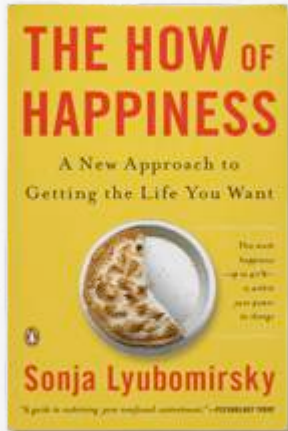


WITHER HAPPINESS?

WHEN, HOW, AND WHY MIGHT POSITIVE ACTIVITIES UNDERMINE WELL-BEING



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- Ken Sheldon, University of Missouri
- **Current Lab:** Christina Armenta, Peter Ruberton, Megan Fritz, Lilian Shin, Seth Margolis, Julia Revord, & Lisa Walsh

POSITIVE ACTIVITY INTERVENTIONS WE HAVE CONDUCTED:

Over the course of 1-3 months, participants are asked to do the following on a regular basis:

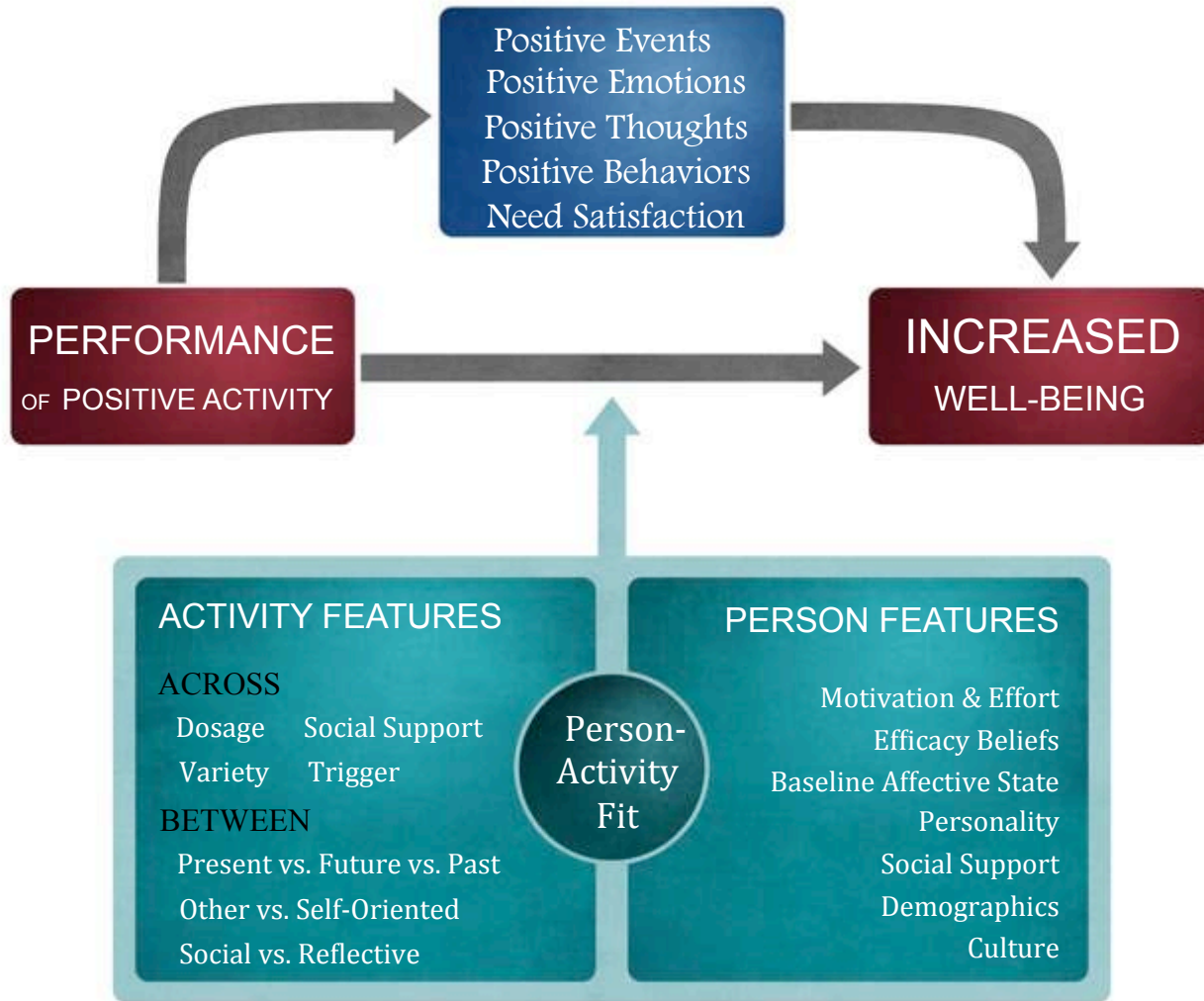
- Commit acts of kindness
- Count their blessings
- Live their life like it's their "last month"
- Make someone else happier
- Write gratitude letters
- Visualize their best possible future
- Affirm their most important values
- Savor and replay happy days

MY LAB'S FOCUS

QUESTION: How and why do happiness-enhancing strategies work?

That is, what are the moderators and mediators that underlie their success?

POSITIVE ACTIVITY MODEL



Lyubomirsky, S., & Layous, K. (2013). How do simple positive activities increase well-being. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 22, 57-62.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR 6-WEEK “COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS” INTERVENTION:

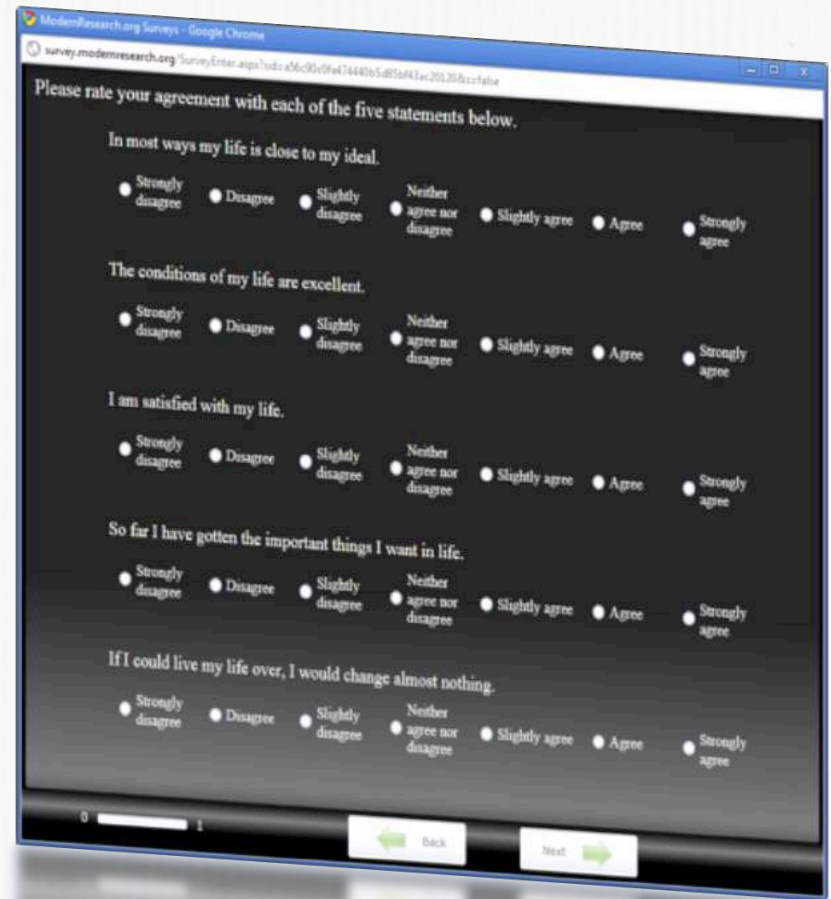


There are many things in our lives, both large and small, that we might be grateful about. Think back over the events of the past week and write down on the lines below up to five things that happened for which you are grateful or thankful.

This week I am grateful for:

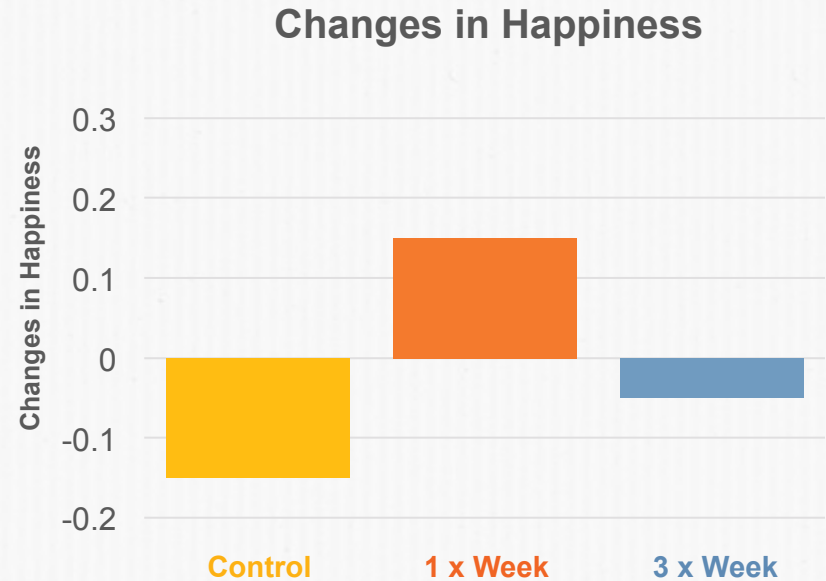
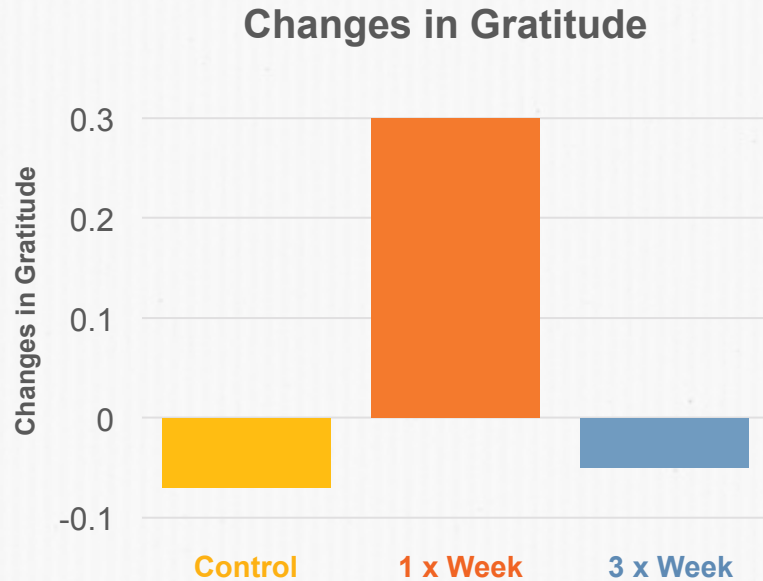
OUTCOME MEASURES

- **Well-Being Composite**
 - Subjective Happiness Scale (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999)
 - Satisfaction With Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985)
 - Affect-Adjective Scale (Diener & Emmons, 1985)
- **Gratitude Scale** (Emmons & McCullough, 2003)



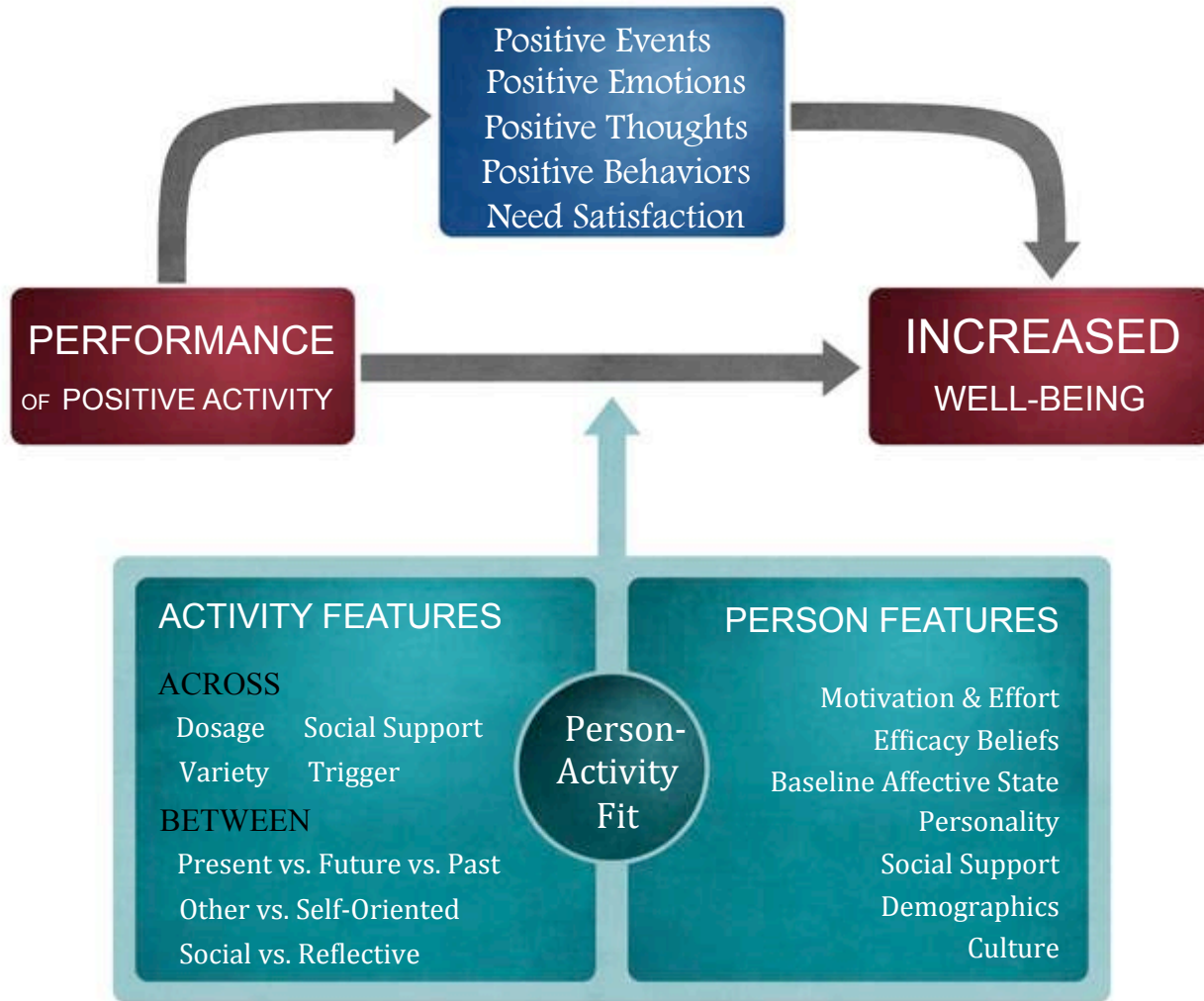
6-WEEK “COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS” INTERVENTION:

DOSAGE AS MODERATOR



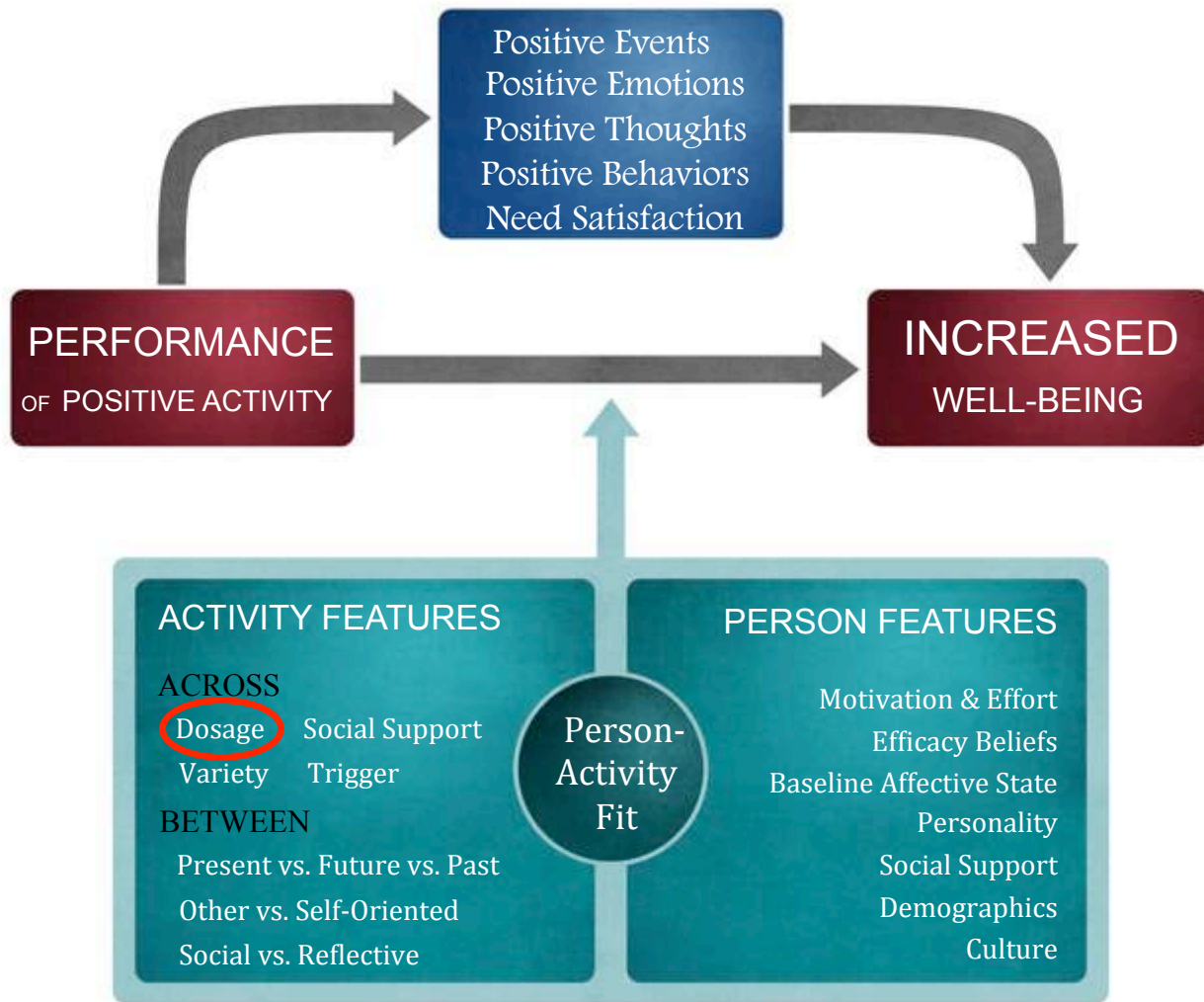
FROM: Lyubomirsky, S., Sheldon, K. M., & Schkade, D. (2005). Pursuing happiness: The architecture of sustainable change. *Review of General Psychology*, 9, 111-131.

POSITIVE ACTIVITY MODEL



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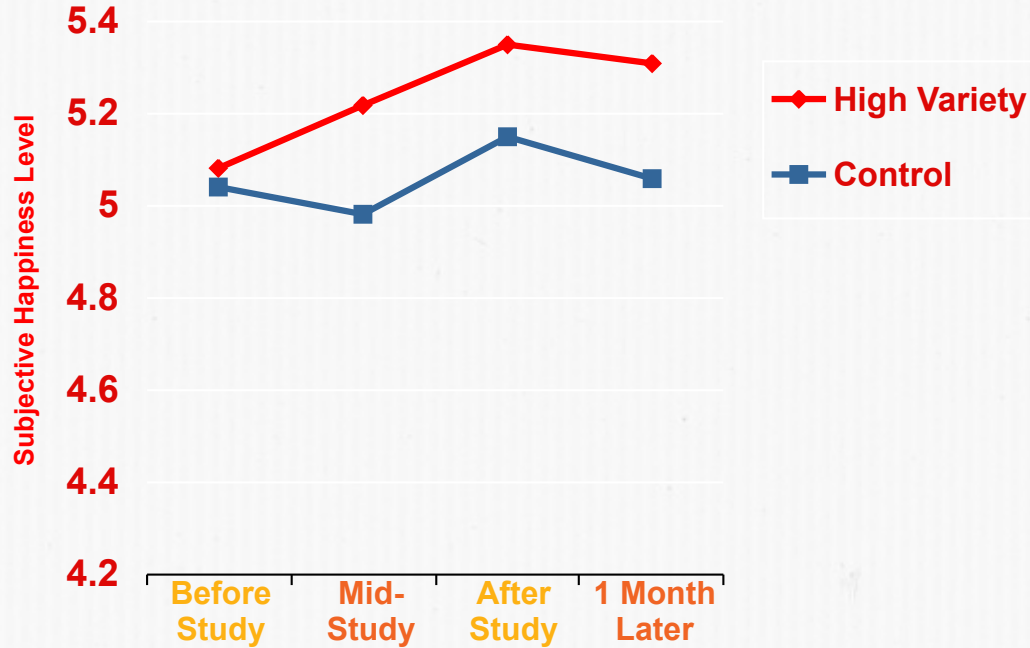
POSITIVE ACTIVITY MODEL



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10-WEEK “ACTS OF KINDNESS” INTERVENTION:

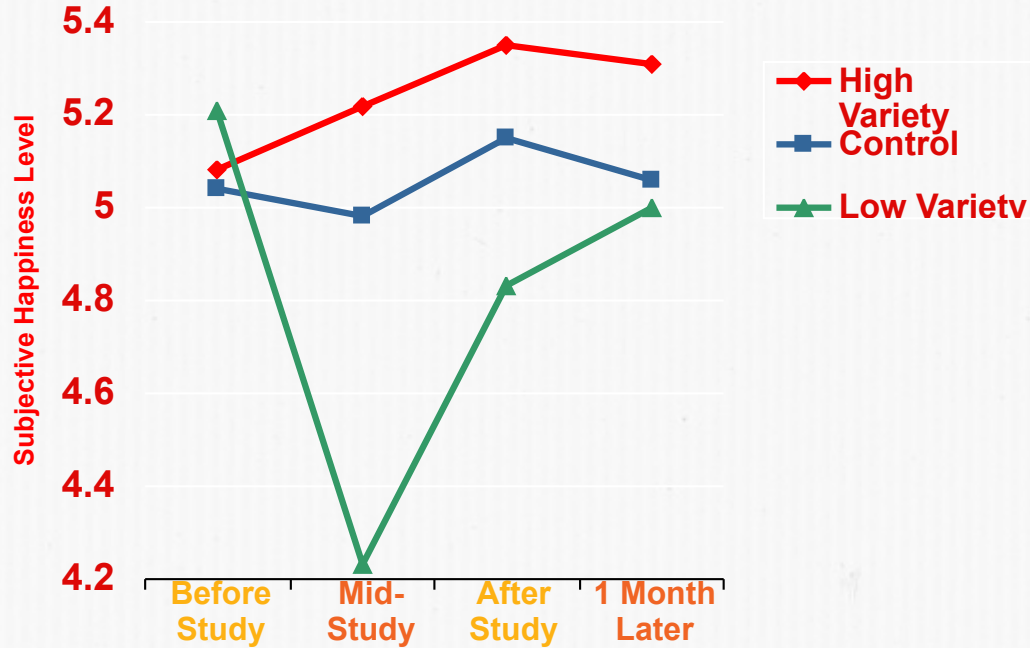
VARIETY AS MODERATOR



FROM: Sheldon, K. M., Boehm, J. K., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2012). Variety is the spice of happiness: The hedonic adaptation prevention (HAP) model. In J. Boniwell & S. David (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of happiness* (pp. 901-914). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

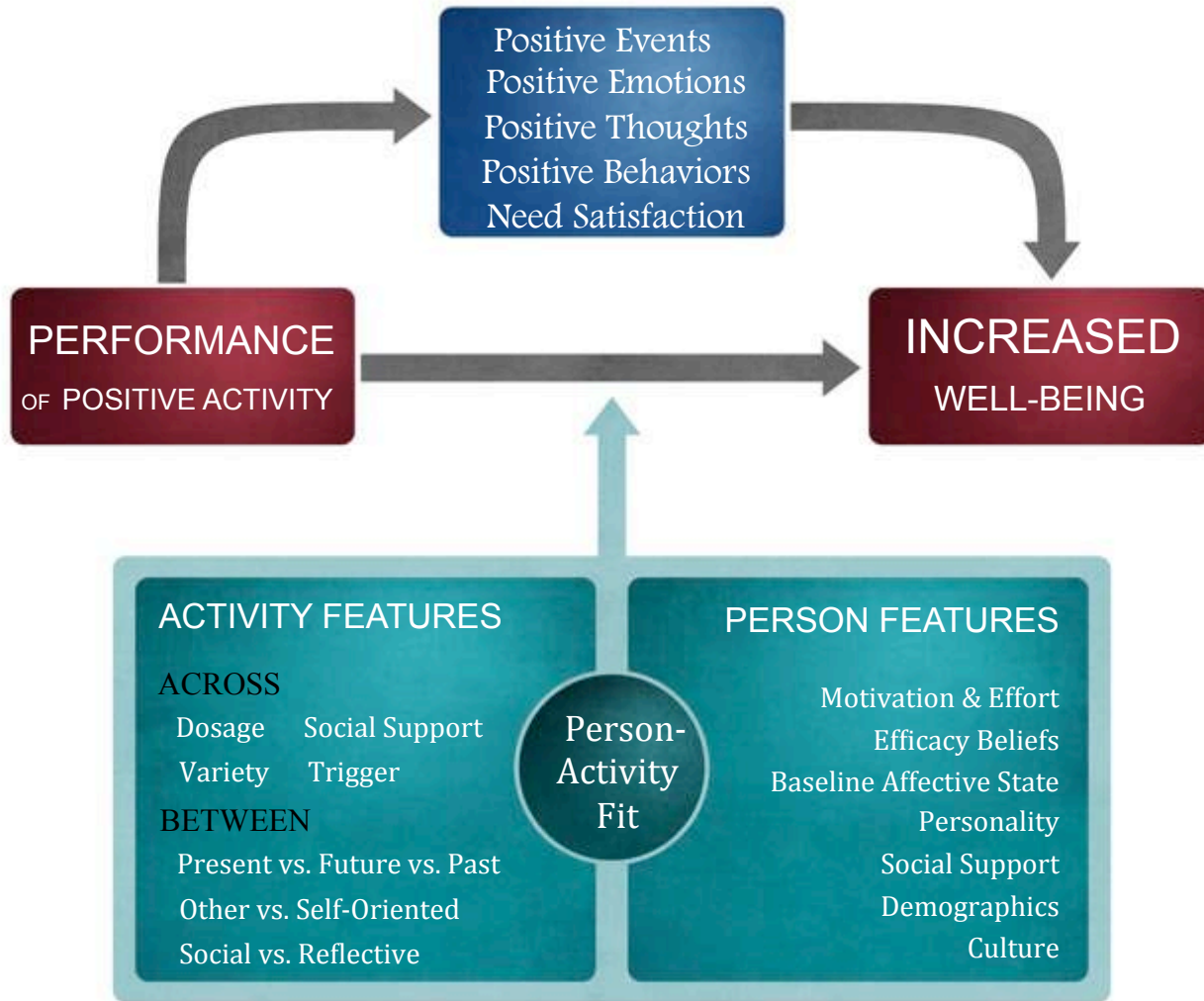
10-WEEK “ACTS OF KINDNESS” INTERVENTION:

VARIETY AS MODERATOR



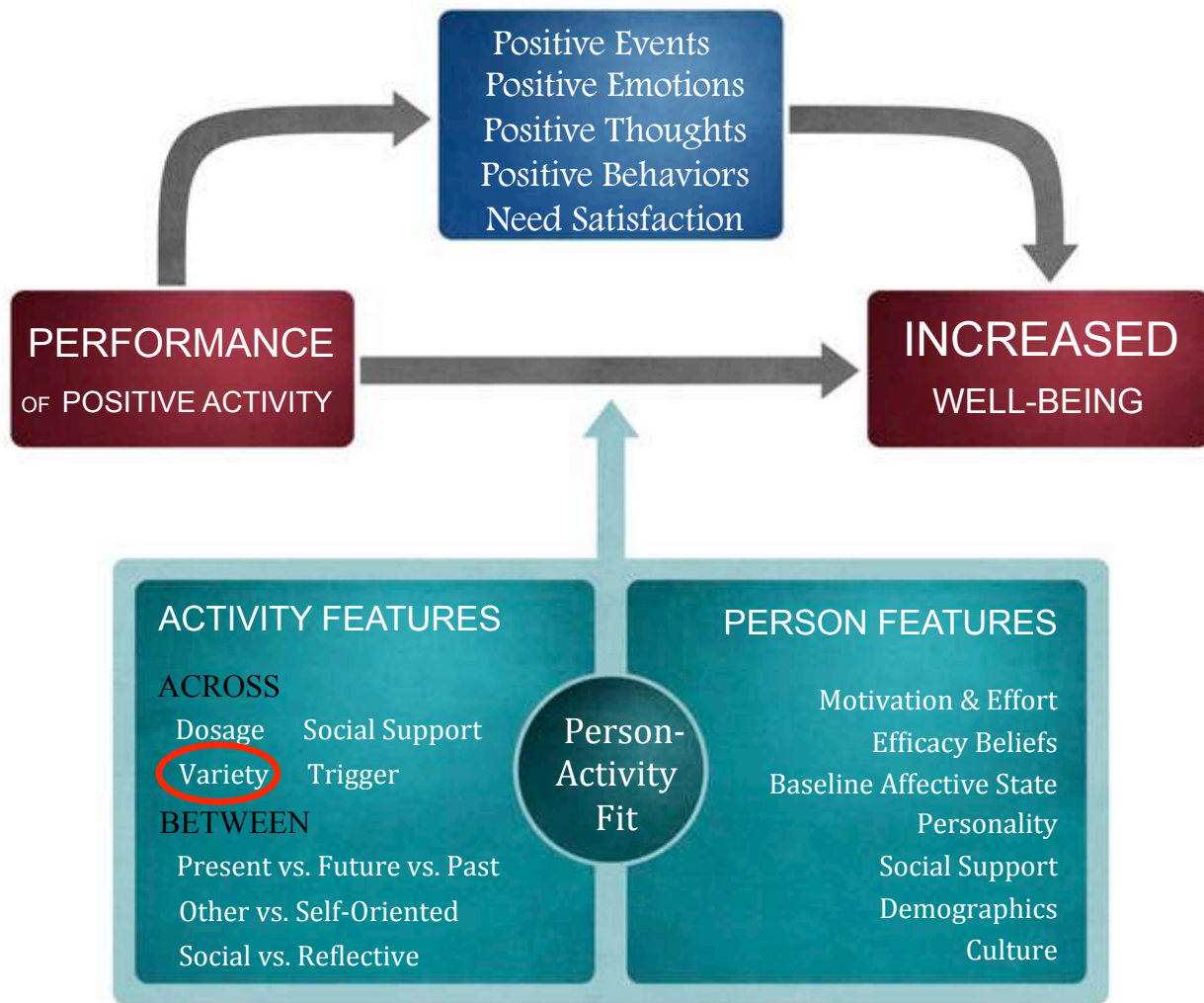
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POSITIVE ACTIVITY MODEL



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POSITIVE ACTIVITY MODEL



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INSTRUCTIONS FOR OPTIMISM CONDITION:



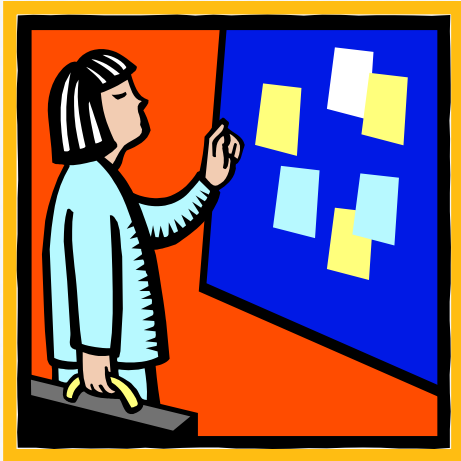
Please take a moment to think about your best possible career or job in the future (say in 10 years). Imagine that everything has gone as well as it possibly could for you. **Perhaps you have your “dream job” or manage your own business – whether it’s full-time or only a few hours a week. Think of this as the realization of the best possible career or job that you could ever hope for yourself.** Now, for the next 15 min, write about what you imagined.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GRATITUDE CONDITION:



Please take moment to think back over the past several years of your life and remember an instance when someone did something for you for which you are extremely grateful. For example, think of the people – parents, relatives, friends, teachers, coaches, teammates, employers, and so on – who have been especially kind to you but have never heard you express your gratitude. Although you should try to write your letter of gratitude to a new person each week; if you prefer, you can write another letter to the same person you wrote to previously. Now for the next 15 min, write a letter to one of these individuals.

TESTING THE ROLE OF **MOTIVATION**:

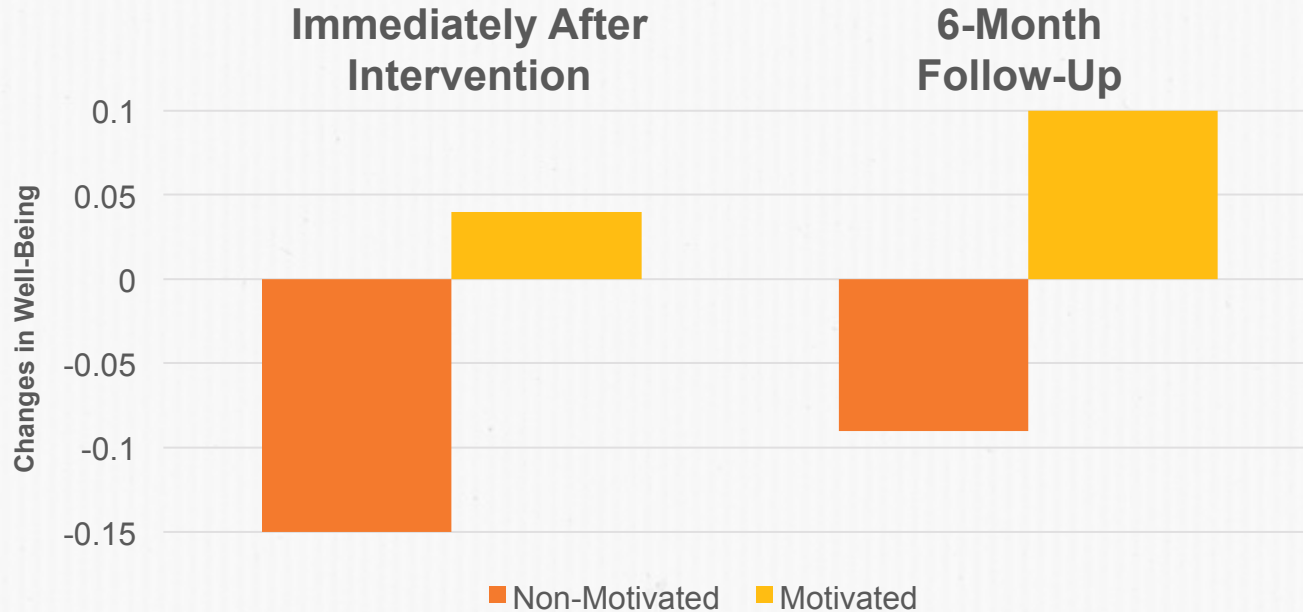


“Do you want to become happier? Sign up here to learn more...”

“This study is about practicing cognitive exercises. Sign up here to learn more...”

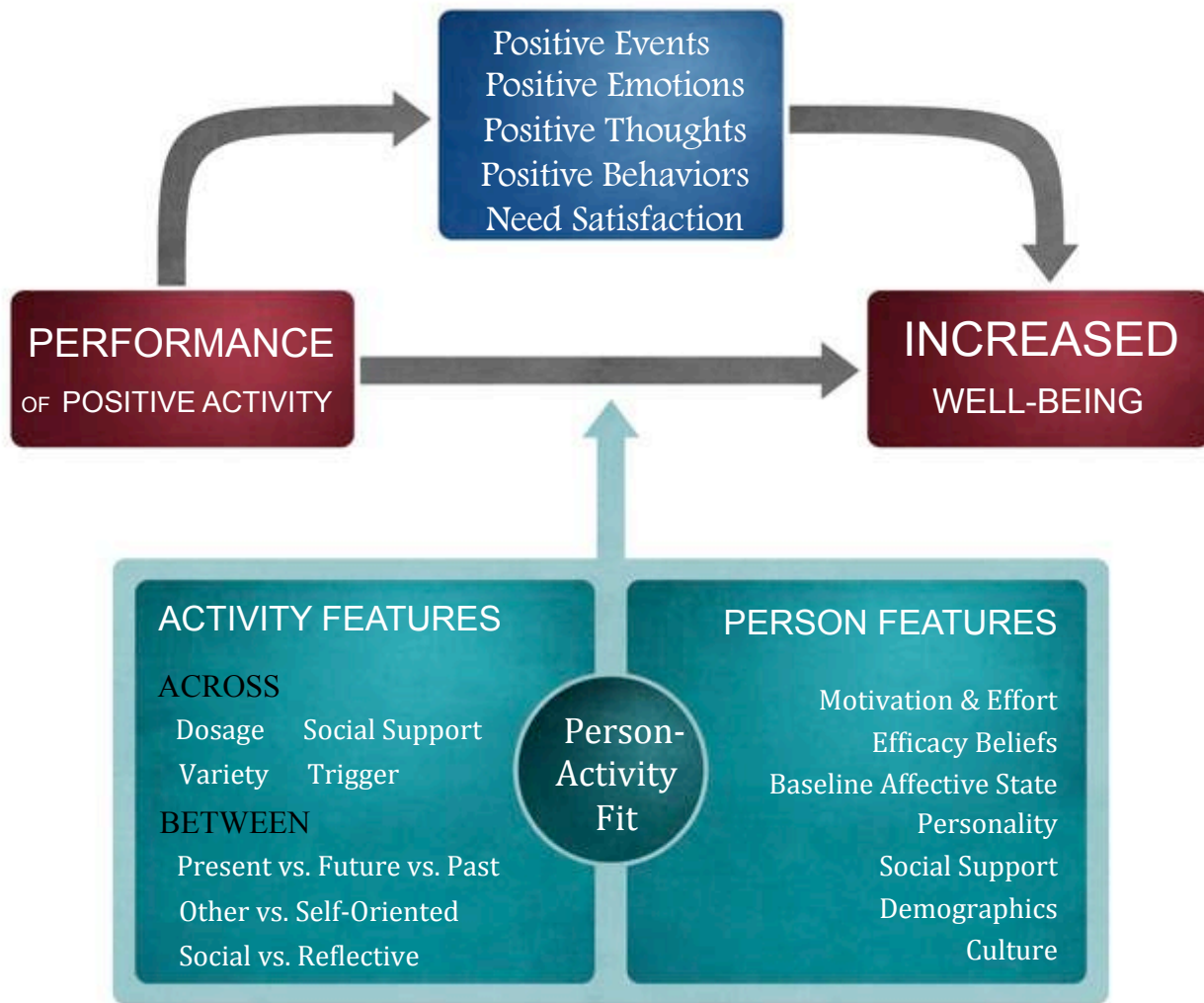
8-WEEK GRATITUDE & OPTIMISM INTERVENTION:

MOTIVATION AS MODERATOR



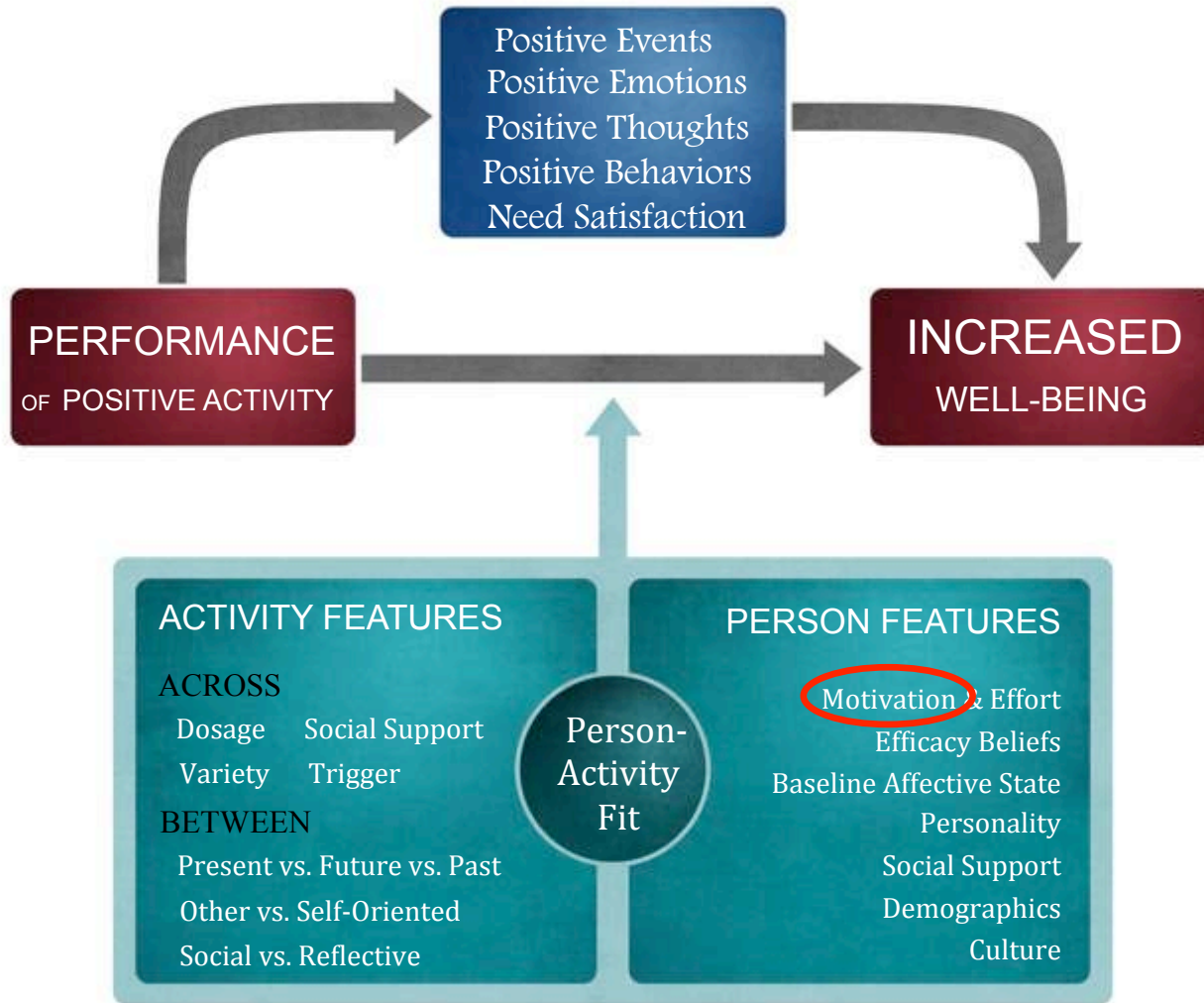
FROM: Lyubomirsky, S., Dickerhoof, R., Boehm, J. K., & Sheldon, K. M. (2011). Becoming happier takes both a will and a proper way: An experimental longitudinal intervention to boost well-being. *Emotion, 11*, 391-402.

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