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Bio

Michael F. Steger, Ph.D. is Professor of Psychology, and the Founding Director of the *Center for Meaning and Purpose at Colorado State University*. He also holds honorary positions at the *University of Melbourne, the Stockholm School of Economics, and North-West University* in South Africa. His research focuses on how people flourish through building meaning and purpose in their lives and in their work. His recent work focuses on aligning human wellbeing interests with the wellbeing of natural and societal life-sustaining systems. He has published more than 150 scholarly articles and book chapters, and his published works include the two most widely-used measures of meaning and meaningful work, the Meaning in Life Questionnaire and the Work and Meaning Inventory. He has published three co-edited books, including *The Wiley Blackwell Handbook of the Psychology of Positivity and Strengths-Based Approaches at Work* and *Purpose and Meaning in the Workplace*. He is currently writing the forthcoming book, *The Presence of Meaning*, with Oxford University Press. He provides keynotes, lectures, workshops, and consulting around the world on the topics of meaning, purpose, psychological strengths, positive education, meaningful work, and creating a happy workplace.

Keynote address on:

Regenerative Positive Psychology

Abstract

Positive psychology has crossed the 20 year mark, and it is time to assess whether it can continue in its current course or whether a reorientation would help positive psychology and wellbeing science grow to match the realities of a world in polycrisis. I propose a vision for positive psychology that builds on systems informed and third-wave proposals. Regenerative positive psychology is offered as a new approach that changes our definition of wellbeing from individual flourishing to system health and flourishing. Regenerative positive psychology seeks to build the science and practice of system flourishing, and points toward more robust collaboration with scientists from other fields, practitioners and policy-makers, and global and indigenous holders of deep knowledge of local systems. Through a reorientation of our field, we can redress some of the flaws in how positive psychology most frequently is pursued. Currently, the overemphasis on individual-level wellbeing leaves in place a myopia about our dependence on life and health-sustaining social and environmental systems. It has left us vulnerable to consumerist impulses that seek happiness products without sufficient consideration of how our individual quests for greater wellbeing and fulfillment may bear costs to the people and world around us. Regenerative approaches seek to build knowledge of systems such that the very use of the system improves its health, growth, and flourishing. In regenerative positive psychology, then, we can strive to build models and practices of wellbeing that more directly seek to replenish, improve, and protect vital wellbeing resources. We the challenges facing humanity left to their own devices it is not clear what happiness will look like in a degraded world. If we use our diverse skills, interests, abilities, knowledge, resources, and passions to strengthen and regenerate our social, governmental, and environmental resources, we can continue to harvest wellbeing for generations to come.