

PERMA

Martin Seligman describes five specific life domains where restorative practices will impact your well-being and ability to flourish (or thrive):



Positive Emotions

What we feel. Those feelings that make you feel the best. Feelings that lack negativity and discomfort. Examples: pleasure, warmth, comfort, gratitude, joy, amusement, etc.



Engagement

Refers to the state of being in “flow”, or the state of being so engaged with something that you lose track of time and things going on around you. **The loss of self-consciousness during an absorbing activity.**

Examples: reading a book for a few minutes, then realizing 2 hours has gone by.



Relationships

The relationships that we develop with other people that contribute to our well-being. The people that matter in our lives. Examples: your partner, children, co-workers, friends, parents, etc.



Meaning

Belonging to and serving something that you believe is bigger than the self. Being part of something larger than yourself. Examples: your family, your job, religion, volunteering, living green, etc.



Accomplishment

Those things that we pursue because they seem worthy of our stretch. Accomplishment can be recognized internally as well as by others. Examples: doing your job well, writing a short story, climbing stairs, receiving an award, losing weight, etc.

No single element of PERMA defines well-being. Each of the five categories contributes to your well-being, and the impact and importance of each category will be unique for each person. The more you increase each category in your life the more resilient you will become and the more you will flourish.

PERMA Journal Reflection

Which PERMA categories feel the most important to you and your well-being?

Why do these categories feel important to you?

Write a list of self-care activities you are currently doing, are trying to do, or would like to do. Example: reading, taking a walk, exercise, volunteering, etc.

Look at the list of activities you have written down. For each activity write the PERMA categories you are meeting by doing that activity. Note: There may be more than one PERMA category for each activity.

Write down a list of the tasks and activities you carry out at work. (client meetings, staff meetings, paperwork, etc.)

Look at the list of activities you have written down. For each activity write the PERMA categories you are meeting by doing that activity. Note: There may be more than one PERMA category for each activity.

Using PERMA

When trying to fit self-care into our busy lives it is helpful to have a list of activities to select from that differ in their time commitment, energy commitment, and how they match up with the PERMA categories.

If you only have 15 minutes free and try to commit to an activity that takes longer, you are going to skip taking care of yourself. If you are feeling low energy and try to do something that requires a lot of energy, you probably aren't going to follow through.

If you are craving a sense of meaning, then selecting a self-care activity that provides only positive emotions isn't going to be a good fit.

If you can create a list of self-care activities that vary in the time commitment, energy commitment, and PERMA categories you will give yourself a wider range of activities to choose from and increase the likelihood that you will take care of yourself.

PERMA at Work

As you are completing your different tasks at work try to think about how those activities connect to the PERMA categories. This will help you realize that there is more to your work than just the tasks you are completing. You are also experiencing positive emotions, in a state of flow, being with other people, bringing meaning to your life, or accomplishing something.

Not all work tasks may have a PERMA category you can associate with them but try to find as many tasks as possible that match up with your PERMA categories and mix them into your day with the more mundane tasks.

If you are finding very few of your tasks at work match up with PERMA categories it may be time to talk to your leadership and find if there is a way to make changes to your job, so you are feeling more fulfilled. This can be a scary request to make, and feel challenging, but finding more PERMA categories in your work will help you build resilience and be more satisfied in your work.

PERMA Grid

Use this grid to map out different activities and tasks that fit within your PERMA categories.

Make note of whether an activity requires high, medium or low energy, and how much time it takes to complete it.

In Life

At Work

**Positive
Emotions**

Engagement

Relationships

Meaning

Accomplishment