

Promotion of well-being in work and interpersonal relationships: A scoping review of goals and meaning interventions

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Abstract: With the demanding pace and challenges of the world today, there is an amplified need to identify ways of attaining well-being in the context of the workplace and relational domains of life. As work and interpersonal relationships are key domains of life where people set goals and find meaning in their search for well-being, interventions towards the promotion of well-being in these domains have become a strategic and critical priority to meet the demands of an everchanging world. Interventions to enhance well-being through goals and /or meaning in various domains of life are dispersed across disciplines, highlighting the need for a comprehensive overview of the current state of the art to advance its progress. This study aimed to explore through a scoping review existing literature on interventions to enhance goals and meaning to promote well-being in the life domains of work and interpersonal relationships. Using specific search terms in each of these domains, a literature search of scientific articles was conducted via various search platforms and databases. Thirty-eight articles were identified, scrutinized, and with the aid of clearly defined inclusion and exclusion criteria a final number of 27 articles extracted. No interventions were found on the concordance of goals and meaning in either of the two domains. Goals and meaning interventions, in both domains, used diverse strategies, leading to various hedonic and eudaimonic outcomes. Findings per study are described in terms of target groups, intervention strategies and outcomes. Through the indication of a major gap in research regarding interventions aiming at the alignment or harmonisation of goals and what is meaningful to people, this study points to further possibilities for research on the development and evaluation of interventions that aim to enhance the alignment of goals and meaning in the work and especially the interpersonal relationships domains.

Keywords: Interventions; well-being; work; interpersonal relationships; goals; meaning

1. Introduction

Finding ways to achieve well-being in the context of the workplace and relationships is of crucial importance, given the world's current unrelenting pace with accompanying challenges (Kowalski & Loretto, 2017). As the work and interpersonal relationships domains are key life arenas where people set goals and find meaning in their search for well-being, interventions towards the promotion of well-being in these domains have become a strategic and critical priority to meet the demands of an everchanging world (Agarwal et al., 2018). In this study, the interpersonal relationships domain of life refers to relationships with friends or others (excluding close family and spiritual relationships as well as community/society in the broad sense) as described in the Eudaimonic and Hedonic Happiness Investigation (EHHI) project (Delle Fave et al., 2011).

Well-being is an overarching concept referring to “optimal psychological functioning and experience” (Ryan & Deci, 2001, p. 142). The majority of research on well-being has been conducted from a hedonic perspective (Joshani, 2018; Lomas et al., 2022), which focuses on happiness and satisfaction with life (thus including the cognitive and affective functioning of an individual; Diener, 2000). In contrast, the eudaimonic perspective on well-being, which involves, among others, a focus on the experience of purpose (Ryan & Deci, 2001), personal growth, goals, and meaning (Waterman, 1993), has been neglected (Kozusznik et al., 2019). Well-being as an overarching concept, for the purpose of this study, includes facets of both eudaimonic and hedonic conceptualisations, with goals and meaning typically being associated more with eudaimonic perspectives.

An analysis of the literature and a synthesis of knowledge on a specific topic, as intended by this scoping review, are important in these times of exponential growth in well-being studies and searching for evidence-based practice. This analysis can present a picture of what is known in the field, whether specific trends are noticeable, and what gaps there may be in what is known and provide guidelines to further the field of study on theoretical and empirical levels.

1.1 The work and interpersonal relationships domains of life

Current economic climates and the COVID-19 pandemic have led to a renewed appreciation and valuation of work and interpersonal relationships, with these domains now becoming even more crucial life arenas where people search for eudaimonic well-being (Goodwin et al., 2021; Helliwell et al., 2023). The consequences of global lockdowns were especially experienced in the work and interpersonal relationships domains, as these contexts were greatly impacted by the regulatory closure of workplaces and restrictions placed on contact with others (Goodwin et al., 2021).

The importance of the work and interpersonal relationship domains of life had been presented even before the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic. For example, Delle Fave et al. (2013) showed that the work and interpersonal relationships domains provide the most meaning second only to the family domain. Bartels et al. (2019) argued that, due to the large portion of daily time and energy individuals invest in the work domain, researchers and practitioners focus major efforts to understand well-being in this context. In addition, the interpersonal relationships domain is a rudimentary source of meaning and well-being (Roffey, 2021; Wissing et al., 2019; Wissing et al., 2020). Well-being interventions in these domains are therefore of strategic and critical importance and can be instrumental in meeting the demands of a dynamic world in transition (Agarwal et al., 2018).

1.2 Goals and meaning as core concepts of eudaimonic well-being

Various studies have shown that key elements which contribute to eudaimonic well-being include goals and meaning (Lucas & Diener, 2008; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005; Sanjuán & Avila, 2019; Wissing et al., 2019). The conative process self-concordance model (SCM) developed by Sheldon and Elliot (1999) proposes that when goals are aligned with intrinsic personal values and meaning, well-being will be higher than when that is not the case. This implies that well-being may be promoted through interventions that facilitate the concordance/alignment of goals and meaning (note that, for this study, concordance and alignment are used as interchangeable terms). Furthermore, Schippers and Ziegler (2019) propose that the setting and attaining of goals orientate people in a direction or give purpose. There is therefore a strong conceptual link between goals and meaning, suggesting that their alignment is associated with higher levels of well-being, but the extent to which this has been operationalised in interventions is to be studied.

Research emphasizes that the study of eudaimonic well-being, encompassing meaning, goals,

and interpersonal well-being, is crucial to fully understanding well-being (Wissing et al., 2019). This applies in different life domains, including the work domain (cf., Steger, 2017, 2019), where research has focused more on hedonic than eudaimonic well-being (Bartels et al., 2019), and interpersonal relationships (cf., Roffey, 2021; Wissing et al., 2019; Wissing et al., 2020), which is reported to be one of the most important sources of meaning in life for people (Delle Fave et al., 2013; O'Rourke et al., 2019). Therefore, eudaimonic well-being research, as in this study, is important in the work and interpersonal relationships life domains.

Although goals and meaning are core constructs in conceptualizations of eudaimonic well-being, hedonic and eudaimonic well-being are also correlated to some extent (Disabato et al., 2016). The promotion of facets of eudaimonic well-being may also enhance outcomes such as happiness and life satisfaction which are associated with hedonic well-being (Huta, 2015). Therefore, the current study will look at both hedonic and eudaimonic well-being outcomes of meaning and goal interventions.

1.3 Interventions

The field of positive psychology (PP) has spearheaded a rejuvenated interest in positive interventions (Biswas-Diener, 2009). Hendriks et al. (2019) define positive psychology interventions (PPIs) as “interventions aiming at increasing positive feelings, behaviors, and cognitions, while also using theoretically and empirically based pathways or strategies to increase well-being” (p. 2). PPIs can enhance valuable outcomes such as the promotion of well-being at individual, social, and organizational levels (Meyers et al., 2013). Lyubomirsky and Layous (2013) posit that people can intentionally engage in activities which facilitate cognitions and behaviors to enhance well-being.

1.4 Current research

Since goals and meaning interventions in the work and interpersonal relationships domains are diverse and scattered across disciplines, a review of the current literature is necessary to move the field ahead. The present study aims to explore the existing literature that presents evidence suggesting well-being through goal setting/planning and/or meaning making/construction /detection as well as interventions aiming to enhance the concordance of goals and meaning in the life domain of work and/or the life domain of interpersonal relationships.

2. Method

This study implemented a scoping review methodology (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). This type of review was conducted rather than a systematic review as the purpose was to map available literature to obtain an overall picture of a research field and identify knowledge gaps and sources to inform practice (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005; Munn et al., 2018). Scoping reviews are relevant for the coverage of literature where the content addressed is still emerging (Munn et al., 2018). The main research question for this scoping review was: *What is known from the existing literature about interventions focusing on goals, meaning, and the concordance thereof, with a view to promote well-being in the life domains of work and interpersonal relationships?* The aim was to explore and describe existing research on the promotion of well-being through goals and meaning interventions and/or their concordance in the work and interpersonal relationships domains of life.

A literature search for articles published in scientific journals was conducted via search platforms such as EbscoHost, EBSCO Discovery Services (EDS; including many data bases such as PsycInfo and Scopus, ScienceDirect, SCIELO, SocINDEX, ERIC, and more), as well as Google

and Google Scholar. Separate searches were conducted for the work and interpersonal relationships domains of life, using the same databases and criteria.

Articles were eligible for inclusion if:

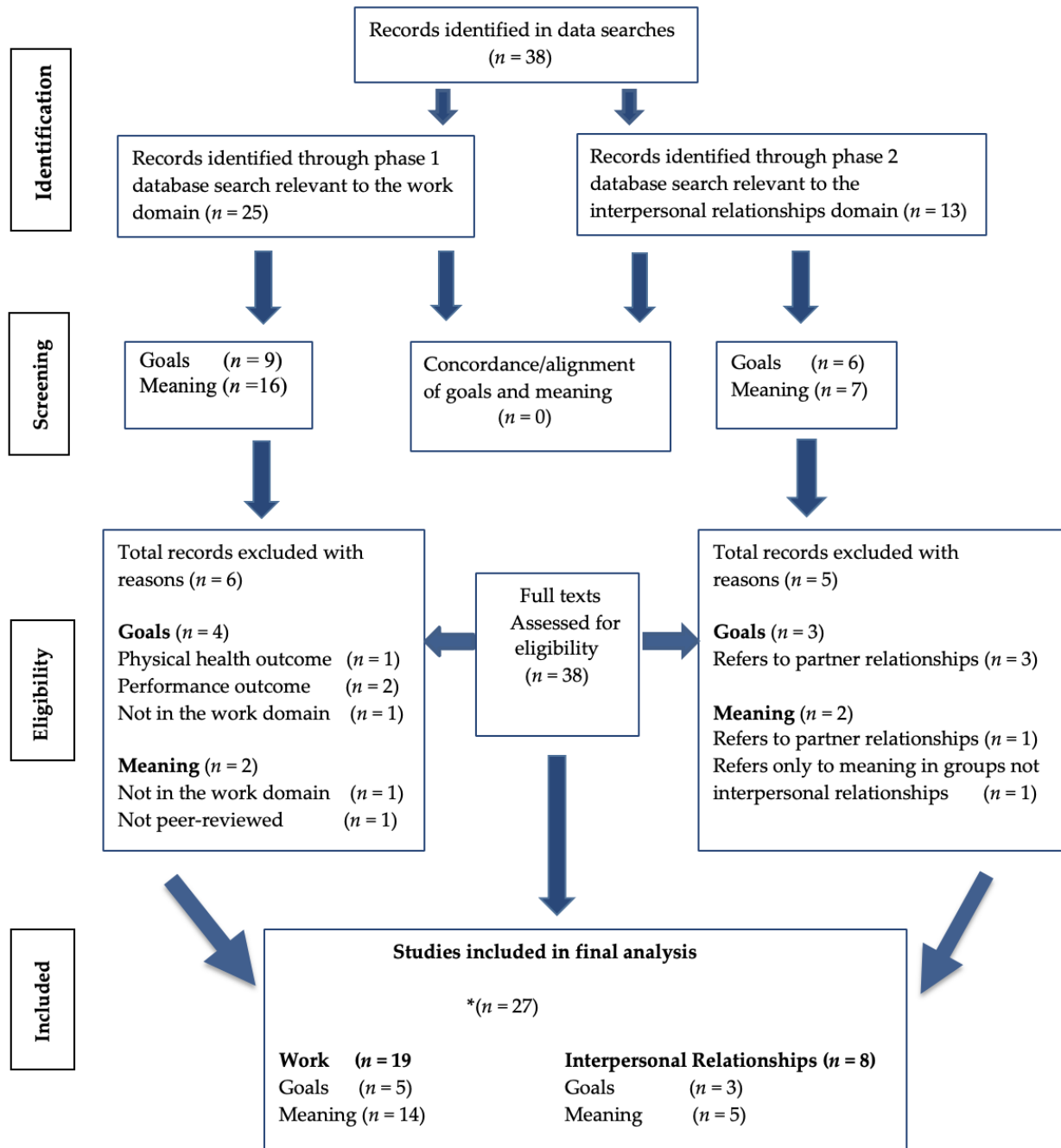
- i. it was a scientific peer-reviewed article published in English between 1998, which is considered the official inception of PP in the scientific research realm (Seligman, 2002) and August 2020, based on time and practical limitations;
- ii. the study explored goals and meaning interventions as well as their concordance in the life domains of work and interpersonal relationships, aimed towards the promotion of well-being;
- iii. the focus was on an intervention in any format;
- iv. the intervention was focused on the promotion of well-being facets in broad terms (inclusive of hedonic and eudaimonic outcomes) within the work and interpersonal relationships domains via interventions focusing on goals, meaning, and/or their concordance. The interpersonal relationships domain in this study refers only to the context of wider interpersonal relationships.

Articles were excluded in the following instances:

- i. the intervention referred to partner or family relationships;
- ii. the focus of the study was in a domain other than the work or interpersonal relationships domains;
- iii. the study did not refer to goals and/or meaning; and if the study referred to outcomes which did not intend to promote or increase well-being facets in broad terms.

Well-being as an overarching concept referring to “optimal psychological functioning and experience” (Ryan & Deci, 2001, p. 142) was used as a framework for the outcome of interventions. The keywords for these searches used in different combinations (with variations in word inflections, singular and plural, British and American spelling) were employed in two phases: firstly, phase one, for the work domain; then, phase two, for the interpersonal relationships domain. Keywords for the work domain were: intervention, positive psychology intervention, promotion of, well-being, wellbeing, goal, goal-setting/planning, meaning, purpose, concordance, alignment, work, workplace, organization. Secondly, the keywords for the interpersonal relationships domain were: intervention, positive psychology intervention, promotion of, well-being, goal, goal-setting/planning, meaning, purpose, concordance, alignment, interpersonal relationships, relationship, friendship.

The first author conducted the initial and follow-up searches to check the inclusion relevancy of articles. The co-authors performed checks of the search and final inclusion and exclusion of articles to ensure scientific rigor and transparency. The inter-rater agreement for study inclusion was determined on a percentage basis (Tricco et al., 2016); when consensus levels of > 75 % were reached across the team, the next stage was pursued. In the event of a lower agreement, the inclusion and exclusion criteria were appraised, and further searches conducted. Rigor, transparency, and trustworthiness were ensured by applying clear inclusion and exclusion criteria, the inclusion of only peer-reviewed articles, co-authors performing checks, and systematic mapping of findings in the Results section. By the end of the review process, 27 studies were included in the final analysis, as reflected in Figure 1 indicating the search strategy and results.

Figure 1. Search strategy and results.


Note. The number of articles included in the final analysis in Figure 1 is denoted by an asterisk *.

2.1 Ethical considerations

The scoping review was conducted as part of a larger project with the ethical clearance number (NWU-00030-19-S1) after approval was obtained from the Health Research Ethics Committee of the North-West University.

3. Results

The following results were discerned from the available literature regarding the identified goal, meaning, and concordance interventions aimed at the promotion of well-being in the work and interpersonal relationships domains as reflected in Figure 1. In the data search, 38 studies were identified and 27 incorporated in the final analysis. As referred to in Figure 1, reference to the articles that met the inclusion criteria, and which were included in the final analysis are indicated by an asterisk (*).

3.1 Concordance / alignment of goals and meaning in the selected domains of life

No interventions specifically addressing the concordance/alignment of goals and meaning could be found in either the work or interpersonal relationships contexts. This indicates a huge gap in existing interventions as it is known that alignment of goals and meaning more strongly promotes well-being than when it is not the case (Sheldon and Elliot, 1999).

Only interventions facilitating goal setting/planning and/or meaning making/construction/detection in the life domains of work and interpersonal relationships, with a view towards the promotion of well-being, were found (without focus on concordance between goals and meaning). The key aspects regarding the content of the interventions and outcomes of these studies will now be reported.

3.2 Goals and/or meaning interventions towards the promotion of well-being in the work domain

Five studies on goals interventions in the work domain were found. The goals interventions were aimed at individuals ($n = 3$) or groups ($n = 2$). The research design of most studies was quantitative ($n = 4$), with one study employing a mixed methods design. With regard to the meaning interventions ($n = 14$ in total), the number of group interventions ($n = 8$) was more than the individually aimed interventions ($n = 6$). The research designs were quantitative ($n = 6$), qualitative ($n = 5$), and mixed methods ($n = 3$).

3.2.1 Goals interventions

The goals interventions in the work domain mainly targeted executives, product development teams, teachers, and working adults. In summary, these interventions included goal-setting strategies and brainstorming (*Wegge & Haslam, 2005), executive coaching and goal attainment (*Grant et al., 2009), judging the quality of a goal-setting programme (*Bipp & Kleingeld, 2009), job crafting (*van Wingerden et al., 2017), and an online self-help goal intervention (*Oliver & McCleod, 2018) aimed towards the promotion of a wide range of well-being outcomes.

The outcomes of the abovementioned interventions included, in summary: improving work motivation, goal attainment, resilience, basic need satisfaction, job satisfaction, work engagement, enhancing overall well-being, as well as the reduction of stress and depression. A discussion of these interventions follows.

3.2.2 More detail on findings per study

Three trials were conducted to solve brainstorming tasks under four different goal conditions for groups in an organizational setting (*Wegge & Haslam, 2005): do your best (DYB), directive group goal setting (DGGs), participative group goal setting (PGGS), and PGGS in combination with individual goal setting (PGGS & IGS). The group goal setting increased team motivation and although there were no differences found between the above goal conditions, goal setting was determined as a good strategy to improve work motivation and brainstorming in working

group contexts.

*Oliver and MacLeod (2018) made use of a self-help online goal-setting and planning (GAP) intervention for working adults, to assist and train individuals in the identification of approach-orientated rather than avoidance-orientated value-linked goals. This included the design of actions to steer the course towards selected goals, predict and handle challenges, and retain motivation in the process. This intervention resulted in participants reporting higher levels of positive affect, flourishing, and well-being.

In the process of executive coaching, which entails an organizational intervention encompassing a “helping relationship” and in-depth conversations between manager and coach, the coach guides the coachee to achieve self-initiated goals. Various cognitive and behavioral approaches were used by the coach to assist the client in attaining these agreed goals, which enhanced goal attainment, resilience, and workplace well-being (*Grant et al., 2009).

Another goals intervention entailed a goal-setting system implemented by a chemical organization for a period of ten years which was adjudicated by employees, and the effects thereof were used to give further insight into job satisfaction and goal commitment (*Bipp & Kleingeld, 2009). Questionnaires were sent to employees who judged the effect of the goal-setting system. The perceptions of the top-down goal-setting system used by human resources management, where managers set goals for employees for their work agreements, were found to greatly influence job satisfaction. Results suggested that more input and participation of employees in goal setting will enhance the job satisfaction and goal commitment of employees.

*Van Wingerden et al. (2017) used a combination of job crafting and a personal resources intervention to increase work satisfaction and engagement. According to Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), job crafting is a process whereby employees set goals which redefine and reimagine their job designs. The personal resources intervention consisted of three different exercises which assisted participants to accept the past, appreciate the present, and view the future filled with opportunities in their work context. The two interventions were then combined as a third intervention. Results showed that the joint third intervention had a positive causal effect on work engagement and impacted self-ratings in goal-setting and evaluation.

3.3 Meaning interventions

The meaning interventions reviewed had target groups that included nurses, managers, caregivers, lecturers, and physicians. In summary, the strategies included: meaning-centred interventions (*Dupuis & Breitbart, 2006; *Fillion et al., 2009; *Makola, 2013; *van Dierendonck et al., 2005), mentoring (*Kennett & Lomas, 2015), job crafting (*Petrou et al., 2017), meaningful artistic interventions (*Antal et al., 2018), life meaning (*Di Fabio & Kenny, 2018), workplace meaningfulness (*Fletcher & Schofield, 2019; *Weziak-Bialowolska et al., 2020), well-being coaching (*Anstiss & Passmore, 2017), inspiring and funny YouTube videos (*Janicke-Bowles et al., 2019), photographs of meaning (*Levy et al., 2019), and work narratives (*Scott, 2019).

A synopsis of the outcomes of meaning interventions reveals: a more positive outlook on life, being more relaxed, openness to others, assertiveness, being more energetic and empathic, self-acceptance, quality of life, enhanced meaning, personal growth, work-related meaning, job satisfaction, self-determination, self-reflection, work engagement, meaningful work, self-awareness, resilience, and purpose.

3.3.1 More detail on findings per study

In an intervention to rediscover meaning and purpose among engineers from industrial companies, the participants kept a diary during the training and compiled an emotional

autobiography, reflecting on their life (*van Dierendonck et al., 2005). Daily, a specific theme was provided as focus. Guided imagery techniques were used to focus on the theme of the day. The training ended with a self-identification exercise. There was an overall improvement in the general outlook on life and work-life balance. Participants generally gained more self-insight, enhanced meaning, and inner strength and became more positive in their outlook on work, life, themselves, and others.

A meaning-centred psycho-educational group intervention, “Enhancing Meaning in Palliative Care Nursing”, was designed to support nurses providing palliative care (*Dupuis & Breitbart, 2006). This intervention used process-oriented strategies, including guided reflections, experiential exercises, and education based on themes of Viktor Frankl’s logotherapy. The intervention resulted in increased quality of life and job satisfaction, enhanced meaning in work, and reduced burnout in this sector.

*Fillion et al. (2009) also used the principles of Victor Frankl’s (1988) logotherapy and tested the efficiency of the intervention designed by *Dupuis and Breitbart (2006; see previous paragraph) to improve job satisfaction and quality of life in palliative care nurses. The palliative care nurses who were part of the experimental group indicated more perceived benefits of working in palliative care with an enhanced quality of life outcome after the intervention.

*Makola (2013) evaluated the effectiveness of a sense of meaning intervention with managers in the work sphere of the South African higher education sector. This intervention applied didactic and process-oriented strategies, including guided reflections, experiential exercises, and education based on themes of Viktor Frankl’s (1998) logotherapy. Theory was presented and the themes of meaning and purpose in life were applied through practical exercises including songs and videos. Three basic ways in which to discover meaning in the workplace were emphasized, namely (a) what is given to the work by the individual (creative values); (b) what is received or taken from work (experiential values); and (c) the attitudes attached to work (attitudinal values). Together with these, five areas in which meaning was most likely to be found were practically demonstrated. These areas included self-discovery, choice, uniqueness, responsibility, and self-transcendence. After the intervention, there was a significant improvement in levels of work-related meaning and job satisfaction among higher education managers.

Mentoring as a method to make meaning at work was tested by *Kennet and Lomas (2015). Mentoring in this instance was explicated as “an intense interpersonal exchange between a senior experienced colleague (the mentor) and a less experienced junior colleague (the mentee) in which the mentor provides support, direction and feedback regarding career plans and personal development” (Russell & Adams, 1997, p. 12). Mentoring resulted in an increased sense of meaning experienced by junior colleagues through the facilitation of self-determination and self-reflection.

Well-being coaching as future-focused collaborative conversations towards the encouragement of self-awareness, personal responsibility, and behavioral change were employed as interventions. They resulted in increased meaning and purpose and the accompanied promotion of well-being in the workplace (*Anstiss & Passmore, 2017). This well-being coaching meaning intervention, in a relevant different format, was also used in the interpersonal relationships domain and will be reported on later in the article.

Job crafting, where employees redesign and envision their jobs, was used towards meaning making at work through motivating, growing, developing, and realising the potential of the employee in the organisation. Job crafting enhanced employee work engagement and meaning making (*Petrou et al., 2017).

In an exploration of whether artistic interventions in organizations empowered employees to

fulfil the human need to give meaning to work, participants were afforded the opportunity to generate new ideas for products and services and display their ideas through artistic portrayals. The intervention was successful in enabling employees to experience meaningful work (*Antal et al., 2018).

A meaningfulness intervention which encompassed discussions by participants on different sources of meaning from individuals to social connections and work was implemented to facilitate meaningfulness and engagement in the organization (*Fletcher & Schofield, 2019). This involved three online questionnaires, two hours of meaningfulness training sessions, and four weeks of individual activities. The study illustrates the potential of meaning interventions to enhance meaning experienced by employees resulting in positive behavioral outcomes.

*Di Fabio and Kenny (2018) delivered a life meaning intervention. Qualitative measures were administered with questions on the sources of meaning in life and work to determine meaningful pathways for the future. The findings stress the value of a life meaning intervention to increase employee self-awareness.

Hedonic and eudaimonic content in inspiring and motivating online videos were played to employees in an intervention to find meaning at work by *Janicke-Bowles et al. (2019). This online experiment explored the role of inspiration and positive affect on three well-being outcomes, namely subjective, psychological, and social well-being in the workplace. Measures such as the work and meaning inventory (Steger et al., 2012) were used pre- and post- intervention. Watching these videos benefited employee well-being by enhancing meaning.

In another intervention over a nine-week period, paediatric palliative caregiving employees followed a meaning-making curriculum through which they created and shared photo narratives via social media. This intervention was named the "Photographs of Meaning Programme" (*Levy et al., 2019). Pre- and post-intervention meaning-in-life measures were completed. Findings suggest that this programme is a life-enhancing intervention which enhances meaning for paediatric palliative caregivers.

*Scott (2019) employed work narratives to assist employees in finding meaning at work. Survey responses and narrative themes were gathered from life story interviews. Relationships between meaning making, pathways to meaning, job characteristics and involvement, and psychological well-being were explored. The themes which emerged in the results were that job characteristics and a sense of agency can be instrumental in enhancing meaning and well-being at work.

An intervention by *Weziak-Bialowolska et al. (2020) explored the corresponding relationships between well-being at work and well-being in life. In online questionnaires, every well-being question was coupled with a work-related counterpart. Well-being measures and questions about job satisfaction, meaning, and purpose in work were used pre- and post-intervention. The results underscored the nature of the relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction, as well as between other dimensions of well-being in life and well-being at work. All the above-mentioned goals and meaning interventions ($n = 19$) were focused on the promotion of well-being, defined broadly in the work domain of life.

3.4 Goals and/or meaning interventions towards the promotion of well-being in the interpersonal relationships domain

The goals interventions in the interpersonal relationships domain ($n = 3$ in total) were aimed at individuals ($n = 1$) and groups ($n = 2$). The meaning interventions ($n = 5$ in total) were not only aimed at individuals ($n = 4$) but also at groups ($n = 1$). All studies pertaining to goals interventions had quantitative research designs ($n = 3$) whereas with the meaning interventions, the majority

had qualitative designs ($n = 4$) and one had a mixed methods design. Target groups included teams, athletes, students, and employees.

3.4.1 More detail on findings per study

*Senécal et al. (2008) applied a season-long team goal-setting intervention in different sport teams. This intervention proved successful in enhancing positive team-cohesion and interpersonal relationships in sport. Another sport intervention by *Wayment and Walters (2017) explored goal orientation and well-being in college athletes and emphasised the importance of social connectedness. They determined whether an interpersonal construct reflecting athlete teammates' social connectedness could explain relationships between goal orientation and well-being. Results showed that social, emotional, and psychological connection to teammates had a positive impact on the well-being of athletes.

In an "Other People Matter" classroom-based strengths intervention by *Quinlan et al. (2014), students practised strengths-focused goal-setting after their strengths were assessed. Online questionnaires during pre-test and three months follow-up periods were also completed. Questions were about cohesion of the class, relatedness, engagement, well-being, and strengths use. The outcome of this intervention affirmed the strengths of the students and indicated that the application of these strengths can lead to the pursual of goals to benefit classroom interpersonal relationships and well-being.

3.5 Meaning interventions

Meaning interventions in the interpersonal relationships domain included, in summary, coaching towards social meaning making (*Stelter, 2007), job crafting (*Berg et al., 2013), photographic meaningful moments (*van Zyl et al., 2019), well-being coaching (*Anstiss & Passmore, 2017), and belonging and meaning making (*Lund et al., 2019). Outcomes of these strategies encompassed meaning and meaning making, deepening and strengthening of relationships, meaning making in relationship self-regulation, positive relationships, increased purpose, meaning making towards joining, connection, and belonging.

3.5.1 More detail on findings per study

Coaching as a conversational process between the coach and coachee was used by *Stelter (2007) to give developmental space and reflective opportunity to the coachee regarding the process of personal and social meaning making. The coach guided negotiation processes within certain social scenarios and reviewed meaning within individual and interpersonal relationships contexts to enhance well-being. Fresh perspectives and newly discovered knowledge emanated from the coaching process in the form of new narratives in interpersonal relationships meaning making.

A well-being coaching intervention by *Anstiss and Passmore (2017), which was also used in another format and evaluated by different outcomes in the work domain, entailed collaborative conversation between coach and coachee to increase self-awareness and personal responsibility. In this instance, The GROW model of coaching (Whitmore, 1992), which is the abbreviation for Goal, current Reality, Options (for obstacles) and Will (way forward), was used to develop skills towards the creation and maintenance of positive interpersonal relationships. In this process, the coachee identified a goal regarding interpersonal relationships and the options for increasing the quality and/or quantity of relationships. The outcome showed that the intervention equipped the coachee towards establishing positive meaningful interpersonal relationships.

*Berg et al. (2013) found that job crafting was a versatile intervention which could also be used for the purpose of crafting existing relationships. This was done by altering the “who” and “how” of forming connections as well as the reframing of current relationships to foster meaningfulness. It was found that assisting and supporting colleagues can also deepen relationships through trust and vitality. Results showed that participants felt empowered to foster meaningful relationships through relational job crafting.

An online photographic meaningful moments intervention on Instagram was implemented and evaluated by *van Zyl et al. (2019). Photographs which participants regarded as the reflection of meaning were posted on Instagram. Pre-, post-, and post-post-intervention assessments were conducted through administering meaning and well-being measures. Results showed that Instagram is an interesting tool to consider for enhancing well-being in the short term with the use of a meaningful moments intervention.

A process of meaning making in a group was constructed where participants could join with others, feel connected, belong, and experience mutual support and understanding through a Balancing Everyday Life (BEL) intervention (*Lund et al., 2019). Personal views of what brings meaning in group participation resulted in a sense of belonging and connection.

The above goals and meaning interventions in the interpersonal relationships domain ($n = 8$) enhanced various aspects of well-being. This was achieved through a variety of strategies.

4. Discussion

The aim of this scoping review was to explore what is known from existing literature about interventions facilitating goals, meaning, and their concordance with a view to promoting well-being in the life domains of work and interpersonal relationships. Results from the available literature indicated that there were 38 studies complying with the keyword search terms, which were reduced to 27 according to the eligibility inclusion and exclusion criteria, and these articles were incorporated in the final analysis. An important lacuna which emerged was that no interventions on the facilitation of concordance between goals and meaning could be sourced in either the work or interpersonal relationships domain. This is even though the well-known self-concordance model (SCM; Sheldon & Elliot, 1999) proposed that the alignment of goals and intrinsic meaning will lead to greater well-being.

The strategies used in the above interventions were diverse. Some of these strategies were applied in both work and interpersonal life domains, such as goal-setting skills, job crafting, coaching, and logotherapy, which seemed to be versatile in their application. Although goal-setting interventions are regarded as potentially one of the most successful and influential motivational interventions applicable to a variety of tasks in the work domain (Locke & Latham, 2002; Rose et al., 2017), the studies on goals interventions were surprisingly fewer than the studies on meaning interventions in the work domain. According to Sonenshein and Dholakia (2012), as well as Steger (2017, 2019), studies on meaning interventions in the work domain are emerging as meaning making is becoming more crucial in the rapidly changing organizational landscape. As supported by the positive outcomes of the goals and meaning interventions, more positive goals and meaning interventions are required in the workplace, as traditional psychologically related interventions have tended to dwell on negative aspects of work by addressing issues such as stress and poor well-being (Nielsen & Randall, 2013).

Although several studies were found on goals and meaning interventions in the work and interpersonal relationships domains, there are fewer than what one may expect given the importance of these constructs and domains. The lacking number of goals and meaning interventions towards the promotion of well-being in the work domain is in accord with the

findings of Tetrick et al. (2012), who found that organizational well-being interventions are inclined to focus more on the rectifying of problems and the prevention of illness than the promotion of well-being. Despite interpersonal relationships being regarded as an important source of well-being (Jackson-Dwyer, 2013), this domain has received minimal examination in terms of positive interventions (O'Connell et al., 2016). While the current study did not review interventions in all relational contexts (for example, family, partner, and spiritual relationships were excluded), the findings do support previous findings that interventions focusing on goals and meaning in the interpersonal relationships domain are scarce (Delle Fave et al., 2013; Wissing et al., 2021).

VanderWeele (2020) posits that the lack of interventions towards meaning making in the interpersonal relationships domain may be explained by the fact that the cultivation of positive relationships with meaning and purpose may require longer commitments than a once-off activity or intervention. This implies that there is still a lot to learn about pathways, strategies, and outcomes for well-being promoting interventions in the interpersonal relationships context (Pietromonaco & Collins, 2017).

It was evident that some studies made use of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being-related indices as pre- and post-test measures of well-being to evaluate the effects of the intervention. Despite goals and meaning being classified as eudaimonic constructs, some of the outcomes of these interventions also showed hedonic well-being effects such as increased happiness, life satisfaction, and positive emotions. Well-being outcomes also included eudaimonic elements such as work motivation, self-acceptance, optimism, personal growth, meaningful work, presence of meaning and purpose, self-esteem, positive deep relationships, connection, and belonging. This underscores the correlation between hedonic and eudaimonic well-being to some extent (Disabato et al., 2016), and that enhancing facets of eudaimonic well-being may also lead to outcomes associated more with hedonic well-being (Huta, 2015).

In summary, this scoping review found that no interventions could be sourced on the promotion of concordance between goals and meaning in either the work or interpersonal relationships domains. Furthermore, there were more goals and meaning interventions which promote well-being in the work domain than there were in the interpersonal relationships domain. Goals and meaning interventions which made use of a variety of strategies in both the work and interpersonal relationships domains led to both hedonic and eudaimonic outcomes.

4.1 Conclusion, limitations, and recommendations

A scoping review was conducted according to the guidelines of Arksey and O'Malley (2005). The scoping review focused on interventions facilitating goals, meaning, and the concordance thereof with a view towards the promotion of well-being in the work and interpersonal relationships domains. Findings were synthesized to indicate the state-of-the-art strategies and to investigate which outcomes were measured in studies that evaluated these interventions. A major gap was identified in knowledge regarding interventions that aim to facilitate the alignment of goals and meaning in the life domains of work and interpersonal relationships. The further development of such interventions, and the implementation and evaluation of their impact, are indicated as a further research agenda for the future.

It is acknowledged that in this scoping review, research not published in English or that may have used other terms than those included in this search, may have been disregarded. It may also be that some databases had been missed. However, the present findings show the importance of goal and meaning interventions to enhance various facets of well-being, but also highlighted the small number of existing studies and, in particular, that less attention is paid to goals.

Goals and meaning are important drivers of behavior and need much more attention in work and interpersonal contexts. Through the indication of a major gap in research regarding interventions aiming at the alignment or harmonisation of goals and what is meaningful to people, this study points to further possibilities for research on the development and evaluation of interventions that aim to enhance the alignment of goals and meaning in the work and interpersonal relationships domains. Interventions to promote well-being through goals and meaning should become a highly esteemed priority to mitigate the challenges of the imminent, ever-changing environments (Agarwal et al., 2018). Of course, similar studies can also be conducted in other life domains.

Conflict of interest statement

The authors report no conflicts of interest.

Data availability statement

This study entailed a review of the literature. All literature included in the review is listed in the reference list.

Author contributions statement

All authors planned the study. The first author compiled the first draft. The second and third authors provided input on various versions of the manuscript that were incorporated by the first author. All authors approved the final manuscript which was submitted by the first author.

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