

Positive Psychology

From: **Paul T. P. Wong** <dr.paul.wong@gmail.com>

To: Louise Sundararajan <louisesundararajan@gmail.com>

Do you think that I can tap into the wisdom of the task force for my approach to integrate East and West?

Applied Second Wave Positive Psychology (PP2,0) can bring meaning and happiness to suffering people.

PP2.0 is rooted in the yin-yang theory of Taoism and the yin-yang reality of the brain. I consider myself the Bruce Lee of Psychology, because I aspire to integrate Western positive psychology with the evidence-based ancient wisdom of Taoism and Buddhism. The complexity of achieving mental health can be simplified to the simple principle of yin-yang.

- 1) The core issue of wellbeing is to maintain a balance between avoidance/defence (yin) and approach/offence (yang). Thus, failure contains the seed of success and success contains the seed of failure. We are able to achieve the golden mean.
- 2) You can be your best by accepting but surpassing your limitations; by being grounded in positive self-concept but transcending your ego.
- 3) You can live the best possible life by accepting the negative forces of life, but finding a way to overcome them and achieve your life goal.
- 4) By practicing offence and defence simultaneously, you are never over-confident nor over-anxious. A healthy life style is to maintain a mental state of peaceful balance between extreme emotions and expectations. This mental state allows for optimal flexibility between protection and expansion in moving forward.
- 5) Psychological skills in meaning therapy (Wong, 2016) are based on the yin-yang theory -- the two-factor theory of search for meaning, the dual-system approach, the double-vision perspective and the resource-congruence model of coping.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/.../excitation-and-inhibition...>

Paul T. P. Wong, Ph.D., C.Psych. (www.drpaulwong.com)

President, [International Network on Personal Meaning](#)

President, [Meaning-Centered Counselling Institute Inc.](#)

From: [Anthony Marsella](#)

I believe Paul's excellent article comes down to several critical points:

- 1: Embrace and tolerate and explore opposites!
2. There is virtue to taking the middle road.
3. Not doing something is doing something.

4. Chop wood and carry water, but when done smile slightly at those about you. Wash and go to bed!

Thank you, Paul, tony 🙏

Anthony J. Marsella, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 26, 2019, at 2:11 PM, Paul T. P. Wong <dr.paul.wong@gmail.com> wrote:

Hope that you can give me feedback on my latest paper on PP2.0. http://www.drpaulwong.com/why-and-how-i-developed-the-positive-psychology-of-suffering-autobiography-ch-28/?et_fb=1&PageSpeed=off

Paul T. P. Wong, Ph.D., C.Psych. (www.drpaulwong.com)
President, [International Network on Personal Meaning](#)
President, [Meaning-Centered Counselling Institute Inc.](#)

From: [Kirk Schneider](#)

Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2019 5:27 PM

Or alternatively "the paradoxical self," to continue the haikus.
Kirk

From: [Paul T. P. Wong](#)

Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2019 8:18 PM

To: [Kirk Schneider](#)

Agreed! But the focus here is suffering, which can either motivate people to be saints or harden people into criminals.

Paul T. P. Wong, Ph.D., C.Psych (www.drpaulwong.com)
President, [International Network on Personal Meaning](#)
President, [Meaning-Centered Counselling Institute Inc.](#)

From: [Ruth McConnell](#)

Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2019 11:12 PM

Dear Paul

These hypotheses fit well within an Attachment-based Developmental approach where developing integrative functioning (not just in the neocortex of the brain but also in personality development)

involves the capacity to mix complex and competing emotions. This is called AMBIVALENCE by Dr Gordon Neufeld (see attached diagram) of helping a child deal with a tantrum (and I use it with helping clients with depression – inverted aggression/attack ...) bring them to their tears.... Of self-compassion (leading to adaptation) and mix their frustration with love for the other (compassion for other), so as not to go into attack mode. I am working on an article to explain the work I do with this model.

Ngā mihi nui/Kind regards

Ruth

[Neufeld's Frustration Circle.pdf](#)

Dr Ruth A Lawson-McConnell MA (Psychology) PhD (Counselling Psychology)
Director, Trinity Initiatives (Counselling/Consulting) Ltd.
Counsellor, Supervisor, Trainer, MNZAC, NZCCA (Affiliate)
MIAAN(Certified Applied Neuroscience Practitioner: Neuropsychotherapy)
Professional Associate of the Neufeld Institute
Partners of Sex Addicts Trauma Specialist (APSATS trainee)

**Office: 32 Pohutukawa Ave,
Red Beach, Auckland 0932
New Zealand**

www.ruthmccconnell.com
e:therapy@ruthmccconnell.com
phone: +(64) 022-640-2941
skype: dr.ruthmccconnell



From: [Ron Boyer](#)

Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2019 1:52 PM

Paul, thanks for sharing your excellent and thought-provoking paper. I was especially moved by the personal somewhat confessional style and the perspective as a whole.

I wonder, in response to your question, if the term Positive Psychology actually applies to your approach. The essay struck me as essentially a **critique** of Seligman's PP grounded in an integral psychological perspective whose theoretical lenses are humanistic-existential (Maslow, Nietzsche, Frankl), transpersonal/East-West Integral (appealing to spiritual values, philosophies, practices, including the indigenous Buddhist emphasis on suffering and Taoist philosophy), and depth psychology (references to shadow, reconciliation of opposites, which are primary themes addressed in Jung's voluminous works).

I see little in your perspective compatible with Seligman's somewhat superficial materialist/positivist views and ego-based definitions of "happiness".

Of course, so much depends on how we define "happiness." The view of Ch'an Buddhism, for example, teaches that happiness lies in quieting the mind (as a direct practice) and a radical "letting go" of dualistic concepts in order to experience Reality directly, moment to moment, in the immediate present. How can humans be "happy" or lead meaningful lives unless we are actually present to life in the moment, here and now?

This letting go of dualistic concepts (and desires)--by quieting the mind-- has its adjunct in neither clinging to/desiring sensory pleasures nor rejecting "unpleasant"(i.e. suffering) or "evil" phenomena, which seems roughly analogous to your discussion of embracing paradox.

Your main altruistic impulse, in terms of personal meaning, is clearly that of a bodhisattva--to relieve the sufferings of humanity, an expression of your indigenous grounding in ancient Asian wisdom-traditions, which have contributed profoundly to Western psychology since the 1960s.

In any event, your essay was very stimulating and obviously a catalyst here for many excellent comments by colleagues! If you have written anything comparing/contrasting your indigenous Chinese psychological perspective with leading Western thinkers you cite (e.g. Nietzsche, Frankl, et al), I'd appreciate you sharing either here or with me privately.

Ron

From: [Paul T. P. Wong](#)

Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2019 5:16 PM

It is unfortunate that Seligman has bartardized the wonderful term positive psychology as coined by Maslow. Any label is inherently limiting. Mine approach is clearly positive, because it sees the beauty and goodness in life in spite of all the horrors of existence.

Paul T. P. Wong, Ph.D., C.Psych. (www.drpaulwong.com)

President, [International Network on Personal Meaning](#)

President, [Meaning-Centered Counselling Institute Inc.](#)

From: [Maureen O'Hara](#)

Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2019 5:48 PM

Paul, you know, I am sure that I have the utmost regard for your work so I hope you will keep that in mind when I say this, but I have wished for years that you had not settled on the term "positive" psychology. It is so much more than that. I agree with Ron that the reduction to PP-2 forces one to to a conceptual work-around to disentangle it from the uber modernism of Seligman's work as an encompassing frame. (To be fair, I also feel somewhat the same way about the terms "existential-humanistic" psychology. I personally think the skein that holds together the varied threads of our ways of knowing we bring to this table--if one such exists--is "life-centered psychology." Such a view allows for consciousness in all its forms, flavors and shades; for our embodied humanness and unavoidable finiteness, and for our inescapable responsibility to all living beings.

Thanks for sparking this conversation.

Maureen O'Hara Ph. D.
Professor of Psychology
Lead, BS in Organizational Behavior
National University
11255 N. Torrey Pines Road
La Jolla, CA 92037
760 889 9493 (mobile)
858 642 8464

From: [Paul T. P. Wong](#)

Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2019 7:22 PM

So glad to hear from you. In a way, I have the satisfaction of getting many converts from Seligman's camp, by using PP2.0. Otherwise, they will simply totally ignore me as they do with the other humanistic-existential psychologists.

Paul T. P. Wong, Ph.D., C.Psych. (www.drpaulwong.com)
President, [International Network on Personal Meaning](#)
President, [Meaning-Centered Counselling Institute Inc.](#)

From: [Liu, James](#)

Sent: Friday, November 29, 2019 4:24 AM

Dear Paul

Thanks for sharing your fascinating, courageous, and inspiring journey. I agree with you that PP1.0 is vastly incomplete. But my question is similar to Maureen's- why did you & do you keep fighting against

the crowd? Why didn't you ever get involved with Asian social psychology for example? Most of us think that what you are talking about is quite normal and natural. It's just part of our cultural traditions. And I'm not sure PP is the right label for it That's the white man's name and the white man's game.

AASP 2021 is in Seoul, please come and give us the benefit of your wisdom!

Sincerely
James

From: [Paul T. P. Wong](#)
Sent: Friday, November 29, 2019 10:48 AM

Thanks so much James. My main motivation is to make Asian positive psychology mainstream.

Paul T. P. Wong, Ph.D., C.Psych. (www.drpaulwong.com)
President, [International Network on Personal Meaning](#)
President, [Meaning-Centered Counselling Institute Inc.](#)

From: [Lutz Eckensberger - lutzeckensberger at gmail.com \(via iptaskforce list\)](#)
Sent: Saturday, November 30, 2019 4:42 PM

Isn't this a contradictio in adjecto?
Lutz

From: [Paul T. P. Wong](#)
Sent: Friday, November 29, 2019 2:56 PM

Hi James, I am interested in speaking in Korea. I have been invited to speak in Japan, Taiwan and China. I think it is about time to speak in Korea, especially because my son married a Korean woman.

Here is a response from a prominent positive psychologist to my chapter on the positive psychology of suffering. Does anyone from this brilliant task force have any effective response to the following?

"Thanks also for your comments on eudaimonia. I guess my position is: Sure, lets incorporate Asian concepts, and concepts about suffering -- lets not exclude any ideas or traditions because of our western biases. We need to test everything we can, and also look for cultural differences (i.e. main and moderator) effects. But in order to do this, we have to have a few basic outcome/criterion variables that we can agree on. SWB works well for this purpose, I believe. I don't glorify SWB or believe it is "right living" itself, it is merely a convenient symptom that such is occurring.

So, the question of whether suffering can bring greater or higher forms of happiness is an empirical one, somewhat aligned with the resilience and post-traumatic growth literatures. If I found data showing that suffering could breed higher SWB in the end (maybe via the elevation of more eudaimonic kinds of virtues), I would be very interested, and would want to understand for whom this is true (who are these resilient people, such as yourself, who can rise to extreme challenges?). If we instead found that suffering or Asian modes of living were negatively associated with SWB, however, then I would be reluctant to “endorse” them. I would be especially wary of an authoritarian political leader who could sell his people on the idea that “suffering is virtue.” That sounds pretty scary!”

Paul T. P. Wong, Ph.D., C.Psych. (www.drpaulwong.com)
President, [International Network on Personal Meaning](#)
President, [Meaning-Centered Counselling Institute Inc.](#)

From: [Dr. Louise Sundararajan](#)
Sent: Monday, December 02, 2019 1:06 AM

PP (positive psychology) is rife with contradictions, Lutz. Consider the following questions concerning suffering:

>So, the question of whether suffering can bring greater or higher forms of happiness is an empirical one, somewhat aligned with the resilience and post-traumatic growth literatures. If I found data showing that suffering could breed higher SWB in the end (maybe via the elevation of more eudaimonic kinds of virtues), I would be very interested, and would want to understand for whom this is true (who are these resilient people, such as yourself, who can rise to extreme challenges?). If we instead found that suffering or Asian modes of living were negatively associated with SWB, however, then I would be reluctant to “endorse” them. I would be especially wary of an authoritarian political leader who could sell his people on the idea that “suffering is virtue.” That sounds pretty scary!<

The interlocutor in the above quote violated a major rule of PP, namely that you are not supposed to ask ethical questions, since pp is ethically neutral, as Seligman claimed. The penalty for the violation of the rule of the game is naïve questions that exposed how uninformed pp is: “I would be especially wary of an authoritarian political leader who could sell his people on the idea that “suffering is virtue.” That sounds pretty scary!”

In fact, “suffering is virtue” was a slogan of the Mao era. Nowadays, the slogan in China is “happiness is virtue”. Is the latter scenario less scary? Volumes have been written about how scary the happiness industry is. The reason why pp cannot see the negative implications of all this is because it is sidetracked into the essentially irrelevant debate over positive and negative psychology. To be scientific, the data on positive and negative emotions should be dummy coded as X and Y emotions. But truth be told, no matter how robustly they are related to wellbeing, X emotions don’t sell—you need a sexy label such as happiness. Does this happiness industry get scary only when the customer is a dictator? Ample research suggests that the crux of the problem lies in commodification of emotions. This is the hole of the happiness donut that I wrote about more than 15 years ago. Hopefully this hole will come to light when Paul reaches his 10th version of pp.

Don't worry, be happy,
Louise

From: [Paul T. P. Wong](#)

Sent: Monday, December 02, 2019 12:24 PM

Thanks so much for your brilliant insight. I have been attacked repeatedly by the PP gang for stating that understanding suffering as inherent in human existence as the necessary foundation for building a credible psychology wellbeing. The other foundation is indigenous psychology. Maybe the time is right for us to get the editor of AP publish a special section on the psychology of wellbeing based on existential and indigenous psychology.

Paul T. P. Wong, Ph.D., C.Psych. (www.drpaulwong.com)

President, [International Network on Personal Meaning](#)

President, [Meaning-Centered Counselling Institute Inc.](#)

From: [Ron Boyer](#)

Sent: Monday, December 02, 2019 7:29 PM

Paul,

Louise said it better than I could. I too was troubled by the author's closing point about "suffering is virtue". What the heck?! It seems the author didn't actually grasp the jist of your argument in that paper, if it was your paper on "mature happiness" that I recently read. Missed your entire point there!

As for his statement in support if there were data showing that suffering could "breed higher SWB" I think I could provide that data based on my own personal experience, in addition to a wealth of such data implied and available in the literature of Jungian depth psychology which offers a theoretical analogue generally consistent with your own. Read, for example, Jung's famous Answer to Job. Though a marginal voice in contemporary American psychology, Jung was by all accounts an exceptionally gifted healer with remarkable rates of success in the most difficult cases, i.e., institutionalized psychotics. As for my own experience, not dissimilar from your own referenced in your paper on mature happiness, do you have a personal email where I can discuss this with you rather than taking this group's time?

I do want to share something I read this weekend, while considering your approach to the psychology of happiness from an Asian perspective. It's from one of the great early pioneers of Buddhist scholarship and practice who helped popularize Ch'an or Zen Buddhism in America, beginning about 80 years ago, Dr. D. T. Suzuki. In "The Answer is in the Question" (in The Field

of Zen: Contributions to The Middle Way, the Journal of the Buddhist Society), Suzuki discusses the universal commonalities of discursive logic and reason between East and West, then veers to the paradoxical topic of happiness:

"If everything is so good, there would be no warfare, no anxiety, we should have real Paradise on earth; but do you think we should be happy? Happiness means that there is something which is not quite conducive to happiness, i.e., happiness always comes along with unhappiness. It is relative. We crave for happiness, but when we have it we are not satisfied with it, and we find that happiness is not so happy after all; and then we think of something happier. That is what drives us all the time. Therefore, if Paradise materialized we should be at a loss what to do. We should suffer from ennui and would like to go back to Hell! Hell is more interesting, as there is always a certain stimulation because although we suffer pain we want to get rid of it. But if everything went on nicely, what is the use of living? So life always means stimulation; pain is most necessary. We talk about absolute peace or absolute freedom but if we had absolute freedom we should like to have that freedom restricted. Absolute freedom is not a condition under which we could live. So as long as we are living, we must have something which contradicts our living principal--that is life, that is becoming, that is the world." (pp. 85-86, Field of Zen, Harper & Row, 1969)

So we are, if this Asian thinker is correct, the "paradoxical self" (as Kirk suggested) who cannot be happy without unhappiness, if not in life, then certainly in art. We, as a society, spend a great deal of time relaxing by watching movies depicting life and death conflicts full of suffering, violence, and evil. This is how most Americans--and not only Americans--relax. The same kind of irony is apparent in our ideal of freedom; as Erich Fromm demonstrated, when it comes to freedom, we are paradoxical creatures "in love with our own chains."

How might your PP 2.0 address and reconcile this paradoxical fact of human nature? Are we the creature who must have unhappiness in order to be happy? And if so what are the implications for a psychology of happiness and well-being?

From: [Kirk Schneider](#)

Sent: Monday, December 02, 2019 9:58 PM

That's a great question, Ron, and one that of necessity worms its way into any kind of research on happiness or vitality. Could it be that to be genuinely enriched and engaged through life that a degree of misery is necessary? Certainly a long line of creative and revolutionary personalities might well make this claim. But to Louise's point we're talking about a degree here, which generally comes with a well lived life, and not purposive imposition of discomfort or "sacrifice" to authoritarian ends. That would not dwell in the dynamic tension of the paradoxes.

From: **Bond, Michael [MM]** <michael.bond@polyu.edu.hk>

Date: Sun, Dec 1, 2019 at 8:43 PM

Ron,

Thanks for your thoughtful response. I have not shared Shiah's article with Paul Wong yet b/c Shiah has not provided any measurement-access to the phenomenon he is circling. However, the attached two have tried bringing Chinese cultural logic into the discourse, my career focus for the last four decades, and proposed a measurement of their construct. These may be of passing interest to you:

Wong, P. T. P. & Bowers, V. (2018). Mature happiness and global wellbeing in difficult times. In N. R. Sinton (Ed.), *Scientific concepts behind happiness, kindness, and empathy in contemporary society* (pp. 112-134). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

and

Lin et al. (2013) have provided a measure of "peace of mind": Lee, Y.-C., Lin, Y.-C., Huang, C.-L., & Fredrickson, B. L. (2013).

The construct and measurement of peace of mind. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 14, 571-590. doi: 10.1007/s10902-012-9343-5

These Chinese-culture inspired outcome measures surely correlate with the individualism-inspired Diener measure of satisfaction with life, but overlap to different degrees in different cultural systems and will be predicted by different aspects of their personalities and their social worlds. This approach to doing cross-cultural psychology is described in the attached *Frontiers* article.

With regards from an unsettled Hong Kong, undergoing its own cultural "realignment": <https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/3040135/hong-kong-protests-tens-thousands-return-streets-after-days>

Michael

From: Ron Boyer <rlboyer10@hotmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, 30 November 2019 2:23 AM

To: Bond, Michael [MM] <michael.bond@polyu.edu.hk>

Cc: Ron Boyer <rlboyer10@hotmail.com>

Subject: Re: IP--PP2.0

Thanks so much for sharing Shia's exceptional and pioneering work! Just finished a first read, and am pleased to learn of it. On the whole, it most accurately reflects Buddhist philosophy and psychology as I know it, and was totally on point to my reference in the conversation with Paul on his work. An important paper in many respects!

My only quibble is a subtle one: the appropriation of Buddhist traditions to modern Western psychology, even sophisticated theoretical approaches like Shia's remain "ego-based" in the focus on utilitarianism. Buddhist practice as a method for achieving happiness is still ego-based "self-improvement". Among the Ch'an an Zen sects of Buddhism, the idea of "no gaining idea" is central to correct understanding and practice. One does not practice meditation to attain anything whatsoever, but rather a function of self in itself, or the natural expression of one's Buddha-nature, self-nature, "essence of Mind," etc.

But practically speaking I understand the logic: Westerners are so inherently egoistic and self-centered that without selling meditation as a method of "self-improvement," Buddhism would likely have gained no foothold in this culture in the first place!

Have you shared this article with Paul? Methinks it lines up nicely with his indigenous Chinese perspective and critique of Seligman's hedonic "self improvement" theories.

Best,

R

From: Bond, Michael [MM] <michael.bond@polyu.edu.hk>
Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2019 6:03 PM
To: Ron Boyer <rlboyer10@hotmail.com>
Subject: FW: IP--PP2.0

Dear Ron,

This is such an insightful assessment of Paul's position in the unfolding well-being drama as it coalesces across cultural divides. In that regard, you may be interested in reading Shiah's attempt to psychologize the Buddhist approach: <http://journal.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00124/full>

With appreciation, mike bond

Michael Harris Bond, PhD

Visiting Chair Professor (OB and HRM)
Room M902
Li Ka Shing Tower

Department of Management and Marketing
Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Hung Hom, Kowloon
Hong Kong S.A.R., China
telephone: [852] 2766-7342

Link to Department website and current
c.v.: <http://www.polyu.edu.hk/mm/bond>

From: iptaskforce@simplelists.com <iptaskforce@simplelists.com> **On Behalf Of** Ron Boyer
Sent: Thursday, 28 November 2019 2:53 AM
To: iptaskforce@simplelists.com
Cc: Ron Boyer <rlboyer10@hotmail.com>
Subject: [WARNING: SUSPECTED SPAM]Re: IP--PP2.0

Paul, thanks for sharing your excellent and thought-provoking paper. I was especially moved by the personal somewhat confessional style and the perspective as a whole.

I wonder, in response to your question, if the term Positive Psychology actually applies to your approach. The essay struck me as essentially a **critique** of Seligman's PP grounded in an integral psychological perspective whose theoretical lenses are humanistic-existential (Maslow, Nietzsche, Frankl), transpersonal/East-West Integral (appealing to spiritual values, philosophies, practices, including the indigenous Buddhist emphasis on suffering and Taoist philosophy), and depth psychology (references to shadow, reconciliation of opposites, which are primary themes addressed in Jung's voluminous works).

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Of course, so much depends on how we define "happiness." The view of Ch'an Buddhism, for example, teaches that happiness lies in quieting the mind (as a direct practice) and a radical "letting go" of dualistic concepts in order to experience Reality directly, moment to moment, in the immediate present. How can humans be "happy" or lead meaningful lives unless we are actually present to life in the moment, here and now?

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Your main altruistic impulse, in terms of personal meaning, is clearly that of a bodhisattva--to relieve the sufferings of humanity, an expression of your indigenous grounding in ancient Asian wisdom-traditions, which have contributed profoundly to Western psychology since the 1960s.

In any event, your essay was very stimulating and obviously a catalyst here for many excellent comments by colleagues! If you have written anything comparing/contrasting your indigenous Chinese psychological perspective with leading Western thinkers you cite (eg. Nietzsche, Frankl, et al), I'd appreciate you sharing either here or with me privately.

Ron

[Wong, P. T. P. & Bowers, V. Mature happiness, 2019.pdf](#)

[Lee, Y. C. et al., Peace of mind, 2012.pdf](#)

[frontiersSmithBond2019published.pdf](#)

From: **Ron Boyer** <rlboyer10@hotmail.com>

Date: Mon, Dec 2, 2019 at 5:57 PM

Hi Michael,

Thanks again for your thoughts and the papers you forwarded as well. I just finished reading them all, and found them all very informative since I am more or less a newbie to this entire literature. Positive Psychology per Seligman never caught my interest; it seems at best a very limited approach and geared to an affluent Western (American) white audience with its self-improvement emphasis.

But the article you forwarded by Paul on "mature happiness" came just at the right moment, as I was in process of getting my head around the fundamentals of mainstream PP theory and terminology in order to respond to his last request for feedback from the IPTF members on the comments he received from a major figure in PP. Paul's article helped me to begin to get my head around the discourse. Thanks for that!

The other articles are also excellent, as well as the Shia article on Buddhist psychology you sent earlier, which I think is quite relevant to Paul's work and East-West psychology as a whole.

As I see it, PP appears to be a fairly recent or emerging "psychology of happiness" defined as "subjective well being." Paul's approach, in my opinion, introduces the vitally relevant subject of the relationship of suffering or unhappiness to happiness, as two poles of this dualistic concept of "happiness," balancing mainstream Western PP's emphasis with the universal existential reality of human suffering, characteristically an emphasis of Eastern thought largely through the Buddhist historical and cultural traditions but also at the heart of all forms of

Western psychotherapy, which aim to address and ameliorate suffering, or lack of SWB, e.g. in psychopathology.

This Eastern perspective finds many theoretical analogues in Jung's depth psychology, and it's emphasis on the shadow-aspects of the personality Jung addressed, for one example, in relation to the existence of extreme suffering and evil in his famous Answer to Job. In his discussion of extreme suffering, Paul is on solid ground with thousands of years of philosophy and theological debate, both East and West, which is to say this is a very complex topic, with countless philosophical and religious "schools" and perspectives. The topic itself resists any attempt at on--size-fits -all.

A big part of the challenge to research in this area appears to be a standardized relatively quantifiable operational definition of "happiness" with its myriads of cultural, socio-historical variations, not to mention the different philosophies and other contextual factors, including gender. For example, do women define happiness in the same way as men? Do women of this country or that historical period define happiness similarly to women of post-modern Americans? For example, I've observed that all of the indigenous Chinese women I know place extraordinary value, in terms of self-worth, on filial responsibility, which trumps individual pursuit of happiness in the Western sense. They will sacrifice everything to take of a sick or dying parent. That's just one example There would appear to be so many variables to consider!

This subject is a deep rabbit hole. Nevertheless, in summary, I believe Paul is really introducing an important and needed element of suffering to the PP approach that promises to complete the picture. He addresses a central theme in the Abstract to his article on "mature happiness," which is the ability to respond to suffering with a different level or type of happiness.

Happiness is not a static goal, it seems to me, which is why fame, wealth, power, etc are not identical with happiness or I think with SWB. I know many miserable famous, wealthy or powerful individuals. Paul's approach it appears emphasizes happiness as a process, including the skills of resilience in the face of exceptional suffering, his hospitalization being a splendid example.

So what exactly does happiness--defined as SWB--have to do with the ability to overcome suffering, whether mundane everyday suffering (e.g. annoyances like encounters with bad drivers or having your electricity turned off for not paying a bill, etc.) or extreme conditions of suffering, like loss of health or divorce or, more seriously, imprisonment in a death camp like Victor Frankl? And is WB the precondition to resilience and the overcoming of extreme suffering, or its outcome? Or both, or neither?

Such are the questions this thread of discourse are stimulating for me currently
Ron

From: **Bond, Michael [MM]** <michael.bond@polyu.edu.hk>

Date: Mon, Dec 2, 2019 at 11:06 PM

These are very savvy observations from Ron in response to my sparse inputs.

The conversation will stimulate some members of the task force, perhaps clarifying some issues. One issue not addressed so far is a stage-of-life factor, signaled by Paul's use of the phrase "mature happiness". Properly designed cross-sectional or hoped-for longitudinal research would surely reveal differently weighted factors leading to a SWB [or contented with life or LS] outcome measure [gender, as Ron suggests, as well as education level and national-ethnic culture would also play a role, I expect, as suggested in the attached article.

Share away!

Michael
