

# Designing Your Life:

Innovating from the  
Inside Out



## Online course Overview

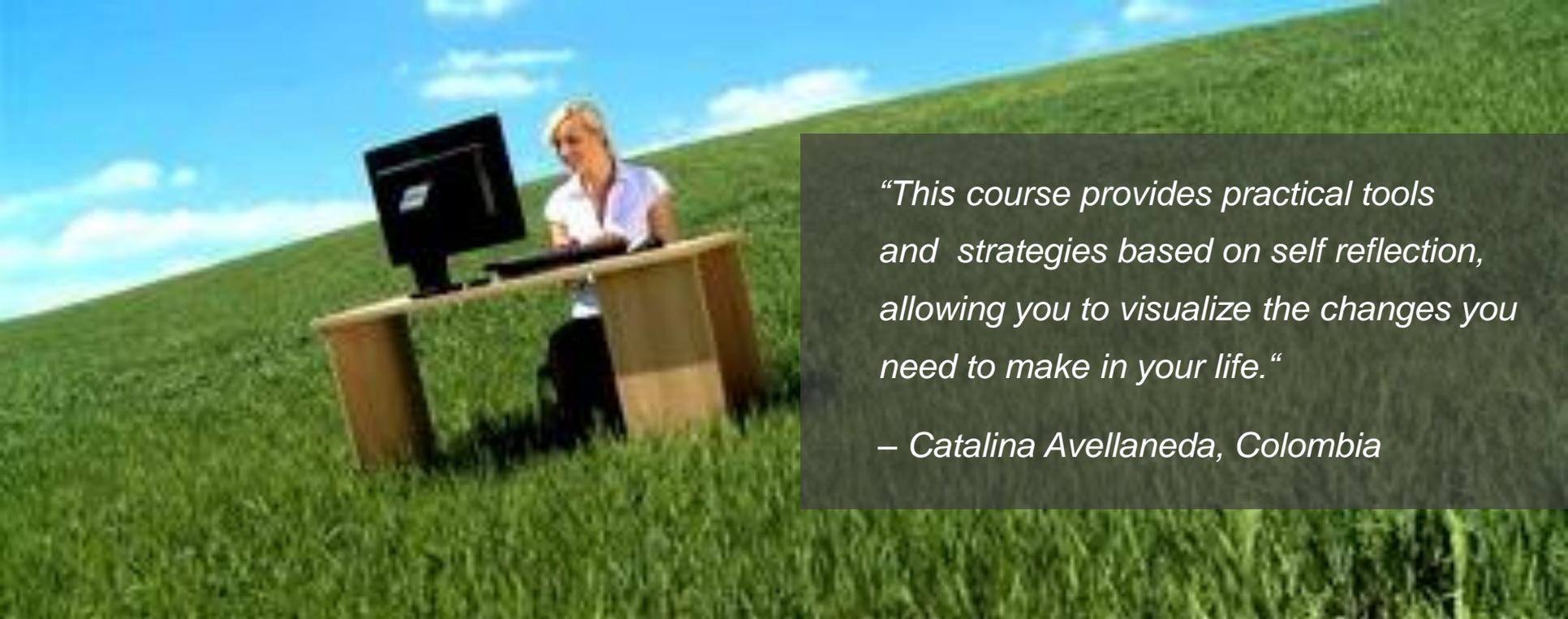
An opportunity to step back from daily routines to reflect upon yourself and explore life goals

This 4-week online course will give you the space, structure, support and motivation to answer some very fundamental questions regarding your passions, your strengths, your goals, your limiting beliefs, your priorities, your comfort zone, and your key relationships.

It is an opportunity to step back from your daily routines to thoughtfully reflect upon yourself and explore important questions about life goals. Founded in the field of positive psychology, this course will help you work toward a stronger sense of well-being and purpose.

*“This course is a must. You will learn healthy habits to promote well-being and happiness as you strive in your quest to help others in the work you do.”*

*– Pamela Taylor, USA*



*“This course provides practical tools and strategies based on self reflection, allowing you to visualize the changes you need to make in your life.”*

*– Catalina Avellaneda, Colombia*

## Who Should Take This Course?

The mix of participants from different backgrounds is an important and valued aspect of this course. This certificate course is designed for, but not restricted to:

- Anyone going through a significant change in life or considering a new career
- Anyone looking to actively improve their work-life balance
- Professionals looking to be inspired and revitalized in their purpose
- Public sector and community leaders

## Benefits

**By the end of this course, participants will have:**

- Read the research on the benefits of cultivating a positive mindset
- Practiced strategies to cultivate appreciation and positivity
- A ranked list of your character strengths
- A plan to increase the time you spend in activities that draw on your strengths
- Identified key people in your life, how they support you, and how to engage them further
- Identified the major sources of work-life balance conflict
- Developed and complete a Personal Work-Life Balance Plan



*“An exciting and enriching experience if you allow yourself to question your own beliefs. Inspiring for all who believe there are many more and better ways to achieve results!”*

– Mariela Quesada,  
Costa Rica

# Course Structure



This participant-centered course will leverage the following resources:

1. Readings by leading researchers in the field of positive psychology on the importance of goal-setting and positive thinking
2. Exercises and activities that will enable you to explicitly answer and practice the critical questions referred to above
3. Hand-picked evaluation tools that will give you real-time feedback on your strengths, positivity ratio, and resilience
4. Videos of leading 'changemakers' who share powerful stories of how they are practicing the theories of the course in their lives
5. A cross-cultural dialogue with an international community of like-minded professionals

WEEK 1: January 18th, 2016  
The Good Life: Cultivating Positivity



#### Lesson Objectives:

In this module, you will be introduced to an overview of the field of positive psychology, appreciative inquiry, and how you can start applying these in daily practice.

#### After studying the materials contained in this lesson, you will:

1. Have an overview of the research-based field of positive psychology (and how it is different from the 'self help' movement)
2. Have gone through the theoretical underpinnings of Appreciative Inquiry (AI)
3. Have learnt about the benefits of 'positivity' and stated an exercise to cultivate an appreciative mindset

#### To complete this session, please follow these steps by January 24th, 2016:

1. Read the week's four assigned readings below. Please note that they are short readings, but rich in content.
2. View the 23-minute TED Talk by Martin Seligman, "father" of positive psychology and author of "Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being".
3. View the 28-minute video by Shawn Achor, positive psychology consultant and author of "Happiness Advantage".
4. View the 3-minute video by Jim Collins, co-author of the classic "Built to Last" and author of the international bestseller "Good to Great".
5. View the 3-minute video by Dan Heath, Senior Fellow at Duke University's CASE center and co-author of "Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard".
6. View the 7-minute video by Dr. Barbara Fredrickson, Professor of Psychology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and author of the book "Positivity".
7. **FORUM:** Take the the activity 'Positivity Self Test'. Your score provides a snapshot of how your emotions of the past day combine to create your positivity ratio.
8. **FORUM:** Participate in the course-long activity 'Three Appreciations'.
9. **FORUM:** Post your reflections in the Forum Reflection 'A Stop Do List', based on the reading by Jim Collins.
10. **FORUM:** Respond in the Forum 'What's Your Sentence?'.
11. Join this week's webinar on **Thursday, January 21st at 8am EST (NY time)**.

\* You can find all these 'FORUM' activities further explained on the course's 'Engaging Forum Conversations and Reflections' at the top of the page (below the Getting Started Forum). We'll use this forum throughout the course.

#### Readings

- Positive Intelligence by Shawn Achor (Harvard Business Review, 2012)
- Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry by Richard Seel (2008, edited version)
- Best New Year's Resolution? A 'Stop Doing' List, by Jim Collins (USA Today, 2003)
- A New Gauge to See What's Beyond Happiness (New York Times, 2011)

#### Videos

- Martin Seligman - The new era of positive psychology
- Shawn Achor - Positive Psychology expert
- Jim Collins - The Journey to Finding a Personal Hedgehog

## The Centre's approach to online courses:

- Highly qualified professors available for feedback throughout the course
- A global classroom of peers with interesting and different backgrounds
- Week-by-week modules including a roadmap of readings, videos, assignments and online forums to complete
- Live webinars to see and interact with peers and professors
- Accountability to keep you on your path
- A final project that explicitly ties course materials to your own personal plan of action

## The Facilitator

The course is anchored by [Kristen Palana](#). Kristen is a multimedia artist and educator based in Rome, Italy and a tenured Associate Professor of Digital Media at The American University of Rome where she also runs its Film and Digital Media Program. She has 15 years of university teaching experience in Rome as well as in and around the New York City area. Kristen is a dual American/Portuguese citizen and has offered art, communication, social activism, and multimedia courses in North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Her work is exhibited internationally and online and has received a number of awards. Kristen received her MFA from Pratt Institute in Computer Graphics and Interactive Media and also holds a BFA in Painting from Massachusetts College of Art and Design. Kristen's number one goal is to help ordinary people do extraordinary things.





## Logistics

### Timing

- This course is offered twice a year, once in January and again in July/August

### Schedule

- Flexible for your busy schedule; recommended live webinars; plan 3-9 hours/week.

### Price

- Instruction and materials for 4-week course: **\$495**

