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FOREWORD

In the foreword to the first edition of *Positive Psychological Assessment: A Handbook of Models and Measures*, edited by Shane J. Lopez and C. R. (Rick) Snyder (2003), Donald Clifton, the pioneer in strengths assessment, observed that the volume "provides the foundation of concepts and measurement experience to enable social scientists to make a leap forward in presenting a better way of life for future civilizations" (p. xiii). Clifton concluded his remarks by stating that "this is the kind of guide we need to transform our civilization and open the doors to a new, exciting quality of life—perhaps a world of abundance rather than scarcity and a world of peace for all" (p. xiv).

Those are high expectations for any volume. And yet, as I sit here looking at the table of contents for the second edition of this volume, edited by Matthew W. Gallagher and Shane J. Lopez, I can't help but think that perhaps Donald Clifton was right in shooting for the stars in his hopes for the text. Certainly, the times are seemingly more uncertain today than they were 16 years ago when the first edition was published. If anything, the critical need for positive psychology has dramatically increased since 2003. And, of course, so much of what we need to do clinically and in a research context in positive psychology begins with assessment. In this new edition, Gallagher and Lopez again bring together productive, knowledgeable scholars in positive psychology and assessment—some whose chapters appeared in the first edition, others who bring a fresh perspective to this edition.

In reading the original volume again (okay, scanning it . . . it's a large volume!), I'm struck by the fact that in that first edition, from the foreword to the preface to the individual chapters, there were consistent attempts to justify the need for a volume on positive psychology assessment and defend

the idea that we should assess and study what is good and right about people. I do not think that this defense is any longer necessary. I am sure that the field will be as hungry for this edition as it was for the first edition and that the fresh perspectives, updates and expansions on assessment, and information about models and tools that can support efforts to promote optimal human performance will be warmly received. I am also sure that there will be no need to justify this volume's publication in the same way that was the case 16 years ago.

Donald Clifton had the authority and credibility to spend much of his foreword exhorting readers to bring the positive of psychology into their practice and to use the volume as a guide to balancing the negative and positive of human action and behavior. I will let the experts who have authored these chapters do that. I will say that I am impressed with the scope and sequence of topics in this second edition, beginning with chapters providing a "search for the positive"; examining cognitive, emotional, and interpersonal models and measures; and examining models and measures of positive processes and outcomes. This is truly a state-of-the art examination of positive psychological assessment. While writing this foreword, I reread the final chapter in the first edition by Shane and Rick that focused on the future of positive psychological assessment. I think they would be pleased with this new volume in that it provides a new milestone that establishes where we are and provides new information for goals and objectives for the future development of the field of positive psychological assessment and, indeed, for the field of positive psychology more generally.

It is hard to beat having Donald Clifton write the foreword to your text on positive psychological assessment because there are a few people in the field whose level of authority and credibility matches his, and you may be wondering why one of them is not writing this foreword. The reason, quite simply, is that Matt Gallagher, whose Herculean efforts are responsible for bringing this volume to fruition, wanted someone who knew both of the editors from the first edition—Shane Lopez and Rick Snyder—to say a few words. My work has been in the application of the self-determination construct to the disability context (and, I might add, I greatly benefitted from information in the first edition and will do so from this edition as well). When I came to the University of Kansas (KU) in the late 1990s, colleagues told me that I needed to get to know an up-and-coming young professor whose work was in the area of hope. Shane Lopez was, at that time, an assistant professor in educational psychology. He and I hit it off immediately, in part because of the shared themes and values in our scholarly work and in part because Shane knew everyone and was everyone's friend. We began talking about shared research and practice interests. Soon after, Shane introduced me to Rick Snyder, who was a distinguished scholar in the Department of Psychology at KU, a pioneer in positive psychology and hope theory, and Shane's mentor. Like Shane, Rick was friendly, supportive, and thoughtful. The ideas that Rick and Shane had regarding the roles of agency and pathways thinking in hope theory influenced how I understood agentic action and self-determination. I had the opportunity to

work with both Rick and Shane. Rick and I had interesting conversations about another KU psychologist, Fritz Heider, and the influence Heider's psychology of interpersonal relationships had on hope theory. Shane was a partner with us in moving our work in self-determination forward, better aligning that work with self-determination theory, and positioning our understanding of the construct to enable us to position our work within the growing field of positive psychology.

It still seems surreal to me that neither Rick nor Shane is with us today. Their physical absence leaves a sense of work undone and important projects never undertaken. A sense of enthusiasm, creativity, and, well, hope seems palpably missing with their passing. But, because I had a chance to get to know many of Shane's doctoral students, I know that the work he and Rick started continues through early-career professionals like Matt Gallagher, the lead editor of this volume, and through chapter authors like Jennifer Teramoto Pedrotti, Lisa Edwards, Heather Rasmussen, Jeana Magyar, and Brian Cole. I suspect that the majority of the contributors, particularly early- and midcareer scholars, have a story to tell about how Shane and/or Rick impacted their lives. To that end, Rick and Shane's enthusiasm, optimism, hope, and support emanate through the words and scholarship of the contributors to this volume and through many other scholars and practitioners in positive psychology.

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I

SEARCHING FOR THE POSITIVE

1

Introduction to Positive Psychological Assessment

Matthew W. Gallagher

Imagine walking into a great hall filled with grand wooden tables. On those tables are thousands of weights and hundreds of well-worn scales, some larger than others. Using the scales, all engraved with the names of age-old foibles, measure the success of your life.

Next, imagine a second hall with twice as many scales—all of the scales for human foibles *plus* scales labeled with antiquated names of human strengths. This huge system of scales measures all qualities essential to life and well-being. Now measure the success of your life.

The premise of this handbook is that the system of scales in the second hall would help to strike a vital balance in our measurement of life success. Indeed, psychological science has provided us with many theoretically grounded, psychometrically sound measures of human strength. The goal of the second edition of this text is to provide an update on advances in the operationalization of constructs and developments of measures in positive psychology.

A POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

Historically, scholars and counseling theorists have argued about the *natural state of human behavior*. To reveal any implicit theories regarding this state, we encourage readers to think about the assumptions they make about their research participants and their clients, their partners and their children,

themselves and who they want to be. *Perspective* on human behavior determines the routes taken in pursuit of psychological data.

The information-gathering routes we take can yield data reflecting psychological weakness, psychological strength, or a combination of the two. It is the combination, the complementary bodies of knowledge, that will help resolve the shortcomings of common psychological assessment practices. It has been well established for decades that negative events may have a greater immediate effect on cognition, affect, and behavior than positive events (Taylor, 1991). For example, the work of Tversky and Kahneman (1981) demonstrated how framing can influence biases in decision making such that people may focus more on potential losses than gain when making decisions. These findings and decades of related research have led psychologists to suggest that "bad is stronger than good" (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001). Although this evidence, the realities of prevalence rates of mental illness (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), and the negative influences of societal factors such as poverty and discrimination require psychologists to investigate how best to understand and ameliorate negative psychological outcomes, it is important for the field of psychology to maintain balance in how we assess and understand psychological functioning.

Even if bad experiences are more immediately salient, there are numerous reasons to focus on positive aspects of functioning even when trying to understand the impact of negative events (e.g., Sparks & Baumeister, 2008). For example, it is an unfortunate reality that the vast majority of individuals will experience one or more traumatic events, yet despite estimates of lifetime traumatic exposure rates of 89.7%, only 8.3% of those same individuals were found to ever develop posttraumatic stress disorder in their lifetime (Kilpatrick et al., 2013). Resilience is therefore the modal outcome even in the face of terrible tragedy, and most individuals are mentally healthy and functioning well in life despite various stressors (Keyes, 2005). Any attempt to characterize human functioning that fails to quantify or represent the positive aspects of functioning therefore provides an incomplete and inadequate representation of psychological functioning.

After reading this handbook, it should be easier for you to see both the positive and negative aspects of someone's presentation and to be able to switch back and forth between—and to integrate—the complementary views of psychology and bodies of psychological science. Dozens of psychological strengths have been operationalized by psychologists committed to understanding the best in people. In this volume, the authors present their conceptualizations of particular human strengths, and they examine the psychometric properties and clinical utilities of observational techniques, physiological measures, scales, inventories, and interview and narrative techniques. We have asked the authors to elucidate the theoretical underpinnings of their measures and to critique their assessment strategies in light of today's stringent measurement standards.

Many of these measures of strengths are theoretically based, thus lending themselves to inclusion in explanatory models (such as those describing buffering processes that keep illness at bay and those models detailing how strengths facilitate healthy development). Furthermore, advancements in measurement

of strength will provide the tools needed to examine the threshold effects (e.g., how much of a strength is enough to produce benefits in someone's life) and exponential effects of the positive (e.g., whether four strengths combined yield more than double the beneficial effects of two strengths combined).

IMPORTANCE OF POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Tremendous progress has been made since the first volume of this handbook was published, not just in the development and refinement of models and measures of positive psychology, but also in demonstrating the importance of measuring these constructs in different contexts. There is increasing evidence that positive mental health is more than just the absence of mental illness, that promoting positive mental health is important across the lifespan (e.g., Keyes, 2013), and that positive mental health predicts health outcomes, functioning, and even mortality above and beyond traditional measures that focus on deficits or psychopathology (Keyes, 2005, 2007; Keyes & Simoes, 2012). Remarkable work has been conducted in developing taxonomies of character strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and demonstrating how strengths predict and promote many important life outcomes (e.g., Niemiec, 2013). Meta-analytic reviews have demonstrated the robust evidence that positive outcomes not only reflect but promote further positive outcomes (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005) and that positive psychological interventions can both promote mental health and decrease mental illness (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009).

Although more research is needed to examine positive psychological outcomes in diverse settings, there is increasing evidence that positive factors such as optimism and positive affect have remarkably consistent effects on wellbeing and health worldwide (Gallagher, Lopez, & Pressman, 2013; Pressman, Gallagher, & Lopez, 2013). The assessment of positive psychological outcomes is also increasingly being used to improve our understanding of how best to predict and promote positive outcomes in the workplace, in educational settings, and in promoting recovery in psychotherapy. For example, the Gallup Student Poll (Gallup, 2017) has been used in recent years to quantify and enhance the hope, engagement, and well-being of more than 5 million American students. The thesis that studying positive outcomes may improve our understanding in research or outcomes in practice is not new (e.g., Menninger, 1959), but all of this work speaks to the value of positive psychological assessment in advancing the science and practice of psychology

OVERVIEW OF THE SECOND EDITION OF
POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

In planning the second edition of this handbook, we sought to build on what worked well in the first edition of this handbook and to provide an updated overview of many of the most important and widely studies theories, constructs, and measures of positive psychology. A major goal in revising this handbook

was to not only provide an update on the science supporting different models and measures of positive psychology, but to also provide more concrete examples of how these tools have been and can be used in clinical practice. In this way, we hope that this handbook will be a valuable resource both for investigators conducting research to further our understanding of positive psychological constructs and also to serve as a useful introduction and guide for practitioners who are interested in incorporating measures of positive psychological functioning in their clinical practice. New to this edition of the handbook is the inclusion of case studies in many chapters to provide more concrete examples of how the constructs covered in this handbook can be applied when working with clients in clinical settings.

The handbook is organized into six sections. The introductory section on searching for the positive includes chapters that establish the importance of broadening assessment in psychology to include a focus on both the positive and negative features of individuals and environments, the influence that positive and negative labels can have on our understanding of functioning in both research and clinical practice, and the importance of ensuring that positive psychological assessment tools are available for and implemented with individuals across cultures and diverse backgrounds. The second section focuses on cognitive models and measures and includes chapters on different forms of positive thinking (i.e., optimism, hope, self-efficacy) that have been shown to be important predictors of functioning in diverse contexts, as well as other cognitive resources and strengths (problem-solving appraisal, creativity, courage, and wisdom) that have extensive empirical support as important factors in promoting flourishing for individuals.

The third section of this handbook includes four chapters focusing on emotional models and outcomes, including best practices for studying positive affect, how to quantify individual levels of self-esteem, and how the presence of love and emotional intelligence can influence both one's individual and social functioning. The fourth section focuses more on positive outcomes in a social or interpersonal context, including how empathy and attachment security can provide a foundation for healthy relationships; how forgiveness, humor, and gratitude can be measured and their role in strengthening social bonds; and how maturity in moral judgments promotes human development. The fifth section focuses on measures and constructs for assessing positive outcomes in diverse contexts such as understanding the role of religious outcomes, the presence of meaning and other positive work outcomes, and the most widely studied model of characterizing positive mental health: subjective well-being. Finally, the handbook concludes with a brief overview of the progress that has been made in the 15 years since the first edition of the handbook was published and how the field can continue to build on this progress to improve our understanding of positive psychological assessment going forward.

Although the second edition of this handbook contains more than two dozen chapters, it represents a selective compilation of many of the most promising and widely studied topics in the field and does not represent an exhaustive

compilation of all models and measures in positive psychology. The degree to which the number of models and measures in positive psychology has grown since the first edition of the handbook speaks to the vibrant nature of the field. Constructs such as resilience, curiosity, mindfulness, flow, posttraumatic growth, and others are also important positive psychological traits and processes and their absence in this volume should not be construed as an indication that those topics and others are not also important positive psychological outcomes that researchers and practitioners may want to assess/consider to more fully characterize functioning. Rather, the breadth of topics that have been and continue to be developed in this area speak to the growing understanding of, and excitement for developing, assessment tools to quantify psychological strengths and resources.

THE LEGACY OF C. R. SNYDER AND SHANE J. LOPEZ

Unfortunately, the field of positive psychology has now lost the two individuals who served as editors of the first edition of this handbook and who were leading figures in establishing and growing the field of positive psychology: Charles Richard "Rick" Snyder and Shane J. Lopez. Rick was a distinguished professor at the University of Kansas who published more than 20 edited volumes and books and more than 250 articles and chapters, was a gifted teacher who received dozens of awards for teaching, and was an inspiring and award-winning mentor. As the primary developer of hope theory (Snyder, 2002), Rick conducted seminal work demonstrating the importance of positive cognition in promoting positive outcomes across many domains, as well as extensive work on coping, reality negotiation, forgiveness, and many other topics in positive psychology. Rick passed away in 2006, a few years after the publication of the first edition of this handbook after developing transitional cell carcinoma.

Like Rick, Shane was an award-winning teacher and researcher and was remarkably productive. Shane was Gallup Senior Scientist in Residence and research director for the Clifton Strengths Institute as well as a professor at the University of Kansas. He published over 100 articles and chapters and over a dozen edited volumes and books, many of which were in collaboration with Rick and represented seminal contributions to the field, such as the *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (Snyder & Lopez, 2009). Shane was a leader in the field of hope and was particularly influential in developing tools such as the Gallup Student Poll to help identify strengths and well-being of students. After years of persevering with a number of serious health conditions, Shane passed away in July 2016 as we were finalizing plans for how to revise this edition of the handbook.

Shane and Rick were extraordinary scientists who were also cherished colleagues, mentors, and friends of many of the contributors to this volume, as well as many other scientists and clinicians around the world. They are dearly missed, and this volume is dedicated to their memory.

CONCLUSION

In developing the second edition of this handbook, we were fortunate to once again have so many distinguished researchers contribute overviews of different assessment tools and theories of positive psychology. With the loss of Rick, Shane, and other pillars of positive psychology such as Chris Peterson, the field of positive psychology is transitioning to the second and third generations of researchers in many areas of positive psychology. The work covered in this volume and the ongoing research on these topics and clinical practice using these tools worldwide speaks to the vibrancy of the field and reason for optimism that continued progress will be made in the field of positive psychological assessment. I hope that this volume not only will help researchers and practitioners understand what is currently known about how best to conceptualize and measure many of the most important aspects of positive psychological functioning in both clinical practice and research, but also will help motivate further developments in positive psychological assessment so that we continue to improve our understanding of how to have a more balanced and complete understanding of optimal functioning for individuals and communities worldwide.

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