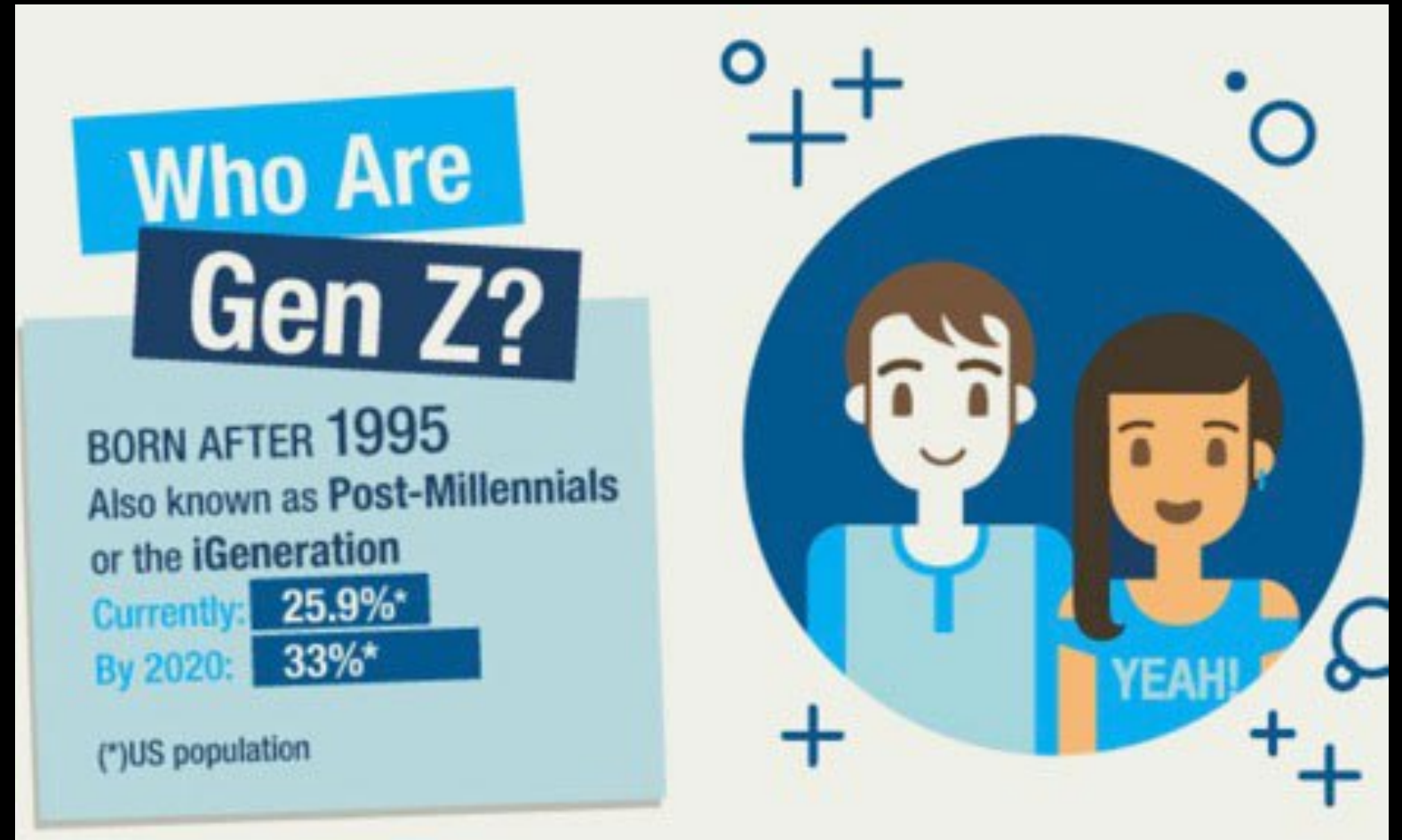


# Generation Z

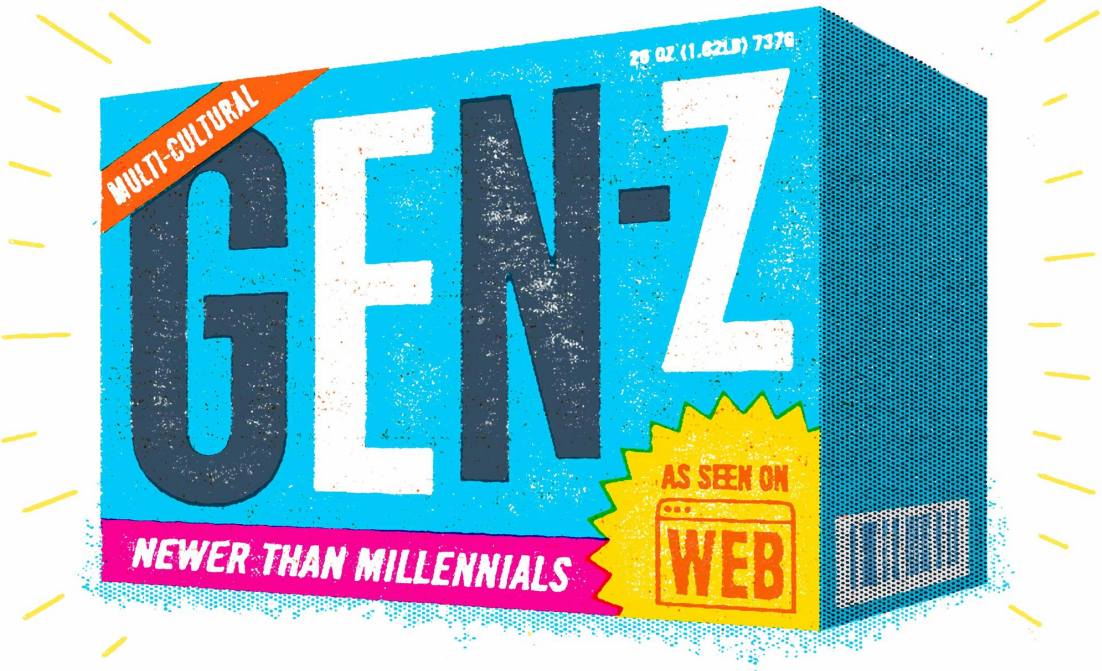
Erik Albinson

Director:

Student Educational  
Services



# Generation Z (iGen)



# Generation Z

DON'T MISTAKE THEM FOR MILLENNIALS

GENERATION

**HELLO**

my name is

5 SCREENS

COMMUNIC

CREATE TH

FUTURE-FO

REALISTS

WANT TO V

*Anxiety*

KT

ENT

D

# Evolution of communication

4,000 years later, and we're back  
to the same language...



# The World is a Dangerous Place

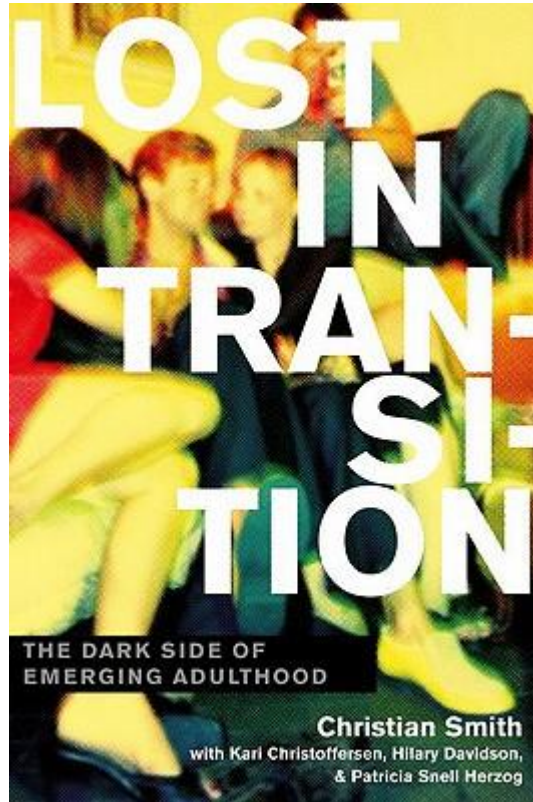
- Post 9/11 Childhood
- Climate Change
- War on Terrorism
- School Shootings
- The Great Recession

The success of previous generations is not guaranteed.

# Generation Z Traits

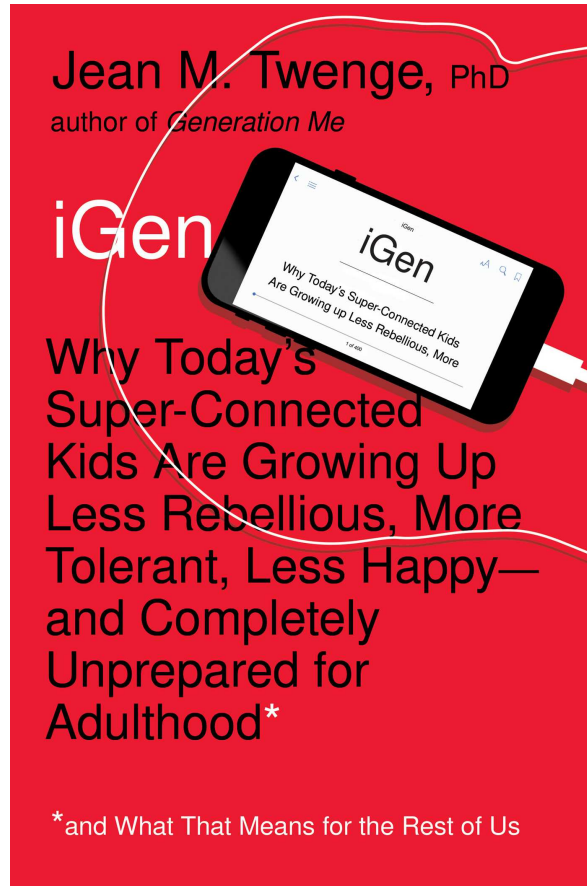
- Hopeful and realistic/responsible (Financially conservative)
- Compassionate, thoughtful, and open-minded - "we-centric"
- Diversity, equality, environmentalism (Value focused)
- Competitive & less team oriented
- Connected consumers, contributors, & collaborators
  - Real world & virtual world blur
  - Understand the dangers of tech and want face to face connection
- Want to commit to a meaningful workplace (Loyal)
- Focus on safety
- Youtube learners (short clips)
- **Customization** – The defining characteristic of Generation Z

# Emerging Adulthood



- Growth of Higher Education
- Delay of Marriage
- No stable lifelong careers
- Extended dependence on parents (financial & emotional)
- Easy access of birth control
- Postmodernism

# iGen – The “I” stand for:



- In no hurry
- Internet – Social Media
  - Decline in Reading
- In Person No More
  - Caveman brains
- Irreligious
- Insulated but not intrinsic
- Income insecurity
- Indefinite – lack of norms
- Independent – political views
- Insecure – Mental Health Crisis



# Sudden Dramatic Change

- Going out without their parents
- Get together with their friends less often
- Feeling left out (FOMO) – Often feel lonely
- Can't do anything right, my life is not useful, Do not enjoy life
  - 50% increase in major depressive disorder between 2011 – 2015 among teens
  - Suicide rate for 12-14 year olds has doubled since 2007

**What happened between 2010 and 2015?**

# 2016 NCHA Survey Marquette University

- Felt hopeless: 42.2%
- Felt overwhelmed: 91%
- Felt exhausted (not from physical activity): 85.4%
- Felt lonely: 58.6%
- Felt very sad: 59.5%
- So depressed that it was difficult to function: 28.8%
- Have overwhelming anxiety: 57.6%
- Have overwhelming anger: 31.8%

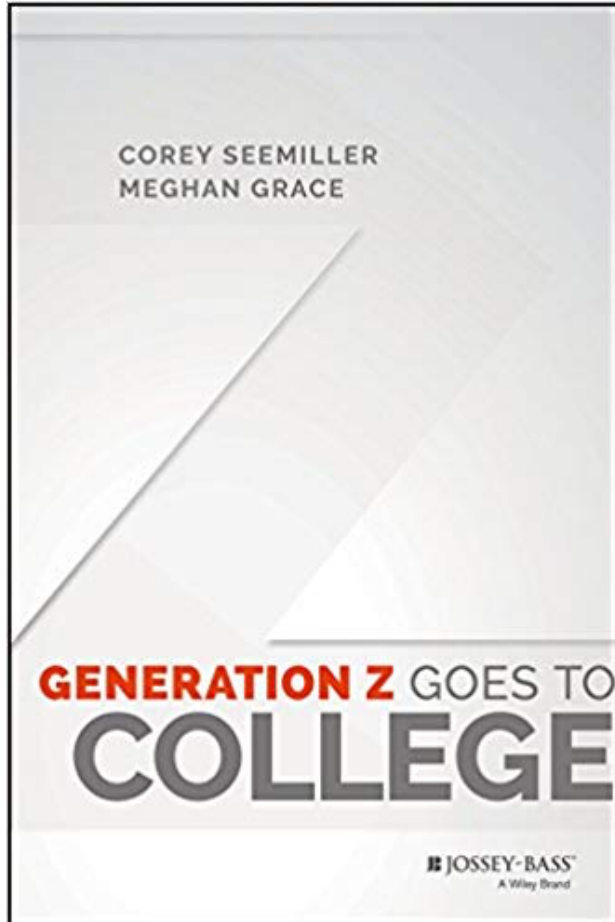
# Life History Theory

- Slow life strategy – common when families have fewer children and cultivate each child longer and more intensely.
- Fast life strategy (Boomer era) – larger families, lack of labor saving tech – focus on getting through the day rather than preparation of the future.
  - Kids play outside (free play)

# Growing Up Slowly

- Focused on Safety
- Not going out on their own
- Fewer teens having sex and drinking alcohol
- Driving later (1 in 4 choose not to drive in HS)
- No more Gen X latchkey kids
- The decline of the teen job
- Less mature than previous generations

# Gen Z Goes to College



- Instant information
  - Implications of easy truth
- Instant gratification
  - microbarriers
- Like minded single serving friends
- Multi-tasking (attention span decreased by 1/2)
- Different form of engagement
  - Respect authority & hierarchy
  - Value transparency and collegiality
- Time and space are fluid
  - Manage energy & Manage Time

# Social Interest (Adler) & Technology Use

- Gen Z consuming and interacting with media **8 hours** a day.
- Smartphones present at all income levels.
  - Low-income and minority students consume 4.5 hours more media than higher-income White youth.
- 50% more comfortable talking online than in real life.
- Digital bond (separation anxiety)
  - 90% of Gen Z report having an emotional bond to the internet

# Neurological Implications

- Screen time disrupts neurological development (attention span).
- Decrease in linear thinking (loss of context). Information is fast, disjointed, and overlapping.
- Multitasking equals partial attention epidemic
  - Absent presence – physically in one place while attention and communication focus is elsewhere.
- Speed = Anxiety

# Bean & Eaton: Avoidance & Approach

- Using technology to avoid struggles in their offline lives.
  - Escapism and fantasy to fill emotional voids and find belonging.
  - Video games: Showed the dopamine released in video games equitable to the the levels of amphetamine users.
    - Excessive video game use has been linked to the inability to manage frustration, fear, uneasiness, and declining grades.
- Excessive gaming or online immersion can lead to difficulty in developing health coping skills (approach behaviors).
- Overcoming adversity is important to human development (Adler).
  - Fragile perfects (Duckworth)



# Working with Gen Z (Seemiller & Grace)

- Face to Face contact
- Be Transparent – Engage with students as colleagues
- Understand Family Roles (Parents are a major influence)
- Enhance Safety
- Ensure Inclusive and Affirming Environments
- Support Mental Health
- Help students access funding
- Focus on Wellness

# Working with Gen Z (Seemiller & Grace)

- Help Students make value based goals
- Cultivate informed opinions
- Financial literacy

# My thoughts: Big Picture

- Utilize a sociological approach (Tinto & Astin) and a Psychological approach.
  - Individualized interventions
  - Student emotions, trauma, and individual psychology should be at the center of our practice.

# My thoughts: Tips of the Trade

- Course Reform – More hands-on & job relevant
- Focus on wellness
- Break the social media group think bubble (echo chambers)
- Find a way to customize their classroom experience. iGen expects to be treated as individuals and colleagues.
- iGen students expect convenience. Don't assume "digital" natives know how to use technology for academics.
- They don't like to learn in groups. They favor videos. They want a model to follow.
- Paradox – they crave face-to-face communication even though they struggle with it. They want authenticity and transparency.

# My Thoughts: Tips of the Trade

- Always be able to explain the why – this is generation that does not blindly accept authority. Your role as a teacher is coach... you are often selling not telling.
- Perry Intellectual Development (Dualism, Multiplicity, Relativism, Commitment).
- Kolb (Experiential Learning) – Concrete Experience, Reflection, Abstract Conceptualization, Active Experimentation

# Gallup Purdue Index Report

## The Six Collegiate Determinants of Being Engaged at Work

1. Having a professor who cares about you as a person
2. Having a professor who makes you excited about learning
3. Having a professor who encourages you to pursue your dreams
4. Having an internship or job where you can apply what you are learning in the classroom
5. Being actively involved in extracurricular activities and organizations
6. Working on projects that take a semester or more to complete

*Having 1-3 together doubles one's odds of being engaged at work.*

*Having 4-6 together doubles one's odds of being engaged at work.*

## These Determinants Are Rare

out of 30,000 graduates...

**14%** strongly agree they had 1, 2 and 3

**6%** strongly agree they had 4, 5 and 6

**3** strongly agree they had all 6 of these experiences during college

# As Educators...

What is the best way to educate a generation that rarely reads books or emails, breathes through social media, feels isolated and stressed but is crazy driven and wants to solve the world's problems?

# Erik Albinson

ealbinso@coe.edu





# Grit

- Interests (fun) → Passion → Purpose (Other Focused) = Grit
- Naturals vs. Strivers
  - Talent & Intelligence are skills
- Fragile Perfects

**F**irst  
**A**ttempt  
**I**n  
**L**earning

Duckworth, A. L. (2016). *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*. New York: Scribner.

# Growth Mindset vs Fixed Mindset



Dweck, Carol. *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. Random House, 2006.

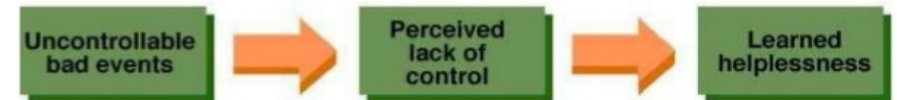
# Learned Helplessness

- Optimism = Temporary Specific
- Pessimism = Permanent Pervasive



Sometimes the chains that prevent us from being free are more mental than physical

## LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

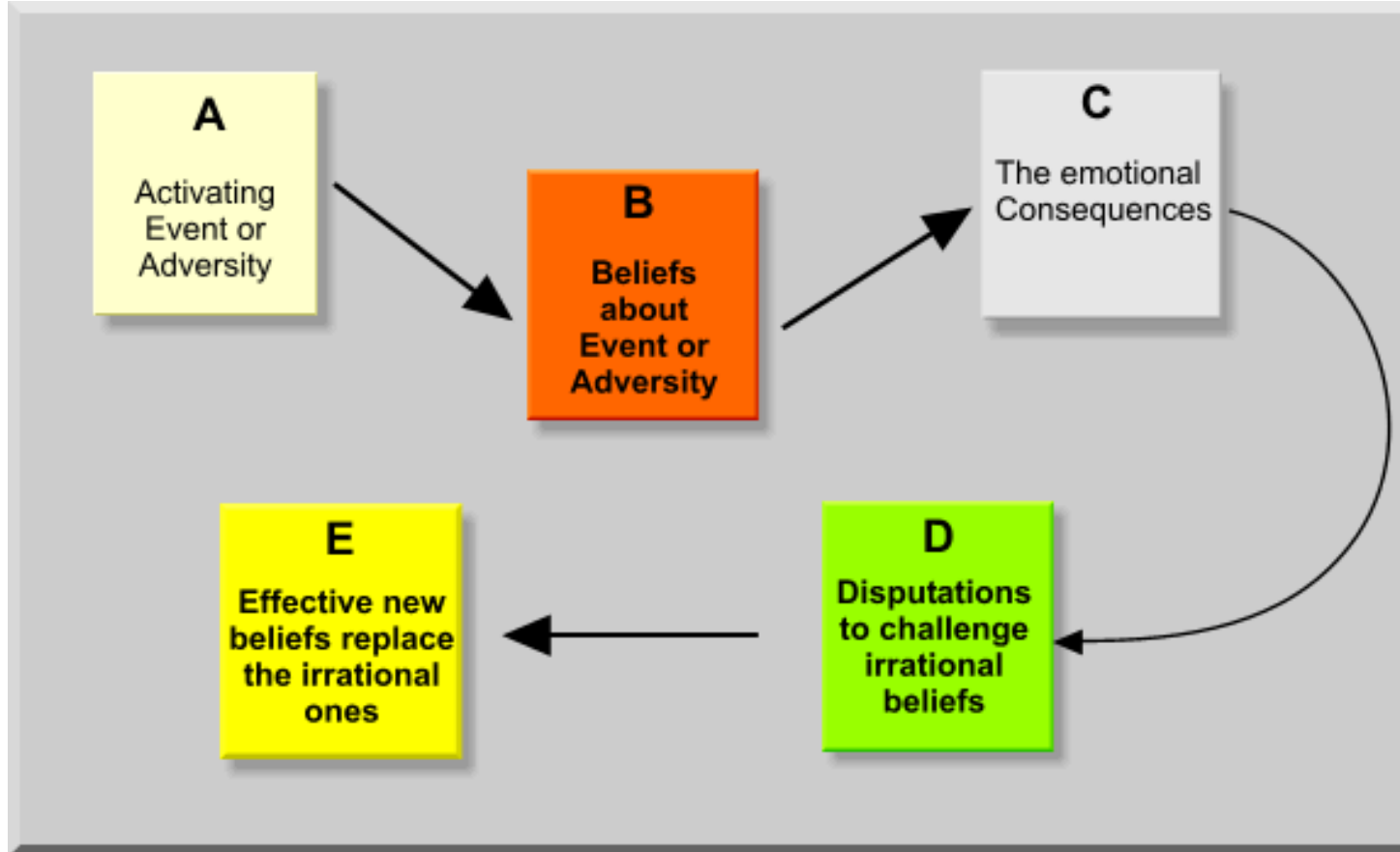


### Learned helplessness:

The passive resignation produced by repeated exposure to negative events that are perceived to be unavoidable.

Duckworth, A. L., Peterson, C., Matthews, M. D., & Kelly, D. R. (2007). Grit: perseverance and passion for long-term goals. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 92(6), 1087.

# ABCDE Model



Seligman, M. E. (2012). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. Simon and Schuster.

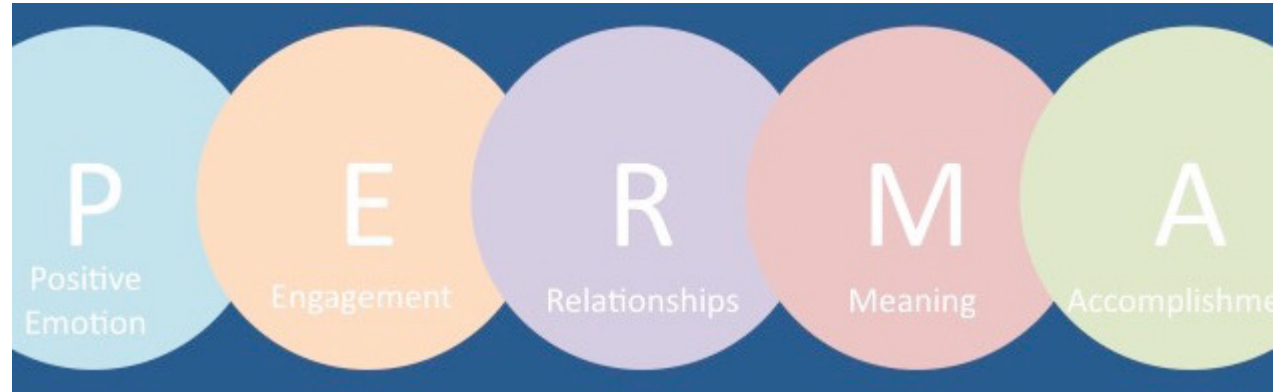
# Perseverance



Duckworth, A. L. (2016). *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*. New York: Scribner.

# Positive Psychology

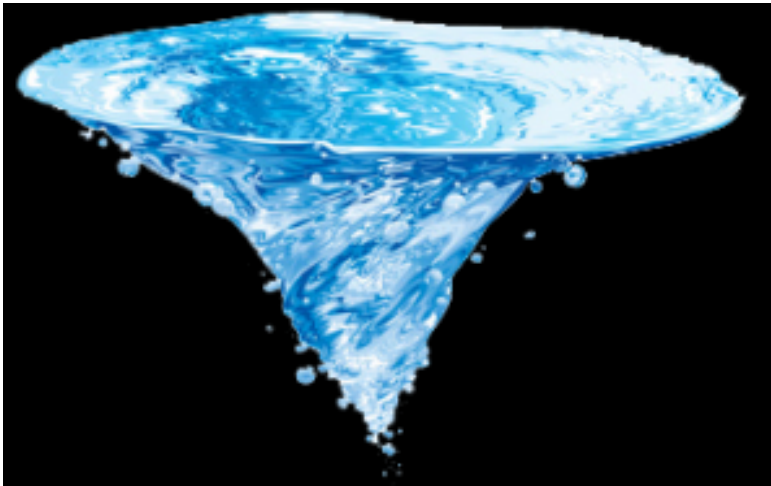
- **P**leasant Experiences
- **E**ngagement (Flow)
- **R**elationships
- **M**eaning
- **A**chievement



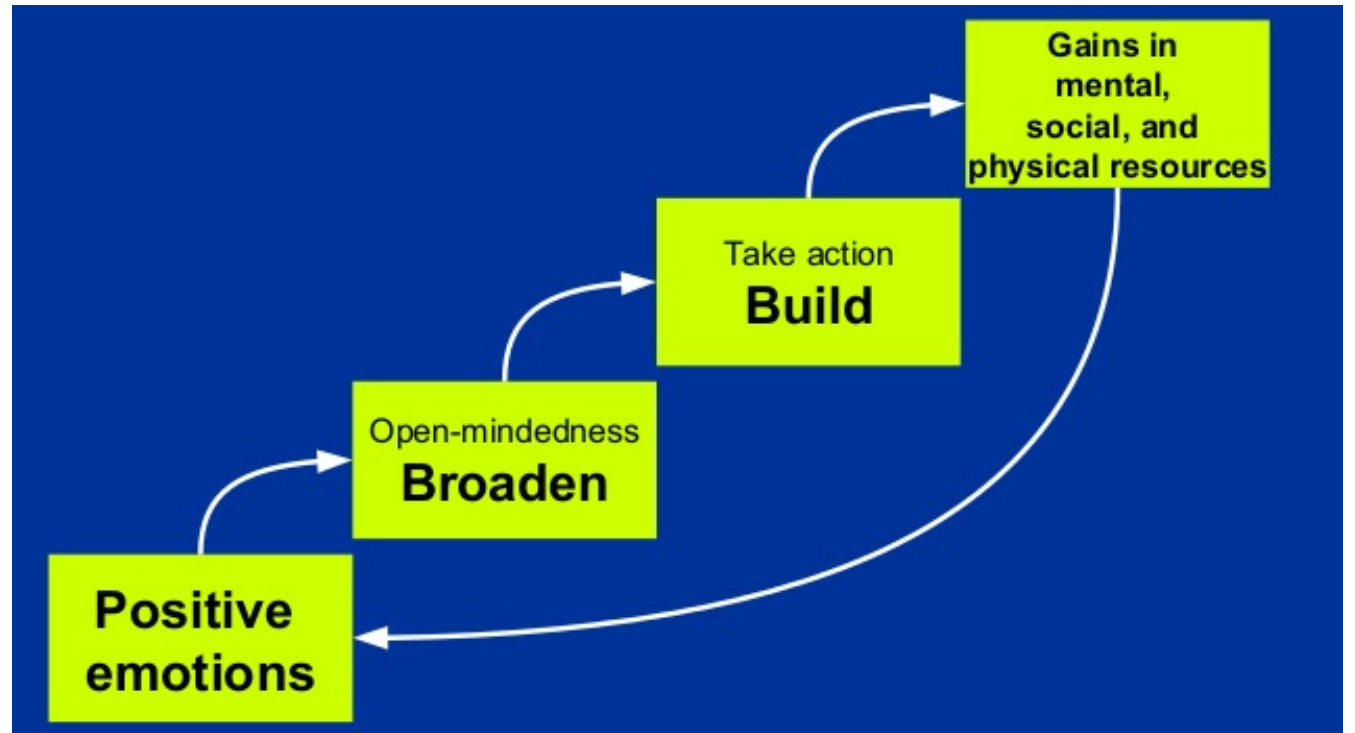
Seligman, M. E. (2012). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. Simon and Schuster.

# Barbara Fredrickson

- Losada Ratio (3:1 Business, 5:1 Marriage)
- Broaden & Build Theory



Fredrickson, B. (2009). *Positivity*. Harmony Books



# The Fundamentals of Positive Psychology

- PERMA (Well being theory)
- Positive Interventions
- Mindfulness
- Virtues & Character Strengths
- Physical Well Being