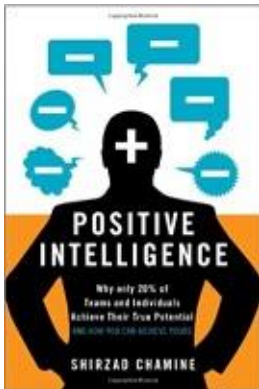


'CliffsNotes' Book Club Recap

DO YOU LOVE BOOKS ON LEADERSHIP, NEUROSCIENCE, AND BUSINESS, BUT NOT HAVE TIME TO READ ALL THE BOOKS?

Join the '**CliffsNotes' club**—where there's no pressure to pre-read the book, no membership required, no cost, and lots of discussion in just 90 minutes. Each month, you will hear a **summary of highlights** from a recently-published business book. This discussion summary is intended to provide a recap of the conversation at Book Club, rather than serve as a thorough book summary. We'll keep you "in the know" on the latest and greatest concepts and models. **Register here** for upcoming events.



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Positive Intelligence

By Shirzad Chamine

Discussion Highlights

Presented by [Janice Shack-Marquez](#)

Every coaching client with whom I work talks about stress, anxiety, imbalance, judgment, overload and overwhelm. These clients are indeed suffering and, as is true for everyone, the suffering is often self-inflicted. The reason so many of our attempts at improving our success or happiness fizzle is that we sabotage ourselves. More specifically, our own minds sabotage us. The positive intelligence program described in the book helps participants dramatically improve the percentage of time their minds are serving them rather than sabotaging them.

What is Positive Intelligence?

Positive Intelligence (PQ) is a synthesis of recent breakthroughs in neuroscience, cognitive positive psychology, and performance science and has been validated by over half a million participants in 50 countries. Chamine's model relies upon extensive factor analysis research that has identified the 10 root-level negative factors (Saboteurs) and the 5 primary powers (Sage) in our psyche that determine our level of "mental fitness" or our ability to manage all situations in a healthy way.

Our Saboteurs, and everyone has them, react to challenges in ways that generate negative emotions such as stress, disappointment, self-doubt, regret, anger, shame, guilt, or worry.

Our Sage handles challenges through positive emotions such as empathy, gratitude, curiosity, creativity, self-confidence, and calm, clear-headed, laser-focused action.

The relative strength of the positive Sage versus the negative Saboteurs is referred to as your PQ (Positive Intelligence Quotient).

The book focuses on tools you can use to build new neural pathways in your brain and improve your PQ.

Approach to Improve PQ

Chamine's approach recognizes that our minds can be our own worst enemies. It is about weakening our Saboteurs, strengthening our positive brain muscles (mental fitness) and building new neural pathways to give us much greater access to our deeper wisdom to dramatically improve performance and productivity and help us respond to challenging life situations with a calmer, clearer, and happier mind and outlook on work and life.

The Saboteurs

A Saboteur is a set of automatic and habitual mind patterns, each with its own voice, beliefs, and assumptions that work against your best interest. Saboteurs are a universal phenomenon. The question isn't whether you have them, but which ones you have and how strong they are.

We each develop Saboteurs early in childhood in order to survive the perceived threats of life, both physical and emotional. They develop in all of us and are not dependent on having a traumatic or difficult childhood. By the time we are adults, these Saboteurs are no longer needed, but they have become invisible inhabitants of our minds. Many of us have no idea that they even exist.

The worst damage is caused by those Saboteurs who have convinced you through their lies that they are working for you rather than against you. They have been accepted into your inner circle and are trusted and you no longer see them as intruders.

- **Judge:** the master saboteur that everyone suffers from. It compels you to constantly find faults with yourself, others and your conditions and circumstances. It generates much of your anxiety, stress, anger, disappointment, shame and guilt. Its self-justifying lie is that without it, you or others would turn into lazy and unambitious beings who would not achieve much.
- **Avoider:** focuses on the positive and pleasant in an extreme way. It avoids difficult and unpleasant tasks and conflicts. It leads you to the habits of procrastination and conflict avoidance. Its lie is that you are being positive, not avoiding your problems.
- **Controller:** runs on an anxiety-based need to take charge, control situations, and bend people's actions to one's own will. It generates high anxiety and impatience when that is not possible. Its lie is that you need the controller to generate the best results from people around you.
- **Hyper-achiever:** makes you dependent on constant performance and achievement for self-respect and self-validation. It keeps you focused mainly on external success rather than on internal criteria for happiness. Its lie is that your self-acceptance should be conditional on performance and external validation.
- **Hyper-rational:** involves an intense and exclusive focus on the rational processing of everything, including relationships. It causes you to be impatient with people's emotions and regard emotions as unworthy of much time or consideration. Its lie is that the rational mind is the most important and helpful form of intelligence that you possess.
- **Hyper-vigilant:** makes you feel intense and continuous anxiety about all the dangers surrounding you and what could go wrong. It results in a great deal of ongoing stress that wears you and others down. Its lie is that the dangers around you are bigger than they actually are and that nonstop vigilance is the best way to tackle them.

- **Pleaser:** compels you to try to gain acceptance and affection by helping, pleasing, rescuing or flattering others constantly. It causes you to lose sight of your own needs and become resentful of others as a result. Its lie is that you are pleasing others because it is a good thing to do, denying that you are really trying to win affection and acceptance indirectly.
- **Restless:** is constantly in search of greater excitement in the next activity or through perpetual busyness. It doesn't allow you to feel much peace or contentment with your current activity. Its lie is that by being so busy you are living life fully, but it ignores the fact that in pursuit of a full life you miss out on your life as it is happening.
- **Stickler:** is the need for perfection, order and organization taken too far. It makes you and others around you anxious and uptight. Its lie is that perfectionism is always good and that you don't pay a huge price for it.
- **Victim:** wants you to feel emotional and temperamental as a way of gaining attention and affection. It results in an extreme focus on internal feelings, particularly painful ones, and can often result in a martyr streak. Its lie is that assuming the victim or martyr persona is the best way to attract caring and attention for yourself.

The Sage

If your Saboteurs represent your internal enemies, your Sage represents the deeper and wiser part of you.

Its perspective on any challenge you are facing is that it is already a gift and opportunity or could be actively turned into one. It has access to five great powers of your mind and taps into those powers to meet any challenge.

- **Explore** with great curiosity and an open mind
- **Empathize** with yourself and others and bring compassion and understanding to any situation
- **Innovate** and create new perspectives and outside-the-box solutions
- **Navigate** and choose a path that best aligns with your underlying values and mission
- **Activate** and take decisive action without the distress, interference, or distractions of the Saboteurs

Three Strategies to Improve your PQ

1. **Weaken your saboteurs** | Involves identifying which thought and emotion patterns come from your Saboteurs and seeing clearly that they don't serve you. You can start by focusing on the judge and noticing the critical difference between and discernment (paying attention to the state of things as they are) and judgement (which generates feelings of anger, blame, scorn, disappointment or betrayal).
2. **Strengthen your Sage** | Involves shifting to the Sage perspective and accessing the five powers it uses to meet every challenge.
 - **Three-gifts technique:** come up with at least three scenarios where your supposedly bad situation could turn into a gift or opportunity.

OR

 - Choose to put the bad situation behind you without any residue of unhappiness, regret or distress.

The Five Sage Powers

| Sage Power | When Needed | Power Game |
|------------|---|-----------------------|
| Empathize | Strong feelings involved. Emotional reserves running low | Visualize the child |
| Explore | Need to discover more about what is going on before deciding or acting | Fascinated explorer |
| Innovate | The obvious or existing ideas don't suffice. Need to think outside the box. | "Yes...and..." |
| Navigate | Need to find alignment with deeper values, purpose or meaning | Flash forward |
| Activate | Need to take action without saboteur interference | Preempt the saboteurs |

3. Strengthen your PQ muscles | Involves understanding the difference between your PQ brain and your survivor brain.

How you feel depends on which region of your brain is active, rather than on your situation or circumstance. (Jill Taylor, My Stroke of Insight)

Build your PQ brain by doing PQ reps – just like lifting a dumbbell repeatedly.

- For example, during this presentation you have likely been in your head the majority of the time, not really aware of your body. So, right now, as I continue to talk,
 - Begin to feel the weight of your body on your seat for about 10 seconds, or
 - Begin to feel the temperature and texture of the keyboard of your computer, or
 - Begin to be aware of your next few breaths and how your stomach rises and falls, or
 - Try to hear all the sounds around you while you continue listening.
- These are all PQ reps.
- This is meditation in tiny chunks of time.
- How to remember to remember
 - Bathroom as reminder
 - Saboteurs as reminder
- Aim for 100 PQ reps per day

As your PQ brain muscle gets stronger, you will be able to handle bigger problems in life without getting hijacked by your Saboteurs.

Work and Life Applications

The balance of the book demonstrates how this work can benefit various aspects of work and life including:

- Team building
- Work-life balance
- Parenting
- Improving your game
- Solving complex problems
- Finding meaning and purpose
- Working and living with difficult people
- Health and dieting
- Managing stress
- Developing other people

About the Book Club In this monthly club, a presenter shares highlights from a book related to leadership, business, neuroscience, or coaching. Membership is not required, and there's no obligation to pre-read the book. This discussion summary is intended to provide a recap of the conversation at Book Club, rather than serve as a thorough book summary. [Register here](#) for upcoming events. For the full set of discussion summaries, [click here](#).