

## **ECPP FULL DAY PRE-WORKSHOP ON JUNE 24TH (08:30-15:00)**

### **Pre-Conference Workshop**

10<sup>th</sup> ECPP Reykjavík, 24<sup>th</sup> of June 2020

#### **Title:**

*An Adventure through the Best of Positive Psychology:  
Pursuing the Sacred by Integrating Mindfulness, Meaning, Character Strengths, and  
Spirituality in Everyday Life and Practice*

#### **Facilitators:**

**Itai Ivtzan**, Naropa University

**Ryan M. Niemiec**, VIA Institute

#### **Learning outcomes:**

- Experience a broad range of mindfulness and positive psychology activities.
- Learn how mindfulness, meaning, spirituality, and character strengths enhance one other.
- Practice ways of boosting your mindfulness, strengths, and meaning.
- Understand the latest research on these various elements of human flourishing.

#### **Background:**

Ready for an experience that will be simultaneously meaningful, informative, and practical?

Join positive psychology leaders, authors, and international presenters (and friends), Dr. Itai Ivtzan and Dr. Ryan Niemiec on an adventure through some of the best research and practices in positive psychology. This collaborative workshop has never been offered before so participants should truly be ready for a meaningful adventure.

#### **Content:**

Dr. Itai Ivtzan and Dr. Ryan Niemiec will make sense of the exponential increase in the science and practice of mindfulness, offering unique insights that every practitioner needs to know. They will share their research and extensive practitioner background around the best ways that mindfulness intersects with character strengths, meaning, and spirituality. Various user-friendly tips, stories, metaphors, and insights will be provided that practitioners will want to use with clients.

The majority of popular mindfulness programs are deficit-focused, initially designed to remediate stress, improve coping with pain or a medical condition, manage depression and anxiety, and so on. Our focus will be strengths-based in that the work starts with and amplifies positive qualities, and in turn, that positivity is used to manage or reframe stress, problems, and other suffering. Both strength and suffering will be discussed and worked with in this workshop.

The workshop covers three general areas: theory, research, and practice, with an emphasis on the latter. You will engage in several experiential exercises and dyad/small group discussions. These are designed to help you master the key concepts and research and will help you rehearse the ingredients of the practice so you can begin using it with clients, employees, or students immediately.

This workshop is intended to provide an adventurous, creative, and open space, where we learn and grow together, while being mindful and playful.

All participants are strongly encouraged to take the free VIA Survey to attain their rank-order of character strengths prior to the workshop. Go to [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)

### **Itai Bio**

Dr Itai Ivtzan is passionate about the combination of psychology and spirituality. It makes his heart sing. He is convinced that if we befriend both psychology and spirituality, and succeed in introducing them into our lives, we will all become super-heroes, and gain super-strengths of awareness, courage, resilience, and compassion. Isn't this an amazing prospect? Dr. Itai Ivtzan is a positive psychologist, an Associate Professor at Naropa University, teaching and researching at the MA Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Mindfulness-Based. He is also an honorary senior research associate at University College London (UCL). Over the past 20 years, Dr. Ivtzan has run seminars, lectures, workshops and retreats in the UK, US, and around the world, at various educational institutions and at private events. He is a regular keynote speaker at conferences. He published several books, as well as more than 50 journal papers and book chapters. His main areas of research are positive psychology, mindfulness, and spirituality. Dr. Ivtzan is confident that mindfulness meditation has the power to change individuals – in fact, whole societies – for the better. Accordingly, he has been investing much time in studying mindfulness academically, writing books about it, teaching it, and training mindfulness teachers.

As part of his work, he established the School of Positive Transformation, where you can study the popular [Positive Psychology Practitioner Certificate](#) and [Meditation & Mindfulness Teacher Training](#).

He is the author/co-author of:

- *Awareness is Freedom: The Adventure of Psychology and Spirituality*
- *Mindfulness in Positive Psychology: The Science of Meditation and Wellbeing*
- *Second Wave Positive Psychology: Embracing the Dark Side of Life*
- *Applied Positive Psychology: Integrated Positive Practice*
- *Handbook of Mindfulness-Based Programmes: Mindfulness Interventions from Education to Health and Therapy*

## **Ryan Bio**

Ryan M. Niemiec, Psy.D. is a leading figure in the education, research, and practice of character strengths that are found in all human beings. He's education director of the VIA Institute on Character, a nonprofit organization in Cincinnati that leads the global advancement of the science of character strengths. Ryan is author of 10 books including the brand new consumer-oriented books [The Power of Character Strengths](#) (a #1 Amazon bestseller) and [The Strengths-Based Workbook for Stress Relief](#), as well as practitioner-focused books that are leaders in their respective fields including, [Character Strengths Interventions](#), [Mindfulness and Character Strengths](#), and [Positive Psychology at the Movies](#). He has two positive psychology books scheduled for 2020.

Ryan is creator of the evidenced-based, 8-week program, Mindfulness-Based Strengths Practice, used across the globe by practitioners; MBSP was the first positive-oriented mindfulness program, the only mindfulness program to target what's best in us (our character strengths), and the only one to use positive qualities (our character strengths) to improve meditation and mindful living.

Ryan has penned around 90 scholarly/peer-reviewed articles and given more than 800 workshops, keynotes, and webinars on positive psychology topics across the globe. He's a columnist for *Live Happy Magazine* and for *Psychology Today*, the latter which his column has 1-2 million reads. He's an award-winning psychologist, certified coach, annual instructor at the University of Pennsylvania, and adjunct professor at Xavier University. Ryan received a Distinguished Early Career Award from the American Psychological Association in 2011, and was granted Fellow status of the International Positive Psychology Association in 2017.

On a personal note, Ryan lives in Cincinnati with his wife and three young, zestful children who travel the globe together. Ryan is an avid collector of vintage Pez dispensers, a passionate fan of The Walking Dead, only listens to 1990s alternative rock music, and is a

zealot for his alma mater, Michigan State University. His highest strengths are hope, love, honesty, curiosity, fairness, and appreciation of beauty.