

# Flourishing through Suffering: Insights from Existential Positive Psychology

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PRESENTED AT THE HFE INSTITUTE FLOURISH TALKS

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# Overview

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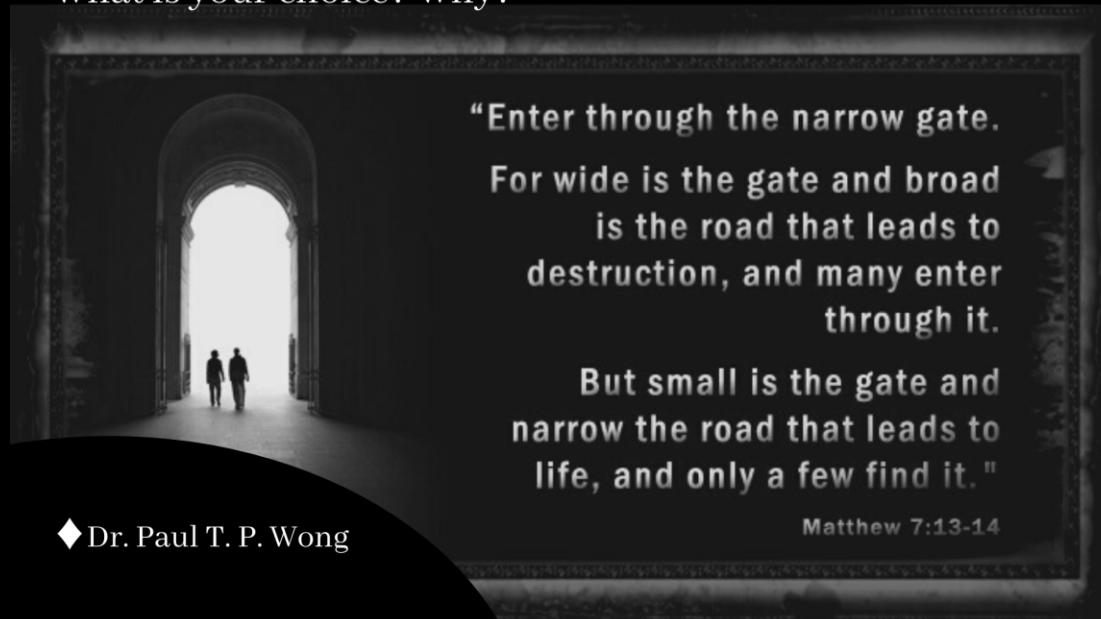


1. Introduction – How can we flourish in the era of COVID-19?
2. The problem of human suffering
3. The inadequacies of focusing only on the positive
4. The need for existential positive psychology (PP 2.0)
5. The self-transcendence model
6. Mature happiness in trying times

We all have to make a choice between:

- (1) A broad gate that promises you a life of worldly happiness and success
- (2) A narrow gate that promises you a life of suffering and flourishing.

What is your choice? Why?



# 1. Introduction

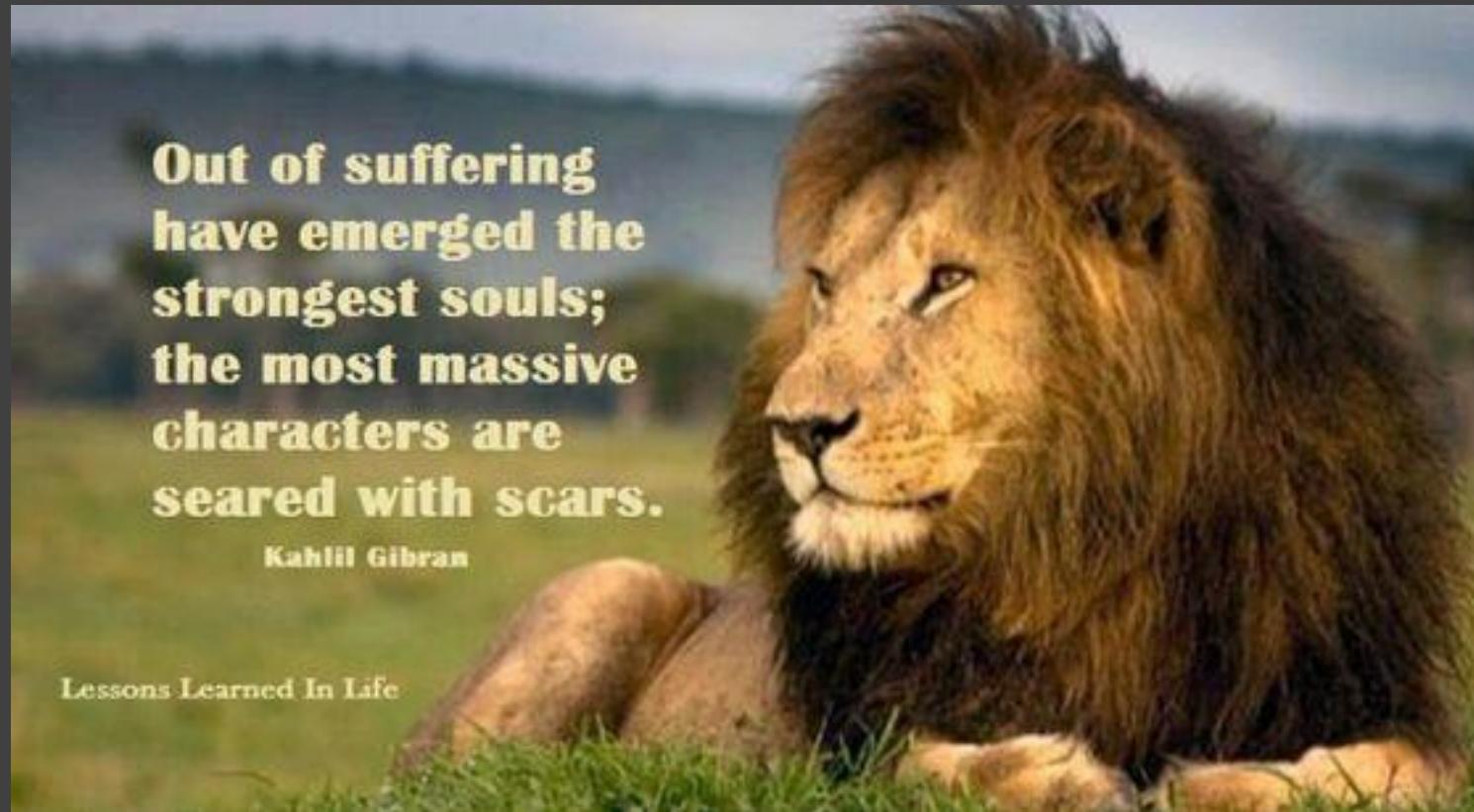
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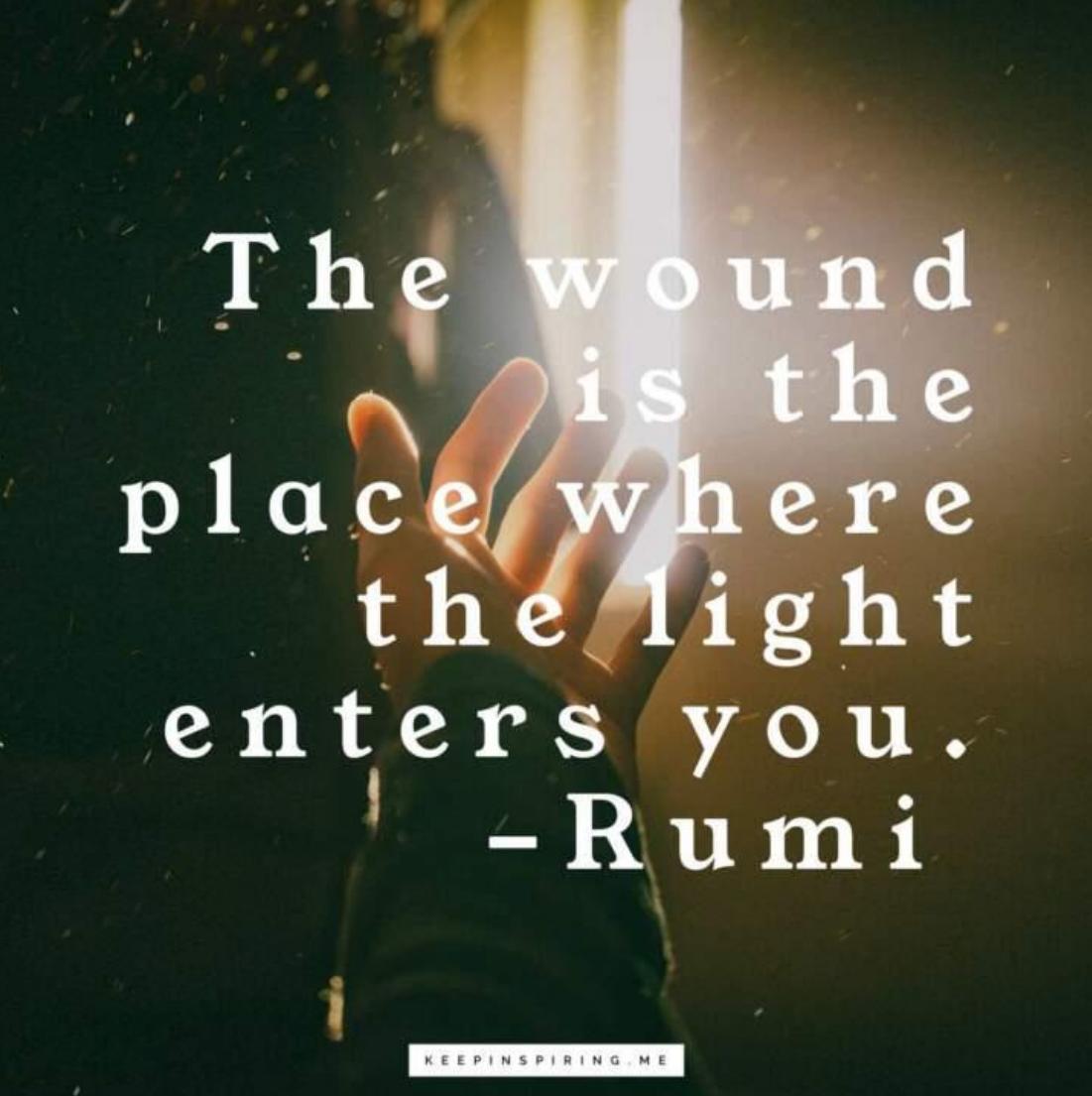
## The pandemic and suffering

- The universality of suffering is a fact that we can no longer deny or avoid in the age of COVID-19.
- The pandemic has destroyed countless businesses and careers.
- The world is full of cut-throat competition and human evils.
- The natural tendency to avoid or escape from the pain of life may create more problems for us.
- Paradoxically, embracing your pain is a better alternative to find healing and flourishing.
- Adversity can either break us or make us.
- Turn suffering into strength and trauma into triumph.

# 1. Introduction

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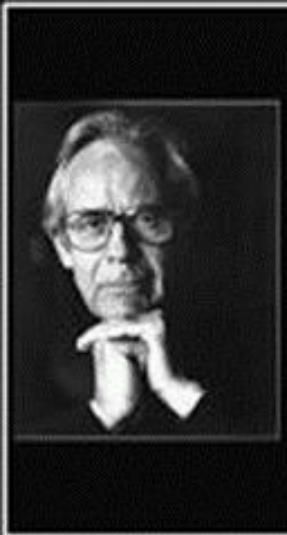
The wound  
is the  
place where  
the light  
enters you.  
- Rumi

KEEP INSPIRING ME

## Suffering, resilience, and the need self-transcendence (ST)

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- It is the worst of times; it is also the best of times. But we cannot celebrate the best without overcoming and transcending the worst.
- The power of ST achieves the dual purpose of transforming suffering into resilience and motivating us to pursue the highest ideals.
- This vertical dimension of ST is often neglected, because current psychology research tends to focus on the horizontal dimension of self-actualization, and worldly success.

A black and white portrait of Rollo May, an elderly man with glasses and a thoughtful expression, resting his chin on his hand.

**One does not become fully human painlessly.**

(Rollo May)

izquotes.com

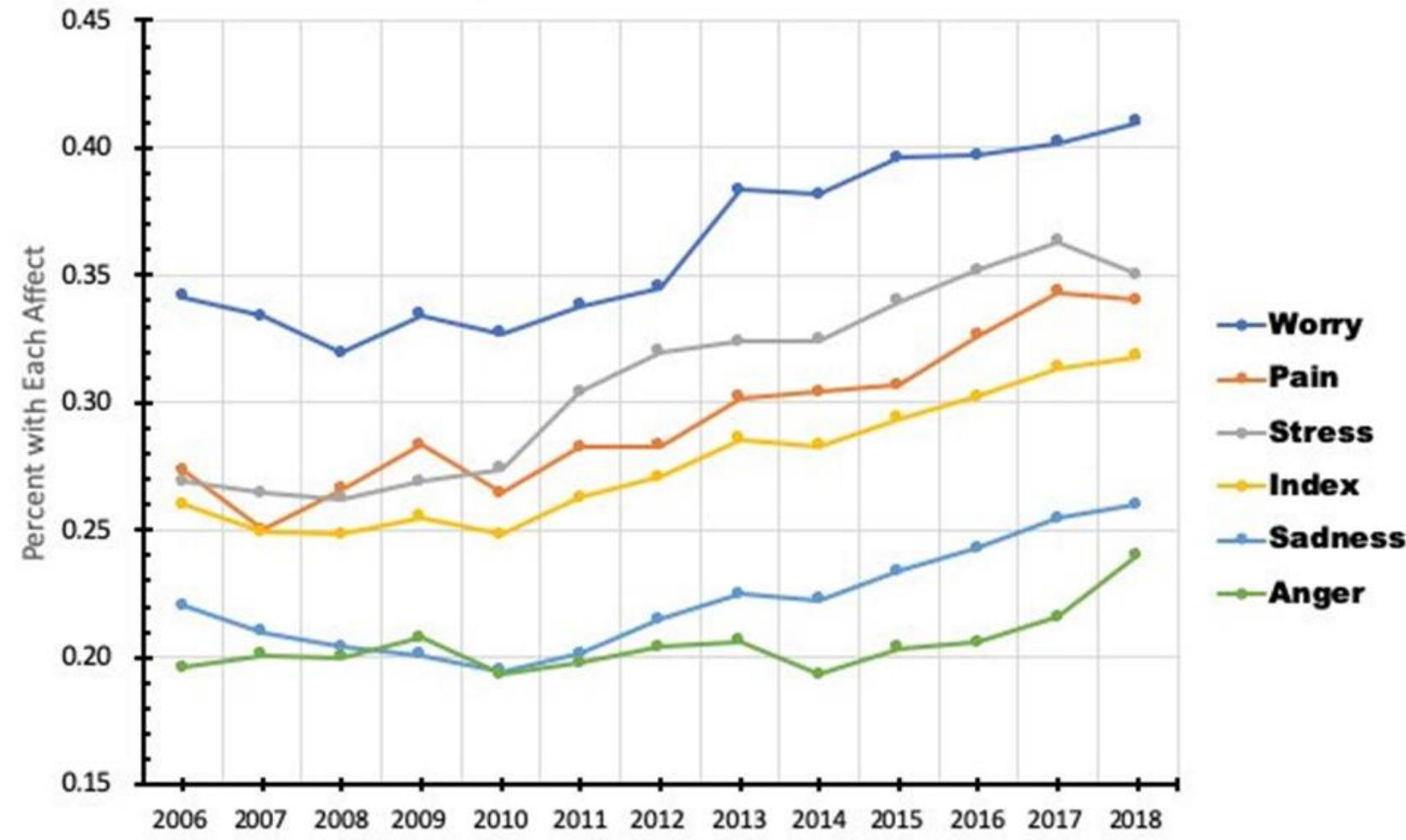
## 2. The problem of human suffering

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Sources of human suffering:

- External events beyond human control (natural disasters, the book of Job).
- External events within human control (community safety, good government).
- Internal events beyond human control (the book of Ecclesiastics & the human bondage, growing pains).
- Internal events within human control (the law of effect, the law of effort).

## Rising Negative Affect in All Countries (Gallup)



# Personal Reasons for suffering

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The ego says, 'I shouldn't have to suffer,' and that thought makes you suffer so much more. It is a distortion of the truth, which is always paradoxical. The truth is that you need to say yes to suffering before you can transcend it.

— Eckhart Tolle —

AZ QUOTES

We all want to happy but most of us feel miserable. Here are some reasons:

- Too much egotism and pride.
- Single-minded pursuit of life is in and by itself self-defeating.
- Materialist things can never fill our spiritual and relational needs.
- Too sensitive – easily impacted by what other people say or do to them, external events, their own limitations.
- Loneliness and over-thinking.
- Existential anxieties and suppressed painful emotions.

# An Existential Model of the 9 Stages of Life-Span Psychology, Tracing the Developmental Roots of Human Vulnerability, Frailty and Virtues.

◆ Dr. Paul T. P. Wong

	Stage	Age	Existential Crisis	Main Task	Gains	Risks
1.	Infancy	Birth–2 years	Separation anxiety	Necessary gradual separation from mother	- Trust, faith, and hope - Secure attachment (love) - Enduring discomfort - Delayed gratification	- Dependency - Anxious/avoidant attachment - No frustration tolerance - Narcissism - Fear of abandonment
2.	Preschooler	3–4 years	Safety anxiety (Fear of getting hurt)	Testing limits of autonomy	- Obedience - Freedom and security within boundaries - Honesty and speaking the truth - Respect for rules and authority	- No respect for parents and authority - No impulse control - Exerting power through temper tantrums - Deception - Aggression
3.	Kindergarten to primary school	4–12 years	Social anxiety (Fear of not belonging)	School	- Sharing and belonging - Playing fair (justice) - Humility and forgiveness - Curiosity about the world	- Isolation/loneliness - Social anxiety - Fear of rejection - Bullying and cruelty - Poor self-esteem - Manipulation
4.	Adolescence	12–18 years	Identity crisis	- Puberty - Preparation for adulthood	- Self-knowledge - Self-awareness - Sexual orientation - Discovery of areas of strengths	- Role confusion - Dropping out of school - Low achievement motivation - Seeking pleasure and risky behaviour - Rebelliousness and antisocial behaviour
5.	Young adult or early career	19–25	Independence anxiety	- Love relationship - Entry into work force	- Courage - Hope - Purpose - Confidence in love relationship and work	- No meaning and purpose - Depression - Aggressiveness - Addiction - Loner - Making a living through illegal means
6.	Adult or mid-career	25–40	- Achievement anxiety (Fear of failure in career and marriage)	- Supporting a family - Parenting	- Responsibility - Resourcefulness - Perseverance - Career success - Happy marriage - A sense of actualization	- Getting stuck in a bad job or bad marriage - Divorce - Delinquent children - No close friends - Depression and addiction
7.	Mature adult or late career	40–60	Mid-life crisis	- Reflection on the first half of life - Ready for major change	- Generativity - Life satisfaction - Life transformation - Social conscience - Consolidating one's contributions - Redemption	- Stagnation - Regression to adolescence - Taking unwise risks - Taking early retirement - Giving up on life
8.	Early old age	60–75	Ultimate concerns about boredom and meaninglessness	Retirement	- Self-transcendence - Integrity - Spiritual growth - Enjoying life to the fullest - Volunteering - Grand-parenting	- Despair - Depression - Bitterness - Resentment - Blaming and complaining - Cranky old person
9.	Late old age	76–death	Worrying about unfinished business	Completing the race gracefully	- Letting go, facing death with gratitude and faith - Integration - Death acceptance - Legacy - Hope for immortality - Wisdom - Spiritual maturity - Mature happiness	- Regrets - Despair - Depression - Anger towards life - Suicide - Alienating adult children

# Suffering inherent in human development

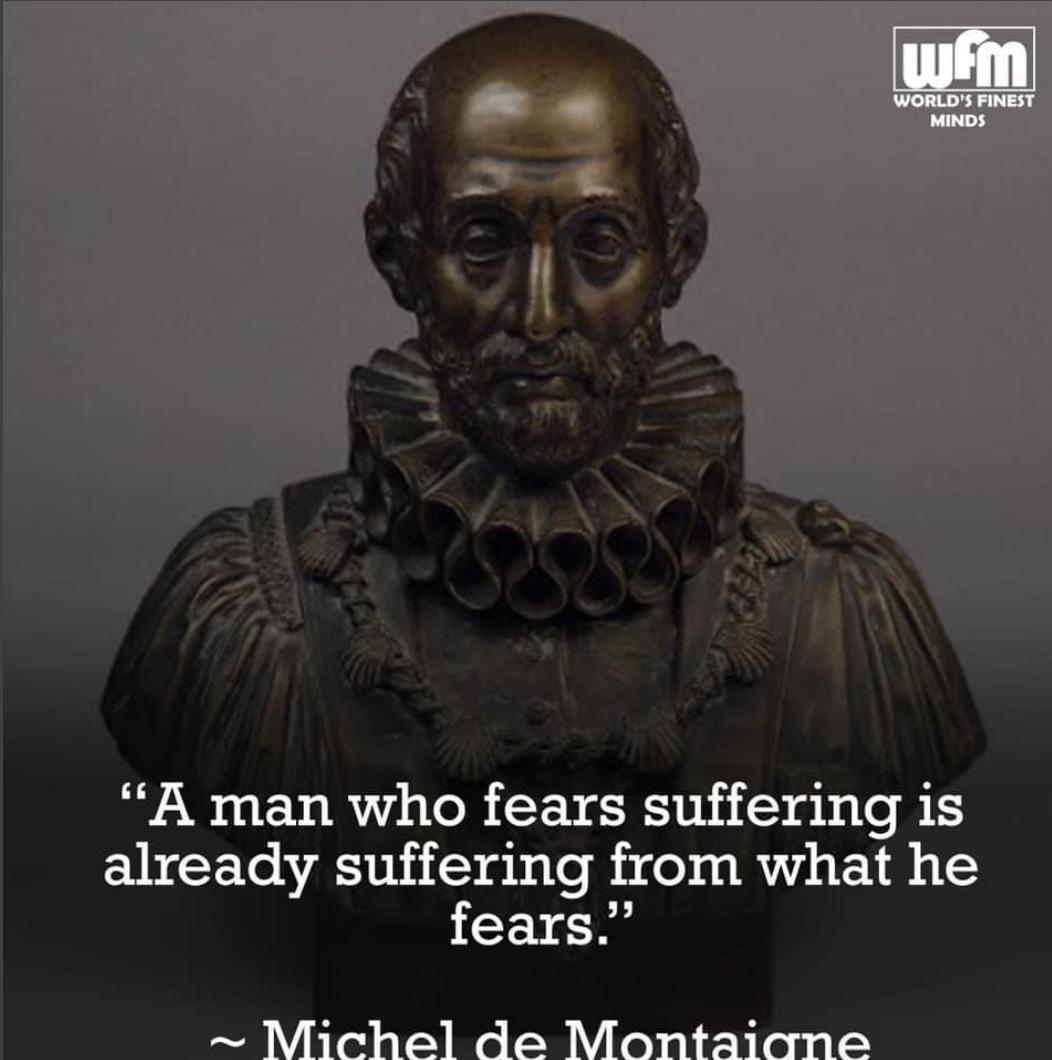
# 3. The inadequacies of focusing only on the positive

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## The dangers of positive illusion

- Adversity either breaks us and makes us bitter or makes us strong and better.
- Unrealistic positive expectations only lead to disappointment and despair.
- Avoiding hardships only make things worse.
- The biggest lie hoisted in the world is that one can have happiness, success, and flourishing without sacrifice, suffering, and fear of nature or God.





**“A man who fears suffering is already suffering from what he fears.”**

~ Michel de Montaigne

### 3. The inadequacies of focusing only on the positive

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Seligman's (2011) Model of Flourishing		Wong's (2021) <b>Self-transcendence Model of Flourishing Through Suffering</b>
P	Positive Emotions	<b>Positivity through embracing the dark side of life.</b>
E	Engagement	<b>Engagement through painful discipline.</b>
R	Positive Relationships	<b>Strong relationships through forgiving and enduring the foibles of others.</b>
M	Meaning	<b>Meaning through transcending egotism and external obstacles.</b>
A	Accomplishments	<b>Achievement through transcending sacrifices and failures.</b>

◆ Dr. Paul T. P. Wong

The inadequacies of  
the PERMA MODEL  
without the  
existential dimension

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# The inadequacies of positive education

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It is impossible for any elite athlete to succeed without going through the "hell" of brokenness and despair. One cannot succeed in any profession or career without going through:

- The discipline of efforts and persistence.
- Self-sacrifice and delay of gratification in order to reach your career goal.
- Mastering coping skills to overcome the agony of defeats.
- The courage, faith, and perseverance can be cultivation through intermittent reinforcement or hardships.

**IRON TRIANGLE**  
*to overcome the*  
**TERRORS OF LIFE  
AND DEATH**

**COURAGE**  
*to face fate with the  
defiant human spirit*

**ACCEPTANCE**  
*what cannot be  
avoided or changed*

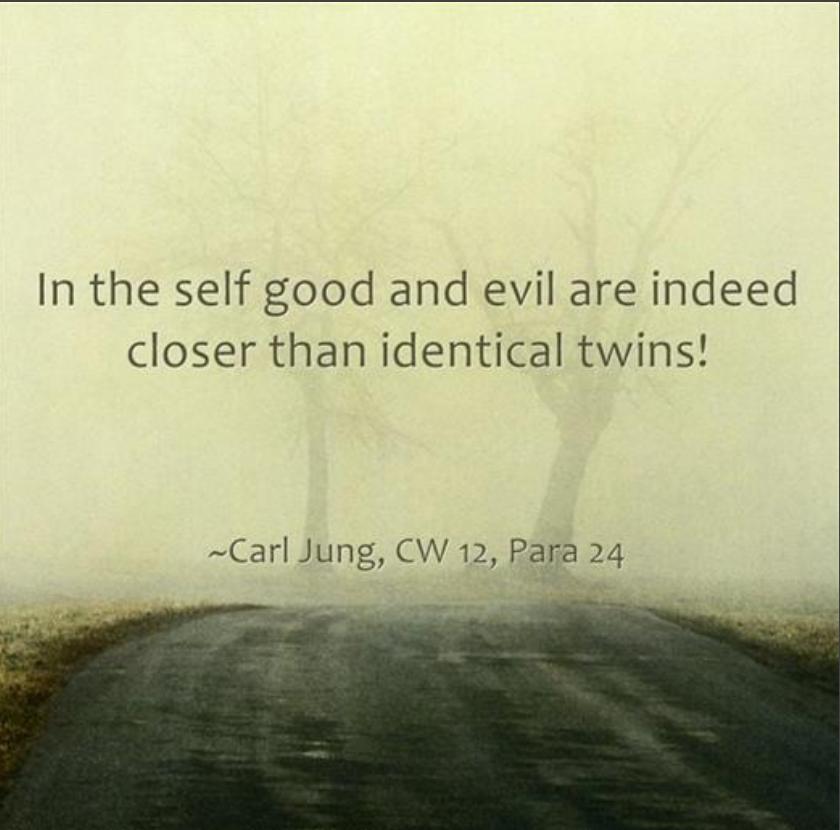
**TRANSCENDENCE**  
*to transform the  
dark side of life*

♦Dr. Paul T. P. Wong

# The need for resilience training for children

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- The pandemic is the best time to teach children resilience which will benefit them for the rest of their lives.
- They enjoy the best neuroplasticity; it is better to teach them important life skills rather than letting them waste time watching TV or playing electronic games.
- Harvard research has identified two essential areas to develop resilience: (1) supporting relationships from significant adults, and (2) learning adaptive coping skills or habits.



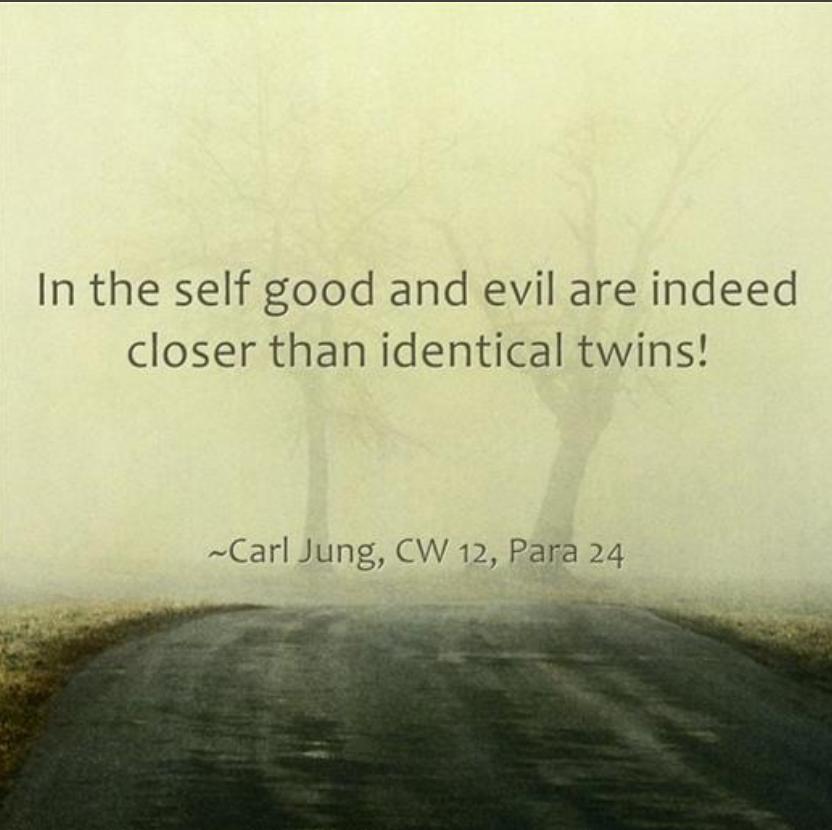
## 4. The need for existential positive psychology (PP 2.0)

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In the self good and evil are indeed closer than identical twins!

~Carl Jung, CW 12, Para 24

- 1 ) Not possible to achieve mental health without protecting the mind from traumas, toxic relationships, and emotions.
- 2) Can't develop virtue or happiness without coming to terms with our evil twin.
- 3) Self-focused psychology can only take us so far; it needs to be balanced by selfless devotion to community and spirituality.



## 4. The need for existential positive psychology (PP 2.0)

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In the self good and evil are indeed closer than identical twins!

~Carl Jung, CW 12, Para 24

- 4) A binary either-or approach to life is inadequate; the complexity and the paradoxical nature of life requires to take a dialectic both-end approach towards life.
- 5) It is necessary for people to have the courage to accept life as it is.
- 6) Most of our daily stress comes from interactions with other people. PP 2.0 calls for developing new ways of relating based on empathy, compassion, and genuineness.

# Existentialism

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- Existentialism is known for its focus on looking into one's abyss with existential angst. Positive psychology is known for its focus on what is good in us. But both perspectives only tell half of the story.
- In order to tell the complete story of human flourishing, existential positive psychology focuses on existential yearnings for the good life through confronting and transcending existential anxieties.

The Positive and Negative  
Sides of Ultimate Concerns

Yalom's four existential anxieties in Existential Therapy:

- Death (mortality)
- Freedom of choice
- Isolation
- Meaninglessness

Wong's four existential yearnings in the Existential Positive Psychology of personal growth:

- Religious or transcendental faith
- Courage to make the right decision
- Love or connections
- A life of meaning and purpose

◆ Dr. Paul T. P. Wong

# Four Existential Harmonies

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1. Death anxiety is harmonized with Faith in an immortal soul.
2. Freedom of choice anxiety with Courage to do the right thing.
3. Fear of isolation/loneliness with Connections/social interest.
4. Fear of meaninglessness with living a life of meaning and purpose.

# Seven important paradoxical truths from existential positive psychology (PP2.0):

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- 1) You need to go through suffering in order to discover the truth of how to flourish.
- 2) Your signature strength can become your fatal weakness.
- 3) The greatest insight of happiness is that one must embrace sadness first.
- 4) You need to let go what you love most in order to gain it.



The words of truth  
are always paradoxical.  
- Lao Tzu

# Seven important paradoxical truths from existential positive psychology (PP2.0):

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- 5) You will never experience true love without your willingness to sacrifice everything for the beloved.
- 6) You do not know your meaning in life, until you find something worth dying for.
- 7) True greatness comes to those who suffering and toil in obscurity for the greater good.



The words of truth  
are always paradoxical.  
- Lao Tzu

# Paradoxes of Human Existence

	<b>Existential Therapy (van Deruzen &amp; Adams)</b>	<b>Existential Positive Psychology (Wong &amp; Cowden)</b>
<b>The Physical World</b>		
<b>Challenge</b>	Death and pain.	How to keep safe and healthy in a world full of dangers and obstacles, but also full of overcoming and opportunities.
<b>Gain</b>	Life to the full.	Accept my finitude and transcend hardships in order to enjoy a full life.
<b>Loss</b>	Unlived life or constant fear.	Indulge in egotistical desires in the short-term but fail to meet body's need for safety and wellbeing in the long-term.
<b>The Social World</b>		
<b>Challenge</b>	Loneliness and rejection.	How to get along with other people and build meaningful relationships in spite of unavoidable misunderstandings and conflicts.
<b>Gain</b>	Understand and be understood.	Maintain harmonious relationships by remaining true to the self and transcending personal differences with empathy, compassion, and self-sacrifice.
<b>Loss</b>	Bullying or being bullied.	Treat people as instruments for my happiness/success and live a disconnected life filled with tension and conflict.
<b>The Psychological World</b>		
<b>Challenge</b>	Weakness and failure.	How to develop and realize my full potential in spite of internal/external constraints.
<b>Gain</b>	Strength and stamina.	Accept/transcend my limitations and actualize my potentials.
<b>Loss</b>	Narcissism or self destruction.	Deny/ignore personal limitations and fall prey to misguided ambitions.
<b>The Spiritual World</b>		
<b>Challenge</b>	Meaninglessness and futility.	Recognize that my life is both a tiny part of a vast universe and an important part of something infinitely greater.
<b>Gain</b>	Finding an ethics to live by.	Become connected with my true self, others, and some divine, transcendental force.
<b>Loss</b>	Fanaticism or apathy.	Sell my soul for worldly happiness and success, and live a wasted, lonely life without knowing my true self and life purpose.

◆ Dr. Paul T. P. Wong



RESEARCH INSTITUTE ON  
**FLOURISHING**  
**& SUFFERING**



# **RESEARCH INSTITUTE ON FLOURISHING AND SUFFERING**

The Research Institute on Flourishing and Suffering (RIFS) is a research arm of the International Society for Existential Positive Psychology of INPM.

## **HUMAN FLOURISHING THROUGH SUFFERING**

# The new science of flourishing through suffering

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1. It accepts the reality that the world is a difficult and dangerous place; therefore, a good life needs to transcend adversity, suffering and chaos.
2. It accepts the reality that all things in the world exist in polarity, and it is not possible to eradicate the negative pole; therefore, wellbeing depends on transcending opposing forces (or Yin-Yang).
3. It accepts the reality that in every stage of development, one is handicapped by internal and external constraints; therefore, personal growth depends on transcending and expanding one's boundaries.

# The new science of flourishing through suffering

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4. It accepts spirituality as the innermost core of personhood, one's soul or true self; the soul's deepest yearning is to seek self-transcendence in order to be connected with one's best future self, with others, and with God or nature.
5. The challenge of Existential Positive Psychology is to catalyze a change in psychology from a dichotomous approach to a dialectical approach of navigating opposite forces to achieve balance and wholeness.

# 5. The self-transcendence (ST) model

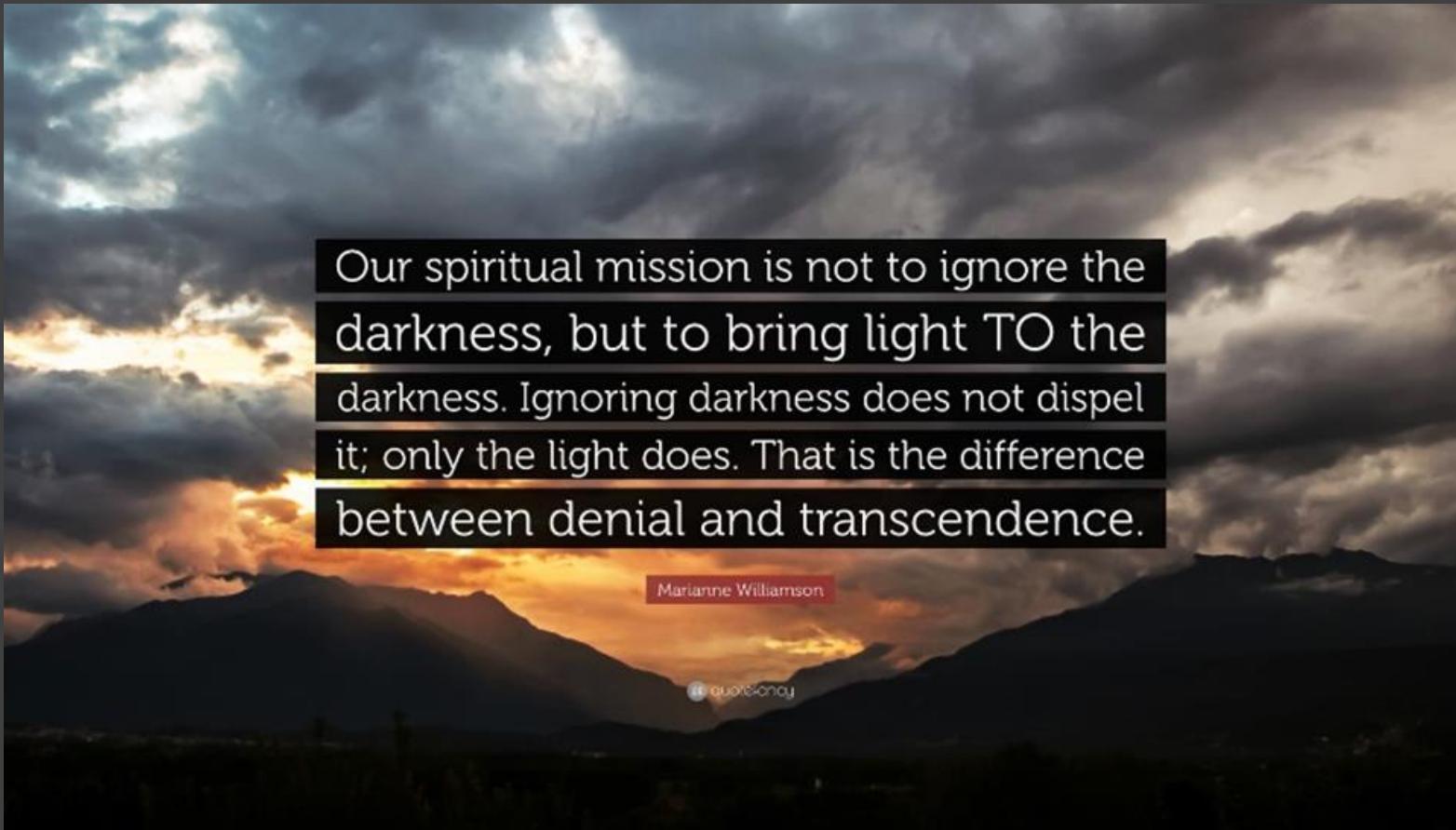
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The self-transcendence (ST) model of flourishing:

- ST is the motivation to go beyond limitations and obstacles in order to reach one's goal.
- ST involves the experience of something sacred beyond daily mundane activities.
- ST contributes to wellbeing through overcome adversity.
- No one can survive and flourish without the capacity to endure and transcend all the misfortunes and sufferings in order to serve something or someone greater than one's own life.
- My lifelong research proves this fundamental truth of life. This the cornerstone of Existential Positive Psychology.

# 5. The self-transcendence model

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# Five basic tenets of the self-transcendence paradigm:

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- (1) We are all broken people living in a broken world; our basic mental health needs for meaningful work and loving relationships are often not met because of many external and internal barriers.
- (2) We need to transcend and transform our brokenness and suffering first in order to find wholeness and well-being.
- (3) The best way to move forward is to be motivated by the intrinsic motivation to become one's best in order to bring light to the darkness, no matter how difficult.

## Five basic tenets of the self-transcendence paradigm:

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- (4) The best way to achieve self-transcendence is to balance the dark and bright sides of life and to seek connections with our soul (innermost being), with others, and with a higher power in spite of setbacks.
- (5) The above struggles make us stronger and better, resulting inner peace from a sense of wholeness, completion and harmony.

# Frankl's contributions to the self-transcendence model of meaning

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Only to the extent that someone is living out this self transcendence of human existence, is he truly human or does he become his true self. He becomes so, not by concerning himself with his self's actualization, but by forgetting himself and giving himself, overlooking himself and focusing outward.

(Viktor E. Frankl)

izquotes.com

# Frankl's contributions to the self-transcendence model of meaning

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- A deep sense of meaning involves the volition of exercising one's will to meaning to pursue self-transcendence for the common good, regardless of sacrifice and suffering.
- Meaning is not only anchored in subjective feelings, but also in an objective behavioral commitment to pursue something or someone greater than oneself.
- Frankl attempted to restore the soul, or the noetic (spiritual) dimension, to psychology and society. Thus, the meaning of life is about developing one's gift in order to give one's best to serve the world.

# Types of meaning in life.

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- 1) Intrinsic meaning of being and becoming.
- 2) Existential meaning of understanding the self and life.
- 3) Relational meaning of belonging.
- 4) Appreciative meaning of gratitude towards everything.
- 5) Moral meaning of doing the right thing.
- 6) Spiritual meaning of believing in a higher power.
- 7) Purposeful meaning of seeking self-transcendence.

# Self-transcendence –the path to our spiritual self

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- The greatest discovery in psychology was made by Viktor Frankl—he discovered that self-transcendence is a promising path to become our best true self through overcoming all internal and external obstacles and all the destructive forces.
- This represented a paradigm shift which simultaneously restored the human soul and spirituality to the center stage of psychology and elevated the search for meaning as the most important primary motivation capable of healing the broken hearted, the wounded ego, and empowering human beings to flourish in the face of suffering and death.
- In one bold stroke, Frankl succeeded in integrating the best wisdom from the East and the West, and clinical psychology with positive psychology.

# Frankl's transcendence and tragic optimism

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- The genius of Viktor Frankl is his profound dialectic understanding of meaning in life in terms of self-transcendence.
- Thus, the optimistic worldview in human potential (responsible freedom, will to meaning, and intrinsic meaning of life) transcends the tragic worldview of life (death, pain, and guilt), resulting in the invincible TRAGIC OPTIMISM.
- The meaning triad (creative, experiential and attitudinal values) transcends the neurotic triad (aggression, addiction and depression) resulting in HEALING and FLOURISHING.
- In other words, it is impossible to have the positive without the negative, just as one cannot have light without darkness.

# The two dimensions of self-transcendence

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- Self-transcendence can be described as going higher to fulfill one's aspirations and going deeper to sink one's roots in suffering, resulting in spreading one's branches full of delicious fruit for all people.
- Rebirth or transformation through suffering and death to the old self is the universal theme of all major religions and myths; it is also one of the main tenets of existential positive psychology (PP 2.0).

## Towards a General Theory of Global Wellbeing

Reaching the highest ideal

Serving the

No Ego

common good

Reducing the worst suffering

◆ Dr. Paul T. P. Wong

Through levels of processing, at the deepest level, all disciplines reach the same conclusion. Through the dialectical process of self-transcendence, at the highest level, all people can reach the same awe-inspiring mystery. Through selfless sacrifice, we can serve the greatest number of people. Through holistic integrative research, we can best approximate the ultimate truth of wellbeing.

The Self-Transcendence model of flourishing requires the following:

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1. Muster the existential courage to embrace all emotions and learn to maintain inner peace and contentment.
2. Assume the responsibility to do what is right and good in spite of limitations and oppositions by doing what we can, with what we have, at where we are, and with creativity and faith in a better future.
3. Seek genuine connections with our true self, with others, and with God.



My friends, it is wise to  
nourish the soul,  
otherwise you will  
breed dragons and  
devils in your heart.

*C.G. Jung,  
The Red Book p.232*



## Self-Transcendence model of flourishing requires the following:

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4. Pursue our calling or future goal with passion and perseverance. When our life goals are constitutively and naturally good, such goal strivings are intrinsically and objectively meaningful, significant, and fulfilling.
5. Nourish the soul and spend time in internal dialogue between the soul and the body.

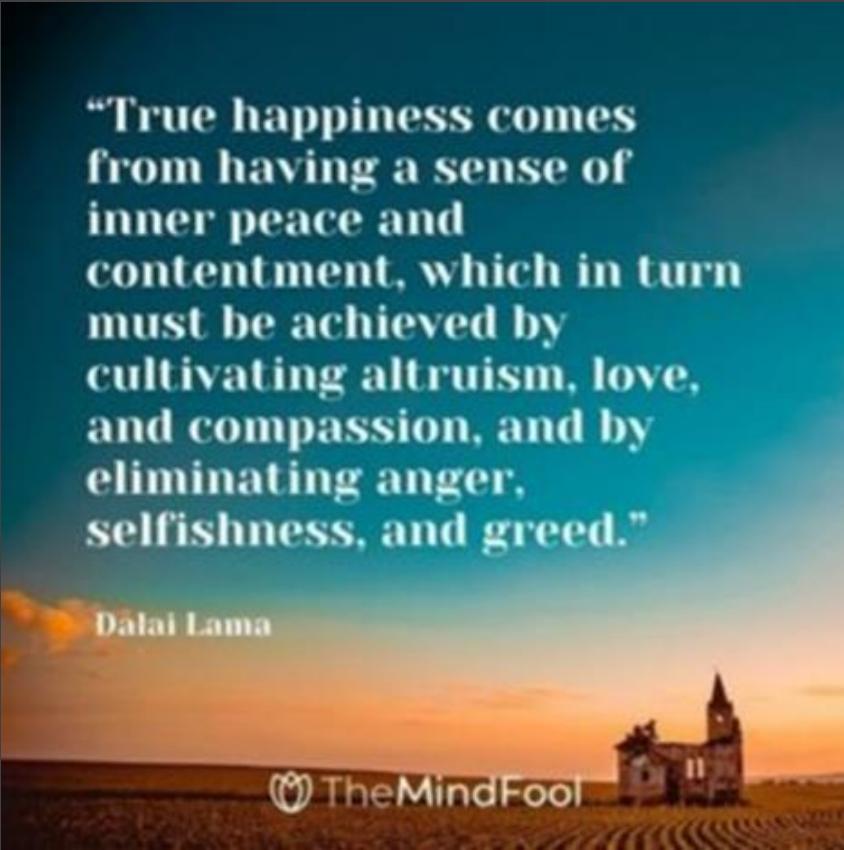
# Self-transcendence (continued)

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- Self-transcendence is the less travelled road towards personal growth and wellbeing. This narrow path will never be as popular as the broad way to happiness, because it involves tough choices in favor of what is true, good, and beautiful, but it will lead you to a life of meaning and fulfillment.
- Frankl got it right when he said that love is the ultimate truth: "The truth—that love is the ultimate and highest goal to which man can aspire."
- Indeed, the most promising way to live a good life is to aim at the highest ideal of unconditional love (agape) for the self, others, and God.

# 6. Mature happiness in trying times

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**“True happiness comes from having a sense of inner peace and contentment, which in turn must be achieved by cultivating altruism, love, and compassion, and by eliminating anger, selfishness, and greed.”**

Dalai Lama

 TheMindFool

# What is mature happiness?

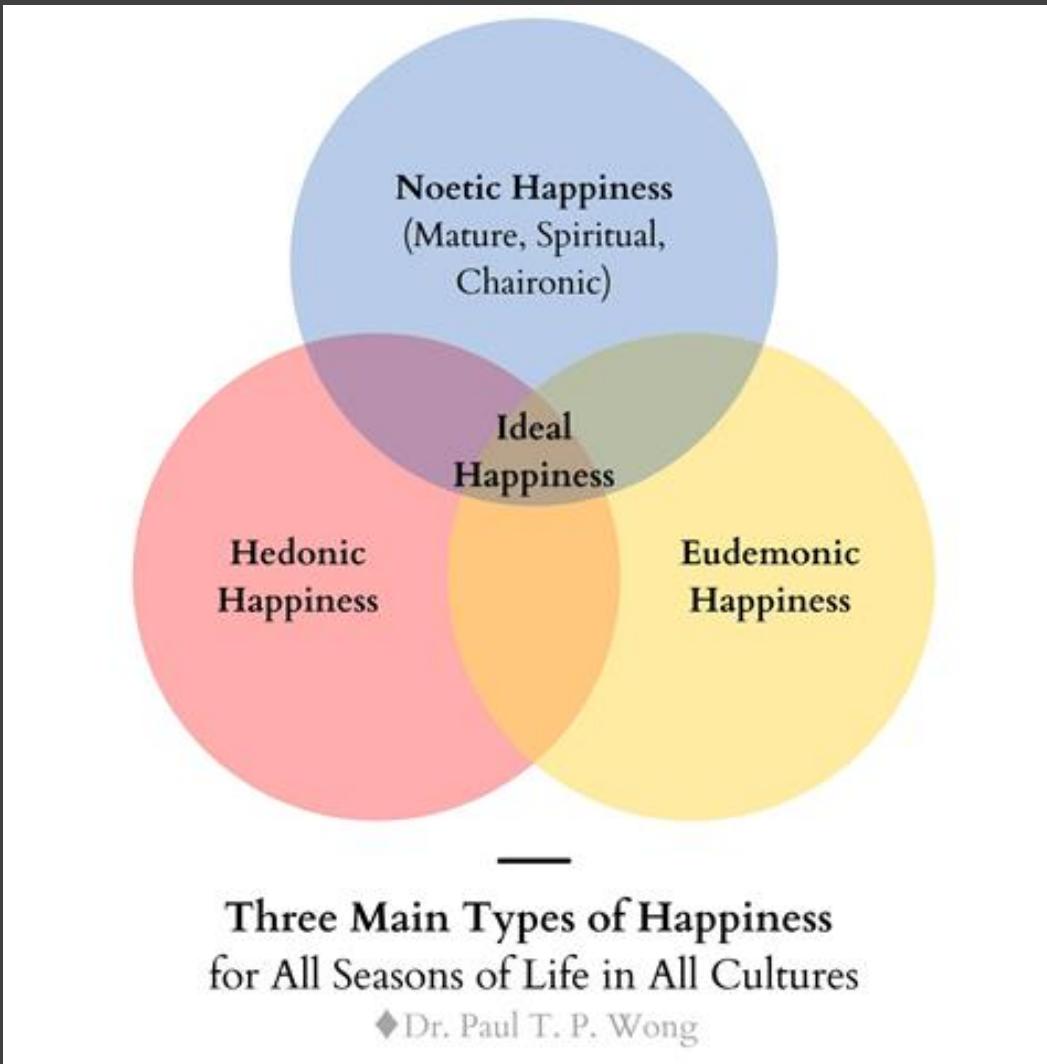
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- It is best understood as spiritual happiness because it involves both the vertical dimension (union with God or a higher power, openness to the transcendental realm or ideals) and the horizontal dimension of spirituality (spiritual/existential coping, the Way of existence, mindful meditation, cultivation of spiritual virtues).
- True happiness comes from being the light to banish darkness in the world. It means the self-transcendental way of enduring the necessary suffering and self-sacrifice for the greater good

# Three types of happiness:

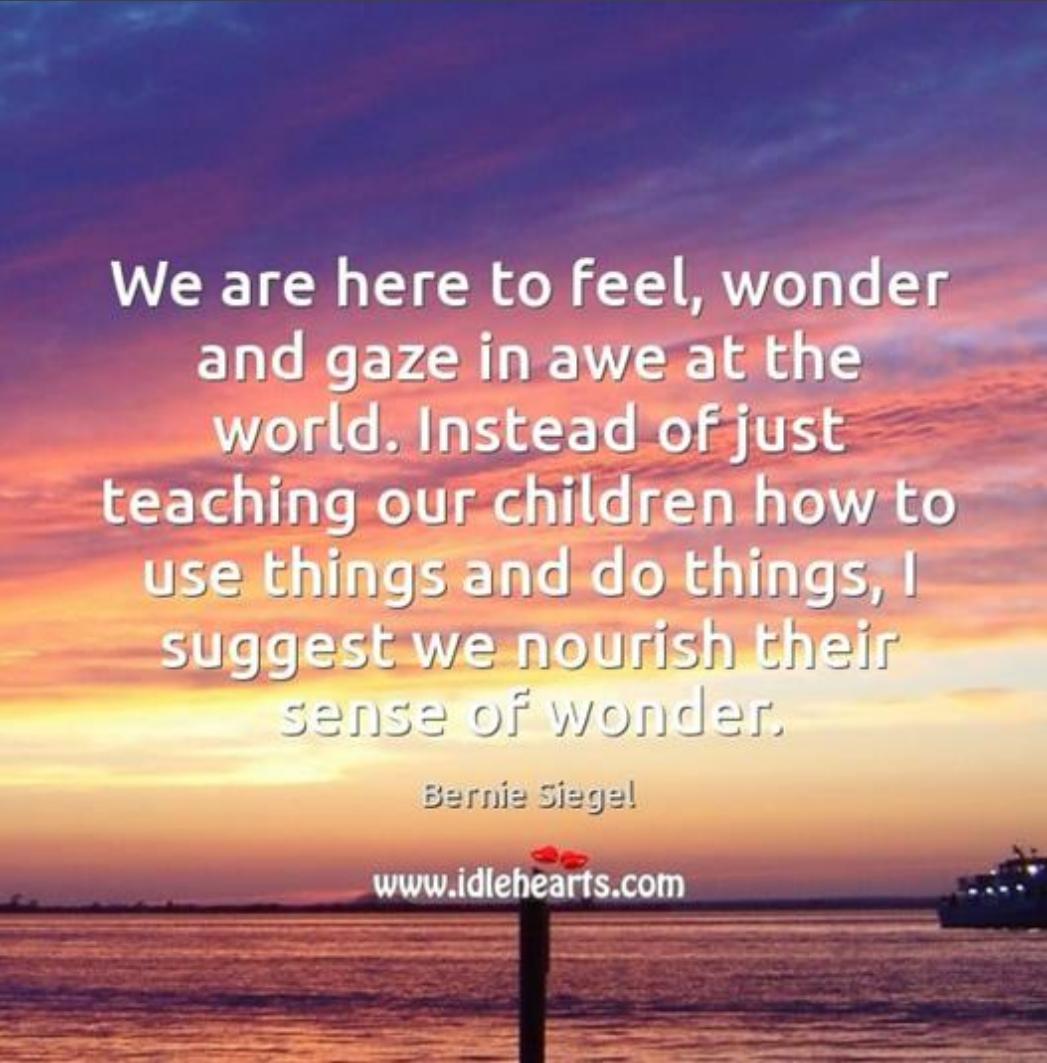
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1. Hedonic happiness – Have a pleasurable experience, depending on enjoyable circumstances.
2. Eudemonic happiness – Have a sense of satisfaction in accomplishing one's life purpose, depending on opportunities to actualize one's potential and fulfill one's dream.
3. Mature or sustainable happiness – Have a sense of inner peace and connectedness with one's true self, with others and with God, depending on one's awakening to the spiritual need of cultivating contentment, compassion and harmony through transcending life's challenges.



# Three types of happiness:

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We are here to feel, wonder  
and gaze in awe at the  
world. Instead of just  
teaching our children how to  
use things and do things, I  
suggest we nourish their  
sense of wonder.

Bernie Siegel

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

Awe as a  
type of  
spiritual or  
mature  
happiness

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# The 7 ways to boost awe and wellbeing based on the self-transcendence model of flourishing.

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I stand in awe of:

1. The power of life force to grow and bear fruits against all odds.
2. The wisdom of human mind to probe into the mystery of life.
3. The virtue of love in sacrificing self for others.
4. The magic of gratitude to fill our hearts with happiness.

# The 7 ways to boost awe and wellbeing based on the self-transcendence model of flourishing.

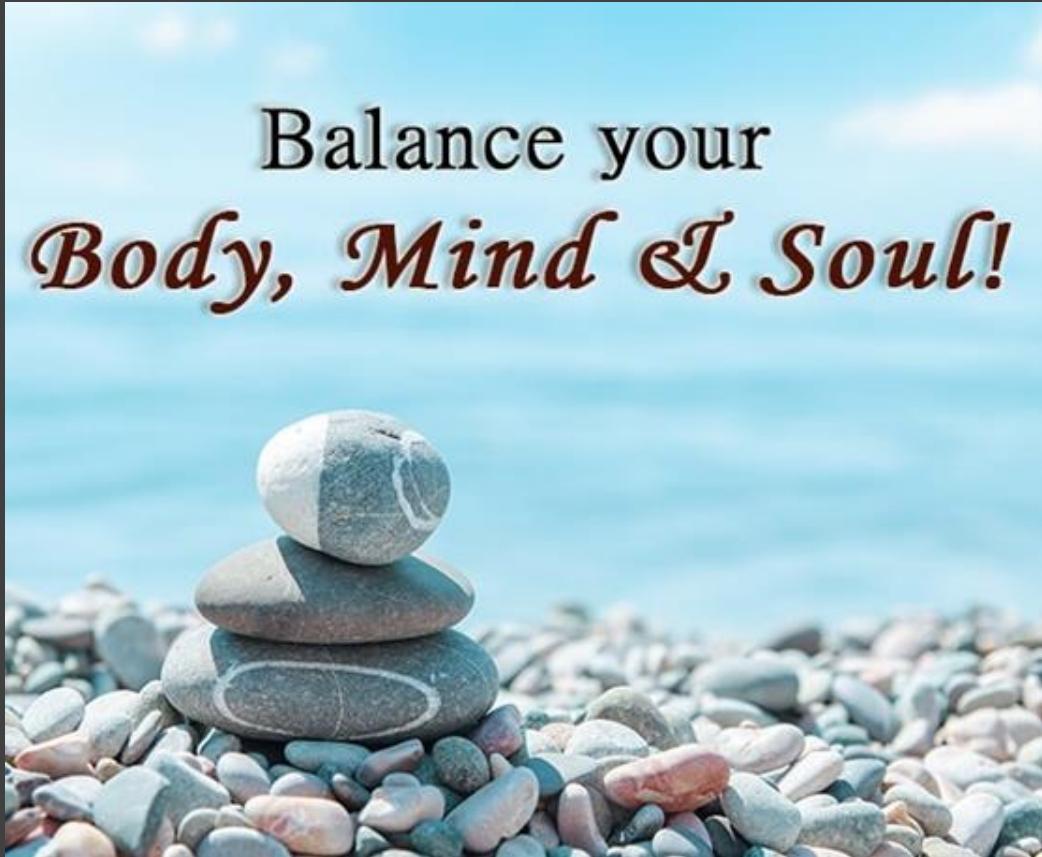
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I stand in awe of:

5. The invincible courage to stand up against evil.
6. The unwavering faith in creating a better future.
7. The unspeakable joy of losing oneself to become a part of something greater (e.g., nature and Creator).

# Inner peace is central to mature happiness

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# Inner peace is central to mature happiness

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You will find inner peace amidst a storm only when you find the point of balance and harmony between reality and ideal, struggle and rest.

Here are 7 ways to find balance in times of overwhelming stress according to meaning therapy:

- (1) Double vision – Keep one eye on your highest aspiration, and another eye on present reality.
- (2) Dual-systems – maintain an adaptive balance between opposing forces through inner dialogue.
- (3) Keep faith – when things are beyond human control, be still and let faith in God be your anchor.

# Inner peace is central to mature happiness

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- (4) Be content with what you have but continue to improve yourself.
- (5) Accept life as it is but work towards a better future.
- (6) Have the courage to embrace the dark side and find light on the other side.
- (7) Seek self-transcendence and connectiveness with the self, others, and God.

# Do You **Believe** in the Power of **Your Beliefs?**



Positive Provocations

Can you say “Yes” to each of the following 8 core beliefs?

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1. Every life has intrinsic value and is worth saving.
2. As long as there is breath, there is hope.
3. You were born for a purpose.
4. If you believe that life is worth living, you will find meaning and purpose.

# Do You **Believe** in the Power of **Your Beliefs?**

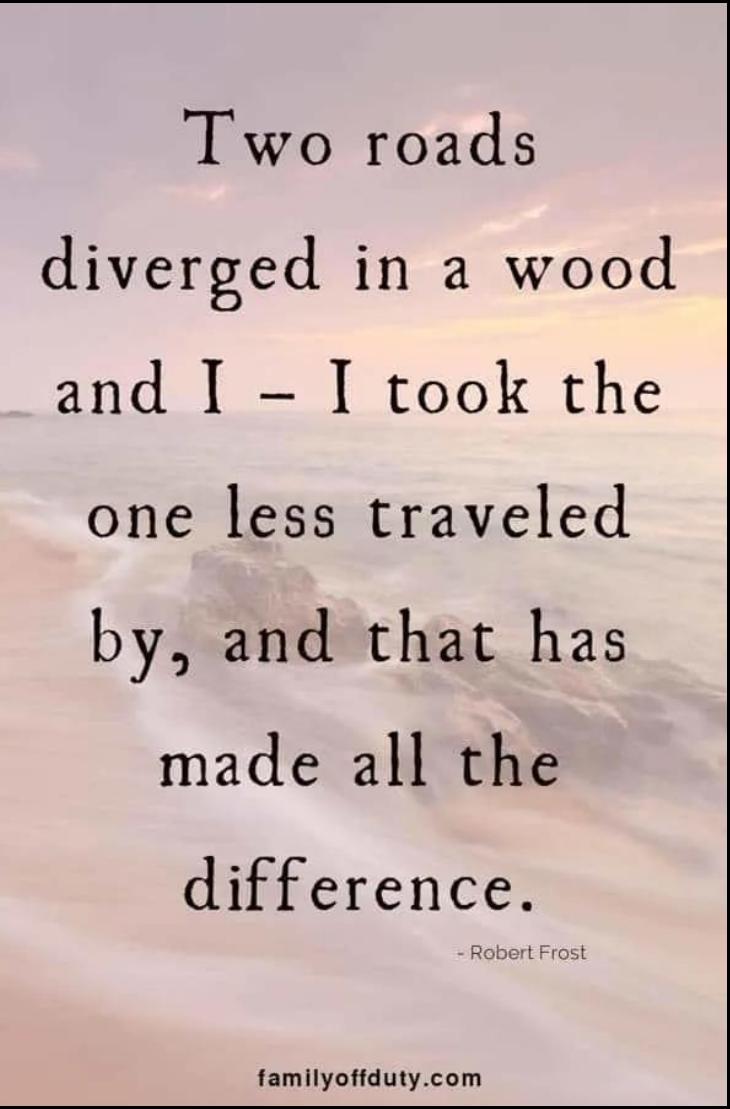


Positive Provocations

Can you say “Yes” to each of the following 8 core beliefs?

---

5. You can create some value in any situation if you put your heart and soul to the task.
6. You have the innate capacity to learn and grow.
7. You have the freedom and responsibility to choose a better future.
8. Your life matters, especially to those who love you.



Two roads  
diverged in a wood  
and I – I took the  
one less traveled  
by, and that has  
made all the  
difference.

- Robert Frost

# Adaptive Worldview Beliefs Checklist

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Which of the following beliefs are characteristic of you?

1. Life is a constant struggle, but still has its meaning and value; that's why I will go on living no matter how difficult.
2. The world is full of suffering and rejoicing; it is not healthy to believe that the world is only safe and good.
3. I accept life in totality, and I appreciate both pleasant and painful experiences.
4. It is better to have the courage to face the horrors of human existence than to ignore or deny them.
5. The best way to become one's best is to devote one's life to something greater than oneself.

# Meaning therapy helps achieve self-transcendence and mature happiness

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Here are three powerful ideas that can transform both psychology and society for the betterment of humanity:

- (1) Polarity – all things in nature exist not as opposite poles on the same dimension but as two complementary and opposite dimensions.
- (2) Transcendence – the creative force or tension holds the opposites together.
- (3) Balance and Harmony – Inner peace and wellbeing result from navigating a balance between opposites.

The Self-transcendence paradigm, based on the above three inter-related tenets, charts a new path towards global wellbeing, world peace and individual flourishing even in turbulent times.

# The Self-transcendence Paradigm of Global Wellbeing & Flourishing

The golden triangle of mental health and wellbeing is about how to live a meaningful life through expanding one's innate capacity for connections in 3 life domains in spite of hardships.



Connecting with one's soul, calling, or authentic self by transcending one's limitations and egotism.

Connecting with others and loved ones by transcending relational conflict and frustrations.

◆ Dr. Paul T. P. Wong

# The Self-transcendence Paradigm of Global Well-being

At the center of Golden Triangle is love, which is manifested in three ways:

- First, loving one's soul or true self by transcending all one's foibles, limitations, and selfish desires.
- Second, loving others by transcending annoyances and frustrations.
- Third, loving God by transcending one's doubts and disbeliefs.

# Concluding thoughts

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- Why do people torment themselves and others, even when they have succeeded in getting everything that will make them happy?
- Why is it so difficult for people to find happiness and fulfillment?
- The wisest man Solomon gave us the answer long time ago: all our strivings for success and happiness are meaningless, if we leave God out of our lives.
- Seligman's positive psychology fails to recognize the impossibility of its enterprise without fearing God and keeping His commandments.
- That is why my 12 rules for flourishing through self-transcendence are based on both God's commandments and scientific research. – Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

# Concluding thoughts

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