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English 112

22 November 2018

Three Good Things

It's almost the weekend and I just managed to pick up my son from his mother's house. While driving back home, suddenly, I heard a loud noise and I had lost steering for a brief period of time. Worried with confusion because my son was in the car, I then pulled over and noticed that my tire popped and lost air. Usually, when things like this happen, I would moan and groan for a couple of minutes until I could get my composure. However, today was different and I was thankful. My thought patterns were being re-written because I'm trying to find something good of this. I could not believe this, but I was glad this happened while the weather was nice and warm. Weird, right? I have felt this sense of gratitude recently because my professor has told us to practice the "three good things," or gratitude for our class where we wrote three good things by the end of the day. Although, I might have changed the way I feel that day, what about tomorrow, next week, months? I then concluded at that time that if I continued to practice "the three good things" tomorrow, next week, and months to come, that maybe I can be rewrite life in a positive light. The three good things gratitude process did have a positive impact on my well-being as I continued to practice and apply it for the days to come. However, can this gratitude process "three good things," impact and have a positive role for my well-being?

First, we need to look at what is positive psychology? As Dr. Martin Seligman often is referred to and credited as the "father of positive psychology," Dr. Seligman definition version of positive psychology is what I will use. According to Dr. Seligman along with the University of Pennsylvania "*Positive Psychology is the scientific study of the strengths that enable individuals and communities to thrive. The field is founded on the belief that people want to lead meaningful*

and fulfilling lives, to cultivate what is best within themselves, and to enhance their experiences of love, work, and play." <https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/> Dr. Seligman is the director for the University of Pennsylvania Department of Psychology. Over the past, he studied depression and the prevention of depression which later builds on well-being.

What is well-being? According to Oxford dictionary well-being is a state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/well-being> This definition is very broad in the psychological field; however, Dr. Seligman's version is more refine towards my argument. As Dr. Seligman talks about his model PERMA which is his scientific finding and prevention for depression. This study support giving gratitude and state of feeling of gratitude is very essential.

What is gratitude? According to Psychology Today. *Gratitude is an emotion expressing appreciation for what one has—as opposed to, for instance, a consumer-driven emphasis on what one wants or thinks they need.* <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/gratitude> Although according to Psychology Today receiving gratitude is beneficial just as if you give gratitude. Have you ever received such a compliment that it made your day? What they say is that giving gratitude is just as good as receiving it.

In this section I will prove that three good things did improve my well-being. But first, how I conducted the three good things. Let's start by having a time frame. For a whole week and at least ten minutes a day, I needed to write down three good things that have happened during the day. I chose the last ten minutes of my day to start and end this process. This is the time where I summed up what had happened during the day and focused on the good side. In a journal or piece of paper I wrote the date, followed by the three good things that made it better or showing gratitude to what happened, and why I felt gratitude. I did this every day for a week and noticed that I felt better and focused more and expected more good things to come as the days went by. But why did I start feeling better? According to Dr. Bryan

Sexton PhD., https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZaAT_RVHCs “We are hardwired as human being to find the negative things as a learning curve for survival.” So, looking in a biological standpoint, we throw out and forget the good things that comes from the day such as free food because of Veterans day, a flat tire but an auto-repair just a few blocks away, or getting a good night sleep in a warm bed, etc. Instead we remember our boss telling us that you need to stay longer for work, arguing with your ex fiancé because your son is being raised wrong, or remember to bring fire so the animals at night will not go near the camp. This are some example of somethings that have happened to me during the three good things project. Except for the fire, animals, and camp. Although practicing the three good things is good, Dr. Seligman also added that his PERMA model is also needed for well-being. After conducting the three good things, I have also noticed that yes, I felt good, however, most of what I was thankful for was mostly on pleasure. Something else was still missing. So, what is PERMA? PERMA is an acronym for Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationship, Meaning, Accomplishment. The PERMA model was designed by Dr. Seligman and is believed help people reach happiness, fulfillment, and meaning.

<https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/perma-model/#engagement> Dr. Seligman believed that you need to engage in all parts of PERMA in order to fulfill a happier life. After conducting PERMA, I noticed that the three good things were good, however, I needed to add the things that were still missing in my life. Such as adding more relationship contacts, engaging to find fulfillment, and meaning. For most of what I was doing was just for pleasure. PERMA made me noticed what I was least engaging in and need to become well balanced instead of just constantly looking for pleasure. In order to balance and amplify my well-being even more I also stumbled on flow. What is flow? Have you done something or saw someone that was so engage in what they were doing. People engage in flow will lose track of time, will not eat, lose sleep, engage in anything else because they are so focus in what they are doing, and they love it and are in bliss. After the destruction caused by World War II, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi wanted to know why some people that were affected by the war seem to be happier and unaffected even with all the trauma and

aftermath. According to Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi flow is the answer.

https://www.ted.com/talks/mihaly_csikszentmihalyi_on_flow?language=en#t-338666 In his study he found that our nervous system is incapable of processing more than 110 bits of information per second, 60 bits is the average. That's why most people cannot understand more than one person talking. Csikszentmihalyi found that when people are in flow, their body does not have time to process how they feel, problems at home, how tired, or even hungry they are. That's why Dr. Seligman incorporate flow into his PERMA model.

So, in conclusion, the feeling of gratitude and practice of the three good things does have an impact on well-being. Though the three good things are enough alone, amplify this with PERMA and flow will give you greater results. Gratitude after a having a flat tire and avoiding traffic with my son in the back of my car was not normal. However, I felt better not dwelling on the present negative emotion and having a brighter outlook on the situation. Will I continue to practice the three good things? I think that time will tell but for now my answer is a definite yes because I am rewriting my life in practicing the three good things. My well-being is at an all-time high and approaching difficult situation with a smile and good feelings is always better than just complaining, whining, and dwelling on it.

Work cited