

Positive Psychology



The science of How to be more
Happy

Positive Psychology

- The study of what makes us happy or have emotional well being
- Positive psychologists are concerned with four topics: (1) positive experiences, (2) enduring psychological traits, (3) positive relationships and (4) positive institutions.



What makes us happy?

- Money
- IQ/success intelligence, curiosity, love of learning — are less strongly tied to happiness than interpersonal virtues like kindness, gratitude and capacity for love."[19]
- Age 20s and 50-70 most happy
- Marriage/Children
- Personality/Genetic/Character
- Alcohol/shopping/etc
- Social ties/social activities
- Faith
- Exercise



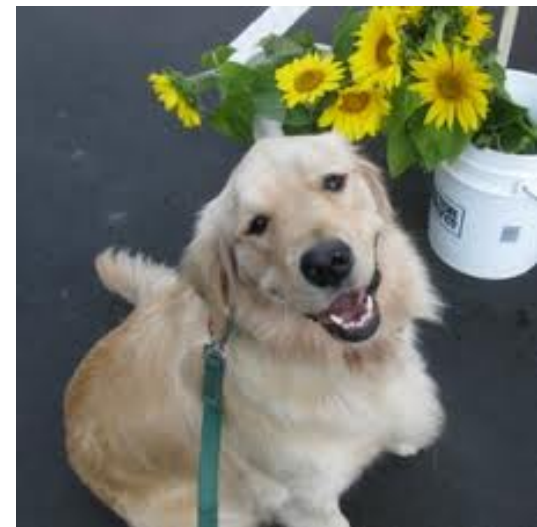


And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. Colossians 3:14

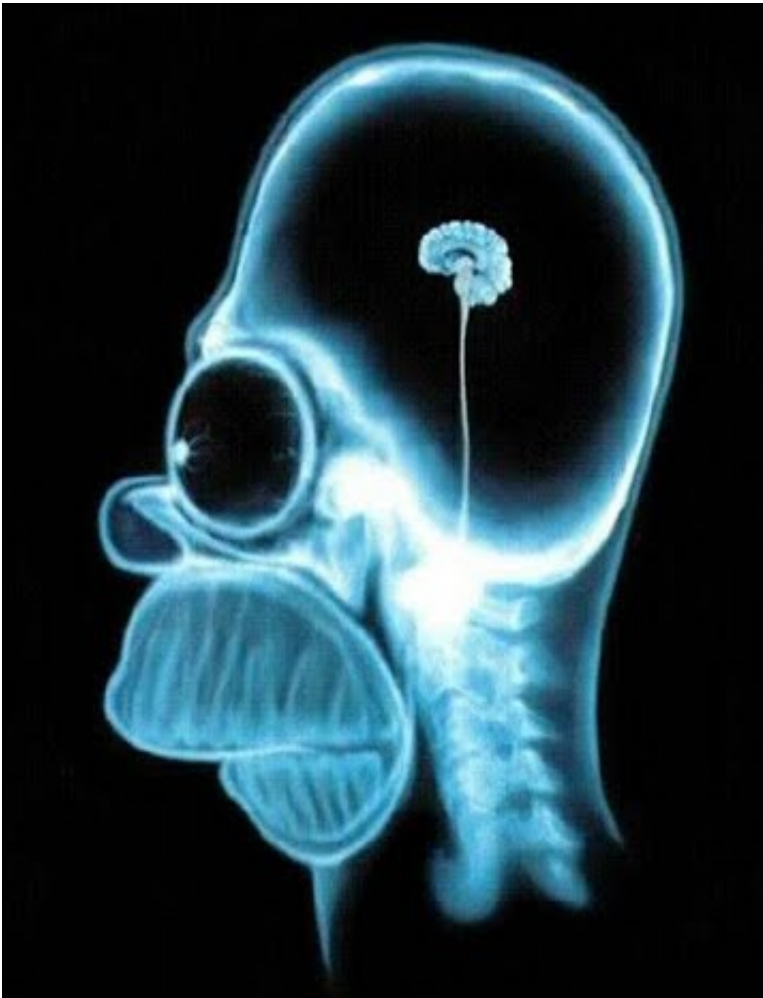
“I have experienced many bad things in my life.

Most of which have never happened”

Mark Twain

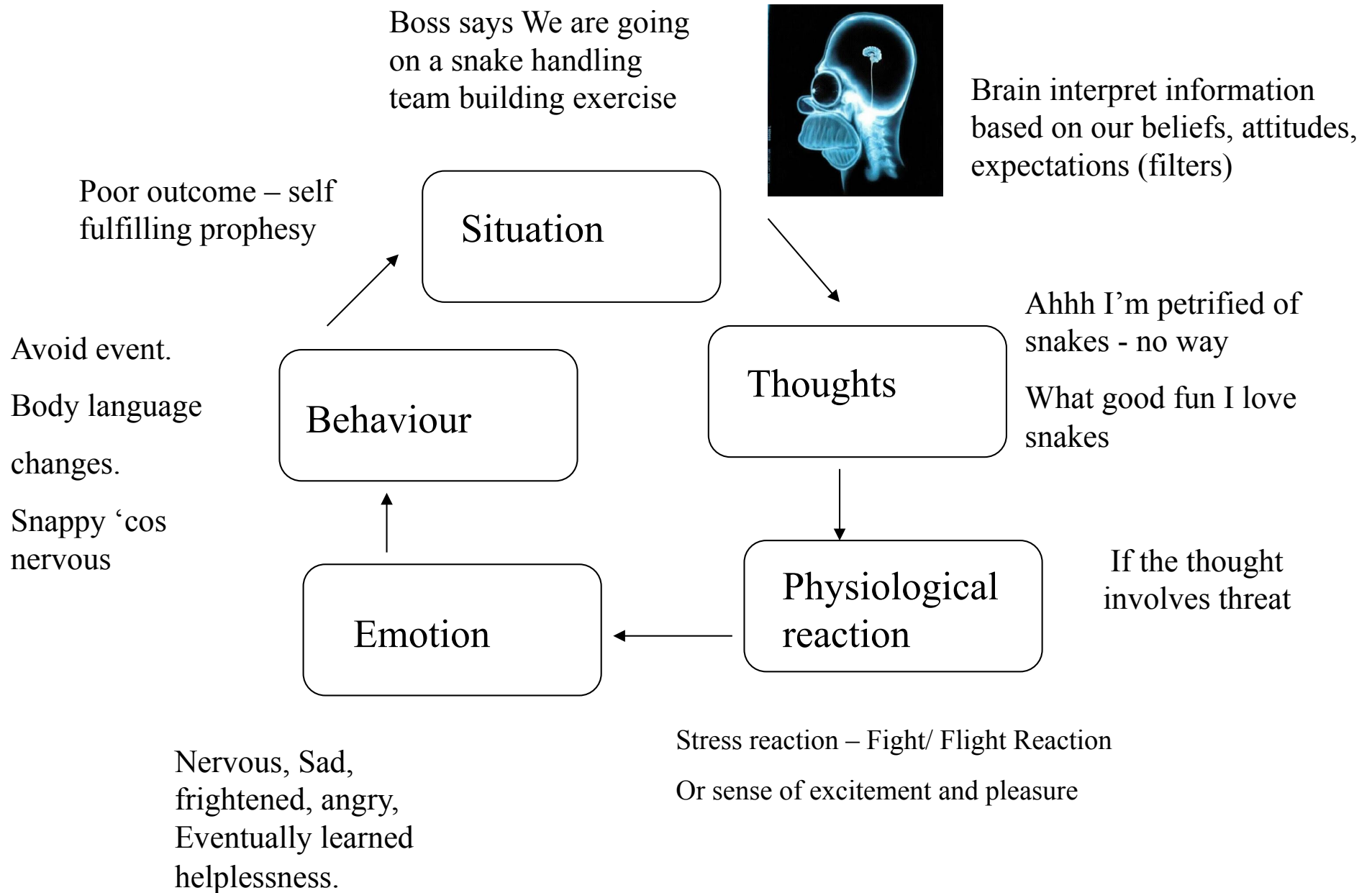


We are basically a big brain



- The brain is literal i.e. if we think it, its happening.
- Store house of experiences
- Has our rules/ programs expectations/filters- influence of these often sub or unconscious
- Also associations eg fear of spiders or an angry parent
- Constantly interpreting our environment based on our program/experiences etc
- Constant self talk

Cognitive Behavioural Framework



Fight Flight Reactions

Adrenalin

- Speeds us up and prepares us for action
- Main impact is on body
- Blood thickens and is diverted away from stomach and periphery to big muscle groups
- Muscles including diaphragm tense

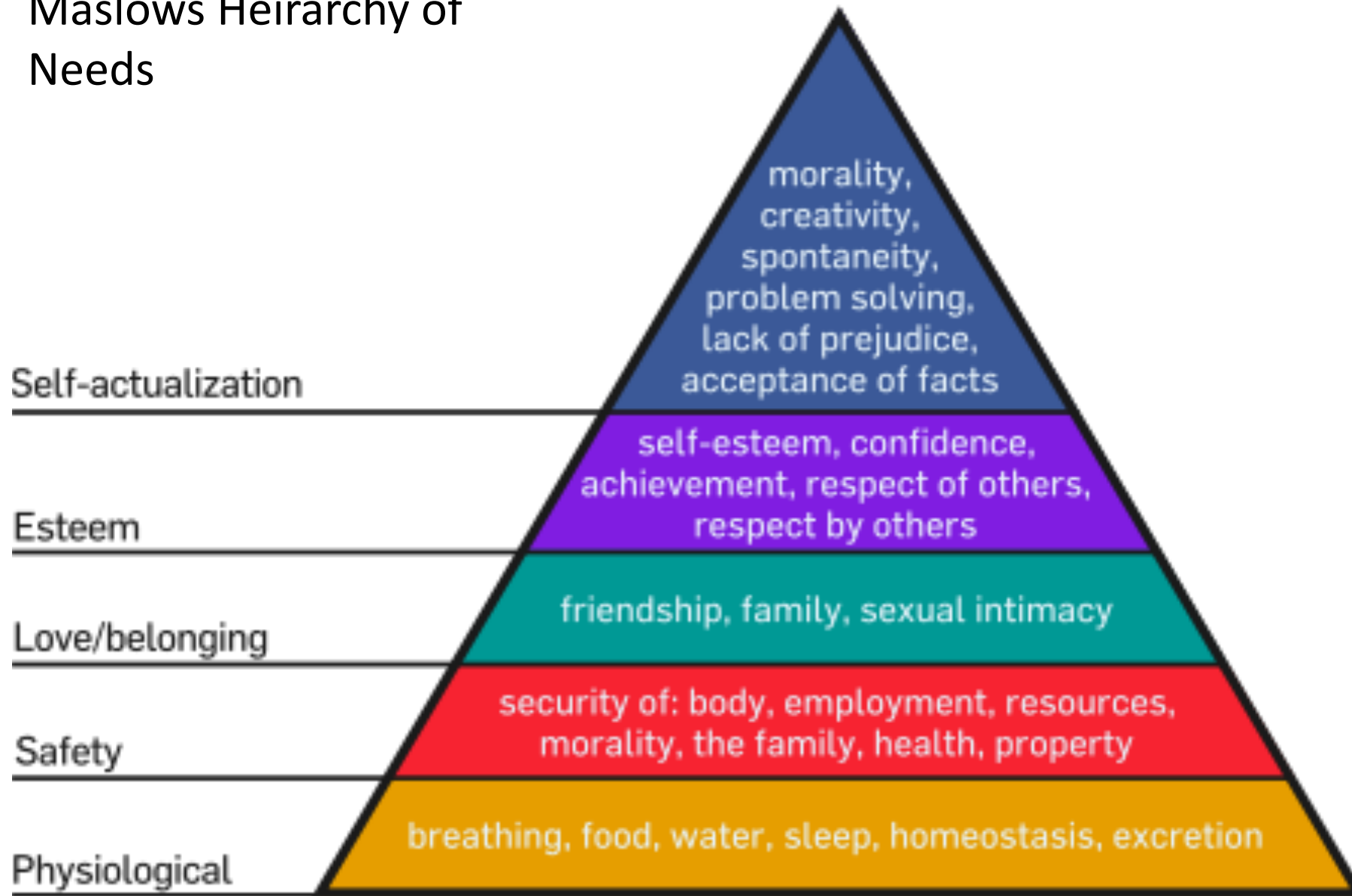
Cortisol (Stress Hormone)

- Impacts thought processes
- Makes us focus on problem and imagine the worst (Cant stop thinking about issue and causes concentration difficulties)
- Stops us being able to see broader picture
- Stops us laying down information sequentially (cant remember)

Being Emotionally Healthy

- Dianne Hales described a person as *emotionally healthy* as someone who exhibited flexibility and adaptability to different circumstances, had a sense of meaning and affirmation in life as well as an "understanding that the self is not the center of the universe", had compassion and the ability to be unselfish, along with increased depth and satisfaction in intimate relationships, and who had a sense of control over the mind and body.
[115]

Maslows Hierarchy of Needs



Character Strengths and Virtues

- **Wisdom and Knowledge:**
creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning, perspective, innovation
- **Courage:** bravery, persistence, integrity, vitality
- **Humanity:** love, kindness, social intelligence
- **Justice:** citizenship, fairness, leadership
- **Temperance:**
forgiveness and mercy, humility, prudence, self control
- **Transcendence:**
appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humor, spirituality

- One goal of positive psychology is to increase well-being and research suggests this is possible through brief exercises termed "positive interventions" (see Lyubomirsky, 2008, for a review).
- Recent meta-analyses confirm that on average, these techniques lead to reliable and sustainable boosts in well-being (Schueller, 2008; Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009).

Can you improve your emotional wellbeing?

Strategies such as:

- expressing gratitude,
- savoring experiences,
- using strengths,
- increasing optimism,
- practicing kindness



all demonstrate the potential to boost an individual's level of emotional well-being

Exercises to create well being

- *Active-Constructive Responding Exercise.* Respond to good news with genuine happiness and displays of excitement as well as active questioning about the event. strongly linked to relationship satisfaction and individual well-being (Gable et al., 2004).
- *Blessings Exercise.* Reflect at the end of each day and write down 3 things that went well on that day and why they went well. Led to increased well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Seligman et al., 2005).

Lets practice

- Spend a few minutes writing 3 things that have gone well today/this week.
- Get into pairs and take turns to tell the other person what went well and the listener does active constructive responding
- Then swap

- *Gratitude Visit Exercise:* Write a gratitude testimonial to someone you never properly thanked. Meet with this individual to read the gratitude letter to the recipient in person. The gratitude visit exercise showed the largest positive change on happiness and depressive symptoms out of a set of 5 exercises (Seligman et al., 2005).
- *Life Summary Exercise.* write a short description of how you would like to have your life relayed to your grandchildren. A few days later review the summary to take stock of what was missing in your life and what changes might be necessary to ensure this summary could be achieved. (Seligman et al., 2006).

- *Savoring Exercise.* reflect each day for at least 2-3 minutes on 2 pleasurable experiences and to make the pleasure last as long as possible. increase savoring /intensify or elongate the positive emotions of an experience through focused attention on the present moment (Bryant & Veroff, 2006).
- *Strengths Exercise.* completed the Values in Action Survey of Strengths (see Seligman & Peterson, 2004) and identified their 5 highest strengths. Each day, participants were asked to find a new way to use 1 of the 5 identified strengths. Use of signature strengths has led to boosts in well-being and decreases in depressive symptoms (Seligman et al., 2005).

Positive Psychology in the workplace

- Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) /Discretionary behaviours
 - OCBs are proven to improve the moods of employees and the moods in the workplace
 - Helping behavior improves mood because the individual is focused on positive thoughts and emotions;
 - Altruism is effective because it has more impact in a social setting like the workplace and is more extrinsically rewarding.
 - OCB encourage positive interactions among people and leads to better psychological and physical health for employees.
- Mood is catching.
 - Research shows happiness spreads to 3 levels of separation but negative spreads to 4.
 - Being around a happy person is good for your health

We are in a learning community

For 2013

1. What OCBs or helping behaviours can we show to one another (random acts of kindness)
2. How can we reach out to someone we may not know very well and get to know them a bit better or show we care
3. How do we spread happiness

Useful reading

- Principle Centred Leadership Steven Covey
- First thing First – Steven Covey - Organisation and time management skills
- Journal of Value based Leadership
- Positive psychology strengths www.viacharacter.org/www/en-us/viainstitute/classification.aspx
- Positive Psychology Centre – lots of questionnaires <http://www.ppc.sas.upenn.edu>
- http://www.bmc.com/offers/performance/whitepapers/docs/2004/Perception_Is_Reality.pdf The psychology of performance management
- Motivating people in organizations, Linda Holbeche Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann, 1998 Writers on organisations, D S Pugh, D J Hickson and C R Hinings Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983 Manual of learning styles, Peter Honey and Alan Mumford Maidenhead: Peter Honey Publications, 1982 How to motivate people, Twyla Dell London: Kogan Page, 1989 Successful motivation in a week, Christine Harvey Sevenoaks: Headway and British Institute of Management, 1993
- Motivational interviewing for effective classroom management The classroom check up Wendy Reinke, Keith Herman (Ebook)
- Paridigm Shifts & Corporate Change --All On Board?: Motivational Interviewing in the Business World Paperback – June 2, 2006 by Ann E. Fields (Author)
- Fierce Conversations Sarah Scott