

## POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND POSITIVE ORIENTATION

Vesna Petrović\*

Faculty of Law and Business Studies, Novi Sad  
Department of Business Psychology

### Abstract

Positive psychology represents a 21st century movement in psychology. It is a psychology aimed at researching optimal human functioning that empirically studies, first and foremost, the concept of happiness, in addition to life satisfaction, optimism, virtues and suchlike notions, which are used to measure the growth and development of human potential and subjective well-being. This line of conceptualization and research is based on the disease model and opens up new perspectives for both psychology as a science as well as the people it is intended for. This paper elaborates the basic ideas and results of certain explorations relative to positive psychology and positive orientation which comprises optimism, self-esteem and life satisfaction.

**Keywords:** positive psychology, positive orientation, happiness, health

### Introduction

Approximately 30% of people in the US claim to lead a “very happy“ life and these figures have not changed over the past 60 years even though the value of after-tax personal income, taken as a constant scale, with inflation rate calculated, has since doubled or even tripled. We still get the same results, namely, that after a certain point is reached, which equals more or less to earning a few thousand dollars above the poverty level, an increase in material well-being does not have a significant effect on people’s happiness. As a matter of fact, we can always observe that a lack of fundamental, material resources affects the level of dissatisfaction whereas a rise in material resources, on the other hand, does not bring more satisfaction (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999).

What actually contributes to people’s feeling of real satisfaction and happiness in their everyday lives?

Over the last few years, from 2000 to date, there has been a rapid rise in the number of studies focusing on human strengths and individual optimal functioning. The results reveal the

---

\* Corresponding author. Faculty of Law and Business Study, Department of Business Psychology, 21000 Novi Sad, Ul. Grčkoškolska 2, e-mail: [vesnapet@eunet.rs](mailto:vesnapet@eunet.rs)

key role which one's estimate of oneself, one's own life and future plays in one's perspective on one's well-being and success in various areas of functioning (Diener & Suh, 2000; Kahneman, Diener, & Schwartz, 1999).

Positive psychology or the positive psychology movement constitutes an important field of the aforementioned research whose most famous proponents are Martin Seligman, Christopher Peterson, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Edward Diener and their associates.

## Positive psychology and happiness

Professor Martin Seligman, a distinguished psychologist, psychotherapist of cognitive-behavioral orientation, one of the founders of, what is now nothing short of a movement, known as positive psychology, replies to the question about the state of psychology today by saying that psychology was good, then not good, while today it is not good enough.

Why was psychology good?

For more than 60 years psychology worked within the disease model. To illustrate this, the professor mentions that ten years ago he introduced himself to a man sitting next to him on the plane, told him what he did for a living and the man moved away from him. Quite rightly, because rumor had it that psychology was only searching for what was wrong with people. "Spot the lunatics". While now, Seligman continues, when he states his profession, people move toward him.

What was good about psychology, about the 30 billion dollars worth of investment made by the National Institute of Mental Health, and about the existing "disease model", was the fact that 60 years ago none of the mental disorders were treatable – things were ill-defined and fuzzy. Nowadays, fourteen disorders are treatable, while two are curable.

Another good thing that happened was the development of science pertaining to mental disorders. Psychologists managed to measure indeterminate concepts, such as depression and alcoholism, with rigorous precision. A classification of mental illnesses was created and it became possible to understand their origins. We can now observe the same people over a period of time, people who are, for instance, genetically susceptible to schizophrenia, and ask ourselves how much influence the environment or genetics exert, and then isolate the third variable by conducting an experimental study of the mental illnesses.

And the best thing of all is that we have succeeded, in the past 50 years, in inventing psychological and drug treatments, which we could subsequently put to test in randomly assigned placebo-controlled groups.

In conclusion, psychology and psychiatry have made miserable people less miserable in the course of the last 60 years, which is brilliant; an achievement we can be very proud of. However, the downside of it was the consequences, that is, three things, explains professor Seligman.

Firstly, the moral. Psychologists and psychiatrists became both victim and pathology oriented; our view of human nature was such that if someone had a problem, this probably implied that the problem was externally induced. We forgot that people made choices and decisions. We forgot about responsibility. And that was the first price we had to pay.

Secondly, we forgot about people. We forgot that normal lives needed to be improved too. We forgot about our mission – that we should make people who are relatively untroubled even happier, more fulfilled, more productive, and the words such as "genius" or "huge talent" became "dirty" words. Few people are working on this.

Thirdly, in relation to the “disease model“, we rushed to help the troubled people and try to repair the damage done, while it never occurred to us to develop interventions which could make people happier - the positive interventions. This was not good.

Seligman further adds:

“And so that’s what led people like Nancy Etcoff, Dan Gilbert, Mike Csikszentmihalyi and myself to work in something I call positive psychology, which has three aims. The first is that psychology should be just as concerned with human strength as it is with weakness. It should be just as concerned about building strength as with repairing damage. It should be interested in the best things in life, and it should be just as concerned with making the lives of normal people fulfilling and concerned with genius, and with nurturing high-talent.” (Seligman, 2010).

In the past 10 years, and hopefully in the future too, we have had the chance to witness the birth of a science of positive psychology: the science that explores what makes life really worth living.

Now we know that the manifold forms of happiness can be measured. Anyone who is interested in this issue can go to the website <http://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/questionnaires.aspx> and fill in a number of questionnaires which measure happiness, free of charge. You can compare your score on positive emotions, or for example, your flow (a kind of emotion – supreme pleasure), with those provided by tens of thousands of other people. A counterpart to the diagnostic manual of mental illnesses has been created as a categorization of strengths and virtues. We have established that we can identify the causation of positive states - the links between the activities of the left hemisphere and those of the right as a cause of happiness. *So, positive psychology operates in terms of human virtues, growth and development of human potentials. The goal is human happiness not the loss of disease symptoms.*

Positive psychology emphasizes optimism and the positive sides of human functioning instead of focusing on psychopathology and the difficulties in functioning. Out of a quest to understand positive human experience, there emerged a positive correlation between emotional competence and constructs, such as happiness, self-esteem, self-efficacy, optimism, hope, life satisfaction, locus of control and many more (Takšić, Mohorić, & Munjas, 2006).

Seligman and his associates claim that the ultimate aim of the positive psychology movement is the creation of interventions and institutions dedicated to increasing the level of happiness since happiness is not merely an irrelevant epiphenomenon – it is related to several positive outcomes, such as health, success and interpersonal satisfaction (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005).

Seligman maintains that the concept of happiness should be used so as to denote the whole field of research pertaining to positive psychology. Just as the notion of cognition is used to denote cognitive psychologists’ field of interest, positive psychologists employ the concept of happiness to define various modes contributing to human happiness which are also accessible to scientific investigations (Mihic, 2009).

One of the first definitions of happiness that can be found in ancient philosophy explains it as an equivalent of pleasure, sensory gratifications included. This viewpoint was first openly expressed in the philosophy of hedonism, in the conviction that pleasure should be maximized, whereas pain should be minimized. In other words, according to this doctrine, a happy life is a *life of pleasure* (Peterson, Park, & Seligman, 2005).

A belief contrary to hedonism that can be discerned even in Aristotle defines happiness as a result of living in harmony with one’s inner self, that is, a life path characterized by discovering inner values and living accordingly. Maslow’s concept of a self-actualized man exemplifies a modern variation of this ancient tradition. The common aspect of all these

conceptions is the belief that man should recognize the best in him and dedicate his qualities and talents to a greater cause, especially if it contributes to other people's well-being. Therefore, a happy life is a *life of meaning* (Peterson et al., 2005).

There is also a third path which positive psychologists emphasize in their writing, the engagement in what we are doing. Engagement is characterized by the loss of boundaries between self and object, it is a complete immersion into an activity, when time seems to have stopped. When we are in the engagement zone, we do not find this state to be particularly pleasant or unpleasant. Only later on, when we reflect upon these moments, do we relate the moments of dedication to pleasantness, even though their essential quality is not the pleasantness itself, but a wholehearted engagement. According to positive psychologists, people who often experience these moments lead a *life of engagement* (Peterson et al., 2005). Csikszentmihalyi (Čiksentmihalji, 1999) introduced the term *flow* to denote a mental state in which a man who leads a life of engagement is performing an activity he is absorbed in and fulfilled by.

Life of pleasure, life of meaning and life of engagement represent three orientations to happiness and can be measured by a scale devised by Peterson, Park, and Seligman (2005) called "Orientations to happiness". Psychologists are nowadays actively searching for the response to the following question: Are there any interventions or other methods that can permanently be steered in a positive direction by these orientations to happiness? Apparently, the answer is affirmative. Tests are now being conducted under placebo-controlled conditions, besides longitudinal studies of different interventions. For instance, an intervention that turned out to be an effective one, teaching people how to maximize life satisfaction, comprised a task which demanded of the participants to use their best skills and design one beautiful day. As positive psychology experts propose designing one beautiful day through a person's mental capacities, virtues and advantages, enhances the level of satisfaction. These psychologists have confirmed that those participants who completed the task experienced an increase in life satisfaction.

## Health, life skills, physical activity and exercise

Psychological interventions that boost happiness can be combined with or complemented by traditional interventions, as well as physical activities, thus leading to a permanent growth of individual happiness, followed by plentiful positive effects on health and optimal functioning.

In his book entitled "Enjoy life: healing with happiness" Johnson (2009) provides copious ways which can raise the level of happiness and, by extension, our general good health. The author includes an entire program whose fundamental elements are gratitude, development of personal strengths, multiplication of personal virtues, increase in optimism, physical exercise, relationships with others and life skills.

Salmon (2001) and Hansen et al. (2001) stress the importance of **physical activity**, stating that its effect corresponds approximately to that of antidepressants or anxiety relief medications - ten minutes a day produces this effect while half an hour of physical activity a day is the optimum.

Balkin et al. (2007) assert that depression is a prevalent issue with girls on university campuses in the US. Their research report pertains to three groups of undergraduates: the first group of participants did aerobic exercises, the second attended weight-lifting classes and the third, the control group, underwent mental health counseling at the university. The aerobic exercise group exhibited a statistically significant decrease in depressive symptoms compared to two other groups of undergraduates. The authors of the study believe that the implications of these results are noteworthy for general good health and that mental health counselors should take into consideration all aspects of health when working with the clients. Young adult women

will probably develop a stronger feeling of well-being if they adopt a life style that is consistent with the wellness model (Hermon & Hazler, 1999). According to these two researchers, mental health counselors should give recommendations which can affect various aspects of mental health and wellness, including those on aerobic exercises as an efficient intervention which reduces depressive symptoms.

Another investigation carried out by Teychenne et al. (2010) on a large sample of women, totaling 3645 participants, demonstrated that a far lower risk of depression was present in women who spent some free time doing physical exercises in comparison with women who spent their free time sitting behind the computer or watching television.

In view of these findings, it is more than evident that there is a link between physical exercise and positive psychology, i.e. orientation to happiness.

Nevertheless, apart from orientation to happiness, the exploration of positive human functioning and experience expands to many other related concepts, areas of life and human traits, such as, for example, optimism, self-esteem and life satisfaction.

## Life satisfaction, self-esteem and optimism

In other words, self-esteem, life satisfaction and optimism seem to be distinctly related to numerous outcomes that confirm individual optimal functioning, such as health, business success and interpersonal positive relations (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener 2005; Pyszczynski, Greenberg, Solomon, Arnt, & Schimel, 2004; Scheier & Carver, 2001). All three constructs correspond to a lasting structure of knowledge about oneself and the world. They have a serious impact on personal feelings and actions, shaping the present and predisposing future experiences (Caprara, 2009).

*Life satisfaction* refers to a person's general evaluation of various activities and relationships that make someone's life worth living (Diener, 1984). This overall estimate summarizes the degree of satisfaction one gets from multitudinous activities and relationships which have marked one's life.

*Self-esteem* denotes an individual's general self-regard and the level of self-acceptance (Harter, 1999). This overall appraisal reflects the ongoing transactions between a person and the situations which define his/her course of life, given that people draw appreciation from what they have accomplished with others over time and through life circumstances of every description. Although neither the price at which self-esteem is gained under harsh and unpredictable life contingencies (Crocker & Park, 2004) nor the risky consequences of an extremely high or low opinion of oneself (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003) should be underestimated, there is certainly no doubt that self-esteem has a beneficial effect on the whole life span in various domains of life. People whose self-esteem is at a high level adopt more efficient strategies in pursuing their goals, are less likely to quit in the face of obstacles or troubles, feel more in control over events, have a lower risk of developing symptoms of depression or anxiety and are more healthy (Baumeister, 1993; Greenberg, et al. 1992; Kernis, 2003).

*Optimism* refers to one's perspective on future personal and social events, in which there will be an abundance of good things and a scarcity of bad things (Carver & Scheier, 2002). The positive effects of this view have been extensively documented in diverse settings and life circumstances. It is worth noting that research findings indicate that optimism is positively correlated to physical health, effective coping strategies, successful recuperation and longevity (Maruta, Colligan, Malinchoc, & Offord, 2000; Scheier & Carver, 1985, 2001; Segerstrom, Taylor, Kemeny, & Fahey, 1998).

A high degree of inter-correlation between life satisfaction, self-esteem and optimism prompts us to focus on the identification of what they have in common. This, eventually, leads to the hypothesis that what they have in common is a latent factor, that is, an outlook on the world and reality which impacts the way people construe their experiences and predispositions for certain actions (Caprara, Delle Fratte, & Steca, 2002; Caprara, Steca, Alessandri, Abela, & McWhinnie, 2009).

*What do self-esteem, life satisfaction and optimism have in common?*

A few thousand respondents, equally distributed by sex and age between 20 and 80 (Alessandri, 2008; Caprara, Alessandri, Tisak, & Steca, 2009), participated in studies exploring life satisfaction, self-esteem and optimism (Caprara, 2009) by filling out questionnaires.

The results of these studies have shown that life satisfaction, self-esteem and optimism are positively and highly interrelated. Furthermore, confirmatory factor analyses have demonstrated that life satisfaction, self-esteem and optimism represent indicators of a common latent factor and exhibit strong and statistically significant positive loadings on common factors (Caprara, Alessandri et al., 2009). Additionally, the explained variances for all the three indicators were uniformly high besides being sound indicators that the conceptual model and the analyzed data were in accord (Alessandri, 2008; Caprara, Alessandri et al., 2009; Caprara et al., 2002). The ensuing explorations confirmed the generalizability of these findings in assorted linguistic and cultural contexts, namely, in Japan, Germany, Spain and Canada (Caprara, Alessandri, Gunzenhauser, Peirò, Trommsdorff, & Yamaguchi 2009; Caprara, Steca, et al., 2009).

*Stability and predictive value of positive orientation*

The results of longitudinal studies confirm the high stability of positive orientation in adolescence (Alessandri, 2008; Caprara, Alessandri, et al., 2009). Moreover, positive orientation was a reliable predictor of depression, positive and negative affectivity, quality of friendship and health, as well as other indicators of individual optimal functioning in school and at work (Alessandri, 2008; Caprara, Alessandri, et al., 2009).

*Genetic basis of positive orientation*

A study conducted on twins which examined self-esteem, life satisfaction and optimism, was aimed at discovering the genetic and environmental structure of these three characteristics (Caprara, Fagnani, et al., 2009). Multivariate genetic analysis revealed that the model presupposing genetic and unshared environmental effect as partly common to self-esteem, life satisfaction and optimism which is partially specific to each of the aforesaid traits clearly depicts the genetic structure of positive orientation. Heritability (defined as a proportion relating to genetic variation within a total variance) for the three (first order) components of positive orientation was: 73% for self-esteem, 59% for life satisfaction and 28% for optimism. Genetic correlation (measuring the extent to which the two traits are influenced by the same gene) was estimated at .80 for self-esteem and life satisfaction, .83 for self-esteem and optimism, and .87 for life satisfaction and optimism.

*Turning potential into optimal functioning: challenges and future directions of research*

The results of the aforementioned studies converge in laying stress on positive orientation as a fundamental predisposition which can, to a considerable extent, account for one's adjustments and achievements. In the light of these data, however, we might wonder about the possibility of any changes, but at the same time, the development of interventions which could empower and strengthen an individual's view of himself, his own life and his future, poses a challenge for researchers, clinicians and health psychologists alike. Even though genes determine our average points for positive orientation, they are probably not responsible for our position within our personal range of variation at any given time.

The influential role of unique experience deserves special attention so that proper strategies for promoting individual growth and flourish could be identified. In this regard, the foregoing findings can be related to contributions that self-efficacy beliefs give to positive orientation, within the frame of social cognitive theory; this theory places the self-efficacy beliefs at the heart of human motivating force. Self-efficacy defines the direction towards a goal, by providing suitable processes and mechanisms that enable people to exert control over their lives and actively contribute to their happiness (Bandura, 1997; Caprara, 2002).

Attention should also be called to the fact that the earlier findings underscore a conceptual model in which an individual's perceived efficacy in affect management influences his perceived efficacy in managing interpersonal relationships while both of them, jointly, contribute to positive orientation (Caprara & Steca, 2005; 2006a, 2006b). Present-day findings reveal the contribution of positive psychology to perceived efficacy and further illuminate the contribution of perceived efficacy to positive orientation in the course of time. It is worth pointing out that the perceived emotional and social efficacy contributes to positive orientation components, namely, to self-esteem and life satisfaction, over a high stability of positive orientation over time.

Although these are only preliminary results (Caprara, 2009), they are very encouraging since they show that self-efficacy pertinent to affect and social relations can contribute significantly to the reinforcement of positive orientation. In this respect, social cognitive theory proves that successful experiences are an efficient means of promoting self-efficacy beliefs and supplying directions for the creation and implementation of appropriate interventions that will enable people to become more efficient in affect regulation and interpersonal relations.

## Conclusion

Over the last decade there has been a sparked interest in positive traits of individual functioning, due to or in accordance with the theoretical and empirical development of the movement called positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

The research program of this movement is directed at human strengths and the discovery of new ways of enhancing an individual's potentials. Positive orientation is a term which embodies life satisfaction, self-esteem and optimism (Caprara, 2009). It represents an omnipresent method of facing reality, reflecting on experience, framing events and processing personal and interpersonal experiences across time and life circumstances.

Studies which we summarized in this paper attest to positive orientation being a far-reaching predisposition which can have a tremendous impact on one's outlook and the use of one's potentials. Recent findings verify the key role which self-efficacy beliefs in the field of affect regulation and interpersonal relationships can play in promoting an individual's positive orientation.

## References

- Alessandri, G. (2008). *An empirical test of the theory of positivity. Results from cross sectional, longitudinal and genetic data*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, "Sapienza" University of Rome, Italy.
- Balkin, R. S., Tietjen-Smith, T., Caldwell, C., & Shen, Y. P. (2007). The utilization of exercise to decrease depressive symptoms in young women. *Adultspan Journal*, 6(1), 30-35.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: Freeman.
- Baumeister, R. F. (1993) (Ed.). *Self-esteem: The puzzle of low selfregard*. New York: Plenum.
- Baumeister, R. F., Campbell, J. D., Krueger, J. I., & Vohs, K. D. (2003). Does high self-esteem cause better performance, interpersonal success, happiness, or healthier lifestyle? *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 4, 1-44.
- Caprara, G. V. (2002). Personality psychology: Filling the gap between basic processes and molar functioning. In C. von Hofsten & L. Bakman (Eds.), *Psychology at the turn of the Millennium: Volume 2. Social, developmental and clinical perspectives* (pp. 201-224). Hove, East Sussex UK: Psychology Press.
- Caprara, G. V. (2009). Positive orientation: Turning potentials into optimal functioning . *The European Health Psychologist*, 11, 46 -48.
- Caprara, G. V., Alessandri, G., Tisak, J., & Steca, P. (2009). Assessing positive orientation. *Submitted manuscript*.
- Caprara, G. V., Alessandri, G., Gunzenhauser, C., Peirò, J. M., Trommsdorff, G. & Yamaguchi, S. (2009). *Cross cultural findings attesting to what is in common to self-esteem, life satisfaction and optimism*. Preliminary Research Report, "Sapienza", University of Rome.
- Caprara, G. V., Delle Fratte, A., & Steca, P. (2002). Determinanti personali del benessere in adolescenza: Indicatori e predittori ("Personal determinants of adolescents' well-being: indicators and predictors"). *Psicologia Clinica dello Sviluppo*, 2, 203-223.
- Caprara, G. V., Fagnani, C., Alessandri, G., Steca, P., Gigantesco, A., Cavalli-Sforza, L., & Stazi, M. A. (2009). Human optimal functioning. The genetics of positive orientation towards self, life, and the future. *Behaviour Genetics*, 39(3), 277-284.
- Caprara, G. V. & Steca, P. (2005). Affective and social self- regulatory efficacy beliefs as determinants of positive thinking and happiness. *European Psychologist*, 4, 275-286.
- Caprara, G. V. & Steca, P. (2006a). Affective and interpersonal self- regulatory efficacy beliefs as determinants of subjective well-being. In A. Delle Fave (Ed.), *Dimensions of wellbeing. Research and intervention* (pp.120.142). Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Caprara, G. V. & Steca, P. (2006b). The contribution of self- regulatory efficacy beliefs in managing affect and family relationships to positive thinking and hedonic balance. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 25, 601-625.
- Caprara, G. V., Steca P., Alessandri, G., Abela, J. R. J., & McWhinnie, C. M. (2009). Positive orientation: Explorations on what is common to life satisfaction, self-esteem, and optimism. *Submitted manuscript*.
- Carver, C. S. & Scheier, M. F. (2002). Optimism. In C. R. Snyder & J. L. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of positive psychology* (pp.231-243). New York: Oxford University Press.

- Crocker, J. & Park, L. E. (2004). The costly pursuit of self-esteem. *Psychological Bulletin*, 130, 392-414.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1999). If we are so rich, why aren't we happy? *American Psychologist*, 54(10), 821-827.
- Čiksentmihalyi, M. (1999). *Tok*. Novi Sad: Forum.
- Diener, E. (1984). Subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin*, 95, 542-575.
- Diener, E. & Suh, E. M. (2000). *Culture and subjective wellbeing*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Greenberg, J., Solomon, S., Pyszczynski, T., Rosenblatt, A., Burling, J., Lyon, et al. (1992). Why do people need self-esteem? Converging evidence that self-esteem serves an anxiety-buffering function. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63, 913-922.
- Hansen, C. J., Stevens, L. C., & Coast, J. R. (2001). Exercise duration and mood state: How much is enough to feel better? *Health Psychology* 20, 267-275
- Harter, S. (1999). *The construction of the self: A developmental perspective*. New York: Guilford.
- Hermon, D. A. & Hazler, R. J. (1999). Adherence to a wellness model and perceptions of psychological well-being. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 77, 339-346.
- Johnson, L. D. (2009). *Enjoy Life*, Retrieved 26 november, 2010 from <http://enjoylifebook.com/>
- Kanhegan, D., Diener, E., & Schwarz, N. (Eds.) (1999). *Wellbeing: the foundations of hedonic psychology*. New York: Russell Sage.
- Kernis, M. H. (2003). Toward a conceptualization of optimal self-esteem. *Psychological Inquiry*, 14, 1-26.
- Lyubomirsky, S., King, L., & Diener, E. (2005). The benefits of frequent affect: Does happiness lead to success? *Psychological Bulletin*, 131, 803-855.
- Maruta, T., Colligan, R. C., Malinchoc, M., & Offord, K. P. (2000). Optimists vs. pessimist: Survival rate medical patients over a 30-year period. *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, 75, 140-143.
- Mihić Lj. (2009). Uvod u pozitivnu psihologiju, Retrieved January 15, 2010 from [www.psihologija.edu.rs/literatura/20091228183102.doc](http://www.psihologija.edu.rs/literatura/20091228183102.doc)
- Peterson C., Park N., Seligman M. E. P. (2005). Orientations to happiness and life satisfaction: the full life versus the empty life. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 6, 25-41
- Pyszczynski, T., Greenberg, J., Solomon, S., Arndt, J., & Schimel, J. (2004). Why do people need self-esteem? A theoretical and empirical review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 130, 435-468.
- Salmon, P. (2001) Effects of physical exercise on anxiety, depression, and sensitivity to stress: A unifying theory. *Clinical Psychology Review* 21, 33-61.
- Scheier, M. F. & Carver, C. S. (1985). Optimism, coping, and health: Assessment and implications of generalized outcome expectancies. *Health Psychology*, 4, 219-247.
- Scheier, M. F. & Carver, C. S. (2001). Adapting to cancer: The importance of hope and purpose. In A. Baum & B. L. Andersen (Eds.), *Psychosocial interventions for cancer* (pp.15-36). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Segerstrom, S. C., Taylor, S. E., Kemeny, M. E., & Fahey, J. L. (1998). Optimism is associated with mood, coping, and immune change in response to stress. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 1646-1655.

- Seligman, M. (2010). *State of Psychology* .Retrieved September 23, 2010, from [http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/scc/martin\\_seligman\\_on\\_the\\_state\\_of\\_psychology.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/scc/martin_seligman_on_the_state_of_psychology.html)
- Seligman, M. E. P. & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology. *American Psychologist*, 55, 5-14.
- Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N. & Peterson, C. (2005) Positive Psychology progress: empirical validation of interventions, *American Psychologist*, 60, 410- 421.
- Takšić V., Mohorić T., i Munjas R (2006). *Emocionalna inteligencija: teorija, operacionalizacija, primjena i povezanost s pozitivnom psihologijom*. Retrieved July 7, 2010 from: [http://hrcak.srce.hr/index.php?show=clanak&id\\_clanak\\_jezik=16712](http://hrcak.srce.hr/index.php?show=clanak&id_clanak_jezik=16712)
- Teychenne, M., Ball, K. & Salmon, J. (2010). Physical activity, sedentary behavior and depression among disadvantaged women. *Health Education Researches*, 25(4), 632-44.

*Submitted October 2, 2010*

*Accepted December 1, 2010*