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978-1-107-02520-2 - Virtues and Vices in Positive Psychology: A Philosophical Critique

Kristján Kristjánsson

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## VIRTUES AND VICES IN POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Positive psychology is one of the biggest growth industries in the discipline of psychology. At the present time, the sub-field of 'positive education' seems poised to take the world of education and teacher training by storm. In this first book-length philosophical study of positive psychology, Professor Kristján Kristjánsson subjects positive psychology's recent inroads into virtue theory and virtue education to sustained conceptual and moral scrutiny. Professor Kristjánsson's interdisciplinary perspective constructively integrates insights, evidence and considerations from social science and philosophy in a way easily accessible to the general reader. He offers an extended critique of positive psychology generally and 'positive education' in particular, exploring the philosophical assumptions, underpinnings and implications of these academic trends in detail. This provocative book will excite anyone interested in cutting-edge research on positive psychology and on the virtues that lie at the intersection of psychology, philosophy of mind, moral philosophy, education and daily life.

Kristján Kristjánsson received his PhD in moral philosophy from the University of St Andrews, Scotland. He has taught at the University of Akureyri, Iceland, and at the University of Iceland as a professor of philosophy of education. Kristjánsson has recently been appointed professor of character education and virtue ethics at the University of Birmingham and deputy director of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Values. He has been a visiting Fellow at Cornell University, University of Konstanz, St Edmund's College (Cambridge University) and Institute of Education (University of London). Kristjánsson has written six books in English (three published by Cambridge University Press) and three in Icelandic. He has published numerous articles on topics in moral philosophy, moral psychology, emotion theory and moral education in international journals in philosophy, psychology and education. He is a member of the International Society for Research on Emotions and a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Moral Education*. In 2011 he was awarded the Ása Guðmundsdóttir Wright Award, the most prestigious scholarly award given in Iceland across the sciences and humanities.

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# Virtues and Vices in Positive Psychology

*A Philosophical Critique*

**KRISTJÁN KRISTJÁNSSON**

*University of Birmingham*

*University of Iceland*



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*To my colleague Erla, who keeps enlightening me on positive  
psychology; to my friends Teruko and Martin, who have helped  
me and my family make Cambridge our second home;  
and to Nora and Hlér for all the rest.*

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