

# Cultivating Campus Flourishing: The Thriving in Action Story

**Dr. Diana Brecher, C. Psych.**  
**Dr. Deena Kara Shaffer**

**Dedicated, with enormous  
gratitude, to our students,  
our champions & you!**

**About the ‘authors’**

# Diana

- 25 years CSDC & 9 years ThriveTMU
- Adjunct faculty [Psychology](#) Dept. & [Sociology](#) Dept. TMU
- Adjunct faculty in [MBA](#) (Mental health and wellness in the workplace)
- [Thrivelandia](#) - SMSK Psychology Foundation
- Career Achievement RFA award
- OPA Award for Excellence in Clinical Teaching
- Best Practices Award - [Best Practices Network](#)

# Deena

- Founder & CEO, [Awakened Learning](#)
- Adjunct Faculty, [TMU](#)
- TEDx speaker, [“How to get from to-do to done”](#)
- Best-selling author, [Feel Good Learning](#) & [Raising Well Learners](#)
- *A New Way to Learn* is coming in 2026!
- Scholar-practitioner & speaker on well-learning, -leading + -working
- 2025 nominations: RBC Women of Influence, 2 TMU teaching awards
- Backcountry camper, poet & mum of 3

**Prologue:**  
***We went for a walk***

# What was in our hearts & minds?

## Diana:

- How can I move upstream to reach our struggling students *before* they get into crisis?
- Can students learn how to thrive and bounce back like any other set of skills they learn at university?
- What if we created a 'one-stop - shop' blending learning and thriving strategies?

## Deena:

- Who got access to Access?
- How-to-learn is (still) never taught
- Student sleeplessness & loneliness
- “What counts” as a learning strategy?

# Chapter 1:

## *Emergent frameworks*

# Profile of RESILIENCE

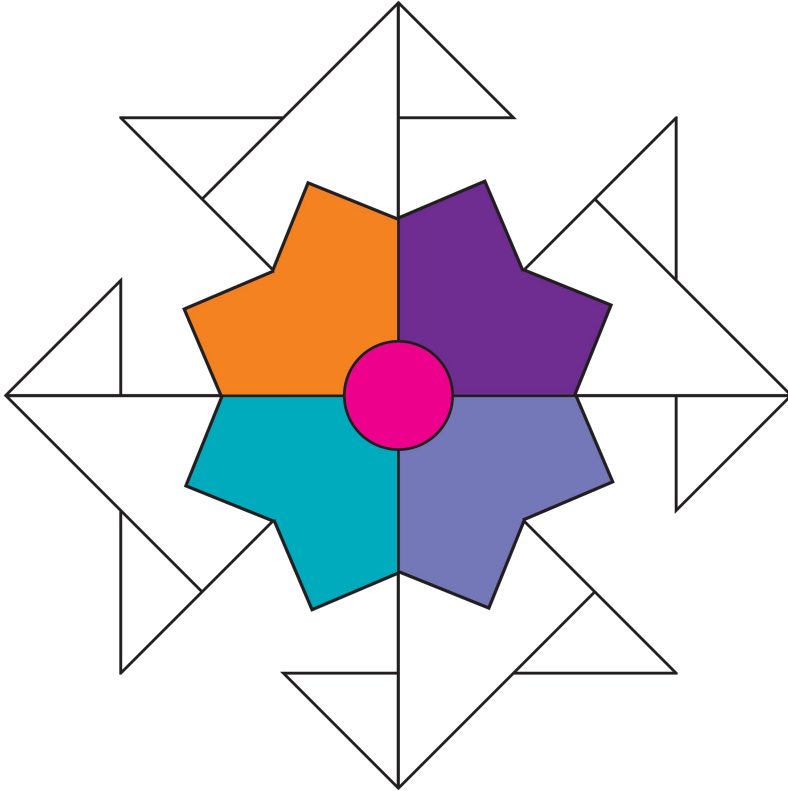
- Mindfulness
- Gratitude
- Optimism
- Self-Compassion
- Grit

# Profile of STRUGGLING

- Difficult to be in present moment
- Don't notice the good things that are happening
- Pessimistic explanatory style
- Self-critical & judgmental
- Give up when overwhelmed



# The Five Factor Model of Resilience



**Mindfulness**

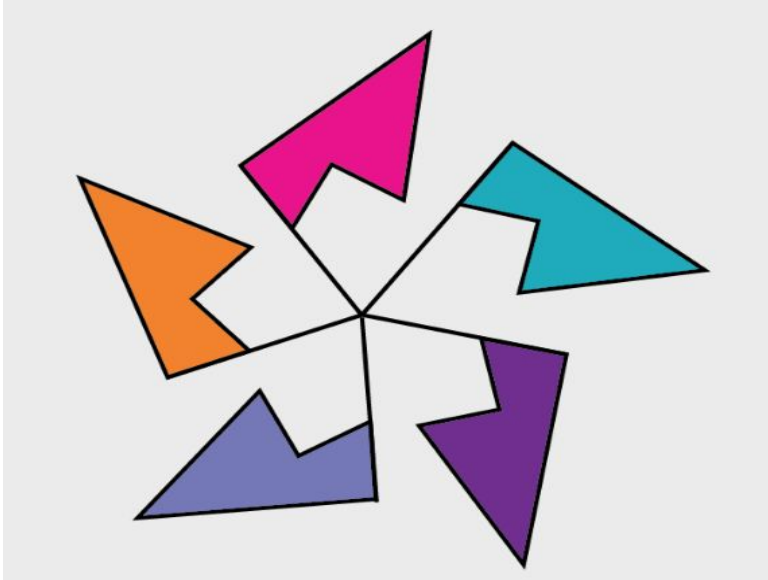
**Gratitude**

**Optimism**

**Self-Compassion**

**Grit**

# Five Features of Wide Awake Learning



**Practiseability**

**Attention Restoration**

**Well-being/-becoming/-learning**

**Connectedness**

**Agency**

Shaffer (2018)

- Equity- & access-prioritizing (all identities & parts of self are welcomed & honoured)
- “Unconditional hospitality” & non-contingent welcome
- Empathic (e.g. lateness), appreciative (e.g. you as your own best expert), celebratory (e.g. applause, reactions)
- “Pedagogy of accompaniment”
- Belief in benevolence, kindness & warmth
- Concretely strengths-based
- Guide vs. expert: “What do you do, know, feel *already* that you can tap into?”
- Enabling more ease, spaciousness & buoyance within academic journey

# Chapter 2:

## *From photocopier to pilot*

**“What Went Well?”**

**Thriving Skill**

**Mindful Movement**

**Writing Prompt**

**Holistic Learning Strategy**

**Meditation/Visualization**

# Ten Week TiA Program

## **Week #1: A Meaningful Journey**

- Habits, Sleep & Top 10 Mind-Body-Heart-Spirit Learning Strategies

## **Week #2: Perseverance & Persistence**

- Grit, Personal Model of Resilience & Mindful Time Management

## **Week #3: Tuning In/To (One's Strengths & Surroundings)**

- Character Strengths & Active Listening, Note-Taking, Concentration Repair

## **Week #4: Broadening Perspective**

- Optimism & Effective, Efficient Studying

## **Week #5/Reading Week: Transitions**

- *Passages* Film

# Ten Week TiA Program

## **Week #6: Practising Presentness**

- Gratitude & Savouring, Calm & Confident Test-Taking

## **Week #7: Cultivating Curiosity**

- Flow & Optimal Performance, Waypoints into Essay-Writing

## **Week #8: Compassion, Connections, Relationships & Reciprocity**

- Self-Compassion, Inquiry, Awe & Collaborative Group Work

## **Week #9: Confidence**

- Growth Mindset, Self-Advocacy & Professional Communication

## **Week #10: Bringing It Together & Looking Ahead**

- Resilience (Micro and Macro Resilience strategies) & Pendulation

# Chapter 3:

## *Resonant results*



# OQ45: Mental Health Vital Signs

Burlingame and Lambert

## Outcome Questionnaire (OQ®-45.2)

**Instructions:** Looking back over the last week, including today, help us understand how you have been feeling. Read each item carefully and mark the box under the category which best describes your current situation. For this questionnaire, work is defined as employment, school, housework, volunteer work, and so forth. Please do not make any marks in the shaded areas.

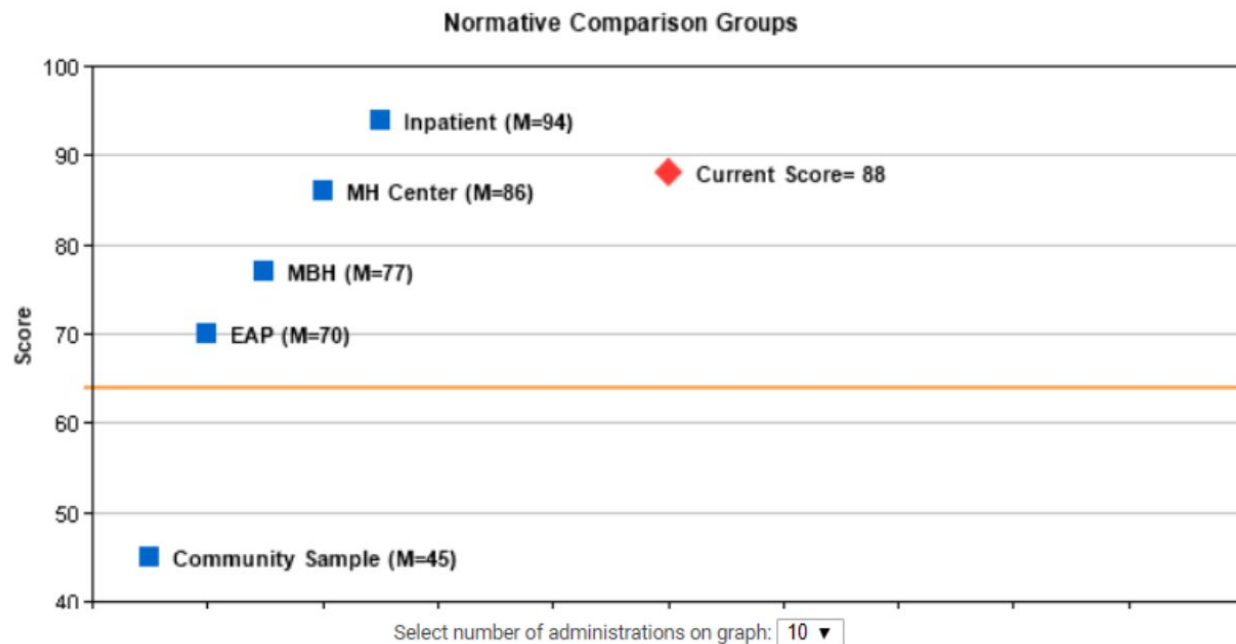
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ yrs.

ID# \_\_\_\_\_ Sex  
M ☐ F ☐

Session # \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	<i>SD</i>	<i>IR</i>	<i>SR</i>
						<i>DO NOT MARK BELOW</i>		
1. I get along well with others.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 0		<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. I tire quickly.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>		
3. I feel no interest in things.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>		
4. I feel stressed at work/school.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4			<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I blame myself for things.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>		
6. I feel irritated.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>		
7. I feel unhappy in my marriage/significant relationship.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4		<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. I have thoughts of ending my life.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>		
9. I feel weak.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>		
10. I feel fearful.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>		
11. After heavy drinking, I need a drink the next morning to get going. (If you do not drink, mark "never")	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>		
12. I find my work/school satisfying.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 0			<input type="checkbox"/>
13. I am a happy person.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/>		
14. I work/study too much.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4			<input type="checkbox"/>
15. I feel worthless.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>		
16. I am concerned about family troubles.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4		<input type="checkbox"/>	
17. I have an unfulfilling sex life.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4		<input type="checkbox"/>	
18. I feel lonely.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4		<input type="checkbox"/>	
19. I have frequent arguments.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4		<input type="checkbox"/>	
20. I feel loved and wanted.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 0		<input type="checkbox"/>	
21. I enjoy my spare time.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 0			<input type="checkbox"/>
22. I have difficulty concentrating.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>		
23. I feel hopeless about the future.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/>		
24. I like myself.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/>		

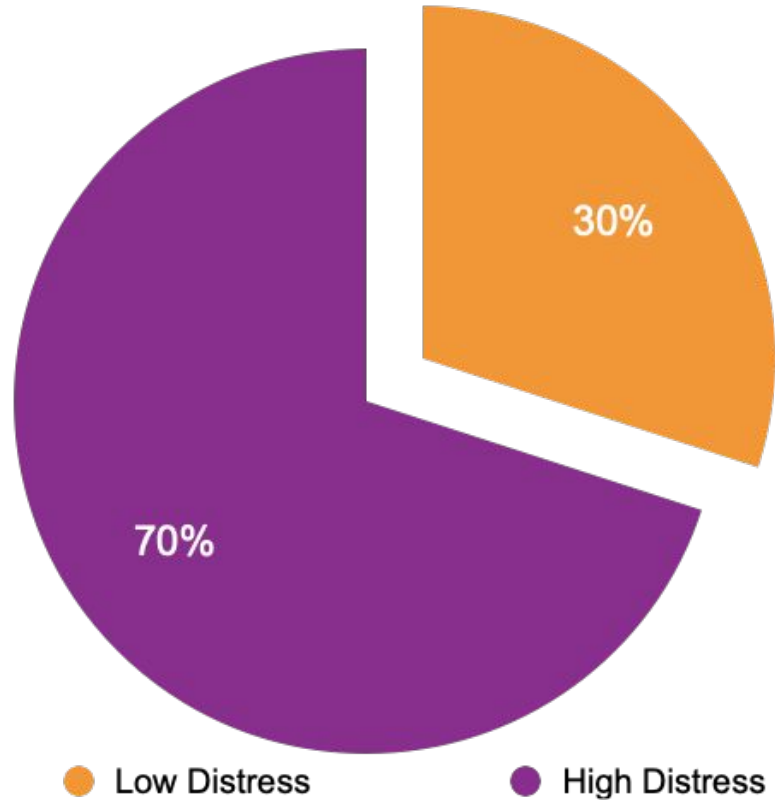
# OQ45



**Graph Legend:**

- Inpatient - Acute care settings with short stay
- MH Center - Outpatient settings such as community mental health centers
- MBH - Managed Behavioral Health company outpatient settings
- EAP - Employee Assistance Programs and students presenting at University Counseling Centers
- Community Sample - Individuals randomly drawn from the community

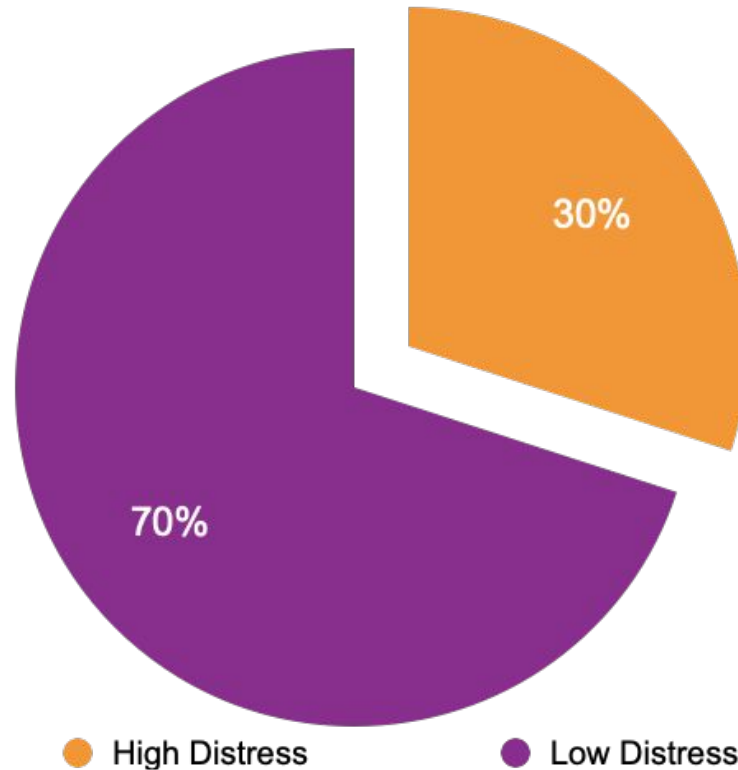
Pre-Test OQ45 scores for entire sample = 98



**For the 68 students in  
clinical distress at pre-test OQ45:**

**70% experienced  
significant clinical improvement  
at post-test**

## Post-Test OQ45 scores for clinical sample = 68



And, 78% of the entire sample  
reported **well-being**  
(*low distress* on OQ45) at post-test

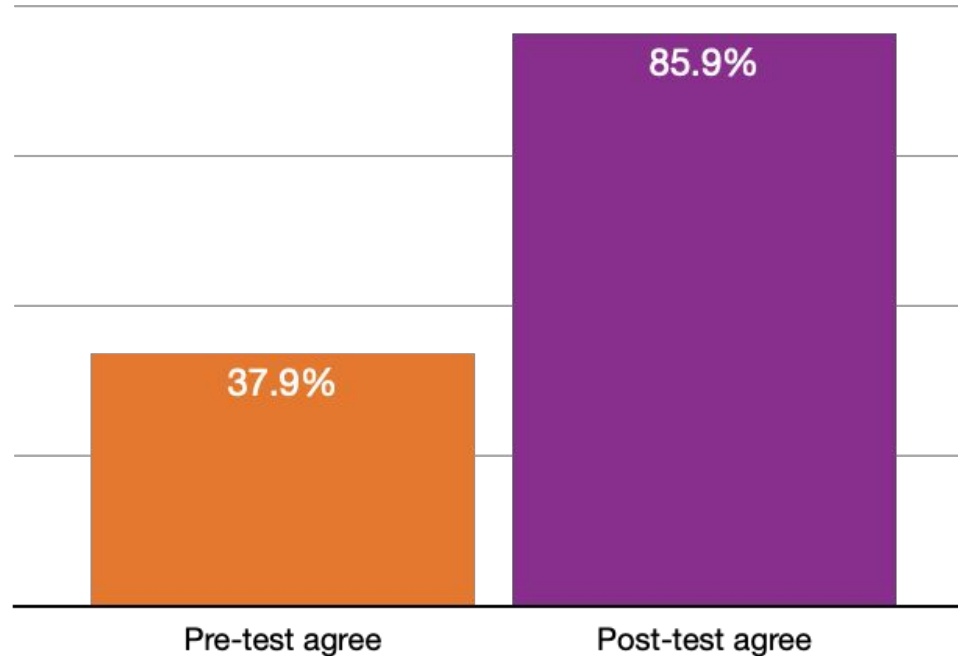
# Thriving Quotient

Dr. Laurie Schreiner

Azusa Pacific University, California

# Strengths

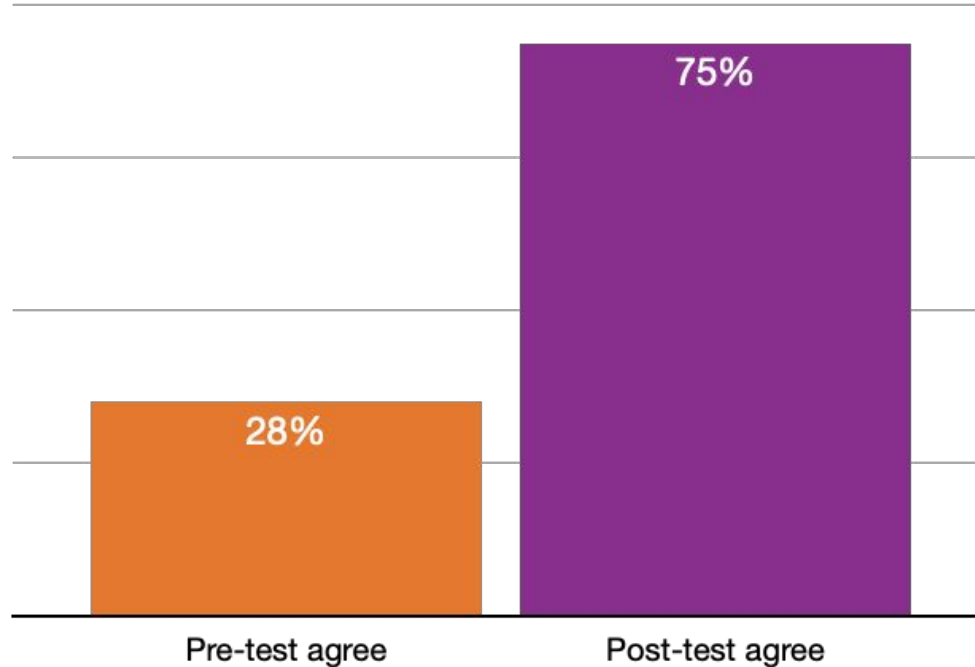
Q7. I know how to apply my strengths to achieve academic success.





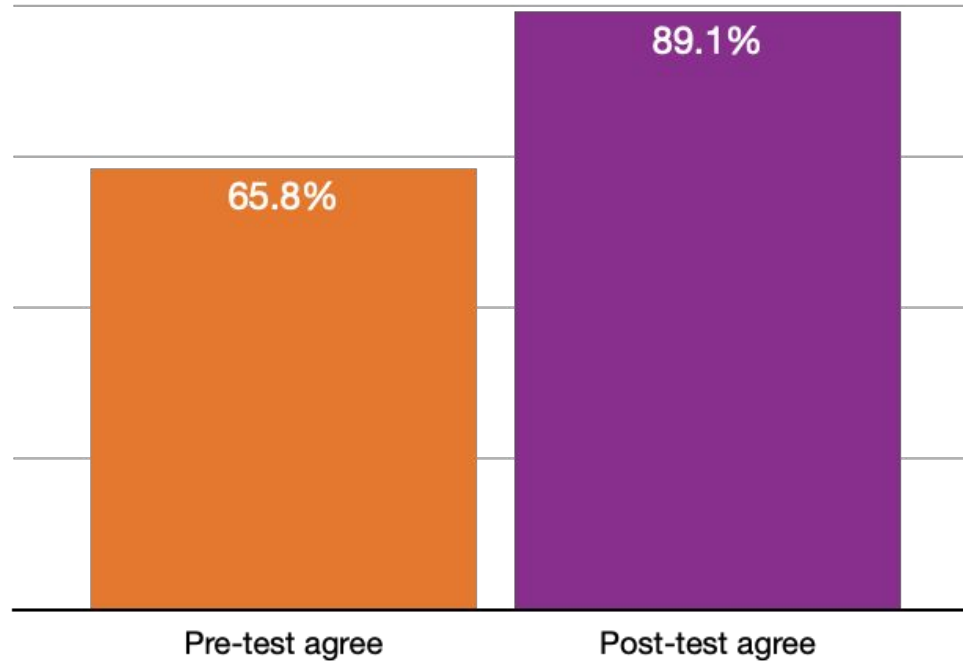
# Resilience

Q8. I am good at juggling all the demands of college life



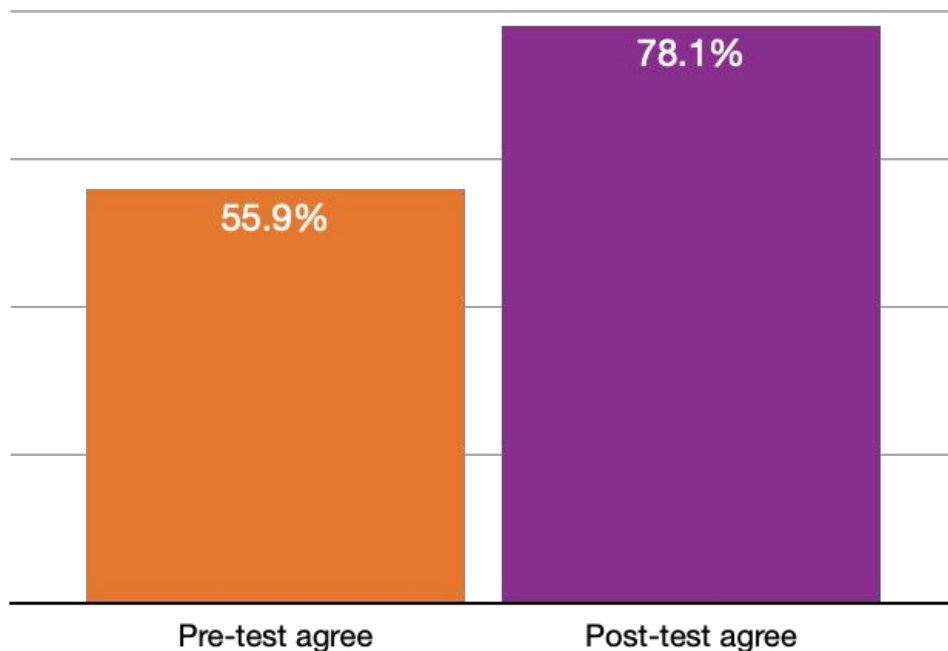
# Belongingness

Q10. I feel like I belong here.



# Connectedness & Community

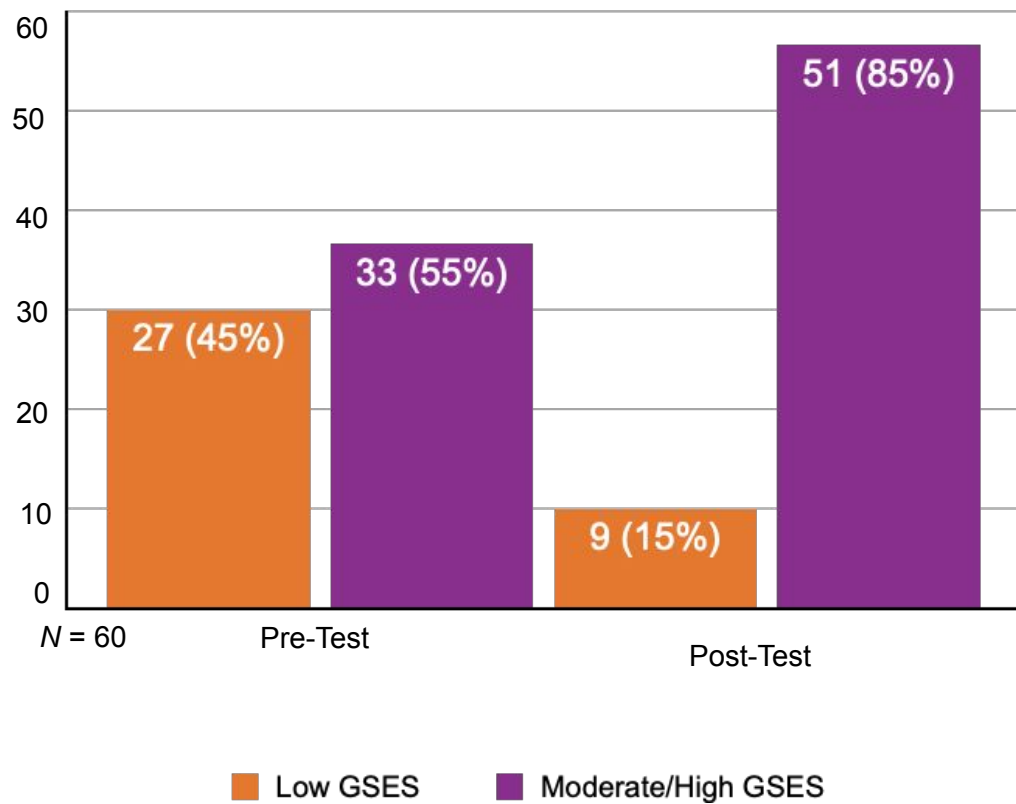
Q16. There is a strong sense of community on this campus.



# General Self-Efficacy Scale

Schwarzer & Jerusalem

GSES at Pre- and Post-Test



# Chapter 4:

## *Alchemy, acknowledged*

## Background

**Who?** There were 16 participating students, some of whom were on academic probation from FCAD, and some were on the CSDC waitlist. In terms of participation: 1 student dropped out, 1 attended half of the sessions, 1 attended 1 session and 7 attended 2 or more sessions. 10 students completed the objective measures post tests.

**What?** Thriving in Action offers an innovative blend of Positive Psychology and progressive, holistic learning skills.

**When?** The Thriving in Action pilot ran for 8 weeks of 1-hour sessions in Winter 2017 from midterms until final exams.

**Why?** An intervention for languishing students to prevent academic and personal crisis, to meet rising registration and request for service at Centre for Student Development and Counselling and Academic Accommodation Support, and to bolster students to return to clear academic standing.

**How?** Inspired by Carleton's FITA (From Intention to Action), Thriving in Action provides a group format to enhance confidence-building, peer learning, and a cohort model to scaffold transition.

## What Happened?

Hee Deena and Diana,

*Before sharing my mark on my final, I just wanted to share with you my journey this semester. It has definitely been bumpy these past couple of weeks, dealing with ongoing family drama issues, my depression and anxiety flare-ups, and problems in the beginning of the term motivating myself.*

*It all hit bottom when I got my Corporate Tax Midterm back, 56%. I started feeling like there was no point in trying, and the marks for my other classes felt as well as my motivation waned.*

*That was until I joined Thriving in Action.*

*I was given the amazing opportunity to learn study and motivational techniques from you guys which I applied in all of my classes. The lessons on being grateful for the little things was a big help in improving my depression, the meditation continues to help for my anxiety, and the study techniques I used to study for my corporate tax exam. The biggest push to start studying was applying what I am already passionate about, which was helping my friends with their taxes, to studying for tax. I figured if I am so willing to help my friends, I should be willing to help my 'friend' in the example problems in the book. I can attest to this strategy as it works!*

*Speaking of tax, I earned 82% on the final!! Honestly, when I got this mark, I felt as if everything I put 100% of my efforts into, I WILL get the results. Hard work definitely pays off and this victory feels so good.*

*I just wanted to end this long email by saying my most sincerest thanks for helping me thrive. I don't think I could have done it without your support.*

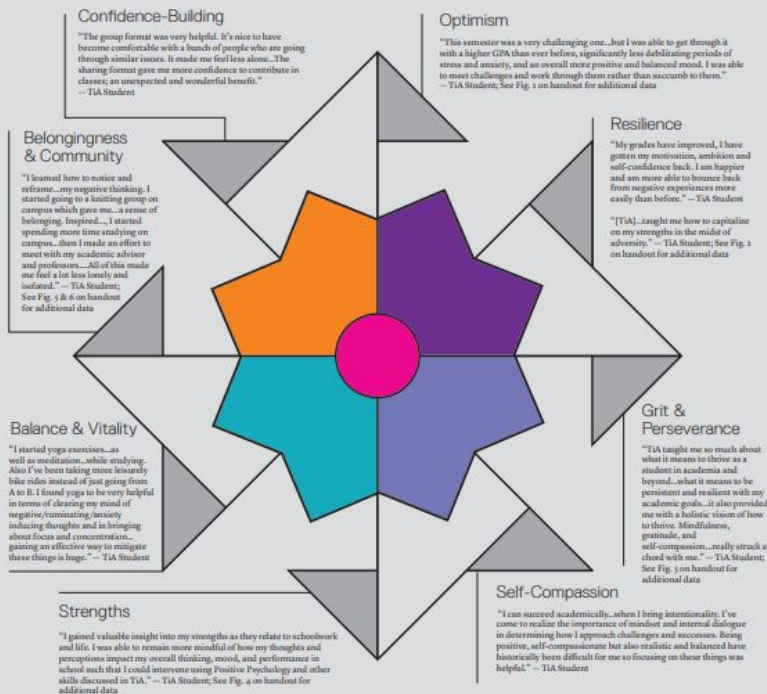
Sincerely yours,  
JS, TIA Pilot Program Participant



# Thriving in Action

**"The email inviting me to this program felt like a miracle... I learned so many strategies in this group that will help me with my life and career generally. This was an amazing experience. I can honestly say that joining this group was best decision I've made at Ryerson so far."**

## The Stories, Themes, and Methodology of What Went Well?



## Outcome Results

- 80% positive response to treatment** (80% of participants had an unusually rapid response)
- 10% no change** (was below clinical cut off scores on both pre and post tests)
- 10% no response to treatment** (only attended 4 sessions)



The Outcome Questionnaire-45 (OQ-45) provides an index of mental health functioning for adults (18+). The cut-off score is 65/80 above which indicates symptoms of clinical significance. Reductions of scores of 14 points or more demonstrates reliable change in functioning.

80% of participants showed progress on this clinical measure—60% showing unusually rapid positive response to treatment, and 10% showing strong progress.

## What's Next?

There are 20 students on the waitlist for the next round of Thriving in Action.

Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services (RASS) and ThriveRU are currently co-developing an Indigenous iteration of Thriving in Action to support Ryerson's Aboriginal students, including incorporating learning strategies grounded in Medicine Wheel teachings, to be launched in September 2017.

Academic Accommodation Support (AAS) and ThriveRU are also working together on a version of Thriving in Action to best serve Ryerson's students with disabilities.

Thriving in Action and you: Feel free to contact Diana Brecher at [dbrecher@ryerson.ca](mailto:dbrecher@ryerson.ca) and Deena Kara Shaffer at [dshaffer@ryerson.ca](mailto:dshaffer@ryerson.ca) to learn more or participate.

[ryerson.ca/ThriveRU](http://ryerson.ca/ThriveRU)

# Toronto Metropolitan University Press

- "New Video Game to Boost Mental Health in Kids and Teens", TorontoMet Today, May 18, 2023
- "World Mental Health Day: Ask an Expert," Ryerson Today, Oct. 8, 2021
- "5 daily non -negotiables to stay resilient in uncertain times," Ryerson Today. Oct.23, 2020
- "Ditching the 'all-nighter': healthy habits play a key role in academic success."  
Ryerson Today, Nov. 5, 2020
- "Ryerson scholars create Thriving in Action Online to help students, faculty thrive."  
Ryersonian, Jan. 26, 2020
- "Students call this class 'life-changing.'" on Thriving in Action & Thriving in Action Online, Ryerson Today, Feb. 21, 2020
- Ryerson scholars create Thriving in Action Online to help students, faculty thrive  
*Ryersonian*, Jan. 26, 2020
- "A New Way To Help Students Thrive." Ryerson Today, Sept. 5, 2017



# External Press

- *National Geographic Family*, on resilience, Jan. 2021
- *Healthline*, How hope affects your health and 5 ways to build it, Feb 12, 2021
- Global News Radio 900 CHML Hamilton Today Interview with Scott Thompson (33:19-38:59), Dec. 21, 2021
- *The Toronto Star*, “You have people in crisis teaching people in crisis’: How COVID-19 upended the lives of millions of Ontario children,” Dec. 2020
- *Global News Morning Show* Coronavirus: How to beat a pandemic burnout, Nov 25, 2020
- *The Globe and Mail*, “University looks different this year, but that’s not all bad,” Nov. 6, 2020
- NewsTalk 1010, “The Kids Are Not OK: The COVID Effect on Post-Secondary Students,” Oct. 2020
- *The Conversation*, Here’s why you’re craving the outdoors so much during the coronavirus lockdown, May 24, 2020
- *National Post*, Struggling in Silence, Sept. 2019
- CBC, *Winnipeg News*, “Spending time in nature helps mental health,” May 17, 2019
- CBC, *The National*, “Spending time in nature helps mental health,” May 13, 2019
- CBC News, “Nature offers serious benefits to our physical and mental health, research suggests,” May 10, 2019
- CBC, *The National*, profile on Thriving in Action, Aug. 17, 2017
- *CBC Online*, Why Ryerson’s Orientation focuses on making mental health accessible, Aug. 2017

# Chapter 5:

## *Thriving at scale*

# Workbooks

NEW!

# Cultivate Your Happiness: A ThriveTMU Weekly Workbook

**Second Edition**

A calendar of weekly thriving strategies, learning strategies, and writing prompts crafted to assist you in navigating challenges and nurturing your overall sense of well-being.

**Diana Brecher & Venus Bali (2023)**



**Toronto  
Metropolitan  
University**

ThriveTMU

# Institutes & TiA COP

# Thriving in Action Training Institute

Dr. Diana Brecher and  
Dr. Deena Kara Shaffer  
Ryerson University



## Thriving In Action Training Manual

Second Edition 2024

Dr. Diana Brecher &  
Venus Bali

Toronto  
Metropolitan  
University

ThriveTMU

[www.torontomu.ca/ThriveTMU/](http://www.torontomu.ca/ThriveTMU/) #ThriveTMU © 2024.

This copyrighted training manual of Toronto Metropolitan University may not be reproduced, or otherwise distributed or used in any form without the express written permission of Toronto Metropolitan University.



# 14 TiA Training Institutes

- TMU, December 2017
- CACUSS Pre-Conference, June 2018
- TMU, December 2018
- Seneca, January 2019
- Centennial, February 2019
- TMU (internal staff/faculty), September 2019
- TMU 2-Day, December 2019
- University of Toronto, 2- Day December 2019
- Virtual 5-Day Intensive: July 2020, January 2021, May 2021, May 2023  
Jan, 2024 May, 2025

## CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES:

- [Concordia University](#)
- Wilfred Laurier University
- Windsor University
- [University of Guelph](#)
- Kwantlen Polytechnic University
- Mt. St. Vincent University
- [Vancouver Island University](#)
- [UBC Okanagan](#)
- U of T Scarborough (possible rebrand to [ArriveUTSC](#), ThriveTMU credited)
- [Kwantlen Polytechnic University](#) (ThriveTMU credit not mentioned, but honoured in this [article](#))
- [McGill University](#) (temporarily suspended)

## CANADIAN COLLEGES

- Niagara College
- Centennial College
- SheridanCollege
- [Mohawk College](#)
- [Algonquin College](#)
- John Abbott College
- George Brown College
- [Humber Polytechnic](#)

## US PSEs

- [University of Notre Dame](#) (TiA Online listed as a recommended resource)
- [Rowan University](#) (ThriveTMU credit not given)
- [Roane State College](#) (Tennessee)



**TiAO**

# How can I learn to love being a student?

Do grades, motivation, and the day-to-day of school life feel like a struggle? Is stress high, confidence shaken, or hope low in your in-person or online academic journey? Does learning feel lonely, disorienting, or disconnected? Thriving in Action Online can help. Here, you'll learn new ways, new approaches, and new skills to support, help, and heal your post-secondary path.

Thriving in Action Online welcomes all students—all identities, all contexts, and ways of learning. No matter your social location, year, program, age, or school history, welcome. We're so glad you're here.

In Thriving in Action Online, born out of the Thriving in Action curriculum, you'll find a blend of flourishing skills and holistic learning strategies that can help you mindfully manage your time, nourish new habits, study efficiently, bounce forward after setbacks, and so much more.

[tia.torontomu.ca](https://tia.torontomu.ca)

# **Faculty and Staff Guide**

Thriving in Action Online

# **Student Guide**

Thriving in Action Online

# Chapter 6:

## *Flourishing, for credit*

# SSH102 Learning & Development



# Student Insights

- “Mistakes are there to remind us that the project is ‘not yet’ at the potential we can bring it to.”
- “I use a writing prompt when I am stuck before writing a paper. Kind of a warm-up for the bigger paper.”
- **“This class doesn’t feel like a class, it feels more like self-care. This class should be mandatory.”**
- “When I lead from my character strengths, I feel alive & purposeful”
- “I actually feel like my grade is growing through this class. I’m willing to fail & make mistakes & learn from them.”
- “By reviewing the outline & topics before a lecture, I can show up to my lectures with an idea of the material, making my note-taking process easier.”
- “I have been unlearning (thanks to this class) bad study habits, how to complete readings on time, even unlearning my tendency to make excuses for myself. I need to keep doing this!”
- “To be successful is not about how smart you are but how resilient you are.”
- **“School & well-being can be mended together.”**
- “Mindful movement is something that I plan to practice outside of this class. It has helped me become aware of my body and emotions.”
- “Nature can be a learning strategy. It is a stress reliever.”
- “I could not have asked for a more eye-opening, relatable, proactive & supportive course to take the semester. I truly believe this course will help me thrive in more ways than one & I can’t thank you guys enough.”
- **“School doesn’t have to suck!”**

**SSH102 TiA COVID Course  
Initiative S/F20:  
3 Days, 3 Weeks, 3 Months**



# PSY706: Positive Psychology

- Articulate how the core concepts, theories, research, science, & applications of Positive Psychology respond to the fundamental question, *How can I thrive in my daily life?*
- Understand the PERMA-V model of flourishing
- Practise key Positive Psychology concepts in experiential, embodied, personal, & academic ways
- Write a capstone paper that entwines contemplation, personal narrative, & scholastic rigour
- Develop a strengthened capacity to learn in an online environment in healthful, meaningful ways
- Experience the intersection of wellbeing learning, & expand one's repertoire of thriving, coping, & well-regulating strategies

October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020

# Happy Thanksgiving

## APPRECIATION. CONNECTEDNESS. GRATITUDE

### APPRECIATION

I want us to take this time to stop what we are doing for just a moment, and recognize the beautiful world that surrounds us, filled with beautiful people...friends, family, neighbours, and the turkey filling dinners we are about to fuel our hungry stomachs with! Let's pause and appreciate our own journey and who we have become, those who have shaped or contributed to our lives (in some way- whether it be on a large or minimal scale), and what we have in front of us (food, love, laughter, health... and life).

### CONNECTEDNESS

"Experiencing a connection with our very selves (body, heart, mind, and spirit), others... the natural world, as well as tapping into our shared humanity ...can help us with healthy decision-making, genuine intimacy, and self-compassion" (Brecher & Shaffer, 2019). Let's make the choice to connect with people around us. Whether it be a genuine smile, a hug, or a pleasant wave, let's exercise the warmth of everyday greetings. Learn more about connectedness at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHoEWUTYnSo>

### GRATITUDE

I am beyond grateful for my incredible family, they are truly cherished with all my heart. I wouldn't be the person I am today without their unconditional support, love, kindness, and guidance. They have provided me with the most beautiful gift of all... LIFE.

October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020

# Mindfulness

Train your mind and  
reach optimal states  
of being

*It is possible!*

01

**MEDITATION.** Connect with yourself, set aside time for you to practice being in the 'now'. Let your preoccupying thoughts of the past/future leave your mind, body, and soul.

02

**OPTIMISM.** Shift the way you explain situations to yourself and make the good last longer. Optimism promotes resilience!

03

**PRACTICE** mindfulness. What we practice becomes stronger!

BE KIND.

BE

CURIOUS.

BE OPEN

MINDFUL.

Take a deep breath, be here  
with yourself, and be present  
with life.

"When we practice mindfulness, we  
strengthen our capacity to be present  
moment by moment in a curious, accepting,  
and kind way" →

file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/ShapiroJazariDeSousa%20(3).pdf

# PSY706 Feedback

- “This is the only class in my three years at university that I have genuinely felt like **helped my mental health and well-being.**”
- “It was great to **actively embody our learnings** throughout the semester!”
- “This class has given me so much & has truly **changed the way I do life.**”
- “Going to create a little **toolkit** for myself with meditations, strategies, etc. from this class to help when I’m anxious or struggling :)”
- “Thank you to everyone for making this class such a **safe space.**”
- “**This class has been a truly extraordinary experience. The learnings I have acquired will stay with me forever.**”

# MB8134: Mental Health & Wellbeing in the Workplace

- Identify the focus of **Positive Psychology**'s six areas of research
- Practise **Active Constructive Responding** as a means of communication, and the impact on our relationships overall and in cultivating life satisfaction and job satisfaction
- Experiment with **self-care strategies** that lead to wellness and **productivity**, for example, sleep, nutrition, and exercise.
- Incorporate **micro-resilience strategies** as energy management in the workplace
- Explore your signature **character strengths**, and how to tap these in your workplace teams
- Apply **Growth Mindset** to some aspect of this course and as a manager in your workplace, and practice process praise as a motivational tool
- Develop a **plan/proposal** to integrate at least two of these Positive Psychology **interventions** into your workplace

# CPSY706 - Development: Personal Growth and Positive Psychology

Menu

Module 1 of 13

Search

Introduction to Positive Psychology

↳ Course Overview

## Welcome

Please take a few moments to watch this welcome video by course author Dr. Diana Brecher. The video provides an overview of key concepts you will study and on how the course has been modelled on Positive Psychology.

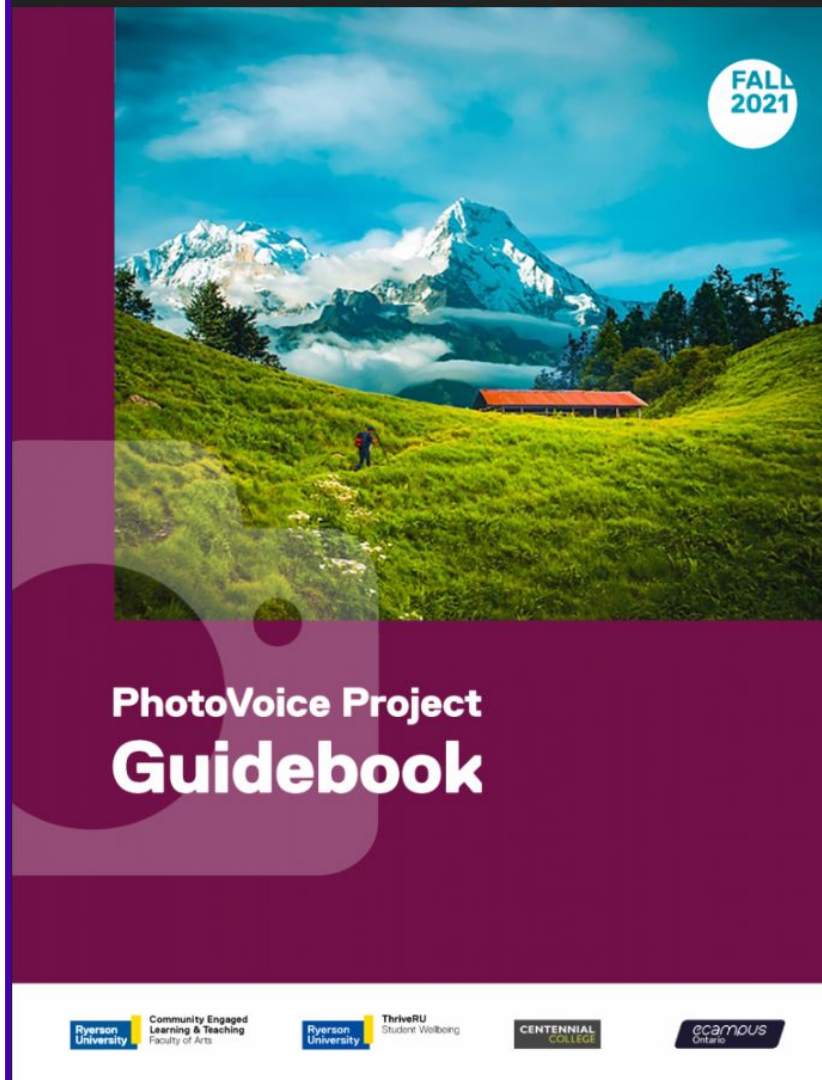


Video

### Introduction to the Course

TMU Video | Duration: 02:26

# Photovoice Guidebook



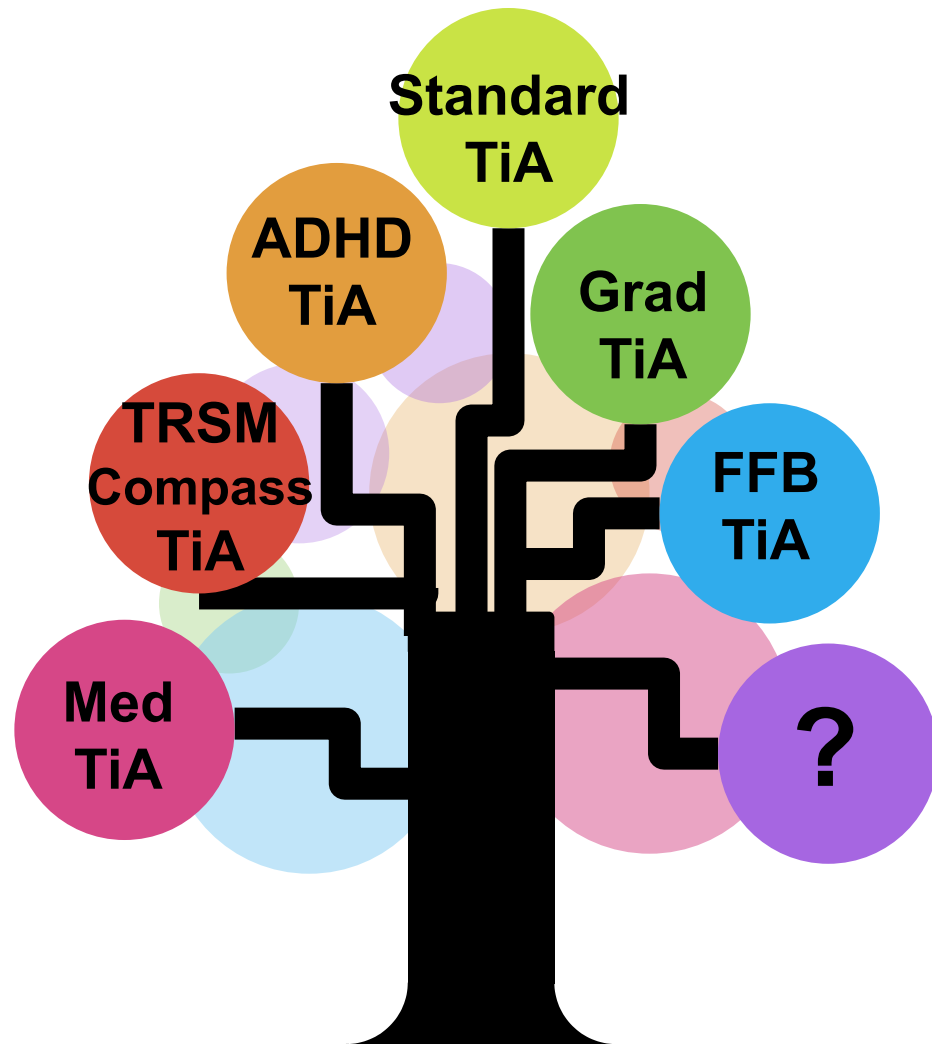
# Exhibit

**An *undenouement*:**  
***A flourishing program,***  
***flourishing***

**TMU**



# Thriving in Action Adaptations




2025

# Thriving in Action Curriculum - 5 Week Program (Part One)

<b>Week 1</b>	Habits & Sleep	A Strong Start: Mindful Time Management
<b>Week 2</b>	Optimism & Hope	Holistic Note-Taking
<b>Week 3</b>	Leading From Strengths & VIA Character Strengths Survey	Flourish by Studying Effectively
<b>Week 4</b>	Quieting the Inner Critic and Cultivating Self-Compassion	Building Focus & Concentration Calm & Confident Test-Taking
<b>Week 5</b>	Gratitude and Savouring	Confident Writing and Editing

# Thriving in Action Curriculum - 5 Week Program (Part Two)

<b>Week 1</b>	Grit & Personal Model of Resilience	Top 10 Learning Tips & Tools
<b>Week 2</b>	Flow & Optimal Performance	Waypoints into Essay Writing
<b>Week 3</b>	Growth Mindset	Cultivating Awe/Curiosity, Group Work & Collaboration
<b>Week 4</b>	Finding Balance	Self-Advocacy, Professional Communication & Mindful Social Media
<b>Week 5</b>	Resilience	Academic Thriving

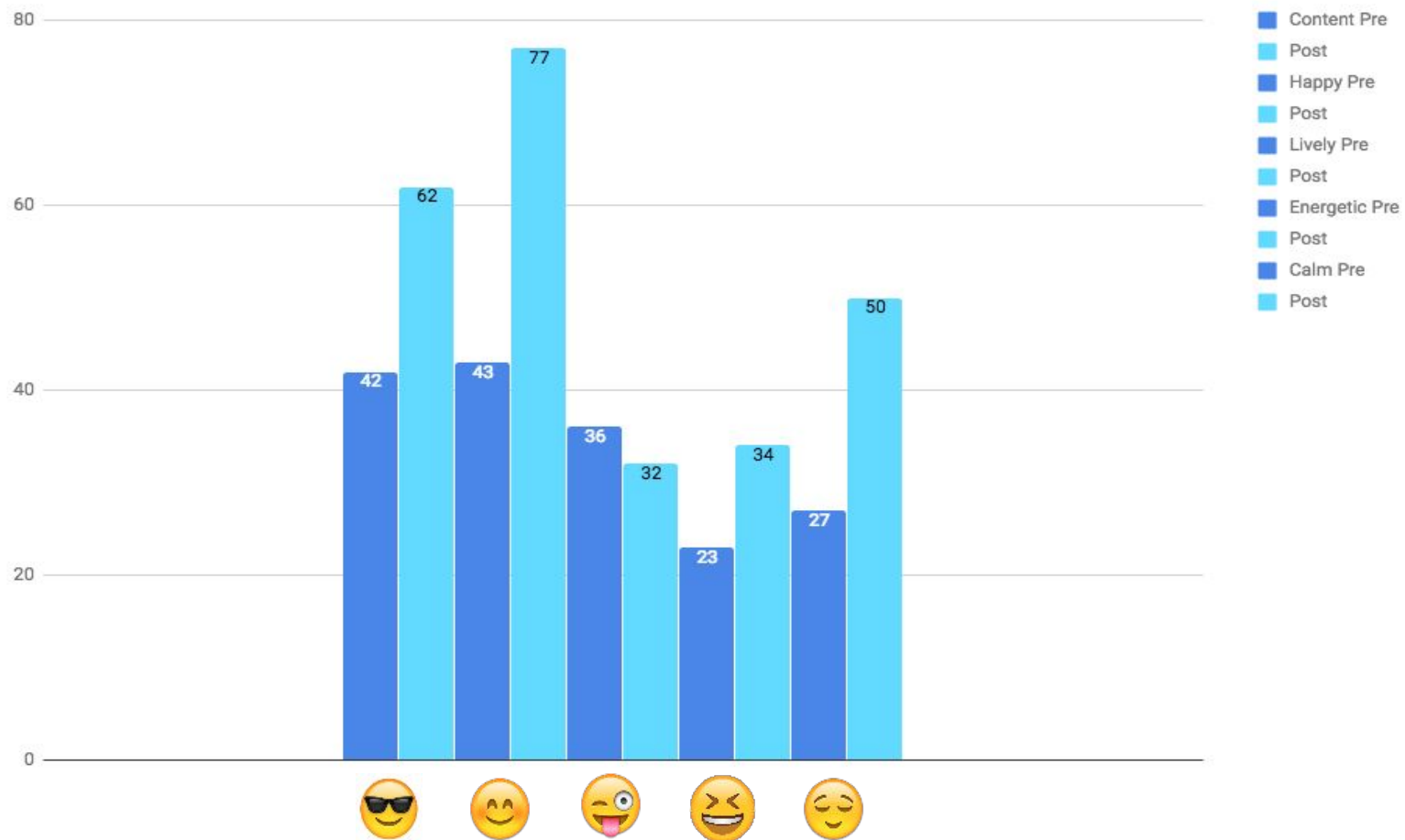
A detailed botanical illustration border surrounds the central text. It includes a pink flower with green leaves in the top left, a yellow flower with green leaves in the bottom left, a branch with small white flowers and green leaves in the top right, a branch with small red flowers and green leaves in the bottom left, and a branch with a large yellow fruit (lemon or orange) and green leaves in the bottom right.

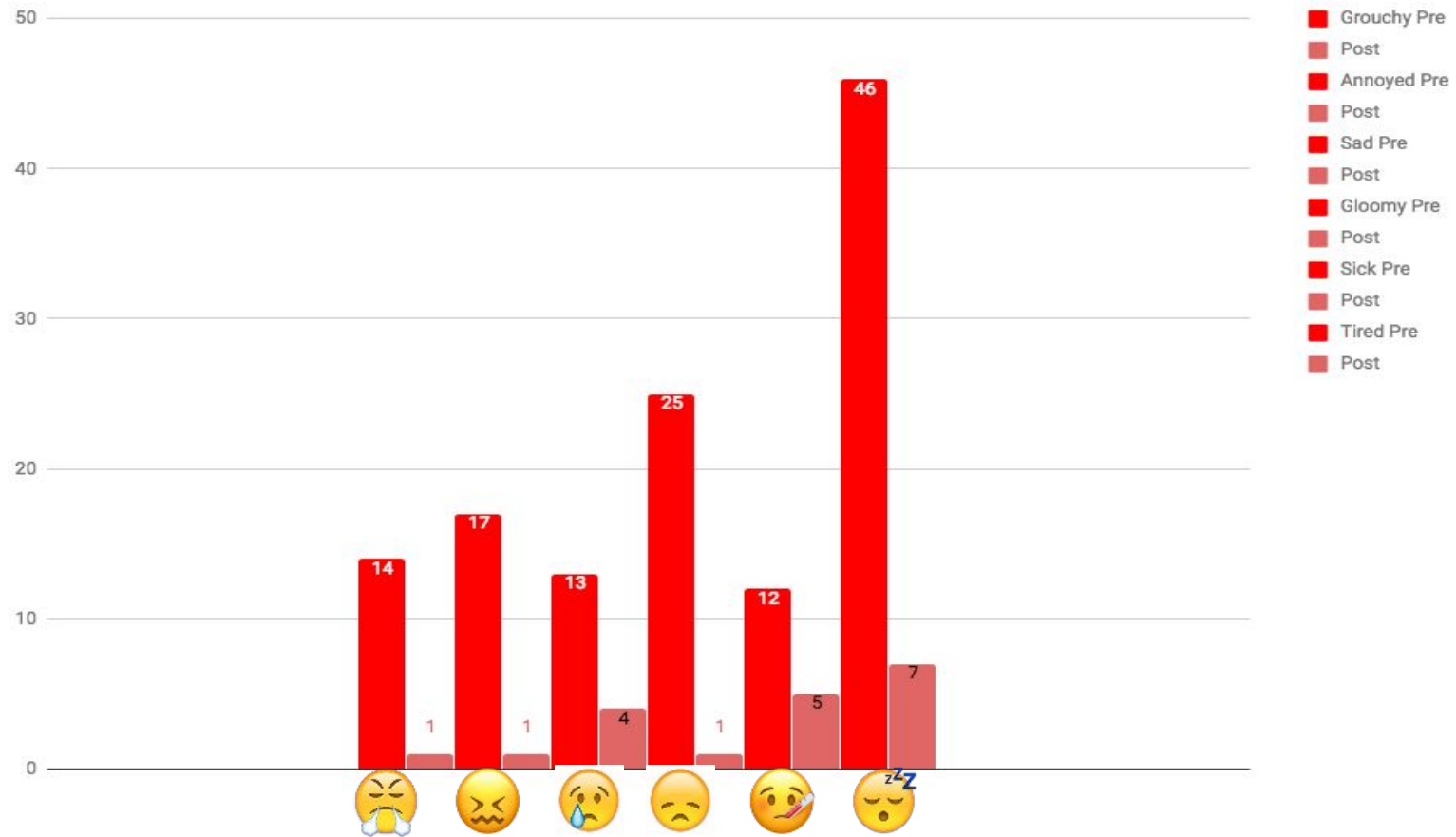
# Nature-Walking *as* Learning Strategy



**“Mood Routes is a bright spot in my week. No matter what’s going on at school, I can leave it behind, connect with others, & see beautiful parts of Toronto that I didn’t know existed. I’ve even started taking my own Mood Route-type walks in my spare time. I come back to my work refreshed & ready to tackle it all. I look forward to it every week.”**

**- Mood Routes Participant**







**“Mood Routes quickly became the highlight of a busy week,** something that could be relied upon to reduce stress and inject an hour or two of movement & fun into the day. Rain or shine, our weekly adventures helped me de-stress among an unlikely community of students and faculty.”

**- Mood Routes Participant**



The slide features decorative floral illustrations. In the top right corner, there are pink and purple flowers with green leaves. In the bottom right corner, there are green buds and leaves. On the left side, there are large green leaves and a small white flower with yellow stamens.

**“I always feel less like  
garbage after we walk...”**

**Community**

## Thriving in the Classroom

A digital toolkit to support resilience in post-secondary educators and their students.

### Hello there

Thank you for your interest in learning more about resilience.

You're joining thousands of college and university faculty, instructors and educators across the province who are committed to supporting themselves and their students in building and strengthening their resilience as they adapt to unpredictable and challenging conditions in the classroom and beyond.

This toolkit shares the latest research, as well as skills and resources to empower you to promote personal, academic, community and career resilience in your students and yourself.

### What is resilience?

Hear what others are saying about resilience



Resilience experts distinguish between four distinct kinds of resilience.

Which of these are you interested in today?

**Community**  
resilience

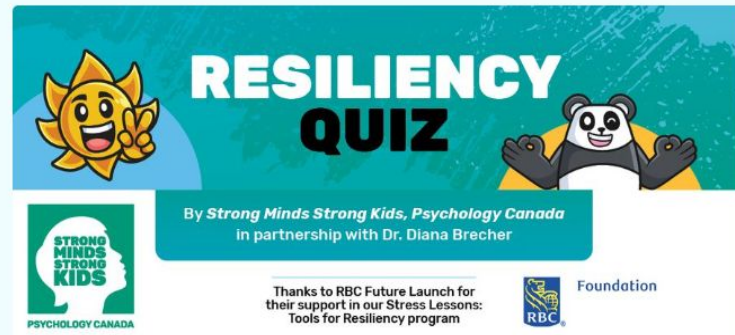
**Personal**  
resilience

**Academic**  
resilience

**Career**  
resilience

# Resiliency Quiz

How resilient are you?



...

Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress—such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors. As much as resilience involves “bouncing back” from these difficult experiences, it can also involve profound personal growth.

...

While these adverse events can be painful and difficult, they don't have to determine the outcome of your life. There are many aspects of your life you can control, modify, and grow with. That's the role of resilience. Nurturing your resilience not only helps you get through difficult circumstances, it also empowers you to grow and improve your life in many ways.

...

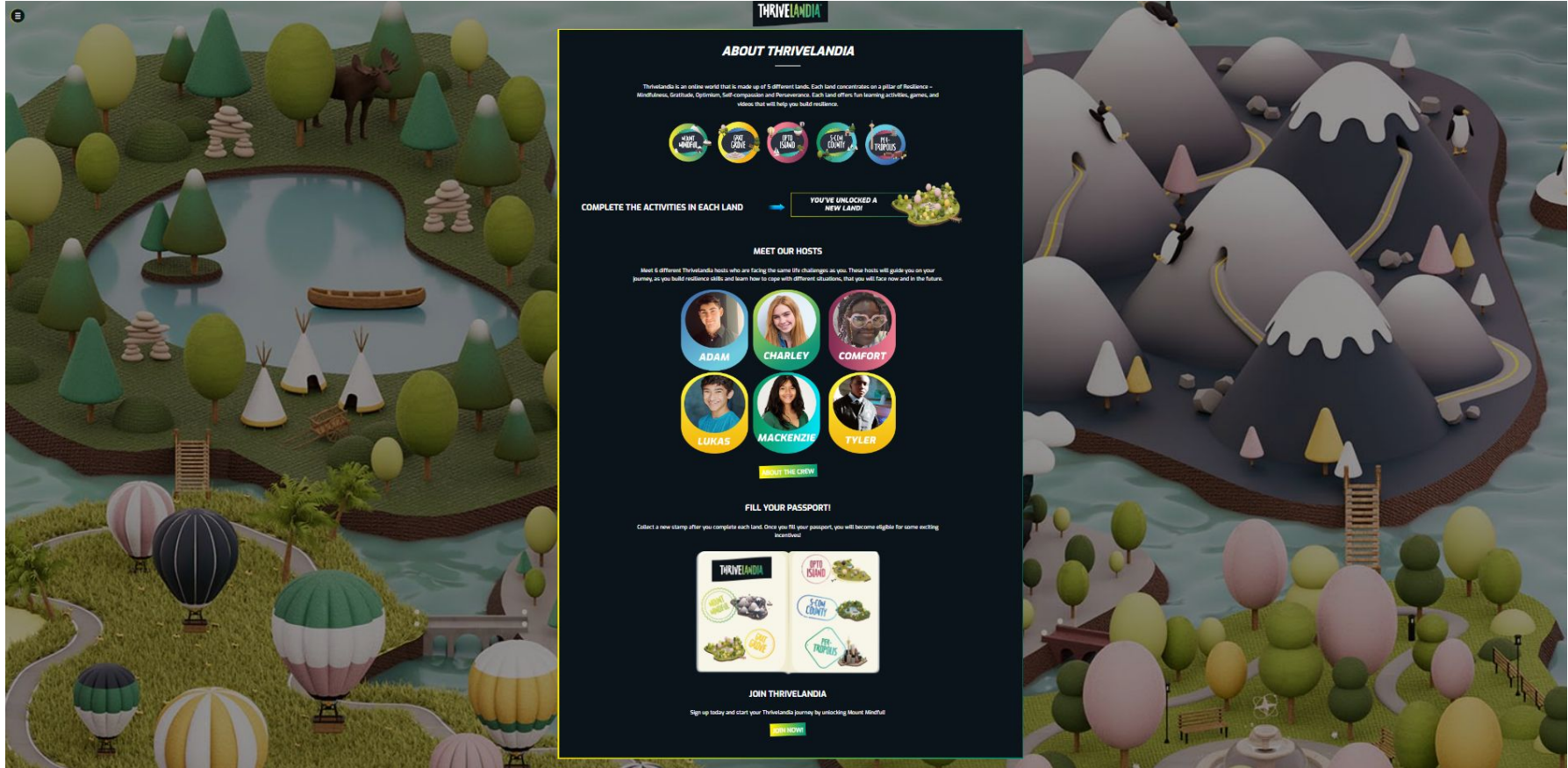
**Try our Resiliency Quiz to learn more about how resilient you are today and the strategies you can adopt that will enhance your life-long resiliency.**

**TAKE THE QUIZ**





# Thrivelandia - based on TiA



# Appendix:

## *Logistics*

- *Sessions*: Number, Duration, Size
- *Recruitment*: Key Stakeholders, Internal/External Promotion
- *Referrals*: Self, Peer, Academic Programs, Student Wellbeing, Student Affairs
- *Attrition*: Before & During
- *Costs*: Printing & Salaries

- **Appreciative Listening**
- **Awe & Wonder**
- **Belongingness & Community**
- **Collaborative Group Work**
- **Coping & Inner-Resourcing**
- **Critical Thinking**
- **Curiosity & Creativity**
- **Decision-Fatigue**
- **Effective Test-Taking**
- **Efficient Studying**
- **Essay-Writing**
- **Flow & Peak Performance**
- **Gratitude**
- **Growth Mindset**
- **Habits**
- **Meaning & Purpose**

- **Micro-Resilience**
- **Mindfulness**
- **Mindful Time Management**
- **Note-Taking**
- **Optimism & Hope**
- **(Complicating) Perseverance**
- **Professional Communication**
- **Responding to Critical Feedback**
- **Restoring Focus**
- **Self-Advocacy**
- **Self-Compassion**
- **Self-Efficacy**
- **Sleep as a Learning Strategy**
- **Well-Regulating Somatic Practices**



# Epilogue:

## *Learnings*

- Cohorts & Heterogeneity
- In-Person vs. Social
- Undergraduate & Graduate Integration
- Mature Student-Friendly
- Flexible Curricular Pairings
- Repeat Participation
- Community → Continuity → Mentorship/Making → Accountability Groups
- Peer Learning
- Practice Space
- Active Well-Being Collaboration

# Acknowledgements:

## The Programs

- From Intention to Action (FITA)
- CAPP - Certificate in Applied Positive Psychology
- SMSK Psychology Foundation
- GEVC - Thriving in Action Online

## The People

- John Hannah & John Austin
- Donica Willis, Tesni Ellis
- Alan Sears
- Allen MacDonald & Lee Hodge
- Venus Bali, Ruth Frolic

**Afterword:**  
***Ways to walk together***

# Diana

[dbrecher@torontomu.ca](mailto:dbrecher@torontomu.ca)  
[www.linkedin.com/in/dianabrecher/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dianabrecher/)  
<https://www.torontomu.ca/thrivetmu/>

## Thriving in Action & ThriveTMU

- *Thriving in Action Training Institute*  
1x/year (spring)
- [CPSY706 Positive Psychology](#)
- Available to consult on applying Positive Psychology to post-secondary undergraduate & graduate programs & curriculum.

# Deena

[deena@awakenedlearning.ca](mailto:deena@awakenedlearning.ca)  
[www.awakenedlearning.ca](https://www.awakenedlearning.ca)  
[www.linkedin.com/in/deenakarashaffer/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/deenakarashaffer/)  
IG: @awakenedlearning

## Holistic Learning Strategies

- Free: [newsletter](#) & [resources](#)
- For learners: [“Summer Skill-Up”](#) (July)
- For educators: ongoing [mentorship](#)
- For all: [“The Essentials”](#)
- For teams: Holistic LS training