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Positive Professional Practice: A Strength-Based Reflective Practice Teaching Model

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The past few years have brought numerous advances in positive education theory, research, and practice. For instance, Waters and Loton (2019) proposed a data-driven meta-framework for evidence-based approaches to the field. O'Brien and Blue (2018) challenged teachers, principals, and administrators to develop a positive pedagogy, designing pedagogical practices that facilitate positivity within the classroom. Oades and Johnston (2017) argued that wellbeing literacy is an important element in positive education. While these developments are encouraging, a critical topic continues to be overlooked—professional practice—which this chapter addresses.

To date, positive education has no agreed conceptual framework or model to guide teachers to theorise and critically self-reflect on what they do and how they have an impact based on existing theories of professional practice (White & Murray, 2015). As such, positive education continues to be a pedagogy in search of a practice (White, 2015). Therefore, if developments such as Oades and Johnston's (2017) wellbeing literacy, O'Brien and Blue's (2018) positive pedagogy, or Waters and Loton's (2019) framework are to achieve deep pedagogical change, I assert that critical teacher self-reflection is an integral starting point building on White and McCallum's (2020) call to enhance teacher quality through evidence-based wellbeing frameworks. Written from the researcher–practitioner perspective, this chapter proposes a conceptual

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model for critical self-reflection for teachers of positive education, guided by two questions:

1. Can positive psychology developments enhance the planning, implementation, and self-reflection required for effective learning and teaching?
2. How can character strengths be integrated into reflective practice to enhance effective learning and teaching?

In this chapter, I address these questions by first highlighting how professional practice remains a missing component in positive education theory and practice. Second, I identify the importance of teacher pedagogy. I describe relevant aspects of Peterson and Seligman's (2004) Values in Action (VIA) strengths classification, surfacing the underlying assumptions of positive education pedagogy, and point to the critical role of reflective practice. Next, I introduce Stephen Brookfield's (2017) four lenses for critical reflection, which is one of the widest reflection methods used in teaching. Then, illustrating how character strengths can be integrated into reflective practice to enhance effective learning and teaching, I propose a strengths-based model that integrates the VIA across all stages of Brookfield's four-lens reflective practice model. Finally, I consider the potential applications of this approach. I contend that a strength-based model is a missing piece in the puzzle needed to support reflective practice and will enhance teacher's professional practice in positive education.

A Need to Focus on Teacher Professional Practice

Over the past decade, positive education has been interpreted in a variety of ways. For example, Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich, and Linkins (2009) first defined positive education as an approach to "teach both the skills of wellbeing and the skills of achievement" (p. 294). White (2009, 2015) claimed that it is a blend of evidence-based learning from the science of positive psychology and best practices in learning and teaching, whereas White and Murray (2015) argued that it is "an umbrella term that is used to describe empirically validated interventions and programs from positive psychology that have an impact on student wellbeing" (p. 2). Slemp et al. (2017) asserted that positive education "combines the concepts and scholarship of positive psychology with best practice guidelines from education" (p. 101).

Stemming from these definitions, research has focused on developing frameworks, interventions, and activities to support student wellbeing (e.g.,

Brunwasser & Garber, 2016; Noble & McGrath, 2016; Waters, 2011). There have been case studies of schools as positive institutions (e.g., Adler & Seligman, 2016; Halliday, Kern, Garrett, & Turnbull, 2019a, 2019b; Seligman & Adler, 2018; White & Murray, 2015). Reviews of positive psychology interventions, programs, and frameworks have been conducted (e.g., Donaldson, Dollwet, & Rao, 2015; Froh & Bono, 2011; Rusk & Waters, 2013, 2015), the most extensive of which is Waters and Loton's (2019) bibliometric review of over 18,403 positive psychology studies.

Yet despite all this activity, only a handful of publications have explicitly focused on the role of the teacher. In his critique of the teacher's role in positive education, Kristjánsson (2017c, p. 188) contends that the "flourishing paradigm of positive education" takes a strength-based approach to *student wellbeing*; it is all about furthering assets that students already possess in nascent forms and helping them continue developing the character virtues that are intrinsically related to (i.e., constitutive of) eudaimonia. While Kristjánsson (2007, 2012, 2015, 2017b) indicates there are many professional implications for teachers, he calls "for an active political contribution from teachers, in order to make sure that the economic precondition of student flourishing is universally met" (Kristjánsson, 2017c, p. 190).

International research has established that teachers are the most significant in-school factor impacting student outcomes (Allen, Kern, Vella-Brodrick, Hattie, & Waters, 2018; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Dickerson, & Helm-Stevens, 2011; Hattie, 2009, 2015; Sachs et al., 2019). The McKinsey Report (Barber & Mourshed, 2007) argued that "the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers" (p. 19). McCallum and Price (2010, 2012, 2015) advocated that for children and young people to be well, teachers must also be well. Teacher quality, retention, and satisfaction are crucial elements for sustaining the profession, maintaining motivation, and preparing teachers to fulfil aspirational outcomes as leaders (McCallum & Price, 2015). And yet teachers are struggling. Many are leaving the profession early (Heffernan, Longmuir, Bright, & Kim, 2019), reports of burnout and stress are high (Oberle, & Schonert-Reichl, 2016), and numerous mental health issues exist (Bullot Cave, Fildes, Hall, & Plummer, 2017; Carlisle et al., 2018; Vesely, Saklofske, & Nordstokke, 2014). As Brookfield (2017) claimed, "it's insane for any teacher to imagine he or she can walk into a classroom and overturn centuries of racial, gender and class exploitation" (p. 43).

Over the past decade, the pedagogy—what teachers do, the professional practice of positive education—has remained uncharted territory. Questions abound around teachers' professional identity (who teachers are), professional practice (what teachers do), and efficacy (how teachers know they are having

an impact). For example, McGrath (2018) noted that "character education specialists seem to know it when they see it, but what it means to call something a character education program remains unclear" (p. 23). Overall, there is a dearth of studies focusing on the professional practice of positive education teachers. As White and Kern (2018, p. 2) noted, "the time has come for the discourse on the *pedagogy* of positive education to become more sophisticated". That pedagogy necessarily focuses on *teacher practice*.

Intersections of Strengths and Reflective Practice

Trask-Kerr, Quay, and Slemp, (2019) contend that a significant hurdle for positive education is that it "revolves around issues to do with psychology itself and the capacity of psychology to comprehensively inform the imagined idea of positive education" (p. 2). As Kristjánsson (2019) noted, positive education's focus on a flourishing paradigm should allay "the fears of traditionalists that the flourishing paradigm is just one more attempt to smuggle a Trojan horse of touchy-feeliness into the classroom in order to undermine standard subjects and processes" (p. 28). Trask-Kerr et al. (2019) further highlight that "teachers have imagined education in positive terms for a very long time" and "it seems that positive psychology's philosophical roots have been largely assumed" (p. 2). They argue for a "Deweyan positive education" that "incorporates psychological knowledge in the embrace of philosophical thinking" (Trask-Kerr et al., 2019, p. 13). I argue that it is beneficial for the research, discourse, and professional practice of positive education to develop through the integration of Peterson and Seligman's (2004) VIA character strengths classification and Brookfield's (2017) theory of reflective practice.

The Values in Action Character Strengths Classification

The VIA advanced by Peterson and Seligman (2004) quickly became one of the earliest adopted developments in positive education (Han, 2018; Niemiec, 2018; White & Waters, 2015). The classification provides a framework enabling teachers to theorise whole-of-class and whole-of-school strength-based approaches (Waters & White, 2015; White & Murray, 2015). Although the VIA has attracted criticism for its philosophical limitations (Kristjánsson, 2007, 2012, 2015, 2016, 2019; Niemiec, 2018; Snow, 2018),

the classification remains one of the foundational elements of many positive education approaches across the world.

Peterson and Seligman (2004) determined a set of criteria for the classification of these strengths based on the contribution of over 40 experts from philosophy, theology, and the social sciences. From this review of various disciplines, Peterson and Seligman (2004) created the VIA, which includes six virtues that manifest as 24 strengths. These are: *wisdom* (creativity, curiosity, judgement, love of learning, perspective), *courage* (bravery, honesty, perseverance, zest), humanity (kindness, love, social intelligence), *justice* (citizenship, fairness, leadership), *temperance* (forgiveness, humility, prudence, self-regulation) and *transcendence* (appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humour, spirituality).

Recent findings on strengths over the past five years have implications for teachers' professional identity, professional practice, and efficacy (Niemiec, 2018; Waters & White, 2015). For example, Bates-Krakoff et al. (2017) found that character could be developed through carefully designed curricula. Having extensively reviewed strength-based studies, McGrath (2018) proposed that character education programs should include seven features: school-based, structure, addresses specific positive psychological attributes, addresses identity, moral growth, holistic growth, and the development of practical wisdom (Kristjánsson, 2017a). Based on eight reviews, Berkowitz, Bier, & McCauley, (2017) identified 42 evidence-based practices to derive lessons on effective practice. They proposed a conceptual framework of six foundational character educational principles to aid the dissemination of evidence-based practices more broadly: prioritisation, relationships, intrinsic motivation (internalisation of character), modelling, empowerment, and developmental pedagogy (PRIMED) (Berkowitz et al., 2017). Reviewing character strength interventions, Lavy (2019) identified how strengths could be linked with the development of twenty-first-century skills, offering an integrative model for strength in schooling. Lottman, Zawaly, and Niemiec (2017) emphasised the importance of incorporating strengths within everyday language.

Across studies and reviews, it becomes clear that strengths underlie much of positive education practice. However, I contend that greater focus should be placed on explicitly incorporating strengths within teacher pedagogy; specifically, through the purposeful use of reflective practice.

The Critical Role of Reflective Practice

I suggest that a missing part of positive education discourse is the incorporation of teachers' critical self-reflection on professional practice. To be clear, when I discuss professional practice, I do not mean just the classroom programs, worksheets, activities, or interventions teachers undertake with their classes. Rather, professional practice refers to a teacher's ability to self-reflect and the "repertoire of effective teaching strategies, and use them to implement well-designed teaching programs and lessons" (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2014). While many schools will adopt wellbeing or positive education approaches to shift educational practices, the challenging task of shifting professional practice is often overlooked. Initial enthusiasm gives way to a dominant school culture that leaves wellbeing on the sidelines (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016).

Within education, a widely recognised body of research focuses on the significant role that reflective practice plays a part in transforming teaching (Brookfield, 2003, 2009, 2013, 2015, 2017). Indeed, teaching is often referred to as a reflective profession in which teachers are continually evaluating their impact on learning and practice. Reflective practice aims to progress teachers' knowledge, understanding, and actions throughout various stages of their career, so that they positively impact student outcomes (Brookfield, 2009, 2015). At the heart of reflective practice research is a teacher's ability to know, understand, and reflect upon professional practice through four lenses. Brookfield (2017) argues that:

> Critically reflective teaching happens when we identify and scrutinise the assumptions that undergird how we work. The most effective way to become aware of these assumptions is to view our practice from different perspectives. Seeing how we think and work through different lenses is the core process of reflective practice. (pp. xii–xiii)

Key researchers in reflective practice include Borton (1970), Kolb and Fry (1975), Argyris and Schön (1978), and Brookfield (2017). Studies by these researchers and others have advanced discourse and research in the area and influenced initial teacher education across the world. Indeed, teacher registration authorities are increasingly requiring teachers to provide evidence of critical self-reflection on teaching practice, a step in the teacher registration process. Similarly, the American Association of Nurse Practitioners requires critical self-reflection as part of the renewal of registration (Brookfield, 2017).

While reflection is widely accepted as an integral part of effective teaching (e.g. Molla, & Nolan, 2020; Sato, Ludecke, & Saito, 2020), there are

many theories and models showing how to approach this task. First theorised in 1995, Brookfield's conceptual framework has been widely applied in initial teacher education and other professions, including health and nursing. I suggest that it can also be helpfully applied within positive education, especially when school leaders and teachers have become frustrated after initial training and investment in positive education efforts but have had limited sustainable results. Brookfield (2017) defines reflective practice as "the sustained and intentional process of identifying and checking the accuracy and validity of our teaching assumptions" concerning learning (p. 3). Four aspects of Brookfield's definition of reflective practice provide much-needed clarity for teachers of positive education and respond to White and Kern's (2018) criticism "that the time has come for the discourse on the *pedagogy* of positive education to become more sophisticated" (p. 2). Brookfield (2017) claims that reflective practice needs to (1) be sustained, (2) be intentional, (3) seek evidence, and (4) assess teaching assumptions. He asserts that paradigmatic assumptions are widely present in education and "critical reflection is all about hunting the assumptions that frame our judgments and actions as teachers" (Brookfield, 2017, p. 21).

I suggest that with the rapid rise of positive education and enthusiasm surrounding its application, some teachers have jumped the gun, focusing on implementation without undertaking the significant critical self-reflection demanded in professional practice. While various programs and curricula have been developed, there is scant evidence of how this has been integrated into professional practice beyond a series of worksheets or claims that they are based on what works for in-school experience (Waters, 2011; Waters & Loton, 2019). As classrooms and schools are complex ecosystems, professional practices that take that complexity into account are needed. I suggest that Brookfield's (2017) *Four Lenses of Critical Reflection* provide a vehicle to allow educators to incorporate positive education in a manner that places professional practice at the centre of the pedagogy.

Brookfield argues there are four lenses of critical reflective practice: (1) our students' eyes, (2) our colleagues' perceptions, (3) personal experience, and (4) theory. These are illustrated in Fig. 7.1.

Lens 1: Our students' eyes. At the centre of reflective practice is the teachers' ability to continually reflect on the impact they have on the students in their classrooms. This includes the mode of instruction, types of activities chosen, tasks that are set, and the way learning is set up in the classroom. Brookfield (2017) asserts that this is the basis of "student-centred teaching: knowing how your student experiences learning so you can build bridges that
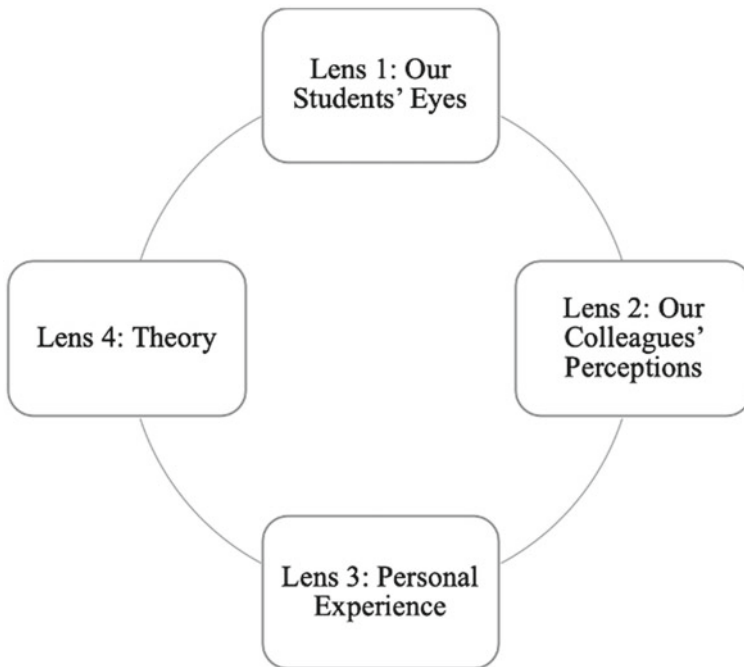
Fig. 7.1 Brookfield's four lenses of critical reflection (Author adaptation from Brookfield, 2017, p. 61)

take them from where they are now to a new destination" (p. 62). Brookfield asserts that effective teachers must collect data to confirm their belief that a learning experience, assessment, or task is working well, in addition to seeking areas for improvement. This includes the teacher clearly articulating the classroom process and procedures, why these are taking place, and how they link back to the learning goal originally established. Brookfield stresses the importance of regular anonymous feedback and the teacher discussing this openly and often, and articulating how teachers have changed their professional practice based on this feedback to help establish trust in the group.

Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions. In many education systems, teachers will often be encouraged to provide feedback on effective teaching as a part of an appraisal process. Brookfield asserts that a 'critical friend' is one who will challenge our underlying assumptions about education and enable us to undercover new perspectives and revisit challenges or dig deep into why we use an approach. Brookfield asserts that some of the best conversations are about the "nature of resistance to earning" (p. 67). I find that this point resonates with teachers who attempt to teach positive education but are met

with resistance from students and/or colleagues, triggered in part by the word 'positive'. Engaging with the resistance begins to unearth people's underlying assumptions about the purpose of learning, which often assumes the centrality of 'academic' courses, with wellbeing training perceived to be of little relevance. Rather than being a problem, such resistance provides the opportunity to expose such underlying assumptions, and then identify the actions, activities, and approaches that resonate versus those that are ineffective within that context. As Brookfield highlights, some of the resistance to learning in education is "grounded in events that happened before I showed up" (p. 67). Further, the best community of reflective practice is multidisciplinary rather than discipline-specific groups, which may reach conclusions about learning and teaching too rapidly and affirm pre-existing paradigms of teaching (Brookfield, 2017).

Lens 3: Personal experience. Learning by the personal narrative is a powerful lens in reflective practice; that is, who do I engage with the process of learning? Many people will find the individual stories of learners who have benefited from a positive education approach meaningful. This includes teachers who recount the power of gratitude exercises, strength-based learning, and focusing on what works well in class. While these individual stories will move us, and often they are what people in the field will remember long after a detailed dataset, they are also paradoxically some of the first examples to be dismissed. As Brookfield argues, the most effective academic criticisms discuss a view of a proposition as 'merely anecdotal'. Brookfield extends this argument and suggests that in specific emotional experiences, there are 'universal elements' embedded within them. Further, he reminds us that "personal experiences of learning are intertwined with teaching practice" (p. 70). The implications for positive education here are profound. Brookfield contends that "we can trace the impulse of these decisions back to the kinds of situations in which we felt excited or confused as learners. We assume that what worked for us will be similarly galvanizing for our own students" (p. 70). When teaching, or discussing positive education, teachers also report concern that students 'opt-out' or are disengaged. Herein, it is an essential point of reflection for teachers of positive education. Brookfield (p. 71) challenges us to consider when we have felt disengaged, and suggests the following examples:

- "I don't see the reason why I'm being asked to do a particular activity."
- "The instructions provided are unclear."
- "The time allowed for it is too short."
- "The leaders have not demonstrated any commitment to the activity."

Brookfield asserts that all teachers and learners have paradigmatic assumptions about the way power is perceived in classroom culture based on personal experiences. He argues that these establish causal assumptions about how different parts of the education world work and the conditions under which they can be changed. Ongoing reflective practice invites teachers to consider these paradigmatic assumptions through the students' eyes, colleagues' perceptions, personal experiences, and theory and research.

Lens 4: Theory. Brookfield argues that explaining the importance of theory to practising teachers is one of the most challenging areas. For example, he asserts that teachers will say "they don't have time to read or that educational theory and research doesn't have anything to do with the particularities of their classroom" (p. 73). Why does theory matter? Brookfield asserts that it "puts into cogent words something you've felt but been unable to articulate" (p. 73). The uptake in positive education research and application in schools can partly be explained in this way. Various aspects of the growing evidence-based approach provide theoretical frameworks for phenomena teachers have observed in the classroom but were unable to describe.
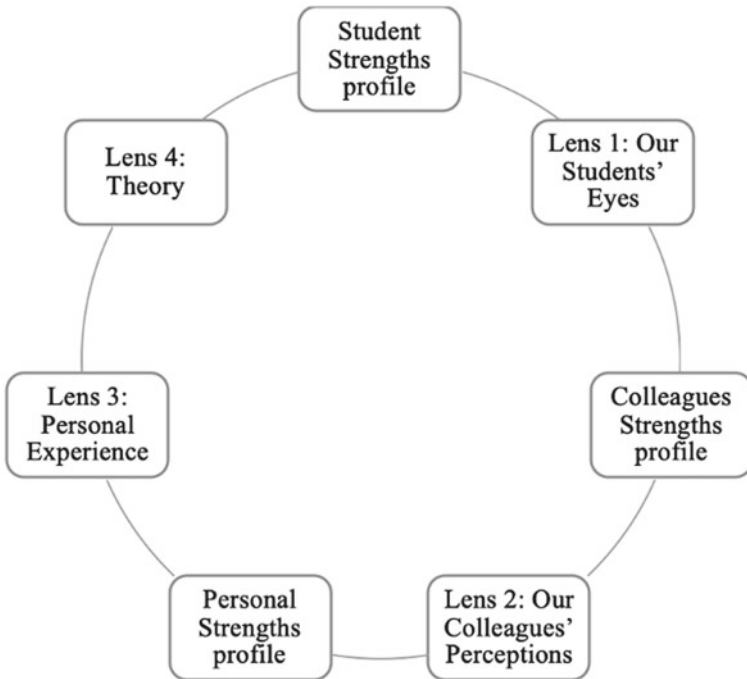
A Strength-Based Reflective Practice Model for Teachers

Brookfield (2017) aptly noted that "methods and practices imported from outside rarely fit snugly into the contours of our classrooms" (p. 54). Indeed, despite the rapid uptake of positive education, schools are also struggling to maintain initial efforts and create sustainable change. In a 2016 paper, I outlined various series of elements of professional practice and educational systems, which I argued were essential for developing comprehensive well-being programs in schools (White, 2016). Since then, I have spent more time reflecting on the pedagogical principles behind positive education. I posit that one of the significant hurdles to the sustainable implementation of positive culture within traditional education systems is that many teachers do not undertake the critical self-reflection required to shift professional practice from the way they were taught to the way they think they teach. One of the critical changes needed to develop a professional practice of positive education is for teachers to see their professional training from the four lenses established by Brookfield (2017).

Notably, the research on strengths provides an opportunity for incorporating reflective practice in a manner that aligns with the core values of

positive education. Thus, I propose a model that integrates reflective practice and strengths based on the combination of Brookfield's four lenses and the 24 VIA character strengths. The purpose of this integration is to promote deeper reflection between teachers' professional practice and what they do in the classroom with the character strengths profile and critical reflection. Figure 7.2 illustrates the underlying theoretical model. The figure demonstrates the process teachers can adopt to integrate Brookfield's Four Lenses of Critical Reflection with a character strengths approach to create a strength-based reflective practice model.

Supporting this model, Table 7.1 offers a series of questions that arise from the integration of the four lenses across the 24 VIA strengths. The table outlines the strengths linked with each of the six virtues and applies each lens to that strength. For Lens 1 (students' eyes), questions could be posed to students participating in a critical reflection of professional practice, inviting students to catch circumstances when their teachers demonstrated each strength. Once the student feedback has been collected anonymously, I suggest that teachers use Lens 2 to seek feedback from colleagues who can also respond to similar questions, focusing on the strengths demonstrated by

Fig. 7.2 A strength-based reflective practice model for teachers

Table 7.1 Strategies for incorporating Brookfield's (2017) four lenses with the 24 VIA character strengths, grouped by Peterson and Seligman's (2004) proposed six virtues

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
			Virtue: Wisdom		
Creativity	Original, adaptive, ingenuity, seeing, and doing things in different ways	When have you seen your teacher adapt their teaching approach and do things differently to engage student learning? How did this strengthen your engagement in class?	Think of a time when your colleague has shown creativity in their work. What was the challenge, how did they respond, and what was the evidence of impact on professional practice?	Reflect on a time when you were creative. What were you doing? Who was there, and what impact did you have?	What researchers on creativity have you read? What are some of the evidence-based approaches on creativity? Can you teach creativity?

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Curiosity	Interest, novelty-seeking, exploration, openness to experience	Tell us about a time when your teacher helped to kindle your curiosity. What was the topic, and what impact did it have on you as a learner?	When have you seen your colleague be open to new ideas and concepts? What was the topic? How did this impact their professional practice?	Reflect on a time when you were curious. What were you doing? Who was there, and what was your impact?	What researchers on curiosity have you read? What are some of the evidence-based approaches on curiosity? Can you teach curiosity?
Judgement	Critical thinking, thinking through all sides, not jumping to conclusions	Think about an example when your teacher explored all the angles of a complicated topic? What impact did it have on you as a learner?	Think about a time when your colleague has been called to weigh up different points of view without making strong judgements. What was the challenge? How did they use evidence to inform decision-making, and how did this impact their professional practice?	Reflect on a time when you needed to use critical thinking and evidence to inform professional practice. What were you doing? Who was there, and what was your impact?	Find out the significant researchers on critical thinking and various models. What evidence is there to support teaching critical thinking skills? What evidence supports the multiple models you have seen in professional practice?

Table 7.1 (continued)

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Love of Learning	Mastering new skills and topics, systematically adding to knowledge	When have you seen your teacher at their best, showing a love of learning when discussing their subject? How did it impact you as a learner?	Recount a time when you have seen your colleague show their love of new ideas. When did this happen? Who was there? What was the goal and how do you think it impacted your colleagues' professional practice?	When are/were you most excited by your teaching discipline? What were you doing? Who was there, and what was your impact?	Who are the significant researchers in learning? Is it possible to teach a love of learning? What evidence do you have to support learning approaches in your professional practice? What are the philosophical assumptions and biases of various learning approaches?

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Perspective	Wisdom, providing wise counsel, taking the big picture view	How has the feedback you received from your teacher helped you to be able to see learning from different perspectives? How has that benefited you as a learner?	Recall when your colleague provided you with wise, professional advice. What was the situation, and how did your professional practice benefit?	Think of a time you were asked to provide counsel. When was it, who was involved, and what was the impact?	Who are the dominant researchers in perspective? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching perspective? How is perspective measured? What are the theoretical models of perspective? Are these culturally specific?

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Bravery	Valour, not shrinking from threat or challenge, facing fears, speaking up for what's right	Learning is tough, and sometimes it means we need to speak up. Recall a time when your teacher has helped you in your learning	*Virtue: Courage* Think of a time when you have seen your colleague speaking up for what is right and also facing their fears. How did this improve their professional practice?	Think of a time when you've had to face your fears in professional practice. What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about yourself as a learner? How did this impact your professional practice?	Find three researchers in the field of bravery in education. What evidence can you find to support courage as a step in learning and teaching? What evidence can you find to support the integration of risk-taking in learning? How do effective teachers teach bravery?

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Honesty	Authenticity, being true to oneself, sincerity without pretence, integrity	Think about your experience as a learner. When have you seen your teacher demonstrating authenticity in their teaching? How has this improved your learning experience?	Recall a story where you have observed your colleagues being true to themselves in education. Recall the circumstances. What do you think was the impact on their professional practice?	When have you been challenged to be true to yourself and demonstrate honesty and integrity? How has this shown in your professional practice, and how do you promote this in learning?	Find the names of researchers who focus on honesty. Is it possible to teach morality? What are the philosophical implications of teaching honesty in education? What philosophers influence Eastern and Western understandings of truth and honesty? Are there evidence-based approaches to teaching morality?

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Perseverance	Persistence, industry, finishing what one starts, overcoming obstacles	Tell a story about when you have seen your teacher finishing a tough learning obstacle. How did this enhance your learning?	Think of a time when you have seen your colleague persist to achieve a significant goal. What was the challenge? Who is involved? And what was the impact on professional practice?	Think of a time when you've had to persevere to achieve a significant goal. What was the goal? What were the objectives? How does this link to your overall strategy to enhance student learning? And what did you learn about your professional practice?	Who are the leading researchers of perseverance or grit? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching perseverance? Is perseverance desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical emotions about learning when perseverance is promoted?

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Zest	Vitality, enthusiasm for life, vigour, energy, not doing things half-heartedly	When have you seen your teacher show enthusiasm for their teaching? What was the topic, and what was the impact on your learning experience?	Think of a time when you haven't possessed zeal in your colleagues' teaching. When did you see this?	Think of a time when you demonstrated zest for your work. When do you feel alive during professional practice? Is it when you're leading a class? Is it when you're providing more wellbeing support to students? When do these things take place, and how does it impact your professional practice overall? What is your impact?	Find out who researches zest or enthusiasm. What do you think is the importance of zest in learning? What evidence do you have to support your claim? Can you find evidence to support teaching students the significance of zest in learning and teaching?

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
			Virtue: Humanity		
Kindness	Generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, altruism, doing for others	Think of a time when your teacher was generous, caring, and showed compassion for other learners	When have you seen your colleague being generous to others in the learning journey? What have they been doing? What has the impact been? And how has this inspired others?	Think of a time when you have demonstrated kindness towards others in the learning journey. Do you think you have been able to demonstrate this effectively? Are there circumstances when you feel challenged to maintain kindness towards others in the learning experience? Why do you think this is the case?	Who are the leading researchers of kindness? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching kindness? Is kindness desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching kindness?

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Love	Loving and being loved, valuing close relations with others, genuine warmth	Think of a time when you have enjoyed spending time with your teacher. What was the situation? How were relations between students and teachers fostered? And what do you think are the major characteristics that enable the teacher to truly know and understand other students?	Recall a time when you have seen your colleagues demonstrate close relationships with others they genuinely support on their learning journey. This could be between colleagues or teachers and students. What was the goal? What was the learning outcome? And what was the impact of professional practice overall?	Think of a time when you have been challenged to demonstrate love for your discipline? When do you think you have been the most in love with learning? When do you feel most alive? Is it when you're teaching the subject? Is it when you're preparing and in the process of getting ready to deliver complex ideas?	Who are the leading researchers of love? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching love? Is love desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching love?

Table 7.1 (continued)

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Social Intelligence	Aware of the motives and feelings of oneself and others, knowing what makes others tick	Think of a time when you have seen your teacher show significant social intelligence. Do they really seem to know how other students know and understand how to navigate through learning? What were the circumstances? How did you feel about your role as a learner? And what did you learn about yourself in the learning process?	Think about a time when you have seen your colleagues demonstrate awareness of the thoughts and feelings of others and navigate this effectively to achieve learning goals. How have they done this? When have they shown this most effectively? How have they been able to bring along people who are reluctant to engage in learning? What do you think about the major characteristics your colleagues demonstrate?	Think of a time when you have used your social intelligence in learning. When do you think you use this most often? Do you think you demonstrate greater social intelligence when working closely with colleagues or students? Why do you think this is the case? Do you show greater social intelligence with students with challenging circumstances? How do you think this impacts your professional practice?	Who are the leading researchers of social intelligence? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching social intelligence? Is social intelligence desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching social intelligence?

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
			Virtue: Justice		
Fairness	Adhering to principles of justice; not allowing feelings to bias decisions about others	Think of times when you have seen your teachers demonstrating fairness in their teaching. How has this impacted you as a learner? What do you think is the importance of this for your learning?	When have you seen your colleague demonstrate the principles of fairness during the learning process? Do you think they are their best at this? What skills do you think they demonstrate to mitigate against personal bites? How do they use evidence to inform professional practice?	Think of times when you've had to demonstrate fairness and equity during the learning process. What were you doing? When were you called upon to use your skills of fairness? How did you use evidence to support the decisions you made during the learning process? Were you invigorated by this?	Who are the leading researchers of fairness? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching fairness? Is fairness desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching fairness?

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Leadership	Organising group activities to get things done, positively influencing others	How do your teachers promote learning and a positive influence over others from a leadership lens? How do they organise groups to enable those who are leaders and also those who are followers to have a clear voice? What is the positive impact on your learning?	When have you seen your colleagues demonstrate leadership to promote positive learning? What did they do to promote leadership in others to create positive learning environments? How did they demonstrate the balance between leadership and followership in others to create positive learning cultures?	Think of times you worked with leaders who created positive learning environments. What did those leaders do to create positive learning cultures? How did they establish positive classrooms, and how did it make you feel? How does this influence your role within the professional practice of learning?	Who are the leading researchers of leadership? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching leadership? Is leadership desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching leadership?

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Teamwork	Citizenship, social responsibility, loyalty, contributing to a group effort	Recall a time when your teacher showed the ability to get teams to work really effectively. What did they do to promote teamwork? How did they encourage people who don't normally speak up to contribute? Has your teacher shown social responsibility and been able to promote teamwork? How has this impacted your learning?	When have you seen your colleagues working at their best in a team? What were they doing? How were they supporting the team? How did they achieve goals? How did they encourage others? What do you think is the most pivotal thing they did to enable others to understand the learning process?	When did you feel you were part of an optimal team? What were the main characteristics of the team? How did the team achieve its learning goals? What were the team's strengths? How did the team enable you to understand your role clearly to promote learning?	Who are the leading researchers of teamwork? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching teamwork? Is teamwork desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching teamwork?

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
			Virtue: Temperance		
Forgiveness	Mercy, accepting others' shortcomings, giving people a second chance, letting go of hurt	Think of a time when you have observed your teacher showing forgiveness, giving people a second chance in learning. How has this positively impacted your learning experience?	When have you seen your colleague forgive others to promote professional practice and learning? What do you think is the importance of the strength of forgiveness in the learning cycle? How do you think your colleague enables understanding the role of forgiveness in learning and professional practice?	Have you experienced the powerful role of forgiveness in the learning cycle? What role do you think forgiveness plays in the development of your professional identity and professional practice? Do you think forgiveness plays a role in developing positive student relationships? How do you promote forgiveness within the learning cycle with your students?	Who are the leading researchers of forgiveness? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching forgiveness? Is forgiveness desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching forgiveness?

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Humility	Modesty, letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves	When do you see your teacher at the most modest? What do you think is the role of modesty in your learning process? Do you think it helps you or is it hindering you?	Consider a time when you have seen your colleague demonstrating modesty. What was the situation? What were they doing? And how did the modesty link to their professional practice? Did their modesty elevate others?	Have you experienced humility in professional practice? What do you think is the significance of humility in promoting positive professional practice? How do you think this helps to promote a healthy profession?	Who are the leading researchers of humility? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching humility? Is humility desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching humility?

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Prudence	Careful about one's choices, cautious, not taking undue risks	When have you observed your teacher modelling prudence? How does this impact your knowledge and understanding of the process of learning? What do you think is the role of prudence in your learning cycle?	Have you seen your colleague use evidence to inform decision-making in professional practice? In doing so, how have you seen this approach demonstrates your college being careful about the choices they make in the learning cycle for professional practice?	Have you experienced the importance of being cautious about the choices you make in professional practice? Think of a time when you have used evidence to inform decision-making in your professional practice. What was the impact on the learning outcomes?	Who are the leading researchers of prudence? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching prudence? Is prudence desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching prudence?

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Self-Regulation	Self-control, disciplined, managing impulses, emotions, and vices	Self-control is one of the key elements for achieving goals in learning. When have you seen your teacher demonstrate significant self-control to achieve a long-term learning goal with your class? How has this impacted your understanding of how learning works? When do you think you self-regulate?	When have you seen your colleague demonstrate disciplined, self-controlled professional practice? What do they spend when working hard to achieve a learning goal with the class? Why has it been trying to achieve mastery of a key pedagogical approach?	When have you used self-control to manage your emotions to establish a positive class environment? When do you get to use self-control to achieve your own learning goals? What is the most challenging and invigorating element of this?	Who are the leading researchers of self-regulation? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching self-regulation? Is self-regulation desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching self-regulation?

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
			Virtue: Transcendence		
Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence	Awe and wonder for beauty, admiration for skill and moral greatness	Beauty appears in all sorts of ways in learning. It could be the beauty of mathematical equations, language, and poetry, or knowing and understanding the significance of historical events. When have you not seen evidence of discussion of beauty and appreciation and admiration for this in your learning? Do you think that has impacted the way you engage with your learning?	When have you seen your colleague at their best, demonstrating an appreciation of the beauty of the subject discipline? What were the circumstances? What was happening? Who was involved? And what was the impact on the learning environment?	Think about a time when you were excited by the beauty of your subject discipline. What were you studying? What did this tell you about you as a learner? What do you think is the link between your appreciation of the beauty of your subject discipline and how you approach your professional practice?	Who are the leading researchers of beauty and awe? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching beauty and awe? Is beauty and awe desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching beauty and awe?

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Gratitude	Thankful for the good, expressing thanks, feeling blessed	How has your teacher shown gratitude in the learning process? When do you feel most grateful in the process of learning? Have you felt grateful when you suddenly found you were able to progress in your learning? How does this impact the way you engage with learning?	When have you seen your colleague express gratitude for professional practice? When have they expressed gratitude and thanks for the students and the resources they have available to them? Have you seen your colleague express excitement and thanks for the learning process?	When have you felt most grateful to be a part of the teaching profession? What are you most grateful for in being a part of the lives of the students you teach? What energises you the most about the learning process?	Who are the leading researchers of gratitude? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to teaching gratitude? Is gratitude desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching gratitude?

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Hope	Optimism, positive future-mindedness, expecting the best, and working to achieve it	When have you seen your teacher demonstrating a positive future-mindedness? When do they show their greatest levels of optimism? How does this impact your learning? Do you think there is a link between the level of optimism that you experience in learning and your ability to achieve goals?	When have you seen your colleague demonstrate optimism for the profession? When have you seen them show future-mindedness for their students? When have you seen them show hopefulness? What is the implication for their professional practice?	When have you felt you are most optimistic in teaching? When have you felt most hopeful for your profession? When have you felt most energised and future-minded about the professional practice you undertake?	Who are the leading researchers of hope? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to hope? Is hope desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching hope?

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Humour	Playfulness, bringing smiles to others, light-hearted—seeing the lighter side	When have you had the most fun in class? Do you think your teacher is able to balance humour and hard work? What do you think is the importance of humour in your learning progress? Have you thought about how you can promote more humour in class?	When have you seen your colleague at their most playful? When have you seen them at their most light-hearted? How often does your colleague laugh? What do you think are the implications for your colleagues' professional practice and your team?	When do you feel most playful in your professional practice? When are you able to have the most fun in your teaching? When was the last time you had great fun teaching? What do you think is the implication for your professional practice when you're experiencing fun?	Who are the leading researchers of humour? Is it possible to adopt an evidence-based approach to humour? Is humour desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching humour?

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Strength	Description	Lens 1: Our students' eyes	Lens 2: Our colleagues' perceptions	Lens 3: Personal experience	Lens 4: Theory
Spirituality	Connecting with the sacred, purpose, meaning, faith, religiousness	Do you think spirituality has a role to play in the learning process? Have you seen your teacher having faith in you? How do you think this manifests in learning? Do you think this has a role at all?	When have you seen your colleague most connected with their purpose in teaching? When have you seen them deeply engaged in the calling of teaching? When have you seen them daring to lead in teaching? When do you see your colleague getting the greatest meaning out of a professional practice?	Where do you get your greatest meaning in teaching? What elements of teaching give you the greatest sense of meaning and accomplishment and professional practice? When do you think you have achieved your mission in teaching? When do you think you have connected your own learning experience with teaching?	Who are the leading researchers of spirituality in education? Is it possible to adopt a research-informed approach to spirituality? Is spirituality desirable in learning and teaching? What are the philosophical implications of teaching spirituality?

their colleagues. Using Lens 3, teachers are invited to reflect on their own experience, considering when they felt they demonstrated the strength while teaching, how they felt at that time, and what impact it had on their own journey as a learner. Lens 4 encourages teachers to connect with relevant scholarship and theory applicable to the strength, comparing and contrasting their own experiences with the theory, making sense of concepts that have been raised.

These questions aim to enable teachers to move from one type of professional practice to a more desired, strength-based approach. These questions have been designed to provoke discussion around the role of the teacher in professional practice, the part of the student in professional practice, the role of theory in professional practice, and also the teachers' own lived experience and ability to reflect on the decisions they make in learning. The questions encourage teachers to consider their role in learning, how they approach specific tasks, and how this impacts upon the experiences of students and their colleagues.

Throughout, participants are invited to reflect on evidence that supports claims made (by students, colleagues, and their own reflection), consider the impact on learning, and reflect upon their own practices. Many of the strengths are integrated into the positive education programs that teachers may be teaching within their school, so this process allows teachers to critically reflect upon the research, their own experience, and the perceptions of others. Teachers are also encouraged to consider how they demonstrate the strengths in their day-to-day teaching, as well as in the content they are exploring.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that positive education continues to be pedagogy in search of a practice (White, 2015). I theorised that one of the hurdles for the development of professional practice in the field is that teachers do not critically reflect on their professional practice fully. I argued that Brookfield's (2017) four lenses provide a robust approach for incorporating reflection into positive education practices. To support this, I introduced a strength-based model and related strategies. I argue that it is possible to achieve this goal over the next decade if researchers systematically investigate the experience of pre-service teachers, practising teachers of positive education, school managers, school leaders, and school governance. As "only then can the field adequately

put forward positive education as the heart of a new approach to pedagogy"
(White & Kern, 2018, p. 12).

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