

# WEEK 1 SCIF0007

## Introduction

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### ▶ OVERVIEW

- Introduction and Icebreaker (15 mins)
- Course overview (20 mins)
- What is resilience? (30 mins)
- What is student success and well-being? (45 mins)
- What is psychological science? (10 mins)
- Pre-practical for Week 2

### ▶ OBJECTIVES

- Gain an understanding of the aims, intended outcomes, and “methods” (learning, teaching and assessment strategies) of this course
- Gain some understanding of the concepts of resilience, success and well-being
- Remember what “psychological science” means

# Some Ground Rules... Stolen from Sue...

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I would like:

our classroom to be full of energy, every learner to feel a part of our community and to have a voice, *mistakes to be viewed as opportunities*, learning to come from your experiences, not just from books, your gifts, struggles, and differences to be respected and valued, constant creativity, *prompt, polite, participation*, many occasions to stop and think about how what we say and do in here fits into our lives outside, a safe space where it is OK to reject an idea but accept its proponent, thinking, laughter and questions to fill the air, **the freedom for you to explore and develop your own passion and interests**, every one of us to know that we are both learners and teachers...

# In other words

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- ▶ **Share in a safe way** – only share what you are comfortable sharing, and keep confidential all that you are told in confidence by others
- ▶ Be **respectful** of others in all that you say and do
- ▶ Be **punctual**
- ▶ Mobile **phones** on silent
- ▶ I prefer to hear **your voices** rather than mine - add value, don't just turn up
- ▶ Be positive! **Take a risk!**
- ▶ **Thinking** is mandatory, **eating and drinking** is OK
- ▶ Make **connections** – in here, and with “out there”
- ▶ **Collaborative** learning is IMPORTANT – work on making it successful
- ▶ The mind is like a parachute – it doesn't work unless it is open (and... )
- ▶ If anything in the course causes you distress, **contact** A/Prof Cranney and/or CAPS
- ▶ **Moodle** – content, assessments, Discussion forum

# Icebreaker

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- ▶ Find someone who...

# Quiz on Course Outline

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1. Name ONE member of staff in this course.
2. In what week is the group assignment due?
  - a) Week 10
  - b) Week 11
  - c) Week 12
3. What are 2 of the components of the Practical Work mark?
4. Name one Topic to be covered in Practicals.

# Quiz on Course Outline

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1. Name ONE member of staff in this course. JC, AO
2. In what week is the group assignment due?

- a) Week 10
- b) Week 11
- c) **Week 12**

Expect some kind of  
“testing” each week

3. What are 2 of the components of the Practical Work mark? pre-activities, journals.
4. Name one Topic to be covered in Practicals.

# Practical Guide

I. Practical Guide and Assessments		
Week	Practicals Tuesday 12-2 (MAT 307), Thursday 10-12 (Morven Brown G5)	Assessment Tasks (other than Pre-Practical Activities – see Moodle)
1	29 or 31/7 Introduction	
2	5 or 7/8 Resilience, stressors and strategies	
3	12 or 14/8 Concepts, Measurement and Psychological Science	Hand out Group Assignment (due Week 12)
4	19 or 21/8 Positive psychology	Journal 1 due Sunday 24/8 at 11pm
5	26 or 28/8 Self-knowledge, Strengths, Goals and Motivation	
6	2 or 4/9 Academic Competencies	
7	9 or 11/9 Connectedness and interpersonal skills	
8	16 or 18/9 Emotional Regulation (CBT, ACT, Mindfulness)	Journal 2 due Sunday 21/9 at 11pm
9	23 or 25/9 Group work: No class	
<b>Mid semester break</b>		
10	7 or 9/10 Mental health strategies and help-giving	
11	14 or 16/10 Group work: No class	
12	21 or 23/10 Group Presentations	Group Assignment Due Journal 3 due Sunday 26/10 at 11pm
<b>Exam Period</b>		<b>FINAL EXAM</b>

# Course Overview

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- ▶ Philosophy/approach/aims/intended outcomes
  - ▶ Experiential Exercises
  - ▶ Pre-practical work
  - ▶ Assessments
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- ▶ NB Recommended Readings – for YOUR benefit!



# Course Approach/Intended Outcomes

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See what is written on course outline! But another way of putting it:

Develop knowledge, skills, attitudes (KSAs) relevant to capacity for **self-management, resilience, psychological literacy**.

Specifically:

- ▶ **Knowledge** of evidence-based approaches to resilience, success and well-being (assessed through quizzes, exam, individual & group assignments)
- ▶ Capacity to **self-reflect**—a key professional skill (journals)
- ▶ Capacity to work in **teams**; communication skills; critical and creative thinking = key professional skills (Group assignment)
- ▶ Capacity to appreciate **boundaries** of KSAs = professional values/ethics (reflection exercises, assignments)

# Course Experiential Exercises

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“Just as no one ever learned to swim just by reading about swimming or watching others swim, to obtain full benefit from this [course] it is essential that you thoughtfully complete each of the exercises that provide you with the opportunity to apply the tools for developing your personal resources and effectiveness.

As the usefulness of different self-management strategies, personal resources and strategies for cultivating them varies between people, your challenge is to identify the most personally relevant and helpful combination of strategies to support your learning”.

(Heslin, 2014, p.3)

“If one approaches these [positive psychology] exercises with cynicism or half a heart, then of course they cannot work, and at least some of the students in our study do exactly this. The critical thinking honed throughout their education manifests itself as automatic criticism. They are sceptical and seemingly afraid to try something that is not only new but also on the face of it corny.”

(Peterson, 2006)

# Capacity building **if** you choose to:

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When you have completed this course you should be able to:

- Understand, recognise, and take initiatives to manage your own stress
- Self-manage your academic and other activities
- Proactively manage your time
- Identity your restrictive mindsets and replace them with more enabling alternatives
- Identify ways to improve your self-management at points of choice
- Understand and know how to cultivate your positivity, self-efficacy and your psychological flexibility for dealing with disruptive negative emotions.

(adapted from Heslin, 2014, p.4)



# Stages of Change Model

- 1. *Precontemplation:*** Never thought of changing, or decided against it
- 2. *Contemplation:*** Aware of issue, considering changing in future, not ready to make commitment
- 3. *Preparation:*** Ready to change, plan to pursue a behavioural goal
- 4. *Action!***
- 5. *Maintenance:*** Work to maintain successful behavioural changes achieved

(Prochaska, Norcross, & DiClemente, 1994)

# Activity

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- ▶ Choose a behaviour you feel you'd like to change/modify about yourself.
- ▶ Where do you think you are at on the Stages of Change Model?
- ▶ What needs to get done in order to make the necessary next steps?
- ▶ Those who are comfortable, discuss as a class.

# Bottom line

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Underlying intention of course:

- ▶ Develop further your psychological literacy, and metacognitive intentional mindset –as you are our future local and global leaders!

This course is partly designed to encourage you to play a part in “giving psychology away” (George Miller, 1969)—to the general public *ie* your friends, family, colleagues.

In doing so, it is best that YOU get a personal taste of what you might recommend to others!

NB: Balcony and Dance Floor – participate but also evaluate

- ▶ Research-based (sample averages) vs personal “case study” (n = 1)
- ▶ May not all work for you personally, but may be useful for you to share with others in your personal and professional life

## \*\*Pre-practical required tasks: General guidance and rationale\*\*

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### **Pre-practical tasks:**

- ▶ Each week you are required to undertake some pre-practical tasks.
- ▶ External incentive in the form of quizzes/assessment, but we hope you also see the value of engaging deeply with the material from week to week.
- ▶ It will all make much more sense in the practicals if you keep up with this – however please **don't** decide **not** to come along because you haven't completed the reading or the task(s) set that week.
- ▶ It is very hard to do well in the assessments without constant attendance at the practicals – this is the priority.

### **Post-practical tasks:**

- ▶ We may give you post-practical tasks and readings to extend your understanding of the practical material. These readings will be examinable on the Final Exam.

# Course Assessments

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- ▶ Practical Work (34%)
  - ▶ Practical Activities (24%)
    - ▶ Submit ALL on Moodle, often asked to bring copy to class (or have access to submission)
    - ▶ Week 2-5 & Week 6-12 – for each time period, **80% complete on time or get 0 marks!!**
  - ▶ Journals (10%)
    - ▶ Due Weeks 4, 8, and 12
- ▶ Group Assignment (20%)
  - ▶ 15% Presentation, 5% Group Peer Review
    - ▶ Due Week 12
- ▶ Formal Examinations (46%)
  - ▶ Exam period

## QUESTIONS?



# What is resilience?

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- ▶ **Resilience = "bouncing back" from difficult experiences**  
(= common understanding)
- ▶ It involves feelings, thoughts and actions that are **developed over time**.
- ▶ "... the attainment of positive **adaptation** in the face of significant **adversity** involves a **developmental progression**; new vulnerabilities and challenges and/or strengths and opportunities often emerge with **changing circumstances** over the life course. Resilience is not something an individual 'has'—it is a **multiply determined** developmental process that is **not fixed** or immutable." (Cicchetti, 2010, p. 146)



# Brief History of Resilience Research

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- ▶ Developmental literature
- ▶ Ann Masten - examined children at risk who thrived
- ▶ Masten (2001) Resilience: “*good outcomes in spite of serious threats to adaptation or development*”

Masten (2010): “there are **fundamental protective systems** for human adaptation and development that, when operating normally, afford considerable **capacity for resilience** in the face of many kinds of adversities. In other words, resilience does not require extraordinary resources in most cases, but instead is the result of what might be called ‘ordinary magic’. It arises naturally from the **interaction of basic adaptive systems** that foster and protect human development.” (p30)

NB Like Positive Psychology, developed out of area of “distress”, now about pro-active resources

# Developmental Definitions of Resilience

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## ▶ Assets

- ▶ Competence - A pattern of effective functioning as demonstrated by **successfully engaging and achieving developmental tasks** for people of a given age, culture, and time in history
- ▶ “Well-being”

## ▶ Risk or adversity

- ▶ **\*Transitions**
- ▶ Cumulative risk and the pile-up of adversities
- ▶ Adverse life experiences (acute/chronic, un/controllable, magnitude)

Interventions based on these models attempt to boost the presence of assets or reduce the number of risk factors

“Children who make it have more resources in their minds, bodies, families, and communities”



# Case Study: Nelson Mandela

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- ▶ **Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela** (July 18, 1918) was the first President of South Africa to be elected in fully representative democratic elections.
- ▶ Before his presidency, he was an anti-apartheid leader of the African National Congress, who spent 27 years in prison for his involvement in underground armed resistance activities and sabotage.
- ▶ Bishop Desmond Tutu (2005) comments that in jail Mandela "began to discover depths of resilience and spiritual attributes that he would not have known he had."
- ▶ Through his suffering, he found himself able to be gentle and compassionate towards others
- ▶ Nelson Mandela walked out of prison with dignity, restraint, spirit of reconciliation, and a desire for national unity, rather than with a bitterness for what had befallen him

# Case Study: S

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S. is a school leaver who is currently completing her final of year of full time study. She moved from her family home in rural Australia to complete a double degree; Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Teaching.

S's mother suffers from Parkinson's disease, making it very hard for her to leave her family during her first year of university. During her second year at university, S's mother became very ill which led to the decision to return home, take a year off and support her sister who is fulltime carer to their mother.

Given her personal situation, it was difficult for S to return to study, but she realised what her life could be like with the opportunity that university provided. The balance of work, study and social commitments away from her family is tough, but S. is determined not to quit.

*"I grew up on a bee farm, my family are farmers and I was raised to work hard to get somewhere, to get money to get a job. I was taught you won't get anything unless you put the effort in.*

*I keep reminding myself, I am not a quitter, I am not going to quit, I don't want to be a quitter. I am not going to walk away, even if I am tired. I tell myself, you have got to do it, you have to hand something in. Sometimes I can hear myself saying I can't do this, it is too hard. Then I will just try to tell myself just calm down, breathe. I will ring a friend, have a cry and everything is just clearer. I don't want to quit. I don't want this to be a waste of time.*

*Being away from my family is really hard for me, being away from my farm is really hard. Some of my family are unwell but I don't want to waste this time.*

*I can see what life can be like for people who don't get these opportunities and I want to do something that I am passionate about. I want to finish so that I can feel the pride from within myself that I did complete it and it was hard but I know I will reap the benefits later."*

# What is resilience? (5 mins)

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In small groups, using the case studies and your own experiences, discuss the following questions:

- ▶ What do we mean when we say that a person is “resilient”?
- ▶ Is resilience a disposition, or an acquired capability (or a bit of both)?
- ▶ Write your responses on Butchers’ paper provided

# Whole class feedback (10 mins)

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- ▶ What do we mean when we say that a person is “resilient”?
- ▶ Hands up: Is resilience a disposition, or an acquired capability, or a bit of both?
- ▶ If not totally predetermined, then can be acquired?  
[Growth Mindset—Dweck]

# Pre-practical Task 1 for Week 2

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- ▶ Identify someone who has demonstrated resilience in their life.
- ▶ On Moodle, in the Discussion forum entitled “Resilient Individuals”, briefly describe your individual, and indicate the stressors that s/he encountered, and how s/he demonstrates resilience.
- ▶ If you are doing a public figure, please note that once someone else has posted that person, you will need to find someone else to write about!!
- ▶ Unless they are a public figure, please give them a pseudonym to protect their privacy.
- ▶ Please bring a printed copy of your response to class in Week 2. Put your name on it.
- ▶ Word limit – 250 words



# Resilience

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happens!

We need to develop **PROACTIVE** and **REACTIVE** resources and strategies to deal with these stressors



...which results in Resilience, Success and Well-being



# Physical and Psychological Fitness

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- ▶ Proactive and Reactive
- ▶ Gym – work at it, better with practice
- ▶ Nutrition, sleep
- ▶ Flexibility – able to withstand more, recover faster
- ▶ Protects from minor illness, not broken arm → seek help!



# Student Success and Well-being (25 mins)

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- ▶ First, write down what YOU think “student success and wellbeing” looks like at UNSW (5 min)
- ▶ Then, in your table groups, share what you have come up with, and create a combined list (10 mins)
- ▶ Whole class sharing and discussion (10 mins)

# What is Well-being? Philosophical and Psychological Approaches

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## Philosophical origins (see Ryff & Singer, 2008) :

Actualisation of human potential: Plato, Aristotle

- ▶ Aristotle (350BC) – eudaimonia is the “highest of all goods achievable by human action”
  - ▶ (‘Eu’ = good or well-being; ‘Daimon’ – spirit or true nature)
  - ▶ The highest human good involves activities that have purpose (ie are **goal-directed**)
  - ▶ The essential end point (telos) is to achieve one’s true potential
  - ▶ One is obliged to realise one’s ‘daimon’ (true nature) – “know thyself”, and “become what you are”
  - ▶ NB not all were invested with potential excellence eg women, slaves, artisans, tradesmen, and not all daimons were equivalent
- ▶ Later philosophers
  - ▶ John Stuart Mill (1893) – happiness is not an end in itself
  - ▶ Bertrand Russell – happiness depends on active interest and engagement in life, meaningful relationships

## Psychological:

Behaviours are congruent with inner values; developing one’s true self (Vitterso et al, 2005; Waterman 1993).

ie “Psychological Well-being” = not *just* pleasure vs. pain, happiness —

“personal growth (*arete*)” and “eudaimonia” are central concepts.

Relates to: authentic happiness, “flow”, **goal** achievement, fulfilling one’s potential, self-actualisation

# What is well-being?

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## Psychological Approaches:

- ▶ Subjective well-being (SWB) - Diener
- ▶ Psychological / Eudaimonic well being - Ryff, Keyes
- ▶ NB we will be discussing (and taking) measures of some of these, as well as being relevant to your group assignment

# What is well-being: Diener

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**Ed Diener:** Subjective Well-being (SWB)



Focuses on people's own evaluations of their lives--3 components:

**Presence of positive affect** and  
**relative absence of negative affect** – the emotional components  
(relates to hedonia) AND

**Life Satisfaction** – a cognitive judgement, how satisfied a person is  
with his/her life (relates to eudamonia)

Subjective well-being is correlated with mental and physical health.  
[see also p9-10, 22 of Diener & Chan (2011), re. types of health  
outcomes]

# What is well-being?

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ie SWB = Affect  
(affective evaluation)  
+  
Satisfaction with life  
(cognitive evaluation)

Widely confirmed in research using large samples of people who completed a variety of measures

(e.g., Lucas, Diener, & Suh, 1996)

Also research on satisfaction with specific life domains: work, relationships, health

(e.g., Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith 1999)

# SWB Correlates

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SWB **correlates** with

- ▶ Marriage, religion, wealth...
- ▶ Personality
  - extraversion
  - optimism
  - self esteem

Caution:

--the pattern of relations may vary across cultures

General Criticisms of SWB: Ignores motivational processes  
eg re. goal pursuit, needs.



# Psychological Well-being

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- ▶ Eudaimonia
- ▶ Ryff used term to challenge conceptions of SWB focused on feeling good, contentment & life satisfaction
- ▶ Development (growth) and self-realisation (fulfilment) of one's unique potential (NB Aristotle)
- ▶ Well-being is influenced by context (ie not equal opportunities for all)
- ▶ Like SWB, Eudaimonic wellbeing has health benefits

# Psychological well-being



Ryff & Singer (2006, 2008)  
Eudaimonic approach

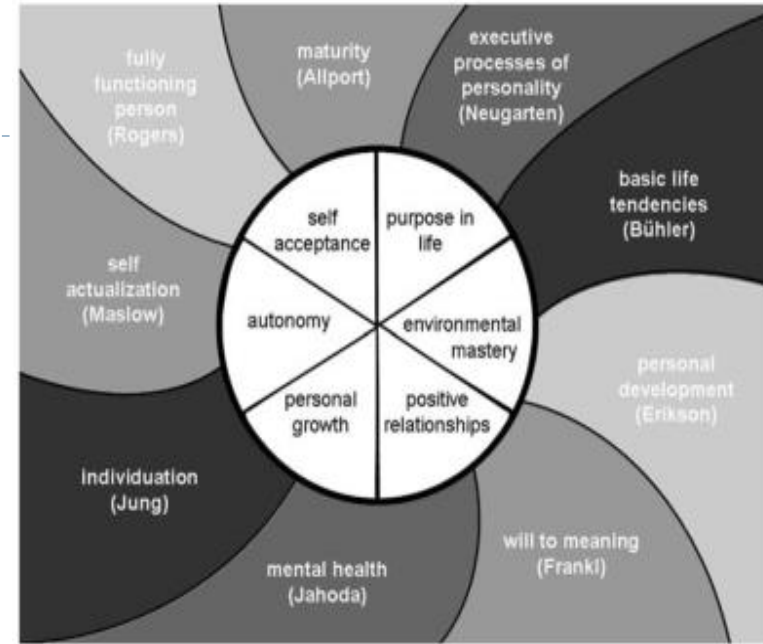


Figure 1. Core dimensions of pwb and their theoretical foundations.

## 6 components:

**Self Acceptance** = positive regard for one's self and one's past life.

**Positive relations with others** = good quality relationships with others

**Environmental Mastery** = the capacity to effectively manage one's surrounding world

**Purpose in life** = a sense that life is purposeful and meaningful

**Personal growth** = a sense of continuing growth and self-realisation

**Autonomy** = the ability to follow inner convictions

# Correlates with PWB (Ryff & Singer, 2008)

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- ▶ Education
- ▶ SES
- ▶ Age – different components of PWB vary with age
  
- ▶ Associated health benefits
  - ▶ Better immune function
  - ▶ Better neuroendocrine regulation (lower Cortisol)
  - ▶ Lower cardiovascular risk (higher HDL ie good cholesterol)
  - ▶ Longer REM sleep
  - ▶ Greater left superior frontal activation (linked to positive dispositional style and reduced depression)

# The Mental Health Continuum

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Keyes (2002)

Operationalization of mental health as a “syndrome” of symptoms of positive feelings (emotional well-being/ emotional vitality) and positive functioning (psychological & social well-being) in life.

Social Well Being: ‘Individuals are embedded in social structures and communities and face countless social tasks and challenges...To understand optimal functioning and mental health, social scientists also should investigate adults’ social well-being ’

(Keyes 1998)

[Social Well-being Scale: Five factors]

[Buckingham, 2012, PP7]

# The Mental Illness Continuum

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Clusters of symptoms used in DSM to diagnose a major depressive episode:

- symptoms of depressed mood (loss of pleasure derived from activities)
- symptoms of malfunctioning (eg insomnia)

# The Complete State Model.

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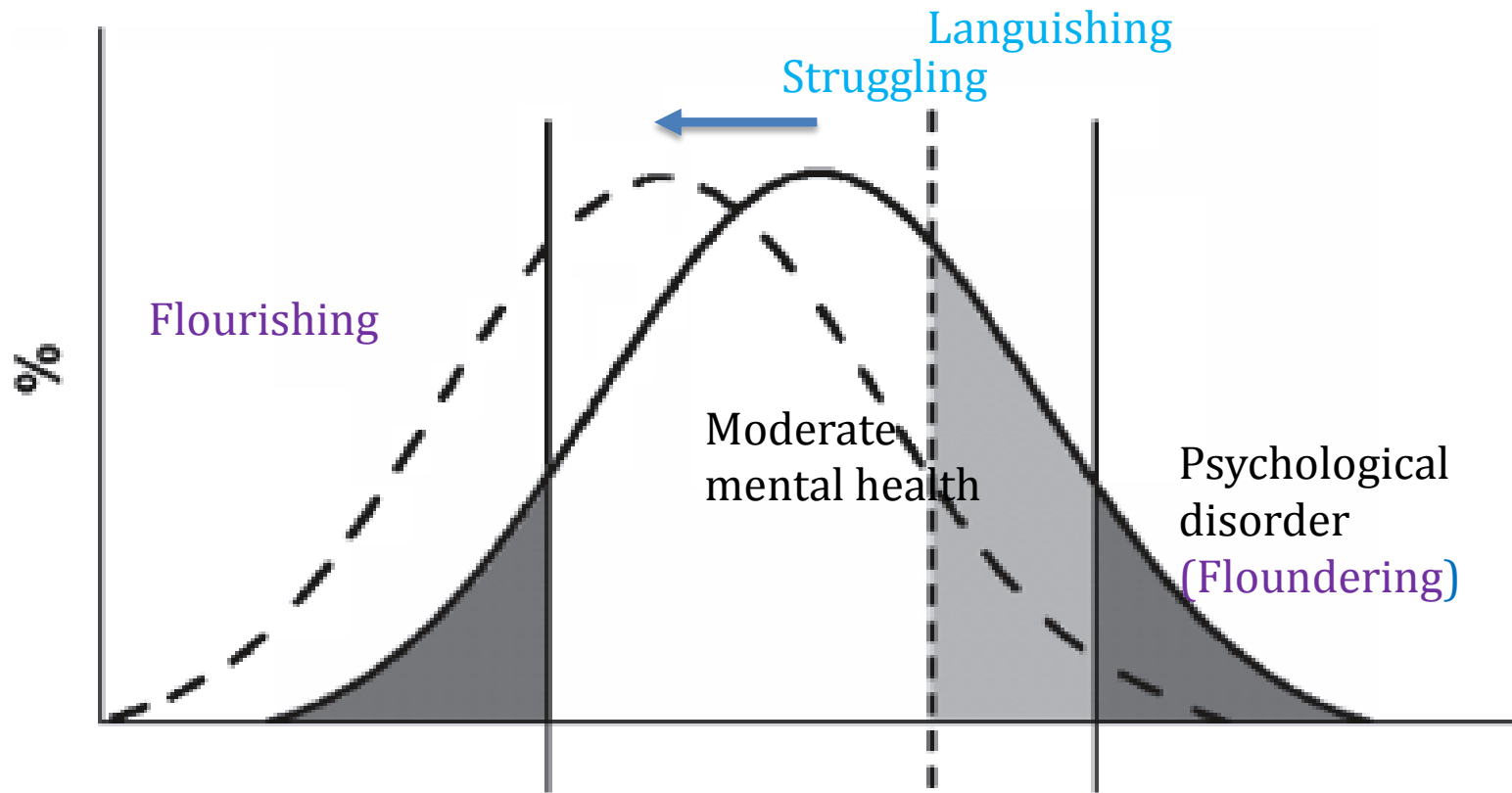
Mental health and mental illness are not opposite ends of a single continuum; mental health is not the absence of mental illness or mental illness the absence of mental health.

“Mental illness and mental health are highly correlated but belong to separate continua, and therefore the prevention and treatment of mental illness will not necessarily result in more mentally healthy individuals”

Keyes (2002)

# Thriving and the population approach: putting it back on a single continuum!!

Effect of a small shift in the population mean on the mental health spectrum (modified from Huppert, 2005).



How is this different from Keyes? So may ignore different intervention types?

# Summary of Well-being

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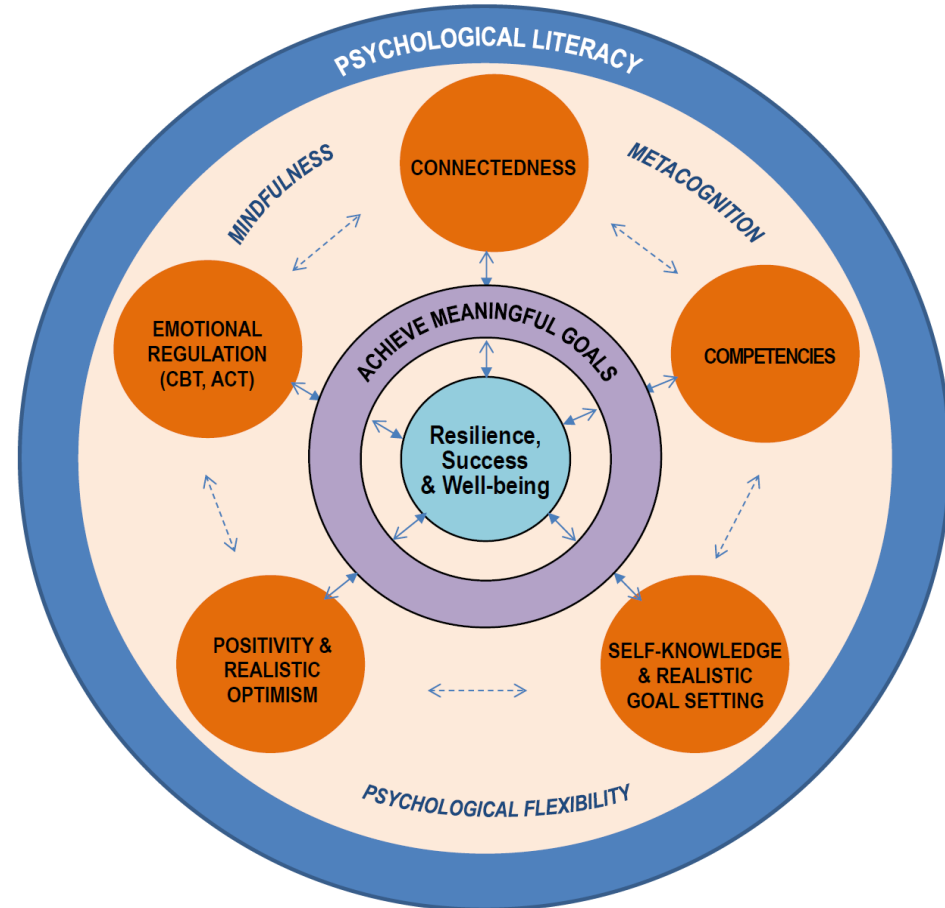
## ▶ 3 theories:

- ▶ Diener – Subjective Well-being (PA & noNA & LS)
- ▶ Ryff – Eudamonia (6 components, Eudamonia)
- ▶ Keyes – Complete State Model (M.Health  $\neq$  No M.Illness)



# Substantive components of course

Investigation of psychological science regarding:

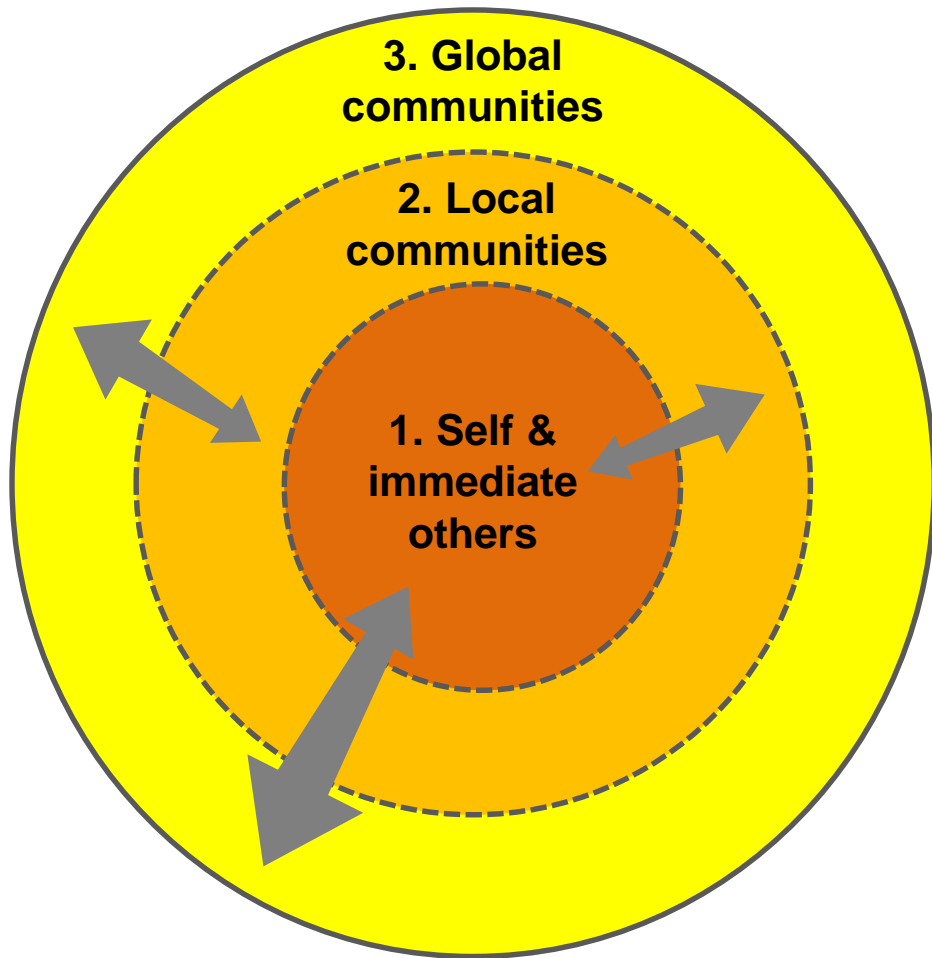


Orange = proposed categories of evidence-based resilience strategies that underpin the structure of this course



**Psychological Literacy:** “the capacity to adaptively and intentionally apply psychological science to meet personal, professional, and societal needs” (Cranney & Dunn, 2011)

[www.psychologicalliteracy.com](http://www.psychologicalliteracy.com)



**WHERE PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES ARE APPLIED (domains or levels):**

**Level 1:** application of psychological principles adaptively to **oneself** and one’s immediate set of **family** members and **friends**. (self-knowledge)

**Level 2:** application of psychological principles in a way that is adaptive for one’s **local community** (local leaders)



**Level 3:** applying psychological principles in local, national or global contexts, in a way that reflects an **awareness of global issues**, and where it is highly likely that one would need to play a leadership role (global citizens)

(Cranney & Morris, 2011)

# Psychological Science of Resilience....

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- ▶ This course is NOT a positive thinking course!!
- ▶ The approach we take is grounded in psychological science
- ▶ The activities are evidence-based
- ▶ Week 3 – discussion of principles of Psychological Science
- ▶ Critically evaluate what you see and hear through this lens
- ▶ Eg Reivich et al. next week
  
- ▶ NB The key reading for Week 3 is Chapter 2 of **Burton** et al. You will need to perform well on a quiz prior to Week 3.
- ▶ A highly recommended resource on this topic is **Stanovich's** book "*How to think straight about psychology*"

# Pre-practical work for Week 2: Summary

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1. Complete homework task on Resilient person – post on Moodle and bring copy to class
2. Read: Reivich et al.(2011). On Moodle, identify 3 strategies from those described in the reading, that you feel would be useful to you. In your submission, indicate also how you might use them. Bring a copy with you to the Week 2 practical. (50-250 words)
3. Read: pp 580-594, Chapter 14, of Burton et al. (on Stress). There will be a quick quiz on this material in Week 2.
4. Watch Positive Psychology YouTube clip

# Moodle

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- ▶ If there are any problems with things that we are doing in SCIF0007 eg you can't see your marks or an assessment task:
  - ▶ Questions for Course Staff Forum on Moodle
  - ▶ email [a.olschewski@unsw.edu.au](mailto:a.olschewski@unsw.edu.au)
- ▶ If problems with Moodle itself
  - ▶ Contact netspot: [externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au](mailto:externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au)  
Internal: x5333 I, External: 9385 333 I
- ▶ If these problems are affecting your ability to engage with your Psychology studies: [b.spehar@unsw.edu.au](mailto:b.spehar@unsw.edu.au)

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