

# Positive Psychology

Australian Institute of Management  
Brisbane

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[seligman@psych.upenn.edu](mailto:seligman@psych.upenn.edu)

# Outline

what is happiness?

skepticism about Positive Psychology

why PP should matter to corporations

PP builds intellectual, social, physical capital

positive interventions

the full life

# General Framework

Happiness as Scientifically Unwieldy: Dissolves into

Positive Emotion

(The Pleasant Life)

Positive Character

(The Engaged Life)

Positive Institutions

(The Meaningful Life)

Each is Measurable

Each is Buildable

$LS = PE + ENGAGEMENT + MEANING$

Productivity, Growth & Health =? same

# Skepticism about Happiness

- ❖ Feeling vs Doing (Instrumental)
- ❖ Suffering Trumps
- ❖ Nothing New Here  
(Wealth, Longevity, LS)
- ❖ Fuzzy
- ❖ Remedial vs. Growth

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**"It's Monday morning, Miss Berstresser. Let the merriment commence."**

# Intellectual Resources

Remote  
Associations

Creative  
Breaking  
of Set

Liver  
Diagnosis

Positive Emotion jolts us into a  
different mode of thought

# Social Resources

Yearbook

Extremely Happy People

Wages 15 years later

# Empirical Strategy

(Fredrickson & Losada, 2006)

Observed 60 business teams

- ❖ High Performance (n = 15)
- ❖ Medium Performance (n = 26)
- ❖ Low Performance (n = 19)

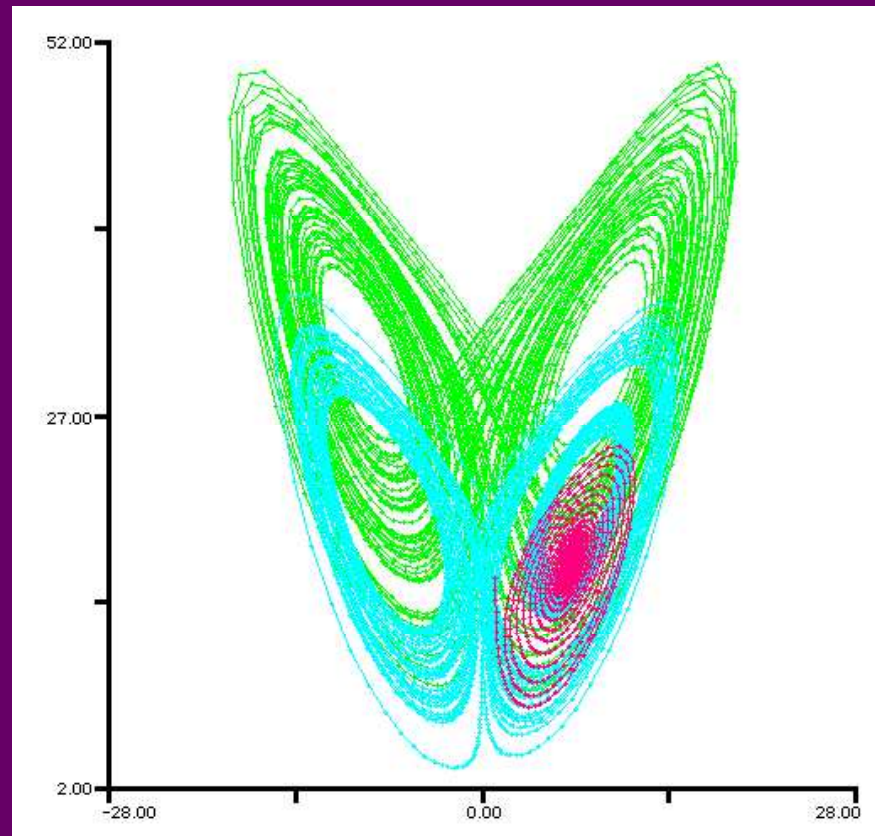
Coded all speech acts

- ❖ Positive-Negative
- ❖ Inquiry-Advocacy
- ❖ Self-Other

Created a nonlinear dynamics model of observed interactions

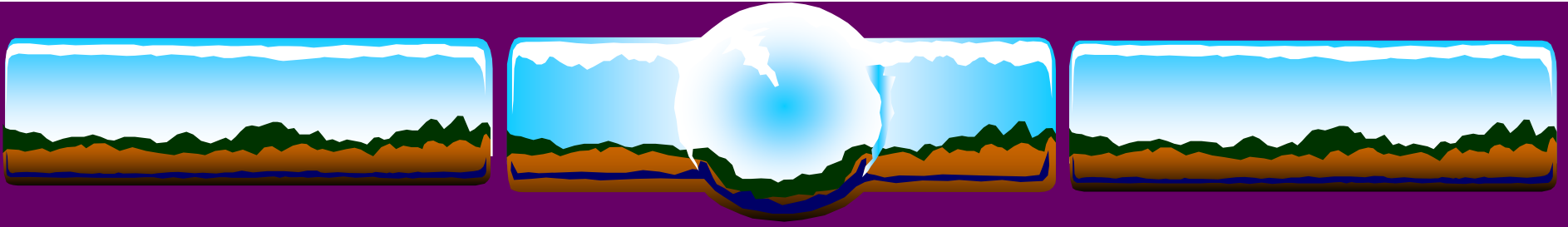
# Dynamics of Losada's Business Teams

Emotional  
Space



Inquiry / Advocacy

Fredrickson & Losada (2005). American Psychologist.



# How much positive affect is needed to flourish?

*Caveat: USA data only*

Pos : Neg  $\geq$  2.9 : 1

Pos : Neg < 11.6 : 1

# Calculate *your* positivity ratio for today...

❖ On a 0-4 scale, on which:

❖ 0 = not at all

❖ 1 = a little bit

❖ 2 = moderately

❖ 3 = quite a bit

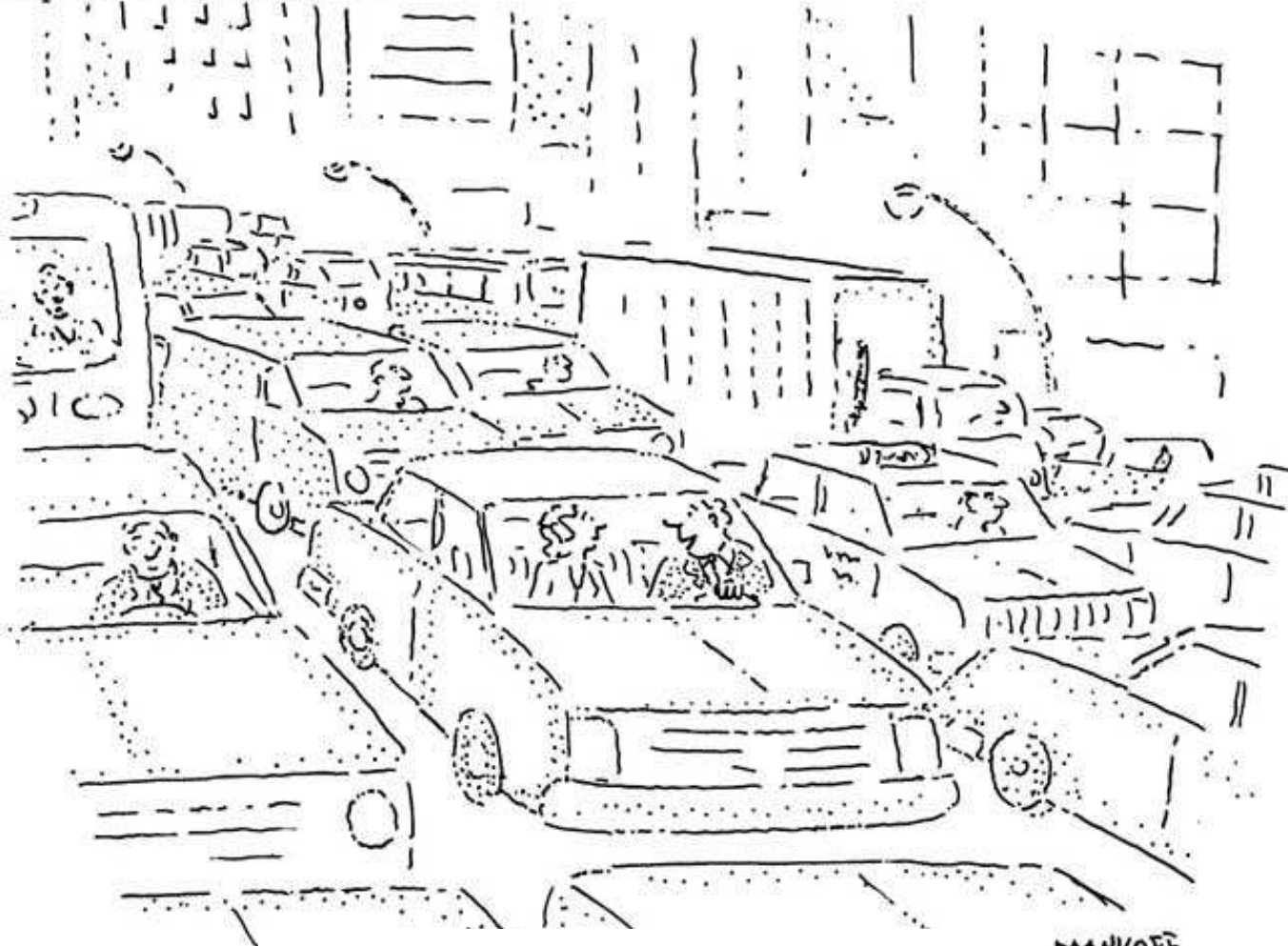
❖ 4 = extremely

❖ What is the most \_\_\_\_\_ you've felt today?

# What is the most \_\_\_\_\_ you have felt today?

- Amused, fun-loving, silly
- awe, wonder, amazement
- content, serene, peaceful
- glad, happy, joyful
- grateful, appreciative, thankful
- hopeful, optimistic, encouraged
- interested, alert, curious
- love, closeness, trust
- proud, confident, self-assured
- angry, irritated, annoyed
- ashamed, humiliated, disgraced
- contemptuous, scornful, disdainful
- disgust, distaste, revulsion
- embarrassed, self-conscious, blushing
- repentant, guilty, blameworthy
- sad, downhearted, unhappy,
- scared, fearful, afraid

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**Hey, is this great traffic, or what?**

# Health: Physical Resources

Mayo Clinic

Nuns

Heart Attack &  
Optimism

# Positive Emotion About the Past The Pleasant Life

Contentment

Satisfaction

Serenity

Pride

## Interventions

Gratitude Visit  
3 Good Things

# Positive Emotion About the Future The Pleasant Life

Hope

Optimism

Faith

Trust

## Interventions

ABCDE  
Learned Optimism

# Engagement Exercises

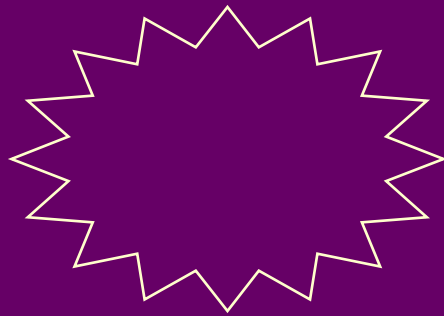
- ❖ Take VIA [www.authentic happiness.org](http://www.authentic happiness.org)
- ❖ Recraft work using signature strength
- ❖ Capitalization

# Active Constructive

Constructive

Destructive

Active



Passive

# The Meaningful Life

positive  
service

fun vs.  
philanthropy

your vision of  
positive human  
future

Your Legacy

Grandchild Writes Obituary

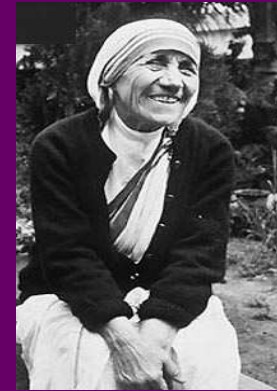
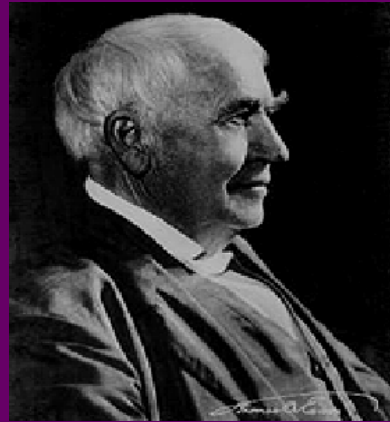


## Three Good Things Results (Severe Depression N=50)

	Happiness	CES-D
Pre-test	53.4 (15 <sup>th</sup> percentile)	33.90 (severe)
Post-test	69.8 (50 <sup>th</sup> percentile)	17.20 (mild-moderate)
Change	+16.4 (92% increased)	-16.70 (94% Decreased)

\*Results within 14.8 days on average

# The Full Life vs The Empty Life



**LS = Pleasure + Engagement + Meaning**

**Predicting Life Satisfaction**

**15 Replications. Multi method**

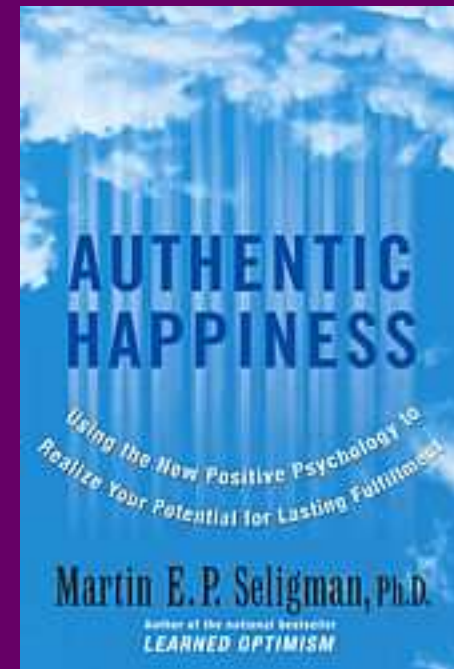
**Pleasure = marginal**

**Engaged Life <.0001**

**Meaningful Life <.0001**

# Sources & Resources

- ❖ [www.reflectivehappiness.com](http://www.reflectivehappiness.com)  
(Interventions)
- ❖ [www.positivepsychology.org](http://www.positivepsychology.org)  
(Literature)
- ❖ [www.psych.upenn.edu/seligman](http://www.psych.upenn.edu/seligman)  
(Literature & Manuals)
- ❖ [www.authentichappiness.org](http://www.authentichappiness.org)  
(Questionnaires)
- ❖ [seligman@psych.upenn.edu](mailto:seligman@psych.upenn.edu)  
(Q&A)



# Review Q&A

- ❖ 3 lives: Pleasant, Engaged, & Meaningful
- ❖ Build Positive Emotion
- ❖ Build Optimism
- ❖ Identify and Build Strengths & Meaning

Consequences: Less Depression, More  
Productivity & Better Health