

# Chapter 18

## Region of Pacific Rim (Australia and New Zealand)

Yilma Woldgabreal

### Positive Psychology in Australia and New Zealand

Before outlining the historical background and current state of positive psychology in Australia and New Zealand, a brief mention of similarities and differences between the two nations would seem appropriate. Arguably, no two countries have more commonalities and stronger bond than Australia and New Zealand. Both nations were established by Britain in the last three centuries and built on the invasion of native Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia, and the Maori people and Pacific Islanders in New Zealand. The various colonies which made the modern day Australia and New Zealand stayed under the British administration for a very long time, beginning with the arrival of the first fleet from England to Australia in 1788 (Denoon et al., 2000). However, with the steadily increasing number of settlers coupled with continued progress in the social, economic and political structures of the then colonies, the colonial masters gradually allowed increased autonomy for self-administration. This eventually gave rise to the 1901 Australian Federation consisting of the six colonies (now states). New Zealand was part of the initial talks, however, decided not to join the federation. Interestingly, Section 6 of the Australian Constitution (Definitions) still leaves the door open for New Zealand:

The States shall mean such of the colonies of New South Wales, **New Zealand**, Queensland, Tasmania, Victoria, Western Australia, and South Australia, including the northern territory of South Australia, as for the time being are parts of the Commonwealth, and such colonies or territories as may be admitted into or established by the Commonwealth as States; and

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each of such parts of the Commonwealth shall be called a State (Australasian Legal Information Institute, 2016).

Despite the early separation, Australia and New Zealand have maintained comprehensive and close bilateral relationships across several domains, including defence, economic, political and social engagements. For example, the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZC) fought side-by-side on the battlefield at Gallipoli during World War I, which to this day remains to be one of the most celebrated historical ties between the two nations (Erickson, 2015). They have also jointly owned important business activities and ventured together on a number of fronts. Examples of these include the ANZ Banking groups, Australian and New Zealand Chamber of Commerce, Australian and New Zealand Disaster and Emergency Management, Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, Australian and New Zealand Institute of Criminology, *Australian and New Zealand Medical Journal*, and *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*. The list for common initiatives is simply endless and reflects the shared values and bonds between the two countries. Most importantly, the 1973 Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangements between Australia and New Zealand allowed their citizens to visit, live and work in either county without restrictions (Scollay et al., 2011). To date, hundreds of thousands of Australians and New Zealanders cross the Tasman each year as tourists, for work and/or to visit relatives. According to a recent Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimate, over 647,000 New Zealand citizens currently live in Australia, while there are around 65,000 Australians in New Zealand (ABS, 2015).

It is also important to note that despite the strong connection and common grounds, the two countries have both historical and present circumstances that uniquely define them from each other. Some of these are summarised in Table 18.1.

In spite of these unique defining circumstances, it is indeed fair to say that Australia and New Zealand have more similarities than differences. As noted earlier, individuals, groups and institutions of both nations frequently embark upon common ventures and adopt similar practices. This has been typically the case with the introduction of positive psychology since the movement began in the United States in the late 1990s. In Australia, many tertiary institutions now offer courses specifically designed to advance the science of positive psychology. Examples include the Master of Applied Positive Psychology at the University of Melbourne, the Master of Science in Coaching Psychology (applied positive psychology) at the University of Sydney, and the Institute of Positive Psychology and Education branch at the Australian Catholic University. Australia also inaugurated the Australian Positive Psychology and Well-being Conference in 2009, which has since been held biennially. The purpose of this conference has been to bring together professionals, academics and students with an interest in positive psychology, and to share experiences, ideas and encourage collaboration in research and practices. At the same time, there is a growing interest and support for positive interventions by government and non-government sectors such as schools, health and employment agencies (Vella-Brodrick, 2011).

**Table 18.1** Glimpses of Australia vs. New Zealand

	Australia	New Zealand
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founded based on penal colonies of British from 1788 to 1868, with more than 160,000 convicts transported from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales during this period. These convicts were eventually joined by free settlers from Britain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founded based on religious colony, with British missionaries sent to convert Maori people to Christianity from 1814</li> </ul>
Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24,413,426 (October, 2016)</li> <li>• World population rank 53rd</li> <li>• Urban 89.3%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4,576,542 (October, 2016)</li> <li>• World population rank 127th</li> <li>• Urban 87.6%</li> </ul>
Indigenous population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders populations are multi-cultural and diverse with estimated 250 tribal languages</li> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders cultures lack influence in the Australian society</li> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have lower participation rate in education and labour market, experience significant poverty, overrepresented in the criminal justice system, and suffer from poor health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maori population is relatively mono-cultural and more prominent (e.g., Maori is an official language of New Zealand, taught in schools, used in government departments and broadcasted on television)</li> <li>• New Zealand has a Maori monarch and a Maori war dance for national ceremonial events (e.g., rugby match)</li> <li>• Maori people also overrepresented in the criminal justice system, but have better participation rate in the job market and education systems</li> </ul>
Racial groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European 71.7%, Chinese 3.1%, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders 3%, Indian 1.4%, Greek 1.4%, Dutch 1.2%, and other 18.2%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European 71.2%, Maori 14.1%, Asian 11.3%, Pacific peoples 7.6%, and other 8.1%</li> </ul>
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English 76.8% (official), Mandarin 1.6%, Italian 1.4%, Arabic 1.3%, Greek 1.2%, Cantonese 1.2%, Vietnamese 1.1%, and other 15.4%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English 89.8% (de facto official), Maori 3.5% (de jure official), Samoan 2%, Hindi 1.6%, French 1.2%, Northern Chinese 1.2%, Yue 1%, and other 20.5%</li> </ul>
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desert, scorched earth and leached soils, which can be difficult for farmers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High and reliable rainfall, nutrient rich soils, but winters can be tough as well as occasional earthquakes</li> </ul>
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GDP per capita US\$54,717</li> <li>• Agriculture 3.7%</li> <li>• Industry 28.9%</li> <li>• Services 67.4%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GDP per capita US\$36,463</li> <li>• Agriculture 4.2%</li> <li>• Industry 26.8%</li> <li>• Services 69%</li> </ul>
Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voting is compulsory</li> <li>• Preferential voting system in which candidates are ranked. This results in two major parties (i.e., Labour and Liberal) being dominant and alternating in power</li> <li>• Australia has a senate</li> <li>• Australia does not have seats reserved for its indigenous people (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voting is not compulsory</li> <li>• Proportional voting system. This results in some dominant parties, but also representation of minorities (e.g., business lobbies, environmentalists) are always ensured</li> <li>• New Zealand does not have a senate</li> <li>• New Zealand has special seats reserved for its native Maori people</li> </ul>

In New Zealand, positive psychology evolved in similar ways. It is currently being taught as part of an undergraduate psychology course at the Auckland University and Victoria University of Wellington (Jarden & Jarden, 2016). In particular, positive psychology has been promoted widely since the establishment of the New Zealand Association of Positive Psychology (NZAPP) in 2008. The mission of NZAPP is to promote the science and practice of positive psychology and its research-based applications, and to foster communication and collaboration among researchers, practitioners, teachers, students, and across disciplines, who are interested in positive psychology (NZAPP, 2016). In direct practice, positive psychology has attracted interest from peak national bodies in New Zealand, including the Treasury, Ministry of Education and Mental Health Foundation in relation to the formulation of policies and approaches that seek to increase resilience and improve wellbeing in the general community (Jarden, 2016).

Clearly, positive psychology is making great strides and has been very well received in Australia and New Zealand. This is directly attributed to the work of many researchers and scholars who have continued to explore the field with keen interest in developing and finding out strengths, and designing approaches in which institutions or organisations can use these strengths to promote optimal human functioning. The next section introduces some of these contributors and examples of their work.

## **Major Positive Psychologists**

Some of the most influential positive psychologists in Australia and New Zealand are presented in Table 18.2. Note that this list is not exclusive and that there are many other positive psychologists who have made significant contributions to the ongoing advancement of positive psychology in both countries. Readers interested in exploring further about the work of other scholars are encouraged to refer to the additional resources provided in Table 18.3 at the end of this chapter. For now, only the work of five positive psychologists (Table 18.2) is described in detail due to limited space. All of these selected positive psychologists provided permission for their biographies and contributions to be included in this chapter.

### ***Dianne Vella-Brodrick (Australia)***

Dianne Vella-Brodrick (PhD) is an Associate Professor, Deputy Director and Head of Research at the Centre for Positive Psychology at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne. She is the inaugural Director of the Master of Applied Positive Psychology program (2013–2015) and is a registered psychologist and a Member of the Australian Psychological Society and College of Health Psychologists. She founded the Positive Psychology Network in Australia and is

**Table 18.2** Top positive psychology researchers/influencers in the region of Pacific Rim

Name	Area of research	Institute	Country	Website
Dianne Vella-Brodrick	Positive education and workplace well-being	University of Melbourne	Australia	<a href="http://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/display/person127276">http://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/display/person127276</a>
Suzy Green	Applied positive psychology in the education, corporate and community sectors	The Positivity Institute	Australia	<a href="http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/public/research/meetourresearchers/SuzyGreen.cfm">http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/public/research/meetourresearchers/SuzyGreen.cfm</a>
Lindsay Oades	Applications of wellbeing in workplaces, health and education systems	University of Melbourne	Australia	<a href="http://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/display/person697284">http://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/display/person697284</a>
Aaron Jarden	Flourishing, well-being	Auckland University of Technology	New Zealand	<a href="http://www.aaronjarden.com/">http://www.aaronjarden.com/</a>
Maree Roche	Positive psychology at work, leadership and Maori leadership models	The University of Waikato	New Zealand	<a href="http://www.waikato.ac.nz/fass/about/staff/mroche">http://www.waikato.ac.nz/fass/about/staff/mroche</a>

Secretary of the International Positive Psychology Association and Chair of the IPPA Membership Committee. Vella-Brodrick is an Editor in Chief of the *Psychology of Well-Being: Theory, Research and Practice* journal and has been a Director of the 2008, 2010 and 2014 Australian Positive Psychology and Well-being Conferences. She has published widely, and presents regularly at conferences. She serves on numerous research advisory boards, regularly reviews scientific papers for leading journals and has received around \$2.5 million funding for her world class research.

Vella-Brodrick's research interests include the development and evaluation of well-being programs, particularly in the areas of positive education and workplace well-being. She specialises in innovative mixed method designs which utilize the latest technology, experience sampling method and biological indices of well-being. Her research has a special focus on young people. She also integrates ethical and professional practice issues in much of her work and is currently the Ethics Chairperson at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education. Vella-Brodrick also has extensive experience with scale development and psychometric testing having been involved in the development of numerous well-being scales including the Wuzzup app and Wellbeing Profiler.

While Vella-Brodrick's contribution to positive psychology is diverse, she has a particular interest in evaluation and measurement development to examine the impacts of positive psychology interventions on mental health and well-being outcomes for young people. For example, one of her collaborative studies examined the efficacy of internet-based interventions using a randomized controlled trial design which compared three conditions: a strengths intervention, a problem solving

**Table 18.3** Resources for readers

Contact details	Area of research	Websites
<p>Anthony Grant, Associate Professor of Psychology The University of Sydney Faculty of Science Office Level 2, Carslaw Building (F07) NSW 2006, Australia Phone: +61 2 9351 6792, Fax: +61 2 9036 5223, Mobile_phone:+61 413 747493 Email: anthony.grant@sydney.edu.au</p>	<p>Coaching psychology, goal attainment</p>	<p><a href="http://sydney.edu.au/science/people/anthony.grant.php">http://sydney.edu.au/science/people/anthony.grant.php</a> <a href="http://www.instituteofcoaching.org/anthony-grant-phd">http://www.instituteofcoaching.org/anthony-grant-phd</a></p>
<p>Dianne Vella-Brodrick, Associate Professor The University of Melbourne Level 5, 161 Barry Street The University of Melbourne Parkville 3010 VIC Australia Phone: +61 3 8344 0254 Email: dianne.Vella-Brodrick@unimelb.edu.au</p>	<p>Positive education and Workplace well-being</p>	<p><a href="http://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/display/person127276">http://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/display/person127276</a></p>
<p>Alison Ogier-Price, M.A Working Well in the Work Place Program Manager PO Box 10051, Dominion Road Auckland 1446, New Zealand Phone: 09 623 4812 Email: info@mentalhealth.org.nz</p>	<p>Application of positive mental health to organisations, groups and individuals</p>	<p><a href="http://www.workingwell.co.nz/index.php/about-working-well/meet-the-team/310-alison-ogier-price.html">http://www.workingwell.co.nz/index.php/about-working-well/meet-the-team/310-alison-ogier-price.html</a></p>
<p>Aaron Jarden, Ph.D. Auckland University of Technology 55 Wellesley St E, Auckland, 1010, New Zealand Phone: +64 21 300935 Email: aaron.jarden@aut.ac.nz</p>	<p>Flourishing, well-being</p>	<p><a href="http://www.aut.ac.nz/profiles/aaron-jarden">http://www.aut.ac.nz/profiles/aaron-jarden</a> <a href="http://www.aaronjarden.com/">http://www.aaronjarden.com/</a> <a href="https://www.workonwellbeing.com/about-wow.php">https://www.workonwellbeing.com/about-wow.php</a> <a href="https://www.awesomeschools.com/about-us.php">https://www.awesomeschools.com/about-us.php</a></p>
<p>Erica Chadwick, Ph.D. <i>Mindbranch</i> Founding Director PO Box 33468, Petone, Lower Hutt, NZ, 5046 Phone: +64 21 941 679 Email: erica@mindbranch.co.nz</p>	<p>Human development, flourishing and savouring</p>	<p><a href="http://mindbranch.co.nz/about-us/">http://mindbranch.co.nz/about-us/</a> <a href="http://maustif6.wixsite.com/manukahealthcentre/clinical-psychology">http://maustif6.wixsite.com/manukahealthcentre/clinical-psychology</a></p>
<p>Lea Waters, Professor of Psychology The University of Melbourne Level 5, 161 Barry Street The University of Melbourne Parkville 3010 VIC Australia Phone: +(61 3) 8344 0050 Email: l.waters@unimelb.edu.au</p>	<p>Positive psychology, positive education, positive organisations and positive parenting</p>	<p><a href="http://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/display/person2778">http://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/display/person2778</a> <a href="http://www.leawaters.com/about.html">http://www.leawaters.com/about.html</a> <a href="http://www.leawaters.com/">http://www.leawaters.com/</a></p>

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**Table 18.3** (continued)

Contact details	Area of research	Websites
Tamlin Conner, Ph.D. University of Otago, Department of Psychology PO Box 56, Dunedin 9054, New Zealand Phone: 64 3 479 7624 Email: tconner@psy.otago.ac.nz	Happiness and well-being; health	<a href="http://www.otago.ac.nz/psychology/research/otago028080.html">http://www.otago.ac.nz/psychology/research/otago028080.html</a> <a href="http://www.otago.ac.nz/psychology/staff/tamlinconner.html">http://www.otago.ac.nz/psychology/staff/tamlinconner.html</a>
Maree Roche, Ph.D. The University of Waikato Gate 1 Knighton Road Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240, New Zealand Phone: +64 7 856 2889 Email: mroche@waikato.ac.nz	Positive psychology at work, leadership and Maori leadership models	<a href="http://www.waikato.ac.nz/fass/about/staff/mroche">http://www.waikato.ac.nz/fass/about/staff/mroche</a>
Suzy Green, Ph.D. The Positivity Institute Founder and CEO Level 57 MLC Centre, 19-29 Martin Place Sydney NSW 2000, Australia Phone: +61 2 9223 4981 Email: suzy@thepositivityinstitute.com.au	Applied positive psychology in the education, corporate and community sectors	<a href="http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/public/research/meetourresearchers/SuzyGreen.cfm">http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/public/research/meetourresearchers/SuzyGreen.cfm</a> <a href="http://www.thepositivityinstitute.com.au/about-us">http://www.thepositivityinstitute.com.au/about-us</a>
Mathew White, Associate Professor of Psychology The University of Melbourne Level 5, 161 Barry Street The University of Melbourne Parkville 3010 VIC Australia Phone: +(61 3) 9035 5511 Email: whitem@unimelb.edu.au	Wellbeing and positive education	<a href="http://www.positivepsychologyandwellbeing.com/mathew-white">http://www.positivepsychologyandwellbeing.com/mathew-white</a>
Kate Lemerle, Ph.D. Institute for Applied Positive Psychology PO Box 4045, Springfield QLD 4300, Australia Phone: +(61 7) 3555 7575 Email: pospsych13@iinet.net.au	Wellbeing, and resilience from a cross-cultural perspective	<a href="http://appliedpospsych.com/dr-kate-lemerle/">http://appliedpospsych.com/dr-kate-lemerle/</a>
Lucy Hone, Ph.D. 100% Project P.O. Box 19800 Woolston, Christchurch 8241, New Zealand Phone: 021 999 376 Email: nfo@100percentproject.co.nz	Wellbeing and resilience	<a href="http://www.100percentproject.co.nz/lucy-hone">http://www.100percentproject.co.nz/lucy-hone</a>
Sue Langley, M.A. Founder and CEO, Langley Group	Positive workplaces, leaders and teams	<a href="http://suelangley.com/sue-langley/">http://suelangley.com/sue-langley/</a>

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**Table 18.3** (continued)

Contact details	Area of research	Websites
of Companies 245 Carrington Road, Coogee NSW 2034, Australia Phone: +61 2 9399 398 Email: jacqui@langleygroup.com.au		<a href="http://wellbeingaustralia.com.au/wba/positive-psychology-and-emotional-intelligence-training/">http://wellbeingaustralia.com.au/wba/positive-psychology-and-emotional-intelligence-training/</a>
Denise Quinlan, Ph.D. The Langley Group Institute 42 William Street, Balaclava VIC 3183, Australia Phone: +61 3 9005 8189 Email: denise@drdenisequinlan.com	Resilience and well-being in education	<a href="http://langleygroupinstitute.com/about/denise-quinlan/">http://langleygroupinstitute.com/about/denise-quinlan/</a> <a href="http://www.drdenisequinlan.com/">http://www.drdenisequinlan.com/</a>
Joseph Ciarrochi, Professor of Psychology Institute for Positive Psychology & Education Australian Catholic University 25A Barker Road Strathfield NSW 2135 Australia Phone: +61 2 9701 4626 Email: Joseph.Ciarrochi@acu.edu.au	Resilience, mindfulness-based approaches that promote social, emotional, and physical well-being	<a href="http://ippe.acu.edu.au/people/professor-joseph-ciarrochi/">http://ippe.acu.edu.au/people/professor-joseph-ciarrochi/</a>
Paula Robinson, Ph.D. Positive Psychology Institute Suites 416 & 417 St James Trust Building 183 Elizabeth St, Sydney NSW 2000, Australia Phone: +61 2 9264 3474 Email: info@positivepsychologyinstitute.com.au	Wellbeing and Mental Fitness for Individuals, Organisations, Schools & the Community	<a href="http://www.positivepsychologyinstitute.com.au/paula_robinson.html">http://www.positivepsychologyinstitute.com.au/paula_robinson.html</a>
Lindsay Oades, Associate Professor of Psychology The University of Melbourne Level 5, 161 Barry Street The University of Melbourne Parkville 3010 VIC Australia Phone: +61 383440170 Email: lindsay.oades@unimelb.edu.au	Applications of wellbeing in workplaces, health and education systems	<a href="http://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/display/person697284">http://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/display/person697284</a>
Fiona Howard, M.A. The University of Auckland Amaki Building 721 - Bldg 721, Level 3, Room 307 Tamaki Campus Gate 1, 261 Morrin Rd, St Johns Auckland 1072, New Zealand	Well-being in clinical practice	<a href="https://www.psych.auckland.ac.nz/people/f-howard">https://www.psych.auckland.ac.nz/people/f-howard</a>

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**Table 18.3** (continued)

Contact details	Area of research	Websites
Phone: +64 9 923 8420 Email: f.howard@auckland.ac.nz		
Elizabeth Peterson, Ph.D. The University of Auckland Human Sciences Building - East - Bldg 201E Level 6, Room 614, 10 Symonds St Auckland 1010, New Zealand Phone: +64 9 923 9693 Email: e.peterson@auckland. ac.nz	Wellbeing, learning and educational outcome	<a href="https://www.psych.auckland.ac.nz/people/e-peterson">https://www.psych.auckland.ac.nz/people/e-peterson</a>
The Wellbeing and Resilience Centre of South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI) PO Box 11060, Adelaide 5001, South Australia Phone: +61 8 8128 4723 Email: wellbeing@SAHMRI.com	The SAHMRI Wellbeing and Resilience Centre was established based on Dr Martin Seligman's guidance and his <b>PERMA</b> model (Positive Emotion, Engage- ment, Relationships, Meaning and Accom- plishment). It also involves promotion of physical activities, nutrition, sleep and optimism, to measure and build wellbeing	<a href="http://www.wellbeingandresilience.com/">http://www.wellbeingandresilience.com/</a> <a href="https://www.sahmri.org/">https://www.sahmri.org/</a>
Australian Positive Psychology Association (APPA)	The APPA is an Australian on-line net- work of people inter- ested in Positive Psychology. At present there are no fees or subscriptions. APPA organizes national and international confer- ences designed to advance positive psychology	<a href="http://psychology-resources.org/explore-psychology/association-organisation-information/country-information/australia/australian-positive-psychology-association-appa/">http://psychology-resources.org/explore-psychology/association-organisation-information/country-information/australia/australian-positive-psychology-association-appa/</a>
The New Zealand Association of Positive Psychology (NZAPP)	The NZAPP promotes the science and practice of positive psychology and the application of research-based positive programs and interventions	<a href="http://www.positivepsychology.org.nz/">http://www.positivepsychology.org.nz/</a>
The International Journal of Wellbeing (IJW)	The IJW was launched in New Zealand in	

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**Table 18.3** (continued)

Contact details	Area of research	Websites
	2011 and promotes interdisciplinary research on wellbeing. It is an open access publication for academic research. The content is free for everyone to access, and there are no submission or publication fees for authors	<a href="http://www.internationaljournalofwellbeing.org/index.php/ijow">http://www.internationaljournalofwellbeing.org/index.php/ijow</a>
Langley Group Companies	The Langley Group is a leading consulting and people development company. It operates in Australia and New Zealand across various locations. Services are based on positive psychology, emotional intelligence and neuroscience to build positive organisations and leaders and get the best from people	<a href="http://langleygroup.com.au/">http://langleygroup.com.au/</a> <a href="http://langleygroupinstitute.com/diploma-of-positive-psychology-and-wellbeing-australia/">http://langleygroupinstitute.com/diploma-of-positive-psychology-and-wellbeing-australia/</a> <a href="http://langleygroupinstitute.com/diploma-of-positive-psychology-and-wellbeing-new-zealand/">http://langleygroupinstitute.com/diploma-of-positive-psychology-and-wellbeing-new-zealand/</a>
Positive Education Schools Association (PESA)	PESA is a nationally incorporated association that fosters the implementation and development of positive psychology and its applications in education settings	<a href="https://www.pesa.edu.au/">https://www.pesa.edu.au/</a>

intervention and a placebo control group (Mitchell et al., 2009). Participants completed measures of well-being and mental illness before and after interventions, and in a 3-month follow-up. Findings of this study revealed heightened level of well-being among those who completed the strengths-based intervention program compared to the other groups at post-program assessment phase, overall suggesting the role of positive intervention in promoting well-being via a self-guided internet intervention.

More recently, Vella-Brodrick and her team conducted a series of large scale evaluation studies to examine the effectiveness of the Positive Education program implemented by the Geelong Grammar School (GGS) in Melbourne (Vella-Brodrick et al., 2014, 2015). GGS has been using the PERMA model of positive psychology interventions by Seligman (2002) since the late 2000s. PERMA seeks to promote

positive emotions, engaged life, positive relationships, meaningful life, and accomplishment. GGS adopted the PERMA model with dedicated lessons being integrated in the school curriculum to teach emotional regulation, pro-social behaviors, realistic optimism, identification of character strengths and finding life meaning. The aim of this positive education is to mitigate life stressors while building resilience and fostering a sense of well-being among students. The evaluation studies by Vella-Brodrick and colleagues revealed that positive education can indeed protect young people from declining mental health as they progress through middle and senior school, and can enhance elements of well-being relating to hope, life satisfaction, positive affect, engagement and meaning.

With respect to measurement development, Vella-Brodrick and colleagues recently developed a new app called ‘Wuzzup’ as part of a comprehensive evaluation of programs run by the Reach Foundation, a national youth-led or peer support scheme designed to improve young people’s well-being by promoting a range of positive psychological states such as positive emotions, life satisfaction, resilience, meaning engagement, positive relationships, autonomy, competence and strength awareness (Chin et al., 2016). The app was designed to store young people’s momentary experiential encounters by asking them to respond to a range of pre-programmed questions about their affects, naturally occurring social and environmental events (positive or negative), source of triggers, and their subjective evaluation of those experiences. The idea behind this technologically innovative experiential sampling method is to capture real-time feelings, thoughts and actions in response to the occurrence of everyday events. Vella-Brodrick and colleagues utilized the ‘Wuzzup’ app to examine the real-time experiences of female and male young people (between the ages of 13 and 15 years) who participated in the Reach Foundation programs. The app was programmed to randomly prompt participants to sample their experiences based on set questions twice each day—once in the morning, and once in the afternoon for 7 days. The app allows participants to choose from a drop-down list of strategies in response to events experienced. An example of a positive strategy for an event experienced is “*I cherished the moment*”; and a negative strategy is “*I tried to avoid the situation*”. Data were then downloaded from the returned research iPods and analysed. The result demonstrated adequate internal reliability and construct validity of the ‘Wuzzup’ app as a measure of momentary affect and activation states of young people’s positive and negative experiences.

Vella-Brodrick is currently working on rigorous methodological approaches for positive psychology research. She has frequently emphasised that positive psychology has made great strides in developing intervention programs across several domains such as workplaces, schools and sports, however, evaluation studies in these areas have not been able to keep up with the pace at which many of these noble initiatives have evolved (Jarden et al., 2013). For Vella-Brodrick, evaluation studies should focus on the whole measurement approach and should attempt to integrate the biopsychosocial aspects of well-being. This means that interventions should be aimed at achieving not just short-term effects, but also long-term effects to permeate at the deeper biopsychosocial levels that will create more lasting impact on

individuals, groups and institutions. Essentially, she advocates for a multi-method approach for the identification of thoughts and feelings, psychobiological factors and behavioral measures of well-being. To this end, her current work primarily focuses on the development and use of a variety of assessment methods, including self-reports, focus groups, biological and physiological markers, and experience sampling of well-being.

### ***Lindsay G. Oades (Australia)***

Lindsay G. Oades is an Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for Positive Psychology, Melbourne University Graduate School of Education. He completed his PhD in Clinical Psychology. Oades also holds a Masters of Business Administration with Distinction, sponsored by the University of Wollongong, culminating in being awarded Commerce Alumni of the Year. In 2013, he received an Australian Government citation for outstanding contribution to student learning. Oades was previously a Member of the Australian Psychological Society, the College of Clinical Psychologists and the College of Health Psychologists. In 2015, he was invited to move from his position (School of Psychology and Sydney Business School) of over 15 years at the University of Wollongong to work at the Centre for Positive Psychology at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne. Oades has taught applied psychology at undergraduate and postgraduate levels for 20 years in psychology, nursing, business and education in Australia, Hong Kong and Japan. He speaks at conferences around the world, and has published more than 100 peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly book chapters cited over 2300 times (h-index = 24). Oades has been part of teams that have gained over \$2.8 million in competitive research funding, and contract research or consultancies (domestic and international) of over \$594,000 in applied health and education contexts. He has supervised 13 doctoral students successfully to completion. His research interests concern the applications of well-being in workplaces, health and education systems. Oades' recent consultancies include the Australian Mental Health Commission (working on the Contributing Life Project), NSW Mental Health Commission (involved in the development on the Well-being Collaborative), Department of Education and Community (consulting on the development of the NSW Well-being Framework for Schools) and Maudsley International (international global mental health consultancy).

One of Oades' major contributions to the field of positive psychology relates to the development and implementation of a recovery orientated mental health service provision. This work is referred to as the Collaborative Recovery Model (CRM), which is a positive mental health approach to people already with mental illness. The CRM has evolved over a number of years and based on empirically established intervention principles (Andresen et al., 2003). These involve, among others, self-directed or consumer-lead recovery pathways, individualized person-centered engagement processes, empowerment, and a holistic approach encompassing the

various aspects of an individual's life such as mind, body, spirit, and community or peer support. The CRM is primarily designed to facilitate and encourage mental health practitioners to focus on factors that promote the recovery process rather than the traditional medical meaning of cure. The term 'recovery' itself refers to the personal and transformational process of clients living with mental illness as opposed to fixed mindsets around diagnostic labels (Oades et al., 2009). As such, the CRM strongly emphasises the importance of working alliance with clients and promotion of positive psychological states such as resilience, optimism, and hope as part of the intervention process.

Thus, implementation of the CRM typically involves coaching mental health practitioners to develop competency in promoting positive psychological states. The idea is that coaching and encouraging practitioners to embrace collaboration and principles underpinning positive mental health recovery processes would better position them to help clients address negative mental health events without judgement or imposing their own values or beliefs of the recovery process. The CRM essentially assists practitioners to implement collaborative recovery-oriented mental health service provision rather than symptom reduction which is based on the traditional medical model. This is because the recovery-oriented approach has been conceptualised as being a personal journey, which would need to be consistent with clients' attitudes, values, feelings, goals, and skills (Oades et al., 2012). It is a way of promoting a satisfying, meaningful and hopeful life even with limitations caused by the mental illness.

The CRM is very well received and has been implemented across many government and non-government sectors providing mental health services in Australia. Unfortunately, the empirical evidence about the effectiveness of this intervention program is limited. Of the limited evaluation studies, one was conducted by Marshall et al. (2009). This qualitative study examined the experiences of mental health service consumers who were engaged in various recovery-focused support practices. The researchers utilised a self-report questionnaire specifically developed to measure the key aspects of the CRM (i.e. responsibility, collaboration, autonomy, motivation, needs, goals, homework). Participants were adult consumers ( $N = 92$ ) from metropolitan, regional and rural non-government organizations and public mental health services in the eastern Australian states. The results indicated that consumers who received advice and intervention services from CRM-trained workers were more collaborative, willing to complete homework activities designed to assist them to achieve their goals, and frequently took responsibility for their own recovery compared with consumers using traditional services. Although preliminary, these findings provide evidence for the values and utilities of the CRM from the perspectives of service users.

Another qualitative study by Marshall et al. (2010) examined the views of eighteen mental health consumers working with practitioners who had received training in the CRM. Participants were divided in small focus groups and took part in in-depth meetings of approximately 2.5 h each regarding the importance of the CRM in mental health services. Findings from these focus group meetings suggested that consumers were highly motivated, engaged and empowered in the use of the

CRM from the outset. This means that mental health practitioners who draw upon the principles of CRM can increase clients' motivation and commitment to the mental health recovery process. While all the preliminary evidence is encouraging, the need for more rigorous evaluation studies is clear. Without which, the CRM is likely to thrive simply based on its pragmatic appeal without having a solid empirical foundation in terms of its effectiveness.

### ***Suzy Green (Australia)***

Suzy Green is a Clinical and Coaching Psychologist. She completed her Professional Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at the University of Wollongong in 2003. After graduation she designed and taught "Applied Positive Psychology" in the Coaching Psychology Unit at the University of Sydney as an Adjunct Senior Lecturer from 2004 to 2014. She currently holds honorary academic positions with the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne (Institute for Positive Psychology & Education), Australian Catholic University and the University of Wollongong. Green is also an Affiliate member of the Institute for Well-being at the University of Cambridge and the Black Dog Institute. Prior to that, she was the "Stress-less Expert" for *Australian Women's Health Magazine* for 8 years. In 2009 and 2011, she was the Director of two "Positive Psychology in Education" symposiums hosted by the Coaching Psychology Unit, University of Sydney, and in 2013 she was the Co-Director of the First Australian Positive Education Conference hosted by Knox Grammar School. In 2015 and 2016, she was the Co-Director of the Inaugural Positive Education Conference in Perth hosted by Perth College. Green is the Founder of The Positivity Institute, an organisation dedicated to the research and application of positive psychology for life, school and work. She was the recipient of an International Positive Psychology Fellowship Award and has published in the *Journal of Positive Psychology*. She currently maintains a strong media profile appearing regularly on television, radio and in print.

As highlighted in her biography, Green's research and professional practice has focused on applied positive psychology in the education, corporate and community sectors. At an individual level, she coaches her clients to bring about sustained cognitive, emotional and behavioural changes that facilitate the attainment of desired life goals and the enhancement of personal well-being. At group and corporate levels, her coaching work involves exploring ways in which businesses, executives and workplaces can encourage teamwork and performance by fostering strengths, resilience, ethical leadership and tolerance. Green is, thus, regarded as one of the top leaders in the field of coaching-oriented positive psychology practices in Australia. Her published work involved randomised controlled studies. One of these was conducted using a non-clinical sample of 56 adults (42 females and 14 males of 18–60 years of age) (Green et al., 2006). The non-clinical status of participants was determined based on the Brief Symptom Inventory screening tool (Derogatis & Melisaratos, 1983). They were then randomly assigned to either a 10-week

life-coaching intervention group or a waitlist control condition. All participants completed a questionnaire consisting of measures designed to assess levels of commitment to goal setting behavior, subjective well-being and hope before commencing and 1 week after the completion of the 10-week life coaching intervention. Session contents involved introduction to theoretical underpinnings of strength-based approaches (e.g. hope and well-being), self-reflection exercises and small-group discussions. Results from this randomized trial study revealed that participants who completed the 10-week life coaching intervention had significantly higher scores on measures of goal setting behavior, subjective well-being and hope compared with those in the control group, suggesting that life-coaching interventions can enhance not only individuals' positive psychological states but also their tendency to engage in setting desired life goals.

Another study by Green and colleagues examined the potential role of educational coaching in facilitating goal attainment, enhancing leadership and communication styles, reducing stressful circumstances, and thereby contributing to an overall workplace well-being (Grant et al., 2010). Participants included 50 high school teachers, who were randomly assigned to a coaching or waitlist control group. They completed a range of measures relating to goal attainment, resilience, stress/anxiety/depression, workplace well-being, and leadership styles at Time 1 (pre-program), Time 2 (post-program), and Time 3 (10 months follow up period). The coaching program was delivered over a 20-week period with 1–2 weeks interval. Sessions were based on a cognitive-behavioral, solution-focused framework, with activities focused on identifying participants desired outcomes, delineating specific goals, enhancing motivation by identifying self-efficacy and resilience, monitoring and evaluating progress toward the goals, and modifying goals as deemed necessary. The outcome of this program was encouraging. Compared with controls, the coaching group reported reduced stress, increased resilience, and improved workplace well-being, indicating that coaching professional development interventions may well have utility within education settings as well as corporate environments.

A similar study examined the potential role of coaching intervention in promoting *engagement* and *hope* among primary school students (Madden et al., 2011). The construct of *engagement* is one of the five pillars of happiness in the positive psychology literature (Seligman et al., 2009), with the other four being positive emotions, relationships, meaning, and accomplishments. Engagement is considered to be one of the prerequisites for a person's learning, growth and satisfaction in life. *Hope* is also another positive psychology construct and known for its properties in facilitating pathway thoughts and one's commitment to pursue desired life goals (Snyder et al., 1991). Green and her colleagues sought to examine whether the properties referred to by both of these constructs were malleable and could be developed through coaching strategies. They utilized a sample of 38 male students aged between 10 and 11 years old from a primary school. Students completed self-report measures at Time 1 (pre-intervention) and Time 2 (post-intervention) to determine their levels of engagement and hope. The program consisted of eight sessions and was conducted fortnightly for 45 min. Contents focused on three key

areas of activities and exercises—identification of personal character strengths, identification of personal resources conducive to desired goals, and instilling hope as well as teaching self-regulation skills to achieve set goals. The program concluded with a letter writing exercise about successes, aspirations, and commitment towards identified valued ends. Analysis of the data showed that students' scores on engagement and hope measures were significantly higher at Time 2 (post-intervention) compared to Time 1 (pre-intervention). This was a small scale study and could not have been generalizable, but provided encouraging results with practice implications in terms of the potential utilities of positive coaching for the promotion well-being among primary school children.

### ***Aaron Jarden (New Zealand)***

Aaron Jarden lives in Auckland, New Zealand. He began his tertiary study in 1995 and has since amassed a Bachelors of Social Sciences with a double major in Psychology and Philosophy, a Bachelors of Social Sciences with honours in philosophy, and a Graduate Diploma of Applied Ethics—all from the University of Waikato (1995–1999). He then completed a Bachelor of Arts with honours in psychology and a Masters of Arts in psychology from Massey University (2001–2002). In 2003, Jarden completed a Diploma in Computing before moving to the University of Canterbury where he studied a Diploma in Clinical Psychology. He completed his PhD in psychology in 2010 which was followed by a Post-Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching through the University of Otago in 2011. He is currently employed part time as a Senior Lecturer at Auckland University of Technology, and part time as a well-being consultant and social entrepreneur. He is president of the New Zealand Association of Positive Psychology, lead investigator for the International Well-being Study, co-investigator of the Sovereign New Zealand Well-being Index, founder of The Tuesday Program, and co-founder of Heart of Well-being. Jarden's publications cover areas of psychological well-being, personal values, post-traumatic growth, positive psychological assessment, positive psychology interventions, organizational well-being, cross-cultural well-being, positive education, national accounts of happiness, well-being policy, e-health, and e-therapy. He presents at both national and international conferences on these topics.

As his biography suggests, Jarden has made several notable contributions to the ongoing development of positive psychology in New Zealand. He is particularly credited for his role as a co-founder and co-editor of the *International Journal of Well-being* (IJW) which was launched in January 2011. The journal promotes research by providing open access to peer reviewed articles on well-being. The aim is to make research freely available to the public and share knowledge as widely as possible. The journal is also designed to provide unaffiliated scholars with the latest references for their research and publications which they could not have been able to access from institutional databases.



Jarden is also one of the creators of the Assessing Well-being in Education Pty Ltd (AWE) in New Zealand (Jarden & Parker, 2016). The AWE is an innovative approach and designed to assess, track and improve the well-being of students and staff in the school community. The AWE is based on empirically established measures of the various aspects of well-being such as resilience, positive emotions, happiness, flourishing, engagement, and self-determination (Seligman et al., 2009). The assessment is completed online, which generates a summary report and interpretation of scores. A typical summary report describes whether a participant's overall well-being is low or high. It also provides domain specific strengths (i.e. happiness, resilience, satisfaction), and identifies problem areas that might benefit from positive psychological interventions. The assessment is commonly completed on more than one occasion to track changes overtime and to evaluate the efficacy of suggested intervention approaches. Whilst the AWE has been utilized by a growing number of private and public schools in New Zealand and Australia, the efficacy of the overall initiative is yet to be established as an empirically valid intervention.

Jarden and his colleague have extended the same approach to develop the Work on Well-being (WoW) assessment for use by individuals and organisations (Jarden & Oades, 2014). Similar to the AWE, the WoW is based on empirically validated measures covering global well-being (e.g., life satisfaction, resilience and happiness), domain specific well-being (e.g., intimate relationship, family and finances), and workplace well-being (e.g., autonomy and job satisfaction). WoW is completed online and provides an individually tailored report highlighting particular areas of strengths and strategies for ameliorating areas of weaknesses or deficits. It can be administered on more than one occasion to track changes over a period of time. While this approach provides useful information for individuals and organizations, it is in its very early stages of development and remains to be empirically tested.

### ***Maree Roche (New Zealand)***

Maree Roche is a Senior Lecturer in Organizational Psychology at the University of Waikato in New Zealand. Her research focus is on positive psychology, with particular interest in positive leadership. She has passion for extending and understanding the benefits of well-being for leaders, organisations and employees. She has been actively involved in many projects and continues to provide consultancy in these areas. She has published in various disciplinary journals, including *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *Personnel Psychology and Leadership & Organizational Development*. She is also the co-editor of the *New Zealand Journal of Human Resource Management*.

Roche's published work specifically covers topics like emotionally toxic work places, re-humanisation of work, work stress, quality-of-work-life, meaning and meaningfulness of work, the study of power and domination, workplace bullying,

sustainability of the human condition at work and concepts such as trust. Roche's most significant contribution to positive psychology relates to her work around the cultural dimensions of organisational Maori leaders in New Zealand and the concept of well-being in a western society (Roche et al., 2015). The results revealed that the various core principles in Maori culture such as *tino rangatiratanga* (autonomy and self-determination), *mana* (respect and influence), *whānau* (extended family), *whakapapa* (shared history), and *whanaungatanga* (kin relations, consultation and engagement) were similar to the conceptualisation of well-being within the framework of the self-determination theory (e.g., autonomy and competence). The study also found differences, especially with Maori leaders' description of well-being pertaining to a collective culture or 'others' as opposed to the "self" which underpins the self-determination theory. This finding does not only highlight the importance of cultural contexts in positive psychology, but also how the western assumptions of well-being may not necessarily or directly be useful for an individual in a collectivist culture.

## **Future of Positive Psychology in Australia and New Zealand**

As highlighted in the proceeding sections, interest in positive psychology is rapidly growing in Australia and New Zealand. This growth can be attributed to several reasons. Firstly, positive psychology is becoming a standalone field of study on its own right. For example, the University of Melbourne offers courses exclusively designed to teach the science of positive psychology at graduate diploma, masters and doctoral levels. The University of Sydney offers a Graduate Certificate in Applied Positive Psychology. The Australian Catholic University has a dedicated branch, the Institute of Positive Psychology and Education. Central Queensland University offers a Graduate Certificate in Positive Psychology. In New Zealand, the Langley Group Institute has been offering a Diploma of Positive Psychology and Well-being. Though not comparable to Australia, positive psychology is also being taught as a single subject at the University of Waikato, Victoria University of Wellington and Auckland University of Technology.

Secondly, the current progress in positive psychology in Australia and New Zealand could not have happened without the push by the field's eminent founders, especially Martin Seligman. He has been a seminal figure for the introduction of several initiatives. In 2012, he was invited by the Government of South Australia to help with new ideas and approaches for the prevention of mental illness. He spent the next 12 months in South Australia guiding the implementation of positive education and mental health promotion initiatives that have since gone from strength to strength. An example of his legacy is the Well-being and Resilience Centre in Adelaide (South Australia's capital), which specifically focuses on researching, measuring and promoting well-being at individual, community and organisational levels. Seligman also visited the rest of the Australian states as well as New Zealand on various occasions to push the public policy agenda around the

creation of flourishing communities based on his ‘PERMA’ model of well-being—positive emotions, engagement, good relationships, meaning and purpose in life, and accomplishment (Seligman et al., 2009). To date, PERMA remains the most popular model for well-being initiatives in Australia and New Zealand.

Thirdly, in parallel with the aforementioned initiatives, the establishment of recurring national conferences dedicated to positive psychology in both countries have been fertile grounds for professionals, academics and students for sharing ideas and advancing the field. These conferences have also created a platform for entrepreneurship with many of these positive psychologists introducing evidence-based services. For example, the Institute of Applied Positive Psychology run by Dr Kate Lemerle in Queensland (Australia), the Positive Institute run by Dr Suzy Green in Perth (Australia), and the Work on Well-being Program run by Dr Aaron Jarden in New Zealand are just some of the entrepreneurship initiatives.

The culmination of all these events has essentially led to the ongoing implementation of positive psychology initiatives in both countries. As outlined in the preceding sections, the positive education program is by far the most successful initiative and has been extensively used by schools to foster student well-being and academic performance through the cultivation of positive emotions, resilience and positive character strengths (Vella-Brodrick et al., 2015; Waters, 2011). Another most recognizable contribution is in the area of organisational behavior. Most government and non-government organizations are now broadening their remit by emphasizing on positive leadership behavior (e.g., building resilience, self-efficacy, ethical leadership and tolerance) to improve productivity, job satisfaction and reduce staff turnover (Green et al., 2006). Positive psychology is also increasingly becoming prominent in public policy making, especially in the domain of mental health to encourage involvement in recreation, physical activity and play, and consequently reduce internalization of risk behaviors such as addiction and suicide.

While positive psychology has been very successful on a number of fronts, it is still a developing field of study. Its scientific base in particular requires ongoing strengthening and quality control (Biswas-Diener et al., 2011). It is fair to say that the implementation of most positive psychology programs and interventions in many western countries (including Australia and New Zealand) have been left largely to the discretion of practitioners and consultants without sufficient attention to regular evaluation studies. This has in turn created inherent problems in aligning the pace of intervention programs with research, and leaving practitioners to make modifications without the backing of empirical evidence. Even those positive psychology initiatives which have been put to empirical scrutiny lack a methodological rigor and are based on small sample qualitative evaluation studies (Green et al., 2006; Marshall et al., 2009).

It is, therefore, incumbent upon positive psychologists to pay sufficient attention to both practice and research as well as commitment to broaden the scope of their inquires (Vella-Brodrick et al., 2015). We also know from previous studies that positive psychology has been linked to the neurobiological pathways through which positive psychological states contribute to physical health. For example, interventions that seek to promote positive psychological states such as positive mood, affect

and optimism have been found to improve immune functioning (Marsland et al., 2007), buffer inflammation or pain (Brydon et al., 2009), and stimulate normal protein synthesis and tissue growth (Low et al., 2011). What happens in the body can affect the brain, and what happens in the brain can affect the body. This means that positive psychological states are not merely fuzzy mental events. They have neurobiological connections that play a large part in the workings of the immune system, and indeed, in the entire synchrony of the overall human organism (for more empirical studies in this area see Sheldon et al., 2011). This line of inquiry and intervention can make tremendous contribution to the scientific foundation of positive psychology, although this has received limited attention among positive psychologists and scholars in Australia and New Zealand. Thus, there is a need to advance the field in this particular domain.

Moreover, the current state of positive psychology in Australia and New Zealand is dominantly orientated toward the concept of human flourishing. However, the field has already entered into its second wave with the increasing recognition that a mere focus on the positive aspects of human life may not necessarily lead to desired life goals and improved well-being (Ivtzan et al., 2015; Kashdan & Biswas-Diener, 2014). This move has positioned positive psychology to acknowledge the “dark side” of human life by focusing not just on the investigation and application of positive interventions, but also to embrace the most difficult and unpleasant aspects of experiences in life. The second wave of positive psychology essentially emphasises the dialectical nature of our behavioral, emotional and cognitive experiences (i.e., mixtures of positives and negatives rather than binary concepts), and the need to embrace human life as a whole from both positive and constructive perspectives.

Although one of the overarching goals of positive psychology has been to explore ways in which institutions and communities can encourage better citizenship by fostering strengths, justice and responsibility, the field has been criticized for being inherently ethnocentric and relying heavily on individualistic framework (Christopher & Hickinbottom, 2008). This has been certainly the case in Australia and New Zealand as much of the work in this area does not attempt to demonstrate how positive psychology is defined in other cultures. If positive psychology is to fare better in multicultural societies such as Australia and New Zealand, it is imperative for the field to be built upon theories and empirical work involving diverse cultural perspectives. Otherwise, lack of adequate understanding of behaviors, attitudes and emotions from a cultural context can lead to misconceptions and inappropriate intervention strategies (Kubokawa & Ottaway, 2009).

Overall, notwithstanding the above limitations, positive psychology is making impressive contributions in Australia and New Zealand. It has continued to capture the attention of diverse groups such as individual consumers, government institutions, non-government organizations and the general public. This could not have happened without the persistent commitment of many positive psychologists who have engaged in the investigation of positive life experiences and application of innovative intervention to promote wellbeing. Hopefully, this work will continue to evolve and help the average person, groups and the community as a whole in making

life worth living as well as embracing the “dark side” of their lives, and learning how positive experiences can be used as buffers against negative life events.

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