

ABSTRACT
NARRATING THE SELF: AN INTERVENTION FOR NURTURING THE WHOLE PERSON

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The aim of this study was to design, implement, and test a novel intervention for nurturing the whole person. The intervention and its theoretical framework were envisioned as a counterbalance to the scientific medical model that currently dominates clinical psychology. It was asserted that, to recover and nourish the holistic, subjective, and self-actualizing nature of the human person, it is critical to invoke both richer, phenomenological perspectives that appreciate the constructive character of personal identity, as well as positive psychological approaches that regard human flourishing.

The intervention itself consisted of seven content modules—Narrative Identity, Narrative Identity and Wellness, Dominant Narratives, Expressive Writing, Savoring, Forgiveness, and Gratitude—that were delivered over eleven weeks in the context of an honors first year seminar at a private, Jesuit university. At pre- and post-intervention, participants ($n = 18$) completed diverse measures of wellness, including quantitative self-report measures of narrative identity awareness, hedonic well-being, eudaimonic well-being, depression, anxiety, and stress, as well as narrative accounts of high and low points in their life stories that were later quantified for themes of agency and communion. Psychoeducational quizzes were administered at the conclusion of each content module to assess retention of intervention material. Finally, participants submitted evaluations of their experiences with the intervention.

Results suggest that, altogether, participants found the intervention to be valuable. All respondents ($n = 10$) reported they would recommend the intervention to a friend. On average, respondents reported that the intervention helped with their identity development to a great extent and that they were likely to apply intervention content in their everyday lives. Repeated samples t-tests did not support the hypothesized increases in narrative identity awareness, hedonic well-being, eudaimonic well-being, levels of narrated agency, or levels of narrated communion. The hypothesized decreases in stress and anxiety were also not supported, though there was evidence of a pre-post increase in depression. Psychoeducational quizzes were satisfactory on average, signifying acceptable levels of content retention. These results are interpreted considering the study's small sample size, recruitment strategy, and experimental limitations. Overall, the study is a big step toward understanding and nurturing the whole person.