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In the preface to this volume Martin Seligman notes that ‘the scientific psychological literature of the 20th century is littered with well-done analytic science that applied to nothing at all, and this is a fate positive psychology must avoid.’ Alex Linley and Stephen Joseph in their volume *Positive Psychology Practice* have taken an important step in diverting positive psychology from this undesirable fate. They have edited a compendium of scholarly chapters on practical applications of the science of positive psychology to important social issues.

This 42 chapter reference work runs to 770 pages. It is divided into 13 sections, each of which contains 1-5 chapters. The opening and closing sections offer an introduction and meta-theoretical perspective on the application of positive psychology in diverse practice contexts. The remaining 11 sections cover practice areas of concern to positive psychology, specifically: historical foundations of positive psychology, values, lifestyle, teaching and learning, work contexts, clinical-health contexts, clinical applications, character strengths, life-span development, community contexts, and policy development. From such a diverse list, it is clear that this is a volume which covers a broad landscape. Throughout the volume contributors have linked coherent theory and rigorous research to well informed practice in a way that offers a springboard for researchers and practitioners to develop positive psychology science and practice into the next decade. The list of contributors to *Positive Psychology in Practice* reflect the growing international status of this scientific endeavour as a world wide movement, rather than an exclusively North American preoccupation. The book is edited by two psychologists based in the UK. Contributors to this edited book come from 9 countries. There are 58 from the USA, 11 from the UK, 4 from Canada, 4 from Italy, 3 from Israel, 2

from Norway and one each from Germany, the Netherlands and New Zealand.

This book contains something for everyone. Kirk Warren Brown and Richard Ryan offer an interesting discussion of the links between self-determination theory and mindfulness as a way of enhancing self-regulation. Kennon Sheldon and Sonya Lyumbomirsky's thoughtful chapter on how to achieve sustainable happiness describes some interesting empirical studies of the effects of positive psychology interventions: carrying out random acts of kindness and counting your blessings. Ilona Bontewell and Philip Zimbardo's chapter on achieving a balanced time-perspective as a route to happiness offers good suggestions for important clinical research. Alina Reznitskaya and Robert Sternberg's chapter on the 'Teaching for Wisdom' programme describes how Sternberg's balance theory of wisdom is being applied to helping students learn to make wise judgments. Nick Baylis describes a course on positive psychology in which students engage in experiential exercises as well as didactic lectures to learn positive psychology. Niro Sivanthan and colleagues chapter on Transformational Leadership, Timothy Hodges and Donald Clifton's chapter on Strengths-based Development, and Jane Henry's chapter on the Positive and Creative Organization show how positive psychology can be applied within an occupational context. In the area of clinical psychology James Maddaus, Rick Snyder and Shane Lopez show how positive psychology offers an alternative to the illness ideology of clinical psychology. Mark Hubble and Scott Miller present a strong empirically-based argument for the major role of client characteristics and common factors in psychotherapy (as an alternative to the current drive for empirically supported therapies). Christopher Peterson and Nansook Park provide a good overview of the Values in Action classification of character strengths research programme. Peter Salovey, David Caruso and John Mayer offer a good empirical update on their approach to assessing emotional intelligence. In the developmental field, George Vaillant presents an

empirically-based account of positive aging. In the area of community integration, Tony Ward and Ruth Mann describe the Good Life Model for rehabilitating sex offenders and Frank Fincham and Todd Kashdan present their research on facilitating forgiveness. In the area of community psychology Ruut Veenhoven uses international survey data to explore the possibility of making happiness a public policy aim. Felicia Huppert offers a useful overview of selected empirical studies of community-based interventions to promote well-being. This whistle-stop tour of the contents of the volume, underlines how widely the editors cast their net in assembling this work. Inevitably, there is considerable variation in the quality of the chapters and their relative emphasis on theory, research and practice. However, overall, for an edited volume a reasonable degree of consistency has been achieved.

Positive Psychology in Practice will be of interest to professionals, researchers and postgraduates in clinical, health, counselling, occupational and community psychology. Selected chapters could be recommended in advanced undergraduate courses in these areas or in the growing number of positive psychology courses being offered by many universities around the world. This is a major reference work and like the Handbook of Positive Psychology (Snyder & Lopez, 2002), Positive Psychology Assessment (Lopez & Snyder, 2003), and Character Strengths and Virtues (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) it should be in the psychology section of every good university library.

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References

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