

Meaning

Dr. Seligman (2011) described meaning as having a connection to something bigger than oneself. Character strengths associated with greater meaning in life include spirituality, gratitude, and appreciation of beauty (Wagner et al., 2019). Lin and Shek (2019) found that a sense of meaning in life fosters positive adolescent development, particularly by improving feelings of happiness and contentment and by reducing their engagement in risky behaviors. In the field of positive education, educators can help students develop greater meaning by encouraging them to “reflect and plan for ways to act with purpose, to think beyond themselves and contribute to higher pursuits” (Falecki et al, 2018, p.104). This involves teaching students to value “the benefits of serving a greater cause and engaging in activities to support that”(Norrish et al., 2013,p.152). The activities in this section have been proven to improve children and adolescents’ sense of meaning and purpose.

References:

- Falecki, D., Leach, C., & Green, S. (2018). PERMA-powered coaching. In S. Green, & S. Palmer (Eds.), *Positive psychology coaching in practice*. New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315716169>.
- Lin, L., Shek, D.T.L. (2019). The influence of meaning in life on adolescents’ hedonic well-being and risk behaviour: Implications for social work. *The British Journal of Social Work*,49(1), 5–24.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcy029>
- Norrish, J. M., Williams, P.,O’Connor, M., & Robinson, J. (2013). An applied framework for positive education. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 3(2), 147-161.
<https://www.internationaljournalofwellbeing.org/index.php/ijow/article/view/250>
- Seligman, M. (2011). *Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-being*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Wagner, L., Gander, F., Proyer, R., & Ruch, W. (2019). Character strengths and PERMA: Investigating the relationship of character strengths with a multidimensional framework of wellbeing. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-018-9695-z>

Educating Students about Benefit Appraisals
Gratitude Letters
Savoring Strategies
Taking in the Good (HEAL)
Mental Time Travel
Brief Mindfulness Activities

Mindful Bell
Mindful Breathing
Body Scan Relaxation
Mindful Walking/Movement
Five Senses Mindfulness
Mindful Photography
Mindful Self-Compassion



This content is provided to you freely by EdTech Books.

Access it online or download it at https://edtechbooks.org/addressing_wellbeing/meaning.