

Assignment 6

MAS S63 Tools for Wellbeing

Due 9pm Thursday 10/2. Do not forget to include your name and email address in your submission.

Please follow the the following name convention to name your files:

<FirstNameLastName-Assignment6>. For example JohnDoe-Assignment6.pdf.

You should upload your file here: <http://bit.ly/1nTdRre>

1 READ

1. Morris R.R., and Picard, R.W, "**Crowdsourcing Collective Emotional Intelligence**," arXiv:1204.3481, Apr. 2012.
<http://affect.media.mit.edu/pdfs/12.Morris-Picard-CI2012.pdf>
2. Panzarella, C., Alloy, L. B., & Whitehouse, W. G. (2006). **Expanded Hopelessness Theory of Depression: On the Mechanisms by which Social Support Protects Against Depression. Cognitive Therapy and Research**, 30(3), 307-333. doi:10.1007/s10608-006-9048-3
<http://sites.temple.edu/moodandcognitionlab/files/2014/01/Panzarella-et-al.-2006.pdf>
3. Schueller, S. M., Munoz, R. F., & Mohr, D. C. (2013). **Realizing the Potential of Behavioral Intervention Technologies**. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 22(6), 478-483. doi:10.1177/0963721413495872
<http://cdp.sagepub.com/content/22/6/478.full.pdf+html>
4. Morris, R.R. (2014, Sept 27) **Can crowdsourcing play a role in preventing suicide?** Retrieved from <http://www.huffingtonpost.com>
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/robert-r-morris/can-crowdsourcing-play-a-_b_5862304.html

2 EXERCISE 1

There are many ways to manage stressful situations. Morris & Picard (2012) and Panzarella et al. (2006) describe a cognitive approach known as 'reappraisal.' It is also sometimes referred

to as 'reframing' or 'adaptive inference.' These terms all refer to the same basic practice: reinterpreting the meaning of a situation to alter your emotional experience.

For a concrete example of this technique, see the Huffington Post article.

Practice reframing some of the negative situations you experience in the next week. Write down a brief description of a negative situation and describe why you think it's stressful. Then compose some alternative interpretations of the situation that might help you feel less stressed. Consider the following:

- Is this situation really as negative as it seems at first glance?
- Is there anything you could learn from this situation?
- Are there any silver linings that could be gleaned from this situation?
- Does this situation say anything positive about you as a person? Your character strengths?
- Is this situation permanent or likely to change?

Please do this exercise **three times**. It really helps to write it down; don't just try to do it all in your head. (**Please keep this exercise private. There is no need to send what you write to the instructors**).

1. Without going into details about any of your specific situations, describe your experience doing the exercise described above. How did it make you feel? Did you find it effective? If so, why? If not, why not?
2. Practice reframing a stressful situation for a peer (friend, classmate or family member). Again, see the Huffington Post blog for examples of how you might reframe another person's situation.
How might you normally comfort your peers? How was this exercise different? How did your peer respond to your reappraisal(s)?
3. Reappraisal is often touted as an adaptive emotion regulation strategy. However, there are occasions when it might not be the best approach. Under what circumstances might reappraisal be a suboptimal strategy?

3 EXERCISE 2

According to a recent study by Hilton et al (2008), only 22% of U.S. workers with high levels of psychological distress receive treatment.

Please describe some reasons why individuals might not seek treatment.

How might computer-based interventions reach individuals who don't ordinarily seek treatment?

4 OPTIONAL

Register for a Panoply account and practice reappraisal on a crowdsourcing platform. The login credentials are below:

url: panop.ly/accounts/register/

userID: affect

NOTE: This platform is a self-help tool, not a formal mental health resource. It is intended for mild stressors, not crisis-related situations. Please use an anonymous login name and do not betray any personal details in your posts. For the purposes of this class, you can post hypothetical situations to test out the app. Note that anonymous contributions on the app may be presented in class on Friday. Your data will not be used for study purposes.

Additional References:

Hilton, M. F., Scuffham, P. A., Sheridan, J., Cleary, C. M., & Whiteford, H. A. (2008). **Mental ill-health and the differential effect of employee type on absenteeism and presenteeism.** *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 50(11), 1228-1243.

5 PROJECT PROPOSALS

As discussed in class last week, you will be forming **teams with 2-3 people per team for your class projects**. If you haven't formed a team yet, please get in touch with the staff as quickly as possible.

You can polish your initial project idea submission into a project proposal.

The end goal of the project is that you design and prototype/mockup a novel tool for well-being. We would like you do do an in-depth study of a problem or opportunity and the relevant scientific knowledge, discuss the target user base, come up with a proposal for a novel solution (a novel "tool"), estimate what the potential benefits or impact could be (how your invention could improve people's well-being), and last but not least design a fully fleshed-out mockup or prototype of the tool and do some preliminary user evaluation.

Submit a polished, one page proposal with names of your teammates to the following folder: <http://bit.ly/1vCKQAI>