

Introduction



Before we start



About you

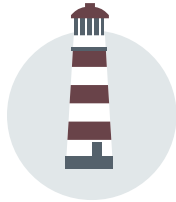
1 minute intro



Overview

- Chapter 1: Introducing PP
- Chapter 2: Second Wave PP
- Chapter 3: The Sailboat Metaphor

PowerPoint presentation labels



for
practitioners



individual
exercise



group
exercise



exercise
in pairs



page of
exercise
in workbook

1



Introducing Positive Psychology

History of PP

- roots in humanistic Psychology (50's)
- a holistic approach to human existence
- meaning, values, freedom, personal responsibility, human potential
- e.g. Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers & Rollo May



History of PP

- reaction to behaviourism & psycho-analysis
- problem: lack of rigorous methodology
- success in self-help area, not at universities
- philosophy rather than psychology
- PP: approach of humanistic psychology, but with scientific methodology

Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi (2000, p. 5)

”

“Psychology has, since World War II, become a science largely about healing. It concentrates on repairing damage within a disease model of human functioning.”

A focus on weakness

?

“What is wrong with people?”

A focus on weakness

?

“Which factors impair human functioning?”

A focus on weakness

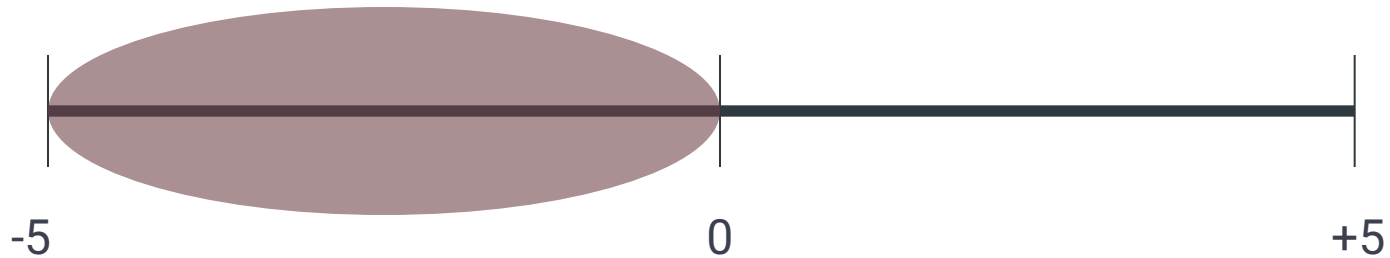
Psychological Abstracts (1967-2000):

- anger: 5,584
- anxiety: 41,416
- depression: 54,040
- joy: 415
- happiness: 1,710
- life satisfaction: 2,582

Ratio: 21/1

Chapter 1 – Introducing Positive Psychology

A focus on weakness



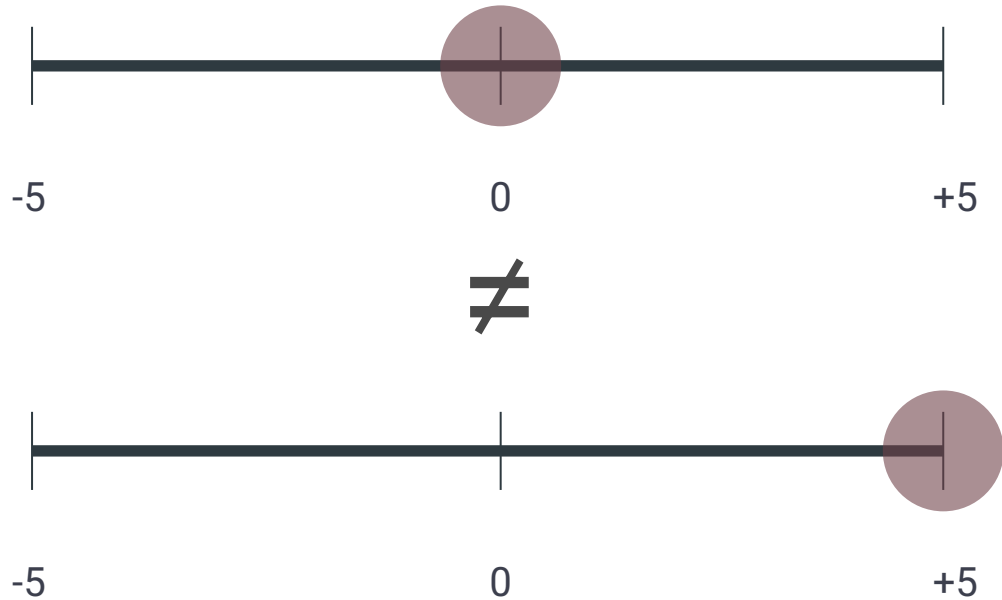
Misconceptions about weaknesses

misconception no #1:

fixing what is wrong automatically leads to well-being

- positive affect and negative affect are not on the same continuum
- getting rid of anger, fear, and depression will not automatically cause peace, love, and joy
- the absence of mental illness does not imply the presence of mental health (and vice versa)

Misconceptions about weaknesses



Misconceptions about weaknesses

misconception no #2:

effective coping is reflected by a reduction of negative states

e.g. it is not the absence of stress that is related to successful weight maintenance, but rather the ability to effectively deal with stress

Misconceptions about weaknesses

misconception no #3:

a weakness focus can help to prevent problems

- When it comes to prevention, the question should **not** be “How can we treat people with problem X effectively?”, but “How can problem X be prevented from occurring?”
- “Why do people suffer from problem X?” vs “Why do some people flourish despite difficult circumstances?”

A focus on strengths



Martin Seligman

“Positive Psychology is the scientific study of optimal human functioning that aims to discover and promote the factors that allow individuals and communities to thrive.”

A focus on strengths

?

“What is right about people?”

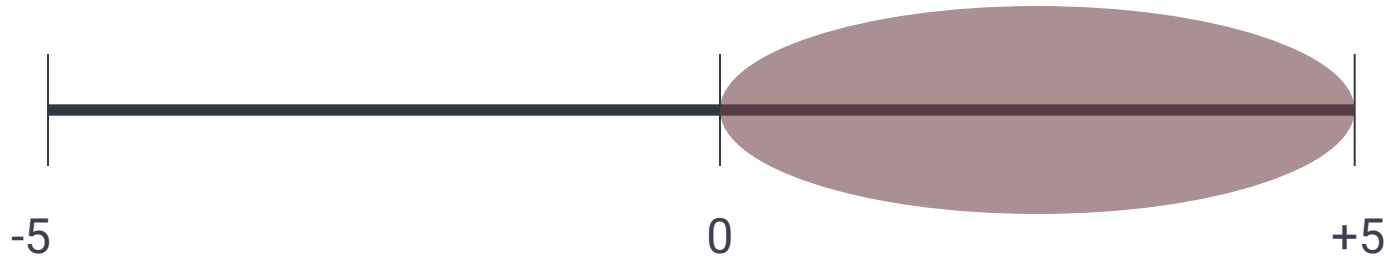
A focus on strengths

?

“Which factors promote human flourishing?”

Chapter 1 – Introducing Positive Psychology

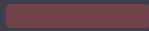
A focus on strengths



Critical notes

- ignoring weakness will not promote well-being
- PP is an addition to the field, not a replacement
- “negative” psychology does not exist
- psychology reaches far beyond the subdomains of psychopathology and clinical psychology
- many studies on well-being before 2000

2



Second Wave Positive Psychology

Held (2004)

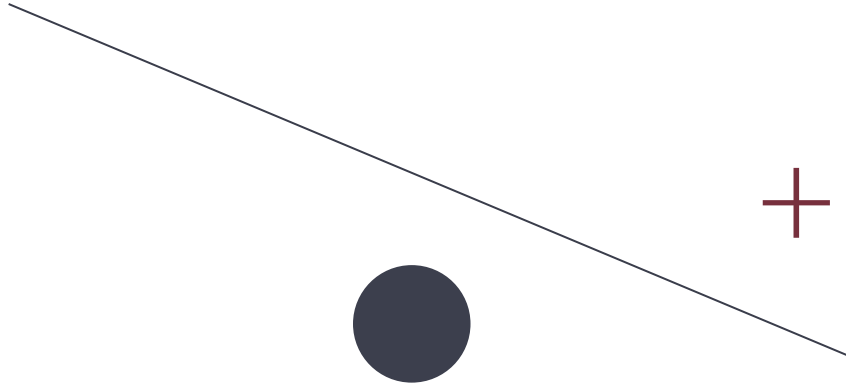
”

“Positive psychology has presented itself as a separate field of psychology which is characterised by a “negativity about negativity itself.”

PP 1.0

—

—



- the good life
- positive experiences
- positive thinking
- positive behaviour

PP 2.0


—

+


- the meaningful life
- negative can create positive
- positive can create negative

- the good life
- positive experiences
- positive thinking
- positive behaviour


PP 1.0: Subjective well-being



life
satisfaction



positive
affect



negative
affect

PP 2.0: Psychological well-being

self-acceptance

environmental mastery

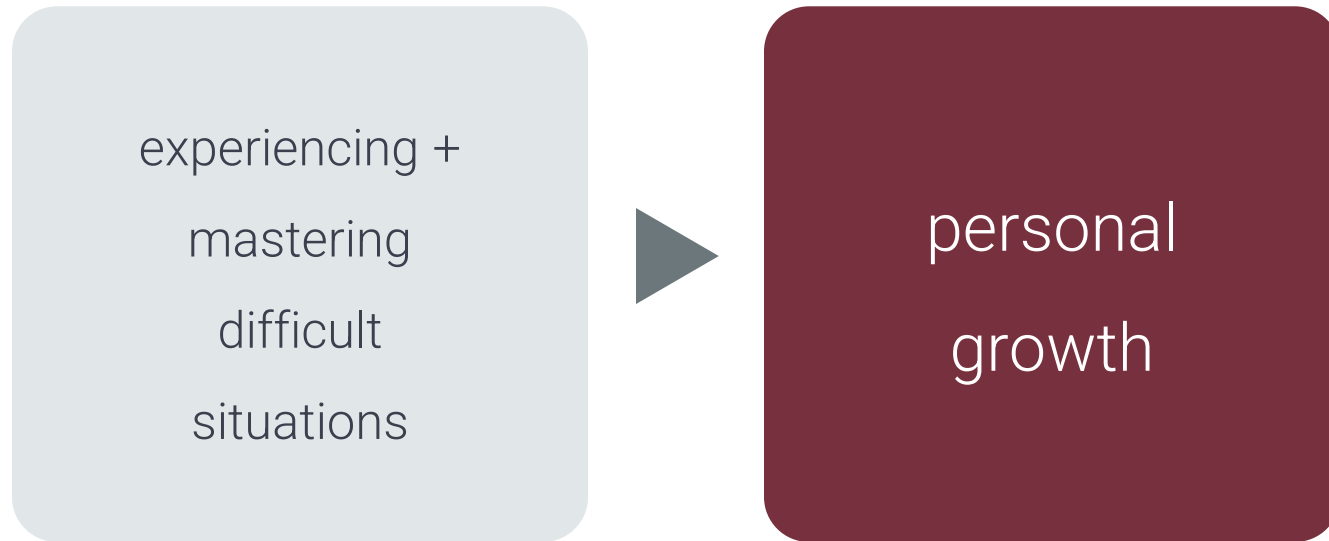
purpose in life

positive relationships

personal growth

autonomy

Negative can create positive



Positive can create negative

- positive thinking can be a form of avoidance and can reduce well-being
- the paradoxical search for happiness and meaning
- overuse of strengths: e.g. extreme levels of optimism related with maladaptive risk-taking

PP 2.0 in practice

“I saw this big piece of marble,
saw David, and the only thing I
needed to do was to remove
the pieces that were
unnecessary”

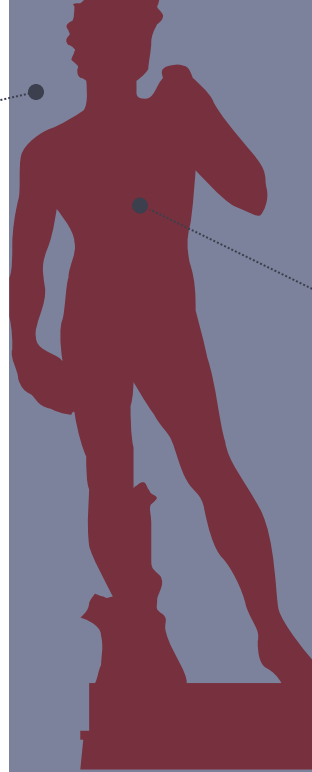
- Michelangelo



PP 2.0 in practice

awareness of factors that obscure authenticity and agency

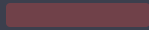
engaging in **behaviour** that reduces the impact of these factors



awareness of factors that represent authenticity and agency

engaging in **behaviour** that increases authenticity and agency

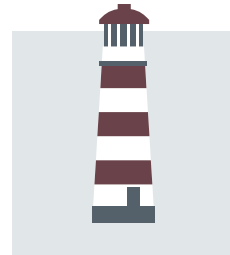
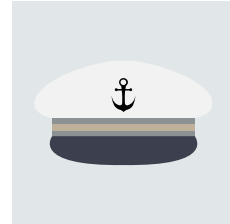
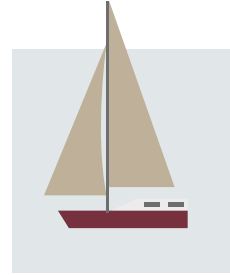
3



The Sailboat Metaphor

The sailboat metaphor

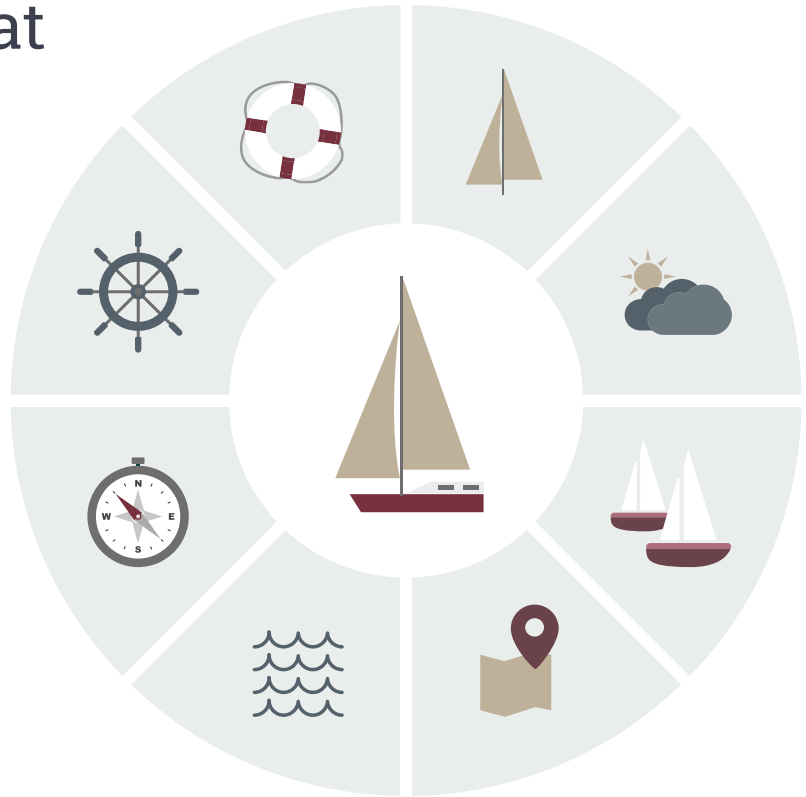
- compares human functioning to a captain with a sailboat and its journey
- 3 components: boat, captain & lighthouse
- autonomy, authenticity, resilience



Why this metaphor?

1. adding **structure** to the ‘conceptual jungle’ of PP
2. creating a **balanced** approach to human functioning
3. creating an **intuitive** and **profound** framework for teaching and practicing PP

The 8 elements of the boat

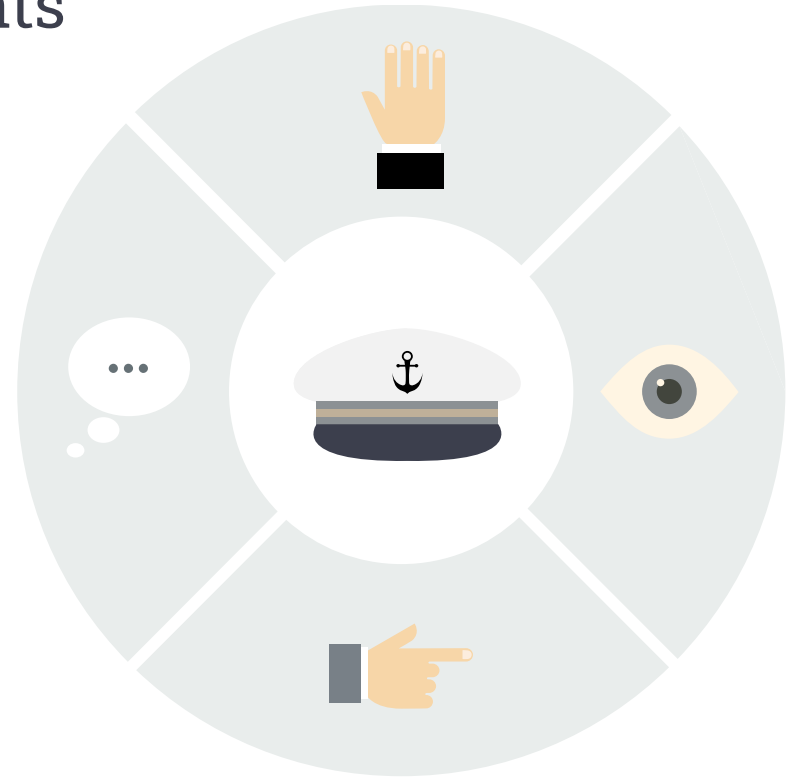


The Captain

- 'master' of the boat
- interacts with the other elements
- relates to the other elements
- symbol of autonomy



The Captain: 4 key elements

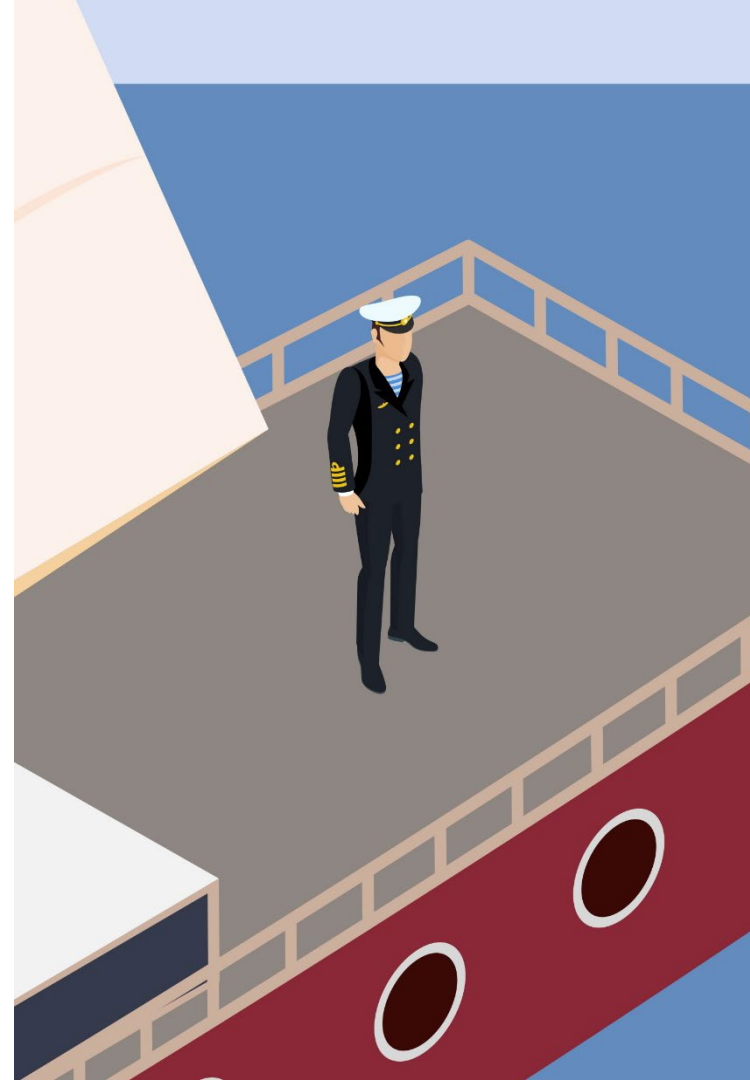


Chapter 3 – The Sailboat Metaphor

The captain: Study aid

acronym: ATMA

Hinduism: the personal soul or self;
the thinking principle as manifested in
consciousness

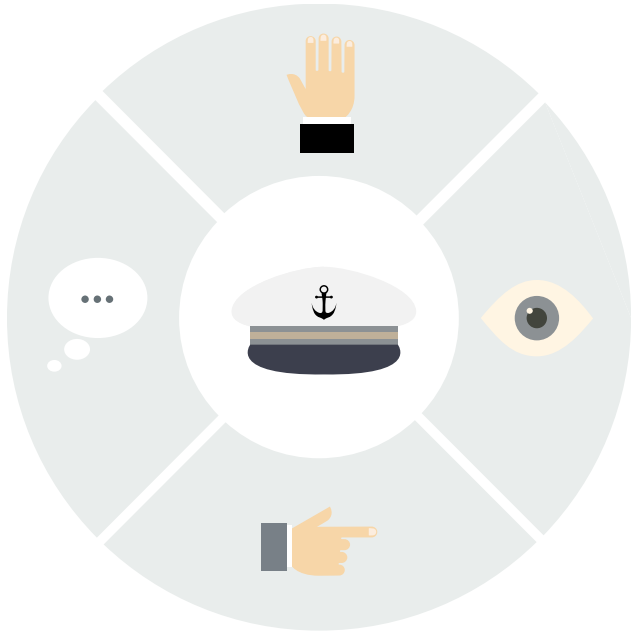


Important note

- every person is a captain
- regardless of skin colour, background, religion, etc.



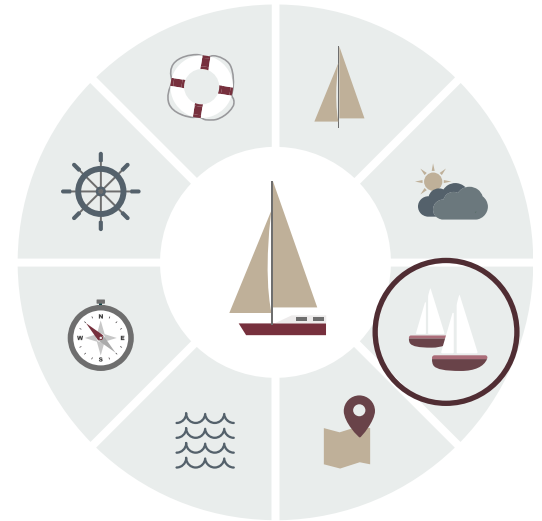
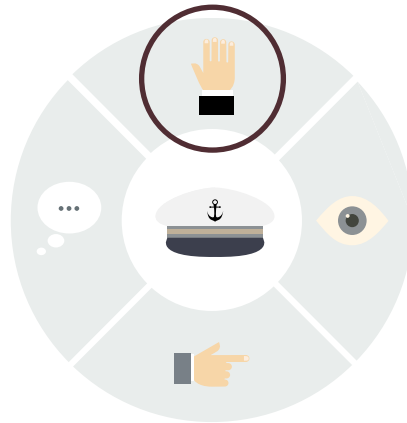
The captain and the sailboat



Example concept translation

resiliency:

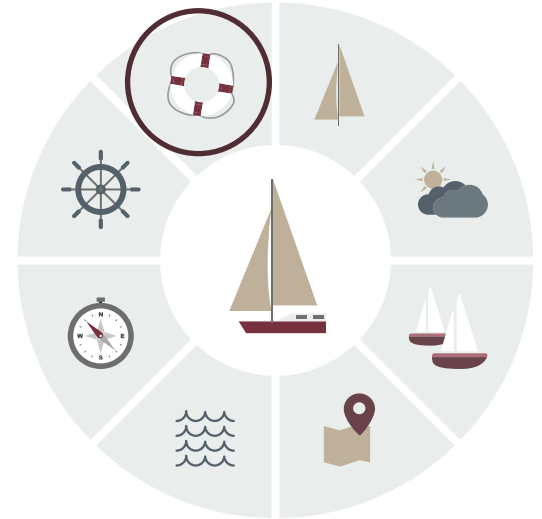
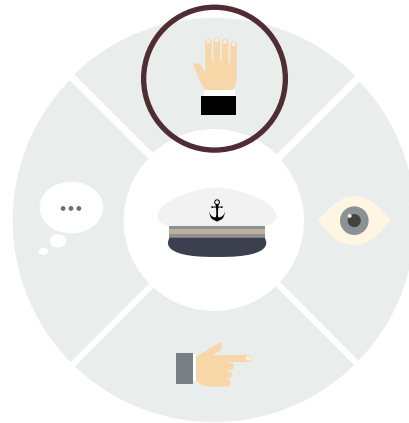
making use of social
support



Example concept translation

resiliency:

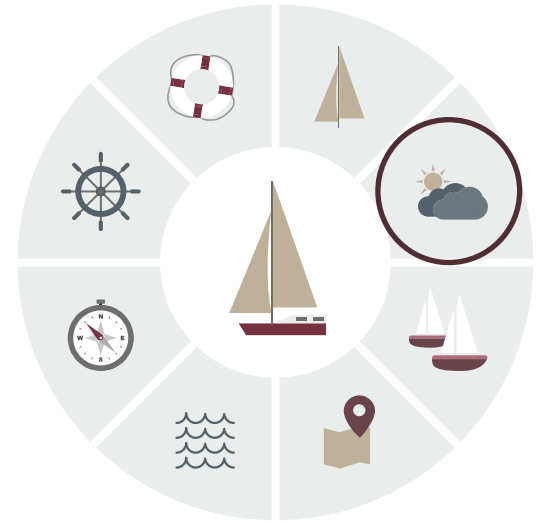
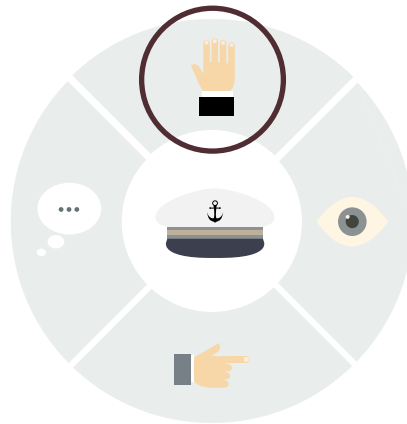
dealing with internal
stressors



Example concept translation

resiliency:

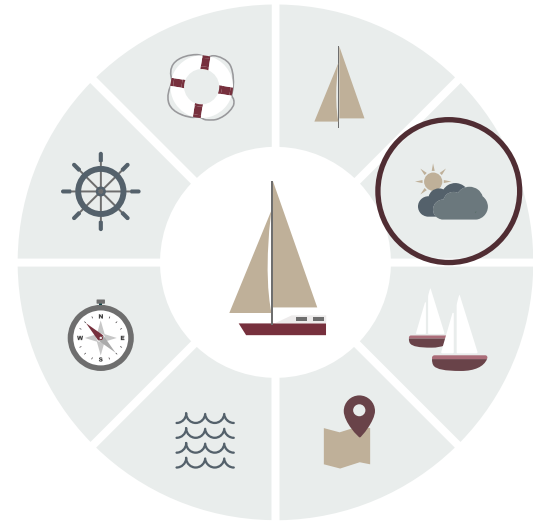
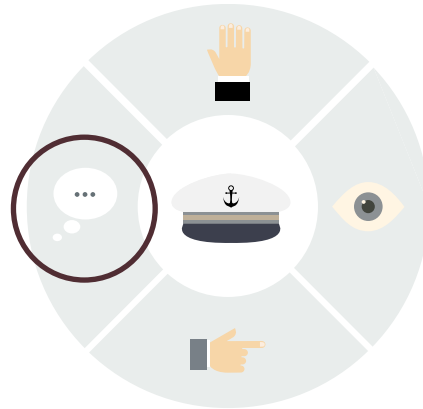
dealing with external
stressors



Example concept translation

resiliency:

cognitively re-appraising
stressful events as less
threatening



Translate to sailboat



How can the following indications of *low* well-being be translated to the sailboat metaphor?

- lack of meaning in life
- inability to deal with difficult events

Translate to sailboat



How can the following indications of *high* well-being be translated to the sailboat metaphor?

- personal strengths used at work
- positive beliefs about the ability to reach goals

Advantages for clients

- offers a “safe” way to describe experiences
- a more holistic view of clients (rather than leak focus only)
- allows clients to take a meta perspective on themselves

Interpreting client responses



”

“I don’t feel like my boat is moving. It is floating in one place, bobbing on the waves.”

Interpreting client responses



”

“I feel like I am sailing in a direction that other sailors want me to sail.”

Interpreting client responses



”

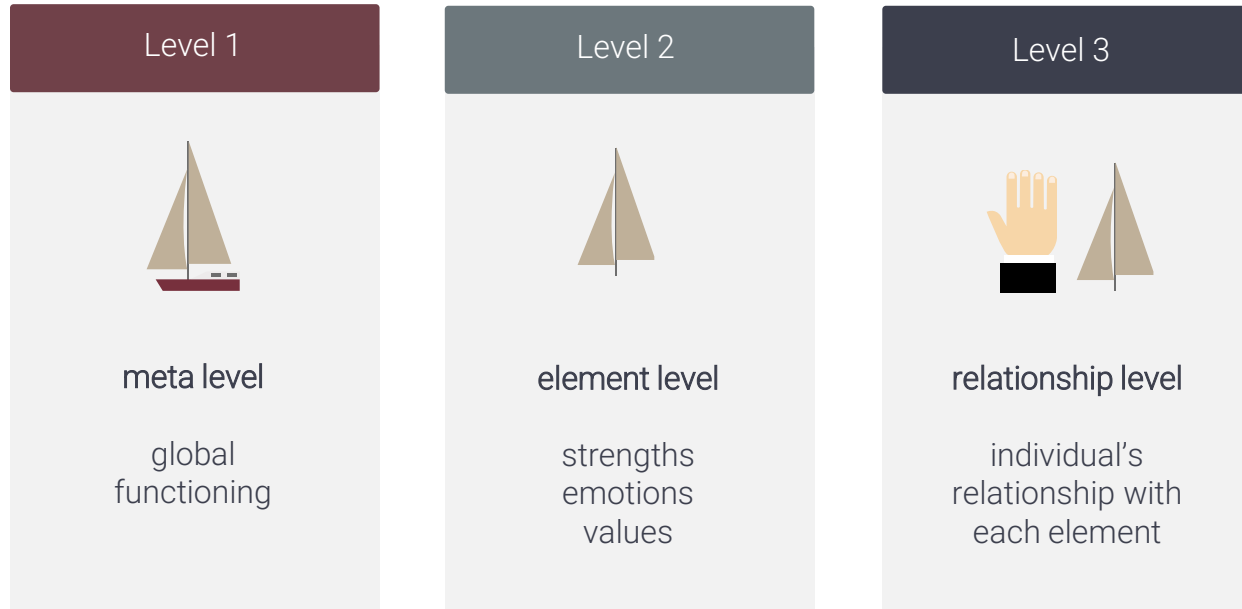
“I am afraid that my boat will not withstand the stormy weather that is coming.”

The status of your sailboat



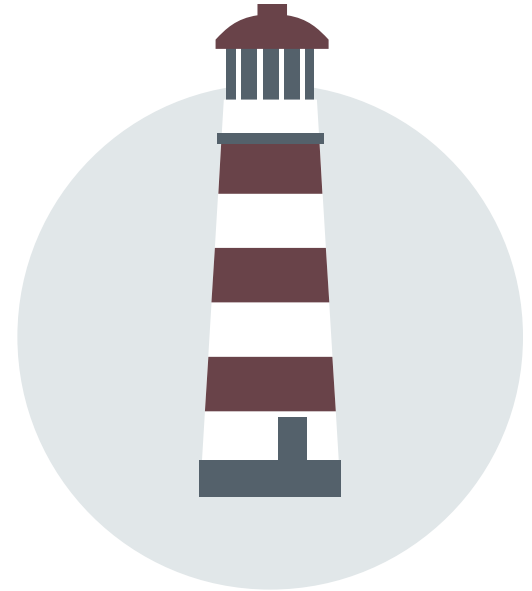
In pairs, use the sailboat metaphor to describe how you are currently doing. What is the current status of your sailboat? How would you describe your current journey? Try to speak as much as possible in terms of the different elements of the sailboat and their interaction.

3 levels of analysis



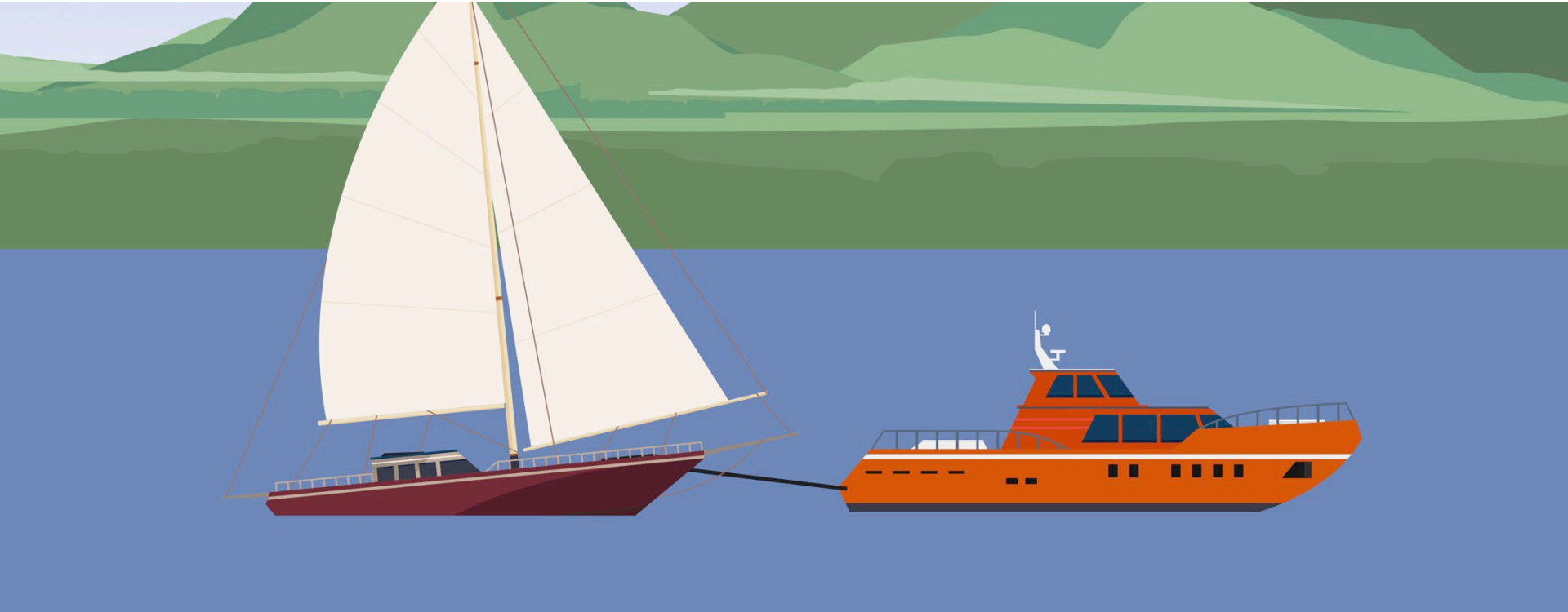
The Lighthouse

- practitioner
- temporary aid on journey
- operates in service of boat's journey
- clarifies current position of boat
- clarifies environment of boat



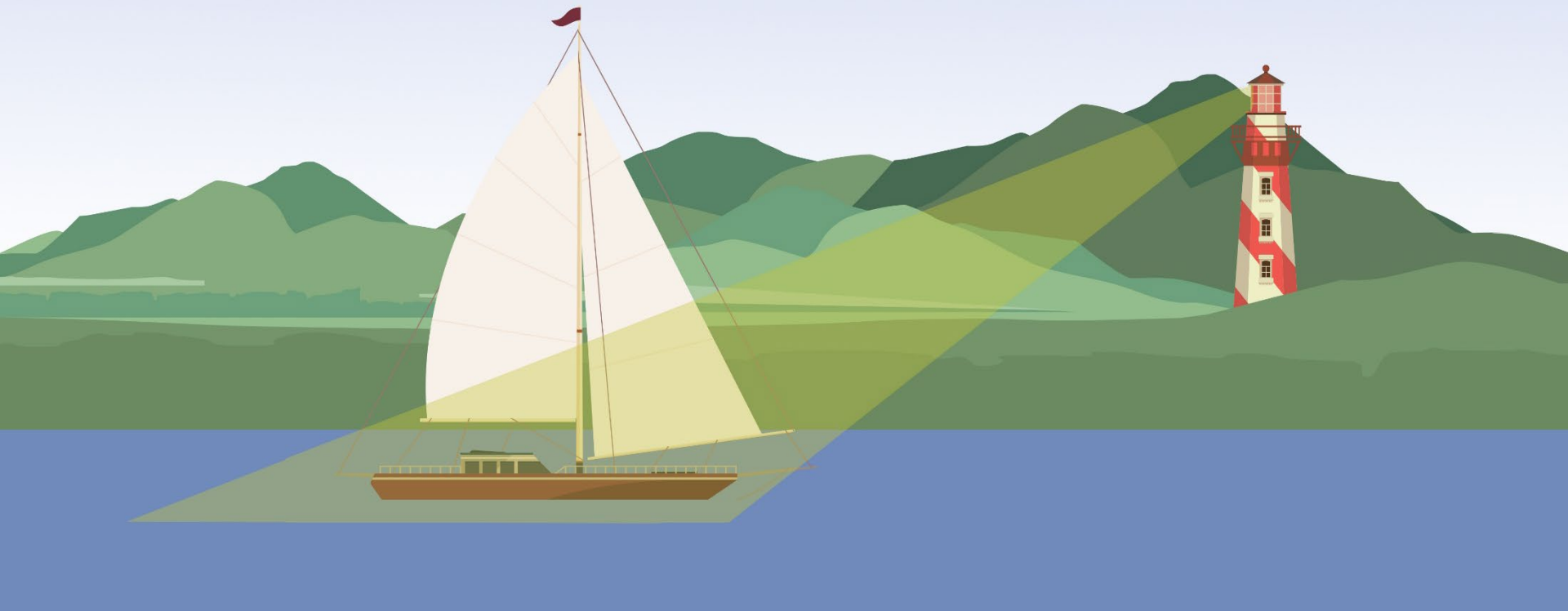
Chapter 3 – The Sailboat Metaphor

The Lighthouse



Chapter 3 – The Sailboat Metaphor

The Lighthouse



Critical notes

- “the map is not the territory”
- a model, not reality
- reduction of endless complexity
- many different ways to map concepts

Thanks



for your attention