

# MAPP Alumni Newsletter

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# mapp

Alumni

 Penn Master of Applied Positive Psychology

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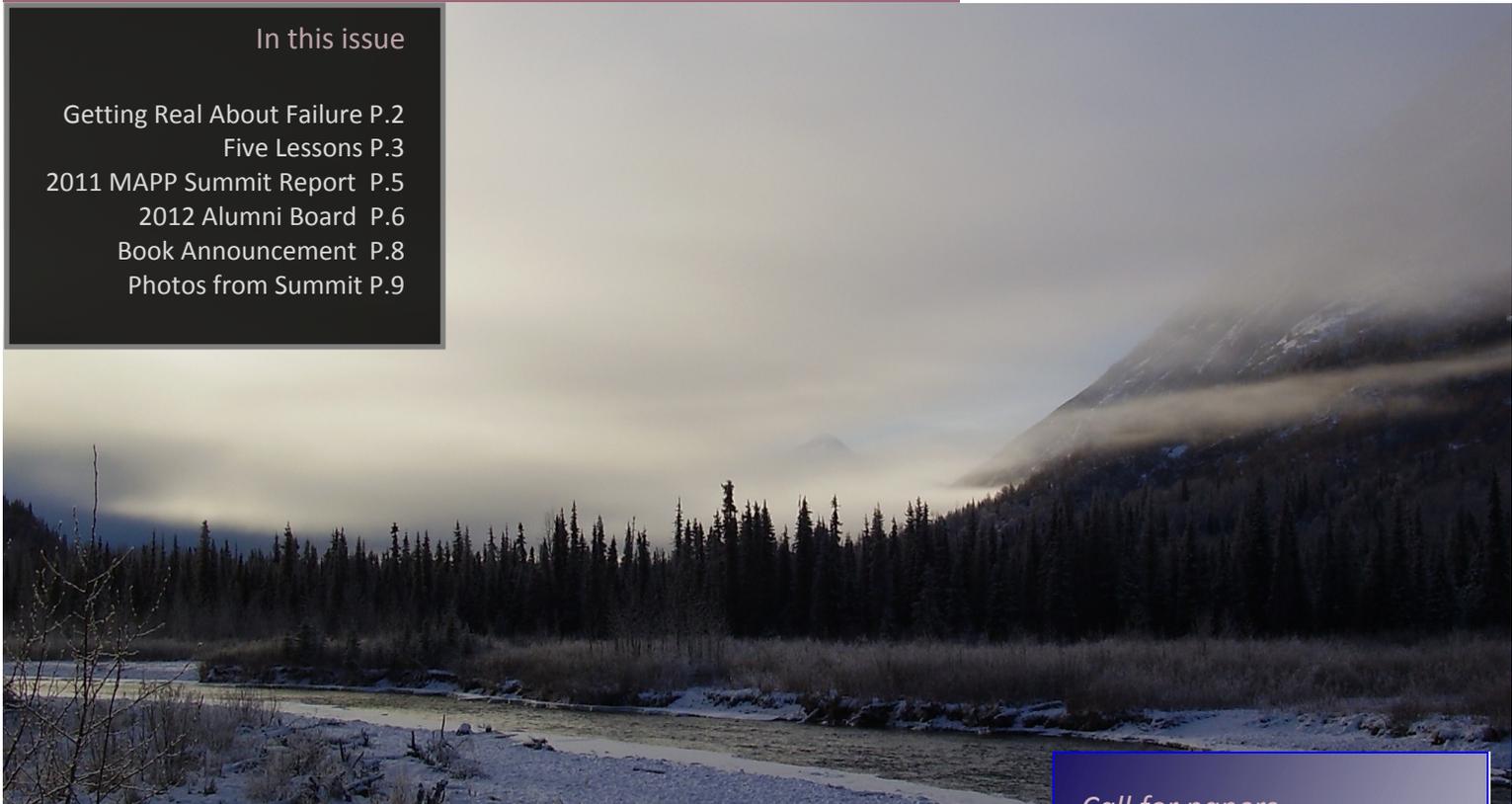
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## MAPP Alumni Assoc. Attains Fund-raising Goal

By Robert Dauman, MAPP '09

*Alumni Contributions Total \$11,480*

To all MAPPsters, thank you, thank you, and thank you!!! Thanks to your generous efforts, networking, and contributions we raised \$11,480 which wonderfully tops our original \$10,000 goal! A deep, tidal wave of gratitude and appreciation to all you contributors to our MAPP Alumni Association Fundraising Drive. We could not have accomplished this without you, our amazing network of dedicated MAPPsters!

This brings our MAPP Alumni Association to an important new era of economic vitality. With the help of your dues and donations we can strategically think about and implement the initiatives that we believe will be most meaningful to our alumni and will have the most positive benefits for our MAPP community. For example, by providing: education through access to new research, journals, libraries; calls, webinars and events with researchers and colleagues who can keep us abreast of the latest science and applications; better ways to leverage the strength of our network to foster communication and collaboration between and among MAPPsters; and using NING or developing a searchable database so like minded MAPP grads can easily find each other we believe, we can continue and grow our "MAPP Magic."

We found most challenging our friendly competition/collaboration for the class with the most "generosity and pride". Knowing that intrinsic motivation most likely inspired most of us to contribute, while in some cases integrated external motivation can help us move forward as well, we had a spirited debate about choosing how to show our heart

*(Continued on page 3.)*

### *Call for papers ...*

Please submit your news, essays and commentary for the Spring edition of the newsletter. Include the author name(s) and a brief bio. -- ed.

### *NEW on NING*

2012 will bring new features and content to *The MAPP Community on Ning*, including research information under the resources tab.

### *Recommended ...*

**full screen mode** to best view the newsletter with Acrobat reader.



## Happiness as Hard Work

*Challenges and Rewards*

by Greg Quinting, Ph.D., MAPP '07

Among the profound and valuable lessons I took home from the MAPP program was that it is “the serious pursuit of happiness”, which happens to also be a quote sometimes used to describe Buddhism. Both positive psychology, and apparently Buddhism – of which I know relatively little – take into full account that life often offers huge challenges, or put more bluntly, suffering. But we also learned that despite the hardships we all face in life, “You know, what the hell, it-i-it's not all a drag”, as Woody Allen wrote in the film *Hannah and Her Sisters*. Neither is it rational, nor is it towards a person's well-being to conclude that life as a whole is unbearable, even not worth living, just for the fact that it entails suffering, perhaps even a lot. Such an outlook would predispose the person to withdraw from life, to essentially be a helpless pessimist, who then allows life to seem higgledy-piggledy, even worthless. If enough people took such a course with their lives, life might indeed be unbearable for most people.

A serious pursuit in psychology also conveys to me that it is a scientific matter, at least as it concerns learning about what brings happiness, or empirically determined well-being. Despite my paucity of knowledge of Buddhism, I strongly suspect that at least some of its traditions, such as Theravada, find that their teachings are often compatible with empirical science or with conclusions drawn through rational thought.

It is then rational to make mistakes, to learn from them and to thereby pursue a life of greater well-being for one and all. This issue of the MAPP Alumni Newsletter features articles about lessons learned and conclusions drawn as graduates apply positive psychology. Serious pursuits indeed.

[greg.quinting@gmail.com](mailto:greg.quinting@gmail.com)

## Getting Real About Failure

by Sherri Fisher, M.Ed., MAPP '06

Ofentimes a deep truth is embedded in someone else's throw-away comment. When I was in my 20's, I had a headmaster who told me that I would “never be anything more than a tutor”, which is what I was at his school—a tutor of children with language learning disabilities. I was very good at this work (parents lobbied the administration for a waiting list to get me), but I was not, apparently, headmaster material. Eventually I became many other things in my work in education, but always I had students of all ages who I coached and tutored. In fact, when I moved on to other kinds of work, people continued to ask for coaching and tutoring. I hated to turn them down, because I could help.

At MAPP, I hoped that I would find a new career in Positive Psychology. I wanted to do something real. But what did that mean? As it turned out, the answer was in Margery Williams' classic, *The Velveteen Rabbit*. The reader is reminded there that, “Real isn't how you are made...It's a thing that happens to you...It doesn't happen all at once...You become...It takes a long time...Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand.” I was that person who did not understand. Blinded by social comparison and “measuring up”, rather than following the strengths approaches I used with my clients, I had failed to notice some of the most important ways that I was “real”.

Late last Spring I had just completed a milestone—SMART Strengths, the book I co-authored with John Yeager '06 and Dave Shearon '06, was about to be published. This was exciting, but in some ways it was like another graduation without a new job offer in hand. Opportunity, though, is not so much about being given chances as it is about taking them. I had become “real” enough to do just that. I answered an advertisement from people who I was certain were looking for the real me, who had a passion for Positive Education, and who had strengths in marketing and finance that mirrored mine in education. We started a company, and its first product is, of course, tutoring!

Positive Edge Tutoring, LLC is the world's first academic tutoring company to embed Positive Education practices within every academic tutoring session we offer. Using our POS-EDGE model, we will train each of our tutors to help enhance positivity, optimism and resilience, strengths, emotional intelligence, decision-making and change, goal-setting and grit, and engagement and physical exercise in our students. We are also embedding Positive Psychology into every aspect of the company, from hiring to training to managing to finance.

While we're starting out by offering in-home academic tutoring services, our “big hairy audacious goal” is to spread Positive Education to every student in America. We will be investing in new ways to help low-income students, get more schools and teachers to use Positive Education practices, fund additional research, and educate parents about how they can improve the well-being and academic performance of their children, so they also can “get real”.

# Five Lessons

by Nicholas Ritchey, MAPP '08

*"How vain it is to sit down to write when you have not stood up to live."* -

Henry David Thoreau

Napoleon Hill calls "drift." Whenever you are not pursuing your "definite purpose," you are in drift. It's like seeing something in the forest and straying from the trail; you can get lost in the woods and may die before you get back on track.

If you watch an hour of TV every night, that's 3650 hours over the next ten years you won't be able to use to get yourself closer to your goals, a perfect example of what economists would call "opportunity cost." Every habit has with it an associated cost, so you really are the sum of your habits; choose them wisely.

The easiest way to reach your goals is to look at your habits one by one, and replace each with a better habit. If you're trying to lose weight, this may mean replacing caloric drinks with non-caloric drinks. If you're sleep deprived, go to bed 5 minutes earlier. Over the course of a year, just 5 minutes means an extra 30 hours of sleep. These small changes in habit are part of the next lesson that's had a major impact on my life, Kaizen.

## **Make it so Easy that You Cannot Possibly Fail**

If you read the sleep idea above and thought, "I can't possibly get to bed 5 minutes earlier than usual," then that suggestion is too hard for you. How much earlier could you go to bed without dreading the change?

3 minutes?

1 minute?

*(continued page 4)*

## Fund-raising

*(continued from page 1)*

-felt appreciation for all your extraordinary generosity and commitment. But in the Spirit of playful Positive Psychology we decided on the following awards, and they go to ...



## AWARDS

The **PERMA**  
Class of 2009

The **Broaden & Build**  
Class of 2006

The **Other People Matter**  
Classes of 2008 & 2010

The **High Quality Connections**  
Classes of 2007 & 2011

Congratulations to one and all! And, again, thank you for truly opening your hearts and wallets; for showing our individual, collective and collaborative pride and generosity by triumphantly topping our \$10,000 goal!

With great Appreciation & Gratitude,  
*Bobby Dauman and all board members past and present*

MAPPsters both talk the talk, and walk the walk. Perhaps the greatest commonality between us is our desire and commitment to changing our lives, and the lives of those we care for, into something better. Several classmates entered the program looking for more, and many found the strength and insight needed to break their chains and pursue their dreams. Some changed careers, others redefined their relationships and re-framed their circumstances. Callings replaced jobs, authenticity replaced timidity, and generosity replaced selfishness. Furthermore, our evolution did not stop with MAPP.

In this short article, I will share the 5 lessons I have learned post-MAPP that have had greatest and most lasting impact on my life. My hope is that they will similarly increase your ability to thrive.

## **You Are the Sum of Your Habits**

We all know the power of habit, but what I had not fully recognized before reading "Outwitting The Devil" was the power of the absence of habit, what

# Five Lessons

(continued from page 3)

30 seconds?

Even 30 seconds would mean an additional 3 hours of sleep per year, and once you make a habit of going to bed 30 seconds earlier, how hard do you think it would be to add on another 30 seconds?

The goal of Kaizen is to bypass the fear response to doing important tasks; the things most of us procrastinate on. I have known for a long time that I wanted to write a book, so after reading about Kaizen, I decided to write one sentence a day; first thing in the morning. Sometimes I would wake up and want to do more, but other days I wouldn't, so I would write a single sentence. Since beginning this practice in October I have written four short guides (over 200 pages altogether), and just got the first one published on Amazon yesterday.

Climbing a mountain can be a scary, but taking a single step is easy. And how does anyone get to the top of a mountain?

One step at a time.

*"Love is Good, Hate is Bad"*

*Bertrand Russell*

We all love catchy phrases and simple moral compasses. As a secular humanist, it's my equivalent of the Christian, "What would Jesus do?"

## Divide Your Time Into Profit Hours and Non-Profit Hours

There's a time to think, and there's a time to act. Profit hours are acting hours and non-profit hours are thinking hours. By segmenting my time into these two zones, I've seen a HUGE boost in RESULTS. I have three solid profit hours every morning when I'm guaranteed to get them, between 5 and 8AM. This is before I go to work, when my mind is at its peak and free of distractions.

If I want to stay up late one night, that's fine. I may be mostly brain dead the next day, but the best three hours I'll have are the first three after I'm rested, so those are my profit hours. This also means that my evenings are free because all work and no play makes Nick a dull boy, but none of my evenings include bad habits for reasons stated earlier.

The rest of the day is non-profit time. Sure, I'll often do things that are profitable in my non-profit time, but that's just a bonus. I'm content with myself if I start the day with a solid three hours of profitable work. The rest of the day is then divided between enjoying the gifts it brings, and planning tomorrow's profit hours.

## Simplify, Simplify, Simplify!

My new go-to concepts for simplicity are those of minimum and maximum

effective dosages. In fact, the first book I wrote was on this topic (though not yet published). Knowing the least amount of effort required for a particular results saves you a ton of time and effort because you optimize your results by stopping when you've done just enough; your actions fall short yielding diminishing returns.

Reading "The Paradox of Choice," by Barry Schwartz, was also a real game changer for me. I can't count the hours saved by considering fewer options or the experiences and joy gained from having more time. In the last year, I've filtered down over one hundred open projects to just two; a personal project, and a project involving a friend.

My work is simplified, sleep is simplified, diet is simplified (another upcoming book), gym time is simplified, weekend activities are simplified, travel is simplified, project management is simplified, friend and family time is simplified... every area of my life is in a continual process of systematized simplification, and I wouldn't have it any other way.

The more clearly you define the purpose of your actions, the easier it is to define your actions, and later optimize them.



# Report on MAPP Summit

October 28-30, 2011

By Sherri Fisher, M.Ed., MAPP '06

Sherri Fisher is an Educational Management Consultant-Coach [flourishingschools.org](http://flourishingschools.org)

**Marty Seligman** opened with remarks that included an "important" book to read: Stephen Pinker's *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*.

The first session was **Gen. Rhonda Cornum**, topic the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program. Its focus is on preventing problems in the soldier corps, the soldiers' families and civilians. Everyone in the army is being assessed with the GAT ("global assessment tool"). Findings include strong evidence that optimism is the highest predictor of success and prevents maladaptive, immature, and undesirable behaviors. The goal then of CFS is to build resilience in soldiers, families, and civilians. The means is total force "fitness" instruction aimed at 100% of the force receiving resilience and prevention training. The expected outcome is to significantly reduce the need for specific interventions, clinical treatment, and incidents of failed clinical treatment. Gen. Cornum asserted that it's important to offer the program to young soldiers new to the force. The MRT (master resilience trainer) is a coach, teacher and mentor. There are 6,700 MRTs in the army, which shows importance of doing the training right from the beginning, versus offering support after symptoms have occurred.

**Jenny Anderson**, MAPP '09 next gave a talk on teaching college-level positive psychology. She reminded everyone of Chris Peterson saying that not every student is like you, the instructor. She advised that undergraduates find media entertaining as part of the tools of instruction. You need to "start small" and share your experiences, as in telling stories. Make sure as well to take happiness measurements at the start of the course and after. Focus on where students can go later with what they learned. Be aware of the risk of turning out disciples instead of critical thinkers - students need to be able to use the research to think, not just follow your ideas.

As Jenny closed her talk she recommended the syllabi available on the Positive Psychology Center website.

**Johannes Eichstaedt**, MAPP 2010 gave a summary of his capstone project on computational social psychology. He noted that every day there are 60 million Facebook updates, 250 million Twitter posts and 3 billion web searches. Original model was to look at the meanings of words using a dictionary approach, in which words are correlated with positive and negative emotion. For example, statuses on Facebook are scored on a PERMA-based scale. Overall, the goal is to create a new generation of positive interventions to make happiness propagate through social networks to the internet population and beyond.

**Brianna Booth**, MEd, MAPP 2011 is a sexuality educator who in her talk listed four current models:

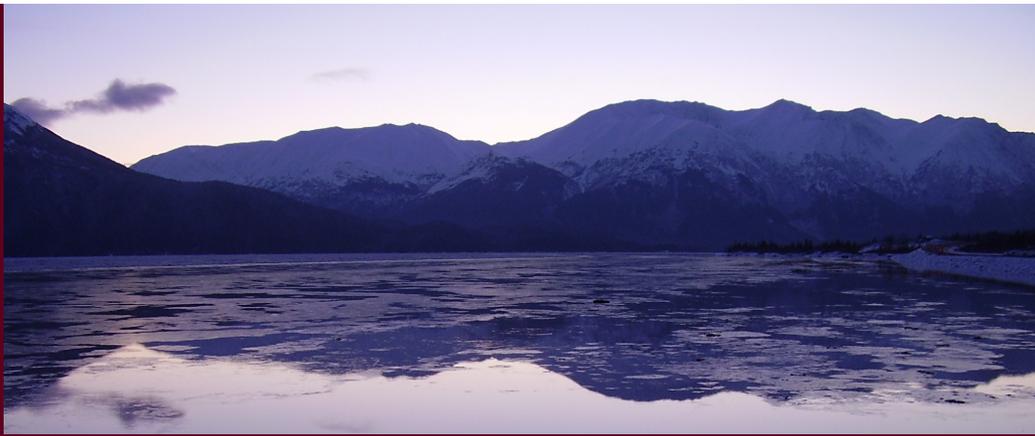
- Medical: It's good if it works. Function.
- Religious: It's good in the right place. Morality.
- Evolutionary psychological: It's good if it's natural.
- Commercial: It's good if it's sexy. Commodity, status.

Brianna argued that we need to integrate these models to create a holistic model not rooted in any one of these to create a sexuality well-being framework.

**Juan Humberto Young** gave a talk on the masters program in positive leadership organization and strategy (MPLOS) at IE School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Madrid. HBR debated how to fix business schools, as they tend to have three problems: 1) a money and power focus, 2) a need to change the curriculum, and 3) a need to produce a different kind of manager, going from one who is externally strong to one who is internally strong, from self-confident to self-regulated. The program's challenges have been push-back of

*(Continued page 6)*





## MAPP Summit *(continued from page 4)*

positive psychology and a sense that it's touchy-feely and thus irrelevant. Managers or businesses are afraid of becoming soft, less competitive. There's concern about behavior change and self-development being demanding and time-consuming. Also, legacy models of management persist.

The MPLOS program uses building blocks from behavioral economics, positive psychology, design thinking and systems thinking. With partners such as The Wharton School of Business, MIT and the Univ. of Chicago, the program teaches about designing positive organizations, about being a change agent and positive designer, the positive psychology of strategic management and leadership. The program has five modules with four work periods between:

- developing positive leadership
- positive organizational design and practicum
- positive design driven strategy
- the leader at the positive designer
- advanced positive management

**David Halpern** head of the 10 Downing St. Behavioral Insight Team and author of *The Hidden Wealth of Nations* discussed his book and his work concerning economic policy's impact on, and measures of, social well-being. Key public concerns for over 35 years have included the economy, race and immigration, healthcare, crime and terrorism. Yet, declining social trust, not crime, drives people's fear and reduces quality of life. 10 Downing St. is interested in helping people become economically more successful as well as improving their life satisfaction. They are using Denmark, which is "preposterously happy" as an example and research results from other Scandinavian countries as well in trying to move from intuition to evidence by paying attention to what the government measures. Halpern wrote in *The Hidden Wealth of Nations* about developing the "economy of regard". Its characteristics include a focus on the root causes of years of life lost, with efforts to develop well-being opportunities that are part of people's everyday life. Such economies build social trust and social capital to develop economic growth. Scandinavian countries with such traits are high in love, health, friendship, freedom, peace. People value reciprocation and are less likely to use money to

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## NEW MAPP ALUMNI BOARD for 2012

The MAPP Alumni association has embarked on a new year to serve the MAPP community, furthering our three priorities: relationships within the MAPP community, and with other positive psychology friends; research findings, so that MAPP community members may stay on top of the latest and greatest; and resources, of time and money, so that the MAPP community may stay vibrant and active, notably in the areas of relationships and research. These are the 3 Rs of the MAPP alumni world.

The Alumni Board members are, therefore, pleased – nay, thrilled – to announce that the Alumni association is extremely well-positioned to grow and flourish in 2012 with new class reps and experienced members.

Our President, for the second year, is Bobby Dauman '09 who brings his strong coaching and research skills into heading the association. Working with him for the second year as VP is Lisa Sansom '10, and Greg Quinting '07 continues in his second year as Secretary. Welcome to Jeremy McCarthy '09 who joins the board in his first year as Treasurer – an especially important role due to our phenomenal success in raising over \$10,000 to support MAPP Alumni activities!

Our class representatives have a key role to play in the thriving MAPP Community, opening up communications channels between the Association and the individual MAPP grads.

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# MAPP Summit Report

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“escape from the inconvenience of dealing with other people. “ They are more likely to use their money to see more of their friends. Gratitude then is a moral motivator.

**Angela Duckworth**, Ph.D. presented her work on grit. Grit is predictor of achievement in unstructured settings. It requires sustained perseverance, insistent interest over time achievement beyond academic skills. Research on grit is interested in character and virtue. Angela described two rules: “the 10,000 hour rule” in total time in deliberate practice, where performance levels out eventually because of physical constraints; and “the 4 hour rule” the limit to how much time high performing people typically devote at any one time to deliberate practice.

Deliberate practice requires:

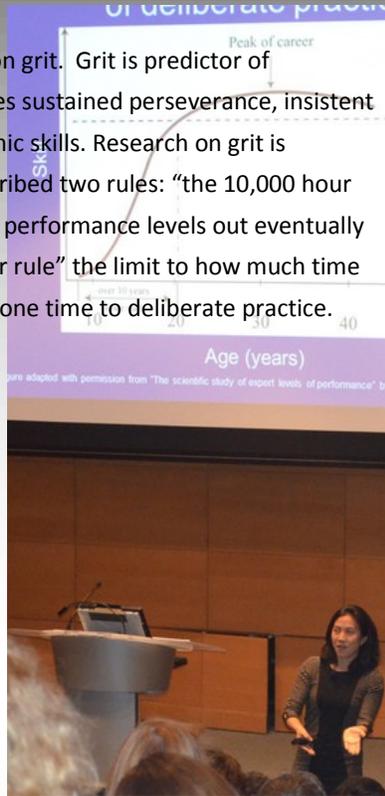
- 100% attention
- being completely absorbed in the task
- is effortful and aversive
- offers high failure opportunity
- is specific and targeted
- is moderated by feedback

... even negative feedback can be helpful because it is generally more specific than positive feedback. A challenge is to make positive feedback specific.

Grit predicts:

- Positive explanatory style. Optimism -> grit -> life satisfaction -> performance.
- Research was done with *Teach for America* teachers.
- Happy teachers teach you more.
- Grit predicts teacher effectiveness.
- There is a .79 correlation between grit and teacher retention.
- Is not related to GPA or SAT, and the B/B+ student may be grittier.
- Grit is not a broad personality characteristic. It looks different in different domains.

Those with grit who apply it effectively however know when to give up. A coach can help a person with grit in discerning when to quit. Effort is a mixed-signal. “Choose easy, work hard”, said Angela.



## MAPP Alumni Board for 2012

(continued from page 6)

For the class of 2006, the class reps are Dave Shearon and Caroline Miller.

For the class of 2007, the class reps are Greg Quinting and Derrick Carpenter.

For the class of 2008, the class reps are Bright Dickson and Kirsten Cronlund.

For the class of 2009, the class reps are Bobby Dauman and Jeremy McCarthy.

For the class of 2010, the class reps are Emily vanSonnenberg and Lisa Sansom.

For the newest members of the MAPP Alumni community – the class of 2011 – the representatives are Conrad Macalalad and Carin Rockind.

If you have any suggestions at all for the MAPP Alumni Association, please contact your class rep. We are open to ideas around furthering our relationships, research and resources!

We all look forward to working together and creating some positive psychology awesomeness in this coming year!



G. Quinting

## #POSITIVITY at WORK TWEET

140 Bite-Sized Ideas to Help You  
Create a Positive Organization  
Where Employees Thrive

S. CHRIS EDMONDS, MHROD  
and LISA ZIGARMI, MAPP  
FOREWORD BY KEN BLANCHARD

BOOK 01

A THiNKaha® BOOK



## SAMPLE TWEETS

Well-being isn't something you acquire. It's something you must continuously choose & doggedly pursue. Make it part of your work, everyday.

Reflect on your values, your life themes & your personal story. Then, share your notes so others can remind you of your strengths & purpose.

Great leaders demonstrate authentic emotion at work: joy over success, frustration over hurdles, love of their aligned team. Be real.

Celebrate the good nature, good work, and good fortune of those you work with. It's a fast, sensible way to multiply your joy and awe.

Anger, hostility, hurt & resentment are often held in the muscles of our bodies. Learn to forgive.

# Book Announcement

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Expert organizational psychologists S. Chris Edmonds and Lisa Zigarmi have seen how positive organizations empower the people who work within them while providing meaningful contributions to society. In their book #POSITIVITY AT WORK tweet, they define and describe a positive workplace, and go on to demonstrate how to engender positive emotions, relationships, accomplishment and health at work. For example, since people show up at work with their hearts as well as their heads, leaders need to be as concerned with effect as well as results. Positive emotion reflects perceptions of safety, satisfaction, and achievement and produces future well-being and positive consequences. Expressing positive emotion is critical for human growth and development, and equally critical for organizational success. Or, to take another example, positive health means much more than just the absence of sickness. Our physical conditions have a huge impact on our presence, skill application, and nimbleness at work. The more positive our physical health, the greater our connection to our work, peers, leaders, company, and customers.

Enabling positivity at work is not simple. Healthy work cultures happen by design, not default. It takes intentional choice to foster a culture of wellness. The responsibility lies not only with the employer, but also with

the individuals who make up the organization. And in this effort, S. Chris Edmonds and Lisa Zigarmi's designed-for-action #POSITIVITY AT WORK tweet is a perfect guide, one that will help you create a healthy, affirmative work environment where every individual contributes, connects, succeeds, and thrives.

### Endorsements

"These are magnificent learning points for business/personal life that will enrich you every day. Lisa & Chris truly want you to win at work." -Garry Ridge (@learningmoment), President & CEO of WD-40 Company and Co-author, *Helping People Win at Work*

"Chris & Lisa 'tweet' you to #POSITIVITY at WORK by showing how emotions, relationships, meaning, achievement & health make a great workplace!" -Dan Bowling, Managing Principal of Positive Workplace Solutions and Former Head of HR for Coca-Cola Enterprises

"#POSITIVITY at WORK, works! A modern masterpiece for short attention spans. A must-read for leaders with ambition to flourish." -Stella Grizont (@stellagrizont), MAPP, MSNBC Contributor and Founder of WOOPAAH, which creates play experiences for companies

