

**Yoga and Positive Psychology for Managing Career and Life**  
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**Yoga from the Lens of Positive Psychology**  
**Lecture - 15**  
**Positivity and Human Potential in Yogic Traditions**

Namaste, welcome to the 4th session of the course Yoga and Positive Psychology for Managing Career and Life. In this session we are going to examine the Yogic tradition through the Lens of Positive Psychology.

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A Quick Recap: The 3 pillars of Positive Psychology



Before we harp on this journey let us have a quick recap of what we discussed in the previous session. So, if you can recall we discussed about the 3 pillars of positive psychology and these pillars are about positive subjective experiences, individual characteristics and social institutions and communities.

Positive psychology is examined and can be understood in the context of individual subjective experiences like well being, satisfaction, optimism, hope, happiness. It can be understood as a positive individual characteristics like virtues related to courage, wisdom, interpersonal skills,

aesthetic sensibilities, etcetera. And there is a macro aspect of positive psychology as well that is related to the social institutions and human behavior in the institutional climate and institutional context. So, we discussed about these things.

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## A Quick Recap cont...: Positive Psychology: The Second Wave



(1) Accepting and confronting with courage the reality that life is full of evil and suffering;



(2) sustainable wellbeing can only be achieved through overcoming suffering and the dark side of life



(3) recognizing that everything in life comes in polarities and the importance of achieving an adaptive balance through dialectics

(4) learning from indigenous psychology, such as the ancient wisdom of finding deep joy in bad situations

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We also looked at that positive psychology is now entering in the second wave as some people call it. In the second wave of positive psychology is distinct from the earlier years of positive psychology, which eventually were called the first wave. That is in terms of accepting and confronting with courage the reality that life is full of evil and suffering. And life has evil and suffering, along with that we have tendency for the optimal experiences. So, the evil and suffering, an optimal experiences, our tendency to build competency, belongingness, determination, they coexist.

Second, a sustainable well being can be achieved through overcoming suffering and dark side of life. So, though there is suffering it can be overcome it is something very similar to what Buddha said, that there is a suffering and there is a way of elevating the suffering.

Third, this wave, the second wave of positive psychology recognizes that everything in life comes in polarities and importance of achieving an adaptive balance is required. So, some emotions can

be negative in certain sense, in certain contexts, but they may not be negative, they may, in fact, be desirable in certain sense, in certain contexts, in some situations.

So, there is a recognition about that. And there is a lot more openness to look at the indigenous psychology. Psychology traditions, spiritual traditions which have implications on the socio psychological life of human being that is acceptable and now the research studies are moving towards more assimilation of these traditions in the so called mainstream psychology literature.

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## Yoga through the Lens of Positive Psychology



So, let us look at yoga through the lens of positive psychology.

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## Aspects of Positivity and Human Potential in Yogic Traditions



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When we look at yoga and overall yogic tradition and here, we do not mean yoga is only about asanas, pranayam and dhyana. We here mean yoga in the broadest sense as it is defined in the paper of Dagar and Pandey. This yoga tradition encompasses emotional aspects, cognitive aspects, aspects related to mind, aspects related to breath, it is also related to the world views, traditions involved and emerging from that worldview.

So, if we look at the yogic tradition in the broadest sense, we see that there is there are lot of ideas, which are reflection of the positivity and human potential in the yogic tradition. That is reflected in terms of holistic life goals, life goals are understood to be holistic in nature; that means, it includes sensuous pleasure, it also appreciates the spiritual growth and evolution, it accepts the diverse pathways. So, holistic life goal and diverse pathways of achieving those goals that is first hallmark of yogic tradition.

Yogic tradition also elaborate in great detail about positive behavior and positive characteristics of human being. This has also a great elaboration on the positive experiences maybe in the form of different emotions, in the form of different levels of ecstasy, described in the taittiriya upanishad in the Anandavalli or Brahmananda valli sutra, it is also in the form of different type of samadhis explained in the yoga sutra.

So, there is a great deal of reflection and elaboration on the positive experiences. Yogic tradition are also replete with positive events, if we look at even if you even if you look at today's calendar the Hindu calendar of Vikram Samvat you will see some tithi. And tithi will have some particular name that must be reflecting what should be done, how should be celebrated that particular day. And that celebration is related to the weather conditions, lifestyle and the stage of life.

So, there are great elaboration, there is immense opportunities for positive events. Yogic tradition also talk about positive institutions family, educational institutions, government these are some of the positive institutions. The potentiality and positivity of those institutions are also explained in great depth in the yogic tradition.

Then we also talk about positive society. Positive society is the outcome or reflection of pursuing all these positive aspects of life. Though there is a great deal of recognition that human beings have negativity evil, problems, disorders, but there are many pathways, processes and interventions took to grow to outgrow from those evil and inculcate all these positive aspects of life.