



**MEDICAL AND  
HEALTH SCIENCES**

# Investigating psychological wellbeing (flourishing) with community dwelling older adults with multimorbidity - identifying strength based interventions

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## North Shore, Auckland, North Island, Waitemata DHB

Annual growth in population 2.3%

**Population:** 582,765 in 2015/16

**65+ population:** will increase from 13% in 2014 to 20% in 2034, doubling in number to 148,980.

Third least-deprived DHB in NZ

**Life expectancy:** 85.1 years overall (highest in the country), 2.4 years higher than the NZ average.

**Mortality:** leading causes of mortality: Cancer, cardiovascular disease, respiratory diseases



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# Objectives

- 1. Engage community dwelling older adults in exploring psychological wellbeing (flourishing).
- 2. Identify health promoting interventions and resources (assets) that enhance psychological wellbeing (flourishing).



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# Conceptual framework

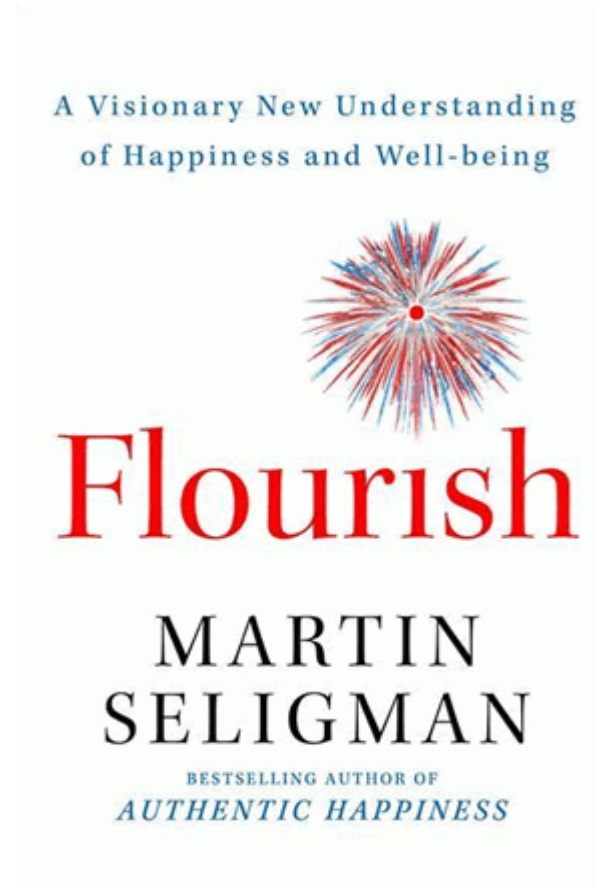
Positive emotion

Engagement

Relationships

Meaningfulness

Accomplishment



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# Participants

- 31 individual interviews
- 18 women and 13 men.
- 10 women were widows, 4 were married and 4 divorced
- Women ranged from 66-85 with a mean age of 76 years
- 
- 11 men were married and 2 were widowers
- Men ranged from 71-95 with a mean age of 75 years
- 
- Long term conditions 0-5 with a mean range of 2. Medical diagnoses ignores the grumbling/frustrating issues



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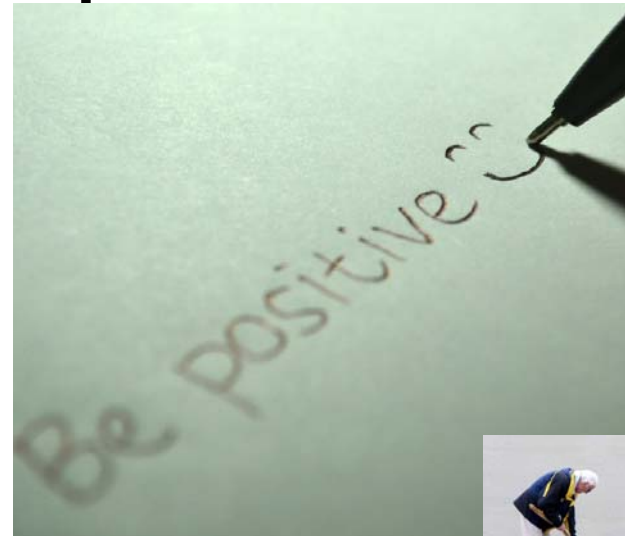


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# Positive people?

- General tendencies toward feeling contentment and joy (Kern 2014).
- Strategies or practices that they used to promote a positive way of thinking.
- *“There is no point in sitting around and feeling sorry for yourself”.* (M.87)
- *“I love spending, it doesn’t matter if it’s food, clothes. But I can only spend if I’ve got it.”* (F. 79)
- 



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# Engagement

- Absorbed, interested and involved.
- Activities -Self orientated
- Collectivist
- A sense of meaning and purpose



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# Relationships

- Being with people in relationship
- *"I've got different sectors of friends."*  
(F.79)
- Support other people
- Gain support from other people
- Preventing loneliness and isolation



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# Meaningfulness

- Having a purpose, a sense of worth.
- Volunteering, helping others.
- *“If you can help somebody no matter in how miniscule a way, you feel that you’ve done something worthwhile.” (F.79).*
- Future thinking
- *“Most of us know that eventually at some stage we’re going to pass on, it’s not a taboo subject, we just make a joke of it. These villages are usually nicknamed the undertaker’s holding pens.” (M.87)*



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# Accomplishments/Achievements

- How often do you achieve the important goals you have set for yourself? (PERMA-Profiler (Butler and Kern 2016).
- *“I don’t think I’ve ever really set goals except when I was in real estate” (F.85)*
- *“I do feel responsible for friends, just keeping in touch.” (F.72)*



Credit - Syd Mannion photography

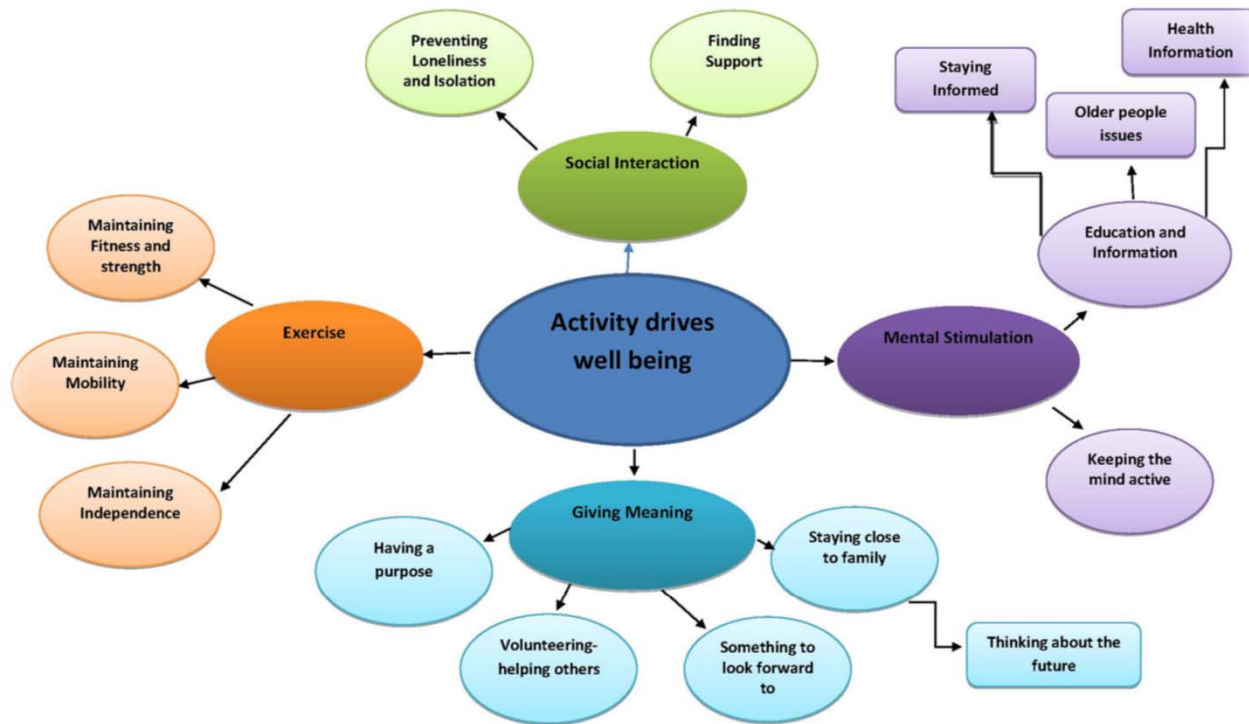
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Lyubomirsky, S &  
 Layous, K. (2013)  
 Positive-activity model.



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## Summary

Using PERMA we identified the strength based strategies/practices that our participants were using to enhance their psychological wellbeing (flourishing).

These fit with the positive-activity model.

Feedback to participants will enable us to develop local community models and identify the critical success factors at a local level.

Thank You

Questions?



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