

Understanding Today's College Student

Rosemary E. Simmons, Ph.D.

This is a cross-section of material I've read concerning societal changes, educational system, child & adult development, positive psychology, interpersonal neurobiology, and principal driven treatments that influenced the thoughts I shared in the training regarding today's college student. I'm sure that I'm overlooking other resources but these will provide a nice base to get you started. If you want more information on this or how I synthesize this for faculty and staff trainings let me know. I have 1.5 hour training and a 6 hour training I developed for faculty and staff at SIU. The training has been very useful to student affairs staff, faculty who are in the classroom, and support staff that interact with students in the reception area, on the phone, etc.

1. Jeffrey Arnett. (2004). Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens through the Twenties. Arnett published his latest book in May of 2013, When Will my Grown up Kid Grow Up? Loving and Understanding your Emerging Adult --- consumer friendly, parent friendly version of the 2004 more research oriented book. Here is link to Dr. Arnett's website: <http://jeffreyarnett.com/>
2. Richard Kadison and Theresa Foy DiGeronimo. (2004). College of the Overwhelmed: The Campus Mental Health Crisis and What to do about it. The title is self-explanatory. Does a good job of reviewing the multiple pressures (success, financial, social, parental), effect of technology (pros and cons), mental health issues, medication, and treatment changes that are allowing students with more severe mental illness to attend college.
3. Jean M. Twenge (2006). Generation Me: Why Today's Young Americans Are More Confident, Assertive, and Entitled—and More Miserable Than Ever Before. New York: Free Press. – consumer friendly, addresses a lot of cultural and society differences and effects on today's youth. The Narcissism Epidemic: Living in the Age of Entitlement (March, 2013 – paperback).

Link to Dr. Twenge's website: <http://www.jeantwenge.com/>
4. Daniel Siegel (2012). The Developing Mind, Second Edition. How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are. He is a researcher and practicing psychiatrist. I love everything he writes. His books are a great resource for therapists to understand the interplay between life experiences, memory, attachment, emotion, and the brain. He has also written a book for parents – Parenting from the Inside Out: How a Deeper Self-Understanding Can Help You Raise Children Who Thrive.

His latest book specifically focuses on adolescents (ages 12 – 24). It is very relevant to what I presented. **Brainstorm: The power and purpose of the Teenage Brain** (December, 2013). It is very relevant to student affairs professionals. Link to his website: <http://drdansiegel.com/>

Rosemary E. Simmons, Ph.D., University of Washington Bothell, RSimmons@uwb.edu, 425-352-3183.
November, 2014

Siegel also founded the Mindsight Institute which is a multi-disciplinary organization, <https://www.mindsightinstitute.com/>

5. Paul Tough (2012). How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character. This book is focused on the education system for at risk children and very privileged children. Does a great job of reviewing the neuroscience regarding the effect of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) on brain development, influence on learning, and how “non-cognitive” skill development is lacking in both groups. The author follows three schools – inner city school in NY, inner city school in Chicago, and very prestigious prep-school in NY. The author does a great job in synthesizing a lot of literature on neuroscience, learning, child development, societal changes, and skill development (i.e., non-cognitive skills). Although it doesn’t directly address college students it explains what went on before they came to our campus. Paperback came out July 2, 2013.
6. Positive Psychology Center: <http://www.ppc.sas.upenn.edu/>
 - a. Martin Seligman (2006). Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life. Martin Seligman (2012). Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well Being.

The New Era of Positive Psychology – good overview (July, 2008)

http://www.ted.com/talks/martin_seligman_on_the_state_of_psychology#t-343728

PERMA (December, 2012)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iK6K_N2qe9Y

Talk at St. Peter’s College – Adelaide Thinker in Residence (February, 2013) – Building individual well-being and also building well-being through larger institutions such as schools, military, and entire countries

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OxxBV7tg1wg>

Global Advances in Wellbeing Science (Feb, 2014) – Update from Adelaide Thinker in Residence Presentation from February of 2013.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4vPtz2O5mA>

- b. Angela Duckworth (2013). Ted Talk, The Key to Success? Grit Grit is a passion, perseverance, stamina, marathon not a sprint, etc. that is a better predictor of success than intelligence independent of family income, standardized achievement test scores, and sense of safety at school. Growth mindset – ability to learn is not fixed, it can change with your

effort.

http://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_the_key_to_success_grit?language=en

- c. PERMA:
- a. **Positive Emotion** – Experience positive emotion (Losada ratio)
 - b. **Engagement** – Aware of feelings as they happen (Signature Strength)
 - c. **Relationships** - Relate to others well (Constructive/Deconstructive & Active/Passive)
 - d. **Meaning** – Meaning in Life (Obituary)
 - e. **Accomplishment** – Sense of achievement (Self-discipline and Grit)
- d. **Twenty-Four Characteristics:** Take assessment of your signature strengths. Take your highest strength and use it in the task you like the least at work for the week. Six months later, less depressed, increased happiness. www.authentic happiness.org
- a. **Creativity (originality, ingenuity):** Thinking of novel and productive ways to conceptualize and do things.
 - b. **Curiosity (interest, novelty-seeking, openness to experience):** Taking an interest in ongoing experiences for its own sake; exploring and discovering
 - c. **Open-mindedness (judgment, critical thinking):** Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; weighing all evidence fairly.
 - d. **Love of learning:** Mastering new skills, topics, and bodies of knowledge, whether on one's own or formally.
 - e. **Perspective (wisdom):** Being able to provide wise counsel to others; having ways of looking at the world that make sense to oneself and to other people
 - f. **Bravery (valor):** Not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain; acting on convictions even if unpopular.
 - g. **Persistence (perseverance, industriousness):** Finishing what one starts; persisting in a course of action in spite of obstacles.
 - h. **Integrity (authenticity, honesty):** Presenting oneself in a genuine way; taking responsibility for one's feeling and actions
 - i. **Vitality (zest, enthusiasm, vigor, energy):** Approaching life with excitement and energy; feeling alive and activated
 - j. **Love:** Valuing close relations with others, in particular those in which sharing and caring are reciprocated.
 - k. **Kindness (generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, altruistic love, "niceness"):** Doing favors and good deeds for others.
 - l. **Social intelligence (emotional intelligence, personal intelligence):** Being aware of the motives and feelings of other people and oneself.
 - m. **Citizenship (social responsibility, loyalty, teamwork):** Working well as a member of a group or team; being loyal to the group.
 - n. **Fairness:** Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice; not letting personal feelings bias decisions about others.
 - o. **Leadership:** Encouraging a group of which one is a member to get things done and at the same maintain time good relations within the group.

- p. **Forgiveness and mercy:** Forgiving those who have done wrong; accepting the shortcomings of others; giving people a second chance; not being vengeful
- q. **Humility / Modesty:** Letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves; not regarding oneself as more special than one is.
- r. **Prudence:** Being careful about one's choices; not taking undue risks; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted.
- s. **Self-regulation (self-control):** Regulating what one feels and does; being disciplined; controlling one's appetites and emotions.
- t. **Appreciation of beauty and excellence (awe, wonder, elevation):** Appreciating beauty, excellence, and/or skilled performance in various domains of life.
- u. **Gratitude:** Being aware of and thankful of the good things that happen; taking time to express thanks.
- v. **Hope (optimism, future-mindedness, future orientation):** Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it.
- w. **Humor (playfulness):** Liking to laugh and tease; bringing smiles to other people; seeing the light side.
- x. **Spirituality (religiousness, faith, purpose):** Having coherent beliefs about the higher purpose, the meaning of life, and the meaning of the universe

7. Mindset: <http://mindsetonline.com/index.html>

- a. Carol Dweck (2006). Mindset: The New Psychology of Success. How we can learn to fulfill our potential.

8. Shawn Achor: The Happy Secret to Better Work

http://www.ted.com/talks/shawn_achor_the_happy_secret_to_better_work

Entertaining and a good message about how our perceptions and interpretations "create" our reality.

9. Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) – Marsha Linehan

<http://behavioraltech.org>

Training materials are on-line and through workshops. Also Linehan just published 2nd edition of two main books – DBT Skills Training Manual, 2nd Edition (October, 2014) and DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, 2nd Edition (October, 2014)

10. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) – Steven C. Hayes

www.stevenhayes.com

Listing of books, research articles, and training workshops.

References from PowerPoint not listed above:

Feeling Emotionally Overwhelmed & Emotional Health Self Rating: CIRP 2010 – 2012

<http://www.heri.ucla.edu/tfsPublications.php>

Top 10 Impediments to Academic Performance: ACHA/NCHA 2010-2012

http://www.acha-ncha.org/pubs_rpts.html

Empathy: Konrath & O'brien (2010). <http://ns.umich.edu/new/releases/7724>

Narcissism: Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell, Bushman (2008). Egos inflating over time: A Cross temporal meta-analysis of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory. Journal of Personality, 76:, 875 – 902.

MMPI: Twenge, Gentile, DeWall, Ma, Lacefield, Schurtz (2010). Birth cohort increases in psychopathology in young Americans, 1938 – 2007: A Cross temporal meta-analysis of the MMPI. Clinical Psychology Review, 30, 145 – 154.