psychology away; Miller, 1969). Empirically supported self-change interventions could gradually and at least partially replace current psychological treatments and become a transitional step from a science of psychopathology to a science of positive psychology. Empirical psychological treatments and become a trans disciplinary psychology to a science of positive psychology. These include increasing clients’ positive expectations and hope about change (psychological placebo; Hubble et al., 1999), general sense of optimism, adaptive or mature defenses (Vaillant, 2000), self-efficacy, and coping strategies. Interventions that enhance people’s strengths and positive traits should be components of every treatment, because they can reduce symptoms, prevent relapses, increase quality of life, and bring positive psychological qualities into therapeutic psychology. An integrative-eclectic approach that offers clients the opportunity to change by themselves in therapy as much as possible can further communicate the philosophy of a positive therapeutic psychology (for more on integrative treatments, see Norcross & Goldfried, 1992).

The foregoing suggestions could potentially help psychologists who research and treat psychopathology to transcend the shackles of their training, their pessimistic views of human nature, and their lifelong professional investments. To believe that this will happen without systematic effort and planning is somewhat unrealistic. I suggest that the road to positive psychology should pass through the fields of psychopathology, psychotherapy, and mental health. Positive psychology research should not be limited to healthy populations but should also include clinical samples. As the aforementioned three examples of potential cooperation have suggested, a research-based positive psychology has a lot to offer in the field of mental health treatment. On the other hand, positive psychology also needs to study clinical populations in order to attract attention and funding. Positive psychology and psychotherapy will be best developed in relation to each other, not separately.

REFERENCES


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Objective state of physical well-being to live in joyful? Do people have to reflect on their subjective states? Is reflecting on their subjective states necessary for very young children to experience happiness? Do such children have to recognize joy to be joyful? Do people have to reflect on the subjective state of physical well-being to live in its experience? POM/HR asserts that when people access free-flowing thought, they are happy by definition (i.e., totally absorbed in the natural experience of healthy, 98.6-degree mental functioning).

Csikszentmihalyi (1999) continued, saying, “Flow alone does not guarantee a happy life. . . . it is necessary to find flow in activities that are complex . . . activities that provide a potential for growth over the entire life span” (p. 826). Here Csikszentmihalyi tied both flow and personal growth to particular (i.e., complex) pursuits. POM/HR suggests that flow, as well as personal growth, is a product of the profound, positive life experience produced by free-flowing thought. Although having total access to memory, free-flowing thinking is also the source of a profound human intelligence (i.e., wise, insightful, creative thought) that transcends memory and culture. When people realize for themselves the power of this thinking, understand its source, and trust it to guide them through life, some will be inspired to pursue complex tasks, whereas others will choose simpler ones. To the degree that people live in free-flowing thought, however, they will find happiness and personal growth in whatever they do—simple, complex, or anything in between.

Csikszentmihalyi (1999) concluded by citing several limits of flow. For example, he stated that people may find flow in destructive, dysfunctional activities (e.g., compulsive gambling) or may become addicted to flow in functional activities (e.g., workaholism). Although this is absolutely true, POM/HR asserts that this condition does not reflect limits of flow. Rather, it reflects limits in people’s insightful understanding of principles of human psychological functioning. People become innocently addicted to flow in any activity (positive or negative) because they don’t realize the profound connection between thinking and subjective personal experience. POM/HR proposes that the personal recognition of principles is all that people need, that people will naturally move toward more happy, fulfilling, virtuous lives as their understanding of principles deepens.

Presently, I am working on a more extensive, principle-based review of Csikszentmihalyi’s flow, as well as several other prominent positive psychological models (e.g., Seligman’s learned optimism, Maslow’s self-actualization, Golem’s emotional intelligence). I hope that this brief sample will intrigue readers, encouraging them to examine the principles of POM/HR and reflect on their potential contribution to the noble mission of positive psychology.

REFERENCES