



Original Article

Positive Psychology and Spirituality: A Review Study

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Abstract

Unlike traditional psychotherapy approaches focused on disease and disorder, positive psychology has opened a new window to the science of psychology by emphasizing the importance of embracing all aspects of individuals. Positive psychology approach not only underlines that the positive, strong aspects of individuals and the good aspects of life deserve at least as much attention as negative facts, but also states that the negative effects of existing problems can be eliminated by identifying and supporting the positive and strong aspects of the individual. Furthermore, positive psychology highlights the necessity of examining these aspects with scientific methods. Spirituality and religious belief occupy a central position in the lives of many individuals and affect the lives of individuals in various ways. Ignoring the spiritual/religious aspect of individuals in the psychotherapy process will lead to an incomplete evaluation. This is contrary to the basic point of view of positive psychology. Positive psychology is open to addressing spirituality in the psychotherapy process. In addition, spirituality is a notion that is examined as part of character strength and virtues in the positive psychology perspective. In this study, which aims to examine the place of spirituality in positive psychology, the relationship between positive psychology and spirituality is examined within the framework of the relevant literature, the basic concepts of positive psychology are discussed within the framework of spirituality. Additionally, the characteristics of the positive psychotherapy process are examined, the studies in which spiritual/religious practices are included in the positive psychotherapy process and these studies effects were given. It is hoped that this study will complete the missing points in the literature and offer a new perspective to practitioners and researchers.

Keywords:

Positive psychology • spirituality • positive psychotherapy • spiritually oriented positive psychotherapy • review study

Pozitif Psikoloji ve Maneviyat: Bir Derleme Çalışması

Öz

Pozitif psikoloji, hastalık ve bozukluk odaklı geleneksel psikoterapi yaklaşımlarının aksine, bireylerin tüm yönleriyle ele alınmasının önemini belirterek psikoloji bilimine yeni bir pencere açmıştır. Pozitif psikoloji, bireylerin sahip olduğu olumlu, güçlü yönlerin ve yaşamın iyi yönlerinin de en az olumsuz olgular kadar ilgiyi hak ettiğinin altını çizmekte, ferdin olumlu ve güçlü yönlerinin belirlenip desteklenerek, var olan problemlerin olumsuz etkilerinden arınabileceğini belirtmekte, bu yönlerin de bilimsel yöntemlerle incelenmesi gerekliliğini vurgulamaktadır. Maneviyat ve dini inanç, pek çok bireyin yaşamında merkezi bir konumda yer almakta, bireylerin yaşamını çeşitli yönlerden etkilemektedir. Psikoterapi sürecinde bireylerin manevi/dini yönünü gözardı etmek, eksik bir değerlendirmeye sebep olacaktır. Bu durum, pozitif psikolojinin temel bakış açısına aykırıdır. Pozitif psikoloji, maneviyyatın, psikoterapi sürecinde ele alınmasına açıktır. Ayrıca, pozitif psikoloji yaklaşımında maneviyyat, karakter güçleri ve erdemler başlığı altında başlı başına ele alınan bir kavram olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Maneviyyatın pozitif psikolojideki yerinin incelenmesini amaçlayan bu çalışmada, ilgili literatür çerçevesinde pozitif psikoloji ve maneviyyat ilişkisi incelenmiş, pozitif psikolojinin temel kavramları maneviyyat çerçevesinde ele alınmış, genel hatlarıyla pozitif psikoterapi sürecinin özelliklerine yer verilmiş, manevi/dini uygulamaların pozitif psikoterapi sürecine dahil edildiği çalışmalar ve bu çalışmaların etkileri incelenmiştir. Yurtdışında maneviyyatın psikoterapi sürecine dâhil edildiği pozitif psikoloji odaklı çalışmalar olsa da, Türkiye’de bu çalışmalar oldukça sınırlıdır. Bu çalışmanın, alanyazında eksik noktaları tamamlayacağı, uygulayıcı ve araştırmacılara yeni bir bakış açısı sunacağı umulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler:

Pozitif psikoloji • maneviyyat • pozitif psikoterapi • manevi yönelimli pozitif psikoterapi • derleme çalışması

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eISSN: 2458-9675

Received: 03.06.2022

Revision: 27.08.2022

Accepted: 07.09.2022

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Citation: Baysal, M. (2022). Positive psychology and spirituality: A review study. *Spiritual Psychology and Counseling*, 7(3), 359–18. <https://dx.doi.org/10.37898/spc.2022.7.3.179>

Overview of Positive Psychology

The Birth of Positive Psychology

The term positive psychology was first used by Abraham Maslow in 1954 as a chapter title in his book *Motivation and Personality*. Positive psychology tries to comprehend the conditions which increases individuals' quality of life and examines processes that can improve the lives of individuals, groups, institutions, and organizations. Positive psychology, defined in this way, has a long history, stretching back to William James's "healthy mindedness" writings at 1902, Allport's studies of the characteristics of positive people, Maslow's writings advocating the need to study healthy people rather than sick people at 1968. However, especially in the last half century, studies focused on problem and pathology have increased in the world of psychology, and studies on the elements that make life worth living have decreased. This situation has been altered, and interest in positive psychology has grown thanks to psychologist Martin Seligman of the University of Pennsylvania. That's why, he is considered the leading representative of the theory (Synder ve Lopez, 2007; Gable ve Haidt, 2005). According to Seligman, psychology has three distinct tasks. These tasks include treating mental illnesses and pathologies, assisting everyone in living more purposeful and productive lives, and identifying and strengthen the areas in which individuals are talented. The economic factors revealed by the Second World War placed pathology in the focus of psychology. The institutions that funded the researchers gave priority to research on mental health problems and the improvement of the mental state of war veterans. In this process, mental disorders such as depression and schizophrenia have been investigated, and great progress has been made in the understanding, measurement and treatment of these disorders. However, putting pathology at the center has led to the ignoring of the positive psychological structures that make life worth living, and the strengths that make up people's coping resources. Traditional approaches have placed so much emphasis on the identification and management of pathological diseases that research on the nature of psychological health has remained remarkably scarce. Two other fundamental missions of psychology have been neglected. At this point, we come across positive psychology. Positive emotions, one's strengths and virtues are the focal points of positive psychology. It emphasizes that the task of the science of psychology is not only to examine pathology, weakness and damage, but that the correct intervention is not only to correct the bad, but to develop and nurture the good (Seligman & Csikszentmihályi, 2000; Kennon & King, 2001; Seligman, 2002b). In this context, it examines concepts related to healthy life such as optimism, subjective well-being, resilience, meaning, hope, spirituality and religiosity (Salsman et al., 2005).

What Is Positive Psychology and What Is It Not?

When it comes to positive psychology, a question such as “Are other approaches negative?” may come to your mind. The positive psychology approach does not imply that other schools of psychology are negative or unnecessary. It draws attention to the imbalance in the way of understanding human behavior. In the positive psychology approach, it is accepted that there are problematic sides, troublesome and unpleasant aspects of life. However, the goal of positive psychology is to show that there is also the other side of the coin, to consider the human being as a whole. Everybody experiences highs and lows in life. The good aspects of life are as real as the bad aspects, and these positive aspects of life deserve scientific attention at least as much as the negative aspects. Through investigate into human strengths and positive traits, positive psychology seeks to increase the body of knowledge of the psychology literature (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Peterson, 2006).

In 1998, the theme of the meeting of the American Psychological Association have been preventive work Discovering and cultivating character strengths such as perseverance, courage, hope, optimism, faith, morality, honesty can serves as a protective barrier against mental illnesses, it was stressed during this meeting. (Seligman and Csikszentmihályi, 2000). Positive interventions are a central component of the psychotherapy process, with success in supporting attempts to prevent and treat psychopathology (Duckworth et al., 2005). However, positive psychology puts forward the argument that it is critical to comprehend these good aspects of people not just as notions that act as a buffer against problems but also as concepts that should be understood on their own (Gable & Haidt, 2005).

Positive psychology does not ignore or falsify past psychology research. Examining the psychopathological factors that prohibit a person from living a functional life and working to find remedies are also very valuable. However, placing psychopathology at the forefront is emphasized by positive psychology as an incomplete approach in the way of understanding human behaviour (Chao, 2015).

Positive Psychology’s View of Human Nature

The pathology-focused approach of psychology has resulted in an unbalanced evaluation where the positive aspects are neglected in the diagnosis and treatment processes, and this has led to the perception of people as weak, helpless beings who are the victims of adverse environmental circumstances and defective genes (Peterson, 2006). Positive psychology sees people as more than all of their harmful habits, traumatic life experiences, conflicts, and negative impulses, emphasizing that focusing only on weaknesses causes a dysfunctional evaluation process. It includes addressing the strengths of positive life experiences, character traits, and examining how these might prevent dysfunction (Synder & Lopez, 2007; Duckworth et al., 2005). Positive

psychology rejects the assumption that human motivational nature is negative and emphasizes the social and moral aspects of people (Jørgensen & Eileen-Nafstad, 2004).

Positive Psychology, Spirituality and Religion

Due to the advent of behaviorism and efforts to isolate psychology from philosophy and religion, psychological science's interest in religion and spirituality have waned in the middle of the twentieth century. In the second half of the twentieth century, studies on religious and spiritual functioning saw a resurgence. One of the reasons for this change is that positive structures such as forgiveness, gratitude, meaning, growth, acceptance and love gain importance. Research on both spirituality and religious belief includes research to determine the relationship between religiosity and various health indices, and methods of incorporating religiosity into mental health intervention programs. At this point, it is worth noting that religion and spirituality are closely related but different concepts (Zinnbauer, 2009). Religion includes the expression of spirituality through participation in organized communities and traditions that share these ultimate concerns. Spirituality can manifest in religious and non-religious ways. (Canda, 2009; Pargament, 2007a).

Religious beliefs and actions has had a significant impact on individuals, organizations and civilizations throughout history since they are closely involved in lives of humanbeings, death, morality, virtue, social justice, self-development, and the good life (Zinnbauer, 2009). In the historical process, religious leaders and prophets such as Jesus, Muhammad, Buddha, Thomas Aquinas have asked questions about the meaning of the good life and how to achieve the good life. It is seen that the common theme of the answers developed to these questions involves serving a higher power than the individuals themselves and having a purpose. The fact that individuals serve other people and humanity as a whole feeds a sense of meaning on the way to a good life. The positive psychology approach also addresses the importance of meaningful living. It emphasizes that both worldly and spiritual pursuits have important contributions in building meaningful life (Emmons and Paloutzian, 2003, as cited in Peterson, 2006). In this context, it is possible to assert that the goals of human development and social well-being are a common issues shared by both religion and positive psychology (Zinnbauer, 2009).

According to Pargament (2007b), who has many valuable studies on the integration of spirituality into the psychotherapy process, religion and spirituality were generally ignored in the psychology literature in the 20th century, and these concepts were even discussed in relation to psychopathology. The 21st century, on the other hand, heralds great changes with the understanding of positive psychology, which also includes spirituality. Because even though everyone has a distinct definition of what is sacred,

the idea that spirituality is an element of human nature is now widely recognized. According to research, spirituality is a valuable tool that helps people get through difficult life circumstances. Positive religious coping, which means that individuals use their religious and spiritual aspects as a resource to cope with challenging and negative life events, includes a secure relationship with the God, a belief that there is great meaning in life, and a sense of spiritual connectedness with others, is a rich area of research that has significant implications for the psychological, physical, social, and spiritual well-being of individuals and families and society (Pargament et al., 2001; Gall & Younger, 2013). Many studies point to the preventive and curative effect of positive religious coping in abusive life events (Ayten et al., 2012; Sağlam-Demirkan, 2020; Spacious, 2019; Zwingmann et al., 2006; Bryant-Davis & Wong, 2013; Cummings & Pargament, 2010). Religious sources have psychological, social, and spiritual functions that strengthen the well-being of individuals, such as positive social relationships, self-regulation, self-control, transcendence, and creating a sense of meaning (Falb & Pargament, 2014). The number of studies investigating the psychological and psychosocial roles of religion and spirituality in the lives of individuals and the relationship between religiosity/spirituality and physical and mental health is increasing. In this sense, the first international contribution was made by the World Health Organization in 2006 within the framework of the quality of life research. In this research, religion and spirituality were examined as a component of quality of life. Data collected from 18 different countries showed that religion and spirituality plays an important role in quality of life in all cultural contexts (Delle Fave et al., 2013). With the positive psychology movement, research on the relationship of religious belief and spirituality not only to the preventive role of mental problems, but also to the positive emotional and psychological structures in the lives of individuals has gained importance (Joseph et al., 2006). In this context, studies with different samples reveals that religious belief and spirituality have a positive relationship with well-being, life satisfaction and resilience (Visser et al., 2010; Delle Fave et al., 2013; Lee, 2007; Reed & Neville), 2014; Killgore et al., 2020). Berthold and Ruch (2014) examined life satisfaction in non-religious and religious people. They concluded that people who practice the necessities of their religion in daily life score higher on the dimensions of positive psychology that are highly related to spirituality such as kindness, love, hope, and forgiveness and lead a more meaningful life.

A Look at the Basic Concepts of Positive Psychology from the Framework of Spirituality and Religion

Well Being

Happiness has historically seen as the highest state of well-being and ultimate source of motivation. Philosophers and writers have put out a wide range of perspectives

on happiness and the factors that contribute to it. Centuries ago, Aristotle wrote his treatises on happiness and the good life in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. While Rousseau associated happiness with a laden bank account, a good cook and a good digestive system, Thoreau emphasized that happiness comes from activity. The Stoics, on the other hand, examined the psychological causes of happiness. Despite the fact that happiness has a long history, for many years studies on unhappiness were the main focus of psychology research. By 1973, happiness was listed as an index term by the *Journal of Psychological Abstracts*, and experimental and theoretical research on happiness, well-being and life satisfaction began to increase. With the birth of positive psychology, happiness and well-being began to be examined with scientific methods (Lu & Shih, 1997; Diener, 2009). Well-being is examined in two dimensions, hedonic and eudemonic. In the hedonic approach, well-being is defined in terms of escaping from pain and achieving pleasure, while the eudomanaic approach examines well-being in terms of self-actualization and explains well-being through the functionality of the individual (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Beyond just feeling good, eugenic well-being also refers to a sense of meaning and purpose (Newman & Graham, 2018). The concept of Eudomania was introduced by Aristotle. Aristotle underlined that some pleasures will injure a person and that one cannot pursue pleasure and be happy. He emphasized that individuals can achieve true happiness by living a virtuous life and fulfilling their potential (Bonniwell, 2012).

The concept of well-being is examined in the literature under the headings of subjective well-being and psychological well-being as well as hedonic and eudomanaic titles. Subjective well-being is the evaluation of one's own life from a subjective point of view. This assessment includes cognitive states or affects, such as being satisfied with one's marriage, career, and life (Diener et al., 1998). High levels of positive affect, low levels of negative affect, satisfaction in different areas of life such as work, marriage, career, etc. are components of subjective well-being (Diener, 2000). Psychological well-being, on the other hand, is a concept based on the psychological functioning of the individual and consists of the dimensions of self-acceptance, having purpose(s) in life, having positive interpersonal relationships, thinking and acting autonomously, environmental dominance, personal development (Ryff & Singer, 1996; Huppert, 2009). Seligman (2012) has developed a multidimensional well-being model that carries the traces of both subjective well-being and psychological well-being in its content. The PERMA well-being model, which takes its name from the initials of its dimensions, consists of positive emotions, engagement, social relations, meaning, achievement. Each of these dimensions contributes to a person's well-being (Seligman, 2012).

According to Newman and Graham (2018), it is crucial to consider the viewpoints of many global religions which play significant roles in people's lives on the ideas of happiness and well-being before studying the connections between spirituality,

religion, and well-being. The way major world religions/religious philosophies and beliefs such as Islam, Judaism, Christianity, and Buddhism look at the concepts of happiness and well-being is often based on eudomonic happiness rather than hedonic happiness. The pursuit of hedonistic pleasure is not encouraged. It is highlighted that by creating a link with the creator, well-being can be attained in the midst of profound meaning and purpose.

Well-being is a state in which people feel healthy, happy, purposeful, peaceful, energetic, in harmony, contented, happy and safe. Well-being, which expresses the state of being in balance and harmony of the body, mind and spirit; it is closely related to spirituality (Kreitzer, 2012). In a 1984 survey by the American Research Company Gallup, individuals who said that their religion was important to them and had a significant impact on many aspects of their lives have been twice as likely to say they were “extremely happy” (Myers, 2000). Researchers who try to explain this positive relationship between faith/spirituality and well-being, and to understand why and how religion and spirituality contribute to well-being, have examined the functions of religion and spirituality such as creating meaning, providing social support, positive emotions and positive emotions within the framework of subjective, psychological and five-dimensional well-being concepts. Steger & Fraizer (2005) evaluated whether religious activities such as meditation, participation in a religious service and doing spiritual/sacred readings are related to well-being on a daily level, and whether everyday meaning in life mediates this. As a result of the research, it was seen that religious activities were related to the well-being levels of individuals, and that religious people who participated in worship, meditated or read about spirituality felt a greater meaning in their lives. In a similar study by Kashdan & Nezlek (2012), 87 individuals from various religions filled out daily reports over the course of two weeks (before going to sleep) regarding their daily spiritual experiences, sentiments and general well-being. In this research, it was found that feeling and experiencing spirituality on a daily basis is positively related to meaning, self-esteem and positive emotion in life. Religious belief and spirituality provide a rich context for social interaction and a meaningful social identity, as well as providing meaning and positive emotion (Merino, 2014). Forasmuch as, in all religions, there are worships performed in groups as well as individual worship. During these prayers, behavior for the benefit of the community is encouraged. For example, Muslims are encouraged to pray in congregation by emphasizing that the congregational prayer in Islam is more virtuous than the prayer performed alone. In addition, the individual’s behavior that will benefit the society, social solidarity is valued. In this context, participation in religious-based activities such as mawlid, funeral, and circumcision increases social communication between individuals and provides a sense of belonging (Kılavuz, 2004). People who share the same religion and worship together create a sense of sameness. This feeling also increases the commitment among group members and meets the individual’s

need to belong (Köylü, 2007). On the other hand, religion and spirituality also provide the framework for flow, which is another element of well-being. According to Csikszentmihályi et al (2014), flow is a subjective situation where people come to the point of forgetting everything but the activity while performing an activity, and immerse themselves in the activity they are performing. Although Csikszentmihályi does not analyze religious experience in detail, he argues that religious rituals produce flow (Neitz and Spickard, 1990). In a study conducted by Rufi et al. (2016), participants were opened the way for participating in a number of spiritual/religious-based activities such as Zen meditation and Catholic rites. Participants reported that they experienced flow state in these activities. In the Catholic Mass, where there is a higher level of social interaction than Zen meditation, which involves a silent practice of contemplation, a higher level of flow is experienced than meditation. This research shows that spiritual/religious rituals and practices, especially performed at the group level, offer opportunities for the experience of flow.

Character Strengths

The Mayerson Foundation, which questions the functionality of traditional psychology schools and thinks that approaches based on recognizing people's strengths can be more effective, have offered a cooperation to Seligman, who brought a new breath to the field of psychology. A question by Neal Mayerson question to Seligman, have paved the way for studies of character strengths, "Do you have any hope that positive psychology can help people realize their potential?" The Values in Action (VIA) Institute have been established, Seligman began working as the institute's scientific director, and Christopher Peterson as project director. Many academics have supported the character strength studies led by Seligman and Peterson. In this context, academicians working in the field of positive psychology came together in the conference organized in cooperation with the Gallup Organization and carried out studies. Chris Peterson and his team of 55 researchers conducted content analysis of nearly 200 major religious and philosophical texts from around the world and sought to identify the values that these religions or philosophies sought to promote. In the light of this study, six basic virtues and twenty-four character strengths associated with these virtues have been identified (Peterson and Seligman, 2004). For example, the character forces named curiosity and creativity are categorized within the virtue of wisdom and love and social intelligence are categorized within the virtue of humanity (Niemic et al., 2020). One of these character strengths is spirituality, which is included in the dimension of transcendence virtue. Spirituality involves going beyond the tangible and physical world to connect with the transcendent and construct meaning in one's life and is the power to have consistent and valuable beliefs about the meaning and purpose of life. Spirituality is the most humanistic and supreme character strength among the strengths of character. Indeed, spirituality

and religiosity are linked to an interest in moral values and the pursuit of goodness (Seligman & Peterson, 2004; Niemiec et al., 2020). In a longitudinal study by Kor et al. (2019) in which the character strength of Israeli secondary school students was examined, it was concluded that spiritual character strength contributes to pro-social behavior and well-being. Selvam (2015) found that spirituality is one of the prominent character forces in dealing with bad habits. These studies point to the importance of spirituality as a character strength, both socially and personally contexts.

Throughout history, religious books and spiritual leaders have emphasized the value of the good life and positive character. Even when we take a brief look at the teachings of monotheistic religions, we see that personal virtues such as forgiveness, sacrifice, faith and loyalty are often counted among the most valuable qualities. In these teachings, the benefits that living a virtuous life will provide to individuals both in this life and in the afterlife are emphasized (Biswas-Diener, 2008). The virtues and character strengths, in which religious and philosophical texts are analyzed and classified, take their source from religious and spiritual teachings. Each character strength contains spiritual or sacred essences and contains qualities that support individuals and societies on the path to the sacred (Rye et al., 2013; Niemiec et al., 2020). When we examine the virtues and character strengths, we see that the virtue of transcendence is directly related to spirituality. It can be said that some character strengths, such as forgiveness, gratitude and enthusiasm for life, which are less clearly related to spirituality, have the potential to add richness and depth to the spiritual development of individuals (Niemiec et al., 2020). Although there are many studies on character strengths and virtues in the literature, the number of studies examining the relationship between character strengths and spirituality is quite limited. It is seen that researchers examining character strengths from the perspective of spirituality and belief focus especially on forgiveness, gratitude and hope and intervention programs aiming to develop these character strengths are high in number (Niemiec et al., 2020; Rye et al., 2013, Özcan et al., 2020). Therefore, in this part of the study, the character strengths of forgiveness, gratitude and hope and the relationship of these strengths with spirituality were examined, reminding that all twenty-four character strengths contain spiritual essences.

Forgiveness

People may develop some reactions such as retaliating for the injustices they have suffered, retaliation for the harm done to them, holding grudges, denying the seriousness of the situation, showing mercy or forgiving.

It is important to stress that forgiving someone does not entail forgetting what happened, excusing them, condoning their mistreatment or allowing them to injure you again (vanOyen Witvliet, 2009). Forgiveness is examined in the literature within

the framework of the individual's self-forgiveness and interpersonal forgiveness. Self-forgiveness is the reevaluation of one's past mistakes by considering situational factors, learning from past experiences and mistakes (Biswas-Diener & Den, 2007). Self-forgiveness is an important component of self-compassion. It prevents the person from approaching himself/herself with an overly critical and judgmental attitude (O'Hanlon, 2010). In the interpersonal dimension, forgiveness is when a person voluntarily gives up negative approaches such as anger and resentment to the person or people who harm him or her and alters negative emotions into positive ones such as compassion and mercy (Enright & Human Development Study Group, 1996).

As the forgiveness literature confirms, forgiveness has many positive contributions to the individual and society, both psychologically and physiologically (Griffin et al., 2015; Peterson et al., 2017; Lawler et al., 2005; Bono, 2008). Unforgiveness threatens the health of the individual by triggering many unhealthy emotions such as grudge, hostility, anger, resentment (McCullough, 2001; Lawler et al., 2005). In his self-help book "Forgiveness is a Choice," Enright (2001) emphasized that forgiveness benefits the forgiver more than the forgiven. According to Coyle and Enright (1997), forgiveness is a spiritual process with emotion-regulating properties that help reduce negative emotions (as cited in Emmons, 2006).

Like other psychological traits, tendency to forgive vary from person to person. While some people find it easier to forgive, others could harbor resentments for a long time or seek retribution (Compton & Hoffman, 2020). Research shows that people with a strong religious identity and affiliation are more forgiving than those who do not. Forgiveness is seen as a valuable action in Christianity, Judaism and Islam, as well as in Buddhist and Hindu traditions (vanOyen witvliet, 2009). In addition to advising people to ask forgiveness from the God, all divine religions advised people to forgive each other in order to ensure healthy interpersonal relations, social peace and tranquility (Ayten, 2009). The Prophet Muhammad, the messenger of Islam, personally experienced oppression, violence and discrimination, but obeying the command given in the 199th verse of the Holy Qur'an's Araf sura -"Keep to forgiveness Oh Mohammed, and enjoin kindness, and turn away from the ignorant (Quran, 7:199)"- has shown forgiveness and has been a role model to all mankind throughout his life. In various verses in the Holy Qur'an, both Allah's forgiveness is emphasized and humanbeings are encouraged to show mercy to each other (Hijr 15:49; Al-Imran 3:134; Al-Imran 3:135; Al-Imran 3:159; Shura 42:40; Shura 42:43). In addition to the Qur'an, "eleao", one of the most frequently mentioned words in the New Testament, means show mercy, while "aphiemi" means to release, to remove (Rye et al., 2000). An important concept in Hinduism, dharma refers one's proper, socially acceptable actions in regard to all living things (Holredg, 2004). For those who want to follow the Dharma path, it is essential to practice all actions such as truthfulness,

tolerance, patience, compassion. Again, karma, which appears as the law of cause and effect in Hinduism, may be related to forgiveness. Through karma, individuals face the consequences of their actions in subsequent reincarnations. Therefore, it can be assumed that a lack of forgiveness, negative emotions and unresolved anger will spread to future births (Rye et al., 2000). In a study by Denton and Martin (1998), an experienced clinician sample was assessed for their understanding of the meaning of forgiveness, phases in the treatment process and proper therapeutic use of it. It was concluded that there was no significant difference between clinicians with different religious orientations. This similarity may indicate that there is a fundamental idea of forgiveness that is universally accepted among religions. Forgiveness is a concept that pervades every culture and religion.

Hope

Hope can be simply defined as having expectations that things will turn out in the best way and making positive wishes. It appears as an important construct in positive psychology (Luthans & Jensen, 2002; Reichard et al., 2013). Hope, which has a unique power to mobilize individuals, groups, organizations and communities, is, according to Synder (2000), not just a passive excitement that arises in the dark moments of life, but a cognitive process by which individuals actively pursue their goals (as cited in Taraghi et al., 2017). In psychology literature hope, which is examined under different headings such as an emotion, a positive motivational state, a cognitive process, appears as a character strength in positive psychology (Leontopoulou, 2020). People with the strength of hope are of the opinion that the future will bring positive things with a desire strong enough to overcome difficulties. Various studies have shown that individuals with high hope levels are successful in overcoming obstacles and finding various ways to reach the goals they set for themselves (Cheavens et al., 2006) and their intention to seek help is high (McDermott et al., 2017). In addition, studies have shown that hope is an important predictor of mental health and well-being (Slezackova & Kraff, 2016; Reichard et al., 2016).

Hope is a concept that is addressed in different fields of social sciences such as philosophy, anthropology, behavioral sciences, as well as in theology and religious studies (Slezackova & Kraff, 2016).

The sense of hope that arises from the ability to imagine, that is, to think beyond what is in the here and now, is fueled by faith in a greater power or God. Human beings face the reality of death in the life cycle. The idea that there is a life beyond death evokes in people a sense of hope for those who await them at the end of life. Religions have supported this belief and hope with belief in the hereafter since the past (Selvam & Poulson, 2012). The word hope appears in one of every seven pages of the Bible. St. Paul, an important figure in Christianity, commemorated hope with the concepts

of faith and love and placed it in an important position. Not only Christians, but also Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, African Ifa, Native Americans, and Australian Aborigines draw their “spiritual light” from their hope-driven belief systems (Scioli, 2007). Especially in challenging life experiences, it has been observed that hope shows its presence in relation to spirituality. Considering that spirituality is related to assigning meaning to life, it is obvious that when individuals encounter challenging life events in their lives, their spiritual aspects will feed hope. As a matter of fact, research indicates that hope and spirituality are related and that spirituality leads to the flowering of hope (Ottaviani et al., 2014; Souza et al., 2017; Harley & Hunn, 2005).

Gratitude

Gratitude, one of the main focal points of positive psychology research is a typical emotional reaction given by individuals for the benefit of a gift given or a favor they see (Bono et al., 2004). Gratitude, which involves noticing and appreciating the positive things in life, has two dimensions: worldly and transcendental. The worldly dimension involves people giving thanks to one another, while the transcendent dimension is associated with the individual’s gratitude to the divinity. Seligman stated that people who are satisfied with their past lives, optimistic about the future, and happy in the present will have a high level of well-being. Gratitude helps the individual become aware of the positive things that have happened to them in the past, which makes the individual feel happy in the present and optimistic about the future (Power, 2016). In addition, gratitude helps regulate, consolidate and strengthen interpersonal relationships (Emmons & Mishra, 2012).

In the great monotheistic religions of the world, the concept of gratitude permeates texts, prayers and teachings. God is thought of as the source of goodness in the world. People feel indebted to him for the blessings and gifts he has given. One of the integral parts of worship and prayers in these religions is gratitude and gratitude is a universal religious feeling. Believers thank for the God’s blessings and mercy through prayer, worship and service to others. In addition to monotheistic religions, gratitude is a character tendency that is also valued in Buddhism and Hinduism. The Buddha says that gratitude is a fundamental characteristic of the noble person (Emmons and Shelton, 2002; Emmons, 2005; Emmons & Mishra, 2012). Peterson and Seligman (2004) have stated that individuals who engage in religious activities will have more intense feelings of gratitude. In this context, Wirtz et al. (2014) examined the relationship between gratitude and spirituality in a theoretical and empirical framework. As a result of this examination, it is stated that religious contexts provide fertile ground for the expression of gratitude, as feeling grateful to the Creator and thanking him through prayer is encouraged in many great religions. They also emphasized that religious rituals and practices in many religions increase

people's awareness of the positive things in their lives. It is thought that people who perform their worship regularly realize the goodness in their lives, and they thank the God (Wirtz et al., 2014). Lambert et al. (2009) conducted an experimental study to investigate the connection between prayer and gratitude. The researchers came to the conclusion that students' regular prayer practice boosted their sense of thankfulness and appreciation as well as their awareness of the good aspects of their own lives.

Optimism

The concept of learned helplessness has been one of the most studied concepts in the psychology literature since it was discovered, and it has influenced psychologists' thoughts on the relationship between mind, brain and behavior. On the contrary of learned helplessness, optimism is one of the main topics of positive psychology, which breathe new life into the science of psychology which focused on identifying and correcting people's weaknesses (Schwartz, 2000). People's expectations for the future are the foundation of the dictionary definitions of optimism and pessimism. People that are optimistic anticipate wonderful things happening to them whereas pessimists anticipate terrible things. When it comes to how people approach and handle issues, pessimists and optimists have different approaches. People who look to the future with optimism tend to put forth effort and use effective problem-solving methods, even when dealing with serious problems. Some people believe that being optimistic means ignoring the drawbacks or dangers in life and concentrating entirely on the positives. This viewpoint, nevertheless, is untrue. Those that are optimistic consider the risks. However, they are not concerned with matters that are unimportant or unlikely to have an impact on them. They wait to display their behavioral responses until truly meaningful threats arise. Additionally, they take active steps to improve their quality of life. In contrast to pessimists, who have a propensity to give up easily, they are persistent in achieving their objectives and exhibit a task-oriented approach (Carver & Scheier, 2002). This is due to their confidence that they can achieve their goals. People who are confident that they will eventually achieve the result they want persevere even in the face of difficulties (Carver et al., 2010).

Research shows that optimism is closely related to both mental and physical health. In a study conducted by Shapira and Mongrain (2010), in which optimism exercise was applied within the scope of positive psychology intervention, it was seen that the depression level of the participants decreased. Rasmussen et al. (2009), carried out a meta-analysis study to determine the strength of the relationship between optimism and physical health. The results of 83 studies that examined a wide range of physical health and illness situations, including mortality rates, cardiovascular diseases, cancer diseases, immune system have shown that optimism is a crucial physical health indicator. In another study on the relationship between optimism and psychological well-being, optimism was found to be positively related to psychological well-being (Jahanara, 2017).

Religious belief can foster optimism and hope with its function of creating meaning for people experiencing existential problems. For followers of the divine faiths like Islam, Christianity and Judaism to have hope for their afterlife, they must meet requirements like faith and worship (Bennett, 2001). Despite the scriptures' narratives of people who were punished for not believing in the God, religions provides reasons to its followers to be optimistic by emphasizing that the God's love, guidance, and protection are abundant, unconditional and continuous. It is highlighted that those who live a life of faith and makes positive contributions to life will receive eternal rewards in the Hereafter (Mattis et al., 2003). In studies on optimism, religiosity, and spirituality, optimism is found to be associated with a supportive and loving relationship with God (Mattis et al., 2003), positive religious coping (Warren et al., 2015), and religious commitment (Dember & Brooks, 1989). In an experimental study conducted by Koenig et al. (2015) examining the effects of standard psychotherapy with optimism-based religious psychotherapy intervention, it was concluded that that both approaches increased optimism, but among the study subjects, those who were more religious were more optimistic and experienced a significantly greater increase in optimism during the psychotherapy process than those who were less religious.

Resilience

Throughout their lives, while sometimes people face minor daily problems, every so often they face serious problems and negative life events. The life path is not always straight. Life is full of uncertainties, bumps and bends are encountered from time to time. We see that some people are able to cope with these difficulties and even come out stronger from these difficulties and improve themselves after negative experiences. Going through negative life events can help a person learn how to deal with life's challenges, overcome them, learn from negative experiences and experience positive transformation. This situation is examined in the literature with the concept of psychological resilience (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013; Hunter-Hernández et al., 2015). Resilience refers to the process of adapting to challenging life events such as troubles and traumas (Luthar et al., 2014).

Researchers working on resilience have examined risk factors and protective factors that may mitigate the harmful consequences of adverse life situations. Spirituality and religion have been regarded as crucial protective resources that can help or strengthen an individual's resistance to adversity (Smith et al., 2012). Studies reveal that there is a positive relationship between spirituality and resilience (Shelton et al., 2020; Batmaz & Meral, 2022; Rahwamati, 2014; Carneiro et al., 2019). According to O'Grady et al. (2016), negative life experiences and traumatic experiences activate spiritual processes for many people. A study by Salloum and Lewis (2010) indicates that spirituality plays a central role in the resilience of African-American families

affected by storm Katrina. Relying on a higher spiritual power encouraged survivors to find purpose in their struggles. It has been seen that praying, worshiping and relying on a higher spiritual power are the best coping strategies (as cited in Graber & Carabine, 2015). Hunter-Hernández et al. (2015) states that spirituality is a resource that promotes compliance and resilience to improve quality of life in patients with cancer or other chronic diseases. According to Lsyne and Wachholtz (2010), religion and spirituality are two basic meaning-building methods that affect a person's ability to cope, endure and accept illness and pain. Performing religious activities and worshipping increases an individual's capacity to tolerate challenging life events.

The individuals' religious belief could help them view their difficult current situation from a different angle. In all divine religions, a meaning is attributed to pain. Not everyone views pain as something to be avoided. There is a viewpoint that asserts adverse life experiences have instructional value and believers should take something positive out from them. Additionally, religion promotes proactive problem-solving by advocating accepting unresolved points and turning to the God through the problem. In a Hittite prayer, the phrase "God, please give me the power to alter the things I can change, to accept the things I cannot change, and to understand the difference between the two" highlights precisely this phenomenon (Dein & Kimter, 2014).

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is conceptualized as a path to well-being in the positive psychology approach (Kashdan & Ciarrochi, 2013). Mindfulness involves accepting ambiguity of daily life, inhibiting our tendency to maintaining our automatic behaviors and letting go of the urge to judge oneself and others (Synder & Lopez, 2007). According to Shapiro et al. (2002), awareness is a discipline of consciousness. It is much more than meditation, despite the fact that it is frequently connected with it. Being aware is a state of being. It involves being present with our body, minds, and experiences in each passing second. According to Kashdan and Ciarrochi (2013), awareness is the ability to observe and experience one's emotions objectively, without being enmeshed in or associating with negative feelings, despite the propensity to avoid painful thoughts and emotions. Over-identification leads to a definite and permanent perception of transient events. For example, the expression "I am a failure" indicates over-identification, while "I have failed" is an expression of awareness. Individuals practicing mindfulness shifts their attention from past regrets, losses and concerns about the future to the present.

With the rise of the positive psychology, the science of psychology has adopted a holistic perspective in which positive qualities are also examined with scientific methods. This change from the pathology model to the health model has led to the examination of different traditions and practices such as mindfulness meditation and

yoga, which have been used for thousands of years to better understand human potential (Shapiro et al., 2002). Mindfulness meditation, which is based on Buddhist philosophies and Eastern traditions, was included in the psychotherapy process about 40 years ago with the pioneering work of Kabatt-Zinn in order to increase mental health and well-being (Hamilton et al., 2006; Allen et al., 2021). Mindfulness meditation includes specific practices, exercises designed to enhance mindfulness (Shapiro et al., 2002). The positive effect of mindfulness exercises and interventions on positive psychology variables such as optimism, well-being, and positive emotions has been demonstrated by various studies (Malboeuf-Hurtubise, et al., 2018; Huppert & Johnson, 2010).

Mindfulness enables us to experience the moment we are in and to reconnect with our spiritual essence (Bien & Bien, 2002). Mindfulness includes meditation practices that are based on accepting and observing negative emotions and thoughts rather than avoiding them. Acceptance is also an important element of meditation. Pargament (2007a) has linked mindfulness to spirituality, arguing that this element—the ability to accept painful thoughts, feelings, and desires—is associated with the behavior of accepting one's own limits and finitude, relinquishing control to a larger power domain/transcendent. There are also diverse studies in the literature that emphasize the relationship of mindfulness with spirituality and religiosity (Aydın, 2019; Lazaridou & Pentaris, 2016; Ghorbani et al., 2016). Trammel (2018) implemented a mindfulness intervention developed based on Christianity, arguing that mindfulness interventions can be applied within the framework of Christianity and other religions in addition to Buddhist-based mindfulness practices. Following these practices, it was concluded that the mindfulness levels of the participants increased and the stress levels decreased. Oman (2009) has shown that the mindfulness/meditation practices inspired by the Prophet Muhammad's habits of contemplation and meditation increase compassion, altruism, empathy, forgiveness and self-efficacy (as cited in York el Karam, 2018).

Positive Psychotherapy

What is Positive Psychotherapy?

Positive psychotherapy is a therapeutic approach based on the hypothesis that building positive emotions, strengths and meaning is effective in treating psychopathology and the principles of general positive psychology (Rashid, 2009; Rashid, 2015). In positive psychotherapy approach, even patients with severe psychopathological issues are thought to prefer improving their lives to getting rid of bothersome symptoms. Clients want not only to reduce negative emotions such as sadness and anxiety, but also to fill their lives with positive emotions such as satisfaction, happiness and joy. Therefore, positive psychotherapists emphasizes that the therapy setting is not only a place where anger, frustration, jealousy and

anxiety are addressed, discussed and treated but also where positive qualities such as hope, optimism, gratitude, compassion, contentment, humility and emotional, social intelligence are examined (Rashid, 2015).

Therapist-Client Relationship

An unconditionally supportive counseling environment is essential in positive psychotherapy (Chao, 2015). Clients who apply to psychotherapy generally are more likely to bring problems and negative situations to the fore. For this reason, in positive psychotherapy, it is essential that the therapist uses basic techniques such as unconditional acceptance and empathetic listening, as well as drawing the attention of the clients to the positive emotions, structures and strengths in their lives. While the traditional therapy approach examines and evaluates which weaknesses of the client cause the existing problem, positive psychotherapy considers which strengths the client might use to cope with their problems (Rashid, 2009). The therapist looks for opportunities to identify and reflect on the client's strengths in positive psychotherapy, where the therapeutic relationship is central. Negative states are balanced by positives. For example, the therapist may bring up the concept of post-traumatic growth while intervening in a traumatic experience with an empathetic approach (Rashid, 2015).

Therapy Process

The process of positive psychotherapy can be divided into three stages. The first stage focuses on discovering the individual's strengths so that the individual can be considered from a balanced and multiple perspective. Based on these strengths, therapeutic targets are determined. The middle stage is the stage in which studies are carried out at the point of developing positive emotions and coping with negative emotions effectively. The final stage includes exercises aimed at developing positive relationships, meaning and purpose (Rashid, 2015). The ultimate goal is to assist the client in getting from where they are to where they want to be, as well as to improve their overall well-being. In the pursuit of this goal, the therapist is not required to examine every detail of the client's pathology or history. During the process, the client's problems, therapeutic goals, the resources, strengths and abilities that the client needs to use and develop in order to achieve the desired therapeutic results are examined (Burns, 2017). Rashid (2015) has suggested topics that can be addressed in each session and exercises that can be done in the process of positive psychotherapy. In the first sessions, the PERMA model of well-being is examined, it is discussed that the absence of which elements of the model in client's life may cause psychological problems and the strengths of the individual are investigated. The following sessions focus on themes such as forgiveness, hope and optimism, gratitude, resilience, meaning and purpose, which are common themes of both spirituality

and positive psychology. For example, in a session where the concept of gratitude is discussed, the client is asked to write a letter containing the expression of gratitude. At this point, if working with a spiritual/religious oriented client, spiritual/religious elements can be incorporated into the process of expressing gratitude. In addition, when working with spiritually oriented clients, scales and inventories that contain items that deal with both religious and non-religious forms of spirituality can be used to evaluate the spiritual well-being of individuals in therapy process. Scales containing items targeting the individual's spirituality such as the "Authentic Happiness Inventory", "Happiness Approaches Survey", "Meaning in Life Survey", "VIA Character Forces Inventory" on the www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu website created by Martin Seligman can be used for these purposes (Canda, 2009).

O'Hanlon and Bertolino (2012) suggested that spirituality has three components: connection, compassion, contribution, and they developed a positive psychotherapy exercise that includes these three components. The exercise consists of questions in which the spiritual side of the client can be evaluated and addressed in the therapy session.

Connection:

Most religious or spiritual approaches help people connect with something greater beyond themselves. The questions in this category have been prepared to help people discover the sources of spiritual power and support in their lives.

- Do you have a less ego-driven purpose in your life than your concerns like money and status? Do you have any spiritual resources that you can connect with?
- When you feel exhausted, bad, distressed etc. do you have any opportunity to connect to a spiritual source? These sources may include the following elements:
 1. Connection to one's soul / spirit / deep self / core self
 2. Connection to one's physical self/body/senses
 3. Connection with another entity (human or animal/pet)
 4. Connection to a group or community
 5. Connection through art (creating or observing/participating in art created by others)
 6. Connection to nature (and a sense of being part of something bigger than yourself)
 7. Connection to God / one's higher power / universe and a greater sense of meaning or purpose

Compassion:

This category contains questions aimed at softening the questioning and critical attitudes of individuals towards themselves and others.

- Does your life contain an atmosphere of compassion? How can you create or develop an atmosphere of compassion and kindness?
- Think of the most serene, compassionate, or wise person you know. What would be his/her perspective on this situation you are experiencing now? How would that person deal with this situation?
- Remember a time when you judged or criticized someone, then softened or became more compassionate. How did you transition from a critical attitude to a compassionate one? What changed after making this change? Can you apply any of these to your current situation?

Contribution:

When we connect with a transcendent power beyond our own self, when we have deep purpose, we feel a desire to help other people and contribute to the world. This category allows the actions that do not directly benefit the client, the altruistic attitude to be addressed in the session.

- You can do something to contribute to world and society to reduce social injustice. For example, donating money to a charity, praying for someone in distress, volunteering for a charity. What can you do to contribute to the world you live in?

Spirituality-Focused Positive Psychotherapy Practices

In the positive psychology approach, psychotherapists benefit from interventions such as asking questions, giving confidence, listening and applying tests in order to reduce the problems experienced by the client, increase their functionality, well-being and improve them to the extent of their potential (Chao, 2015). A one-size-fits-all approach is avoided in positive psychotherapy, and it is emphasized that each client's requirements may vary. Depending on the client's characteristics, positive psychology interventions are modified in terms of their form, structure and order (Rashid, 2009). Considering that spirituality constitutes an important part of the lives of many individuals, spirituality can be included in the psychotherapy process by evaluating the needs of the client. It is thought that it will be beneficial to benefit from spiritual practices at both group and individual level, especially when working with clients whose character strengths are characterized by spirituality and transcendence. There are experimental studies in the literature that include spiritual and religious interventions in positive psychotherapy practices, both in individual and group sessions. For example, in a study conducted by Fallah et al. (2011) spiritually focused interventions were given to breast cancer survivors. The group was consist of women who recovered. The first week of the 8-week process was devoted to contemplation and meditation. In the second week, prayer was discussed and the types of prayer were defined as a way to connect with the God. The agenda of the third week was the subject of trust in God. The effect of trust on hope and treatment process was discussed. In the fourth week, patience was emphasized, patience was defined in the Islamic framework, and the importance of patience in problem solving was discussed. Repentance formed the agenda of the fifth week, and God's forgiveness was discussed. The sixth session covered the topic of forgiveness. What it means to forgive is discussed, and the contributions of forgiveness to the life of the individual both in this world and in the hereafter was examined. The main theme of the seventh week was gratitude. The concept of gratitude in Islam was studied. Group members were encouraged to focus on and be grateful for the positive aspects of life. Different ways of being grateful were discussed. In the eighth week, the topic of the agenda was altruism. In this session, the place of helping the people in Islam was discussed. At the end of the process the hope, happiness and life satisfaction levels of the participants increased. The effect of spiritual/religious interventions on spiritual well-being and anxiety was examined by Elham et al. (2015) on 66 patients undergoing treatment in the coronary care unit. Interventions were determined on the basis of the spiritual needs of the patients. Participants of the intervention group received 60 to 90-minute spiritual/religious based intervention sessions for at least 3 days from hospitalization to discharge. Interventions included 30 minutes of caregiving, giving them hope, talking to them about spiritual experiences, strengthening relationships with family members and important people in their lives, providing them with opportunities to

worship and pray. The patients were given small booklets containing valuable quotes from religious scholars and world scientists about hope, generosity and forgiveness. As a result of the research, the subjective well-being levels of the participants increased and their anxiety levels decreased. Noferesti & Tavakol (2021) examined the effect of positive individual psychotherapy intervention based on “belief in divine goodness” on depression. After sessions with a spiritual/religious dimension, clients’ depressive symptoms decreased. An increase was observed in the levels of happiness, life satisfaction and sense of meaning in life. In another experimental study conducted by Lambert et al. (2010) which study group was university students, participants were given the task of praying for a friend, praying about any topic or thinking positive thoughts about a friend every day for 4 weeks. It was concluded that the participants who prayed for their friends reported more forgiveness than the other two participant groups. These studies point to the high effectiveness of positive psychology interventions in which the spiritual dimension is included. In this context, it can be said that the use of spiritual/religious-based positive psychotherapy practices will provide functional therapeutic results, especially when working with clients who are fed spiritually/religiously.

Conclusion

Religion and spirituality were mostly overlooked in psychology literature during the 20th century and these ideas were even associated with psychopathology. With the positive psychology approach, significant developments have occurred in the 21st century. Positive psychology has given researchers and practitioners a new perspective on human beings, and thanks to positive psychology, previously neglected studies on religion and spirituality have gained momentum. Today, it is widely accepted that spirituality is an important resource that strengthens the well-being of individuals and provides a sense of meaning, every person has a spiritual aspect and seeks for the sacred although the way they define the sacred in different ways (Shafranske & Sperry 2007; Pargament, 2007a).

Traditional approaches focused on psychopathology suggest that the individual’s ability to continue his life in a functional way is possible by addressing his weaknesses, problems and solving them (Dawson & Austin, 2014). Positive psychology studies, which were pioneered by Martin Seligman and have gained popularity recently, focus on the positive and qualities of people by noting the shortcomings of traditional approaches that emphasize problems, diagnoses and treatments. It attempts to assist individuals in leading happier and more fruitful lives as well as in identifying and comprehending their personal talents and virtues (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Synder & Lopez, 2007). In this context, spirituality is considered as a character strength in the positive psychology approach. The spiritual aspect of the individual

can be used as a resource in the psychotherapy process. Additionally, all religions and the prophets who serve as their representatives of these religions refer to things like the characteristics of a decent life and a virtuous person on the path to leading a dignified life. In this perspective, it is possible to assert that positive psychology and religions share common issues at the social and individual level (Zinnbauer, 2009). When the literature is examined, there are a few studies showing that these interventions, in which spirituality is included in positive psychotherapy practices, are positively effective (Lambert et al., 2010; Fallah et al., 2011; Elham et al., 2011; Nofereesti and Tavakol, 2022). In Turkey, although there are current efforts to address the spiritual aspects of the client while working with spiritually oriented clients, it is thought that spirituality and religious orientation are neglected in positive psychology-based interventions. It is thought that this study, which examines the intersection points of the positive psychology approach with spirituality and the interventions used when working with spiritually oriented clients, within the framework of the relevant literature, will provide practitioners and researchers with a different perspective and form the basis for future research. As stated in the study, spirituality, in addition to being considered as a character strength in the positive psychology approach, has an important place with its functions such as a being a resource that the individual can feed on in difficult times and an being effective coping strategy. When the basic concepts of positive psychology are examined on spiritual/religious basis, it can be said that concepts such as well-being, optimism, mindfulness and resilience are common concepts of positive psychology and spirituality. In addition, positive psychology has done some valuable work in grounding the concept of character strengths in philosophical, cultural and religious traditions. Moreover, if an effective interdisciplinary dialogue can be established between these distinctive research traditions to deepen our understanding of the complexities of the human psyche, the science of psychology will have much to gain and offer. This paper has been a modest attempt to contribute to this interdisciplinary effort.

The goal of this study is to offer a broad framework for the relationship between positive psychology and spirituality. The limitations of the research are that the spiritual dimension of each of the character strengths is not examined and that spiritually oriented positive psychotherapy interventions are minimally addressed. In future studies, each main topic in this study can be examined in more detail. Spiritually oriented positive psychotherapy interventions can be explained with case examples. In addition, the effects of positive psychotherapy sessions with spiritually oriented clients, in which spirituality is addressed, can be examined using an experimental design in the presence of cases.

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