Linking research evidence on salutogenesis to health promotion practice
Could we live longer, happier and healthier - Challenging the research approach of Medicine and Public Health

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The Three Marias: Maria, Maria, Maria

(West Side Story, Georg Bernstein)

Maria Koelen, the Professor
Lina Maria My Pregnant Daughter
Lena Maria, My Inspiration
My daughter Lina Maria (now a happy mother)
WHAT IS HEALTH?

THE WHO DEFINITION of 1948?

........................or Something Else?
Health, Disease, Quality of Life

H- ------------------------------- H+
D- --------------------------------- D+
QoL- -------------------------------- QoI+
TWO DIRECTIONS OF HEALTH RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

- Finding Soc-Determinants
- Exploring Causes of Health
- Finding Reasons for Living
- Fighting Risks
- Causes of Death, Disease, Social Determinants
- QoL
THE DO-WELL-FACTOR?

WHAT IF WE HAVE PEOPLE WHO IN SPITE OF A HEAVY DISEASE BURDEN AND HARD LIFE CONDITIONS SUCH AS SOCIO ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION AND SEVERE STRESS STILL ARE ABLE TO DO WELL?

Do the Do-Well-Factors Exist??
The Do-well-Factors

Exist? YES!

Do we have theories and ways to measure this?

WE DO HAVE BOTH!
THE ORIGIN OF HEALTH??

Aron Antonovsky, Salutogenesis and the Sense of Coherence Theory
The Do-well-Factors

Exist? YES!

Do we have theories and ways to measure this?
WE DO HAVE BOTH!
The determinants of mental health

**Societal structures & resources**
- Transport, housing

**Individual factors**
- Biology, genes
- Health behaviour,
- Emotions, coping,
- Self-esteem, etc

**Socio-cultural values**
- Human rights, equity
- Stigma

**Macro-**
- Resources
- Climate, seasons

**Economic factors**
- Water, sanitation

**Global**
- Information flow

**Meso-**
- Health and Social Services
- Family

**Micro-**
- Social factors
- Settings

**Environmental Factors**
- Migration
The logic formula for health promotion action

$$HP(OC) = (SAL + QoL)HR$$

Health promotion, according to the ottowa charter (OC) has an overall aim:

To enable people lead an active and productive life, or a good quality of life (QoL).

This can be achieved thorough a saluotgenic (SAL) process.

However, all has to be filtered thorough the declaration of human rights were people can act as active participating subleects in their own life (HR)
Salutogenesis
An assets approach

Gratitude
(McGullough)

Self-efficacy
(Bandura)

Hardiness
(Kobasa)

Empathy
(Eisenberg)

Humour
(Martin)

Learned resourcefulness
(Rosenbaum)

Learned optimism
(Seligman)

Learned hopefulness
(Zimmerman)

Quality of Life
(Lindström)

Cultural capital
(Bourdieu)

Social capital
(Putnam)

Empowerment
(Freire)

Locus of control
(Rotter)

Coperned
(Lazarus)

Sence of coherence
(Antonovsky)

Connectedness
(Blum)

Resilience
(Werner)

Will to meaning
(Frankl)

Wellbeing
(Diener)

Emotional intelligence
(Goleman, Akerjordet et al)

Flourishing
(Keyes)

Ecological system theory
(Bronfenbrenner)

Action competence
(Bruun Jensen)

Interdisciplinarity
(Klein)

Attachment
(Bowlby)
H+ ease  healthy orientation  SALUTOGENESIS

H- dis-ease

PROMOTE
EDUCATE
PREVENT
PROTECT
CURE

Quality of life Wellbeing

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A NEW DEFINITION OF HEALTH??

HEALTH IS WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE LIFE WORTH LIVING
30 years of research into the do-well-factors

And the Results?
Less Disease?

• Probably not

• The disease panorama is ever changing

• At present we talk about the five Big Killers of the The Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) being on an increase all over the world

• DIABETES, CVDs, CANCER, CHRONIC LUNG DISEASE and MENTAL DISORDERS
Coping Better with Disease?

YES

A strong SOC increases manageability reduces the impact of the NCDs adds Potential Years of Life
Does the **do-well-Factor** Increase over Age?

YES

we can talk about the wisdom of life in old age
Coping better with Life?

• OH YES INDEED !!

Improving QoL,
Mental Health
and Wellbeing
Signs of Mental Health

Hedonic Well-Being
1. Happy with life
2. Interest in life
3. Satisfaction with life

Eudaimonic Well-Being
4. Contribution to society
5. Social integration
6. Social growth and potential
7. Acceptance of others
8. Social interest and coherence
9. Self acceptance
10. Environmental mastery
11. Positive relations with others
12. Personal growth
13. Autonomy
14. Purpose in life
The stronger the SOC the better the QoL on children, adults and in families.

Findings from both quantitative and qualitative studies support the SOC to be a factor enhancing good QoL.

Results from longitudinal studies confirmed the findings from the cross-sectional ones.

Most of the studies are using specific questionnaires for measuring HRQL on a variety of samples.

Studies measuring QoL on general populations are only few.

Do do-wellers live longer?

OF COURSE

ADDING YEARS TO LIFE (AYL)
INCREASING POTENTIAL YEARS OF LIFE (PYL)
Are do-wellers Happier?

They Have
A Better Quality of Life
And Mental Wellbeing
Are do-wellers healthier

They have a better:

Perceived Health

Health in Relation to Chronic Disease such as the major NCDs (Cancer, Diabetes, CVD, Chronic lung disease)

Mental health

Choose healthier behaviours (as nutrition, physical activity, avoiding tobacco alcohol..)
Do we know how this ability develops

• Yes - Partly

• A life long reflective interactive learning process

• The synergy of individual group and society
• Seems to be more related to psycho emotions than socio economy

(Detail example if time is given)
Two Areas to Combine to bring coherence in and between life spheres and settings in the life course

1. The Political or Socio Economic Dimension:

   The Reduction of Inequity, Bridging the Gap

2. The Inner Dimension:

   The Psycho-Emotional Dimension

Are they like the hen and the egg? The development of a strong SOC acts on both !?

Can we Create a collective SOC?
What People and Communities need:

to develop their sense of coherence

What the professionals, decision makers and politicians need:

A sense FOR coherence (SFC) to be able to understand what people and communities need in order to develop their SOC
Development of a strong SOC

Psycho emotional rather than socio economic factors

Contact with inner feelings
(Antonovsky 1979, 1987)

Intimate relationships
(Antonovsky 1979, 1987)

Social support
(Antonovsky 1979, 1987; Shawn et al. 2007)

Meaningful activities
(Antonovsky 1979, 1987)

Existential issues
(Antonovsky 1979, 1987)

Load balance and consistency
(Sagy & Antonovsky 1996)

Participating in shaping the outcomes (empowerment)
(Sagy & Antonovsky 1996)

Good childhood conditions
(Antonovsky 1979, 1987)

Absence of family conflict and prevalence of neighbourhood cohesion
(Shawn et al. 2007)

Introspection and reflection about job engagement
(Forbech Vinje & Mittelmark 2007)
Message to traditional public health and medical research

You are doing well

THANK YOU ON BEHALF OF ALL THE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD
Message to traditional public health and medical research

But you could do better

INVEST IN RESEARCH INTO THE DO-WELL FACTORS
SYNERGY FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH AND DO-WELL RESEARCH
FINAL MESSAGE FROM THE DO WELL RESEARCHERS TO REMEMBER:

• To conclude, we are able to state, with some confidence, that people and systems that develop the ability to implement the do-well way of living (salutogenic), not only live longer but perceive they are in good health, enjoy a better quality of life and mental wellbeing. In addition, they can stand stress better than the average and have more constructive health behaviours. Even if they become acutely ill or develop a chronic disease such as an NCD they will manage better than the average.
THE FUTURE OF HP

• HEALTH DIRECTED TOWARDS **LIFE** PROMOTION
• More Healthy learning
• More Mental Health Promotion
• More Comprehensive Approaches
• More Systematic Reviews
• More Coherence and Synergy
• A better theory base to enable quality action and evaluation in health promotion
From Health Promotion to Life Promotion

- Life promotion is the process of enabling individuals, groups or societies to increase control over, and to improve their physical, mental, social and spiritual health. This can be achieved through the creation of environments and societies (i.e. **settings**) characterized by clear structures and empowering environments where people see themselves as active participating subjects, able to identify their internal and external resources, use and reuse them to realize aspirations, to satisfy needs, to perceive meaningfulness and to change or cope with the environment in a **health promoting** manner.”
BE WARE OF THE NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK 😊

SALUTOGENESIS and HEALTH PROMOTION…
and there is a **NEW** BOOK TO READ

THE HITCHIKER´S GUIDE TO SALUTOGENESIS
Folkhälsan Research Center
Bengt Lindström
Monica Eriksson
Published: December 23rd, 2010

Order from: [www.salutogenesis.fi](http://www.salutogenesis.fi)
The Hitchhiker’s Guide to Salutogenesis

*Post scriptum*

The title of this book was inspired by Douglas Adams book *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* ([Adams 1979](#)). We are afraid this text is not at all as funny as Adams book rather much more boring.

However, Adams book ends with the answer to the ultimate question, the meaning of life. The final truth is the number 42 which in fact did not make sense at all because the original question was forgotten.

On behalf of the authors of this book we can only say it seems SOC 13 and SOC 29 are equally valid. Although 29+13= 42 salutogenesis hopefully gives you more meaning in life, responding to the question on the origin of health.

We hope you enjoyed the ride.
FOR ALL REFERENCES SEE :

*The Hitchhiker’s Guide to Salutogenesis*,
Folkehälsan Research Report 2, 2010
order from: www.salutogenesis.fi