

Listening 1

Kind: captions In positive psychology we adopt the saying be careful what you think because your thoughts become your words be careful what you say because your words become your actions be careful what you do because your actions become your habits your habits determine your character and that is what determines your future. Positive psychology is the study of what makes life worth living. As a science it tests hypotheses about what works to improve our lives. It uses the same research techniques as other areas of psychology it's just the focus of what is studied that is different. Traditionally psychology has been most concerned with what is going wrong for people and has attempted to find ways to make them less miserable. The goal of positive psychology is to make normal life more fulfilling. It focuses on people's strengths and asks what is it that is going well in their lives. Instead of helping people move from the minus end of the scale up to zero it focuses on moving people to the positive end of the scale. Positive psychology complements traditional psychology but suggests that there should be as much focus on finding out how to use our strengths as on how to manage our weaknesses. By focusing on what is right with you we learn how to become resilient. We move our focus from striving, to getting more engaged with life, working out the meaning of our life and ultimately having greater life satisfaction. Habits for a healthy body include good food and exercise. Habits for a healthy mind include good habits of thinking. This includes engaging in realistic thinking which is infused with a sense of optimism. Of course some students experience more life challenges and may have less support than others. The goal of positive psychology is to assist people to focus on the parts of their life over which they do have some control. Research has found that three main things account for how satisfied we are with our life our personal qualities our life circumstances and most importantly intentional activities that we choose to do to make life worth living. On average, across the population about 50% comes from our genetic makeup and for most people only about 10% comes from their life circumstances. So that means that we have a large amount left over which is determined by our choices. We can choose to engage in specific activities which research has shown will build our well-being. There is no clear cut off between ill-being and well-being. Just as we can get into bad habits of eating or exercise and become unfit or ill we can also do this with our mental health. Mental health might best be seen as a set of skills to be developed by training just as we do when we go to the gym or train for a sport or when we learn a musical instrument. At the early stages we can improve our life by learning the skills to be happier and more positive but doing fun things is only part of the answer. Ultimately, as with many top sports people musicians, or any successful person much of our life satisfaction will come from being part of a team or group and from helping others to do well. Just as being a good sports person does not mean always winning well being is not just about always being happy.