

# LITERATURE REVIEWS

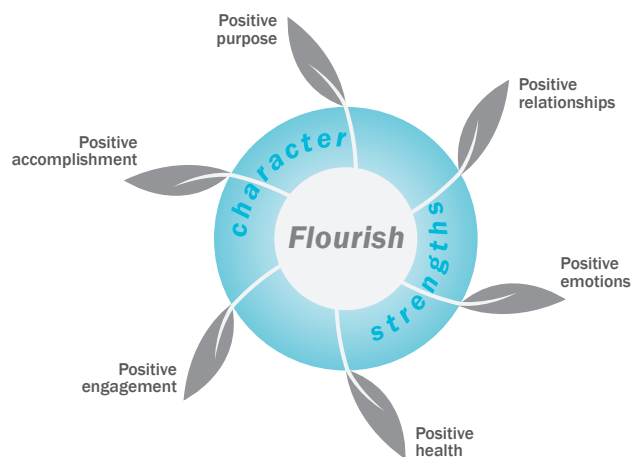
Norrish, J., Robinson, J. & Williams, P. (2011).

## A MODEL FOR POSITIVE EDUCATION

THE GEELONG GRAMMAR SCHOOL MODEL FOR POSITIVE EDUCATION IS A SCIENCE-INFORMED CONCEPTUAL AND APPLIED FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOLS TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT THEIR STUDENTS AND STAFF TO FLOURISH.

Geelong Grammar School passionately believes in the importance of student and staff wellbeing. The high prevalence of depression among young people worldwide, the well documented small rise in life satisfaction, and the synergy between learning and positive emotion all argue that the skills for wellbeing should be taught in school. There is substantial evidence from empirical studies that skills to increase resilience, positive emotion, engagement and meaning can be successfully taught to school children and achieve meaningful outcomes. Since 2008, Professor Martin Seligman, one of the founders of Positive Psychology, has been involved in a collaborative project with Geelong Grammar School. The project is recognised as pioneering the development and application of what has come to be defined as Positive Education.

The Geelong Grammar School Model for Positive Education is based on the scientific research underpinning Positive Psychology. It has been reinforced by observations and learning from implementing Positive Psychology interventions at the School.



**POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY** is an umbrella term for work that investigates happiness, wellbeing, human strengths, and flourishing.

(Gable & Haidt, 2005)

**POSITIVE EDUCATION** brings together the science of Positive Psychology with best practice teaching to encourage and support schools and individuals within their communities to flourish.

(Geelong Grammar School, 2011)

**POSITIVE EDUCATION** is education for both traditional skills and for happiness.

(Seligman, 2009)



## THE GGS MODEL FOR POSITIVE EDUCATION COMPRISES SIX ASSOCIATED DOMAINS THAT ARE CENTRAL TO THE PROMOTION OF FLOURISHING.

**THE POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS** domain recognises the importance of connectedness and thriving relationships and helps students to develop social and emotional skills that nourish relationships with self and others.  
**Key topics:** social intelligence, communication, forgiveness, teamwork

**THE POSITIVE EMOTION** domain focuses on the importance of helping students to anticipate, initiate, experience, prolong, and build positive emotional experiences, as well as responding to negative emotions in a healthy way.  
**Key topics:** gratitude, savouring, the Positivity ratio

**THE POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT** domain focuses on helping students understand and experience complete immersion in activities as peak experiences through understanding the nature of engagement, the pathways to it and the function it has in individual wellbeing.  
**Key topics:** flow, motivational theory, signature strengths, discovering your passion

**THE POSITIVE ACCOMPLISHMENT** domain aims to develop individual potential through striving for and achieving meaningful outcomes.  
**Key topics:** mindset, goal theory, praise, hope theory

**THE POSITIVE HEALTH** domain focuses on helping students to develop sustainable habits for optimal physical and psychological health that are developed from a sound knowledge base.  
**Key topics:** mindfulness, resilience, physical health

**THE POSITIVE PURPOSE** domain involves understanding, believing in, and serving something greater than yourself and deliberately engaging in activities for the benefits of others.  
**Key topics:** meaning and purpose in life, social awareness, purpose projects, community service.



**FLOURISHING IS  
THE CENTRAL AIM OF  
THE GEELONG GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL MODEL FOR  
POSITIVE EDUCATION  
AND IS DEFINED AS A  
COMBINATION OF  
'FEELING GOOD  
AND DOING GOOD'.**

Feeling good is consistent with hedonic approaches to wellbeing and includes a wide range of emotions and experiences such as feeling content about the past, happy in the present, and hopeful about the future,

Feeling good also includes the strength and resilience to cope with negative emotions and experiences in a healthy and adaptive way.

Doing good is aligned with a eudaimonic theory of wellbeing and focuses on equipping students and staff with the skills and knowledge that helps them to thrive when faced with both challenges and opportunities.

Doing good embodies functioning effectively across a wide spectrum of human experiences. Also important is a commitment to pro-social behaviours and choices that benefit others and the wider community.

Character Strengths underpin the GGS Model. They link domains together and provide an access point for younger students. Developing an understanding of one's character strengths and using them in a variety of different ways builds confidence and competence in individuals.

Furthermore, the GGS Model is supported by the School's pastoral care programme, which includes the availability of professional counselling. Consequently, efforts to prevent and treat mental and physical illness work alongside efforts to promote good health and flourishing with the overall goal of fostering student wellbeing.

**CHARACTER  
STRENGTHS**  
*ARE WAYS OF THINKING,  
FEELING, AND BEHAVING  
THAT COMES NATURALLY  
AND EASILY TO A PERSON  
AND THAT ENABLE  
HIGH FUNCTIONING AND  
PERFORMANCE.*  
(Linley & Harrington, 2006)

**FLOURISHING  
REFERS TO THE  
EXPERIENCE OF LIFE  
GOING WELL.  
IT IS A COMBINATION  
OF FEELING GOOD AND  
FUNCTIONING  
EFFECTIVELY.**  
(Huppert & So, 2011)

Huppert and So used existing diagnostic criteria for depression and anxiety and proposed their opposites as indicative of flourishing. This process resulted in ten features of flourishing vitality, self-esteem, resilience, positive relationships, positive emotions, optimism, meaning, engagement, emotional stability, and competence. Their international measure - the Individual Flourishing Questionnaire - is used at Geelong Grammar School.

Flourishing within the Model for Positive Education exists on multiple levels. Individual students may be considered to be flourishing when they are happy, thriving in their social relationships, achieving their goals with competence and confidence, and making valued contributions to others.

A staff member may be flourishing when he or she experiences positive emotions throughout the day, obtains a deep sense or value from his or her work, and feels like a valued member of the school community.

A class may be flourishing when most or all the students feel included, where the teacher feels confident and satisfied, and where all members of the class feel engaged and committed to learning. A whole school may be flourishing when most or all members of the community feel a deep sense of commitment and belonging to the school and its culture promotes positive emotions, effective learning, and social responsibility.

The GGS Model for Positive Education provides a flexible framework that facilitates the planning, implementation, and evaluation of Positive Psychology knowledge within school settings. Though the GGS Model schools can appreciate areas in which they are already doing well, and identify targets for improvement. Capacity in each domain is cultivated through a whole school approach that involves explicit learning in the classroom and implicit practices integrated throughout school life. The purpose of the GGS Model is to encourage and support flourishing school communities that contribute to the wider population and in doing so help a greater percentage of people to live optimally well.