

# Positive Living

## NEWSLETTER

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### EDITORIAL

## INPM 2016 Conference: “Coming Home”

[Luis A. Marrero, MA, RODP, LLP](#)



Our International Network on Personal Meaning held a very successful [9th Biennial International Meaning Conference](#) in Toronto, Canada this past July 28-31, 2016. The international gathering and fellowship of academics and practitioners was described by some as a “coming home” event. Through the conference, we greeted old friends and

made new ones—all committed to learn from one another in order to make a meaningful difference in people's lives. Many of those who attended look forward to the 10th Biennial International Meaningful Conference in Vancouver next 2018! We look forward to seeing you then!

For me, one of the most significant breakthroughs from the conference was co-sponsoring with my friend and fellow INPM Board Member, Dr. Gordon Medlock, the new **Meaningful Work Group**(MWG). The working draft mission of the MWG is to *Conduct scientific research and establish best practices that enhance the quality of meaning in work for personal and organizational thriving*. We have 20 new signatories interested in being part of the MWG and seeing the mission fulfilled. We look forward to collaborating with the INPM Board of Directors in our pursuit of having the MWG become a new division within INPM. Members interested learning more about the MWG can contact me (<mailto:luis@bostonimp.com?subject=INPM%20Meaningful%20Work%20Group>).

Please also read our President's Report by Dr. Paul Wong titled, [Mapping the Contour of Second Wave Positive Psychology \(PP 2.0\)](#). Dr. Wong shares some of the valuable insights from the conference, including the PP2.0 Summit, the centrality of meaning, and the positive psychology of meaning. For those interest on Second Wave Positive Psychology or **PP 2.0**, you will find Dr. Wong's definition and its value proposition. Likewise, on **the centrality of meaning**, the case is made about people being bio-social-spiritual beings. And on **the positive psychology of suffering**, Dr. Wong presents how the field of positive psychology has finally recognized through empirical findings the role that suffering and adversity can play bringing meaning to people's lives.

In past editions of the Newsletter, [we have been featuring the new members of the Board of Directors](#). I am next in line. Accordingly, in this edition, I share three subjects about myself: First, about my interested in existential and positive psychology. Second, what I stand for. And third, based on what I stand for, how I go about doing what is meaningful and important to me—including through my roles as a member of the International Network on Personal Meaning (INPM). I hope this introduction is insightful to you and that it allows us to have deeper connections and commonality of purpose.

I am also pleased to include the article, [Peak Experience: When Flow Gains Meaning](#), by Lia Naor from the Department for Counseling and Human Development, University of Haifa, Israel. I was positively impressed listening to Lia explain her *Peak Experience* work while in the conference in Toronto, and was very pleased when she agreed to write an article for the September 2016 Newsletter. Among other interesting concepts, I found captivating her contrast of Csikszentmihalyi's concept of **Flow** and **Peak Experience**, and its potential implications in the pursuit of meaning. I am sure you too will enjoy her unique perspective and approach researching personal positive transformation in natural settings.

Happy September 2016 and may you enjoy this new edition of your INPM Members' Newsletter.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

# Mapping the Contour of Second Wave Positive Psychology (PP 2.0)

[Paul T. P. Wong, PhD, President, INPM](#)



The [9th Biennial International Meaning Conference](#) has come and gone, leaving behind many lasting memories and a rich reservoir of ideas for research and interventions. In this report, I want to highlight the main themes that map the contour of PP 2.0.

### **Second Wave Positive Psychology (PP 2.0) Summit**

The [PP 2.0 Summit](#) was a historical first. Some of the most creative minds in positive psychology attended the summit to chart the course of the future of PP 2.0, including Carol Ryff, Itai Ivtzan, Michael Steger, Roger Tweed, Veronika Huta, Piers Worth, Pninit Russo-Netzer, and Dmitry Leontiev, with Gordon Medlock and myself serving as the moderators.

I opened the Summit with the following definition of PP 2.0:

*Second wave positive psychology is concerned with how to bring out the best in individuals and society in spite of and because of the dark side of human existence through the dialectical principles of Yin and Yang.*

Panel members were asked to address any of the following questions in their presentations based on their own research:

1. In what ways does PP 2.0 contribute to psychology and society beyond PP 1.0 in terms of research and interventions?
2. In what ways does dialectical thinking provide new insights in your area of research?
3. What are the advantages of incorporating the negative or undesirable aspects of life in PP 2.0?
4. What are the benefits of integrating positive psychology and humanistic-existential psychology in advancing mainstream psychology and well-being?

Several themes emerged from the panel presentations and ensuing dialogues...

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## FEATURED ARTICLES



### Featured Member: Luis Marrero

Luis A. Marrero, MA, Board Member, INPM

It has been a tradition of this newsletter to feature INPM members in order to make them known to others, and to reinforce the bonds of friendship and collaboration within our community. Recent editions of the newsletter have focused on introducing the new INPM Board members, and (as Deputy Chairman of the Board) it is now my turn. First, I'd like to tell you how I



### Peak Experience: When Flow Gains Meaning

Lia Naor, PhD Candidate, Member, INPM

On a daily basis, human beings have a large array of experiences; some may be transformational while others will not leave any long lasting impression. This article will examine what transformative experiences entail, based on empirical evidence from our research on peak experiences, in contrast to short-lived rewarding experiences (e.g. flow). The

became interested in existential and positive psychology. Second, I will explain what I stand for. And third, based on what I stand for, share with you how I go about doing what is meaningful and important to me—including my time as a member of the International Network on Personal Meaning (INPM).

### **The Role of Existential and Positive Psychology**

I first became interested in existential and positive psychology in the late 1990s, particularly because of a quote from Viktor Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning*. The line that impressed me profoundly was,

“Life ultimately means taking responsibility to find the right answers to its problems and to fulfill the tasks which it constantly sets for each individual.”

At the time I read that line, I was dealing with a challenging personal situation, and I was trying to find reasonable answers to my problem...

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presented research findings reveal key constructs of the transformative experience that will be discussed in relation to personal growth and actualization.

A swift personal profound experience I had in the Colorado desert ten years ago could have passed as an enjoyable but short-lived experience but, for reasons that I understand only now, was for me a transformational peak experience. This one-time swift experience instigated my personal actualization and incited my professional and academic path, leading to my current work and research on positive transformation. Our research focuses on peak transformative experiences, specifically as occurring in nature, going beyond common description and outcome of the peak experience to reveal the meaning and process of personal transformation.

American psychologist and philosopher Abraham H. Maslow (1908-1970) coined the term “peak experience” to describe a sudden moment of intense happiness and well-being. These moments are...

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