

**UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR
PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT**

Exam 1

Positive Psychology – Psyc 441 - Fall 2005 – Dr. Ken Hart (kenhart@uwindsor.ca)

NOTE: This exam tests your knowledge of Seligman's 2004 book, "Authentic Happiness". There are two parts. Part A consists of 60 multiple-choice questions (MCQs). These are shown below. Part B consists of 15 short answer questions. These are shown at the end of the MCQs. You should answer any 10 of the 15.

PART A: MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. What is the state of the evidence to suggest strengths and virtues are derived from negative motivation?
 - a. there is no such evidence*
 - b. the evidence is weak due to inconsistencies
 - c. the balance of the evidence favors the suggestion that negative motivation does underly positive motivation

2. Seligman discusses how positive psychology has identified 24 strengths from the list of 18,000 English words referring to personality traits. Valor and kindness are among the 24. Which of the following are not included in the 24?
 - a. intelligence
 - b. perfect pitch
 - c. punctuality
 - d. all of the above*

3. Which of the following comprises the short list of six 'core' virtues?
 - a. wisdom, courage, love, leadership, temperance, spirituality/transcendence
 - b. wisdom, courage, love, justice, temperance, optimism
 - c. wisdom, courage, love, justice, temperance, spirituality/transcendence*

4. Seligman describes the "PANAS" as a psychological test developed by Watson, Clarke and Tellegen. Included on the test are items such as "interested", "excited", "enthusiastic", "proud", "alert" and "inspired". What theoretical construct do these items purport to measure?
 - a. absence of negative affect
 - b. optimism
 - c. strong positive sense of internal control
 - d. positive affect*

Indicate whether the following are true or false

5. Happy people show a bias in which they 'over-remember' good events and "under-remember" bad events
(*T = a and F = b)

6. Depressed people are more accurate than happy people in remembering good and bad events
(*T = a and F = b)

7. Happy people are lopsided in their beliefs about their successes and failures
(*T = a and F = b)

8. Seligman describes a longitudinal study which linked positive emotions to productivity in occupational settings. In this regard, how do happier people differ from their less happy counterparts at work?
 - a. they receive better evaluations from their supervisors
 - b. they get paid more money
 - c. they tend to be more extraverted and smoke more
 - d. both 'a' and 'b' above*

9. Seligman describes an experiment conducted by Dr. Rick Snyder on the TV show "Good Morning America". In terms of coping with adversity, what did Snyder's experiment involve and what did the results show?
- the experiment involved holding one's hand in a bucket of ice and it showed happy people have better pain tolerance*
 - the experiment involved holding one's breath and it showed unstable causal attributions facilitate greater ability to withstand the discomfort of not breathing
 - the experiment involved exposure to very loud uncontrollable noise and showed tolerance for noise is better when thinking happy thoughts compared to sad thoughts
 - the experiment involved putting one's bare foot under a heat lamp and it showed that optimists were better able to withstand the discomfort of burning sensations than pessimists.
10. Seligman describes research by Dr. Barbara Fredrickson suggesting that positive emotions can 'undo' the adverse after-effects of negative emotions. What did Fredrickson's research involve?
- writing about negative life events followed by writing about positive events
 - analysis of 292 diaries/journals kept by students over the period of a semester
 - exposing research participants to "positive" films/videos and monitoring their heart rate*
11. In Chapter 4 "Can you make yourself lastingly happier?", Seligman presents his happiness formula ($H=S+C+V$) Which of the following is NOT part of the formula?
- lack of value placed on materialism*
 - genetic limits on range of possible happiness
 - environmental circumstances/situations
 - exercising personal will power/effort

Seligman reviews research linking wealth to happiness. In this regard, identify whether the following statements are true or false

12. Value placed on money, rather than money itself influences how happy people are
(*T = a and F = b)
13. Materialism seems to be counterproductive in terms of subjective enjoyment of life
(*T = a and F = b)
14. In almost all cultures that have been studied, people who have the highest incomes also tend to be markedly happier than their poorer counterparts
(*T = a and F = b)
15. In Western cultures, research has documented, as an established fact, that married people (or those cohabitating, are happier than unmarried or non-cohabitating counterparts. Why is this?
- the close proximity of a partner provides more emotional support which carries benefits to well being
 - unhappy people find it very difficult to get and stay married/cohabitated
 - people who are genetically happy are particularly likely to attract romantic partners and live with them
 - all of the above*

Research shows that relative to their less happy counterparts, happier people have a richer and more fulfilling social life. In this regard, is the following statement true or false.

16. The balance of the evidence points to the interpretation that socializing more will cause people to become more happy
(T = a and *F = b)
17. Research on the association between negative emotions and positive emotions suggests they are polar opposites on the same basic dimension
(T = a and *F = b)
18. In a medical health context, which is more strongly related to happiness?
- objectively defined good health as determined by a medical doctor
 - subjectively perceived health status as appraised by the patient*
 - both 'a' and 'b' above show similar associations to happiness

19. Research shows that happiness is very strongly related to life circumstances involving such things as education, race, gender and climate (T = a and *F = b)
20. Survey data consistently show religious or spiritually oriented people are somewhat happier and more satisfied with life than nonreligious/non spiritual people. This suggests seeking the sacred holds emotional health benefits. According to Seligman, how might we explain this apparent link between spirituality and positive affectivity?
- religion prohibits health destructive life style behaviours (smoking/drinking)
 - Jesus intervenes to lift the mood of his followers
 - Religion and spirituality instills hope for the future and enhances a sense of meaning in life*
 - God hears prayers of unhappy believers and responds by casting out the devil
21. In Chapter 5 "Satisfaction about the past", Seligman reviews the empirical evidence bearing on Freud's and Darwin's fatalistic proposal that our past dictates our future. What does the evidence say about the long term effects of childhood events on adult personality and adjustment?
- the vast majority of studies show large effects where positive childhood events predict positive adult wellbeing and where negative childhood events predict negative adult wellbeing
 - about half the studies show negative childhood events have a detrimental causal influence on happiness during adulthood
 - some studies have documented small effects and most of these suffer from methodological inadequacies which render their conclusions suspect*
22. In discussing the implications of the work of Jon Haidt, Seligman describes a positive emotion exercise that asked the reader to spend a minute or so remembering something that happened in the past that caused them feelings of intense happiness so much so that the urge was present to jump or shout out loud with joy. What type of exercise was this?
- mood elevation exercise
 - elevation exercise*
 - joyful experience exercise
 - bliss awareness exercise
23. If you had some spare money, spending money shopping might induce a sense of _____ while helping the needy would induce a sense of _____?
- happiness; contentment
 - pleasure; gratification*
 - materialism; spirituality
 - temporary optimism; more long-lasting optimism
24. The following pairs of self-statements vary along which dimension involving causal attributions? (a) "I'm stupid" Vs "I'm hung over", (b) "men are tyrants" Vs "my partner was in a bad mood":
- internal – external dimension
 - hopeful - hopeless dimension
 - stable – unstable dimension
 - both 'b' and 'c' above*
25. Seligman describes 4 techniques that contribute to more effective disputation of pessimistic thoughts. Which of the following did he describe?
- finding evidence to invalidate the thoughts
 - thinking of multiple alternative causes
 - reminding oneself of how destructive the belief is
 - all of the above*
26. In Chapter 7, Seligman reviews the pleasures and joys, and suggests several ways of amplifying them. In this connection, which of the following is not discussed?
- counteracting habituation
 - savoring
 - going into nature to be close to trees, streams and animals*
 - mindfulness
27. Seligman describes an exercise he calls "have a beautiful day" What does this involve?
- setting aside free time to indulge in one's favorite pleasures*
 - doing something unselfish that is altruistic and designed to benefit another person (or persons)
 - silent internal singing of a pleasant melody coupled with secretive humming of this tune
 - both 'b' and 'c' above

28. Seligman argues that _____ can be identified, nurtured and amplified but that _____ can not.
- gratifications; pleasures
 - pleasures; gratifications*
 - positive emotions; negative emotions
 - optimism; pessimism
29. The pleasures are concerned with _____
- eudaimonia
 - the bodily senses and the emotions and positive perceptions*
 - enacting personal strengths and virtues (right action)
 - both 'a' and 'b' above
29. The gratifications are concerned with _____
- eudaimonia
 - the bodily senses and the emotions and positive perceptions
 - enacting personal strengths and virtues (right action)
 - both 'a' and 'b' above*
30. How do you pronounce the name of the eastern European researcher Dr. Czikzentmihalyi?
- cheek-sent-me-high*
 - zick-ant-mile
 - shick-zen-hale
31. "Flow" is a positive psychology variables that has been studied by eastern European researcher Dr. Czikzentmihalyi. Flow involves which of the following?
- intense positive emotions of elation/euphoria
 - timelessness
 - intense concentration/involvement/engagement
 - both 'b' and 'c' above*
 - 'a' and 'b' and 'c' above
32. Seligman speculates that one of the reasons for the high rates of depression in our society is that Western culture
- is psychologically fat and flabby?
 - Has corrupt moral standards
 - Has a terribly unhealthy diet
 - None of the above*
33. Which of the following would be an example of a shortcut to the pleasures that might result in a neglect of the gratifications
- eating food that pleases the palate
 - watching TV/movies that have high entertainment value
 - drinking alcohol or taking recreational drugs
 - all of the above*
34. Seligman believes there is a powerful antidote to the epidemic of depression in young people in the Western world. He suggests that people who are depressed or at high risk for depression do which of the following?
- decrease the pursuit of gratifications and increase the pursuit of pleasures
 - decrease the pursuit of pleasures and increase the pursuit of gratifications*
 - increase the rewards in life and decrease the punishments
 - confess sins to a clergy person of their choosing and as Jesus/God/Allah/Mohamed for forgiveness
35. Seligman believes people can experience deeply satisfying and lasting authentic happiness even if they lack authenticity and meaning in life, provided they help the needy on a consistent basis.
(T = a and *F = b)
36. Even if a person has only little or no sensual (bodily) pleasure in life, Seligman believes they can nevertheless achieve happiness by increasing the number of gratifications in life.
(*T = a and F = b)

37. According to Seligman, what happens when a person is able to identify and make use of (exercise) their 'signature strengths'?
- their level of negative affect will go down
 - their level of positive affect will go up
 - their level of happiness and satisfaction in life will go up
 - all of the above*
38. The second half of Seligman's book concerns itself with describing how _____ come(s) about and how to enhance this.
- a sense of pleasure
 - a sense of gratification*
 - unstable attributions for bad events
 - internal attributions for good events
39. _____ - is about repairing damage and about moving from plenty of negative mental health to less amounts of negative mental health
- the field of positive psychology
 - the field of abnormal and clinical psychology*
 - the field of consciousness studies (eg., dreaming research)
 - the practice of hypnosis therapy
40. A person who consistently exercises will power and exerts effort to engage in acts of courage, wisdom or temperance is
- likely to feel a sense of gratification
 - an optimistic person who makes unstable attributions
 - enacting virtues
 - both 'a' and 'c' above*
41. While strengths of character often produce good consequences in our culture, _____
- they don't necessarily need to have positive consequences to be defined as a strength
 - they (strengths) are valued in their own right
 - they (strengths) are esteemed in diverse cultures
 - all of the above*
42. What effect does the display of a bona-fide strength by one person have on observers who might witness the display?
- Observers often feel diminished because they feel relatively less virtuous
 - Observers often feel elevated, uplifted, and inspired*
 - Through the process of downward comparison, observers will feel inferior
 - Through the process of upward comparison, observers will feel superior to others
43. According to Seligman, curiosity, interest in the world, love of learning, ingenuity, originality, and perspective taking are routes to which virtue?
- courage
 - valor
 - wisdom*
 - transcendence
 - none of the above
44. According to Seligman, appreciation of beauty, gratitude, hope, forgiveness & humor are routes to which virtue?
- courage
 - valor
 - wisdom
 - none of the above*
45. A signature strength _____
- is defined as a sense of ownership or authenticity
 - is a person's highest personal strength
 - can be assessed by using the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VAIS)
 - both 'b' and 'c' above*

46. Seligman administered the optimism-pessimism test to the entering class of the Virginia Law School in 1990. These students were then followed throughout the 3 years of law school. What were the results of this study?
- pessimistic law students, on average, fared better than their optimistic counterparts*
 - optimistic law students, on average, fared better than their pessimistic counterparts
 - there were no differences between optimists and pessimists on GPA or law journal success
 - optimistic students had better physical health and socialized more, provided they also scored in the top third on IQ
47. Seligman described research which as surveyed rates of depression in employees of 104 occupations. According to this research, which specific occupation showed the very lowest rate of major depressive disorder?
- librarians
 - bus drivers
 - assembly line plant workers
 - Seligman did not say*
48. Of 104 occupations surveyed, major depressive disorders have been found to be highest among lawyers. Seligman speculated why this might be the case. In this connection, what did Seligman propose?
- high pressure combined with low decision latitude might be to blame
 - the adversarial nature of the win-loss enterprise might be to blame
 - widespread corruption and unethical practice might be to blame
 - both 'a' and 'b' above*
49. In the positive psychology studies conducted by Diener and Seligman of extremely happy people, every person (save one) in the top 10% of happiness was _____
- extremely wealthy (income of \$200,000 or more)
 - currently involved in a romantic relationship*
 - disease free and mobile and without significant medical disability
 - involved in a job with low stress levels and high decision latitude
50. Fraley & Shaver have developed the "Close Relationships Questionnaire" to study adult love styles and suggested the quality of love experienced during adulthood might be related to levels of attachment to the primary caregiver during childhood. Which type of adult love did these researchers identify as existing in adulthood?
- secure love
 - avoidant love
 - anxious love
 - all of the above*
51. Research reviewed by Seligman suggests that securely attached people and secure romantic partners who exhibit secure love are better adjusted in their relationships. In this connection, which aspect of marriage was found to be benefited by being securely attached?
- sensitivity to one's partner's need for care and concern
 - sex life
 - effectiveness of coping with stressful events
 - all of the above are benefited*
52. The positive psychology of close interpersonal relationships is concerned with _____
- repairing damage to distressed romantic relationships on the brink of destruction
 - making a solid romantic relationship even better *
53. Sandra Murry, a professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo studied romantic illusions by asking married and dating couples to rate themselves, their actual partners, and an imaginary ideal partner. The ratings were made on a variety of strengths and weaknesses. Dr. Murry also asked friends to fill out the rating scales about each member of the couple. What did Murry's results show?
- the bigger the discrepancy between what your partner describes about your strengths and what your friends believe, the happier and more stable the relationship*
 - the bigger the discrepancy between what your partner describes about your strengths and what your friends believe, the less happy and more unstable the relationship
 - positive illusions that distort reality in a direction downplaying faults and elevating strengths predicted unexpected breakup
 - none of the above

54. Finchman and Bradbury have studied optimistic and pessimistic explanations in happy and unhappy marriages. Their results suggest _____
- a. optimistic couples make temporary and specific explanations for bad relationship events but make permanent and pervasive explanations for good events*
 - b. when two pessimists are married together, they can empathize with each other due to shared perceptual style and their relationship is surprisingly happy and stable
 - c. pessimistic couples make temporary and specific explanations for bad relationship events but make permanent and pervasive explanations for good events
 - d. optimistic couples make temporary and specific explanations for good relationship events but make permanent and pervasive explanations for bad events
55. In his chapter on "Raising Children", Seligman offers three parenting principles. In this regard, which of the following was not one of these principles?
- a. parents should devote approximately 75% of their contact time with children to positive reinforcement of conforming behaviour and only about 25% of their time to punishing deviant behavior*
 - b. parents should inculcate positive emotions in their children because this helps to build intellectual, social and physical coping resources that contribute to mastery and wellness
 - c. parents should inculcate positive emotions in their children because it helps them adopt a 'better' way of thinking and better ways of acting
 - d. both 'b' and 'c' above*
56. In his chapter on child rearing, Seligman describes practices such as making a deal, synchrony games, bedtime nuggets, sibling rivalry and letting baby sleep with parents. What is the goal of these techniques?
- a. to make children obey parents more often
 - b. to make children experience positive emotions more often*
 - c. to make children better able to tell when they are likely to get rewarded and when they are likely to get punished
 - d. to make children more independent and strong so they can stand on their own and less dependent and demanding on their parent's time
57. Like contentment, positive emotions about the past can best be increased by _____
- a. gratitude and forgiveness*
 - b. learning to better recognize and dispute automatic pessimistic thoughts
 - c. counteracting the numbing effects of habituation
 - d. exercising your strengths and virtues
58. Positive emotions about the future, like optimism, can best be increased by _____
- a. gratitude and forgiveness
 - b. learning to better recognize and dispute automatic pessimistic thoughts*
 - c. counteracting the numbing effects of habituation
 - d. exercising your strengths and virtues
 - e. both 'c' and 'd' above
59. Seligman refers to positive emotions about the present as "pleasures" and "gratifications". He suggests they can best be increased by _____
- a. gratitude and forgiveness
 - b. learning to better recognize and dispute automatic pessimistic thoughts
 - c. counteracting the numbing effects of habituation and by savoring and mindfulness
 - d. exercising your strengths and virtues
 - e. both 'c' and 'd' above*
60. Absorption, engagement and flow involve
- a. the pleasures
 - b. the absence of felt positive affect
 - c. a sense of gratification
 - d. both 'b' and 'c' above*

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End of Part A
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SIX (6) EXTRA CREDIT QUESTIONS (over)

NOTE: The following questions are optional. If you wish to attempt to answer the following questions, each correct answer will earn you extra credit points.

61. (extra credit 1).

The key defining feature of _____ is the successful pursuit of positive feelings supplemented by the presence of attitudes and skills that amplify this type of happiness

- a. the pleasant life*
- b. the good (engaged) life
- c. the meaningful life

62. (extra credit 2).

The key defining feature of _____ is successfully using your signature strengths to obtain abundant, authentic and sustained gratification while serving the needs of something larger than yourself

- a. the pleasant life
- b. the good (engaged) life
- c. the meaningful life*

63. (extra credit 3)

The key defining feature of _____ is successfully using your signature strengths to obtain abundant, authentic and sustained gratification.

- a. the pleasant life
- b. the good (engaged) life*
- c. the meaningful life

64. (extra credit 4)

Seligman divides the positive emotions into two categories: (1) pleasures and (2) gratifications

(*T = a and F = b)

65. (extra credit 5)

Seligman argues that using your signature strengths to obtain gratification results in a life that feels and is "authentic"?

(*T = a and F = b)

66. (extra credit 6)

Paradoxically, Seligman uses the term happiness and positive emotional well-being to refer to activities (*such as being absorbed by intrinsically interesting tasks*) that, by definition, have no feeling component when experienced in the present moment.

(*T = a and F = b)

PART B: SHORT ANSWERS

NOTE: You should answer any 10 of the 15.

1. Lisa Aspinwall, a professor at the University of Utah, won the second Templeton award for progress in Positive Psychology. She has done research involving the process of making important health-lifestyle decisions. She concluded that happier people may be smarter when it comes to precautionary health behaviour than unhappy people. In no more than one paragraph, describe Aspinwall's research study.
2. Research in Western cultures has documented that married people (or those cohabiting) are happier than unmarried people (or people who live alone). In no more than two short paragraphs, give two explanations to account for this statistical fact (one very brief paragraph per explanation).
3. Seligman describes the phone call received by Dr. Everett Worthington on New Year's day 1996. Dr. Worthington's brother exclaimed, "*Mama's been murdered. There was blood on the carpets, and walls ...*" As a result of his research on forgiveness, Dr. Worthington wrote a book describing a 5-step process that leads to unburdening of hatred and development of forgiveness. The acronym for this process is R.E.A.C.H. Describe in no more than 10 sentences what each letter stands for (maximum of 2 sentences per letter).

4. In writing about the causal attributions of pessimists and optimists, Seligman states that pessimists who have a history of making universal explanations for their failures (and problems) are prone to give up more easily across the board when a particular setback hits a particular area of their life. In contrast, when a particular setback hits a particular area of the life of an optimist, they tend to make specific attributions and thereby only become helpless in the one area of their life that is impacted. In this connection, give a verbatim one sentence example of a self-statement (thought) that might come into the mind of a pessimist. Don't replicate the examples given by Seligman. Also, give the optimistic counterthought/self-statement. Put your answers in quotations. (maximum 2 sentence answer)
5. Seligman notes that people who give up easily in the face of adversity believe the causes of bad events that happened to them are permanent, meaning the underlying contributors will last a long time. In contrast, people who persist under adverse conditions believe the causes of bad events are temporary. In this connection, give a one sentence example of a self-statement (thought) that might come into the mind of a pessimist who believes in permanence. Also, give a verbatim example of the type of self-statement(thought) that an optimist might have. Put your answers in quotations. (maximum 2 sentence answer)
6. Describe in no more than one sentence the type of thinking that would cause a person to bounce back from trouble/setbacks more briskly.
7. Seligman describes a well researched and well documented method for building optimism. This method consists of becoming more aware of pessimistic thoughts and then disputing them. In this connection, Seligman offers the ABCDE model. Using only no more than five sentences, describe what the acronym ABCDE stands for (one sentence per letter).
8. Seligman describes four techniques that contribute to more effective disputation of pessimistic thoughts. In no more than four sentences, describe four of these techniques (one sentence per technique)
9. Seligman describes a positive psychology technique known as "mindfulness." In no more than three or four sentences, describe what mindfulness is and how it is relevant to positive psychology.
10. The positive psychology of close interpersonal relationships is not about repairing damage to distressed romantic relationships on the brink of destruction. In no more than 3 or 4 sentences, describe the positive psychology orientation.
11. Seligman suggests optimistic attributions help improve the quality of marriage or close romantic relationships. Based on this general assertion, describe the specific advice Seligman would give to a member of a couple (Person 1) who finds their partner (Person 2) has done something they (Person 1) are displeased with. In no more than 3 or 4 sentences, describe the optimal response.
12. Seligman suggests optimistic attributions help improve the quality of marriage or close romantic relationships. Based on this general assertion, describe the specific advice Seligman would give to a member of a couple (Person 1) who finds their partner (Person 2) has done something they (Person 1) find admirable. In no more than 3 or 4 sentences, describe the optimal response.
13. In no more than one paragraph, describe "the pleasant life"
14. In no more than one paragraph, describe "the good life" (ie., the "engaged" life)
15. In no more than one paragraph, describe "the meaningful life"