Selfishness and Positive Psychology:
Living with Oneself vs. Living with Others

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Personality Theory: Models of Human Behavior

- Personality is crucial for understanding management selection and development.
- There are two major schools of personality psychology:
  1. Intrapsychic theory—learning to live with oneself (Maslow and Positive Psychology).
  2. Interpersonal theory—learning to live with others (Goffman and Socioanalytic theory).
Intrapsychic Theory

• Positive psychology is a version of intrapsychic theory and a is widely popular model for management development.
• It maintains that it is a mistake to worry about correcting shortcomings—it is too difficult.
• It focuses on learning to live with yourself and nurture your natural inclinations so that you are able to flourish.

Socioanalytic Theory

• Interpersonal models concern how to live with others—because you have no choice.
• Living with others is a skill; like any skill there are individual differences in:
  1. Innate talent.
  2. Coachability.
  3. The ability to play on a team—the diva problem.
Strategic Self-Awareness: I

• Socrates advocated self-knowledge.
• He meant:
  1. Understanding one’s strengths and shortcomings.
  2. How these compare to those of one’s competitors.
• The first is self-awareness, the second is \textit{strategic self-awareness}.

Strategic Self-Awareness: II

• Strategic self-awareness depends on performance-based feedback.
• In competitive activities, there is no news in good news.
• Performance can only improve if people know what they are doing wrong.
• And competitors will use your strengths to defeat you. Strengths can become weaknesses.
Positive Psychology is a Mistake

• Positive Psychology’s focus on effectiveness is important. But…
• The focus is not new.
• Effectiveness is NOT flourishing—many effective people are driven by demons.
• If flourishing means self-acceptance, it is probably narcissism.
• If flourishing means self-actualization, it is nonsense.

Data

• Positive psychology is supported by rhetoric, not data.
• The Adjustment scale of the HPI measures self-acceptance.
• High scorers are self-satisfied, lack a sense of urgency, and ignore feedback.
• Low scorers have a sense of urgency and seek feedback.
• Other things being equal, low scorers are more effective.