



To the Distinguished Committee,

As a senior researcher who has devoted his academic career to the development of indigenous psychology, it is my great pleasure to recommend Dr. Paul T. P. Wong for the 2022 Tang Prize for Achievements in Psychology. Just as the founder of the Tang foundation, Dr. Fay Tang, noted that there was no Nobel Prize for Psychology in 1989, during the positive psychology bloom – as the must-know popular wave in psychology and various other disciplines in the 2010s – few psychologists cared about the wellbeing of those who were suffering. Dr. Wong is a pioneer who has walked alone to ponder about and dedicate his life to helping the suffering people search and reconstruct their meanings in life to find their inner peace and sustainable happiness. People usually flock to places of bustle and laughter, but Wong compassionately brings light and hope for those suffering in the dark. Dr. Wong is the best candidate who deserves the Nobel Prize of Psychology - the Tang Prize for Achievements in Psychology – to recognize his great contributions and life-long achievements. He has contributed immensely to the psychology of wellbeing by integrating both the positive and negative domains of the human existential truth.

Dr. Wong was born in Tianjin, Mainland China in 1937 and has been educated under traditional Chinese culture since his childhood, which influenced him to "learn from Confucius." During the Second Sino-Japanese War (第二次中日戰爭), he became a refugee living in Hong Kong. He went to Canada to continue his university education as an adult and received his Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Toronto in 1970. He has continually dedicated himself to academic research and clinic practice as a psychologist. His research career has gone through four stages with internationally recognized significant contributions in learning theory, social cognition, existential psychology, and positive psychology. Although he is 85 years old, he is still enthusiastic in psychological research and practical work. Currently, he is the editor-in-chief and editorial board member of various international academic journals. He is the editor-in-chief of the classic book *The Human Quest for Meaning* (two editions) and he is a diverse and prolific psychologist who has published 11 books and more than 300 academic journal papers and books chapters (see more in his academic website: <http://www.drpaulwong.com/curriculum-vitae/>).

His doctoral dissertation was completed in 1970. He found that animals could learn to overcome frustration under various negative situations, resulting in an animal model of the positive psychology of optimism and grit. His research on persistence has also led to Rosenbaum's development of learned resourcefulness. These research milestones recognize that he is one of the pioneers of positive psychology. As an Asian ethnic scholar, throughout his academic career, he has been continuously involved in integrating Eastern philosophies, including Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, with Western scientific psychology. His persistent efforts and abundant evidence-based research and publications have earned him international recognition and respect, particularly on Meaning Therapy (MT) and the second wave of Positive Psychology (PP2.0) or Existential Positive Psychology (EPP) which he advocates.

Dr. Wong's MT is based on Frankl's logotherapy, which was developed as a spiritual therapy and then influenced by key philosophers from the East and West, such as Confucius and Aristotle, and



humanistic-existential founders, such as Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, and Rollo May. Furthermore, MT is influenced by Christ's teaching on sacrificial love, grace, and forgiveness, and Buddha's teaching on compassion and mindfulness (Wong, 2017).¹ His PP2.0 has contributed the second wave of Positive Psychology and inspired numerous colleagues and followers to reflect on the nature of mainstream psychology. Particularly, his efforts in advocating the importance of "mature happiness" of PP2.0 have made significant contribution to contemporary psychology by encouraging many psychologists to seek to remedy Western scientific psychology with Eastern philosophies. PP2.0 offers a more comprehensive and balanced view of Positive Psychology with the Yin - Yang(陰-陽) theory of I- Ching(易經) and the ingredients of Asian indigenous psychology. The most crucial points of PP2.0 is concerned with both the positive and negative sides in life, especially emphasizing the need to find happiness for the suffering people and to bring spiritual wellbeing to all mankind as well as mature happiness and flourishing. Dr. Wong thinks of the global and holistic definition of positive psychology as, "the scientific study of virtue, meaning, resilience, and well-being, as well as evidence-based applications to improve the life of individuals and society in the totality of life" (Wong, 2011). In recent years, Dr. Wong has focused on research promoting "happiness and flourishing by transcending and transforming suffering" to help people to create happiness with grit, resilience, and self-transcendence during times of fear and suffering.

Dr. Wong's long-term and continuous efforts and contributions to psychology, along with his own experience of transcending various physical, spiritual, and cultural suffering, has provided prescriptions for spiritual and mature happiness for the suffering people in the world. He has received many international awards. Two representative international awards related to psychology are as follows: he received the Carl Rogers Award in 2016 from Division 32 of the American Psychological Association for his "outstanding contribution to the theory and practice of humanistic psychology" and the 2022 Indigenous Social Science Scholar of the Chinese Indigenous Social Sciences Association (CISSA) for recognition of his noble personality and his international, academic achievements throughout his life. Undoubtedly, Dr. Wong is an outstanding internationally renowned scholar to receive the 2022 Tang Prize for Achievements in Psychology whose record of achievement has left an indelible mark on the field of Psychology.

Yours Sincerely,

Kwang-Kuo, Hwang Ph. D. *K. K. Hwang Nov. 4, 2022*

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¹ Wong, P. T. P. (2017). Reflections on my psychology career: Where I come from, and where I am going. A Lifelong Search for Meaning:

Lessons on virtue, grit, and faith. Retrieved from <http://www.drpaullwong.com/reflections-on-my-psychology-career/>