



Certificate in

Wholebeing

Positive Psychology

Course Syllabus



Certificate in **Wholebeing** Positive Psychology

About

Bertrand Russell wrote, “The happiness that is genuinely satisfying is accompanied by the fullest exercise of our faculties and the fullest realization of the world in which we live.” The cultivation of our own potential is critical in order to realize it.

In this course, we study and apply the evidence-based research in positive psychology, neurobiology, and behavioral modification to cultivate self-leadership—the ability to pilot our life towards the good, towards our fullest realization.

In contrast with traditional psychology, which focuses on pathology—alleviating neuroses, anxiety, and depression—positive psychology focuses on individual and societal flourishing, on nurturing happiness, strengths, self-esteem, and optimism. Or, to paraphrase Russell, engaging our whole self.

Certificate in Wholebeing Positive Psychology (CiWPP)

The Certificate in Wholebeing Positive Psychology provides an introduction to the core concepts and fundamental principles of positive psychology, including its philosophical approach and its practical applications.

Through interactive online modules and webinars, group and faculty connections, and two residential immersions, the certificate program contributes to the well-being and success of the participant, and provides tools to help others fulfill their potential.

Throughout the 9-month course, participants explore the research and practice that make up the foundation of positive psychology. You engage in the processes and practices of positive psychology, and learn how to

- Develop self-efficacy and grounded optimism
- Apply the SPIRE model of well-being to increase appreciation for and application of a multifaceted view of thriving
- Identify, explore, and apply character strengths to engage your unique and best self
- Construct and live into a narrative that aims towards the ideal self
- Discover a higher purpose and set concrete goals in relation to that purpose
- Enhance positive emotions and navigate painful ones
- Build resilience and grit
- Cultivate healthy personal and professional relationships, and constructively work with conflict when it arises



Certificate in Wholebeing Positive Psychology

- Explore how positive psychology contributes to the art and science of self-leadership, and its relationship to leadership in all domains of life
- Bring lasting change to individuals and organizations.

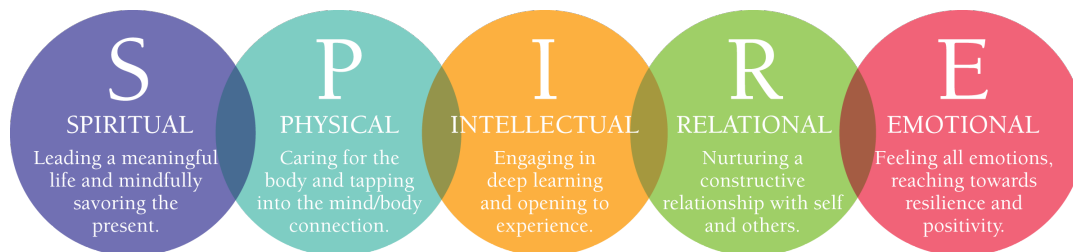
Philosophy

There are three legs that support transformational learning that sticks. These are central to the philosophy of the course.

The first is that flourishing is not just a neck-up, cognitive experience. The whole you must be engaged. This course extends the dimensions of positive psychology with a rare whole-person approach, guided by the SPIRE methodology.

The second leg of learning is application. You must use the tools, practicing to create new habits. The course is set up with that in mind, providing worksheets, peer-group discussions, and a project that deepens the application aspect.

The third leg is community—using a shared language, within a healthy environment, with people who want to see you succeed. The course connects the group through positive, constructive interactions.



Learning Objectives

Upon completing the course, participants are able to

- Understand the fundamental ideas of positive psychology and how these ideas can radically change the way we relate to ourselves and others
- Apply SPIRE as a means toward higher levels of whole-person well-being, increasing creativity, motivation, health, and overall success in individuals, groups, and organizations



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- Use a variety of scientifically proven techniques from the positive psychology, neurobiology, and mind-body toolboxes that can lead to lasting change rather than a temporary high
- Understand the key drivers of healthy and happy interpersonal relationships, and how to apply this understanding to one's own and others' relationships—cultivating positive relationships and constructively working with conflict when it arises
- Bring out the best in oneself and others by employing a strengths-based, appreciative approach in conversation, attitude, and behavior
- Systematically progress through an evidence-based process towards the realization of life goals and objectives
- Navigate challenges by using tools that build resilience when times are smooth, and reinforce a resilient response when times are tough.

Who Should Take This Course

This course is specifically for, but not limited to, social workers, psychologists, coaches, allied health professionals, yoga teachers, schoolteachers, managers, and those wanting personal growth and development across all domains of life.

CiWPP is suitable for those interested in

- Introducing positive psychology into organizations, from schools to businesses
- Improving their leadership and/or parenting capabilities
- Realizing more of their own and others' potential for well-being and success
- Facilitating workshops and conducting lectures in the field of positive psychology
- Becoming a better coach, mentor, or change agent (please note that this program does not offer coaching certification).

Requirements

Prerequisite: Before being admitted into the certificate course, students must complete [Module 1: Introduction to Wholebeing Happiness](#).

To complete and graduate from the certificate course, participants must

- Attend the two 5-day residential immersions
- Participate in at least 85 percent of the contact hours
- Complete the final project
- Complete a course evaluation.



Certificate in Wholebeing Positive Psychology

Program Dates

Find course dates at wholebeinginstitute.com/cipp.

Design

The certificate course includes 125 hours, comprising two 5-day residential immersions; seven online pre-recorded lectures (Module 1 is a prerequisite); two webinars with faculty for each online module; peer-group sessions; video interviews with subject matter experts from the field; and a final project. The course also includes homework and reading assignments, as well as development of a personal home practice to reinforce learning. We estimate that participants will spend a total of four to six hours weekly on coursework and webinars.

For each online module, requirements include watching the video lectures, reading assigned material, completing the worksheets, participating in small-group work, and completing a reflection that shows understanding and application of the content.

Here's an example of the weekly content flow (not including worksheets, reflections, and reading).

Module	Content	Time
Week 1	Video Lesson 1	0.25
	Video Lesson 2	0.25
	Video Interview	0.1
	Video Interview	0.1
Week 2	Peer Meeting	1
	Video Lesson 3	0.25
	Video Lesson 4	0.25
	Video Interview	0.1
Week 3	Video Interview	0.1
	Live Faculty Webinar	1
	Video Lesson 5	0.25
	Video Lesson 6	0.25
Week 4	Video Interview	0.1
	Video Interview	0.1
	Peer Meeting	1
	Video Lesson 7	0.25
	Video Lesson 8	0.25
	Video Interview	0.1
	Video Interview	0.1
	Live Faculty Webinar	1
	Video Wrap-Up	0.25
	Hours	7.05

Residential Immersions

The weekly learning schedule has a total of 40 hours, including class time, yoga and movement, and healthy, nutritious meals. Components of the immersions include experiential exercises, journaling, discussion of material, and firsthand practice in teaching, coaching, and presenting positive psychology precepts. Peer study groups are formed at the first immersion, about halfway through the week. The study groups are designed to help you learn, to give you opportunities to apply what you have learned, and to provide support, accountability, and feedback.

Reading List

The course reading consists of books and academic articles that directly support the video lectures. They are recommended (not required) for developing an in-depth understanding of positive psychology, as well as a basis for supporting the final project.

We expect students to be well read in the material that most calls to them. They may explore some resources more fully than others. Students are given freedom within the recommended readings to delve into those that best suit their personal and professional interests.

Course books can be purchased online. Links are provided for most articles. Those that have copyright restrictions can be purchased online via a link provided in the virtual classroom. We anticipate that students will spend \$200–\$250 on reading materials.

Final Project

The final project (also known as the Forever Project because it's meant to engage curiosity and exploration well beyond the end of the course) is a 20-minute presentation on any topic within the field of positive psychology. The topic can be one that's covered in class, but it doesn't have to be. Whatever interests the student most—meaning, success, well-being in the workplace, happiness, relationships, humor, creativity, spirituality, and so on.

The presentation is an opportunity to bridge the gap between the Ivory Tower and Main Street, to synthesize between rigor and fun, between research and accessibility. It should refer to empirical work from journals and articles mentioned or recommended in class, as well as others.

This is an expression of what the student finds interesting and compelling. The project is not graded; completion is a requirement of graduation.

Module 1: Introduction to Positive Psychology

Prerequisite for the certificate course

This module introduces key principles from the diverse sciences of optimal human functioning, including positive psychology, neurobiology, and the social and behavioral sciences. The research is integrated through the SPIRE model of well-being. Students are introduced to the concept of aiming towards an ideal self, the advantages of a positive focus, the five perspectives of well-being, how to engage character strengths and appreciation, and using evidence-based tools to make lasting change.

Module 2: What Makes Us Happy(er)?

This module begins by defining happiness as the overall experience of meaning, strengths, and pleasure. Students are then introduced to the theory and practice of a growth vs. a fixed mindset, and the related concept of a growth heartset. Topics covered include full-body engagement, finding flow, identifying our purpose, detecting meaning (even in the mundane), and appreciative inquiry.

Module 3: On-site Residential Immersion

This module moves the class from an online experience to a community of support, setting the stage for the group work to come. Peer groups of six are created during this time, and students leave with a plan of action for instituting positive habits through the 30-day practice and a group-determined structure for peer communications. Topics covered and practiced include a deeper dive into values and ideal self, effective listening, resilience, mind-body practices, systems thinking, and reminders for successful habit change.

Module 4: Moving Towards Your Best Self

This module focuses on self-compassion, habits, habit change, and expanding the use of character strengths to make those habits stick. Prioritizing positivity and the mind-body link will be discussed, using the body for biofeedback to manage stress and procrastination, and enjoying the process of change rather than fighting it with willpower. Drawing on the latest research in neuroscience, the ABCs of psychology (affect, behavior, cognition), and the SPIRE check-in, students learn how to engage the whole mind-body towards the best.

Module 5: Living and Working Well with Others

You don't live in a vacuum. Your best self comes alive through interactions with others—through your relationships. Relationships are the number-one generator of well-being; gone awry, they produce pain and misery. Done right, positive relationships are key to positivity and wholebeing. This module looks at relationships as ways of

expressing who you are and who you want to be, and as opportunities to grow both your own and others' potential, increasing the bond you share—whether as lovers, friends, family, teammates, or colleagues. We study and practice lovingkindness meditation, and explore the topics of authenticity, effective communication, the importance of listening and appreciation, and how to effectively deal with the energy of conflict.

Module 6: Realizing Dreams

We all have dreams and aspirations; however, most people's dreams remain unrealized. This module looks at how we can cultivate the seed of hope and help it flourish. Topics covered include beliefs as self-fulfilling prophecies, setting goals, the CHANGE model to map the process, raising our belief in ourselves through action, visualization and priming (including a common mistake people make in visualizing), focusing on personal strengths, and learning from failure.

Module 7: Resilience and Grit

Life has challenges, difficulties, death, and dying. As the Buddha said, life is suffering. Big or small, difficult times cannot be avoided. We can understand, practice, and build the skills of resilience, increasing our capacity to adapt. Topics covered include implicit wholeness (how we can be both broken and whole), post-traumatic growth, the tools of resilience and grit, and bringing alive the archetypal wisdom found in the stories and poetry of those who have chosen a meaningful quest.

Module 8: Choosing and Realizing Your Best Life

At every moment in our lives, we have a choice. Moments add up to a lifetime; choices add up to a life. This module summarizes the material presented in the previous seven through examining the choices that we make—from major choices, such as deciding on the kind of work we want to pursue or the kind of person we want to spend our lives with; to minor choices, such as the physical posture we assume when walking into a room or the way we respond to a request from a colleague. It is through these choices—major and minor—that we become co-creators of our reality.

Module 9: On-site Residential Immersion

In this final module, participants move from students to teachers—by synthesizing and summarizing what is personally most compelling to them about positive psychology via the final project, and presenting to a small group of peers. This module emphasizes the concept of serving it forward—sharing with others the key lessons learned, the "power of one," and the ripple effect of modeling the work. This way, even as our class ends, our impact continues to grow, and we come to understand the paradox of endings as beginnings.