

Positive Psychology

Positive psychology is the scientific study of what makes life meaningful and fulfilling.



Unlike traditional psychology that mainly focuses on problems and disorders, positive psychology emphasizes building positive emotions, personal strengths, and a sense of purpose. One of its key practices is “gratitude”, which has been shown to reduce stress, improve relationships, and boost overall well-being. When practiced regularly, like writing down things we’re thankful for, gratitude becomes a powerful habit that reshapes our mindset.

A central concept in positive psychology is the idea of the **24-character strengths** – positive traits that exist in every person, regardless of background. These strengths, such as kindness, courage, curiosity, fairness, and self-control, help individuals grow, connect with others, and live more meaningful lives. Recognizing these traits in ourselves and others promotes self-awareness and empathy.

What matters most is not just identifying these strengths, but understanding “**why**” we or others have them. For example, asking why someone is brave or why we value learning helps deepen our understanding and personal development.

Ultimately, **positive psychology** teaches us that life is not just about surviving, but about discovering our potential and learning how to truly “**flourish**”.

The 24-Character Strengths

The 24-character strengths are a main tool in positive psychology.

They were created by psychologists Martin Seligman and Christopher Peterson. These are positive traits found in all people, no matter their culture, age, or gender.

They were developed as part of the **VIA (Values in Action) program**, which helps people recognize and use their strongest character traits to live a more meaningful and satisfying life.

The 24 strengths are grouped into **6 main categories** (virtues):

1. Wisdom and Knowledge Mental abilities that help us learn and use knowledge: Creativity Curiosity Love of learning Open-mindedness (critical thinking) Perspective (wisdom)	4. Justice Strengths that help groups and society work well: Teamwork Fairness Leadership
2. Courage Emotional strengths that help us face challenges: Bravery Persistence Integrity (honesty) Zest/Enthusiasm	5. Temperance Strengths that protect us from excess: Self-regulation Forgiveness Humility Prudence
3. Humanity Strengths that help us care for others: Love Kindness Social intelligence	6. Transcendence Strengths that connect us to meaning and beauty in life: Gratitude Hope Humor Faith/Spirituality

These strengths are usually measured with a self-awareness tool that helps people find their top traits. Strengthening these traits can lead to more happiness, confidence, meaning, and better quality of life.