Graduate School of Human Sciences

Assumption University of Thailand

FEATURE: "Impact of AI on Education"

On April 28, 2023, EAL Ph.D. candidate, Dr. Chaw Su Hlaing, was honored to be asked to participate on a 4-person, expert panel for two discussions in the Times City Complex in Yangoon, Myanmar.

Panel topics included:

1. The evolution of teaching learning process, parental involvement and understanding to support their children.
2. How schools should prepare for digitization, digitalization, and digital transformation.
3. Students and AI (one panelist conducts research on AI usage by students).
4. Teachers and AI
5. Education during the challenging times like pandemic, and the new normal with AI.

Dr. Chaw Su Hlaing credits her coursework, leadership topics, and supportive classmates as helping her to generate ideas for the panel disucssion. She reflected on the experience, "During our classes, students were assigned to write about curriculum direction and AI in school climates. I was able to use the knowledge and ideas learned from my instructors and classmates to apply to the panel.

Dr. Poonpilas and Dr. Matt introduced us to how to use AI in everyday life and how it is a useful tool and dangerous weapon as well for the education industry. She asked us, do you want to use AI in your school? How will you use it as safely as possible in your school? All of these ideas come to my mind to construct the themes for the panel discussion. My panelists also agreed with my suggestions and they took each part to discuss collectively to highlight."

Congratualtions to Dr. Chaw and we thank you for sharing your expertise and representing GSHS with integrity and intelligence.

this issue

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY APPROACHES TO LEARNING
Parvathy Varma.S,PhD

Positive education aims at imparting education focusing on traditional skills not only for knowledge but for general well-being and happiness. Given the high prevalence depression, anxiety, and stress among youth worldwide, a small rise in life satisfaction, and the synergy between learning and positive emotion all argue that the skills for well-being should be taught in school. There is substantial evidence from well-controlled studies that skills that increase resilience, positive emotion, engagement and meaning can be taught to students. Positive school experiences have been connected to positive long-term outcomes, such as being less likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors (e.g., alcohol and drugs) and a strong sense of preparedness for their personal aspirations.

There is a wide use of Positive Psychology these days in counseling, education, personality development programs coaching etc. The focus of positive psychology is on the development of individual strengths instead of weaknesses. Instead of placing a focus on the components of mental illness, positive psychology focuses on how the positive events in a person's life form their identity.

The rapid advancement of technology and the fast-paced nature of societal growth have indeed had an impact on the rates of suicide, depression, anxiety, and stress. It is evident that these mental health issues have increased in recent years.

Additionally, there has been a concerning rise in violence, anger, and frustration among the youth population. One factor contributing to these challenges is the communication gaps that have emerged in today's digital age. While technology has provided us with various means of communication, it has also created barriers to meaningful and authentic connections. Many individuals, especially young people, may find it difficult to establish and maintain deep, face-to-face relationships, leading to feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Furthermore, cultural differences have become more apparent in our increasingly interconnected world. These differences can sometimes lead to misunderstandings, prejudice, and conflicts, further exacerbating the feelings of anger and frustration among youth.

To address these issues, it is crucial to promote open and inclusive dialogue, foster understanding and empathy, and provide platforms for constructive discussions. Schools and educational institutions play a vital role in facilitating these conversations and promoting cultural competence and mutual respect among students.

Moreover, it is essential to incorporate mental health education and support systems into the educational curriculum. By equipping young individuals with the necessary tools to navigate stress, manage emotions, and seek help when needed, we can empower them to better cope with the challenges they face in their daily lives.

Ultimately, creating a supportive and nurturing environment that encourages healthy communication, embraces diversity, and prioritizes mental well-being is key to addressing the increasing rates of mental health issues, violence, anger, and frustration among the youth.

There are several areas where we may find a lack or need for improvement:

Resilience: Building resilience is crucial in navigating life's challenges and setbacks. It involves the ability to bounce back from adversity, adapt to change, and maintain a positive mindset. Developing resilience skills can help individuals better cope with stress, overcome obstacles, and maintain their well-being.

Ability to Control Anger/Frustration: The ability to manage and control anger and frustration is essential for maintaining healthy relationships and emotional well-being. Learning effective anger management techniques, such as identifying triggers and practicing self-regulation strategies, can contribute to more constructive and positive responses to difficult situations.

Self-Compassion/Empathy: Cultivating self-compassion and empathy towards oneself and others is key to fostering positive mental health and well-being. It involves being kind and understanding towards oneself, recognizing common humanity, and showing empathy towards others.

Dr. Dave's Story

Being born and raised in a small city located in the northern part of Iran, in the mid-eighties in the Middle East, and in the midst of the Iran – Iraq war can have profound life-long effects on an individual, and I have been no exception. Trying to find one-self is not easy and growing up in that context certainly does not make it any easier.

I was always amazed by technology, and "computers" became one of my passions. From the age of 10, I started teaching myself programming languages, 3d modeling and animation, and video and audio editing by reading Sams publishing's "teach yourself (programming/ 3dmodeling/whatever) in 24 hours" books.

Even though I loved to pursue an education in computer science / engineering, based on the school administration's and my family's insistence I finished high school in the "natural sciences" track with the hopes of becoming a medical doctor. I was soon hit with the harsh reality that I was just competing against so many like-minded and capable individuals. So I decided to go for Translation Studies, which was just established as a university program in my country at the time. I liked the field and as part of my coursework I was introduced to the filed of linguistics. I pursued a Master's degree in General Linguistics with a specialization in Sociolinguistics. Reading further I was introduced to the area of Computational Linguistics which would combine computer science and linguistics in one enticing package for someone like me who has a passion for "computers". I pursued computational linguistics as part of my doctorate degree while at the same time trying to run an IT and network infrastructure services company of my own. Steep economic downturns for the country and the rapid depreciation of the local currency started around this time, and still continues to this day. The time had come for me to make some difficult decisions, one of which was to leave my country and start living somewhere else, while still finishing up my doctoral dissertation. At the age of 30, I left the country, and after living short term in a number of neighboring countries, and finishing my doctorate degree, and after rejecting an offer from a European university for a position in their neuroscience program, I finally decided to move to Thailand. This move came with an opportunity to study Counseling Psychology.

Meet Dr. Dave!

"I was always amazed by technology, and 'computers' became one of my passions. From the age of 10, I started teaching myself programming languages, 3d modeling and animation, and video and audio editing"

These qualities contribute to better self-esteem, healthier relationships, and a more compassionate and inclusive society.

Self-Esteem: Developing a healthy sense of self-esteem is vital for individuals' overall well-being. It involves having a positive self-image, recognizing one's strengths and abilities, and maintaining a healthy level of self-worth. Promoting self-esteem can contribute to improved mental health, resilience, and a sense of accomplishment.

Communication Problems Across Generations: Communication gaps and misunderstandings between different generations can hinder effective relationships and understanding.

Encouraging open and respectful communication, fostering intergenerational dialogue, and promoting empathy and active listening can bridge these gaps and foster mutual understanding and connection.

Addressing these areas of improvement requires a comprehensive approach that includes education, support systems, and fostering a culture that values well-being and positive interpersonal relationships. By providing resources, training, and promoting awareness in these areas, we can work towards creating a more resilient, empathetic, and communicative society.

The PERMA model, developed by Martin Seligman, highlights five key elements that are essential for long-term well-being:

Positive Emotions: This involves experiencing positive emotions such as joy, gratitude, interest, and hope. Cultivating a positive emotional state is crucial for overall well-being.

Engagement: Being fully engaged and absorbed in activities that challenge your skills and provide a sense of flow.

When you are engaged, you experience a state of deep focus and enjoyment.

Positive Relationships: Building and nurturing positive relationships with others is vital for well-being. Connecting with and being supported by family, friends, and a broader social network contributes to a sense of belonging and fulfillment.

Meaning: Finding meaning and purpose in life is another important aspect of well-being. Belonging to something greater than oneself, such as a community, a cause, or a belief system, gives individuals a sense of significance and fulfillment.

"These qualities contribute to better self-esteem, healthier relationships, and a more compassionate and inclusive society."

Accomplishment: The pursuit of success, achievement, and mastery is an integral part of well-being. Setting and accomplishing goals, whether big or small, contributes to a sense of competence and satisfaction.

The PERMAH framework expands on the PERMA model by adding an additional element: Health. This includes aspects such as sleep, exercise, and diet, which are recognized as essential components of a comprehensive positive education program. Taking care of one's physical well-being is seen as foundational to supporting overall flourishing and happiness.

By integrating these elements into education, schools can promote

the holistic development of students, fostering positive emotions, engagement, positive relationships, meaning, accomplishment, and health. This comprehensive approach to positive education aims to cultivate well-being and equip individuals with the skills and resources necessary to lead fulfilling and flourishing lives.

The PERMAH framework adds *Health* onto this, covering aspects such as sleep, exercise, and diet as part of a robust positive education program (Norrish & Seligman, 2015).

To effectively implement positive education, tailored interventions and training programs can be implemented for both teachers and support staff. Regular participation in these training programs is essential for teachers and staff to learn about positive education principles and how to apply them in their work and personal lives. It is important for educators to internalize these principles so that they can effectively incorporate them into their teaching practices.

Similarly, students should receive regular lessons on positive psychology, similar to other subjects like mathematics and geography. By integrating positive psychology into the curriculum, students can develop an understanding of the principles and apply them to their own lives, promoting their well-being and positive growth.

PERMA model of well-being

P **Positive Emotions** E **Engagement** R **Positive Relationships** M **Meaning** A **Accomplishment**

Image credit: https://www.scratchie.com/post/instituting-a-culture-of-positive-psychology
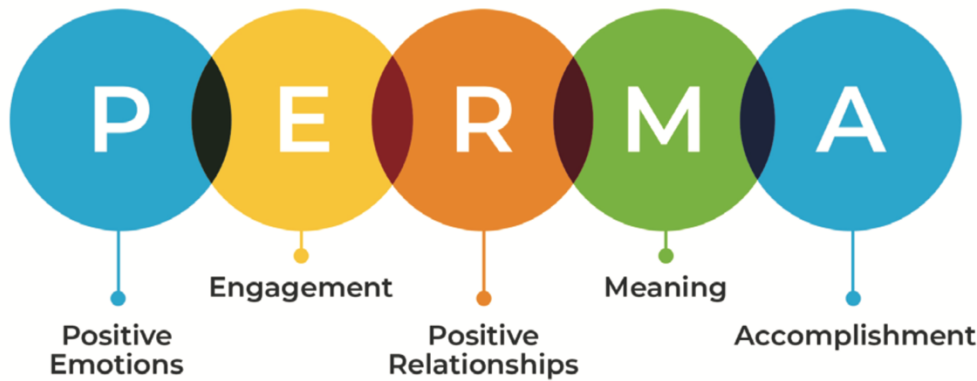
Positive Psychology Top 9 Strategies:

#1 GROUNDING

If you notice an intense feeling, overwhelming emotion, or your getting swept away with your thinking, try to focus on feeling your feet firmly planted on the ground. Focus on those sensations for a few moments and take some deep breaths.

#2 SOOTHING TOUCH

When you notice an intense feeling, overwhelming emotion or getting swept away with your thinking, try putting your hand on your heart, your abdomen or gently rubbing your neck. In the moment, this gesture of caring for you can help bring awareness to this moment of unease reminding yourself to be gentle.

#3 SELF-COMPASSION BREAK

This practice was created by Dr. Kristin Neff. Set aside a few moments in your day OR do this practice when needed. This mindfulness practice is designed to acknowledge the difficult situation you are experiencing and help you work to bring some compassion to your circumstance.

Simply repeat the following self-compassion phrases : this is a moment of suffering, suffering is a part of life, may I be kind to myself.

#4 JOURNALING

Keep a self-compassion journal recording any time you experience difficult emotions throughout your day. Write down the incident, difficult emotion or inadequacy. Then write a few sentences to yourself from the perspective.

#5 WRITING SELF-COMPASSIONATE LETTERS

Write a compassionate letter to yourself, addressing the struggles, challenges, or pain you may be experiencing. Offer words of understanding, support, and encouragement, just as you would to a dear friend. Read the letter aloud or keep it as a reminder of your self-compassion.

#6 CREATING AFFIRMATIONS

Develop positive and affirming statements that remind you of your worth, strength, and value. Repeat these affirmations to yourself regularly, especially in moments of self-doubt or self-criticism.

For example, "I am deserving of love and compassion," or "I am enough just as I am."

#7 SELF-NURTURING ACTIVITIES

Engage in activities that bring you comfort and joy. This could be reading a book, taking a relaxing bath, practicing a hobby, spending time in nature, or listening to soothing music. Prioritize activities that nourish and replenish your well-being.

#8 SET HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

Learn to recognize and honor your own needs by setting boundaries with others. Say no when necessary, delegate tasks, and prioritize self-care. Respecting your own limits and boundaries is an act of self-compassion that promotes your well-being.

#9 SEEKING SUPPORT

Reach out to supportive friends, family members, or a therapist to share your feelings and experiences. Seek guidance, empathy, and understanding from others who can provide a safe space for you to express yourself and receive support.

Tech Corner: 7 great tips to help with your Academic Writing

It's no secret that writing your master's or doctoral thesis is no easy task. Writer's block and procrastination haunt many graduate students. Nonetheless, Geneviève Belleville, psychology professor at Université Laval, has a few tricks that can help make things easier.

Visit **https://www.universityaffairs.ca/career-advice/career-advice-article/7-tips-for-efficient-thesis-writing/** for more information on these tips and improving your academic writing!

1. **Set specific times for writing**

2. **Set long- and short-term goals**

3. **Distinguish different writing stages**

4. **Inspiration is a rationalization**

5. **Avoid procrastination**

6. **Resist perfectionism!**

7. **Stay connected and talk about it with others**

In the context of the teacher-student relationship, strengths-based interventions can be employed. Instead of giving vague feedback like "Good job!" teachers are instructed to provide specific feedback that highlights the strengths demonstrated by the student. This approach not only acknowledges and reinforces positive behavior but also helps students develop a deeper understanding of their own strengths and capabilities.

Furthermore, positive education extends to improving disciplinary practices within schools. Rather than relying solely on punitive measures such as expulsions and suspensions, educators and school administrators are encouraged to adopt alternative approaches. While there may be instances where these disciplinary measures are necessary for safety or the learning environment, schools are starting to rethink their methods and explore more restorative and proactive disciplinary approaches. By focusing on the well-being and growth of the student, schools can create a supportive environment that encourages positive behavior and addresses underlying issues contributing to misconduct. Some examples that can be used to practice self compassion are shared as tips on this page.

Overall, implementing positive education requires a comprehensive approach that involves training and development for educators, integration of positive psychology into the curriculum, strengths-based interventions, and reevaluation of disciplinary practices. By embracing these strategies, schools can foster a positive learning environment that nurtures the well-being and growth of both students and staff.

Dr. Chaw Su Hlaing
EAL Ph.D. Candidate
AI Education Expert Panel
Times Complex, Yangon, Myanmar
April 28, 2023

[cont. from page 2, Dr. Dave]

I always found the idea fascinating and wanted to try my hand in the subject. Assumption University, and the graduate school of human sciences, the faculty of counseling of psychology gave me that opportunity. I pursued a Master's and subsequently a doctorate degree at assumption university, and was eventually hired to teach as a lecturer. As a faculty member, I am mostly interested in quantitative research, including but not limited to addiction and addictive behaviors especially in the context of the Internet, social media and other cyberspaces, individual's attitudes, stigma and cultural and social aspects in counseling psychology and professional help-seeking, social justice and its role and implications in psychology with major focus on the interests of minority groups.

Visit Dr. Dave in his office on the fifth floor in D-Buidling.

WELCOME TO GSHS, DR. DAVE!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

• Semester 1, 2023 starts on June 6

Information about new student orientation (held on June 6) will be shared soon

The Graduate School of Human Sciences at Assumption University organized a successful Student, Faculty, and Staff Development activity on February 26, 2023. More than 70 members of GSHS participated in the Strength in Diversity event, which included a visit to Baanmaichailane and Amphwa Floating Market. The student committee arranged icebreaking games on the coaches, and team T-shirts were provided to all participants.

Fundraising for the People Affected by Cylone Mocha in Myanmar

Any amount of your generous donation will go directly to those affected communities through community emergency response groups. If you would like to donate, please refer to the QR code. We will receive the donation for one week starting from 27.5.2023 to 3.6.2023. We would highly appreciate it if you can send the receipt to the message box and we will release the financial statements after one week.

We Need Your Help!
Myamar People Need Your Help!

Many people are now homeless, shelterless, and helpless. We need your help.
We are organising a fundraising activity that can support the suffering communities in Myanmar.

*Remark: We are a group of students from the Arakan State in Myanmar who feel the urge to help the affected communities of the Mocha cyclone in Rakhine State and some other parts of Myanmar.

Please help us by donating money