

# Flourishing In Personal Recovery



# Learning Outcomes

- Understand what is meant by the positive psychology term *flourishing*
- Understand what is meant by the term *flourishing in personal recovery*
- Understand the concept of the *Dual Continuum Model of Mental Health* (Keyes, 2005)
- Understand the PERMA Model of Wellbeing (Seligman, 2011) and how to apply this to your life to promote flourishing



What do you think it means to flourish?

What does flourishing look like?





**Can mental illness and  
flourishing co-exist?**

**What does it mean to  
flourish in personal  
recovery?**





It *is* possible to flourish in personal recovery





# Flourishing

- Multi-dimensional, made up of many different parts
- A relatively new area of research
- Moves beyond the confines of simple happiness or well-being
- Encompasses a wide range of positive psychological constructs and offers a more holistic perspective on what it means to be well and happy (Ackerman, 2020)





# The PERMA Model of Wellbeing

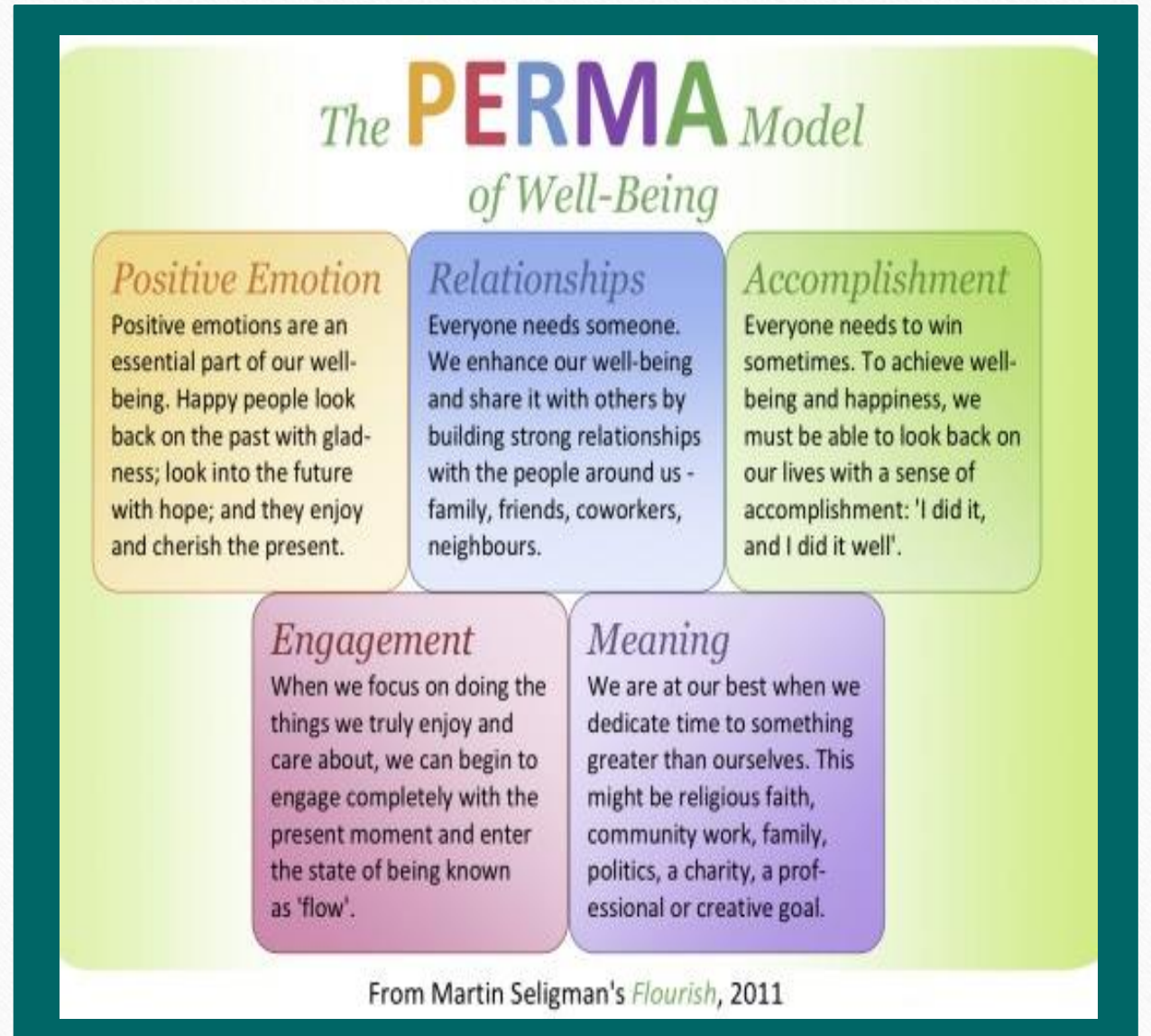
Seligman (2011)

- The PERMA model was developed to explain what contributes to a sense of flourishing.
- “To flourish is to find fulfilment in our lives, accomplishing meaningful and worthwhile tasks, and connecting with others at a deeper level—in essence, living the “good life” (Seligman, 2011).





Flourishing is the state that we create when we tend to each aspect of the PERMA model: increasing our **positive emotions**, **engaging** with the world and our work (or hobbies), develop deep and meaningful **relationships**, find **meaning** and purpose in our lives, and **achieve** our goals through cultivating and applying our strengths and talents.





## Flourishing includes...

Diagnosis  
free?

Medication  
free?

Problem free?

Happy all the time?





## Reflection Questions



- What do you think of the PERMA model?
  - Do you agree with the 5 elements of wellbeing?
  - What would you add or take out or change?
- 
- Which element do you identify as significant/important in life?
  - Which element do you identify as a challenge to identify with?
  - Which element do you feel is an area of strength in your life?



## PERMA-Profiler

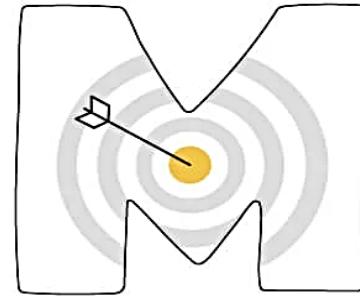
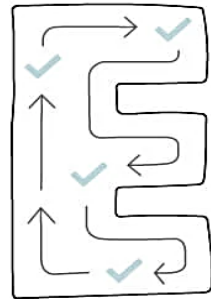
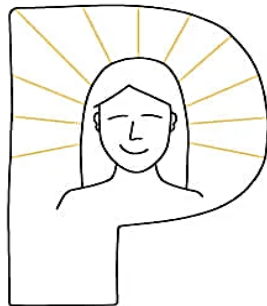
- Butler & Kern (2016)
- Measuring the five PERMA pillars: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment, as well as one question on overall well-being, three questions on negative emotions (sadness, anger, and anxiety), one question on loneliness, and three questions on self-perceived physical health
- Access it here: [PERMA Profiler](https://www.peggykern.org/uploads/5/6/6/7/56678211/the_perma-profiler_101416.pdf) or:  
[https://www.peggykern.org/uploads/5/6/6/7/56678211/the\\_perma-profiler\\_101416.pdf](https://www.peggykern.org/uploads/5/6/6/7/56678211/the_perma-profiler_101416.pdf)





# The PERMA Model

- P - Positive Emotion.** Feeling good, positive emotions, optimism, pleasure and enjoyment.
- E - Engagement.** Fulfilling work, interesting hobbies, “flow.”
- R - Relationships.** Social connections, love, intimacy, emotional and physical interaction.
- M - Meaning.** Having a purpose, finding a meaning in life.
- A - Accomplishments.** Ambition, realistic goals, important achievements, pride in yourself.





## How to Apply the PERMA Model to Your Life

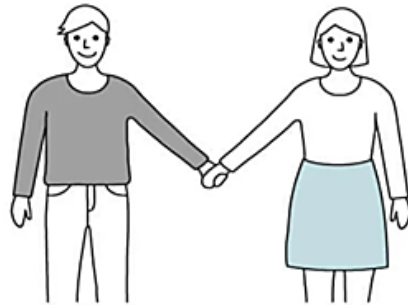
Remember to adopt a positive perspective as often as you can.



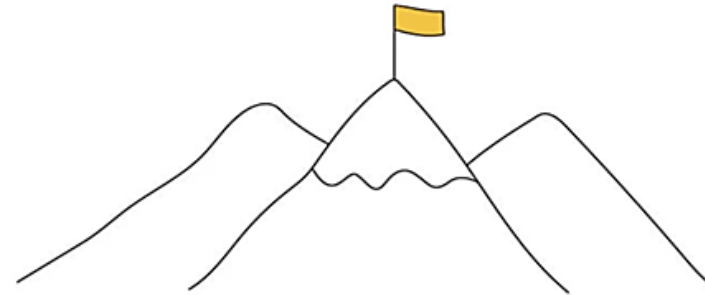
Find the things that make you happy and engaged.



Focus on your relationships with family and friends, and find ways to connect.



Search for meaning and lead a life of purpose.



Savor your accomplishments and strive for further achievement.



**“Flourishing is the product of the pursuit and engagement of an authentic life that brings inner joy and happiness through meeting goals, being connected with life passions, and relishing in accomplishments through the peaks and valleys of life.”**

**(Soots, 2015)**

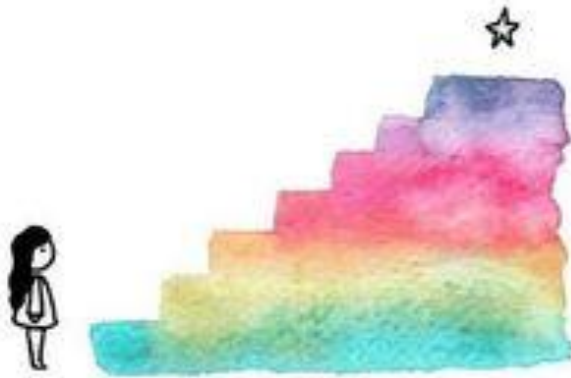




Flourishing is not a trait or a characteristic; it's not something that you "either have or don't have." flourishing is not a static, immutable piece of who you are, it is a process that requires action. Anyone can flourish, but it will likely require some effort to get there.

- Soots (2015)

take a small step every day



you now



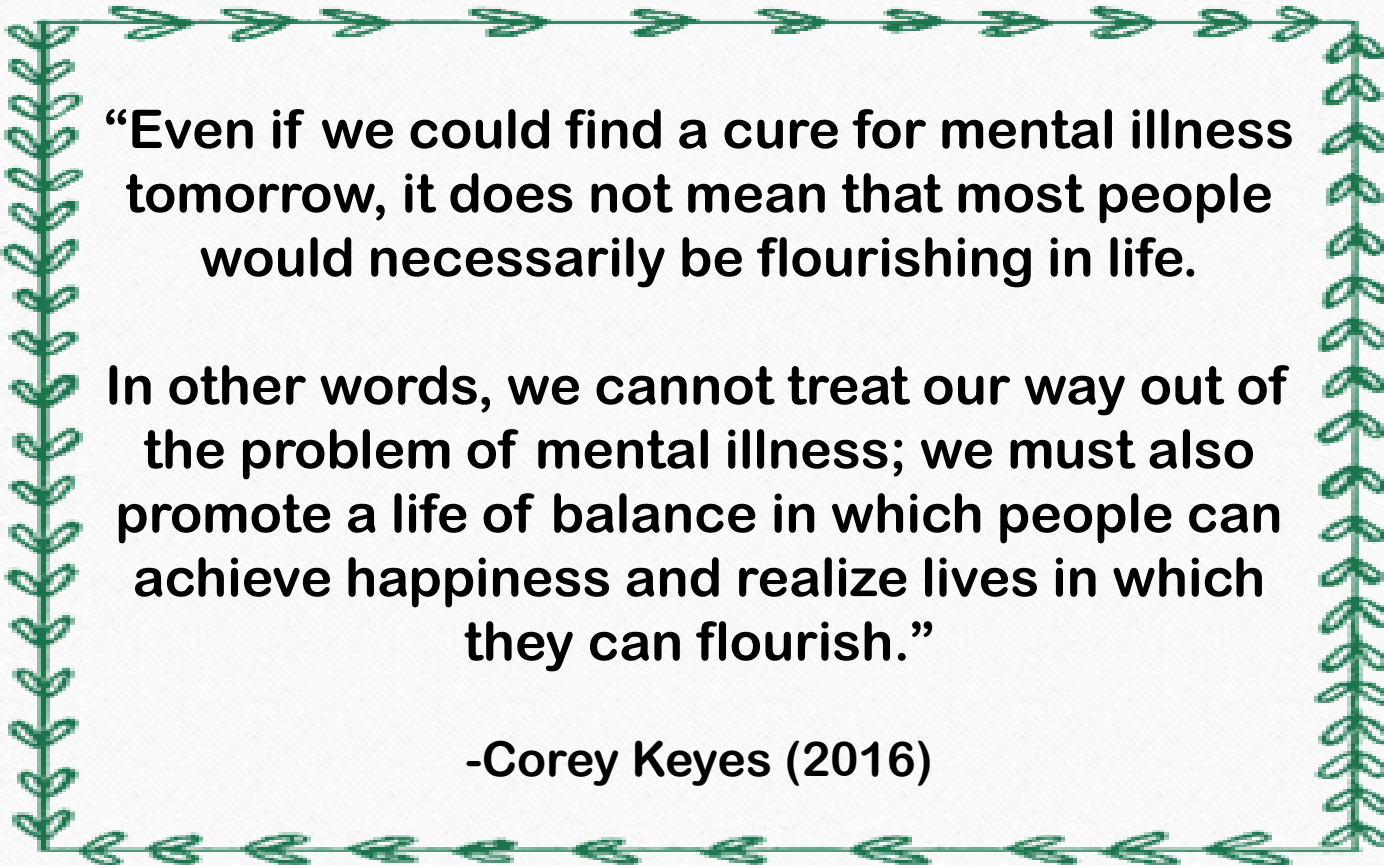
you in the future



you will grow!

Success doesn't come from what you do occasionally, but what you do consistently.



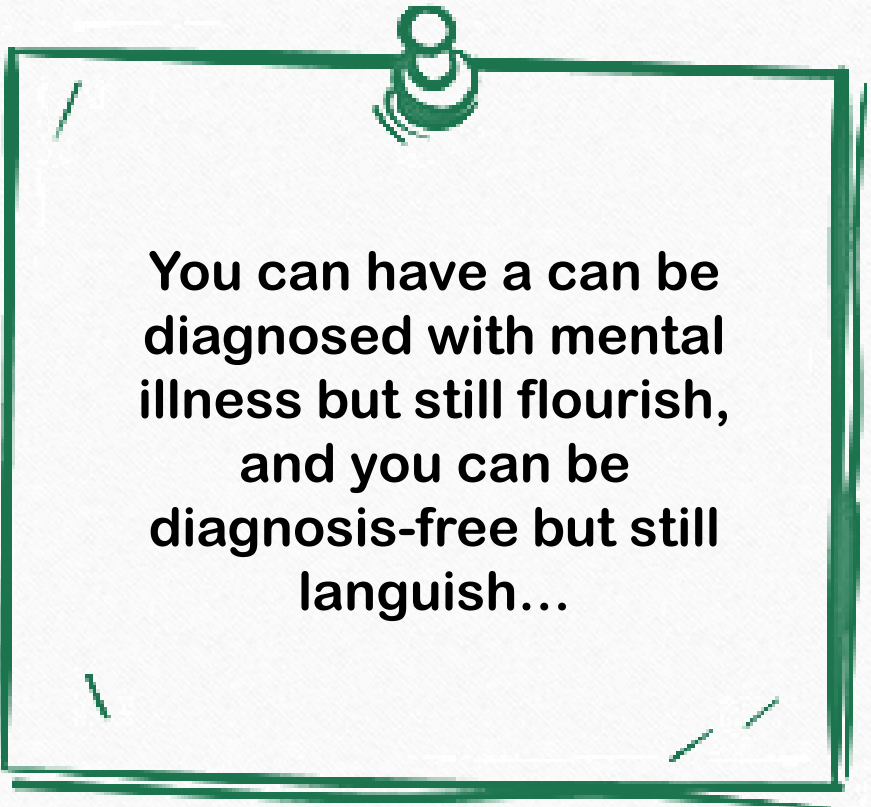


**“Even if we could find a cure for mental illness tomorrow, it does not mean that most people would necessarily be flourishing in life.**

**In other words, we cannot treat our way out of the problem of mental illness; we must also promote a life of balance in which people can achieve happiness and realize lives in which they can flourish.”**

**-Corey Keyes (2016)**





**You can have a can be  
diagnosed with mental  
illness but still flourish,  
and you can be  
diagnosis-free but still  
languish...**

## Languishing

“Emptiness and stagnation, constituting a life of quiet despair ... individuals who describe themselves and life as hollow, empty, a shell, and a void.”  
(Corey Keyes)

Languishing has been associated with:

- Poorer functioning
- Time off from work
- Being unable to manage life's daily activities
- Risk factor for mental illness

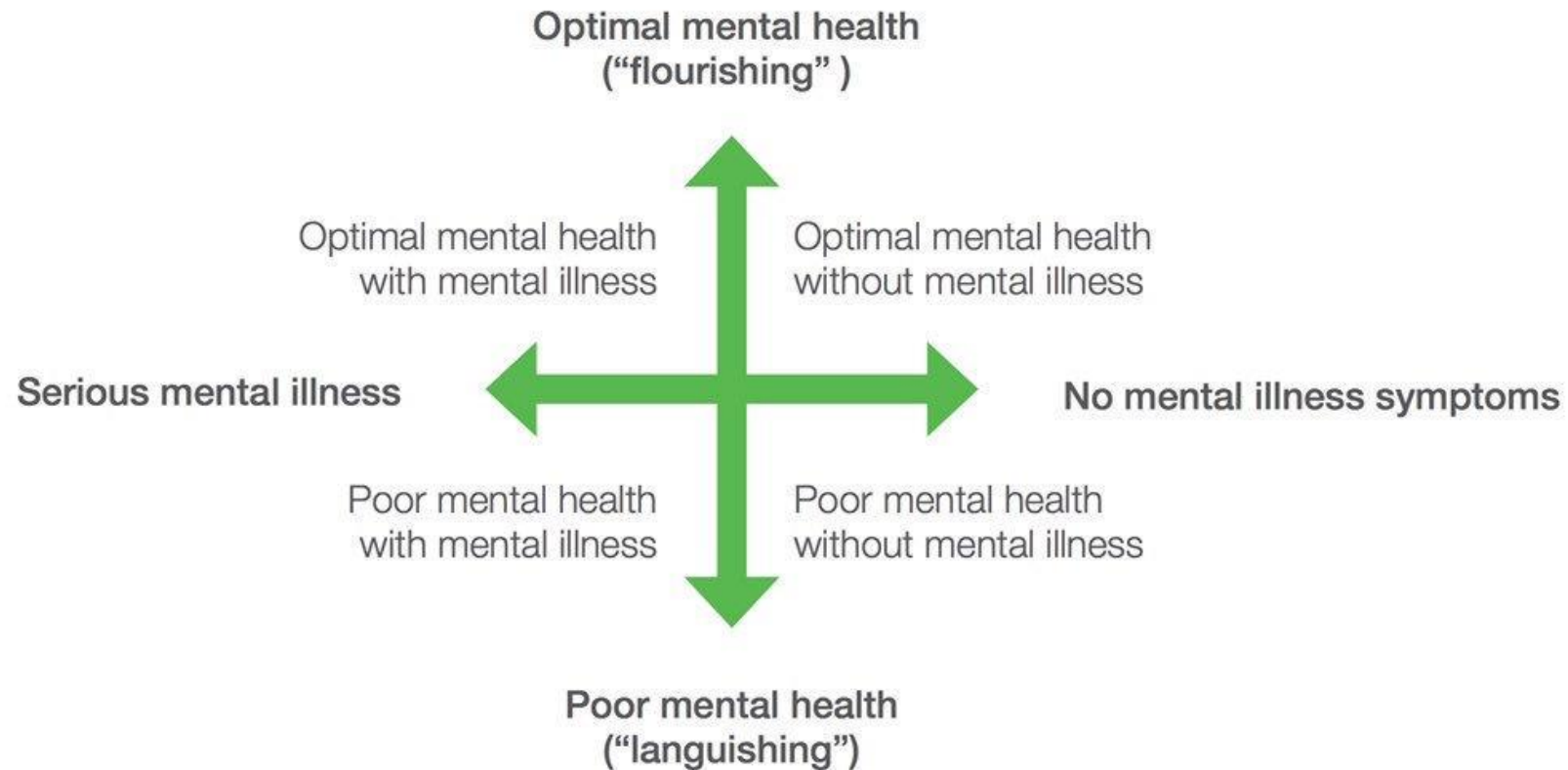


People who are languishing often “fall through the cracks” as their symptoms aren’t “clinically significant” enough to access services.



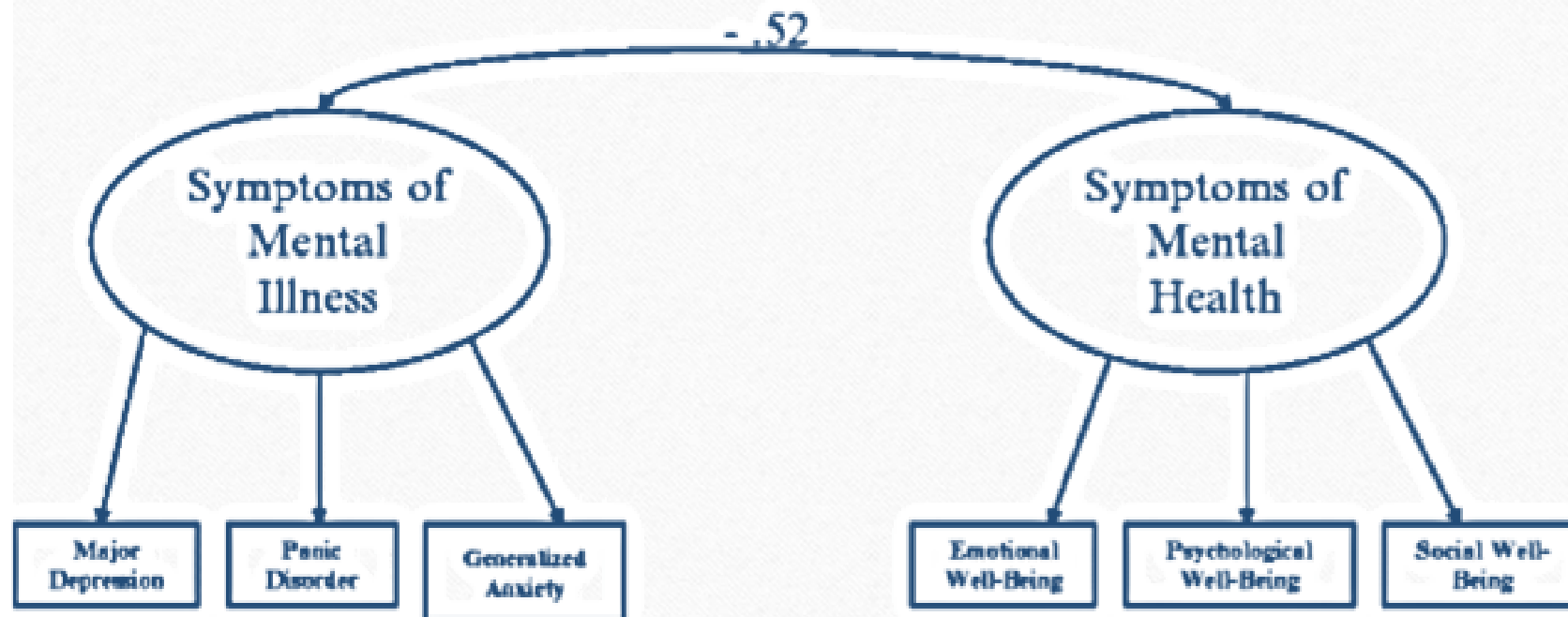


**Figure 1: Dual Continuum Model of Mental Health and Mental Illness**



*MacKean, 2011. Adapted from: The Health Communication Unit at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto and Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario; based on the conceptual work of Corey Keyes*

## Mental Health as two Continua Keyes (2005)





Dr. Corey Keyes:

“A Positive Approach to Healthcare”

TEDx Atlanta

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYHOI3T32VA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYHOI3T32VA)



Reflect again on what it means to flourish...





## References

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