

## SYLLABUS

### Module 2: Unlock the Transforming Power of Suffering:

#### The How of Integrative Meaning Therapy

#### AEPP02

Asynchronous

#### Course Presenter

[Dr. Paul T. P. Wong](#) is the President of the International Network on Personal Meaning (INPM) and Meaning-Centered Counselling Institute (MCCI). He is uniquely qualified to integrate more than 50 years of research and practice in existential psychology and positive psychology into an innovative way of simultaneously reducing human suffering and contributing to global flourishing.

**Course Assistant:** Tim Yu

- **For general course-related questions** (e.g., regarding the essay assignment or quizzes), please check the [course FAQs first](#). If they are not answered there, please send them to [tim.inpm@gmail.com](mailto:tim.inpm@gmail.com).
- **For technical support** (e.g., course navigation, inaccessible file), please check the [course FAQs first](#). If they are not answered there, please send them to [tim.inpm@gmail.com](mailto:tim.inpm@gmail.com).
- **Office hours:** If you would like to speak to Dr. Wong about specific course-related materials, please email [tim.inpm@gmail.com](mailto:tim.inpm@gmail.com). Office hours will be made available on an individual basis and will be held either at 12 noon ET or 10 pm ET between Mondays to Fridays.
- **For other questions** (e.g., personal matters), please send them to [tim.inpm@gmail.com](mailto:tim.inpm@gmail.com).

#### Course Description

Life is complex and full of contradictions and paradoxes. It takes a more flexible and broader mindset to hold two opposing facts or beliefs in one's mind simultaneously rather than the binary mindset of black-or-white thinking, which only leads to maximizing the positive and minimising the negative.

In contrast, the ancient wisdom of yin-yang interactions represents a dialectical mindset, which can process different shades of gray. That is more adaptive mindset is essential in empowering clients to discover the optimal balance between two extremes or the right response in complex situations. In short, Integrative Meaning Therapy (IMT) teaches a new paradigm of healing and flourishing with paradoxical and innovative interventions.

IMT originates from Logotherapy and incorporates various therapeutic modalities, such as CBT, narrative therapy, and cross-cultural therapy, with meaning as the central organizing construct.

IMT is based on positive psychology research and existential insights. It is tailored to individual client's special needs, but also makes optimal use of clients' innate capabilities for meaning-seeking and meaning-making.

Rather than focusing on symptom reduction, IMT emphasizes both healing and flourishing by meeting the basic human need for meaning, relationships, and faith: the golden triangle for positive mental health. This course will teach paradoxical intervention strategies such as giving thanks for bad things, becoming your best through embracing your worst, and new birth through dying to the old self. Dr. Wong will use real life stories and case studies to illustrate the practice of IMT. Learn more about meaning therapy and existential positive psychology at [www.drpaulwong.com](http://www.drpaulwong.com)

In sum, this course teaches students how to make use of the potential power of suffering to turn weakness into strength and trauma into achievement. It is a less travelled path of healing and flourishing. This course will also equip students to identify the challenges and opportunities of addressing clients' deepest fears and highest aspirations.

### **Learning Objectives**

At the end of this module, all students will gain a deeper understanding of:

1. The defining characteristics of IMT.
2. The safe and effective use of self as a therapist.
3. The major IMT intervention strategies.
4. Paradoxical IMT intervention skills.
5. How to apply IMT to various conditions.

### **Course Platform**

This course will be delivered online asynchronously on the [course homepage](http://www.drpaulwong.com) on drpaulwong.com. I will primarily use Google Documents and YouTube for course material and Google forms for quizzes. For technical support, please send your questions to [tim.inpm@gmail.com](mailto:tim.inpm@gmail.com).

## Course Readings

### *Required readings*

- Wong, P. T. P. (1995). [The processes of adaptive reminiscence](#). In B. Haight, & J. D. Webster (Eds.), *The art and science of reminiscing: Theory, research, methods, and applications* (pp. 23-35). Taylor & Francis.
- Wong, P. T. P. (1998). [Meaning-centred counselling](#). In P. T. P. Wong, & P. Fry (Eds.), *The human quest for meaning: A handbook of psychological research and clinical applications* (pp. 395-435). Erlbaum.
- Wong, P. T. P. (2011). [Positive psychology 2.0: Towards a balanced interactive model of the good life](#). *Canadian Psychology*, 52(2), 69-81.
- Wong, P. T. P. (2012). [Toward a dual-systems model of what makes life worth living](#). In P. T. P. Wong (Ed.), *The human quest for meaning: Theories, research, and applications* (2nd ed., pp. 3-22). Routledge.
- Wong, P. T. P. (2014). [Viktor Frankl's meaning seeking model and positive psychology](#). In A. Batthyany & P. Russo-Netzer (Eds.), *Meaning in existential and positive psychology* (pp. 149–184). Springer.
- Wong, P. T. P. (2016). [Self-transcendence: A paradoxical way to become your best](#). *International Journal of Existential Positive Psychology*, 6(1).
- Wong, P. T. P. (2020). [Existential Positive Psychology and Integrative Meaning Therapy](#). *International Review of Psychiatry*. Doi:10.1080/09540261.2020.1814703
- Wong, P. T. P. (2022). [The wisdom of the soul: The missing key to happiness and positive mental health?](#) [Review of the book *A Time for Wisdom: Knowledge, Detachment, Tranquility, Transcendence*, by P. T. McLaughlin & M. R. McMinn]. *International Journal of Existential Positive Psychology*, 11(2).
- Wong, P. T. P. (2023). Pioneer in research in existential positive psychology of suffering and global flourishing: Paul T. P. Wong. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 18, 2153-2157. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-023-10207-7>
- Wong, P. T. P. (2023). [Spiritual-existential wellbeing \(SEW\): The faith-hope-love model of mental health and total wellbeing](#). *International Journal of Existential Positive Psychology*, 12(1).
- Wong, P. T. P., & Laird, D. (2023). Varieties of suffering in clinical setting: Re-envisioning mental health beyond the medical model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1155845>
- Wong, P. T. P., & Worth, P. (2017). [The deep-and-wide hypothesis in giftedness and creativity](#) [Special issue]. *Psychology and Education*, 54(3/4).
- Wong, P. T. P., & Yu, T. T. F. (2021). Existential suffering in palliative care: An existential positive psychology perspective. *Medicina*, 57(9), 924. <https://doi.org/10.3390/medicina57090924>

### *Suggested readings*

- Wong, P. T. P. (2007). [Viktor Frankl: Prophet of hope for the 21st century](#). In A. Batthyany & J. Levinson (Eds.), *Anthology of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy*. Tucker & Theisen Inc.
- Wong, P. T. P. (Ed.). (2023). [A second-wave positive psychology in counselling psychology: A paradigm shift](#). Routledge.

- Wong, P. T. P., Arslan, G., Bowers, V. L., Peacock, E. J., Kjell, O. N. E., Ivtzan, I., Lomas, T. (2021). [Self-transcendence as a buffer against COVID-19 suffering: The development and validation of the Self-Transcendence measure-B](#). *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 4229.
- Wong, P. T. P., & Mayer, C.-H. (2023). [The meaning of love and its bittersweet nature](#). *International Review of Psychiatry*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540261.2023.2173001>
- Wong, P. T. P., Mayer, C.-H., & Arslan, G. (Eds.) (2021). [COVID-19 and Existential Positive Psychology \(PP2.0\): The New Science of Self-Transcendence](#). *Frontiers in Psychology*.
- Wong, P. T. P., Wong, L. C. J., & Scott, C. (2006). [Beyond stress and coping: The positive psychology of transformation](#). In P. T. P. Wong & L. C. J. Wong (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural perspectives on stress and coping* (pp. 1–26). Springer Publications.

### **Course Structure, Assignments, and Grading**

There will be 10 lessons in total in addition to the Preface, which introduces the new paradigm (see “Course Schedule, Lectures and Readings” below for details). For each content lesson (Lessons 1 – 10), there will be readings and videos (asynchronous lectures by Dr. Wong) that are relevant to that lesson’s theme.

Your grade in this course will be based on your performance on 4 components: quizzes, discussion questions, workbook exercises, and the final essay.

**Quizzes** (60% of final grade) will be posted on [the course homepage](#) after each content lesson. Additionally, for each content lesson, you will need to answer one discussion question to receive a passing grade for course participation. These **discussion questions** (20% of final grade) will also be made available on [the course homepage](#). In addition, there will be **workbook exercises** (10% of final grade) posted on [the course homepage](#) after each content lesson. Finally, there will be an **essay assignment** (10% of final grade) at the end of the course. The questions for the essay assignment will be made available when Lesson 5 is released. These questions will be posted on the [assignment instructions page](#).

More details about course assignments are available in [this separate document](#). To pass this course, students will need a final grade of 65% or higher.<sup>1</sup>

<b>Component</b>	<b>% of Final Grade</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Quizzes (10 in total)	60%	September 14, 2024
Discussion Questions (10 in total)	20%	September 14, 2024
Workbook Exercises (10 in total)	10%	September 14, 2024
Essay Assignment	10%	September 14, 2024

<sup>1</sup> If students have any questions regarding the grading policy or the grade they receive for any assignment, please contact Tim Yu at [tim.inpm@gmail.com](mailto:tim.inpm@gmail.com)

## Course Schedule, Lectures and Readings

Only the readings marked with an asterisk (\*) are required readings

Date <sup>2</sup>	Lesson Theme	Readings, Lectures <sup>3</sup> and Assignments
April 15	<b>Preface:</b> A new paradigm of healing and flourishing through suffering	<b>Assignments:</b> None. <b>Lecture videos:</b> The course introduction video posted on the <a href="#">course homepage</a> . <b>Readings:</b> Read the syllabus and course Preface (both are posted on the <a href="#">course homepage</a> ). Begin reading the course readings in the syllabus.
April 29	<b>Lesson 1:</b> Introduction: Presuppositions about human nature and the natural way of mental health	<b>Assignments:</b> Quiz 1, Discussion Question 1, Workbook Exercise 1 <b>Lecture videos:</b> <a href="#">The Basics of Meaning Therapy</a> <b>Readings:</b> The Lesson writeup (posted on <a href="#">course homepage</a> ) and the following articles: * Wong, P. T. P. (2019, July 6). <a href="#">How I cracked nature's code for positive mental health: Introduction and my search for meaning</a> . <i>Positive Living in Difficult Times</i> . * Wong, P. T. P. (2023). <a href="#">Spiritual-existential wellbeing (SEW): The faith-hope-love model of mental health and total wellbeing</a> . <i>International Journal of Existential Positive Psychology</i> , 11(2).
May 13	<b>Lesson 2:</b> Characteristics of Integrative Meaning Therapy and working with multiple selves	<b>Assignments:</b> Quiz 2, Discussion Question 2, Workbook Exercise 2 <b>Lecture videos:</b> None. <b>Readings:</b> The Lesson writeup (posted on <a href="#">course homepage</a> ) and the following articles: Cooper, M., & McLeod, J. (2012). <a href="#">From either/or to both/and: Developing a pluralistic approach to counselling and psychotherapy</a> . <i>European Journal of Psychotherapy and Counselling</i> , 14(1), 5–17. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/13642537.2012.652389">https://doi.org/10.1080/13642537.2012.652389</a> * Wong, P. T. P. (2010). <a href="#">Meaning therapy: An integrative and positive existential psychotherapy</a> . <i>Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy</i> , 40(2), 85-93. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/s10879-009-9132-6">https://doi.org/10.1007/s10879-009-9132-6</a> * Wong, P. T. P. (2015). <a href="#">Meaning therapy: Assessments and interventions</a> . <i>Existential Analysis</i> , 26(1), 154-167.

<sup>2</sup> Starting on April 15, 2024, each lesson will be uploaded by the following dates.

<sup>3</sup> All lectures are pre-recorded and uploaded to YouTube. Students can watch them at their own time.

		Wong, P. T. P. (2021, August 6-8). <a href="#">Integrative Meaning Therapy (IMT)</a> [workshop]. International Network on Personal Meaning 11th Biennial International Meaning Conference, Toronto, ON, Canada.
May 27	<b>Lesson 3:</b> The therapist factor, the client factor, and deep relationship	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Quiz 3, Discussion Question 3, Workbook Exercise 3</p> <p><b>Lecture videos:</b> None.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> The Lesson writeup (posted on <a href="#">course homepage</a>) and the following articles:</p> <p>Bohart, A. C., &amp; Tallman, K. (2010). Clients: <a href="#">The neglected common factor in psychotherapy</a>. In B. L. Duncan, S. D. Miller, B. E. Wampold, &amp; M. A. Hubble (Eds.), <i>The heart and soul of change: Delivering what works in therapy</i> (2nd ed., pp. 83–111). American Psychological Association. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1037/12075-003">https://doi.org/10.1037/12075-003</a></p> <p>Cooper, M. (2018, June). <a href="#">Working at relational depth: What the research is telling us and the implications for coaching</a> [presentation]. Adventures in Coaching Research Conference, Ashridge, Hertfordshire.</p> <p>* Wong, P. T. P., &amp; Wong, L. C. J. (2013). <a href="#">The challenge of communication: A meaning-centered perspective</a>. In E. van Deurzen, &amp; S. Iacovou (Eds.), <i>Existential perspectives on relationship therapy</i> (pp. 109-121). Palgrave Macmillan.</p>
June 10	<b>Lesson 4:</b> Self-transcendence, life review, and the PURE strategy to find meaning in life	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Quiz 4, Discussion Question 4, Workbook Exercise 4</p> <p><b>Lecture videos:</b> <a href="#">The Psychology Podcast: Paul Wong, Existential Positive Psychology</a></p> <p><b>Readings:</b> The Lesson writeup (posted on <a href="#">course homepage</a>) and the following articles:</p> <p>* Wong, P. T. P. (1995). <a href="#">The processes of adaptive reminiscence</a>. In B. K. Haight &amp; J. D. Webster (Eds.), <i>The art and science of reminiscing: Theory, research, methods, and applications</i> (p. 23–35). Taylor &amp; Francis.</p> <p>* Wong, P. T. P. (2016). <a href="#">Self-transcendence: A paradoxical way to become your best</a>. <i>International Journal of Existential Positive Psychology</i>, 6(1).</p>
June 24	<b>Lesson 5:</b> ABCDE strategy, effective coping, resilience, and multicultural perspective	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Quiz 5, Discussion Question 5, Workbook Exercise 5, Essay Assignment Criteria Uploaded to the <a href="#">Assignment Instructions Document</a>.</p> <p><b>Lecture videos:</b> None</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> The Lesson writeup (posted on <a href="#">course homepage</a>) and the following articles:</p> <p>Arslan, G., &amp; Wong, P. T. P. (2023). <a href="#">Embracing life's challenges: Developing a tool for assessing resilient mindset in second wave positive psychology</a>. <i>Journal of Happiness and Health</i>, 4(1), 1-10. <a href="https://doi.org/10.47602/johah.v4i1.53">https://doi.org/10.47602/johah.v4i1.53</a></p>

		<p>* Wong, P. T. P. (1993). <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.2460090110">Effective management of life stress: The resource-congruence model</a>. <i>Stress Medicine</i>, 9, 51-60. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.2460090110">https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.2460090110</a></p> <p>* Wong, P. T. P., Wong, L. C. J., &amp; Scott, C. (2006). <a href="#">Beyond stress and coping: The positive psychology of transformation</a>. In P. T. P. Wong &amp; L. C. J. Wong (Eds.), <i>Handbook of multicultural perspectives on stress and coping</i> (pp. 1–26). Spring Publications. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/0-387-26238-5_1">https://doi.org/10.1007/0-387-26238-5_1</a></p>
July 8	<b>Lesson 6:</b> Dual-systems model, Yin-yang dialectics, and wu wei (mindfulness)	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Quiz 6, Discussion Question 6, Workbook Exercise 6</p> <p><b>Lecture videos:</b> <a href="#">Wu-wei   The Art of Letting Things Happen</a></p> <p><b>Readings:</b> The Lesson writeup (posted on <a href="#">course homepage</a>) and the following articles:</p> <p>* Wong, P. T. P. (2012). <a href="#">Toward a dual-systems model of what makes life worth living</a>. In P. T. P. Wong (Ed.), <i>The human quest for meaning: Theories, research, and applications</i> (2nd ed., pp. 3-22). Routledge.</p> <p>* Wong, P. T. P. (2023, June 24). <a href="#">Existential positive psychology: A new science based on the ancient wisdom of yin-yang dialectics</a>. <i>LinkedIn</i>.</p>
July 22	<b>Lesson 7:</b> Double vision and existential universals	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Quiz 7, Discussion Question 7, Workbook Exercise 7</p> <p><b>Lecture videos:</b> <a href="#">The Double Vision Strategy</a></p> <p><b>Readings:</b> The Lesson writeup (posted on <a href="#">course homepage</a>) and the following articles:</p> <p>* Wong, P. T. P. (in press). <a href="#">An existential perspective on positive psychology: Towards a general theory of global flourishing</a>. In L. Hoffman (Ed.), <i>APA Handbook of Humanistic and Existential Psychology</i>.</p> <p>* Wong, P. T. P., &amp; Cowden, R. G. (2022). Accelerating the science and practice of psychology beyond WEIRD biases: Enriching the landscape through Asian psychology. <i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>. <a href="https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1054519">https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1054519</a></p> <p>Wong, P. T. P., &amp; Sproule, C. F. (1984). <a href="#">Attributional analysis of locus of control and the Trent Attribution Profile (TAP)</a>. In H. M. Lefcourt (Ed.), <i>Research with the locus of control construct, Vol. 3: Limitations and extensions</i> (pp. 309–360). Academic Press.</p>
August 5	<b>Lesson 8:</b> Paradoxical interventions: Know your best self, giving thanks for bad things	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Quiz 8, Discussion Question 8, Workbook Exercise 8</p> <p><b>Lecture videos:</b> None</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> The Lesson writeup (posted on <a href="#">course homepage</a>) and the following articles:</p> <p>Howse, R. (2010, January 23). <a href="#">Cool intervention #8: Paradoxical interventions</a>. <i>Psychology Today</i>.</p>



		<p>* Jans-Beken, L. G. P. J., &amp; Wong, P. T. P. (2019). <a href="#">Development and preliminary validation of the Existential Gratitude Scale (EGS)</a>. <i>Counselling Psychology Quarterly</i>. Advance online publication. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2019.1656054">https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2019.1656054</a></p> <p>* Leung, M. (2019, July 6). <a href="#">Tragic optimism: A roadmap for trauma treatment</a>. <i>Positive Living Newsletter</i>.</p> <p>* Wong, P. T. P. (2020). <a href="#">Existential Positive Psychology and Integrative Meaning Therapy</a>. <i>International Review of Psychiatry</i>. DOI: 10.1080/09540261.2020.1814703</p>
August 19	<b>Lesson 9:</b> The Meaningful Living Group, family therapy, and group therapy	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Quiz 9, Discussion Question 9, Workbook Exercise 9</p> <p><b>Lecture videos:</b> None</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> The Lesson writeup (posted on <a href="#">course homepage</a>) and the following articles:</p> <p>Breitbart, W., Rosenfeld, B., Pessin, H., Applebaum, A., Kulikowski, J., &amp; Lichtenthal, W. G. (2015). <a href="#">Meaning-centered group psychotherapy: an effective intervention for improving psychological well-being in patients with advanced cancer</a>. <i>Journal of clinical oncology : official journal of the American Society of Clinical Oncology</i>, 33(7), 749–754. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1200/JCO.2014.57.2198">https://doi.org/10.1200/JCO.2014.57.2198</a></p> <p>* Lantz, J. (1999). Meaning-centered family therapy: Treatment elements and dynamics. <i>Families in Society</i>, 80(3), 221-228. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.675">https://doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.675</a></p> <p>* Wong, P. T. P. (2015). <a href="#">Meaningful living group project as a grassroots positive mental health movement</a>.</p>
September 2	<b>Lesson 10:</b> Paradigm shift to Existential Positive Psychology: What is PP2.0 and why it is necessary.	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Quiz 10, Discussion Question 10, Workbook Exercise 10</p> <p><b>Lecture videos:</b> None.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> The Lesson writeup (posted on <a href="#">course homepage</a>) and the following articles:</p> <p>* Wong, P. T. P. (2021). <a href="#">What is existential positive psychology (PP 2.0)? Why is it necessary for mental health during the pandemic?</a> <i>International Journal of Existential Positive Psychology</i>, 10(1), 1–16.</p> <p>* Wong, P. T. P., &amp; Laird, D. (2023). <a href="#">Varieties of suffering in clinical setting: Re-envisioning mental health beyond the medical model</a>. <i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>, 14.</p>



## **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in any course. As a result, we treat cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In the essay assignment:

- Using someone else's ideas or statements without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Citing sources or facts without checking for accuracy
- Copying Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated content word for word.

On quizzes:

- Filling out the quiz using someone else's answers to the questions instead of your own.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance.

If students have questions or concerns about appropriate academic conduct or research and citation practices, they are expected to seek additional information on academic integrity from credible educational resources.