

~
centre for
positive health
sciences

The Science of Health and Happiness 2.0

2024 Summary



RCSI
UNIVERSITY
OF MEDICINE
AND HEALTH
SCIENCES

The SHH journey

Definition of positive health
The rise of lifestyle diseases
Positive psychology and lifestyle medicine
The GOOD Life



Mind-body connections
Blue zone living
Whole person health



Meaning and purpose
Positive health tools
Meditation



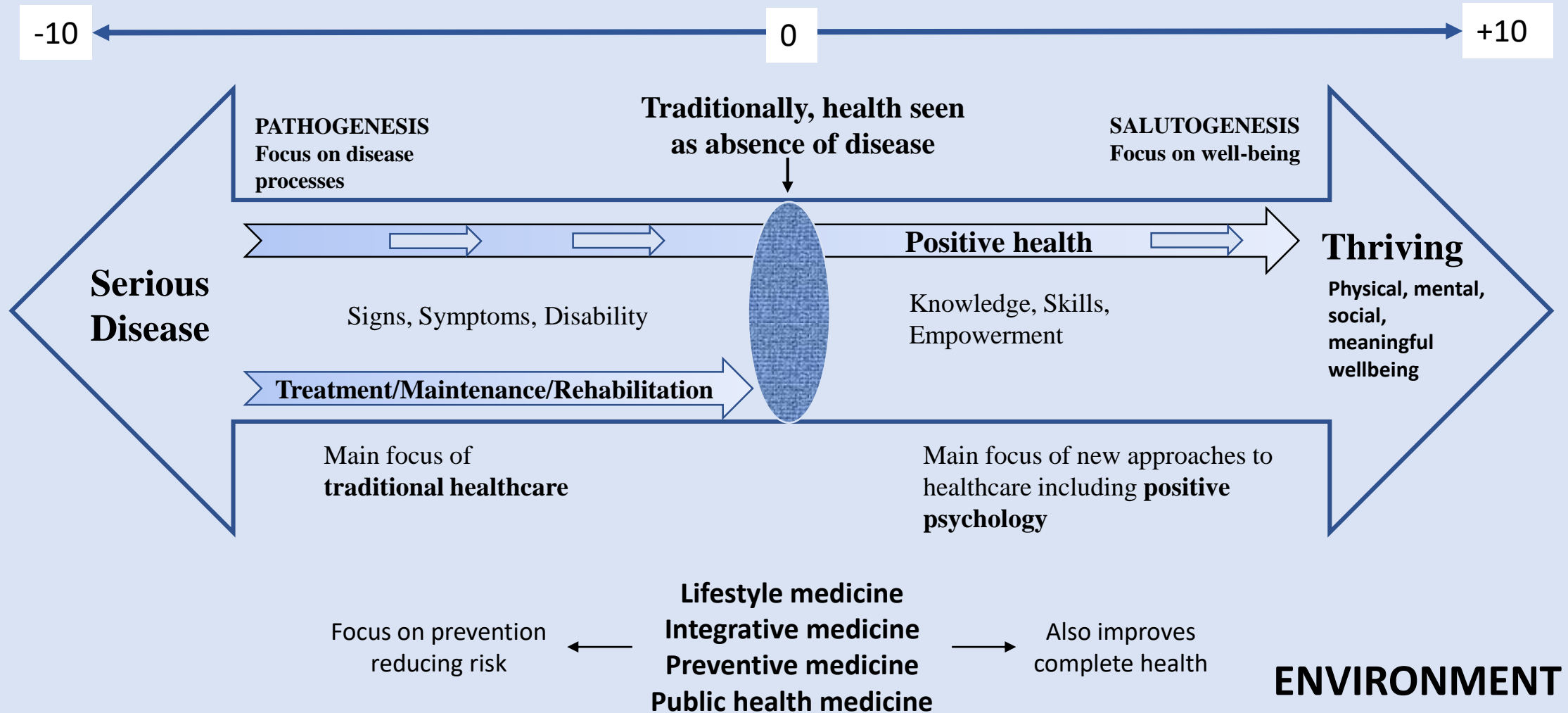
Health & happiness at work
Well-being arts



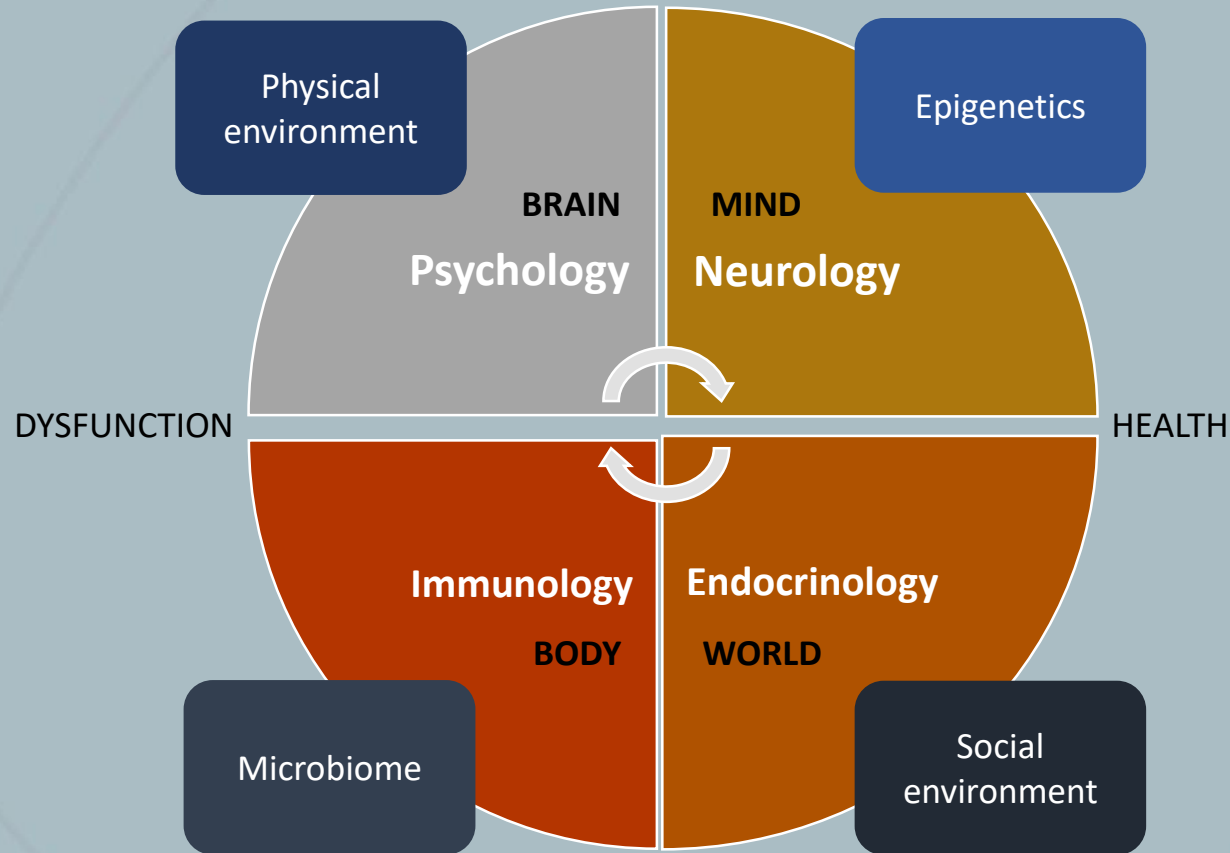
Going beyond ourselves
Interconnection and context



The RCSI Positive Health Model



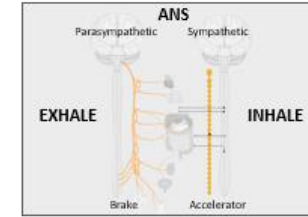
Brain, mind & body connections



Breathe

Practice when you are waiting for the kettle to boil, the bus to come, etc.

Be aware of your breath and balance your inhalation with your exhalation



Breathe through your nose only!

- Breathe light (gentle)
- Breathe slow
- Breathe deep (into your belly)
- 5 seconds in; 5 seconds out

For anxiety and insomnia:

- 5 seconds in
- 5 seconds out
- Hold your breath for 5 seconds



THE SIX PILLARS OF LIFESTYLE MEDICINE

The aim of lifestyle medicine is to redesign health delivery to rely on therapeutic lifestyle interventions as a primary modality to treat, prevent, manage, and reverse chronic cardiometabolic conditions.



Test your health with this free survey from the US Veterans Association

NUTRITION

Evidence supports the use of plant-predominant diets rich in whole foods to prevent, treat and reverse chronic illnesses.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Regular, consistent physical activity is an important part of overall health and resiliency.



RESTORATIVE SLEEP

Improving sleep quality can improve attention span, mood, and insulin resistance, and can reduce hunger, sluggishness, and more.



SOCIAL CONNECTION

Positive social connections have beneficial effects on physical, mental and emotional health.



AVOID RISKY SUBSTANCES

The use of tobacco products and excessive alcohol consumption have been shown to increase the risk of chronic diseases and death.



STRESS MANAGEMENT

Managing negative stress can lessen anxiety, depression, and immune dysfunction and contribute to improved well-being.

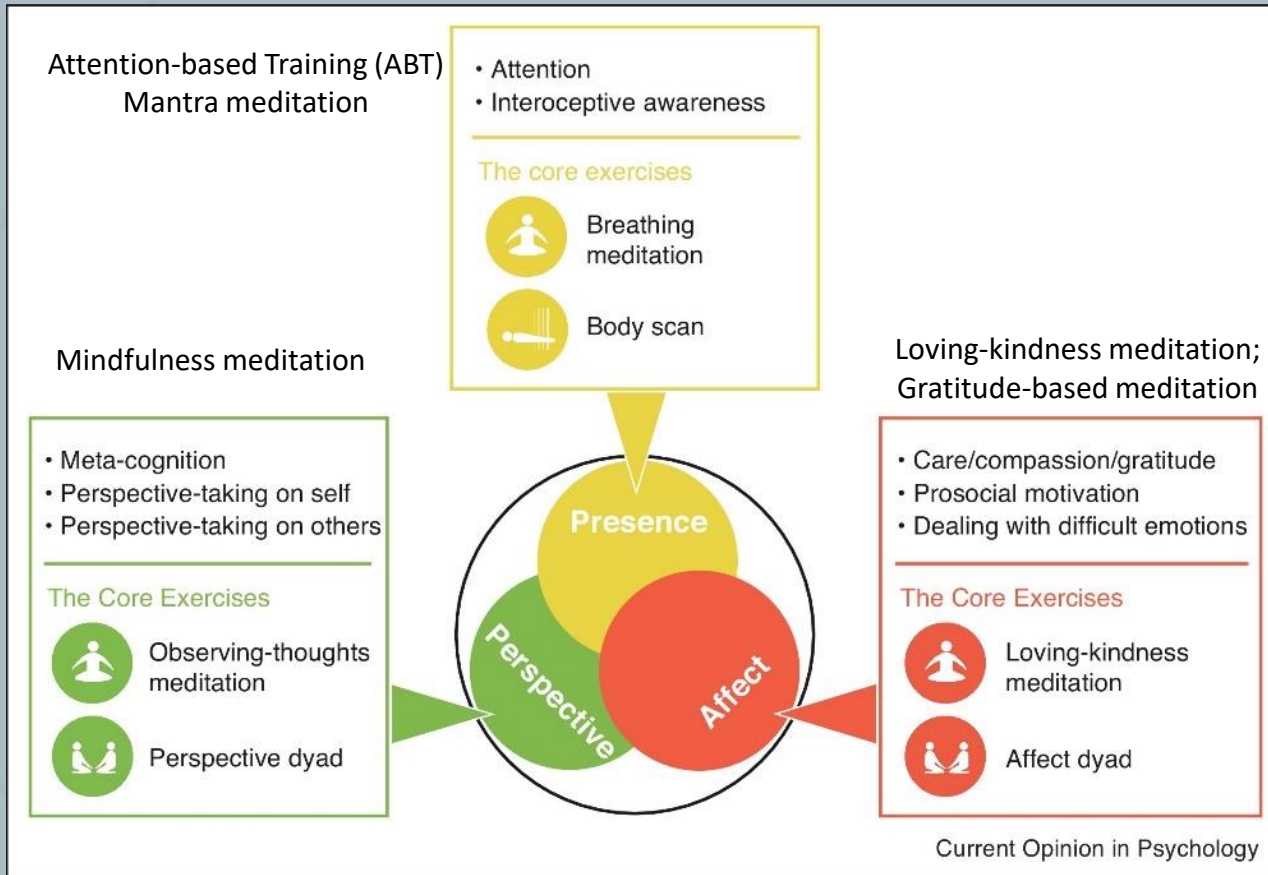


lifestylemedicine.org



Meditation for Health

Different meditations have different impacts



Our free 8-week (ABT) programme ([LINK](#))

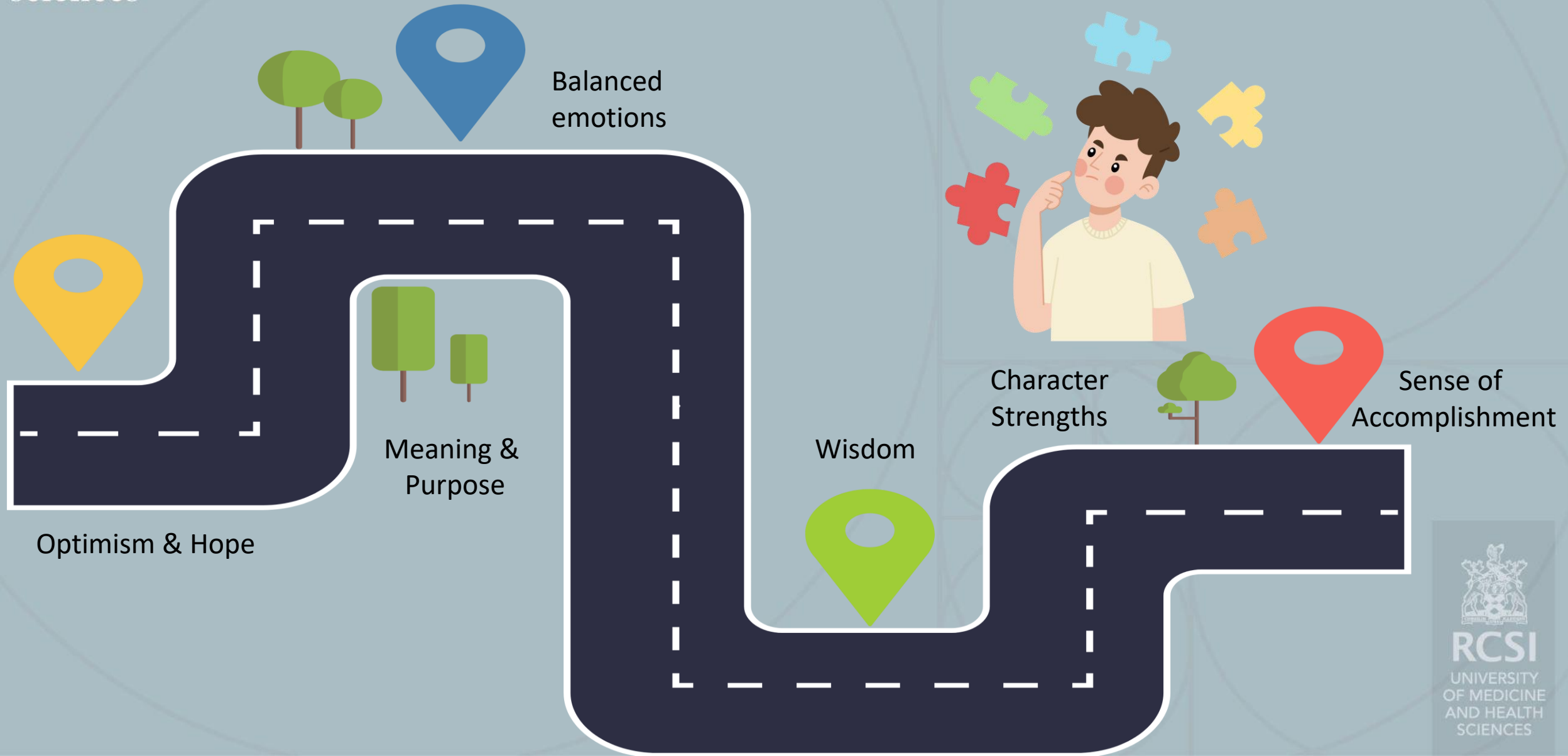


[Six 2-minute ABT videos](#) ([LINK](#))



Click [here](#) to practice the body scan for free

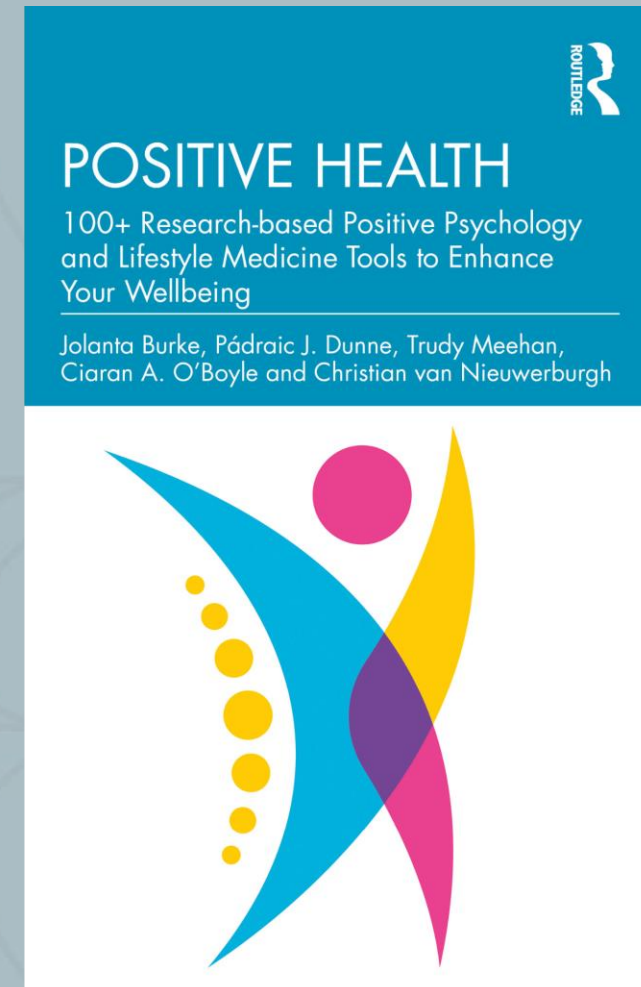
A Journey into the Good Life



The Positive Health Tools

- Goals make a difference
- Wellbeing literacy
- Aim to assimilate

- Activities (body and mind):
 - Practise gratitude
 - Turn off your phone 1 hour before bed
 - Write about the best possible self
 - Listen to music
 - Practise humour



Arts and Health

- equal partnership between the arts and health sectors.
- range of arts practices
- bring together the skills and priorities of both arts and health professionals.
- clear artistic vision, goals and outcomes that seek to enhance individual and community health and wellbeing.
- Arts doesn't have to be scary – the big C and the little c of creativity



Impact of arts engagement

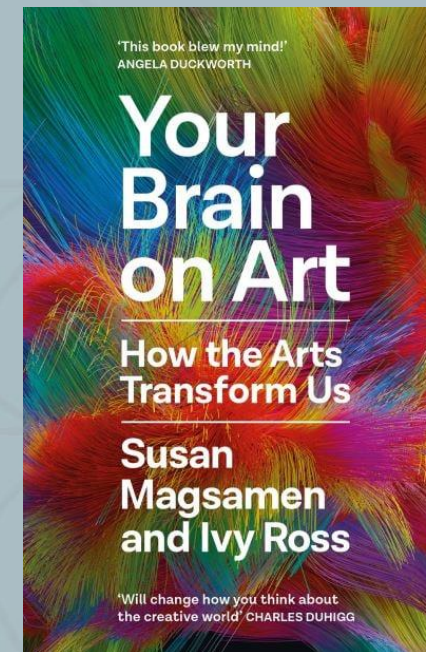
Significant associations between arts participation and:

- mental health (Bone et al., 2022)
- healthy aging (Rena et al., 2022)
- well-being (Bone et al. 2022)
- mortality (Fancourt & Steptoe, 2019)

Associations can be:

- Modes (Attending, doing, participating, consuming, learning)
- Forms (Dance/Movement, Literary Arts, Media, Music, Theatre, Visual Arts, Craft, Design)

“If we were to design a tool from scratch to improve learning, health, and overall wellbeing, it would look like the arts”



Example of singing

How it works

- **Physical** (increased awareness of physical self, respiratory and heart health)
- **Physiological** (enhanced respiratory muscles, improves immune function and increases feelings of happiness)
- **Psychological** (improvements in cognitive stimulation, abilities and skills, expectation and hope, social connection)

Benefits:

- **Fun and enjoyment**
- **Caring and supportive**
- **Connecting**
- **Self-belief**



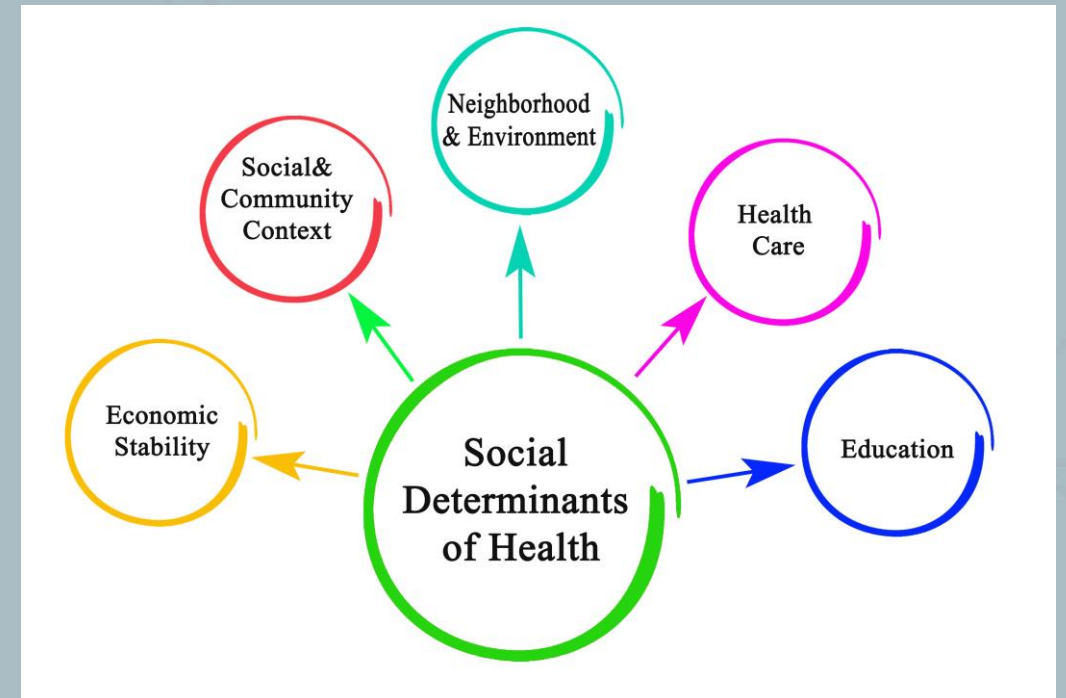
***BUT it must be something that fits
you – lots of Arts to choose from***

Going beyond yourself

Social determinants of health:

“the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life.” (WHO definition)

- differences in health between population groups associated with the society they live in.
- when people change social and cultural environments, their disease risks change.



Positive Emotions

Joy, Gratitude, Serenity, Interest, Hope, Pride, Amusement, Inspiration, Awe, Love.

[Barbara Fredrickson 2009]

Experiencing positive emotions predicts whether we will languish or flourish.

Positive emotions can be cultivated, e.g. savouring, expressing gratitude, fostering positive social connections.

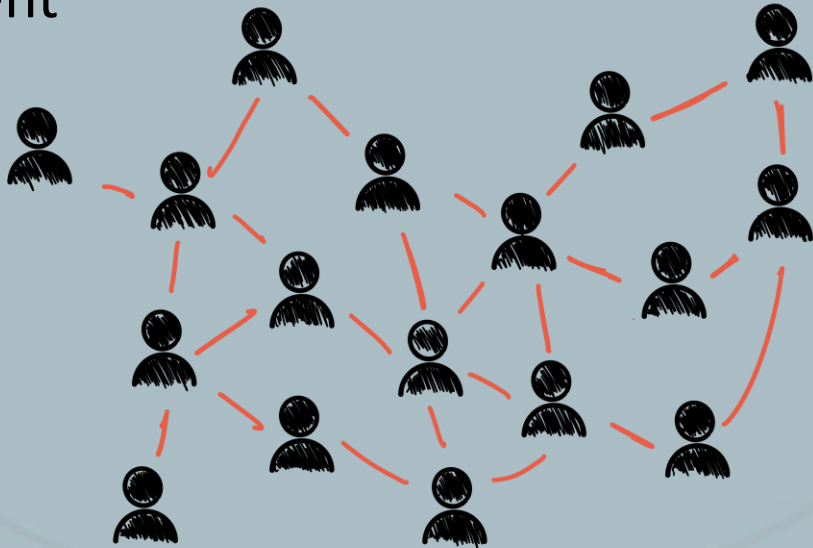
Tendency for negative emotions, but can cultivate positive emotions.



Social Connection

- Lack of social connection can lead to poor health outcomes (heart disease, stroke, diabetes etc)
- 3 pathways: biology, psychology and behaviour

One size does not fit all – we are all different



Positivity resonance

- Micro-moments of positivity resonance
- Many types of relationships

“Positivity resonance between brains ... requires only connection, not intimacy or shared history that comes with a special bond.”

(Fredrickson, 2014, p47)

WHO Definition

The World Health Organization defines a healthy workplace as follows;
"A healthy workplace is one in which workers and managers collaborate to use a continual improvement process to protect and promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all workers and the sustainability of the workplace by considering the following, based on identified needs."



Health and safety concerns in the physical work environment



Health, safety and wellbeing concerns in the psychosocial work environment, including organisation of work and workplace culture



Personal health resources in the workplace



Ways of participating in the community to improve the health of workers, their families and other members of the community¹⁶

Competence

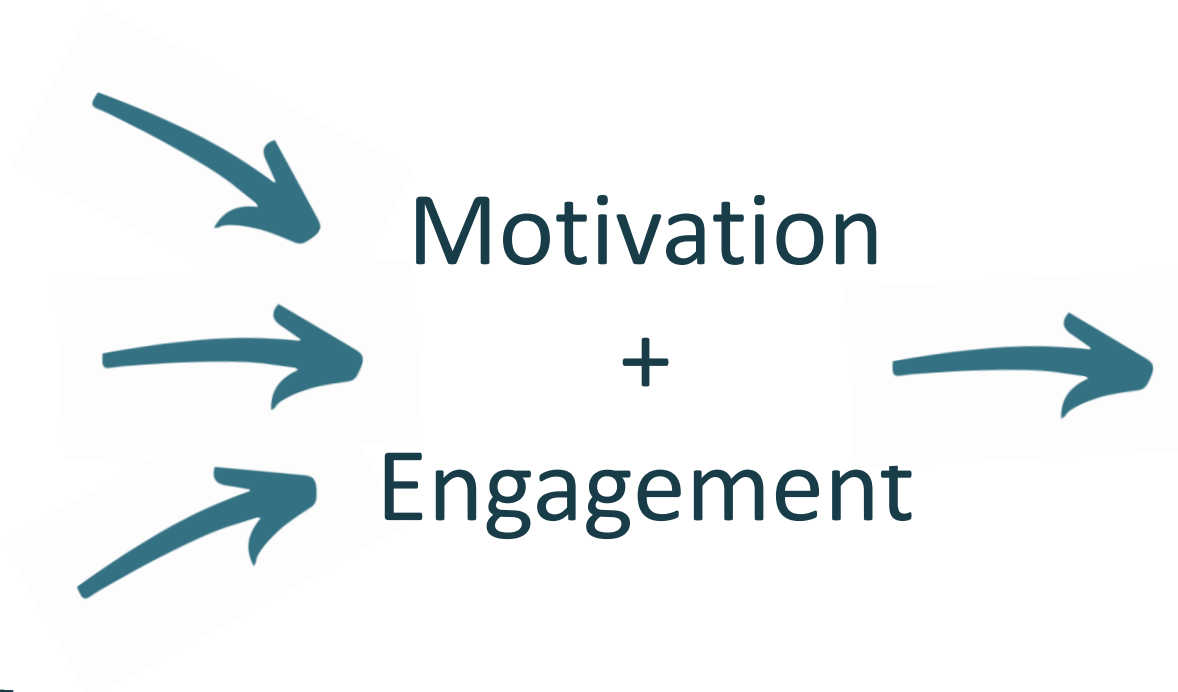
Feeling effective at one's activities

Autonomy

Having a choice, being able to be yourself

Relatedness

Feeling connected to others, sense of belonging.



Enhanced performance + wellbeing

PERMA Model

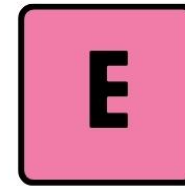
Applying the PERMA MODEL of Well-Being as a Leader



POSITIVE EMOTIONS

Cultivate a range of positive feelings.

- ◆ Encourage solutions
- ◆ Supportive conditions
- ◆ Address negativity
- ◆ Share Praise



ENGAGEMENT

Achieve a state of flow by aligning challenges with skills.

- ◆ Build relationships, mentor
- ◆ Boost collaboration activities
- ◆ Cultivate team support
- ◆ Leverage strengths and acknowledge hidden strengths
- ◆ Guide autonomy, experiment



RELATIONSHIPS

Build strong connections and support networks.

- ◆ Structured connections
- ◆ Team collaboration
- ◆ Supportive culture
- ◆ Inclusive environment
- ◆ Lead supportively
- ◆ Encourage interactions
- ◆ Facilitate connections
- ◆ Promote open solutions



MEANING

Find purpose and significance in personal and collective goals.

- Task clarity
- Role dialogue
- Values at work
- Personal task link



ACCOMPLISHMENT

Pursue goals and celebrate achievements.

- ★ Recognize, praise, celebrate
- ★ Learn from success
- ★ Highlight goals, showcase achievements
- ★ Celebrate milestones, emphasize success
- ★ Focus on growth
- ★ Publicly acknowledge contributions



Seligman, M. E. (2012). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. Atria Paperback.



Centre for Positive Health Sciences

Our mission is to educate, nurture and discover to enhance health and well-being through the practice of positive psychology and lifestyle medicine.



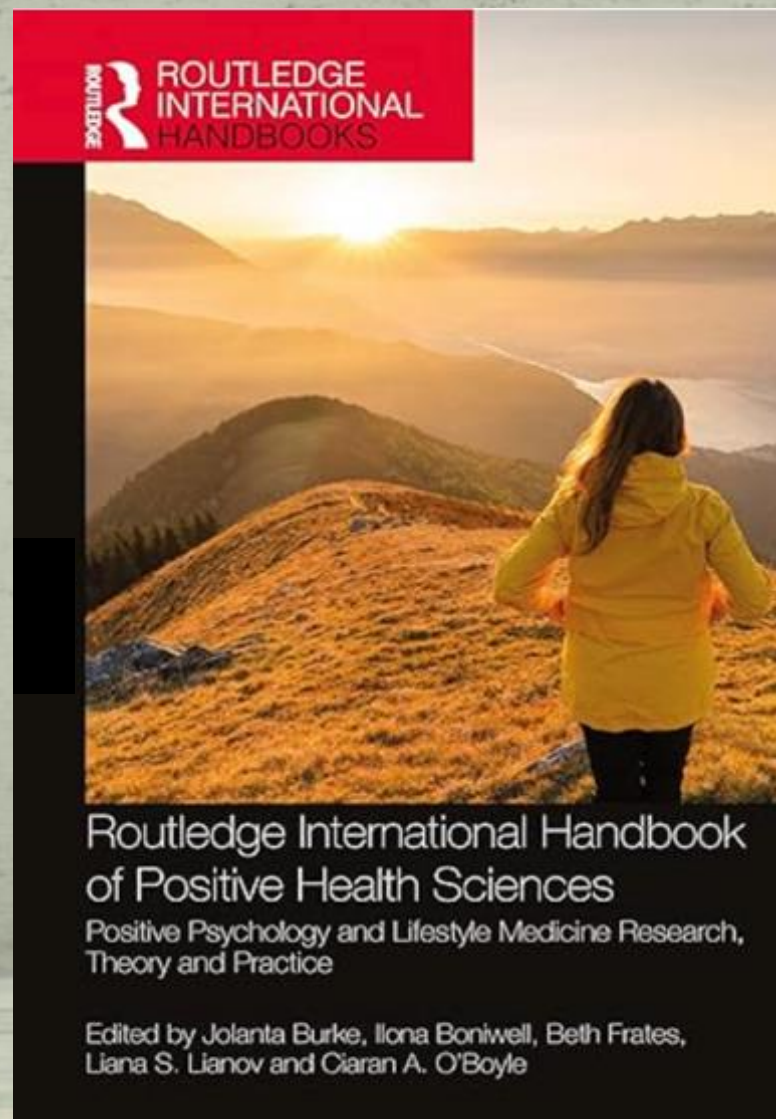
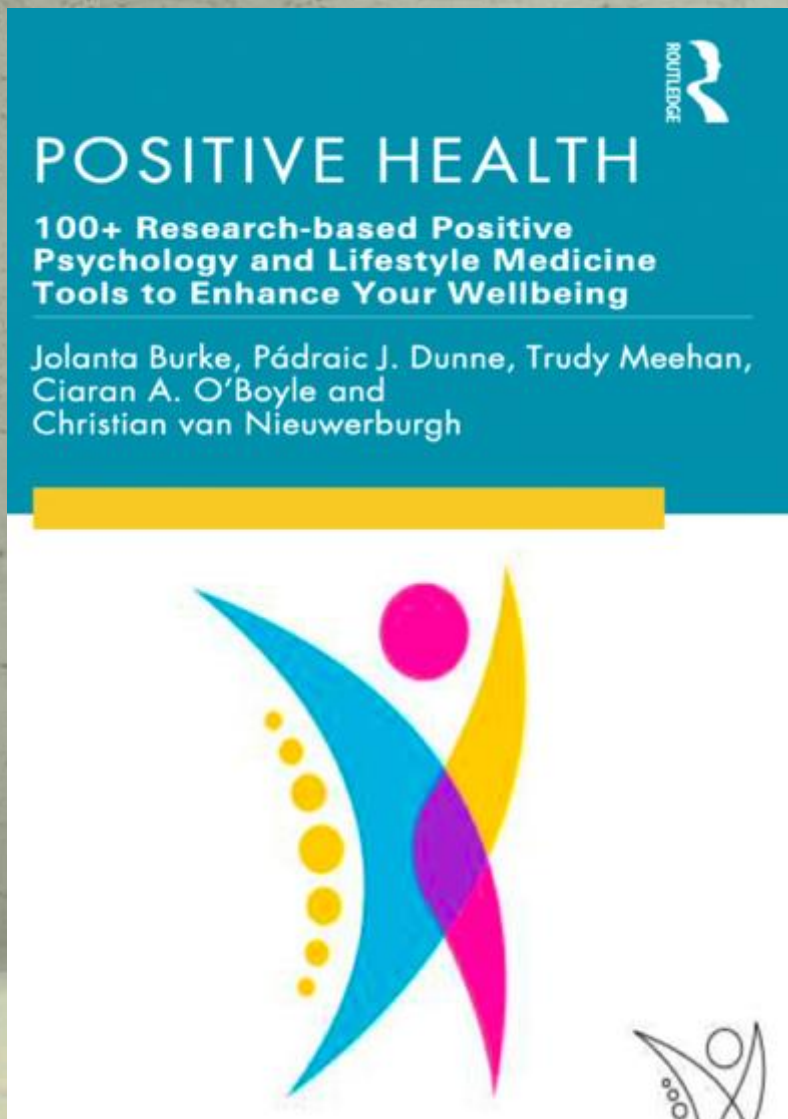
Register your interest

Join our mailing list to learn more about the RCSI Centre for Positive Health Sciences and receive updates about upcoming courses.

[SIGN UP NOW](#)

- Professional Diploma in Positive Health
- Professional Diploma in Leading Workplace Health and Wellbeing
- Masters in Positive Health Coaching
- PhD in Positive Health
- Professional Doctorate in Positive Health
- Introduction to Lifestyle Medicine
- The Science of Health and Happiness (General, Young people, Ageing)





“The only real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes.”

~ Marcel Proust