

# Promoting Flourishing and Psychological Safety in the Learning Environment

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## Disclosure Statement

No financial interest/arrangement or affiliation with one or more organizations that could be perceived as a real or apparent conflict of interest in the context of the subject of this presentation.

## Learning Objectives

- Explore Human Flourishing/Psychological Safety principles
- Reflect upon your unique character strengths and how they can be used to enhance your teaching
- Learn the five principles of Positive Psychology (PERMA) that can lead to your flourishing or effectiveness as an educator

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Tell Us About Something You Love to Do

# What is Positive Psychology and What Does It Have to do With Human Flourishing?



The scientific study of human flourishing or the strengths and virtues that enable individuals, communities and organizations to thrive. There are 24 strengths and virtues.



Creativity Perspective  
 Judgment Curiosity  
 Honesty Bravery Fairness  
 HUMOR Zest  
**PERSEVERANCE** Teamwork  
 Love Kindness Leadership  
 Social Intelligence Love of Learning  
 Forgiveness HOPE PRUDENCE  
 Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence Humility  
 Spirituality SELF-REGULATION Gratitude



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## A Little History

100 articles on psychopathology for every 1 on wellbeing in 90s

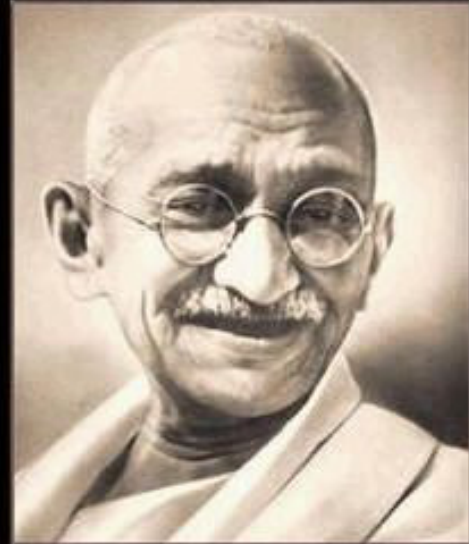
Psychological, philosophical, scientific and spiritual research

Strengths-based interventions mobilize health and ability

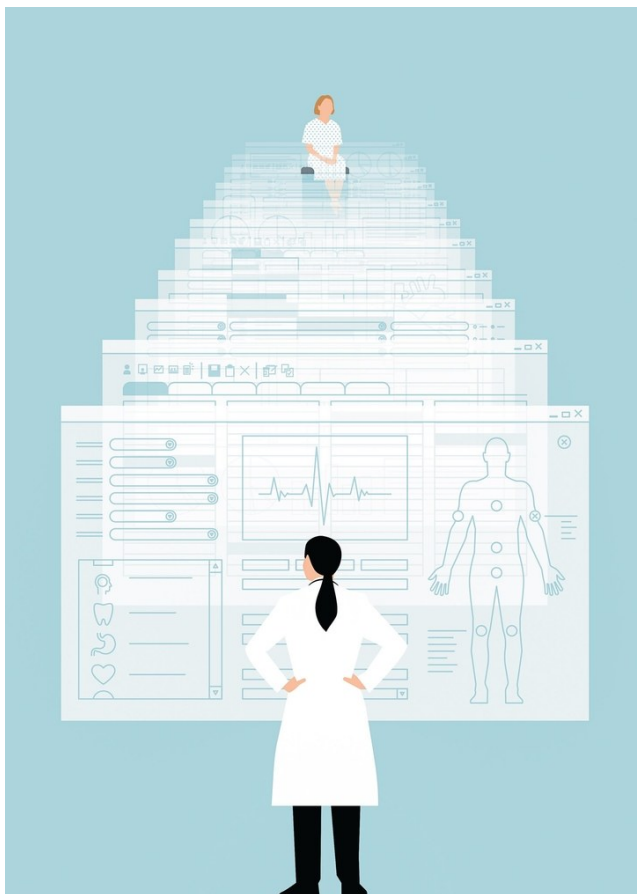
Martin Seligman, University of Pennsylvania

Deficit models versus assets

Happiness is  
when what you  
think,  
what you say,  
and what you do  
are in harmony.







# Why Does This Matter for Educators and Learners?

“The negative shouts at you, but the positive only whispers.”

Learning and motivation improve with **positive focus**

Positive Psychology practices enhance joy in teaching

Communication style matters for flourishing and safety



# Pleasure Combined with Task for Optimal Engagement

Using your unique character strengths and virtues in teaching

“Good teaching is being yourself in front of a group of people”

Naturalness and authenticity in teaching and learning

Self-awareness allows for greater effectiveness

Authenticity feels good

## Exercise #A: Values in Action Survey

Discover your unique character strengths

Share your top five with a partner

Tell a story about using them in a challenging  
and a joyful teaching situation

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# Self-awareness, Flow and Learning Environment

Self awareness, focus and intentional use of strength leads to flow

Flow is meaningful engagement in a desired activity. Time flies

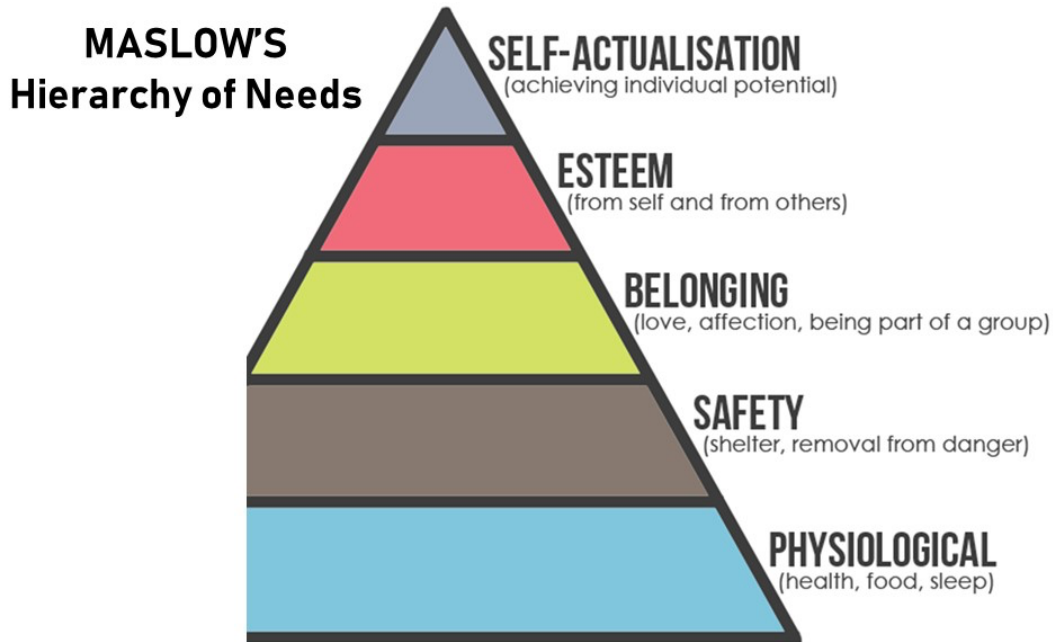
Deep engagement with the task for purpose and meaning

We each play a different instrument to make an orchestra



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# Flow is a Form of Self-Actualization



# PERMA for Human Flourishing and Self- Actualization

P: Positive Emotion  
E: Engagement  
R: Relationships  
M: Meaning  
A: Accomplishment



Basic principles of Positive Psychology



## Exercise B :You

What conjures PERMA for you as an educator?

What conjures PERMA for you in your personal life?

Reflect, write and share with a partner

How might PERMA be elicited in learners?

# PERMA Facilitates Human Flourishing





“Happiness  
makes up in  
height for what  
it lacks in  
length.”

- *ROBERT FROST*

# Barriers to PERMA



# Interpersonal Conflict and Inner Stress





# #1 Three Good Things

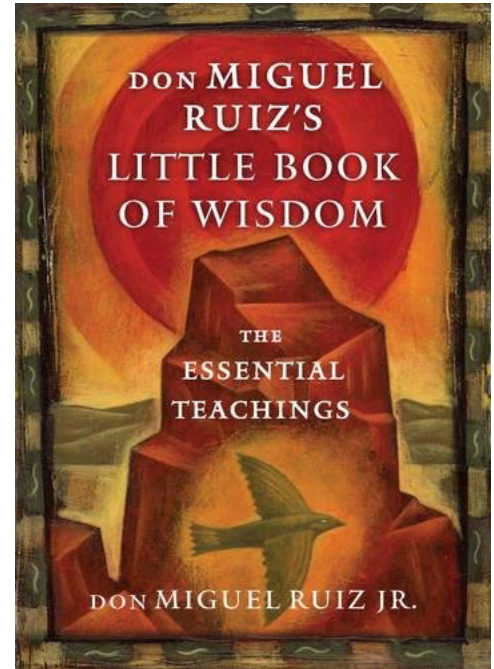
Think about the past week and write down:

Three things that went well and your role in it

Discuss with a small group

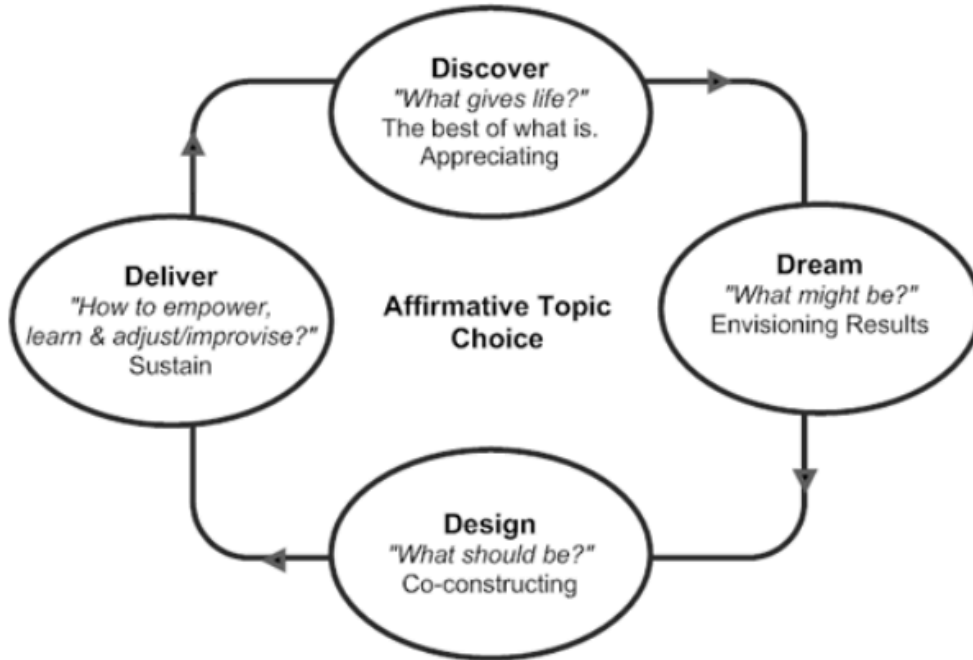
## #2 Toltec Wisdom

1. Do your best
2. Don't make assumptions
3. Listen with slight skepticism
4. Be impeccable with your word
5. Don't take it personally





## #3 Appreciative Inquiry for Positive Culture



## #4 Broaden and Build Theory

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Barbara L. Fredrickson

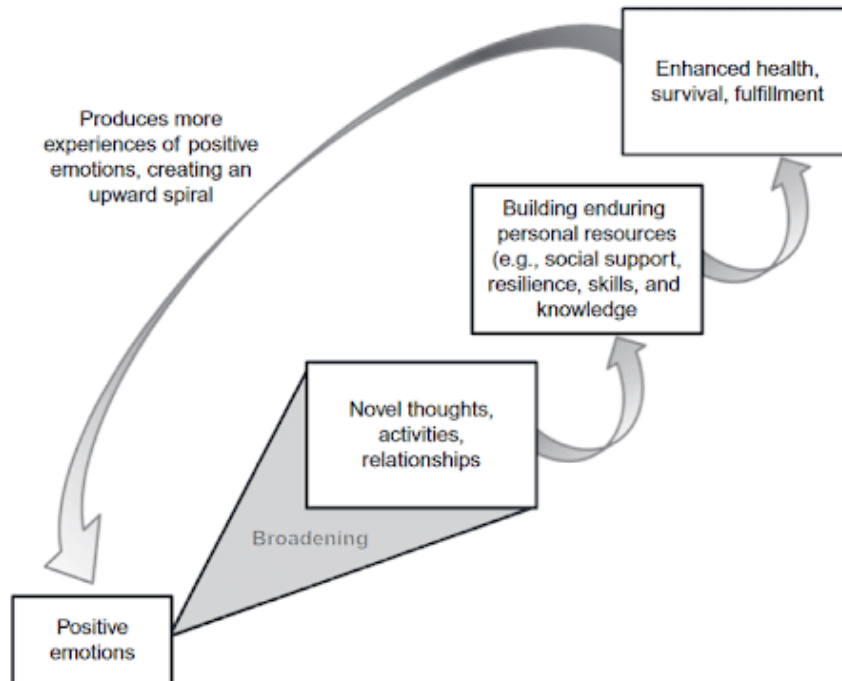
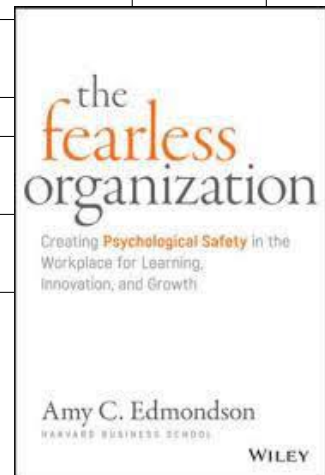
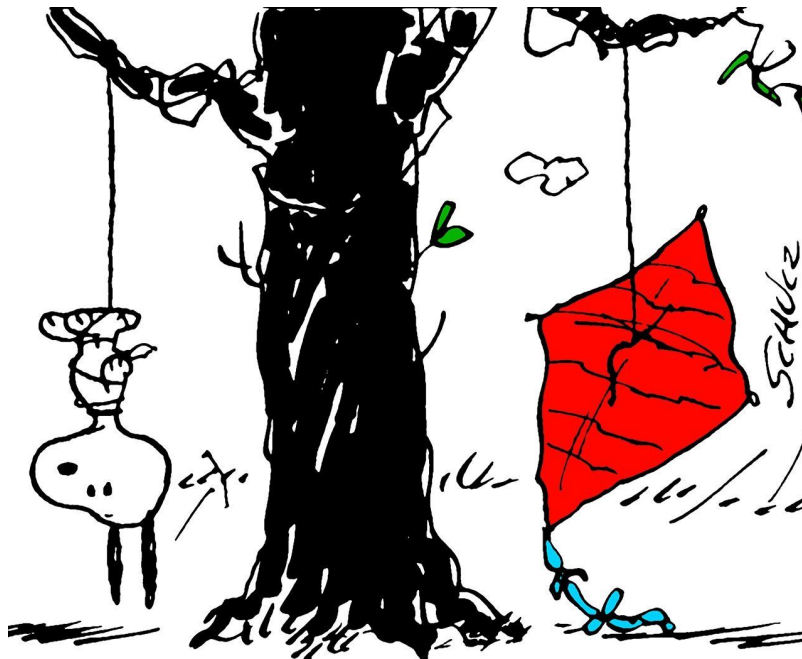


Figure 1.1 The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. Adapted from Fredrickson and Cohn (2008, Fig. 48.1)

## #5 Psychological Safety Conditions

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree / disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. If you make a mistake in this team, it is often held against you.					
2. People on this team sometimes reject others for being different.					
3. It is difficult to ask other members of this team for help.					
4. Members of this team are able to bring up problems and tough issues.					
5. It is safe to take a risk in this team.					
6. No one on this team would deliberately act in a way that undermines my efforts.					
7. Working with members of this team, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilized.					





MAKE MISTAKES

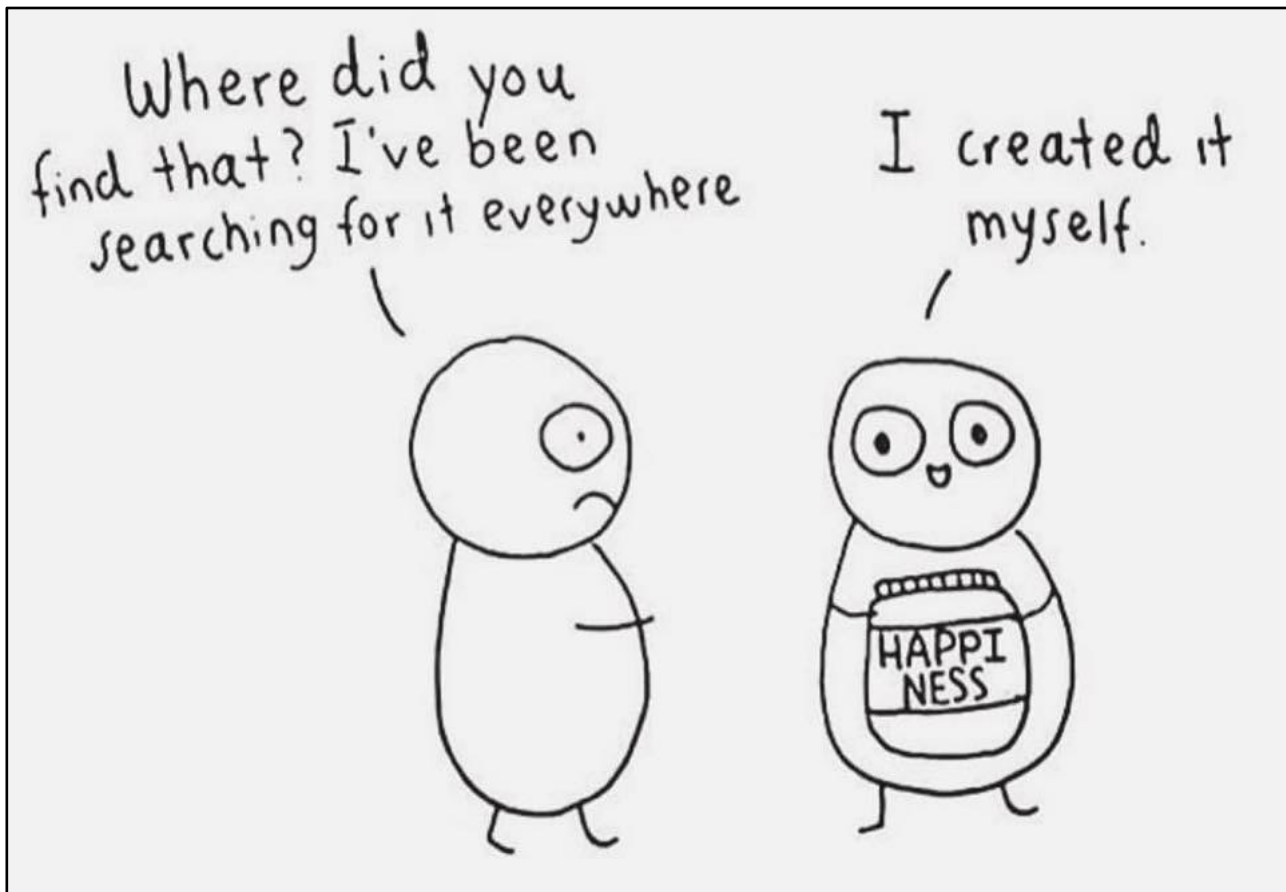
## Exercise # C: Psychological Safety for Learners

Discuss conditions that render psychological safety  
in the learning environment that allow learners to flourish.  
Consider qualities of educators that do the same.

## Maya Angelou



“I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”





$(\text{THANK YOU})^n$

$n \in \mathbb{N}, n > 1$

$\text{YOU} \in \{\textit{Awesome People Set}\}$



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