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**Second Wave Positive Psychology Coaching with difficult emotions:  
Introducing the mnemonic of 'TEARS HOPE'**

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## Abstract

Although the Positive Psychology (PP) approach has only recently established itself as a specialism within coaching, there is already a fresh perspective beginning to take shape within the field. This second wave (Held, 2004, Lomas & Ivztan, 2016) or PP2.0 (Wong, 2011) calls for us to embrace the dark sides along with the bright sides and to integrate the challenging and difficult aspects of human experience into our understanding of wellbeing and flourishing. The author welcomes this second wave (PP2), making an appeal for PP coaches to embrace the ‘bad’ along with the ‘good’. The current article recognises that PP2’s emphasis on the coexistence, compatibility and contextual nature of emotions can be extrapolated to carefully considered techniques used within coaching conversations. The variety of possible coaching approaches is summarised and discussed by introducing the acronym TEARS HOPE as a mnemonic and model for PP2 coaching with difficult emotions.

*Keywords:* Positive Psychology, Second wave, Coaching, Emotions

Coaching is already benefiting from the theories, evidence and measurements developed within Positive Psychology (PP). PP coaches are adopting solution-focused (Cavanagh & Grant, 2014) and appreciative inquiry approaches (Orem, Binkert & Clancy, 2011) in their practices and are using PP interventions, including the following: Strengths (Linley *et al.*, 2010); Gratitude (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Seligman *et al.*, 2005), Hope (Green, Oades & Grant, 2006; Kauffman, 2006), Savouring (Boniwell & Osin, 2015; Bryant, Smart & King, 2005), Kindness (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon & Schkade, 2005); Forgiveness (McCullough, Root & Cohen, 2006), Flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Wesson & Boniwell, 2007), Mindfulness (Niemiec & Lissing, 2016; Passmore & Marianetti, 2007), Visioning best-possible selves (King, 2001) and Optimistic explanatory styles (Peterson, 2000; Gillham, Reivich & Jaycox, 2008; Seligman *et al.*, 1999). Moreover, there are a number of PP psychometric assessments that can also be used within coaching (Biswas-Diener, 2010; Lopez & Snyder, 2003).

Despite this accumulated impact of PP research on practice, PP is moving into a second wave (Held, 2004; Ivtzan *et al.*, 2015; Kashdan & Biswas-Diener, 2014; Lomas & Ivtzan, 2015) or PP2.0 (Wong, 2011), a development that cautions PP advocates of the limitations of eschewing the ‘dark’ side within PP and is against adopting a polarised view that fails to embrace a nuanced appreciation of the ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ sides of people’s lives. The current paper first briefly presents the core PP literature on positive emotions along with the rationale for a PP2 perspective that considers the important role of challenging emotions for understanding human wellbeing. Next, the principles of PP2 that are germane for coaching difficult emotions experienced by coachees are discussed and finally, a model for considering the variety of approaches and techniques for addressing these emotions is presented as a mnemonic for PP coaches to adopt in their coaching practices.

Integral to the first wave of PP has been a focus on increasing the experience of ‘positive’ emotions. The literature in this area has mushroomed since PP’s emergence, providing compelling evidence that emotions such as joy, contentment and hope not only feel good, but are also the drivers of an upward spiral of positivity through broadening mental and behavioural activity (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005) and building enduring resources and resilience (Cohn *et al.*, 2009). For example, positive affect experienced during physical activity motivates increased attention to cues that perpetuate health behaviours, leading to a sustainable lifestyle pattern of regular exercise and healthy behaviours (Van Cappellen *et al.*, 2017). In fact, the benefits of being happy are vast, including improved health, wealth, wisdom and wellbeing, stronger immune systems, bigger salaries, more work engagement, higher levels of creativity and stable marriages (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005).

There is also evidence that ‘positive’ emotions ‘undo’ or remedy the adverse effects of ‘negative’ emotions, for example, when students viewed a film that triggered positive emotions, they recovered more quickly from the stress inducing physiological effects of being told to prepare a speech (Fredrickson *et al.*, 2000). ‘Negative’ emotions work differently. Emotions such as fear, anger and disgust link to ‘specific action tendencies’, namely to flight, fight or expel (Tooby & Cosmides, 1990). Such emotions are often considered to be the remains of an evolutionary overhang that lead to undesirable and unhealthy reactions such as chronic stress and unwanted aggression, which are incompatible with strengthening social, psychological, intellectual and physical resources. This background of research provides a defensible case for coaches putting efforts into maximising ‘positive’ emotions in coachees and minimising ‘negative’ ones, with the only restraint being to acknowledge that there is a threshold beyond which positivity fails to be beneficial, the recommended ratio being three ‘positives’ to every one ‘negative’ (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005).

PP2 (Held, 2004; Ivtzan *et al.*, 2015; Kashdan & Biswas-Diener, 2014; Lomas & Ivtzan, 2016, Wong, 2011) advocates a renewed appreciation of the dark side within PP. The rationale behind PP2 is that PP is now at a juncture where it can mature as a scientific field by incorporating the darker human states more explicitly into its agenda, rather than allowing the prominence of ‘positive’ to restrict its focus of inquiry. Lomas (2016) echoes Hegelian philosophy in arguing that where ‘psychology as usual’ was the thesis, PP became the antithesis, and the renewed interest in deficiencies indicates that both sides are in the process of becoming incorporated into a synthesis.

At its core PP is interested in addressing important questions about human nature and to investigate what makes life worth living (Peterson, 2006). Although some scholars have met PP with a cold reception for failing to fully embrace the accumulated literature within humanistic psychology, for its initial emphasis on hedonia (pleasure) and its dismissal of the role of the qualitative research inspired by phenomenology (Robbins, 2008), it is paramount that we fully acknowledge the philosophical traditions of over 2,000 years and the earlier *zeitgeists* of psychodynamic and humanistic psychologies as being fundamental to the foundation of PP. In fact, PP1 has already been engaging with the ‘darker’ realms, even though the emphasis has been on the ‘bright’ side of life, and this is captured through an increasing appreciation of the complimentary orientations of eudaimonic and hedonic wellbeing (Huta, 2015; Ryan & Deci, 2001). In brief, hedonic wellbeing encompasses happiness, high positive affect and low negative affect, whereas eudaimonia involves intrinsic motivation, meaning, excellence, and growth (Huta & Waterman, 2013). The term eudaimonia was coined by Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics* (translated by Rowe & Broadie, 2002) in referring to striving for excellence in accord with virtue and living in harmony with one’s true nature or ‘daemon’.

With regard to human emotions, PP2 recognises that for reaching the highest levels of social and transcendent experience and in engaging with the bittersweet and rich intricacies of life, a simplistic and polarised view of emotions fails to do justice to the complexities of individuals in navigating their way through the turbulent and volatile challenges of their lives. Therefore, as coaches striving to help people change and lead more fulfilling and rewarding lives, it is crucial that we embrace the dynamic tensions between seemingly opposing emotional states such as hope-fear, joy-sadness and satisfaction-frustration. For PP coaches, this means expanding our approaches and methods to support coachees in handling essential but difficult emotions as well as continuing to develop methods to increase their experiences of joy, contentment and hope.

From the prevailing PP2 literature that already exists (Held, 2004; Ivtzan *et al.*, 2015; Kashdan & Biswas-Diener, 2014; Lomas & Ivtzan, 2016; Wong, 2011), the author has extrapolated those principles that appear most germane to coaching that addresses a range of emotions, especially difficult and challenging emotions in coachees. These principles are being summarised here as Coexistence, Compatibility and Context (Table 1). Whilst all three are considered to be relevant for understanding how the full range of emotional states are involved in human flourishing, they are discussed separately below to illustrate how they each represent different kinds of topics and concerns likely to be presented within coaching sessions.

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**Coexistence (coaching in spite of difficult emotions):** PP2 argues that ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ psychological states and traits cannot be readily separated and are naturally and

universally interrelated when understanding the whole person. Repairing the worst means embracing the coexistence of the ‘bad’ with the ‘good’. If coaches ignore the dark sides and only promote positivity, this could lead to the “tyranny of the positive attitude,” highlighted by Held (2002, p.967), where an individual can feel guilty or defective for not successfully accomplishing a positive attitude. In fact, emotions that are seemingly ‘negative’ can be useful indicators of core values or beliefs. For example, if a person feels angry for being ignored, this signals an underlying need for attention which could be reflected in their relationships with others.

The dangers of avoiding negative states are well documented. A key message within psychotherapy and dating back to Freud (1961) is that psychological distress and illness stem from suppressing difficult emotions. More recently, suppression of emotion has been shown to be related to depression and brings costs to individual wellbeing and social relationships (Gross & John, 2003; Gross & Levenson, 1997). Although a distinction often made between coaching and therapy is that coaching is the domain for people who are not suffering from mental health problems, where therapy is the province for those who do, there is evidence that coaches are having to make decisions about challenging emotions expressed by their coachees (Cox & Bachkirova, 2007; Corrie, 2017). A sample of 96 coaches from the BPS Special Group in Coaching Psychology (SGCP) showed almost unanimous agreement of the importance of being able to identify poor mental health, with many claiming they would welcome further training for managing mental health in their coaching (Corrie, 2017).

The initiation of PP is marked by Martin Seligman’s presidential address of the American Psychological Society where he argued that it was no longer adequate for psychology to only focus on nullifying negative conditions to return to an absence of disabling conditions, or simply a restoring of the status quo to zero (Seligman, 1999). Yet, given the evidence that the majority of people in the population are at moderate levels of

mental health (Huppert, 2009; Keyes, 2002) and that this average is likely to also represent the mental health of many coachees, PP coaches could adopt a slightly broader outlook than starting from zero and instead choose to apply coaching techniques to enable people to move from somewhere at the minus end (disabling conditions) to crossing the divide so that they are placed within the plus side of the spectrum towards flourishing.

Therefore, professional PP coaches need be open to working with difficult emotions. An example might be a coachee who is experiencing high levels of stress in their work and wants to be more productive. Allowing coachees to tell their story to express themselves freely is an important first step before making decisions about coaching interventions and techniques. Whilst the evidence for the beneficial outcomes of PPIs for boosting positivity is strong, a coach needs to be aware of the risks of rushing to an inflexible positivity approach without giving any consideration to the challenging and conflicting feelings that their coachees are experiencing. Repairing the worst means troublesome emotions must be engaged with, rather than dismissed or made to feel unfitting within a solution-focused and positive psychology coaching session.

**Compatibility (coaching because of difficult emotions):** A simplistic polarised view of ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ is also misleading because opposites of emotions work dynamically in a dialectic fashion. You cannot have happiness without sadness for example. Moreover, failing to address the interaction between various emotional states could mean missed opportunities for the growth benefits of combining light and dark, a point emphasised by Wong (2011) with his dual systems theory. Examples might be working harder when motivated by both fear of failure and the need for success and staying healthier when motivated by both the fear of getting ill (prevention) as well as the desire to enjoy good health (promotion). Covalenced emotions such as love and bittersweet experiences and memories



that can occur during reminiscing or during major life changes can indicate valuable aspects of an individual's readiness to change and engage with higher levels of functioning.

Resilience is one of the staple topics within PP and the evidence is showing that the optimal proportion of 'positive' emotions to 'negative' emotions that relates to beneficial health outcomes decreases as the severity of a stressor increases, with people experiencing traumatic events recovering better when relatively more 'negative' emotions are able to be expressed (Larsen *et al.*, 2003). Furthermore, growth occurs as a result of facing and overcoming highly challenging life crises (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004), indicating that not only should difficult emotions be thought of as a burden to be confronted during times of hardship, they can also be appreciated as potentially conducive to bringing about a positive impact on individuals' overall development. Posttraumatic growth can be seen through showing a greater appreciation for life, improvements in relationships, a renewed focus on valuable priorities and a sense that one is stronger than before.

For coaches, instead of approaching all signs of anxiety, anger and sadness as 'negative' states needing to be overcome, a different approach is called for that focuses on how these states might complement other emotions or states in handling an important life challenge (Wong, 2011). For example, PP interventions are predominantly future focused and yet, there is evidence that when coachees adopt a past-time perspective and are able to connect themselves mentally to their past, they are likely to have high levels of wellbeing (Boniwell *et al.*, 2010). From a PP2 position, a person who is undergoing major life changes might be encouraged to reminisce or engage in nostalgic experiences. Sedikides and Wildschut (2016) discuss evidence pointing to the bittersweet or mixed emotions involved in engaging in memories of momentous events and significant people from the past, an experience that involves sadness over times gone by, as well as joy, warmth, satisfaction and perceptions of meaningfulness in life. There is evidence that nostalgia is a resource that

improves social connectedness, including love, trust and feeling socially supported by others, as well as buffering against perceptions of threat. Research into PP interventions that encourage nostalgic experiences and the self-regulation of mixed emotions will be a useful endeavour for developing scientifically supported interventions for coaching with a broader and richer range of emotions.

**Context (coaching ‘light’ and ‘dark’ for the particular situation):** Coaching is a broad-based approach that addresses the whole person adapting to situations. In this respect, the ethos behind coaching and PP2 are indistinguishable. This means that no state or combination of states is ideal for every situation. Intentions and dispositions are not sufficient to produce the ‘just right’ behaviour in any particular context. Indeed the view that it is fundamental that we choose wise and careful consideration of the optimal expression of emotional states for each unique situation dates as far back as ancient Greek philosophy. Practical wisdom (phronesis) was a term coined by Aristotle (trans. Rowe & Brodie, 2002), who claimed that virtue alone was insufficient for bringing about a good outcome without the ability to align emotion and reason in choosing one’s action in a particular circumstance (Schwartz & Sharpe, 2006). When there are conflicting choices of action in a particular situation and moment in time, practical wisdom helps individuals make choices through moral perception, deliberating between various goals, reasoning and taking action (Fowers, 2005). Developing practical wisdom can mean feeling rightly angry at an injustice and rightly fearful when someone we value needs protecting. In fact, in line with PP2’s emphasis on balance, we know that whilst there is an optimum level of positive stress or eustress that motivates performance (Teigen, 1994), there is no fixed optimum level, because that always varies between individuals and within particular situations. Wong and Wong (2012) take an even broader view of context, emphasising the influence of the social and cultural context in

shaping the ‘just right’ actions for integrating the complex interactions of light and dark states for an individual.

Individuals can develop their abilities to express and manage their emotions in an adaptive way in a particular situation by acquiring skills of attentional control, mindfulness, meta-emotions and metacognition (Moneta, 2013). Helping coachees to become more aware of and more focussed upon the emotional nuances of their responses to life situations can facilitate coachees’ abilities to accept as well as self-regulate their emotions. For example, within the context of bereavement, sadness is an expression of love and shows the capacity to be deeply moved by the impermanence of life on earth (Horowitz & Wakefield, 2007; Thieleman & Cacciato, 2014; Woolfolk, 2002). If a coachee is experiencing sadness following a personal tragedy, increased emotional awareness can help them recognise that this is a profoundly genuine and appropriate emotion to display given the circumstances.

### **TEARS HOPE for addressing coachees’ difficult emotions**

Presented below is an aide memoire that PP coaches can refer to in developing techniques and training for addressing difficult emotions in their coachees (Table 2). The mnemonic TEARS HOPE is an acronym that summarises nine different ways that PP coaches can develop PP2 approaches for handling difficult emotions. This acronym is also apt as an abbreviation as it encapsulates its dual purpose of working with emotions of ‘unhappiness’ (Tears) as well as enabling expectations of good outcomes and goal achievement (Hope). The mnemonic is not intended to be a selection of particular methods, as these will depend on the expertise and preferences of the individual coach. However, the aide serves to guide PP coaches to a variety of options that might be used to support coachees in reducing (coexistence), embracing (compatibility) or adjusting emotions to the level and expression considered to be ‘just right’ for the particular situation (context).

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**T – Teach and learn**

In the spirit of coaching as a psycho-educative and a co-creative process, the coach could help the coachee to increase their meta-emotional and meta-cognitive awareness by discussing the evolutionary functions of difficult emotions and learning about how their expression can be either beneficial or harmful, depending on the context. Discussion around whether current emotional states are examples of ‘fight or flight’ reactions and understanding their physical and psychological effects can enable individuals to be in a stronger position to accept and regulate their emotional reactions. The language or imagery that is used needs to fit the particular coachee’s preferences and levels of experience. The use of metaphors can be an effective way of communicating some of the concepts of PP2. For example, the metaphor of a Lotus flower blooming because of the nutrients and nourishment obtained from the mud is a way of showing how crises can be integral to growth (Hall, 2015).

**E – Express and enable**

Coachees can be helped to express their feelings as freely as possible by encouraging openness and curiosity of their emotions (one way might be through using mindfulness), so that a fuller understanding of the emotional landscape is understood and reflected upon. The important thing is that coaches do not try to challenge or sidestep those experiences at the beginning of the sessions, because it is likely that this is the first opportunity the coachee has had to truly become aware of their feelings in relation to the topic they want to address.

Moreover, full expression helps both coach and coachee to understand the bigger picture around the coachee's issues.

As emotions are experienced at the sensory and physiological level, coaching questions and techniques to boost awareness of sensory and embodied experiences are helpful for enabling emotional fragments to become coherent narratives. In fact, body language awareness can help both coach and coachee and can inform powerful observations and questions such as, "I notice that you are leaning back and crossing your arms" (which indicates that the coachee might be feeling uncomfortable). "How are you feeling right now?" Also, coaches who are experienced in Emotional Intelligence (EI) might choose to focus upon concepts from an EI framework to inform the coaching conversation and for framing questions that encourage coachees to fully express their emotional experiences (David, 2005).

An effective technique shown to bring beneficial outcomes is expressive writing (Pennebaker, 1993). Coachees can be asked whether they would like to try this as a piece of homework as a way of encouraging the use of emotional words in narrating their experiences.

### **A – Accept and befriend**

Coaching conversations that help the coachee to gain experiential acceptance or tolerance for frustration and discomfort might be particularly beneficial for a coachee who is resisting the nuances and the significance of the difficult emotions they are experiencing, especially as this can lead to deeper insights around the sources of those emotions. Depending upon the context, sometimes difficult emotions are appropriate for the situation at hand (e.g. sadness during grieving) and/or when the situation cannot be changed (e.g. being made redundant) and it would be unhelpful or untimely to rush to emotional regulation strategies before facing the reality of the coachee's experience at the present time.

Also, coachees who are berating themselves over mistakes or perceived inadequacies would benefit from approaches to increase self-acceptance and to encourage the befriending of challenging emotions. A coach needs to communicate empathy and compassion as well as help the coachee to develop self-compassion (Neff, Kirkpatrick & Rude, 2007). Moreover, coaches trained in ACT techniques (Blackledge & Hayes, 2001) might find them particularly helpful for supporting a coachee to accept difficult emotions whilst they are pursuing their valued goals.

### **R – Re-appraise and re-frame**

When coachees are reacting to events experienced in ways that are a reflection of thought disturbances or unhelpful thinking patterns, cognitive-behavioural coaching (CBC) approaches (Palmer & Gyllensten, 2008) are effective for encouraging emotional agility in coachees. Coachees can increase awareness of their unhelpful thinking patterns and learn to adopt more rational and helpful explanatory styles. For example, coachees can positively reframe experiences to change the emotional valence of their responses (e.g. from fear to hope, anxiety to excitement) or they can modify their thoughts to reduce their levels of ‘negative’ valence (for example, from anxiety to concern, from depression to sadness). For a coachee wanting to overcome procrastination, different emotions (anxiety, boredom or frustration) signal different reasons for their behaviour patterns and involve different CBC methods and coaching dialogues (Sims, 2014).

### **S – Social Support**

There is clear evidence for the health benefits of receiving social support when handling emotional difficulties, as receiving support moderates the risks associated with being emotionally vulnerable (Thoits, 2011). There are various ways that a coach can help the client

to increase their openness for receiving support from others and to help them become aware of the social connections they already have. Loving Kindness Meditation and techniques for improving and practicing communication skills are different ways of working with an individual to help them to optimise their emotional sustenance through recognition of the emotional support available to them and for gaining actual assistance from their close ties and peers (Fredrickson, *et al.*, 2008).

### **H – Hedonic wellbeing/Happiness**

The broaden-and-build theory of ‘positive’ emotions supports the evidence that using methods to increase experiences of contentment, joy, hope, gratitude and other positive emotions at an approximate ratio of 3 to 1 in relation to experiences of difficult emotions brings increasing levels of wellbeing, creative thinking and goal accomplishment (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005) as well as overshadowing the effects of anxiety, stress and low mood (Fredrickson *et al.*, 2000). The positive psychology interventions (PPI’s) shown to increase hedonic wellbeing in relation to a person’s own intrinsic preferences (person-activity fit) and through deliberate effort should continue to be a way of curbing the deleterious effects of experiencing too much negativity and for boosting the chances of achieving self-concordant goals (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2007; Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009). These PPI’s can be encouraged with the support of an informed PP coach.

Moreover, solution-focus (Cavanagh & Grant, 2014) and appreciative coaching (Orem *et al.*, 2011) are approaches that boost positive emotions by focusing on the coachee’s possibilities for successes. A PP coach trained or experienced in understanding and handling a range of emotions will flexibly adjust the structure of the coaching process to encourage increases in positivity at a level and pace they see as appropriate for the coachee in a particular life or work situation, building on ‘positive’ emotions where possible, whilst also

carefully monitoring and paying attention to any difficult emotions the coachee is experiencing.

### **O – Observe and attend to**

Having the opportunity and skills to non-judgmentally attend to and observe one's own emotional responsiveness enables coachees to gain a greater awareness of their emotional lability and emotional discrimination and increases their ability to reflect and regulate their emotional responses to challenging situations. Coaches trained in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR, Kabat-Zinn, 2003) can use this to help their coachees improve their emotion differentiation or granularity. Deliberately cultivating a mindful approach to observing one's emotional fluctuations is conducive to effective emotion management (Passmore & Marianetti, 2007). Niemiec and Lissing (2016) discuss how coaches can combine mindful awareness with strengths development in their coaching practices (MBSP), helping individuals to deal with problems, tensions and difficulties that they are facing in their lives.

### **P – Physiology and behavioural changes**

There are a number of stress management methods that coaches can include within their coaching packages, such as procedures for supporting physical relaxation and breathing, which can help a coachee to feel less overwhelmed by their emotional reactions. These approaches can be thought of as techniques for increasing stress tolerance potential rather than stress reduction methods. Coaches can also use specialist equipment, along with training, to increase coachees' awareness and regulation of their emotions through biofeedback (e.g. Heartmath ©, McCraty & Rees, 2009). Lifestyle changes involving working on dietary patterns and exercise are all beneficial for helping coachees manage difficult situations and



strengthening their resistance to daily hassles and the demanding challenges faced in their lives. The current author finds that walking coaching sessions can bring immediate boosts in a coachee's levels of enthusiasm, confidence and overall wellbeing, particularly when the individual is dealing with work stress that is associated with sitting in an office all day.

### **E – Eudaimonia**

Although emotions are an expression of the hedonic realm of PP, any coaching around the nuanced complexity of the emotional life of individuals needs to consider the context of change as part of the larger eudaimonic wellbeing of coachees.

The emotions expressed should be dealt with according to the intrinsic motivation, values, self-realisation, meaning and growth of the individual. Coaching is an applied means of fostering the Organismic Valuing Process (Rogers, 1951) and addressing basic needs (Self Determination Theory: Deci & Ryan, 2002). Although there is evidence that positive emotions fulfil eudaimonic pursuits (Catalino, Algoe & Fredrickson, 2014), all emotions need to be considered as a part of the normal challenges that trigger growth. Conflicts and disturbances can be seen as important signals that the coachee is striving to fulfil basic needs of autonomy, competence or relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2002) and move towards attaining intrinsic goals.

A PP coach will be interested in how emotions fluctuate as part of a person's 'sense making' and 'benefit finding' during major life changes; she will likely want to look at whether values relate to character strengths underpinned by virtues and help the coach appreciate that the constellation of competencies and emotions will change depending on the particular context. Practical wisdom used within coaching will seek to identify the 'just right' set of psychological processes to be regulated and developed for individuals within important life contexts. Considerations might also be given to whether sacrificing positive emotions

and enduring difficult emotions might be the better decision to make when considering the collective benefits of others.

The above 9 approaches for engaging with difficult emotions in coachees and summarised in the mnemonic TEARS HOPE (teach, express, accept, reframe, support, hedonic, observe, physiology, eudaimonic: Table 2) highlight multiple means that coaches can adopt for helping and supporting coachees to embrace the ‘bad’ along with the ‘good’ in working towards achieving their goals.

Acknowledging the significance of working with troublesome emotions also means that a responsible and professional coach has to consider the broad emotional repertoire involved in their own experiences and how this might impact on their ability to coach effectively and ethically. The significance of handling difficult emotions within PP coaching means that procedures and methods for managing them need addressing and developing for coaching supervision and training. It is important to bear in mind that coachees are likely to find expressing emotional issues very challenging and possibly upsetting. All coaches need to have a box or packet of tissues ready. When a coachee breaks into tears it can be a ‘positive’ sign. It can indicate relief for the coachee, as well as trust in the coaching relationship and its success in allowing the expression of openness and honesty.

Finally, whilst PP2 is in its infancy, research on addressing the darker sides of coachees can build upon the evidence already existing around interventions and coaching approaches within PP. With future research evaluating the efficacy of these second wave methods used within PP coaching practices we can continue to build upon the strong evidence base that has already been amassed over the last decade and a half. Bringing PP2 into the practice of coaching means developing mature coaching conversations that combine the ‘bad’

along with the 'good', as well as offering a more eclectic range of methods for supporting coachees as complete and whole individuals facing complex challenges in their lives.

	<b>Positive Psychology 2 (PP2)</b>	<b>PP2 in Coaching with Difficult Emotions</b>
<b>Coexistence</b>	Experiences involve ‘light’ and ‘dark’ elements. Cannot readily separate ‘positive’ from ‘negative’	Coaching in spite of difficult emotions Coaching the whole person Coachees at moderate levels of flourishing
<b>Compatibility</b>	Dialectical nature of wellbeing Complex balance of ‘light’ and ‘dark’ for flourishing	Coaching because of difficult emotions Engaging with the ‘dark’ to benefit wellbeing
<b>Context</b>	Practical Wisdom Social and Cultural context Dynamic relationships of ‘light’ and ‘dark’ depends on situation	Self-regulation of emotions optimal in particular contexts Complex interactions between emotions changing over time

Table 1: The PP2 principles of Coexistence, Compatibility and Context for the relationship between ‘light’ and ‘dark’ aspects as applied to Coaching with difficult emotions

## **TEARS HOPE**

- **T – Teach and learn**
  - increase self-awareness and understanding of physiology and functions of emotions and their influence on psychological wellbeing
- **E – Express and enable** sensory and embodied experiences and fragments
  - to become coherent narratives through storytelling and expressive writing (Pennebaker, 1993). Encourage openness and curiosity – mindfulness, without trying to change or challenge
- **A – Accept and befriend**
  - experiential acceptance, self-compassion, tolerance for frustration and discomfort, sadness as a natural response to trauma and loss
- **R – Re-appraise and re-frame**
  - emotional agility through cognitive-behavioural approaches (Palmer & Gyllensten, 2008, Edgerton & Palmer, 2005), either ‘positively’ reframe (e.g. from fear to hope, anxiety to excitement) or modify thoughts (anxiety to concern, depression to sadness)
- **S – Social Support**
  - moderate vulnerability, reduce risks and improve outcomes, Loving Kindness Meditation, communication skills
- **H – Hedonic wellbeing/Happiness**
  - Broaden-and-Build (Fredrickson, 2004) – 3 to 1 ratio approx. (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005), Undoing and overshadowing effects of positivity, upward spirals-secondary emotions, positive activities, person-activity fit, PPIs (Lyubomirsky, 2008)
- **O – Observe and attend to**
  - non-judgmentally attend, mindfulness, emotional discrimination
- **P – Physiology and behavioural changes**
  - relaxation, biofeedback, Heartmath ©, breathing, exercise, diet, lifestyle changes
- **E – Eudaimonia**
  - Authenticity (self-realisation, values), meaningful goals, striving for excellence, growth

Table 2: The TEARS HOPE model as a mnemonic for positive psychology coaches embracing difficult emotions in developing second wave PP coaching methods.

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