

Positive Health

*A Practical Approach from the Netherlands
to Engage People into a Process Towards more Health and Wellbeing*

7 July 2023 – Healthy Ireland Conference

Machteld Huber MD PhD

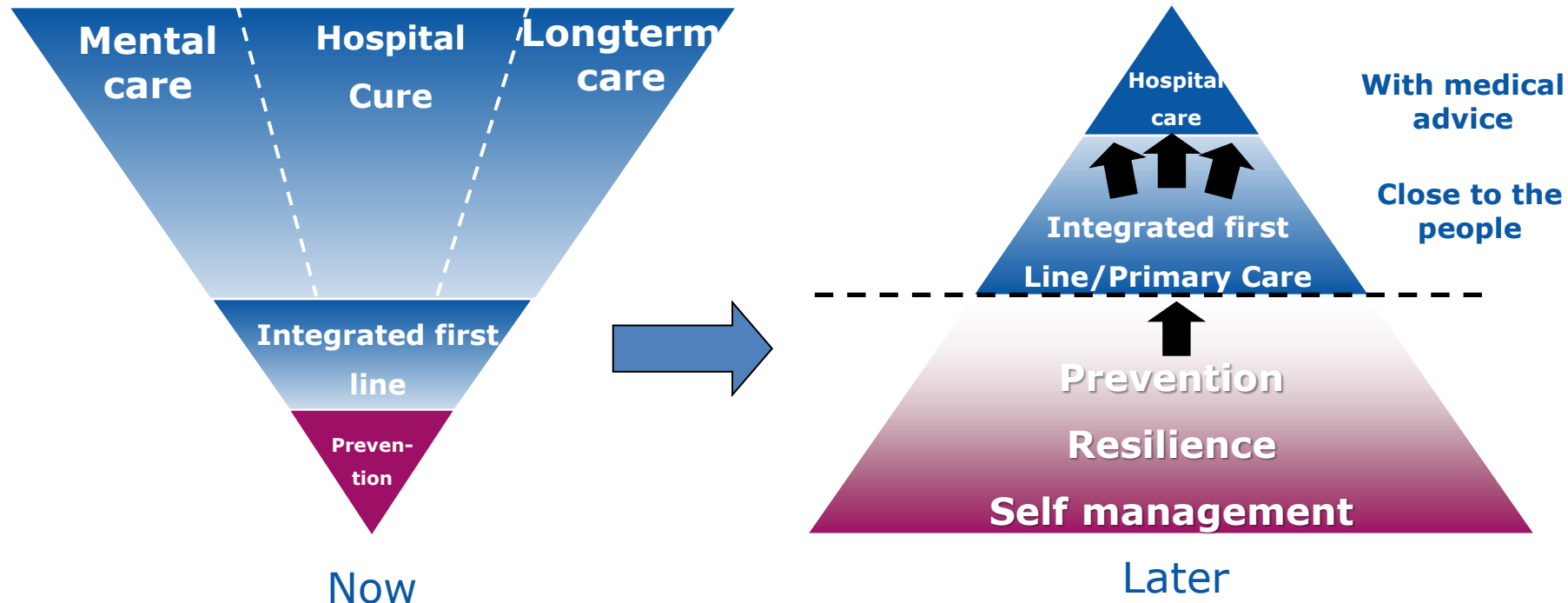
Statement

*We speak about 'healthcare',
which in fact is 'disease care'....*



Perspective on (affordable) care systems in the future

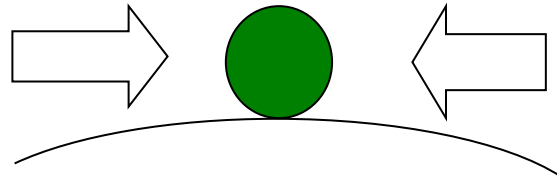
The distribution of costs



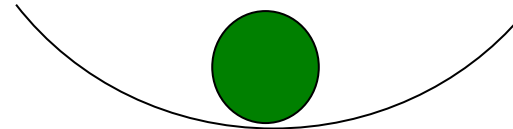
Source: Bas Leerink, CEO Menzis Health insurance company

TOWARDS RESILIENT SYSTEMS THROUGH THE ADAPTATION MODEL

Control model
Conventional approach



Adaptation model
Resilience approach

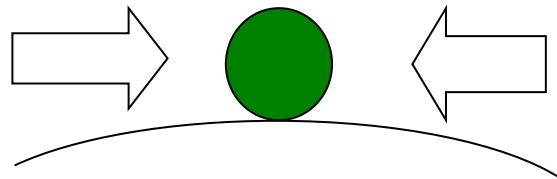


(Ten Napel et al., 2006; WUR/LBI)

TOWARDS RESILIENT SYSTEMS THROUGH THE ADAPTATION MODEL

Control model

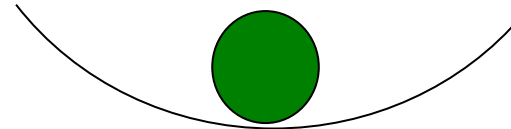
Conventional approach



- **Focus on the problem**
- Reduce variation
- Continuous monitoring
- Direct interference
- **Static equilibrium**

Adaptation model

Resilience approach



- **Focus on the system**
- Use variation
- Stimulating self regulation
- Steer indirectly
- **Dynamic equilibrium**

(Ten Napel et al., 2006; WUR/LBI)

**What do we know about strengthening
homeostasis and resilience?**

3 Perspectives

1. RESILIENCE: 'Sense of Coherence' (SOC) *Antonovsky*

People with SOC survive and endure heavy experiences relatively well..

- **Comprehensibility**
- **Manageability**
- **Meaningfulness**

The opposite is :

- *Confusion*
- *Feeling a victim*
- *Meaninglessness*



2. BLUE ZONES

Areas around the world where people get very old (over 100 years) without chronic diseases and without mental retardation:



Clues: Nutrition, natural movement, getting up with an ideal and having friends to realize the ideal

3. 'HEALTH' IS STILL DEFINED BY THE WHO-DEFINITION OF 1948:

'A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.'

Since then often criticized, but never changed.



IN 2011 WE PROPOSED AN ALTERNATIVE ‘GENERAL CONCEPT’:

**‘Health as the ability to adapt and to self manage,
in the face of social, physical and emotional challenges’**

Huber M, Knottnerus JA, Green L, et al. How should we define health? BMJ 2011;343:d4163.



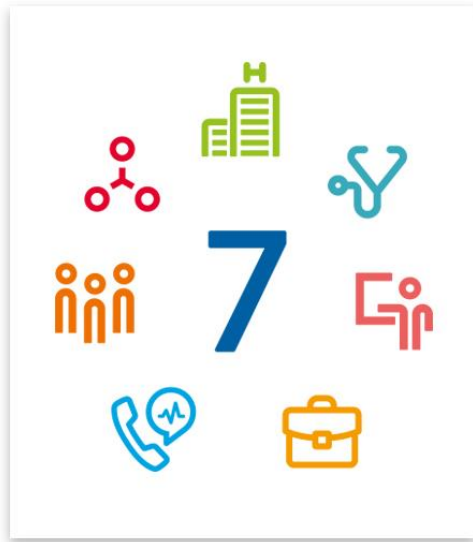


THE FOLLOW-UP STUDY:

The Netherlands Organization for Health Research & Development (ZonMw) asked to evaluate the support for this concept:

**‘Health as the ability to adapt and to self manage,
in the face of social, physical and emotional challenges’**

and work towards operationalisation.



7 STAKEHOLDER GROUPS WERE APPROACHED:

1. Patients
2. Healthcare professionals
3. Policymakers
4. Health Insurances
5. Public Health professionals
6. Citizens
7. Researchers

In a qualitative and a quantitative study.

RESULTS OF THE QUALITATIVE PART:

Question 1: Your opinion about the new concept?

Positive:

- *The focus is on **the whole person**, not on the disease.*
- *As a patient, I feel addressed in **my strength** instead of in my weakness.*
- ***Besides** having a diagnosis, I experience a lot of **healthiness** and that is being addressed by this.*
- *It emphasizes the **potential**.*

RESULTS OF THE QUALITATIVE PART:

Question 1: Your opinion about the new concept?

Negative:

- *What about **disease** with this description?*
- *Is everybody capable of this? Large groups do lack the basis health literacy that is needed for this.*
- *How about the **social environment**, or should everyone manage by him/herself?*

*But also an **advice**.....*

ADVICE FROM THE INTERVIEWS:

*Take **health**, not as an aim in itself, but as a means to
..... **a meaningful life!***

ADVICE FROM THE INTERVIEWS:

*Take **health**, not as an aim in itself, but as a means to
..... **a meaningful life!***

Meaningfulness appears for the 3rd time:

1. In Antonovsky's work, the SOC
2. In the Blue Zones
3. In my research



RESULTS OF THE QUALITATIVE PART:

Question 2: Indicators of health

- In total **556 indicators of health** from seven stakeholder domains were collected.
- These were concentrated and **categorized** in a **consensus process** in cooperation with two independent researchers of Research Institute NIVEL.
- This resulted in **six main dimensions** of health, differentiated into **32 aspects**.

RESULTS OF THE QUALITATIVE PART

The six main dimensions of health:

 **Bodily functions**

 **Mental well-being**

 **Meaningfulness**

 **Quality of Life**

 **Participation**

 **Daily functioning**



RESULTS OF THE **QUANTITATIVE** PART:

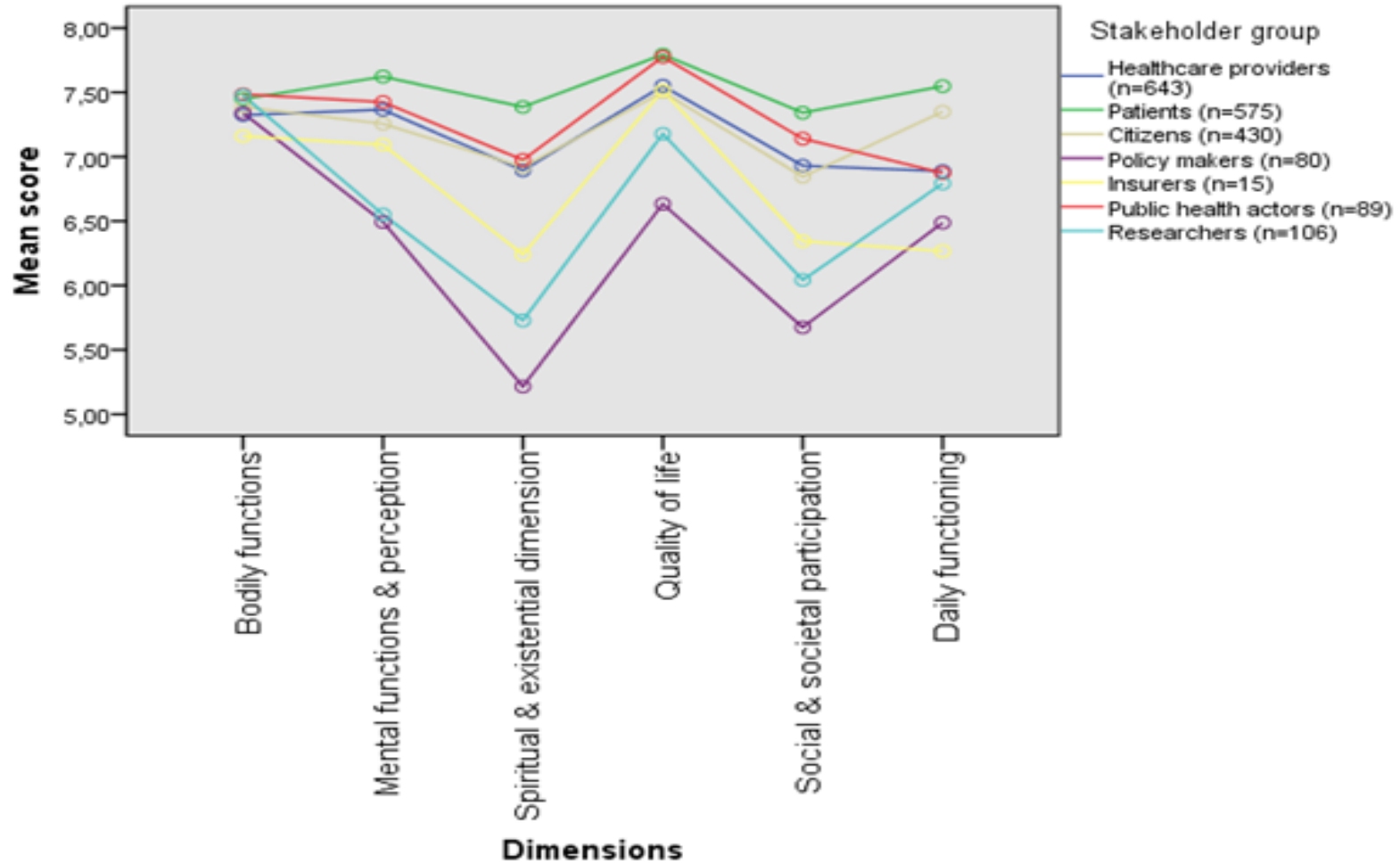
Based on the qualitative results a **survey questionnaire** was established, evaluating the outcomes of the qualitative part.

The response counted **1938** reactions:

- 643 Healthcare professionals (doctors, physiotherapists, nurses) (panels)
- 575 Patients (panel)
- 430 Citizens (panel)
- 106 Researchers
- 89 Public health actors
- 80 Policymakers
- 15 Insurers

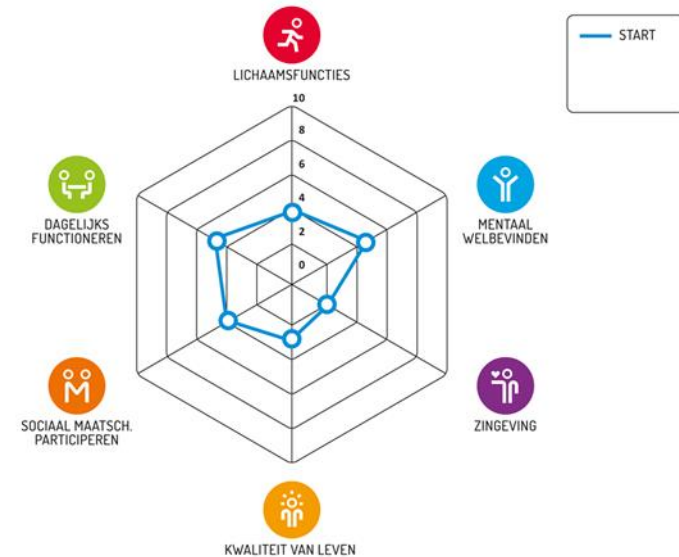
RESULTS OF THE QUANTITATIVE PART

Mean score per dimension for different stakeholder groups



CONCLUSIONS

- **Discrimination** is needed between the **'narrow'** interpretation of **'health focussing on the physical'** and the **'broad'** interpretation **with six dimensions**.
- For the **broad interpretation** we did choose the name of **Positive Health!**
- **And visualised** the six main dimensions into a **spiderweb-diagram**

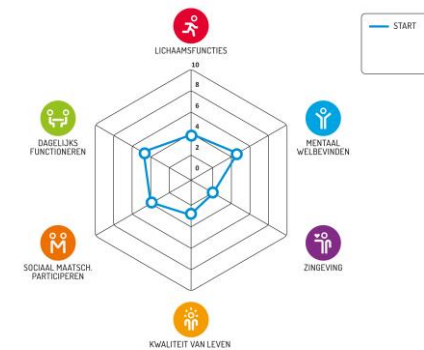


ESSENCE:

- NO external norm! **Personal evaluation of the situation: Self reported health.**

A 'health surface' becomes visible.

- Question: **Would you like to change something?**

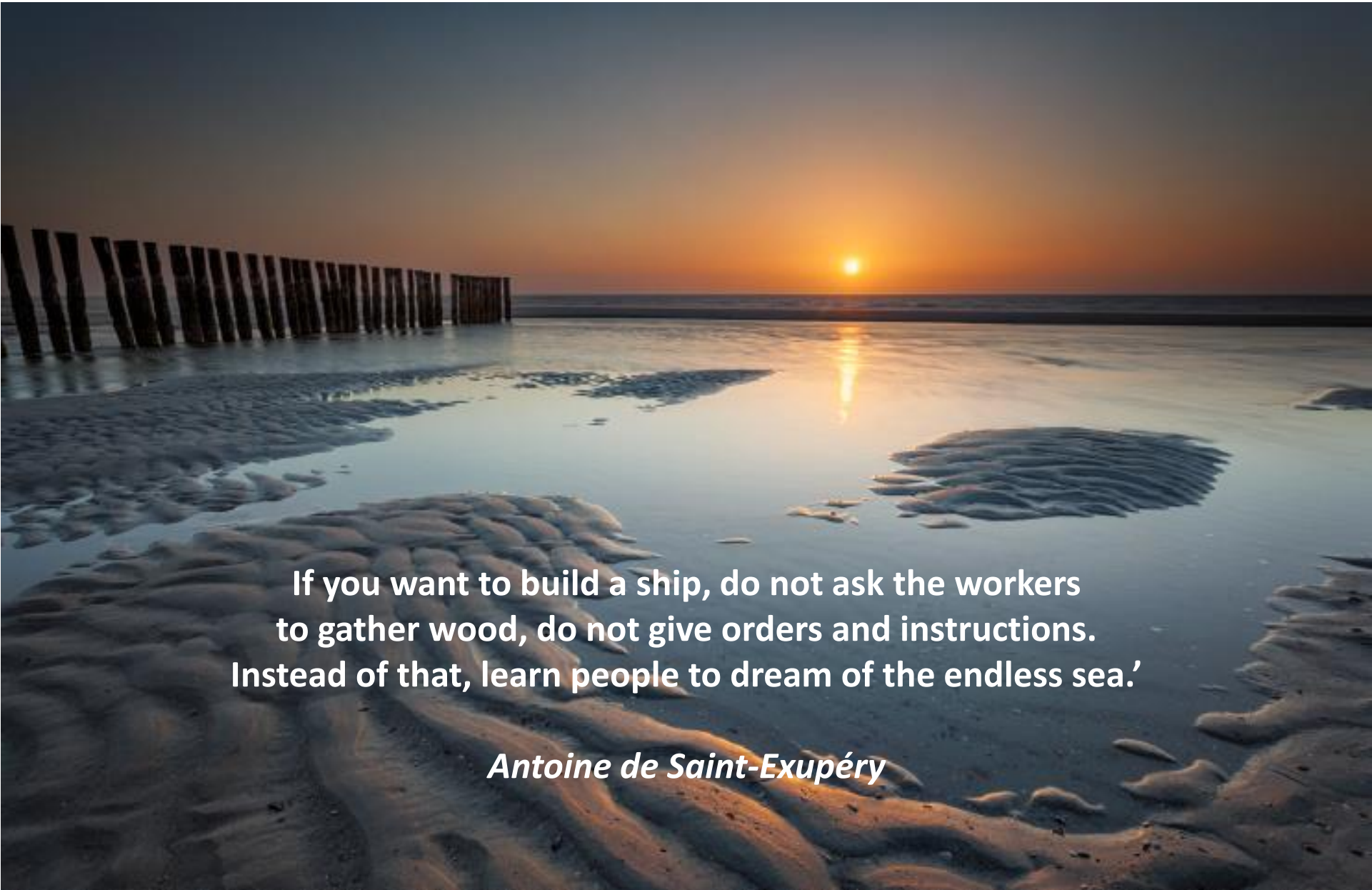


- Then supporting the person with **actions** that he or she can do themselves.

Why do we ask if someone would like to change something?

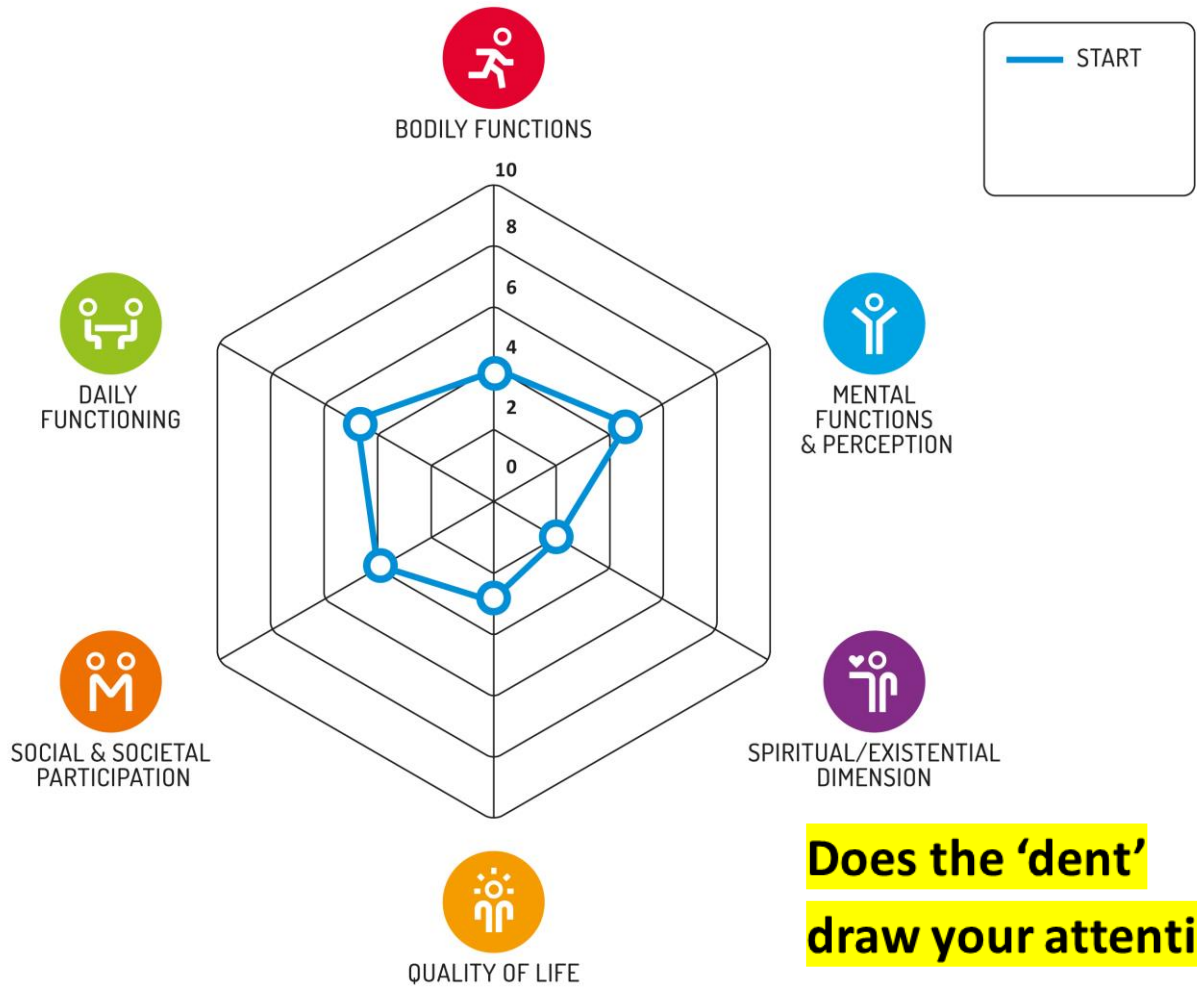
STATEMENT:

*People don't do so easily what they have to do,
but do much easier what they
want to do and what is of value to them.*



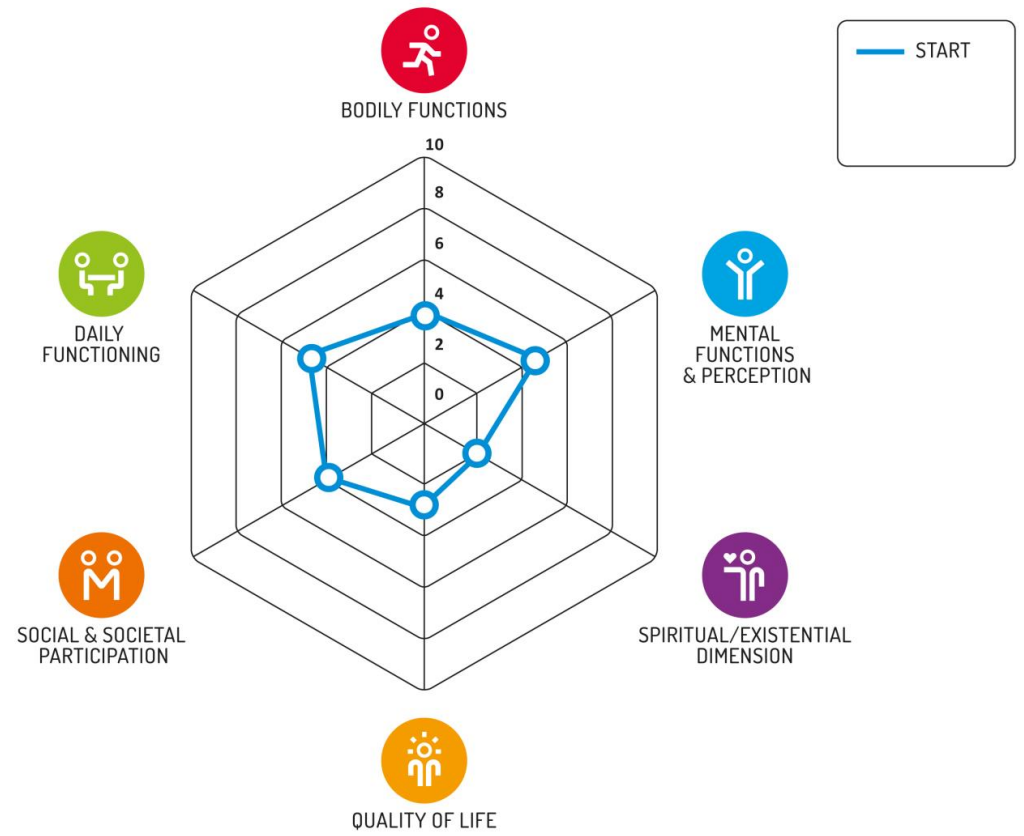
**If you want to build a ship, do not ask the workers
to gather wood, do not give orders and instructions.
Instead of that, learn people to dream of the endless sea.'**

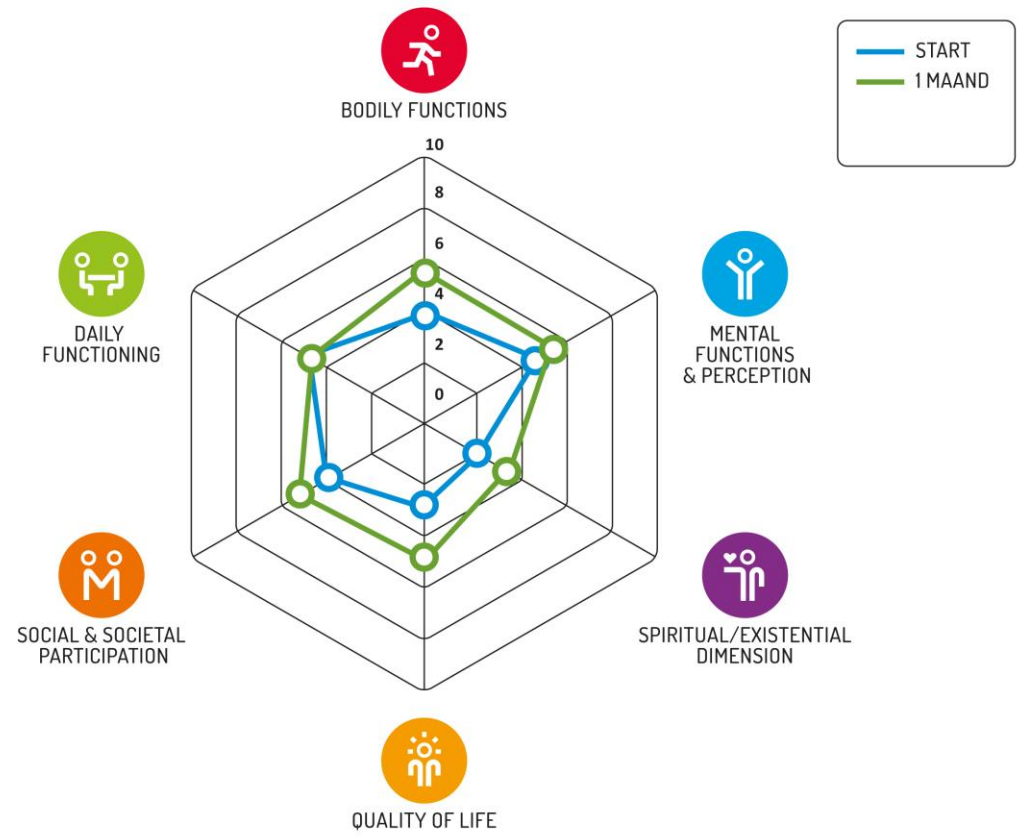
Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

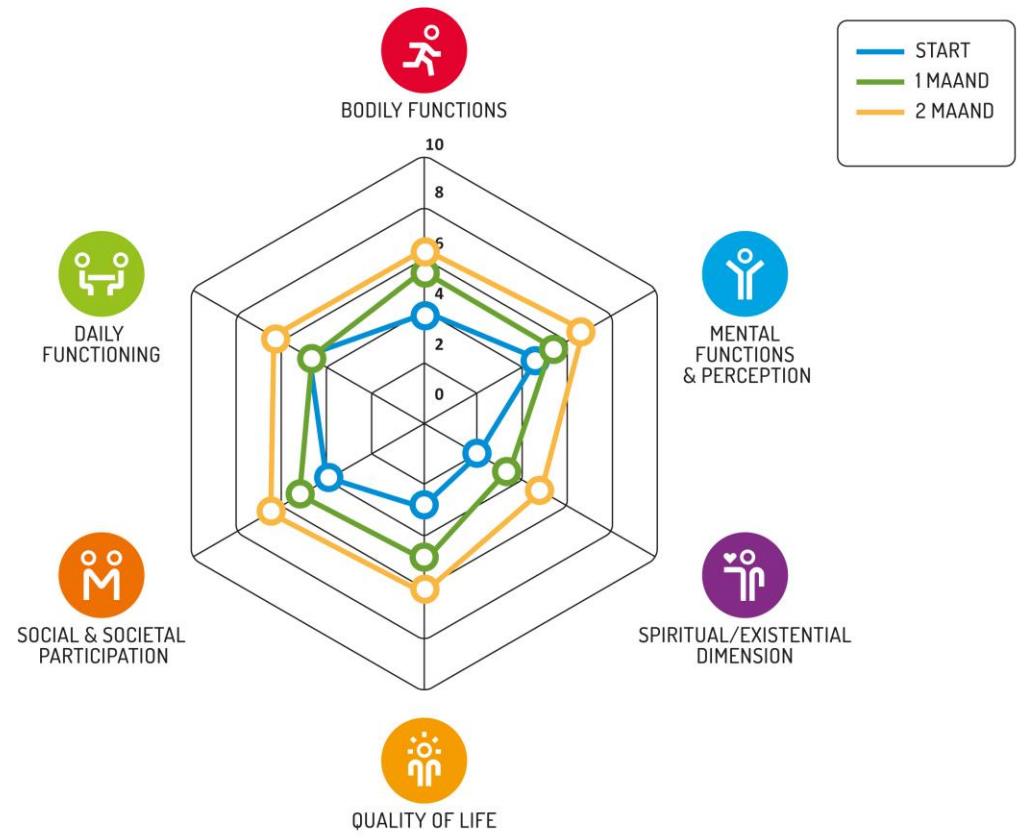


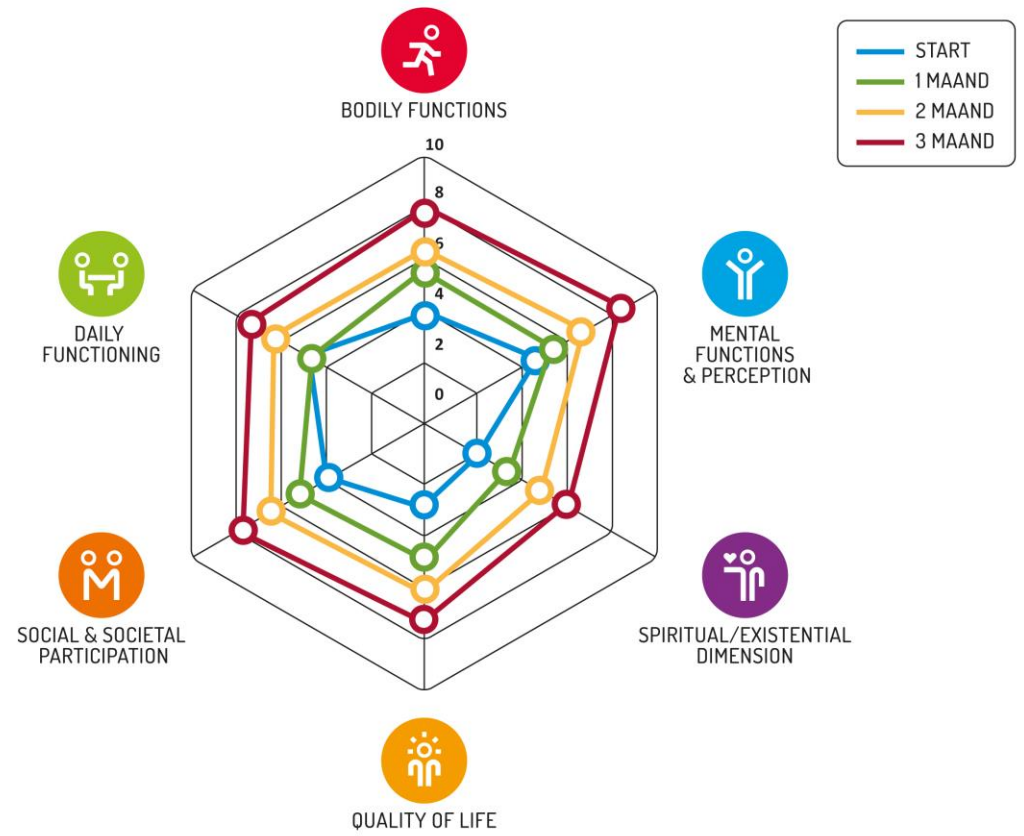
**Does the 'dent'
draw your attention?**



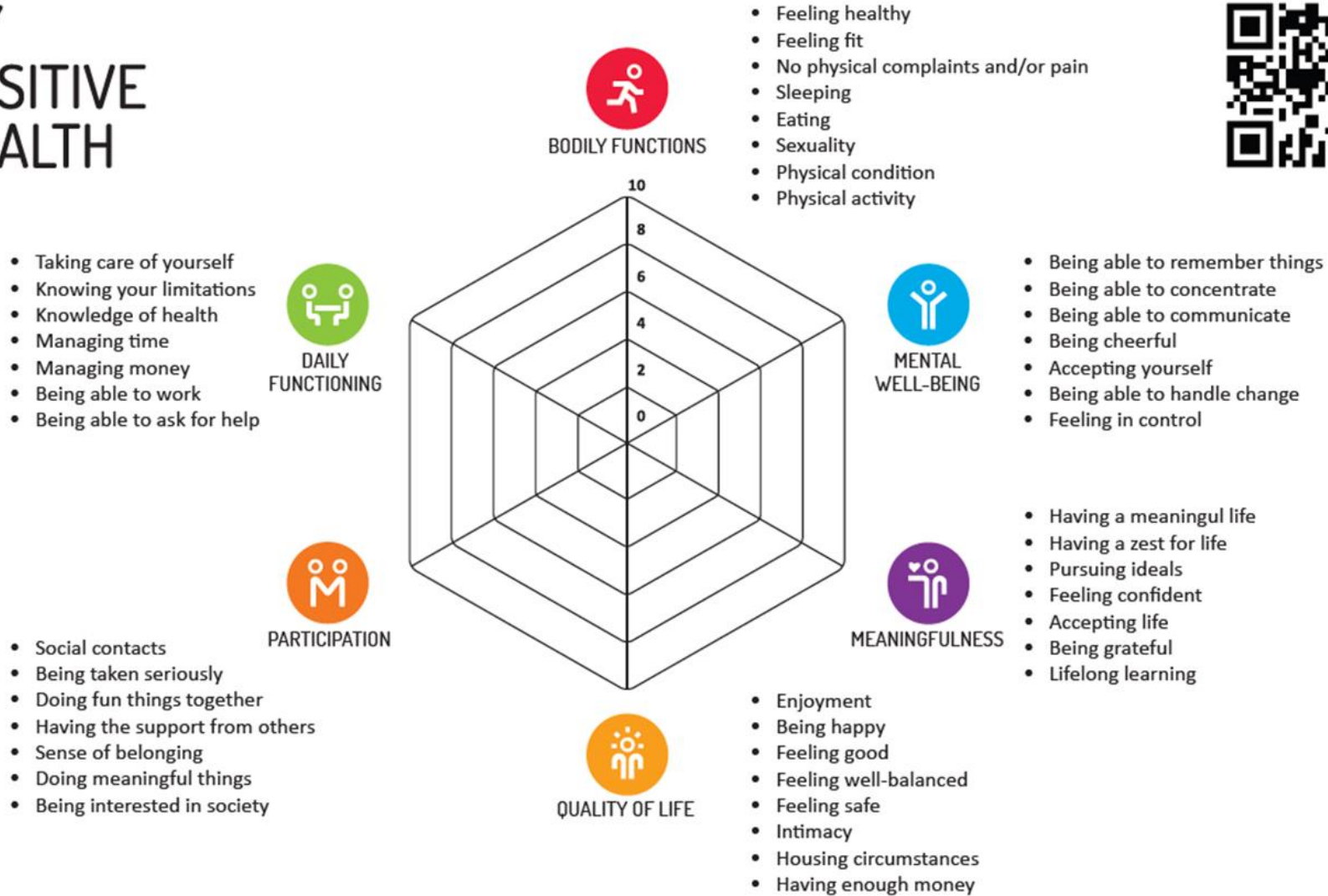








MY POSITIVE HEALTH



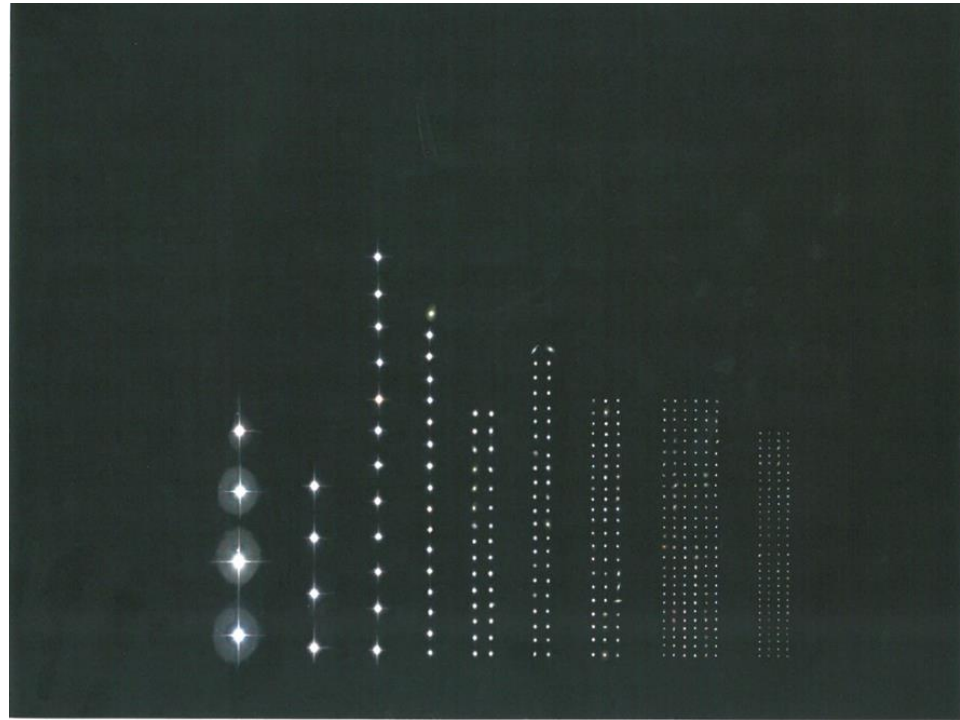
Something that is important to me is missing: _____

Beware

It is not a *measurement* tool!

It is a *dialogue* tool ...

the *experienced* reality versus **the *classified* reality**



Working with Positive Health

Is about **3 elements**:

1. *The broad reflection inwardly - ‘My Spiderweb’*
2. *The ‘alternative dialogue’ - **What matters really to you?**
Would you want to change something?*
3. *The availability of **practical ‘Actions’**, which the person chooses him/herself and **is being coached** on the choice.*

Working with Positive Health

Is about **3 elements**:

1. *The broad reflection inwardly - ‘My Spiderweb’* > **Comprehensibility**
2. *The ‘alternative dialogue’ - What matters really to you?
Would you want to change something?* > **Meaningfulness**
3. *The availability of practical ‘Actions’, which the person chooses
him/herself and is being coached on the choice.* > **Manageability**

Different tools, besides the adults tool, there is also a tool for children, youth and a simple version:

MY POSITIVE HEALTH
CHILD 8-16 YEARS

- MY BODY**
 - Feeling good
 - Having energy
 - Eating healthily
 - Sleeping well
 - Sports & exercise
 - Physical complaints
 - No complaints and/or pain
 - Physical appearance
- MY FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS**
 - Managing your feelings
 - Accepting yourself
 - Fitting in
 - Feeling positive about life *
 - Knowing your limitations *
 - Coping with adversity *
- NOW AND IN THE FUTURE**
 - Looking at the future
 - Culture and religion
 - Having goals and dreams
 - Making choices *
 - Self-knowledge *
 - Role models *
- FEELING GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF**
 - Enjoyment
 - Happiness
 - Cheerfulness
 - A pleasant environment *
 - Taking pleasure in doing things *
 - Receiving support and understanding from others *
- PARTICIPATION**
 - Friends
 - Belonging
 - Bullying
 - Self-determination *
 - Keeping up with others *
 - Personal contribution *
- DAILY LIFE**
 - Going to school
 - Being yourself
 - Leisure time
 - Looking after yourself
 - Feeling normal
 - Limitations
 - Smoking, alcohol and drug use *

The following is particularly important to me _____

© IPH/PH | Children's tool 1.0 | www.positivehealth-international.com, in collaboration with Institute for Positive Health (IPH) | *suitable for children from 12 years

Childrens tool 8-16 year

MY POSITIVE HEALTH
ADOLESCENTS 16-25 YEARS

- MY BODY**
 - Feeling healthy
 - Having energy
 - No physical complaints or pain
 - Eating healthily
 - Sleeping
 - Fitness
 - Sports & exercise
 - Physical appearance
- MY FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS**
 - Managing your feelings
 - Accepting yourself
 - Fitting in
 - Feeling positive about life *
 - Knowing your limitations *
 - Coping with adversity *
- MEANINGFULNESS**
 - Leading a meaningful life
 - Having confidence in the future
 - Having zest for life
 - Having goals and dreams
 - Making choices
 - Accepting situations
 - Gratitude
- QUALITY OF LIFE**
 - Happiness
 - Enjoyment
 - Experience balance
 - Feeling safe
 - A pleasant environment
 - Housing and living environment
 - Making ends meet
- PARTICIPATION**
 - Social contacts
 - Being taken seriously
 - Doing fun things with other people
 - Belonging
 - Self-expression
 - Meaningful relationships
 - Receiving support and understanding from others
- DAILY LIFE**
 - Taking care of yourself
 - Being able to work or study
 - Knowing your limitations
 - Knowledge about health
 - Ability to plan
 - Being able to ask for help
 - Smoking, alcohol and drug use

The following is particularly important to me _____

© IPH/PH | Tool Adolescents and young adults 1.0 | www.positivehealth-international.com, in collaboration with Institute for Positive Health (IPH)

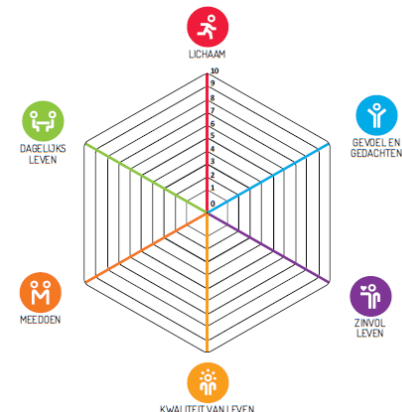
Youth tool 16-25 year

1. Lichaam

1	Voel jij je gezond?	Nee	Een beetje	Ja	Hier wil ik over praten
2	Voel jij je fit?	Nee	Een beetje	Ja	Hier wil ik over praten
3	Heb je pijn?	Nee	Een beetje	Ja	Hier wil ik over praten
4	Slaap je goed?	Nee	Een beetje	Ja	Hier wil ik over praten
5	Eet je gezond?	Nee	Een beetje	Ja	Hier wil ik over praten
6	Ben je vaak ziek?	Nee	Een beetje	Ja	Hier wil ik over praten
7	Kan je goed bewegen?	Nee	Een beetje	Ja	Hier wil ik over praten

Je hebt nagedacht over je lichaam. Welk cijfer geef je dit?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

GA



Why fill out the questionnaire

This brochure is useful when you talk about yourself and your health to, for example, your physician, caregiver, home counsellor, physiotherapist or youth care worker. The statements in this brochure may help you think about your situation. Which issues are you facing? What is important to you? And what would you like to change?

Why think about that?

Health is more than not being sick. It is also about being able to adapt to changes in both your body and your life - such as an injury, a setback, age-related ailments, problems at home, being overworked or having to say goodbye to someone you love. To feel better, there are many possibilities to focus on.

What is Positive Health?

Positive Health is a way of looking at health from a broader perspective. For example, are you able to manage sufficiently? Are you happy or do you feel lonely? Or perhaps you need medical care or support from within your own environment? The point is for you to feel healthy and energetic, in the way that suits you best.

> read more on the back of this brochure

The power of Positive Health

Former general practitioner Machteld Huber has researched what people themselves consider to be 'health'. She did this after she had suffered several illnesses and noticed that she was able to contribute greatly to her own recovery. Her research shows that people who have had an illness themselves see health in much broader terms than merely the physical side. It is also about knowing your limits, for example. And about feeling good about yourself, in control of your life, and able to participate.

Being healthy, therefore, is more than not being sick. So, for people who need care, perhaps there are other things important to them than those assessed by care providers. That is why talking about it is so important. Many care providers and social workers are already working with Positive Health.

Also online

Would you like to know more? Have a look at mijnpositievegezondheid.nl. There, you can fill out an extensive questionnaire. In this way, you can check how you are doing, whenever you need to. The website also has a number of pointers on how to stay Positively Healthy.



Stichting Institute for Positive Health

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How are you doing?

Talking about what is important for your health.

Read more about it in this brochure.



Handbook Positive Health in Primary Care
The Dutch Example

Increasing numbers of general practitioners are discovering the benefits of working with Positive Health. It helps to talk with patients in a different way, with a focus on possibilities rather than on the impossibilities related to a particular health problem. This is good for the patient. And for the general practitioner. But how do we apply Positive Health? This handbook provides useful tools! The book is full of tips, tells the story of how the concept was first developed and gives practical examples.

It explains the underlying scientific basis of Positive Health — with a clear emphasis on what is meaningful to patients. And, above all, this book invites you to start working with Positive Health on various levels — in your consulting room, your practice and in the local community. Because cooperation and combined effort are key. You will experience how Positive Health seamlessly fits the core values and challenges of all aspects of primary care.

The handbook is intended for all primary care professionals in and around the practice, as well as those who are still in training. It describes the Dutch health care system and the experiences related to inspiration, implementation and the embedment of the Positive Health concept into this system. The publication is indispensable for anyone who wants to provide meaningful primary care using the Positive Health concept.

About the authors

Machteld Huber is a former general practitioner and founder of the Positive Health approach. General practitioners *Hans Peter Jung* and *Karolien van den Brekel-Dijkstra* are working with Positive Health every day in their medical practices. All three are associated with the Institute for Positive Health (IPH).

'When I heard about Positive Health and the spider web, I felt that it gave us a much wanted tool to empower our patients and the community.'
Elinborg Bárðardóttir, general practitioner & programme director primary care training, Primary Healthcare in Iceland



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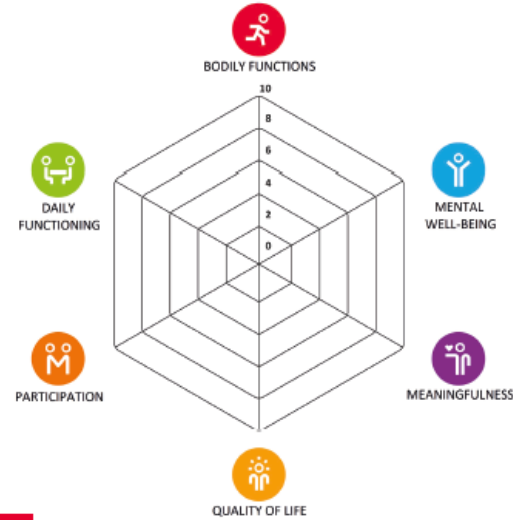
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Huber, Jung en
van den Brekel-Dijkstra

Handbook Positive Health in Primary Care

Handbook
Positive Health in Primary Care
The Dutch Example

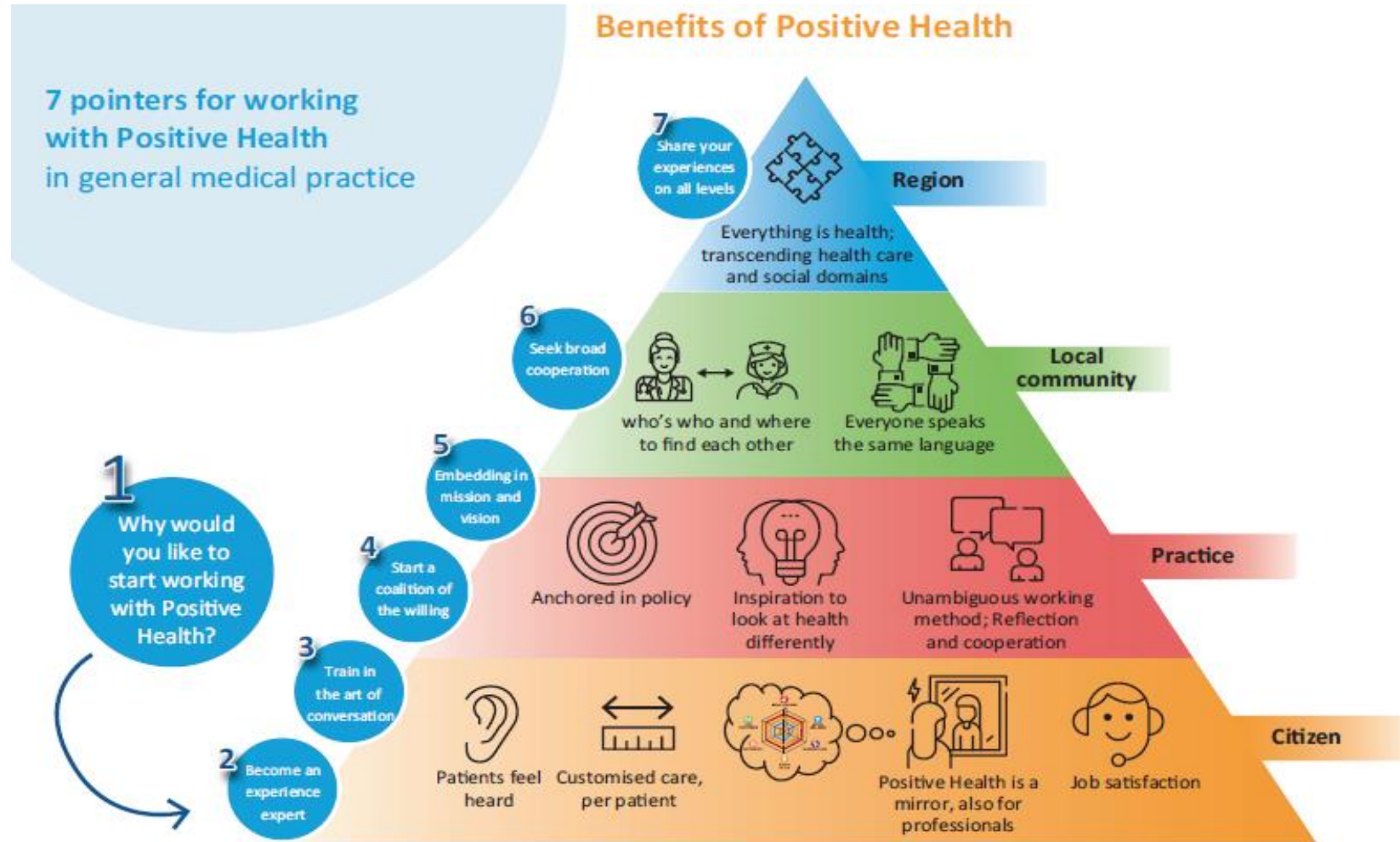
Machteld Huber
Hans Peter Jung
Karolien van den Brekel-Dijkstra



bohn
sluiser
van boijnum
Part of the Challenge Clinician group

<https://www.iph.nl/en/handbook-positive-health/>

What we learned from 10 years Positive Health in the Netherlands:



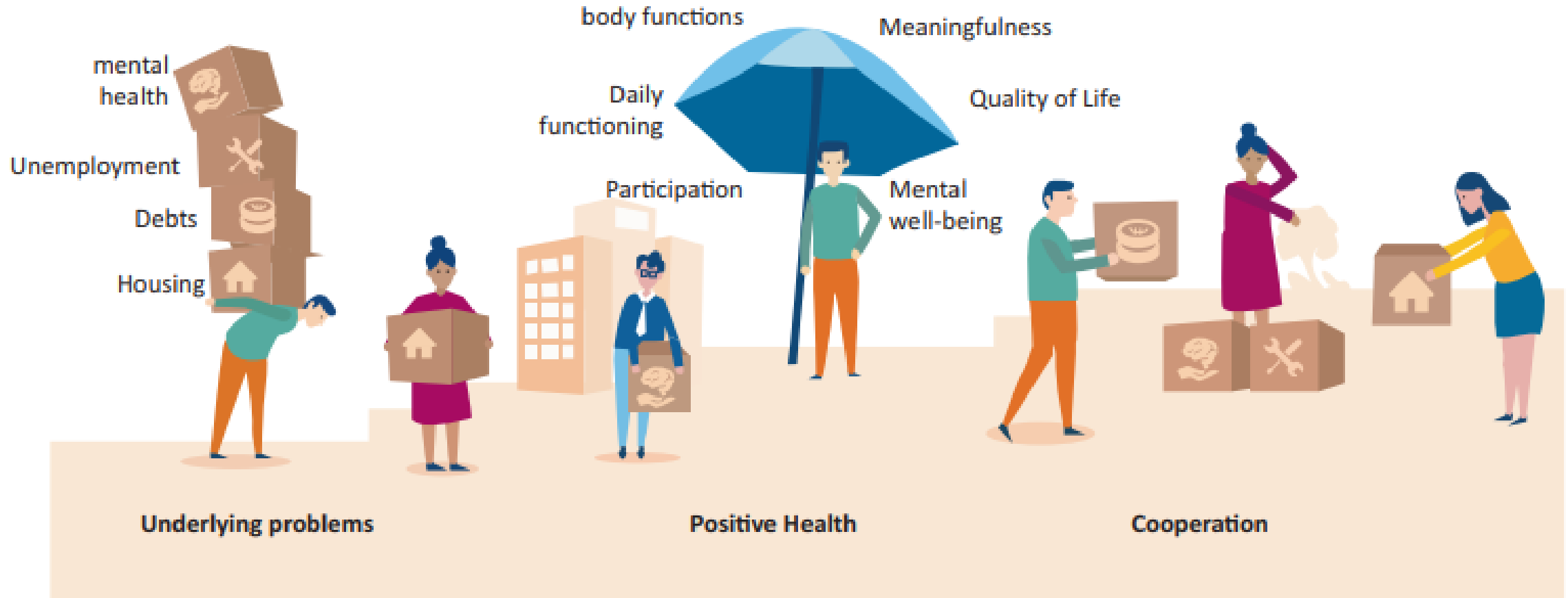
Positive Health:

Enhancing resilient and meaningful living

.... in a supportive environment!

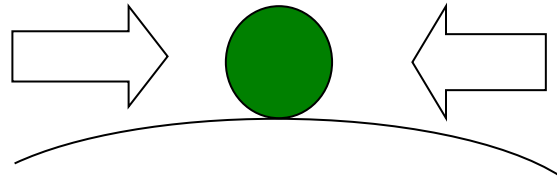


Positive Health in the National Health Policy Document 2020-2024

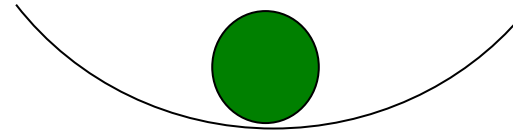


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Conventional approach



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(Ten Napel et al., 2006; WUR/LBI)

Links for more information

www.iph.nl/en

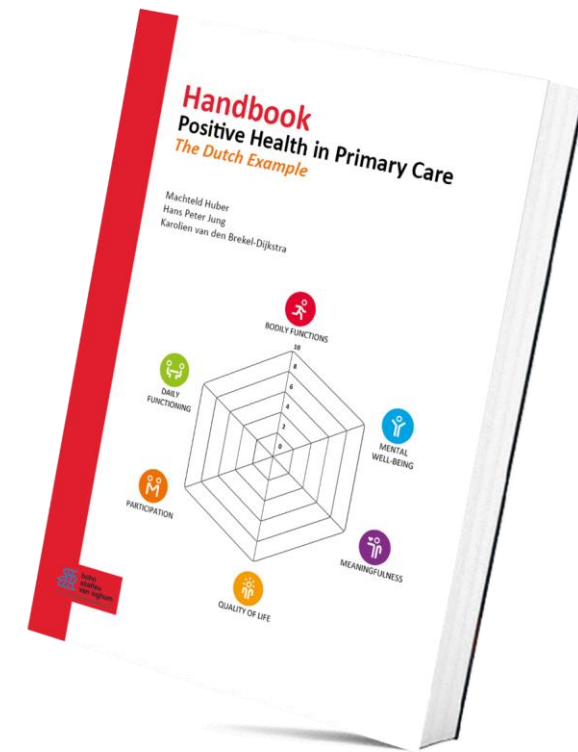
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For more information about Positive Health international,
lecture or workshop: www.positivehealth-international.com
E-mail: k.vandenbrekel@positivehealth-international.com

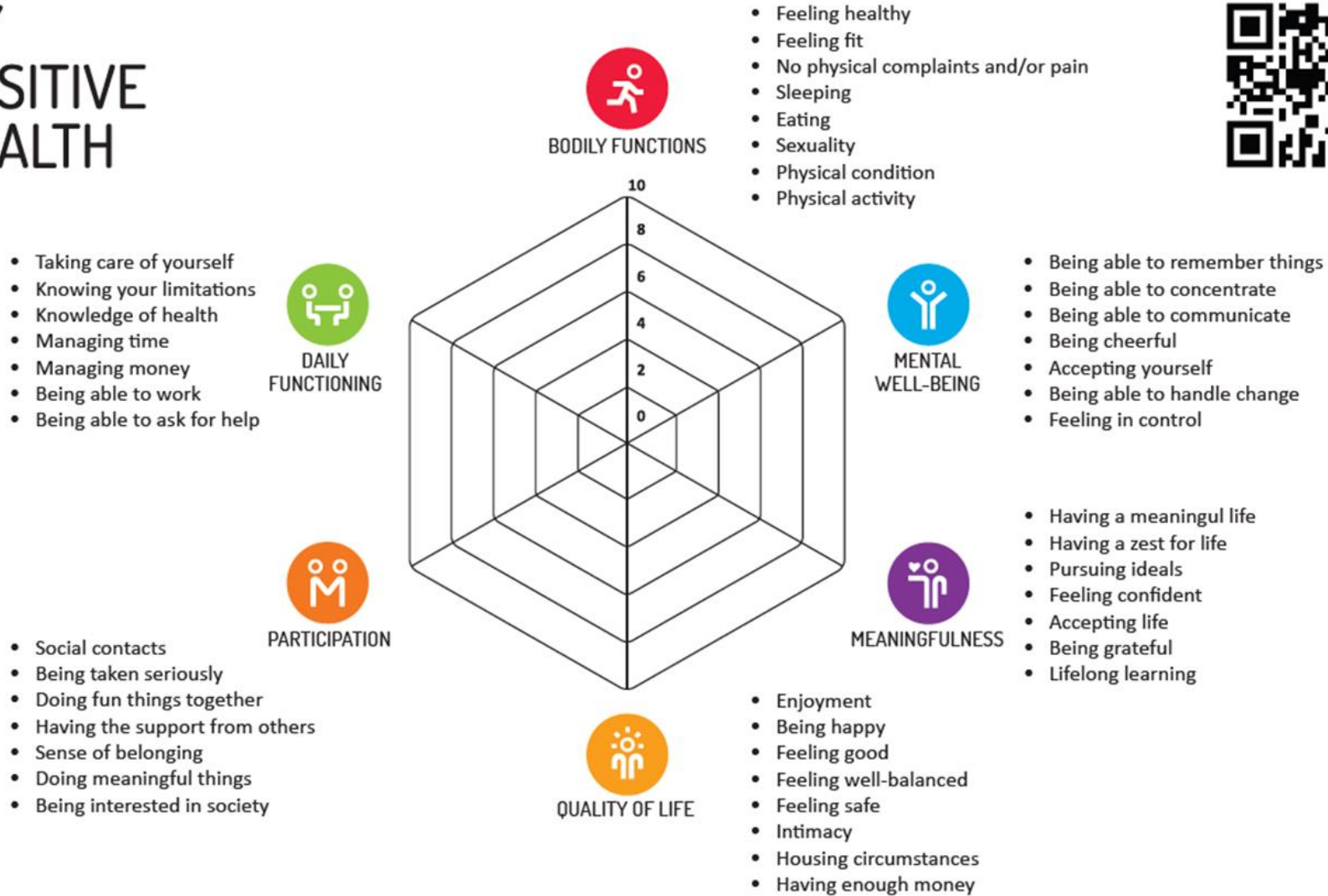


www.iph.nl/en/handbook-positive-health/

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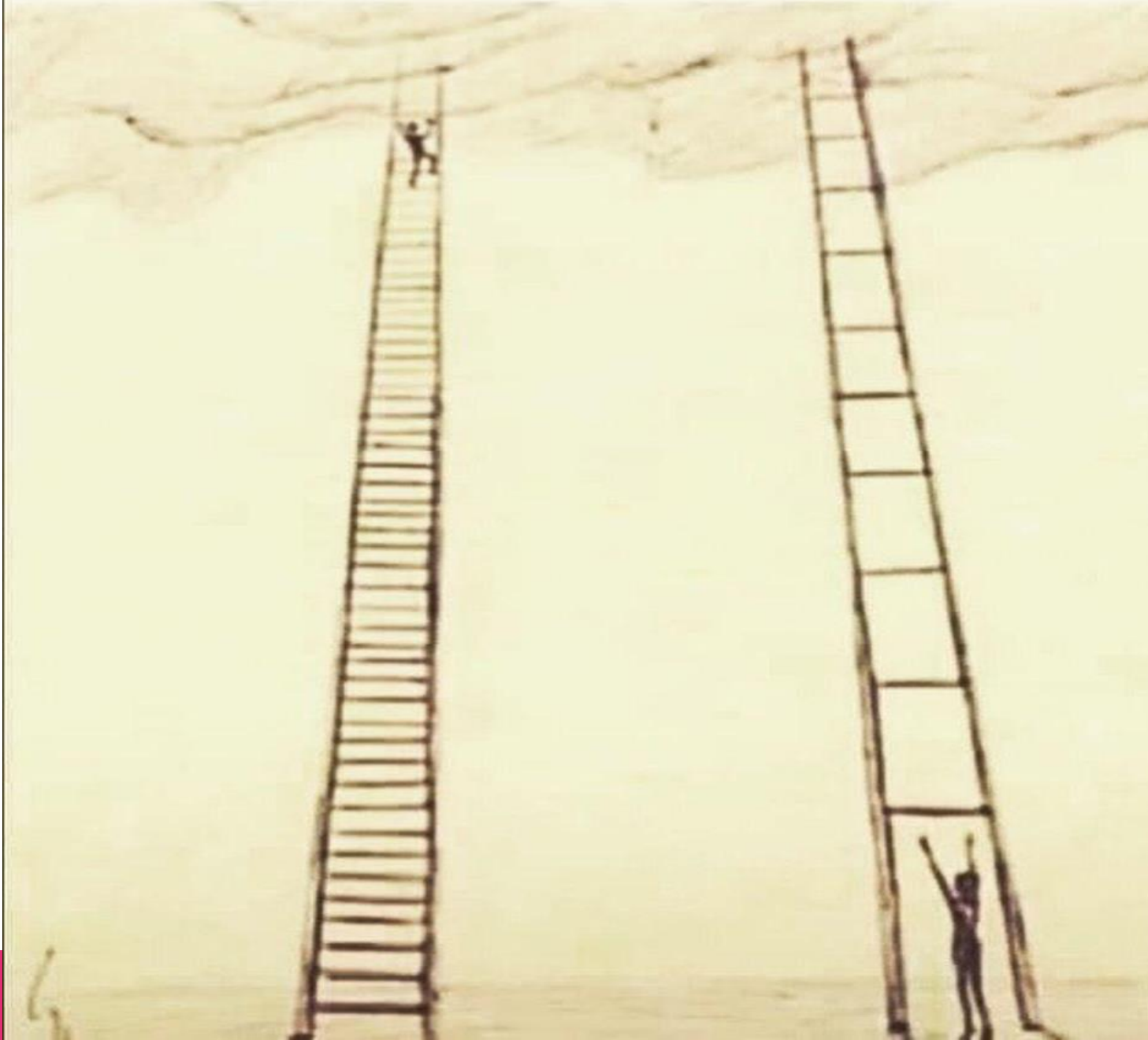


MY POSITIVE HEALTH



Something that is important to me is missing: _____

The importance of smaller steps. Love it



Thank you for your attention!

www.iph.nl/en/

&

www.positivehealth-international.com