

Title: Inclusive Positivity as a Model of Authentic Wellbeing

Manami OZAKI

The purpose of this presentation is to introduce “Inclusive Positivity”, a model of authentic wellbeing realized through transcendental perspective and to show Morininaru is a practice of inclusive positivity based on my research.

Inclusive positivity was born in the field of positive psychology to add the holistic and culture sensitive worldview to the traditional concept of happiness and wellbeing from Japan. Inclusive positivity connects and integrates the two controversial phenomena such as growing positively through negative occasions. Inclusive positivity is also explained as authentic wellbeing. Authentic wellbeing could be the opposite state of common happiness, such as being thankful for the negative events and joy of giving rather than acquiring. This authentic wellbeing is realized by circulating two poles such as positivity and negativity, self and others.

I will first illustrate two of my research outcomes, as examples of inclusive positivity. One is about PTG (Posttraumatic growth) studies on Japanese students after 311 earth quake/tsunami disaster. Another is about the students’ authentic wellbeing by their pro-social movement of “Pay it forward”.

500 Japanese Students’ PTG (Posttraumatic growth) after 311 was investigated focusing the relation between PTG and the negative emotions, and their attribution style. The results showed that the students who experienced more grief and sorrow had higher PTG than those who showed less negative emotions. The students who had higher PTG showed gratitude to the situations despite of the damage. The highest group of PTG had the personalized attribution style (which is defined as pessimism by Seligman) at the negative event, and the least group of PTG had the outer attribution style, the optimistic group which does not take responsibility for the bad events. These results suggest that the pessimistic attitude could be more adaptive at the moment of crisis, and that the pain contributes to growth. Therefore, PTG is well explained as an inclusive positivity.

Another example of inclusive positivity is revealed through a students’ pro-social movement. Inspired by the movie “Pay it forward”, two of my seminar students conducted an intervention program for the students to cultivate pro-social behavior. 26 of the psychology-major students watched the movie “Pay it forward”, and asked to do non-rewarding pro-social actions, to write weekly journals about their experiences for four weeks. The assessments were done by two-dimensional mood scale and the life satisfaction scale at the beginning and at the end of the intervention

program with free writings. The positive mood and life satisfaction were significantly raised after the program. According to their free writings, watching the movie impressed the students to motivate pro-social behavior, but did not lead them to start it actually. Doing pay it forward had changed their hesitation to the actual action, which is accompanied by positive emotions such as gratitude and high self-esteem. The students showed pure joy of giving without material or social reward, which is an authentic wellbeing.

These results show that negative emotional experiences promote spiritual growth and that pro-social activity, which is not accompanied by reward but even with negative experiences, cultivate one's life satisfaction and positive emotion. The virtuous state of mind, in other words authentic wellbeing, was realized among the ordinary students at the crises, and the practice of pro-social actions promotes one's positive emotion not just the thought.

Morininaru is a method to practice altruistic spirit, which is evoked at the crises of the death of the loved one. It transforms one's grief to authentic wellbeing spontaneously. Therefore, Morininaru is a practice of inclusive positivity.