



Existential Positive Psychology's Unique Contribution to Psychotherapy and Wellbeing Research

Baihua JIN

Independent Scholar, China
baihua9457@gmail.com

Abstract. Existential Positive Psychology (EPP), also known as Positive Psychology 2.0, pioneered by Dr. Paul T. P. Wong, offers a transformative and integrative framework that bridges existentialism and positive psychology, emphasizing meaning-centered approaches to human suffering and flourishing. Grounded in existential psychology, informed by empirical findings in clinical psychology, and guided by a strengths-based perspective, EPP provides a comprehensive model for understanding and promoting sustainable well-being. This paper explores the unique contributions of EPP to psychotherapy and well-being research through the lens of Integrative Meaning Therapy (IMT), a clinical approach derived from the EPP framework. IMT presents a holistic view of mental health, proposing that psychological distress arises from deviation from the “natural way of mental health”—faith, meaningful work, and love. Central to IMT are the practices of self-transcendence and meaning-making, operationalized through the PURE (Purpose, Understanding, Responsibility, Enjoyment/Evaluation) and ABCDE (Acceptance, Belief, Commitment, Discovery, Evaluation) strategies. These approaches equip individuals to transform suffering into personal growth and lead purposeful lives anchored in spiritual and moral values. Furthermore, EPP emphasizes dialectical wisdom—such as the Yin-Yang perspective, Wu-Wei (effortless action), and paradoxical interventions—as essential tools for navigating life's inevitable suffering and contradictions. By embracing these philosophies, EPP teaches individuals how to endure adversity, find meaning in suffering, and attain mature happiness characterized by inner peace and spiritual fulfillment. Through integrating diverse traditions—Western psychotherapy, Eastern philosophies, and spiritual practices—EPP and IMT present a multicultural, compassionate, and deeply humanistic approach to psychotherapy. This paper highlights EPP's potential that not only promotes psychological well-being but also redefines it as the capacity to flourish through suffering by embracing life's ultimate concerns with courage, responsibility, and meaning. The prospect of EPP's theoretical integration with other mainstream psychotherapy approaches is discussed. In addition, critical reflections are made upon EPP and IMT, and future directions for improvement are suggested.

Keywords. Existential Positive Psychology (EPP, Positive Psychology 2.0), Integrative Meaning Therapy (IMT), Meaning, Mental Health, Well-being, Suffering, Dialectics.

1 Introduction

Existential Positive Psychology (EPP), developed by Dr. Paul T. P. Wong, creatively integrates universal existentialism from Existential Psychology (EP) and people's best wishes of optimizing human strengths and potentials for well-being and flourishing from Positive Psychology (PP); moreover, EPP teaches people the practical ways to pursue a meaningful and fulfilling life despite the unavoidable sufferings in human lives (Wong, 2010a, 2010b, 2021a, 2021b). Rooted in Existential Psychology, backed by empirical research in Clinical Psychology, and with a Positive Psychology orientation, Existential Positive Psychology is an integral school of psychology with unique practical approaches (Wong, 2021b). Complete positive mental health involves not only the presence of positive emotions and experiences but also the reduction and transformation of negative emotions and experiences (Ho et al., 2022; Wong, 2011a). Integrative Meaning Therapy (IMT) applied in clinical settings is built on the EPP framework, which innovatively integrates the philosophies from different schools of psychotherapy in clinical psychology, positive psychology, humanistic psychology as well as eastern traditions like Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism, with the mission of dealing with various intractable human problems in this world through a dialectical and multicultural approach (Wong, 2010a, 2010b). As a successor of Dr. Viktor Frankl, Dr. Paul T. P. Wong further addressed the Meaning of Life, the Meaning of Suffering, and the Meaning of Multiculturalism as the three pillars of existential sustainable well-being (Wong, 2019a, 2019b, 2020). Dr. Paul T. P. Wong's thesis is further supported by Dr. Tim Lomas and other scholars' work on the promotion of Third-Wave Positive Psychology (Lomas et al., 2021). The philosophy and practice of IMT are also widely applied in psychoeducational interventions to enhance people's resilience and well-being (Armstrong et al., 2019; Cohen & Bai, 2023; Wong, 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c; Zhang, 2023). This essay aims to summarize EPP's unique contribution to psychotherapy and well-being research by explaining the key concepts of IMT: 1) The Natural Way of Mental Health; 2) Self-transcendence, the PURE and the ABCDE strategy; 3) Yin-Yang Dialectics, Wu-Wei, and Paradoxical Interventions.



Figure 1: Theoretical Formation of Existential Positive Psychology

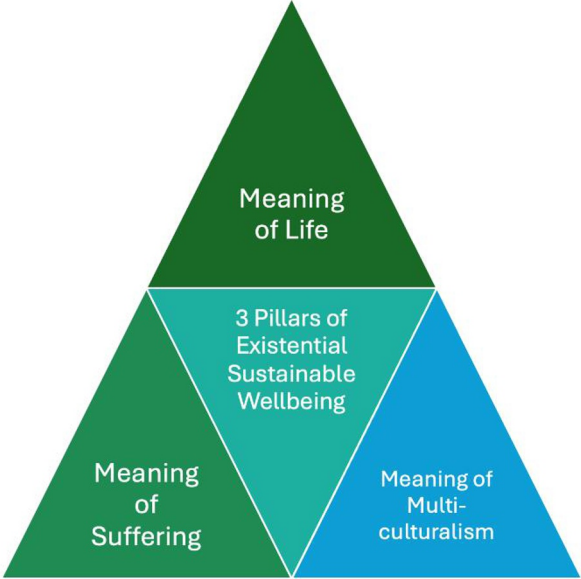


Figure 2: Three Pillars of Existential Sustainable Wellbeing

2 **The Natural Way of Mental Health**

One of the significant differences between IMT and mainstream psychotherapy is that instead of treating mental illness as a disease or something wrong with the person, IMT takes a holistic view of one’s inner and outer circumstances and proposes that mental ill-health originates from one’s living deviating from the natural way of mental health (Wong & Laird, 2024). To maintain physical health, we need to observe the natural way of physical health – getting enough quality sleep, having adequate nutritious food, and taking regular proper amounts of exercise (Belloc & Breslow, 1972). Similarly, to maintain mental health, there is also the natural principle we need to obey – connecting with God, Nature, or a higher power through faith, committing to doing meaningful work as the way of fulfilling our life calling, and connecting with people through love and forgiveness (Wong, 2019a, 2023). All kinds of mental illnesses occur with different symptoms but from the same source of lacking the necessary components in maintaining the natural way of mental health – Faith in God, Meaningful Work, and Positive Relationships (Wong, 2023).

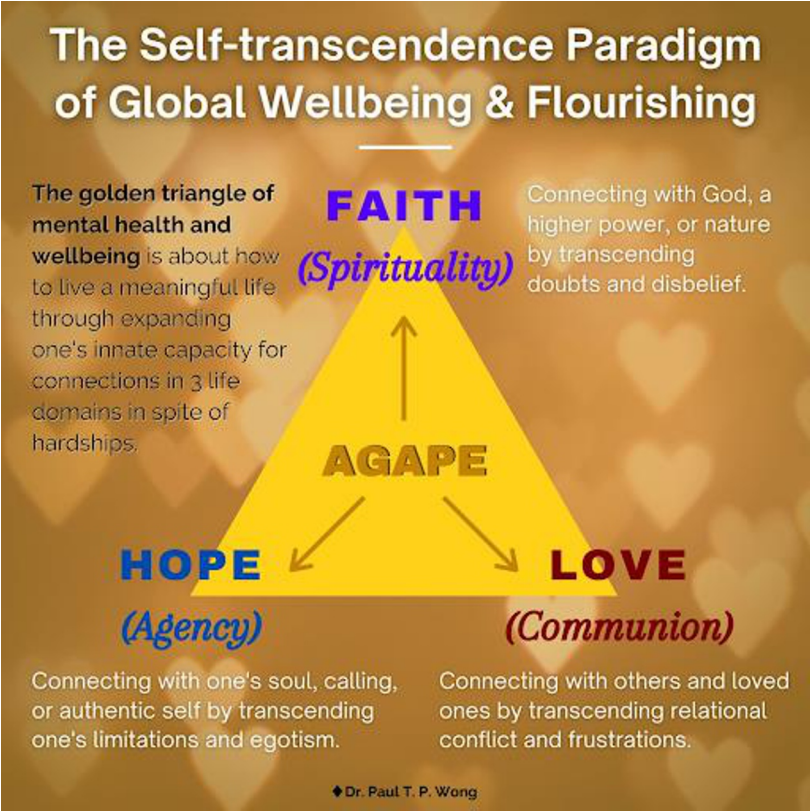


Figure 3: The Faith-Hope-Love Model of Mental Health and Wellbeing

Note. From *Spiritual-existential wellbeing (SEW): The faith-hope-love model of mental health & total wellbeing* (p. 9), by P. T. P. Wong, 2023, *International Journal of Existential Positive Psychology*, 12(1).

3 Self-transcendence, the PURE and the ABCDE Strategy

Though there are only three components in the natural way of mental health, it takes one's spiritual awakening and practical life wisdom to transcend and transform all the challenges and suffering in one's life in order to live meaningfully and achieve sustainable happiness (Wong & Laird, 2024). IMT inherits Dr. Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy to take virtuous meaning as the core of one's mental well-being and sustainable flourishing (Wong, 2010a). As a spiritual being, we can discover the meaning and purpose in every situation and in life as a whole; we can generate meaning by creating something worthwhile for humanity and responsibly meeting life's demands on us each day (Wong, 2014). A meaningful life is based on self-transcendence – 1) self-awareness of one's need for positive changes; 2) self-determination from egotistic concerns to caring for others; 3) reorienting one's life towards serving the common good and a higher purpose (Wong, 2016d). As Dr. Viktor Frankl famously announced: "Those who have a 'why' to live can bear almost any 'how' (Frankl, 1985)." A meaning-orientation not only brings out the good and noble side of human beings, leading to well-being, but also transforms the inevitable dark side of human existence, protecting us against distress (Edwards et al., 2007). IMT claims that the spiritual awakening of discovering and fulfilling one's life purpose and living our everyday life according to our conscience is a necessity for our well-being and sustainable flourishing amid all sorts of suffering in human life (Dhillon, 2020; Wong, 1999, 2014, 2020). Happiness is not an end, but a byproduct of leading a meaningful life. It is through serving others, showing compassion, and dedicating ourselves to a worthy cause that we find meaning and happiness (Dhillon, 2020; Wong, 2021a). Even during the good times in life when everything seems satisfactory, one still needs to engage himself/herself in discovering his/her unique life Purpose— What does life demand of me? What should I do with my life? What really matters in life? Otherwise, one easily falls into the success treadmill or existential vacuum and lives a wasted life (Yalom, 2020). To find one's worthy self-congruent life goals, one needs to Understand one's true self and make sense of the situations and the world one is living in. Whereafter, it is pivotal for one to take Responsible actions to do the right thing in the given situations and pursue one's authentic path. Through assuming one's full responsibility for one's own behaviors and building a preferred future, one can finally Evaluate whether he/she has achieved his/her goals, make necessary adjustments accordingly, and Enjoy the process of purpose-driven life – the PURE strategy (Wong, 2010a, 2010b, 2011b). On the other side, as a mortal being, no one can escape from the unavoidable suffering in life, and there will be dark times in one's life when one cannot see any light (Frankl, 1985). But through genuinely Accepting the suffering in one's life, Believing in God's best plan and salvation through faith, having the Courage to face adversity, Committing to concrete actions to work for a better future, Discovering the new meaning in suffering and new hidden opportunities, Evaluating one's progress and making necessary and timely adjustments to achieving one's meaningful goals (the ABCDE strategy), one can even enjoy mature happiness of inner serenity and deep appreciation in life's dark pit (Leung, 2023; Wong, 2015, 2016c; Wong & Wong, 2013). Living like a tree's roots reaching downward to face and transform suffering, and its branches reaching upward through self-transcendence and connections with the highest ideals of faith, hope, and love, we can experience and enjoy mature happiness and

sustainable flourishing, whatever the outside circumstances are (Bowers, 2020; Carreno et al., 2021; Wong, 2024a; Wong et al., 2021).

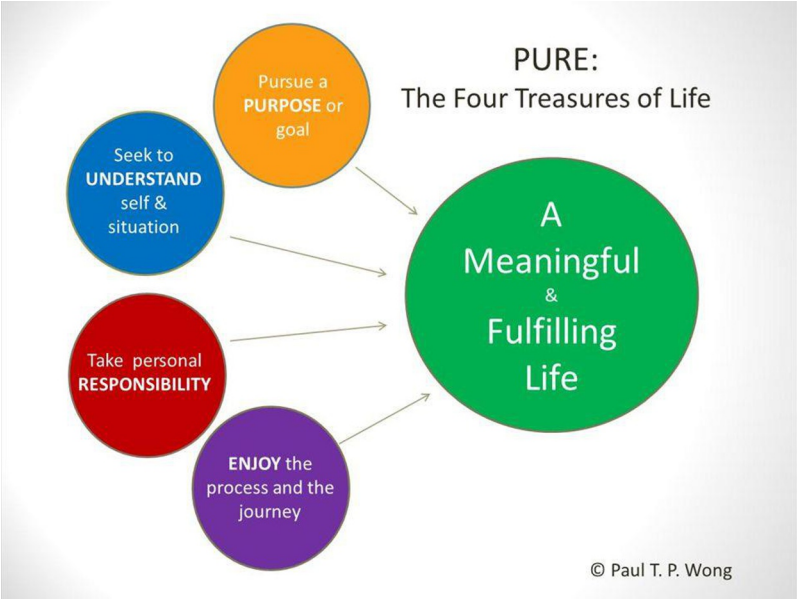


Figure 4: The PURE Strategy

Note. From *Meaning Therapy: An integrative and positive existential psychotherapy* (p. 11), by P. T. P. Wong, 2010, *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 40(2), 85-93.

The Pathway of Resilience

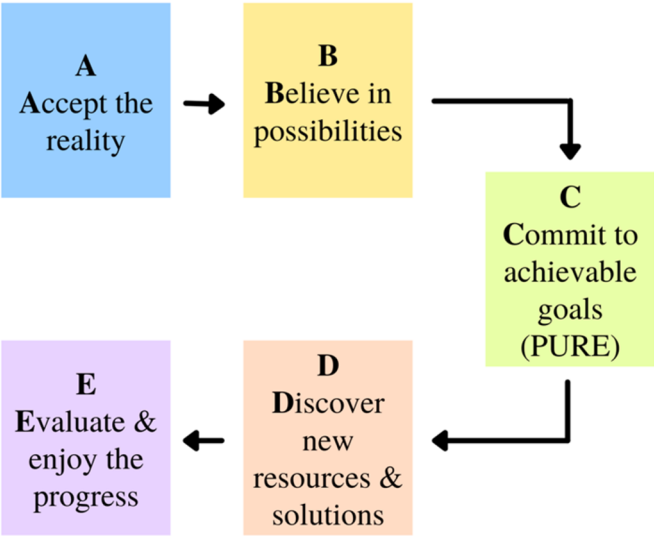


Figure 5: The ABCDE Strategy

Note. From *Meaning Therapy: An integrative and positive existential psychotherapy* (p. 11), by P. T. P. Wong, 2010, *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 40(2), 85-93.



The new science of flourishing through suffering consists of the dialectical process of (a) sinking one's roots to the deepest parts of hell through level of processing, and (b) spreading one's branches to the highest parts of Heaven and the broadest parts of earth through self-transcendence.

This is the less travelled road to finding joy and peace on earth through the vertical dimension of human existence of reaching downward to face and transform suffering, and reaching upward through self-transcendence and connections with the highest ideals of faith, hope, and love.

◆ Dr. Paul T. P. Wong

*"No tree, it is said, can grow to heaven
unless its roots reach down to hell."*

—C.G. Jung

Figure 6: The New Science of Flourishing through Suffering

Note. From *COVID-19 and existential positive psychology (PP2. 0): The new science of self-transcendence*, by P. T. P. Wong, C.-H. Mayer, & G. Arslan, 2021, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, Article 800308.

4 Yin-Yang Dialectics, Wu-Wei, and Paradoxical Interventions

On the contrary, EPP argues that one can never enjoy sustainable well-being through living a superficial life of merely pursuing pleasure and fortune (Wong, 2020; Wong & Roy, 2017). No matter how fortunate one is, one cannot avoid death, loneliness, sickness, and boredom in life (Wong, 2006; Yalom, 2020). Self-transcendence is the key in EPP to transform all the crucibles in human life into valuable nutrients for one's growth and to lead a meaningful life (Wong, 2016d). When one transcends from one's own misery to see a bigger picture in God's plan, to care for people surrounding

themselves, to work conscientiously pursuing and fulfilling one's life calling, to humbly learn the wisdom taught by one's suffering and discover the deeper meaning in the process, one will gradually be enlightened by the paradoxical truth in life (Li et al., 2019) – ending means a beginning of a new journey, failure is the preparation for success, suffering makes us compassionate, limited life and resources makes us cherish more, death helps us let go and focus on what is truly important, we actualize ourselves by losing ourselves and serving others, we can rediscover happiness through sorrow, we can find our strengths through vulnerabilities, our worst suffering can be our greatest blessing, we find healing in ourselves through helping others (Wong, 2013, 2016d, 2021b; Wong & Gonot-Schoupinsky, 2024). A virtuous life of living according to our integrity saves us from various inner conflicts and protects us from the endless bites of shame, guilt, and fear in our souls (Wong & Tomer, 2011). A meaningful life of discovering and pursuing our life calling and building meaningful relationships saves us from the painful struggle in boredom and loneliness, and fills our souls with God's spirit even when we fail (Wong, 2013, 2021b, 2022).

THE 7 PRINCIPLES OF SELF-TRANSCENDENCE

◆ DR. PAUL T. P. WONG

*The first five principles are proven
strategies of overcoming and
transcending suffering...*

1. Accept life as it is with gratitude.
2. Believe in creating a better future with help from Providence.
3. Commit to worthy goals and a life purpose.
4. Discover the hidden treasures by digging deeper.
5. Enjoy inner peace and harmony.
6. Love others as yourself.
7. Fear God and obey his commandments.

*...The last two principles are
the moral foundations of
caring and doing no harm.*

Figure 7: The Seven Principles of Self-transcendence

Note. From “*The best possible life in a troubled world: The seven principles of self-transcendence*”, by P. T. P. Wong, 2022, *Positive Psychology in Counseling and Education*.

Happiness and suffering, good and evil, are like the brightness in the daytime (Yang) and darkness in the nighttime (Yin), which coexist and supplement each other (Wong, 2013; Wong & Cowden, 2022). Just like there will not be light at sunrise without darkness after sunset, we will not feel happy if we never experience bitterness in life, we will not know goodness if there is no evil in this world. Happiness and suffering, fortune and calamity, positives and negatives, are like the twin brothers that coexist and dialectically interact with each other (McMahan et al., 2016). There are hidden dangers in the fortune, and there are also disguised blessings in the misfortune (Wong, 2016a). Everything is transient. The positives and negatives often transform into each other with unexpected and inevitable changes in one's life (Leontiev, 2023). One's advantages can blind oneself and lead to fatal failure, while one's vulnerabilities can be turned into one's great strength (Niemiec, 2023; Wong, 2013). To maintain sustainable well-being, we need to learn the life wisdom to stay humble in fortune and prepare for the hidden dangers that may happen later; we also need to be grateful even when we are struggling in suffering, and we must dig deeper to find the hidden treasure in calamity – the new opportunities brought by the crisis (Wong, 1999, 2013, 2015, 2016c, 2021b). EPP teaches us the dual approach and double vision – hope for the best while preparing for the worst in navigating the dynamic interplay between positives and negatives in life challenges (Deng et al., 2022; Lomas & Ivztan, 2016; Wong, 2013). On one side, we need to pursue our life purpose as our highest calling; on the other side, we also need to find ways to sustain our daily living and solve the current problems. It seems that these two contradict each other in reality, but we can never achieve sustainable flourishing if we only go after one extreme. We need to cultivate meaning and happiness as well as transform negative emotions and adversity (Wong, 2011a, 2011b). It takes the dual approach to flourish, so we must creatively find the Middle Way between the two opposites and discover the adaptive balance between positives and negatives (Gao et al., 2022; Lomas & Ivztan, 2016; Suh, 2020; Wong, 2015, 2016c). To achieve our goal, we need to have the life wisdom to know the timing – when to approach, when to disengage (Cowden et al., 2021). Between approaching and disengaging, we need Wu Wei (Pause—Stop—Think, Mindfulness Non-action) to reflect and rethink the timing and our strategy (Taylor, 1978; Wong & Cowden, 2022). Mindful meditation or other forms of reflection in solitude are helpful for us to detach from the single view of reality, gain a new perspective from God's view, and see the

bigger picture (Roberts & Ertubey, 2022; Suh, 2020; Wong, 2019b, 2024a; Xing & Sims, 2012).

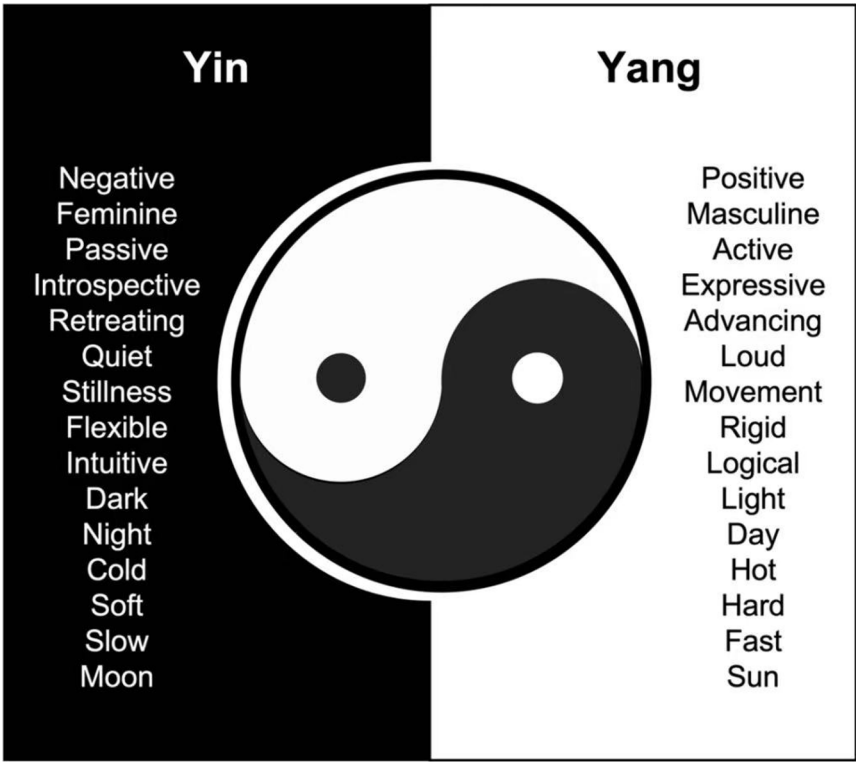


Figure 8: Yin-Yang Symbol and Dialectics

Note. From “Accelerating the science and practice of psychology beyond WEIRD biases: enriching the landscape through Asian psychology”, by P. T. P. Wong, 2022, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, Article 1054519.

Life is never perfect in this world. We always experience regret or imperfection in our lives, having something while losing/lacking something else, just like no one is perfect. However, if we accept our limitations, we can improve ourselves daily; if we are grateful for what we have instead of pitying what we do not have, we can make the best of what God gives us and create a better future (Jans-Beken, 2019; Wong, 2011a). EPP’s fundamental mission and unique contribution lie in the practical ways it offers for everyone to cultivate coping resources and appreciate what we have (Wong, 1993), whatever our circumstances are, while working for a better future to transcend and transform inescapable suffering into flourishing (Wong & Bowers, 2019). It is not only theoretical, but also educational in its strength-based and growth-oriented practice (Wong, 2010a, 2010b). EPP’s main message is that it is never too late to become what one is meant to be—it simply begins with taking personal responsibility to make meaningful changes, one step at a time (Wong, 2015, 2016c, 2019b, 2024b). No matter what life throws at us, we can turn it into the stepping stone for our success and the nutritious soil for our growth. As Mencius said: “When Heaven is about to confer a

great responsibility on man (天将降大任于斯人也), it will first fill his heart with suffering (必先苦其心志), toils his sinews and bones (劳其筋骨), exposes his body to hunger (饿其体肤), subjects him to extreme poverty (空乏其身), confounds his journey with setbacks and troubles (行拂乱其所为), so as to stimulate his alertness, toughen his nature (所以动心忍性), eventually bridging his incompetence gap and prepare him for the task (曾益其所不能) (Hinton, 2015). Every one of us, whether we are the therapist or the client, can transform our life story into a wounded healer’s heroic journey to embrace suffering as an opportunity for transformation and positively influence and inspire each other (Mayer et al., 2019).

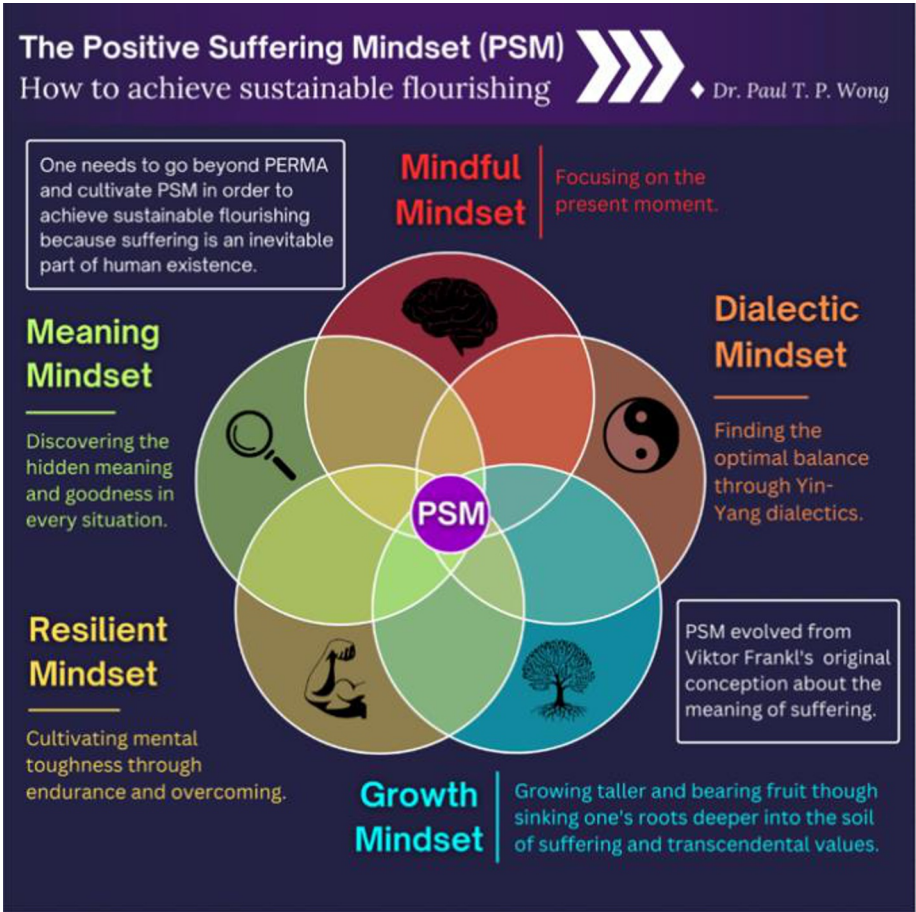


Figure 9: The Positive Suffering Mindset – How to Achieve Sustainable Flourishing
Note. From *Positive Suffering Mindset: The key to flourishing in turbulent times*, by P. T. P. Wong, 2024, *Positive Living Newsletter*.

5 Theoretical Integration with Other Mainstream Approaches

Rather than functioning in isolation, IMT is promising to be effectively integrated with other psychological approaches to enhance therapeutic efficacy and address the multifaceted nature of human experience.

While IMT and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) both focus on accepting inevitable suffering, finding meaning in adversities, and leading values-driven lives to develop one's psychological flexibility (Harris, 2006), EPP complements ACT's existential dimension, offering clients spiritual reflection tools for personal transformation (Wong, 2010a).

Besides, IMT encourages clients to explore deeper existential beliefs that shape their worldview, which align with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)'s strengths in modifying clients' maladaptive beliefs and thoughts (Wenzel, 2017). EPP expands the cognitive restructuring techniques to include existential themes, such as confronting mortality, embracing uncertainty, and redefining success through meaning-making (Wong, 2020).

IMT also supplements Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) and Narrative Therapy. They all emphasize the client's story, resilience, and identity construction (Etchison & Kleist, 2000; Reeves, 2015). Beyond that, IMT provides structured strategies such as life review and self-transcendence exercises to support re-authoring one's life through meaning reconstruction after trauma (Wong, 2019b).

Moreover, IMT's emphasis on self-transcendence and mature happiness resonates with Compassion-Focused Therapy (CFT)'s model of soothing system activation and shame reduction (Gilbert, 2009). IMT extends CFT by offering an existential scaffold to empower clients' therapeutic change through connecting to larger values and life goals, further enriching treatment for trauma and self-worth (Wong, 2010a).

Theoretical integration not only broadens the scope of EPP and IMT but also fosters an interdisciplinary and culturally responsive foundation for practice. This integrative potential positions EPP as a flexible, robust, and evolving framework in contemporary psychotherapy.

6 Critical Reflections and Future Directions

For better adaptation of EPP and IMT to this fast-changing world to serve a greater population, the following critical reflections are made, and future advancing directions are suggested.

Firstly, while EPP is supported by comprehensive theoretical frameworks and is well-applied in clinical practices, EPP and IMT must be tested empirically through mixed-methods and longitudinal-designed experiments (Wong, 2010a). For example, integrating positive psychology and existential positive psychology in the school-based educational intervention to enhance students' resilience and well-being is one promising path for future research (Wong & Wong, 2024).

Secondly, since the foundation of EPP and IMT is built upon spiritual values, researchers and therapists need to consider how IMT can be further adapted for non-

spiritual and secular populations, and how IMT practices can be harmonized with clients holding different worldviews and value systems (Helminiak, 2001).

Thirdly, a standardized IMT therapist training and operation system needs to be developed with standardized protocols and measurable outcome data. New psychometric tools integrating both quantitative and qualitative measures need to be designed to assess abstract concepts in EPP, such as self-transcendence, Wu-Wei, Yin-Yang dialectics, and spirituality (Wong, 2015).

Fourthly, with the rise of AI applications in various sectors of life, EPP principles can be embedded in digital interventions (e.g., chatbots, self-guided apps) to help people deal with AI-related anxieties, digital burnout, social isolation, and existential uncertainties (Ping, 2024). However, the applicability of EPP interventions to different populations across cultures, age groups, and mental health conditions still needs to be empirically tested. Tailored EPP interventions for helping specific populations deal with distinct developmental and environmental challenges require deeper exploration (Worth & Lyle, 2022).

Finally, theoretical advancements in EPP and broader applications of IMT would benefit from interdisciplinary collaboration across psychology, philosophy, neuroscience, education, and public health. Such synergy can foster more robust models of human flourishing that address both suffering and strength, positioning EPP and IMT not only as a therapy modality but also as a foundational framework for holistic well-being and human development (Mayer, 2022).

7 Conclusions

In conclusion, EPP aims to be a holistic and interdisciplinary school for helping people achieve sustainable well-being and flourishing in all seasons of life and cultures through living a meaningful life and pursuing worthy life goals, achieving one's potential through taking personal responsibilities and transcending oneself, and cultivating necessary coping resources to overcome and transform suffering into invaluable life assets (Wong, 2019b). Future studies to incorporate indigenous psychology and wisdom from different cultures are needed to further enrich the philosophies and toolkits of EPP. More empirical studies are also needed to further spread the messages and wisdom of EPP through creative channels, and further verify the effectiveness of IMT interventions in different cultural and age groups (Helminiak, 2001; Mayer, 2022; Ping, 2024; Wong, 2015; Wong & Wong, 2024; Worth & Lyle, 2022).

References

- Armstrong, L. L., Desson, S., St. John, E., & Watt, E. (2019). The DREAM program: developing resilience through emotions, attitudes, & meaning (gifted edition)—a second wave positive psychology approach. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 32(3-4), 307-332.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2018.1559798>

- Belloc, N. B., & Breslow, L. (1972). Relationship of physical health status and health practices. *Preventive medicine*, 1(3), 409-421. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0091-7435\(72\)90014-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/0091-7435(72)90014-X)
- Bowers, V. L. (2020). Transpersonal psychology and mature happiness in the context of counseling. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 33(4), 572-582. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2019.1634518>
- Carreno, D. F., Eisenbeck, N., Pérez-Escobar, J. A., & García-Montes, J. M. (2021). Inner harmony as an essential facet of well-being: a multinational study during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 648280. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.648280>
- Cohen, A., & Bai, H. (2023). Eastern wisdom, inner work, and aging: a contribution in second wave positive psychology. In *A Second-Wave Positive Psychology in Counselling Psychology* (pp. 202-217). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2019.1624253>
- Cowden, R. G., Mascaret, N., & Duckett, T. R. (2021). A person-centered approach to achievement goal orientations in competitive tennis players: Associations with motivation and mental toughness. *Journal of sport and health science*, 10(1), 73-81. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jshs.2018.10.001>
- Deng, K., Wong, Y. J., Li, J. P., & McCullough, K. M. (2022). Dialectical coping and well-being among Chinese college students: The mediating role of resilience. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 35(2), 363-380. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2020.1783641>
- Dhillon, S. K. (2020). Empirical Support of Wong's Self-Transcendence Spiral: Meaning in Life, Virtues and Happiness. *Wesleyan Journal of Research*, 13(56), 17-28. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349708313_Empirical_Support_of_Wong%27s_Self-transcendence_Spiral_Meaning_in_life_Virtues_and_Happiness
- Edwards, L., Rand, K. L., Lopez, S. J., & Snyder, C. (2007). Understanding hope: A review of measurement and construct validity research. In M. H. M. v. D. Anthony D. Ong (Ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Methods in Positive Psychology* (pp. 83-95). Oxford University Press. https://epublications.marquette.edu/edu_fac/407/
- Etchison, M., & Kleist, D. (2000). Review of Narrative Therapy: Research and Utility. *The Family Journal*, 8, 61-66. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1066480700081009>
- Frankl, V. E. (1985). *Man's search for meaning*. Simon and Schuster. https://www.nomanszone.org/pdf/Mans_Search_for_Meaning.pdf
- Gao, R., Huang, S., Yao, Y., Liu, X., Zhou, Y., Zhang, S., Cai, S., Zuo, H., Zhan, Z., & Mo, L. (2022). Understanding Zhongyong using a Zhongyong approach: re-examining the non-linear relationship between creativity and the Confucian doctrine of the mean. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 903411. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.903411>
- Gilbert, P. (2009). Introducing compassion-focused therapy. *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, 15, 199-208. <https://doi.org/10.1192/apt.bp.107.005264>
- Harris, R. (2006). Embracing your demons: An overview of acceptance and commitment therapy. *Psychotherapy in Australia*, 12(4), 70-76.

- Helminiak, D. (2001). Treating Spiritual Issues in Secular Psychotherapy. *Counseling and Values*, 45. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-007X.2001.tb00196.x>
- Hinton, D. (2015). *Mencius*. Catapult. [https://books.google.ca/books?hl=en&lr=&id=K98REAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA7&dq=Hinton,+D.+\(2015\).+Mencius.+Catapult.&ots=rbvR56ZVpy&sig=ro8-DMZcYS2yubdLnP3iWCHMk2M&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Hinton%2C%20D.%20\(2015\).%20Mencius.%20Catapult.&f=false](https://books.google.ca/books?hl=en&lr=&id=K98REAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA7&dq=Hinton,+D.+(2015).+Mencius.+Catapult.&ots=rbvR56ZVpy&sig=ro8-DMZcYS2yubdLnP3iWCHMk2M&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Hinton%2C%20D.%20(2015).%20Mencius.%20Catapult.&f=false)
- Ho, S., Cook, K. V., Chen, Z. J., Kurniati, N. M. T., Suwartono, C., Widayarni, N., Wong, P. T., & Cowden, R. G. (2022). Suffering, psychological distress, and well-being in Indonesia: A prospective cohort study. *Stress and Health*, 38(5), 879-890. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.3139>
- Jans-Beken, L. (2019). The dialectic dynamics between trait gratitude, subjective well-being, and psychopathology across 30 weeks. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 32(3-4), 502-515. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2019.1638228>
- Leontiev, D. (2023). The dialectics of aloneness: Positive vs. negative meaning and differential assessment. In *A Second-Wave Positive Psychology in Counselling Psychology* (pp. 278-292). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2019.1640186>
- Leung, M. M. (2023). Tragic optimism: an integrative meaning-centred approach to trauma treatment. In *A Second-Wave Positive Psychology in Counselling Psychology* (pp. 259-277). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2019.1633497>
- Li, P. J., Wong, Y. J., & Chao, R. C.-L. (2019). Happiness and meaning in life: Unique, differential, and indirect associations with mental health. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 32(3-4), 396-414. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2019.1604493>
- Lomas, T., & Ivtzan, I. (2016). Second wave positive psychology: Exploring the positive-negative dialectics of wellbeing. *Journal of happiness studies*, 17, 1753-1768. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-015-9668-y>
- Lomas, T., Waters, L., Williams, P., Oades, L. G., & Kern, M. L. (2021). Third wave positive psychology: Broadening towards complexity. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 16(5), 660-674. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2020.1805501>
- Mayer, C.-H. (2022). Positive and Existential Psychology in Times of Change: Towards Complex, Holistic, Systemic, and Integrative Perspectives. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19, 8433. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19148433>
- Mayer, C. H., Vanderheiden, E., & Oosthuizen, R. M. (2019). Transforming shame, guilt and anxiety through a salutogenic PP1. 0 and PP2. 0 counselling framework. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 32(3-4), 436-452. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2019.1609421>
- McMahan, E. A., Choi, I., Kwon, Y., Choi, J., Fuller, J., & Josh, P. (2016). Some implications of believing that happiness involves the absence of pain: Negative hedonic beliefs exacerbate the effects of stress on well-being. *Journal of happiness studies*, 17, 2569-2593. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-015-9707-8>

- Niemiec, R. M. (2023). Finding the golden mean: the overuse, underuse, and optimal use of character strengths. In *A second-wave positive psychology in counselling psychology* (pp. 183-201). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2019.1617674>
- Ping, Y. (2024). Experience in psychological counseling supported by artificial intelligence technology. *Technology and health care : official journal of the European Society for Engineering and Medicine*, 32. <https://doi.org/10.3233/THC-230809>
- Reeves, E. (2015). A synthesis of the literature on trauma-informed care. *Issues in mental health nursing*, 36(9), 698-709. <https://doi.org/10.3109/01612840.2015.1025319>
- Roberts, W., & Ertubey, C. (2022). Flow the wu-wei way: a thematic analysis of charity runners' experience of wu-wei in enhancing wellbeing and flourishing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 12(4). <https://doi.org/10.5502/ijw.v12i4.2129>
- Suh, J. (2020). The Confucian doctrine of the Mean, the optimality principle, and social harmony. *Society and Economy*, 42(1), 59-73. <https://doi.org/10.1556/204.2020.00004>
- Taylor, E. (1978). Asian interpretations: Transcending the stream of consciousness. In *The stream of consciousness: Scientific investigations into the flow of human experience* (pp. 31-54). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4684-2466-9_3
- Wenzel, A. (2017). Basic strategies of cognitive behavioral therapy. *Psychiatric Clinics*, 40(4), 597-609. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psc.2017.07.001>
- Wong, P. T., & Bowers, V. (2019). Mature happiness and global wellbeing in difficult times. In *Scientific concepts behind happiness, kindness, and empathy in contemporary society* (pp. 112-134). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-5918-4.ch006>
- Wong, P. T., & Tomer, A. (2011). Beyond terror and denial: The positive psychology of death acceptance. In (Vol. 35, pp. 99-106): Taylor & Francis.
- Wong, P. T. P. (1993). Effective management of life stress: The resource-congruence model. *Stress medicine*, 9(1), 51-60. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.2460090110>
- Wong, P. T. P. (1999). Towards an integrative model of meaning-centered counseling and therapy (MCCT). *The International Forum for Logotherapy*, 22(1), 48-55. https://www.meaning.ca/archives/archive/art_integrative-model-MCC_P_Wong.htm
- Wong, P. T. P. (2006). Existential and Humanistic Theories. In J. C. Thomas, D. L. Segal, & M. Hersen (Eds.), *Comprehensive Handbook of Personality and Psychopathology* (Vol. 1, pp. 192-211). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2005-14534-010>
- Wong, P. T. P. (2010a). Meaning Therapy: An Integrative and Positive Existential Psychotherapy. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 40(2), 85-93. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10879-009-9132-6>
- Wong, P. T. P. (2010b). What is existential positive psychology. *International Journal of Existential Psychology and Psychotherapy*, 3(1). <https://www.meaning.ca/ijcpp-article/vol3-no1/what-is-existential-positive-psychology/>

- Wong, P. T. P. (2011a). *Meaningful living group project as a grassroots positive mental health movement*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283504561_Meaningful_Living_Group_Project_as_a_Grassroots_Positive_Mental_Health_Movement
- Wong, P. T. P. (2011b). Positive Psychology 2.0: Towards a Balanced Interactive Model of the Good Life. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie Canadienne*, 52, 69-81. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022511>
- Wong, P. T. P. (2013). Toward a dual-systems model of what makes life worth living. In *The human quest for meaning* (pp. 3-22). Routledge. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/266868056_Toward_a_Dual-Systems_Model_of_What_Makes_Life_Worth_Living
- Wong, P. T. P. (2014). Viktor Frankl's meaning-seeking model and positive psychology. In A. Batthyany & P. Russo-Netzer (Eds.), *Meaning in positive and existential psychology* (pp. 149-184). Springer, New York, NY. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4939-0308-5_10
- Wong, P. T. P. (2015). Meaning therapy: Assessments and interventions. *Existential Analysis*, 26(1), 154-167. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2015-05162-012>
- Wong, P. T. P. (2016a). Chinese positive psychology revisited. *International Journal of Existential Psychology & Psychotherapy*, 6(1), 1-7. <https://www.meaning.ca/ijepp-article/vol6-no1/chinese-positive-psychology-revisited/>
- Wong, P. T. P. (2016b). Integrative meaning therapy: From logotherapy to existential positive interventions. *Clinical perspectives on meaning: Positive and existential psychotherapy*, 323-342. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-41397-6_16
- Wong, P. T. P. (2016c). Integrative meaning therapy: From logotherapy to existential positive interventions. In P. Russo-Netzer, S. Schulenberg, & A. Batthyany (Eds.), *Clinical perspectives on meaning: Positive and existential psychotherapy* (pp. 323-342). Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-41397-6_16
- Wong, P. T. P. (2016d). Self-transcendence: A paradoxical way to become your best. *International Journal of Existential Psychology and Psychotherapy*, 6(1), 9. <https://www.meaning.ca/ijepp-article/vol6-no1/self-transcendence-a-paradoxical-way-to-become-your-best/>
- Wong, P. T. P. (2019a). How I cracked nature's code for positive mental health: Introduction and my search for meaning. *Positive Living in Difficult Times*. <https://www.meaning.ca/article/how-i-cracked-natures-code-for-positive-mental-health-introduction-and-my-search-for-meaning/>
- Wong, P. T. P. (2019b). Second wave positive psychology's (PP 2.0) contribution to counselling psychology. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 32(3-4), 275-284. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2019.1671320>
- Wong, P. T. P. (2020). Existential positive psychology and integrative meaning therapy. *International Review of Psychiatry*, 32(7-8), 565-578. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540261.2020.1814703>
- Wong, P. T. P. (2021a). The Frankl cure for the 21st century: Why self-transcendence is the key to mental health and flourishing. *The International Forum for Logotherapy*, 41(2), 33-50.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/353021204> The Frankl Cure for the 21st Century Why Self-Transcendence is the Key to Mental Health and Flourishing Positive Psychology Goes to Hell and Back A Festival to Celebrate the Human Spirit FOLLOW US

- Wong, P. T. P. (2021b). What is existential positive psychology (PP 2.0)? Why is it necessary for mental health during the pandemic. *International Journal of Existential Positive Psychology*, 10(1), 1-16. <https://www.meaning.ca/product/what-is-existential-positive-psychology-pp-2-0-why-is-it-necessary-for-mental-health-during-the-pandemic/>
- Wong, P. T. P. (2022). The best possible life in a troubled world: The seven principles of self-transcendence. *Positive Psychology in Counseling and Education*, 1, 1-24. [https://doi.org/DOI:10.30099/PPCE.202206 \(1\).0001](https://doi.org/DOI:10.30099/PPCE.202206 (1).0001)
- Wong, P. T. P. (2023). Spiritual-existential wellbeing (SEW): The faith-hope-love model of mental health and total wellbeing. *International Journal of Existential Positive Psychology*, 12(1), 1-25. <https://www.meaning.ca/ijepp-article/vol12-no1/spiritual-existential-wellbeing/>
- Wong, P. T. P. (2024a). How to say Yes to Life in the Face of Suffering and Death. *Positive Living Newsletter* <https://www.meaning.ca/article/how-to-say-yes-to-life-in-the-face-of-suffering-and-death/>
- Wong, P. T. P. (2024b). Positive Suffering Mindset: The Key To Flourishing In Turbulent Times. *Positive Living Newsletter*. <https://www.meaning.ca/article/positive-suffering-mindset-the-key-to-flourishing-in-turbulent-times/>
- Wong, P. T. P., & Cowden, R. G. (2022). Accelerating the science and practice of psychology beyond WEIRD biases: Enriching the landscape through Asian psychology. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 1054519. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1054519>
- Wong, P. T. P., & Gonot-Schoupsinsky, F. (2024). Mental health and meaning: a positive autoethnographic case study of Paul Wong. *Mental Health and Social Inclusion*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MHSI-06-2024-0092>
- Wong, P. T. P., & Laird, D. (2024). The suffering hypothesis: Viktor Frankl's spiritual remedies and recent developments. In J. McLafferty, C.L., & J. Levinson (Eds.), *Logotherapy and Existential Analysis: Proceedings of the Viktor Frankl Institute Vienna* (Vol. 2, pp. 93-110). Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-48922-8_6
- Wong, P. T. P., Mayer, C.-H., & Arslan, G. (2021). COVID-19 and existential positive psychology (PP2. 0): The new science of self-transcendence. In (Vol. 12, pp. 800308): *Frontiers in Psychology*.
- Wong, P. T. P., & Roy, S. (2017). Critique of positive psychology and positive interventions 1. In *The Routledge international handbook of critical positive psychology* (pp. 142-160). Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315659794-12/critique-positive-psychology-positive-interventions-1-paul-wong-sandip-roy>

- Wong, P. T. P., & Wong, L. C. J. (2013). A meaning-centered approach to building youth resilience. In *The human quest for meaning* (pp. 585-617). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203146286>
- Wong, P. T. P., & Wong, L. C. J. (2024). Meaning-Centered Positive Education (PE 2.0): Based on the New Paradigm of Existential Positive Psychology (EPP). In G. Arslan & M. Yildirim (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive School Psychology: Evidence-Based Strategies for Youth Well-Being* (pp. 87-106). Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-54295-4_7
- Worth, P., & Lyle, L. (2022). Existential positive psychology interventions in and over time. In *Positive Psychology Across the Lifespan* (pp. 147-168). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003132530-9>
- Xing, Y., & Sims, D. (2012). Leadership, Daoist Wu Wei and reflexivity: Flow, self-protection and excuse in Chinese bank managers' leadership practice. *Management Learning*, 43(1), 97-112. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507611409659>
- Yalom, I. D. (2020). *Existential psychotherapy*. Basic books.
- Zhang, R. (2023). Quest for a pathway to human's good life in the Chinese cultural context. In *A Second-Wave Positive Psychology in Counselling Psychology* (pp. 246-258). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2019.1634002>

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

