

Newsletter

Maytiv - School of Psychology

Issue 1

January 2012

Maytiv- the center for research and practice in Positive Psychology established in 2010 as part of the School of Psychology in the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya. The center promotes evidence-based community interventions according to the core principles of Positive Psychology, develops programs and tools for the practice of positive psychology in the areas of education, health, government, and business, and helps integrate the principles of positive psychology within schools, hospitals, private and public institutions, and in communities in Israel and abroad.

This is the first newsletter of Maytiv. From now on, a newsletter will be published every six weeks, in order to provide news and information about Maytiv center's activities and projects, references to key academic papers in the field of positive psychology, and updates regarding upcoming seminars, workshops and lectures.

Dr. Tal Ben-Shahar, Dr. Anat Shoshani and Dr. Sarit Guttman-Steinmetz.

The Maytiv website is now in the air!! Everyone is welcome to visit and get updated: www.maytiv.com.



On the website you can find an abundance of materials in the field of Positive Psychology, alongside activities and future events of Maytiv center. There are also descriptions of recent empirical studies conducted on various topics within the field of Positive Psychology, and academic questionnaires for researchers. If you are interested in learning about your strengths and other factors on which Positive Psychology focuses, you are welcome to fill out questionnaires yourself and receive immediate feedback through the questionnaires system on our website. Under "School activities" you can watch a touching movie that was taken in the "Gvanim" junior high school in Rosh-Ha'ayin. Highly recommended.

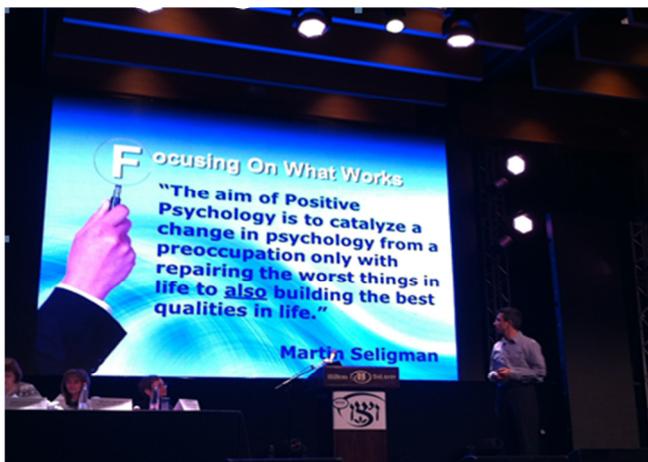
"Positive" Center, established by IDC students:

At the Positive Center, established by Keren Gitlin and Chen Albas, pre-teens participate in afterschool structured activities. Keren and Chen, 3rd year students of the School of Psychology at the IDC, head a team of 15 Psychology IDC students, and together work towards the goal of nurturing the inner strength that exists inside the children and empower them. This year the center focuses on children in the 4th-6th grades, from struggling homes. The center provides activities twice a week, for two hours, which are composed of two main components: a social component and a specialized component. The social component is worked on within small, intimate groups and includes activities that are based on core themes of Positive Psychology such as creativity, cooperation, helping others, and leadership. The specialized component includes a wide variety of enriching group activities, such as painting, sculpturing, drama, sports and guided imagery. Now, 3 months into this project, the staff and children are beginning to see the fruits of their hard work.



The International WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organization) Conference in the Hilton Hotel in Tel-Aviv- 1/18/2012

The Women's International Zionist Organization conference took place in January. Representatives from all over the world including Sweden, Mexico, Finland and France participated in the meetings. In response to an invitation by the Early Education section of WIZO Israel's Division of Education, the parliamentary session, "From Risks to Possibilities" was headed by Dr. Tal Ben-Shahar. Dr. Ben-Shahar lectured on the resilience factors empirically found to predict growth and coping among at-risk populations, and in crisis situations. The lecture included personal stories of three graduates of educational programs of WIZO Israel.



Planned activities:

- "Etgar Bamidbar" Conference in the Arava by **Lotan's Way**, a non-profit organization aimed at promoting wilderness therapy in the desert for youth at risk. Will take place in "Han Habsamim" in the Arava Dessert between 2/14-16/2012. Lectures and workshops are to be led by Maytiv senior staff.
- A lecture meant for teachers in the "Lady Davis" High School in Tel-Aviv, 2/20/2012.
- A lecture in the Administration of Social Services, 2/26/2012, the Ayalon department of Tel-Aviv municipality.
- Conclusion of the "Tzamarot" Program: the Avni Roshia institution, outstanding school principals- ends of

Maytiv's Schools Project:

The year-long programs of Positive Psychology in high schools and junior high schools are moving along. Currently, there are 10 teacher-rooms across the country, who are taking the core program of 15, two-hour long, sessions over the course of the school-year (for a total of 30 hours). The implementation of the Positive Psychology in these schools is in fact a two-stage process: in the first, the homeroom teachers participate in lectures and workshops lead by Maytiv academic advisors, which focus on the core principals of Positive Psychology. An integral part of this process is receiving practical tools for the teachers to implement these principles of positive psychology in their personal as well as professional life. Then, the teachers receive lesson plans to work with their students, leading to the second stage, in which the homeroom teachers implement the programs of intervention in their classes. In the classroom, similar to the teachers' room, the program includes 15 two-academic-hours meetings, once every two weeks, to every half a class.

And now some field feedbacks: Homeroom teacher: "I believe that if we succeed in really making students believe in themselves, it would be a great success! Them believing that they can make a difference; them knowing not only that change is possible because we said so- but really believing they can make a difference, from the bottom... from within themselves". A student: "It's not like a regular class...we sit in a circle, which helps because you can really talk with children you go to school with for three years, sometimes for the first time. You get to share personal stuff with them...I understood that I can make some change. I can lead. The whole optimism and positivity stuff, it's not just words- it's really something I can bring into my life and lead a better life through it. Before these classes, I had a very low self-esteem...but then I realized that there are things I should be proud of". Another homeroom teacher: "We wanted to let parents from the main parents' committee know what we go through as homeroom teachers. This present we have received. My eyes filled with tears".

Research

Mishelet Lev (Make-a-Wish) has asked Maytiv to conduct research following their activity. Specifically, this association - for children with life-threatening diseases- makes children's wishes come true with the goal of giving them hope, strength, and joy. The study examines the link between the process of wish fulfillment and the medical and mental quality of life of these children.

