

# Building Wellness on Dependable Strengths

A Resilient Self

Approach

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# The Research Literature Shows that:

Lack of Meaning and Purpose in Life  
is strongly related to  
various **Psychological difficulties**

including:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Substance Abuse
- Planned Violence
- Problem Eating
- Fear of Death
- Dissatisfaction
- Low Motivation
- Insecurity
- Male sexual problems



That:

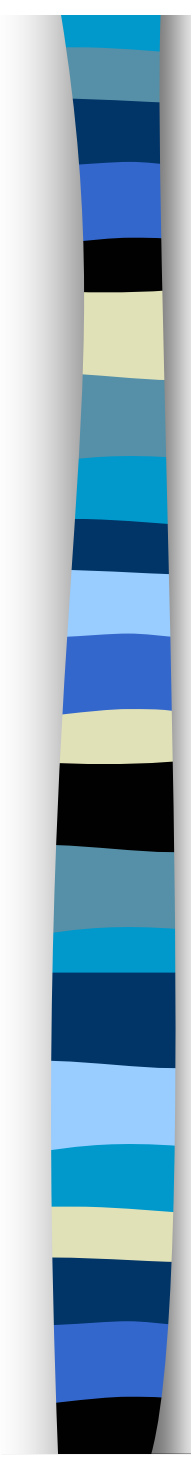
**Chronic Lack of Meaning & Purpose in  
Life**

Involves

**Deficits of the Self**

in the context of

**Uncontrollability Experiences** that  
**impede What I might want in life**



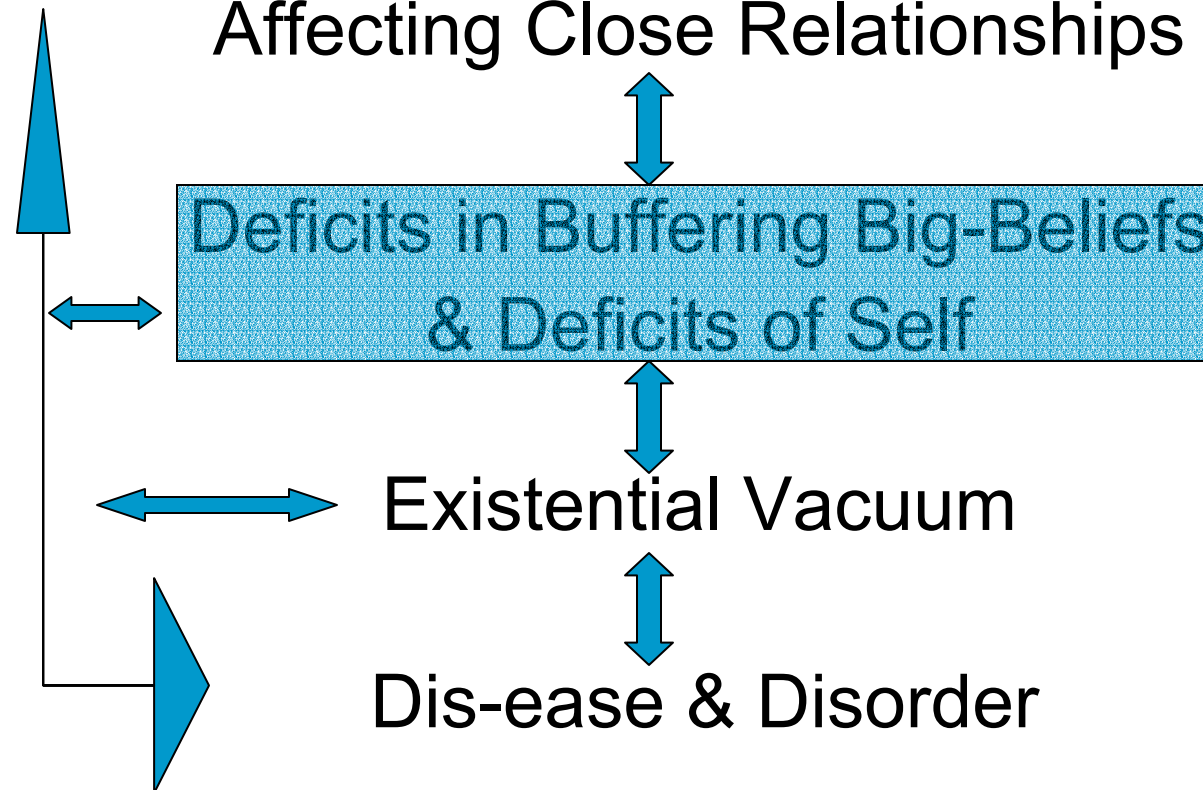
and that **Lack of Meaning & Purpose in Life Involves search for Adequate Answers to:**

- What can I expect in Life? (Science including PCP)
- Who Am I?
- What is Valuable & Why am I Valuable?  
(Science, ethics, culture)
- What is the Value of suffering? (Religion)
- How can I bring about what I value?

(For a detailed review of the Literature see  
PD day on Aug 6<sup>th</sup> as per Brochure)

# RST-Cycle of Existential Vacuum (Cook, 2003)

Uncontrollable Negative Experiences  
Affecting Close Relationships





# On the Basis of the Research on Meaning & Purpose in Life

A 3-fold

## **Resilient Self Approach**

Has been developed to work

in conjunction with

“Connected Community” initiatives

to Facilitate **Prevention & Rehabilitation**

in Mental Health



# RST's 3-fold Approach to Facilitating Meaning & Purpose

1. Coal-face Programs that can articulate a more elaborate sense of identity.
  - Dependable Strengths Articulation,
  - Value articulation
2. Therapy to Individualise an RST program (including timing & order) **&**  
Identify & Resolve Restraints in the Self  
(Cognitive-Behavioural, Personal Construct, Multi-modal Trauma resolution, Medication etc)
3. Culture-Focused Articulation of Belief Buffers



# 1. Coal-Face Programs

- Can be used safely & effectively:

- By a wide variety of workers in various contexts
- With individuals or groups
  - In Health Development & Prevention
  - In Rehabilitation
  - In Vocational Guidance
  - In Coaching & Potential Enhancement Programs
  - In Human Resources & Business



# Dependable Strengths Articulation Process (DSAP) (Haldane, 1988; Foster, 1989; Cook, 2002)

- 1/ Select good periods of life (especially childhood)
- 2/ Identify “Good Experiences” in which:
  - a. I **enjoy/ed the process** (vs its outcome or situation)
  - b. I **am/was good at it** (own assessment)
  - c. I am/was **proud of it** (a bit at least)

Note: If replies are achievement oriented select via a/ only
- 3/ Detailed video-description of the process
- 4/ Strengths and values it shows about me

# DSAP Work-sheet: Example

| <b>Good Experience (ages)</b> | <b>Video Description</b>   | <b>Strengths Values it Shows</b>   |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Shell Collecting<br>Age 4-    | Crawled along the shell-line for hours by myself, searching for ones that were uncommon & even very, very rare but theoretically possible judging by my shell book. I never tired of seeing uncommon ones with beautiful colours, shapes & textures. I sorted and kept the best specimens to upgrade my small, very ordinary collection. I filed each with their names on cotton-wool, in match-boxes kept in a round metal movie-film tin I scrounged from dad. | Goal-oriented<br>Artistic<br>Nature Lover<br>Self-sufficient<br>Patient<br>Idealistic<br>Systematic<br>Persistent<br>Individualistic<br>Resourceful<br>Selective |



### 3. Culture-Focused Articulation of Belief Buffers

- What believable & value generating answers can a Culture offer to the 5 question domains of chronic Lack of Meaning?
- How can we challenge value-undermining answers at a cultural level? (eg. My worth = work or fame or popularity or perfection)
- How can such answers be made more available & believable in a culture?



# References & Further Information

- Resilient Self Approaches: Professional Training, Consultancy & Therapy
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  - Denne, J. (nee Cook) & Thompson, N. (1991).  
Transitions to Meaning and Purpose in Life, Journal of Phenomenological Psychology., Vol 22, pp109-133
  - Cook, J. For Full review & extensive references see, Lack of Meaning and Purpose in Life: The Research Base of Resilient Self therapy, One day intensive lecture program, next running on August 6<sup>th</sup>, O'Donnell Cook & Associates, Warrnambool Business Centre, 0352377473 or [Julene\\_Cook@yahoo.com](mailto:Julene_Cook@yahoo.com)



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