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Quality of Life in Therapeutic Communities for Addictions: A Positive Search for Wellbeing and Happiness

Eric Broekaert[a], Jessica De Maeyer[b], Stijn Vandevelde[a], Wouter Vanderplasschen[a], Claudia Claes[b], Kathy Colpaert[b], and Maurice Walgraeve[b]

[a]Department of Special Needs Education, Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium; [b]Faculty of Education, Health and Social Work, University College Ghent, Ghent, Belgium

ABSTRACT
Although addiction is increasingly considered as a chronic problem, only a limited number of studies have addressed quality of life (QoL) in therapeutic communities (TCs) for addictions. This reflective conceptual article assesses the history, philosophy, and background of the TC movement as modern concept, with roots in existentialism and phenomenology, as well as the QoL approach as a "postmodern" concept, with a positive vision on wellbeing and happiness, grounded in Aristotelian rationalism. The exploration of the QoL concept situated in the context of TC values, facts, and subjects leads to the finding that both visions can go alternatively together and fertilize each other.

KEYWORDS
Addiction; positive psychology; quality of life; therapeutic communities; wellbeing

The concept of quality of life (QoL) becomes more important in scientific literature (De Maeyer, Vanderplasschen, & Broekaert, 2010). QoL is part of postmodern thinking that—in essence—goes back to a philosophy of individual civil rights, self-advocacy, emancipation, deinstitutionalization, and inclusion (Broekaert, Vandevelde, & Briggs, 2011). It belongs to the postexistentialist period and it should be seen as an effort to start from a subjective perspective in our alienating, modernist society, by listening to an individual's own experiences and expectations in life.

The drug-free therapeutic community (TC) or TC for addictions started at the end of the 1950s, reached Europe in the 1970s and can be situated in the existentialist and humanistic tradition (Soyez & Broekaert, 2005). TCs are essentially educational environments that consider the subject in social interaction and dialogue. TCs defend to be part of a context. Consequently, subjective perspectives relate to an interactive dialogue. This means that the scientific knowledge (the facts/evidence), as well as the TC philosophy and functioning (the values) and the residents and staff members involved (the subjects) constitute QoL in TCs. However, the question remains as to how the postmodern QoL concept can be

CONTACT Jessica De Maeyer Jessica.demaeyer@hogent.be Faculty of Education, Health and Social Work, University College Ghent, Voskenslaan 270, 9000 Ghent, Belgium.

integrated in and go together with the modernist interpretation of evidence, values and subjects' perspectives in TCs?

To tackle this question, we assess the history, philosophy, and background of the TC movement, as well as that of the QoL movement. The method involves a conceptual reflection, supplemented by findings from a case study in TC De Kiem (Belgium).

The integration of both approaches may lay in postmodern social constructivism, in which the subject is considered as the actor of his own knowledge based on interaction and dialogue. The association of QoL with positive psychology, the successor of the existential humanist psychology, is explored.

The concept of QoL

The concept of QoL has been put forward as a prominent outcome measure for treatment and support in various disciplines (mental health, addiction, disability; De Maeyer et al., 2010; Katschnig, 2006; Schalock, 2004). However, despite its long history and its recognition as a central concept in health care and social support, there is still no consensus about the interpretation of the concept (Carr & Higginson, 2001; Dijkers, 2007; Farquhar, 1995; Moons, Budts, & De Geest, 2006).

Originally, the word *quality* is derived from the Latin word *Qualis*, which literally means "of what sort." The term *quality of life* was first noted in 1943, in the midst of the Second World War (Cummins, Lau, & Stokes, 2004). The date is interesting, as it suggests the relation between survival and death. After World War II, the term *QoL* has been used to describe the role of material wellbeing on individuals' lives. Because of the economic prosperity and the improved standard of living following the War, an upcoming interest in the concept QoL was noticed among the general population. This materialistic approach of QoL was related to the possession of material goods, without attention for individuals' subjective well-being (Cummins et al., 2004). In the 1960s, the exclusive focus on individuals' material well-being was questioned and the conceptualisation of QoL was extended to issues such as family, health, and housing, to gain insight in the QoL of a society as a whole. This is often referred to as the social indicators movement, which proposes a social scientific index to measure the well-being of the general population (Farquhar, 1995; Rapley, 2003). From the 1970s on, increasing attention has been given to QoL in health care research and clinical practice (e.g., in oncology and psychiatry), especially for patients with chronic disorders (Moons et al., 2006).

The continuous and growing attention for the concept of QoL illustrates that since WWII, there has been a permanent question about what QoL people really want. This is reflected in the definition of the WHO Quality of Life Group: "individuals' perceptions of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live, and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns" (The WHOQOL Group, 1998, p. 551). Part of the conceptual inconsistencies about QoL is due to varying views on the "good" life as represented in arts, politics, philosophy, and science. In arts, it seems hard to find an equilibrium between the classic interpretation of beauty and the current rather anarchistic texture (Nash, 2007). In

politics, policy makers balance between "right" and "left" (Giddens, 1994), while a loss of the great scientific theory is observed in philosophy, which is accompanied by an uncompleted search for ethical fulfillment and meaningfulness (Lyotard, 1984). In religion, churches often lean on certainty, absolute values, and dogma, whereas modernism and Enlightment are based on free thinking and rely on reason, science, and logic, rejecting whatever dogma (Henderson, 2003). Finally, a tension persists between quantitative empirical-analytical approaches to construct scientific knowledge and qualitative interpretative approaches to study phenomena (Broekaert, Autrique, Vanderplasschen, & Colpaert, 2010).

Yet, in the current debate, agreement is growing that QoL should be conceptualized as a construct that (a) is multidimensional and influenced by personal and environmental factors and its interactions, (b) includes the same aspects for all people, (c) consists of both subjective and objective components, and (d) is enhanced by self-determination, resources, purposes in life and a sense of belonging (Cummins, 2005). Most authors agree on the fact that QoL should encompass both objective and subjective criteria (e.g., happiness, satisfaction with life), that should be measured separately, given the limited correlation between both indicators (Cummins, 2005; Ruggeri, Warner, Bisoffi, & Fontecedro, 2001). Moreover, QoL is mainly determined by the perception of the individual (Schalock & Verdugo Alonso, 2002). It is primarily a subjective concept that represents an individual's perspective and perception of life (Bonomi et al., 2000).

With regard to subjective well-being, two at first sight opposing and distinct philosophical conceptualizations are established—the hedonistic and the eudemonic approach (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The hedonic approach states that wellbeing relates to pleasure and happiness, including pleasures of the mind and body (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Maximizing human happiness and satisfaction is the ideal objective in this approach. Subjective well-being is the concept most commonly used as indicator of well-being, starting from a hedonic approach, in which the person is given the freedom to define happiness based on his/her own frame of reference (Lee & Carey, 2013). Subjective wellbeing includes cognitive (satisfaction with life) and affective components (positive and negative affect; Diener & Ryan, 2009). The eudemonic approach goes back to Aristotle (384–322 BC), who stated that happiness could not be equated with pleasure but could only be achieved by giving purpose and meaning to one's life ("doing that which is worth doing"). Developing and realizing personal potentials and life goals and moving toward self-actualization are central aspects of the eudemonic approach (Waterman, Schwartsz, & Conti, 2008). Eudemonic wellbeing represents a statement of wellbeing resulting in personal growth, engagement, and expressiveness. From this perspective happiness can only be achieved when living a meaningful life (Lee & Carey, 2013).

History and background of TCs for addictions

A TC for addictions can be defined as "a drug-free environment in which people with addictive problems live together in an organized and structured way to promote change toward a drug-free life in the outside society" (Broekaert, Kooyman, &

Ottenberg, 1998, p. 595). The community as such is considered as the main feature of TCs, which is commonly referred to as "community as a method" (as elaborated in the seminal works of De Leon, 2000, 2007). Community as method is characterized by "the use of a range of structured activities in which both staff members and residents are expected to participate and the use of peers as role models who set a positive example and demonstrate how to live according to the TC's philosophy and value system" (Vanderplasschen, Vandevelde, & Broekaert, 2014, p. 9).

The cradle of the first TCs, Synanon, originated in 1958 as a self-help movement, promoting a drug-free life, influenced by the principles of the Alcoholics Anonymouse movement and the ideologies of the 1960s and the humanistic psychology. Casriel (1976, p. 54) reported:

> In retrospect, it is evident that Synanon and Daytop, as well as the groups I was running, were part of something going on—not just with addicts—but with people. The human potential movement had begun. The National Training Laboratory was growing fast. Followers of Maslow and Rogers had founded the Association for Humanistic Psychology.

Maslow saw Synanon as a utopian society (Maslow, 1971) and he described Daytop (a TC based on Synanon's principles) as a beautiful place that could be important to everyone (Maslow, 1971; O'Brien, 1993). Maslow's work on self-actualization (cf. eudaimonia) and Buckminister Fuller's formulations (1969) on the design and use of environments that allow innovative use of living space and resources, have also been central to the growth of Synanon's lifestyle and value system (Gould, 1975). According to Bassin, Carl Rogers was also in favor of Synanon's encounter groups ("the Games"; Bassin, 1977, p. 10).

The original concept of Synanon demanded life-long engagement of the residents. Soon, it was transformed into a striving toward reinsertion into society and recovery from addiction, mainly under the influence of American TCs such as Phoenix House New York and Daytop Village. Synanon ended as a closed system under the dogmatic charismatic leadership of its founder Chuck Dederich (Broekaert et al., 2000).

Gradually, the TC movement spread over the United States, Europe, Asia, South America, and Africa. In Europe, the TC for addictions has been influenced by the so-called democratic TC approach of Bion, Bridger, Main, and Jones, amongst others, that originated during and shortly after the Second World War (Vandevelde & Broekaert, 2009). Maxwell Jones stressed the necessity of transparency in TCs and characterized them as open systems as opposed to closed systems, which are "hierarchical and therefore the antithesis of holism" (Jones, 1988, p. 48; Vandevelde & Broekaert, 2009). In these open systems, social learning takes a prominent role. Social learning can be described as a process whereby persons solve problems together, after which they review the characteristics and possibilities of their actions (Jones, 1982; Murto, 1991; Vandevelde & Broekaert, 2009). Other important evolutions with regard to TCs in Europe relate to the fact that TCs are influenced by the antipsychiatric movement, existentialism, and alternative community living; and that TCs have always been open to different ideologies (Vanderplasschen et al.,

2014). This means "that the common human value system always transcended the different visions" (Broekaert, Berg-Sørensen, Vanderplasschen, & Vandevelde, 2015, p. 103).

In essence, the TC operates as an open, meaningful educational system, based on humanistic existentialist values, scientific evidence, and the interactions between staff and residents (Broekaert et al., 1998; De Leon, 2000), within the context of a society that tolerates substance use to a certain extent and promotes the pursuit of wellbeing and happiness.

QoL in TCs

Given the recognition that addiction is a chronic disorder, attention for the concept of QoL is growing in this field. However, up until now, only a limited number of studies have specifically addressed QoL in TCs for addiction (e.g., Fischer & Roche, 2013; Gonzalez-Saiz et al., 2009, 2011; Johnson et al., 2012; Lozano Rojas et al., 2009; Snyder, Schactman, & Young, 2015; Vanderplasschen et al., 2013).

The conceptualization of QoL in a TC is—by our knowledge—not yet specifically studied and cannot be defined univocally. To our understanding, it has to be seen as an integral part of the TC values, subjects, and facts. The values refer to the TC as a school for life, based on free responsible action and the pursuit of wellbeing and happiness. The facts are based on reasonable evidence on abstinence and success after treatment and positive evolutions in diverse psycho-social domains. The subjects illustrate the striving for survival and recovery. Consequently, QoL in TCs has to be defined as quality in context. When talking about QoL, a holistic approach that gives attention to the individual as a whole in open interaction with his or her environment is indispensable (Brown, Renwick, & Nagler, 1996; Laudet, Becker, & White, 2009). In the following sections, we will focus on these three topics separately.

Values and QoL in the context of TCs for addictions

The value system of a TC, striving toward a drug-free life, implies that residents will not be hold against their will. It is expected that residents can act and behave in a free way. Referring to Thomas Kuhn (1996) and his influential book The *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, it is necessary to make an enquiry of the predispositions of important concepts like "freedom" or "liberty" (two words for the same content). It is important to focus on the difference between positive and negative liberty. Negative liberty is the absence of obstacles, barriers, or constraints. Positive liberty is the possibility of acting—or the fact of acting—in such a way as to take control of one's life and realize one's fundamental purposes (cf. eudemonia). The idea of distinguishing between the negative and positive sense of liberty goes back to Kant. The issue has several links with discussions about free will and (the nature of) autonomy. Within the TC, it is assumed that positive liberty, if not necessary for a good QoL, is a strong predictor of individual QoL. Because the concept of QoL starts from

individuals' own perspectives and considers clients themselves to be the main actors, attention for individuals' QoL will increase their empowerment and self-control.

In TCs for addictions, the longing/craving for drugs is described as an overwhelming "out-of-balance" desire to get the substances to meet the physical, cerebral, social, and psychological needs of addiction. In other words, the search for pure enjoyment and lust to fight basic anxieties. The TC tried to create a milieu to utter underlying problems, to realize an atmosphere of safety, and to offer security through a clear value system.

Facts and QoL in the context of TCs for addictions

In measuring TC outcomes, success has been defined as a drug-free life (abstinence). This is considered as the QoL "par excellence." There is scientific evidence available on success after TC treatment (Bergmark, 2005), but the results are not unequivocal (Vanderplasschen et al., 2013). A Cochrane study demonstrated few evidence for TCs as compared with other interventions in randomized controlled trials (Smith, Gates, & Foxcroft, 2006). A more recent review carried out by Malivert, Fatséas, Denis, Langlois, and Auriacombe (2012) showed a significant decrease in substance abuse during and after treatment in TCs. Long-term results, however, are not that favorable as about 50% are reported to relapse on a longer term (Malivert et al., 2012; Vanderplasschen et al., 2013).

Outcome research in TCs has mainly been based on quasi-experimental studies and less rigorous methodological designs, since it is deemed unethical to randomly select residents who should have access to treatment. Moreover, the first outcome studies were usually carried out by persons who were involved in the development and implementation of TCs. An extensive number of studies has indicated that success depends on the time spent in program and early drop-out can be countered positively by the use of senior staff, family and social network interventions, motivational interviewing, and the use of assessment instruments (De Leon, 2000; Raes, De Jong, De Bacquer, Broekaert, & De Maeseneer, 2011; Ravndal, 2003; Soyez, De Leon, Rosseel, & Broekaert, 2006).

A recent review (on 16 studies using a control condition) with regard to the effectiveness of TC treatment showed positive results on substance abuse and criminal recidivism in as much as two out of three studies (Vanderplasschen et al., 2013). An interesting finding revealed that a number of studies (10 out of 16) looked beyond the "traditional" outcome indicators, such as abstinence and criminal recidivism, when assessing TC treatment success, whereas other studies did not (six out of 16; Vanderplasschen et al., 2013). The results indicate that some of the studies who took these indicators into account showed an improved psychological functioning. From a recovery-oriented perspective, increased attention for exactly these broader and more subjective indicators, such as psychosocial wellbeing and family/social relations, may foster the personal growth and social inclusion that TCs are striving for.

Subjects and QoL in thec of TCs for addictions

Survival is an important aspect of life for drug addicts, who have often been at close end to death. Not surprisingly, TC names include symbols of survival such as "Phoenix House," "Last Renaissance," and "Second Genesis." Several TCs emphasize the importance of living and survival in their philosophy: "To be reborn is our ultimate reality" (Last Renaissance, 1976). This striving for survival and recovery constitutes the essential educational process of the TC. Junior residents mirror their behavior, feelings, and attitudes to that of positive role models and senior residents serve as examples for younger residents. The TC is built on the self-help processes that imply a free choice for treatment. The residents are the protagonists of their own life and staff members provide the context for change and recovery. As a consequence, TC treatment needs to last long enough so that it can empower persons in "recovering a valuable and meaningful life" (Gudjonsson, Savona, Green, & Terry, 2011; Vanderplasschen et al., 2013). It refers to the sometimes very long process in which an individual re-takes control over his or her personal life (Gagne, White, & Anthony, 2007). Farkas (2007) pointed at four important aspects of the recovery model as being person- and not patient-centered; as looking for involving the person in his own treatment and recovery pathway; as focusing on self-determination and opportunities for personal choice; and as offering a prospect of hope for new directions in life. Therefore, QoL, which is described by Snyder (2015, pp. 133) as a "loose analoque for personal recovery," is a broad and subjective concept, indicating there are as many "good quality lives" as there are individuals (Ward & Brown, 2004). The applied methods in TCs serve the educational process, defined as

> Meaningful social interaction within an adapted milieu. It aims at a transitional process of growth and development of the whole person, his family and primary network. This social interaction assumes diversity and differences between participants. It strives for inclusion, and makes use of intuitive and rationally structured methods and approaches. The integration of at first sight contradictory angles of incidence, creates new insights and more balanced behavior, feelings and attitudes. (Definition by the Department of Special Needs Education, Ghent University, Belgium)

The applied methods in TCs serve the educational process. These methods do not stand on their own, but are part of the social interaction that forms the basis for growth and self-reliance. Life can be hard in a TC, as quitting from drugs also means breaking with old habits of use and a way of life.

Discussion

The concept of QoL has not yet been thoroughly studied in TCs for addictions. This article has focused on exploring the QoL concept in relation with TC values, facts and subjects. It has shown that QoL, as a broad and holistic concept, has to be studied within the TC context, as it cannot be considered apart from its historical evolution and context. Otherwise, the multidimensionality of the concept could lead to eclecticism in which diversity and inclusion could be lost (Broekaert et al., 2010).

The TC is a child of existentialism and humanism, now situated in a postmodern area. As a postmodern concept, QoL is based on emancipation and empowerment of the subject. This implies responsibility and freedom. Also, TCs strive for freedom and responsibility for these ideals but do not put them in a sociopolitical context as materialistic poststructural postmodernism does. The TC vision rather corresponds with the idealist social constructivist interpretation of postmodernism. The TC movement tries to integrate idealism, materialism, and symbolism as those three visions on mankind and life can alternatively go together (Broekaert et al., 2011). A clear philosophy and theory (De Leon, 2000) exists in TCs, but at the same time people are invited to a dialogue with staff and residents (Broekaert, Vandevelde, Schuyten, Erauw, & Bracke, 2004). As well in QoL as in TC literature, the perspectives of residents serve as a tool to present residents as subjects-who-know rather than as objects-that-are-known by others. Thus, they capture meanings and representations that are "their own," and complement specialized, often medical, knowledge (Claes et al., 2011). However, the existentialist perspective of dialogue with others in TCs serves as the basis for developing self-knowledge.

As argued above, QoL is a broad and holistic concept, that has to be studied within the TC context, because it cannot be considered apart from its internal bonding between values, facts, and subjects. Within this internal interaction the one is part of the whole and the whole is part of the one: a diversity in unity or/and unity in diversity. This differs at first sight from the above-mentioned World Health Organization-definition on QoL, where the focus may be lying more on the perception of the individual's expectations, rather than on the internal bonding. The main reason of this incompatibility can be explained by the clash between existentialism and postmodern thinking, where the "we" feeling is replaced by a more individualist approach on QoL; Where hermeneutic methodologies has to counter objective –positivist evidence based on randomization strategies and where grand theories are lost in favor of the individual narrative. It is argued that a postmodern new positive psychology emerged that differs from the "old existentialist approaches." Could the individual perceptions in search for happiness correspond with the global aspiration for happiness? The key to this answer may lie in a possible link between TC as existentialist movement and the positive psychology of happiness studies.

Waterman (2013) listed the impossibilities of the interrelatedness between humanistic and positive psychology, accepting the fact that the prominent humanistic psychologist Maslow introduced the term *positive psychology and emotions* in his book *Motivation and Personality* (1954). The reasons for this are mainly situated in the wish for positive psychology to be considered separately from humanistic psychology based on differences with regard to philosophical/ontological foundations, epistemology/research, and psychological practice (Waterman, 2013, pp. 125–126).

The philosophical divide

Waterman (2013) summarized the main philosophical sources and authors of humanistic psychology as (proponents of) phenomenological, hermeneutic,

constructivist, and postmodern (social constructionist) psychologies. He remarked that most of these positive psychology scholars do not refer to these sources, but rather to an Aristotelian perspective. To better understand this point, we will clarify what the position of essentialia in philosophy is about. Aristotle focuses on the essential characteristics of the individual and states that the core features of an individual are central; Plato, on the other hand, starts from the metaphysical relationship: The core features are thus interrelated. The social-constructivists consider the core features in function of the construction of social reality. This means that Aristotle, as proponent of rationalism, can be considered as the originator of empirical research in which separate elements might possess substantial characteristics that might be the cornerstones of scientific comparisons. Therefore, he investigates reality by means of its "building stones" (or its "parts"; Robertson & Atkins, 2013). This is in sharp contrast with the idealistic thinking of Plato in which reality, as perceived by our senses, is merely an imperfect representation of reality as interconnectedness (the whole) that has to be unraveled by means of Socratic questioning. Within this holistic thinking, happiness is as well part of the whole as the whole is part of the totality, as Coleridge (1814/1992) stated so accurately: "The Beautiful, contemplated in its essentials, that is, in kind and not in degree, is that in which the many, still seen as many, becomes one." Starting from an educational paradigm, happiness seen as Aristotelian partials interacts with the global existentialistic TC approach as thesis and antithesis. This interaction is leading toward a new synthesis, a starting point of a never-ending process of change for the better of mankind. By doing so, we introduced the concept of happiness into the ethical code.

The ontological divide

Waterman (2013) also pointed at an ontological difference between the humanistic and positive psychology. He indicated that the positive psychology departs from a deterministic foundation by stating that "There is a generally accepted belief that science is founded on determinist assumptions and that 'uncaused causes' are to be excluded from scientific consideration" (Waterman, 2013, p. 127). In the "first force" in psychology and psychoanalysis, determinism is omnipresent in the work of Freud and Lacan. The concept of free will, on the other hand, is almost never mentioned (Derksen, 2014). Also in behaviorism (the "second" force), determinism takes in a ponderous position. In the "third force" of psychology, the humanistic psychology, that reacted against psychoanalysis and behaviorism, free will and responsibility while taking decisions in action, and not determinism are the cornerstones. Yet, Aristotle indicates in the *Ethica Nicomachea* that man is consciously responsible for his good as well as for his bad deeds. He is able to make decisions for the good or for the worse (Stein, 2012). Once again, it seems clear that existentialist TC and Aristotelian thoughts have more in common than expected at first sight, especially if we focus on the ethical, or in the TC vision, improvement and positive change toward a high QoL.

Epistemology and research

Waterman (2013) stated that research in a humanistic tradition (e.g., exemplified in TCs as we have argued in this article), is in the first place phenomenological (interpretative) in contrast of positive psychology where research is embedded in a nomological and positivistic tradition. This reasoning is the logical consequence of the fact that positivist evidence based research is only applicable to a limited extent in TCs (Broekaert et al., 2010). This does not mean that empirical-analytical semi-experimental studies find no place in TC-research. In a recent review mentioned earlier in this article, Vanderplasschen et al. (2013) have summarized the available evidence of TCs based on high-quality studies, using controlled designs ($n = 30$ publications, based on 16 studies). These controlled studies represent only a minor part of the large amount of semi-experimental and other quantitative studies, often published in grey literature. The main reason why the majority of quantitative studies are semi-experimental has to do with an ethical positioning that impedes "at random allocation" of TC clients. In case of the TC, self-selection is a necessary condition for investigating treatment effectiveness (De Leon, 2010, p. 109). It goes hand in hand with the permanent striving to motivate clients toward treatment and to prolong their stay in treatment through the involvement of family therapy, motivational interviewing, the use of senior staff members, diagnostic instruments, and social networking, amongst others (Broekaert, 2006). The alternatively going together of quantitative and qualitative (empirical) research is significant for education in general and the TC in particular.

Psychological practice

Waterman (2013) further gave a good overview of humanistic and positive psychology-oriented interventions. But how can we explain that TC clients make use of short-term programs that are integrated in the broad TC action field? Examples include mindfulness, and strengths-based approaches aimed at improving well-being and QoL. In our opinion, the misinterpretation of what is going in TCs lies in the common assumption that the TC is a method (De Leon, 2000, 2007). The difference relates to how De Leon defined a method, in contrast to common definitions. De Leon (2000, p. 92) defined a *method* as "the activities, strategies, materials, procedures and techniques, that are employed to achieve a desired goal." According to the dictionary, a *method* is described as "plans or procedures followed to accomplish a task or attain a goal. Method implies a detailed, logically ordered plan" (American Heritage Publishing Company, 2009). For this reason, it might be underestimated that in TC as education, a great number of psychotherapeutic approaches can be used and integrated in the search for happiness, wellbeing, and a high QoL. No doubt, this includes positive psychology approaches, such as mindfulness, and strengths-based methodologies. Evidence-based practices can easily be part of the psychological interventions that are used in TCs as integrated methods. In some cases, embedded pragmatism—as learning by doing (Dewey, 1938/1997)—and practice-based evidence underpin education for QoL, wellbeing, and happiness.

Conclusion

In this article, we argued that a positive postmodern psychology can find its embedment in the context of modernist humanist TCs. In order to develop our argument, we described the TC from its core functioning, as an ethical, educational process; a search for positive human improvement. The article stressed that the inevitable opposition between Aristotelism and Platonism, determinism and responsibility, and methods and goals as thesis and anti-thesis can be transferred toward a new synthesis for the better. We focused specifically on the ethical prerequisite of education, in which social interaction and dialogue form the corner stones of a better future that includes QoL, well-being, and happiness as part of the eternal striving of mankind for human rights and freedom. The integration of positive psychology and education can contribute to an enrichment in ideas and action. Within TC as education, this action cannot be depersonalized. It is the eudaimonia and ataraxia, the "Ode an die Freude", the "choc des opinions qui jaillit la lumière (the shock of opinions that provokes enlightment)": the eternal desire for pleasure and happiness.

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