**The Glasbern/VIA Taxonomy Meeting Minutes**

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See Appendix for Biographical sketches of all attendees.

**Summary**

The goal of the Glasbern meeting was to further develop the VIA Taxonomy of Strengths and Virtues. The Taxonomy was envisioned as a theory-free list of characteristics that could empirically be shown to contribute to a positive life, and further, that could be developed in children and adolescents in collaboration with Youth Development programs. The pros and cons of the Taxonomy were discussed, and skepticism was expressed that such a taxonomy could possibly be theory-free. Several different organizations of the characteristics emerged over the course of the meeting, ending with an organization based on the Youth Development field’s 5 C’s: Competence, Confidence, Connection, Contribution were named as outcome measures, and Character became a new umbrella term for the strengths and virtues. The next step in the development of the Taxonomy will be measurement of the strengths and virtues, and empirical examination of the relationships among the strengths and virtues, the four outcome measures, and enabling factors.

**Goals**

The meeting opened with Dr. Seligman giving a brief history of Positive Psychology. He explained that psychology has acquired a great deal of knowledge about treating the negative end of the spectrum of human existence (e.g. bringing people from –8 to –3), but has not paid adequate attention to the positive end (e.g. bringing people from 0 to +5). Positive Psychology aims to address this discrepancy. Dr. Seligman then described the Four Pillars of Positive Psychology (Positive Subjective Experience, Positive Traits, Positive Institutions, and the Taxonomy). He represented the VIA Taxonomy as the backbone of Positive Psychology: once the Taxonomy is developed, each characteristic, and its relationships with enabling factors and positive outcomes (fulfillments) will be studied in depth.

The broad goals of the VIA Taxonomy of Strengths and Virtues are to identify characteristics associated with the “good life”; to develop valid and reliable measures of these characteristics; and to apply these measures and accompanying empirical research to Youth Development programs.

**Concerns**

One major stumbling block in our endeavor was the suggestion that the taxonomy might become merely a reflection of the biases (cultural and theoretical) of the researchers involved in its development, rather than being a theory-free list of strengths and virtues. The majority of the attendees proclaimed their desire that the list of strengths and virtues be theory-free and valid across cultures. However, both Dr. Stevens and Dr. Kendell cautioned that taxonomies are essentially arbitrary (even in the seemingly more concrete world of biology) and context-laden, and cannot possibly be atheoretical.

Another concern was that, despite efforts to present the taxonomy as nonexclusive and non-exhaustive, other researchers, believing the taxonomy to be closed to new ideas, might be loath to contribute to or suggest changes to the taxonomy. Dr. Csikszentmihalyi suggested that we leave the specific content of the taxonomy undefined for now, and look instead for bigger categories of strengths and virtues. This way, we avoid the problem of appearing to close the taxonomy off to other researchers. By using general categories instead of specific strengths and virtues, we will encourage other researchers to attempt to fill in the categories.

**A “First Pass” at the Taxonomy: 21 Strengths and Virtues**

On the first afternoon of the meeting, Dr. Peterson presented his and Dr. Seligman’s (Peterson & Seligman, 2000) first attempt at a taxonomy of human strengths and virtues. Dr. Peterson discussed several criteria that he, Dr. Seligman, and their colleagues used in selecting the strengths and virtues. First, there was a linguistic criterion that a strength should be usable as a noun, an adjective, *and* an adverb (e.g. “I ought to be patient”/”I ought to show patience”/”I ought to answer questions patiently”). A strength or virtue should also be trait-like – that is, reliable and stable across time and situation. It should contribute to the various fulfillments comprising the good life, and it should be valued across most cultural groups. The opposite of a strength or virtue should not also be a strength or virtue (e.g. is the opposite of flexibility inflexibility, or is it steadfastness?). A strength or virtue should be valued in its own right, and should be celebrated when present (although not necessarily mourned when absent). Dr. Peterson went on to differentiate strengths and virtues from talents and abilities, from the enabling conditions that allow us to develop the strengths and virtues most easily (e.g. genetics and socio-economic status), and from the fulfillments that are the result of these strengths and virtues. Dr. Peterson then described five clusters of strengths: Strengths of Cognition; Strengths of Emotion; Strengths of Will; Relational and Civic Virtues; and Strengths of Coherence. This was followed by the list of strengths and virtues, as follows (note that some of the strengths/virtues appear in more than one cluster):

**Strengths of Cognition**:

* curiosity/interest
* love of learning/knowledge
* rationality/judgment
* originality/ingenuity
* personal intelligence/emotional intelligence/social intelligence/psychological-mindedness
* appreciation of beauty and excellence/awe/wonder/gratitude
* hope/optimism/future-mindedness
* wisdom/prudence
* spirituality/sense of purpose/faith/religiousness

**Strengths of Emotion:**

* personal intelligence/emotional intelligence/social intelligence/psychological-mindedness
* appreciation of beauty and excellence/awe/wonder/gratitude
* hope/optimism/future-mindedness
* love of life/zest
* courage/integrity
* humor/playfulness
* capacity to love and be loved
* kindness/generosity/care/nurturance
* citizenship/duty/loyalty/teamwork
* balance/temperance/integration
* self-control/self-regulation
* wisdom/prudence
* spirituality/sense of purpose/faith/religiousness

**Strengths of Will:**

* love of life/zest
* courage/integrity
* kindness/generosity/care/nurturance
* citizenship/duty/loyalty/teamwork
* industry/perseverance
* honesty/authenticity
* balance/temperance/integration
* self-control/self-regulation
* wisdom/prudence
* spirituality/sense of purpose/faith/religiousness

**Relational and Civic Virtues:**

* humor/playfulness
* capacity to love and be loved
* kindness/generosity/care/nurturance
* citizenship/duty/loyalty/teamwork
* humane leadership
* justice/fairness/tolerance
* honesty/authenticity
* balance/temperance/integration
* wisdom/prudence
* spirituality/sense of purpose/faith/religiousness

**Strengths of Coherence:**

* honesty/authenticity
* balance/temperance/integration
* self-control/self-regulation
* wisdom/prudence
* spirituality/sense of purpose/faith/religiousness

After presenting the list of 21 strengths and virtues, Dr. Peterson discussed the different ways in which they might be measured, and also the potential difficulties that we might encounter in our attempts to measure them. For example, kindness is tonic (stable across time and place), but courage is phasic (unstable, situation-dependent). Thus, whereas kindness might be measured in the usual self-report manner, courage would have to be measured using a tool suited to its phasic nature, for example, critical incident methodology (e.g. ask participants to imagine how they would act in a crisis situation).

The group also discussed whether there might be “signature strengths” – that perhaps having a good life depended more on the ability to find a niche in which one’s best strength(s) could best be used than on fully developing each of the strengths/virtues in the VIA Taxonomy.

Finally, Drs Davidson and Diener (among others) emphasized the need to test these 21 strengths and virtues empirically.

**Assessment**

Several assessment issues were raised over the course of the Glasbern meeting.

As previously mentioned, some of the proposed strengths and virtues are tonic (i.e. consistent across time and place), whereas some are phasic (i.e. inconsistent, dependent on special situations, ), and assessments of these strengths and virtues must take this difference into account.

Drs Seligman and Rosenberg stressed the importance of researching the physiological correlates of the various strengths and virtues (e.g. through blood pressure changes, galvanic skin response, and heart rate measures, and also through fMRI and PET studies). Identifying these physiological correlates might allow us to place the strengths and virtues within an evolutionary psychology framework.

Dr. Carlson and others stressed the importance of creating measures especially for children, rather than only for adults (see section on children, below, for more detail).

Dr. Stone stressed the importance of identifying lower-order concepts to aid in the assessment of higher-order strengths, such as wisdom. He suggested that we break down diffuse concepts such as wisdom into small, measurable components, such as (in the case of wisdom) critical thinking. This would allow for more accurate assessment of the more complex constructs on the list.

Buss and Craik’s Act-Frequency approach was discussed as one method for measuring the strengths and virtues; so too was Diener’s on-line act-frequency methodology (the experimenter beeps participants during the day at random intervals, and has them fill out palm-pilot questionnaires related to the strength(s)/virtue(s) and fulfillments of interest).

Dr. Diener lead an in-depth discussion on the pros and cons of several methods he uses to assess subjective well-being (SWB). Self-report measures, interview biography, and memory reports, he reminded us, are subject to retrospective memory bias. Informant reports, on the other hand, lack convergent validity with other types of measures, unless the participant’s spouse is used as the informant, or five or more reports from sources other than the participant’s spouse are used. Biological measures are useful, and can be taken in a laboratory setting under controlled conditions (e.g. people who are in a good mood show less eye-blink startle than do people in a bad mood; facial EMG measures can be taken while participants talk about their lives and loved ones). Another laboratory measure is situational challenge (e.g. extraverts show more positive reactivity to pleasant slides after having viewed disturbing slides than do intraverts). Dr. Deiner stressed the importance for the VIA Taxonomy of using a multi-dimensional assessment methodology.

**Successful Aging: Strengths and Virtues in Old Age**

Once we have defined and are able to measure the strengths and virtues, we will be free to concentrate on empirical research aimed at assessing their relevance to the “good life”, and their interactions with enabling conditions. Dr. Vaillant and Mr. Isaacowitz, working with the Harvard Grant Sample, have already begun to do work of this type. In this section, I will describe their contributions to our understanding of how the strengths and virtues might contribute to successful aging.

Dr. Vaillant outlined several factors (“protective factors”) that predicted successful aging (good physical health and SWB at age 80) in the Harvard sample. Particularly important for good physical health at age 80 were good health before age 50, and no alcohol abuse or heavy smoking. The important factors for SWB were somewhat different: use of mature defenses (e.g. sublimation, looking for the silver lining, humor, and altruism) and a warm marriage were the two most important predictors of SWB at age 80. Dr. Vaillant claimed that the mature defenses were in fact virtues, and explained that mature defenses accounted for more of the variance in SWB at age 80 than did enabling factors such as parental age of death, terrible childhoods, and a family history of depression. Thus, Dr. Vaillant argued, factors under our personal control (strengths and virtues) have a huge impact on physical and mental health at age 80; their development in youth is vital. Dr. Vaillant further stated that the strength most clearly associated with SWB at age 80 was capacity to love and be loved – Dr. Vaillant argued that this capacity should be viewed as a master strength. He also argued that several of the taxa had little to do with successful aging: these were courage, originality, and spirituality (with the caveat that courage is phasic, and thus not well measured, and that spirituality/religion tend to be higher in those who are depressed than in those who are not depressed).

Derek Isaacowitz then described his work (also with members of the Harvard Grant Sample) on the original 17 strengths and virtues (developed at the Grand Cayman meeting, February, 1999) using the Wellsprings Questionnaire. Mr. Isaacowitz found that the strengths/virtues that best correlated with positive outcomes (e.g. SWB) were love of learning, the capacity to love and be loved, and humane leadership. He also found that most of the strengths and virtues mapped onto the Big Five personality traits (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and agreeableness). He suggested that in the future, factor analyses of the strengths and virtues might reveal a coherent deep structure to the VIA Taxonomy.

**Children and the VIA Taxonomy**

So far, little to no empirical research has addressed the utility of the VIA strengths and virtues in children. The need for studies on the applicability of the Taxonomy for children was emphasized by many of the Glasbern meeting attendees. This section includes a summary of concerns that were raised about how research of this sort might proceed, and about what this research might uncover.

Dr. Carlson discussed the pitfalls of imposing adult DSM diagnoses onto children, and warned that the same problems could result if a taxonomy based on adults were thrust haphazardly onto children. Dr. Carlson suggested that prospective studies which do not impose adult strengths and virtues downward are one answer to this problem. Restrospective studies of virtuous and/or happy people might also help, although there are problems with false or biased recall in these types of studies. Finally, Dr. Carlson argued that the strengths and virtues are almost certainly dependent upon developmental level, and this must be taken into account when applying them to children.

Dr. Winner (*in absentia*) discussed the differences between child prodigy (mastery of a domain) and adult genius (people who alter domains). She argued that most child prodigies do not become adult geniuses, and listed several possible reasons for this lack of continuity. Prodigies may be pushed too hard by their parents and thereby lose intrinsic motivation to perform (but there are exceptions to this rule, e.g. Yo Yo Ma). Also, prodigies may suffer from emotional problems and thus drop out of their field of interest. Another potential pitfall is that the prodigy may not be able to remake him- or herself, and therefore may be forced to “retire” (e.g. a child who paints like Picasso is considered a prodigy, but is no longer interesting as an adult if s/he continues to paint like Picasso). Some prodigies who suffer from this inability to remake the self do not drop out but instead become experts (e.g. child violin prodigies become first chair in a world-class orchestra rather than world-class soloists). Thus far, we have no way of predicting who will drop out versus who will “settle” for being an expert. Finally, environment is important: the cultural and family environments must foster the talent of the prodigy (although there are exceptions to this rule – e.g. geniuses often had stressful family lives as children). The VIA Taxonomy might help us to better understand which individuals will make the leap from child prodigy to adult genius, and conversely, studying child prodigies might help us develop a better taxonomy of strengths and virtues by helping us to discover which strengths/virtues best predict later adult genius and which kinds of experiences (enabling conditions?) maximize the potential of prodigies to become geniuses.

Dr. Blyth, Dr. Clark, Dr. Nicholson and Mr. Ferber all stressed the importance of enabling factors and their interaction with the strengths and virtues in the VIA Taxonomy. Mr. Ferber speculated about the content of the strengths and virtues across the lifespan: are strengths and virtues different for adults and children? are there developmental critical periods for the strengths and virtues? are there different versions of the strengths and virtues throughout the lifespan? are certain strengths and virtues more important at age 5 than they are at age 45?

Dr. Blyth argued that our research questions should change depending on the age-groups we are studying: we should focus on enabling conditions when researching the role of the strengths and virtues in youth; for adults, however, the focus should shift to how the possession of various strengths and virtues relates to various positive outcomes.

Dr. Blyth further differentiated between creating a taxonomy that is conceptually eloquent, and creating one that has high utility. He argued that the Youth Development field requires the latter more than the former. The taxonomy must be concrete enough that people can relate to it and use it – people must believe that the virtues and strengths have a positive impact on life, and also that they can be encouraged in young people. Dr. Rosenberg added that prospective and retrospective studies of people who grew up without enabling conditions would be important in this venture: what does it mean, in terms of life happiness, to grow up without enabling conditions? are the strengths and virtues systematically different for people high and low in enabling conditions?

Although Dr. Vaillant’s work suggests that enabling conditions in childhood are not important by age 80, representatives of the Youth Development community warned that we should not take this as evidence that a lack of enabling conditions is not important at various other times throughout the lifespan.

**Theoretical Frameworks for the VIA Taxonomy**

**(a) Some Useful Frameworks:**

Despite a stated desire to keep the taxonomy theory-free, several different views of how the taxonomy might be organized emerged as the meeting progressed. In this section, I describe some frameworks that helped lead the group to a new conceptualization of how the strengths and virtues might be framed (see next section for this new conceptualization).

**(i)** **Peterson and Seligman’s Five Categories:** Drs Peterson and Seligman argued that the 21 strengths and virtues could be divided into the following five overlapping categories: strengths of *cognition*, strengths of *emotion*, strengths of *conation*, strengths of *coherence*, and *civic* strengths/virtues.

**(ii)** **Prom Queens, Outcasts, and New Kids:** Katherine Dahslgaard argued for a different categorization of the strengths and virtues, based on historical continuity and contemporary relevance. She described three sets of strengths/virtues: *Prom Queens*, aka the “*Big Six*” (strengths that have survived the test of time from Plato to the present, and which are preserved in the VIA Taxonomy: **wisdom**, **justice**, **courage**, **temperance**, **humanity**, and **spirituality**); the *Outcasts* (strengths that have not survived the test of time, and have not made it into the taxonomy, e.g. **cleanliness** and **etiquette**); and the *New Kids in School* (strengths that historically have not appeared on lists of strengths, but will nonetheless appear in the VIA Taxonomy, e.g. **humor**).

The *Prom Queens* have shown up on lists of strengths and virtues throughout the history of philosophy. They first appear in Plato’s formulation of the tripartite soul. The tripartite soul consists of reason, appetite, and a “spirited” component. Each of these divisions of the soul has a function, the exercise of which comprises a particular virtue. Thus, wisdom is the virtue exercised by reason; temperance (self-restraint) is imposed on appetite, and courage comes about when the “spirited” component confronts danger. However, these three virtues can only be exhibited when justice, Plato’s master virtue, is present. In fact, for Plato, the four virtues of justice, wisdom, temperance, and courage are interdependent – if one is missing, and especially if justice is missing, then the other three cannot be fully achieved.

Ms. Dahlsgaard explained that every Western taxonomy of virtue since Plato has incorporated these four virtues in some form (even Eastern taxonomies included some variants of Plato’s four virtues, e.g. Confucius included justice and wisdom/knowledge in his taxonomy). Aristotle included the four Platonic virtues in his taxonomy; St. Thomas Acquinas included them in his taxonomy (as the cardinal/moral/natural virtues), but added three *theological virtues* (the heavenly virtues – i.e. faith, hope, and charity). Note that in the VIA Taxonomy, Acquinas’ theological virtues show up as the sixth *Prom Queen*, spirituality.

One difference between Eastern and Western taxonomies of virtue is that, whereas Western taxonomies ignore the concept of humanity, Eastern ones have traditionally viewed humanity as central to their taxonomies (e.g. Confucius viewed humanity/love as the most crucial virtue for the promotion of a fair working society). For that reason, humanity is included as one of the *Prom Queens*.

After her discussion of the *Prom Queens*, Ms Dahlsgaard discussed the reasons why some virtues that had been included in early taxonomies (e.g. cleanliness and politeness) were not included in the VIA Taxonomy. She categorized these strengths/virtues as the *Outcasts*. Cleanliness is an example of one such historically important but contemporaneously discarded virtue. Cleanliness was discarded not only because there is currently very little variance in cleanliness in the United States, but also because cleanliness is a value-laden concept, and requires various enabling factors in order to be achieved (e.g. one must be able to “afford” cleanliness). Politeness was discarded for similar reasons.

Ms Dahlsgaard ended with a discussion of the *New Kids*, virtues that have not historically been important, but have nonetheless been included in the VIA Taxonomy. For example, only Aristotle deemed humor (defined by him as lying somewhere between boorishness and clownishness) important enough to include in his taxonomy of strengths/virtues – neither Plato nor Acquinas nor Confucius nor Franklin included humor in their taxonomies. Humor, for the purposes of the VIA Taxonomy, will be defined as the ability to place serious matters in a non-serious frame both for oneself and for others. There is some confusion regarding whether humor is best viewed as a true strength/virtue, a defense mechanism, a talent, or an enabler of strength/virtue – nonetheless, it was agreed that having a sense of humor is an important ingredient in positive living.

**(iii) Deck of Cards:** Dr. Stone brought up the metaphor of a deck of cards for the taxonomy. He stressed that we do not use all of the cards in a deck for one game – each individual, and indeed each culture might play with a different subset of cards, or even with a different deck. It is the job of the taxonomy to come up with the cards, and also to come up with combinations of cards that make up winning hands (i.e. which lead to the fulfillments). Each winning hand could be conceptualized as a kind of theoretical framework for living a good life.

**(iv) Strengthsfinder:** In his discussion of his Gallup/Strengthsfinder research, Dr. Stone enumerated a list of 34 strengths that were derived from web-based questionnaires of work competencies. These strengths are mapped onto various jobs, and are used to help people choose careers that best suit their strengths – the job of the taxonomy, Dr. Stone argued, should be, at least in part, to teach people which types of jobs they resonate to. Having a career which best reflects a person’s idiosyncratic strengths is one major way to help people achieve the good life.

**(v) Primary and Secondary Stregths:** Dr. Diener differentiated between primary and secondary strengths and virtues. *Primary virtues*, he argued, are an end in themselves: they are self-evident, and there is no need to prove that they are worthwhile. *Secondary virtues*, on the other hand, get us to our goals (or fulfillments), and make up the majority of the list of 21 strengths and virtues in the VIA Taxonomy as it stood at the beginning of this meeting. These secondary virtues require empirical support – they do not necessarily appear worthwhile at face value.

**(vi) Positive Emotions:** Dr. Fredrickson discussed the implications for the VIA Taxonomy of her research on positive emotions as strengths. Positive emotions lead to thriving because they lead to broadened Thought-Action Tendencies (mindsets). Dr. Fredrickson described how four cross-culturally valid positive emotions (joy, interest, contentment, and love) might lead to a broadened mindset. Joy, for example, arises in safe, familiar contexts in which progress is being achieved. The tendency when one feels joy is to engage in unscripted play (e.g. monkeys show joy by engaging in rough and tumble play). This play leads to broadened skills (e.g. fighting and survival skills for the monkeys, expanded theory of mind and creativity for humans) and alliances (e.g. friendships). These outcomes are durable, and can be built upon during the course of one’s life.

Dr. Fredrickson calls her model the *Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions*. Whereas negative emotions are adaptive in the moment (e.g. fear = fight-or-flight), positive emotions are adaptive in the long-run (they help us build durable resources, and to become better versions of ourselves). The positive emotions, then, are strengths in their own right. However, they are also enabling conditions: they help us produce other strengths (e.g. *joy* helps us develop skills and alliances, *interest* helps us gain knowledge and psychological complexity, *contentment*, which helps us savor our lives and integrate our life circumstances in the world around us, leads to a modified sense of self and world view, and *love* leads to enhanced social support).

The Broaden-and-Build Theory has three important implications for the VIA Taxonomy. First, it can be used as an organizing tool. That is, the strengths and virtues can be tied to specific positive emotions. Dr. Fredrickson suggested, for example, that humor/playfulness and love of life/zest be collapsed into one category, the *capacity for joy*. Curiosity/interest, and love of learning/knowledge could also be collapsed into one category, the *capacity for interest*. Second, Dr. Fredrickson suggested that we add strengths that correspond to positive emotions that are not represented in the taxonomy as it stands: e.g. by adding a *capacity for contentment/peace/serenity* taxon (Dr. Fredrickson described this as an everyday version of the capacity for awe, and Dr. Rosenberg added that this could be measured by an existing scale called the Capacity of Mindfulness Scale). Third, Dr. Fredrickson suggested that we consider the *capacity to self-generate positive emotions* as a higher-order strength (this might subsume the strength of self-regulation).

The ensuing discussion of Dr. Fredrickson’s work was overwhelmingly positive. Dr. Stone suggested that Youth Development programs could use positive emotion to help build the strengths and virtues in children (e.g. teach children the joy of generosity). Dr. Fredrickson stressed that to do so, children would have to be taught to view the various strengths and virtues as being genuinely positive. That is, children should view generosity (in Dr. Stone’s example) as intrinsically positive, not as a chore. Dr. Czikszentmihalyi agreed with this point: he argued that if we want the strengths and virtues to be nurtured in young people, we must find ways to get them to enjoy doing things associated with the strengths/virtues. Enjoyment, and particularly the experience of *flow*, is one method for delivering the strengths and virtues to children. It is the job of educators, Dr. Csikszentmihalyi argued, to teach children to have pleasure in the “right” things.

**(vii) SWB and Positive Affect:** Dr. Diener discussed SWB as both an outcome and a strength/virtue. He then described and critiqued the empirical evidence for several aspects of positive affect (*sociability*, *health*, *success in life*, *self-regulation*, and *judgment/thinking clearly and accurately*). According to the current literature, happy people are higher on each of these aspects of positive affect than are non-happy people. Better empirical studies of these aspects of positive affect and their relationship to SWB and the good life are needed, however, before causative conclusions can be reached. Dr. Diener finished his discussion with a warning that the importance of negative affect in living a good life should not be discounted. Negative affect teaches us the things we need to know in order to have and to appreciate positive affect.

Dr. Diener’s research led to a discussion of moral monsters and positive affect (e.g. are happy hit men a goal of the VIA Taxonomy?). Dr. Seligman pointed out that happy hit men could not result from a successful use of the Taxonomy: the Prom Queens (e.g. justice, temperance, wisdom, and humanity) are characteristics that moral monsters such as hit men and Hitler surely did not have. Positive Psychology is only interested in happiness that follows from virtue: as such, we questioned whether hit-men can ever truly be happy.

**(b) The 5 C’s: A New Direction for the VIA Taxonomy**

Dr. Nicholson, in her discussion of the VIA Taxonomy and Youth Development, reminded the group of the Youth Development’s 5 C’s (earlier brought up by Mr. Ferber), and remarked that the strengths and virtues might map onto the 5 C’s in a useful way.

Dr. Nicholson commented that, to her mind, the successful development of the VIA strengths and virtues in children relies on making sure that those children have enabling conditions in their lives. She argued that without enabling conditions, it is extremely difficult for children to develop the strengths and virtues, particularly the civic virtues. She further argued that the point of developing the strengths and virtues in children is to help them be a contribution to their community (e.g. by providing enabling conditions to other children in need). She then grouped the taxonomy as follows:

1. First, children need *Connection*, which are the *relational virtues* listed in the taxonomy (e.g. capacity to love and be loved).
2. Then, children can develop *Competence* (the *cognitive strengths/virtues*, such as curiosity and interest) and *Confidence* (the *emotional strengths/virtues*, such as perseverance, honesty, and self-regulation).
3. Third, the children can build *Character* (“*personal” virtues*).
4. Finally, the children can develop *civic virtues*, i.e. *Contribution*.

Dr. Seligman viewed the utility of the 5 C’s for the VIA Taxonomy somewhat differently: he realized that four of the C’s (Connection, Competence, Confidence, and Contribution) mapped onto the fulfillments quite well, and that Character is really a synonym for the characteristics that the taxonomy was created to identify.

Dr. Seligman’s conceptualization follows:

The *fulfillments* (4 C’s):

1. *Connection*: reverence for life; intimacy/love
2. *Competence*: competence; creativity; mental/physical health; satisfying work life; material sufficiency
3. *Confidence*: SWB; acceptance of self; mental/physical health
4. *Contribution*: respect of others; civic virtues; healthy community and family

Dr. Seligman hypothesized that if we can learn how to build *Character*, we would achieve the 4 C’s. He further hypothesized that we can build character by building the 21 strengths and virtues described in his and Dr. Peterson’s taxonomy. That is, character results from and interaction between the strengths and virtues and enabling/disabling conditions, and the 4 C’s (the positive outcomes, or fulfillments) result from character.

**Future Directions**

Dr. Seligman’s closing remarks best summarize both the progress made at the Glasbern meeting, and the future of the VIA Taxonomy/Categorization. They are as follows (edited for length):

“Yesterday, I thought we had moved from the first tee back to the showers. Now, by the end of the meeting, we have gone forward. I think the notion of Confidence, Competence, Connection, and Contribution [the 4 C’s] is a wonderful front end: it’s what kids need, it’s something that Congress will hear, and it’s something that funders will hear. It can be easily understood as what we are after.

“What is our conceptual underpinning? I think that the 4 C’s are the fulfillments. I think that we now have to elaborate the outcomes that we want to use, based on the 4 C’s. ... It doesn’t force it at all to say that that is what we are after. The 21 or 34 strengths and virtues (the Gallup/Peterson combination) can be systematically put together as the 5th C, which is Character. And Character is modulated by enabling and disabling conditions. So, I see a conceptual framework that I think will work with some modification.

“The next couple of months will consist of an email group for those who are interested in conceptually integrating the 4 C’s/21 strengths-virtues/34 [Gallup] themes. That will result in a bigger document than the one we have now... By January 1st or so, we’ll get something out the door. ...

“Then I see 2 steps that will occupy us for a while. A *measurement step*, and an *acceptance step*.... The measurement step is to start to talk with Gallup and with David’s [David Seligman, Assistant Directory of Research at Access Measurement Systems, a company that specializes in measuring outcomes of behavioral health treatments] people and other people who measure these things... to construct focus groups and develop the kinds of measures that don’t exist for the Big C (the strengths and virtues that make up character), and that will result in the 4 C’s.

“The other thing we have to do simultaneously is to get this accepted across the entire range of American people... That can only be done by a lot of consultation, and we’ll have to think carefully about it. What’s on this list that shouldn’t be there, and what isn’t on this list that should? Reg [Clark] has agreed to help with this endeavor. ...

“Finally, I see a theory... I learned today that learning theory made a huge mistake. It regarded negative and positive emotion as reinforcers. And that surely is true, but it’s minor. The theory that I see emerging is that negative emotion is a signal that tells you that you are in a zero-sum game. It activates a set of narrowing responses. But positive emotion is a signal that says you are in a non-zero-sum game. It’s a broadening, building system. I think we have the beginnings of a categorization ... we don’t have a taxonomy, we have a categorization... the VIA Categorization of Strengths and Virtues. I actually think that we have a new theory of human motivation.”

**Appendix: Biographical Sketches**

Dale Blyth, Ph.D.

Dr. Blyth is a researcher, consultant, author and speaker who specializes in developing strategic initiatives that link community-based youth development efforts with solid knowledge from research and practice at both the community initiative and program levels.

In 1977 Dr. Blyth received his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Minnesota. He has authored over 30 peer-reviewed journal articles and a book on transitions in adolescent development that followed about 900 youth over five years.

Dr. Blyth has worked at research institutes including the Boys Town Center for Youth Development; at three major universities—the University of Minnesota, Ohio State and Cornell University; in policy work through the American Medical Association and the Department of Adolescent Health; in practical research and community work as Director of Research & Evaluations at Search Institute; as founder and Executive Officer of the Society for Research on Adolescence. He has been an evaluator and consultant to major national youth development organizations and funders such as the Kellogg Foundation and the United Way. He has also served as a Senior Program Associate with the W.T Grant Foundation in New York, which funds research on children and youth.

Currently, Dr. Blyth is the Director of the Center for Youth Development and Assistant Dean of the University of Minnesota Extension Service. The Center is part of a national resources network, the Cooperative Research and Education Extension Service. The Center serves as a catalyst, advocate and resource for:

* Quality youth development programs;
* Communities becoming more intentional about youth development;
* Professionals and volunteers seeking to understand and do youth development; and
* The generation of new knowledge that enriches the practices of youth development

The Center also provides formal training for youth educators, leaders and volunteers and creates youth development opportunities that link research, theory and practice.

Dr. Blyth formerly oversaw the Search Institute’s Strategic Initiative Unit and the Research and Evaluation Division, where he directed efforts to develop major new initiatives and increase youth involvement.

Jack D. Burke Jr., M.D., M.P.H.

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Dr. Burke is Professor and Head of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science at Texas A&M University's College of Medicine, and Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry, Scott and White Clinic and Hospital in Temple, Texas.

In 1970, Dr. Burke graduated magna cum laude from Harvard College, where he was a Harvard National Scholar, National Merit Scholar, and member of Phi Beta Kappa. He was elected to Alpha Omega Alpha at Harvard Medical School, from where he graduated in 1974. He then trained in psychiatry at two Harvard hospitals, Massachusetts Mental Health Center and Massachusetts General Hospital. After obtaining his M.P.H. from Harvard in 1979, he joined the National Institute of Mental Health as a research psychiatrist, where he became one of three Division Directors.

Dr. Burke's interests are in epidemiology, mental health services research, and issues in diagnostic assessment. He served as one of three NIMH principal collaborators in the Epidemiological Catchment Area (ECA) Program. From 1980 through 1991, he was also one of the principal collaborators in the WHO-ADAMHA Collaborative Program in Classification and Diagnosis of Mental Disorders, and Alcohol and Drug Problems. At NIMH, he received multiple awards from the federal government and from professional and advocacy groups for his leadership in developing research in psychiatric epidemiology and mental health services research.

At Texas A&M - Scott and White since 1991, Dr. Burke has helped develop health information systems to sustain a research initiative on health services research, and helped develop a new School of Rural Public Health. He has served as a member and chairman of the Psychiatry Test Committee for Step 2 of the U.S. Medical Licensing Examination, and as a member of the National Board of Medical Examiners. He has also been a temporary consultant to the World Health Organization, and a collaborating investigator in the International Study of Somatoform Disorders.

Gabrielle A. Carlson, M.D.

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Dr. Carlson is Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics and Director of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. She specializes in the subjects of childhood and adolescent depression, bipolar disorder and suicide. She has published over 100 peer-reviewed, scientific articles, numerous book reviews and invited papers and chapters on these subjects. She is a frequent invited speaker at professional meetings nationally and internationally, as well as by parent and school groups.

Dr. Carlson's current research focuses on mood disorders in youth, psychosis in adolescents and comorbidity of behavior and mood disorders in children and adolescents. Dr. Carlson is active in the psychiatry community. She has served on many national committees. These include the APA committee to evaluate DSM-III, the DSM-IV Task Force on Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Disorders, the steering committee for the Childhood Depression Consortium, and various review committees for the National Institute of Mental Health. Dr. Carlson has a strong commitment to community child psychiatry. She is a consultant to a number of school districts, and works with other mental health administrators in her area to improve services for children.

Reginald Clark, Ph.D.

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Dr. Clark leads the multi-racial consulting group of Clark and Associates, in Montclair, California. The mission of his for-profit business is to deliver services that help program providers effectively support the growth and success of their clients. Dr. Clark conducts research on questions relating to success and development, and uses the findings from the research studies to help create and deliver results-oriented programs and resources to services providers, educators, parents and students. All coaching seminars and programs are based on “best practices” research pertaining to how students learn, and how administrators, teachers, parents and others can positively impact student growth and development.

Clark and Associates’ high quality products include their program entitled, “Use Your Time Wisely/Lifestyles in Balance,” which is currently available to schools and other youth-serving agencies. This program includes parent leadership training seminars, mentor leadership training seminars, automated surveys, computer software, and internet programs that help students evaluate whether/how their weekly activity routine away from school might be holding them back from school success.

Born and raised in a low-income area of Chicago, Dr. Clark received his undergraduate degree from Howard University and his advanced degrees from the University of Wisconsin. He has piloted research-based school reform projects in Pasadena, California and Bakersfield, California that aimed to help lower-achieving students improve their proficiency on standardized reading tests. The cultivation of parent involvement was a central component of these projects. These projects led to increases in reading proficiency of many students, from kindergarten through 8th grade.

Dr. Clark also served as a Project Research Director at the Center for Research on Basic Skills (Tennessee State University) in Nashville, Tennessee. He has served as a research associate with the Illinois Board of Higher Education and has worked with the University of Wisconsin’s Institute for Research on Poverty. He has consulted with the U.S. Department of Education, the Education Commission of the States, and many state and local youth-serving agencies. He has held a variety of academic positions, including those of high school teacher and speech and drama instructor. He has served on faculties at four universities, in fields ranging from Urban Education, Ethnic Studies, Human Services to Child and Family Studies. He was chairman of the Families as Educators Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association. Recently, Clark and his Associates completed a “cluster evaluation” of the W.K. Kellogg “African American Men and Boys Initiative” (which sponsored 30 “grassroots” youth and adult leadership projects in 15 states).

Dr. Clark's interest in what enables some children to achieve in school while others do not led to his conclusion that school program factors and family habits and interactions—as opposed to poverty, broken homes, race, or ethnicity—affect success in school. These findings are described in the book Family Life and School Achievement: Why Poor Black Children Succeed or Fail, and in some of his recent writings, which can be obtained on his website at [www.timeuse.com](http://www.timeuse.com).

Dr. Clark continues to promote student learning through his development and evaluation of programs that lead to more effective student involvement in out-of-school learning activities.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Ph.D.

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One of the world’s leading authorities on the psychology of creativity, Dr. Csikszentmihalyi is the C.S. and D.J. Davidson Professor of Psychology at the Peter F. Drucker Graduate School of Management at Claremont Graduate University and Director of the Quality of Life Research Center. He is also emeritus professor of human development at the University of Chicago, where he chaired the department of psychology.

His life’s work has been to study what makes people truly happy. Drawing upon years of systematic research, he invented the concept of “flow” as a metaphorical description of the rare mental state associated with feelings of optimal satisfaction and fulfillment. His analysis of the internal and external conditions giving rise to “flow” show that it is almost always linked to circumstances of high challenge when personal skills are used to the utmost.

The Hungarian-born social scientist, a graduate of the classical gymnasium, Torquato Tasso in Rome, completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Chicago and earned a Ph.D. in psychology there in 1965. After teaching in the department of sociology and anthropology at Lake Forest College, where he rose from instructor to associate professor, he returned to Chicago in 1970 and was appointed a full professor in 1982, a position he held until his retirement last year. He has been a visiting professor at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada, the University of Illinois, the University of Milan, the University of Alberta, Escola Paulista de Medecina in São Paulo, Brazil, Duquesne University, the University of Maine, the University of Jyvakyla in Finland, and the British Psychological Society. His research has been supported by the United States Public Health Service, the J. Paul Getty Trust, the Sloan Foundation, the W.T. Grant Foundation, the Hewlett Foundation, and the Spencer Foundation.

A former resident scholar at the Rockefeller Center at Bellagio, resident fellow at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences in Palo Alto, and senior Fullbright Fellow in Brazil and New Zealand, Dr. Csikszentmihalyi holds an honorary doctor of science degree from Lake Forest College. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Psychological Society, the National Academy of Education, and the National Academy of Leisure Studies and a foreign member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Serving on the editorial boards of numerous professional journals, he has been a consultant to business, government organizations, educational associations, and cultural institutions and given invited lectures throughout the world. In addition to the influential Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience (1990), which was translated into fifteen languages, he is the author of thirteen other books and some 185 research articles. His latest volume, Finding Flow: The Psychology of Engagement with Everyday Life, was published in 1997 by Basic Books.

Katherine K. Dahlsgaard, M.A.

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Katherine Dahlsgaard is a fourth-year doctoral student in the Psychology Program at the University of Pennsylvania. She graduated magna cum laude from Bryn Mawr College in 1992. She works with Dr. Martin Seligman on positive psychology research involving taxonomies of human strengths as well as how talents in childhood serve as protective factors from the development of later psychopathology.

Lucy Davidson, M.D., Ed.S.

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Dr. Davidson is Associate Director of Science of the Center for Child Well-being (CCW), a program of the Task Force for Child Survival and Development. She manages scientific activities of the CCW, including research, monitoring systems, program and policy recommendations, grants, and technical assistance. She also serves as Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the Emory School of Medicine and expert consultant to the office of the Surgeon General. Her previous research and programmatic interests have concentrated on suicide and suicide prevention with special attention to psychiatric epidemiology, policy, medical assessment, and public education.

She began her work in public health through the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) when the Centers inaugurated violence prevention activities. While there she conducted and published the first case-control study of youth suicide clusters and collaborated on public health initiatives to address suicide, suicide attempts, and interpersonal violence. She has been working in partnership with many people concerned about suicide to help develop a National Strategy for Suicide Prevention and has recently coauthored The Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Prevent Suicide.

Dr. Davidson is board certified in psychiatry and forensic psychiatry, with training in medical ethics. She received her undergraduate and medical degrees from Emory and master’s and specialists’ degrees in education from Georgia State University. Following an early career in education and curriculum design, Dr. Davidson practiced adult and adolescent psychiatry and psychotherapy. Dr. Davidson is a Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association and an Examiner for the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology. She reviews research for the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) and the Archives of General Psychiatry. Dr. Davidson’s own research has been published internationally and she enjoys supervising residents and teaching.

She is the recipient of the U. S. Public Health Service Citation, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Public Service Award, SPAN Architect Award for the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, and the Kappa Kappa Gamma National Alumnae Achievement Award. She is most pleased to have had the Lucy Davidson Scholarship for undergraduate education and the Lucy Davidson, MD, EdS, Research Fund established in her honor.

Ed Diener, Ph.D.

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Dr. Diener was born on July 25, 1946 in Glendale, California. He grew up on a farm in the San Joaquin Valley of California, near Fresno. He attended San Joaquin Memorial High School in Fresno, where he met his wife, Carol. They have been married since 1966, and they have five children: Marissa and Mary Beth (twins), Robert, Kia, and Susan, and several grandchildren. In addition to psychology, Dr. Diener is involved in farming in California (cotton, tomatoes, and lettuce). His wife, Carol, is a clinical psychologist who is also finishing a law degree. His daughter, Marissa, is a developmental psychologist who teaches at the University of Utah. Her twin sister, Mary Beth, is finishing a Ph.D. in clinical psychology at the University of Kentucky. His son, Robert, is entering a Psy.D. program in clinical psychology in the fall of 1997. The youngest two children are not in the field of psychology.

Dr. Diener received his bachelor's degree in 1968 at California State University at Fresno. He worked two years as an administrator for Kings View Community Mental Health Center. He attended the Ph.D. program in personality psychology at the University of Washington from 1970 to 1974, and conducted his dissertation research on deindividuation. He had three major mentors during graduate school: Irwin Sarason, Ronald E. Smith, and Scott Fraser.

Dr. Diener became a faculty member in the Department of Psychology at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign in 1974, and has been in that department ever since. In 1981 he changed the focus of his research to the study of subjective well-being, and has been active in that field. His laboratory focuses on the understanding of subjective well-being (including topics such as life satisfaction, happiness, and positive emotions).

He is the editor of the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology: Personality Processes and Individual Differences. Dr. Diener was also the President of the International Society for Quality of Life Studies (1997-1998), and is on the editorial board of several book series and journals. He is President-Elect of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology (Division B of APA) in 2000 and will serve as President in 2001. Dr. Diener is also the co-editor of a new journal, Journal of Happiness Studies: An Interdisciplinary Forum on Subjective Well-being. In 1996 he won the University of Illinois Oakley Kunde award for teaching.

Thaddeus Ferber

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Mr. Ferber joined the International Youth Foundation (IYF) in 1998 as a John Gardner Public Service Fellow. Prior to his work at IYF, Mr. Ferber has been involved in Youth Development research, writing, practice and policy within a number of organizations, both in the United States and abroad.

At the federal level, Mr. Ferber served as a policy intern at the President’s Crime Prevention Council, chaired by Vice President Al Gore. At the Council, he worked on a report on coordination of comprehensive youth programs across federal departments, conducting interviews with the directors of such programs within the Departments of Justice, Labor, Education, Agriculture, and Health and Human Services. At the Forum for Youth Affairs in Tel Aviv, Israel, Mr. Ferber analyzed data and prepared articles examining the quality of life within Israeli residential youth facilities.

As a research assistant at the Stanford Center on Adolescence, Mr. Ferber led a team in developing a process to assist scientists, practitioners and policy makers reach consensus on key strategies for promoting adolescent development. Concurrently, Mr. Ferber assisted Professor Milbrey McLaughlin at Stanford’s Gardner Center for Children and Communities in the design of a fellowship for community leaders for youth. Most recently, Mr. Ferber worked as an evaluator, consultant and youth worker at HOME Project, a community-based organization in Alameda, CA. He earned a B.A. in Youth Development and Policy (an independently designed, interdisciplinary major) from Stanford University.

About the International Youth Foundation:

Founded in 1990, the International Youth Foundation (IYF) "is dedicated to improving conditions and prospects for children and youth worldwide, by enabling them to care more responsibly for themselves, their families, communities and the world." IYF seeks to increase the quality and quantity of philanthropy for children and youth through collaboration with major business, government, foundation, and non-profit organizations. Activities are conducted in partnership with indigenous foundations in selected countries. In conjunction with partner foundations, IYF identifies effective programs for inclusion in Youth Net International, a global forum and exchange among successful programs; makes grants to strengthen and expand the impact of programs aimed at holistic development of children and youth ages 5-20; strengthens the institutional capacity of organizations serving children and youth; and supports learning and dissemination through its grant making, databases, workshops, and published reports. Currently, 80 percent of funds are channeled through partner foundations, with 20 percent devoted to programs worldwide.

Barbara L. Fredrickson, Ph.D.

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Dr. Fredrickson graduated summa cum laude from Carleton College in 1986. She received her Ph.D. in psychology from Stanford University in 1990, and from 1990-92 was an NIMH Post-doctoral Fellow at UC Berkeley, studying emotions and psychophysiology. Her first faculty appointment was at Duke University, and then in 1995 she joined the psychology faculty at the University of Michigan. Fredrickson’s research on positive emotions and well-being is supported by grants from NIMH and the University of Michigan. Her research and teaching have been recognized with numerous awards, including, in 2000, the largest prize ever awarded in psychology, the Templeton Positive Psychology Prize.

Derek M. Isaacowitz, M.A.

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Derek Isaacowitz is a fifth-year doctoral student in Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. He has worked with Dr. Martin Seligman since 1996, after graduating with honors and distinction from Stanford University. A recipient of the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, Mr. Isaacowitz’s primary research interest involves successful aging, specifically, the role that cognitive styles such as optimism play in adults' ability to regulate emotions in the face of stress.

He developed a research program on cognitive variables and depression in older people by conducting a prospective, longitudinal study of community-dwelling older adults. He measured explanatory style and depressive symptoms, then conducted follow-up assessments of mood and life events experienced. By modifying the standard measure of explanatory style, he developed the Older Adults’ Attributional Style Questionnaire (OAASQ), an extension of work done by Dr. Seligman.

Carrissa A. Griffing, MCIS

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Ms. Griffing received a B.A and B.S from Rutgers College, Rutgers—The State University she specialized in Penology and Communications. Working closely with Dr. Michael F. Welch, Associate Professor at the School of Social Work, she has published several journal articles and textbooks on such topics as The United States’ Justice System, Prisoner and Immigrants’ Rights, and Creating an Informed Citizenry.

While obtaining her Masters Degree of Communication and Information Science at the Rutgers School of Communication, Information, and Library Studies; she received a Johnson & Johnson Fellowship. Her areas of focus were: the dissemination of information in order to create an informed citizenry via mass media; and establishing a correlation between student learning and gendered communicative styles of their instructors.

She now works as the Coordinator of the Positive Psychology Network at The University of Pennsylvania.

Terry Kang, J.D.

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Terry Kang was born near Seoul, Korea and became a U.S. citizen as a teen. She received a B.A from Columbia, with a major in Psychology and a minor in French literature. After Teaching for several years, she received a J.D. from Rutgers in 1993. She worked as a law clerk for the Chief Judge of the U.S Bankruptcy Court and then as a litigator before retuning to Psychology and academia. Kismet and good timing led her to Dr. Martin Seligman. She currently works as his office administrator in the Martin Seligman Research Alliance at the University of Pennsylvania. She co-authored—with Dr. Seligman and Paul Verkuil—Lawyer Unhappiness: Maladaptive pessimism, Low Decision Latitude and the Zero-Sum Dilemma, a subject with which she is familiar.

Nicole Kurzer

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Ms. Kurzer graduated summa cum laud in Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania in May, 2000. She received the Miles S. Murphy award for outstanding undergraduate research. This research included an honors thesis on attitudes toward food and eating (with Dr. Paul Rozin), a study of maladaptive beliefs associated with personality disorder and their relation to outcome in cognitive therapy for depression (with Drs. Willem Kuyken, Robert Derubeis, Greg Brown, Aaron T. Beck), and a study of individual differences in negativity dominance (with Dr. Paul Rozin).

Currently a research assistant for the Martin Seligman Research Alliance, Ms. Kurzer is working on studies of individuals with extremely high subjective well being, the broadening effects of positive emotion, and, most relevantly, the relationship between focus on strengths and outcomes in therapy for depression.

Robert Kendell, M.D.

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Dr. Kendall received his psychiatric training at the Maudsley Hospital in London. He served on the staff of the US/UK Diagnostic Project from 1966 to 1968 and from 1970 to 1971. Dr. Kendall was an Associate Professor at the University of Vermont College of Medicine 1969-70; a Reader in Psychiatry at the Institute of Psychiatry, London from 1971 to 1974 and Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Edinburgh from 1974 to 1991. In 1975 he published "The Role of Diagnosis in Psychiatry." From 1986 to 1990 he served as Dean of the Edinburgh Medical School. He then was appointed Chief Medical Officer for Scotland from 1991 to 1996 and President of the Royal College of Psychiatrists from 1996 to 1999.

Donna Mayerson, Ph.D., M.Ed.

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Dr. Mayerson is the Trustee of the Manuel D. and Rhoda Mayerson Foundation, child psychologist, and a special educator. She has extensive experience working with children of all ages and their families in a wide variety of settings. She currently works in a nationally recognized public preschool, building teacher and parent understanding of children and helping these adults acquire skills to interact in effective and rewarding ways with the children they care for.

Neal H. Mayerson, Ph.D.

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Dr. Mayerson is the President of the Manuel D. and Rhoda Mayerson Foundation and clinical psychologist. In his work with the Foundation, he has initiated and/or been a principal developer of numerous non-profit organizations and programs, including the Mayerson Academy (for K-12 professional development; mayacad.org), RISE (technology-assisted training for adults working with children; Risetraining.org), The Mayerson Center for Safe and Healthy Children (treatment, prevention, research, and training focused on the issue of child neglect and abuse), the Inclusion Network (for changing attitudes and opportunities regarding the full inclusion of people with disabilities; inclusion.org), the Mayerson High School Community Service Program, the Mayerson Community Service and Philanthropy Program, and, most recently, the Values in Action Institute (VIA). Neal is also the President of the Mayerson Company, a financial and real estate investment and management company.

Richard McCarty, Ph.D.

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Currently the Executive Director for Science at the American Psychological Association in Washington, D.C., Dr. McCarty previously served for eight years as Chair of the Department of Psychology at the University of Virginia, where he started his career as a junior faculty member in 1978. He received his undergraduate training at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia and his Ph.D. in 1976 from the Johns Hopkins University. He was a post-doctoral fellow in neuroscience at the National Institutes of Health from 1976-1978.

Dr. McCarty has returned to conduct research at the National Institutes of Health on two occasions during sabbatical leaves from his faculty position. He was the recipient of a Research Scientist Development Award from the National Institute of Mental Health from 1985-1990. He served as Editor-in-Chief of the international journal STRESS from 1995-1999. He has served as Chair of the Executive Board of the Council of Graduate Departments of Psychology and has been an organizer of several international symposia. Dr. McCarty is a fellow of several scientific societies, including the Society for Behavioral Medicine, the Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research, the International Institute of Stress, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the American Psychological Society. He has authored numerous journal articles in his two primary areas of research: the physiology of stress and the development of hypertension. He has also edited six volumes in the fields of psychobiology and neuroscience research.

Peter Nathan, Ph.D.

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Dr. Nathan is University of Iowa Foundation Distinguished Professor of Psychology. During his first six years at Iowa, beginning in 1990, he was Provost, then Acting President. Before coming to Iowa, he spent almost 20 years at Rutgers where, between 1983 and 1989, he directed the Center of Alcohol Studies. On partial leave from Rutgers between 1987 and 1989, he served as Senior Program Officer of the MacArthur Foundation. He was actively involved in the DSM-IV process as a member both of the DSM-IV Task Force and of the Substance Use Disorders Work Group.

Heather Johnston Nicholson, Ph.D.

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Dr. Nicholson has more than two decades of experience in research, program development and educational and political advocacy for girls and young women.

A prolific author, she has contributed to some 30 books, articles, monographs

and technical reports on gender equity, informal education and the healthy development of girls and young women ages 6 to 18. She has also written and contributed to a wide range of program curricula, magazine articles, evaluation tools and policy games on issues of math, science and technology, health and wellness, sports, teen sexuality and pregnancy, violence, juvenile justice, single- sex education, and leadership—all with a multicultural focus on girls.

Dr. Nicholson joined Girls Incorporated, the national youth program, research and advocacy organization that “inspires all girls to be strong, smart and bold,” in 1982 as a senior research associate at the National Resource Center in Indianapolis. She has been the principal investigator for several multi-million dollar initiatives funded by government and private grants.

Dr. Nicholson is Chair of the National Council for research on Women and serves on advisory boards of the United Way of America, the Purdue School of Education and the National Collaboration for Youth. Prior to joining Girls Incorporated she taught political science and public policy at the University of Iowa, Purdue University, and at Indiana/Purdue University at Indianapolis. She holds a B.A. with honors from Chatham College, an M. A. from the state University of New York at Buffalo, and a PH.D. from the University of Iowa, all in political science.

Jennifer M. Ostovich, M.A.

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Jennifer Ostovich received her B.S. from the University of Toronto in 1998, M.A. University of Pennsylvania in 1999. She is presently a third-year doctoral student in social psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, studying with Dr. John Sabini.

Her research interests include: motivations for dieting; dieting prevention in children and adolescents; gender differences in sex drive and fantasy.

Christopher Peterson, Ph.D.

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Dr. Peterson has been at the University of Michigan since 1986, where he is presently Professor of Psychology. He also holds an appointment as an Arthur F. Thurnau Professor. His original doctoral training (1972-1976) was in Social and Personality Psychology at the University of Colorado, where he became interested in individual differences in cognitive characteristics. He maintained this interest during his post-doctoral retraining in clinical psychology (1979-1981) at the University of Pennsylvania, where he began to use the perspective of the learned helplessness model to investigate psychopathology, specifically depression, and physical well-being. He is the author or co-author of more than 170 publications.

Over the years, Dr. Peterson's work has been supported by funding from NIA, NIH, and OAM. His work falls most broadly within a stress and coping framework, with an emphasis on health applications. He also has a long-standing interesting in how to assess psychological characteristics from archival data. He is currently turning his attention to positive psychology and as of September 2000, has been on leave at the University of Pennsylvania working on the Telos Taxonomy: a catalogue of human strengths and virtues.

Mark Rosenberg, M.D., M.P.P.

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Mark Rosenberg is Executive Director of the Task Force for Child Survival and Development in Decatur, Georgia. He is also the Director for Science at the Collaborative Center for Child Well-being, a project of the Task Force. The Center was established in 1999 to serve as a resource for advancing the well-being of children through a strengths-based paradigm for child health and development. The focus is on the assets and capacities that enable a child to thrive from infancy through adulthood, rather than on pathology. Optimal health, a sense of purpose and control, interpersonal skills, empathy, literacy skills, and good cognitive abilities are among the positive characteristics that parents, children, and child-advocates alike believe are key to well-being.

Dr. Rosenberg is board certified in both psychiatry and internal medicine, with training in public policy. He was educated at Harvard University where he received his undergraduate degree as well as degrees in public policy and medicine. He completed a residency in internal medicine and a fellowship in infectious diseases at Massachusetts General Hospital, a residency in psychiatry at the Boston Beth Israel Hospital, and a residency in preventive medicine at CDC. He is on the faculty at Morehouse Medical School, Emory Medical School, and the Rollins (Emory) School of Public Health. He served the Public Health Service for 19 years in enteric diseases, HIV/AIDS, and injury control. He was the founding director of the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control and attained the rank of Assistant Surgeon General.

His research and programmatic interests have concentrated on injury control and violence prevention with special attention to behavioral sciences, evaluation, and health communications. He has been interested in both interpersonal violence and suicide and edited Violence in America: A Public Health Approach. He uses photography to document the human side of injury and illness. In his book, Patients: the Experience of Illness, he combined photographs and interviews to show the effects of illness on the lives of six people with different diseases. He is currently using the same approach to examine the impact of violence.

He has authored more than 120 publications and has received the Surgeon General's Exemplary Service Medal as well as the Meritorious Service Medal and Outstanding Service Medals from the U.S. Public Health Service. He is a member of the Institute of Medicine. He is married to Jill Rosenberg and is the father of two children, Julie and Ben.

Peter Schulman

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Peter Schulman is Research Director of the Martin Seligman Research Alliance in the Department of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. He has a B.S. in Economics from the Wharton School, with a major in Management.

He currently oversees groundbreaking large-scale longitudinal research supported by NIMH on the prevention of depression and anxiety among college students at risk for depression. Participants who received the cognitive-behavioral intervention had significantly fewer episodes of depression and anxiety than the no-intervention control group, and improvements in optimism mediated the prevention effect.

Mr. Schulman is currently developing a Web-based cognitive-behavioral intervention for large-scale testing and dissemination. The purpose of this pioneering intervention is to prevent depression and anxiety, improve physical health, and enhance achievement on a massive scale. Some of the features of this intervention include self-paced and self-directed online lessons that use text, streaming video and streaming audio; online exercises with feedback; threaded discussions; structured chat rooms; online dependent measures; and online trainers who will play various roles – monitor and participate in chat rooms and threaded discussions, offer virtual office hours, respond to e-mails, and provide feedback to online exercises.

He has managed numerous research projects, including the impact of optimism on achievement in various domains, the increase in optimism as a mechanism of relief from depression during cognitive-behavioral therapy, the heritability of optimism, and the development and application of a content analytic technique to assess optimism. He developed and designed the Web site for the Martin Seligman Research Alliance (<http://www.psych.upenn.edu/seligman>). He is also President of Foresight, Inc., a human resources consulting firm that provides research services and optimism testing to various businesses.

David Seligman, M.S.

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David Seligman is the Assistant Director of Research at Access Measurement Systems (“AMS”), a company that specializes in measuring outcomes from behavioral health treatment. AMS’s rapidly growing national database currently has data on over 70,000 clients. AMS is in the process of seeking funding to create the infrastructure for a practice research network that would allow academic researchers to conduct studies relating the process of treatment to outcomes in real-world, naturalistic settings. Once in place, this infrastructure will present an opportunity for positive psychologists to collect data on strengths among those seeking behavioral health treatment. These studies could help answer questions about the relationship between strengths and psychopathology, the relationship between the existence of client strengths and treatment outcomes, and the relationship between a focus on client strengths and treatment outcomes.

Mr. Seligman’s primary interest in positive psychology is how it relates to clinical practice. As positive psychology develops a clinical practice of its own, AMS would welcome the chance to be involved in designing, testing, and deploying the measures that must accompany such a practice.

Martin E.P. Seligman, Ph.D.

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Dr. Seligman works on positive psychology, learned helplessness, depression, and on optimism and pessimism. He is currently the Robert A. Fox Leadership Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. Well-known in academic and clinical circles, he is also a best-selling author, and former President of the American Psychological Association.

His bibliography includes fifteen books and 150 articles on motivation and personality. Among his better known works are Learned Optimism (Knopf, 1991), What You Can Change & What You Can't (Knopf, 1993), The Optimistic Child (Houghton Mifflin, 1995), Helplessness (Freeman, 1975, 1993) and Abnormal Psychology (Norton, 1982, 1988, 1995, with David Rosenhan).

He is the recipient of two Distinguished Scientific Contribution awards from the American Psychological Association, the Laurel Award of the American Association for Applied Psychology and Prevention and the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Society for Research in Psychopathology. He holds an honorary Ph.D. from Uppsala, Sweden and Doctor of Humane Letters from the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology. He received both the American Psychological Society's William James Fellow Award (for contribution to basic science) and the James McKeen Cattell Fellow Award (for the application of psychological knowledge).

Dr. Seligman's research and writing has been broadly supported by a number of institutions including The National Institute of Mental Health (continuously since 1969), the National Institute of Aging, the National Science Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation, and the MacArthur Foundation. His research on preventing depression received the coveted MERIT Award of the National Institute of Mental Health in 1991. He is the founder and Editor-in-Chief of Prevention and Treatment, the electronic journal of the American Psychological Association. He is the Treasurer of the Council of Scientific Society Presidents, the Director of the Positive Psychology Network, the Scientific Director of the Telos Taxonomy Project of the Mayerson Foundation, and the chair of the Board of Advisors of the Solomon Asch Center for the Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict.

For 14 years he was the Director of the Clinical Training Program of the Psychology Department of the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Seligman was named "Distinguished Practitioner" by the National Academies of Practice. He is a past-president of the Division of Clinical Psychology of the American Psychological Association. Dr. Seligman served as the leading consultant to Consumer Reports for their pioneering article that documented the effectiveness of long-term psychotherapy. He is scientific director of Foresight, Inc, a testing company, which predicts success in various walks of life.

His books have been translated into more than a dozen languages and have been best‑sellers both in America and abroad. His work has been featured on the front page of the New York Times and Psychology Today, in Time, Newsweek, U.S. News and World Report, the Reader's Digest, Redbook, Parents, Fortune, Health, Family Circle and many other popular magazines. He has been a spokesman for the science and practice of psychology on numerous television and radio shows. He has written columns on such wide-ranging topics as education, violence, and therapy. He has lectured around the world to educators, industry, parents, and mental health professionals.

In 1996 Dr. Seligman was elected President of the American Psychological Association, by the largest vote in modern history. His primary aim as APA President was to join practice and science together so both might flourish; a goal that has dominated his own life as a psychologist. His major initiatives concerned the prevention of ethnopolitical warfare and the study of Positive Psychology.

Philip Stone

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Dr. Stone is a Professor of Psychology at Harvard University and Senior Scientist with the Gallup Organization. He has worked in several areas relevant to positive psychology. In the 1960’s he participated in the Time-diary studies, a multi- country time-use study, which became a benchmark of social indicators for estimating women’s unpaid contributions to society, as well as the basis for later time trend studies by John Robinson in the U.S., Andrew Harvey in Canada, and others in Europe. Recently, the U.S. data from the study have been used by Putnam and others to test “bowling alone” theories. The main report resulting from this study—with A. Szalai, P. Converse, E. Scheuch, and P. Feldheim (editors)—appears in The Use of Time: Daily Activities of Urban and Suburban Populations in Twelve Countries, The Hague: Mouton Press, 1972.

Related articles include: Women’s time patterns in eleven counties, in: Michelson, W. (editor), Public Policy in Temporal Perspective, The Hague: Mouton Press, 1978, 113-150; Organic solidarity and life-quality indictors, in Andrews, F. and Szalai, A. (editors) Comparative Studies on Quality of Life, Beverly Hills: Sage Publication, 1981; (with N. Nicholson) Infrequently occurring activities and contexts in time-use data, Journal of Nervous and Mental disease, 1987, 175, 519-525, reprinted in: Devries, M (ed.) The Experience of Psychopathology. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1992.

George E. Vaillant, M.D.

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Dr. Vaillant is a Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and Director of Research for the Division of Psychiatry, Brigham and Women’s Hospital. For the past 25 years he has served as Director of the Study of Adult Development at the Harvard University Health Service. Dr. Vaillant has spent his research career charting adult development and the recovery process of schizophrenia, heroin addiction, alcoholism, and personality disorder. His published works include Adaptation to Life, (1977), The Wisdom of the Ego, (1993), and The Natural History of Alcoholism-Revisited, (1995).

He has been a Fellow of the American College of Psychiatrists and has been an invited speaker and consultant for seminars and workshops throughout the world. A major focus of his work in the past has been to develop ways of studying defense mechanisms empirically; more recently he has been interested in successful aging. A graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Medical School, Dr. Vaillant did his residency at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center and completed his psychoanalytic training at the Boston Psychoanalytic Institute.

Dr. Vaillant has received the Foundations Fund Prize for Research in Psychiatry from the American Psychiatric Association, the Stecker Award from the Institute of Pennsylvania Hospital, and the Semrad Award from the Massachusetts Mental Health Center.

Nicole Yohalem

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Ms. Yohalem joined the staff of IYF-US as Manager of Learning and Research in 2000. Nicole brings to IYF-US ten years of experience working directly with and on behalf of children and youth. Before joining the IYF-US staff, She served as youth development specialist at Michigan State University, where she developed, implemented, and evaluated community-based youth programs and provided training and technical assistance to programs statewide within the Cooperative Extension Service. From 1990 to 1995, She worked in the adolescent division of the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, where she staffed and later directed the Foundation’s residential program for teens and developed curricular and training materials for use in a wide range of youth programs. She received her Master of Education degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, in their multidisciplinary Risk and Prevention Program.