CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

The quest for ever-greater happiness has existed since antiquity. No matter how different people’s lives are – whether due to age, gender, culture or life experience – the desire for happiness is widespread. From ancient history to recent times, philosophers, writers, self-help gurus, and now scientists have taken up the challenge of how to foster greater happiness in youth. Some two centuries ago, Jefferson (1819) wrote that happiness is the aim of life, but virtue is the foundation of happiness. He reminded us all that virtues can help us survive and indeed thrive as individuals and as a society. Virtues do not belong in dusty books; virtues belong in our everyday life, where they can matter so much. Character strengths matters, then and now and in future. Cultivating its components should be an important goal for all: parents, educators, citizens and in particular youth.

Gratitude and forgiveness are interpersonal strengths that produce well-being through a combination of reflection, positive emotions, and adaptive social behaviors and relationships that facilitate well-being and happiness (Fredrickson, 2004; Watkins, 2004; Kashdan, Mishra, Breen, & Froh, 2009). All young people want to do well and live in happy and fulfilling ways. These goals are fundamental human desires and rights. Hence, character strengths play important roles in positive youth development, not only as broad-protective factors, preventing or mitigating psychopathology and problems, but also as enabling conditions that promote thriving and flourishing.

Gratitude or Thanks Giving as a virtue is being extolled in all the world religions ranging from Judaism, Christianity, and Hinduism to Islam (Dumas, Johnson & Lynch, 2002). All the Eastern philosophies, namely the Confucian school of thought, did uphold gratitude as a virtue. It is also considered as an antidote for all illnesses. Indian Ayurveda, an ancient Indian medical practice puts gratitude and forgiveness high on the list of human immune boosters and suggests that negative thoughts such as greed, jealousy and anger eats human mind. The ageless wisdom of
India, Sanaathana Dharma, also highlights the importance of gratitude as a way which will lead to heaven. The Great Epic Bhagwand Gita narrates an incident posing a question, what is the greatest sin on earth? The answer to it as suggested in Gita is “ingratitude”. Forgiveness has a broad and timeless appeal, one that is seen in the Indian sect of Jains (Svetambara) who follow the teachings of Mahaveera, observe a week every year as the forgiveness week where they go around asking people to forgive them for any mistake that they might have committed during the year. According to Buddhism, if we haven’t forgiven, we keep creating an identity around our pain, and that is what is reborn and then that is what suffers”. Also, Jesus repeatedly spoke of forgiveness. Luke 6:36 (NIV) quoted, “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven”. Its significance is assured in Mahabharata too, Udyoga Parva Section, (translated by Sri Mohan Ganguli) ‘Righteousness is the one highest good; and forgiveness is the one supreme peace; knowledge is one supreme contentment; and benevolence, one sole happiness’.

In some ears, the word character strength and virtue sounds ‘old-fashioned’ and implies ‘hammering harsh’ and unwelcome lessons into recalcitrant youngsters. In recent times these two words “Thank You “and “Sorry’ of sincerity have been stripped and in doing this we have forgotten the major role they play in our lives (Mullins, 2005). We use them flippantly, throw around without care, and often reduce them to an easy way of getting off the hook and evading meaningful action. The age-old "Eastern" moral virtues and values are being gradually eroded and youth is lost in competitive world where self image, looking after one’s own interests, striving for material success and avoiding being a “loser” are important values (Sri Dhammananda, 2005). Also with the advent of modernization and advancement, today’s youth is falling short of such strengths of character. Their morals, ethics and values are fading to the extent that it is the need of the hour to culminate and develop gratitude and forgiveness among youth.

Our ancestors laid great emphasis on strengths like gratitude, kindness, hope, empathy and forgiveness and even possessed them in abundance. Message from our
ancestors which holds relevance till date is that the motivation for doing virtuous acts begins by experiencing the virtue of people we interact with. By watching and experiencing our source figures acting virtuously, we develop an appetite for virtue. This appetite is called as a ‘right’ appetite and right appetite results from a habituated experience and most importantly, values must be acted upon and acted upon repeatedly as when a value is acted upon repeatedly, it is internalized as a constituent of a person’s character (Aristotle, 2000). No one will live his or her life without challenges and setbacks, but to the degree that young people have greater life satisfaction, happiness, character strengths, and social support, they will experience fewer psychological or physical problems in the wake of inevitable difficulties (Park, 2004b; Peterson, Park, & Seligman, 2006).

Belonging to strong social ties is a fundamental need, and securing strong and supportive relationships early on can provide bedrock for many positive outcomes. Experiencing and expressing gratitude can help improve youth moods, and cultivate a sense of purposeful engagement with the world. Responding positively with forgiveness instead of negatively with avoidance or vengeance when one is wronged, hurt or attacked could help reduce negative emotions such as anger, disappointment, and hostility, and replace them with more positive or benevolent attitudes, feelings, and behaviors (McCullough, 2001; McCullough & Witvliet, 2002). Forgiveness contributes to happiness and well-being mainly from its potential to help people repair and preserve supportive and close relationships (Karremans, Van Lange, Ouwerkerk, & Kluwer, 2003).

The question of how to become happier has become a topic of growing scientific interest in this day and age and the route to happiness is best understood with recent developments in the field of Positive psychology (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon & Schkade, 2005b; Seligman, Steen, Park & Peterson, 2005). There is a shift in interest among psychologists from investigating the negative emotions associated with psychopathology to identifying the positive emotions associated with a positive psychological status (Emmons, 2007). Within the vicinity of Positive psychology, the first generation of research arrived as an identification of character strengths and virtues which paves way towards youth’s academic success, health promoting
behavior, life satisfaction and happiness (Park & Peterson, 2006a; Ma et al, 2008; Lounsbury et al, 2009). The character strengths most associated with the meaning route to happiness were religiousness, gratitude, hope, zest, and curiosity (Peterson et al., 2007), character strengths with a developmental trajectory are appreciation of beauty & excellence, forgiveness, modesty, open-mindedness (Park & Peterson, 2006a; 2006b). Also, total score on the VIA-IS (all 24 character strengths) correlated positively with life satisfaction (.44) indicating that strong character is associated with happiness and the good life (Ruch et al., 2007). More recently, Toner, Haslam, Robinson and Williams (2012) found the character strengths of temperance (character strength of forgiveness), vitality, and transcendence (character strength of gratitude) in an Australian adolescent sample associated with subjective wellbeing and happiness. Recent literature reviews pinpoints that gratitude is strongly associated with happiness and happiness-related constructs and forgiveness has been associated with well being, happiness and meaning in life.

The second generation of research draws closer to augment happiness and promote strengths through developing programs and intervention plans. However, research in the field of positive psychology is finally beginning to systematically test happiness interventions to investigate the impact of activities such as optimism and gratitude, committing acts of kindness and using personal strengths – a goal that Fordyce (1977) set forth several decades ago, but that was not taken up until quite recently. Recent applications of positive psychology theories can be found in a series of interventions based on Seligman’s model of happiness (Seligman, 2002). Also, another type of positive interventions focus on one or more strengths and aims to enhance well-being and happiness through the enhanced demonstration of specific strengths and the rationale of these interventions lies in the strengths and specific psychological mechanisms or theory linking the strength to well-being and happiness. Such intervention studies, for example, are Seligman’s (1991) work on optimism, Emmons & Mc Cullough’s (2003b) work on gratitude enhancement, Sheldon & Lyubomirsky’s (2006a) work on gratitude and love and Luthan’s work on psychological capital (Luthans, Avey, Patera, 2008).
Mapping the similarities between gratitude and forgiveness suggests that these both strengths have the potential which effects at the transpersonal (broader) level which produces change at the interpersonal (specific) level (Fincham & Beach, 2007). Their influence on relationship processes, relationship outcomes and personal outcomes suggests that there may be considerable potential for an integrated approach to facilitate well being and happiness, and that these approaches may have considerable significance involving shifts in motivation and bringing behaviour intentions under pressure. These two strengths with its depth give us moral perspective and imagination to help exchange our zoom lens of rumination i.e. compassion-focussed reappraisal for a wider-angle i.e. benefit-focussed reappraisal lens that can give us a bigger picture in understanding our own selves, family, friends and most importantly interpersonal relationships. The filters of compassion and benefits foster forgiveness and generate gratitude (Witvliet, 2011). Gratitude and forgiveness are closely related and function in a complementary manner, forgiveness being the flip side of gratitude.

However, looking at the history of research on happiness, character strengths have been examined in isolation from other strengths but the purpose of this study was to augment gratitude and forgiveness together within the same sample to better understand conceptual links with happiness. Although a trend is in full swing to investigate these strengths in unison in West (Fincham & Beach, 2010; Witvliet et al, 2010; Weber, 2010; Hill & Allemand, 2011) but it has not been investigated much in an Eastern culture. Thus, the present study is at an advanced league of the second generation of research in Positive Psychology where in an effort is made to utilize the tools of psychological science (gratitude and forgiveness) and frame a Strength Building Program as a complete package which acknowledges the presence and influence of other character strengths i.e. how might combining two or more strengths produce additive effects in the pursuit of happiness?

1.1 Positive Psychology

The “positive” in Positive Psychology refers to strengths, optimal functioning, and flourishing. In addition to "fixing what's wrong," positive psychologists help
"building what's strong." It complements rather than replaces traditional therapy, in which goals include knowing yourself better, easing emotional pain and confusion, and developing better ways of coping. It does not deny the problems that people experience, do not ignore stress and challenge in their attempts to understand what it means to live well. Positive psychology focuses on identifying and enhancing the human strengths and virtues that make life worth living and allow individuals and communities to thrive; it is the scientific study of the good life (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Figure 1
Mind Map of Positive Psychology

Source: Ilona Boniwell, 2006. Positive Psychology in a Nutshell
Most psychologists such as *clinical psychologists* are working mainly in the *disease model* with a goal of reducing suffering, curing illness and achieving an absence of symptoms (reaching ‘neutral’). A *positive psychologist*, on the other hand, works in the *health model* with a goal of moving from whatever the starting point, beyond neutral and into the plus scale of well-being. Positive psychologists are now attempting to empirically map good character, beginning with systematically identifying a multidimensional framework of character strengths with the aim of classification and measurement, as well as investigation into its relationship with the good life. *In nutshell, positive psychology is the study of what we might call life on the positive side of zero, where zero is the line that divides illness from health and unhappiness from happiness. The diagram gives more of an idea of how the two i.e. disease and health models work.*

*Figure 2*

Positive Psychology Disease and Health Model

![Diagram of Positive Psychology Disease and Health Model](image)

1.1.1 Character Strengths and Virtues

One of the most significant contributions of Positive Psychology to studying character is the classification of strengths and virtues (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).
Character strengths are the more specific psychological processes or mechanisms that define the virtues. To convey the multidimensionality of good character, we refer to its components as character strengths. Aristotle shared a similar thought on virtues as a reflection of the individual’s character that can be taught and acquired by practice. Aquinas further argued that a virtue is a habit that people can develop by choosing the good and consistently acting in accordance with it. Other scholars have emphasized that character must be developed by action and not merely by thinking or talking about it (Maudsley, 1898).

As a testimony to his commitment in the field, Seligman was the 31st most frequently cited psychologist in introducing textbooks throughout the 20th century (Haggbloom, 2002). According to Seligman, 2003 research in positive psychology is conducted in three main areas which are called as the three pillars i.e. the study of positive emotions, the study of positive traits (example strengths, virtues, abilities) the study of positive institutions (example strong families). These pillars are related as positive institutions support positive traits, which in turn support positive emotion. Also, the science of positive psychology operates on three different levels: the subjective level, the individual level and the group level.

The subjective level includes the study of positive experiences such as joy, well being, satisfaction, contentment, happiness, optimism and flow. This level is about feeling good, rather than doing good or being a good person.

At the individual level, the aim is to identify the constituents of the ‘good life’ and the personal qualities that are necessary for being a ‘good person’, through studying human strengths and virtues, future-mindedness, capacity for love, courage, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, wisdom, interpersonal skills and giftedness.

Finally, at the group or community level, the emphasis is on civic virtues, social responsibilities, nurturance, altruism, civility, tolerance, work ethics, positive institutions and other factors that contribute to the development of citizenship or communities.
1.1.2 Conceptualization of Character Strengths and Virtues

Yearley (1990) defined character strength as “a disposition to act, desire, and feel that involves the exercise of judgement and leads to a recognizable human excellence or instance of human flourishing”.

Emmons and Crumpler (2000) opined virtue as a piece of both authenticity and resilience (as cited in Crompton, 2005). Virtues are “acquired excellences in character traits, the possession of which contribute to a person’s completeness or wholeness”.

Linley & Harrington (2006) defined character strengths are natural capacities within individuals, and these strengths, when cultivated and promoted, would allow individuals to achieve optimal functioning and performance, and lead individuals to have better, more satisfying, and more fulfilling life.

According to Fowers (2008) “Virtues are the character strengths that are necessary to pursue what is good which means that what counts as a virtue is determined largely by what we believe to be the best, highest, most admirable, most noble aims for humans”.

1.1.3 Description of Character Strengths and Virtues

Peterson and Seligman (2004) proposed a classification of 24 character strengths grouped under six overarching virtues claimed to be shared across culture and human history (Dahlsgaard, Peterson, & Seligman, 2005).

1. **Wisdom (Cognitive Strengths)** - Strengths of wisdom include positive traits related to the acquisition and use of information in the service of the good life.

- Creativity - As an individual difference, creativity entails two essential components. First, a creative person must produce ideas or behaviors that are recognizably original. However, originality alone does not signify that a person possesses creative ability. The second component suggests that behaviors or ideas must be not only original but also adaptive. To be adaptive
the individual’s originality must make a positive contribution to that person’s life or to the lives of others.

Curiosity - Curiosity, interest, novelty-seeking, and openness to experience represent one’s intrinsic desire for experience and knowledge. Curiosity involves the active recognition, pursuit, and regulation of one’s experience in response to challenging opportunities. Curiosity is ubiquitous, manifest in the mundane activities that make one’s daily life more fulfilling, for example, being absorbed in the plot of a movie, conversing with an intriguing stranger or examining a picture of Siamese twins. All individuals experience curiosity, but they differ in its depth and breadth, and in their threshold and willingness to experience it.

Open-Mindedness - Open-mindedness is the willingness to search actively for evidence against one’s favored beliefs, plans, or goals, and to weigh such evidence fairly when it is available. Its opposite has been called the myside bias, which refers to the pervasive tendency to think in ways that favor one’s current views (Greenwald, 1980). Individuals with the strength of open-mindedness would probably believe that abandoning a previous belief is a sign of strong character and always take into consideration evidence that goes against their beliefs. They feel that beliefs should always be revised in response to new evidence.

Love of Learning- Love of learning is characterized as referring both to a general individual difference and to a universal but individually varying predisposition to engage in particular content (e.g., Latin, videogames, music) or well-developed individual interests (Renninger, 2000). Love of learning describes the way in which a person engages in new information and skills generally and/or the well developed individual interest with which he or she engages particular content. It describes the process of engaging content that may or may not result in immediate achievement or any immediate benefit to achievement as defined by some external standard like academic tests (Harackiewicz, Barron, and Elliot, 1998).
Perspective - Perspective refers to the ability to take stock of life in large terms, in ways that make sense to oneself and others. Perspective is the product of knowledge and experience, but it is more than the accumulation of information. It is the coordination of this information and its deliberate use to improve well-being. In a social context, perspective allows the individual to listen to others, to evaluate what they say, and then to offer good (sage) advice. Directions back to the interstate do not qualify as wisdom, unless the highway is the metaphoric route to the life well lived.

2. Courage (Emotional Strengths) - Strengths of courage entail the exercise of will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition, either external or internal.

Bravery - The meaning of bravery shifts across contexts. Shelp (1984) came as close to a consensual definition as exists: “the disposition to voluntarily act, perhaps fearfully, in a dangerous circumstance, where the relevant risks are reasonably appraised, in an effort to obtain or preserve some perceived good for one self or others recognizing that the desired perceived good may not be realized.” Bravery must also involve judgment—an understanding of risk and an acceptance of the consequences of action. Hence, a courageous person must have a disposition to take risks, yet must also overcome a disposition to take unconsidered risks. Bravery raises the moral and social conscience of a society (May, 1978).

Persistence - Persistence is the voluntary continuation of a goal-directed action in spite of obstacles, difficulties, or discouragement. Seligman and Peterson use the terms perseverance and persistence interchangeably, as have most previous researchers, though the connotations of perseverance are more uniformly positive than the connotations of persistence. For example, attitude researchers sometimes use the terms belief perseverance or attitude perseverance (usually with the Canadian pronunciation accenting the second syllable) to refer to the maintenance of attitudes or beliefs in the face of contradictory evidence. Because the maintenance of attitudes and beliefs does
not involve active behavior, this process does not fit their definition of persistence. Similarly, persistence in merely thinking about a goal (i.e., ruminative persistence) could not be considered perseverance according to their definition.

- **Integrity** - Integrity, authenticity, and honesty capture a character trait in which people are true to themselves, accurately representing—privately and publicly—their internal states, intentions, and commitments. Such persons accept and take responsibility for their feelings and behaviors, owning them, as it were, and reaping substantial benefits by so doing. Individuals with the character strength of integrity believe that it is important to be open and honest about their feelings and it is more important for them to be their own selves than being popular. They always follow through on their commitments, even when it costs them.

- **Vitality** - Vitality describes a dynamic aspect of well-being marked by the subjective experience of energy and aliveness (Ryan and Frederick, 1997). As an indicator of organismic wellness, vitality is directly and interactively related to both psychological and somatic factors. At the somatic level, vitality is linked to good physical health and bodily functioning, as well as freedom from fatigue and illness. At the psychological level, vitality reflects experiences of volition, effectance, and integration of the self at both intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. A person who is vital is energetic and fully functioning.

3. **Humanity (Interpersonal Strengths)** - Strengths of humanity include positive traits manifest in caring relationships with others.

- **Love** - Love represents a cognitive, behavioral, and emotional stance toward others that takes three prototypical forms. One is love for the individuals who are our primary sources of affection, protection, and care. Another form is love for the individuals who depend on us to make them feel safe and cared for. The third form is love that involves passionate desire for sexual, physical,
and emotional closeness with an individual whom we consider special and who makes us feel special. The prototype is romantic love. Relationships can involve more than one type of love. They can involve different types of love at different points in time. Also, relationships can begin with one type of love and acquire other types over time.

- **Kindness** - Kindness, generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, and altruistic love are a network of closely related terms indicating a common orientation of the self toward the other. Kindness and altruistic love require the assertion of a common humanity in which others are worthy of attention and affirmation for no utilitarian reasons but for their own sake. Such affective states are expected to give rise to helping behaviors that are not based on an assurance of reciprocity, reputational gain, or any other benefits to self, although such benefits may emerge and need not be resisted. Individuals with this strength believe that giving is more important than receiving and doing good for others with love and kindness is the best way to live. They care for the ungrateful as well the grateful.

- **Social Intelligence** - Intelligence refers to the ability to think abstractly to understand similarities and differences among things, to recognize patterns, and to see other relations. Intelligence can be divided into subtypes that focus on a specific area of reasoning. There also exists a group of hot intelligences (personal, social, and emotional intelligence), so called because they process “hot” information: signals concerning motives, feelings, and other domains of direct relevance to an individual’s well-being and/or survival. The hot intelligences concern information of direct personal relevance for survival and well-being (Mayer & Mitchell, 1998). Social intelligence concerns one’s relationships with other people, including the social relationships involved in intimacy and trust, persuasion, group memberships, and political power.
4. **Justice (Civic Strengths)** - Peterson & Seligman regard strengths of justice as broadly interpersonal, relevant to the optimal interaction between the individual and the group or the community.

   - Citizenship - Citizenship, social responsibility, loyalty, and teamwork represent a feeling of identification with and sense of obligation to a common good that includes the self but that stretches beyond one’s own self-interest. A generative spirit and sense of responsibility for the community are further indicators of this strength. Individuals with this strength would be likely to be active in the civic affairs of their communities—by voting, joining voluntary associations, or contributing time and money to social or environmental causes. They give personal importance to working to correct social and economic inequality and help others who are in difficulty.
Fairness - Fairness is the product of moral judgement—the process by which people determine what is morally right, what is morally wrong, and what is morally proscribed. Being committed to fairness in all of one’s social relations, developing skill in the abstract logic of equitable arrangements, becoming sensitized to issues of social injustice, coming to embody compassion and caring for others, and developing the perceptiveness necessary for relational understanding are desirable developmental outcomes. Individuals who have developed the psychological strengths associated with fairness would strongly endorse beliefs that everyone should get her fair share and it is wrong to use people.

Leadership - Leadership as a personal quality refers to an integrated constellation of cognitive and temperament attributes that foster an orientation toward influencing and helping others, directing and motivating their actions toward collective success. Individuals with this predisposition aspire to dominant roles in relationships and social situations. They comfortably manage their own activities and the activities of others in an integrated system. Leadership is inherently a social phenomenon. However, the practice of leadership can be distinguished from leadership as a personal quality. Leadership as practice includes (a) defining, establishing, identifying, or translating a direction for collective action by one’s followers; and (b) facilitating or enabling the collective processes that lead to achieving this purpose (Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2001). Leadership as a personal quality reflecting an ability and desire to influence and motivate collective action has a long history in psychology (e.g., Bernard, 1926; Bowden, 1926).

5. **Temperance (Strengths of restraint)** - The positive traits that protect people from excess are classified as strengths of temperance.

Forgiveness and Mercy - Forgiveness represents a suite of prosocial changes that occur within an individual who has been offended or damaged by a relationship partner (McCullough, Pargament, & Thoresen, 2000). When people forgive, their basic motivations or action tendencies regarding the
transgressor become more positive (e.g., benevolent, kind, generous) and less negative (e.g., vengeful, avoidant). Forgiveness can be considered a specialized form of mercy, which is a more general concept reflecting kindness, compassion, or leniency toward (a) a transgressor, (b) someone over whom one has power or authority, or (c) someone in great distress (Gove et al., 1966). Individuals with a strong disposition to forgive don’t hold a grudge for very long. They believe that seeking revenge doesn’t help people to solve their problems. It is important for them to mend their relationships with people who have hurt or betrayed them in the past.

Humility and Modesty - In her review and critique of the existing theoretical literature, Tangney (2002) identified a number of humility’s key features:

- an accurate (not underestimated) sense of one’s abilities and achievements
- the ability to acknowledge one’s mistakes, imperfections, gaps in knowledge, and limitations (often with reference to a “higher power”)
- openness to new ideas, contradictory information, and advice
- keeping one’s abilities and accomplishments in perspective
- relatively low focus on the self or an ability to “forget the self”
- appreciation of the value of all things, as well as the many different ways that people and things can contribute to our world

In contrast, the term modesty refers primarily to the moderate estimation of one’s merits or achievements and also extends into other issues relating to propriety in dress and social behavior. Social psychological studies have often approached modesty in behavioral terms—for example, not taking full credit for success (Hareli & Weiner, 2000) or lowering estimates for one’s future success when in the presence of another (Heatherington, Burns, & Gustafson, 1998).

Prudence - Prudence is a cognitive orientation to the personal future, a form of practical reasoning and self-management that helps to achieve the individual’s long-term goals effectively. Prudent individuals show a farsighted and deliberative concern for the consequences of their actions and decisions, successfully resist impulses and other choices that satisfy shorter term goals at
the expense of longer term ones, have a flexible and moderate approach to life, and strive for balance among their goals and ends. Individuals with this strength take a foresighted stance toward their personal future, thinking and caring about it, planning for it, and holding long-term goals and aspirations. They are skilled at resisting self-defeating impulses and at persisting in beneficial activities that lack immediate appeal.

- **Self regulation** - Self-regulation refers to how a person exerts control over his or her own responses so as to pursue goals and live up to standards. These responses include thoughts, emotions, impulses, performances, and other behaviors. The standards include ideals, moral injunctions, norms, performance targets, and the expectations of other people. The term self-control is sometimes used as a synonym for self-regulation, but other writers use it more narrowly to refer specifically to controlling one’s impulses so as to behave in a moral fashion. Overriding or altering one’s responses is especially important in self regulation.

6. **Transcendence (Theological Strengths)** - The common theme running through these strengths of transcendence is that each allows individuals to forge connections to the larger universe and thereby provide meaning to their lives.

- **Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence** - Appreciation of beauty and excellence (or simply appreciation) refers to the ability to find, recognize, and take pleasure in the existence of goodness in the physical and social worlds. Peterson & Seligman presume that people whose minds and hearts are open to beauty and excellence find more joy in daily life, more ways to find meaning in their own lives, and more ways to connect deeply with other people. They propose that there are three principal types of goodness for which it is beneficial to be responsive: (a) physical beauty (primarily the beauty of the visual environment but also auditory beauty such as music); (b) skill or talent (displays of virtuosity or superhuman ability by other people); and (c) virtue or moral goodness (displays of kindness, compassion, forgiveness, or many of
the other virtues). Each of these three kinds of goodness can produce awe-related emotions in observers.

- **Gratitude** - Gratitude is a sense of thankfulness and joy in response to receiving a gift, whether the gift be a tangible benefit from a specific other or a moment of peaceful bliss evoked by natural beauty. The word gratitude is derived from the Latin gratia, meaning “grace,” “graciousness,” or “gratefulness.” All derivatives from this Latin root “have to do with kindness, generousness, gifts, the beauty of giving and receiving, or getting something for nothing,” (Pruyser, 1976). Prototypically, gratitude stems from the perception that one has benefited due to the actions of another person. There is an acknowledgment that one has received a gift and an appreciation of and recognition of the value of that gift.

- **Hope** - Hope, optimism, future-mindedness, and future orientation represent a cognitive, emotional, and motivational stance toward the future. Thinking about the future, expecting that desired events and outcomes will occur, acting in ways believed to make them more likely, and feeling confident that these will ensue given appropriate efforts sustain good cheer in the here and now and galvanize goal-directed actions. Individuals with this strength always remain hopeful about the future despite challenges. They believe that good will always triumph over evil and expect the best.

- **Humor** - Humor may be easier to recognize than to define, but among its current meanings are (a) the playful recognition, enjoyment, and/or creation of incongruity; (b) a composed and cheerful view on adversity that allows one to see its light side and thereby sustain a good mood; and (c) the ability to make others smile or laugh. Individuals with this strength would welcome the opportunity to brighten someone else’s day with laughter. They try to add some humor to whatever they do and never allow a gloomy situation to take away their sense of humor. They can usually find something to laugh or joke about even in trying situations.
Spirituality - Spirituality and religiousness refer to beliefs and practices that are grounded in the conviction that there is a transcendent (nonphysical) dimension of life. These beliefs are persuasive, pervasive, and stable. They inform the kinds of attributions that people make, the meanings they construct, and the ways they conduct relationships. Individuals who are spiritual or religious believe that life has a purpose. They believe in a higher power and look to that power for support, guidance, and strength. They pray and meditate often.

Macdonald, Bore, & Munro, (2008) extended prior findings by applying factor analysis on 24 character strengths and identified four factors i.e. Positivity (teamwork, love, hope, humor, zest, and leadership); Intellect (creativity, appreciation of beauty/excellence, curiosity, love of learning, social intelligence, perspective, and bravery); Conscientiousness (self-regulation, perseverance, judgment, honesty, and prudence); and Niceness (modesty/humility, fairness, kindness, forgiveness, religiousness, and gratitude). Another factor analysis by Peterson et al., 2008 found 5 factors: Interpersonal (humor, kindness, leadership, love, social intelligence, and teamwork); Fortitude (bravery, honesty, judgment, perseverance, perspective, and self-regulation); Cognitive (appreciation of beauty/excellence, creativity, curiosity, and love of learning); Transcendence (gratitude, hope, religiousness, and zest); and Temperance (fairness, forgiveness, modesty/humility, and prudence).

More recently, Brdar & Kashdan, (2010) concluded with 4 factors: Interpersonal, which reflects positive behavior toward others (fairness, teamwork, kindness, forgiveness, love, modesty/humility, leadership, gratitude, and appreciation of beauty/excellence); Fortitude, which reflects openness and bravery (perspective, judgment, creativity, social intelligence, bravery, and love of learning); Vitality, which reflects a global factor of positive qualities (zest, hope, curiosity, and humor); and Cautiousness, which reflects self-control (prudence, self-regulation, perseverance, religiousness, and honesty).
1.1.4 Ten Principles Emerging from the Science of Character

Niemiec and Wedding (2008) proposed the following ten principles emerging from the science of character that is presented below:

- **Character is plural** - Peterson coined this sentence that has become an adage in positive psychology. This expands one-dimensional thinking that character means only honesty or integrity. People are not simply kind and humble, brave and hopeful, or wise and fair. An individual’s character is better understood as a unique profile of strengths with varying highs and lows.

- **Character strengths are stable but can and do change** - Character strengths are part of our personality, which we know is quite stable. At the same time, our character strengths can change based on predictable life events such as starting a family, unpredictable life events such as a trauma, and deliberate changes in lifestyle.

- **Character strengths are elemental** - Mayerson (2010) has referred to character strengths as the basic building blocks of goodness in the individual. They are our true essence – the core parts of our personality that account for us being our best selves.

- **Character strengths can be measured** - It is groundbreaking science to have a tool that measures many of the positive traits found in human beings. The VIA Survey, like any measurement tool, is imperfect, yet serves as a signpost pointing to what is potentially strongest and best in individuals. The measurement is dimensional, not categorical. We do not either have a character strength such as creativity or not have it. Rather, we have degrees of creativity, fairness, zest, and so on.

- **Character strengths are expressed in degrees** - Individuals will likely express their character strengths in different ways and to a greater or lesser extent based on situation. Depending on the context, one individual might call forth his or her social intelligence and curiosity when with friends; use self-
regulation and prudence when eating; draw on teamwork and perseverance at work; and use love and kindness with family. The degree of kindness and love the person expresses may differ depending on the personality of the other family members present: the restrained mother, jovial father, warm brother, or unemotional sister. Moreover, the situation – a funeral home, an amusement park, or a public lecture – will also affect the way character strength is expressed.

Character strengths are interdependent - It is difficult to be creative without some level of curiosity, or to be kind without some amount of bravery. It is likely that in virtually any situation, individuals will express a combination of character strengths, rather than one character strength alone. In a given situation, interactions among strengths may enhance the expression of some but hinder the expression of others.

Character strengths can be developed - Character can be affected through deliberate intervention. People can learn to be more curious, more grateful, fairer, or more open-minded. The key is practice to break old habits and form new ones. For many character strengths, there are specific interventions that have an impact, such as journaling, emulating exemplars, and goal-oriented planning.

Character strengths can be overused, misused, or under-used - It is striking that character strengths can be quickly forgotten or expressed in unbalanced or harmful ways. The misuse of creativity can readily be found in email spamming; the overuse of curiosity can lead someone into a dangerous part of a city; and the under-use of fairness can lead to conflicted relationships.

Character strengths have important consequences - The outcome of expressing one’s character strengths, especially one’s signature strengths – high-ranking strengths used across settings, readily noticed by others, that feel energizing and authentic when expressed – is likely connected to many benefits, such as increased happiness.
Character strengths are universal - What a marvelous finding to remember: that these strengths can be found in the most remote cultures and lands, and are shared by people with differing beliefs, religious affiliations, and political preferences. This makes work on applying character strengths more a matter of synthesis (i.e., gathering and bridging what is best in us) than analysis (i.e., picking ourselves apart).

1.1.5 Character Strengths among Youth

The population for whom a strengths-based approach seems particularly invaluable is youth, who are at a critical development stage of making key choices about their future. An association between character strengths in youth and academic success, health promoting behavior and life satisfaction have been reported (Park & Peterson, 2006a; Ma et al, 2008; Lounsbury et al, 2009, Gillham et al, 2011) and the literature consistently advocates cultivating specific strengths in youth to meet these ends. Also, traditional virtues such as gratitude, altruism and a tendency to forgive have been attracting increased attention from scientific researchers. These types of personal strengths contribute to pro-social behavior and promote well-being which may further reduce the likelihood that youth will opt for negative identities that include violence. Infact, the emergence of these traditional virtues as predictors of well-being is one of the most robust findings in recent years of research in well-being (Proctor, Maltby & Linley, 2009).

There are several reasons that justify to study character strengths and it makes sense to include gratitude and forgiveness in the scientific pursuit of positive youth development precisely because it helps build personal resources for ensuring happiness, well-being, social integration and generativity as they are at a crucial stage in their life where social identity and belonging go hand in hand (Froh & Bono, in press). Character strengths in adolescents have been also associated with desirable outcomes such as such as delay gratification, kindness and altruism (Scales et al, 2000) and also reduction of problems like sexual risk-taking, substance use, alcohol abuse, smoking, violence (Park, 2004b). Character education provides an antidote to
youth depression, serves as a pathway to increased life satisfaction, promotes learning and creativity, enhances social cohesion, and promotes civic citizenship (Waters, 2011).

Positive behaviors started early in life can help children reap benefits for many years and the ideal place for such initiatives can be schools and colleges. Positive affect enhancing behaviors that are implemented in young age have a greater impact on the person’s life because these positive behavioral experiences provide a constantly growing experiential base for future behavioural experiences with greater self awareness and emotional intelligence (Lyubomirsky, King & Diener, 2005; White & Waters, 2014).

Hence by cultivating these strengths, begins a cycle that actually attracts healthy self esteem, a positive attitude and good things into one’s life. Psychosocial development during this period will equip individuals with intrapersonal and interpersonal resources to facilitate adaptive negotiations of the complex adult world. Therefore, working on youth’s character strengths is not a luxury but a necessity. These various notions about virtues suggest that character can be cultivated by good parenting, schooling, and socialization and that it becomes instantiated through habitual action. Character development programs should teach specific activities of strengths and encourage youth to keep using them in their daily lives (Park & Peterson, 2008a, 2009b). Continuous monitoring and journaling of progress and making a lifestyle change are critical. Identifying your personal strengths and then consciously incorporating them into daily activities will bring greater happiness and life satisfaction.

KEY CONSTRUCTS

In the present study gratitude, forgiveness and happiness are the key constructs being explored. Before probing into the review of literature it is essential to look at the conceptual framework of the key constructs to gain a better understanding of the same.
GRATITUDE

Gratitude is a virtue that is held in high esteem by virtually everyone, at all times, in all places. From the classical philosophers, to the ancient religions, all the way to the modern self-improvement industry – gratitude has been offered as a way of increasing our basic happiness and satisfaction with life. It has recently received a great deal of attention in both the scientific and popular literature on psychology, where it is viewed as a potential remedy for many of life’s hardships as well as a means to achieve peace of mind, happiness, physical health, and more fulfilling relationships (Emmons & McCullough, 2003a). Stemming from the Latin word ‘Gratia’, meaning grateful and pertaining to kindness and the beauty of giving and receiving, gratitude is the most common discrete positive affect, experienced by more than 90% of adults (Chipperfield, Perry & Weiner, 2003). This commonality extends to the understanding of gratitude where it is variously posited from the perspective of benefits provided, benefits received, a combination of these, as an emotion or disposition. Moreover, gratitude stems from the recognition of positive outcome as being generated by another, with behaviour that was intentional, holds costs for them and value for the recipient (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Thus, gratitude operates in terms of being grateful to someone, being grateful for something, being grateful to a person for something in particular or the tendency to experience gratitude as ongoing across situations (Snyder & Lopez, 2007).

Considered an important virtue for psychological and social functioning, gratitude is an emotion that instills a sense of meaning and connection to other people, communities, nature, or God (Emmons, 2004). Classical writers who focused on the good life emphasized the cultivation and expression of gratitude for the health and vitality of both citizenry and society (Haidt, 2003). Gratitude is a positive experience and comes from recognizing gifts or blessings and feeling thankful. Gratitude is also an attitude, a way of perceiving life, where individuals are attuned to the beneficial actions of others on their behalf. This attitude might be characterized as situational or chronic. Those exhibiting chronic attitude is said to possess a grateful disposition. Gratitude is also a habit that can be cultivated. Grateful thinking develops a disposition or tendency to focus on the blessings of life. Gratitude is also a coping
response to challenging and difficult circumstances. Thus, on closer inspection, gratitude has emotional, attitudinal, characterological and situational components (as cited by Worthen & Isakson 2007).

1.2.1 Conceptualization of Gratitude

Gratitude has been defined differently by different authors; each gave a different definition in their works, some of which are presented below:

According to Emmons & McCullough (2003) gratitude can be defined as a “felt sense of wonder, thankfulness, and appreciation for life. It can be expressed to others as well as to impersonal (nature) or nonhuman sources”.

Peterson & Seligman (2004) offered an expanded definition of gratitude as “a sense of thankfulness and joy in response to receiving a gift, whether the gift be a tangible benefit from a specific other or a moment of peaceful bliss evoked by natural beauty”.

Adler & Fagley (2005) defined gratitude in a broad sense and called it appreciation and so they defined appreciation as “acknowledging the value and meaning of something – an event, a person, a behaviour, an object – and feeling a positive emotional connection to it”.

Park & Peterson (2006a) defined gratitude as “being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen”.

Wood, Maltby, Stewart, & Joseph (2008) referred gratitude as cognitive and emotional reaction arising from noticing and appreciating the benefits that one has received. The sources of the perceived benefits that lead to gratitude are diverse and include (a) direct help, (b) tangible possessions, (c) positive relationships, (d) the positive in a given moment, and (e) doing well compared to others.

According to Lambert, Graham & Fincham (2009) gratitude has been conceptualized as a moral virtue, an attitude, an emotion, a habit, a personality trait, and a coping response.
Wood, Froh and Geraghty (2010) defined as a general habit of noticing and being appreciative of whatever is good in one’s life.

Algoe (2012) opined gratitude as a positive emotion experienced in “response to a benefit because the recipient has noticed a particularly responsive action on the part of the benefactor”.

Copenspire (2013) defined gratitude as “the quality of being thankful, readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.”

Recently, Nicogossian (2014) asserted that gratitude is a feeling or state of thankfulness and appreciation. It can be externally expressed to others through words, gestures and behaviors, as well as internal expressions in our mind through thoughts, positive memories and encouraging self-talk.

A common feature in the conception of Gratitude:

An attempt has been made to pull out a common theme from various conceptualizations of gratitude given by the researchers listed above. Thus, gratitude can be understood in terms of sharing a conception of recognition of benefit obtained owing to another person and the experience of being emotionally moved and also being appreciative for the good things that are present in our life.

1.2.2 Development of Gratitude

The developmental trajectory of gratitude in youth remains open to question. Klein (1957) believed that gratitude first arises in the earliest stages of infancy. She suggested that gratitude is essential for the infant to build a strong relation to the “good object” (i.e., mother) and fosters an appreciation of oneself and others. The mother’s breast is a source of love and nourishment, and the infant feels appreciation toward the mother for these resources. The more the infant experiences maternal love, the more the infant will also experience gratitude. The infant only experiences absolute enjoyment if the capacity for love is adequately developed, and this enjoyment is hypothesized to be the foundation for gratitude. Similarly, it is reported
that an early attachment experience, as conceptualized by Bowlby (1969), may be a focal point for the wellsprings of gratitude.

Gratitude seems to manifest itself differently in children and youth. As suggested by Froh, Miller & Snyder (2007) in a research paper entitled “Gratitude in children and adolescents: Development, Assessment, and School-Based Intervention” and recently by Freitas, Pieta & Tudge (2011) in research paper entitled “Beyond Politeness: The Expression of Gratitude in Childhood and Adolescents” a study of developmental trajectory of gratitude by Baumgarten-Tramer, (1938) stood out. Two questions were posed to children and adolescents from Switzerland; (a) “What is your greatest wish?” (b) What would you do for the person who granted you this wish?.” On answers to these questions, following four types of gratitude were proposed i.e.:

- **Verbal gratefulness** – Verbal gratefulness of the “thank you” kind simply reflects what the child has been taught to say without necessarily denoting a feeling of gratitude. It was particularly frequent in 15-year-olds (e.g., “I should thank him”).

- **Concrete gratefulness** - Concrete gratefulness appears when the child wants to give an object to the benefactor in return for the benefit (example, “I should give him a book, a bow, a pocket knife”). Concrete gratefulness occurs in two kinds: exchange and material. Similar to Tesser et al.’s (1968) assertion that gratitude is a positive function of the value for the gift received, the degree of exchange gratitude experienced is measured by the subjective value of the object given in return for the benefit. The child who promises a gift to the benefactor for providing the requested benefit illustrates material gratitude. This type of gratitude was most frequent with 8-year-olds and least frequent with children between 12 and 15 years of age.

- **Connective gratitude** - An attempt by the beneficiary to create a spiritual relationship with the benefactor. Example, “I would help him in case of need” characterizes this type of gratitude. Connective gratitude appears to become more frequent after age 11 (Baumgarten-Tramer, 1938). Children as young as
7 years of age, however, reported feelings of connective gratitude, even though this type of gratitude is more other-centered compared to verbal and concrete gratefulness. Thus, around age 7 children may experience both connective gratitude and gratitude as defined by others (McCullough et al., 2001; Tesser et al., 1968), because beneficiary will be motivated to act prosocially toward the benefactor (e.g., offering assistance).

Finalistic gratitude - Baumgarten-Tramer (1938) suggests finalistic gratitude is most common in 13–15 year olds due to gratitude taking a higher form in later developmental stages. Teaching children the social rules of language serves the function of helping them successfully navigate the social world (Gleason & Weintraub, 1976). Indeed, failing to say “thank you” can have socially troublesome consequences for the individual (Apt, 1974) while expressing gratitude helps individuals become socially effective communicators and build beneficial affiliations (Hess, 1970, as cited in Becker & Smenner, 1986). Saying “thank you” when someone holds the door requires only knowing the social etiquette of gratitude; it does not require knowing what it means to feel grateful. Gratitude is elicited only if the beneficiary perceives himself or herself as the intended recipient and the benefactor as intentionally bestowing the benefit (McCullough et al., 2001). Therefore, obligatory gratitude and genuine gratitude seem to serve different functions.

1.2.3 Gratitude and Religious Viewpoints

From Cicero to Buddha, many philosophers and spiritual teachers have celebrated gratitude. The world's major religions, including Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hindu, prize gratitude as a morally beneficial emotional state that encourages reciprocal kindness (Emmons & Crumpler, 2000). Pastors, priests, parents and grandparents have long extolled the virtues of gratitude. Gratitude crosses religious and cultural boundaries. It is both a theological and social virtue. Part of contemporary interest in it is scientific; it is a “prosocial” behavior that lubricates human relationships. Sacred scriptures teach gratitude, and religious prayers of thanksgiving reinforce an attitude of appreciation for what one is given. Worship with
gratitude to God is a common theme in such religions and therefore, the concept of gratitude permeates religious texts, teachings, and traditions. For this reason, it is one of the most common emotions that religions aim to provoke and maintain in followers and is regarded as a universal religious sentiment (Emmons & Kneezel, 2005).

- **Jewish** - In Judaism, gratitude is an essential part of the act of worship and a part of every aspect of a worshiper’s life. According to the Hebrew worldview, all things come from God and because of this, gratitude is extremely important to the followers of Judaism. The Hebrew Scriptures are filled with the idea of gratitude. Two examples included in the psalms are “O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever,” and “I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart” (Ps. 30:12; Ps. 9:1). The Jewish prayers also often incorporate gratitude beginning with the Shema, where the worshiper states that out of gratitude, “You shall love the Eternal, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might” (Deut. 6:5). The concluding prayer, the Alenu, also speaks of gratitude by thanking God for the particular destiny of the Jewish people. Along with these prayers, faithful worshipers recite more than one hundred blessings called berachot throughout the day (Emmons & Crumpler, 2000). In Judaism there is also a major emphasis on gratitude of acts of human kindness and goodness. Once you stop being selfish you appreciate other people and therefore appreciate when they do something nice hence you can be grateful.

- **Christianity** - Gratitude has been said to mould and shape the entire Christian life. Martin Luther referred to gratitude as “The basic Christian attitude” and today it is still referred to as “the heart of the gospel.” (Emmons & Kneezel, 2005). As each Christian believes they were created by a personal God, Christians are strongly encouraged to praise and give gratitude to their creator. Gratitude in Christianity is an acknowledgment of God’s generosity that inspires Christians to shape their own thoughts and actions around such ideals (Emmons & Crumpler, 2000). Instead of simply a sentimental feeling, Christian gratitude is regarded as a virtue that shapes not only emotions and thoughts but actions and deeds as well. According to Jonathan Edwards
(theologian), in his A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections Love, Gratitude, and thankfulness toward God are among the signs of true religion. Because of this interpretation, modern measures of religious spirituality include assessments of thankfulness and gratitude towards God. Allport (1950) suggested that mature religious intentions come from feelings of profound gratitude and Edwards (1746) claimed that the “affection” of gratitude is one of the most accurate ways of finding the presence of God in a person’s life. In a study done by Samuels and Lester (1985) it was contended that in a small sample of Catholic nuns and priests, out of 50 emotions, love and gratitude were the most experienced emotion towards God (Emmons & Crumpler, 2000).

- Islam - The Islamic book, The Quran, is filled with the idea of gratitude. Islam encourages its followers to be grateful and express thanks to God in all circumstances. Islamic teaching emphasizes the idea that those who are grateful will be rewarded with more. A traditional Islamic saying states that, “The first who will be summoned to paradise are those who have praised God in every circumstance” (Wood et al, 2007). In the Quran it is also stated in Sura 14 that those who are grateful will be given more by God. The prophet Mohammad also said, “Gratitude for the abundance you have received is the best insurance that the abundance will continue.” Many practices of the Islamic faith also encourage gratitude. The Pillar of Islam calling for daily prayer encourages believers to pray to God five times a day in order to thank him for his goodness. The pillar of fasting during the month of Ramazan is for the purpose of putting the believer in a state of gratitude (Emmons & Crumpler, 2000).

1.2.4 Theoretical Perspectives and Approaches of Gratitude

In order to explicate deeper understanding of the construct, listed below are a few theoretical perspectives:

- Evolutionary Perspective - A common view of gratitude is that it facilitates reciprocity of positive behavior, a view captured by Simmel’s (1950)
description of gratitude as “the moral memory of mankind”. Although Darwin himself suggested that nonhuman primates exhibit gratitude, Trivers (1971) appears to have offered the first evolutionary account of gratitude. In proposing a reciprocal theory of altruism, Trivers argued that gratitude was selected to regulate responses to altruistic acts. A more recent evolutionary hypothesis is that gratitude enhances the fitness of a population in which direct reciprocity already exists by facilitating ‘upstream reciprocity’ or passing on benefits to third parties (Nowak & Roch, 2006). This is adaptive as upstream reciprocators will themselves sometimes benefit from the actions of others who pass on gratitude in this way. Because of natural selection, cost-benefit ratios will stabilize, leading to higher levels of, and more efficient, altruism.

Componential Perspective - However, theorists generally agree that gratitude can be defined or conceptualized in terms of three definitional components. First, the object of gratitude is always the “other,” whether another human being, a non-human natural being (e.g., an animal), or a superhuman (e.g., God). Second, gratitude stems from the perception of a positive personal consequence (e.g., a material, emotional, or spiritual gain) of the actions of the “other,” which has not necessarily been earned or deserved. Third, gratitude involves the appraisal of the other’s actions as intentionally constructed around the goal of benefiting the person (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1985). According to Lazarus and Lazarus (1994), gratitude results from recognizing the other’s goodwill and appreciating his or her generous action as an altruistic gift.

Psychoanalytic Perspective - From a psychoanalytic perspective, Klein (1957) focused on the sources of gratitude during infants’ interactions with a primary caregiver and equated the ability to feel gratitude and the ability to love. Essentially, Klein like Bowlby (1973) proposed that pleasurable interactions with a sensitive and responsive caregiver lead to the formation of positive mental representations of others. In her view, these positive representations subdue destructive emotions, such as greed and envy, and lead infants to feel that they have received from their caregiver a unique gift that they wish to
keep, thereby laying the foundation for feeling gratitude toward any generous other. The development of gratitude, which means assimilation of a “good object” that has enriched the self, goes together with the parallel development of generosity – the wish to benefit others and share with them the gift one has received. Klein also viewed gratitude as an inner resource that helps us to withstand hardship and mental pain and to accept the tragedies of life without bitterness.

An Attributional Perspective - It has been argued that appraisal processes determine what emotion is experienced and how one responds to receiving a benefit. For example, Heider (1958) argued that gratitude only occurs when the beneficiary perceives the benefactor as intending to benefit them. In a more elaborate attributional analysis, Weiner (1985) distinguished between outcome dependent and attribution dependent emotions. Outcomes give rise to a general state of happiness when they are positive and unhappiness when they are negative. Gratitude, however, is attribution dependent and occurs only when the benefit results from an action perceived to be a freely enacted, intentional behavior, one for which the benefactor is fully responsible. In this regard, gratitude is much like forgiveness in that processes that influence responsibility are hypothesized to influence each construct.

The Moral Affect Theory of Gratitude – Gratitude can also be conceptualized as a virtue and (McCullough, Kilpatrick, Emmons & Larson (2001b) build on the work of Adam Smith who viewed gratitude as serving a prosocial function, to offer a theory of gratitude as a moral affect. They operationalized gratitude as a moral emotion because it typically results from and causes behavior that is motivated by concern for another person. They proposed that gratitude serves three moral functions. (a) It serves as a moral barometer for beneficiaries by signalling the value of the relationship with the benefactor for the gift bestowed upon them; (b) as a moral reinforcer by increasing the probability that the benefactor will bestow gifts again in the future; and (c) as a moral motive by spurring beneficiaries to respond prosocially toward the benefactor or toward other people. (Wood, Joseph & Linley, 2007). Gratitude
may also motivate prosocial behavior because it is an “empathic emotion” (Lazarus & Lazarus, 1994) that increases sensitivity and concern toward others.

- A Social-functionalist Perspective - Frederickson (2004) has argued that gratitude builds cognitive flexibility and social resources by encouraging thought of creative ways to reciprocate to reflect gratitude. In this regard, gratitude takes its place, along with other positive emotions, in her broaden and build theory that helps an individual build up resources by fostering an “upward spiral toward optimal functioning and emotional well-being.” (Frederickson, 2004). Algoe, Gable & Maisel, 2010; in developing this perspective argue that “considering the relational implications of gratitude is essential for understanding its role in social life”. They suggest that what is critical about a benefit is its perceived responsiveness to the self because this is associated with feeling understood, valued and cared for. As such, gratitude has enormous implications for relationships; it may initiate the building of a relationship as well as impact established relationships.

- The Trait Gratitude Perspective – Gratitude has been defined as both an affective trait (McCullough, Emmons & Tsang, 2002) and an affective state (McCullough et al 2001b). McCullough et al (2002) suggested four facets of the grateful disposition that may lead to distinct emotional experiences. The term facets are used to refer to the following elements of the grateful disposition because it is suspected that these elements are not distinct or independent but, rather, co-occur. The first facet of the grateful disposition can be called intensity. A dispositional grateful person who experienced a positive event is expected to feel more intensely grateful than would someone less disposed toward gratitude. A second facet can be called frequency. A dispositional grateful person might report feeling grateful many times each day, and gratitude might be elicited by even the simplest favor or act of politeness. A third facet can be called span. Gratitude span refers to the number of life circumstances for which a person feels grateful at a given time. Dispositional grateful people might be expected to feel grateful for their
families, their jobs, their health, and life itself, along with a variety of other benefits. A fourth facet can be called density, which refers to the number of persons to whom one feels grateful for a single positive outcome.

- The State Gratitude Perspective- Affective states are more accessible to conscious awareness in comparison to affective traits. Affective state comprises emotions and moods. Emotions are involuntary reactions to environmental events that subside within minutes to hours (Rosenberg, 1988). Gratitude as an emotion has been associated with the adaptive response of promoting reciprocal benevolent behaviors (McCullough et al, 2002). Moods are more stable than emotions, typically lasting from hours to days and therefore have more enduring influence on thoughts and behaviors than emotions (Rosenberg, 1988). A grateful mood is argued to create enduring positive processes such as recognizing constructive influences during times of adversity.

- Social-Cognitive Model of Trait and State Gratitude- Wood et al (2008) proposed the model where characteristic interpretive biases in appraising prosocial situations mediate the relationship between trait and state levels of gratitude. Firstly, after a person is helped, he or she makes several attributions about the nature of the aid, and the attributions naturally group together to form a benefit appraisal. Secondly, the benefit appraisals cause the experience of state gratitude. Thirdly, characteristic interpretive biases lead people higher in trait gratitude to make more positive benefit appraisals. Fourthly, more positive benefit appraisals explain why trait and state levels of gratitude are linked. The model suggests that grateful people make distinct benefit appraisals, perceiving the help they receive as more costly to the benefactor, more genuinely intended to help them (rather than ulteriorly motivated) and also more valuable to them.

- Find-Remind-and-Bind Theory of Gratitude- Algoe, Haidt & Gable (2008) Find-remind-and-bind theory suggests that gratitude helps people develop new relationships (find), build on existing relationships (remind), and maintain
both (bind). Gratitude may be the key to human cooperation as it improves satisfaction for both the recipient of appreciation and the person expressing the appreciation. Expressing thanks signals the potential for relationships paves the way for collaboration and strengthens personal relationships including work relationships, and personal friendships (Gordon et al., 2011). The theory asserts that gratitude serves to alert people to the possibility of high-quality social bonds. Gratitude helps both at the start of a new relationship and later when one is working to keep a relationship strong and beyond what it does for relationships, it improves personal happiness and overall health as well (Wood et al, 2010).

Positive Psychological Perspective - The view of gratitude as an inner resource has recently re-emerged in a more actualization-oriented approach to psychology – the “positive psychology” movement (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003; Seligman, 2002). Gratitude is increasingly understood to be more than an evolutionary adaption or method of social exchange. In psychology, gratitude has been viewed diversely as an emotion, a personality characteristic, an attitude, an ethical virtue, or an adaptive response (Emmons & McCullough, 2003a). In this approach, happiness and satisfaction with life are not consequences of luck or genetics, but rather the result of personality strengths – characteristics that may be shaped and fostered by social experiences and deliberate personal effort (Seligman, 2002). Of the three pillars, Seligman claims that the concepts from the second pillar, using one's strengths to achieve the good life is the kind that everyone is capable of; this involves first identifying one's strengths and then using them in work, love, friendship, and other important life domains. The universality of the good life is due in part to the fact that it involves the greatest amount of personal choice and is less limited by external circumstances or access to external means. Therefore, individuals from virtually any culture, age category, or social standing can apply the basic concept of using one's signature strengths within his or her lifestyle. Expressing human virtues
contributes to individual well being and happiness and well being and happiness of others.

1.2.5 Barriers to being Grateful

Potential obstacles and inhibiting factors to experiencing and expressing gratitude include a sense of entitlement, lack of self-reflection, preoccupation with materialism, and the perception that one is a passive victim (Emmons, 2004). As you contemplate enhancing your gratitude behavior, be mindful that certain behavior patterns can limit one’s capacity to be grateful. According to Kerns (2006) at least five areas of functioning can become barriers to expressing gratefulness i.e.:

First, a passive victim attitude coupled with a sense of entitlement can diminish gratitude. Quite simply, if you believe you are entitled to most things, then you will be thankful for very little.

Second, a preoccupation with materialism can sidetrack the expression of gratitude. An overemphasis on “things” tends to result in comparisons to others who may have more than you do. These comparisons can lead to resentments that diminish gratefulness.

Third, a lack of self-reflection on how truly blessed you may be, or simply taking things for granted, can present a barrier to expressing gratitude. The “three good things” and the “want what you have” strategies help you not take things for granted.

Fourth, a lack of prior deprivation may make it difficult to recognize blessings. Many have been blessed to the extent that they do not know what it is like to do without something. It seems that some people are “standing on third base” in life, thinking that they actually hit a triple, but in reality they did not do it alone others have helped them to get there.

Fifth, self-centeredness can prevent one from expressing gratitude. The self-absorbed have little energy for recognizing and appreciating others in ways that communicates gratitude.
1.2.6 Solutions to Obstacle in practicing Gratitude

According to Wahlder (2009) certain obstacles come in the way of practicing gratitude but can be overcome by working on them and so proposed solutions which are as follows:

❖ Obstacle - You don’t feel grateful.

We take a shower when we aren’t in the mood, brush our teeth, go to work, prepare dinner and even exercise. Somehow when it comes to spiritual or personal development practices, we let ourselves off the hook if we “don’t feel like it.” We may not realize that even though spiritual self-care is less tangible, it is just as important as physical self-care.

Solution - “Fake it” till you make it.

Getting your gratitude in motion (i.e. taking action) is one of the most important aspects of shifting from a negative to a positive, grateful paradigm. Choosing to “fake it”—choosing gratitude even when you are not feeling particularly grateful—is the first step to actually becoming grateful. Just as uplifting or upbeat music can lift our mood, so does a conscious choice to express gratitude elevate our state of mind.

❖ Obstacle - Lack of peer pressure.

Who will know, and frankly who will care, if you neglect to list the people and things for which you are grateful? There is no peer pressure, and little support, to encourage creating and sustaining a practice of gratitude.

Solution - Optimal self care and support.

You are the main beneficiary of having a practice of gratitude, and others will benefit from your change in attitude. Establish your own sense of personal accountability and responsibility, and if this doesn’t work, form a supportive gratitude partnership with a friend or a life coach.
Obstacle - Unaware of benefits.

Gratitude seems like a great spiritual practice and a virtuous concept in theory. However, unless you practice it consistently, the cumulative effects and benefits are not readily apparent.

Solution - Record the advantages

If you are unaware of the benefits or advantages of a new behavior, it is difficult to motivate yourself to begin it. By keeping track of the positive changes in your mood, behavior and overall sense of well-being, you will accumulate evidence of how the practice of gratitude is favorably affecting your life.

Obstacle - Practice becomes rote.

Most of us are enthusiastic when we start a new program, but gradually, the initial zeal wears off and our practice can become repetitive. Routine and boredom sets in, and perhaps we even think we have exhausted our list of gratitude's.

Solution - Introduce creative alternatives.

Keep it fresh and dynamic. Try practicing gratitude alphabetically, either aloud or in writing, beginning with “A,” express what you are grateful for that starts with the corresponding letter, continue until you have reached “Z.” You can even create a fun, interactive game with friends or family members in which you randomly call out letters and attempt to be first in naming your gratitude. Verbally tell a friend how significant her friendship is to you. Give out spontaneous tokens of appreciation. Speak your gratitude out loud in your car.

Obstacle - Sleepiness sets in.

If you practice gratitude in the evening, you may find that it lulls you to sleep. You may have good intentions, but they seem to fade as tiredness takes over.

Solution - Get grateful at various times of day

No specific time of day is better than another for gratitude. Simply making a point to be conscious of what you have to be grateful for during the day is all that matters.
Obstacle - Takes too much time.

You might be thinking that you don’t have time to add one more thing to your already hectic life.

Solution - Keep it brief.

Expressing gratitude can be as short as ten seconds. If your only two words are, “Thank you,” that would be enough. And, if you feel inspired, you can add specifics: such as, “Thank you for my life, my ability to breath, walk, talk, love.” Just be sincere, not necessarily lengthy.

1.2.7 Benefits of Cultivating Gratitude

Thousands of years of literature talk about the benefits of cultivating character strengths as a virtue (Emmons, 2007). Emmons, 2004 proposed several variables that may promote the experience and expression of gratitude such as optimism, empathy, humility, perspective taking, and having a spiritual orientation. The following benefits are proposed by Lyubomirsky, 2008 in her book, “The How of Happiness: A Scientific Approach to Getting the Life you want”.

- Gratitude promotes savoring positive life experiences - First, grateful thinking promotes the savoring of positive life experiences. It magnifies positive emotions. In effect, gratitude allows us to participate more in life. We notice the positives more, and that magnifies the pleasures you get from life. Instead of adapting to goodness, we celebrate goodness. By relishing and taking pleasure in some of the gifts of your life, you will be able to extract the maximum possible satisfaction and enjoyment from your current circumstances.

- Gratitude may increase a sense of confidence and self worth, by encouraging you to consider what you value about your current life - Second, expressing gratitude bolsters self-worth and self-esteem. When you realize how much people have done for you or how much you have accomplished, you feel more confident and efficacious. Unfortunately, for many people, it comes more naturally to focus on failures and disappointments or on other people’s slights and hurts. Gratefulness can help you unlearn this habit. Instead of
automatically thinking, “Woe is me,” in response to any setback, the practice of gratitude encourages you instead to consider what you value about your current life or how you are thankful that things aren’t worse.

- Gratitude helps you cope with difficulties - Third, gratitude helps people cope with stress and trauma. That is, the ability to appreciate your life circumstances may be an adaptive coping method by which you positively reinterpret stressful or negative life experiences (Fredrickson, Tugade, Waugh & Larkin, 2003). Indeed, traumatic memories are less likely to surface – and are less intense when they do – in those who are regularly grateful (Watkins, Grimm, and Kolts, 2004). Interestingly, people instinctively express gratitude when confronted with adversity. For example, in the days immediately after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, gratitude was found to be the second most commonly experienced emotion (after sympathy) (Fredrickson, Tugade, Waugh & Larkin, 2003).

- Gratitude encourages kindness and other moral behavior - Fourth, the expression of gratitude encourages moral behavior. As mentioned earlier, grateful people are more likely to help others (e.g., you become aware of kind and caring acts and feel compelled to reciprocate) and less likely to be materialistic (e.g., you appreciate what you have and become less fixated on acquiring more stuff). To wit, an Auschwitz survivor was once described this way: “His life was rooted in gratitude. He was generous, because the memory of having nothing was never far from his mind.” (Casey, 2006). In one study, people induced to be grateful for a specific kind act were more likely to be helpful toward their benefactor, as well as toward a stranger, even when the helping involved doing an unpleasant, tedious chore (Bartlett and DeSteno, 2006).

- Gratitude helps strengthen relationships - Fifth, gratitude can help build social bonds, strengthening existing relationships and nurturing new ones (McCullough et al. 2001). Keeping a gratitude journal, for example, can produce feelings of greater connectedness with others. Several studies have shown that people who feel gratitude toward particular individuals (even when
they never directly express it) experience closer and “higher-quality” relationships with them, (Algoe, Haidt, Gable, and Strachman, 2007). As Emmons suggests, when you become truly aware of the value of your friends and family members, you are likely to treat them better, perhaps producing an “upward spiral,” a sort of positive feedback loop, in which strong relationships give you something to be grateful for, and in turn fortifying those very same relationships. In addition, a grateful person is a more positive person, and positive people are better liked by others and more likely to win friends. (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005).

Gratitude inhibits envy - Sixth, Gratitude blocks toxic, negative emotions, such as envy, resentment, regret - emotions that can destroy our happiness. You cannot feel envious and grateful at the same time. There’s even recent evidence, Wood et al (2008) found that gratitude can reduce the frequency and duration of episodes of depression. Expressing gratitude tends to inhibit invidious comparisons with others. If you are genuinely thankful and appreciative for what you have (e.g., family, health, home), you are less likely to feel envy.

Gratitude helps undermine negative emotions - Seventh, the practice of gratitude is incompatible with negative emotions and may actually diminish or deter such feelings as anger, bitterness, and greed (McCullough, Emmons, and Tsang, 2002). As an eminent psychiatrist Roger Walsh argued, “gratitude dissolves negative feelings: anger and jealousy melt in its embrace, fear and defensiveness shrink. Indeed, it’s hard to feel guilty or resentful or infuriated when you’re feeling grateful.

Gratitude keeps us from taking the good things for granted – Eighth, gratitude helps us thwart hedonic adaptation. Hedonic adaptation is illustrated by our capacity to adjust rapidly to any new circumstance or event. This is extremely adaptive when the new event is unpleasant, but not when a new event is positive. So, when you gain something good in your life – a romantic partner, a genial officemate, recovery from illness, a brand-new car – there is an immediate boost in happiness and contentment. Unfortunately, because of
hedonic adaptation, that boost is usually short-lived. Adaptation to all things positive is essentially the enemy of happiness, and one of the keys to becoming happier lies in combating its effects, which gratitude does quite nicely. By preventing people from taking the good things in their lives for granted – from adapting to their positive life circumstances – the practice of gratitude can directly counteract the effects of hedonic adaptation.

Grateful people have stronger physical, psychological and social benefits - Last but not the least, listed below are few physical, psychological and social benefits of gratitude:

Physical benefits:
- Stronger immune systems
- Less bothered by aches and pains
- Lower blood pressure
- Sleep longer and feel more refreshed upon waking

Psychological benefits:
- Higher levels of positive emotions
- More alert, alive, and awake
- More joy and pleasure
- More optimism and happiness

Social benefits:
- More helpful, generous, and compassionate
- More forgiving
- More outgoing
- Feel less lonely and isolated.

1.2.8 Gratitude and Happiness

Gratitude has been shown to have positive associations with well-being, positive affect and emotions, happiness, trust, altruism, life satisfaction, forgiveness, vitality, spirituality, optimism and positive beliefs and negative associations with
emotional distress and negative affective states such as hostility, anger, aggression, depression, anxiety, stress and vulnerability (Thompson et al. 2005 and Friedman, 2005). Gratitude can be considered a meta-strategy for happiness, since it has been established that grateful people are more optimistic, experience more positive affect and are more kind and show more empathy for others. (Emmons & Shelton, 2002). Park, Peterson & Seligman (2004) found that not only is effect of gratitude related to life satisfaction, but the strength of this relationship is surpassed by only two of other 24 personality traits which they measured: optimism and zest. This “suggests that gratitude can explain more variance in life satisfaction than such traits as love, forgiveness, social intelligence, and humor” (Wood, Joseph, & Linley, 2007). It is suggested that cultivating gratitude prompts ‘positive affect’ and ‘perspective’ and all the benefits derived from an increase in happiness.

Figure 4
Relationships (+/-) between gratitude and negative affective states and well-being

Source: Friedman & Toussaint (2011)
Gratitude has been associated with happiness at both personal and interpersonal level from two important perspectives. In its natural form, as a global personality disposition, for eg: people that are grateful on general as an appreciation of life (Lyubomirsky, 2008; McCullough et al, 2001). Experimentally inducted, both directly telling someone that you feel grateful with a letter or in person and indirectly by writing a diary of things that you are thankful for (Hayland, Whalley & Geraghty, 2007; Seligman, Steen, Park & Peterson, 2005).

1.2.9 Research Based Exercises for Promoting Gratitude among Youth

Happiness can be augmented through cultivating and developing character strengths like optimism, hope, gratitude, forgiveness etc. Those who have thought about the inculcation of good habits, from Aristotle to the present, agree that doing so requires both theory and practice (Peterson, 2006). Deliberate interventions can encourage lasting happiness. The database of knowledge as to what makes us happy, and happier, continues to expand. The exercises are based on behavioural, cognitive and volitional activities. Many positive psychology studies have implemented and tested specific interventions. This present study seeks to address the question of whether it is possible to teach youth to be happier through a combination of education and the practice of multiple exercises and activities.

Different types of exercises to throw light on how to develop gratitude reactions in daily life.

❖ *Exercise 1: Following Four-Step Approach*

- Experiencing and expressing gratitude does not come naturally; it is a learned process and sometimes an effortful one and it requires a certain level of inner reflection and introspection.
- It is a four-step, cognitive–behavioral approach for cultivating gratitude:
  - Identify non-grateful thoughts,
  - Formulate gratitude-supporting thoughts,
  - Substitute the gratitude-supporting thoughts for the non-grateful thoughts, and
Translate the inner feeling of gratitude created by these thoughts into outward action.

Method: Self report technique, group discussion and feedback.

Exercise 2: Writing a Letter: Expressing “Thanks”

Write to someone who has positively influenced your life. Describe the impact this person has made on your life and explain what this person’s contributions have meant to you.

- You should not express gratitude by just saying “thanks” rather it should be more descriptive and specific. For example, I appreciate your prudence advice, leaving a note on your roommate’s table thanking for cleaning the room.

- After composing the letter, invite the person to your home, or travel to that person’s home. Bring a laminated version of your letter with you as a gift, or a greeting card expressing thanks.

- Take a moment to think about each of the following questions:
  - How did you feel as you wrote your letter?
  - How did the other person react to your expression of gratitude? And how were you affected by their reaction?
  - Would you like to express your gratitude to someone else in a similar manner? Who?

Method: Task assignment, group discussions, feedback.

Exercise 3: Counting Blessings Versus Burdens

There are many things in our lives, both large and small, that we might be grateful about. Counting your blessings means thinking about the time in a day when you were at your best and that was very satisfying to you. Example
might be- “to God for giving me determination”, “for wonderful parents”, “to the Lord for just another day”.

- Burdens are things that annoy or bother you which occur in various domains of life. Also write down the burdens present in your life such as “doing a favour for friend who didn’t appreciate it”, “finances depleting quickly”.

- Start comparing blessings with burdens, you will realize that blessings are many but misfortunes are some. Therefore one should be grateful for the blessings present in our life. Create a habit of becoming aware and paying attention to gratitude-inspiring events.

- Every night before going to bed, think about three good things that went well that day.

- Write down the three things that went well (it is important that you have a physical record of what you wrote).

- Then write down why each thing went well.

Method: Narration method, self reporting thoughts and expressions, group discussion, feedback.

Exercise 4: Practice Downward Comparisons

- It means about thinking how things could be worse, or are worse for someone else. You can also use downward comparison by remembering your own times of adversity.

- Example might be- you met with an accident and when you picked up yourself, you were very grateful to have only a deep bruise on your thigh, no broken bones. It will take a while for the bruise to go away with the thought of having so many working parts.
• Thank each and every one of your organs for serving you so wonderfully for so long. Thank your heart for beating 70 times per minute without interruption since you were born. Thank your brain for serving you and your body without your having to tell it what to do. Thank your eyes for showing you the beauty of life in all its colour and magic.

Method: Recall, visualization and group discussion.

1.3 FORGIVENESS

The concept of forgiveness has existed for millennia. It is upheld as a virtue in nearly every major world religion and has been discussed and written about in literary works from the Bible to Greek philosophy to classic Western literature (Macaskill, 2005; McCullough & Worthington, 1999). The term ‘forgive’ derives from ‘give’ or to ‘grant’, as in ‘to give up,’ or ‘cease to harbor (resentment, wrath).’ Human beings appear to have an innate proclivity to reciprocate negative interpersonal behavior with more negative behavior. When insulted by a friend, forsaken by a lover, or attacked by an enemy, most people are motivated at some level to avoid or to seek revenge against the transgressor. Although both of these two post transgression motivations can be destructive, revenge is usually the more potent and almost always the most glamorous of the two (McCullough and Witvliet, 2002). A variety of potential solutions have been devised to the corrosive effects of interpersonal conflicts in everyday life. One mechanism that can interrupt the cyclic nature of avoidance and vengeance is ‘forgiveness’, an approach whereby people can move beyond a desire for revenge and reinstitute social ties (Fincham, 2000). Forgiveness is the most important single process through which people seek to overcome social conflict and aggression in more positive ways. It is a proven prescription for happiness (Luskin, 2001).

Forgiveness is a pervasive phenomenon, transcending across time, cultures, and even species. It may take place in context either of serious and personal hurts or of the slight but annoying hurts of everyday life (Enright and Fitzgibbons, 2000). The hurts experienced by the offended may be physical, psychological or moral or a
combination of any or all of them. Sadly, the disastrous consequences of lack of forgiveness can wreak on individual lives as anger and desire for revenge go unchecked and may contribute to the path of violence and crime. However forgiveness is usually the most productive choice and helps to heal a broken relationship and contribute to overall happiness and well being (Karremans, Van Lange, Ouwerkerkm & Kluwer, 2003). It is in both individual interest and the interest of society as a whole to practice forgiveness as it is an important and desired transaction for psychological, physical and relational health (Lawler-Row et al 2008). Importance of forgiveness is so much so that, in Australia, a “National Sorry Day” has been created to foster forgiveness among Australian Aborigines following British colonization (Heale, 2008).

1.3.1 Conceptualization of Forgiveness

There have been many definitions of forgiveness proposed over the decades through common use and research enquiry, some of which are presented below:

According to North (1987), “Forgiveness is the overcoming of negative affect and judgment towards the offender, not by denying ourselves the right to such affect and judgment, but by endeavoring to view the offender with compassion, benevolence and love while recognizing the he/she has abandoned the right to them”.

McCullough et al (1997) described forgiving as ‘complex’ of motivational changes that occurs in the aftermath of a significant interpersonal offense. When offended people forgive, his or her basic motivations to (a) seek revenge and (b) avoid contact with offender are lessened and other relationships and constructive motivations (such as the motivation to resume a positive relationship) are restored.

Enright et al (1998) defined forgiveness as “a willingness to abandon one’s right to resentment, negative judgment, and indifferent behavior toward on who unjustly hurt us, while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity and even love toward him or her”.

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Steven (1999) defined forgiveness as ‘letting go of my right to hurt another person for hurting me’.

According to Rye & Pargament (2002) forgiveness is defined as “letting go of negative emotions (hostility), negative thoughts (thoughts of revenge) and negative behaviours (verbal aggression) in response to the considerable injustice suffered, and getting ready to be merciful towards the guilty person”.

Yamhure, Thompson & Snyder (2003) defined forgiveness as the “framing of a perceived transgression such that one’s attachment to the transgressor, transgression and sequel of the transgression is transformed from negative to neutral or positive”.

Fincham & Kashdan (2004) defined forgiveness in terms of its potential ability to offset the debilitating effects of anger and hostility associated with a desire to avenge the hurtful act of another.

According to Wade, Worthington & Meyer (2005) Forgiveness has been conceptualized as a person’s progression, moving from a position of hatred, resentment and bitterness to one of diminishment of anger and desire for revenge toward the perceived wrongdoer.

Cosgrove & Konstam (2008) conceptualized forgiveness which includes benevolence and that it goes beyond the cessation of negative affect, judgment and behavior toward and the presence of positive affect, judgment and behavior toward the wrongdoer such as compassion, mercy, empathy and perhaps love.

Recine, Werner & Recine (2009) opined a consensus definition of forgiveness which is comprised of the following three elements- Forgiveness is a process that takes time, it involves letting go of a negative response following an offense and through forgiveness, a positive response towards the offender emerges.

Reid (2014) defined forgiveness as a deliberate and conscious decision to release feelings of resentment or anger towards a person or group of people who have caused harm.
However, most theorists and researchers do have a consensus on ‘what forgiveness is not’. According to Enright and Coyle (1998), forgiveness should be differentiated from ‘pardoning’ (which is a legal term), ‘condoning’ (which implies a justification of the offense), ‘excusing’ (which implies that the offender had a good reason for committing the offense), ‘forgetting’ (which implies that the memory of the offense has simply decayed or slipped out of conscious awareness), and ‘denying’ which implies simply an unwillingness to perceive the harmful injuries that one has incurred) and ‘reconciliation’ which implies the restoration of relationship.

A common feature in the conception of Forgiveness:

In spite of many differences among definitions of forgiveness that various researchers have proposed, an attempt has been made to build one core common feature of forgiveness i.e. *When people forgive, their response towards other people who have injured them in terms of what they think of, feel about, want to do to, or actually do to become more positive and less negative and that those responses even may become prosocial over time.*

1.3.2 Forgiveness and Religious Viewpoints

Forgiveness has been encouraged for thousands of years by major world religions. Adherents of these religious have claimed that forgiveness yields numerous emotional and spiritual benefits, and can dramatically transform one’s life. Following are the perspectives on forgiveness espoused by various religions as given by Rye et al. (2001).

- Judaism - The most common Hebrew words for ‘forgiveness’ in classical Jewish texts are ‘Mehillah’ which denotes the wiping away of a transgression and ‘Selihah’ that denotes reconciliation. Since the ‘Day of Atonement’ is the holiest day of the Jewish liturgical year, forgiveness is clearly a central theme in Judaism. Since God’s forgiveness on us on that day can only occur if we have been forgiven by those we have offended, it is not only God’s forgiveness that occupies this central place in Judaism, but also human forgiveness. Therefore, the ultimate theological basis for forgiveness is that
God themselves is forgiving, and so we in imitation of God must be so as well. In general, it insists that transgressors earn forgiveness by going through the process of return, which involves acknowledgement that one has done something wrong, public confession of one’s wrongdoing and announcing not to sin this way again.

- **Buddhism** - In Buddhism, forgiveness is seen as a practice to prevent harmful thoughts from causing havoc on one’s mental well being. In Sinhala language used by Buddhists in Sri Lanka, translations for ‘forgive’ are ‘forgiveness’ are ‘Samavenava’ and ‘anukampa dakvenava’ for the former, and ‘ksamava’ and ‘dayava’ for the latter. Literal translations of each of these terms reveal that together they may approximate the notion of ‘forgiveness’, but individually they do not. Sama venava and its cognate, ksamava, can both be translated as forbearance, a concept that is more inclusive than forgiveness. The Buddhist notion of forbearance both enduring an action done against one and the renouncing of anger or resentment toward someone who has offended you. Anukapa and dayava can be translated as compassion or pity, virtues that more one not to react against someone who deserves punishment because of their own actions. It also emphasizes on the concepts of mett (loving kindness), karuna (compassion), mudita (sympathetic joy) and upekkh (equanimity) as a means of avoiding resentments in the first place.

- **Jainism** - In Jainism, forgiveness is one of the main virtues that need to be cultivated by the Jains. Kamāpanā or supreme forgiveness forms part of one of the ten characteristics of dharma. In the Jain prayer, (pratikramana) Jains repeatedly seek forgiveness from various creatures—even from ekindriyas or single sensed beings like plants and microorganisms that they may have harmed while eating and doing routine activities. Forgiveness is asked by uttering the phrase, Micchāmi dukkaa. Micchāmi dukkaa is a Prakrit language phrase literally meaning "may all the evil that has been done be fruitless. During samvatsari—the last day of Jain festival paryusana—Jains utter the phrase Micchami Dukkadam after pratikraman. As a matter of ritual, they personally greet their friends and relatives seeking their forgiveness. By
practicing prāyacitta (repentance), a soul gets rid of sins, and commits no transgressions; he who correctly practices prāya citta gains the road and the reward of the road, he wins the reward of good conduct. By begging forgiveness he obtains happiness of mind; thereby he acquires a kind disposition towards all kinds of living beings; by this kind disposition he obtains purity of character and freedom from fear. (Māhavīra in Uttarādhyayana Sūtra 29:17–18)

Islam - The theological basis of forgiveness is in the Qur’ān and Hadith. Qur’ān is the word of God revealed to Prophet Muhammad and is in Arabic. The concept of forgiveness in the Qur’ān is expressed in three terms: (1) ‘afw’ used 35 times, which means to pardon, to ensure for a fault, wavier of punishment; (2) ‘safhu’ used 8 times, which means to turn away from a sin or a misdeed, ignore etc; (3) ‘ghafara’ used 234 times that means to cover, to forgive and to remit. To receive forgiveness from God there are three requirements: 1) Recognizing the offense itself and its admission before God. 2) Making a commitment not to repeat the offense. 3) Asking for forgiveness from God. If the offense was committed against another human being, or against society, a fourth condition is added: 1) Recognizing the offense before those against whom offense was committed and before God. 2) Committing oneself not to repeat the offense. 3) Doing whatever needs to be done to rectify the offense (within reason) and asking pardon of the offended party. 4) Asking for forgiveness from God.

Christianity - Forgiveness is at the religious, theological and ethical core of the Christian tradition. In the New Testament, Jesus speaks of the importance of Christians forgiving or showing mercy towards others. The Parable of the Prodigal Son is perhaps the best known instance of such teaching and practice of forgiveness. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus repeatedly spoke of forgiveness, “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.” Matthew 5:7 (NIV) “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come
“And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.” Mark 11:25 (NIV).

- Sikhism - The concept of forgiveness is also highlighted in Sikhism. Virtue of forgiveness is imbibed in the teachings of all Gurus. Guru Angad Devji (2nd Guru), said that ‘Sikhism is to forgive the corrupt and reform, the ideal of Sikhism is to pardon the sinner’. Many stories in the history of the Sikhs demonstrates the practice of forgiveness, for instance, guru Hargobind Ji (6th Guru of the Sikhs), forgave Jahangir for the sinful act of assassination of his father (Guru Arjan Dev Ji). Similarly, Guru Nanak Dev Ji (1st Guru of the Sikhs), has stated in the Guru Granth Sahib (Holy book of the Sikhs, Pg 223), that forgiveness is a virtuous act and to practice forgiveness is a good conduct that makes one content and by practicing it disease (ego) gets eradicated and the pain of death ends. He further stated in his teaching that forgiveness is love at its highest power (Narang, 1960).

- Hinduism - Forgiveness has been enumerated as a great virtue in Indian tradition. Forgiveness along with compassion and forbearance are also key components of the concept of dharma or righteousness (Rye et al., 2000). Also, through Karma (law of cause and effect), individuals face consequences of their actions in subsequent reincarnations. Therefore, according to Hindu tradition, one can presume that lack of forgiveness, negative feelings and unresolved anger can spill over into future births (Rye et al., 2001). ‘Ksama’ or “Ksamata’ is the word most commonly used to signify ‘forgiveness’. This is usually combined with words for mercy such as kripa, daya or compassion, karuna (Rye et al., 2001). It has also been quoted as an important virtue of Lord Krishna by Veda is Maha Bhagwad Purana, where he defined forgiveness as “Krodhapraptau citta Samyamanam”, which means controlling oneself even at the time of anger. The importance of forgiveness has been elaborated in various commentaries, in one of the most important Hindu Scriptures-Shrimad Bhagwad Gita.
1.3.3 Types of Forgiveness

Different set of researchers have categorized forgiveness into different types, sum of which are presented below:

According to Thompson & Snyder (2003) forgiveness is of three types i.e.:

- **Forgiveness of Self-** It may be defined as a willingness to abandon self-resentment in the face of one’s own acknowledged objective wrong, while fostering compassion, generosity, and love towards oneself. Self-forgiveness and reconciliation with self are always linked. One does not offer only an affective or cognitive response to oneself, but truly cares for oneself as a member of the human community. In this self-reconciliation, the person acknowledges that the self will give a genuine effort to change in the future (Enright et al., 1996).

- **Forgiveness of Others-** It builds on the core of empathy and involves cognitive, emotional, and possibly behavioral responses (McCullough et al., 1997). It is important to note that forgiveness still allows for holding the offender responsible for other transgression, and does not involve denying, ignoring, minimizing, tolerating, condoning, excusing, or forgetting the offense (Enright and Coyle, 1998). Theorists emphasize that it involves letting go of the negative feelings and adopting a merciful of goodwill toward the offender (Thoresen et al., 1998). This may free the wounded person from a prison of hurt and vengeful emotion, yielding both emotional and physical benefits, including reduced stress, less negative emotion, fewer cardiovascular problems, and improved immune system performance (Worthington, 1998).

- **Situational Forgiveness –** It is as being when source of a transgression is viewed as being beyond anyone’s control. Examples could include illness, natural disasters, acts of fate, and so on, where it is not possible to identify a specific individual as the target of blame. Victims may be blaming fate in causing them to be unlucky, or God, nature, the political system, general human stupidity, or the like.
Worthington and Scherer (2004) also proposed a different typology. They gave two types of Forgiveness i.e. Decisional and Emotional.

- **Decisional forgiveness** - It is a behavioral intention statement that one will seek to behave toward the transgressor like one did prior to a transgression. However, in some cases, decisional forgiveness could trigger emotional forgiveness. Granting decisional forgiveness might change negative motivations but not change negative emotions. Some people grant forgiveness and sincerely never intend to seek revenge or avoid the offended, yet they remain bitter, resentful, hostel, hateful, angry, and fearful towards the offender. The second type of forgiveness is called emotional forgiveness. (Worthington et al., 2001), defined forgiveness as rooted in emotions which affect motivations.

- The second type of forgiveness is called emotional forgiveness. (Worthington et al., 2001), which is rooted in emotions which affect motivations. Emotional forgiveness is defined as the emotional juxtaposition of positive other oriented emotions such as empathy, sympathy, compassion altruistic love, or romantic love over the negative emotions of unforgiveness (Worthington and Wade, 1999).

### 1.3.4 Theoretical Perspectives and Models of Forgiveness

Various theoretical orientations are pinpointed below that examine factors or conditions associated with forgiveness; specific models of forgiveness have also been proposed, some were developed for interventions to promote forgiveness as well.

- **Determinants of Forgiveness** - Mc Cullough et al. (1998) proposed the following four sets of determinants which can offer forgiveness. According to the degree of proximity and immediacy, these determinants promoted and inhibited forgiveness. (a)More-proximal determinants (socio-cognitive variables), forgiveness can take place if victim acknowledges attributive processes i.e. explained the offensive event by attributing it to specific causes or responsibilities (Girard & Mullet, 1997); and can hinder forgiveness if the
same event is explained by attributing it to specific faults and deep harm severity caused by the offender. Empathy is an important component in forgiveness i.e. being able to put in offender’s place and have benevolent feelings towards him/her in comparison to people who can’t forgive as they ruminated over issues i.e. brooding and obsessively repeatedly thinking over what happened (Caprara, 1986; Collins & Bell, 1997 Greenberg, 1995); (b) Moderately- proximal determinants, victims grants forgiveness as they consider the offence not that serious enough and that the offender shows sorry or offers sincere apology to the victim (Girard & Mullet, 1997). On the other hand, forgiveness is tough if the offensive act accounted to deep bruised feelings and that the offender didn’t show any regret for his/her behaviour. (c) Moderately-distal determinants (interpersonal) i.e. close, commitment and satisfaction with their relationships and share strong intimacy, motivates to forgive (Nelson, 1993; Rackley, 1993) (d) Lastly, most proximal determinants explain ethical principles, religious beliefs, attitudes towards revenge, submissiveness and way of reacting to anger. It can be believed that the above stated determinants along with these personal characteristics influence granting of forgiveness.

Affective, Cognitive and Behavioral Perspective - Forgiveness involves three levels of functioning, namely, affective, cognitive and behavioral levels (Zechmeister and Romero, 2002). On an affective level, negative feelings like anger, hatred, resentment and sadness are given up. Although this may unfold slowly, it is eventually accomplished. Positive Affect such as compassion eventually replaces the neutral emotions. On a cognitive level, the offended person stops entertaining condemning judgments’ and plan of revenge. These are substituted by positive thoughts towards the offender. These could assume the form of wishing the offender well (Smedes, 1984) and viewing the offender respectfully as moral being. At the behavioral level, one does not act out of revenge. This is replaced by willingness to join in a “loving community” with the offender and perhaps even making overtures in that direction (Ansburger, 1981). For example, in forgiving, an individual may
recognize situational determinants that caused an offender’s actions (cognitive), feel sympathetic or compassionately towards the offender (affective) and discuss possible solutions to problems or help the offender (behavior).

▸ Interpersonal Perspective - Forgiveness is important for the evolution and maintenance of social relationships that are important to human survival. According to McCullough, Fincham & Tsang 2003, there are three things that activate the forgiveness instinct:

- Safety: People are naturally inclined to forgive people who they trust will not hurt them again.

- Expected Value: When relationships look like they have long term value and we can see benefit of restoring relationships, then we are more likely to forgive.

- Compassion or Careworthiness: We tend to easily forgive those with whom we feel close or feel empathy.

▸ The Tripartite Typology of Forgiveness - Fehr, Gelfand & Nag (2010) explains through their typology the reasons that make forgiveness tough for victims offenders. The theoretical underpinnings put forward (a) mitigating cognitions (what happened?) which focuses on victims attitudes and thoughts surrounding an offender and offense. Underlining this factor is a sense-making process whereby victim keeps a track of concepts like intent, responsibility and severity and even utilizes these cues to interpret the nature of the offense and how their offenders should be viewed and treated (Weick, 1995). It seems forgiveness is examined through theoretical lens of attribution theory (Weiner, 1995) which focuses on the constructs of responsibility i.e. attributing degree of responsibility to one’s transgressor for his/her behaviour and intent i.e. emphasizing on goal directed purpose of the transgressor and harm severity i.e. clear negative effect; facilitating negative impressions of the offender such that he/she is viewed as unworthy of forgiveness (McCullough, Fincham &
Tsang, 2003). (b) The affective theory of forgiveness describes moods and emotional experiences that one feels in terms of (how do I feel?). Consistent with the mood-as-input model (Martin et al, 1993), unforgiveness is the result of a negative mood where victim feels displeasure, distressed and lethargic. Victims may also be constraint by the question (what if I don’t forgive?). In this context, interdependence theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978) and accommodation theory (Rusbult, Verette, Whitney & Lipkus, 1991) suggests that forgiveness can be quiet hard as they might not share (c) embeddedness in relationships i.e. commitment and closeness with the offender, as it is only closeness which enhances victim’s motivation for relationship preservation and foster long-term relationships.

Schmidt's Model of Forgiveness - Schmidt's model (1995) is based on her vast years of experience as a facilitator of survivor/victim-offender mediation programs. Below is a description of her version of how the offended party's journey towards forgiving unfolds i.e.:

Stage 1 – Denial: Denial is often the first stage in healing the journey for offended individuals. The level of violation will influence how this denial is expressed (Schmidt, 1995). The offended individual may say, "This is not really happening" or "I must have done something wrong to cause this".

Stage 2 – Hurting: The offended individual may experience the next stage called hurting. During this stage the injured party has acknowledged that a violation has occurred, feels emotional pain and is mainly interested in finding the release from the pain. The survivor/victim may, for instance, readily agree to meet the offender hoping that this will take the pain away. If the offender apologizes, he/she may be granted forgiveness prematurely. At this stage offended parties are often unable to articulate what they need from offenders to continue their healing journey.

Stage 3 – Anger: The hurting phase is followed by anger directed at the offender and the offence. Here the offended parties are less likely to participate in any survivor/victim and offender mediation programs because they are still angry about the perceived injustice. They may feel that the offender should be punished to the full
extent of the law. It is not unusual at this point for the transgressed party to vilify the offender defining them only by the action that caused pain. If the offended party is granted forgiveness before reaching this stage, this forgiveness may well be retracted (Schmidt, 1995).

Stage 4 – Understanding: Once through the anger stage, the offended party can move towards understanding. It is here that injured persons can experience healing, in that the violation no longer controls them. The offended parties often ask for three things during this phase of their healing. First, they want to know why the event (offence) happened. They ask the offender questions in order to understand not only the event but also the circumstances that made it possible. Secondly, they want some form of compensation, which may include a sincere apology or some sort of remuneration. Thirdly, they want assurance that the event will not be repeated. This is important for their peace of mind. The understanding stage is an ideal time for offended parties to enter into a third party process (Schmidt, 1995). They are often able to articulate what they need in a constructive manner.

Stage 5 – Possible Reconciliation: At the understanding stage there is also the potential for movement towards reconciliation. Reconciliation occurs when the relationship between the offended party and the offender is restored (Witvliet et al., 2001). Healing, however, does not depend on the reconciliation of the two parties, it can occur even if the two parties do not reconcile.

- The Pyramid Model of Forgiveness - Majority of forgiveness interventions follow process-based models which allows for gradual stage like progress towards the decision to forgive. Worthington (1998; 2003) developed a pyramid model of forgiveness in which empathy, humility and commitment to forgive play central roles. Empathy regarding the transgressor’s situation places the hurt into the broader context of all the factors influencing the transgressor’s behavior whereas humility reminds the victim of his or her own shortcomings and the times he or she has needed forgiveness. Accordingly, forgiveness is seen as ‘the natural response to empathy and humility” (Worthington, 1998). But forgiveness is not easy and thus the need to commit to forgiveness. The pyramid model appears to take its name from an
intervention to which it gives rise and is described by the acronym REACH where each letter corresponds to succeeding layers of a pyramid.

A key feature of the forgiveness process is empathy. At the base of the pyramid is recalling the hurt (R). The forgiver recalls the offense in a supportive environment. The next layer is empathy through various exercises (E) or seeing things from the other’s perspective, followed by the altruistic gift of forgiveness to the offender, recognizing that, in the past, one has hurt others (A). The next layer concerns committing publicly to forgive (C) and finally, at the apex, hold on to forgiveness (H).

Enright’s 20-Step Process Model of Forgiveness - Based on this socio-cognitive view of forgiveness, this model was developed by Enright and Coyle, 1998.

**Figure 5**

Forgiveness Process Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uncovering phase</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Examination of psychological defense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Confrontation of anger.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Admittance of shame, when it is appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Awareness of catharsis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Awareness of cognitive rehearsal of the offense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Insight that the injured party may be comparing themselves with the injurer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Realization that one may be permanently and adversely changed by the Injury.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Insight into a possibly altered “just world” view.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision Phase</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. A change a heart/conversion/new insights that old resolution strategies are not working.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Willingness to consider forgiveness an option.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Commitment to forgive the offender.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work phase</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Reframing through role taking of who the wrongdoer is by viewing him or her in context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Empathy and compassion towards the offender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Giving a moral gift to the offender.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deepening Phase</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16. Finding meaning for oneself one others in the suffering and the forgiveness process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Realization that one has needed other’s forgiveness in the past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Insight that one is not alone (university, support).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Realization that one may have a new purpose in life because of the injury.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Awareness of decreased negative affect and perhaps increased positive affect, if this begins to emerge, toward the injurer; awareness of internal, emotional release.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It consists of four phases and 20 units, incorporating the cognitive, behavioral and emotional aspects of the forgiveness process. Enright et al. (1996) observed that as the injured person gives up justified resentment and the right to retaliate and instead offers the offender the gift of mercy, the injured receives a gift as well. The gift is in the form of psychological healing. This model is not intended to represent a rigid sequence of steps but rather a flexible process in which individuals may move back and forth among the units. This view accommodates a vast array to individual variation as people go about the forgiveness process Enright et al (1996).

- Malleability Model of Forgiveness - The level of forgiveness shown by a person can fluctuate over time (McCullough, Fincham, & Tsang, 2003). Karremans and Van Lange (2008b) argue that “the processes underlying forgiveness cannot be fully understood without taking into account the unconscious and implicit processes that may be at play in influencing forgiveness”. They therefore challenge the common view that forgiveness always results from a conscious decision and focus instead on situational triggers outside of conscious awareness that influence forgiveness. Karremans and Van Lange (2008b), however, acknowledge that automatic, nonconscious and deliberative conscious processes are associated with forgiveness and consider how these two processes combine to produce forgiveness. One is that the two processes act in a parallel, simultaneous manner. Second, automatic and deliberative processes may occur sequentially for forgiveness to take place.

- Hill and Mullen's Forgiveness Journey Model - This model embraces an implicit understanding that grief and loss are closely connected to the forgiveness process. Stages or phases suggested by Hill and Mullen (2000) are similar to the stages or phases identified for the grieving process. The basic tasks of grief provide interesting parallels to the work of forgiveness (Hill, 2001) i.e.:
Stage 1 - Accepting the loss: Acknowledging the reality of the loss is the first task that the offended party needs to master.

Stage 2 - The working through task: Different people experience various emotions following an interpersonal injury. Experiencing the pain and working through the shame are some of the emotions experienced by the offended parties.

Stage 3 - Making needed adjustments: All hurts involve a certain amount of loss. Loss of control, self esteem and self-worth are some of the losses that may be experienced by the offended party following an interpersonal transgression. Making needed adjustment is about adapting to the changes or losses incurred as a result of the interpersonal injury.

Stage 4 - Re-investing emotional energy: This entails reinvesting emotional energy from grieving to living with hope. Although forgiving unfolds in different stages over time, there is a general consensus that this process does not necessarily proceed through clear consecutive stages. Individuals experience oscillation between stages. They move back and forth and in and out of a complex set of emotions (Bee, 2000). These stages are not rigid and as suggested by Hill (2001), they should rather be understood as emotional tasks or themes, which injured people address throughout this journey.

- Positive Psychological Perspective - Positive psychology can be summarized succinctly by what Seligman (2002) calls the three pillars of positive psychology. The first pillar of encompasses what Seligman declares as positive subjective experience which is further divided into three parts: Past, Present, and Future. Positive traits- The second pillar i.e. positive individual traits or the traits of a character that enable one to have a “good life”. These include six virtues namely-wisdom and knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance and transcendence. Under it falls 24 strengths of character, namely- creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning, gratitude, hope, humor, forgiveness etc that seem to be valued by virtually every culture and hold true across time and geographic borders. Positive social institutions- The third pillar involves the creation and functioning of positive institutions,
the kinds of communities, organizations, families, schools, and nations that bring out the best in positive character and bring out the positive subjective experience.

Forgiveness based on positive psychological perspective plays a key role in changing how we regard our history. When we are able to forgive, what happened in the past does not have power over how we feel today. In midlife, we may need to undergo therapy or get some help creating forgiveness rituals in order to be freed from past resentments, be truly present in the moment, and be optimistic about the future. "It would give us some comfort if we could only forget a past that we cannot change. If we could only choose to forget the cruelest moments, we could, as time goes on, free ourselves from their pain. But the wrong sticks like a nettle in our memory. The only way to remove the nettle is with a surgical procedure called forgiveness."

1.3.5 **Barriers to expressing Forgiveness**

While some people may choose not to let go of their anger, sometimes the offended people are unable to let go. These are some of the reasons that can make it difficult to forgive even when the offender seeks forgiveness: Bitterness and spite are the two barriers that can obstruct the expression of forgiveness. When people become consumed by anger and defensiveness, they may not want their adversaries to have the satisfaction of an assurance of forgiveness (McCullough et al., 2000a).

Table 1

*Factors and Circumstances affecting Forgiveness*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of the offended person</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Forgiveness is developmental. Adults more than children, and elderly people more than middle-aged adults and young adults, express a higher level of willingness to forgive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Differences between women and men in willingness to forgive are very slight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Religiousness</td>
<td>Religious people more than nonreligious people value forgiveness or express a higher level of willingness to forgive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal philosophy</td>
<td>Some people could forgive if their personal views demand it. They are unconditional forgivers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood</td>
<td>Some people could decide to forgive in a moment of good mood.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of the offender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Proximity</td>
<td>Some people find it easier to forgive a sibling than a colleague. In general, forgiveness could be the best way because it restores good relations with people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Proximity Community</td>
<td>Some people do not find it easier to forgive someone from the same religious groups than someone from another community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of the offense</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severity of consequences</td>
<td>Some people find it easier to forgive when the severity of consequences is not very high than when it is high.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intent to harm</td>
<td>When intent was absent, some people find it easier to forgive.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negligence</td>
<td>When negligence was absent, some people find it easier to forgive.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What happened after the offense</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenge</td>
<td>Some people can forgive only after the offender has been punished in proportion to the offense, in application of the <em>lex talionis</em>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancellation of consequences</td>
<td>Some people can forgive only once they have got back what was taken from them or once their rights have been resorted or once the consequences have vanished with time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apologies</td>
<td>Some people find I the offender apologizes for the harmful act, or shows sincere repentance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressure from close</td>
<td>Some people could forgive because the family and friends pressure them into others forgiving.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressure from authorities</td>
<td>Religious people could forgive if the religious authorities demand it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapy</td>
<td>In some extreme cases, people can be taught the way to forgiveness. In general, people can be taught the way to forgiveness. In general, people forgive others to the extent that they can (re) experience empathy for them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Some people find it easier to forgive when sufficient time has elapsed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Azar and Mullet, (2001)*
1.3.6 Forgiveness and Happiness

Research findings point consistently to the conclusion that forgiveness is positively associated with well-being quality of life, life satisfaction, gratitude, optimism, hope, trust, self-worth and positive beliefs and affects; and negatively associated with emotional distress and negative affective states such as depression, anger, vengeance, anxiety, somatic symptoms, guilt and vulnerability. (Thompson et al. 2005 and Friedman, 2005). Humans often work actively to restore positive, cooperative relationships with individuals in their social networks following aggression and conflict (Aureli & de Waal, 2000). An attitude that can make a big difference in being happy and at peace is forgiveness as holding onto grievance is a sign of mistaken identity and a decision to keep suffering. Forgiveness offers insurance against blocked heart, an unhealed past and an unhappy future. Such people are also likely healthier, more agreeable and serene.

Figure 6

Relationships (+/-) between forgiveness and negative affective states and well-being

Source: Friedman & Toussaint (2011)
Forgiveness has been associated with happiness at both personal and interpersonal level from two important perspectives. In its natural form, as a global personality disposition, for eg: people that are forgiving in general tend to interpret offenses as worthy of showing mercy and forgiveness (Brown, 2003). Experimentally inducted, both directly telling someone that you are extremely sorry with an apology letter and indirectly by introspecting on questions of Naikan technique and self-talk (Krech, 2002; Baskin and Enright, 2004).

1.3.7 Research Based Exercises for Promoting Forgiveness among Youth

Happiness can be augmented through cultivating and developing character strengths like optimism, hope, gratitude, forgiveness etc.-Consciously following plans, programs or interventions which utilizes exercises and activities that can help maximize develop habits of these strengths can lead to an increased disposition towards being thankful and mercy. Seligman (2002) suggests “the possibility that building strength is the most potent weapon in the arsenal of therapy” and that developing these strengths may provide buffers against mental illness, promote personal wellbeing, and social good, and increase life satisfaction. The present study seeks to address the question of whether it is possible to teach youth to be happier through a combination of education and the practice of multiple exercises and activities.

Different types of exercises to throw light on how to develop forgiveness reactions in daily life.

Forgiveness Exercises

- **Exercise 1: Forgiving Oneself**
  - Self forgiveness is the starting point. We cannot give to others what we do not have ourselves. We can’t give love if we have self-hate, we can’t give joy if we have self-loathing, we can’t forgive others if we haven’t forgiven ourselves.

  - Sometimes we keep regretting about the things that we have done wrong such as I am a bad person. We should try to overcome our own flaws and
shortcomings. You can help yourselves by taking up the responsibility for the bad action and then let go so that you can move forward with the tasks in your life.

Method: Self report technique, feedback.

❖ Exercise 2: Following Five Steps of “REACH”

Each letter represents one of the five steps towards forgiving a specific harm. This will facilitate forgiveness by way of increasing empathy.

- R - Recall the hurt, in as objective the way as you can. Do not think the other person as evil; take deep, slow ad calming breaths as you visualize the event.
- E – Empathize with the one who has hurt you. Try to understand from the perpetrator’s point of view why this person hurt you.
- A – Offer an altruistic gift of forgiveness. First recall a time you transgressed, felt guilty, and was forgiven. This was a gift you were given by another person and so now tell yourself that you can also rise above hurt and vengeance.
- C – Make a commitment to forgive. You may write a letter of forgiveness to the offender, write it in heir dairy or write a poem or a song. These are all contracts of forgiveness that lead to the final step.
- H – Hold on the forgiveness. This is another difficult step as forgiveness is not erasure; rather, it is a change in the tag lines that a memory carries. Remind yourself that you have forgiven, and read the documents you composed.

Method: Self report technique, group discussion, feedback.

- Exercise 3: Performing Naikan

- Naikan is a Japanese word which means “inside looking” or “introspection”. This method helps us to understand ourselves, our relationships and nature of human existence.
In this self experiencing technique, you have to ask yourselves three questions:

- First, what did I receive? Such as love, blessings.
- Second, what did I give? Such as providing help to others.
- Third, what troubles or difficulties did I cause to others? Such as hurting someone.

Adopt this exercise as a part of your day to day life and this will help you to enhance forgiveness.

Method: Self report technique, group discussion, feedback.

Exercise 4: Writing an Apology: Asking for “Forgiveness”

- A good apology has three parts:
  - I am sorry.
  - It’s my fault.
  - How can I make it right?

- Make a list of individuals against whom you have done wrong, then either mail the apology letter or meet them personally to feel sorry. Tell them to forgive you or just be kind in your interaction with them.

- You should also forgive the individuals against whom you hold a grudge. One should remember the great saying, “let bygones be bygones”.

Method: Task assignment, group discussion, feedback.

1.4 GRATITUDE AND FORGIVENESS: TWO SIDES OF A SAME COIN

The study of virtues and character strengths has a prominent position because the meaning of a happy and a well lived life is strongly connected to human virtues (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Gratitude and forgiveness can be classified as character strengths and virtues (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). While some have emphasized a distinction in what constitutes gratitude versus forgiveness, there is much that they have in common. A central connection between these two constructs is the human
relationship where individuals experience both help and harm (Bono & McCullough, 2006).

Among the different character strengths, gratitude and forgiveness emerge as two important strengths in interpersonal situations (Bono & McCullough, 2006). Responding positively with forgiveness instead of negatively with avoidance or vengeance when one is wronged, hurt or attacked could help reduce negative emotions such as anger, disappointment, and hostility and replace them with more positive or benevolent attitudes, feelings, and behaviors (McCullough, 2001; McCullough & Witvliet, 2002). Expressing gratitude or appreciation of adverse life circumstances could be adaptive and would allow one to positively reinterpret stressful or negative life experiences (Fredrickson, Tugade, Waugh, & Larkin, 2003). Indeed, forgiveness and gratitude as character strengths and positive responses have been empirically explored in their applications to the promotion of well-being.

Gratitude and forgiveness are at everyone’s disposal. Gratitude is a positive psychological response to interpersonal benefits and forgiveness is a positive psychological response to interpersonal harm (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Gratitude is a powerful emotion which can release you from a negative bonding (Froh, 2007). Focus on the good things instead of the bad can make you attract great good in your life. But if you are weighted down with un-forgiveness, it is hard to open the door to gratitude. Feelings of revenge, un-forgiveness and blame can linger within us for a long time, filling us with negativity and keeping us away from being good and happy. If you look at the cycle of grieving, you will see that forgiveness is the fundamental stage to experience gratitude and the joy of life again (Froh & Emmons, 2007).

Gratitude and forgiveness are closely related, forgiveness being the flip side of gratitude. It involves responding positively to transgressions by offering mercy instead of vengeance. Like gratitude, it is outward directed and intentional and recognized as a VIA character strength. Happiness results when energized by magnificent blend of new elixirs i.e. Gratitude and forgiveness, two interconnected positive character strengths (Froh & Emmons, 2007). Gratitude relates to willingness
to forgive (DeShea, 2003), which is associated with the absence of psychopathological traits (Maltby et al., 2008), and is integral to positive functioning (Maltby, Day, & Barber, 2005). These strengths produce well-being through a combination of reflection, positive emotions, and adaptive social behaviors and relationships that facilitate well-being and happiness (Fredrickson, 2004; Kashdan, Mishra, Breen, & Froh, 2009; Watkins, 2004).

Youth will need these strengths of character to live happy lives, to have successful relationships and to cope with the burdens and challenges that life throws up. Gratitude and forgiveness are interpersonal strengths that produce well-being through a combination of reflection, positive emotions, and adaptive social behaviors and relationships that facilitate well-being (Fredrickson, 2004; Kashdan, Mishra, Breen, & Froh, 2009; Watkins, 2004). Thus, gratitude and forgiveness are conceptually linked as positively valenced, pro-social, empathy-based character strengths associated with psychological and physical health.

**Strengths of Gratitude, Forgiveness and Well-Being Outcomes**

Toussaint and Friedman, (2011) found that the links between gratitude and forgiveness to well-being is mediated by self-evaluative beliefs and by experienced affect. Also, Neto, (2007) showed that gratitude predicted forgiveness (both positive and negative dimensions) over and beyond demographic variables, religiosity and the big five personality dimensions.

*Figure 7*

Relationships between affect, beliefs, attitudes, forgiveness, gratitude and well-being

*Source: Friedman & Toussaint (2011)*
Fincham & Beach, 2010 draws parallels between gratitude and forgiveness. First, numerous authors have bemoaned the lack of attention given to gratitude (Solomon, 2004) and forgiveness (Fincham, 2000) by philosophers and social scientists. Second, thriving empirical literature has emerged in the last fifteen years on gratitude and forgiveness. Third, each is acknowledged to have a rich history extending back to the ancient Greeks, though attempts to draw systematically from this intellectual history are rare. Fourth, both constructs describe processes that are ascribed a central role in social life. Fifth, gratitude and forgiveness orient the person away from their own selfish interests to the interests of others. A sixth parallel emphasizes that both are considered to be virtues. Seventh, each has being linked to personal well being (for gratitude- Wood, Froh & Geraghty, 2010; for forgiveness- Fehr, Gelfand & Nag, 2010). Eighth, the presumed value of each construct for promoting mental health have given rise to numerous interventions designed to increase their occurrence (Nelson, 2009; Wade, Johnson & Meyer, 2008). In light of the above parallels, it is believed that the emergence of interest in gratitude and forgiveness can be traced to the rise of positive psychology movement and also that these common heritage points to another feature i.e. focus on the individual.

Further, mapping connections between the two constructs appear to share the following general features a) broader vs. more specific forms, b) the potential to be characterized in interpersonal vs. emotional terms, c) their ability to occur in degrees rather than all or none, d) their potential to be represented as two-dimensional rather than uni-dimensional constructs. These similarities suggest that they are likely to have a shared impact on other relationship processes and outcomes and that they need to be considered specifically in the relationship context (Fincham & Beach, 2010). Likewise, both can be conceptualized within a framework of emergent goals and have links to general well-being. Therefore, active engagement of strengths of character appears to be a viable exercise for increasing and promoting happiness and well-being (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006a).
1.5 HAPPINESS

Throughout the world, it is believed that happiness is an important and valuable goal. The study of human life starts as early as time and the pursuit of happiness has been a source of fascination throughout centuries. Over centuries, leaders in many religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam have contributed substantially on the sense of meaning in life that is required to achieve true happiness (McMahon, 2006). Happiness is the undying quest of life, the unquenchable thirst and the insatiable hunger of all human kind. However, people want not just to be happy, they want to be happy for the right reasons – for things they value. It is thus a moral imperative, not simply a hedonistic one. Happiness results from people’s values. Happiness is a central criterion that has been associated with numerous tangible benefits, such as enhanced physical health, reduced psychopathology, superior coping skills and even longer life (Lyubomirsky, King & Diener, 2005). Considering happiness within the framework of good and evil, right or wrong, it is seen that what is evil or wrong is only undesirable because it diminishes the happiness of an individual or group, and that what is good and right is only so because it increases the happiness of an individual or group. Thus, an important goal for positive psychology is advancing knowledge about how to help people increase their levels of happiness, positive mental health and personal thriving.

“Don’t worry be happy”, carols every one. “And the prince and the princess lived happily ever after”, say the fairy tales. “I only want your happiness”, croons the lover. “Every man has the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”, says the American Constitution. “Happiness is buying the latest must-have”, shout the advertisements. No matter what the message, mankind is united in conviction that happiness is a desirable state. Indeed, all of us, consciously or unconsciously, are motivated in all we do by our need for happiness. It is an indicator for quality of life and this claim is strengthened by research which stated that people who are happy will be more satisfied with their lives, able to accept the distance between hope and reality, and have better performance. On the other hand, an unhappy person will be more prone to depression, suicide, anxiety and will deliver poor working performance and relations. The United Nations declared 20 March the International Day of Happiness.
to recognize the relevance of happiness and wellbeing as universal goals. In 2014, Happy (Pharrell Williams song) became the anthem and inspired clips from around the world

1.5.1 Conceptualization of Happiness

There have been many definitions of happiness proposed over the decades through common use and research enquiry, some of which are presented below:

Howard Mumford Jones opined that “happiness belongs to that category of words, the meaning of which everybody knows but the definition of which nobody can give” (cited in Freedman, 1978).

Myers (1992) described happiness or subjective happiness as it is often called, as a lasting sense that life is fulfilling, meaningful, and pleasant.

Lu and Shih (1997) asserted that “the most general description of happiness would be an internal experience of a positive state of mind which can be induced through various means”.

Veenhoven (2000) defined happiness as “the degree to which someone evaluates positively the overall quality of his or her present life as a whole”.

Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) viewed happiness as one’s enduring level of happiness results from three factors such as one’s set range, the circumstances of one’s life and one’s voluntary control. They further explained that happiness may refer to three domains viz. the past (satisfaction, contentment, fulfillment, pride and serenity), the present (joy, ecstasy, calm, zest, ebullience, pleasure and flow) and the future (optimism, hope, faith, trust).

Lyubomirsky (2001) defined happiness as “the experience of joy, contentment or positive well-being, combined with a sense that one’s life is good, meaningful, and worthwhile”. She further identified two main components of happiness viz a cognitive component that is how you think about your life and an affective component that is how often you experience positive and negative emotions.
Seligman (2002) referred to the meaning of happiness in form of an equation i.e \( H = S + C + V \)

where \( H \) is one’s enduring level of happiness; \( S \) is one’s happiness set point; \( C \) constitutes one’s life’s circumstances and \( V \) is a factor representing a person’s voluntary activities. \( S \) is a combination of genetic disposition and cultural upbringing, is largely out of control; \( C \) is one’s life’s circumstances, which may also be difficult to change. But \( V \) is where we have total control and opportunity.

Fredrickson (2003) defined “happiness as the fuel to thrive and flourish and to leave this world in a better shape than you found it”.

According to Carr (2004) happiness is defined as “a positive psychological state characterized by a high level of satisfaction with life, a high level of positive affect and a low level of negative affect”.

Tkach & Lyubomirsky (2006) asserted that happiness is characterized by the experience of more frequent positive affective states than negative ones as well as a perception that one is progressing toward important life goals.

Robert Biswas-Diener & Ben Dean (2007) defined happiness as “the experience of frequent, mildly pleasant emotions, the relative absence of unpleasant feelings, and a general feeling of satisfaction with one’s life”.

Snyder & Lopez (2007) proposed a generalised definition of happiness as “a positive emotional state that is subjectively defined by each person.”

Veenhoven (2009) opined that happiness can be compared to health in the sense that it is also determined by your genes, the environment around you, and your behavior in life.

Tomer (2011) referred to an understanding of enduring happiness and proposed a modified happiness formula which is somewhat different from other psychologists i.e. \( H = S + UC + E \), where \( H \) is an individual’s enduring happiness; \( S \) is an individual’s set point, one’s inherited disposition to happiness; \( UC \) is the
contribution to happiness made by the relatively utilitarian or hedonic aspects of an individual’s circumstances; and \( E \) is the contribution to happiness made by the eudaimonic aspect of life.

Recently, White (2013) defined happiness as “a mental or emotional state of well-being characterized by positive or pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy.”

A Common feature in the conception of Happiness:

An attempt has been made to pull together a common theme from various conceptualizations of happiness given by numerous researchers i.e. happiness is considered more than a pleasant feeling with less prevalence of negative emotions and is determined by our genes but also largely depends upon our environment as well as how do we interpret our significant others in our lives.

1.5.2 Historical Roots of Happiness

The distant past provides evidence for the roots of many of today’s notions on happiness. From ancient Greeks and Buddhists to modern philosophers and politicians, thinkers have queried the nature of happiness. Aristotle’s great work on moral philosophy, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Irwin, 2000) claimed that happiness is complete, self-sufficient and intrinsically valuable, and that human motivation is to pursue happiness as an end in itself. He is credited with saying that true happiness can only be attained through cultivation of human virtues (Aristotle 2000). Epicurus (341 BC - 270 BC), another influential Greek philosopher added to the discourse on happiness in *Principle Doctrines* (Feldman, 2004) and has received popular credit for the favouring of maximising happiness through the uninhibited pursuit of pleasure (hedonism). The philosophies of Confucius (estimated 551 BC - 479 BC) believed that humankind should cultivate its virtues through learning, and by doing so, take responsibility for creating its own happiness (Confucius, Legge, & Mencius, 1930).

The United States of America’s founders proved their belief in the fundamental right of people to pursue happiness. The United States Declaration of
Independence, adopted on 4 July 1776 stated that “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness” (Jefferson, 1819). It seems that a large portion of the human population over the centuries has agreed on the desire for, and the right to pursue, happiness, and yet the population does not appear to have become happier. Historically, two distinct perspectives seem to have emerged (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 1993). One perspective views pursuing pleasure as the way of achieving happiness. This view is rooted in hedonism (maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain) first articulated by ancient Greek philosophers (Kahneman, Diener, & Schwarz, 1999). A second perspective views pursuing meaning in life as the way to achieve happiness. This view is also rooted in ancient Greek philosophy under the notion of eudaimonia (being true to one’s inner self) that specifies that true life satisfaction entails identifying, cultivating, and living in accordance with one’s virtues (Ryan, Huta, & Deci, 2008). Accordingly, individuals should develop their best skills or talents and use them to serve the interests of the common good in the pursuit of a meaningful life. More recently, Peterson, Park, and Seligman (2005) added a third perspective of engagement in pursuing a good life, based on Csikszentmihalyi’s (1990) concept of flow that accompanies highly engaging activities. They defined a good life in the context of the pursuit of happiness that broadly included hedonic features as well as fulfillment and contentment, and distinguished engagement from pleasure and meaning as three distinct orientations to happiness.

A focused endeavor by a body of positive psychology researchers to build a robust database of knowledge is attempting to address the issue. People prior to the late 17th century thought happiness was a matter of luck or virtue or divine favor. Today we think of happiness as a right and a skill that can be developed. This has been liberating, in some respects, because it asks us to strive to improve our lots in life, individually and collectively. According to Seligman (1995), the roots of our happiness as adults are developed in our childhood. He asserts that teaching ten-year-old children optimistic thinking skills would halve the rate of depression that occurs to them during puberty and thereafter (Seligman, 2002). If Seligman’s prognosis has
credence, perhaps there is a dire need to learn more about what constitutes happiness in youth and to consider ways and means of enhancing it. Happiness is what we all seek for, what we long for.

1.5.3 Theoretical Approaches and Models of Happiness

1.5.3.1 Self Determination Theory

Self Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 2000) is another perspective that has both embraced the concept of eudaimonia or self realization as central aspect of well being and attempted to specify both what it means to actualize the self and how that can be accomplished. SDT posits three basic psychological needs – autonomy, competence and relatedness – and also theorized that fulfillment of these needs is essential for psychological growth (eg: intrinsic motivation), integrity (eg: internalization and assimilation of cultural practices), and well being (eg: life satisfaction and psychological health), as well as the experience of vitality (Ryan and Frederick, 1997) and self congruence (Sheldon and Elliot, 1999).

Self Determination Theory posits that satisfaction of the basic psychological needs typically fosters subjective well being as well as eudaimonic well being. This results from the belief that being satisfied with one’s life and feeling both relatively more positive affect and less negative affect (the typical measures of subjective well being) do frequently point to psychological wellness. SDT describes the conditions that facilitates versus undermine well being within varied developmental periods and specific social contexts such as schools, workplaces and friendships. It does not suggest that the basic needs are equally valued in all families, social groups or cultures but it does maintain that thwarting of these needs will result in negative psychological consequences in all social or cultural contexts. As such, contextual and cultural, as well as developmental factors, continually influence the modes of expression, the means of satisfaction, and the ambient supports of these needs, and it is because of their effects on need satisfaction and they, in turn, influence growth, integrity, and well being at both between-person and within-person levels of analysis.
1.5.3.2 The Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions

The broaden-and-build theory proposed by (Fredrickson, 2001), underscores the way in which positive scores are essential elements of optimal functioning. The theory carries an important prescriptive message that people should create positive emotions in their own lives and in the lives of those around them, not just because doing so makes them feel good in the moment, but also because doing so transforms people for the better and sets them on paths toward flourishing, happiness and healthy longevity.

- Positive emotions broaden our thought action repertoires - The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions holds that positive emotions broaden individuals' thought–action repertoires, enabling them to draw flexibly on higher-level connections and wider-than-usual ranges of percepts, ideas, and action urges; broadened cognition in turn creates behavioral flexibility that over time builds personal resources, such as mindfulness, resilience, social closeness, and even physical health (Cohn, Fredrickson, Brown, Mikels, & Conway, 2009; Fredrickson, Cohn, Coffey, Pek, & Finkel, 2008; Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006). Thus, according to the theory, pleasurable positive emotions, although fleeting, can have a long-lasting impact on functional outcomes, leading to enhanced wellbeing and social connectedness. Put simply, positive emotions expand people's mindsets in ways that little-by-little reshape who they are.

- Positive emotions undo negative emotions - Positive emotions and negative emotions seem to produce opposite effects. Our thinking and possible actions are narrowed by negative emotions and broadened by positive emotions. Fredrickson et al, 2000 examined the cardiovascular consequences of negative and positive emotions. Specifically, they designed a study to determine whether positive emotions would speed up recovery from the increases cardiovascular activity engendered by negative emotions. Negative emotions like fear, increase cardiovascular activity such that more blood flows to the
appropriate skeleton muscles necessary for a possible “fight-or-flight” response.

- Positive emotions fuel psychological resiliency - It is suggested that positive emotions may fuel psychological resilience. In effect, then, resilient individuals may be wittingly or unwittingly – expert users of the undo effect of positive emotions (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2002). A prospective field study of American college students before and after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 provided consistent evidence. Relative to their less resilient peers, resilient individuals were less likely to become depressed and more likely to experience post-crisis growth after the attacks. Most importantly, the greater positive emotions that resilient people experienced fully accounted for each of these beneficial effects (Fredrickson et al, 2003).

**Figure 8**

The Broaden- and- Build Theory of Positive Emotions

*Source: Fredrickson (2001).*
Positive emotions build personal resources and fuel psychological and physical well-being. As founded by Fredrickson and Joiner (2002) that “when people feel positive emotion, they are jolted into a different way of thinking and acting. Their thinking becomes creative and broad-minded, and their actions become adventurous and exploratory. This expanded repertoire creates more mastery over challenges, which in turn generates more positive emotion, which further broadens and builds thinking and action, and so on” (Seligman, 2002). This finding is important for because it suggests how people might begin to harness the beneficial effects of positive emotions to optimize their own well-being; by regularly finding positive meaning within the daily ups and downs of life.

1.5.3.3 Positive Psychological based Happiness

1.5.3.3.1 Hedonic and Eudaimonic Approaches to Happiness

In pursuit of understanding happiness, there are two main theoretical perspectives which focus on addressing the question of what makes people feel good and happy. These are the hedonic and eudaimonic approaches to happiness (Keyes, Shmotkin, & Ryff, 2002).

Hedonic well-being is based on the notion that increased pleasure and decreased pain leads to happiness. Hedonic concepts are based on the notion of subjective well-being. Subjective well-being is a scientific term that is commonly used to denote the ‘happy or good life’. It comprises of an affective component (high positive affect and low negative affect) and a cognitive component (satisfaction with life). It is proposed that an individual experiences happiness when positive affect and satisfaction with life are both high (Carruthers & Hood, 2004).

Eudaimonic well-being, on the other hand, is strongly reliant on Maslow’s ideas of self actualization and Roger’s concept of the fully functioning person and their subjective well being. Eudaimonic happiness is therefore based on the premise that people feel happy if they experience life purpose, challenges and growth. This approach adopts Self-Determination Theory to conceptualize happiness (Keyes et al.,
Self determination theory suggests that happiness is related to fulfillment in the areas of autonomy and competence.

From this perspective, by engaging in eudaimonic pursuits, subjective well being (happiness) will occur as a by product. Thus, life purpose and higher order meaning are believed to produce happiness. It appears that the general consensus is that happiness does not result from the pursuit of pleasure but from the development of individual strengths and virtues which ties in with the concept of positive psychology (Vella-Brodrick, Park & Peterson, 2009). Positive Psychology views happiness from both the hedonistic and eudaimonic view in which they define happiness in terms of the pleasant life, the good life and the meaningful life (Norrish & Vella-Brodrick, 2008).

1.5.3.3.2 Four Pathways to Happiness

Seligman (2002) offered the following four pathways of happiness i.e.

- **The Pleasant Life** (first pillar of positive psychology i.e. Positive experiences) - Feeling positive emotions about dealing with the past, happiness in the present, optimism about the future by transforming your negative emotions into forgiveness, optimism, pleasure and gratification.
  - Control your negative emotions.
  - Maintain an optimistic attitude.
  - Enhance the pleasures in your life.
  - Find gratification in achieving peak performance.
  - Generate feelings of optimism, hope, faith, and trust.

- **The Good Life** (second pillar of positive psychology i.e. Positive traits) - The strengths and virtues function against misfortune and psychological disorders, and they may be the key to building resilience. Building good character by acquiring an awareness of the 24 character strengths and developing a set of signature strengths you can use to obtain abundant gratification in the main realms of life - work, love, play, and parenting.
  - When you know what makes you strong you can make great decisions.
Learn how to use your strengths in work, love, parenting and play.

Enhance your emotions of joy, ecstasy, calm, zest, cheerfulness, pleasure, as well as maximizing your ability to achieve peak performance.

**The Meaningful Life** - Without the application of one’s unique strengths and the development of one’s virtues towards an end bigger than one’s self, one’s potential tends to be whittled away by a mundane, inauthentic, empty pursuit of pleasure. Using your signature strengths in the service of a larger purpose which allows you to further the progress of humanity by developing knowledge, creating constructive power and expanding goodness.

- Find your forte for making the world a better place.
- Build a sense of satisfaction, contentment, fulfillment, pride, and serenity.

**An Authentically Happy Life** - Authentic Happiness synthesizes all three levels. To top it off, Authentic Happiness further allows for the "Full Life," a life that satisfies all three criteria of happiness (Vella-Brodrick, Park & Peterson, 2009; Carruthers & Hood, 2004). Achieving a balanced life in which you:

- Experience positive emotions about your past, present and future;
- Derive abundant gratification from using your signature strengths in work, love, parenting and play;
- Find meaning by advancing the development of humankind.

### 1.5.3.3 Seven Steps for Achieving Authentic Happiness

Muha (2003) identified the following steps towards achieving authentic happiness:

**STEP 1** - Define Your Authentic Happiness Outcomes.
- Are you clear about your goals regarding work, love, parenting, play, and purpose?
- Have you broken down your goals into stages that will facilitate change?
- Do you know your purpose in life?

**STEP 2** - Control your negative thinking.
- Do you have negative feelings about your past, present or future?
• How optimistic are you about your chances of achieving your goals?
• Do you know how to reframe your negative thoughts when you become frustrated?

STEP 3: Create external support from other people.
• Do you have a mentor or a coach who is willing to help you?
• Is your significant other giving you all the support you need?
• Do you feel the higher power is helping you reach your goals?

STEP 4: Commit to using your strengths and making positive choices.
• Have you identified your strongest character strengths that will help you be successful?
• Can you stay focused on working toward your goals all on your own?
• Do you have all the knowledge you need in order be prepared for achieving success?

STEP 5: Visualize achieving your outcomes and use positive self-talk.
• Can you see yourself at some time in the future having achieved happiness?
• Do you know how to use affirmations to maintain your motivation?
• Do you see obstacles in your path or the solutions that will overcome them?

STEP 6: Make daily decisions about how to bring happiness into your life.
• Do you have a time every day when you focus on what is important to you
• Are you frequently responding to urgent matters and not to what’s most important?
• Do you get distracted and fail to accomplish what you wanted to get done?

STEP 7: Evaluate your progress toward your outcomes.
• Are you able to review your progress without becoming discouraged?
• Do you regularly stop to assess where you are and what your next step should be?
• Can you be your own biggest fan or would you benefit from someone else cheering you on?
1.5.3.4 The Sustainable Happiness Model

This model (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon & Schkade 2005b) accommodates the role of both personality/genetic and circumstantial/demographic factors in happiness. As Lyubomirsky (2007) has found, 50% of happiness is determined by a genetic set point. Counter intuitively, only 10% is determined by life circumstances (whether you are rich or poor, healthy, unhealthy, married, divorced, etc), while 40% is the result of actions under voluntary control i.e. intentional activities. It offers an optimistic perspective regarding the possibility of creating sustainable increases in happiness. Most important, the model incorporates the role of motivational and attitudinal factors, consistent with the assumption that happiness can be actively pursued. Certain types of intentional activities indeed offer ways to achieve sustainable changes in well-being, despite the counteracting effects of adaptation.

Three factors contribute to an individual’s chronic happiness level:

1) The set point,
2) Life circumstances, and
3) Intentional activities.

As mentioned, the set point is thought to account for approximately 50% of the variance in individual differences in chronic happiness. Unfortunately, however, because the set point is “set” or fixed, it is resistant to change. Given its relative inflexibility, the set point is unlikely to be a fruitful direction to pursue increases in happiness. Counter to many lay notions of well-being, a person’s circumstances generally account for only about 10% of individual differences in chronic happiness (Diener et al., 1999).

Life circumstances include such factors as a person’s national or cultural region, demographics (e.g., gender, ethnicity), personal experiences (e.g., past traumas and triumphs), and life status variables (e.g., marital status, education level, health, and income). Thus, circumstantial factors also do not appear to be a promising route through which to achieve sustainable well-being. Interestingly, however, although the average person easily adapts to positive changes in her life, like getting married,
winning the lottery, or acquiring sharper vision, individual differences have been found in degrees of adaptation.

The most promising factor for affecting change in chronic happiness then, is the approximate 40% portion represented by intentional activity (Lyubomirsky, 2008). Characterized by committed and effortful acts in which people choose to engage, intentional activities can be behavioral (e.g., practicing random acts of kindness), cognitive (e.g., expressing gratitude), or motivational (e.g., pursuing intrinsic significant life goals). The benefits of intentional activities are that they are naturally variable and tend to have beginning and ending points (i.e., they are episodic). These two characteristics alone have the potential to work against adaptation. That is, it is much more difficult to adapt to something that is continuously changing (i.e., the activities that one pursues) than to something that is relatively constant (i.e., one’s circumstances and situations). Findings suggest that people vary in how they intentionally behave in response to changing circumstances – for example, the extent to which they might express gratitude to their marriage partner, put effort into cultivating their relationship, or savor positive experiences together.

Figure 9
The Sustainable Happiness Model

![Factors Influencing Chronic Happiness Level](image)

1.5.3.5 The PERMA Model

The PERMA Model (Seligman, 2011) is a five-sided model that highlights five elements which help in experiencing well-being and satisfaction with life. Together, they form the foundation upon which a happy and flourishing life is built. “PERMA” stands for (P) positive Emotions, (E) engagement, (R) relationships, (M) meaning, and (A) accomplishments.

*Figure 10*

The PERMA Model

(P) Positive emotions have an impact that goes far beyond bringing a smile to our faces. Positive Psychology research has identified certain skills and exercises that can boost our experience of positive emotions. We can learn to feel them more strongly, and to experience them for longer. Cultivating positive emotions makes it easier to experience them naturally.

(E) Engagement i.e. we don’t thrive and feel useless when we are doing nothing, but when we engage with our life and work, we become absorbed. In Positive Psychology, 'flow' describes a state of blissful immersion in the present moment. *It involves identifying and cultivating personal strengths, virtues and talents. When we identify our own greatest strengths (such as gratitude and forgiveness) we can consciously engage in work and activities that make us feel most confident, productive and valuable.*

(R) Positive Relationships i.e. key to all relationships is balance. It is not enough to surround ourselves with 'friends' - we must also listen and share, make an effort to maintain our connections, and work to make those connections strong. When
we belong to a community, we have a network of support around us and we are a part of it and also teach us to build and maintain relationships, recognize the difference between healthy relationship and a damaging one.

(M) Meaning i.e. people who belong to a community and pursue shared meaningful goals are happier than people who don't. It is also very important to feel that the work we do is consistent with our personal values and beliefs. From day to day, if we believe our work is worthwhile, we feel a general sense of well-being and confidence that we are using our time and our abilities for good. Lastly,

(A) Achievement/Accomplishment i.e. creating and working toward goals helps us anticipate and build hope for the future. Past successes make us feel more confident and optimistic about future attempts. Positive psychology encourages us to identify our ambitions and cultivate the strengths we need in order to reach them. Also, it is vital to cultivate resilience against failure and setbacks. Success doesn’t always come easy, but if stayed focused and positive, one doesn’t give up when adversity strikes.

1.5.4. Happiness in the Indian context

Against the modern American dream that seems to have become life, liberty, and purchase of happiness, the Indian panorama places emphasis on certain different things. First, it considers happiness and sorrow to be an integral part of life; two aspects of the same coin, two wheels of the chariot that is life. Second, instead of amassing wealth, people experience the bliss of happiness by sacrificing all their material possessions. Thus, a happy state indicates larger accommodative mental space within the individual. Third, happiness and sorrow are related to the presence or absence of desires. Sorrow results when the pressure from desire becomes extreme. Happiness leads to pleasantness, attraction and brightness of the eyes and face. Fourth, the relational nature of self in the Indian context emphasizes that happiness lies in responsiveness to the needs of other (Srivastava and Misra, 2003).

Happiness has always been considered the ultimate motivation for human action. The value of such (pleasure) has been mentioned in Rigveda and the notion of
purushartha clearly brings out the satisfaction of desires as a key component of kama. Happiness appears to have a number of positive by products, which not only benefit individuals, but families, communities, and societies also. In the Indian context it is assumed that happy are those who show daya (pity), tyaga (sacrifice), dan (charity), kshama (forgiveness), who are udar (munificent), madhur-vakta (sweet tongued), devoid of ahamkar (ego), and parseva-prarayana (always prepared to serve their fellow beings).

The Indian tradition, since ancient times, has recognized the natural desire of all human beings to be happy at every stage and in every aspect of life. “Let all people be happy” (sarva bhawantu sukhinah) has been the highest ideal of human life. The Caraka-Samhita, the ancient work on the Hindu system on medicine, described the concept of sukhswarup (happy life). The Sanskrit equivalent of happiness that is ‘Sukham’ (su=plenty, kham=space). According to Bhagavad Gita, a happy state indicates larger accommodative mental space within the individual (Menon, 1998). In the Indian context, a number of terms like sukh, mast santosh, santushti, aram, anand, harsh, khushi, prasanna etc are used to express the happy state of an individual (Menon, 1998). Santosham paramam sukham (contentment is the highest happiness) has been the motto of Indian philosophy, which can be attained through total immersion in dharma. The goal of a welfare state is also to achieve happiness for the people. The measures adopted for the upliftment of the poor (e.g. poverty alleviation programs) are meant to improve the quality of life and bring happiness to them.

Human life consists of a mixture both of happiness and sorrow or misery. In fact, the search for knowledge begins with the realization of suffering (dukh) and moksha (or nirvana) was treated as liberation from suffering. The non-fulfillment of desires causes unhappiness to an individual. It may be noted that humans do not always pursue happiness; rather on many occasions they give up some amount of happiness to get their lives’ narratives moving in the right direction.

The unhappiness or the misery can be the result of the acts of other human beings for can be caused by the natural forces. According to Hindu Philosophy of prarabdha karmas, the happiness or sorrow one gets in the present life is a
consequence both of actions performed by him in the present life and his actions in the past lives. It is, therefore possible that right actions in this life any be accompanied by sorrow and wrong ones by happiness as a result of consequences of actions in past lives (Chaturvedi, 2001). It is also believed that though fulfillment of desires of human beings is an essential aspect of life, they need to conform to dharma (code of right conduct). The aggregate of dharma, artha and kama secure welfare and happiness for all human beings.

In the Indian context, happiness can also be explained form a relational point of view. Peace of mind and being free of worries have been emphasized as aspects of self in India (Roland, 1984). The individual feels good and happy by acting as is expected of him/her by the family and friends, sacrificing his/her interests for the in-group, displaying affection towards in-group, and maintain harmony with in-group. Marriott (1976) argued that Hindu conceptions assume that the self is an open entity that is given shape by the social context. This has been beautifully described by Kakar (1978). Salve (2000) argues that living in the present is an essential key to happiness and stress free life. To him, “Discarding all prejudices ideologies, presumptions and assumptions, living, in the present moment and giving the credits of the final results to the Almighty, one can definitely experience bliss—a state that is beyond happiness” Salve (2000).

1.5.5. Benefits of Happiness

A recent review of all the available literature has revealed that happiness does indeed have numerous positive byproducts, which appear to benefit not only individuals, but families, communities, and the society at large. The benefits as per Lyubomirsky (2011) include:

- Higher income and superior work outcomes (e.g., greater productivity and higher quality of work).
- Larger social rewards (e.g., more satisfying and longer marriages, more friends, stronger social support, and richer social interactions).
- More activity, energy, and flow, and better physical health (e.g., a bolstered immune system, lowered stress levels, and less pain) and even longer life.
• Happy individuals are more creative, helpful, charitable, and self-confident.
• Have better self-control, and show greater self-regulatory and coping abilities.
• It promotes altruism.
• Happiness boosts positive thoughts and expectations.
• Happiness makes us flexible and easily adapts to change.
• It enhances positive and constructive communication with people and also enables us to handle and put our emotions in check.
• It promotes optimism and resilience.
• A dose of happiness is really therapeutic.
• Happiness brings about relaxation and creates a positive anticipation about future.