

Using Encouragement & Positive Psychology to Promote Resilience

Reade Dowda, PhD, LPC
Fort Hays State University
rldowda@fhsu.edu

Brian Weber, MS, NCC
Fort Hays State University
bwweber2@fhsu.edu

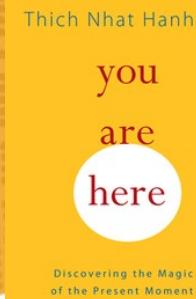


Interest in Research

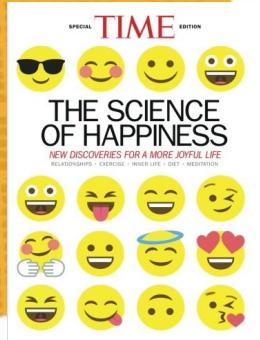
- Positivity fights depression
- Proactive in handling stressful situations
- Influence of theory on professional development



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY
Forward thinking. World ready.



Discovering the Magic
of the Present Moment



Today's Agenda

- Resilience
- Positive Psychology
- Adlerian Encouragement
- Questions

We have positive and negative seeds. Only water the positive seeds – Thich Nhat Hanh



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

Positive Psychology

- Positive Psychology: Shift from pathology to wellness (Carlson, Watts, & Maniacci, 2006; Watts, 2012).
- Adler embraced a focus on strengths and a growth mindset long before contemporary positive psychology (Watts, 2015).
- Optimistic vs. Pessimistic Outlooks
- Optimism is a protective factor against depression (Seligman, 1998).



Forward thinking. World ready.

Positive Reframe

- **Bouncing forward** (Walsh, 2002)
- Bouncing back vs. bouncing forward
- **Resilience** is often the strength gained from challenging events.



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

Positive Reframe

- **PTG vs. PTSD (Martin Seligman)**
 - Reframing events such as bullying at school or bad interactions at work
- “Healing past wounds can become strength” (Haddock & Falkner, 2017, p. 105).
- Challenging times often help people take a fresh look at priorities.



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

If Bad is Stronger than Good, Why are People Happy?

- Negativity bias – awareness.
- We have more positive than negative events – they add up.
- We reminisce about the good times.
- Selective perception and memory (Baumeister, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001).
- Happier people focus on the positive.



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

Seligman's Model for Happiness and Well-Being

- Positive Emotions (enjoyment)
- Engagement (flow – losing track of time)
- Relationships (authentic connection)
 - “Resilience is nurtured by supportive relationships” (Walsh, 2002, p. 35).
- Meaning (purposeful life)
- Achievement (success)
- Freedom & Health



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

Active Constructive Responding



FORT HAY
UNIVERSITY
Forward thinking

Positive Psychotherapy (PPT) Interventions

- Three good things/blessings
- Closed door / Open door
- Your life as a garden
- Satisficing vs. maximizing
- Savoring (mindfulness & small victories)
 - (Rashid, 2015; Rashid & Seligman, 2014; Seligman, Rashid, & Parks, 2006)
- Yes & No: Boundaries



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.



Gratitude

- Expression
- Experience
- Gratitude interventions have been used to ameliorate depression and anxiety
 - (Kini, Wong, McInnis, Gabana, & Brown, 2016)
- Gratitude journal
- Gratitude mapping
- Complement journal
- G.L.A.D. technique
 - Grateful, learned, accomplished, delight



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

Processing Character Strengths

- Values in Action Inventory of Strengths
www.viacharacter.org
- Top five strengths are Signature Strengths.
- How are you using these strengths in your personal/professional life?
- How can you use your **signature strengths** to aid with a **challenging situation**?



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.



Reade Dowda

1: Hope

Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it; believing that a good future is something that can be brought about.

2: Perseverance

Finishing what one starts; persevering in a course of action in spite of obstacles; "getting it out the door"; taking pleasure in completing tasks.

3: Love

Valuing close relations with others, in particular those in which sharing & caring are reciprocated; being close to people.

4: Judgment

Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; not jumping to conclusions; being able to change one's mind in light of evidence; weighing all evidence fairly.

5: Prudence

Being careful about one's choices; not taking undue risks; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted.

6: Honesty

Speaking the truth but more broadly presenting oneself in a genuine way and acting in a sincere way; being without pretense; taking responsibility for one's feelings and actions.

7: Humor

Liking to laugh and tease; bringing smiles to other people; seeing the light side; making (not necessarily telling) jokes.

Brian Weber

1: Creativity

Thinking of novel and productive ways to conceptualize and do things; includes artistic achievement but is not limited to it.

2: Judgment

Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; not jumping to conclusions; being able to change one's mind in light of evidence; weighing all evidence fairly.

3: Perspective

Being able to provide wise counsel to others; having ways of looking at the world that make sense to oneself/others.

4: Prudence

Being careful about one's choices; not taking undue risks; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted.

5: Fairness

Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice; not letting feelings bias decisions about others; giving everyone a fair chance.

6: Forgiveness

Forgiving those who have done wrong; accepting others' shortcomings; giving people a second chance; not being vengeful.

7: Honesty

Speaking the truth but more broadly presenting oneself in a genuine way and acting in a sincere way; being without pretense; taking responsibility for one's feelings and actions.

Interventions - Humor

- Humor can be used to connect with others (Rashid, 2015).
- Helping clients see the humor in their concerns (Carlson, Watts, & Maniacci, 2006).
- Don't believe everything you think - Thich Nhat Hanh



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

Encouragement

- Think of some one of more persons who was encouraging to you.
- What were some characteristics of your encouragers?
- “We draw courage through encouragement” (Walsh, 2002, p. 35).



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

Adlerian Encouragement

- Adlerian counseling is a growth/wellness model. It is an optimistic perspective that views people as unique, creative, capable, and responsible.
- Adlerian counseling emphasizes prevention, optimism and hope, resilience and growth, competence, creativity and resourcefulness, social consciousness, and finding meaning and a sense of community in relationships.
- Because Adlerians believe the growth/wellness model makes more sense than a *sickness* model, they see clients as discouraged rather than sick.
 - ***Thus, Adlerians are not about “curing” anything; counseling is a process of encouragement*** (Carlson, Watts, & Maniacci, 2006).



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

Adlerian Encouragement

Encouragement, for Adlerians, is the interpersonal conveyance and therapeutic modeling of *gemeinschaftsgefühl*: *community feeling/social interest*

Community Feeling: affective and motivational aspects – sense of belonging, empathy, caring, compassion, acceptance of others, etc.)

Social Interest: cognitive and behavioral aspects – thoughts and behaviors that contribute the common good; the good of the all at both micro- and macro-systemic levels.

Both are required for a holistic understanding of Adler's *gemeinschaftsgefühl* (Watts, 2012).



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

Adlerian Encouragement

- Clients present for counseling because they are discouraged and lack the confidence and "courage" to engage successfully in the tasks or problems of living.
- **Encouragement is not a technique, but rather it is an attitude and a *way of being* with clients**
- Dreikurs (1967) noted the essential necessity of encouragement in psychotherapy. He stated that presenting problems are "based on discouragement" and without "encouragement, without having faith in her/himself restored, [the client] cannot see the possibility of doing or functioning better" (p. 62).



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

Adlerian Encouragement

- Adler (1956) once asked a client what he thought made the difference in his successful experience in therapy. The client replied: “That’s quite simple. I had lost all courage to live. In our consultations I found it again” (p. 342).
- Adlerians consider encouragement a crucial aspect of human growth and development. This is especially true in regard to psychotherapy. Stressing the importance of encouragement in therapy, Adler (1956) stated: “Altogether, in every step of the treatment, we must not deviate from the path of encouragement” (p. 342). Dreikurs (1967) agreed: “What is most important in every treatment is encouragement” (p. 35).
- In addition, Dreikurs stated that therapeutic success was largely dependent upon “[the therapist’s] ability to provide encouragement” and failure generally occurred “due to the inability of the therapist to encourage” (pp. 12-13).

Resilience from an Adlerian Perspective

- Resilience is the capacity to overcome adversity
- One needs courage to face this adversity
 - Self encouragement
 - Encouragement from others
 - Courage to fail / be wrong



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

How to build resilience

- Community support
 - Support from family
 - Support from therapist/teachers, modeling of courage
 - Support from other positive and nurturing community groups (school clubs, churches, fitness groups)



Acting ‘as if’

- Professional counselors ask clients to begin acting as if they were already the person they would like to be. For example, a confident person
- Ask clients to pretend and the clients are only acting
- The purpose of the procedure is to bypass potential resistance to change by neutralizing some of the perceived risk.
- The professional counselor suggests a limited task, such as acting as if an individual had the courage to speak up for himself or herself.
 - Expectation is that the client will successfully complete the task
 - If the task is not completed successfully, then the counselor explores with the client what prevented a successful experience



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

Reflecting As If

- Reflecting As If (RAI) (Watts, 2003; 2013)
 - If you were the person you wanted to be, what would you have done differently?
 - If I were watching a video of you, what would be different? What would you want to do more of? Less of?
 - What would be some initial indicators that demonstrate you are headed in the direction you want?
- Audience participation: Volunteer to describe a challenging situation.



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

Success Oriented Recollections

- Describe a success you had in the past related to your current challenge.



- Ask others to describe a recent success you had in a related topic.



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

What can I do Today?

- What's the best “medicine” for depression?
- Physical Activity
- Do something for someone else.

Being able to
recognize what
makes you
happy is a hell
of a start –
Lucille Ball



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

Conclusion & Questions

- What have you heard today that you could see yourself using?
 - (“nothing” is not a correct answer!)

Never underestimate the
power you give someone by
believing in them! - DDP



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

References

- Adler, A. (1956). *The individual psychology of Alfred Adler* (H. L. Ansbacher & R. R. Ansbacher, Eds.). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Baumeister, R., Bratslavsky, E., Finkenauer, C., Vohs, K., & Salovey, Peter. (2001). Bad is stronger than good. *Review of General Psychology*, 5(4), 323-370.
- Bernard, J. M. & Goodyear, R. K. (2014). *Fundamentals of clinical supervision* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Bornsheuer-Boswell, J. N., Polonyi, M. M., & Watts, R. E. (2013). Integrating Adlerian and integrated developmental model approaches to supervision of counseling trainees. *Journal of Individual Psychology*, 69(4), 328-343.
- Carlson, J., Watts, R. E., & Maniacci, M. P. (2006). *Adlerian therapy: Theory and practice*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

References

- Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs [CACREP]. (2009). *2009 standards for accreditation*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Dinkmeyer, D.C. (1972). Use of the encouragement process in Adlerian counseling. *The Personnel & Guidance Journal*, 51, 177-181.
- Dinkmeyer, D. C., Dinkmeyer, D. C., Jr., & Sperry, L. (1987). *Adlerian counseling and psychotherapy* (2nd ed.). Columbus, OH: Merrill.
- Dreikurs, R. (1967). *Psychodynamics, psychotherapy, and counseling*. Chicago, IL: Alfred Adler Institute of Chicago.
- Edwards, J. K. (2013). *Strengths-based supervision in clinical practice*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.
- Edwards, J. K., & Chen, M. (1999). Strength-based supervision: Frameworks, current practice and future directions. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 7(4), 349-357. doi:10.1177/1066480799074005
- Fall, K. A., Lyons, C., & Lewis, T. (2003). Contributions of supervisees: A strength-based element of supervision. *TCA Journal*, 31(1), 15-20
- Folkes-Skinner, J., Elliott, R., & Wheeler, S. (2010). 'A baptism of fire': A qualitative investigation of a trainees counsellor's experience at the start of training. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 10 (2), 83-92.



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

References

- Jordan, K., & Kelly, W. E. (2004). Beginning practicum students' worries: A qualitative investigation. *Counseling & Clinical Psychology Journal*, 1(2), 100-105.
- Kraus, V. I. (2005). Relationship between self-care and compassion satisfaction, compassion fatigue, and burnout among mental health professionals working with adolescent sex offenders. *Counseling and Clinical Psychology Journal*, 2, 81–88.
- Maslach, C. (2003). Job burnout: New directions in research and intervention. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12, 189–192.
- Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job burnout. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52, 397–422.
- Nichter, M., & Dowda, R., (2016). Strengths-based supervision. In J. K. Edwards, N. Young, & H. J. Nichols (Eds.), *Handbook of strengths-based clinical practices: Finding common factors* (pp. 305-322). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. Oxford, UK: American Psychological Association.
- Schueller, S. M. (2009). Promoting wellness: integrating community and positive psychology. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 37(7), 922-937. doi:10.1002/jcop.20334
- Seligman, M. P. (2006). Learned optimism: How to change your mind and your life. New York, NY: Random House.



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

References

- Seligman, M. P., Rashid, T., & Parks, A. C. (2006). Positive psychotherapy. *American Psychologist*, 61(8), 774-788. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.61.8.774
- Stamm, B. H. (2002). Measuring compassion satisfaction as well as fatigue: Developmental history of the Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Test. In C. R. Figley (Ed.), Psychosocial stress series, no. 24. Treating compassion fatigue (pp. 107-119). New York, NY, US: Brunner-Routledge.
- Thompson, I. A., Amatea, E. S., & Thompson, E. S. (2014). Personal and contextual predictors of mental health counselors' compassion fatigue and burnout. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 36(1), 58-77.
- Todd, T. C., & Storm, C. L. (2014). *The complete systemic supervisor: Context, philosophy, and pragmatics*. New York, NY: Authors Choice Press.
- Walsh, F. (2002). Bouncing forward: Resilience in the aftermath of September 11. *Family Process*, 34-36. doi: 10.1111/j.1545-5300.2002.40102000034.x
- Watts, R. E. (2003). Reflecting "As If": An integrative process in couples counseling. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 11, 73-75.



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.

References

- Watts, R. E. (2012). On the origin of the striving for superiority and of social interest. In J. Carlson & M. P. Maniacci (Eds.), *Alfred Adler revisited* (pp. 41-47). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Watts, R. E. (2013, April). Reflecting as if. *Counseling Today*, 55(10), 48-53. <http://ct.counseling.org/2013/04/reflecting-as-if/>
- Watts, R. E. (2015). La Psicología Individual de Adler: La Psicología Positiva original [Adler's IndividualPsychology: The Original Positive Psychology]. *Revista de Psicoterapia*, 26 (102), 81-89.
- Watts, R. E., & Pietrzak, D. (2000). Adlerian “encouragement” and the therapeutic process of solution-focused brief therapy. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 78, 442-447.
- Zaretskii, V. K. (2009). The zone of proximal development: What Vygotsky did not have time to write. *Journal of Russian & East European Psychology*, 47(6), 70-93. doi:10.2753/RPO1061-0405470604



FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Forward thinking. World ready.