

# Strategies for Promoting College Students' Mental Health Based on Positive Psychology

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**Abstract:** This paper addresses college students' mental health issues and explores positive psychology's application in promoting it. It expounds positive psychology's core concepts and students' common mental health problems, analyzing its role in enhancing well-being, emphasizing strengths, fostering relationships, and building meaning. Through campus cases, it proposes multi-level strategies for schools, teachers, and students. The study confirms positive psychology offers new perspectives, with highly applicable strategies vital for improving students' mental health.

**Keywords:** positive psychology, college students, mental health, promotion strategies

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, with the intensification of social competition and the acceleration of the pace of life, the mental health issues of college students have received extensive attention from all sectors of society. Multiple factors such as academic pressure, interpersonal relationship troubles, confusion about career development, and economic pressure have made the college student group face many psychological challenges[1]. Relevant survey data show that some college students have varying degrees of psychological problems such as anxiety and depression, which seriously affect their study, life, and physical and mental health development[2]. Mental health problems not only restrict the growth and talent cultivation of college students but also have a potential impact on the talent cultivation quality of colleges and universities and social harmony and stability. Therefore, it is urgent to explore effective strategies for promoting the mental health of college students[3].

## 2. Definition of Related Concepts

### 2.1 Basic Connotations of Positive Psychology

Positive psychology takes Seligman's PERMA model of "five elements" as its core theoretical framework. PERMA stands for Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment respectively. Positive emotions emphasize cultivating individuals' positive emotional experiences such as joy, satisfaction, and pride, which can broaden individuals' thinking and behavior patterns and enhance psychological resilience. Engagement refers to individuals' full immersion in certain activities and obtaining the experience of flow, thus improving their sense of well-being. Relationships emphasize the importance of a good social support network for mental health, and positive interpersonal relationships can provide individuals with emotional support and a sense of belonging. Meaning refers to individuals' cognition and pursuit of life goals and values, giving life a sense of meaning. Accomplishment reflects the sense of achievement and self-efficacy that individuals obtain through efforts to achieve their goals. These five elements are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, jointly forming the cornerstone of individuals' happiness and mental health.

### 2.2 Types of Common Psychological Problems of College Students

College students' common psychological problems are diverse. Emotionally, anxiety (triggered by academic pressure and career uncertainty) and depression (linked to interpersonal conflicts or family changes) are prominent. In interpersonal communication, issues like social phobia and loneliness hinder building close relationships. Academically, low motivation and improper methods cause excessive pressure, leading to learning weariness and avoidance. Additionally, self-cognitive biases and campus adaptation difficulties also impact their mental health to varying degrees.

### 2.3 Definition and Scope of Mental Health Promotion

Mental health promotion goes beyond treating psychological diseases, focusing on prevention and enhancing psychological qualities. It aims to create a supportive environment via diverse methods to improve psychological adjustment abilities and foster overall development. Covering individual self-adjustment, school-level courses/activities, and social support systems, it emphasizes comprehensive measures to boost mental health.

### **3. The Role of Positive Psychology in Promoting the Mental Health of College Students**

#### **3.1 Enhancing Well-being and Psychological Resilience**

Positive psychology methods like gratitude exercises and positive diaries boost college students' well-being and resilience. Gratitude exercises guide students to focus on life's positives by recording daily thanks, cultivating positive emotions and improving satisfaction. Positive diaries strengthen positive experiences by documenting them. Sustained practice forms positive thinking, helping students better regulate emotions, enhance resilience, and face challenges optimistically.

#### **3.2 Emphasizing Individual Strengths and a Sense of Value**

Positive psychology focuses on guiding college students to discover and leverage their own strengths. Through activities such as strength identification and self-affirmation training, it helps students recognize their unique features and potential abilities. When students clearly understand their strengths and apply them in learning and life, they can obtain a sense of achievement and self-confidence, thus enhancing their sense of self-worth. For example, organizing students to conduct strength assessments allows students to clarify their strengths in creativity, leadership, communication skills, and other aspects, and encourages students to give full play to their strengths in team projects and community activities, continuously strengthening their self-value recognition and reducing self-doubt and inferiority complex.

#### **3.3 Promoting Interpersonal Relationships and a Sense of Belonging**

Positive psychology promotes college students' interpersonal relationships and belonging via group activities and positive communication. Group tasks enhance mutual understanding, teamwork, and interpersonal skills. Positive communication — using encouraging language and respecting others — fosters harmony. Such relationships offer emotional support, reducing loneliness and social anxiety while boosting campus belonging.

#### **3.4 Encouraging the Establishment of a Sense of Meaning and Purpose**

Positive psychology encourages college students to establish a sense of meaning and purpose through life education, career planning counseling, and other channels. Life education guides students to think about the value and meaning of life, helping students establish correct outlooks on life and values, and making them realize the significance of their existence. Career planning counseling combines students' interests, strengths, and social needs to assist students in formulating reasonable career development goals and developing specific action plans to achieve these goals. When students clearly define their life goals and directions, they can enhance their motivation for learning and life, reduce confusion and bewilderment, and invest in college life with a more positive attitude.

### **4. Brief Investigation or Case Analysis of Current Implementation Strategies in Colleges and Universities**

#### **4.1 Introduction to the Positive Psychology Curriculum Setting in a Certain College**

A college offers a public elective positive psychology course centered on the PERMA model. It covers modules: cultivating positive emotions via emotional management training, fostering engagement through flow-experience activities, enhancing relationships with group projects, exploring meaning via life education, and promoting accomplishment by encouraging goal-setting. Using lectures, case analysis, and group discussions, the course is popular. A post-course survey shows over 80% of students report improved mental states and enhanced well-being.

#### **4.2 Description of the Effectiveness of Certain Group Counseling Activities or Psychological Workshops**

A college holds regular positive psychology-themed group counseling and workshops. The "Discovering Strengths" activity helps students recognize and leverage their strengths through assessments and sharing, boosting confidence and problem-solving skills, with many reporting increased self-assurance. The "Gratitude and Happiness" workshop uses meditation, letter-writing, and sharing to cultivate gratitude, enhancing life satisfaction and alleviating anxiety/depression. Participants note deeper appreciation for surroundings and improved mental well-being.

#### **4.3 Student Feedback or Teacher Observation**

From student feedback and teacher observation, positive psychology courses and activities have yielded notable results. A student noted learning to recognize strengths and practice gratitude, shifting from anxiety to optimism. Teachers observed

increased classroom engagement, harmonious relationships, and stronger learning motivation post-activities. Such feedback and observations confirm positive psychology concepts effectively enhance college students' mental health, demonstrating their practical positive impact.

## 5. Feasible Strategies and Suggestions

### 5.1 At the School Level

Schools should integrate positive psychology into mental health education. They can organize themed activities like cultural festivals and psychological drama performances to foster a positive campus atmosphere. Meanwhile, embed positive psychology into the curriculum system — offer public electives and infuse concepts into courses like ideological education and career planning. Additionally, strengthen teacher training on positive psychology to enhance their ability to conduct mental health education.

### 5.2 At the Teacher Level

Teachers should apply positive psychology in teaching and management. Actively listen to students, respect individual differences, and create a supportive classroom environment. When students face setbacks, provide encouragement, affirm efforts, and guide positive problem-solving — e.g., analyzing exam failures while praising progress. Integrate methods like group learning and achievable tasks into teaching to help students experience achievement and self-efficacy.

### 5.3 At the Student Level

Students should proactively explore themselves and use positive psychology self-help tools. They can learn its concepts via books and online courses, and apply tools like gratitude diaries to cultivate positive emotions and goal-setting to boost self-management. Meanwhile, actively participating in school mental health and community activities helps develop interpersonal skills, expand social support networks, and promote mental health.

## 6. Conclusions

Positive psychology offers new perspectives and theoretical support for college students' mental health promotion. Its core concepts like focusing on strengths and cultivating positive emotions align with students' needs. Analyses and campus cases show its mental health strategies are highly operable, with multi-level approaches for schools, teachers and students providing practical guidelines for mental health education.

## References

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