Workplace wellbeing and less common wellbeing enhancing activities

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14th September 2018, Jakarta

Indonesian Positive Psychology Association (AP2I)
Less common wellbeing enhancing activities

Warm up: Counting

• Pair up
  • Count up to 3 repeatedly, taking turns. Once mastered:
    – Then for every “1”, instead of saying “1”, clap.
    – Then for every “2”, instead of saying “2”, click.
    – Then for every “3”, instead of saying “3”, hi-five.
    – Now see how fast you can go…
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Aims:

• To gain exposure to and learn how to disseminate and teach some lesser known positive psychological interventions.
• Skills and tools to add to your toolkit.
• Knowledge ↑.
• Experience ↑.
• Fun ↑.
• Do no harm! (non-maleficence)
Abstract: In this workshop Associate Professor Jarden introduces novel and less common wellbeing enhancing activities – also known as Positive Psychological Interventions (PPI’s). The workshop moves beyond common PPI’s (e.g., Gratitude, Strengths, Mindfulness, Optimistic thinking) and is experiential within an applied training framework, so you will experience many empirically validated tools first hand during the workshop. The aims is that you gain exposure to and learn how to disseminate and teach some lesser known positive psychological interventions and leave the workshop with increased knowledge of PPI’s, practical experience of some PPI’s, and learn strategies for how to implement such PPI’s in you workplace or practice in an appropriate and ethical manner.
definition n. l.
The teacher gave definitions of the new words.
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Definitions:

• Positive Psychology Interventions vs. Positive Psychological Interventions.

• Positive Psychological Interventions are strategies, exercises and activities designed to promote happiness and wellbeing.

• Positive Psychology Intervention = (Bolier et al., 2013; Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009)
  • Since the start of the Positive Psychology movement – i.e., 1998.

• Positive Psychological Intervention = (Schueller, Kashdan, & Parks, 2014)
  • Include studies that use the same intervention strategies and target the same outcomes but do not explicitly reference “positive psychology”.
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A framework to locate PPI’s:

• The individual level (Me)
• The group level (We)
• The organisational level (Us)

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• Individual level wellbeing initiatives include strategies and tasks that employees can do by themselves, such as learning about and utilising their strengths mindfully (Niemiec, 2013), or undertaking a mindfulness program (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). Such ‘Me’ initiatives do not require the involvement of others within the organisation. Group level wellbeing initiatives include strategies and tasks that involve an employee working on their wellbeing with either their manager, their direct team, or other employees who they are in frequent contact with in the work setting. These activities either have influence on a small group or are undertaken in a group format, and cannot be undertaken by employees themselves as they require the cooperation and input from others - such as the employee’s manager or team members. Examples of ‘We’ initiatives include strategies and tasks such as job crafting (Wrzesniewski, 2014) or building high quality connections (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003). Organisational level wellbeing initiatives include strategies and tasks that have an impact over the whole of the organisation, or are designed to trickle down from the top of the organisation - ideally to all employees. Examples of ‘Us’ initiatives include strategies and tasks such as creating organisational wellbeing policy (HAPIA, 2009), directing resources towards one-off or smaller scale wellbeing initiatives, or whole of organisation wellbeing assessments or workplace wellbeing programmes such as Appreciative Inquiry summits (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005).

• On the whole, at all levels of Me, We and Us, high wellbeing from a positive psychology perspective is about employees and organisations shifting their perspective from predominately focusing on what is wrong, to building on what is going right and working – to capitalising on the good and building and seeding the enabling conditions for high wellbeing (Jarden & Jarden, 2015; Lewis, 2011). Workplace wellbeing programmes across these three levels are about helping employees to use their strengths, enhance their relationships, and find more meaning and engagement at work so that both employees and the organisation as a whole can achieve their, and its, true potential.
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Another framework relevant for PPI’s:

• The Cognitive Model.

• “The fundamental interconnectedness of all things holistic” – Douglas Adams.

• Let’s try it:
  • Imagine someone punches you in the arm...
  • Imagine someone give you a hug...
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Some random points:

• Humans cannot truly achieve long-lasting happiness simply by watching from the side-lines. They actually have to get down onto the pitch and participate! Happiness is not something out there that people find just by looking, instead it is dependent on doing something, on joining in, on trying things out.

• Chris Peterson – “Happiness is not a spectator sport”.

His few friends had told him he could never buy it, but Mr. Crawley surmised that they just didn’t know where the store was.
Novel PPI’s
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Process expectations:

• Qualify your delivery and set expectations – I usually say things like:
  • “I’m no expert in your wellbeing and wellbeing improvement is hard work – like losing weight. This is not therapy, and i'm no longer a practicing psychologist.”
  • “This is an opportunity to make some changes, get renewed, re-energized, revitalized! It’s time to create change here in your own life – but realise that all change is hard and stressful, even positive change”.
  • “It’s not just about learning to be more positive – it’s about using scientifically-informed tools and strategies to make your thinking more flexible, accurate, clear, and expansive. This thinking will lead to more healthy behaviours”.
  • “It’s not all about the positive and happiness, joy, joy... Accept the negative; it’s functional”.

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How does the PPI fit into a model?

• What is optimal human functioning?
• We need to understand the context, not individual behaviour alone.
• Different theories and recipes of wellbeing, flow into different public health messages.
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Fordyce lists 14 techniques as fundamentals:

- Keep busy and be more active.
- Spend more time socializing.
- Be productive at meaningful work.
- Get better organized and plan things out.
- Stop worrying.
- Lower your expectations and aspirations.
- Develop positive, optimistic thinking.
- Become present oriented.
- Work on a healthy personality.
- Develop an outgoing, social personality.
- Be yourself.
- Eliminate negative feelings and problems.
- Close relationships are the number one source of happiness.
- Put happiness as your most important priority.
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**Not so novel PPI’s**

- Three good things
- Use your strengths
- Flow
- Gratitude visit
- Forgiveness letter
- Cultivate optimism

- Savouring
- Kindness
- Mindfulness
- Compassion
- Resilience
- Purpose and meaning
Novel PPI’s

See:

Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009

Bolier et al., 2013
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Efficacy vs effectiveness – we know little about the real world:

• Hone et al (2015) – “...synthesizing efficacy trials of PPIs reveals little evidence that these interventions translate into sustained programmes of behaviour change when applied beyond the tightly controlled conditions of the laboratory or psychology classroom setting”.

• Parks et al (2012) - “...researchers have yet to offer persuasive evidence that happiness activities, as they are actually used in real-world settings, are beneficial”.

Novel PPI’s

What impacts are you aiming for?

- Bolier et al., 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3 Main effects</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome measures</td>
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<td>Post-test</td>
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<td>Subjective well-being</td>
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<td>Psychological well-being</td>
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<td>Depression</td>
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<td>Depression</td>
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n = Number of studies, N = Number of subjects, Ne = Number of subjects in experimental group; Nc = Number of subjects in control group.
# Novel PPI’s

Why do people participate in PPI’s?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Reason for low participation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Service needs misalignment</td>
<td>The provision of services that have little relevance or interest to employee needs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Time and work pressures</td>
<td>Perception that programme participation is incompatible with current workload and time pressures</td>
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<td>Access to resources</td>
<td>Employee believes that they have access to resources that are a sufficient substitute for those being offered</td>
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<td>Change readiness</td>
<td>Lack of psychological readiness to engage in the personal change encouraged by such programmes</td>
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<td>Locus of responsibility</td>
<td>Employee belief that enhancing aspects of personal functioning is their own legitimate responsibility</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Balance of change</td>
<td>Perception that the onus for change is weighted more towards employees than the organisation’s preparedness to do likewise</td>
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<td>Organisational</td>
<td>Changed HR function</td>
<td>Perception that HR-led initiatives are an execution of strategic organisational priorities rather than genuine support for employees</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Corporate social control</td>
<td>Belief that employee-sponsored programmes are little more than an attempt to shape a workforce</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Organisational trust</td>
<td>Belief that the programme is <strong>NOT</strong> underpinned by employee-centred motives, and/or lacks the requisite ability to successfully deliver the programme, and/or lacks fairness, and/or is conducted in a way that is reliable and consistent</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Basic need satisfaction</td>
<td>A lack of autonomous motivation emerging from an absence of workplace support for autonomy, competence and relatedness needs</td>
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Less common wellbeing enhancing activities

1. Positive introductions
   • Other micro PPI’s
2. Questions
3. Pathways to wellbeing
4. Closer connections (HO)
5. Playfulness
6. DEAR communication (HO)
7. Flow (HO)
8. Job crafting (HO)
   • HO = Handout
9. Slowness (HO)
10. Savouring
11. Active constructive responding
12. Positive expressive writing (HO)
13. High quality connections
14. A great day at work/school
15. Maximising and satisficing (HO)
16. Random Strengths (Aarons)

Your challenge is it place each one we cover into the me, we, us framework. Also, think about if it is targeting cognitions, emotions or behaviours or a combination?
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Novel PPI: 1 – Positive introduction

• Step 1: Pair up with someone you don’t know.

• Step 2: In 2 minutes (1 minute each), tell a story – a thoughtful narrative with a beginning, middle and end – that illustrates when you are at your best – at school, at work, in life...

• Note: Swap when you hear the bell the first time after 1 minute, stop completely when you hear the bell the second time after 2 minutes.
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Novel PPI: 1 – Positive introduction

• Key point: Wield your strengths – they are paths to engagement and enjoyment.
  
  http://www.viacharacter.org

• What strengths can you use to engage with and teach PPI’s? – this is my challenge to you...

• Ref: Rashid, 2008; Magyar-Moe, 2009
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Some other micro PPI’s:

• “Yes and but” party.
• Geelong three breaths (next slide).
• Secret handshake.
• 10 pills (after Geelong).
The Geelong three breaths exercise

• **Breath One.** Take a deep breath. Notice your physical body and any points of pain or tension. Breath out slowly and release any tension away.

• **Breath Two.** Take a deep breath. As you breathe out think about what you are grateful for right at this very moment. Say to yourself “Right now I am grateful for...”.

• **Breath Three.** Take a deep breath. As you breathe out think what intentional state you want to be in right now. Say to yourself “My intention right now is to be (kind, open minded, relaxed, critical, curious etc)...”.

Developed by Justin Robinson at Geelong Grammar.
10 Pills.

- Imagine that you wake up in a lab, surrounded by minions peering at you. One has bad fashion sense. Blinking, you see that a table in front of you has 10 different pills on it. “You may choose only three!” one minion cackles. A sign pops up, seemingly out of no-where, and warns you that consuming more than three will result in rapid, painful, combustion.

- Your choices are...
10 pills

- **My Destiny Pill** – you can see up to 24 hours into the future, and your future, whenever you want. You can only use this ability no more than once a month.

- **See-through Pill** – you can see through anything, like an x-ray; within your normal range of vision, and works at any layer. However, you cannot see through cheese.

- **Wonderful Flight Pill** – you can fly; soar even. All you have to do is flap your arms. You can’t fly above 1,000 feet or more than 100 miles though, and don’t forget your warm gear as it might be cold up there...

- **Fantastic Medicine Pill** – you get the power to immediately feel the effects of any drug out there as much as you want, with no after or side effects.

- **Super Attractiveness Pill** – you’re on fire, and so are they – you are instantly, and irresistibly, attractive to anyone you want. Pill comes with an endless supply of lip-gloss...

- **Marvellous Immunity Pill** – you gain the ability to become immune to all the bad bugs, germs, disease, and politicians, and a super-host for all of the good bacteria - like probiotics.

- **Ample Moolah Pill** – you always have the exact amount of money to do the things you want, every time. Note this is to do things, but buy stuff...

- **I Wish, I Wish Pill** – you’re granted the power to have one wish come true each week, that is for someone else (warning: you can’t wish for any other pill effects, otherwise immediate combustion will occur for you and the nearest cat)

- **Make uglier Pill** – you gain the ability to have any person of your choice slower get a bit uglier. This pill can only be used once a year. The uglier effect also runs out after a year, and you can’t use it on the same person more than once (unless they are either particularly rude or a Spice Girls fan)

- **Pain-Proof Pill** – Special Ops step aside; you are tougher than any SEAL or Sniper and while you can still get hurt, you bounce back fast and good. You have super healing abilities, bit a bullet, a great fall, or too much ABBA will still kill you.
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Novel PPI: 2 - Questions

• What's the best thing that has happened today?
• “Answer not important, unless ask the right question”
• What questions are you asking?
  • What's right?
  • What's good?
  • What works? What doesn’t?
• What should I focus on? (what we focus on, grows...)
• In which ways do I accept myself, and which ways don’t I accept myself?
• What are my greatest strengths and competencies?, and how do I use them?
• Who are my most cherished relationships? How do they support me?
• What would I like to learn?
• What would I like to accomplish?
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Novel PPI: 3 – Pathways to wellbeing

• **Step 1**: Pair up with a different partner, get a pen ready, as well as a blank A4 page...

• **Step 2**: Raise a hand in the air when you're ready...

• **Step 3**: Without looking down at your blank page, and **ONLY looking at your partner’s face**, you have 1 minute to draw a portrait of your partner, starting on the bell!

• **Step 4**: After the bell, when finished, sign your name, date it, and swap pictures with your partner...

• Also known as the “Five ways to wellbeing”.
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Novel PPI: 4 – Closer connections (handout)

• The idea behind this activity is that mutual vulnerability fosters greater closeness.
• Two parts – questions and gazing.
• Questions:
  • Given the choice of anyone in the world, whom would you want as a dinner guest?
  • Would you like to be famous? In what way?
  • Before making a telephone call, do you ever rehearse what you are going to say? Why?
• Gazing:
  • Now that question time is over, sit directly facing your partner and set a countdown timer for four minutes. Spend the next four minutes staring directly into your partners eyes. This is the only instruction. Try not to gaze away, talk, or do any other movements – just sit still and stare into their eyes.
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Novel PPI: 5 – Playfulness

- You have 3 minutes to create a paper plane using one of your five top strengths.
- Ref: Brown, 2009
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Novel PPI: 6 – DEAR communication (*handout*)

- From Marsha M. Linehan’s - Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT).
  - **Describe** the situation.
  - **Express** an Emotion.
  - Request an **Action** (or **Assert**).
  - **Reinforce** the consequences of the action happening.

- Actually DEAR MAN (MAN: Mindful, Appear confident, Negotiate)
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Novel PPI: 7 – Flow *(handout)*

- The idea is to *intentionally* balance challenge and skill.
- Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
  - Chick-sent-me-hi-ly

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Novel PPI: 8 – Job crafting (handout)

- It’s a bottom-up, employee led, approach about redesigning your job to better suit your values, strengths, and passions.

- Objective is a more optimal fit between you and your job, boosting your happiness and effectiveness at work.

- Connections go up, self-image goes up, sense of autonomy goes up (SDT).

- Work with your manager:
  - What tasks can you change in your job? – add some, take some away?
  - What relationships can you change in your job?
  - Can you change the perception of your job and the tasks you do? – create meaning?

- Think about your values, strengths, and passions in your job specifically and the tasks you do. How can you change your tasks to better reflect your values, strengths, and passions?

- Pair up, one person be a line manager and the other person initiate a conversation about job crafting during a performance appraisal.
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Novel PPI: 9 – Slowness (handout)

• A slow stretch (50% slower).
• A slow moon walk.
• Ted talk: In praise of slowness - Carl Honore
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Novel PPI: 10 – Savouring

• Savouring involves being “in the moment” and “taking in” all that an experience has to offer. I think of it as *wringing the pleasure juice out of life* by giving attention to the pleasures of the moment.

• Savouring can be used in a wide variety of circumstances – one can savour a sensory experience, a social experience, a feeling, or even a memory.

• There are ten different types of savouring strategies - sharing with others, memory building, self-congratulation, sensory-perceptual sharpening, comparing, absorption, behavioural expression, temporal awareness, counting blessings, and kill-joy thinking.

• We are going to try a combo of “sensory-perceptual sharpening” and “absorption”.
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• **Step 1:** Hold your almond.

• **Step 2:** Take a close look at it – inspect it, examine it! What does it look like? Is it symmetrical?

• **Step 3:** Close your eyes for the rest of this experience and feel it in your hand – what does the texture feel like?

• **Step 4:** Smell it. What does it smell like?

• **Step 5:** Put the almond into your mouth but do not bite or suck it – just let it rest on your tongue. Explore the almond with your tongue and teeth, noticing as much as you can.

• **Step 6:** Bite slowly into it and focus on the taste. Swirl the contents of the almond around in your mouth.

• **Step 7:** Swallow the almond and open your eyes.

• Was it easy to stay focused as you tapped your senses and became absorbed in the sensory experience?

• What was it like to pay attention to each individual detail of the experience?
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Novel PPI: 11 – Active Constructive Responding

• There are four ways of responding, and active constructive responding has been shown to build solid, strong and lasting relationships the best.

• Using active constructive responding is a good way to convey understanding, validation and caring, and to increase the wellbeing of your existing friends, as well as to make new friends and to encourage closer, more trusting relationships with them.

• Shelly Gable.
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Novel PPI: 11 – Active Constructive Responding

• **Active Constructive Response** involves expressing enthusiastic positive support = “*That’s really great. Your wife will be pretty proud of you. I know how important that promotion was to you. We should go out and celebrate*”. During such communication the person is maintaining eye contact and displaying positive emotion, such as laughing or smiling.

• **Active Destructive Response** involves expressing a derogatory or critical response = “*That sounds like a lot of responsibility to take on. There will probably be more stress involved in the new position and potentially longer hours at the office*”. The person is displaying negative emotions, such as frowning or anxiety.

• **Passive Constructive Response** involves showing benign disinterest = “*That’s good news*”. The person is displaying little nonverbal communication.

• **Passive Destructive Response** involves distancing or failing to respond = “*What are we doing Friday afternoon?*” The person does not acknowledge the good news, is not in eye contact, and may be turning away or leaving the room.
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Novel PPI: 12 – Positive expressive writing (handout)

• Write for 10 minutes through the lens of a positive emotion reflecting on your day yesterday. Instructions as follows:
  • Choose just one emotion. Love, joy, interest, awe, inspiration, gratitude, hope, serenity, amusement and pride.
  • Think about how the emotion feels to you.
  • Reflect on the emotion as you write.
  • Be detailed; describe the emotion.
  • Choose to see any negative events or thoughts through the lens of your chosen emotion.
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Novel PPI: 13 – High quality connections

• When was the last interaction at that “lit you up” – that was a HQC.
• People feel attuned and a sense of worth.
• Benefits of HQC from page 12 of positive leadership book.
• Type of actions or pathways to HQC’s:
  • Respect others – show them they are important. A good way is through being present. Effective listening – micro skills. Empathy.
  • Task enable others – facilitate others successes. Encourage, guide, support.
  • Trust others – don’t over monitor and control.
  • Play – team building, volunteering.

• Let’s talk about exemplars of the above 4 types of actions you have seen?
• What can you do?
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Novel PPI: 14 – A great day at work/school

- Design a good day, including a standard work or school day, from when you wake up to go to sleep in 60 minute intervals. Focus on building in psychological and physical wellbeing, and strengths.

- 7am-8am – Wake and breakfast, ready for work or school.
  - Strengths: Creativity (dressing), Bravery (new route to work/school)
  - Wellbeing: Connect (partner), Be active (walk around house)
  - Physical: Whole foods, low sugar

- Or structure like this
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Novel PPI: 15 – Maximising and satisficing (handout)

• The goal of the exercise is to increase your decision-making skills which in turn impact your wellbeing.

• Individuals who maximise consider all possibilities comprehensively and strive to select the best option. These individuals search out information to ensure they are exposed to the best alternative.

• Individuals who satisfice seek an alternative that exceeds some criterion of acceptability. Once they identify an acceptable option, they discontinue their search and choose that option. These individuals do not pursue the goal to optimise every decision.

• Maximising all the time is stressful and not good for wellbeing.
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Novel PPI: 16 – Random strengths

• www.workonwellbeing.com/strengths
• Spin and win a new strength to both enact and see your day through the lens of...
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From PPI’s to real world application

• Wellbeing Adventure Race
  • 2017 WRC Wellbeing Adventure Race
  • 2018 PESA Wellbeing Adventure Race
Novel PPI's

From PPI's to real world application

- Other practical applications and considerations:
  - CEO Friday lunch.
  - 10/2 rule - Ritz-Carlton.
  - Gratitude walls.
  - Entrance door activities and messaging.
  - Team meetings – start with ‘what went well?’, walking meetings.
  - Gamification (leaderboards, points, etc.).
  - Visual things
Novel PPI’s

A model of reflection on practice:

• Korthagen & Vasalos’s (2005) Five Stage ALACT Mode:
  • Action – doing PPI.
  • Looking back on the action - reflect.
  • Awareness of essential aspects, impact of PPI.
  • Creating alternative methods of action that could enhance PPI.
  • Trial of amended PPI and the consequences.
Novel PPI’s

A model of reflection on practice:

- Korthagen & Vasalos’s Onion Model – 6 levels of personal reflection:
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Insights

• What are two more key insights?
  • 1 ____________________________
  • 2 ____________________________
Questions?
(or applause)
Thank you

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