

POSITIVE  
PSYCHOLOGY:

POSITIVE TRAITS

FIB QUIZ POWERPOINT NOTES

# TRAIT THEORIES OF PERSONALITY AND PERSONAL STRENGTHS

- **Positive psychology is not concerned with positive emotions but also with positive traits.**
- **Traits are \_1\_ (3 words)\_ that influence behavior, cognition and affect. While traits are enduring and operate across a \_2\_ (2 words) \_ of situations, “states”, in contrast, are transitory and situation specific.**
- **Traits are normally distributed across the population (distributed like the bell curve).**
- **Current trait theory has come to be dominated by the Five-Factor Model of \_3\_.**
- **The 5 factors/traits of personality (“The Big Five”) are: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness.**

# EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FOR TRAIT-RELATED STRENGTHS

- There is strong empirical evidence that positive scores on the Big Five traits are associated with 4 (2 words), coping, longevity, healthy behavior relationships, academic achievement etc.
- **Well Being:** the traits of 5 and emotional stability (lack of neuroticism) have the strongest association with happiness
- **Coping:** People with higher levels of extraversion and 6 were more likely to use problem solving to cope with stress.
- **Longevity and life style:** Conscientious is most connected to longer living. It probably affects longevity through its impact on 7 (2 words) and lifestyle (Bogg and Roberts, 2004)

# EVIDENCE FOR STRENGTH RELATED TRAITS

- **Relationship quality:** The traits of 8 (2 words), extraversion and agreeableness are the three trait based strengths important for satisfying relationships.
- **Job performance:** While conscientious is important for job performance; emotional stability and extraversion are essential for job 9.
- **Genetic and Environmental Contributions of Traits:**
  - Evidence from twin studies shows that trait-related strength is the result of approximately 10 proportions of genetic and environmental factors.
  - There is strong evidence that the big 5 follow a predictable lifespan trajectory
    - Adolescence show 11 in openness to experience, but decreases in both these traits occur in old age
    - In early and middle adulthood, there are 12 in conscientiousness, emotional stability and social dominance
    - There is also a trend for agreeableness to increase over the lifespan.

# VIA: CLASSIFICATION OF CHARACTER STRENGTHS AND VIRTUES

- **The positive psychology of strengths and virtues differs from traditional personality/trait psychology such that it sets out to identify personality traits associated with the life well lived.**
- **13 are core characteristics valued by moral philosophers such as wisdom or courage**
- **14 are less abstract personality traits (like creativity & gratitude) that may be used to 15 virtues (or virtuous states).**
- **Wisdom, Courage, Humanity, Justice, Prudence and Transcendence are the 6 virtues.**

# THE CHARACTER STRENGTHS OF “WISDOM”

**Wisdom involves the acquisition of knowledge and use of reason to enhance well being. Its character strengths are: **creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning, and perspective.****

- A person with creative strengths is capable of producing new ideas and behaviors that lead to the 16 of artistic, scientific or other products that are 17.
- A 18 person is strongly motivated to acquire new experiences, knowledge and information. Curiosity and intrinsic motivation are essential for the development of skills and expertise.
- An open-minded person looks at the problem from 19, thinks things through rationally, examines all the available evidence, doesn't jump to conclusion and can 20 his or her mind in light of new evidence.
- Those with a 21 (3 words) are intrinsically (internally) motivated to master new skills, topics and knowledge in a systematic way.
- A person with perspective can see the “22” and makes balanced judgments about options and can express them in a 23 way.

# THE CHARACTER STRENGTHS OF COURAGE

The character strengths of the **virtue of courage** involve exercising one's will in the face of 24 (2 words) to enhance one's well-being

- Authenticity: Persons who present themselves in a 25 way without pretense and take responsibility for their beliefs, feelings and behaviors.
- Bravery: A brave person faces physical and psychological threats, challenges, difficulties and pain in a 26 way. They stand up for what they believe to be right in the face of opposition.
- Perseverance: strength of finishing demanding and difficult tasks despite encountering 27 to completion and the temptation to quit. Persistence is shown by people with a high ability to delay 28.
- Zest: strength of approaching life with enthusiasm, energy, and vigor. They embrace life as an 29 and address tasks in a wholehearted way.

# THE CHARACTER STRENGTHS OF "HUMANITY"

The character strengths of 30 are interpersonal strengths that are used to deepen the quality of close or caring one-to-one relationships.

- Kindness: A kind person does good 31 for others and takes care of them . They often will help others despite the costs to themselves.
- Love: Through the character strength of love people value close relationships with others in which sharing and caring are 32.
- 33 (2 words) : Those with this strength can maintain an awareness of the motives and feelings of ourselves and others so we can fit into different social situations. They can accurately recognize the psychological states of 34 and manage their psychological states effectively.



# THE CHARACTER STRENGTHS OF “JUSTICE”

**The character strengths of the virtue of 35 are: fairness, leadership and teamwork. These strengths are relevant to 36 of relationships with groups. (rather than between 2 people)**

- 37: “Fair people” will consistently treat all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice and do not let personal feelings bias fair decisions.
- Leadership: Those high in the character strength of leadership organize group activities, foster good relationships between group members and makes sure their group completes its tasks. 38 leaders adjust their style to suit the goals, characteristics of the group they are leading.
- Teamwork: This strength entails concepts of 39, citizenship and working for the common good. These people are able to have good relationships with members of a work team and do their fair share of the work.

# THE CHARACTER STRENGTHS OF “TEMPERANCE”

The character strengths of the virtue of temperance protect us from a range of 40 (like hatred, arrogance, long-term difficulties and over-indulgence). These strengths are: forgiveness, modesty prudence and self regulation.

- **Forgiveness:** the tendency to give a person who wrongs them a second 41. It is a complex psychological process. It involves empathy with the transgressor.
- **Modesty:** persons high in this strength let their accomplishments speak for themselves and do not boast or regard themselves as being more 42 than others.
- **Prudence:** persons high in this strength approach life where most decisions are made in light of an overarching concern for the long-term 43 of actions. They lead a lifestyle marked by 44 and devoid of excesses that might bring short-term pleasures but long-term risks.
- **Self-regulation:** persons who take charge of their thoughts, emotions, appetites and impulses in a 45 way to pursue goals in planful ways and to live up to personal standards.

# THE CHARACTER STRENGTHS OF "TRANSCENDENCE"

The character strengths of **transcendence** allow us to reach out beyond ourselves to maintain a connection with the wider universe and create 46 in our lives.

- **Appreciation of beauty/excellence:** a personal strength in which a person notices and appreciates beauty, excellence and 47 (2 words) in all areas of life (nature, performance, science, virtuous acts by others)
- **Gratitude:** a personal strength in which a person takes time to be aware and 48 | for good things that happen in their lives and experience 49 as a result of them. There is personal (others) and transpersonal (deity/god) kinds of gratitude.
- **Hope:** a person high in this strength expects the 50 and works to achieve it.
- **Humor:** a strength in which a person can bring smiles to others by pointing out the 51 side of life's 52 through playfulness, laughing and joking.
- **Religiousness:** A person who maintains beliefs about the higher purpose and 53 (3 words). This includes where we fit into the larger scheme of things which guides our behavior.

# DEVELOPMENT OF THE VIA CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM/ASSESSING STRENGTHS

- **This (the VIA) classification system is based on a review of virtues and strengths referred to in major 54 and philosophical traditions around the world.**
- **These virtues are ubiquitous and probably 55.**
- **To be included in the VIA classification system a positive characteristic had to be 56-like.**
- **Strengths in each virtue group are similar insofar as they all involve the core virtue but are also 57 from it.**
- **The 24 strengths contained in the VIA classification system may be assessed with the 58 (3 words) Inventory of Strengths.**

# SIGNATURE STRENGTHS

- Seligman distinguishes between 2 distinct classes of positive emotions: 59 pleasures and more 60 gratifications
- 61 entail states of absorption or flow that come from engagement in activities that involve using signature strengths.
- It is important to use signature strengths in: 62 with romantic partners, 63 with offspring, in work settings and in leisure activities.
- Signature strengths have (some) of the following distinctive characteristics: (Dr. Craig's note: please read all on your own!)
  - 64 about using strength
  - A yearning for new ways to use the strength
  - Being 65 rather than exhausted while using the strength
  - Feelings of joy, zest, enthusiasm or ecstasy when using the strength

# EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

- Kindness, 66, honest, 67 and judgment were found to be the most commonly endorsed signature strengths in the USA.
- **Gender.** Linley (2007) found that women scored higher than men on all VIA strengths except 68, and the three for which gender differences were the greatest were 69, gratitude and love.
- **Age.** Linley (2007) found that strengths tended to 70 with age (especially curiosity, love of learning, and fairness).
- **Well-being.** A series of studies suggest that 71, hope, love and gratitude are 72 associated with well being in children, adolescents and adults.
- **Work satisfaction.** 73, zest, hope, gratitude and spirituality were associated with work satisfaction.