive athletes but organizational citizens who are the lifeblood of the bottom line of many organizations. The key is identifying the same positive psychological motivators that occur on the playing field and implementing them in an organizational context. This inquiry utilized three focus groups with 10 elite professional football players under contract with the Cleveland Browns football franchise. Throughout the progression of the three focus groups, support for four positive psychology themes began to emerge: (a) hope, (b) optimism, (c) resilience, and (d) self-efficacy. These themes proved significant because of the athletes' positive perceptions, experiences, and subsequent performance as a result of their coach's espoused and enacted leadership style. Focus group participants revealed that coaches who demonstrate or enact positive psychological behaviors actually cause a follower to embrace and emulate the very ethos of that coach. Furthermore, the coach's enactment was shown to create a greater proclivity for the players to realize optimal functioning both on and off the field through the attainment of biopsychospiritual homeostasis (BH). The result is greater organizational productivity and a greater return on investment achieved through better overall organizational health derived from motivated and fully engaged followers.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Forsyth, J. (2009). Resiliency factors of international adoptees in transracial families. The University of the Rockies. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This research studied the resiliency factors of international adoptees in transracial families. The definition of resilience in this study is "the way that international adoptees or their transracial families utilize and apply their traits, strengths, characteristics, and abilities that are available to them and alleviate any risk factors or symptoms of emotional, mental, physical, or spiritual hardships that they have endured as a result of the international adoption process." The goal of this research was to study the population of international adoptees in transracial families and integrate the study in a positive psychology theory and strength-based counseling perspective. This study expanded beyond the usual topic of race only regarding international adoptees and researched more characteristics and factors that an international adoptee has to cope with in their transition to a new family and new culture. A list of the top five most frequently endorsed resiliency factors and the least five endorsed resiliency factors was generated from the study. These resilient characteristics could be used to help international adoptees, transracial families, mental health providers, and members of the community that are part of the adoptee's support system who notice personal strengths to use when helping this population.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Gilbert, M. (2009). La sante psychologique au travail: Conceptualisation, instrumentation et facteurs organisationnels de developpement. Universite de Montreal (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The present thesis concerns psychological health at work (PHW) and adopts a positive perspective of this concept which was conceived for a long time in terms of pathologies. This thesis, composed of three articles, proposes a better understanding of PHW, a validation of measures of indicators of a good state of PHW and an examination of which variables it is possible to affect to reach an optimal level of psychological health. The first article has for objective to present a review of the documentation concerning PHW and to propose, on the basis of this information, an operational definition as well as an explanatory model. The diverse conceptions of psychological health, the personal and organizational resources, the indicators of psychological health at work as well as the fundamental needs to reach an optimal psychological level of health, are presented. Finally, hypotheses as well as suggestions of future research are suggested. The second article aims at validating the measure of the Well-Being Manifestations Measure Scale (WBMMS) as well as that of the Psychological Distress Manifestations Measure Scale (PDMMS), both adapted to the work context. This validation of these two French scales was realized with 561 Quebecors who worked in different domains. The results of exploratory and confirmatory factorial analyses present three different factors explaining 51,80 % of the variance for psychological well-being at work. These factors are: personal balance, work involvement and harmony with work environment. Concerning psychological distress at work, three factors, explaining 58,64 % of the variance, emerge from the analyses: irritability/aggressivity, anxiety/depression and disengagement. Correlational analyses with criteria such as optimism, organizational climate and justice were also realized. Results show that the adaptation for work of these two scales possesses good psychometric properties and that these scales predict the expected variables. The limits and contributions of this study are also presented. The third article examines the links between two organizational resources (organizational climate and justice), the satisfaction of three fundamental needs (autonomy, competence and relatedness) and two most important indicators of PHW (psychological well-being and distress at work). This article examines whether the satisfaction of the fundamental needs acts as mediating variable in the relation between both organizational resources and both indicators of psychological health at work. The results of regression analyses show the presence of a complete effect of mediation between both organizational resources, satisfaction of the fundamental needs and psychological well-being at work. For psychological distress, it is possible to confirm a complete mediation between organizational climate and the satisfaction of needs. The limits as well as ideas for future research are also presented.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Teasdale, K. (2009). Defining and measuring engagement within the family: Development of the family engagement behaviors scale. University of Kansas. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Leading scholars in the field of positive psychology of the family have recognized a need for more strengths-based family assessments that are grounded in theory and applicable to diverse populations. To date, no assessment of family engagement--defined as the positive behaviors family members carry out to invest in and learn about the family unit and members, and to achieve individual and common family goals--exists within the field. The aim of this study was to define more clearly the term "family engagement" and to develop a measure of this concept: The Family Engagement Behaviors Scale (FEBS). Results show initial support for the internal consistency and test-retest reliability of the FEBS, as well as concurrent validity of the FEBS when correlated with existing strengths-based family assessments. Implications and suggestions for future studies are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Brzycki, H. (2009). Teacher beliefs and practices that impart self system and positive psychology attributes. The Pennsylvania State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

We are in an education revolution where children are learning about life through their schooling and people are spending much more of their lives in school. Yet, little is known about the complex development that occurs through schooling; the dominant paradigm in a child's life for learning about themselves. The study of the self in cognitive developmental and positive psychology has taken on heightened importance due to the increasing awareness of the central, functional role that the self plays in development across the life-span. This study investigated teacher beliefs and practices for imparting self system and positive psychology attributes because of the critical link between the construction of the self and happier, healthier, more successful children. This study considered the interactions among the beliefs that teachers hold about the importance of their role in the development of the selves of their students, the classroom practices used to impart self system and positive psychology attributes. Research design is a combination of qualitative interviewing (n=25) using grounded theory methods; and a case study at the middle school level. Open-ended, in-depth interview protocol utilize: subjective happiness, meaning in life, satisfaction with life, and psychological well-being scales from the Positive Psychology Center . I argue that teachers can do much more to impact the human development of students. Most studies that are conducted within a school context consider academic achievement as the dependent variable or outcome of a child's schooling. Teachers are important in the life of a child not merely for imparting academic content knowledge, but additionally and more directly than is known, in aiding their cognitive and human development in terms of an integrated, whole view of children, or a self system. Understanding the differing teacher beliefs and intervention and instructional strategies used to impart happy, healthy and whole children is the focus of this study. Results included: teachers hold deep beliefs to empower adolescent development; teachers have minimal classroom strategies available; there is a gap between espoused theories of action versus theories in use; this study developed a theory that an alignment of teacher beliefs with classroom practices that focus upon an integrated self leads to developmental outcomes. Implications include policy, curricula, and teacher development. Suggestions for further studies were also made.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Waters, L. (2009). The effect of the knowledge and application of signature strengths on the perception of self-efficacy of educational administrators: Identifying hopefulness on the island of leadership. Azusa Pacific University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The present research focused on personal and professional efficacy of educational administrators serving in urban school districts in Southern California. The literature review demonstrates there is a lack of studies investigating educational issues as they pertain to the leadership cadre, the educational administrator and especially studies that quantify the relationship of strengths-based leadership in education. Of the 110 volunteers who began the study by taking the pre-Efficacy and Strengths Perceptions Survey; 60 participants then completed the StrengthsFinder 2.0 online inventory; 82 participants completed the post-survey. The theoretical framework for the study is based on Strengths-Based Psychology, aspects of Positive Psychology, and the Social Learning Theory. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the knowledge and application of Signature Strengths and the perception of self-efficacy of educational administrators. The study examined relationships of

dominant Signature Themes to levels of administrative assignments as well as examined the extent to which educational leaders fit into Activity Groupings based on characteristics of educational leadership. Three specific questions are addressed based on the consideration of the effects of signature strengths on self-efficacy: (1) Would knowledge and application of signature strengths significantly increase the level of self-efficacy of educational administrators? (2) Are there any different patterns of strengths-based themes among the five assessed levels of educational administrators? (3) Are there different levels of perceptual change, after strengths treatment, of educational administrators based on gender, age, current administrative assignment, or years of service? In a mixed method examination, an ANOVA statistical analysis and qualitative methods were employed to analyze the data attained from the online surveys. The study failed to reject the null hypotheses for questions 1 and 3; question 2 was assessed using qualitative methods that identify patterns that point to some differences in strengths themes in relation to administrative levels and administrative duties. Study group means indicated the group receiving treatments and interventions experienced positive effects. Under analysis, trends of strengths applications to practical duties suggest that the researcher developed Activity Groupings contain specific strengths themes to support the administrators in the global tasks of the positions they hold.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Del Giudice, M. (2009). Distinctive personality traits of student leaders as assessed by the rorschach. Widener University, Institute for Graduate Clinical Psychology. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The high rate of leadership failure in organizations has been associated primarily with personality shortcomings that are not always apparent during the leader selection process. Consequently, the need for more sophisticated leader selection procedures is now widely recognized within organizations. The Rorschach Comprehensive System (CS) represents a unique and potentially valuable supplement to leader selection procedures due to its provision of nuanced personality data, its contribution of incremental validity, and its resistance to impression management. However, a lack of research exists concerning CS assessment of leadership, rendering it premature to assume CS viability in leader selection contexts. As a first step, this dissertation presents and analyzes CS data of 30 college student leaders. Following an exploratory approach, confidence interval analyses were completed on 124 CS variables as a basis for comparing this sample to a large nonpatient sample as well as three college student samples. Non-overlapping confidence intervals were considered signs of potentially significant differences to be explored in subsequent research studies. Student leaders appeared to exhibit greater capacity for collaboration, greater use of emotionally-based resources, and higher introspective tendencies than each of these four control groups. These findings are discussed within the frameworks of CS validation research, current leadership theory and research, and positive psychology. A trajectory for advancing CS research of leadership phenomena is proposed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Shryack, J. (2009). The structure of virtue: An empirical investigation. University of Minnesota. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This project is guided by the need for a common model of virtuous personality that can integrate theory and research on positive personality traits across the fields of positive psychology, personality, moral development and character education. A particular concern is that character education programs lack an empirically-based structural model of virtue - which could be provided by mainstream psychological research - even while initiatives to strengthen character in America's schools have been popular and well-

funded in the past few decades. The current project was designed to do two things: (1) examine the structural validity of a rationally-derived model of virtue in two separate factor analytic studies, and (2) relate the resulting major virtue dimensions to dimensions of normal personality and to virtue-relevant criterion variables. Specifically, in Study 1, an exploratory scale factor analysis of a popular virtues assessment (the VIA-IS) was conducted to determine the fit of different models using multiple retention criteria. In Study 2, an exploratory item factor analysis was conducted using items from the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) to represent the VIA-IS item content domain and factors were related to measures of normal personality, altruism, academic experiences and relevant demographic variables. Evidence for a three- and five-factor structure was found, with certain factors (e.g. Temperance) replicating across Studies 1 and 2. In addition, virtues predicted variance in altruism scores over and above that provided by a measure of normal personality.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Brennan Morrey, R. (2009). The relationship of hope, goal setting, goal commitment, and functional attainment among medical rehabilitation inpatients. The University of Wisconsin - Madison. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study examined relationships between hope, goal setting, goal commitment, and functional outcome among a mixed-sample of medical rehabilitation inpatients at a university hospital. Per standard protocol. patients were assessed for their functional abilities (FIM(TM); Hamilton, Laughlin, Fiedler, & Granger, 1994) at admission and discharge in 13 motor areas (e.g., eating, bathing, mobility). Ninety (N = 90) patients consented to and participated in a 75-minute two part interview; the first part was semi-structured using the patient's admission FIM(TM) scores whereby patient's self-set discharge goals facilitated by a goal-setting script, while the second part led patients through a structured interview including the Herth Hope Index (HHI; Herth, 1992), Snyder-Hope Scale (SHS; Snyder, et al., 1991), Life Orientation Test (LOT-R; Scheier & Carver, 1985), and Goal Commitment Scale (GCS : Klein, Wesson, Hollenbeck, Wright, & DeShon, 2001). Normative benchmark values (M, SD) were pulled from a national rehabilitation outcome database (UDSMR® : Unified Data Systems for Medical Rehabilitation) to create standardized criterion variables and compare patients' functional data to their clinically equivalent case-mix group. Multiple regression analyses tested the extent to which patients who endorsed high hope reported heightened self-set discharge goals, attained more superior functional outcomes, and how much variance was predicted by hope in patients' goal commitment. Results indicated the following, (a) patient goal-setting tendencies did not vary by level of hope: 92% of patients overestimated their eventual discharge functioning, (b) both hope measures approached significance in their ability to predict functional outcome, while optimism had minimal influence in functional outcome, (c) the distribution of goal-commitment scores was highly skewed, which negates the generalization to other populations; and (d) most patients self-reported exceedingly high goal commitment. The discussion provides potential explanations, strengths, limitations, and future directions by integrating hope, goal, rehabilitation, and positive psychology literatures.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative, qualitative.

Chan, Y. (2009). Hope, participation, and subjective well-being of people with spinal cord injuries living in the community. The University of Wisconsin - Madison. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Snyder's model of hope was applied to understanding the community participation and subjective well-being of people with spinal cord injuries living in the community. Hope is a construct drawn from positive

psychology that has become increasingly popular in disability and rehabilitation, and community participation and subjective well-being have been identified as important outcomes of rehabilitation. First, factors were examined that might contribute to the development of hope. Second, hope was examined as a possible mediator of the relationship between the barriers faced by people with spinal cord injuries and their community participation. Finally, community participation was examined as a possible mediator of the relationship between hope and subjective well-being. The sample for the study was comprised of 120 adults with spinal cord injuries in Manitoba, Canada, who participated in a mail survey, conducted with the assistance of the Manitoba office of the Canada Paraplegic Association. Results of a hierarchical regression analysis identified variables that may be important contributors to the development of hope. Each of four sets of variables entered into the hierarchical regression analysis explained a significant amount of variance in hope that had not been explained by those entered at previous steps: functional dependence and secondary physical conditions; understanding of causality and perceived personal control; future time perspective; and resilience. The final model explained 55% of the variance in hope scores, and perceived personal control and resilience emerged as significant predictors of hope. Mediation analysis identified hope as a partial mediator of the relationship between barriers and participation, suggesting that the effects of barriers faced by people with spinal cord injuries may be lessened by hope. Finally, participation was found to partially mediate the relationship between hope and subjective well-being, suggesting that hope leads to greater participation, which in turn leads to a greater sense of subjective well-being. The results suggest that hope may be an important construct in understanding the participation and subjective well-being of people with spinal cord injuries, and implications are discussed for clinical practice and future research.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Salustri, M. (2009). Mindfulness-based stress reduction to improve well-being among adolescents in an alternative high school. Hofstra University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Mindfulness is the practice of bringing one's attention to the present moment. Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) allows the individual to utilize their inner capabilities and resources by tuning in to their mind and body's present experience in a non-reactive, non-judgmental way (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). MBSR has been used unaccompanied, or in conjunction with more traditional treatment, for a variety of physical and mental health issues, and has achieved acceptance and respect as an evidence-based practice (Dryden & Still, 2002). The present study investigated the effects of a MBSR program on subjective well-being in an alternative high school sample. The study aimed to address a dearth in the research on the effects of mindfulness on adolescents, and in the areas of meditation and positive psychology (Baer, 2003; Roemer & Orsillo, 2003; Shapiro, Schwartz, & Santerre, 2005). A single-subject, ABA repeated measures design (n=7) was utilized to assess the efficacy of an 8-week, 16 session MBSR program that was adapted for use within the alternative high school setting. The program was based on Kabat-Zinn's (1990) Stress Reduction and Relaxation Program. Weekly self-report measures were administered to the student participants to assess participant levels of subjective well-being, while teachers completed a weekly behavioral measure to assess participant school-related behavior. Participant levels of mindfulness were measured at pre-intervention, post-intervention, and fourth week of follow-up. It was hypothesized that participants would show increases in levels of mindfulness and subjective well-being, as evidenced by increases in positive affect and life satisfaction and decreases in negative affect. Research questions investigated specific areas of life satisfaction to determine domain-specific changes, as well as investigated school-related behavior to assess changes in attendance, on-time arrival to class and class

work completion. Visual inspection and ipsative z statistical analysis were used to analyze the data. Results indicated that by the end of follow-up, all participants showed an increase in levels of mindfulness. While there was some support for some of the hypotheses, there were minimal statistically significant changes in the direction of the hypotheses and negative effects of treatment were also found. Implications are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

La Civita, J. (2009). Social interest and the personal orientation inventory of artists working in a community art and wellness center. Adler School of Professional Psychology. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

By focusing on the strengths of an individual and their contribution to humanity, Alfred Adler's notion of Social Interest (SI) and Abraham Maslow's belief in the Self-Actualizing (SA) individual helped to reveal that Positive Psychology is and can be a valid criterion for mental health. In promoting an awareness of SI and SA and their relationship to positive mental health, this study was undertaken. This research examines the relationship between two scales, the Sulliman Scale of Social Interest (SSSI) and the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI) and their related subscales with 60 artists (36 females, 24 males) who teach at an urban community art and wellness center. The results of this study showed that the hypothesis is supported by the statistically significant correlations at the .001 level between the SSSI sub scale, Concern for and Trust in Others and the POI subscale, Self-Actualizing Value; the SSSI sub scale, Confidence in Oneself and Optimism in One's View of the World and the POI subscale, Self-Regard. These correlations appear to support the hypothesis that both the SSSI and the POI measure attributes that are important in developing harmonious relationships in an art and wellness center. There were no negative correlations between any of the SSSI and POI though some items were tautologically related. These related items were the POI Time Competent (TC) and all three of the SSSI scores as well as the POI Inner Directed (TI) and all three of the SSSI scores.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

2008

n = 33

Scholtz, M. (2008). The relationship between several positive psychology constructs at teachers. University of South Africa (South Africa). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The objective of this research was to determine the relationship between several positive psychological constructs for 178 teachers. The reliability of the measuring instruments, the relationship to each other and the wellness of the teachers were determined. The following measuring instruments were used: sense of coherence (Antonovsky), locus of control (Schepers), personal meaning (Wong), life regard (Battista and Almond), burnout (Maslach), engagement (Schaufeli) and coping (Carver). The results of the empirical survey of the instruments' Cronbach alpha coefficients showed significant correlation. The dimensions of the constructs showed broadly significant correlation with each other. The regression analysis indicated that some of the constructs are good predictors of each other. The factor analysis between the dimensions was determined with the use of varimax factor rotation. The dimensions were divided into five factors which in practice correlated significantly with each other.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Strachan, A. (2008). Career self-efficacy psycho-educational group model for emerging adults using positive psychology interventions. University of New Hampshire. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Emerging adulthood is becoming recognized in research as a unique developmental phase where young people explore role identity, relationships, values and beliefs, and their potential for different vocational pursuits. Career counseling is not often considered by individuals who are experiencing difficulties in making optimal career choices, yet evidence supports the need for career interventions that address both career search strategies and personal growth. Positive psychology's emphasis on developing one's strengths as a venue for career satisfaction and overall well-being is an approach that may best assist emerging adults to find out what they are good at doing, and develop positive self-efficacy about their strengths and abilities that can be transferred to more optimal career choices. The psycho-educational group model provides a basis for identifying strengths, and learning and practicing how to use them within a social context. Self-knowledge and confidence can then be applied to the career search process, leading to fewer job changes and a more focused career direction.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Hersh, B. (2008). Exploring the use of strengths-based assessment as an intervention for enhancing strengths in youth: A multiple baseline study. The University of Texas at Austin. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Traditional approaches for enhancing the mental health of youth have focused on remedying problems and disturbances. Positive psychology, however, focuses on building strengths and resources to promote mental health and well-being. Strengths-based assessment, an area of exploration within positive psychology, aims to identify individuals' strengths and resources and how those protective factors are drawn upon to cope with adversity. The current study used a single-subject, multiple baseline across participants design to explore the effects of strengths-based assessment (SBA) with seven seventh grade students. The SBA was hypothesized to be an intervention that might positively affect youths' self-perceived strengths, hopeful thinking, and ego strength through concentrated feedback about their individual strengths. The study also explored how SBA affected teachers' recognition of participants' resilient behaviors, participants' school grades, and school attendance. Results suggested that participants' recognition of their strengths increased after the SBA, including a significant increase in participants' self-reported hope. Participants indicated in social validity interviews that participating in a strengths assessment was helpful and meaningful to them. Significant changes were not found for the other outcome variables. This study offers a cogent framework for a SBA that would be practical for use by clinical child and school psychologists and demonstrates the potential of SBA to serve as a therapeutic intervention for youth.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Pittman, K. (2008). Preventing unintentional injuries: A program to teach adolescents basic child safety. Alliant International University, San Francisco Bay. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Unintentional injuries continue to be the number one cause of death to children four years and younger, despite the finding that they are preventable by alert and informed caregivers. The majority of programs that target the prevention of unintentional injuries to children seem to be focused on primary caregivers. They do not take into account that adolescent and siblings are often placed in charge of young children, even though they may not be reported as being primary caregivers. Such caregiving can lead to an

increase in unintentional injuries to the younger children. These programs also do not incorporate aspects of positive psychology, which have proven to make youth programs more effective and beneficial. The purpose of this dissertation was to construct a manual for a primary prevention program that focuses on reducing the prevalence of unintentional injuries to young children. The program, Teens In Charge, incorporates positive psychology into a prevention program focused on teaching adolescents how to be informed, alert, and active caregivers. Teens In Charge is divided into seven sessions. Positive psychology techniques include students completing the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths for Youth. This provides students with a rank of their personal character strengths; then students learn how to apply them in preventing unintentional injuries. The program teaches adolescents how to be informed and alert caregivers by educating them about developmental milestones and the most common types of unintentional injuries and how to prevent them. Each of the sessions includes a lecture, activities, handouts, a quiz, and a PowerPoint presentation. Students receive a certificate upon completion of the program. This manual has not been formally implemented in a classroom setting. However, it has been reviewed by a psychologist experienced in Positive Psychology, a psychologist experienced in Forensic Child and Family Psychology, a middle school teacher, and several middle school students. Also, this manual has not been tested for its efficacy, and would benefit from such examination in the future.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Ingemann, M. (2008). NeXus: Firefighter wellness program. Regent University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the basic tenets of holistic wellness and positive psychology and extrapolate concepts that may be congruent with firefighter occupational health issues. The author designed an innovative, cross-cultural, and practical holistic wellness curriculum with the objective of refining its content based on the needs assessment of a local city fire department. A needs assessment questionnaire (N = 103) was disseminated and a focus group was conducted to ascertain their current health and wellness practices at an organizational and individual level and to identify specific training topics, program resources, and support services that may be most relevant to their particular work environment. The results revealed that the organization is experiencing stress symptoms and manifestations of burnout and may benefit from health and wellness interventions at an individual and organizational level. The fire department does not have a comprehensive health promotion program, but offers a minimum level of services. The current curriculum may be refined to include topics on suicide prevention and managing interpersonal conflict. Future consultation may assist in evaluating and maximizing their current level of services.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Waitkus, J. (2008). The use of popular films in psychotherapy to identify and develop clients' strengths. Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Clinicians who view the work of psychotherapy through the lens of positive psychology may struggle with a myriad of clinical obstacles that can interfere with therapeutic objectives such as helping a client to increase positive emotion or to express gratitude. The use of popular films within the context of psychotherapy, often referred to in the literature as cinematotherapy, typically involves the clinician inviting the client to watch a film which is later discussed in session. When utilized in this way, films may stimulate conversation, provide a rich and varied source of therapeutic metaphor, augment therapeutic interpretations, and allow the client to address areas of concern in a way that is indirect, and therefore

less-threatening. The principal objective of this study is to build a theoretical model that explains how popular films can facilitate the work that is done within the context of positive psychotherapy. To accomplish this, I have conducted one semi-structured, qualitative interview with a clinician who has used popular films within the context of psychotherapy. This interview was transcribed, coded, and analyzed using a format most consistent with a grounded theory approach. In addition to the interview data, I have coded and analyzed seven peer reviewed journal articles relating either to the use of popular films in psychotherapy or bibliotherapy. The results of this analysis have been used to generate a theoretical discussion that explores the question: How can popular films facilitate the clinical objectives of positive psychotherapy? This project is organized as follows: In chapter one, I begin with a personal statement, which is followed by introductory information; chapters two and three provide a review of the literature relevant to media psychology and positive psychology, respectively; In chapter four, I discuss the concepts and rationale that serve as a foundation for the methodology described in chapter five; The results of the data analysis can be found in chapter six; and finally, in chapter seven, I discuss the findings and provide a summary of the overall project.

Thesis, conceptual, theoretical.

Praner, K. (2008). Constructing workplace value identity: Knowledge worker perceptions of how they are valued by their organizations. Capella University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This qualitative research study works to establish an understanding of how knowledge workers construct their workplace value identities: their sense of how the organization values them. Leaders and managers who recognize how knowledge workers construct their value identities can relate to knowledge workers' needs to be valued and thus improve working relationships within the organization. Knowledge workers who are aware of how they construct their value identities can use that knowledge to make their work environments more enjoyable and create a more favorable impression within the work environment. Embarking from the central premise that knowledge workers operate in their organizational environments under the influences of the organizational culture and social exchange according to their individual perceptions, the study was informed through an integration of the literatures of knowledge work, emotion in the workplace, motivation, self and identity, positive psychology, and organization-based self-esteem. From a purposeful sampling of knowledge workers, 7 men and 7 women from a wide range of industries were selected as study participants. One in-depth interview with each participant provided the data for this phenomenological study. The results revealed that knowledge workers look for signs of respect and fair treatment from the organization to build their value identities; valued knowledge workers have a sense that they are not only employees, but collaborators in the work effort. Internal elements such as personal satisfaction in their work also play a role in knowledge workers' value identity construction. The dual contribution of external and internal factors indicates that knowledge workers can influence their value identity constructions; they are not at the mercy of the organizational environment to shape their value identities. Further study in this area could contribute to a more confident and empowered domain of knowledge workers. Studies expanded to include how leaders and managers could enhance their intent to make knowledge workers collaborators in the work environment may benefit the entire organization.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Ruiz, M. (2008). Effects of positive and negative emotion elicitation on physical activity performances. University of Minnesota. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The positive psychology movement has drawn attention to the benefits of positive emotion. Fredrickson (1998), for example, noted that positive emotion affects human performance by broadening one's attention and facilitating cognitive expansion, unlike negative emotion, which narrows attention and limits cognition. Much sport psychology research, however, has focused on the role of negative emotion in physical activity performance with little emphasis on assessing how positive emotion may also influence such performance. Thus, the purpose of this study was to determine the differential effects of positive, negative, and neutral emotion on the performance of three different types of physical activity. Three distinct groups of 30 male and female collegians (mean age 21.91 years) participated in each of the three repeated measures experiments assessing performance on one of the following physical activities: cup stacking (a fine motor skill and cognitive engagement activity); vertical jumping (a gross motor skill activity); and free throw shooting (a sport specific activity). After completing baseline assessments, within each experiment three film clips were shown in counterbalanced order to elicit positive, negative, or neutral emotion. Following each viewing of one of the three film clips, participants performed trials of the assigned physical activity for that experiment. After each trial manipulation check questions were asked of 42 of the 90 participants to assess the effectiveness of the emotion elicitations. Repeated measures ANOVAs revealed significant differences ($p \leq .05$) in the cup stacking experiment, showing that cups were stacked faster in the positive emotion condition than in the negative emotion condition. Significant differences ($p \leq .05$) on the vertical jump experiment indicated that participants jumped higher in both the positive and negative emotion conditions than they did in the neutral emotion condition. Analysis of the interview demonstrated that the film clips elicited the desired emotions prior to physical activity performances. Given the variability in the observed effects of positive, negative and neutral emotions on different physical activities, the influence of emotion elicitation on effective performance appear to interact with the specific physical and cognitive demands of the task and thus must be further examined to draw more generalizable conclusions.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Sohl, S. (2008). Refining the conceptualization of an important future-oriented self-regulatory behavior: Proactive coping. State University of New York at Stony Brook. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Proactive coping has emerged as a new focus of research in the field of positive psychology. However, there are currently two distinct conceptualizations of and ways to assess this construct, creating confusion in how it is understood. Although these conceptualizations agree on the proposed self-regulatory process in which proactive copers engage, they disagree on whether proactive copers appraise the future in terms of goals to be met or stressors to be averted. Therefore, a first aim of this study was to examine how the two operationalizations of proactive coping differentially relate to salutary outcomes when included in the same analyses. A second aim was to determine through what mechanisms proactive coping leads to these outcomes. Participants were 281 undergraduates facing the stressor of an upcoming course examination. They completed the Proactive Coping Inventory (PCI; consisting of two subscales that each assess one of the conceptualizations), the Proactive Competence Scale (PCS; that assesses the proactive coping process), and measures of well-being and academic self-regulation. Structural Equation Modeling confirmed the superiority of a two-factor structure of the two subscales of the PCI, with one factor assessing the first conceptualization and the second factor assessing the second conceptualization. Only the first factor was significantly positively associated with well-being, whereas the unique variance in the second factor was not. Therefore, the current study supported the conceptualization of proactive coping that is based on a positively-focused striving for goals and personal growth that is assessed with

the proactive coping subscale of the PCI. Additionally, the addition of optimism to the final model revealed that Proactive Coping's unique variance was explained by two of the proactive competencies, use of resources and realistic goal setting, whereas the remaining variance associated with Well-being was accounted for by optimism. Thus, the mechanisms explaining proactive coping were best described by the authors of the second conceptualization and measured by the PCS. Finally, future research might focus primarily on use of resources and realistic goal setting in designing interventions to promote proactive coping.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Naude, M. (2008). An investigation of how children with learning difficulties perceive happiness in relation to school and learning. University of South Africa (South Africa). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Purpose . To develop a greater understanding of the experience of happiness as it is perceived by children with learning difficulties. This study focuses on the interpretative aspect of perception, which is seen to consist of; (1) how the experience feels, (2) how the structure of the experience is understood, and (3) what relevance is attributed to the experience. Methodology and rationale: The paradigmatic point of departure is Positive Psychology, which forms part of the strength-based perspective. Positive Psychology explores those factors that allow individuals and communities, not just to survive, but to flourish. The methodological orientation of this study is phenomenological and qualitative in nature.

Findings: While the most consistent theme was the relationship between friendship and happiness, this study offers insight into all three aspects of perception as defined above. It also suggests that children with learning difficulties may seek their happiness outside of the context of school and learning.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Bricker, M. (2008). The role of emotional approach coping and internalized homophobia in perceived stress, depression, and meaning of life among gay men and lesbians. The University of Memphis. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The primary goal of this study was to examine whether emotional approach coping played a role in the relationship between internalized messages of self-devaluing and heterosexist beliefs, as measured by internalized homophobia, and the constructs of perceived levels of stress, depression, and meaning in life in a sample of gay men and lesbians. As part of this, the study also examined whether emotional approach coping and internalized homophobia were predictive of mental health variables including: perceived stress, depression, and (presence of) meaning in life. In addition, the current study explored whether gender differences in use of emotional approach coping found in heterosexual samples also existed in a sample of gay men and lesbian women. A total of 1300 lesbians and gay men from the U.S. were surveyed via the internet in order to examine the mental health variables under study. In contrast with findings in heterosexual samples (Austefeld & Stanton, 2004), results suggested that gay men and lesbian women do not differ significantly in their use of emotional approach coping. While emotional approach coping was not found to moderate the relationship between internalized homophobia and the mental health variables under study, the current results indicated that emotional approach coping may serve as a valuable form of coping for lesbians and gay men, being predictive of lower perceived stress and depression, and higher meaning in life among the current sample. Consistent with Stanton, Kirk, Cameron, and Danoff-Burg (2000b) and others in positive psychology (Austefeld & Stanton, 2002), these results suggest emotions can be used adaptively in the context of coping, and emotional approach coping appears to be a positive predictor of mental health, which differs from findings associated with past

emotion-focused coping measures (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). Conversely, internalized homophobia was associated with poorer mental health outcomes, including higher levels of depression and perceived stress and lower meaning in life. Furthermore, these findings are consistent with prior findings that show internalized homophobia's direct negative association to the psychological health of lesbians and gay men (Balsam, 2001; Bos, Van Balen, & Van Den Boom, 2004; Meyer, 1995).

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Unwin, J. (2008). A prospective study of the role of hope in predicting adjustment in new lower limb amputees. University of Hull (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

Previous research has indicated that psychosocial variables such as satisfaction with social support and active coping may be of importance in facilitating adjustment to amputation. However, studies published to date have been almost exclusively cross sectional and have framed adjustment in negative terms (e.g. the absence of depression). The current study aims to build on previous research by examining prospectively demographic, amputation-related and psychosocial variables. Adjustment is conceptualized as subjective and is positively framed. Furthermore, the role of hope, a cognitive model from the field of positive psychology, is examined for its unique contribution to adjustment over other variables. Ninety-nine lower limb amputees were recruited and completed measures of social support, active coping and hope at the beginning of rehabilitation. At six-month follow-up participants completed measures of positive affect and subjective adjustment. Analyses of the data confirm the importance of psychosocial variables in predicting adjustment to lower limb amputation. Social support, active coping and hope were all significantly correlated with outcome. Hope made a unique contribution to the prediction of positive mood in lower limb amputees.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Tangeman, K. (2008). Self-efficacy in incarcerated adolescents. Pepperdine University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Although many adolescents engage in risky behaviors, those adolescents without requisite psychological skills, safety and contextual supports, can experience severe consequences to their decisions to engage in risky behaviors, including incarceration. The present study intends to identify strengths within an incarcerated, male adolescent sample with the interest in upholding the framework of positive psychology. The purpose of this research is to investigate the role of general self-efficacy and specific self-efficacy factors in depressive and posttraumatic stress symptoms, positive family relationships and perceived social support within an incarcerated adolescent population. One hundred male adolescent participants, randomly selected from the population rosters of four juvenile camps administered by the Los Angeles County Probation Department, were included in the archival dataset used in this study. Self-efficacy beliefs were found to be significantly and positively correlated with family supportiveness as well as social support from peers. The results of this study contribute to the field of social cognitive and self-efficacy theory, as well as self-efficacy and positive psychology research. Additionally, the findings also have implications for positive psychology treatments and multicultural applications.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Brink, A. (2008). Curiosity, personal growth initiative, and life satisfaction in older adults. The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Working within a positive psychology framework, this study explores the intersection between Curiosity, Personal Growth Initiative, and Life Satisfaction in community-dwelling older adults. A review of the existing literature in the areas of positive psychology and the older adult population is presented. The Curiosity and Exploration Inventory (CEI), Personal Growth Initiative Scale (PGIS), and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) were administered to 50 older adults. Consistent with existing research, the results indicate that there is a significant positive correlation between Curiosity and Life Satisfaction, Personal Growth Initiative and Life Satisfaction, and Curiosity and Personal Growth Initiative. Among Curiosity and Personal Growth Initiative, the latter was found to be a stronger predictor of Life Satisfaction. Limitations of the current research are discussed as well as the implications for future research.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

McCoy, K. (2008). Flow and spiritual transcendence: The conditions of positive experience and usefulness for therapeutic outcome in substance abuse recovery. The Wright Institute. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Individuals who have made the behavioral change from substance abuse to sustained abstinence offer insight into the qualities that contribute to successful recovery. Methodology: In a sample of 126 clean and sober adults in recovery from drug and/or alcohol abuse, this study examined the relationships between positive sober experiences (flow, spiritual transcendence), hope and variables associated with relapse in existing empirical literature (self-efficacy for abstinence, presence of meaning in life, search for meaning in life, attitudes toward substance of abuse, perceived social support, psychiatric symptoms, time abstinent). Results: Hope contributed significantly to six of seven recovery-related variables (self-efficacy for abstinence, $r = .32$, $P < .001$; presence of meaning in life, $r = .51$, $P < .01$; attitudes toward substance of abuse, $r = .25$, $P < .01$; perceived social support, $r = .49$, $P < .001$; psychiatric symptoms, $r = -.39$, $P < .001$; time abstinent, $r = .21$, $P < .05$). While flow and spiritual transcendence showed less robust relationships with recovery-related variables, each made significant contributions to hope (flow and hope correlation, $r = .36$, $P < .001$; spiritual transcendence and hope correlation, $r = .35$, $P < .001$). Multiple regressions were used to further analyze the relationships between positive psychology variables and recovery-related variables. Contrary to hypotheses, life stressors, such as legal stress and low income, did not have a significant relationship with flow, spiritual transcendence or hope. Employment level was significantly related to hope. With respect to 12-step involvement and dual diagnosis, this study found few group differences in hope, flow, spiritual transcendence or recovery-related variables. Addiction severity did not account for the relationships found among study variables. Discussion: Findings suggest that positive sober experiences, such as flow and spiritual transcendence, may foster hope, and that hope corresponds with strength of recovery. Discussion of study limitations, clinical implications and areas for future research follows an analysis of quantitative findings.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Merrin, J. (2008). Program evaluation of clinical services at a community-based behavioral health clinic: An action research approach. Alliant International University, Fresno. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Outcome research, program evaluation and performance measurement have been important parts of quality assurance in the health care field in recent decades to increase effectiveness of treatments and well-being for patients. Improving efficiency and effectiveness at community-based mental health clinics could ultimately improve patients' health, treatment outcome, well-being, and quality of life (QOL). The organizational variables that were assessed in this study included resource allocation and responsibility; use of research data policy planning; feedback; team building; client, clinician, and administration

interaction; effectiveness of clinical supervision; stakeholder and community involvement; and quality assurance intervention design and implementation. This study utilized Seligman's positive psychology model (1998; see also Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) to analyze the outcome and performance of a community-based behavioral health clinic organization, the W. Gary Cannon Psychological Service Center (PSC), in Fresno, California. Results of the qualitative action research model for the study of the PSC organization revealed a number of factors that could increase the likelihood of the PSC becoming a high-performance organization that could increase the well-being of its clients. Specifically, some of the issues identified included: measuring patient QOL outcomes validly and reliably, increasing stakeholder awareness of each other's activities and performance, fixing broken equipment to improve clinician education and client care, implementing continuous data-based performance management tools, and proving that the PSC was a cost-effective clinic. The findings support previous research that community-based clinics are going to need increasingly to evaluate and improve their effectiveness if they are going to be able to provide valid documentation of improvement in the well-being of their clients in a managed care world.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Walker, S. (2008). From description to prescription: Twelfth-century medicine for psychological and social health. Stanford University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This dissertation is an examination of five books on human psychology written between 1135 and 1210: William of St. Thierry's *De natura ivrporis el animae*, Aelred of Rievaulx's *De anima*, Isaac of Stella's *Epistola de anima*, Helinand of Froidmont's *De cognitione sui*, and an anonymous work entitled *De spirilu et anima*. In it, Walker argues that the authors of these texts shared a similar view of the mind and taught that a better understanding of psychology lay at the heart of efforts to improve mental, social and spiritual health. Walker explains that all five books are *libri de anima* or "books on the soul" and that their authors placed the seat of the mind in the immaterial and immortal substance of soul, teaching that man's soul is made in the image of God and operates within the body as God operates within the world, or a king within his kingdom--i.e., by "animating" the body social or politic. Accordingly, soul was possessed (literally) by individuals and (metaphorically) by their institutions, states and societies, with the result that the health of individuals and collectives was discussed using identical language. From here, Walker goes on to describe the exact structure of the soul and the essentially hierarchical nature of twelfth-century psycho-civic metaphor as a necessary prelude to uncovering the methods prescribed for optimizing inward health (i.e., soul-health). Through close examination of the texts, Walker argues that one can separate out descriptive and prescriptive psychology by identifying the structures of the mind discussed in the texts and then identifying the authors' ethical prescriptions - prescriptions which are also, in effect, psychological and psycho-civic medicines. These medicines are generally cultivatable virtues (i.e., labor, love of learning, contemplation, obedience) and appear in the texts for three reasons: (1) they promote individual mental health, (2) they improve the health (i.e., cohesion and effectiveness) of institutions and communities, and (3) they lead individuals and communities upward to God. Substantial theoretical influence claimed for positive psychology.

Thesis, conceptual, theoretical.

Kim, J. (2008). Virtue and character strengths, coping, and quality of life for people with chronic illness and disability. The University of Wisconsin - Madison. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The positive psychology constructs of virtue and character strengths, in addition to coping, were examined in relation to quality of life, using a sample of 95 individuals with chronic illness and disability. Participants completed the Sense of Well-Being Inventory-Revised (SWBI-R), Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WOCQ), and a newly developed bipolar scale of character strengths. Preliminary factor analysis was conducted on participant responses to the 24 character strength items to identify underlying virtue factors, and three factors or subscales were identified and labeled as positive harmony, self-cultivation, and practical wisdom. Participants were clustered, using Ward's hierarchical agglomerative clustering method, on the basis of their profiles of SWBI-R subscale scores, and three clusters were identified and labeled as balanced quality of life, low quality of life, and intermediate quality of life. More than half of the participants were included in the intermediate quality of life cluster, with mean sense-of-well-being scores approximating the sample as a whole, and the remaining participants were divided between the balanced and low quality of life clusters. Discriminant analysis, followed by univariate analyses of variance, indicated that the three quality of life clusters could be differentiated on the basis of WOCQ scores, with participants in the low quality of life cluster indicating greater use of escape-avoidance coping strategies relative to the other two clusters. A second discriminant analysis, also followed by univariate analyses of variance, indicated that the quality of life clusters could also be differentiated on the basis of the three virtue factors from the character strengths scale, with higher self-cultivation scores for participants in the balanced quality of life cluster. Thus, evidence was found to support of relationships between quality of life of people with disabilities and both virtues and character strengths, particularly self-cultivation, and coping, particularly the use of escape-avoidance coping strategies.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Barneclo, N. (2008). *El laberinto del exito: A mixed methods investigation of resilience within the context of mexican-american late adolescents lives*. New Mexico State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purposes of this study are to promote positive psychology in research involving Mexican-American participants, and to understand the resilience process among Mexican-American adolescents. This study is a mixed methods study, with both quantitative and qualitative measurements of resilience. The first part of the study examines resilience by using the Connors-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), the Multicultural Adversity Scale for Adolescents (MASA), cumulative high school Grade Point Average, and the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS). The author hypothesized that among 101 Mexican-American college student participants, CD-RISC scores would predict higher cumulative high school GPA and SHS when controlling for MASA. Additionally, it was hypothesized that Mexican-American females would have higher CD-RISC scores than Mexican-American males, and that the longer Mexican-American adolescents and their families had lived in the United States, the lower their high school GPA and SHS scores. Eight participants were then selected for the qualitative study based on high CD-RISC, MASA scores, high school GPA, and SHS scores from the initial 101 participants. The qualitative study pursued awareness of specific resilience processes and factors by examining ways in which the participants coped with stressful life events. Quantitative results were examined using the General Linear Model, and the qualitative results were examined using NVivo II software and grounded theory. Hypotheses one and two were supported, suggesting that the CD-RISC can significantly predict SHS and high school GPA when statistically controlled for MASA. Implications are briefly discussed. Qualitative data supported a variety of resilience factors prevalent in the current literature, such as the importance of parent support and parent involvement in education. In addition, the data provided additional information pertinent to Mexican-American adolescents, including the importance of sibling connections and cultural pride. Finally,

additional theory and a model for resilience among Mexican-American adolescents are proposed, and limitations and implications for counseling psychologists are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Siegel, C. (2008). Assessing the effectiveness of the reintegration and recovery program. The University of the Rockies. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The Adult Needs Strength Assessment measured the strengths and needs of adult male offenders within the Reintegration and Recovery Program. Techniques like motivational interviewing, cognitive behavioral, and positive psychology was the theoretical orientations that served as the foundation for the Reintegration and Recovery Program. The results from pre and post 7-week testing indicated positive change patterns within the experimental group versus the control group. More negative change patterns were consistently found in the control group (those male offenders who were not exposed to the Reintegration and Recovery Program). The results supported the hypothesis where the ANSA pre and post scores would show disparity between the two different time periods by using the quasi-experimental Wilcoxon test.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Schwartz, A. (2008). Stayers, fence-sitters, and leavers: Foster care workers' psychological responses in the workplace. Columbia University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The field of child welfare struggles with rapid job turnover, causing an enormous burden on child welfare agencies, both in the time and resources required to replace employees and in the ability for workers to work effectively with their clients. This study describes the contributors to, experiences of, and outcomes of foster care workers' emotional responses to their work. Affective events theory contributed to the conceptual framework for this study, which uniquely draws from several research traditions---organizational theory, positive psychology, and social work---to describe and conceptualize the relationships of multi-level contributors to foster care workers' affective reactions at work and resulting job attitudes, notably job satisfaction and happiness, and job and field turnover intention.

Semi-structured, in depth interviews were conducted with 25 foster care workers from five nonprofit foster care agencies in New York City. In addition, standardized surveys were administered and basic organizational data was collected. Multiple case study methods drawing from grounded theory and case study methods guided the data analysis. In general, foster care workers made overwhelmingly negative comments about the larger environment within which their agencies were embedded. Most workers were very positive about their clients, coworkers, and supervisors, and accounts of agencies sorted themselves out into three organizational types: Positive, Negative, and Mixed. A typology of foster care workers based on their job attitudes was created. Three groups emerged: Stayers, Fence-Sitters, and Leavers. Most workers, regardless of group affiliation, named more negative than positive emotions. Fence-Sitters and Leavers, however, are at higher risk of leaving their jobs and the field. These findings have practice implications at multiple levels. At the institutional level, changes in policy and funding could improve the working conditions for foster care workers. At the organizational level, agencies that are Negative or Mixed can strive to be more Positive. At the individual level, agency leaders can take on a significant role in fostering a culture where workers are encouraged to name, foster, maintain, extend, and transfer their good feelings at work.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Kelley, B. (2008). Life satisfaction, religiosity/spirituality, and the relationship with parents in adolescents and young adults. Columbia University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study examines the relationships among life satisfaction, religiosity/spirituality, and adolescents' perceptions of their parents' style of relating, in a large, diverse sample of adolescents and young adults (12-23). Subjects were ascertained by purposive and snowball sampling, predominately in New York, New Jersey, Illinois, and California. In order to overlap with the literature of positive psychology, adolescents within the top quartile of life satisfaction scores were separated to form the Very Satisfied group, and compared via regression beta weights with the Rest of the sample. Univariate and simultaneous regressions were employed with the Satisfaction with Life Scale as an outcome, and as independent variables, the Fetzer Multidimensional Measure of Religiousness/Spirituality, four single-item proxies for religious involvement and behavior, the Parental Bonding Instrument, and the newly developed Parental Spiritual Transparency Scale. The Very Satisfied had significantly higher means than the Rest of the sample on all of the religious/spiritual and parenting variables except for Congregational Problems, and Mother and Father Overprotection. Pearson correlations found that none of the independent variables included were significantly correlated with life satisfaction for the Very Satisfied, though regression analyses did uncover some small to moderate effects for proximal religious/spiritual variables, such as Daily Spiritual Experiences and Frequency of Prayer on high life satisfaction. Perhaps due to a restricted range of scores, or ceiling effect in the Mother and Father Care dimensions and the Parental Spiritual Transparency Scale scores (overall the adolescents reported very good parenting), there were no significant patterns of association found between parenting variables and high life satisfaction. However, for the Rest of the sample, regression analyses found significant associations with Life Satisfaction from Daily Spiritual Experience, Forgiveness, Positive Religious Coping, Congregational Benefits, and three of the single items. Similarly, Mother and Father Care (positively) and Mother and Father Overprotection (negatively), as well as Parental Spiritual Transparency, were all significantly associated with life satisfaction in the Rest of the sample. A post-hoc, Sobel's test of mediation was performed with the only set of associations which fit criteria, and Paternal Spiritual Transparency was found to significantly mediate the association between Mother Care and Life Satisfaction. Results are considered for their theoretical and methodological implications for the Psychology of Religion/Spirituality and Positive Psychology, which include the necessity of treating positive functioning as distinct, theoretically and empirically, from the relationships found between predictors and the functioning of psychopathological or population-representative research participants.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Beard, K. (2008). An exploratory study of academic optimism and flow of elementary school teachers. The Ohio State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The goal of this research was to examine individual teachers' beliefs about their experiences, abilities, students, and academic tasks through two concepts evolving out of positive psychology - flow and academic optimism. Researchers have theorized and found correlational support for the idea that flow is an optimal psychological state underlying peak performance. This study examined two competing models of flow. Jackson (1998) defined flow as a holistic, subjective experience encompassing all nine of Csikszentmihalyi's original elements. Quinn (2006) conceived of flow as a causal model, with antecedents and consequences defining flow as the merging of awareness and application. The results from CFA and SEM of 260 elementary school teachers, demonstrated that Jackson's model provided a better explanation of flow for teachers. For teachers, flow is a holistic and integrated concept with nine aspects.

Hoy and colleagues (2006) theorized that collective teacher efficacy, faculty-trust in students and parents, and academic emphasis are dimensions of a single latent trait of schools called academic optimism. The (Hoy, et. al., 2007) model of individual academic optimism was well supported. Teacher academic optimism is a second-order factor comprised of three first order factors: sense of teacher efficacy, teacher trust in parents and students and individual teacher academic emphasis. In this analysis, the measures of individual academic optimism were refined. The construct of general life optimism describes an individual's positive expectation about the future. Enabling structure describes the extent to which the structure of a school supports teachers' work. The correlational results yielded that a teacher sense of flow and academic optimism were positively related. General life optimism was positively correlated with academic optimism. Enabling school structure was positively correlated with academic optimism but the relation with flow was not supported. Finally, the results from exploratory analysis of multiple predictors for teacher sense of academic optimism showed that general life optimism, flow and teacher perception of enabling school structure all made significant contribution to the explanation of teacher's sense of academic optimism, while academic optimism and general life optimism made significant contributions to the explanation of teacher's sense of flow.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Sandoval, E. (2008). Secure attachment, self-esteem, and optimism as predictors of positive body image in women. Texas A&M University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This correlational cross-sectional study investigated body image from a positive psychology viewpoint by examining variables that were predicted to contribute to positive body image in women and testing a model describing the relationships among the variables. Negative body image has been correlated with many psychological problems in the literature, but less research has examined positive body image. Some questions addressed include: Is there a relationship between secure attachment and positive body image? Do self-esteem and optimism act as intervening variables in the predicted relationship between secure attachment and positive body image? To address these questions, data from 97 women were used in a structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis. Some of the hypotheses were supported, although the overall model was not. Secure attachment was found to be positively correlated with and predictive of self-esteem and optimism as hypothesized and in line with previous findings. Also as hypothesized, self-esteem and optimism were found to be moderately correlated. Self-esteem and optimism were not significantly related to body image in the SEM analysis and therefore the overall proposed model was not supported. In this sample, secure attachment was found to be the greatest predictor of positive body image. Attachment accounted for 40% of the variance in body image, 44% of the variance in optimism, and 25% of the variance in self-esteem.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Markatselis, S. (2008). A scientific study of strengths and virtues: A contribution to the field of positive psychology. The City University (London) (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

Positive psychology philosophy underpinned the rationale of the current study. The aim was to examine factors considered to cultivate human strength. It was hypothesized that hope and perceived social support will be associated with and will predict participants subjective life satisfaction. Secondary objectives were to investigate how well the data obtained supported the theoretical models upon which the questionnaires were based. This quantitative study utilized a cross-sectional design. One hundred and fourteen participants from the community aged between 21 to 65 years, completed questionnaires

regarding perceived social support (Medical Outcomes Study Social Support Survey), hope (Adult State Hope and the Adult Trait Hope Scales), and subjective life satisfaction (The Satisfaction With Life Scale). Participants were approached in shopping areas in London and Surrey. The main hypotheses were partly supported by results. All dimensions of hope and social support were found to relate significantly with subjective life satisfaction. Agency, which refers to the individual's perceived capacity to initiate and sustain actions towards desired goals, emerged as the most significant predictor of subjective life satisfaction. Global Perceived social support was found to be a stronger predictor of subjective life satisfaction than global hope. The co-habiting and married groups perceived that they have significantly more tangible and affectionate support when they needed it than singles. Co-habitees reported significantly more overall support than singles. Principal Components Analysis of the Medical Outcomes Study Social Support Survey which was used to assess perceived social support and the dispositional and situational hope measures supported the theoretical frameworks the questionnaires were based on. Conclusion: The study confirms existing results and supports the idea that a person could increase subjective life satisfaction when it is motivated to initiate and sustain movement toward goals.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Kodama, N. (2008). Values and wellness as related to positive school orientation among Japanese adolescents. University of Northern Colorado. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Improvement of school attendance is an important educational concern in Japan. Over the last three decades, many researchers have used a pathological-oriented perspective to develop interventions. Despite these efforts, school attendance rates have not significantly improved. The application of positive psychology may provide an alternative perspective for addressing school attendance in Japan because it focuses on prevention and positive psychological growth. This orientation fosters students' optimal psychological functioning and may be able to buffer against the onset of problems including school non-attendance. Specifically, values and wellness can be significant factors related to positive school orientation such as school bonding and attendance. Therefore, the present study examined the relationship between a positive school orientation and Japanese students' values and psychological wellness. The results indicated that students' perceived wellness seems to consistently relate to a sense of school bonding, but not necessarily to attendance or participation in extracurricular activities. The relationship between values and positive school orientation was less clear, but values seemed to relate to more voluntary actions such as participation in extracurricular activities. Cultural considerations need to be taken into account in future research related to wellness and values. Implication for further research and prevention efforts within schools were discussed.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Fitzgerald, J. (2008). Doing good (or evil) and personal fulfillment in the thought of Abraham Joshua Herschel and Karol Wojtyla/John Paul II. The Catholic University of America. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Does doing good (or evil) lead to increases (or decreases) in personal fulfillment, if we understand "personal fulfillment" to include such realities as happiness, meaning in life, and freedom? This dissertation explores this question by analyzing the work of two prominent thinkers of the twentieth century: Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel and Karol Wojtyla/Pope John Paul II.

After an introduction that provides an overview of the question, authors, and sources to be discussed, the first chapter of this study supplies working definitions of the key terms and phrases in that question. The second chapter analyzes relevant philosophical, theological, and psychological considerations raised by

Heschel; the third chapter does the same for Wojtyla/John Paul II. The fourth (and final) chapter begins by revealing several noteworthy similarities and distinctions between the respective positions of these two thinkers. The final chapter then analyzes the wider context of those views by (1) showing Heschel and Wojtyla/John Paul II's debts to a few major predecessors (Aristotle, Maimonides, Aquinas, and Kant) and (2) examining some implicit critiques put forth by notable contemporary authors. This dissertation contends that both Heschel and Wojtyla/John Paul II suggest that doing good generally leads to increases in happiness, meaning, freedom from selfish desires, and personal fulfillment in general, while doing evil generally leads to decreases in each of these realities. In fact, it is plausible to think that both authors would say that doing good always leads to certain advancements in personal fulfillment, while doing evil always leads to certain declines. At the same time, the two thinkers' views are distinguishable; for example, Wojtyla/John Paul II more strongly emphasizes the relationship between doing good and attaining eternal life, while Heschel wrestles more openly with the possibility that proper religious commitment ultimately involves anxiety and sadness. In the end, while the pertinent conclusions of these authors are supported to an extent by recent findings in the field of positive psychology, whether or not one finds either of these thinkers ultimately persuasive will depend in large part on one's prior conclusions about the existence and nature of God.

Thesis, conceptual, theoretical.

Yurkewicz, C. (2008). Happiness in adolescence: The contributions of self-control, hope, and personal strivings. St. John's University (New York). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The researcher investigates the relationships of character strengths (hope and self-control) along with Seligman's (2002) paths to happiness and their effects on academic adjustment and subjective well-being in an adolescent sample of 149 students drawn from two schools in a large metropolitan area. Through structural equation modeling, the degree of hopefulness of adolescents was found to be predictive of subjective well-being, self-esteem, and academic adjustment, whereas self-control was found to be significantly related to positive outcomes in adolescence. In addition, those reporting the experience of greater levels of meaning in their lives were predictive of less absenteeism, less disciplinary incidents, and higher GPA, while controlling for other paths to happiness and demographic variables (gender, grade, and ethnicity). Finally, secondary analyses investigated the role of personal strivings (Emmons, 1986) in the experience of subjective well-being and academic adjustment, and these strivings were found to significantly account for further variance to positive outcomes over and above the contributions of the aforementioned variables. Directions for future research on positive psychology in schools are provided, as well as implications for administrators, educators, and school psychologists looking to promote optimal functioning in adolescence.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Chasle, L. (2008). Parenting a child with cancer: Positive psychology and coping. University of Hull (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

Part one comprises a systematic literature review, in which the empirical literature relating to coping of parents of children with cancer is reviewed. Twelve studies were included and from these studies, the coping strategies that parents related as most useful or most frequently used were synthesized into a bi-dimensional taxonomy. The dimensions of approach-avoidance coping and emotion-focused and problem-focused coping were used to organize results into a more coherent and meaningful structure. The reviewed papers were also quality checked. Part two comprises a qualitative study, using

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) methodology to explore the experiences of parents of children who have been diagnosed with cancer in the previous five years. In this study, positive psychology literature was used as a theoretical guide to focus interviews. Positive psychology is concerned with the study of positive emotions or characteristics, positive relationships and positive organizations, and how people may draw strength from these. It was hoped that by using positive psychology as a lens through which to explore the experiences of parents or children with cancer, a better understanding may be gained of what may drive or be behind behaviours and strategies so frequently observed in coping literature.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Bast, K. (2008). Self-determination, hope, and subjective well-being in adolescents with cognitive disabilities. University of Kansas. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Research has shown that it is important to examine positive psychology constructs for commonalities and unique relationships to determine the relevance and implications of these constructs on all people, including adolescents with cognitive disabilities. Self-determination, hope, and subjective well-being are three such constructs. For this study, correlational analyses were used to test the hypothesis that self-determination, hope, and their specific components are significantly positively correlated, and multiple linear regression analyses were used to test the hypothesis that the components of self-determination and hope can predict subjective well-being as defined by positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. Results showed that self-determination, hope, and their components are significantly related on many levels, but not all levels, and that the components of self-determination and hope can predict subjective well-being. These findings offer support for self-determination, hope, and subjective well-being sharing unique relationships, but also still remaining distinct constructs.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Moores, L. (2008). Positive aspects of international students' cross-cultural transition: A qualitative exploration. Simon Fraser University (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

As the international student population grows, it becomes increasingly important to understand the experience of crossing cultures. The literature has focused predominantly on associated problems while positive aspects have received little attention. The current study combines a Critical Incident Technique methodology and a positive psychology lens to explore the cross-cultural transition of seven international students, focusing on facilitative factors, growth, and personal resources. Nine categories of helpful factors emerged from the 134 critical incidents recounted in the interviews: growth and/or change, social support/building relationships, learning to navigate host culture, enjoyable activities outside of schoolwork, previous experiences and preparation, supportive faculty and staff, persevering through hard times, sense of belonging, and staying connected to roots. Further interpretation revealed four overriding themes: connecting with others, maintaining a foundation, embracing the process, and discovering strengths within. I also presented suggestions for future research and implications for counsellors and postsecondary institutions.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Lee, D. (2008). Aristotle's biopsychosocial model of psychology and conceptualization of character: Points of congruence with modern models of psychology. Adler School of Professional Psychology. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This dissertation had four basic aims: (1) to use English translations of Aristotle's work to illustrate his model of psychology and conceptualization of character; (2) to identify points of congruence between Aristotle's model of psychology and modern models of psychology that inform current clinical practice; (3) to illustrate the biopsychosocial and dynamic nature of Aristotle's model of psychology and conceptualization of character; and (4) to contribute to the ongoing and fruitful dialogue between the disciplines of psychology and philosophy. The author presents material from Aristotle's writings that provide evidence for the argument that Aristotle formulated a multidimensional, biopsychosocial and dynamic model of psychology and conceptualization of character that prefigured and is congruent with many aspects of contemporary models of psychology. Points of congruence between Aristotle's model of psychology and the following modern models of psychology were identified: biological/physiological models, evolutionary psychology, behaviorism, cognitive-behavioral therapy, Adlerian therapy, and positive psychology. The existent points of congruence between Aristotle's model of psychology and these modern models of psychology are identified and explicated in both the results and the discussion section. Both the illustration of Aristotle's model of psychology and the identification of points of congruence between his model and modern models of psychology that inform clinical theory and practice, makes Aristotle's model of psychology more accessible to students and practitioners of clinical psychology. To accomplish the above stated goals material was presented from the following sources: English translations of Aristotle's surviving works, writings from the works of Thomas Aquinas, material from contemporary moral philosophy, and material from modern and contemporary clinical psychology. The possibility of using Aristotle's model of psychology as a meta-theory to integrate material from various disciplines that study human experience is raised in the discussion section.

Thesis, conceptual, theoretical.

Clark, S. (2008). The role of school, family, and peer support in moderating the relationship between stress and subjective well-being: An examination of gender differences among early adolescents living in an urban area. Loyola University Chicago. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses

An emerging discipline within the field of psychology, known as Positive Psychology, places an emphasis on human strengths and well-being. One area of research within positive psychology is subjective well-being; a tripartite construct consisting of positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. Social support has been conceptualized in terms of its role in buffering, or protection against, the negative impact of a stressful event. Perceptions of social support have significant influence on psychological adjustment. Adolescence can be a time of additional stress due to cognitive, emotional, physical, and interpersonal changes. Adolescents residing in urban areas may be prone to heightened stress levels by virtue of their living conditions, putting them at higher risk for further negative consequences. Based on the Stress Buffering Hypothesis, social support works as a moderator or protective factor against stress. The present study explored the role of three different sources of perceived support (family, peer, school) moderated the relationship between stress, positive affect, negative affect and life satisfaction in an underrepresented population of Latino adolescents residing in an urban area. It also explored gender differences across stress and social support. The current study is a secondary data analysis of archival data previously collected in 2005. Subjects were 127 early adolescents enrolled in a public urban middle school in a large Midwestern city. Separate hierarchical multiple regression equations were used to test for interaction effects. A MANOVA was conducted to test for mean differences among gender across several dependent variables. Results did not support social support as a moderator, calling into question the stress buffering hypothesis for among this sample. However, family support was found to be a significant predictor of well-

being. Girls reported significantly greater levels of stress and peer support than boys. An explanation of results and implications are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

2007

N=35

Karris, M. (2007). Character strengths and well-being in a college sample. University of Colorado at Boulder. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Character strengths are new and important topics of inquiry in Positive Psychology. Recently, a classification of the strengths was developed, identifying 24 character strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Those authors contended that character strengths are important to one's wellbeing. For example, Peterson and Seligman recommended using one's character strengths to live a happier life and to buffer against disorders such as depression. Despite the positive assumption that character strengths are important to well-being, previous studies have failed to demonstrate who possesses these character strengths and to what degree. Furthermore, previous studies have not investigated the implications of possessing the character strengths. The current study: (a) measured character strengths in a college population (n=759) using the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths scale (VIA-IS); (b) tested the relationship between character strengths and various measures of well-being; and (c) evaluated the internal consistency of the VIA-IS scale. Significant gender differences were found for 11 of the 24 character strengths: kindness/generosity, intimacy, gratitude, forgiveness, appreciation of beauty and excellence, prudence, equity/fairness, leadership, creativity, valor, and self-regulation. Analyses of the relationship between character strengths and measures of well-being revealed a number of significant associations, especially with happiness and life satisfaction. Cronbach alphas for each of the 24 character strength scales were above .71, revealing adequate levels of internal consistency reliability. However, a Principle Components Analysis (PCA) revealed that the 24 character strength scales were best described as having 53 latent factors rather than the expected 24 factors. Implications of the major findings and recommendations for future research are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Flornes, K. (2007). An action research approach to initial teacher education in Norway. University of Birmingham (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

Starting from the most important question for me as a teacher educator in Religious Education, namely, 'How can I improve my practice?' I create an Action Research investigation over three cycles. Considering the limited framework of the RE programme in Norway and the lack of sufficient structures for student teachers, in particular RE student teachers, to use for education and stimulus in their professional and personal growth, I argue that the teaching and learning activities in the process of learning and learning to teach have to be carefully chosen and creatively implemented. Through this Action Research I conclude that the pedagogical tools derived from Personal Psychology and Positive Psychology and implemented in my study serve as appropriate catalysts for improved interactions and relationships between student teachers, mentors and teacher educators. In the process of becoming and being a teacher, and in my research, these catalysts not only promote reflection about personal performance in the classroom, but

they seem to stimulate a valued process of self-assessment, in challenging future teachers to identify their personal strengths and weaknesses.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Mallen Ozimkowski, K. (2007). The gratitude visit in children and adolescents: An investigation of gratitude and subjective well-being. Hofstra University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Research suggests that expressing gratitude can improve subjective well-being and mitigate symptoms of depression among the adult population. However, the benefits of expressing gratitude remain understudied in child and adolescent populations. Therefore, extending the work of Froh, Sefick, and Emmons (2007), this study attempted to determine if the participation in an intervention called the "gratitude visit" (Seligman, Steen, Park & Peterson, 2005) could enhance subjective well-being, state gratitude and decrease depression symptomology in children and adolescents. The second objective of this study was to determine if religious commitment, extraversion or gender moderate the relationship between the gratitude visit and reports of happiness. The overall N of this study was 89. Three groups of participants (3rd grade 8th grade and 12th grade) were randomly assigned to either the gratitude visit condition or a control condition. The measures used in this study consisted of the following: Positive and Negative Affect Scale for Children (PANAS-C; Laurent, Catanzaro, Joiner, Rudolph & Potter, 1999), the Brief Multidimensional Life Satisfaction Scale (BMLSS; Seligson, Huebner & Valois, 2003), the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale for Children (CES-DC; Wiessman, Orvaschel & Padian, 1980), the Gratitude Adjective Checklist (GAC; Emmons & McCullough, 2003), and either the Children's Personality Questionnaire (CPQ; Porter & Cattell, 1985) or the High School Personality Questionnaire (HSPQ; Cattell et al., 1984) for children and adolescents, respectively. Results indicated that conducting a gratitude visit was not associated with increases in overall happiness or state gratitude, or decreases in depression symptomology. However, students in the gratitude visit condition reported significant increases in life satisfaction at 4 weeks post. Religious commitment, extraversion and sex did not serve as moderators. The findings from this study add to the existing literature on gratitude and subjective well-being in children and adolescents. These findings suggest that the gratitude visit may be an effective intervention for the enhancement of life satisfaction in children and adolescents. Finally, the present research is consistent with Seligman et al., (2005) research which suggests that rather than being delivered to children and adolescents in isolation, perhaps the gratitude visit may be best delivered in a package of positive psychology interventions or as a supplement to psychotherapeutic intervention.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

O'Neil, D. (2007). Predicting leader effectiveness: Personality traits and character strengths. Duke University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Personality traits have been used extensively over the past forty years in assessing leadership potential, with varying degrees of success. A major limitation of this research has been the measures of personality. Another important limitation has been the availability of quantifiable measures of leader effectiveness. A third limitation is the lack of longitudinal studies. Because of these limitations, researchers have had difficulty determining the strength of personality traits as predictors of leadership effectiveness over time. Recent studies have used the Five Factor Model of personality to predict leadership effectiveness (e.g., Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan, 1994; Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002; McCormack & Mellor, 2002); and researchers in positive psychology (e.g., Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) have suggested that character strength and virtues (i.e., courage, temperance,

and transcendence) might also offer an approach useful in predicting leadership success. This research builds on these approaches and examined two trait-based instruments, the Big Five instrument (NEO-PI-R) and the Values in Action Inventory of Strength (VIA-IS) instrument as they relate to leader effectiveness. Using undergraduates at the United States Military Academy as participants, the research examines the relationship and efficacy of the NEO-PI-R and the VIA-IS in predicting leadership effectiveness over a two and a half year study. Regression analysis demonstrated that conscientiousness was the most significant predictor of leadership effectiveness. However, latent growth curve analysis suggests that there are three distinct patterns of leadership effectiveness. Using mixture modeling, these trajectories are best explained by the personality factors and virtue variables of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and temperance. The findings of this study have broad implications for emergent leader selection, leader development programs, and executive coaching in organizations.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Parker, B. (2007). The relation between hostility and social support: Investigating potential mediation or moderation by trait forgiveness, attributional style, and trait empathy. West Virginia University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

A substantial body of scientific literature has examined the relations among hostility, social support, and physical and psychological functioning. Typically, positive relations are observed between hostility and various problematic health concerns and negative relations are observed between social support and these same problematic health concerns. Hostility is commonly associated with decreased ratings of social support. The purpose of this study was to explore this relation between hostility and low social support, and determine whether three variables derived from the positive psychology literature (trait forgiveness, attributional style, and empathy) either moderate or mediate this relation. One hundred and fifty two female and 87 male undergraduate students completed the Cook Medley Hostility Questionnaire, the Social Support Questionnaire-6, the Heartland Forgiveness Scale, the Attributional Style Questionnaire, and the Interpersonal Reactivity Index. Results confirmed relations between several study variables. Hostility was significantly negatively related to forgiveness and social support quality, and significantly positively related to negative attributional style. Social support quality was significantly positively related to social support quantity, forgiveness, positive attributional style, and empathy. Forgiveness was significantly negatively related to negative attributional style. Although many relations consistent with the previous literature were observed, there was no support for any of these variables serving as moderators or mediators of the hostility-social support relation.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Giroux, P. (2007). Resilient teachers: A qualitative study of six thriving educators in urban elementary schools. Western Michigan University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This qualitative research study used elements of phenomenological and narrative research methodology to explore the common characteristics and experiences of a sample of resilient elementary teachers working in urban schools. The six research subjects in this study's sample each had at least eight years of teaching experience, and each participated in a cycle of three in-depth interviews designed to determine their degree of resilience and to develop a portrait of their personal and professional characteristics, experiences, attitudes and beliefs. Once the data collection phase was complete, data was coded and then analyzed to identify which of the characteristics and experiences were common to the research subjects. The significant findings of this study were that: (a) a sense of spirituality; (b) the presence of

collegial and, or personal support systems; and (c) the development of personal connections with students were all common to the sample members at a strong level. The findings of this study suggest implications for the fields of educational leadership and teacher education, and for areas of study including resilience theory and positive psychology.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Hwang, J. (2007). Perceived stress, positive affect, and meaning-focused coping of maternal caregivers of chronically ill children. Alliant International University, San Francisco Bay. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Many studies have investigated the negative psychological impact of stress among caregivers of the chronically ill. This investigation focused on how positive psychology assisted maternal caregivers feel better despite their taxing and chronic stress of caring for an ill child. The study utilized the 10-item Perceived Stress Scale, 20-item Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale, the Ways of Coping Checklist, and the Positive and Negative Affect Scale. Three groups of maternal caregivers were categorized as follows: low-distressed and high-distressed caregivers of chronically ill children, and caregivers of healthy children. Results showed a significant difference in the utilization of meaning-focused coping among the caregivers of chronically ill children. Specifically, as years of caregiving increased, low-distressed mothers used more meaning-focused coping than high-distressed mothers. The results also revealed that the low-distressed caregivers were significantly lower in perceived stress scores than the high-distressed caregivers over time. Furthermore, the low-distressed caregiving group and mothers of healthy children had similar mean scores on perceived stress and positive affect. Considered together, these results suggest that some maternal caregivers of chronically ill children are coping well psychologically despite having constant stress. Clinical application and future research directions are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Meacham, M. (2007). Life stories of authentic leaders in higher education administration. The University of Texas at Austin. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study researched authentic leaders (Avolio & Gardner, 2005) who were self-aware of their values, beliefs, ethical philosophies, and character strengths while using this knowledge to strengthen their self-regulation. They used positive modeling to enhance follower development, which ultimately promoted veritable and sustainable outcomes personally and professionally that integrated with the authentic leader's purpose in life. Higher education, as a multi-billion dollar industry, uses shared governance that creates challenges for its leadership. Authentic leaders who hold senior administrative positions within higher education are often confronted with varying levels of administrative challenges, especially immoral, unethical, or illegal policies and practices. Senior administrators are often the frontline for creating, supporting, and maintaining either an inauthentic culture at their institution that supports the status quo or an authentic culture at their institution that promotes and supports positive change focused on the common good. This study reviewed the literature regarding eudaimonia, positive psychology, positive leadership, and higher education administration. The focus was on authentic leaders who were senior administrators in higher education administration. This study utilized life stories to identify the common themes within these senior administrators' lives that allowed them to develop into authentic leaders who had the moral courage to take courageous principled-action against immoral, unethical, and illegal policies and practices within their institutions. This study produced a theoretical model that was juxtaposed against Avolio and Gardner's (2005) Authentic Leader Model confirming their research, as well as extending their

research into the moral courage and courageous principled-action research domains. This study has primary value for persons interested in having a deeper understanding of leadership, positive leadership, authentic leadership, moral development, moral courage, courageous principled-action, and higher education administration. This study has secondary value for persons interested in developing as an authentic leader, working effectively within higher education administration, or aspiring to develop the moral courage that will support their willingness and capabilities for taking courageous principled-action.

Thesis, conceptual, theoretical.

Wang, Q. (2007). Correlates of happiness for chinese individuals who are employed in the united states. Texas A&M University - Commerce. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the correlates of happiness for Chinese individuals employed in the United States. The criterion variable was happiness, and the predictor variables were optimism, internality, powerful others, chance, self-efficacy, and religion. A total of 112 Chinese individuals participated in the study. Each participant finished a package including measurements for the seven aforementioned variables. Pearson product coefficient results indicated that happiness was correlated positively with optimism, internality, and self-efficacy. When other variables were controlled, partial correlations indicated that happiness was also correlated positively with religion. Hierarchical multiple regression showed that optimism, religion, and internality were better predictors of happiness among the six variables. Happiness is closely related to an individual's daily life and one major concept of positive psychology. In America, immigrants have played important roles in various aspects of American society. At the same time, due to cultural differences, individuals from various cultural groups may face difficulties adjusting to American culture. These difficulties affect their perceptions of the quality of life as well as their levels of happiness. Therefore, it is of great importance to investigate the correlates of happiness for various cultural groups living in the United States.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Wood, K. (2007). Experiences of transformative learning in the appreciative inquiry event. Fielding Graduate University. ProQuest Dissertations and These.

In a review of the current literature and research on the practice of appreciative inquiry (AI), it is evident that changes in meaning schemas reported by participants are consistent with the process of transformative learning (TL) as described by Mezirow. In this qualitative research, I explored and described how AI participants understand and make meaning of their transformative experiences, comparing these experiences to Mezirow's TL theory. The sample population consisted of self-selected participants who reported a positive change they attributed to an AI event. First, I used a method of constant comparative analysis suggested by grounded theory. Then a deductive analysis using a transformative learning coding key, later, I triangulated the data. My research revealed that 73% of the participants who attended an AI summit experienced TL. Overall, 38% of the participants experienced a change of perspective consistent with TL, while 62% experienced an alignment of their values with AI. The process of TL followed Mezirow's model and other unique models of TL. Positive emotional experiences played a significant role in offsetting the experience of negative emotions. This research resulted in a new model of TL, which better describes the experiences of the research participants, and may be more inclusive and complete. This research increases our understanding of the process of TL, how AI might promote and foster TL, and the role of positivity and positive emotions in the process of TL.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Brault-Labbe, A. (2007). Engagement psychologique et bien-etre personnel: Presentation d'un modele tridimensional applique a l'univers academique. Universite de Montreal (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This doctoral thesis, presented in the form of three articles, aims to highlight the usefulness of studying the notion of commitment in psychology in order to better understand the mechanisms underlying an optimal human functioning. The first article presents a theoretical review which describes the conceptual limits having rendered the study of psychological commitment difficult until now. A three-dimensional model of commitment which was developed in order to overcome these limitations is then presented, as well as a description of the investigated applications of this model to date. The two empirical articles which are then presented describe in what manner the commitment model proposed in the theoretical article applies to the academic field. The first empirical article describes a study conducted with 266 university students and guided by three objectives: (1) applying the three-dimensional model of commitment to the academic area, while therein including new motivational considerations; (2) testing the hypothesis that academic commitment is positively related to students' personal well-being; (3) exploring the nature of the relations that exist between academic commitment and self-determination in the academic area. Exploratory factor analyses allowed the validation of a first version of the Academic Commitment Scale ($\alpha = .88$). Correlational and multiple regression analyses permitted the corroboration of the hypothesis pertaining to the positive relationship between academic commitment and personal well-being among students. This type of analyses also allowed the drawing of a descriptive portrait of associations existing between different types of regulation of motivation and academic commitment, highlighting a strong connection between intrinsic regulation toward accomplishments and academic commitment. Finally, exploratory and confirmatory analyses led to the corroboration of the hypothesis pertaining to the mediating role of academic commitment in the association between students' self-determination and personal well-being. The second empirical article still focuses on academic commitment, but also on the possible imbalances in respect of students' commitment, that is academic undercommitment and overcommitment. The underlying hypothesis was that those two less balanced modes of commitment would be associated with negative consequences for students. The reported study, conducted with 296 college-level students, aimed to corroborate the association between academic commitment and personal well-being with a new population of students, and to contrast this association with the negative one that was expected between personal well-being and the two less balanced modes of commitment. The three-dimensional structure of the Academic Commitment Scale ($\alpha = .92$) was validated again with college students, and exploratory factor analyses allowed to validate a first version of academic overcommitment ($\alpha = .85$) and undercommitment ($\alpha = .94$) scales. Correlational and multiple regression analyses allowed to confirm the hypothesis pertaining to the relationships between the different modes of academic commitment and personal well-being. Finally, by combining students' scores on each mode of commitment, four academic functioning profiles were identified and compared in regard to their respective level of personal well-being. Results are discussed while bringing forth their clinical and pedagogical potential value.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative, qualitative.

Cranmer, D. (2007). Autonomy and control in the workplace: Assessing managerial styles and employee perceptions of work climate. Capella University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This research is rooted in one of the central tenants of self-determination theory, i.e., social contexts can have a significant impact on an individual's degree of motivation, quality of performance, and level of

psychological well-being. The current study examined this assertion through research in a U.S. based medical transportation company. It incorporated an ex post facto research design to answer two questions: (a) [primary question] was there a relationship between employee perception of work climate and supervisors' managerial style, and (b) [secondary question] to what degree would causality orientations predict employee perception of work climate? A positive correlation was found in the primary question. The results of the secondary question were mixed, showing that only an impersonal causality orientation was predictive of employee perception of work climate. The larger concerns in this study included several overlapping areas, including quality work environments, positive work cultures, and employee motivation (e.g., intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, passion, and flow). This research drew heavily on self-determination theory, positive psychology, and positive organizational scholarship, as a way to address the larger concerns. Ultimately, the results of this study suggested the necessity of future research into organizational health as a potential moderating factor in the development of work related social contexts that are autonomy supportive for employees, and mutually beneficial to both employees and organizations. Detailed discussion of findings, implications, limitations, and future research are presented.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Sheppard, D. (2007). Understanding how highly involved minority parents sustain their involvement in their child's education. Wichita State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of my research study was to describe minority parents' perceptions of how they overcame challenges, sustained involvement, and remained highly involved in their child's education. Participants' perceptions were viewed through the theoretical frameworks of appreciative inquiry, positive psychology (Seligman, 1998) and humanistic psychology (Maslow, 1943). A qualitative descriptive multi-case study research design applied appreciative inquiry theoretical research perspective to describe the minority parent's perceptions of how they overcame challenges, sustained involvement, and remained highly involved in their child's education. An appreciative inquiry theoretical research perspective centers on the positive core of experiences held by participants. The multiple case study design was selected for utilizing more than one case for evidence and data, thus strengthening the study and increasing its external validity (Yin, 2003). Data were collected through focus groups interviews, and document review. Data were analyzed using pattern matching, the constant-comparative method and CATPAC, a text analysis software designed to show relationships among words. The analyzed data revealed six findings: Six salient findings were derived from my data analysis: (1) Native American and African American parents identified involvement strategies to improve their child's education; (2) African American parents believed there were issues related to minority relationships within the school and community; (3) Native American and African American parents set expectations for their children; (4) Native American and African American parents expressed pride in their children's accomplishments; (5) Native American and African American parents linked family values to their role and responsibility as a parent; (6) Native American and African American parents linked teacher care and respect for their child to the child's success.

These findings validate that Native American and African American parents desire to be and can be as successful as any other minority or non-minority parents, at being involved in their children's education. This group of highly involved parents offered several effective strategies for sustaining involvement in their child's education. Communication strategies and recognition for what is important in dealing with school personnel has facilitated these parents in their quest to support and help their child through their

educational careers. Both Native American and African American parents demonstrated that a belief system centered on the modeling of core and family values, including instilling the value of an education has proven to be effective positive acts for their children and families. A strong, positive, and optimistic belief system as well as a learned ability for effectively interacting with the school system has facilitated these parents in overcoming challenges and obstacles other minority parents often face.

I hope that the findings from this study can contribute to furthering an awareness of, and inspiring future research for minority parent involvement in our schools, as well as opening doors to practice and policy changes facilitating the education of children who greatly need to achieve at higher levels in our schools.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative, qualitative.

Buchanan, C. (2007). Making hope happen for students receiving special education services. University of Kansas. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

In positive psychology and special education, research and interventions focused on accentuating positive characteristics for students with disabilities is becoming more common. This study evaluated a positive psychology intervention; a program entitled Making Hope Happen (MHH) focused on enhancing hope, which was adapted for students receiving special education services. Involved in the study were 20 students receiving special education services in a moderate-sized middle school (grades 5-8) in an Eastern town. The students, an average of 12.35 years, received special education services under one of the following classifications: learning disabilities, emotional disabilities, autism, communication impairments, mental disabilities, or other health impairments. The Children's Hope Scale (CHS; Snyder, Hoza et al., 1997) and the Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS; Huebner, 1994) were used to assess gains in hope and life satisfaction for students with disabilities. A quasi-experimental, nonequivalent control group switching replication design was used with two comparison groups and three data collections. A repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) analyzed the overall effects of the intervention and the differences between the groups (Cook & Campbell, 1979). This study, being an initial attempt at increasing hope in students receiving special education services, was not significantly effective, revealing no statistically significant or clinically significant changes in the participants' scores on the CHS or the MSLSS. The repeated measures MANOVA's showed consistent CHS scores and MSLSS scores across all three administrators for both groups. Follow-up t -tests revealed no differences within or between groups. The MSLSS and the CHS have been reliable positive psychology measures for use with students with disabilities in previous studies and demonstrate satisfactory psychometric properties in the current study. Difficulties with recruitment, sample size, threats to internal validity, and group assignment all created limitations to the study. Psychology and research on individuals with disabilities no focuses on capitalizing on the positive aspects of human functioning, predicated a need to understand optimal functioning in all humans. The overall effects of the MHH program are inconsistent and unclear with this sample of youths. Further studies need to be conducted with larger samples and more developed modifications to the MHH program.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Chavez, D. (2007). Emotions: An experimental study on increasing positive emotions. Capella University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Positive psychology is the study of human potential and optimal functioning offering the theoretical conceptualization for psychological well-being and happiness. Positive psychologists suggest that identification of daily positive events may increase happiness. Following previous theory and research,

this quantitative study investigated the practice of a positive event exercise. The cognitive behavioral exercise was hypothesized to increase happiness and positive affect, relative to the control condition. The experimental design used a pre-post and posttest treatment and control group. Forty-four participants from a nonclinical, adult, rural population represented diversity in education and racial/ethnicity. Demographic data included generational emmigration status, such as first/second generation. A posttest questionnaire screened for life crises occurring during the experimental phase. Subjective and objective testing instruments were administered for measurement of happiness, positive affect, and heart rate. Statistical analyses were conducted through independent sample t-tests, regression analyses, correlational analyses, and one-way ANOVAs. The positive events exercise was a significant predictor of posttest happiness and positive affect. Sex and education did not have an effect on positive emotions; however, education had a significant effect on negative emotions for the positive events exercise group. Heart rate, a physiological objective measurement used in this research study, did not decrease for the positive events exercise group, when compared to the control group.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Farrell, A. (2007). Targeting the positive: The role of positive psychology in the prediction of inmate adjustment in a Canadian federal prison for women. Fielding Graduate University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Positive psychology theory involves a focus on character strengths as a means to assess behaviour that provides a more holistic approach to diagnostics than the present focus on pathology (Seligman, 2002). Such a perspective may enhance diagnostics, treatment approaches, and outcome for a variety of issues. In this study, the VIA-IS (Values in Action-Inventory of Strengths; Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and a life satisfaction measure (Authentic Happiness Inventory - AHI Peterson, 2006) were administered to 77 female inmates in a Canadian federal prison for women to determine any relationship of these constructs to institutional adjustment and recidivism. Results indicated that several character strengths and virtues were significantly negatively correlated with dynamic factors related to recidivism, general recidivism, and to some degree, institutional adjustment. A positive relationship was also found between life satisfaction and character strengths. In addition, psychopathology, particularly suicidality, was associated with poor institutional adjustment and higher recidivism risk. However, multiple regression analysis did not provide evidence of the VIA-IS as a predictive tool in institutional adjustment and recidivism. Treatment and policy recommendations are presented and the results of this study are discussed in terms of past research, limitations, and direction for future research.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Wakeley, S. (2007). Strengths of illinois public school superintendents and principals: Relationship to leadership components for change. Northern Illinois University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The literature indicates that leadership is of critical importance in the ability of schools and school districts to change and evolve in order to meet the continuing demand for increased student achievement and accountability. Although there is no shortage of theorists providing components to lead a change process, there is a void in the literature of how administrators can use their character strengths and abilities to frame the challenges of complex change in a positive way, which facilitates and fosters effectiveness and optimal experience. This research examined the alignment of character strengths with leadership components for change. Furthermore, this study sought to identify the leadership profiles of components for change that superintendents and principals exhibited based on their relative character strengths. The raters were made up of 18 third-year doctoral students from Northern Illinois University. Additionally, 324

superintendents and principals from 18 counties in northern Illinois completed a strength survey, which allowed for an analysis of leadership profiles of administrators based on specific demographic characteristics. The results of the classification of strengths and components for change by the raters showed that all of the 24 strengths could be aligned within the five components for change. However, the responses from survey participants created an alternative classification, which also displayed alignment of strengths to components for change, but grouping variation was observed. In order to make a meaningful correlation of strengths to leadership components for change, the classification results based on the survey participants was utilized throughout the profile analysis. The findings of the profile analysis illustrate that significant variation in strengths that align with components for change were evident when making comparisons of administrators based on their gender, experience, and their position of either superintendent or principal. The findings of this research sought to create a new niche for the exploration of character strength and the field of positive psychology and its implications for educational leadership, in particular leading change. Furthermore, this study brings to light the implications for administrators to become cognizant of how strengths can contribute to their effectiveness as leaders of change.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Mtsweni, S. (2007). Salutogenic functioning amongst university administrative staff. University of South Africa (South Africa). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study provides an orientation towards coping with stress management through salutogenic functioning. Six constructs, namely, sense of coherence, hardiness, self efficacy, potency, learned resourcefulness and locus of control, were studied as it manifest amongst random sampled university administrative staff. The literature review focused on salutogenic functioning, coping and stress, integrated in the salutogenic personality profile. The results from the research revealed correlations between external locus of control and comprehensibility, autonomy and self control, internal locus of control and self control, internal locus of control and commitment and challenge, self efficacy and meaningfulness. Negative correlations existed between autonomy and self efficacy and comprehensibility, males and females differed in their self control and external control, black Africans had the lowest score on external control, and there was no relationship between age and the constructs. Conclusions and recommendations were made regarding the optimisation of salutogenic functioning among university administrative staff.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Panega, L. (2007). Positive psychology: Implications for leadership development. Northern Illinois University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

As schools across our nation continue to struggle with an increasing shortage of effective school administrators, educational institutions and leadership development programs must find additional strategies to assess and further develop quality leaders. Recognizing the need to build leadership capacity and effectiveness, this quantitative research study linked effective leadership and character traits to the emerging field of positive psychology. Founded on the research conducted by Martin Seligman, a pioneer in positive psychology, the 24 signature strengths which represent character and personality traits were linked to effective superintendent leadership. The research study targeting National Board Certified teachers asked respondents to assess the degree to which they valued the signature strengths in their superintendents and the degree to which they perceived their superintendents as possessing the signature strengths. Through comprehensive analysis, the data revealed significant discrepancies between valued and perceived signature strengths which have implications for leadership development

and hiring practices. Additionally, the data obtained through this quantitative study were aggregated by gender, years of teaching experience grade level taught, and type of district, and leaves room for future studies targeting positive psychology and effective leadership. As educational leaders are forced to deal with extreme political and social challenges, it is not leadership theory and background that are so critical to leading in turbulent times but rather the character and personality traits which are the backbone of effective leadership. This study identifies the most highly valued signature strengths by National Board Certified teachers in superintendents and raises the concern as to why these same character traits are not perceived as being possessed by superintendents.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Cameron, R. (2007). Governing ourselves before governing others: An investigation of authentic leadership. Capella University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Authentic leadership is becoming a prevalent focus area for new thinking in leadership after the colossal corporate failures in leadership experienced at the beginning of this century. To this end, authenticity in leadership has been proposed as the fundamental root construct of all positive psychology-based forms of leadership such as transformational and servant. This study proposes that authenticity is constitutive to all effective antecedents to leadership, follower-ship, and highly effective teams. As such, authenticity is a hegemonic core construct that is foundational to what makes humans, and ultimately entire organizations, sustainable in their effectiveness. Increasing authenticity within leaders fosters increasing effectiveness of followers through modeling as well increased states of trust between the leader and follower. Trust, in this sense, is the lubrication for all highly effective systems of human activities whatever they might be.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Zurita Ona, P. (2007). Development and validation of a comprehensive coping inventory. The Wright Institute. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Despite the significant progress that the field of coping has had the last thirty years, coping research is currently challenged by the following major problems: (a) current coping measures do not capture the broad repertoire of individual responses to stress, (b) distinctly different coping responses are classified in very large categories (problem vs. emotion-focused or approach vs. avoidance); (c) coping measures do not include the findings of contemporary schools of therapy, and (d) current coping instruments do not yield results that are significant enough to be used in clinical settings. To address the above problems, the present study applies the findings of past and contemporary coping research, including emotion theory and positive psychology, to develop an integrated coping measure that allows clinicians to capture the broad variety of coping responses that individuals exhibit when encountering psychological stressors. Items and coping subscales were developed based on a rational classification strategy. In addition, a review of several coping measures with high internal consistency and reliability was conducted in order to identify items that appropriately reflect a coping construct. The generated coping instrument, Comprehensive Coping Inventory, contained 50 subscales and 200 items in its initial phase of development and was administered to 145 subjects. Cronbach's Alpha analysis of data was conducted in order to obtain reliability measures on the CCI's 50 subscales. In addition, exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the data in order to confirm or disconfirm its explanatory capabilities when applied to the structure of coping. Principal components extraction and Oblimin (oblique) rotation were employed using SPSS version 11.0. Using the Kaiser (eigenvalue-greater-than one) rule, twelve factors were extracted and rotated.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Gensner, B. (2007). A scholarly critique of deficits-based clinical psychology: A proposed alternative to the 5-axis diagnostic method. Spalding University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Psychology has historically devoted itself to the identification and remediation of many forms of psychopathology, and in the process of doing so has minimized or completely neglected areas of human strength and resilience. This qualitative dissertation traces the historical, sociocultural, political, and theoretical underpinnings of this medical-model paradigm, and seeks to provide an alternative approach to the manner in which consumers of mental health services are conceptualized and treated. This is accomplished through a careful review of published literature outlining the manner in which this deficit-based approach has impacted consumers and the public as a whole through the process of stigmatization. In addition, literature founded in Positive Psychology theory is reviewed in order to highlight the movement by some to call attention to the qualities and conditions that allow people to survive despite tremendous obstacles. This dissertation concludes with an appeal to the healthcare community for consideration of an addendum to the typical 5-axis model, in which a sixth axis would mandate that evaluators and clinicians broaden their conception of assessment and intervention to include those assets and areas of strength that have been traditionally overshadowed by symptom presentation and pathology.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Mansfield, S. (2007). The relationship of CEO's and top leadership teams' hope with their organizational followers' job satisfaction, work engagement, and retention intent. Regent University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study posits the existence of a leadership variable that both correlates with and predicts greater levels of follower satisfaction, engagement, and retention likelihood, secondary to the level to which this variable--leader hopefulness or hope index--is present in the positive psychology armament of the leader or leaders. Quantitative research methods were used to assess the hypotheses that higher leader and top leadership team hopefulness correlates with and predicts higher levels of employee job satisfaction, work engagement, and retention likelihood or intent. The independent variable in the research design was the chief executive officer (CEO) and top leadership team hope indexes and the associated hypotheses were tested using data generated via surveys of CEOs, chief operating officers (COOs), chief financial officers (CFOs), and chief nursing officers (CNOs) comprising the Catholic Health Initiatives health care system. These leaders' organizational follower satisfaction, engagement, and retention likelihood were assessed via analysis of employee climate surveys completed by followers of the executives; as such, these results provided data on the three dependent variables. While the study failed to confirm support for the belief that higher hope in CEOs and top leadership teams yields higher work engagement among their employees, it supported a positive correlation and predictive relationship between CEO and top leadership team hopefulness and their employees' job satisfaction and retention likelihood. This fact is significant to the fields of organizational effectiveness and leadership given the emerging existence of literature supporting the assertion that hopefulness, in organizational as well as other contexts, is a learnable skill. Through focused training, it has been demonstrated that leaders can elevate their hope indexes. This study is timely given that the dependent variables of job satisfaction and retention likelihood are in multiyear declines at the very time that those factors have been emphasized in the literature as being critically important to overall organizational effectiveness. While the role of leader hopefulness is a

comparatively nascent concept, the results of this study clearly demonstrate its utility in an organizational setting and underscore the need for additional scholarly research on the subject.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

McLaughlin, C. (2007). Buying happiness: Family income and adolescent subjective well-being. University of California, Berkeley. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Can money buy happiness? In this dissertation I review the extensive literature on adult happiness in order to answer this question once and for all; I then posit that income may be even more important for children's happiness than it is for adults. Children have a larger set of irreducible needs than adults, most of which require significant financial and material resources in one way or another. Those needs are what make them human children: they are heavily dependent on society and their families for their healthy development and survival. Using data from the Panel Study for Income Dynamics, I examine the relationship between family income and adolescent happiness. Then, by using the positive psychology, human development, and sociological literatures on child well-being, I develop a childhood "happiness hypothesis"--those factors which, in theory, should contribute most to childhood happiness. Finally, I test these factors in a series of logit and OLS regression analyses to determine which are most important for adolescent happiness, and which are most closely related to family income. The significant happiness factors boil down to the basic responsibilities of a parent and a society: providing for children's physical needs; providing communities and contexts for childhood (social integration); loving and bonding with children and providing for their emotional needs (establishing secure attachments); and providing support for, and monitoring of, their daily comings and goings. All of these happiness factors mediate the positive relationship between family income and adolescent happiness. Results show that higher family income does increase the odds that an adolescent will be happy, and that the unequal distribution of happy children in American society is largely a social problem rather than an individual one.

Thesis, conceptual, literature, review.

Hickinbottom, S. (2007). Moral decline or moral panic? A hermeneutic analysis of arguments about the western moral condition. Simon Fraser University (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

While many believe Western society is in the midst of a precipitous moral decline, others dismiss such claims as irrational moral panic. The purpose of this dissertation is to examine what this debate reveals about contemporary understandings of morality and moral pedagogy, and to provide a view of moral education that can overcome limitations of extant approaches. The study is composed of five sections. In the first, it is argued mainstream social science relies on naturalist epistemologies that fail to appreciate the situated, interpretive nature of understanding. A hermeneutic perspective, focused on questions of meaning rather than questions of certainty, is elaborated and offered as an appropriate methodology for the current study. In the second section, I situate the subject by examining how the declivity thesis has been expressed historically. This analysis reveals both sides of the morality debate rely on a shared eschatological narrative that features a technical utopia initiated and controlled by man. The assumptions underlying this narrative are examined critically in the third section. Three interrelated themes are identified: a pervasive attitude of scientism; a presumption of an atomistic, independent self; and, a narrow conception of the ideal of authenticity. It is argued that these themes, and the ways in which they have come to constitute the debate, conceal the uncertain nature of the moral domain, the embedded nature of selfhood, and the need for moral goods to be evaluated against a broad sociocultural context.

In the fourth section, character education is offered as an instantiation of the arguments presented. A brief history serves to situate the emergence of technical approaches and a critical review of two fields of contemporary psychological inquiry that seek to inform moral education (i.e., positive psychology and character psychology) is presented to demonstrate the ways in which technical approaches are detrimental to the development of practical wisdom and moral agency. The fifth section offers an alternative, hermeneutically inspired approach to moral education that views it as a practice of initiating students into established traditions and practices and cultivating a disposition that is open to continual engagement with moral issues.

Thesis, conceptual, theoretical.

Mashunkashey-Shadow, J. (2007). A longitudinal study of hope in Native American children and adolescents. University of Kansas. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Native Americans are at greater risk for trauma and negative mental health outcomes than the general population. Several protective factors have been identified within the Native American culture that may aid in decreasing mental health disparities. Some of these protective factors appear to be closely linked to positive psychology, specifically hope theory. To date, no published studies have examined hope within Native American children for any time frame greater than a one-month period. The primary purpose of this study was to examine hope in Native American children over a longer period of time. Participants were 47 Native American adolescents from the Midwest who were assessed at two time periods approximately three years apart. Results indicated that hope remains constant over time. Post hoc analyses suggested that a decrease in levels of hope appears as age increases. This study provides preliminary information about the trajectory of hope in Native American children, and adds to the cultural diversity in positive psychology literature. Results support the incorporation of positive psychology concepts as potential protective factors into mental health treatments for Native American adolescents. Implications and future research directions are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Coddington, J. (2007). Toward a theory of thriving. Capella University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

A grounded theory research design, including both qualitative and quantitative data, was used to explore the lives of high thrivers, eliciting proposed and definition and factors of thriving and creating a foundation for a theory of thriving. The central research question addressed in this study addresses this need: What are the dimensions of the sustained thriving over time? Fourteen factors emerged that fall under four super domains (Self with a capital "S," Connections with a capital "C," The P's---path, purpose and passion, and Abundance Mindset) which together create a theoretical basis for thriving in adults. The proposed definition is: Thriving in adults is an expression of internal coherence and the alignment of the authentic self that grows and develops over time. It is passionately expressed through a sense of path and purpose, characterized by deeply felt connections to other people and a greater whole, and fueled by a sureness of abundant possibility. The study contributes to the body of literature in positive psychology, specifically its goal of helping people to live thriving lives. It also relates to and builds upon Maslow's work on self-actualizing, adding to and broadening an understanding of what living and expressing an actualized self may look like and then identifying additional factors as the distinct construct of thriving. The results have application in organizational settings, as well as with individuals. The results of this study suggest a strong link between thriving and psychological well-being, indicating that an understanding of thriving may be a key to increasing individual well-being. The notion of thriving also has significant

implication in organizations and for leadership. The results imply a connection between both thriving and servant-leadership, and thriving and notion of mastery. Thriving appears to be as much about allowing, balance and emergence as it is about doing, distinguishing it from alternative ways of operating which are striving and driving. Understanding thriving in individuals will contribute to understanding and developing thriving organizations.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative, qualitative.

Rosewall, A. (2007). They accounted for their hope: A pastoral theology of hope constructed in response to personal narratives from the colonia 21 de mayo, el salvador. Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The Colonia 21 de mayo neighborhood in San Salvador, El Salvador, provided the research context for a pastoral theological study of the presence of hope and despair in times of crisis. The study connects the narratives of 13 individuals, the narrative of the community and the metanarrative of the country in order to understand the experiences of the individuals from 1970 to the present. Participants in the study were interviewed and the results showed similarities in the areas of locus of identity and the descriptions of violence and poverty. Visions of the future were dissimilar. The individuals interviewed expressed consistency of human strengths defined in positive psychology, and expressions of faith defined in pastoral and liberation theologies across areas of their lives. Factors such as resilience, perseverance, optimism, future story and identification with the suffering and resurrection of Christ influenced preferences for expressing hope for maintaining the status quo, mantener, and hope for continuing on toward transformation, seguir. Theological insights from these expressions of hope are explored as well as implications for pastoral caregiving in various contexts. Areas of future research point to ways of broadening pastoral theologies of hope grounded in human experience.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Wang, C. (2007). A case study of a positive psychology approach in an affective education elementary school course. University of Northern Colorado. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The primary purpose of this investigation was to identify and explore the components of a framework for affective education implementation based on a positive psychology approach. A fifth grade class (19 boys and 12 girls) in a public rural elementary school in Taiwan was chosen to participate in a 13-week long affective course that consisted of six units: Self-discovery, Love and Gratitude, Empathy, Emotions, Optimism, and Hope. In this study, both qualitative and quantitative methodological approaches were employed for collecting data. Constructivist grounded theory case study was used as a qualitative methodological approach to explore the components of a framework for affective education implementation, and the six methods for gathering data included participant observations (over 660 hours of observing participants), field notes (journals), videotapes, artifacts, self-assessment, and interviews. The Children's Attributional Style Questionnaire (CASQ) was utilized as a quantitative methodological approach to investigate whether the students' positive explanatory style had increased after experiencing this course. A framework for affective education implementation that emerged from the collected data consisted of three levels: the classroom in/out level, the school/family level, and the society/culture level. The classroom in/out level included three influential components: instruction (storytelling, interdisciplinary instruction, student subculture, and teachable moments), teacher (role and attitude), and student (self-concept). In the school/family level, teachers' teaching and students' learning were affected by school administrators and family members. In the society/culture level, the findings revealed that society and

culture had an impact on affective education implementation. Moreover, the components within these three levels were interrelated and affected each other overtly and covertly. Furthermore, the CASQ results revealed that students' positive explanatory style increased significantly from the pretest to the posttest, and the interview findings showed that participants enjoyed this course because they had acquired a lot of helpful affective knowledge. Finally, recommendations for educators and researchers were provided.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Iaquinta, M. (2007). The experience and meaning of career decision-making as lived by women with brain injury. The University of British Columbia (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Through explicit attention to diversity and a positive psychology frame, this phenomenological inquiry investigated the experience of career decision-making for women with brain injury. This group has been previously ignored in the career development and counseling, vocational psychology, and psychology literatures. There is a paucity of information about the subjective experience of career decision-making. The purpose of this study was to give women with brain injury a greater priority in career research and to illuminate the lived experience and meaning of career decision-making from the perspective of women with brain injury. Eight volunteers, involved in the community as a worker, volunteer, or student, described their career decision-making experiences through in-depth audio-taped interviews. Notwithstanding the initial severity of brain injury, participants richly articulated and illuminated their personal experience and meaning of career decision-making. Six common themes and five sub-themes emerged from a thematic analysis of the interview data. These were: (1) Continued Centrality of Career comprised of two interrelated sub-themes: the intensified meaning of paid work career, and the influence of rehabilitation in career decision-making; (2) Continued Centrality of the Relational in Career; (3) Sense of Life Purpose and Altered Life Perspective with a concomitant sub-theme of increased agency in career decision-making; (4) Sense of Continuity and Change in Identity; (5) Sense of Increased Vulnerability in Interactions comprised of two inversely related sub-themes: the sense of being devalued, and the sense of equality; and (6) Sense of Insecurity and Emotionality. The findings of this study revealed the experience of career-decision making to be a highly complex ongoing experience imbued with emotion and subjective meaning. Social interactions and the societal context, giving rise to positive or negative emotions, facilitated or obstructed the women's experience of career decision-making. These findings point to a critical need for training about the potential of women with brain injury for rehabilitation and counseling professionals. The theoretical implications of the findings are discussed as they relate to research in brain injury and career. The implications for career counseling process, in relation to models of career-decision making and career counseling are discussed and recommendations for future research are provided.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Crane-Mahan, C. (2007). The role of positive psychology in recovery of youth with behavioral health disorders. University of Kentucky. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The collection of various outcome data from multiple perspectives has become common in systems of care serving youth and their families; however, little is known about the information derived from such systems. Additionally, it is not clear which variables if any, contribute to the recovery of youth with severe emotional disabilities (SED). The present study examined existing data to explore differences between youth and caregiver perspectives on measures of hopefulness and functioning derived from the IMPACT Plus Ohio Scales. This study also attempted to explore the predictive properties of hopefulness upon

functioning. It was found that, on average there was a difference between youth and caregiver perspective on measures of hopefulness and functioning; however, while considering various hope models presented in the literature, the Ohio hopefulness subscale appeared to not measure hope. Therefore, the expectation of the hierarchical regression analyses to explore the prediction theory became moot. It is proposed that an existing or revised scale to measure hope in youth with SED be tested further before including the Ohio hopefulness subscale in theoretical research.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Faison, M. (2007). The relationship of forgiveness to psychological resilience and health among African American women. Capella University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This nationwide online study, involving 300 African American women, investigated whether forgiveness was significantly related to resilience and health. Consistent with the increased interest in positive psychology, the purpose of the study was to examine the relationship of the disposition to forgive to psychological resilience and physical and mental health among African American women. The respondents, residing in all areas of the United States, ranged in age from 18 to over 75, and the majority had attained a minimum of an undergraduate college degree, with over half having earned advanced degrees. This quantitative study employed a descriptive, correlational, cross-sectional survey design. As expected, bivariate correlations revealed a statistically significant correlation between forgiveness and resilience ($r = .340, p < .01$) and a stronger statistically significant relationship between forgiveness and mental health ($r = .412, p < .01$). Contrary to prediction, there was no statistically significant correlation between forgiveness and physical health ($r = .044, p < .01$). Additional analyses using multivariate analysis of variance found main effects indicating significant links between age and physical health and between religion and physical health. Interactions between forgiveness and the demographic variables of marital status and retirement also indicated significant relationships. These findings suggest that replication or more in-depth study might provide further insight into the meanings of these relationships. Results of this study added notably to scientific research about the relationship of forgiveness to resilience and health among African American women and paved the pathway to future research about positive health outcomes.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Otey-Scott, S. (2007). A lesson in gratitude: Exploring the salutogenic relationship between gratitude and health. Regent University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study investigates the correlation between gratitude and mental and physical health. It is hoped that the findings will extend research on the salutogenic relationship between gratitude and well-being as introduced by Emmons & McCullough (2003). Gratitude is assessed from a variety of perspectives including psychological and spiritual. The study is web-based designed yielding correlational data. Measures utilized included the Gratitude Questionnaire 6 (GQ-6, McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2001) and the Health Related Quality of Life 14 (HRQOL-14, CDC, 1995). Based on the groundbreaking research of Emmons and McCullough (2003), it was hypothesized that individuals high in gratitude would report fewer poor mental and physical health days than those low in gratitude. These hypotheses were supported. It was further proposed that individuals high in gratitude would report fewer days when they were unable to participate in their daily activities as a result of poor mental or physical health. This hypothesis was supported as well. The overall purpose of this research project is to add to the growing body of literature that supports the role of positive psychology and its influence on well-being.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Kilka, S. (2007). An analysis of the dependable strengths articulation process and the theory of optimal experience. Seattle University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This qualitative, phenomenological dissertation examines Dr. Bernard Haldane's Dependable Strengths Articulation Process (DSAP) and Dr. Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi's Theory of Optimal Experience, also known as Flow. The study upon which it is based aimed to discover whether, and to what extent, a process for Identifying Strengths Through Flow Articulation (ISTFA) is useful in eliciting dependable strengths derived from participant-narrated stories of past Flow experiences, contrasted with the DSAP's focus on stories of past Good experiences, and how the stories differed. The DSAP and the process for ISTFA are explained as having roots in personal construct psychology, narrative psychology, positive psychology and appreciative inquiry. Two groups, of four adult volunteers each, took turns sharing stories of past Good and Flow experiences while listeners made note of strengths they identified as having been used to accomplish them. Listeners provided immediate feedback on the strengths they had identified. From those lists, tellers selected their dependable strengths. Reports of strengths, primary researcher notes, and audiotapes of the full proceedings provided the data for the study. Comparable numbers of strengths were identified and the feelings of ownership of strengths that occurred during both processes validated the DSAP, as well as the ISTFA process, as effective interventions. Flow experiences produce states of heightened awareness, well-being, and happiness. The data suggest that the kinds of stories told and the kinds of strengths identified during the ISTFA process were different in nature from those of the DSAP. When used in combination with the DSAP, a broader spectrum of strengths may be identified. It is reported that there are mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health benefits of a positive, optimistic outlook (often called "the optimistic advantage"). People form more positive self-concepts as they gain insights into themselves, their strengths, talents, skills and abilities. Much leadership literature points to the need for renewal and a similar concept that Heifetz calls "sanctuary." Reflecting on past Flow experiences might allow leaders and others to explore and use the strengths derived from these processes to help them create conditions for future Flow experiences and for renewal.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Steinberg, S. (2007). Positive psychology and schooling: An examination of optimism, hope, and academic achievement. University of California, Berkeley. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Hope and optimism have gained increasing attention as important positive psychological variables. They have become promising examples of how positive psychology may fulfill a valuable role within the field of education, especially because they are variables that may affect academic achievement and also be malleable to teacher influence. This study investigated the relationship between teachers' and students' levels of optimism and hope, and also how these variables relate to students' academic achievement. In this study, optimistic attributional style and hope of 143 students were examined using self-report measures. Students came from 17 different 3rd, 4th and 5th grade classrooms in public elementary schools in Southern California. Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) was used to explore the relative importance of the predictor variables (teacher optimism, teacher dispositional hope, domain-specific hope, teacher perceptions) to student optimism, hope and academic achievement. HLM was also used to examine cross-level interaction effects of teacher predictors, teacher perceptions of student ability and student outcome variables. Despite original hypotheses that teacher optimism and hope would be related to that of their students, no significant relationships were evident. Similarly, neither teacher nor student

levels of optimism and hope predicted student academic achievement, as measured by the Houghton Mifflin CA reading assessment. However, both student optimism and hope each separately approached significance. Furthermore, one of the two components comprising hope, agency, did significantly predict students' Houghton Mifflin assessment scores. Cross level interaction effects were detected. Teachers' optimism accounted for most variance in student optimism among those students whom they had designated as being at grade level. Also in line with original hypotheses, teachers' domain-specific hope was not correlated with their dispositional hope, suggesting that teachers' hope related to their work in the classroom may be quite distinct from their overall levels of global, dispositional hope. Overall, findings suggest that the origins of students' optimism or hope may not lie simply with adult role models, but rather in the norms and dynamics of students' social affiliations. Findings also indicate the need for a more nuanced understanding of positive psychological variables. Implications for future research are discussed. **Thesis, empirical, quantitative.**

2006

N=24

Hollander, D. (2006). Is hitting a baseball solely dependent on one's athletic skill: The influence of one's attributional style and absorption level on a baseball player's batting average. Adler School of Professional Psychology. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study will examine whether or not a baseball player's success in hitting can be significantly affected based on one's perception of events and absorption ability. Perception is defined, using positive psychology, by the type of explanatory style a person uses to explain good and bad events. A person can view an event in either an optimistic or pessimistic explanatory style. Absorption is a trait marked by the level of focus and awareness of distracting stimuli. The Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ) will be used to evaluate whether one has an optimistic or pessimistic explanatory style. In order to assess one's absorption ability the Tellegen Absorption Scale (TAS) will be utilized. The results from the two questionnaires will then be correlated to each baseball player's batting average to determine if one's explanatory style and level of absorption influences one's success in hitting a baseball. The hypothesis is that those baseball players that have an optimistic explanatory style are more likely to have a higher batting average, as defined by hitting at or above .300, than those with a pessimistic explanatory style. Furthermore, a baseball player who demonstrates either high or low absorption ability will perform at a higher level than those baseball players who demonstrate average absorption ability. The hypothesis also includes that those baseball players that have an optimistic attributional style and a low absorption level will be more likely to have a higher batting average. The results are projected to indicate that baseball players that have an optimistic explanatory style and a low absorption ability are more likely to hit at a higher level. It is also likely that the outcome will show that optimism or low absorption ability alone will not significantly affected one's batting average. Furthermore a baseball player with a pessimistic attributional style is not likely to be considered a successful hitter. Additionally having a pessimistic attributional style and either a high absorption ability or a low absorption ability will probably not have a significant impact on a player's batting average. The implications of the probable results include being able to identify those players that are more likely to become a successful hitter based on their optimistic attributional style and low absorption level. The study also discusses the limitations within the research for possible future studies.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Gouig, S. (2006). Preventing eating disorders in young adolescents using positive psychology. Alliant International University, San Francisco Bay. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Eating pathology has become an increasing concern in our society. It has been reported that over 70% of adolescent girls of normal weight are engaging in unhealthy eating behaviors. Since treatment for eating disorders has been largely ineffective in long term follow-up studies, a successful prevention program for young adolescents is warranted. Those programs that have the most success share a common characteristic: a focus on self-esteem enhancement. Self-esteem enhancement and a focus on successful prevention programs are key values of positive psychology. Positive psychology is a developing perspective that focuses on the nurturing of strengths, rather than repairing weaknesses, to increase the efficacy of treatment. This dissertation created a prevention program that uses the principles of positive psychology as a guide. The development of this program provides students with information regarding healthy living and will instill self-confidence by teaching them to use their signature strengths to succeed. Students are taught to use their signature strengths in daily life to increase overall gratification in work and play. Since there is evidence that increased self-efficacy can generalize to other dimensions of life, thus contributing in areas of happiness, teaching students to be more healthy may impact their overall sense of well-being. Students ages 9-11 were chosen because adolescents at this age were less likely to engage in at-risk eating pathology behaviors such as extreme dieting or meal skipping. The program was written to be implemented in the 5th grade classroom by a teacher or counselor. This program has not been tested for efficacy but hopefully will significantly contribute to the field of preventing eating disorders. However, the addition of a positive psychology framework to prevent unhealthy living skills is promising in line with successful programs that focus on enhancing self-esteem. Further, a program focused on prevention for 5th grade students is promising since this has been an age group relatively neglected in the field of eating disorders prevention. Based on previous prevention programs this program is designed to decrease eating pathology among young adolescents.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Jezzi, M. (2006). The moderating role of optimism as related to work resources and work engagement. San Jose State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

A total of 216 employed participants from two samples were surveyed in a study of work engagement, defined as vigor, dedication, and absorption. The study focused on two primary objectives: (1) it used an application of the Job Demands-Resources Model which focused on four work resources and two work attitudes to predict work engagement; (2) it evaluated the moderating role of optimism with work resources and work engagement. The results revealed partial support for the prediction of engagement with work resources, job involvement, and optimism. Affective commitment did not significantly predict engagement. The results also revealed a small moderating role of optimism with work resources, vigor, and absorption, such that the relationships of work resources with vigor and absorption are stronger for individuals high in optimism than for those low in optimism. The hypotheses and results are discussed within the framework of the positive psychology perspective.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Mitchell, J. (2006). Individual perceptions of a proposed pressure to be positive in America. University of North Texas. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Positive psychology has become influential in research and practice. However, some have criticized positive psychologists who focus solely on the virtues of being positive. A tyrannical pressure to be positive may potentially exist in positive psychology, as well as mainstream United States culture. The following study explored perceptions of this theory using focus groups of individuals who differed in coping style, social desirability, and depression. Results suggest that individuals are affected by social pressures to be positive, and the expression of both positive and negative emotions is determined by social pressures, rules, context, and consequences. Although emotional expression, especially negativity, is contraindicated in several social contexts, there are also social, psychological, and physical benefits to all types of emotional expression.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Charrow, C. (2006). Self-efficacy as a predictor of life satisfaction in older adults. Adelphi University, School of Social Work. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

As people continue to live longer, quality of life and well-being issues as we age have become critically important. Informed by Bandura's social cognitive theory, this study aimed to contribute knowledge about subjective well-being for older adults, by examining the relationship between older adult life satisfaction and self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is an individual's perceptions of his or her own capabilities to perform specific actions required to produce specific results. Life satisfaction was used as an indicator of subjective well-being. A sample of 93 community-dwelling men and women age 65 to 92 was studied to test hypotheses that self-efficacy beliefs would be predictive of life satisfaction in older adults. This research analyzed general self-efficacy, social-efficacy and productive-efficacy using the Self-Efficacy Scale of Sherer, Maddux, Mercadante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs & Rogers (1982) and three original, individual questions about productive-efficacy. Life satisfaction was measured with the Satisfaction with Life Scale of Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin (1985). Hierarchical multiple-regression analyses found self-efficacy beliefs to predict life satisfaction even after controlling for demographic (age, gender & marital status) and health related variables. The most interesting predictor of life satisfaction was a one-item self-efficacy variable "I am able to be useful to my family, friends and community" that appears to measure efficacy in both the productive and social-connectedness domains. Self-rated health was also found to be predictive of life satisfaction in older adults. With its combined foci on life satisfaction and self-efficacy, this study contributes to the evolving field of positive psychology that highlights well-being rather than negative states such as problems and illness. The findings support Bandura's social cognitive theory that self-efficacy beliefs influence well-being in later life. Implications of the findings are discussed for theory, policy, social work education, practice and further research.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Shorey, H. (2006). The interactions of hope and attachment styles in a social-cognitive-motivational model of depressive vulnerability. University of Kansas. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Given the importance of understanding developmental antecedents of the early adult emergence of depressive symptomology (Ingram, 2001), new models of depressive vulnerability that unite seemingly disparate literatures are needed. The current paper proposes such a model based on the clinical, cognitive, social, and positive psychology literatures. Two studies assessed the model's propositions that: (a) social goals are linked to negative achievement events (i.e., failure) in cognition more closely than achievement goals are linked to negative social events (i.e., rejection); and that, (b) social hope mediates the relationship between achievement hope and depressive symptoms as a function of attachment-styles.

Results generally supported these hypotheses in finding that specific deficits in social- or achievement-area hope related to depressive symptoms differentially for each attachment-style group. Results are discussed in terms of implications for depression research and clinical practice.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Forest, J. (2006). Verification de l'effet de la passion et la satisfaction des besoins de base sur la performance, le bien-etre psychologique, la detresse psychologique, l'etat de flow et la vitalite subjective au travail. Universite de Montreal (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The aim of this thesis is to examine the effect of harmonious passion (where the individual has control on the practice of his passionate activity), obsessive passion (where the individual is "controlled" by his passion), and of the satisfaction of the three basic needs---autonomy (to be at the origin of one's actions and to act in accordance with one's values), competence (to feel effective in goal attainment) and relatedness (to feel that one belongs to a group)---on performance, psychological well-being, psychological distress, flow (a state of concentration and absorption) and vitality (perceived energy level) in the work context. Previous empirical evidence has shown that several positive consequences are associated with harmonious passion and need satisfaction whereas obsessive passion is related with negative or less positive consequences. Using the concepts of passion and satisfaction of the three basic needs, the present study has three goals. The first goal is to verify the impact of passion on performance, mental health (which includes psychological well-being and psychological distress), the state of flow (often synonymous with enjoyment) and vitality. In line with previous studies, it is expected that harmonious passion will be positively related to performance, psychological well-being, the state of flow and vitality whereas it will be negatively related to psychological distress. As with obsessive passion, it is expected that it will be positively related with performance and psychological distress while being negatively related to psychological well-being and vitality. No relation is expected with the state of flow.

The second goal of this study is to examine what relations exist between satisfaction of the three basic needs and the same dependent variables (performance, mental health, state of flow and vitality). It is expected that satisfaction of the three basic needs at work will be positively related to performance, psychological well-being, the state of flow and vitality whereas it is expected that there will be a negative relation between satisfaction of needs and psychological distress. The last goal of this study combines the concepts of passion and satisfaction of the three basic needs in order to see whether the satisfaction of the three basic needs is the mediating variable of the link between harmonious passion and the dependent variables (performance, well-being, distress, flow and vitality). General interpretation of the 439 participants' results tend to show that the more individuals report having a high level of harmonious passion and a high level of satisfaction of their three basic needs, the more they are also prone to report high levels of well-being, flow and vitality and low levels of psychological distress. On the other hand, high levels of obsessive passion are related with more distress and less well-being. The expected negative relation with vitality has not been supported but, as expected in this case, no relationship was found with the state of flow. Finally, contrary to expectations, the relationship with performance was not confirmed for both types of passion. Concerning the test of mediation, results tend to show that satisfaction of the three basic needs partially mediates the relation between harmonious passion and the dependent variables (except performance). After the presentation of the results, the theoretical and practical contributions of this research are discussed and are followed by the limits of the study, suggestions for future research and conclusions. This conclusion stresses the importance of harmonious passion and the satisfaction of the three basic needs in the explanation of well-being and pleasure at work.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Harbin, J. (2006). Therapist work with client strengths: Development and validation of a measure. University of Maryland, College Park. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Drawing from the positive psychology literature, the Inventory of Therapist Work with Strengths and Assets (IT-WAS) was constructed to measure the degree to which clinicians incorporate strength-based approaches in their therapy work. Two different samples were gathered in the current study; a professional sample ($n = 128$) and a university sample ($n = 97$). The professional sample was randomly selected from the 2005 membership directory of Divisions 17 (Counseling Psychology), 29 (Psychotherapy), and 42 (Independent Practice) of the American Psychological Association (APA), and resulted in a 51% return rate. The university sample consisted of graduate students in counseling related fields as well as faculty and counseling center staff at a large Mid-Atlantic university; the return rate for this sample was 62%. T-test results found no significant differences between samples on IT-WAS scores, and thus samples were combined for analyses. Three factors (Theory of Intervention, Strength Assessment, & Supporting Progress) were extracted by factor analysis, accounting for 52% of the total variance. The IT-WAS demonstrated very good internal consistency ($\alpha = .96$) and test-retest reliability ($r = .83$). Scale validity was supported by positive associations between the IT-WAS and measures of favorable attitudes toward human nature, benevolent world assumptions, as well as therapist work with the strengths of a most recent client. Most therapists generally conducted strength-based clinical work to a high degree, supporting propositions made by Seligman (2002; Seligman & Peterson, 2003). Cognitive-behavioral, humanistic, multicultural, and feminist theoretical orientations were positively related to the IT-WAS, while psychodynamic and psychoanalytic theoretical orientations were negatively correlated to the IT-WAS. No differences between clinical and counseling psychologists were found on IT-WAS scores. Implications of therapist work with client strengths are discussed and areas for future research are provided.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Rosenberg, L. (2006). A hermeneutic inquiry of learned happiness. Gonzaga University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

What is fundamental happiness? How is this deep sense of happiness learned? The relevant parameters which defined my research are dependent upon an essential assumption that places happiness at the center of humanness. While happiness influences the multi-layered facets of human life, its cultivation requires proper attention. This study demonstrates that fundamental happiness is a realistic goal worthy of intentional pursuit. My research provides insights into the skillful means necessary to engage in this quest. Development of a theoretical model of learned happiness designed specifically for adults was the primary purpose of this study. The model merged two fields of study: the conceptualization of happiness and transformational learning. Both fields were approached from perspectives of philosophy and psychology, and are shown to be convergent rather than divergent. The four primary authors selected for the research on happiness were: Father Robert Spitzer, the Dalai Lama, Pema Chödrön, and Martin Seligman. These authors were chosen because their individual approaches to the discussion of happiness have made significant contributions to the field. Each provides depth and clarity about happiness from a different perspective than the others; however, their general conclusions are, in large part, complementary. The five approaches to transformative learning were: (a) Mezirow's Transformation Theory, (b) Kegan and Lahey's languages for transformational change, (c) a scientific dialogue with the Dalai Lama and The Mind and Life Institute, (d) Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy, and (e) Appreciative Inquiry. The approaches

to education highlighted in this research are those which share the focus on the dispositional traits, characteristics, emotions, thoughts or beliefs that appear to mediate between external events and our interpretation of them. Happiness and transformational learning were analyzed uniquely using aspects of formal theory development. The literature review clarified and explicated the conceptual framework and characteristics of happiness, and illustrated how the cultivation of this simple yet complex phenomenon requires transformational learning. The subsequent synthesis of the concomitant relationship between happiness and transformational learning produced a significant component of the concluding model. Implications of the model were drawn in the following five areas: the field of Positive Psychology, the practice of psychology, economics, ethics, and education.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Soward, K. (2006). Resilience and self-control in at-risk preschool children: Influences of maternal parenting style and self-control. Fielding Graduate University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This dissertation is a quantitative exploration of children's self-control, under the rubric of resilience and from the theoretical perspective of positive psychology. Although there is research on parenting style and children's self-control dating back to the 1960s, the focus has been largely from a deficit standpoint and has not explored relations to resilience, adaptive outcomes, or adult self-control. This study investigated the positive relations between maternal parenting style, self-control, and children's self-control and behavioral concerns in at-risk preschool children attending Head Start. It was suggested that a fuller conceptualization of resilience, parenting style, and self-control would prove fruitful, and this study sought to generate one. This dissertation hypothesized that even in facing the adversity of poverty, a significant number of preschool children would still emerge resilient, developing appropriate self-control, and maternal parenting style and self-control would play crucial roles in enhancing adaptive outcomes. In a Head Start sample of 106 children, self-control and behavioral concerns were rated by mothers and teachers, as well as maternal depression symptoms, self-control, and parenting style. Results revealed statistically significant relations between authoritative and authoritarian parenting, self-control, and depression, and children's self-control and behavioral concerns. The findings suggest that higher levels of authoritative parenting style significantly predict higher levels of children's self-control. Conversely, higher levels of authoritarian parenting style significantly predict lower levels of children's self-control and increased behavioral concerns. This study not only furthered the research on the relations between maternal parenting style and children's self-control and behavioral concerns, but it also demonstrated that children faced with the adversity of poverty are still likely to emerge resilient, and that maternal parenting style plays an important role in adaptive outcomes.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Flack, H. (2006). The psychosocial experiences of young people with cancer: A qualitative comparison between paediatric and adult treatment settings. University of East Anglia (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

Qualitative methods were used to investigate the psychosocial experiences of young people (aged 13-21) with cancer (N=8). The experiences of young people treated in a paediatric ward were compared with those treated in adult wards. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, observations and discussions with the treatment teams. The findings were considered in relation to two developmental theories of adolescence frequently used within this field of research: 1) Havighurst (1948), and 2) Erikson (1968). Four main themes emerged from the data: 1) personal (emotional and physical changes), 2) setting (the physical treatment environment), 3) relational (interactions with family, peers, other patients

and the treatment team), and 4) education, career and the future. Differences emerged between the treatment wards in relation to young people's psychosocial experiences. The theoretical implications of the research are considered and the researcher questions the usefulness of these developmental theories within the context of young people with cancer. Alternative theories (including ideas from: positive psychology, models of chronic illness, and systemic theory) are proposed to enhance our understanding of young people's experiences during treatment. The research also discusses clinical implications, including how to enhance the provision of psychosocial care for young people with cancer.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Parker, C. (2006). Aging african-american women and the impact of positive psychological factors on quality of life. University of Maryland, College Park. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Aging African-American women are disproportionately affected by negative health outcomes and mortality. Life stress has strong associations with these health outcomes. The purpose of this research was to understand how aging African American women manage stress. Specifically, the effects of coping, optimism, resilience, and religiousness as it relates to quality of life were examined. This cross-sectional exploratory study used a self-administered questionnaire and examined quality of life in 182 African-American women who were 65 years of age or older living in senior residential centers in Baltimore using convenience sampling. The age range for these women was 65 to 94 years with a mean of 71.8 years (SD = 5.6). The majority (53.1%) of participants completed high school, with 23 percent (N = 42) obtaining college degrees and 19 percent (N = 35) holding advanced degrees. Nearly 58 percent of participants were widowed and 81 percent were retired. In addition to demographics, the questionnaire included the following reliable and valid survey instruments: The Brief Cope Scale (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989), Optimism Questionnaire (Scheier, Carver, & Bridges, 1994), Resilience Survey (Wagnild & Young, 1987), Religiousness Assessment (Koenig, 1997), and Quality of Life Questionnaire (Cummins, 1996). Results revealed that the positive psychological factors examined were positively associated with and significant predictors of quality of life. The bivariate correlations indicated that of the six coping dimensions measured in this study, planning ($r=.68$) was the most positively associated with quality of life. Optimism ($r=.33$), resilience ($r=.48$), and religiousness ($r=.30$) were also significantly correlated with quality of life. In the linear regression model, again the coping dimension of planning was the best predictor of quality of life ($\beta = .75$, $p < .001$). Optimism ($\beta = .31$, $p < .001$), resilience ($\beta = .34$, $p < .001$) and religiousness ($\beta = .17$, $p < .01$) were also significant predictors of quality of life. It appears as if positive psychology plays an important role in improving quality of life among aging African-American women.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Sweeney, M. (2006). Playing to strengths: A study examining drama therapy within the context of positive psychology. Concordia University (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study examines and compares two emerging areas in the field of mental health: positive psychology and drama therapy. The positive psychology movement emerged out of the desire to balance research in the mental health field to include the study of human strength and positive functioning along with the study of mental illness, and to apply this knowledge in clinical practice. The creative processes used in drama therapy, which are inspired by theatrical tradition, can effectively promote positive mental health, as they facilitate the potential for skill-building and deeper personal discovery within the safety of a therapeutic environment. Supporters of positive psychology are also working towards building a strong body of research focusing on human strengths and potential. Research collaborations with positive psychologists

could benefit drama therapy as a profession, by communicating this modality's therapeutic effectiveness to a wider community.

Thesis, conceptual, theoretical.

Norman, S. (2006). The role of trust: Implications for psychological capital and authentic leadership. The University of Nebraska - Lincoln. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The need for positivity and transparency in organizations has perhaps never been greater. Organizational scandals are widespread and organizational demands on leaders and employees at all levels are at an all-time high. Drawing from positive psychology and past leadership research, this dissertation explores the impact that leader positive psychological capital, or PsyCap (hope, optimism, efficacy, and resiliency), and level of transparency affect perceptions of trust in them and their overall effectiveness as an authentic leader. Utilizing an on-line experimental study with random assignment of 304 adult, fully employed subjects into four conditions (high leader PsyCap/high leader transparency, low leader PsyCap/high leader transparency, high leader PsyCap/low leader transparency, and low leader PsyCap/low leader transparency), results indicated strong support for the hypothesized relationships. Specifically, even after controlling for a wide variety of subject variables (whether the subject has been through an organizational downsizing, subjects' gender, subjects' age, subjects' propensity to trust, subjects' overall years of work experience, whether the subject was based in the United States, subjects' job type, and subjects' job level), it was found that both the leader's level of PsyCap and level of transparency impact followers' trust in that leader and followers' evaluation of the effectiveness of that leader. Limitations, practical implications, and future research are noted. Results contribute to the better understanding and positive impact of authentic leadership.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Taylor, V. (2006). Parent and staff perspectives of the relationship between nurture groups and children's behaviour: A grounded theory study. The University of Nottingham (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

Nurture Groups (NGs), originally set up by Marjorie Boxall (EP) in the 1970s, are a preventative resource for young children experiencing social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. They comprise discrete classes of between 10 and 12 pupils located within mainstream infant or primary schools and staffed by a teacher and trained assistant. Nurture Groups aim to provide a restorative experience of early nurture within a supportive and caring setting. A core feature of the approach is to meet children's needs at their developmental level, irrespective of chronological age. This study aimed to explore parent and staff perspectives of the relationship between NGs and children's behaviour at school and at home and processes relating to the intervention which were perceived to have effected change. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with an opportunity sample of parents and NG staff (n=26). Grounded theory methodology underpinned data collection and analysis. Conceptual categories relating to pre-intervention data represented children who were failing educationally, were emotionally disorganized and had poor self-efficacy and social skills. Many of these difficulties were attributed to poor parenting skills. Impact on parents generated categories representing perceptions of parental failure, vulnerability and a transactional impact between children's difficulties and parents' well-being. Post-nurture codes represented happy children who were thriving educationally, had improved self-efficacy, social skills and resilience and who were more emotionally contained. A positive transactional impact on parents' well-being was also noted. Interpretative analysis generated a grounded theory which indicated that NG processes could be supported by attachment theories, positive psychology and scaffolding children's experiences.

Explanations relating to changes occurring within the home could be supported by eco-systemic and transactional theories.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Tal, M. (2006). Re-joining the stream of life: An integrated model of trauma group treatment via dance movement therapy and somatic experiencing for older women suffering from spouse abuse. CNAA, Anglia Polytechnic (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

This research explores a new Integrative Trauma Therapy Model, which is comprised of two methods: Dance-Movement Therapy and Somatic Experiencing in a group setting for traumatized patients. The conceptual framework combined theories of trauma, neuro-physiology and survival, body-mind connection, emphasizing use of resources and positive psychology. As a piece of applied research it is focused on practice and on practical implications. The participants were 14 older women aged 60-83, victims of long lasting spouse abuse. They were all clients of a center for domestic violence in Israel where the researcher is a practitioner. This research study accompanies and is focused on the characteristics and effectiveness for the research participants and subjects of the practice of the programme, which is underpinned by theories, and the therapeutic model developed by the researcher practitioner. The main findings showed that: The Integrative Trauma Model was effective in healing the effects of suffering from trauma, enabling the women to move from the victim stance towards a more successful survivor stance. A positive change is clearly presented, showing relief in the trauma symptoms: depression, anxiety and dissociation. There has been a great improvement in personal abilities as a result of the treatment especially in the ability of connecting to the body. Five body-mind healing indicators were found as part of the healing process: body-mind integration; vitality and aliveness; self-regulation and relaxation; empowerment; and self-boundaries. The use of resources was found as another healing indicator. Most of the women reported a very high level of change on all the indicators. All the women experienced a change in their sense of empowerment.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Cheng, A. (2006). Hope and attachment styles among mothers at risk for child abuse and neglect. The University of Kansas. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Child abuse and neglect have long been associated with insecure attachment styles both as the antecedent and aftermath of the maltreatment. Attachment theory provides a useful conceptual framework for understanding the cause and long-term consequences of child maltreatment. Research on the positive mediating construct in families that are at high risk for child maltreatment is scarce. Hope is a construct in positive psychology and is related to positive psychological adjustment among non-clinical populations. However the significance of hope is unclear among families that are at risk to abuse their own child(ren). This study attempts to understand the relationship of hope, adult attachment style, and child maltreatment potential within high risk families. A sample of 45 at-risk for child abuse mothers completed measures of hope, attachment style and potential for child abuse. Results demonstrate a moderate relationship between child abuse potential and one's hopefulness. Findings also revealed that avoidantly attached individuals have higher child abuse potential and have lower hope scores.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Tilson, C. (2006). Positive psychology and psychotherapists. The Wright Institute. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Positive psychology is a new-yet-old subfield of clinical psychology and psychological science highly relevant to the practice of psychotherapy. Psychotherapy training, literature and lore have traditionally been characterized by a negative bias. The negative bias may impact psychotherapists' beliefs, and result in errors in clinical judgment and practice. This review of theory, research and applications in the field of positive psychology (a) provides an analysis of the relationship between positive psychology and the education, beliefs and practices of psychotherapists in order to generate knowledge relevant to the development of the profession, (b) considers potential benefits and/or dangers to the profession with bringing positive psychology formally into curricula, training and professional practice, and (c) identifies areas for future empirical study. Integration of positive psychology into graduate training programs is recommended as a means of expanding the role of clinicians into prevention and health promotion as well as treatment of illness, thereby potentially increasing well-being at a societal level.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Pye, M. (2006). An exploration of the relationships between strengths, academic performance, and classroom behavior in young students. Lakehead University (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Positive psychology is a theoretical framework, which emphasizes the importance of understanding and utilizing individuals' strengths, as opposed to focusing on their deficits. Since this framework is relatively new, there is little research that has explored the utility of strengths in a school setting, and in particular, the relationship between young students' strengths, their academic performance, and classroom behavior. The current study examined these relationships through the use of 3 questionnaires: (1) the Teacher Rating Scale (TRS) of the Behavioral Emotional Rating Scales (BERS 2; Epstein, 2004), (2) a modified version of the Strength Assessment Inventory (SAI; Rawana, Brownlee, & Hewitt, 2006), and (3) a modified version of the Teacher Report Form (TRF) from the Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment (ASEBA; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001). It was hypothesized that: (1) all students, regardless of academic performance and behavior, will have some strengths in all domains measured, (2) strengths will be positively correlated with academic performance, (3) scores on the BERS 2 will be negatively correlated with scores on the TRF, and additionally, (4) total scores on the BERS 2 and the SAI will be highly positively correlated and those scales that measure overlapping content areas will be more highly correlated than other scales. Data was analyzed using both Pearson correlations and canonical correlations, and yielded results that supported all hypotheses. Perhaps most interestingly, strengths were found to be related to both performance and behavior, however, the nature of the relationship was different for boys and girls.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Matteson, J. (2006). The emergence of self-sacrificial leadership: An exploration of the theoretical boundaries from the perspective of the leader. Regent University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Historically, self-sacrificial leadership was demonstrated by Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, and Martin Luther King. Contemporaneously, the selfless contributions of business leaders, especially during situational crises, have fueled the genesis of research on the role of self-sacrifice in leadership. Presently, all published studies investigating self-sacrificial leadership have been conducted quantitatively using controlled laboratory experiments. In these studies, the aspects of post-conventional moral reasoning, the spiritual features of self-transcendence, and several concepts related to positive psychology such as empathy, altruism, hope, and courage have received insufficient attention. In this exploratory research, qualitative interviewing and cross-case analyses were employed to examine the boundaries of the

construct. The construct of leader self-sacrifice is framed using concepts including attributes of charisma, risk taking, and willingness to experience harm and loss to establish the theoretical boundaries. Implications for the development of a theory of self-sacrifice in leadership, its practical utility, and recommendations for future research are discussed.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Branson, Y. (2006). Efficacy of a parent-child therapeutic nursery: Assessing outcomes of mothers of high functioning children on the autistic spectrum. Yeshiva University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

There are a limited number of intervention programs for children on the Autistic Spectrum and their parents, still fewer have been researched and shown efficacious. This study evaluates the parents (N=8) of children on the Autism spectrum who participated in the parent-child intervention of the Therapeutic Nursery, a developmental multi-modal nursery (Allen & Mendelson, 2000). The intervention was conducted over one school year through daily sessions of 2.5 hour duration. Parents are enlisted as members of the treatment team and the intervention is psycho-educational in order to help parents understand the developmental needs of their children. Parents also participate in parent support-groups and individual counseling. Pre and post comparisons of videotaped parent-child interaction will test for significant increases in parents' responsiveness to their children. Targeted parent goals include increasing parent competence, decreasing isolation and parental stress, and improving parent understanding of their child's needs. Exploratory measures were used to determine maternal mental health, positive psychology (optimism and hope) and parenting stress. Videotaped observations of dyadic free play were assessed using the Maternal Behavior Rating Scale. Findings showed significant correlations between maternal levels of hope and responsivity during free play with their child. Levels of anxiety were clinically significant among the mothers and stress findings were comparable to mothers of a Developmentally Delayed sample. Implications of the findings are compelling for practice purposes. Cognitive and behavioral therapy techniques can be utilized to help mothers reduce their anxiety and stress, enabling them to focus more on effective parenting. Furthermore, since levels of hope appear to be influenced by the psycho-educational aspect of the program, this feature of the parent-child model should be strengthened. Mothers should continue to be encouraged and supported in forming child related behavioral and developmental goals and developing the means to help their child reach those goals.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Butterfield, L. (2006). Helping workers meet the challenges of ongoing change: What strategies help and hinder? The University of British Columbia (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Taking a positive psychology approach, this research looked at a little-studied subset of working women and men--those who experienced changes affecting their work and self-reported as handling them well. The primary purpose was to explore what strategies they employed that helped them handle change well, what hindered doing well, and whether there were things that would have been helpful but were unavailable. There were two secondary purposes: (1) to gain insight into the nature of the changes they had faced, the impacts of those changes, whether they had always handled change well, and if not, when that changed and why; and (2) to explore whether the research interview itself had an impact on participants. This was primarily a qualitative, exploratory study that used the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) (Flanagan, 1954) to elicit helping and hindering critical incidents and wish list items; and open-ended interview questions (Cozby, 1997; Palys, 1997) to gather information about participants' experiences of change. A quantitative component was embedded in the form of a pre- and post-interview scaling

question (Palys, 1997) to determine if the interview had an impact. Data from the CIT portion of the study elicited ten helping, hindering and wish list categories: (1) Personal Attitudes/Traits/Emotional Set; (2) Support from Friends and Family; (3) Internal Framework and Boundaries; (4) Taking Action; (5) Self-care; (6) Support from Professionals; (7) Management Style and Work Environment; (8) Skill/Role Competence; (9) Support from Work Colleagues; and (10) Personal Life Changes/Issues, suggesting strategies can be employed that facilitate handling change well. Data from the quantitative portion resulted in a borderline large effect size, suggesting the interview had an impact on participants. Surprisingly, results from participants' stories of change and its impacts strongly paralleled results of studies in the unemployment, transition, burnout, and posttraumatic growth literature, suggesting this sample of workers was dealing with chaotic environments in many domains of their lives and even though they self-reported as doing well with the changes they were facing, there was a cost involved. Implications for workers, counsellors, vocational psychologists, career counsellors, human resource professionals, organizations, and future research and theory are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Nogen, C. (2006). Using positive psychology in sexually transmitted disease prevention programs for early adolescence. Alliant International University, San Francisco Bay. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This dissertation explores how to increase the effectiveness of sexually transmitted disease (STD) prevention programs for young adolescents. A review of literature explores adolescent development and the developmental tasks and sexual vulnerabilities adolescents face today. This study explores the major theories guiding the development of prevention programs, identifies factors that collectively contribute to effective prevention among adolescents, and investigates a few effective STD prevention programs already in use. Special focus is given to positive psychology, which is based on a prevention model. Positive psychology aims to identify and foster strengths in the hope that these strengths will assist in buffering against future stressors and vulnerabilities. This study identifies some of the positive psychology components embedded in effective STD prevention programs such as self-efficacy, resiliency, optimism, sense of coherence (SOC), and hardiness. This dissertation proposes that incorporating positive psychology themes into STD prevention programs for young adolescents will assist in strengthening the skills that will protect against participation in risky sexual behaviors. This dissertation focuses on the middle school age group (11-14 years). Nearly one in five adolescents has engaged in sexual intercourse before his/her 15th birthday. This statistic does not include adolescents who have engaged in oral sex or other sexual behaviors that increase the risk for STD transmission. Statistics for these behaviors among this age group are incomplete. To date, few STD prevention programs developed for this age group have shown evidence of long-term positive effects. This study offers guidelines on how to focus on aspects of positive psychology to increase the overall effectiveness of STD prevention programs oriented towards young adolescents. The guidelines also offer other ideas for improving the effectiveness of STD prevention programs for middle school youth, such as educating them about forms of sexual contact that can lead to the transmission of STDs which appear to be increasing today. It is also focused on educating students about the more commonly transmitted STDs (e.g., HPV, chlamydia, trichomoniasis). Limitations and suggestions for further research are discussed.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Kurz, N. (2006). The relationship between teachers' sense of academic optimism and commitment to the profession. The Ohio State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Using the theoretical frames of positive psychology and social cognitive theory, this study explored teachers' beliefs that influence their commitment to the profession. While commitment significantly influences teacher effectiveness, little has been known about teachers' cognitive thought processes related to commitment. Therefore, this study examined the relationship between teachers' commitment and key beliefs. In particular, teachers' beliefs about their ability to bring about desired student outcomes (teachers' sense of efficacy); thoughts about quality relationships with their students and parents (trust); and high priorities for academic tasks (academic emphasis) form the underlying construct of academic optimism as a characteristic of individual teachers. To test the relationship between teachers' sense of academic optimism and commitment to the profession, data were collected from a random sample of third and fourth grade teachers in Ohio. Correlational and exploratory factor analyses were conducted to analyze the data and the proposed models. In addition, analyses included an investigation into teacher factors (years of experience, certification/licensure status, and degree attained) and student factors (socioeconomic status, minority background, and identified status) related to teachers' sense of academic optimism. The results of the investigation supported the hypotheses that academic optimism is comprised of teachers' sense of efficacy, and their emphasis on academics. Teacher factors are not related to teachers' sense of academic optimism. Academic optimism is positive related to students' socioeconomic status, but teacher experience and expertise factors are not related to teachers' sense of academic optimism. Finally, academic optimism is related to teachers' to the profession.

In summary, exploratory analyses demonstrated that positive teacher beliefs are related to teachers' commitment to the profession. The results of this study offer numerous implications for theory, practice, and future research.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

2005

n=22

Zemansky, T. (2005). The risen phoenix: Psychological transformation within the context of long-term sobriety in alcoholics anonymous. Fielding Graduate University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Although members of Alcoholics Anonymous and AA literature emphasize a profound, positive psychological transformation that takes place through the process of working the 12 Steps and using the tools of the AA program, most behavioral science research on alcoholism has focused on psychopathology and deficit. The current study employed a new paradigm, combining the emerging field of positive psychology and long-term 12-Step recovery. This quantitative research used a correlational design and multiple hierarchical regression analysis to examine the relationship between optimism, gratitude, meaning and purpose in life, subjective well-being, spirituality, and the developmental process of recovery among active members of Alcoholics Anonymous, as measured by length of continuous sobriety and degree of AA affiliation. An Internet-based survey was designed and used to collect data from 164 AA members, 100 of whom had over 10 years of continuous sobriety. While the hypothesized relationships did not prove to be significant, several associations were found. These include a positive relationship between AA affiliation and gratitude, between having an AA sponsor and spirituality, and between working all 12 Steps and having meaning and purpose in life. Notably, AA members in this sample demonstrated significantly above average scores on optimism, gratitude, spirituality, and subjective well-being when compared to same-instrument scores from historical reference studies using

non-clinical adult populations. This study thus offers some measurable evidence of a positive transformation, outside of simply stopping drinking, that occurs within the AA recovery process.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Fronczak, D. (2005). Coaching men at midlife. Alliant International University, San Francisco Bay. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Midlife can be a difficult and challenging period of adult development. Historically men struggling with midlife challenges sought support from family and friends. Over the last four decades some have men have found help from psychotherapy. Unfortunately, many men have sought no help at all. Over the last two decades men have increasingly sought the assistance of personal coaches to support them during midlife. This study is intended to assist coaches, whether psychotherapists or laymen, by providing a context for better understanding the developmental issues facing men at midlife. The study also overviews the field of positive psychology and suggests areas where it may enhance and inform coaching. The adult development theories of Carl Jung, Erik Erikson, and Daniel Levinson each posit specific developmental tasks for men at midlife. The ideal resolution of the midlife transition requires a shift toward generativity and a re-engagement in the individuation process to achieve personal integration, greater self-knowledge, and a more meaningful life. The emerging field of positive psychology offers several methods to support men with their developmental tasks of midlife. Positive psychology seeks to increase subjective well-being and help people to flourish. There are three suggested routes to increasing happiness; bodily and emotional pleasures, gratifications from engaging activity, and engagements that provide meaning. Identifying signature strengths and integrating them into coaching interventions may contribute to a more authentic quality of happiness and facilitate the pursuit of a meaningful life. Positive psychology may help men build the necessary resources and resiliency to buffer against midlife's inevitable challenges. Enhancing positive emotions increases one's thought-action repertoire and coping strategies. The integration of positive psychology and coaching may produce the necessary resources to prevent a midlife transition from developing into a midlife crisis. Based upon a review and synthesis of the relevant literature on midlife development, positive psychology, and coaching, several interventions are presented to provide an idea of how to develop techniques in line with the integrated theory proposed in this dissertation. This study suggests midlife interventions intended to help coaches normalize the midlife transition; increase positive emotions; facilitate personal integration; enhance self-understanding; and nurture the pursuit of a meaningful life.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Hamilton, D. (2005). The power of positive thinking: Do positive emotions broaden the cognitive repertoire of preschoolers? Bryn Mawr College. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Positive emotions, such as happiness and joy, feel good. Beyond this momentary hedonic benefit, past research suggests that positive emotions can facilitate patterns of thought that are more sophisticated and creative than those that occur when one is experiencing neutral or negative emotions (Fredrickson, 2001; Isen, 2000). However, little research has examined the range of domains to which this "broadening" effect of positive emotions applies and the extent to which the effect depends on the age of the individual. The field of positive psychology, which has fostered much of this research, would benefit from greater consideration of developmental perspectives. Rather than enhancing the performance of young children, positive emotions may impair performance, at least in some domains. Because preschoolers are still developing the ability to regulate their emotions effectively, positive emotions may disrupt their focus,

narrow their attention, and lead to more regressive and less adaptive functioning. This research examines the effect of positive emotions on preschoolers' performance of tasks in several socio-cognitive domains. One hundred and eleven participants were randomized to a positive or neutral mood condition and tested individually. Four different parallel (positive vs. neutral) mood induction procedures were counterbalanced and used with each participant. Following each mood induction, the children completed tasks assessing accuracy in Emotional Understanding (Emotion Recognition, and Emotion Knowledge), Inhibitory Control (Stroop and Card Sort), Social Problem Solving, and Creativity abilities. On the Card Sort task children in the positive condition performed better than children in the neutral condition. On the Emotion Recognition task, there was a marginally significant effect of condition such that children in the neutral condition performed better as compared to children in the positive condition. On the Social Problem Solving, Stroop, and Creativity tasks there was no difference in performance based on condition. Possible explanations for the findings are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Rempfer, P. (2005). A phenomenological study of trainers in the dependable strengths articulation process workshop. Seattle University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This phenomenological dissertation sought to discover and examine the psychological meanings of teachers, counselors and administrators who participated in the Dependable Strengths Training Workshop (DSTW). The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of eight participants as they engaged in the Dependable Strengths Articulation Process (DSAP). The study also explored the experiences of the participants as they learned how to teach the DSAP to others. Dependable Strengths are self-reported strengths based on the perceptions of participants as they evaluate experiences that they feel they do well, are proud of and enjoy doing. A phenomenological research methodology was chosen because of the desire to study the perceptions of participants as they relate to their experiences during the DSTW. Qualitative data were gathered and analyzed from the eight participants' concrete descriptions gathered in open-ended in-depth interviews, workshop observations, questionnaires administered after the first half of the workshop and at the conclusion of the workshop. Findings of this study indicate that the DSAP is a very effective experiential process for validating and affirming constructions of self-concepts. The sequential process of using Good Experiences as a basis for articulating Dependable Strengths works very well. All eight participants felt validated and affirmed by the articulation process which involved sharing in teams called Quads and also Project-for Excellence. Five participants expressed that they learned something new about themselves and three participants felt they already knew their strengths. All eight participants expressed that they believed everyone should go through this process. The findings of this study add credibility to the existing research on the Dependable Strengths Articulation Process. These findings have positive implications in the areas of career counseling, positive psychology, leadership development and organizational development.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Parker, P. (2005). The effects of explanatory style on bowling performance. West Virginia University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

As positive psychology gains more attention in psychology, sport psychology consultants will likely increase the study of this branch of psychological research. Foster, Hinkelman, and Watson (2003) suggested that an area of importance for sport psychology researchers is the development of a program to teach athletes how to be more optimistic in their explanatory style (ES). Some sport related research

has shown that an optimistic explanatory style better equips individuals to bounce back from failure (e.g., Martin-Krumm et al.; Seligman et al., 1990), while other research has shown that a pessimistic style may be more beneficial to sport performance (e.g., Davis & Zaichkowsky, 1998). However, no research thus far has examined the link between explanatory style and performance following success. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between explanatory style and sport performance. Competitive bowlers (N = 50) who participated in regional tournaments and local leagues completed the Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ, Peterson et al., 1982), a bowling ASQ (BASQ), and a demographic sheet prior to bowling. Data regarding the participants' bowling performance and explanations for this performance was collected following each of three games. Results of this investigation revealed that the bowlers' perceptions of success or failure were not dependent on their success or failure in the previous game. Following Game 1, there was a significant interaction between explanatory style grouping and perception of success; those with optimistic ES and a successful performance in Game 1 saw a decrease in scores for Game 2; however, all other bowlers had increasing scores from Game 1 to Game 2. Significant correlations were found between bowling experience and ASQ composite score; tournament experience was found to have a low-moderate correlation with ASQ composite score. Scores on the BASQ did not significantly correlate with scores on the ASQ. Possible reasons for these findings may include the nature of the sport of bowling or that bowlers may have learned to succeed despite their ES through perseverance and experience.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Austin, D. (2005). The effects of a strengths development intervention program upon the self-perceptions of students' academic abilities. Azusa Pacific University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Students are faced with numerous challenges as they reach the high school level. Among these issues are declining levels of academic efficacy, expectancy, confidence, positive academic behaviors, and motivation. Developing existing strengths or talents may serve as an intervention to reverse these negative trends and equip students with the skills necessary to experience academic success. The power of positive psychology is the foundation for recent studies in strengths-development research.

The purpose of this research was to measure the effects of a strengths-development intervention in education for possible global benefits in academic achievement and self-perceptions of academic ability. Six research questions were addressed in this study: (1) What effect will a strengths-development intervention program have upon students' academic expectancy and efficacy levels? (2) What effect will a strengths-development intervention program have upon students' positive academic behaviors? (3) What effect will a strengths-development intervention program have upon students' academic intrinsic and extrinsic motivation levels? (4) What immediate effect will a strengths-development intervention program have upon student outcomes in attendance rate and grade-point averages in mathematics and English? (5) What effect will a strengths-development intervention have upon teacher observations of positive behaviors? (6) What effect will a strengths-development intervention program have upon the academic expectancy, efficacy, motivation levels, and positive academic behaviors of subgroups identified by gender, ethnicity, economic status, and parent education levels?

The relatively large sample size (N = 527) was combined with the opportunity to assign students to experimental and control groups. The intervention group utilized the Gallup StrengthsFinder inventory to identify individual strengths. Students identified and developed their strengths through a 6-week intervention course at a suburban high school in southern California. Students were given a posttest to measure self-perceptions of efficacy, expectancy, motivation, and positive academic behaviors.

The results demonstrated that the 6-week intervention produced increases in the self-perceptions of the strengths-intervention group. Students experienced statistically significant benefits in the areas of academic efficacy, expectancy, positive academic behaviors, and extrinsic motivation.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Du Buisson-Narsai, I. (2005). The relationship between personal meaning, sense of coherence and organisational commitment. University of South Africa (South Africa). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The present study aimed to investigate the relationships between, personal meaning, sense of coherence, organisational commitment and selected biographical variables, specifically age, tenure and occupational level. It was found that mostly significant positive relationships exist between personal meaning and sense of coherence. Personal meaning and sense of coherence exhibit predictive value for organisational commitment. It was established that self-transcendence plays a significant role in the development of affective and normative organisational commitment. Some significant differences were found between management and non-management employees in the manifestation of personal meaning. Management approximates more personal meaning to achievement, self-acceptance, and fair treatment. On sense of coherence and organisational commitment there were no significant differences between management and non-management employees. It was recommended that the relationship between personal meaning and other positive psychology variables be researched in order to determine the significance of such relationships so as to add to this relatively new body of research.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Crawford, D. (2005). The bases for executive action: A multiple case study of leadership in the highly regulated long-term health care industry. Regent University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Leader contribution in regulated industries is often dismissed because of the perception that opportunities for discretion are limited by the dictates of the government. The long-term health care industry, one of the most government-regulated industries in the United States, has produced many failed business and few successes. Assuming limited leader discretion, since all of these businesses are regulated, why are there stories of both success and failure? This study explores how leaders can influence their environments despite regulatory constraints and market uncertainties. This was a mixed-method, multicase study incorporating a quantitative measure, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5X), into a qualitative study. Three cases examined the leadership of successful executives from three separate nursing home corporations through in-depth interviews, questionnaires, researcher observation, and the examination of field notes and participant feedback. As a result, analytical generalizations, as opposed to statistical generalizations, produced themes, patterns, and insights of extraordinary leadership in the context of this industry. Cross-case analysis yielded similarities among these executives. Leaders scored high on both transformational and transactional leadership, suggesting that managing in both arenas is essential in their regulatory environment. Further, these leaders do not allow regulations to drive decisions; rather, they transcend the environment by setting higher expectations and operating standards. Finally, these executives exhibited the constructs of hope, optimism, and resilience that are emerging from the positive psychology movement. Additional observations were noted to delineate how leaders construct psychological pathways to goals.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative, qualitative.

Sheard, M. (2005). A construct validation approach to mental toughness in sport: A positive psychological perspective. Teesside University (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

This study investigates the construct validation of mental toughness from the perspective of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). It recognizes the circulatory and the lack of a definitional consensus that has dogged previous attempts to conceptualise the term 'mental toughness'. The work starts from the premise that recent qualitative research which has attempted to define the construct (e.g., Fourie & Potgieter, 2001; D. Gould, Dieffenbach & Moffett, 2002; G. Jones, Hanton, & Connaughton, 2002; Thelwell, Dalzell, & Sadler, 2004) has proffered attributes that (a) deviate little from the characteristics identified by Loehr (1986) two decades earlier, and (b) have attempted to define it within the theoretical context of Kobasa's (1979) hardy personality (Clough, Earle, & Sewell, 2002). The considerations are followed by the rigorous and successful psychometric examination of Loehr's (1986) Psychological Performance Inventory (PPI), a measurement of mental toughness containing seven hypothesised subscales: self-confidence, negative energy control, attention control, visualisation and imagery control, motivation, positive energy, and attitudinal control. The PPI provides evidence in support of the theoretical relationship between mental toughness and hardiness, and demonstrates the power to discriminate successfully between genders, performance levels, types of sport, and nationalities. The instrument was applied in two separate intervention studies. Empirical evidence lent only partial support to anecdotal claims that outdoor adventure education activities develop positive psychological characteristics. However, the results of an individually prescribed mental skills training programme showed a significant post-intervention improvement in competitive swimming performance, and in levels of mental toughness and key correlate positive psychological constructs (viz., hardiness, self-esteem, self-efficacy, dispositional optimism, and positive affectivity). The findings of a unique investigation into the allelic association between a particular stress-protective polymorphism of the serotonin transporter (5-HTT) gene, mental toughness, and key correlate positive psychological attributes gave partial support to the proposition that phenotypic response is moderated by genotypic heritability as well as by a socially-conditioned environment. It is concluded that mental toughness is definable, measurable, responsive to intervention, and possibly genetic. Future research directions are suggested.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Murphy, M. (2005). Positive aspects of family caregiving of patients with Alzheimer's disease: A qualitative study. Our Lady of the Lake University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The burden of caregiving for Alzheimer's disease (AD) patients has received much attention, but there has been less research investigating the positive aspects of caregiving. Over the past fifteen years, researchers have begun to examine the positive elements of caregiving. This is one small step towards shifting the research focus from deficit-based to strength-based. This study's purpose was the description of positive or beneficial aspects of caregiving experienced by family caregivers of Alzheimer's patients. The ideas of positive psychology and postmodern social constructionism guided this research project. Using phenomenological methodology, eleven family caregivers and the investigator generated stories to assign positive meanings to caregiving events through the interview process. Non-professional literature and films about AD were also reviewed for themes about positive experiences in these depictions of AD caregiving. Caregivers co-created narratives about their responsibilities, relationships, and the positive aspects of their experiences. Themes that emerged included positive approaches to deal with the stress of caregiving, positive motives and rewards, creation of meaningful experiences, and perceived benefits for the patients. The participants described the positive aspects within the context of their entire

experience, and themes also included differences in role acquisition, and the difficult aspects of caregiving that these individuals were able to assimilate. Focusing on positive aspects of caregiving may help psychologists work with caregivers to enhance their strengths and successes, create meaning, and improve relationships between caregivers, care recipients, and other family members.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Xu, J. (2005). Subjective well-being as predictor of mortality, heart disease, and obesity: Prospective evidence from the alameda county study. The University of Texas Health Sciences Center at Houston School of Public Health. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Based on the World Health Organization's (1965) definition of health, understanding of health requires understanding of positive psychological states. Subjective Well-being (SWB) is a major indicator of positive psychological states. Up to date, most studies of SWB have been focused on its distributions and determinants. However, study of its consequences, especially health consequences, is lacking. This dissertation research examined Subjective Well-being, as operationally defined by constructs drawn from the framework of Positive Psychology, and its sub-scores (Positive Feelings and Negative Feelings) as predictors of three major health outcomes--mortality, heart disease, and obesity. The research used prospective data from the Alameda County Study over 29 years (1965-1994), based on a stratified, randomized, representative sample of the general public in Alameda County, California (Baseline N = 6928). Multivariate analyses (Survival analyses using sequential Cox Proportional Hazard models in the cases of mortality and heart disease, and sequential Logistic Regression analyses in the case of obesity) were performed as the main methods to evaluate the associations of the predictors and the health outcomes. The results revealed that SWB reduced risks of all-cause mortality, natural-cause mortality, and cardiovascular mortality. Positive feelings not only had an even stronger protective effect against all-cause, natural-cause and cardiovascular mortality, but also predicted decreased unnatural-cause mortality which includes deaths from suicide, homicide, accidents, mental disorders, drug dependency, as well as alcohol-related liver diseases. These effects were significant even after adjusted for age, gender, education, and various physical health measures, and, in the case of cardiovascular mortality, obesity and health practices (alcohol consumption, smoking, and physical activities). However, these two positive psychological indicators, SWB and positive feelings, did not predict obesity. And negative feelings had no significant effect on any of the health outcomes evaluated, i.e., all-cause mortality, natural- and unnatural-cause mortality, cardiovascular mortality, or obesity, after covariates were controlled. These findings were discussed (1) in comparison with relevant existing studies, (2) in terms of their implications in health research and promotion, (3) in terms of the independence of positive and negative feelings, and (4) from a Positive Psychology perspective and its significance in Public Health research and practice.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Das, P. (2005). The effects of optimism and coping strategies on quality of life for women with systemic lupus erythematosus. State University of New York at Albany. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The present study was the first to examine the research question that coping strategies mediate the relationship between optimism and psychological and physical quality of life for women with Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE). It was conducted as an exploratory investigation, so effects of all 14 coping strategies represented by the subscales of the Brief COPE (Carver, 1997) were explored as potential mediators between optimism measured by the LOT-R and the Mental Component Summary (MCS) and the Physical Component Summary (PCS) of the SF-36. Results provided support for the partial mediation

of optimism and psychological quality of life by seven coping strategies. Greater optimism influenced the use of active coping, positive refraining, acceptance, and emotional support, which were related to better psychological quality of life. Optimism also influenced the use of denial, behavioral disengagement, and self-blame, which were related to poorer psychological quality of life. Other findings showed that optimism had a direct positive influence on psychological quality of life and that use of some coping strategies including planning, instrumental support, and self-distraction resulted in poorer physical quality of life. A sample size of 314 women with SLE contributed to the significance of the results. Support was provided for coping strategies as partial mediators between optimism and mental health for women with SLE. Implications for clinical interventions by psychologists were reviewed. Future areas for research were suggested. The results of this study contribute to the literature on women's adjustment to SLE, positive psychology, coping with chronic illness, and women's health.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Patterson, T. (2005). Development of a measure of unconditional positive self-regard. University of Warwick (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

This thesis considers the relevance of both person-centred theory and client-centred therapy to mainstream psychology and to therapeutic practice, with particular focus on the construct of unconditional positive self-regard as an indirect of therapeutic change. The literature review examines the person-centred personality theory of Carl Rogers in light of recent developments in theory and research within the emergent discipline of positive psychology. In particular, theoretical observations and research finding from self-determination theory are reviewed in order to illustrate that empirical evidence supporting self-determination theory is equally supportive of the account of personality development, psychological functioning, and the process of therapeutic growth, as hypothesized within person-centred theory. The implications of this finding for both person-centred theory and positive psychology are considered. The second chapter reports the development of a self-report measure of therapeutic change that is based on person-centred theory. The unconditional positive self-regard scale (UPSR) was developed using a university student population. Principal components factor analysis established the empirical separability of two components, characterised as self-regard and conditionality. Both subscales showed high internal (coefficient alpha) reliability. Further analyses supported the convergent, discriminant, and construct validity of the new scale. Initial evidence suggests that the UPSR may have potential future applications as a non-medicalised indicator of therapeutic change. Chapter 3 reports the development of a brief version of the Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale in a sample of university students. The original 35-item scale measures the domains in which self-esteem is contingent. A brief version of the scale would have potential use in applied settings. The nine-item brief version of the scale was found to have four components. The factor structure partially replicated that obtained previously for the original 35-item scale, but a number of differences are noted.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Martin, S. S. S. (2005). Toward a theory of invisible leadership: A content analysis of the writings of Mary Parker Follett. Regent University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study is the first computer-assisted content analysis of the writings of Mary Parker Follett, a political scientist and social worker with a substantial following among business leaders over 80 years ago. Her ideas are echoed in quality circles, empowerment, horizontal structures, and social networks as they are discussed in leadership theory and practice today. Ahead of her time, Drucker (1995) dubbed her a

"prophet of management" (p. 1) for her forward thinking. "Her assumptions anticipated our own time in its complexity, turbulence, and uncertainty, more adequately than most writers or practitioners who are currently grappling with those types of issues" (Klenke & Charabaghi, 2001, p. 10). Using a grounded theory approach to content analysis, 1450 pages of text and 16,000 different words were reduced to 45 codes and 5 code families. The text was analyzed in three ways: word frequencies, coding, and tracing the development of the words leader, leaders, and leadership. Leadership emerged as the unifying thread of Follett's body of work. The results of this comprehensive content analysis showed that Mary Parker Follett was a trailblazer and an out-of-the-box thinker whose ideas and concepts expressed or anticipated many contemporary leadership constructs such as followership, conflict management, authority, control, and power and leadership theories including contingency theory, transformational leadership, the positive psychology movement, and complexity theory. The results of this research represent the foundation for the next step in theory development which will employ a grounded theory approach, anchored in the data presented here, to generate a model of invisible leadership through the inductive-deductive cycle of substantive theory building.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Madrugá, C. (2005). Counseling adolescents with cancer: Using positive psychology to enhance coping skills. Alliant International University, San Francisco Bay. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The way a cancer diagnosis is perceived has changed. As advances in modern medicine continue to develop, cancer is often not a fatal disease. Instead, more and more adolescents who are diagnosed with cancer are surviving. This change has led clinicians to find better ways to help these adolescents deal with their illness rather than face a terminal illness. As the likelihood and period of survival increases, understanding the impact of adolescents' experience with cancer and its treatment is increasingly important. The diagnosis of cancer in childhood often disrupts the emerging social development of the school-aged child. For example, the requirements of the treatment can interfere with the ability of the child to attend school or to have normal social interactions. Therefore, the focus of clinicians must turn to increasing the coping skills and resilience of adolescents who are struggling with a very disruptive stressor. Without appropriate interventions, these adolescents are at a greater risk for developing psychological problems. The focus of this study is on adolescents who are living with or have survived cancer. A conceptual analytic approach was taken to apply positive psychology theory to better understand and counsel adolescents who face abundant developmental challenges in coping with cancer at this stage in life. Adolescents are more flexible than adults in changing maladaptive coping style and are able to develop better coping skills. Positive psychology offers a promising theoretical paradigm for both prevention and intervention because it focuses on the strengths of the person. A personal account of K, a 17-year-old female, was utilized to specify the clinical applications outlined in this study. Her coping skills, sense of coherence and signature strengths exemplify how utilizing positive psychology interventions can strengthen adolescents' resilience. Moreover, it help them find meaning and purpose at a time when they often feel out of control and uncertain about their future. The theories used in this conceptual analytic study are meant to suggest a myriad of clinical applications. Hopefully, this study will help health professionals better understand how adolescents cope with this difficult and sometimes life-threatening illness. A consideration of the clinical applications suggested can help them both prevent and better deal with common and individual psychological problems of adolescents living with cancer.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Mayland, K. (2005). The impact of practicing mindfulness meditation on women's sexual lives. Alliant International University, San Francisco Bay. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Interviews of 10 married women described the impact of practicing mindfulness meditation on a woman's experience of sexuality. The average age of participants was 50.2 years old, their average length of marriage was 15.7 years, and their average length of practicing meditation was 19.4 years. The interview consisted of open-ended questions that were grouped into five categories: Early Sexuality; Current Sexuality; Exploring Mindfulness Meditation; Impact of Mindfulness Meditation on Sexuality; and Sexual Satisfaction. Interviews were analyzed using content analysis to yield qualitative data. Nearly all of the participants were extremely satisfied with their sex lives. While many had received negative messages about sexuality in their youth from sources including their parents, siblings, peers, media and the church, most enjoyed sexuality in adulthood. They felt that their sexual lives had been affected by practicing mindfulness meditation, and described a heightened awareness of physical sensations and emotions during sexual encounters. Motivations to engage in sexuality tended to fall into three categories: To feel a sense of emotional connection with one's husband, to experience physical pleasure, and to please one's husband. Participants felt that emotional factors, such as intimacy, were more important than physical factors in determining sexual satisfaction. While they felt orgasm was important, if orgasm was not achieved each time, they enjoyed the sensations along the way, and some found the mounting physical sensations to be more important than the orgasm itself. These women used mindfulness techniques to manage anxiety, and to release expectations of how they should behave within their sexual relationships. Some had increased acceptance of times of decreased sexual frequency or abstinence, with diminished feelings of obligation or guilt, and increased satisfaction. These findings suggest a possible association between mindfulness meditation and an increase in sexual awareness and self-acceptance, and suggest the need to reconsider sexual dysfunction. In addition, this study contributes to research in the area of positive psychology, as the participants generally describe a view of sexuality experienced under the best of circumstances.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Perreault, L. (2005). Perceived control, influence, responsibility, and helplessness in situations of choiceless control. University of Windsor (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of the present study was to examine the feasibility of choiceless control in determining perceptions of control, influence, responsibility, and helplessness over outcomes. After reviewing and critiquing some traditional theories and research that exist in the control literature, a new conceptualization of control is presented. Based on research by Nickels et al. (2005), an extended research design was proposed and tested, which examined the separate effects of actual control, choice, and predictability. The present findings show significantly higher ratings of perceived influence under conditions in which individuals made their own choice (whether voluntary or involuntary) between options that made a difference (actual control) in a failed outcome that was predicted. Whereas perceived control ratings were significantly higher with actual control, feelings of responsibility over the outcome were significantly higher when actual control was combined with a voluntary choice. Although feelings of helplessness were not significantly affected, ratings of frustration over the outcome were significantly higher when actual control was combined with the prediction that a failed outcome would occur. The theoretical relevance of these findings is discussed, and the generalizability of the new conceptualization of control is explored in terms of its relation to positive psychology (e.g., humour) and cross-cultural research frameworks.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Baker, S. (2005). Autobiographical memory recall in long-term breast cancer survivors: Reminiscence and psychological growth. University of Houston. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Advances in detection, treatment and knowledge of breast cancer have led to increasing numbers of survivors (Berry et al., 2005). It is assumed that following effective treatment of breast cancer, a woman returns to her premorbid level of functioning. In anecdotal reports (Adams, 2001; Baker, 2001) some three-year breast cancer survivors reported significant, but, non-specific quality of life changes as a result of their breast cancer diagnosis and treatment, which may be indicative of psychological growth. In turn, psychological growth may influence a woman's retrieval of autobiographical memories perhaps as a function of reorganization of goals. The present study examined the effect of traumatic events on the retrieval pattern of autobiographical memories across the life-span. It was hypothesized that any individual who experiences psychological growth from a life-threatening event will generate a unique distribution of autobiographical memory retrieval. A sample of 50 women between the ages of 40 and 80 was recruited; half the sample 10 years or longer breast cancer survivors and half the sample peers who had not had breast cancer. Participants engaged in a cognitive task, a free-recall of twenty autobiographical memories from across their life-span, which they later dated. In addition, all participants completed measures of psychological growth (PTGI, Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1995) and quality of life (FACT, Cella, 1997). For the entire sample, replication of the theoretical autobiographical memory distribution (Rubin, Wetzler & Nebes, 1986) was obtained with the hallmark presence of the reminiscence bump. When memory distribution patterns were compared between groups, breast cancer survivors and peers, unique patterns of autobiographical memory distributions were revealed, with a notable absence of the reminiscence bump for the breast cancer survivor group replaced with a traumatic bump present around the age of diagnosis. Further, distinct autobiographical memory distributions were revealed within the breast cancer survivor sample as a function of psychological growth. Implications from this research are discussed including the validation of breast cancer survivors' sense of change as a manifestation of re-prioritization of world beliefs and individual goals. Further, this research is consistent with a refocus of breast cancer survivorship towards a positive psychology perspective and normative development.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Angner, E. (2005). Subjective measures of well-being: A philosophical examination. University of Pittsburgh. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Over the last couple of decades, as part of the rise of positive psychology, psychologists have given increasing amounts of attention to so-called subjective measures of well-being. These measures, which are supposed to represent the well-being of individuals and groups, are often presented as alternatives to more traditional economic ones for purposes of the articulation, implementation and evaluation of public policy. Unlike economic measures, which are typically based on data about income, market transactions and the like, subjective measures are based on answers to questions like: "Taking things all together, how would you say things are these days---would you say you're very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy these days?" The aim of this dissertation is to explore issues in the philosophical foundations of subjective measures of well-being, with special emphasis on the manner in which the philosophical foundations of subjective measures differ from those of traditional economic measures. Moreover, the goal is to examine some arguments for and against these measures, and, in particular, arguments that purport to demonstrate the superiority of economic measures for purposes of public policy. My main thesis is that the claim that subjective measures of well-being cannot be shown to be inferior to economic measures quite

as easily as some have suggested, but that they nevertheless are associated with serious problems, and that questions about the relative advantage of subjective and economic measures for purposes of public policy will depend on some fundamentally philosophical judgments, e.g. about the nature of well-being and the legitimate goals for public policy.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Rollwitz, W. (2005). Executive angst: An exploration into the lived experiences of senior corporate executives. Capella University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This heuristic qualitative study sought to understand executive angst as defined in the lived experiences of senior level executives. The outcome of this study led to a definition of executive angst. Leadership dynamics, positive psychology, emotional intelligence, and stress were discussed in order to understand the current work environment and its potential impact on the selected study participants. In-depth, structured interviews of eight senior executives who self-reported experiencing executive angst were conducted. The interviews were audiotape recorded and thematic analysis was performed to ascertain a clear definition of executive angst. This study concluded with recommendations for further research into executive angst.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Boober, B. (2005). Spirited youth/thriving youth: Adolescents' perspectives on nurturing thriving outcomes through faith development. The University of Maine. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Building on an interactionist model and on research on salubrious factors, this study gave voice to adolescents' perspectives on their intrinsic faith development as it occurs within the faith community social support network. Specifically, it used asset and faith assessments and a series of audio-taped interviews to engage 18 youth actively involved in youth group activities within faith communities to address the global question "How do the (a) individual intrinsic development of faith and the (b) faith-related social experiences serve as assets for mental health development and thriving in youth, from the youths' perspectives?" Secondary questions included (a) How do youth define and describe the essence of their developing intrinsic faith? (b) How do youth define and give meaning to their faith-related social experiences? and (c) How do youth experience and give meaning to the complex interaction between intrinsic faith and social interactions of the faith community? This study modeled principles of youth asset development by engaging four youth as co-researchers in this interpretivist phenomenological study. The youth in this study shared themes about their faith development experience. They consistently called their faith activities "fun" and critical to their identity. Their faith community was a safe place where (a) they could be themselves and question belief systems; (b) they had intergenerational meaningful connections with unconditional love and support across time; (c) they felt equal; and (d) they had leadership roles and opportunities for meaningful participation. The youths' faith development experiences supported some and challenged other prior findings of risk reduction, asset development, and faith development research. The study (a) assimilated concepts from positive psychology, faith/health connection research, and risk reduction/resiliency and asset development models; (b) provided voice to and insights of adolescents regarding their individual intrinsic faith development within the faith community; and (c) empowered youth as research partners in its methodological design. The study illuminated the essence of faith development within the faith community, gave insights into how faith served as a salubrious factor for youth, and suggested implications for redesigning the children's mental health deficit-model system of care into a salutogenic, strengths-based system that promotes growth and thriving.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Goldman, D. (2005). Affective benefits of capitalizing on personal positive events. University of Richmond. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The present study examined how disclosing personal positive events influenced ensuing positive affect (PA). Forty undergraduate students reported personal positive events either privately or to a friend. All participants made written and vocal disclosures, counterbalanced to control for order effects. We hypothesized that participants who vocally reported positive experiences to a friend would have the highest PA scores subsequent to disclosure. Results from a two-way mixed ANOVA failed to support the hypothesis. Trait optimism was significantly related to positive affect, but its inclusion as a covariate in the ANOVA did not influence the pattern of results. These results are discussed, with special attention given to their place in the framework of the emerging discipline of positive psychology.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

2004

n=18

Tecosky-Feldman, A. (2004). Learning disability: A grounded theory of adapting. Fielding Graduate Institute. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This thesis explores the experience of self-identified adults with learning disabilities using transcribed interviews subjected to constant comparative analysis to derive theory inductively (Glaser, 1965; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Consistent with others' research (Gerber & Reiff, 1991; Gerber, Reiff, & Ginsberg, 1988; Orenstein, 1992; J. R. Patton & Polloway, 1992), my study finds that all participants experience some negative impacts of learning disability in adulthood. These consist of two interacting spheres: first, a basic physiological process of underlying neurobiological disability encompassing the practical influence of uneven cognition on acquisition of academic, social, motor, or procedural skills; and second, a psychosocial process encompassing dimensions of support, stigma, reification of identity, accusations of feigning, and construction of meaning. In both processes the main activity engaged in by study participants involves adapting self to environment or environment to self. Synthesizing the psychosocial with the neurobiological, this study integrates complex processes at multiple levels.

Impetuses to engage in adapting include direct pressures resulting from problematic neurobiological areas, and pressures resulting from secondary issues, including being overwhelmed and having problems of belonging, difference, and self-esteem. The three primary means to adapting are understanding, choosing, and plasticity. Aspects of both a medical model (Bigler, 1992; Rourke & Dotto, 1994) and an emancipatory social-political model (Davis, 1997; Linton, 1998) were pertinent; aspects of positive psychology (Maddux, 2002; S. L. Shapiro, Schwartz, & Santerre, 2002; S. E. Taylor, Dickerson, & Klien, 2002) were particularly relevant to the induced theory.

I make recommendations based on the theory of adapting that are directed toward enhancing the adapting process for the adults in the substantive area within the boundaries of the perspectives of the players themselves. Research pertinent to enhancing adapting includes Kabat-Zinn's (1990) work on mindfulness and Neff's (2003b) work on self-compassion, for addressing the impact of underlying neurobiological and psychosocial pressures and problems. Finally, while support and guidance are

desirable, study participants' emphases on the critical place of intrinsic motivation suggest that the process of adapting by adults with learning disabilities is best pursued as a self-directed process.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Hazel, C. (2004). School safety sacrificed to standardized assessment of achievement: The story of one neighborhood elementary school community. University of Northern Colorado. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The implicit contract of public education is that children will attend school and schools, in turn, will provide a safe place in which they can learn. Bullying may be the most prevalent type of school violence. The most common estimate is that approximately 20% of students experience regular victimization by peers. This dissertation was a qualitative multiple case study into the perceptions of and behaviors related to school safety at one neighborhood elementary school in Jefferson County, Colorado. The data collection included interviews, a Q-Sort survey, and document analysis. Subgroups of the school community were purposefully sampled for four cases: elementary school administrators, parents, fourth grade students, and fourth grade teachers. Data were analyzed formatively, as the data collection proceeded, and summatively, after the data were obtained. Summative analysis was guided by ecological theory, positive psychology, and levels of prevention. Summative analysis was conducted at three levels: descriptive, explanatory, and prescriptive. Bullying was found to be a significant problem for fourth grade children, with 79% reporting that they had experienced peer harassment. Attending to children's affective needs, generally, and implementing the safety curriculum, specifically, was viewed as impossible given the district's curriculum requirements designed to improve performance on the state's standardized achievement tests. Many adults adopted a dualistic view of the children, separating their affective and academic development and needs. In contrast, the children discussed their needs for acceptance, love, and belonging as intertwined with their academic learning and motivation. School psychology has not to date taken the leadership position that it could in initiating conversations and providing interventions to increase school safety. School psychology has not studied children's psychological development given pedagogy driven by standardized testing, or specifically, the impact of testing on bullying and school safety. Guaranteeing all children the opportunity for development in the physical, social, and academic realms would require a paradigm shift for the field. One effect of this would be that school psychology would address the impact of high stakes standardized testing on children's development. A suggested means for achieving this shift is to adopt the public health model.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Aylett, V. (2004). A positive psychology goal intervention using strengths and values to enhance goals and increase well-being. University of Southern California. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

From the new field of Positive Psychology, based on human strengths and optimal human functioning, a brief goal intervention was developed. Based on Positive Psychology principles, the intervention was designed to help people to learn of their personal strengths and values, to assist them in setting better, more intrinsic personal goals, and to increase their hope and well-being. Participants completed a goal intervention consisting of Values in Action (VIA) Signature Strengths Survey (Peterson & Seligman, 2000) and the Personal Values-Card-Sort (Miller, C'de Baca, Matthews, & Wilbourne, 2001). This goal intervention was designed to help participants to list more autonomous goals, goals that are assumed to better fulfill psychological needs, and thus lead to increased well-being. The intervention was based on the Self-Concordance Model of Healthy Goal Striving (for a review, see Sheldon, 2002), which is an

extension of the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Results suggest that interventions that help individuals to learn more about themselves (e.g., personal values and strengths) may take more time to enhance goals and increase well-being and hope than this short-term intervention allowed. Future research will need to address this question.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Hobbs, J. (2004). Childhood exposure to domestic violence: Phenomenological studies of surviving in the aftermath of this trauma and positive personal change in professionals working with these children. University of Warwick (United Kingdom). PQDT - UK & Ireland

Research into the impact of trauma on survivors and the professionals working with them has predominantly taken a negative focus; thus developing our understanding of maladaptation and psychopathology in the aftermath of adversity and the dangers of 'vicarious traumatization' and 'burnout' through empathically engaging with trauma survivors. However, throughout history philosophers and theologians have reported the phenomenon of gaining personal growth and deeper spiritual awareness through transcending traumatic experiences. For example, the Chinese logographic symbol for 'crisis' is comprised of the symbols for 'danger' and 'opportunity'. The relatively recent interest in positive psychology has paved the way for research into positive change in both the survivors of trauma (i.e. 'posttraumatic growth'), and the professionals that journey with survivors to find meaning and grow in the aftermath of adversity, thereby finding themselves changed in the process (i.e. 'vicarious posttraumatic growth'). The first paper in this thesis reviews the relevant literature and explores the clinical implications of posttraumatic growth following childhood and adolescent adversity. The second paper is an empirical paper which adopts a phenomenological, idiographic approach in order to explore a unique adolescent experience of surviving a particular trauma - that of exposure to severe domestic violence during early childhood. The third, and main, empirical paper is a phenomenological study of positive personal change in professionals working with child survivors of domestic violence. The final paper is a reflective paper which explores my research journey.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Arndt, M. (2004). Positive psychology and hope: A cross-cultural test and broadening of Snyder's hope theory in the United States and Mexico. Washington State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

In this study, I suggested that the emergent field of positive psychology, as a new science of human strengths and virtues, expand its scope of the good life to be mindful of what constitutes the meaning of the good life in different cultures. The focus of the study was Snyder's (2000) hope theory which was tested in an individualistic (U.S.) and collectivistic (Mexico) culture. A more interdependent-collectivistic or group-centered conception of the hope construct was also considered and tested. Through a series of cross-cultural tests, I investigated hypotheses about cultural differences and predictive relationships involving self-construals, two kinds of hope (individualistic and interdependent-collectivist), and subjective well-being.

Two hundred thirty-two Mexicans and 185 European American volunteers completed packets, which included the Hope Scale, an Interdependent-Collectivist version of Hope (I-C Hope), the SCS, and SWLS. The study succeeded in extending the empirical scope of positive psychology into the context of cross-cultural research. Findings were mixed. Snyder's (2000) two-factor model of agency and pathways was replicated in the U.S. but failed to replicate in Mexico. In a cross-cultural context, however, the single factor hope construct demonstrated structural equivalence. An interdependent-collectivistic hope

dimension with commensurate agency and pathways subfactors was not found. However, two factors that were similar across cultures emerged and were interpreted as family and community hope. As hypothesized, independent self-construal was found to be a better predictor of individualistic hope than was the interdependent self-construal factor in both cultures. Interdependent self-construal, as compared to independent self-construal, was found to be a better predictor of family hope and community hope in both cultures. Individualistic hope was more strongly tied to subjective well-being in both cultures. Family hope was also moderately tied to subjective well-being in both cultures, whereas community hope was not. Contrary to cross-cultural hypotheses, interdependent self-construal, and interdependent-collectivistic hope (family and community hope) were higher for the U.S. sample, whereas independent self-construal was higher for the Mexican sample. Limitations of the study and the use of only quantitative methods was discussed. Consideration of transconceptual frameworks that integrate and further extend cultural and positive psychology values was advocated.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Youssef, C. (2004). Resiliency development of organizations, leaders and employees: Multi-level theory building and individual-level, path-analytical empirical testing. The University of Nebraska - Lincoln. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The need for understanding the development of resilient organizations, leaders and employees--those able to adapt, bounce back, and flourish despite adversity--has never been greater. Although receiving attention in clinical psychology, to date little is known about resiliency in organizational settings. Drawing from the positive psychology, positive organizational scholarship (POS), and positive organizational behavior (POB) movements, this dissertation explores the role of resiliency, in conjunction with self-efficacy, hope and optimism, in enhancing performance, job satisfaction, work happiness, and organizational commitment. For the first time, a multi-level resiliency development model is introduced and conceptually supported. The model offers various antecedents (assets, risk factors and values), mediators (buffering processes at the organizational level, and hope, optimism and self-efficacy at the individual leader level), and outcomes (employee performance, job satisfaction, work happiness, and organizational commitment) for the resiliency development process. The model is then empirically tested using path-analysis, and informed by the results, an alternative model is conceptualized and supported using a second data set. Results of testing the individual (manager and employee) level of the initial model using 137 managers and 411 employees (effective N = 341 dyads) from 90 different organizations support the overall fit of the resiliency development model. The causal linkages within the model were mostly supported, indicating there are causal relationships between managers' hope, self-efficacy, and resiliency, as well as between employees' resiliency and their performance, job satisfaction, work happiness and organizational commitment. Results of post-hoc analyses of the above data set (N = 522 managers and employees), as well as testing the positive psychological capital model (Luthans, et al., 2004; Luthans & Youssef, 2004) as an alternative model using another data set of 484 managers and employees from 45 different organizations, provide strong support for the model, explaining over 30 percent of the variance in outcomes. Moreover, resiliency is supported as providing a foundational, additive, synergistic, and complementary role to that of self-efficacy, hope and optimism, in enhancing performance and attitudinal outcomes.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Mencel, J. (2004). The roles of moral intensity and moral emotions in the ethical decision-making process: A study of human resource management professionals. The University of Nebraska - Lincoln. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Employee health and wellness are significant considerations for organizations today and have gained renewed focus with the movement in positive psychology (Snyder & Lopez, 2002). Not only are businesses required to comply with health-related rules and regulations, they are also concerned about how these issues impact the costs associated with human resources. In instances where regulations do not exist, human resource professionals are often faced with difficult decisions affecting various individuals and stakeholders. These types of dilemmas are infused with ethical implications. Many researchers have investigated individual and organizational characteristics that influence ethical decisions. Additionally, studies have examined issue-contingent characteristics, thoughts, attitudes, and values that affect the ethical decision-making process. More recently, feelings and emotions have been posited to impact the way in which individuals make ethical decisions. The purpose of this research was to determine the extent that moral intensity factors (Jones, 1991) and moral emotions (i.e., empathy, guilt) influence the ethical decision-making process (Rest, 1986). Two research questions were addressed: (1) How do dimensions of moral intensity affect the ethical decision-making process? (2) What is the role of moral emotions in the ethical decision-making process? These relationships were examined by analyzing data from vignettes and questionnaires administered to a sample of human resource professionals ($n = 95$). The findings suggest that psychological proximity was more strongly related to elements of the ethical decision-making process compared to social proximity and physical proximity, particularly when magnitude of consequences was low. Additionally, cognitive empathy and affective empathy significantly and positively influenced moral evaluations. Integration with previous literature, future research directions, implications for human resource managerial decisions, and strengths and weaknesses are discussed.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Michel, J. (2004). Are quantity and quality of social relations associated with adult formal volunteering? an ecological and positive psychology perspective. Arizona State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The present study is a secondary data analysis based on data of the 1995/1996 National Survey of Midlife Development in the United States (MIDUS), investigating associations between formal volunteering and the participant's demographics, as well as the number of social contacts, perceived social positivity, and perceived social negativity with the participant's social environment. Following the ecological paradigm, the analyses were performed with the social dyad spouse/partner and the social groups family, friends, neighbors, and community, within the full sample of the MIDUS survey (20 to 71 years), and the age categories young (20-39), mid-age (40-54), and older adults (55-71). Formal volunteering was explored via the variables volunteer status (volunteering yes/no), frequency of volunteering (hours volunteered per week), and the two domain variables health-related and youth-related volunteering. Perceived social positivity/negativity were treated as separate entities, as postulated by the positive psychology paradigm. Education, the sum of social contacts with all social groups, and social contacts with community predicted volunteer status in all three age groups. Furthermore, each component of social contacts with community (church attendance, church involvement, and involvement in organizations other than church) predicted volunteer status separately. In all age categories, social positivity from community predicted volunteer status positively, and social negativity from community predicted volunteer status negatively. Other social groups predicted volunteer status only sporadically in one or another social relations variable and age category. The only social relations variable that predicted (negatively) frequency of volunteering in all age

categories was perceived social negativity from community. Social relations variables with other social groups predicted frequency of volunteering sporadically in different age categories. Most important, perceived social positivity was not always positively related to frequency of volunteering, nor was perceived social negativity always negatively related to frequency of volunteering. Interaction analyses revealed that gender may have contributed to this finding. Social negativity did not interact with gender, but social positivity. Finally, young and mid-age women worked proportionally more in health-related volunteering than men, and men proportionally more in youth-related volunteering.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

de, I. P. (2004). The role of spirituality in how filipino immigrants conceptualize and cope with crisis. Alliant International University, San Francisco Bay. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Many people turn to spirituality to make sense of their world. Ever since psychology aimed to establish itself as an empirical science, however, many mental health practitioners have avoided the topic of spirituality in treatment. Spiritual needs for some clients are, therefore, often not met. The goal of the study was to learn more about the role of spirituality in psychology to better understand the potential value it might hold in helping to increase efficacy in mental health treatment. There is increasing need not only in psychological research in spirituality, but also in understanding the needs of the fastest growing Asian group in the country--Filipinos. Many more Filipino immigrants are therefore expected to access mental health services. Since spirituality has been found to be an important part of the Filipino immigrant identity, this study sought to understand specifically how spirituality impacts the unique way in which Filipino immigrants make sense of their world amidst adversity. Six Filipino immigrants were interviewed utilizing a semi-structured, face-to-face interview to explore how spirituality impacts how they understand and cope with crisis. A qualitative methodology was used to gather and analyze the data in order to include context and culture, capture the unique meanings of each participant's experience, and accurately explore unexplored and undefined constructs such as Filipino immigrant spirituality, spiritual coping and resilience. Unique elements that comprise Filipino immigrant spirituality, in addition to conceptualization of health and illness, and the crisis experience were explicated in relation to folk Catholicism and colonial mentality. Theories about crisis, coping and resilience were outlined and discussed in light of positive psychology, sense of coherence, spiritual surrender and spirituality of trauma. This study elucidated the role of spirituality in how Filipino immigrants cope and make sense of crisis, called attention to the value of integrating spirituality in treatment, and how spirituality can be an important source of resilience. Results of this study hopefully can inspire researchers and clinicians to further contribute to research on Filipinos, and spirituality and mental health, and to ultimately strive for consistently providing quality, effective, and strength-based care to others.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Larson, M. (2004). Positive psychological capital: A comparison with human and social capital and an analysis of a training intervention. The University of Nebraska - Lincoln. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Today's organizations are competing in an increasingly complex global economy. In particular, today's employees are finding themselves in a turbulent environment where technology changes are the norm, downsizing has become rampant, loyalty and commitment are diminishing, and work-life balance issues are a priority. Yet, for competitive advantage, managing human resources has become the major challenge. To meet this challenge of effectively managing human resources requires new thinking and approaches. This dissertation study investigates such a new model of employee capital that extends the

current paradigm of human and social capital. Although the idea of positive psychological capital has been recently introduced, it has not yet been experimentally tested. Drawing from psychology's positive psychology and the positive organizational behavior movements, the first purpose of the dissertation is to analyze the value-added contribution that positive psychological capital can have over recognized human and social capital. The second purpose is to conduct, for the first time, a field experiment that tests whether or not positive psychological capital and its individual capacities of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency can be developed. The results indicated support for positive psychological capital's additive value to the human and social capital model. With a sample from a Midwest manufacturing firm's employees ($N = 74$), correlation analysis indicated positive psychological capital as a whole had a stronger relationship with job satisfaction ($r = .373$) and organization commitment ($r = .313$) than the individual capacities of self-efficacy, optimism, and resiliency. Further hierarchical regression analysis of the additive impact of positive psychological capital over human and social capital found a significant change in R^2 for the relationship between positive psychological capital and organization commitment and job satisfaction. As to the training intervention, although participants in the experimental group experienced an increase in their reported levels of self-efficacy and resiliency, it was a non-significant change from pre- to post-measures and when compared to the control group. The study hypotheses related to the effects of the developmental intervention for psychological capital in this relatively small study of short duration were not supported. The discussion and limitations note the possible reasons for these findings and conclude with practical implications.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Simonds, M. (2004). Optimism: A comprehensive psycho-educational program design. Carlos Albizu University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Some individuals possess an unrelenting ability to remain optimistic despite adverse circumstances. The concept of learned helplessness is well established and yet unclear is the ability to teach an individual optimism. It is clear that individuals across cultures and throughout the world people desire to be happy, want to improve their well-being, and hope to live the good life. Research indicates that there are many components involved in the positive psychology of optimism. Increasingly people experience depression, anxiety, anger, high levels of burden, increased degrees of burnout, and feelings of abandonment and isolation. Research shows that the historically high complaints are unrelated to economic status, age, sex or ethnic origin. The research does not offer any comprehensive program to teach people how to attain greater satisfaction in their lives. Optimistic people seem to utilize a variety of mechanisms to build and maintain the good life. The construct has past present and future components, and appears to be greatly affected by an individual's perception of the environment. Optimism has little to do with money and seems to have more to do with satisfaction with what one possesses. Self-care, proper sleep, and exercise not only aid in physical health, these good practices have mental health benefits as well. The glass is both half full and half empty, what the optimist knows is to bring the half full aspect to the forefront of their attention. Focus on the positive. Another component of optimism is expectancy; the expected outcome of events by the individual. It is established that expectations influence outcomes, and an individual may be able to improve results by expecting good outcomes. Nevertheless, there is still value in reminders of poor outcomes, so the value of positive results remains valuable. Also important in the mechanism of optimism is the way an individual explains negative events. Happier people credit themselves more readily for successes and blame external forces for failures. They seem to possess an internal locus of control and feel as though they are competent in their own world. Extroversion and strong self-esteem are thought to

mediate life satisfaction. Moreover it becomes important how an individual perceives not just their own experience, but the environment in its entirety. The psycho-educational program that I will develop will aid individuals, regardless of socioeconomic status, the opportunity to master the skills of becoming optimistic. The program will consist of one multidisciplinary team providing psychological services in the group therapy format. The program staff will include a licensed clinical psychologist, an office manager, and two licensed mental health professionals; a licensed social worker and/or a licensed master's level therapist. The team will be trained in the cognitive-behavioral modality to maintain consistency and structure of the program's services. Participants will receive services for up to one year following their completion of the program. The implementation of the program will document the efficacy of teaching individuals how they can help themselves attain the good life, happiness, optimism, and health.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Rump, B. (2004). Positive psychology and children with and without chronic illness. University of Kansas. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Children with chronic illness and their families face a myriad of challenges in their everyday lives. Adjustment to the stressors associated with treating the chronic illness may be enhanced by resilience factors defined by positive psychology. Hope is believed to one of these factors. Parent hope and child hope are both examined as they relate to parenting stress and negative mood states. How parents perceive their child's adjustment is examined as it relates to the child's hope and parent perceived quality of life for the child. Children diagnosed with sickle cell disease (SCD), juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA), and diabetes and their families participated in the study and were compared to a sample of children without chronic illness and their families. Mediator and moderator analyses were conducted to determine relationships between parent and child hope, parent adjustment and child adjustment. The hypothesis for the mediator analyses was that for parents with children who have chronic illness, parental perceptions of how his or her child is adjusting will have a major impact on the parent's psychological adjustment and that hope, either parent's own hope or their child's hope plays some role in that process. The moderator analyses hypothesis tested was that the parent perception of child adjustment moderates the relationship between hope and parental adjustment. Analyses were conducted for chronic illness groups combined and for chronic illness groups separately as they compared to the healthy control group. Mediation occurred for the combined disease group on some factors but strong associations within separate disease groups influenced the overall findings. The healthy control group was the only group to show significant levels of moderation. These findings may contribute to identifying positive psychology constructs that will assist health care providers meet the needs of children and families with chronic illness.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

DiPalma, L. (2004). Shades of wisdom: Portraits of attachment in families at risk. Harvard University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969/1982) highlights the importance of mother-child relationships in human development. Studies have shown correlations between maternal responsiveness and infants' distinct patterns of secure and insecure attachments (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Main & Solomon, 1986). Childhood attachment patterns have been shown to remain stable over time and to predict other measures of healthy/unhealthy development (Solomon & George, 1999). Thirty years of attachment research demonstrates these findings are reliable but not highly robust, especially in low-income and clinical samples (DeWolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997). This qualitative study was designed to provide a more

contextual understanding of attachment relationships in families at risk and to better understand differences of attachment patterns observed in this population. A secondary analysis of narrative data collected for the Family Pathways Project (FPP), a longitudinal study of women and children with high social risks, was conducted using a phenomenological approach, specifically the portraiture method of inquiry (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Drawing from family histories, psychological measures, and audio and videotaped interviews and observations gathered over a span of 20 years, a three-tiered research approach was used to (1) provide a descriptive analysis of 20 high-risk mother-child pairs and their families, (2) examine meaningful relational dynamics identified by 10 FPP adolescents and their significant caregivers, and (3) construct in-depth portraits of attachment for three exemplar mother-child pairs within the context of their larger family and social systems. This portrait study illuminates the complexity of attachment patterns in families struggling with severe adversity; it points to the important role of grandparents and other extended family. FPP mothers and adolescents describe multifaceted family relationships that change over time and reveal a full range of interpersonal strengths and failings. Patterns of individual and relational resilience are discussed along with the potential for intergenerational transmission of risk. This analysis highlights high-risk families' capacity to "tolerate uncertainty" and "accept human limitations." These dimensions of wisdom (Linley, 2003), drawn from the field of positive psychology, provide insight into high-risk families' patterns of acceptance, forgiveness, and loyalty.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Mikolashek, D. (2004). A meta-analysis of empirical research studies on resilience among students at-risk for school failure. Florida International University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Being at-risk is a growing problem in the U.S. because of disturbing societal trends such as unemployment, divorce, substance abuse, child abuse and neglect, and the new threat of terrorist violence. Resilience characterizes individuals who rebound from or adapt to adversities such as these, and academic resilience distinguishes at-risk students who succeed in school despite hardships. The purpose of this research was to perform a meta-analysis to examine the power of resilience and to suggest ways educators might improve academic resilience, which was operationalized by satisfactory test scores and grades. In order to find all studies that were relevant to academic resilience in at-risk kindergarten through 12th -grade students, extensive electronic and hardcopy searches were conducted, and these resulted in a database of 421 articles. Two hundred eighty seven of these were rejected quickly, because they were not empirical research. Upon further examination, another 106 were rejected for not meeting study protocol criteria. Ultimately, 28 studies were coded for study level descriptors and effect size variables. Protective factors for resilience were found to originate in physical, psychological, and behavioral domains on proximal/intraindividual, transitional/intrafamilial, or distal/extrafamilial levels. Effect sizes (ESs) for these were weighted and the means for each level or category were interpreted by commonly accepted benchmarks. Mean effect sizes for proximal ($M = .27$) and for transitional ($M = .15$) were small but significant. The mean effect size for the distal level was insignificant. This supported the hypotheses that the proximal level was the source of most protective factors for academic resilience in at-risk students followed by the transitional level. The distal effect size warranted further research particularly in light of the small number of studies ($n = 11$) contributing effect sizes to that category. A homogeneity test indicated a search for moderators, i.e., study variables affecting outcomes, was justified. "Category" was the largest moderator. Graphs of weighted mean effect sizes in the physical, psychological, and behavioral domains were plotted for each level to better illustrate the findings of the meta-analysis.

Suggestions were made for combining resilience development with aspects of positive psychology to promote resilience in the schools.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Rashid, T. (2004). Enhancing strengths through the teaching of positive psychology. Fairleigh Dickinson University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Traditional psychological treatments primarily aim to ameliorate negatives, this intervention attempted to enhance strengths postulated by the Values In Action Classification (Peterson & Seligman, in press). Utilizing a pre- and post-intervention control group design, it was delivered to the experimental group ($n = 35$) through an experiential course in Positive Psychology, while the control group ($n = 30$) took a course in Abnormal Psychology. The participants in the both groups were traditional age undergraduate and graduate students from a diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds studying at a metropolitan campus. The intervention presented the VIA strengths with an emphasis on exploring and enhancing strengths through cognitive-behavioral strategies included readings, watching an assigned film on each strength, writing a reaction paper weekly and group discussions and exercises. After adjusting for pre-intervention VIA scores, results indicated that the experimental group demonstrated significant, positive changes on 17 of 24 strengths. Zest, Playfulness & Humor, Social Intelligence and Judgment were found to be more malleable than Self-regulation, Humility & Modesty, Perspective, and Citizenship & Teamwork. Consistent with the VIA classification, non-signature strengths did not change even when attempted deliberately, whereas signature strengths increased without deliberate efforts. Subjective appraisal of most signature strengths (self-identified) did not associate with objective appraisals (signature strengths independently identified by three significant others and by corresponding VIA strength scores) suggesting that signature strengths might not have much cross-situational generality. Along with locating strengths within participants, the study also attempted to locate participants in their broader socio-cultural life conditions such as--Social Support, Health, Spirituality, Volunteerism and Life Satisfaction, all significantly associated with most VIA strengths. Results also indicated that enhancement of VIA strengths like Intimate Attachment, Kindness, Leadership, and Forgiveness & Mercy is mediated by optimal physical health. Future studies should explore developmental patterns, stability of gains and functional outcomes associated with VIA strengths.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Kilgour, J. (2004). Steps toward a response-ability model of adaptation: Contributions of explanatory style, hope, and optimal experience to well-being. Virginia Commonwealth University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Hedonic (pleasure-based) and eudaimonic (virtue-based) models of well-being were reviewed and their relationship to personality, explanatory style, hope, and flow was explored. It was hypothesized that these positive psychology constructs represent, respectively, an increasing ability to respond to challenges adaptively, based on the fit between challenge and the ability to respond. Participants included 238 undergraduates 18-51 years old (mean = 21, SD = 4.88), 66% female, of diverse racial/ethnic background. Well-being measures included the Subjective Happiness Scale and Scales of Psychological Well-Being; response-ability measures included the Big Five Inventory, Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire, Hope Scale, and Flow Short Scale. Results supported the response-ability model, overall, with personality and hope showing the strongest relationships to well-being.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Ruzek, N. (2004). Transpersonal psychology's historical relationship to mainstream American psychology. Institute of Transpersonal Psychology. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study reviewed transpersonal psychology's relationship to mainstream American (United States) psychology. A historic-hermeneutic perspective was taken wherein transpersonal psychology was viewed as an event emerging out of and alongside other areas of American psychology, including behaviorism, psychoanalysis, humanistic psychology, cognitive psychology, and more recently, positive psychology. Founders of transpersonal psychology, who were interviewed included Ken Wilber, Roger Walsh, Frances Vaughan, Stanislav Grof, Ralph Metzner, Stanley Krippner, Huston Smith, James Fadiman, Miles Vich, Charles Tart, and Michael Washburn. These individuals answered general questions with regard to transpersonal psychology's development over the past 35 years as well as more specific inquiries into their involvement in mainstream psychology. In order to provide a counterpoint to the transpersonal perspective, historians of American psychology were also interviewed. These individuals commented on the place of transpersonal psychology in the history of American psychology, whether or not they view transpersonal psychology as a subdiscipline of American psychology, and if they believed that transpersonal psychology could have a viable relationship with mainstream American psychology in the future. Results indicated that neither its founders nor historians of psychology consider transpersonal psychology an influential force in American psychology. Transpersonal psychology's failure to influence mainstream American psychology was attributed to mainstream psychologists' resistance to spiritual and philosophical ideas as well as to transpersonal psychologists' tendency to isolate themselves from the mainstream. However, both groups suggested that with the current rise of positive psychology and a popular interest in spirituality transpersonal psychology might be able to engage with mainstream psychology in the future. Finally, both groups offered suggestions for how transpersonal psychologists can participate more dynamically in mainstream American psychology. Both groups suggested that transpersonal psychologists become more involved with the mainstream, and do so by emphasizing existing similarities shared with the mainstream rather than focusing on historical differences.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Oakes, K. (2004). Cognitive-affective linkages in employee experiences of organizational change. Alliant International University, San Diego. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Many organizational change plans do not achieve desired results and some researchers suggest it is because we have neglected adequate diagnosis (Harrison & Shirom, 1999) and/or we have left out the "people factor" (Lawrence, 1969). The current study uses a cross-sectional design to diagnose employee differences in emotional experiences of organizational change. Measures of both negative [ATQ (Netemeyer et al., 2002)] and positive thoughts [ATQ-P (Ingram & Wisnicki, 1988)] and affect [PANAS (Watson, Clark & Tellegen, 1988)] were used to calculate employees' states of mind (Schwartz, 1997; Schwartz & Garamoni, 1986) and to assess cognitive processing [Personal Need for Structure (PNS)] as a possible moderator of affect structure (Reich, Zautra, & Potter, 2001).

Theories of individual change link thoughts to affect but previous research focused on establishing the negative thinking-negative emotion relationship (Beck, 1963, 1964) in clinical settings. The current study extends cognitive model concepts to a new population (organizational employees) and includes study of positive thought-affectivity correlations (in addition to negative). Additionally, the study adds to the discussion in the Positive Psychology literature about development of individual-level, positive affect in the presence of "residual" negative affect. Results supported the study's hypotheses that positive thoughts are correlated with positive affect (both state and trait) and that negative thoughts are correlated with negative

affect (state). However, the findings are not conclusive if cognitive processing (PNS) is a moderator of affect structure; results indicated that the moderator effect may be spurious and instead related to curvilinear relationships. Some evidence, though, supported the hypothesis that employees scoring in the highest quartile on PNS have a bipolar affect structure (PA and NA the same construct). Results also suggest limited usefulness of state of mind (SOM) as a classifying variable as participants' PNS levels are statistically the same in individuals defined as "functional" and "dysfunctional" and differences in affect structure in these two groups are not definitive. Implications are discussed for consulting psychologists conducting individual-level assessments to better manage group-level interventions like Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider et al., 2000) focused on increasing positive affect and resiliency training (Reivich & Shatté, 2002) focused on reducing negative affect.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

2003

n=7

Nank, G. (2003). A study investigating the impact of Adler's construct of social interest on burnout moderated by social support among episcopal clergy. Seattle Pacific University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purposes of this field investigation were to identify levels of Adler's social interest among a national random sample of Episcopal clergy, to explore predictors of the distinctive components of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal achievement, and to investigate the interaction between social interest and perceived social support on burnout. Six hundred participants randomly selected from American Episcopal clergy were mailed packets containing Crandall's Social Interest Scale, Maslach's Burnout Inventory, Sarason's SSQ-6 and a demographic survey. Usable surveys were received from 127 active clergy. Analysis of the data showed no main effect for social interest for two indices of burnout. However, there was a main effect of social interest on depersonalization, $r = -.262$; $p < .01$. Similarly, there was no global main effect for social support for all three indices of burnout. Nevertheless, there was a significant correlation between social support from peers and personal accomplishment, $r = .274$; $p < .01$. This study also examined the effect of the interaction between social interest and social support on burnout. There was one significant interaction effect between social support (peers) and social interest on depersonalization. Clergy who had higher social support from peers tended to have an elevated depersonalization score regardless of their social interest status. However, clergy who have low social interest with low social support were most prone to higher depersonalization while those who were high on social interest with lower social support reported lower depersonalization. (There were no meaningful differences between clergy types or gender on the variables of interest).

Preventive implications for clergy and clinically innovative therapeutic interventions were discussed from the perspective of positive psychology where hope, optimism, courage, spirituality, responsibility, and wisdom are thought to influence health and creativity which then allows human lives and communities to flourish. Limitations of the study were reviewed and recommendations for future research were discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Ahonen, P. (2003). Exploratory inquiry: Homeless women's voices. stress and coping in a shelter. The University of New Mexico. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This qualitative exploratory study attempts to understand and explain aspects of homeless women's experiences. The aim of this inquiry was: (1) To learn about the pathways to homelessness for the women in the sample, how they perceive their current situation, and how they perceive their future possibilities; and (2) To understand, from a homeless woman's perspective, how she copes with her life situation. This study was undertaken from the perspective of positive psychology, focusing on participants' strengths and methods of coping. The study was based on interviews with 12 women who are homeless and living in a large urban homeless shelter. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed participants to define and describe their own experiences, including both the stressors and the coping processes. Data was analyzed using the constant e comparative method. The major domains that emerged from the data included: (1) Paths to homelessness; (2) Contexts of homelessness; (3) Coping and resilience; and (4) Plans and hopes for the future. The participants displayed profound acceptance of the difficulties life had brought them, including their experiences with homelessness. These women's lives exemplify determination and survival. For many of the women, resilience appears to have been honed through dealing with traumatic life experiences. This resilience seems now to translate to an optimistic attitude regarding the stressors inherent in homelessness. The women had created meaning out of their homeless experiences in the context of their futures. Plans and hopes for the future seemed to be a factor in coping, and allowed these women to take one day at a time. These women had experienced a variety of external events that would be considered by many to be extremely adverse. However, the women had chosen to use constructive interpretation of homelessness which facilitated adaptation and coping.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Geary, B. (2003). The contribution of spirituality to well-being in sex offenders. Loyola College in Maryland. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this study was to examine empirically the contribution of spirituality and church attendance to well-being, over and above demographic and situational factors, personality, and social desirability, in a sample of sex offenders. The sample consisted of 195 men in outpatient sex offender treatment programs or individual therapy. The participants completed the Satisfaction with Life Scale, The PANAS Scales, The NEO-FFI, The Faith Maturity Scale, The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale, selected items from the Brief Multidimensional Measure of Religiousness/Spirituality: 1999, and a demographic questionnaire created for the study. The sample was compared with data on religious practices from the General Social Survey (GSS). While there were differences in distribution of religious affiliation, the study sample was similar to the GSS sample on most aspects of religious practice and attitudes. The hypotheses of the study received partial support as Spirituality contributed unique variance to Satisfaction With Life and Positive Affect, but not to Negative Affect. Church attendance contributed added unique variance to Satisfaction with Life. The group was divided into Low-Medium and High Neuroticism groups, revealing different personality profiles of the two groups. The implications of these findings for sex offender treatment and recovery are discussed in the wider context of recent developments in the field of positive psychology.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Sijo, Y. (2003). A program design focusing on optimism to ameliorate the symptoms of depression and learned helplessness in cuban adolescent refugees. Carlos Albizu University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This paper presents a program design for the treatment of depression and learned helplessness. The population being served by this program are Cuban adolescent refugees who have recently arrived in the

United States and exhibit symptoms of depression and learned helplessness as a result of pre- and post-emigration factors. A literature review provides information pertaining to the etiology, prevalence, and clinical features of adolescent depression. It offers an overview of depression in adolescent refugees and explains the conditions characterizing children and adolescents' lives in Cuba, their traumatic experiences, and the concept of acculturative stress. The literature review also highlights the main postulates of the Learned Helplessness theory and the Positive Psychology Movement and discusses the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral therapy and group and interpersonal psychotherapy in treating adolescent depression. An overview of the program is offered which includes information pertaining to the physical setting, staffing, admission and inclusion criteria, program funding and budget, therapeutic interventions, and program evaluation. The theoretical basis of learned optimism and a positive explanatory style upon which the program's philosophy is built is also explained.

Thesis, conceptual, theoretical.

Walsh, R. (2003). The power of positive emotions in organization development and change. Benedictine University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Organization development and change practice has focused on building theory and design concerned with initiating, shaping, and sustaining positive organizational performance. An essential strand that has emerged in this discussion focuses on positive organizational psychology and positive organizational change. This study seeks to build the conversation between the movement for positive psychology, change theory in the context of organization development, and practice in the workplace. To do so, the study will ground these themes in the literature. Using grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) in relation to an established research base, this study takes up two questions: (a) what are the actions that emerge from an organizational context of positive emotion; and (b) what organizational interventions most effectively construct positive emotion? Models for workplace application and continued research are offered.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Dimino, R. (2003). Early memories, attachment style, the role of peers, and adolescent substance use. Adelphi University, The Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The present study examines the use of addictive substances in the older adolescent population as it is related to early memories and attachment style. This study attempted to link self-report of addictive substance use with a known measure of such behavior (MMPI-A PRO), endorsed attachment style (by the Bartholomew & Horowitz four-category model, 1990), and select indices of the participant's earliest memories. One hundred twenty-one college students with a mean age of 19.6 participated in the study by providing demographic data, self-report usage of alcohol, marijuana, "other drugs," and tobacco (on a 5 point scale), attachment style data, and four early memories. The MMPI-A PRO successfully separated the substance usage patterns of this sample into three categories (Abstainer, Experimenter, and User) as put forth by Shedler and Block (1990). It is noteworthy that the User group for each substance did not produce the severity of scores as reported in the original MMPI-A Sample (Weed, et al., 1988); thereby leaving a void of a true substance abuse group. Attachment Style was not associated with the other study variables (indices of the early memories or substance usage levels). Although the early memories provided some findings, which tended toward significance, overall they did not show associations with substance use and attachment style. Selected predictors of substance abuse revealed inconsistent findings. In this study, peer substance use was the single best predictor of an individual's use of the same

substance. Contrary to previous studies, parent use and religiosity did not show an association with an individual's substance use. The creation of a "Poly-User" usage category did not produce pertinent findings beyond that of the initially examined three levels of substance usage. The degree of positive affect of the participant's happiest memory was associated with his or her tendency to eschew addictive substance use (as indicated by the MMPI-A PRO). This finding is relevant in light of the current interest in Positive Psychology and may provide a fertile area for future research.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Rinehart, N. (2003). Social confidence and social anxiety: Differences in cognitive processing. University of Montana. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Positive psychology emphasizes the focus on strengths in the human psychological condition (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Stemming from the concept of positive psychology, social confidence is hypothesized to be on the opposite end of a hypothetical continuum of Social Anxiety Disorder (from McNeil, 2001). Social confidence is hypothesized to be comprised of the following: (a) absence of social anxiety; (b) ability to act assertively; (c) sense of self-efficacy regarding one's social interactions; and (d) tendency toward a more positive appraisal of social interactions. The present study is an investigation of the differences in social confidence and social anxiety in terms of cognitive processing. It is hypothesized that individuals who meet criteria for social confidence will respond to interpersonal situations more assertively and cognitively appraise interpersonal situations more adaptively than individuals who are socially anxious. Five hundred undergraduate students completed self-report measures of anxiety, depression, social anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, assertiveness, self-efficacy, and cognitive appraisal. Forty-nine participants (26 women, 23 men) met criteria for the "Non-Socially Anxious" Group (NSAG; socially confident); 20 participants (16 women, 4 men) were classified as belonging to the "Socially Anxious" Group (SAG). Hypothesis testing was completed with the use of Assertive Scenario Forms (ASF), a self-report assertiveness, self-efficacy, and cognitive appraisal measure. On the ASF, participants responded to written, hypothetical interpersonal interactions; the scenarios included the presentation of Negative (NEG), Neutral (NEU), or Positive (POS) feedback. The NSAG was significantly more likely to endorse assertiveness and to describe their actions to be confident and effective (indication of self-efficacy), in comparison to the SAG. The NSAG also utilized a more positive cognitive appraisal (statistically significant) after receiving NEU and NEG interpersonal feedback, in relation to the SAG. Similarly, for the NSAG, level of self-efficacy to engage in effective interpersonal behavior remained unchanged after receiving NEU and NEG feedback. Overall, participants who met criteria for social confidence (NSAG) demonstrated more adaptive cognitive appraisal across a wide variety of interpersonal scenarios in comparison to individuals classified as socially anxious. Findings from the present study illuminate further the behavioral tendencies, appraisals styles, and action orientation consistent with social confidence.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

2002

n=11

Carey, R. (2002). Adolescent explanatory style among African Americans: A positive psychological perspective. Argosy University/San Francisco Bay Area. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The current study examined two research questions: (a) Does participation in standard outpatient psychotherapy produce positive changes in the explanatory style of African American adolescents? and (b) What are the factors that affect African American adolescents' explanatory styles? These questions were examined through four specific hypotheses: (a) African American adolescents who regularly participate in outpatient psychotherapy will exhibit a significantly more positive explanatory style at the end of treatment than they did on their admittance; (b) Among African American adolescents, discrimination will be perceived as a factor that contributes to a pessimistic explanatory style; (c) Among African American adolescents, a low level of racial identity will be associated with a pessimistic explanatory style; and (d) Among African American adolescents, a low level of racial socialization will be associated with a pessimistic explanatory style. Using case study methodology, two African American male adolescents diagnosed with Dysthymic Disorder completed the Children's Attributional Style Questionnaire (CASQ) and a semi-structured interview before entering outpatient psychotherapy, and then 8 weeks into treatment. Results from the CASQ indicated that one African American male demonstrated an increase in pessimistic explanatory style at the end of the 8 weeks, whereas the other case demonstrated no changes in explanatory style over the course of treatment. Qualitative analysis of the interview data indicated that both youths, who were high in optimism despite their depressive diagnosis, experienced little discrimination and had a high racial identity and a high level of racial socialization by their parents and others. Results were interpreted in the context of attribution theory and positive psychology.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Gregory, E. (2002). Psychological engagement in daily life. The University of Wisconsin - Madison. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Attaining happiness is age-old pursuit with scientific discourse dating back to the Greek era. The growth of happiness research in the past 20 years has revealed that despite individuals in the United States being twice as wealthy as they were 40 years ago, they are ten times more depressed. Having more has not made us necessarily happier. Researchers in the field of positive psychology--a discipline that seeks to understand that which is healthy in human behavior, have utilized investigative methods that provide insight into people's daily-lived experiences (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). This has generated a great deal of information on people's daily actions, thoughts, and feelings. One place where people have reported a greater sense of well-being is in "Flow." This term has been coined for people who can become engaged in activities where they are able to bring challenge to a set of skills. Other research has examined the link between a pessimistic disposition and depression. As opposed to pessimists, optimists seem to have a general tendency to take a favorable view of their circumstances and therefore seem less prone to depression (Seligman, 1991). This study integrated the major threads of these research findings to examine the difference between optimistic and pessimistic individuals' everyday life experiences. The study examined whether optimists do indeed live feeling more engaged in their activities, think more positively, and feel better than their pessimistic counterparts. To achieve this, an investigative approach was used that took lived "snapshots" with the use of an alarm watch or Palm Pilot that signaled a participant throughout various times of the day to stop their activity and to write down their thoughts, feelings, and activities. The results of this study did not reveal a relationship between optimism and an individual's thoughts, feelings, or actions. Participants who engaged in Flow activities did have more positive feelings than those participants who did not. Additionally, those participants who rated having positive thoughts, were also involved in intrinsically motivated activities; were more focused on a present activity; evaluated their skill level as higher; and had more positive feelings.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Grant, A. (2002). Towards a psychology of coaching: The impact of coaching on metacognition, mental health and goal attainment. Macquarie University (Australia). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

A series of studies developed a framework for a psychology of coaching. Coaching was defined as a collaborative, solution-focused, result-orientated systematic process, used with normal, non-clinical populations, in which the coach facilitates the self-directed learning, personal growth and goal attainment of the coachee. A review of the peer-reviewed psychological literature found some measure of support for the effectiveness of coaching, but noted that coaching research is still in its infancy. A solution-focused cognitive-behavioural (SF/CB) framework was developed, which the following studies explored. The Transtheoretical Model of Change (TTM) was identified as a model of change with applicability to coaching and empirical support was found for its use in coaching. Three studies then explored the effects of cognitive only, behavioural only and combined cognitive and behavioural coaching, on trainee accountants' grade point average, study skills, self-regulation, mental health, private self-consciousness and self-concept. The cognitive only program increased deep and achieving approaches to learning, academic self-concepts, reduced test anxiety and nonstudy-related anxiety and depression. Academic performance declined relative to controls. The behavioural only coaching program decreased test anxiety and increased academic performance. The combined cognitive and behavioural program increased academic performance, deep and achieving approaches to learning, academic self-concepts, and reduced test anxiety. No program had a significant impact on private self-consciousness, self-reflection or insight. On follow-up, one semester later, academic performance increases were maintained only for combined cognitive and behavioural program participants. A theoretical discussion then outlines the role of psychological mindedness, self-reflection and insight in coaching, and the construction and validation of the Self-reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) is reported. In the final study 20 adults completed a life coaching program, focusing on attaining goals that had alluded them for an average of 23.5 months. Participation was associated with enhanced mental health, quality of life and increased goal attainment. Levels of self-reflection decreased but insight increased. It is concluded that SF/CB coaching appears to be an effective approach to personal development and goal attainment, and may prove to be a useful platform for a positive psychology and the investigation of the psychological mechanisms involved purposeful change in normal adult populations.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Hughes, L. (2002). The effect of relationship status on empathy, narcissism, and resilience in women. Alliant International University, Los Angeles. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The dominant society holds basic assumptions about women regarding their life choices, options, and behavior. Two assumptions are that marriage and motherhood are the "ideal states" for women, and that female singlehood is a temporary state. This study challenged some of the past pathological assumptions made by the dominant society regarding single women. It examined reported levels of empathy (Interpersonal Reactivity Index), narcissism (Narcissistic Personality Inventory), and resilience (Resilience Scale) among the three relationship status groups of Always Single, Single Again (divorced or widowed), and Married women. Participants were 130 women between the ages of 30 and 68. This study screened for different sexual orientations among the groups of women. Always Single women reported higher levels of empathy, specifically, in perspective-taking ability. There were no differences among any of the

relationship status groups on narcissism or resilience. Results were interpreted in light of Growth in Connection theory and Positive Psychology.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Kanter, J. M. K. (2002). The "algorithm for spiritual needs, self awareness, and self-emergence": A mind-body-spirit tool for health promotion and disease prevention. Union Institute and University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Theory and research suggest that the human stress responses (i.e. fight-or-flight responses) are a prevalent and significant risk factor for our current disease burden. Through altering the patient's experience of stress, healthcare providers can diminish stress as a risk factor in certain stress related diseases. Mind-body Medicine theories suggest a need to shift our health care approach to offer patients stress management assistance as part of their overall health promotion regimen. This PDE proposes a system of cognitively processing dysfunctional emotional patterns by offering balanced responses to fight-or-flight reactions. The Algorithm for Spiritual Needs, Emotional Awareness, and Self-Emergence is a cognitive method for working through fight-or-flight emotional patterns. This Algorithm provides the introspective patterns to enable the user to quickly move through answering the internal questions: "What am I feeling?"; "Why am I feeling this way?"; and "What do I need to do about it?" This method is an algorithmic pattern of symptom (the user's fight-or-flight emotion), diagnosis (deficient spiritual need), treatment (virtuous behavior as antidote to fight-or-flight emotion). The unique ideas proposed are that fight-or-flight emotions are manifestations of unmet spiritual needs. Virtuous behaviors, when applied from the ideal of a balanced perspective (non-duality), are the antidote to meeting one's spiritual needs, consequently shifting fight-or-flight emotions to peaceful or loving responses. Building upon Maslow's theories of health, deficient needs and self-actualization this PDE presents a clearer articulation of what is meant by health of the spirit and health of the mind. Integrating theories found in Transpersonal Psychology, Abraham Maslow's theories, Mysticism, and a survey of world religions, the Spiritual Needs Theory presents an understanding of human spiritual and mental health that is based on a set of fundamental 'spiritual needs.' A survey of the world religions demonstrates that 'spiritual needs' are a common theme which presents an inclusive approach to the spiritual nature of all human beings regardless of religious affiliation. The Algorithm integrates psychological theories from Humanistic Psychology, Transpersonal Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, and Positive Psychology into a practical system to promote better mental/emotional health. The purpose of the Algorithm is to provide assistance in cognitively processing dysfunctional fight-or-flight emotional reactions offering patterns of thinking which are based on methods of building human resilience. This Algorithm has the potential of diminishing stress responses thereby promoting improved overall mental, physical, as well as spiritual health.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

McMeekin, A. (2002). A training model for consulting psychology: A formula for competency and success. Widener University, Institute for Graduate Clinical Psychology. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The dynamic and often chaotic corporate environment of the 21st century has an increasing need for psychologically-based services. In order to meet these needs, practitioners need to develop ways to more efficiently apply and deliver their expertise. One such way is by consulting to businesses, where the current need to address the psychological aspects of the workplace, the previously "soft issues," is paramount and directly linked to the financial bottom line. Contemporary socioeconomic circumstances have made it possible for psychologists to apply themselves within corporations in a value-adding way.

This dissertation proposes a training model for consulting psychologists and, indirectly, a discussion on how clinical, school, and industrial/organizational psychology skills can be simultaneously applied in the corporate domain. It is based on current literature that highlights the need for both training and competencies standards of consulting psychologists to be more clearly defined. Adding the skills acquired through traditional training in clinical, school, and industrial/organizational psychology clearly has many advantages. To utilize this synergy effectively, however, requires a unifying paradigm. Positive Psychology is presented and proposed as a paradigm that not only unifies the three areas of psychological training, but also allows for the incorporation of human resource management training. This synergy then can be directly applied to various business functions in human resource management.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Nerney, J. (2002). Toward the instruction of a positive psychology: Lessons for an undergraduate course. The Wright Institute. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The period from the 1998 APA Presidential Address through the 2002 publication of *The Positive Psychology Handbook* inaugurated a new era for the scientific study of positive psychology. In this project the concept of positive psychology is described and presented as a series of lesson plans appropriate for undergraduate college instruction. Thirty-two individual class outlines are provided as a framework for possible future implementation of a formally articulated California Community College course offering. Additionally, the first 16 class outlines are paired with detail transcripts of proposed lectures, exercises, class interactions, and processes. These detail transcripts serve as descriptive rather than prescriptive illustrations of how the material in these classes might be effectively presented. The content of these lessons is drawn, in part, from Martin Seligman's seminar on positive psychology currently being offered at the University of Pennsylvania. The material composition of this project, while including Seligman, Csikszentmihalyi, and Myers, also places an emphasis on the previous generation of positive psychologists: May, Maslow, and Rogers. The conceived purposes of these lessons are (a) as an interventional and educational inoculate against an array of mental and emotional discomforts, and (b) as a system of salutogenic development supporting the healthy individual and the thriving community. An introduction accompanies the class documents to illuminate the historical context, structure, and motivation for the project.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Mendes, E. (2002). The relationship between emotional intelligence and occupational burnout in secondary school teachers. Walden University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this study was to compare the emotional intelligence (EI) of 49 credentialed secondary teachers, as measured by the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS), with their current burnout levels, as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey (MBI-ES), to examine the relationship between EI and teacher burnout. EI theory, a theory of noncognitive intelligence, suggests that recognizing, understanding, and managing emotions is essential to effective leadership. Teachers' inventory scores were quantitatively assessed and examined, along with demographic information. Four significant findings were found in this study: (a) In the high emotional exhaustion subgroup (n = 15) there was a negative correlation between emotional exhaustion and managing emotions (-.53); (b) also in the emotional exhaustion subgroup (n = 15) there was a negative correlation between personal accomplishment and managing emotions (-.65); (c) in the low personal accomplishment subgroup (n = 36) there was a positive correlation between emotional exhaustion and managing emotions (.34); and (d) in

the total sample ($N = 49$) a positive correlation was found between the number of years teaching and identifying emotions ($r = .33, p \leq .02$). That is, with more experience, teachers are better at identifying emotions. Implications of these findings are discussed as they relate to designing new teacher programs, organizational training, stress research, and the theory of EI and field of emotions. In this era of positive psychology, understanding the role of emotions in work environments can lead to proactive approaches that may ease stress, increase productivity, and improve morale.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Prosser, E. (2002). The development and validation of a multicultural model of coping. University of Kansas. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

According to the Psychological Theory of Stress and Coping, cognitive appraisals play an important role in the coping processes people use when dealing with stress. The present study examined cognitive appraisals from a positive psychology perspective, focusing on human strengths that could contribute to optimal functioning. Specifically, the contributions of six positive cognitive appraisal variables (hope, optimism, religious faith, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and locus of control) to adaptive coping were assessed. These constructs had not been previously examined in conjunction with one another, nor had they been assessed extensively with diverse populations. Contributions of the constructs were used to develop a multicultural model of coping. The present study involved three stages: model development, cross-validation, and examination of individual ethnic groups. A multicultural sample ($N = 397$), comprised of African Americans, Hispanics, Caucasians, and Native Americans participated. In the model development stage ($n = 132$), the multicultural model of coping was constructed by assessing the contribution of each predictor variable to adaptive coping using a simultaneous multiple regression. Of the six predictor variables, only hope and religious faith were found to make significant independent contributions to adaptive coping. Thus, the multicultural model of coping included hope and religious faith as contributors to adaptive coping. The model's validity was assessed with a cross-validated multicultural sample ($n = 132$). The model remained valid based on significance of the multiple regression, significance of the independent contributions of hope and religious faith, and confidence intervals that did not differ significantly between models. The model's validity was then assessed with individual ethnic groups. The model remained valid with the African American sample, but not with the other ethnic groups. Results suggest that the construct of hope may account for the variance of the other predictor variables in influencing adaptive coping, while religious faith in probably tapping unique aspects of adaptive coping, not reflected in the other chosen variables. These results have important theoretical and research implications for the coping and positive psychology literature, as well as useful information for clinical interventions.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Barlow, P. (2002). The measurement of optimism and hope in relation to college student retention and academic success. Iowa State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Consistent with research approaches in positive psychology, the variables of optimism and hope were investigated to determine what role these constructs had in the retention and academic success of college students. A sample of 282 students (172 women, 111 men) from a large midwestern university, supplemented by 82 collateral reporters (friends or relatives of the students), participated in the study. Each participant completed a questionnaire including Scheier and Carvers' Life Orientation Test (LOT); Peterson, Semrnel, von Baeyer, Abramson, Metalsky, and Seligmans' Attributional Style Questionnaire

(ASQ), and C. R. Snyder's Adult Trait Hope Scale (HOPE) along with measures of depression, anxiety, commitment to college, and academic motivation. Participants gave consent for the release of their college grade point average, ACT composite score, and high school class rank from the registrar's office. In addition, the collateral reporters were asked to complete the LOT, ASQ, and HOPE according to their knowledge of the participants. Analyses including linear and logistic regression and Pearson correlations provided evidence for a significant relationship between hope and grade point average, but not optimism. Additionally, no significant relationships were found between optimism, hope, and continued enrollment from the fall to spring semester. Data from the collateral reporters demonstrated a similar pattern with hope significantly related to grade point average as indicated by correlation and regression analyses. The need for further clarification of the relationship between hope, academic success, and retention was discussed along with the limitations of the current study and suggestions for additional research.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Adler, M. (2002). Conceptualizing and measuring appreciation: The development of a new positive psychology construct. Rutgers The State University of New Jersey, Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The purpose of this research was to develop a reliable measure of the construct of appreciation. Being appreciative is hypothesized to facilitate and enhance feelings of well-being and life satisfaction. Expressing appreciation to others is hypothesized to build social bonds. The first phase of the research consisted of a qualitative study of the phenomenology of appreciation in which 37 undergraduates responded to open-ended questions about the construct. Their responses were content analyzed. These results, along with an a priori conception of appreciation, led to the development of 81 rating-scale items. These items comprise the Appreciation Inventory, which in phase two of the research, was administered with measures of optimism, spirituality, self-awareness, and subjective well-being (SWB) to 427 undergraduates at a large Northeastern university. Results of both a Principal Components Analysis and item analyses with the 81-item Appreciation Inventory yielded two measures of appreciation. The Appreciation Scale-Long Form (57 items), which has a coefficient alpha of .94, is obtained from totaling the 8 subscales that comprise appreciation: Have Focus, Awe, Ritual, Present Moment, Self/Social Comparison, Gratitude, Loss/Adversity, and Interpersonal. The Appreciation Scale-Short Form (18 items) also provides an overall appreciation score (coefficient alpha is .91). Preliminary evidence of construct validity was provided by appreciation's relationship to optimism, self-awareness, and spirituality. A multiple regression in which appreciation was regressed on optimism, spirituality, and self-awareness revealed that all three variables make significant unique contributions to appreciation (i.e. over and above the contribution of the other two). The major finding regarding the relationship between SWB and appreciation is that when the contributions of self-awareness, optimism, and spirituality are partialled out, appreciation still makes a significant unique contribution to SWB, which highlights its importance in understanding SWB. In addition to presenting a model of appreciation, a nomological net of appreciation showing its relation to positive psychology constructs such as optimism, hope, and SWB is discussed. Since it may be that people can learn to be more appreciative and to express appreciation more often, suggestions for future interventions based on the study's findings are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

2001

n=9

Scarborough, J. (2001). Predicting life satisfaction from psychoanalytic personality theory: An examination of ego integration, quality of object relations, and attachment style. The University of Texas at Austin. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The primary goals of this study are to review the literature on psychoanalytic personality variables and subjective life satisfaction and to examine the power of several key psychoanalytic personality variables (ego integration, quality of object relations, and attachment style) to predict subjective life satisfaction. The study begins with a review of the theoretical development of psychoanalytic personality theory. Empirical literature is presented on three personality theories: ego psychology, object relations theory, and attachment theory. The literature is then reviewed that indicates that these constructs matter because they play an integral role in determining an individual's felt quality of life. The more "psychologically healthy" an individual is, as measured by these constructs, the higher should be his or her subjective life satisfaction. While clinically assumed, very few empirical data are available to substantiate a link between key constructs of psychoanalytic theories and overall subjective satisfaction. This study discusses the difficulty of measuring constructs considered largely unconscious and provides a rationale for the self-report measures selected. Data were collected from 104 university students and variables assessing ego integration, quality of object relations, and attachment style were entered into a multiple regression equation with subjective life satisfaction designated as the dependent variable. 36% of the variance in subjective life satisfaction was accounted for by the multiple regression analysis. Clinical implications of these findings are proposed, along with a discussion of the increasing emphasis in clinical/counseling psychology on building a "positive psychology" that seeks to understand the factors that promote human wellness and well-being. Limitations of the study are discussed, as well as recommendations for additional exploratory research.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Coffman, D. (2001). Assessing transformative practices: A case-based outcome study using converging measures. Saybrook Graduate School and Research Center. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

The goal of this project was to develop a protocol for assessing claims of transformative practices. As an applied case-based example, 6 participants of a program in personal development, Integral Transformative Practice, were studied in-depth over the course of their training. A battery of measures was administered at the beginning of a training cycle (baseline) and repeated at the end of the cycle. A training cycle consists of 8 months of weekly sessions plus home exercises. Interviews were conducted after participants had completed a cycle of training. Three participants were followed over one training cycle, 3 were followed over two cycles. A second interview was conducted 30 months after baseline for the 3 participants completing assessments for two cycles. Consequences of the training were evaluated across three levels of assessment: (1) Changes in psychophysiological response to cognitive stress were assessed by electromyography, skin conductance, heart rate, and peripheral skin temperature. The Digit Vigilance Test and the Stroop Color-Word Test were used to induce cognitive stress and assess cognitive flexibility; (2) Changes in cognitive, behavioral, and affective tendencies were assessed by 4 personality measures: Temperament and Character Inventory, State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, Tellegen Absorption Scale, and Anomalous Experiences Inventory; (3) Changes in phenomenological comportment were

assessed by interviews regarding personal interpretations of the training, practical uses of the training, and through exploratory use of a projective technique modeled after the Thematic Apperception Test. Outcomes of the case-based examples showed practice adherence was related to improvement across the three levels of assessment, changes in comportment were attributed to skills learned from the transformative practice, and most participants demonstrated improved physiological response to cognitive stress. Drawing on the work of James, Murray, White, Jung, Campbell, Taylor, and Csikszentmihalyi, implications of this research model are discussed as they relate to transformative practices, existential-humanistic and transpersonal dimensions of experience, and positive psychology. A model relating comportment, competence, and the experience of flow is presented to explain effective transformative practices.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Uribe, C. (2001). A school-based program design focusing on positive psychology to assist physically challenged children. Carlos Albizu University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Physically handicapped children often experience psychological disturbances as a result of their handicap. Children can develop tremendous anxieties when faced with the challenges of being handicap and the social pressures faced by their disability. Children with orthopedic problems often have a negative and very distorted self-image. Studies of children with curvature of the spine or multiple disabilities show by having them draw pictures that they view themselves as markedly distorted. Therapeutic interventions is often necessary to help these children change their self-image, and to learn to effectively communicate. Research indicates that 12 percent of all school children are disabled from birth defects, accidents, illness, or other causes. These means 700 children are born each day that need special care, and the number appears to be growing. Children with a disability with an average range of intellectual ability are more likely to experience depression, anxiety, anger, because they are aware of their own limitations. Research indicates that the need for programs for children with special needs is greater because of the overall lack of specialized childcare facilities. To fulfill the gap the school-based program that I will develop will provide physically handicap children of average intellectual ability with a twelve-week program utilizing the positive psychology approach that will meet during the regular school day, two times a week, and will consist of a variety of therapeutic interventions. The goal of the program is to provide the children and the parents the necessary techniques necessary to enhance a child's self-esteem, independence, and a child's optimism toward the future by providing weekly group therapy sessions.

Thesis, conceptual, qualitative.

Firpo, H. (2001). A prevention program based on positive psychology for elementary school-aged children. Carlos Albizu University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Positive psychology is based on the idea that if young people are taught to be resilient and optimistic, they will be less likely to suffer from depression and will lead happier, more productive lives. In other words, by building on human strengths, we are also building psychological muscles before the problems occur; therefore, preventing mental illness. The program was designed to serve a population of children, ages 5 to 11 years old, which are enrolled in the elementary public school system, and to be implemented within the elementary public school system. Children will be introduced to new cognitive and coping strategies, as well as social skills. Parents will be involved and encouraged to participate in the learning of optimism, providing ample positive feedback, reassurance, support, and sensitivity toward culturally diverse children. At the end of the program cycle, the children will be assessed utilizing measurements such as the Child

Behavior Checklist for ages 4-18 (CBCL/4-18) and the Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (BERS). These tools will help determine if there is a prevention of mental illness, and to ascertain whether a change was made toward an optimistic explanatory style. The participants will be tested over a two year period to determine if mental illness was prevented over a long period of time. Though, some concerns need to be addressed prior to an effective implementation. Such as, the programs group size, the cost, it is time consuming, its location, and its after school time schedule. This program appears to be a realistic and viable solution for the prevention of mental illness among elementary school-aged children. Short-term benefits to this program may be the reintegration of children into the community, creating cohesiveness among children and their families, and the teaching of adaptive thoughts and behaviors. The long-term benefits could be the prevention of violence, substance abuse, gang involvement, and ultimately psychological deficits. (Abstract shortened by UMI.)

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Johnson, D. (2001). Exploring women's empowerment and resilience: Beyond symptom reduction. University of Kentucky. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

In recent decades there has been an increased interest in the development of a more "positive psychology" that looks beyond pathology and risk factors for psychological illness. Additionally, feminist therapy has long theorized the importance of the positive outcomes of therapy, conceptualizing empowerment and resilience as Outcomes of therapy in addition to the more traditional emphasis placed on symptom reduction (Worell & Remer, in press, Wyche & Rice, 1997). The present work theoretically and empirically investigates the constructs of empowerment and resilience. The first chapter describes the various definitions of resilience that have been proposed and the multitude of terminologies has been implemented to represent similar phenomenon. Additionally, some of the problems that plague the resilience literature are discussed. An alternative paradigm for understanding resilience is proposed that adopts a dialectical and feminist perspective when investigating resilience. A "matrix of resilience" that includes intersecting axes of the broad domains of symptom formation and positive outcomes is outlined. Finally, a feminist analysis of the specific components of the positive outcomes of functioning is suggested. The final two chapters describe an empirical investigation of empowerment and resilience in women. Specifically, the reliability and validity of a new measure of empowerment in women, the Personal Progress Scale-Revised (PPS-R: Worell & Chandler, 1998), is investigated. Items for the PPS-R were theoretically derived from Worell and Remer's (1992, in press) Empowerment Model of Feminist Therapy. Results suggest that the PPS-R is a promising measure of empowerment and resilience in women with total scores demonstrating excellent reliability, and concurrent and discriminant validity. Additionally, factor analysis results indicate that the PPS-R measures a construct consistent with the Empowerment Model. Furthermore, the PPS-R was determined to be useful in assessing empowerment and resilience in a sub-sample of abused women. Implications of the findings, including suggestions for revisions of the PPS-R are discussed.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

Rich, G. (2001). Aspiring adolescents: Optimal career development. The University of Chicago. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Using purposive sampling from three high schools selected from the Csikszentmihalyi and Schneider (2000) work, available data from high school seniors who gave first year interviews were analyzed. Using a theoretical framework grounded in positive psychology (Rich, 2001), intrinsic motivation research (Deci

et al., 1999), and career and identity development research (Greenberger & Steinberg, 1986), adolescents' understanding of careers to which they aspired were analyzed for several types of careers. First, adolescents' understanding of medical careers was explored for adolescents who aspired to medical careers. Second, adolescents' understanding of law careers was explored for adolescents who aspired to law careers. Third, adolescents' understanding of business careers was explored for adolescents who aspired to business careers. Fourth, adolescents' understanding of alternative careers which required educational and experiential prerequisites which were not clearly defined were explored for adolescents who aspired to such careers.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Bertges, W. (2001). The relationship between stressful life events and leadership in children with an emphasis on explanatory styles and emotional intelligence. University of Detroit Mercy. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

A recent shift in the study of psychology, termed positive psychology, has addressed the benefits of building strengths while heightening understanding in the areas of prevention and health promotion. The focus of this study was to incorporate some of the principles of positive psychology into the exploration of the relationship between life events and leadership in children. Explanatory/attributional style and emotional intelligence were investigated as additional predictors of leadership behavior. It was hypothesized that explanatory style and emotional intelligence would predict leadership and moderate the adverse effects of life events. The subjects were 60 parent and child pairs enrolled in school-aged child care programs/latchkey programs at one of fourteen local suburban schools. Child measures included the Coddington Life Event Scale-Child Version (Coddington, 1972, 1984), the Children's Attributional Style Questionnaire (Seligman et al., 1984), and the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte et al., 1998). Parent participants completed parent and child consent/assent forms, the Life Event Scale-Parent Report Version (Coddington, 1972, 1984), the Gifted Evaluation Scale-2 Leadership Ability Subscale (GES-2) (McCarney, 1987), and the Scales for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students Leadership Characteristics Scale (SRBCSS) (Renzulli, Smith, White, Callahan, & Hartman, 1976). The dependent variable of leadership was assessed using two measures, the GES-2 and the SRBCSS. The combination of all predictor variables contributed a greater amount of the variance in the SRBCSS measure ($R^2 = .29$, $F(7, 52) = 2.99$, $p = .01$) than in the GES-2 measure ($R^2 = .22$, $F(7, 52) = 2.13$, $p = .06$). Emotional intelligence was found to be the strongest predictor and contributed 13% of the variance (partial $F(4, 55) = 9.39$, $p = .003$) in the SRBCSS measure. Life events were also found to significantly predict leadership and accounted for 10% of the variance. However, overall attributional style was not found to be significantly related to or predictive of leadership.

These findings suggest that the relationships between the independent/predictor variables and the dependent variable of leadership are complex. Emotional intelligence was found to be more predictive of leadership in children than life events and may serve as a buffer against adverse life events. These findings support the importance of identifying and implementing strength-building strategies in children so that they may be applied by psychologists, teachers, and parents. The increased understanding of the relationships between the constructs of life events, leadership, emotional intelligence and optimistic attributional style lends further support to the benefits of working within the positive psychology framework.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Kernes, J. (2001). The dimensions and depth of psychologists' meaning in life. Arizona State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Psychologists working in three settings (academia, university counseling centers, and community mental health) were surveyed with regard to their beliefs about the cosmic and terrestrial meaning of life, their views of a desirable life, their views of a morally good life, and those things that are meaningful to them in their work. Psychologists generally rejected the notion that there is no cosmic meaning to life. They also rejected statements indicating that nothing was personally meaningful to them. Psychologists generally endorsed accepting something from all ways of life, appreciating and preserving the best of humanity, showing sympathetic concerns for others, and enjoying the easily obtainable pleasures as preferred ways to live. They also supported feeling or expressing love, having or being part of a family, having good physical and/or mental health, and having significant friendships as the most desired characteristics of life. Psychologists were generally divided into moral absolutists and moral situationists with regard to their views about the moral dimensions of the good life. Finally, psychologists were generally satisfied in their work and found their work meaningful. Psychologists reported that the most meaningful aspect of their work was helping others live more satisfying lives. Beliefs did vary on the bases of several demographic variables. Results are related to theories of meaning within the positive psychology paradigm. Implications for education, training, therapy, and social policy are addressed.

Thesis, conceptual, quantitative.

Couper, G. (2001). The psychology of travel: A theoretical analysis of how study abroad and positive regression affect personal growth. Northcentral University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Scope of the study: This theoretical analysis and retrospective study explores the psychology of travel, and how and why study abroad affects personal growth and career choice. International travelers often experience something far beyond the acquisition of new subject matter or cultural awareness--they undergo a personal paradigm shift that alters their perception of themselves and their world in such a way as to clarify areas of their lives that were previously unclear. Many conceptual frameworks in developmental psychology are outlined to help define how people acquire new behavioral skills. This sometimes occurs through re-experiencing regressive situations from earlier childhood stages of development and adaptation in the more secure adult years. The theories outlined include those of Kohlberg (1984), Erikson (1968), Loevinger (1976), Kegan (1982), Basseches (1984), Marcia (1980), P. Adler (1975), Perry (1970), and Dabrowski (1977). Transformative learning refers to a dialectic, experiential form of learning through which one reexamines and changes perceptions, values, and behavior. The participants in this study were 126 college alumni five or more years after graduation, both who had and had not attended a study abroad program. A survey was distributed that consisted of demographic information, the Keirsey Temperament Sorter (KTS-II), a portion of the Omnibus Personality Inventory, and six open-ended questions related to regression, career consolidation, world-mindedness, and life goals. The emphasis was on self-awareness, not on the design, development, or administration of a study abroad program. Findings and conclusions: Quantitative and qualitative data comparing the differences between study abroad alumni and non-study abroad alumni were analyzed using the statistical procedures of two-way analysis of variance (2 x 2 ANOVA) and chi-square (χ^2). Findings showed that (1) one's temperament did not determine whether the study abroad experience was effective; (2) vocational goals were toward service careers and away from monetary pursuits; (3) childhood feelings (not actions) in times of frustration were more evident but less emotional; (4) new challenges and environments were more readily accepted; (5) time allocation was more flexible and less scheduled; and (6) corporate culture

was easier to adjust to for those with experience abroad. Of particular interest were the differences in personality traits between female and male participants. This is important because other cultures provide varied experiences based on their unique definitions of appropriate gender behavior and opportunity. Thus, research on the influence of travel on personal growth should include analysis by gender. With the dawning of the twenty-first century, positive psychology is emerging as a field in its own right. This specialty encompasses the science of positive influences and strives to improve the quality of life for all people. Further research should be pursued on how and why international travel affects personal growth, whether regressive experiences during travel help trigger learning, and how much pretravel training and emotional support during travel is required for optimal learning conditions. This will assist with the design of, and decisions to attend, such programs. Travel and multicultural encounters provide opportunities for personal growth. These experiences can transform individuals, organizations, and society.

Thesis, conceptual, literature review.

2000

n=3

Benson, H. (2000). The relationship between self-reported happiness and perception of TAT cards. The Florida State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This study examined the perception of complex visual stimuli as a function of self-reported happiness. The emotion was assessed using the Happiness Measures (Fordyce, 1988), which indicate both the frequency and intensity of happiness experienced by an individual over time. Perception was measured using a semantic differential technique for assessing emotional response to situations. Subjects were 105 undergraduate psychology students from a large southeastern university. A set of twelve TAT cards was presented to the subjects, who responded to each card using the semantic differential. Results were analyzed using a 2 x 3 MANCOVA with two levels of happiness, three groups of cards; positive, negative, and neutral, and sex as a covariate. A significant interaction was found between level of happiness and card group. Individuals with a high level of happiness scored positive situations significantly higher ($p = .047$) on valance ratings than individuals with a low level of happiness. No significant difference in responding was found between the high and low happiness groups on valance ratings of negative or neutral card groups. A 2 x 12 MANCOVA was also conducted with two levels of happiness and all twelve cards. A significant interaction ($p = .046$) was again found. Individuals with a high level of happiness showed significantly higher valance ratings on cards 10 ($p = .012$) and 17BM ($p = .017$) and significantly lower valance ratings on card 18GF ($p = .043$) compared to individuals who reported a low level of happiness. Differences in responding appear to be related to possible underlying motivations of happy individuals. Literature concerning positive affect, subjective well-being, and positive psychology is also reviewed. Implications for research and practice are discussed.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.

Loffer, S. (2000). Returning to ourselves: Women thriving with chronic illness. Institute of Transpersonal Psychology. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This qualitative study describes the experiences of women who are thriving in the midst of the adversities of rheumatoid arthritis (RA)--a systemic, unpredictable, intractable, and progressively degenerative disease that creates a wide range of limitations and challenges with far-reaching physical and psychological consequences. Drawing upon the researcher's life with RA and the work of heuristic, cooperative, feminist, and organic researchers, a derivative form of qualitative research, termed insider research, was developed. Participants were selected through self-identification as thriving with chronic illness; they answered yes to the question, Is your life better now than before you become ill? Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 9 participants, including the researcher. The participants were in their 30s and 40s and have lived with RA from 9 to 22 years. All have significant damage and limitations created by RA; 3 are on medical disability; 3 have more than one rheumatic disease; and 1 has survived cancer. Vignettes sketch each woman's life and medical history. Meta-themes organize the meaning of and journey to a better life: (a) returning to ourselves : the journey of self-discovery in which we examined old beliefs and behaviors, unearthed abandoned aspects of the self, explored novel expressions of ourselves, and created new meaning and fulfillment; (b) taking control of what we can : the endeavor to educate ourselves and to make choices in our own best interest; (c) making connections and building support : the pursuit of personal, professional, and spiritual connections to counterbalance the isolation created by RA; (d) gaining perspective on the journey : the struggle to come to an acceptance of our lives with chronic illness yet still cultivate hope and optimism through our perseverance, humor, gratitude, and aspirations for even better lives; and (e) sharing what we have learned : the advice we offer to others with chronic illness. This study provides a rich and detailed portrait of the potential for empowerment and transformation in the midst of adversity. It bridges research in psychology, sociology, and medicine, and contributes to the field of positive psychology by describing those who have found hope, strength, and optimism despite the adversities of chronic illness.

Thesis, empirical, qualitative.

Simmons, B. (2000). Eustress at work: Accentuating the positive. Oklahoma State University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Findings and conclusions . This dissertation demonstrated in a sample of 158 hospital nurses that the positive stress response may best be represented by a higher-order construct, eustress, and also demonstrated the effectiveness of several established first-order variables as indicators of this second-order construct. An individual's trust for her or his supervisor was significantly and positively related to eustress, and eustress was in turn significantly and positively related to the individual's perception of her or his health. For health care administrators recognizing that healthy workers are more productive workers, this study suggested that workers can have a positive response to even the most demanding work environments, and this positive response is significantly related to employee health. The theory of eustress presented in this dissertation thus makes a legitimate contribution to the advancement of a positive psychology.

Thesis, empirical, quantitative.