

Part 1: Dr Tim Sharp (aka Dr Happy)

Positive Psychology

- Is so much more than just happiness
- It's the science of thriving and flourishing, and being (and doing) the best we can in the circumstances we find ourselves in
- It involves positive emotions, resilience, having meaning and purpose, and having quality connections and relationships

Normal vs Abnormal

- It's perfectly normal to experience negative emotions like stress and anxiety. It's part of being human
- But when those feelings become overwhelming for longer than 2 weeks, to the point that someone can't function normally (changes to behaviour, sleeping and eating patterns etc.) then it's time to seek professional help via a GP.

What can we learn from COVID-19 and the isolation experience?

- Change is difficult for everyone – we can't all be positive and happy all of the time
- It's important (and normal) to acknowledge uncertainty and anxiety
- Look long term to understand meaning, purpose and what positives might come out of this. Make constructive changes
- Focus on what can be controlled, not what can't be. For e.g. your daily routine, exercise, diet, keeping in touch with friends and colleagues etc.
- Find what works for you and make this a priority

Ensuring a positive work environment

- Recognise and acknowledge the importance of building a positive work culture. It's the cumulative effect of the little things that matter that make a difference
- Focus on boosting resilience and optimism
- Everyone is responsible

Positive Ageing

- The secret factor to living a long and good life is the quality of our relationships. The ability to love and be loved, supported and cared for makes a huge difference
- Studies of people living beyond 100 indicate things like: healthy diet, being physically active, social connectedness and a sense of purpose are common themes
- For retirees these factors are also relevant, particularly a sense of purpose
- Key to a happy retirement is defining who you are and replacing work with something else
- Those happiest are often involved in using their skills and wisdom to give something back to the community