

Subjective Well-Being Intervention Program

Procedures Manual

Wellness-Promotion Groups with 6th Grade Children

Shannon M. Suldo, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of School Psychology

Jessica A. Michalowski, M.A.

Doctoral Student in School Psychology

University of South Florida

Fall 2007

Table of Contents

Introduction

Therapist's Guide to Use of Manual

Session 1: Introduction to Intervention

Overview of Sessions 2-3: Positive emotions about the Past

 Session 2: Introduction to Gratitude

 Session 3: Gratitude Visits

Overview of Sessions 4-7: Positive emotions within the Present

 Session 4: Acts of Kindness

 Session 5: Introduction to Character Strengths

 Session 6: Assessment of Signature Character Strengths

 Session 7: Use of Signature Strengths in New Ways

Overview of Sessions 8-9: Positive emotions about the Future

 Session 8: Optimistic Thinking

 Session 9: Hope

Session 10: Termination

Appendix

 Materials for Use within Sessions

 References

Introduction

The traditional focus of psychological interventions has been on the amelioration of disorders. However, there has been a movement in the psychological field, known as positive psychology, which has shifted from the traditional disease model to strengths and wellness promotion. In the spring of 2006, Suldo and colleagues completed an empirical study in which approximately 400 middle school students completed surveys about their mental health status (both mental illness *and* subjective well-being (SWB) - that is, happiness) and functioning in several important domains of life, including academic achievement (perceived competence in learning; GPA and FCAT scores were also yielded from school records). A central purpose of the study was to understand the extent to which students' levels of mental illness (in line with the traditional disease-oriented focus of psychology) and subjective well-being (in line with the focus of positive psychology) related to their academic functioning.

Results included the following findings: (1) approximately 13% of the students did not display symptoms of mental illness but yet still reported low SWB (a group we called "vulnerable youth"), and (2) between-group differences emerged on many indicators of educational functioning (e.g., scores on statewide standardized achievement test, attitudes towards schooling); specifically, the "complete mental health youth" (no symptoms of mental illness *and* average to high SWB) scored significantly better than the vulnerable youth, suggesting that it's not sufficient to be free of mental illness (Suldo & Shaffer, in press). Instead, being satisfied with one's life and experiencing a preponderance of positive emotions (i.e., high SWB) is associated with maximum academic functioning.

Happiness is a blanket term often used in ordinary language when referring to an emotional state. Seligman (2002) operationalized happiness as including positive emotion, engagement with life, and having meaning in life. Researchers have identified factors that determine levels of happiness, including set point, life circumstances, and intentional activity (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005). Happiness is set within a chronic range that is stable over time and linked to one's genetics. A person's set point is the expected happiness value within their range, reflecting intrapersonal, temperamental, and affective personality traits (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). Circumstances are incidental but relatively stable facts of an individual's life (i.e., region you live in, age, gender, personal history, occupational status). Finally, intentional activity includes varied actions and thoughts in one's daily life, such as

amount of exercise, looking at things in a positive light, and setting goals (Lyubomirsky, et al., 2005).

Although positive psychology has a relatively young history, research in happiness has begun to look beyond the topography and demographic correlates to viable methods of intervention. To date, research on happiness interventions has aimed at factors in adulthood. An overview of the research on happiness interventions reveals positive support for several methods, including increasing daily acts of kindness (Lyubomirsky, Tkach, & Sheldon, 2004), goal attainment (Sheldon, Kasser, Smith, & Share, 2002), and practicing grateful thinking (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). However, these interventions are unable to neither provide support for lasting effects on happiness levels in and of themselves nor provide a comprehensive framework. In contrast, research on strengths of character as a viable method for building happiness has provided evidence of lasting effects (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005).

Seligman (2002) asserted that people are capable of increasing their happiness levels into the upper range of their set points through intentional activities. He proposed a multidimensional view of increasing happiness, including attention to past, present, and future aspects of emotional life. Seligman suggested that feelings of satisfaction with the past can be increased through expressions of gratitude for positive events. Based on the research of Emmons and McCullough (2003), Seligman suggested increasing happiness through expressions of gratitude, such as journaling happenings for which one has been grateful or interpersonal expressions of gratitude. In terms of the present, Seligman discussed happiness levels as dependent on both pleasures (i.e., immediate, fading sensations) and gratifications (i.e., the enactment of personal strengths in meaningful ways). He suggested that people can improve lasting happiness by increasing gratifications through identifying their personal strengths and virtues, termed character strengths, and using them in new ways. Published research by Seligman and colleagues (2005) has supported this claim. In an internet-based study, 577 adults participated in one of five activities designed to increase happiness as well as one placebo control group. Happiness levels were found to significantly increase in both the group that completed gratitude visits (i.e., delivered a letter of gratitude to an influential person in their life) and the group that used their character strengths in a new way. Finally, Seligman suggested that happiness levels for the future could be increased through learned optimism, which is a cognitive-behavioral method of changing pessimistic modes of thought through disputations of negative attributions based on evidence in

every day life. Seligman (1990) stated that people develop explanatory styles for interpreting the world by the age of seven. A pessimistic explanatory style includes attributions of negative events as permanent, pervasive across life domains, and caused by personal factors. This type of style increases risk for internalizing disorders, such as depression, decreases success, and decreases physical health. On the other hand, an optimistic explanatory style includes attributions of negative events as temporary, specific to situations, and related to external causes. This style increases ability to cope with trauma as well as generates positive emotions (Seligman, 1990).

Seligman's (2002) framework for increasing happiness has provided a base from which the current intervention was developed. Within his work, important recommendations for improving optimal well-being in childhood and throughout life are provided. The current intervention is a product of the developmentally appropriate modification of both Seligman's recommendations and empirically supported adult focused interventions aimed at increasing well-being and positive outcomes. It is structured in three phases, including past, present, and future aspects of emotional well-being. In addition to Seligman's description of gratitude interventions and character strengths, sections on acts of kindness, savoring, and hope were added into his framework in order to increase the comprehensiveness of the intervention according to the literature. Furthermore, learned optimism is a complex skill that would require more time than could be provided for this intervention. Consequently, a scaled down version of his principals has been included under optimistic thinking. Specific interventions will be included within these phases.

Due to the evidence that an absence of mental illness is not sufficient for optimal mental health functioning, the current intervention was developed to act as both an enhancement and prevention for vulnerable youth. It is designed to increase student happiness, which is related to more desirable academic, social, and physical health outcomes (Suldo & Shaffer, in press). In effect, an enhancement of life satisfaction and the factors with which it is correlated may work as protective factors against the occurrence of such negative outcomes as school failure.

Therapist's Guide to Use of Manual

The intent of this manual is to provide guidance to therapists in implementing positive psychology interventions within a comprehensive framework. All activities are clearly defined for the therapist. However, the therapist will need to provide examples from personal experience and make modifications as necessary to accommodate student needs.

Aside from the introduction and termination sessions, each of the sessions are categorized into phases (i.e., happiness in the past, present, and future). Each phase is described prior to presentation of specific session outlines. Please read these descriptions carefully as they orient the therapist to the nature and goals of each phase.

The session outlines within each phase provide an overview of the goals, procedures, and materials needed. Detailed descriptions of intervention activities follow with a rationale for how activities relate to the topic of the session. Directions for therapists to complete activities with students are single spaced in bulleted lists. Sub-bullets indicate examples. It is important for therapists to become familiar with this material before beginning the intervention. Within particular activities, wording of instructions and/or explanations of concepts is important to clarity. When verbatim instructions are required, they are printed in *italics*.

Session 1: Introduction to Intervention

Overview

Goals

- Establish a supportive group environment.
- Increase awareness of subjective well-being.

Session Procedures

- A. Get to Know You exercise: You at Your Best
- B. Group Discussion: What does it mean to be happy? Why is that important?
- C. Clarify Purpose of Group and Confidentiality
- D. Homework: You at Your Best

Materials Needed

- Binder to hold documents provided and created throughout the program
- Folder in which students can transport group homework assignments
- Whiteboard or easel
- What Determines Happiness? Graph (see Appendix)
- Student worksheet: What Determines Happiness? (see Appendix)
- Student worksheet: Confidentiality (see Appendix)

Session 1 Procedures Defined

A. Get to Know You exercise: You at Your Best

This exercise has been found by Seligman et al. (2005) to provide an initial boost of happiness and immediate increase to set point levels within a sample of adults. These researchers have indicated that the “You at Your Best” exercise is likely a good introductory exercise for more effective, long-lasting interventions due to its potential to amplify effects.

➤ You at Your Best

- Initiate by saying: *Before we talk about why we’re all here in this group, I’d like to do an activity to help us get to know each other.*
- Provide students with a plain sheet of lined paper
- Ask them to write about a time when they were at their best
 - doing something really well
 - going above and beyond for someone else
 - displaying a talent
 - creating something
- Once completed, ask them to take a few minutes to reflect on the story
 - remember the feelings of that day
 - identify the personal strengths they displayed in the story
 - think about the time, effort, and creativity that comprised such an accomplishment
- Ask students to share their story with the group and one or two reflections
- As the group leader, you should initiate reflections on group members stories with identifications or reaffirmations of strengths within the story
- Encourage group members to reflect on the positives of each others’ stories
 - something they admired or liked in the story
 - a quality they share with the presenter
- Make a photocopy of the stories. File the original You at Your Best paper in the permanent group binder, and place the original in a folder in which the student can keep their group homework assignments.

B. Group Discussion: What does it mean to be happy? Why is that important?

Begin by asking students: *What do you think this group is all about?*

- #### ➤
- Once answers are received, state that the group is about happiness.

Pose these questions to the group and facilitate a brief discussion:

- *What does happiness mean to you?*
- *Why is happiness important to you?*
- *What do you do to increase your own happiness?*

No specific answers are necessary. Simply facilitate students' thoughts and discussions on these topics. Participate in the discussion as well with examples from your own life in order to develop a relationship with the group.

C. Clarify Purpose of Group and Confidentiality

Discuss the set point of happiness and how people have the power to change where they spend their time in their emotional range, at the lower versus upper ends.

- Purpose of Group
 - Describe this concept with the aid of the “What Determines Happiness?” graph in the appendix (developed from the research of Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).
 - Use the following script verbatim to explain this concept:

Look at the graph “What Determines Happiness?” Happiness is made up of three things: a genetic or biological set point, purposeful activity, and life circumstances. Set point is the biggest cause of happiness and it is controlled by our genetics. We all have a range of ability to be happy based on what we’re born with. Let’s use the ruler and pretend that people can be happy on a scale of 1-6. Some people’s ranges are naturally high, so even when they are at their lowest happy level, they may seem a lot happier than other people. In that case, their range could be 4-6. However, some people’s ranges are lower, so they don’t seem happy that often. They may have a range of 0-2. A person’s set point is the level of happiness they usually have within their range. For example, a person could have a range of 3-5 but are usually at a 4 level of happiness. It is a good thing that genetics isn’t the only thing that makes up happiness, or else we wouldn’t be able to get any happier. Changes in life circumstances and purposeful ways of thinking and acting help us to move our level of happiness within our ranges. Circumstances are facts of life, such as the state you live in, your age, how much money you have, and the school you go to. These are things that we usually can’t change or can’t do so very easily. The key to increasing happiness within our ranges is purposeful activity; in other words, what you choose to do or think. Purposeful activity includes the things you do, the way you think, your

attitudes, and your goals. Everyone has the opportunity to increase their level of happiness through purposeful activities and that's what we'll be talking about in group. The purpose of this group is to increase your happiness by talking about good attitudes, feelings, thoughts, and activities from your past, present, and future. We'll meet one time each week, for ten weeks, in this room, at this time. During our meetings, we'll learn how to make our purposeful activities (those things we choose to do and think about) more in line with activities that people feel happier with their lives. Do you have any questions?

- Comprehension Check: Ask the students to fill in the blanks that correspond to the 3 determinants of happiness. File the worksheet in the students' binders.

➤ Confidentiality

- Discuss with students their ideas of what confidentiality means
- Ask them if they have heard the word before and how they would define it for this group (e.g., confidential = private or secret)
- Compile their ideas into a confidentiality definition on a whiteboard
Make sure that it includes the following components:
 - Respect for others' privacy outside of group
 - Times when the group leader will have to break confidentiality (e.g., danger to self, danger to others, student is in danger)
 - Any other concerns students express
- Comprehension Check: Ask all students to write the definition on the worksheet (see Appendix); file in binder

D. Homework: You at Your Best

Discuss with the group specific incentives that will be provided weekly for completion of group homework (for instance, school supplies, stickers, etc.).

For each night this week, ask the students to read their story and reflect on identified strengths. They can add more details and length to the story if they would like. A brief discussion in the next session will touch on student follow through with homework and resulting feelings of happiness.

E. Administer the CES

Overview of Sessions 2-3: Positive Emotions about the Past

According to Seligman (2002), positive emotions about the past include serenity, pride, fulfillment, contentment, and satisfaction. Positive and negative emotions related to the past are driven by thoughts and interpretations of past events, actions, and relationships. When one dwells on past events that (s)he has interpreted negatively, negative emotion is perseverated. Mood returns within its set range when it is not the focus of thoughts. Therefore, focusing thoughts on positive interpretations of past events can hold emotion in the upper range of its set point. Gratitude works to increase life satisfaction because it amplifies the intensity and frequency of positive memories. Within sessions 2 and 3, increasing gratitude is used as a method for bringing positive emotion about the past into focus. Session 2 introduces gratitude and gratitude journaling. Session 3 opens discussion of those journals, introduces enactment of gratitude through visits, and makes the connection between thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Session 2: Introduction to Gratitude

Overview

Goals

- Explore students' current levels of gratitude.
- Define gratitude and how it can impact happiness.
- Learn a method of using gratitude to create a focus on positive interpretations of past events.

Session Procedures

- A. Review Homework: You at Your Best
- B. Rate Your Own Gratitude
- C. Why may Gratitude be Important?
- D. Gratitude Journals
- E. Homework: Gratitude Journals

Materials Needed

- Tangible rewards for homework completion (stickers, pencils, etc.)
- Whiteboard or easel
- Small squares of paper for students to note self-identified ratings
- Notebooks/journals with blank cover to be inserted in individuals' binders for group
- Pens, pencils, markers, etc. (or other colorful supplies to decorate journals)

Session 2 Procedures Defined

A. Review Homework: You at Your Best

Ask students how often they read their “You at Your Best” stories. If students did not comply with the daily requirement, stress the importance of daily effort for changes in happiness to occur. Provide a small tangible reward (e.g., pencil, sticker) for homework completion

- Ask students to share any new reflections that they had over the week
- Ask students to share if they felt any difference in happiness since the prior session

B. Rate Your Own Gratitude

Pose this question to the group:

- *What is gratitude?*
 - Facilitate a brief discussion on what students think constitutes gratitude
- Rate Your Own Gratitude
 - Tell the students: *We are going to rate our own level of gratitude.*
 - Draw a number line from 0-10 on a whiteboard and state the following: *Think about how often you have felt grateful in the past few month. On a scale from 0 to 10 with 0 being never grateful, 5 being sometimes grateful, and 10 being always grateful, rate your gratitude.*
 - Have students write their ratings on a piece of paper and fold it over
 - Circle the room and have each student share their number and the reason they have chosen it

C. Why may Gratitude be Important?

Pose these questions to the group:

- *Why is it important or not important to have gratitude in your life?*
- *Do you think being grateful can increase happiness? Why or why not?*
 - Discuss how gratitude helps us focus our emotions on the positive parts of our pasts as related to school, friendships, and in family life
 - Group leader provide a personal example of a time in which you’ve felt grateful and how that refocused your attention on a positive experience

D. Gratitude Journals

Emmons and McCullough (2003) found that daily attention to grateful thoughts significantly and noticeably increased positive affect and life satisfaction. In that vein, gratitude journals are a method of focusing student thoughts on things, people, and events for which they are grateful. The intensity is high for the first week, in that students are asked to journal daily. This is due to Emmons and McCullough's finding that higher intensity lead to greater increases in happiness. Subsequent journaling will be recommended on a once per week basis.

➤ Create Gratitude Journal

- Provide each student with a plain cover journal or notebook
- Ask them to use the writing/art materials to design a cover that shows something positive about their history
 - Something they have done, was given to them, part of a family event, or any other kind of experience valued as positive
 - It could be done entirely as a picture or can incorporate writing and drawing/symbols

➤ Gratitude Journaling

- Once the journal have be completed, give the following instructions verbatim:

I want you to take five minutes, think about your day, and write down five things in your life that you are grateful for, including both small and large things, events, people, talents, or anything else you think of. Some examples may include: generosity of my friends, my teacher giving me extra help, family dinner, your favorite band/singer, etc. [You may provide examples relevant to your students that you are aware of].

- Help students complete an initial entry during group
 - Allow students 5 minutes to list 5 things for which they are currently grateful
 - Explain that a variety of responses is acceptable and expected
 - Prompt each student to share 1 – 2 of their responses with the group after the independent writing time is over

E. Homework: Gratitude Journals

For each night this week, ask the students to complete gratitude journals:

For each night this week, I want you to set aside five minutes before you go to sleep. At that time, think about your day and write down five things in your life that you are grateful for, just like we did here today in your journals. Remember that you can include events, people, talents, or anything else you think of, whether it is large or small. Also, you can repeat some things if they are really important to you. But also try to think of different ones as well.

Remind students that they will never be asked to share all of their responses, but to be sure that they are comfortable with sharing 2-3 of the responses they record during the week in group next week. Send them home with the decorated notebooks contained in their homework folders, but not the permanent binders to be held by the group leaders. Remind them of the incentives they can receive the following group contingent on homework completion and return of the gratitude journal.

Session 3: Gratitude Visits

Overview

Goals

- Explore students' experiences with gratitude journals.
- Make the connection between thoughts and feelings.
- Learn to incorporate actions of gratitude.

Session Procedures

- A. Review Homework: Gratitude Journals
- B. Gratitude Visit
- C. Thoughts about the Past
- D. Homework: Gratitude Visits and/or Journals

Materials Needed

- Tangible rewards for homework completion (stickers, pencils, etc.)
- Gratitude Visit Planning Form (see Appendix)
- Access to computer lab or letter stationary
- Letter size envelopes
- What Determines Happiness? Graph (see Appendix)

Session 3 Procedures Defined

A. Review Homework: Gratitude Journals

Discuss with the students when and how they completed the journals; stress the importance of journaling if necessary. Provide tangible reward for completion.

- Have the students pick 2-3 things for which they recorded being grateful to share with the group
- Discuss the significance of gratitude for these things in terms of positive feelings about the past
- Ask students to express any changes in feelings of gratitude or happiness

B. Gratitude Visit

Seligman and colleagues (2005) described a study in which several interventions based on positive psychology theories were implemented via online registration.

Completion of a gratitude visit was one of the three intervention exercises that resulted in positive changes in happiness through a one month follow-up. The current exercise is based on their study and intended to increase the experience of gratitude by intensifying the connection between thoughts, feelings, and actions.

➤ Gratitude Visit

- Introduce the gratitude visit by using the following verbatim script:

We all have people in our lives who have helped us in some way. This helping can be part of someone's job, like a teacher or parent, or help that someone gives without being required to. Even when people's kindness or help is provided as part of their job, the help can be important because of the way they did it or how it benefited us so much. Sometimes other people's kindness towards us goes unnoticed or unrecognized.

- As the group leader, begin by providing some examples of people who were particularly kind or helpful to you during childhood that were never properly thanked
- Instruct students to write a list of people who had been especially kind to them but may not have been properly thanked (use Gratitude Visit Planning Form)

- Ask students to share at least one story about how one person has helped them
- Explain: *“gratitude visits” are when you express this gratitude in a one-page letter and deliver the letter to the person who has been especially kind to you*
- Help students identify someone from their list of people to whom they are grateful that they could meet in person to deliver such a letter
- Assist students in composing a one-page letter that described the reason(s) why they are grateful to this person (access to computers may be secured in advance of the session if the group prefers to type)
- Assist students in planning a day and time during which they will read the letter aloud to the person (use Gratitude Visit Planning Form). Emphasize to students that they must read slowly with expression and eye contact during a face-to-face visit. Warn students that they should not reveal the reason why they want to meet with the person; instead, simply make plans to spend time with the person

C. Thoughts about the Past

Discuss the connection between their thoughts of the past and current affect.

- How has gratitude refocused thoughts and changed feelings?
 - Review the “What Determines Happiness?” graph and discuss how grateful thinking is a purposeful activity
 - Doing things like gratitude journaling and visits refocuses thoughts on the positive parts of your past, which increases positive attitudes about your history and your life (brings you into the upper range of your set point-use ruler)
 - It can even help you feel more confident in your goals because you recognized people in your life who are there to help you

D. Homework: Gratitude Visits and/or Journals

Instruct students to enact their gratitude visit. Note: in situations in which this is impossible (student does not have means to meet with someone to whom they’re grateful, or cannot identify a person), instruct students to continue working on your gratitude journals as done the previous week. Ask all students to complete at least one gratitude journal entry at some point during the week before the next session.

E. Administer the TASC-C. Group leader complete TASC-T for each student.

Overview of Sessions 4-7: Positive emotions within the Present

According to Seligman (2002), positive emotions within the present include joy, zest, ecstasy, calm, pleasure, ebullience, and flow. Typically, these are the emotions that people refer to when they discuss happiness. There are two distinct types of present positive emotions, including pleasures (i.e., raw sensory feelings) and gratifications (i.e., full engagement or absorption in activities that are enjoyed through thinking, interpreting, and tapping into strengths and virtues). Since pleasures are fleeting, momentary, and of short duration, the focus in this intervention is on increasing gratifications, which are more highly related to long-term happiness outcomes. Gratifications are not easy to come by as are pleasures. They require identification and development of character strengths, challenging those strengths, and absorbing oneself into strength-related activities. In session 4, we begin by focusing on the character strength of kindness due to its strong relationship with increases in subjective well-being as found in the literature (Lyubomirsky et al., 2004; Otake, Shimai, Tanaka-Matsumi, Otsui, & Fredrickson, 2006). Within sessions 5-7, students are taught about their signature character strengths and how they can be utilized to achieve increased gratifications. Sessions 5 and 6 are focused on the identification of signature character strengths and how they may be used in new and unique ways. Session 7 provides an opportunity for students to discuss their experiences with using their signature strengths in a new way, and teaches them how to savor positive emotions, such as those that may result from using one's signature strengths (Bryant & Veroff, 2007).

Session 4: Acts of Kindness

Overview

Goals

- Discuss how kindness is considered a moral virtue, or strength of character, in general terms and how it may relate to happiness.
- Explore students' estimations of how often they spontaneously perform acts of kindness.
- Learn a method using kindness as a focus on positive interpretations of present events.

Session Procedures

- A. Review Homework: Gratitude Visits and/or Journals
- B. Discuss Kindness as a Virtue Related to Happiness
- C. Student Estimations of Acts of Kindness
- D. Homework: Performing Acts of Kindness

Materials Needed

- Tangible rewards for homework completion (stickers, pencils, etc.)
- Whiteboard or easel
- Performing Acts of Kindness Record Form (see Appendix)

Session 4 Procedures Defined

A. Review Homework: Gratitude Visits and/or Journals

Discuss with the students their experiences during the gratitude visits. Provide tangible rewards for completion.

- Ask the students: *How did the recipients of the visit respond? How did they feel following the visit?*

For students who continued to complete gratitude journals:

- Have the students pick 1 entry to share with the group
- Brief reflections on happiness feelings may be discussed

B. Discuss Kindness as a Virtue Related to Happiness

Lyubomirsky and colleagues (2005) discussed acts of kindness as a method for temporarily boosting moods and leading to long-lasting well-being through satisfying basic human needs of relatedness. Park, Peterson, and Seligman (2004) defined kindness as a virtue, or character strength, which can be utilized in impacting level of happiness. Otake and colleagues (2006) found a positive relationship between happiness and motivation to perform, enactment of, and recognition of kind behaviors. The following discussion is based on the work of these researchers.

- Ask students what they think of when someone is called a kind person? What specifically is that person doing?
 - On a whiteboard, create a list of behaviors as students define them
 - Be sure that the end conclusion of the list is that acts of kindness are behaviors that benefit other people or make others happy, typically at the cost of your time and effort
 - Say to the students: *When a person consistently performs these behaviors, we say they are kind, or they possess the virtue of kindness. A virtue, also called strength of character, is a moral strength that people do by choice. We'll talk more about character strengths next week. For today, how do you think using this particular virtue, that is kindness, can impact someone's happiness?*

- Discuss how kindness can help us to focus our emotions on the positive parts of our present lives. Examples:
 - Creating a positive view of others and the community
 - Increased cooperation
 - Awareness of your own good fortune
 - Seeing yourself as helpful
 - Increased confidence and optimism about being able to help others
 - Getting others to know and like us
 - Receipt of appreciation and gratitude
 - Others reciprocating kindness and friendship to you

C. Student Estimations of Acts of Kindness

In their 2006 study, Otake et al. found that happiness could be increased through a counting of the acts of kindness that a person typically performs over one week's time. For the present purposes, the basis of this study is used in this preparatory exercise for enacting kindness for homework.

- As the group leader, begin by providing some examples of acts of kindness that you have performed recently, focusing mainly on the past week.
 - Make sure that you provide a wide range of acts of kindness that are authentic to you but also relatable to the group
 - Give yourself a loose estimate of the amount of kind acts you perform in a week (e.g., 3-5, 4-6, or 7-10)
- Ask the students to think about the people in their lives such as family, friends, and teachers
 - Have them provide a few examples of kind acts they observed by these significant figures in their lives during the past week
 - Have them provide a weekly estimate of these observed kind acts
- Have students provide some examples of acts of kindness that they have performed in the past week. If it is too difficult for students to think of acts of kindness limited to this time frame, have students think back to the past 2 or 3 weeks.
 - Have students give themselves a weekly estimate
 - It is important to create a climate of openness and nonjudgmental attitudes since kindness was described as a moral virtue and it can be interpreted as negative, or even shameful, if a student states low amounts of kind acts
 - Preface the exercise with a statement that all people vary in the amount of kind acts they perform, which is not a reflection on the quality of their moral character. As will be examined in the following session, moral strengths come in many forms. People are stronger in different areas than others.

D. Homework: Performing Acts of Kindness

Lyubomirsky and colleagues (2004) found that people who performed 5 acts of kindness in one day each week for 6 weeks showed a significant increase in well-being. Utilizing their format, instruct students in performing acts of kindness:

➤ Acts of Kindness

- Ask students to perform 5 acts of kindness during one designated day over the next week
- Remind students that the acts of kindness, as discussed, are behaviors that benefit other people or make others happy, typically at the cost of your time and effort
- Have the group brainstorm some ideas of the acts of kindness they might like to perform
- Provide them with the “Acts of Kindness Record Form” to jot down the acts they perform
- Have students decide on a date to perform the acts before ending session
- Inform students that they will be asked to share 2-3 acts of kindness performed with the group and related feelings

Session 5: Introduction to Character Strengths

Overview

Goals

- Define character strengths and virtues.
- Discuss character strengths and virtues related to happiness in the present.
- Students identify perceived strengths.
- Reinforce acts of kindness.

Session Procedures

- A. Review Homework: Performing Acts of Kindness
- B. Discuss Character Strengths and Virtues
- C. Students Identify Perceived Strengths
- D. Relationship of Character Strengths to Happiness in the Present
- E.. Homework: Continue Acts of Kindness

Materials Needed

- Tangible rewards for homework completion (stickers, pencils, etc.)
- Whiteboard or easel
- Lined paper
- Classification of 24 Character Strengths (see Appendix)
- Performing Acts of Kindness Record Form (see Appendix)

Session 5 Procedures Defined

A. Review Homework: Performing Acts of Kindness

Discuss with the students how well they were able to complete all five acts of kindness during the week. Provide tangible rewards for completion.

- Have the students pick 2-3 acts of kindness to share with the group
- Discuss the significance of acts of kindness in terms of positive feelings about the present, ensuring that the acts performed benefited someone else at the cost of the student's time and/or effort
- Inform students that their homework for this week will be to continue doing acts of kindness in the same manner.

B. Discuss Character Strengths and Virtues

Park, Peterson, and Seligman (2004) defined character strengths as “traits that reflect thoughts, feelings, and behaviors” (p. 603). These strengths are identifiable but related and used voluntarily in differing degrees by individuals. Strengths are dispositions to act that require judgment and enable people to thrive. On this basis, conduct the following discussion.

- Ask students: *How would you define a character strength or virtue of a person?*
 - Encourage an active discussion of the meanings of these words
 - Be sure to discuss that character strengths are moral strengths done by choice, which is different from talents: *Talents are qualities that you are born with but may be improved somewhat by purposeful actions (e.g., perfect pitch in your singing voice, rhythm in dance, running speed). However, character strengths are moral virtues that are built-up and used by choice (integrity, kindness, fairness, originality)*
 - Have leader and co-leader provide examples of their own talents vs. moral strengths.
- Share with students the “Classification of 24 Character Strengths” sheet. Interactively discuss the meanings of each of the 24 identified strengths by having each student read one of the character strength definitions and saying what that means to them; ensure that students understand meanings by clarifying definitions as necessary. The leader should describe each category before students read and discuss the strengths that comprise them. This will give the character strengths context and clarify that the categories are more general, not character strengths in

themselves. A round robin method should be used to ensure each student has several turns to define and discuss character strengths.

C. Students Identify Perceived Strengths

- Have students generate ideas as to what they think their top 5 character strengths may include:
 - Ask students to think back to the “You at Your Best” activity they did during the first week of group and have them reread their stories to themselves
 - As the group leader, briefly summarize the You at Your Best story you shared earlier in order to then identify some character strengths and virtues (consistent with the terminology used in the “Classification of 24 Character Strengths”) of your own that you demonstrated in that story
 - Ask students to identify character strengths they believe they have, possibly in the context of the strengths they showed during their You at Your Best stories, by choosing from the “Classification of 24 Character Strengths” sheet.
 - Have each student write down their own identified strengths on a piece of lined paper
 - Ask students to share the strengths they chose for themselves and write them out on the white board
 - Have the group look at strengths shared by different group members

D. Relationship of Character Strengths to Happiness in the Present

- Discuss how using character strengths may relate to happiness in the present
 - Have students provide their ideas and list them on the white board. The leader and co-leader should ensure that the following are also discussed:
 - Focus on current efforts
 - Engaging in a challenges that build on abilities and skills
 - Concentration
 - Absorption in a task where time flies by
 - Creating and working on clear goals
 - Immediate feedback from others and yourself
 - Sense of self-control
 - Emphasize that good feelings resulting from use of character strengths are due to the choice and effort in using them
 - Provide this example: *A cashier undercharges you for your order. Although you think that the items are overpriced and you really want to keep the extra money, you tell the cashier that you owe more than he stated. You feel good about yourself afterward because you chose to exercise your character strength of honesty.*
 - Ask students to pick one of the strengths they listed for themselves and explain to the group how it may take effort to use it
 - Be sure to collect each student’s list of self-identified strengths as they will be needed for the next session

- Inform students that the group will use an online survey to identify their character strengths in the next session and will compare the strengths they chose for themselves with the survey results.

E. Homework: Continue Acts of Kindness

Ask students to continue performing acts of kindness as completed during the previous week. Remind them that changes in happiness occur with repeated use of exercises such as performing acts of kindness. If needed, remind students of the components of this exercise:

➤ Acts of Kindness

- Ask students to perform 5 acts of kindness during one designated day over the next week
- Remind students that the acts of kindness, as discussed, are behaviors that benefit other people or make others happy, typically at the cost of your time and effort
- Provide them with the “Acts of Kindness Record Form” to jot down the acts of kindness they intend to perform
- Have students decide on a date to perform the acts before ending session
- Inform students that they will be asked to share 2-3 acts of kindness performed with the group and related feelings

Session 6: Assessment of Signature Character Strengths

Overview

Goals

- Objectively identify students' signature strengths
- Discuss students' individual signature character strengths.
- Explore new ways to use one signature strength
- Develop individual plan for use of one signature strength.

Session Procedures

- A. Review Homework: Continue Acts of Kindness
- B. Assessment of Signature Strengths
- C. Discuss Expected vs. Objectively Assessed Signature Strengths
- D. Homework: Use Signature Strength in New Ways

Materials Needed

- Tangible rewards for homework completion (stickers, pencils, etc.)
- Blackboard, whiteboard, or easel and appropriate writing utensil
- Extra copies of the "Classification of 24 Character Strengths" sheet (see Appendix)
- Students' handwritten lists of self-identified strengths created in the previous session
- Lined paper
- Access to computer lab and the internet: www.authentichappiness.org
- New Uses of My First Signature Strength record form (see Appendix)
- Extra copies of Acts of Kindness record form (see Appendix)

Session 6 Procedures Defined

A. Review Homework: Continuing Acts of Kindness

As in the previous session, discuss with the students how well they were able to complete all five acts of kindness during the week. Provide tangible rewards for completion.

- Have the students pick 1-2 acts of kindness to share with the group
- Discuss the significance of acts of kindness in terms of positive feelings about the present (emphasis if needed on benefit to others at cost of student's time and/or effort)
- Encourage students to continue completing activities that increase their happiness: either acts of kindness (i.e., 5 acts of kindness in one day) or making entries in their gratitude journals (i.e., 5 things they are grateful for in one entry). Inform students that today's homework will include two parts; one part is for them to choose between continuing acts of kindness or their gratitude journal- remind them either activity is to be completed in a single day.

B. Assessment of Signature Strengths

The Values in Action Inventory of Strengths for Youth (VIA-Youth) was developed by Park and Peterson in 2006 as an extension of their original adult version. The purpose of this assessment is to identify individual adolescents' personal ranking of the 24 character strengths with particular emphasis on their top 5 strengths, known as signature character strengths. Seligman (2002) discussed how use of one's signature strengths is a viable method of increasing happiness in the present.

- VIA-Youth
 - Before beginning, you will need to register on the website in order to access the survey. It is recommended that you do this prior to the session. During session, the group leader will be able to logon multiple child users on separate computers all under the group leader's account/logon.
 - Begin by explaining to students that researchers have developed a method for people to rank their character strengths through a survey. The top five strengths are called *signature character strengths*
 - Explain to students the use of the internet site designed to help define their signature strengths, specifically www.authentichappiness.org

- Once on the website, scroll down and click on the link VIA Strength Survey for Children
- Follow the online instructions for entering the survey
- Go over the instructions for completing the questions provided online as a group
- Have each student individually complete the survey

C. Discuss Expected vs. Objectively Assessed Signature Strengths

As individual students complete the online survey, print out their top 5 signature character strengths. If a printer is not available, have students circle their signature strengths on their “Classification of 24 Character Strengths” sheet and number them from 1-5 as indicated by the website feedback. Provide students with the print-out (or individualized “Classification of 24 Character Strengths” sheet) and their hand written lists of self-identified strengths. On an individual and/or small group level (depending on students’ rate of survey completion), discuss the following topics:

- *How are your signature strengths from the online survey the same or different from the strengths you wrote about yourself before we went online?*
- *What were your reactions to your signature strengths?*
 - Explore surprise, expected, happy, disappointed, and curious reactions
- *Sometimes the computer generated strengths don’t feel like they are a good fit. That’s okay; you just don’t concentrate on using them. Instead, think about how you use the strengths that do fit you. The ones that fit may just feel right, may be exciting to use, may help you to do well in new activities, may be something you enjoy doing, may be something that gets you pumped up, or something you want to try using in different ways.*
- Example of Leadership as a signature strength: You may be the kind of person who thinks that being a leader is something you can do well, you get excited about the chance to lead groups in class work, in sports, or on trips, or you may already be a leader on your football team but you also want to

be student government present and lead a food drive at school for Thanksgiving. Being a leader just feels like it is right for you.

- *Are there any strengths that you feel just don't fit you? Why?*
 - Examples of ways strengths may not fit:
 - Strength doesn't feel "like me"
 - Not comfortable using the strength
 - Can't think of examples of situations they could use the strength
 - Assist the students cross off from their printout any strengths that don't seem to fit, as these are not signature strengths
- *Which of your signature strengths do you use often?*
- *Can you think of ways you have used your signature strengths recently?*
 - Have students pick one strength they would like to work on this week and give an example of one way they already use that strength.

D. Homework: Use Signature Strength in New Ways

Continue on an individual and/or small group basis with students:

- Part 1: Ask each student to use their chosen signature strength in new ways each day of the upcoming week. Brainstorm ideas of new ways they could use their strength and have the student write down their chosen ways on the “New Uses of My First Signature Strength” record form. Ask them to write down the feelings they had after they used their strength each day. If they think of different ways to use the strength during the week, ask them to note on their form how they used it. Encourage students to try a different way to use the character strength if they encounter obstacles with the plan on their record form. **Make copies of the students VIA-Youth results and handwritten lists of strengths as well as their “New Uses of My First Signature Strength” record form for their permanent folders.**
- Part 2: Ask students to choose whether they will continue doing acts of kindness or completing their gratitude journal. Make a notation of each student's choice to check in with next session. Provide “Acts of Kindness” record form as needed.

Session 7: Use of Signature Strengths in New Ways

Overview

Goals

- Review students' use of their signature strengths in new ways and discuss related feelings.
- Problem-solve obstacles that limited students use of character strengths in new ways.
- Explore/plan new uses of signature strengths across life domains.
- Present simple methods of savoring to expand positive experiences with use of signature strengths.

Session Procedures

- A. Review Homework: Use Signature Strength in New Ways
- B. Explore/Plan uses of Signature Strengths in New Ways across Life Domains
- C. Savor the Experience
- D. Homework: Use Signature Strength in New Ways with Savoring
- E. Administer the TASC-C. Group leaders complete TASC-T for each student.

Materials Needed

- Tangible rewards for homework completion (stickers, pencils, etc.)
- Blackboard, whiteboard, or easel and appropriate writing utensil
- Extra copies of Classification of 24 Character Strengths sheet (see Appendix)
- New Uses of My Second Signature Strength record form (see Appendix)
- TASC-C and TASC-T forms for students and leaders (see Appendix)

Session 7 Procedures Defined

A. Review Homework: Signature Strength in New Ways

Part 1: Ask students how well they were able to complete either acts of kindness (i.e., 5 acts of kindness in 1 day) or their gratitude journal (i.e., 5 things they are grateful for in entry). Group leaders should check homework completion. Have students share either one kind act or grateful item. If students did not comply with the daily requirement, stress the importance of daily effort for changes in happiness to occur. Provide tangible reward for completion.

Part 2: Discuss with students how well they were able to use their signature strength in new ways each day.

- Have students share with the group their signature strengths from the online survey and how well that matched up to the ones they wrote for themselves (students can refer to the copies of their VIA-Youth results and hand written lists of strengths in their permanent folders if needed)
- Ask students to get into pairs and interview their partner about the signature strength they chose to enact for homework. Have each partner talk about two examples of new ways they used their chosen signature strength during last week and reflect on their feelings related to use of strengths. The partners will then report to the group. Facilitate encouragement over use of strengths.
- Ask students if they had any difficulties that made it hard to use their strength; Problem solve with the group in terms of how those obstacles could be addressed or avoided

B. Explore/Plan uses of Signature Strengths in New Ways across Life Domains

Seligman and colleagues (2005) reported that participants who used their signature strengths in new ways showed significant increases in happiness above other positive psychology interventions and with a longer duration, including an intervention in which participants simply identified and used signature strengths in the same ways but with increase frequency. It was hypothesized that the increased effort in creating

new ways to utilize signature strengths may be related to the lasting impact on happiness. Considering their findings, pose this question to the group:

- *In which ways do you currently use your signature strengths?*
 - Prompt them pick two strengths (different than the one they worked on for homework) and think of examples in school, friendships, and/or with family
 - Ensure that each student has an opportunity to respond
 - Inform students that researchers have found that use of character strengths in new ways is a good way to increase happiness in the present (emphasis on not just using strengths more but in new and different ways than ever before)

➤ Domains of Life

According to Seligman (2002), it is important to lasting happiness that signature strengths be used across life domains. Since his book was designed for adults, those domains included work, love, and raising children. For the current purposes, the life domains of adolescents include school, friendships, and family.

- Explain to students that there are three important areas of life for students their age, including school, friendship, and family. In order to use character strengths in new ways to effectively increase happiness, they must be utilized in each area of life.
 - Provide this example: *A student who's signature strength is creativity can use it in school by joining the art club or organizing the layout of the school newspaper, in friendship by thinking of new activities friends can do together, and in family by coming up with new ways to save family memories, such as in a scrapbook.*
- Ask students to decide on a signature strength that they would like to work on this week (which may not be the same as last week's homework)
- Provide students with lined paper and ask them to work independently in making a list of ways they may use this signature strength that are different from or unique to prior usage. As students work, group leaders should make sure that the activities they are listing are manageable and concrete. For instance, if a student's character strength is "fairness," maybe she can intervene when she sees a younger or smaller sibling getting taken advantage of by an older relative. Such a plan is more feasible than joining the student council between groups.
- As students finish, write the life domain categories on the white board.
- Tell the students that you will need two volunteers to share their lists with the group.
- Individually, have her/him state the signature strength and ways in which (s)he has thought about using it differently.

- As the student states each way to use his strength, the group leader should ask the group what category of life domain the activity would go under and write it under such heading on the whiteboard. Then, ask the group to brainstorm other ideas for use of this strength and write them on the whiteboard under appropriate life domain.
- Have the volunteer student write down ideas that are appealing to him/her on the “New Uses of My Second Signature Strength” record form, making sure to note life domain and use. Tell students they do not have to write in the days just yet.
- Ask the volunteer student if they think there might be any obstacles that would make it hard for him/her to use their strength this week. Problem solve with the group in terms of how those obstacles could be addressed or avoided
- Be sure to clarify any suggestions that may stray from the content of the signature strength and guide students to more targeted suggestions. Copies of the “Classification of 24 Character Strengths” sheet should be made available to help students remember the meanings of the strengths.
- After demonstrating with the second volunteer, put the students into two small groups. One student volunteer who has already prepared his/her record form should be in each group. Each group will help members complete their “New Uses of My Second Signature Strength” record form by going through their prepared lists of uses of strengths and determining domains as well as brainstorming other ideas and problem solving potential obstacles. A group co-leader should facilitate each small group.
- Once each student in the small group has prepared their record form, tell students to write in days this week they think they can do each of the ways to use their strengths. The days do not have to be in order, but each day of the week should be designated for use of strength.
- Make a copy of each students “New Uses of My Second Signature Strength” record form

C. Savor the Experience

Bryant and Veroff (2007) defined savoring as attending to, appreciating, and enhancing the positive qualities of one’s life. Adolescents’ perceived abilities to savor positive events are empirically distinct from their abilities to cope with negative events (Meehen, Durlak, & Bryant, 1993). In middle school students, savoring is linked to higher self-esteem, positive affect, and life satisfaction (Cafasso, 1994; 1998).

➤ Define Savoring and Relate to the Present

- *Savoring is the term for when you pay attention to, appreciate, and boost your positive experiences in the present. When you savor, you pay extra*

close attention to things that you are enjoying now, such as when you pay attention to the taste of a favorite meal, the notes in a favorite song, or a job well done.

- Ask: *What are some things that you think would be worth savoring?*
 - Prompt for preferred foods, vacations, activities, events, friendships, TV shows, etc.
- *Savoring makes us happier by stretching out the positive feelings of those activities, foods, events, etc., to last longer in the present. When you savor, you slow down time by purposefully focusing on the good experience before moving onto something else. Instead of going fast into future stuff, you stay and enjoy the present moment.*

➤ Ways to Savor

- *We can make the good feelings we have when using our signature strengths last longer by savoring.*
- Tell students that there are two easy ways to savor that take very little time
 - Share the experience with someone else: You could tell a friend or family member about how you used your strength and how it felt to use it
 - Tell students they already used this way to savor when we went over homework and they interviewed each other; they shared their experiences
 - Ask students if they remembered their good feelings from using their strength when talking to their partner
 - Absorb yourself: Take a minute to close your eyes and think about your experience and the good feelings you had; you could even congratulate yourself on a job well done
 - Tell students: *Let's all practice absorbing ourselves now. Think about one of the ways you used your strength for homework. How did it feel? How did others react? Was it something you could congratulate yourself on?*
 - Have everyone close their eyes for a minute to reflect. Then, tell students how good you feel after reflecting on a use of your strengths. Explain the good feelings connected to the actions you did. Have one or two volunteers talk about their reflections.

D. Homework: Use Signature Strength in New Ways with Savoring

- Part 1: Ask students to use their chosen signature strength in new ways each day of the upcoming week across life domains as was prepared on their “New Uses of My Second Signature Strength” record form. Ask them to write down the feelings they had after they used their strength each day on their form and how they savored the experience (e.g., who talked to or when thought about

it). If they think of different ways to use the strength during the week, ask them to note on their form how they used it. Encourage students to enact a different route for using character strengths if they encountered obstacles with the first plan.

- Part 2: Ask students to choose whether they will continue doing acts of kindness or completing their gratitude journal. Make a notation of each student's choice to check in with next session. Provide "Acts of Kindness" record form as needed.

E. Administer the TASC-C. Group leader complete TASC-T for each student.

Overview of Sessions 8-9: Positive emotions about the Future

According to Seligman (2002), positive emotions about the future include faith, trust, confidence, hope, and optimism. Optimism and hope can be built-up in people to act as buffers against negative life events. This phase of the intervention focuses on shifting awareness toward an optimistic explanatory style, the way in which attributions are made about events, as well as increasing a perspective of hope. An optimistic explanatory style includes attributions of permanency to positive life events (i.e., good events are viewed in terms of traits and abilities; “I made the goal because I’m talented in sports) and temporary attributions to negative life events (i.e., negative events are transient due to mood or effort; “I didn’t study enough to get an A, so I’ll have to try harder for the next test”). Optimists see the positive as universal (e.g., “I’m good at all of my classes because I’m smart”) and the negative as specific (e.g., “Mr. Smith is an unfair teacher”). The final piece of explanatory style is personalization, specifically optimists self-blame for positive events. In effect, the optimistic style leads to resilience (i.e., negative events are temporary and specific). Snyder, Rand, and Sigmon (2005) discuss hope theory in terms of “belief that one can find pathways to desired goals and become motivated to use those pathways” (p. 257). Therefore, this combination includes optimism in terms of an explanation of life events and an expectation of future events in addition to hope in terms of an expectation of and motivation for goal accomplishment. Session 8 will introduce optimistic thinking in terms of this explanatory style while session 9 provides methods for increasing a hopeful perspective.

Session 8: Optimistic Thinking

Overview

Goals

- Discuss feelings related to use of signature strengths and use of savoring.
- Introduce optimistic thinking.
- Discuss the value of optimism in happiness as related to the future.
- Learn methods for increasing optimistic thinking.

Session Procedures

- A. Review Homework: Use Signature Strength in New Ways with Savoring
- B. Rate Your Own Optimism
- C. How Can You Think More Optimistically?
- D. What is the Value of Optimism?
- E. Homework: Optimistic Thinking

Materials Needed

- Tangible rewards for homework completion (stickers, pencils, etc.)
- Uses of My Third Signature Strength record form (see Appendix)
- Lined paper
- Examples of Optimistic Thinking reference sheet (see Appendix)
- My Optimistic Thoughts record form (see Appendix)
- Blackboard, whiteboard, or easel and appropriate writing utensil

Session 8 Procedures Defined

A. Review Homework: Signature Strength in a New Way with Savoring

Part 1: Discuss with students how well they were able to use their strengths in new ways each day; stress the importance of daily effort if necessary. Provide tangible reward for completion.

- Character Strengths and Savoring
 - Ask each student to provide 1-2 examples of ways they used their chosen signature strength in new ways during last week
 - Encourage reflection on their feelings related to use of strengths
 - Ask students in which ways did they savor the experience and how that may have enhanced positive feelings
 - Facilitate group discussion and encouragement over each other's use of strengths and savoring
 - Discuss any obstacles that may have occurred and problem solve with the group in terms of how those obstacles could be addressed or avoided
 - Have each student verbalize a different signature strength in which they will independently complete the "Uses of My Third Signature Strength" record form during this week.

Part 2: Ask students how well they were able to complete either acts of kindness (i.e., 5 acts of kindness in 1 day) or their gratitude journal (i.e., 5 things they are grateful for in one entry). Group leaders should check homework completion. Have students share either one kind act or grateful item.

B. Rate Your Own Optimism

- *What is optimism?*
 - Introduce optimism by stating: *We've all had people tell us to think more optimistically, to smile, or to be positive. What does thinking optimistically mean to you?*
 - Facilitate a brief discussion on what students think about optimism and write ideas on the whiteboard.
- Rate Your Own Optimism
 - Tell the students: *We are going to rate our own level of optimism.*
 - Draw a number line from 0-10 on a whiteboard and state the following: *Think about how often you have been optimistic in the past few months.*

On a scale from 0 to 10 with 0 being never optimistic, 5 being sometimes optimistic, and 10 being always optimistic, rate your optimism.

- Have students write their ratings on a piece of paper and pass it to the group leader. Group leader will circle each of the numbers indicated by the group on the number line and discuss the overall group range.
- Then circle the room and have each student share their number and the reason they have chosen it

C. How Can You Think More Optimistically?

Seligman (1990) described a method of developing optimistic thinking called learned optimism. It is a cognitive-behavioral method for changing one's explanatory style in making attributions about events. Due to the time and space constraints of the current intervention, Seligman's work on optimism has been modified. The focus of this activity is on using his description of an optimistic explanatory style (as provided in the overview) to increase optimistic thinking whereas a pessimistic explanatory style is not discussed. The object of this activity is to teach students how to increase use of optimistic thinking, not to change their existing explanatory style.

➤ Optimistic Thinking

- Begin by stating: *Everyone can learn to think more optimistically, even those who already rated themselves highly.*
- Provide the following explanation using the "Examples of Optimistic Thinking" reference sheet: *On your examples sheet, optimistic thinking is broken into two categories, the way you look at good events and the way you look at bad events.*

Thinking optimistically means:

- *Thinking about good things in your life as being permanent, such as being caused by your traits and abilities. Look at the good events column under permanent.*
 - *You might say, "I made the goal because I'm talented in sports." A talent is a permanent ability.*
- *Also, you would see bad events as temporary, only lasting as long as your mood or effort. Look at the bad events column under temporary.*

- *That would be like saying, “Even Beckham would have missed that one; I’ll probably make the next goal I try for.” The missed goal was a one time thing.*
- *Also, optimists see good events as widespread, that is happening throughout life Look at the good events column under widespread.*
 - *That would be like thinking, “I’m good at all of my classes because I’m smart.” Being smart is something that will always be a part of you and will be a part of everything you do.*
- *Optimists see negative events as specific to certain areas of life Look at the bad events column under specific.*
 - *You may think, “I’m not good at math because Mr. Smith is an unfair teacher.” Mr. Smith is only one of your teachers, a specific person. When you work with different teachers, you could do better at math.*
- *Optimists take credit for causing good events in their lives but blame other sources for bad events.*
 - *Look at the good events column under take credit. An optimist would think “I won the contest because of my effort and talent in creative writing.” You won the contest because of your hard work and talent, not something other people did.*
 - *Look at the bad events column under blame other sources. An optimist would think, “I lost the contest because I needed better materials to prepare myself.” You lost the contest because of poor materials, not because you didn’t try hard.*

➤ Practice Thinking Optimistically

- Complete the practice section of the “Examples of Optimistic Thinking” reference sheet
- Help students to identify events as good or bad and develop optimistic thoughts corresponding to events
- Instruct students in the following way:

First, read the event and then decide if it is a good or bad situation. If it is a good situation, write an optimistic thought that is permanent, widespread, or takes credit. If it is a bad situation, write an optimistic thought that is temporary, specific, or blames another source. (Point to “Examples of Optimistic Thinking” reference sheet as providing explanation).

Let’s do the first one together.

- *Is this a good or bad situation? It’s a good event. Write good underneath the event.*
- *What’s something permanent that I can say about it?*
- *What about widespread?*
- *Taking credit?*
- *Complete the rest on your own and then we’ll discuss. (Be sure that students use this format for all of the answers).*

- Examples of corresponding optimistic thoughts include (in order of appearance on the “Examples of Optimistic Thinking” reference sheet)
 - This is a good event:
 - Permanent: I was invited because I am a fun person.
 - Widespread: I was invited because I am always cheerful.
 - Taking credit: I was invited because I helped come up with ideas for the theme of the party.
 - This is a bad event:
 - Temporary: She probably isn’t feeling well and will call me as soon as she is better.
 - Specific: My other friends have called me back, so if there is a problem, it is just between the two of us.
 - Blame other sources: She has been under a lot of stress with having trouble in school and her parents arguing, it probably doesn’t have to do with me.
 - This is a good event:
 - Permanent: My parents increased my allowance because I have shown that I am a responsible person.
 - Widespread: My parents have increased my allowance because they trust me to be responsible in school, at home, and with my friends.
 - Taking credit: It was because I made the effort to show them how responsible I can be that my parents decided to increase my allowance.
 - This is a good event:
 - Permanent: My science group did well because we are smart, hardworking students.
 - Widespread: I always do well on my class projects because I work well in groups.
 - Taking credit: I had a large part in why our group did well because I organized our project and acted as the group leader.
 - This is a bad event:
 - Temporary: I did poorly on my assignment because I only had a little bit of time to work on it. I will plan more time for the next assignment and will do much better.
 - Specific: This was a very difficult assignment, not like most of my school work. I usually do really well.
 - Blame other sources: I didn’t have enough time for this project because of other responsibilities, which distracted me from doing my best.

D. What is the Value of optimism?

Pose these questions to the group:

- *Do you think it is valuable to be optimistic?*

- *Do you think being an optimist can increase happiness? Why or why not?*
- *How can being optimistic help you in school? In friendships? In family life?*
- *How is optimism related to your happiness about the future?*
- Cover resilience in the discussion. It can be described in the following way:

Optimistic thinking leads to resilience: feeling like you can face any bad situation and come out okay.

- *Because of resilience, you are more likely to try when things get hard.*
- *A person who doesn't think optimistically may instead feel helpless and give up easily, which means missing out in possible success.*
- *However, a resilient person keeps trying until they accomplish what they want in life.*
- *Remember, we discussed increasing happiness through purposeful activities. Optimistic thinking is one form of purposeful activity (in this case, a purposeful attitude) and it can help you get involved in other kinds of activities as well.*

E. Homework: Optimistic Thinking

- **Part 1:** Ask students to intentionally use optimistic thinking one time each day until the next session. Have them note the situation and their optimistic thought on their “My Optimistic Thoughts” form. To ensure they understand the format, complete the first line together:
 - My Optimistic Thoughts
 - Have 2 or 3 students volunteer a situation from their day (or yesterday)
 - Ask the student describe the situation and then briefly write it under the situation category
 - Then ask the student to decide if it was a good or bad event and fill in that column accordingly.
 - Ask the student how the situation could be thought of more optimistically
 - If the student has difficulty, ask the group for assistance
 - Reminder Note: If the situation is negative, the optimistic thought must be temporary, specific, and/or blaming another source. If it is positive, the thought must be permanent, widespread, and/or taking credit for oneself.
- **Part 2:** Use chosen signature strength in a new way each day and complete the “Uses of My Third Signature Strength” record form. Help students brainstorm ways to use their strengths and note ideas on their record form as time allows.

Session 9: Hope

Overview

Goals

- Discuss student use of optimistic thinking and creating a snowball effect.
- Discuss what hope means to the group.
- Introduce hope as goal-directed.
- Collaborate on how hope can be utilized to increase happiness about the future.

Session Procedures

- A. Review Homework: Optimistic Thinking
- B. Rate Your Own Hope
- C. Discussion of Hope
- D. Writing activity: Best Possible Self in the Future
- E. Homework: Best Possible Self in the Future

Materials Needed

- Tangible rewards for homework completion (stickers, pencils, etc.)
- Blackboard, whiteboard, or easel and appropriate writing utensil
- Extra copies of Examples of Optimistic Thinking reference sheet (see Appendix)
- Extra copies of Acts of Kindness record form (see Appendix)
- Extra copies of My Optimistic Thoughts record form (see Appendix)
- Uses of My Fourth Signature Strength record form (see Appendix)

Session 9 Procedures Defined

A. Review Homework: Optimistic Thinking

Part1: Discuss with the students when and how they completed their “My Optimistic Thoughts” form; stress the importance of daily efforts if necessary. Provide tangible reward for completion.

- Begin by asking the group how they felt using optimistic thinking
 - Did it produce any positive feelings about situations?
 - Was it difficult to do?
 - Anything they liked or did not like about completing the activity?
- Have volunteers read some of their situations (approximately 2) and their corresponding optimistic thoughts. Reminder Note: If the situation is negative, the optimistic thought must be temporary, specific, and/or blaming another source. If it is positive, the thought must be permanent, widespread, and/or taking credit for oneself.
 - If the student does not follow this format, review the examples on the “Examples of Optimistic Thinking” reference sheet and assist with rewriting the optimistic thought. Group members may provide assistance.
- In order to demonstrate versatility of optimistic thinking, ask the group to think of a different way the situation could be thought of optimistically for 2-3 student responses.
 - For example, if the event was positive and the student wrote a permanent optimistic thought, challenge students to think of a widespread or taking credit optimistic thought for the same situation.
- Once each student has had an opportunity to participate, explain the snowball effect of optimistic thinking:

The great thing about optimistic thinking is that it has a snowball effect. Have you ever heard of a snowball effect? When snowballs roll, they pick up more snow and get bigger. When people start practicing optimistic thinking, it starts to take over how they think. At first, it takes work trying to come up with optimistic thoughts. You have to really think about the situation. But soon it becomes natural and easy. So, keep working on those optimistic thoughts and see if you can get it to snowball.

Part 2: Ask students how well they were able to complete using their signature strength in new ways. Have students provide 1-2 examples of ways they used their strength and related feelings. Did savoring stretch out those positive feelings? Where there any problems that the group could help with?

B. Rate Your Own Hope

Pose this question to the group:

- *What is hope?*
 - Facilitate a brief discussion on what students think constitutes hope
 - Do not define hope at this time, simply allow students to provide their own opinions and write their ideas on the whiteboard to refer back. Hope will be defined in the next section
- Rate Your Own Hope
 - Tell the students: *We are going to rate our own level of hope.*
 - Draw a number line from 0-10 on a whiteboard and state the following: *Think about how often you have felt hope in the past few month. On a scale from 0 to 10 with 0 being never hopeful, 5 being sometimes hopeful, and 10 being always hopeful, rate your level of hope.*
 - Have students write their ratings on a piece of paper and fold it over
 - Then circle the room and have each student share their number and the reason they have chosen it

C. Discussion of Hope

Snyder and colleagues (2005) discussed the development of their hope theory in terms of hopeful thinking comprising both the ability to envision viable methods for goal attainment and belief in one's ability to utilize those methods in reaching specific goals. The following discussion is based on their work. Present discussion questions to the group and ensure the topics below the questions are a part of the conversation:

- *A few moments ago, we discussed the question "What is hope?" Now that we have shared our ideas, I'm going to tell you how psychologists have defined hope:*

Having hope means believing that you can become motivated and find ways to meet your goals. This is like telling yourself, "I'll find a way to get this done or make this happen!" When an obstacle gets in your way, having hope means believing you can find another way to meet your needs and coming up with ideas on what those other ways might be. When you are hopeful, you believe that you can reach your goals because you have the ability and can get the resources –

you are motivated. You might say to yourself “Nothing can stop me!” For example, if you want to play basketball but you don’t make the school team, then you may organize a recreational team in your neighborhood so that you can play and practice somewhere besides school. Or, if you want to make a new friend and the first person you ask to go to the movies says “no,” then you identify another classmate and try a different approach.

- *Thinking about hope like this, how can it be important or not important in your life? In school? In friendships? With family?*
 - School:
 - Motivation to do well, work harder, be more successful
 - Find different ways to meet goals (e.g., better grades, meeting deadlines, meeting criteria for college)
 - Stress impacts you less
 - Athletics:
 - Greater performance because get “psyched” that you can win, compete, or make it to the end
 - Confidence in your abilities
 - Willingness to practice harder because you believe it will help you win
 - Physical Health:
 - Motivation and goals to find ways to keep healthy or reduce illness when sick (e.g., eating nutritiously, drinking lots of water, regular medical check-ups, or taking medications, avoiding infections, following doctor’s orders specifically)
 - Help to cope with being sick or being hurt
 - Focus on recuperating or improving condition
 - Emotions:
 - Good feelings about yourself (self-esteem) and beliefs that you can do well (self-efficacy) because you are motivated and believe you can find ways to meet your goals
 - Develop strategies to deal with stress and are motivated to use them because you believe one way will work
 - More likely to problem-solve when difficult situations occur
 - Social Relationships:
 - Make friendships
 - Work and maintain positive relationships with family and friends
- *How do you think hope could impact people’s happiness about their future?*
 - Discuss how hope can help us focus on positive goals for our futures and prevent feelings of helplessness through the belief that there are ways to meet those goals
 - Tie in with optimism:

Hope works like optimistic thinking about the future, in that people see the things they do now as leading to future benefits across life domains

(widespread across school, friends, and family parts of life) and that are lasting (or permanent parts of the future). On the other hand, misfortunes or problems are seen as temporary and limited to a particular situation, thereby minimizing impact on the future. When thinking that way, people are more likely to believe there are ways to meet goals and more motivated to work toward those positive future goals.

D. Writing activity: Best Possible Self in the Future

King (2001) found that writing about life goals in the form of an exercise known as one's "best possible self" was highly associated with increased happiness and decreased negative affect. Additionally, results of a study by Sheldon and Lyubomirsky (2006) suggested that envisioning one's best possible self (i.e., a version of the future self having accomplished desired goals) is potentially beneficial to maintaining increased positive affect. Since this exercise consists of writing about desired goals, paths taken to achieve such goals, and motivation involved in future success, it fits well with hope theory. In this section, writing about one's best possible self in the future is used as a concrete method of practicing hopeful thinking.

➤ Best Possible Self in the Future

- Talk with students about how they have the ability to change their levels of hope by practicing using hopeful thinking about their futures. Introduce the activity in this way:

I would like you to think about your life in the future. Take a few minutes to imagine that everything has gone as well as it possibly could. You have worked hard and succeeded at accomplishing all of your life goals. After a two minute pause, state: Now write about what you imagined (adapted from King, 2001).

- Provide lined paper.
- Allow 5 minutes for them to write their thoughts and then ask the students to share what they have written so far with the group
- Encourage students to provide more detail in describing how they will meet their goals
- Make copies of what they have written thus far and return original to students

E. Homework: Best Possible Self in the Future

- Part 1: Instruct the students to continue writing about their best possible selves in the future. Ask them to review their stories each night and add new thoughts and ideas or make revisions to what they have already written.
Encourage students to think about ways in which they could achieve the goals they imagined in their futures.
- Part 2: Ask students to either continue gratitude journals, acts of kindness, using signature strengths in new ways, or optimistic thinking, whichever activity individual students have found to be most personally meaningful. Provide corresponding record forms as needed.

Session 10: Termination

Overview

Goals

- Review framework for increasing personal happiness.
- Review activities and exercises learned in the group.
- Encourage a personal reflection.
- Gather student feedback on exercises perceived to be most helpful and activities they plan to continue.

Session Procedures

- A. Review Homework: Best Possible Self in the Future
- B. Review of Happiness Framework
- C. Personal Reflection: Progress During Group
- D. Wrap-up and Solicit Student Feedback

Materials Needed

- Tangible rewards for homework completion (stickers, pencils, etc.)
- Blackboard, whiteboard, or easel and appropriate writing utensil
- What Determines Happiness? Graph (see Appendix)
- Happiness Flow Chart (see Appendix)
- Wellness-Promotion Summary Sheet (see Appendix)
- Certificate of Completion (see Appendix)
- Treatment Acceptability Measure (CEI- Child Evaluation) (see Appendix)

Session 10 Procedures Defined

A. Review Homework: “Best Possible Self in the Future” form

Part 1: Have students take a moment and reread their “Best Possible Self in the Future” writing activity and reflect on their feelings, strengths, qualities, accomplishments, and so forth. Then, ask students to share their stories with the group along with one or two reflections. Provide tangible reward for completion.

- Ask students to share their stories with examples of domains of life in which they envisioned their best possible future selves (e.g., School, Athletics, Physical Health, Emotions, Social Relationships)
- Ask what changes/additions occurred since last session
- Encourage a reflection on which goals in life seem most important to students and what ways they can go about achieving those goals
- Ask if students felt any different about themselves after thinking about their future in a positive manner
- Ask if they feel more motivated to work on future goals
- As the group leader, you should initiate reflections on group members’ stories with identifications or reaffirmations of motivations and goal orientation within the story
- Encourage group members to reflect on the positives of each others’ stories
 - Something they admired or liked in the story
 - Goals they share with the presenter
 - Other ideas for ways of achieving goals
- Once each student has had a turn, ask students how this activity has impacted their hope for the future, if at all

Part 2: Ask students to share 1-2 examples of the activity they chose to do for the second part of homework (e.g., gratitude journal, acts of kindness, character strengths, or optimistic thinking) and talk about why they chose that activity. Group leaders and members should provide feedback on student examples and preferred choice of activities.

B. Review of the Happiness Framework

Review that happiness can be best increased through the purposeful activities that we do each day (show “What Determines Happiness Graph?”), and that happiness is thought to result from positive interpretations of one’s past experiences, present behaviors, and positive views of the future using the “Happiness Flow Chart.” Then, review exercises used to increase happiness within these areas of life:

➤ Group Review and Reflection

- State: *In the past 10 weeks, we have completed multiple exercises that were designed to improve happiness by changing the activities (thoughts and behaviors) that we do on purpose.* [reference the What Determines Happiness graph]
- *The exercises we have done during the group have helped you learn how to purposefully create positive thoughts about your past experiences, how to act in positive ways that use your strengths in the present, and how to create positive thoughts about your future.* [reference the Happiness Flow Chart]
- *Which exercises are meant to promote positive feelings about one’s past?*
 - Gratitude journaling
 - Gratitude visits
- *How did gratitude improve your satisfaction with your past?*
- *Which exercises are intended to promote positive emotions in the present?*
 - Acts of kindness
 - Using signature character strengths in new ways
 - Savoring positive experiences when using character strengths
- *How did these activities improve your satisfaction with your present?*
- *Which exercises are meant to improve your view of the future?*
 - Optimistic thinking
 - Hope (best possible self in future)
- *How did these exercises improve your feelings about the future?*

➤ Application to Future Situations; Summarize Activities

- Distribute the “Wellness-Promotion Program Summary Sheet”. To promote application of learned material to future situations, ask the students to identify situations/times in which it would be a good idea to use the activities to increase positive thoughts about past, present, and future in their own future lives (i.e., upon completion of the group).
 - For instance, in addition to practicing grateful thinking at all times, they may want to enact a gratitude visit or complete a gratitude journal at times they are feeling regret or disappointment with their life circumstances. They may want to do acts of kindness, use strengths in

new ways, or savor when they catch themselves feeling “blah” about their daily experiences. When they catch themselves feeling hopeless about their future, they should prompt themselves to practice hopeful and/or optimistic thinking.

- After students identify perceived emotions that cue them to increase positive thoughts about a specific time period (past, present, and future), ask students to read aloud the definition of activities that correspond to this period (use round robin format).
 - Note: Students should record their character strengths in their summary sheet during the discussion of planning to improve daily experiences.
- Which activities do you plan to continue in the future?
 - Why that particular activity?

C. Personal Reflection: Progress During Group

It is important to have the students think through and reflect on their personal growth during the intervention. Provide them with the following instructions.

➤ Personal Reflection

- Say to the students: *Take a few minutes to think of the ways you have changed over the past ten weeks. Allow 2-3 minutes for students to reflect.*

Pose these questions to the group:

- *How have your feelings about your life changed?*
- Follow-up prompts for topics not addressed to general question on life change:
 - *Any changes in happiness?*
 - *What about your feelings about yourself?*
 - *People in your life?*
 - *Your past?*
 - *Your future?*

D. Wrap-up and Solicit Student feedback

Provide students with the “Certificate of Completion” and express appreciation for their continued efforts over the weeks. Administer the measure of treatment acceptability (CEI- Child Evaluation) and instruct students to write down their thoughts about their satisfaction with the group before leaving.

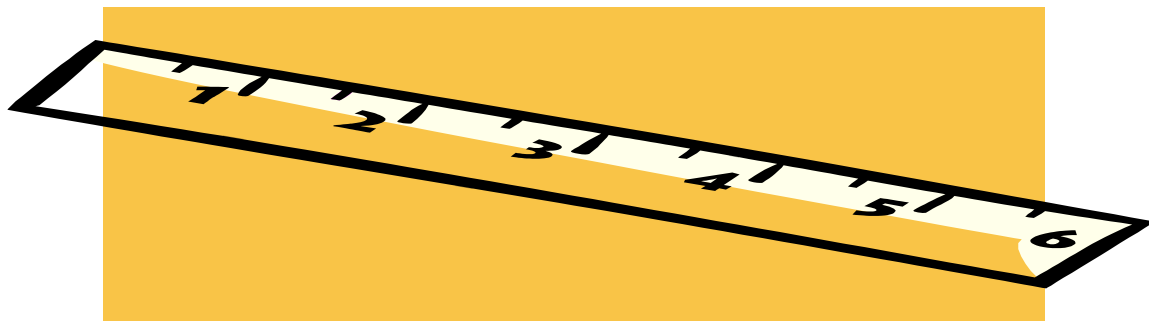
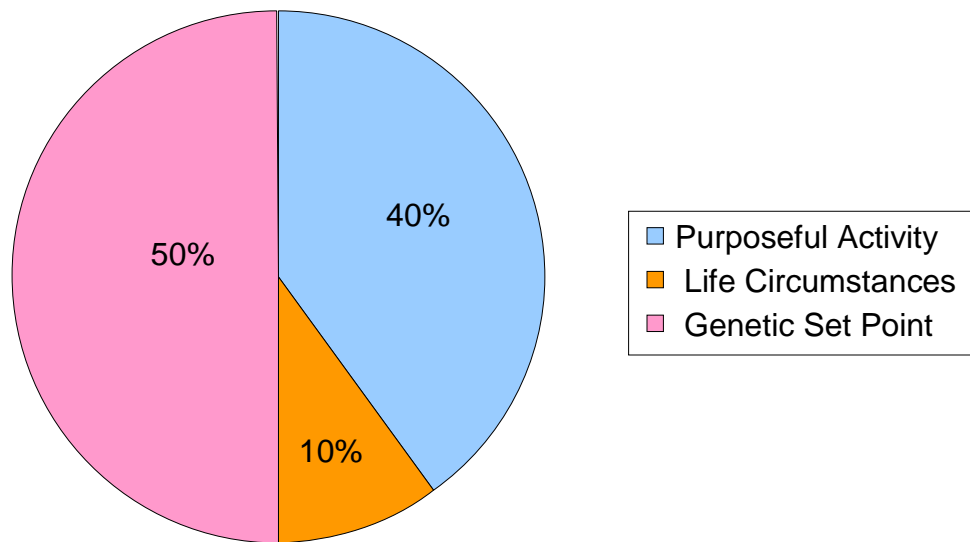
References

- Bryant, F. B., & Veroff, J. (2007). *Savoring: A new model of positive experience*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2003). Counting blessings versus burdens: An experimental investigation of gratitude and subjective well-being in daily life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(2), 377-389.
- Cafasso, L. L. (1994). *Uplifts and hassles in the lives of young adolescents*. Unpublished master's thesis, Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, IL.
- Cafasso, L. L. (1998). *Subjective well-being of inner-city resilient and non-resilient young adolescents*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, IL.
- King, L. A. (2001). The health benefits of writing about life goals. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27(7), 798-807.
- Lyubomirsky, S., Sheldon, K. M., & Schkade, D. (2005). Pursuing happiness: The architecture of sustainable change. *Review of General Psychology*, 9(2), 111-131.
- Lyubomirsky, S., Tkach, C., & Sheldon, K. M. (2004). [Pursuing sustained happiness through random acts of kindness and counting one's blessings: Tests of two six-week interventions]. Unpublished raw data.
- McCullough, M. E., Emmons, R. A., & Tsang, J. A. (2002). The grateful disposition: A conceptual and empirical topography. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(1), 112-127.
- Meehan, M. P., Durlak, J. A., & Bryant, F. B. (1993). The relationship of social support to perceived control and subjective mental health in adolescents. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 21, 49 – 55.

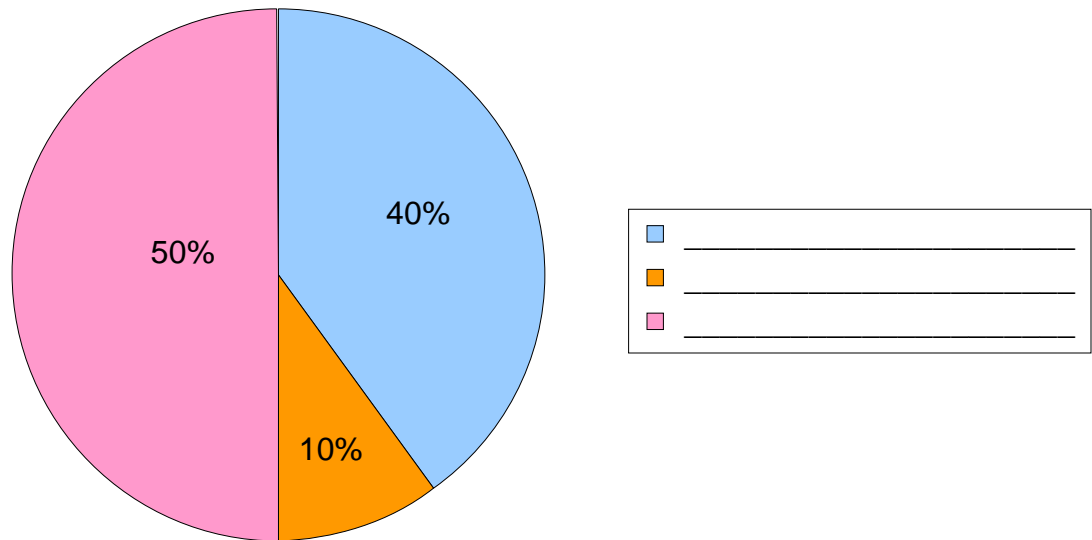
- Otake, K., Shimai, S., Tanaka-Matsumi, J., Otsui, K., & Fredrickson, B. L. (2006). Happy people become happier through kindness: A counting kindnesses intervention. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 7, 361-375.
- Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2006). Moral competence and character strengths among adolescents: The development and validation of the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths for Youth. *Journal of Adolescence*, 29, 891-909.
- Park, N., Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). Strengths of Character and Well-Being. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 23(5), 603-619.
- Seligman, M. E., P. (1990). *Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life*. New York: Random House, Inc.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. New York: Free Press.
- Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress: Empirical validation of interventions. *American Psychologist*, 60(5), 410-421.
- Sheldon, K. M., Kasser, T., Smith, K., & Share, T. (2002). Personal goals and psychological growth: Testing an intervention to enhance goal attainment and personality integration. *Journal of Personality*, 70(1), 5-31.
- Sheldon, K. M., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2006). How to increase and sustain positive emotion: The effects of expressing gratitude and visualizing best possible selves. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 1(2), 73-82.
- Snyder, C. R., Rand, K. L., & Sigmon, D. R. (2005). Hope theory: A member of the positive psychology family. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (pp. 257-276). New York: Oxford University Press, Inc.

Suldo, S. M., & Shaffer, E. S. (in press). Looking beyond psychopathology: The dual-factor model of mental health in youth. *School Psychology Review*.

What Determines Happiness?



What Determines Happiness?



What is the Purpose of this Wellness-Promotion Group?

1. During our weekly group meetings, which of the three areas that determine happiness are we going to focus on in order to improve our happiness?

2. How many times each week are we going to meet? _____

3. How many weeks will we meet? _____

What is Confidentiality?

How Will I Keep what Students Say in this Group Confidential?

Gratitude Visit Planning Form

People who have been especially kind or helpful to me:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Person I will make a gratitude visit to: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

****Reminder:** Tell the person that you want to make plans to spend time with them. Don't tell them about your gratitude letter before the visit. To have the gratitude visit work really well, remember to read your letter out loud to the person. Read slowly with expression and make eye contact.

TASC-C
(Shirk & Saiz, 1992)

Code # _____

Date: _____

Instructions: We are going to read some sentences about meeting with your counselor. After reading the sentence, you decide how much the sentence is like you. Let's try this example:

I do activities with my counselor when we meet together.

Would you say that is:

1	2	3	4
Not Like You	A Little Like You	Mostly Like You	Very Much Like You

Here are the rest; remember there are no right or wrong answers, just how you feel

	Not Like You	A Little Like You	Mostly Like You	Very Much Like You
1. I like spending time with my counselor.	1	2	3	4
2. I find it hard to work with my counselor on solving problems in my life.	1	2	3	4
3. I feel like my counselor is on my side and tries to help me.	1	2	3	4
4. I work with my counselor on solving my problems.	1	2	3	4
5. When I'm with my counselor, I want the meetings to end quickly.	1	2	3	4
6. I look forward to meeting with my counselor.	1	2	3	4
7. I feel like my counselor spends too much time working on my problems.	1	2	3	4
8. I'd rather do other things than meet with my counselor.	1	2	3	4
9. I use my time with my counselor to make changes in my life.	1	2	3	4
10. I like my counselor.	1	2	3	4
11. I would rather not work on my problems with my counselor.	1	2	3	4
12. I think my counselor and I work well together on dealing with my problems.	1	2	3	4

TASC-T
(Shirk & Saiz, 1992)

Counselor: _____

Client/Student: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Please rate your client's current presentation in treatment on the following scales. Circle the number corresponding to your rating for each item.

	Not Like My Client	A Little Like My Client	Mostly Like My Client	Very Much Like My Client
1. The child likes spending time with you, the counselor.	1	2	3	4
2. The child finds it hard to work with you on solving problems in his/her life.	1	2	3	4
3. The child considers you to be an ally.	1	2	3	4
4. The child works with you on solving his/her problems.	1	2	3	4
5. The child appears eager to have sessions end.	1	2	3	4
6. The child looks forward to counseling sessions.	1	2	3	4
7. The child feels that you spend too much time focusing on his/her problems/issues.	1	2	3	4
8. The child is resistant to coming to counseling.	1	2	3	4
9. The child uses his/her time with you to make changes in his/her life.	1	2	3	4
10. The child expresses positive emotion toward you, the counselor.	1	2	3	4
11. The child would rather not work on problems/issues in counseling.	1	2	3	4
12. The child is able to work well with you on dealing with his/her problems/issues.	1	2	3	4

Performing Acts of Kindness Record Form

	Day of the Week: _____ Date: _____
Acts of Kindness	

Classification of 24 Character Strengths

1. **Wisdom and knowledge**—cognitive strengths in the acquisition and use of knowledge

- _ *Creativity*: Thinking of novel and productive ways to do things
- _ *Curiosity*: Taking an interest in all of ongoing experience
- _ *Love of learning*: Mastering new skills, topics, and bodies of knowledge
- _ *Open-mindedness*: Thinking things through and examining them from all sides
- _ *Perspective*: Being able to provide wise counsel to others

2. **Courage**—emotional strengths that involve the exercise of will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition, external or internal

- _ *Authenticity*: Speaking the truth and presenting oneself in a genuine way
- _ *Bravery*: Not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain
- _ *Persistence*: Finishing what one starts
- _ *Zest*: Approaching life with excitement and energy

3. **Humanity**—interpersonal strengths that involve “tending and befriending” others

- _ *Kindness*: Doing favors and good deeds for others
- _ *Love*: Valuing close relations with others
- _ *Social intelligence*: Being aware of the motives and feelings of self and others

4. **Justice**—civic strengths that underlie healthy community life

- _ *Fairness*: Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice
- _ *Leadership*: Organizing group activities and seeing that they happen
- _ *Teamwork*: Working well as member of a group or team

5. **Temperance**—strengths that protect against excess

- _ *Forgiveness*: Forgiving those who have done wrong
- _ *Modesty*: Letting one’s accomplishments speak for themselves
- _ *Prudence*: Being careful about one’s choices; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted
- _ *Self-regulation*: Regulating what one feels and does

6. **Transcendence**—strengths that forge connections to the larger universe and provide meaning

- _ *Appreciation of beauty & excellence*: Noticing and appreciating beauty, excellence, and/or skilled performance in all domains of life
- _ *Gratitude*: Being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen
- _ *Hope*: Expecting the best and working to achieve it
- _ *Humor*: Liking to laugh and tease; bringing smiles to other people
- _ *Religiousness*: Having coherent beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of life

New Uses of My First Signature Strength

[illegible]

New Uses of My Second Signature Strength

Signature Strength:			
Day of the Week	Life Domain	New Use	Feelings
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>

****Remember to Savor:** Make your good feelings last by telling someone about using your strength or taking a minute to close your eyes and think about the experience.

New Uses of My Third Signature Strength

Signature Strength:			
Day of the Week	Life Domain	New Use	Feelings
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>

****Remember to Savor:** Make your good feelings last by telling someone about using your strength or taking a minute to close your eyes and think about the experience.

New Uses of My Fourth Signature Strength

Signature Strength:			
Day of the Week	Life Domain	New Use	Feelings
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>
			<u>Savor:</u>

****Remember to Savor:** Make your good feelings last by telling someone about using your strength or taking a minute to close your eyes and think about the experience.

Examples of Optimistic Thinking

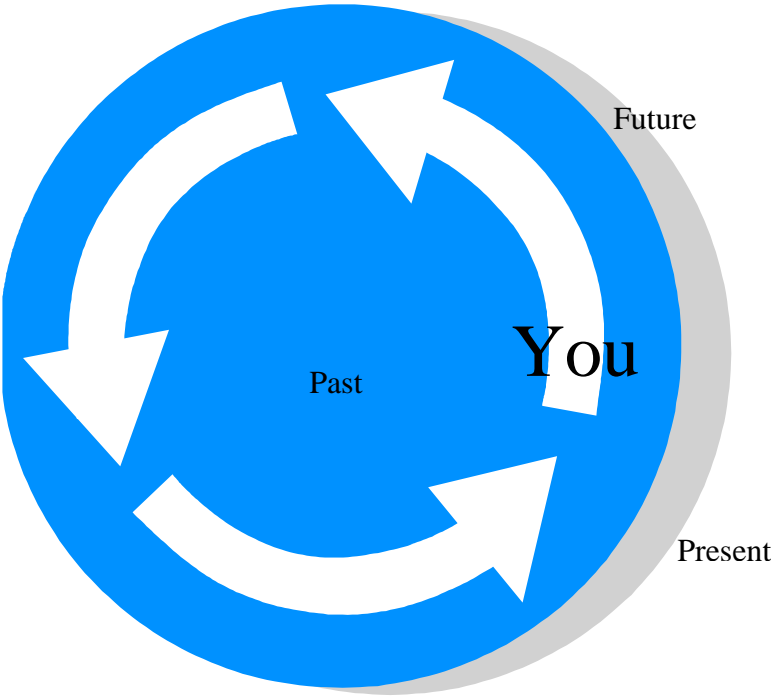
Examples		Practice	
Good Events	Bad Events		
<i>Permanent</i>	<i>Temporary</i>	Event	Optimistic Thought
I made the goal because I'm talented in sports.	Even Beckham would have missed that one- I'll probably make the next goal I try for.	I was invited to the biggest party of the year.	
<i>Widespread</i>	<i>Specific</i>	My good friend hasn't called me back in days.	
I'm good at all of my classes because I'm smart.	I'm not good at math because Mr. Smith is an unfair teacher.	My parents increased my allowance.	
<i>Take Credit</i>	<i>Blame Other Sources</i>	My teacher said my science group did the best in the class.	
I won the contest because of my effort and talent in creative writing.	I lost the contest because I needed better materials to prepare myself.	I had to finish a giant assignment in three days and I got a C- on it.	

My Optimistic Thoughts

Date	Situation	Good or Bad Event	Optimistic Thought*

*Optimistic thoughts for good events are widespread, permanent, and take credit. Optimistic thoughts for bad events are temporary, specific, and blame other sources.

Happiness Flow Chart



Date: _____
Name: _____

Wellness-Promotion Program Summary Sheet

When I want to feel more positive about my past:

- Gratitude journal
 - 5 things I'm grateful for, write down 1 time each week
- Gratitude visit
 - Write a letter of thanks to someone who has been kind to me; read the letter to the person

When I want to feel more positive about my daily life:

- Do acts of kindness
 - 5 kind acts for other people in one day
- Use my signature character strengths
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
- Savor your successes
 - Tell someone about it or absorb yourself (take a few minutes to focus on it)

When I want to feel more positive about my future:

- Optimistic thinking
 - View good situations as permanent, widespread, and take credit for it
 - View bad situations as temporary, specific, and blame other sources
- Hopeful thinking
 - Focus on goals and ways to achieve those goals

CEI-Child Evaluation
(Kazdin, Siegel, & Bass, 1992)

Code # _____

Date: _____

Instructions: We are going to read some sentences about meeting with your counselor. After reading the sentence, you decide how much the sentence is like you. Let's try this example:

I like going to counseling.

Would you say that is:

1	2	3	4	5
Not Like You	A Little Like You	Somewhat Like you	Mostly Like You	Very Much Like
You				

Here are the rest; remember there are no right or wrong answers, just how you feel

1	How much do you think you have learned from counseling?				
	1 nothing	2 a little	3 some	4 pretty much	5 a whole lot
2	How much did you learn about changing your actions and thoughts?				
	1 nothing	2 a little	3 some	4 pretty much	5 a whole lot
3	How much did you learn about increasing happiness?				
	1 nothing	2 a little	3 some	4 pretty much	5 a whole lot
4	How much did you learn about getting along with other people?				
	1 nothing	2 a little	3 some	4 pretty much	5 a whole lot
5	How much fun was it to be in counseling?				
	1 no fun at all	2 not very much fun	3 OK	4 quite a bit of fun	5 lots of fun
6	How much did you look forward to going to the counseling meetings?				
	1 didn't want to go to sessions at all	2 kind of didn't want to go	3 didn't look forward but didn't mind	4 looked forward to meetings	5 looked forward to meetings very much
7	When you were in the meetings, did you want them to be over quickly?				
	1 all the time	2 often	3 some of the time	4 liked being there	5 really liked it
8	How much did you like counseling?				
	1 didn't like it at all	2 sort of didn't like it	3 it was OK	4 liked it quite a bit	5 really liked it
9	How interesting were the meetings?				
	1 very boring	2 somewhat boring	3 neither interesting nor boring	4 usually pretty interesting	5 very interesting
10	Please rate how you felt about your counselors.				

	1 didn't like her at all	2 liked her a little	3 liked her some	4 liked her quite a bit	5 really liked her
11	Please rate how much you think your counselors liked you.				
	1 didn't like me at all	2 liked me a little	3 liked me some	4 liked me quite a bit	5 really liked me

12	Are you able to use what you learned in counseling to help you in school?				
	1 no	2 a little	3 some	4 pretty much	5 very much
13	Are you able to use what you learned in counseling to help you become happier?				
	1 no	2 a little	3 some	4 pretty much	5 very much
14	Are you able to use what you learned in counseling in dealing with adults?				
	1 no	2 a little	3 some	4 pretty much	5 very much
15	Are you able to use what you learned in counseling in dealing with other children?				
	1 no	2 a little	3 some	4 pretty much	5 very much
16	How much have your thoughts and actions improved because you were in counseling?				
	1 not changed at all	2 a little	3 some	4 pretty much	5 a whole lot

TEI-Child (Therapist Rating)
(Kazdin, Siegel, & Bass, 1992)

Counselor: _____

Client/Student: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Please complete this rating scale for the child by circling the number which corresponds to your rating. This should be completed at the end of the final session of treatment.

1	How receptive was this child to counseling?				
	1 not at all receptive	2 a little receptive	3 moderately receptive	4 quite receptive	5 very receptive
2	Was (s)he able to grasp the strategies used in counseling?				
	1 no	2 not very able	3 OK	4 fairly capable	5 very capable
3	Was (s)he cooperative?				
	1 very uncooperative	2 fairly uncooperative	3 OK	4 fairly cooperative	5 very cooperative
4	Did (s)he want to change his/her thoughts, attitudes, and actions?				
	1 no, very resistant to change	2 somewhat resistant	3 neutral	4 some desire to change	5 strong desire to change
5	How much did the child learn in counseling?				
	1 nothing	2 only a little	3 learned some	4 learned quite a bit	5 learned a great deal
6	How much new information did the child acquire from the counseling?				
	1 no new information	2 a little new information	3 some new information	4 quite a bit	5 a lot
7	How much do you think this child improved as a result of counseling?				
	1 no	2 little improvement	3 some improvement	4 quite a bit	5 very much
8	How much did counseling help his/her happiness?				
	1 no improvement	2 little improvement	3 some improvement	4 quite a bit	5 very much
10	Was (s)he able to apply gains made in counseling meetings to other situations?				
	1 no	2 a little	3 somewhat	4 fairly able	5 very able
11	What effect do you think counseling will have on his/her life?				
	1 no effect	2 little effect	3 some effect	4 quite a bit of effect	5 very effective
12	How much will counseling improve his/her ability to deal with frustrations?				
	1 none	2 a little	3 some	4 pretty much	5 very much
13	How well will (s)he be able to deal with failures?				
	1 very poorly	2 not well	3 OK	4 pretty well	5 very well
14	Please rate overall how you feel the child will do in the future?				
	1 very poor prognosis	2 not well	3 fair	4 pretty well	5 very well, good prognosis
15	How much will the child be able to generalize from the treatment setting to the community?				
	1 not at all	2 not very much	3 somewhat	4 fairly able	5 very much

Your Thoughts on the USF Wellness-Promotion Program

1. What do you feel are some of the most important things you learned in the program?

2. What did you like best about the program?

3. What did you like least about the program?

4. Which activities that you learned in the meetings are you likely to continue to do on your own?

<input type="checkbox"/> “Me at my best” writing	<input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude journal
<input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude visit	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts of kindness
<input type="checkbox"/> Savoring	<input type="checkbox"/> Using my signature strengths in new ways
<input type="checkbox"/> Optimistic thinking	<input type="checkbox"/> “Best possible self in the future” writing
<input type="checkbox"/> None	

5. What suggestions do you have to improve the program?

6. Any additional comments?



Certificate of Completion

Congratulations to

for successfully completing the USF wellness-promotion program.

It has been a pleasure having you participate in group.

