

## CENTER FOR WELL BEING AND POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY



YUMNA QURESHI

### Embracing Forgiveness: A Path to Inner Peace and Healing

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Dear Readers,

In a world where getting hurt and disappointment is inevitable, forgiveness stands as a beacon of hope, offering solace and healing to wounded souls. Today, we delve into the profound topic of forgiveness, an art that has the transformative power to release us from the shackles of resentment and pain and lead us toward inner peace and healing.

Forgiveness is a profound act of self-love and liberation. When we harbor resentment, anger, or bitterness towards those who have wronged us, we inadvertently allow the past to dictate our present and future. The weight of unresolved grievances burdens our hearts and minds, impeding our ability to experience true joy and fulfillment.

However, forgiveness does not mean condoning or forgetting the actions that caused us harm. Rather, it is a conscious decision to release the grip of negative emotions and reclaim our power to live fully in the present moment. It is a journey towards understanding, empathy, and ultimately, freedom from the chains of the past.

Yet, the path to forgiveness is not always easy. It requires courage, vulnerability, and a willing-

ness to confront our deepest wounds. It may involve confronting painful memories, acknowledging our role in the situation, and embracing empathy toward those who have hurt us. It is a process that unfolds gradually, often with its own setbacks and challenges. But with each step taken towards forgiveness, we inch closer to the profound peace and healing that await us on the other side.

Research in positive psychology has shown that forgiveness is closely linked to improved mental and physical health. Studies have found that individuals who practice forgiveness experience lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression, along with enhanced overall well-being. Moreover, forgiveness has been associated with stronger interpersonal relationships, greater resilience in the face of adversity, and a deeper sense of inner peace.

As we navigate the complexities of life, let us remember that forgiveness is not a sign of weakness, but rather a testament to our strength and resilience. It is a gift we give ourselves, a gift of freedom, healing, and inner peace. May we embrace the art of forgiveness with open hearts and minds, and may it guide us towards a brighter, more compassionate future.

to refer psychological pattern that occurs in an individual and is usually associated with distress or disability that is not expected as part of normal development. A number of mental disturbances, such as Depression and Personality Disorders etc. are very common psychological problems of the modern era (ICD-11 & DSM-VTR)

Many researchers have attempted to answer the question, whether creative individuals vulnerable to mental illness? One of the pioneer studies in this area was conducted by the psychologists Rushton (1961) and Andreason (1987) found that creativity is correlated with intelligence and psychosis. Similarly, Ludwig (1989), in his paper, Reflections on Creativity and Madness, concludes that although not a prerequisite, a touch of madness could enhance creativity. Ludwig (1995) in his book, The Price of Greatness: Resolving the Creativity and Madness Controversy examined the lives and achievements of over 1000 extraordinary men and women and concluded that creative people suffer from more mental difficulties than ordinary people. Eysenck (1995), Wills (2003) and Janka (2004), both argued that madness and genius are common traits of creative individuals.

Felix (1994), in his landmark study of 291 worldly famous people highlighted who suffered from psycho-pathology. Among them, few important names are given in each category.

**Composers:** Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schoenberg, Wolf, Beethoven and Wagner.....

**Scientists:** Darwin, Pasteur, Bell, Galton, Newton and Mendel.....

**Philosophers:** Emerson, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Marx, and Russell,

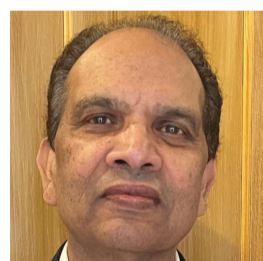
**Politicians:** Churchill, Gladstone, De Gaulle, Mussolini, Nehru, Stalin, Disraeli, Hitler, Ataturk and Lincoln.....

**Artists:** Picasso, Rossetti, Van Gogh, Charlie Chaplin and Monore....

**Writers:** Dickens, Hardy, Huxley, Hemmingway, Kipling, Sartre, Fitzgerald, Tolstoy, and Twain etc.

Furthermore, Ferry and Daniel (2014) have also highlighted list of creative people, having some form of psychological disturbances that is also similar to the list of the Felix as mentioned above. Accordingly, Whiteside (2013), suggests that the brains of creative people appear to be more open to incoming stimuli from the surrounding environment, whereas other people's brains might shut out this same information through a process called "latent inhibition".

To sum up, Emil Kraepelin, the German psychia-



### Creativity & Mental Illness

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Since ancient time people have argued about the possible connection between creativity and mental illness. The ancient Greeks believed that creative inspiration was achieved through altered states of mind such as 'divine madness'. Aristotle equated insanity with genius. In 1889, Cesare Lombroso published a book called "The Man of Genius" (this book represented one of the first attempts to analyze the works of the mentally ill) in which he argued that genius was a form of insanity. Today the interest in this area has increased manifold and there is ongoing research to establish the link between creativity and psychopathology. Although, there is plenty of literature in this area, the findings remain inconclusive and the debate continues. There are certainly many creative people who have

some form of mental illness. But not all creative people have mental illness. Similarly, majority of people with mental illness have no creativity at all. But, let's see first what we mean by creativity and mental illness.

Creativity comes from the Latin word *creatus*, literally "to have grown". Producing or bringing about something partly or wholly new; investing an existing object with new properties or characteristics; in imagining new possibilities that were not conceived of before; and in seeing or performing something in a manner different from what was thought possible or normal previously.

Mental illness or mental disorder are terms used

trist, also emphasized the positive outcome of certain psychological disorders. Finally, American philosopher William James, wrote: "When a superior intellect and a psychopathic temperament coalesce, we have the best possible outcome in the form of genius".



AMNA SALEEM

## Positive Psychology Interventions: Techniques for Enhancing Happiness

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In today's fast-paced world, where stress and anxiety seem to be commonplace, the pursuit of happiness has become a priority for many individuals. Positive psychology interventions offer a beacon of hope, providing evidence-based techniques for enhancing happiness and overall well-being. One of the most effective PPIs is gratitude journaling. This simple practice involves regularly writing down things one is grateful for. Research by Emmons and McCullough (2003) found that individuals who engaged in gratitude journaling experienced significant increases in happiness and life satisfaction. By focusing on the positive aspects of life, even during challenging times, individuals can cultivate a mindset of appreciation and abundance.

Another powerful intervention is acts of kindness. By performing small acts of kindness for others, individuals not only spread positivity but also experience a boost in their own happiness levels. Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, and Schkade (2005) conducted a study demonstrating that engaging in acts of kindness can lead to greater well-being and a sense of fulfillment. Whether it's helping a neighbor with groceries or offering words of encouragement to a friend, acts of

kindness create a ripple effect of positivity in both the giver and the recipient.

These interventions are grounded in scientific research and offer practical strategies for individuals to cultivate greater happiness in their lives. Incorporating gratitude journaling and acts of kindness into daily routines can lead to profound shifts in overall well-being and life satisfaction. As individuals focus on the positive aspects of their lives and spread kindness to others, they create a cycle of positivity that benefits themselves and those around them.

Positive psychology interventions provide valuable tools for enhancing happiness and promoting a fulfilling life. By embracing techniques such as gratitude journaling and acts of kindness, individuals can tap into their innate capacity for happiness and well-being. As the Dalai Lama once said, "Happiness is not something ready-made. It comes from your own actions." Through intentional practices and small acts of kindness, individuals can cultivate a deeper sense of happiness and meaning in their lives, contributing to a more positive and flourishing world.

Positive Psychology. While we were sad to bid you farewell when you left, your impact on us remains profound.

As you continue on your journey beyond our team, please know that our support and well wishes will continue to remain with you.

While nothing in life remains constant, the bond we formed as a team will always remain the same. You are deeply missed, Ayesha. Remember that this family always has your back, and we will continue to celebrate your achievements as if they were our own.

On behalf of Center for Well Being and Positive Psychology we wish you nothing but the best in all your future endeavors. May success, happiness, and fulfillment accompany you every step of the way.

## Counselor of the Month:

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Ms. Nawal's commitment towards fostering holistic well-being and personal growth is truly inspirational. Whether she's guiding individuals through challenging times or imparting invaluable soft skills in her lectures, Nawal's passion for her work shines through in everything she does.

Beyond her role as a counselor, Nawal is the epitome of a supportive colleague and a dynamic teacher. Always ready to lend a helping hand, she goes above and beyond to uplift her team and empower her students. Her empathetic nature and genuine care for all create a safe space where people feel heard, understood, and supported. Nawal's ability to cultivate a sense of trust and openness has touched the lives of countless individuals, empowering them to overcome obstacles and embrace their full potential.

Nawal, your dedication towards promoting positivity and resilience within our community does not go unnoticed. Your impact is profound, and we are incredibly grateful to have you as a valued member of our team.

Thank you for being the guiding light, the supportive colleague, and the inspirational teacher that we all look up to. Your unwavering commitment to cultivating well-being in all aspects of your work is a true testament to your exceptional character.



MIND MATTERS

## Unveiling Insights on Narcissism with Professor Zafar Jamal

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In a recent episode of Mind Matters, we were fortunate to host Prof. Dr. Zafar Jamal, Principal (R), Govt. MAO College, Lahore. Our engaging discussion centered on narcissism, a topic that resonates with many.

Professor Zafar Jamal provided insight into the fundamental traits of narcissism, which include an inflated sense of self-importance, a strong desire for admiration, and a lack of empathy towards others. He elaborated on how these characteristics can manifest in behavior,

often resulting in manipulation, exploitation, and feelings of entitlement. Additionally, he offered valuable perspectives on the impact of narcissism on individuals and society at large. Don't miss out on this insightful dialogue on the YouTube channel of IAC!

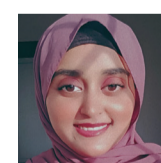
## This is not a goodbye, just farewell for now!



Dear Ayesha Pervez,

As we reflect on the time we spent together, working hand in hand on various projects, achieving shared goals, and being there for one another, it's evident that we've evolved into more than just colleagues; we have become a family.

Your presence was a source of strength, positivity, and inspiration for all of us at the Center for Well Being and



FATIMA NADEEM

## Student's Testimonial

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Discovering the Well-Being Center at my institute has been a game-changer for me. As a student juggling academic pressures and personal challenges, I often felt overwhelmed and unsure of where to turn for support. However, from the moment I stepped through the doors of the Well-Being Center, I knew I had found a safe place. The counselors and staff welcomed me with open arms, creating a warm and nurturing environment where I felt heard

and understood. Through their guidance and support, I've learned invaluable coping strategies, cultivated self-awareness, and developed a deeper understanding of my well-being. The Center's holistic approach to mental health has empowered me to prioritize self-care and pursue a more balanced, fulfilling life. I am incredibly grateful for the Well-Being Center and the positive impact it has had on my journey. Thank you for being a beacon of light during my darkest moments.



RIDA BIBI

## The Importance of Hope in Positive Psychology

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Hope plays a pivotal role in positive psychology, a field dedicated towards exploring positive emotions, strengths, and the elements that contribute towards a meaningful and gratifying life. It is essentially a positive motivational state rooted in the anticipation of favorable outcomes in the future.

"Hope is a good thing; maybe the best of things."

In accordance with Snyder's Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991), hopefulness is a fundamental human strength that encompasses three interrelated components:

1. **Goal Thinking** – the clear and precise conceptualization of valuable objectives.
2. **Pathways Thinking** – the ability to formulate specific strategies for achieving those goals.
3. **Agency Thinking** – the capacity to initiate and sustain motivation for employing those strategies.

Hope Therapy, an outgrowth of pure positive psychology, deviates from the conventional focus on distressing factors. Instead, it integrates techniques such as positive self-talk, hopeful imagination, and fostering connections with supportive networks (Shekarabi-Ahari, Younesi, Borjali, & Ansari-Damavandi, 2012).

To enhance hope and well-being, individuals can employ various techniques. Positive self-talk involves consciously replacing negative thoughts with positive affirmations, promoting a more optimistic outlook. Visualization exercises, where individuals vividly imagine achieving their goals, can contribute to a sense of hope and motivation. Additionally, building and maintaining supportive social networks play a crucial role in fostering a hopeful mindset, as they provide encouragement, understanding, and shared positive experiences.

## Cultivating Growth: Exploring Mindset Dynamics in Team Development



In a recent skill-building session led by Mr. Kafeel Majal, the Team of Well-Being and Positive Psychology delved into Carol S. Dweck's "Mindset," exploring its core concepts of growth and fixed mindsets. Encouraged by Kafeel, team members engaged in group discussions, reflecting on the book's teachings and sharing personal insights.

Through dialogue, they explored how individuals perceive and discuss their own fixed and growth mindsets by drawing examples from their real lives

in order to illustrate these concepts. Candid anecdotes enriched the discussions, shedding light on the impact of mindset on personal and professional development.

The session fostered a supportive environment for learning and growth within the team, emphasizing the importance of adopting a growth mindset for resilience and adaptability. By collectively examining mindset paradigms, team members cultivated a shared language for discussing personal development and fostering a culture of continuous learning.

In conclusion, the session facilitated by Mr. Kafeel Majal not only deepened the team's understanding of mindset theory but also ignited a transformative journey towards embracing growth while harnessing their full potential and adaptability.

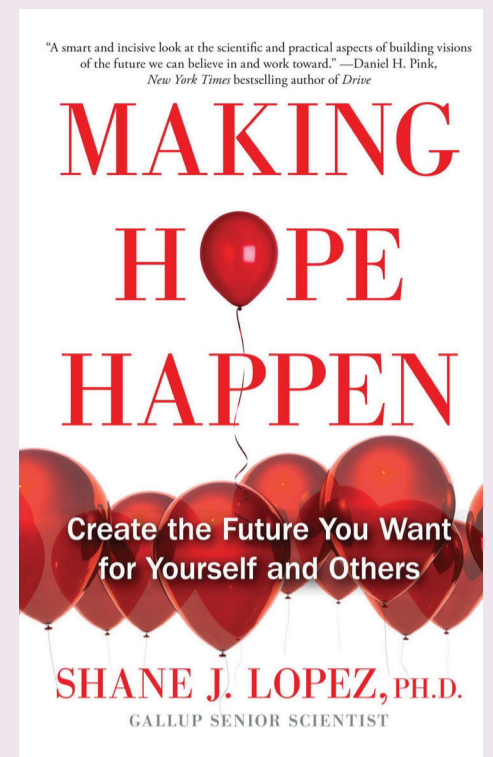


BOOK RECOMMENDATION

## Making Hope Happen: Create the Future You Want for Yourself and Others

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In "Making Hope Happen," Shane J. Lopez presents a compelling argument for the transformative power of hope in shaping individual lives and societal well-being. Through a blend of research, real-life anecdotes, and practical strategies, Lopez navigates the complexities of hope, demonstrating its profound impact on personal resilience, motivation, and achievement.



Lopez begins by debunking common misconceptions about hope, asserting that it is not simply wishful thinking but a dynamic cognitive and emotional process rooted in agency and pathways thinking. Drawing from diverse fields such as psychology, education, and sociology, he highlights the importance of hope as a fundamental human need, especially in the face of adversity.

One of the book's strengths lies in its accessibility; Lopez distills complex psychological concepts into actionable steps, making them applicable to various aspects of life, from personal relationships to professional endeavors. Through engaging storytelling and practical exercises, he empowers readers to cultivate hope in their own lives and communities.

Moreover, Lopez emphasizes the role of hope in driving positive change on a broader scale, advocating for its integration into education, healthcare, and policymaking. By showcasing inspiring examples of individuals who have overcome adversity through hope, he underscores its potential as a catalyst for resilience and social progress.

While "Making Hope Happen" offers valuable insights and tools for fostering hope, some readers may find the book's emphasis on positivity and personal agency overly simplistic. Additionally, a deeper exploration of the intersectionality of hope and social justice could enhance the book's relevance in addressing systemic inequalities.

Overall, "Making Hope Happen" is a timely and inspiring read that reminds us of the transformative power of hope in navigating life's challenges and creating a brighter, more hopeful future for ourselves and others.

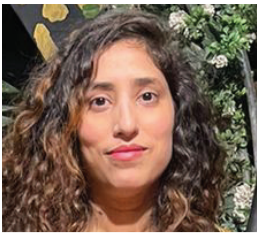
## Food For Thought:



Be Happy, Be wise. Happy People live longer.

Veen Hoven, 2012





MAHWISH IQBAL

## Unlocking Productivity: Understanding the Psychology of Procrastination and Strategies for Overcoming It

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Procrastination is a universal experience that transcends age, profession, and cultural background. It is a nuanced behavior rooted in the intricate workings of our psyche, which impacts our decision-making ability and daily habits. This tendency can profoundly affect our productivity, resulting in missed opportunities, diminished work quality, and strained relationships. The mounting pile of unfinished tasks often triggers feelings of overwhelm, perpetuating a cycle that becomes increasingly challenging to break free from.

At its core, procrastination is driven by various psychological factors. Fear of failure looms large, causing tasks to appear daunting and leading individuals to postpone starting them. Perfectionism exacerbates this by creating unrealistic standards, and delaying action until conditions seem ideal. Task aversion also plays a role, as negative emotions or boredom associated with certain tasks can lead to avoidance behavior.

The consequences of procrastination extend beyond mere delays. Chronic procrastination breeds stress, anxiety, and a pervasive sense of unproductivity. It erodes self-confidence and satisfaction with one's accomplishments, fostering a cycle of self-criticism and dissatisfaction. Moreover, procrastination strains professional and personal relationships, as missed deadlines and unmet commitments can erode trust and credibility.

Overcoming procrastination requires a multifaceted approach rooted in understanding its psychological underpinnings. By addressing the root causes and implementing effective strategies, individuals can reclaim their productivity and well-being. This process begins with challenging negative thought patterns and replacing them with realistic and empowering beliefs. Setting clear goals, breaking tasks into manageable steps, and prioritizing effectively can provide a roadmap for progress. Managing distractions, creating conducive work environments, and utilizing time management techniques can enhance focus and efficiency.

Self-compassion is also crucial in this journey, as it fosters resilience and encourages learning from setbacks rather than dwelling on failures. Seeking support from mentors, coaches, or mental health professionals can provide guidance, accountability, and personalized strategies tailored to individual needs.

Embracing change and adopting proactive habits may seem daunting, but each small step forward contributes to a more fulfilling and purpose-driven approach for the fulfilment of tasks and goals. With perseverance and self-awareness, overcoming procrastination is not just a possibility but a transformative journey towards personal growth and success.

## Dear Counselor: How do I?

Dear Counselor: How do I cultivate healthier relationships and set boundaries without feeling guilty?

### Dear Reader,

Navigating a delicate balance between cultivating healthier relationships and setting boundaries without succumbing to guilt is indeed a journey which requires patience and self-awareness. Begin by delving into introspection, understanding your own needs, values, and limits. Communicate openly and assertively with those around you, expressing your boundaries in a way that acknowledges both, your own needs and the feelings of others. It's crucial to recognize that prioritizing your well-being is not selfish but rather a fundamental aspect of maintaining healthy relationships.

If feelings of guilt arise, explore their origins and challenge any irrational beliefs that may fuel them. Remember, seeking support from trusted confidants or a counselor can provide invaluable guidance and perspective as you navigate this process. Consistency is key—practice enforcing your boundaries and evaluating your relationships regularly, adjusting as needed to ensure they align with your evolving needs and values.

Through this journey of self-discovery and growth, may you find the strength and confidence to foster relationships grounded in mutual respect, understanding, and authenticity.

Warm regards,  
Aqsa Shabbir  
Counselor

## Reader's Activity: Mindful Meditation

**Time:** Flexible

Reflective Letter Writing

**Key Words:**

Mindfulness, Meditation, Present Moment Awareness, Non-judgmental

**Goal:**

To cultivate mindfulness and present moment awareness through meditation, fostering relaxation, stress reduction, and mental clarity.

**Instructions:**

- Find a quiet and comfortable space. Sit in a chair with your feet flat on the ground or on a cushion with your legs crossed.
- Close your eyes gently if it feels comfortable, or maintain a soft gaze on a fixed point in front of you.
- Focus on your breath
- As you continue to breathe naturally, bring your attention to the present moment. Let go of thoughts about the past or worries about the future.
- Notice any sensations, thoughts, or emotions that arise without judgment. If your mind starts to wander, gently guide your focus back to your breath.
- Allow yourself to be fully present with each moment of meditation, embracing whatever arises with kindness and acceptance.

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