



# Applied Positive Psychology; a strengths-based approach.

## Key concepts and practical skills training for use in clinical practice.

Positive psychology is at times, mistakenly, interpreted as being simply positive thinking and as having the aim of producing perpetually smiling clients. This is, of course, not the case. Rather, positive psychology is a research-based branch of psychology that encourages therapists, as well as clients, to widen their focus from being largely problem-centred to also include clients' strengths and the things that go right in their lives. Balancing the illness focus of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM, American Psychiatric Association, 2013), "the aim of positive psychology is to catalyse a change in psychology, from preoccupation only with repairing the worst things in life to also building the best qualities in life" (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

The morning session of the seminar will explore: (1) the origins of positive psychology and Seligman's model of wellbeing; (2) key concepts in positive psychology, such as signature strengths, flow, gratitude, complex optimism, resilience, post-traumatic growth, forgiveness, and positive emotions, as well as active-constructive responding; (3) the relationship between these concepts and clients' cognitions, emotions and behaviours; and (4) evidence-based positive psychology techniques and their scope in the context of therapy. The session will include audio-visual material and practical examples, and I will be using an

interactive presentation style that encourages participants. The afternoon session will focus on the practical application of evidence-based positive psychology interventions. Skills training will be provided in using techniques related to (1) signature strengths, (2) post-traumatic growth, and (3) gratitude. Participants will watch demonstrations of how techniques are used in clinical practice and will have the opportunity to practice three techniques in role-plays as clients as well as therapists. The afternoon will conclude with time for questions and for reflections on how the practised techniques can be incorporated into participants' own clinical practice.

References: American Psychiatric Association. (2013). Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5th ed.). Arlington, DC; Author. Seligman, M.E.P., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology: An introduction. *American Psychologist*, 55, 5-14).

### Learning objectives of this training:

1. Appreciate the importance of including strength building and positive emotions in therapy practice.
2. Understand key concepts of positive psychology.
3. See how positive psychology concepts translate into therapy techniques that positively impact clients' beliefs, emotions and behaviour.
4. Use evidence-based positive psychology techniques that have been shown to increase clients' wellbeing.



**Renata Porzig-Drummond** shares the positive psychology view that it is equally important to focus on clients' strengths and what is going well in their lives as it is to explore the problems they are facing. Accordingly, she is passionate about integrating positive psychology strengths-focused techniques into clinical practice. Renata is a lecturer at the Australian College of Applied Psychology in Sydney, specialising in the fields of Mental Health and Positive Psychology. She uses an interactive presenting style that is engaging and emphasises practical application in a clinical context. Renata holds a PhD in Clinical Psychology and a BSc Psychology (Hon) from Macquarie University; a GradDip in Psychology and a BA from the University of Sydney; and a Certificate of Holistic Counselling from Nature Care College. Renata's research has focused on behaviour change, particularly on the use of emotion-focused and cognitive-behavioural strategies in effecting behaviour change. Her research has been published in leading academic journals, including *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, *Australian Social Work and Social Science & Medicine*. Renata's clinical experience includes crisis counselling, psychological assessment, working with parents of children with behaviour difficulties, and working with clients with depressive and anxiety disorders. Renata is a member of the Australian Psychological Society and the International Coaching Federation.

**This training may qualify for Focussed Psychological Strategies (FPS) CPD. Please refer to the Dept. of Health <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/mental-ba-focus#cpd> for more information.**

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Our continuing professional development events meet the quality standard recognised by relevant professional associations including psychology, social work, occupational therapy, mental health nursing, community work, counselling, psychotherapy and more.

*We recommend checking with your association for the correct calculation of points.*

A certificate of attendance for 6 hours of face-to-face training is issued for all participants.

## Morning Session

Brief overview of the origins of positive psychology.

Strength focus versus illness focus.

Key concepts of positive psychology (signature strengths, flow, mindfulness, gratitude, positive emotions, complex optimism, resilience, post-traumatic growth, forgiveness, engagement, and meaning).

Their relationship with client beliefs, emotions and behaviours.

Overview of positive psychology techniques used in clinical practice.

## Afternoon Session

Skills training:

- Identifying and using signature strengths to increase flow, wellbeing and resilience
- Changing explanatory style to increase optimism and resilience
- Using gratitude to decrease depressive symptoms and increase positive emotions and wellbeing

Reflections on how techniques can be incorporated into participants' clinical practice.

Questions, evaluation and closing.

***"This seminar provides useful tools and practical skills to help clients shift their view from one that is solely problem-focused to one that also includes clients' personal strengths and the positives in their lives."***

Renata Porzig-Drummond

### How will you benefit from attending this training?

- Understand the key concepts of positive psychology one of the newest directions in psychology that inform therapy practice.
- Be able to balance a problem-focused therapy approach with strengths-focused techniques.
- Become skilled at using three evidence-based positive psychology techniques that can be used with clients throughout the course of their therapy, both in-session and as homework..

### Booking process:

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The presentation will enable professional Psychotherapists, Psychologists, Social Workers, Allied Health Professionals - both experienced and new to the field to draw on their own depth of experience and level of expertise. A minimum requirement would be a basic qualification in counselling and psychotherapy.

### Feedback form Renata's recent presentations:

*"Renata's enthusiasm, attention to detail, going over and beyond expectations made it an absolute pleasure."*

*"Excellent course and thoroughly enjoyed it."*

*"Renata has a warm and friendly style and was professional and engaging. She clearly knows her stuff on Positive Psychology. It was great to hear real life examples as well as the video segments of positive psychology in action."*

*"The day was well paced and informative with skills and awareness I can use in my work with clients and in my own personal life. I enjoyed the interactive activities discussed and the videos."*

*"Renata's enthusiasm makes such a difference to the training. She is a very knowledgeable and positive trainer."*

*"Thank you, today was very engaging, practical and informative, really clear and I will apply it to my practice."*

*"Renata was very encouraging of us to ask questions and engaging with her knowledge in that way was fantastic and contributed to everyone's learning. Just great!"*

*"The enthusiasm, knowledge on this subject and in general an engaging teaching ability made this an enjoyable and valuable training. Thank you!"*

*"Renata's knowledge and experience is impressive! She was well prepared, approachable and helpful throughout."*