



Identifying Your Strengths

Strengths vary from person to person – it's key to recognize *your* unique personal and professional strengths. A strengths-based approach allows you to meet yourself where you are right now and assess: what are you doing well and what can you build on?

If you get stuck identifying your own strengths, think about what others might say about you. What are you known for? What do people come to you for as a resource? What kind of feedback or praise do people give you?

Take a Free Strengths Assessment

The VIA (Values in Action) Survey of Character Strengths is a free assessment at www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu

This will rate 24 strengths in order and give you a list of your top 5 signature character strengths.

Go to the tab for "Questionnaires," then select "VIA Survey of Character Strengths," which will take you to a page to create a free account. You will need to reserve about 30 minutes to take the assessment in one sitting.

Reflect on Your Strengths

As you read each of your top strengths, consider the following questions:

1. How do you recognize this strength in the world?
2. How do you imagine you can use this strength more?
3. What do you think the overuse of this strength might be?

Use One Strength a Day

Strengths need to be used regularly on purpose, like flexing a muscle. A fun activity is to immerse yourself in a daily strength Monday – Friday. For example, your week might look like:

1. Monday: Kindness and generosity (do a random act of kindness)
2. Tuesday: Curiosity and interest in the world (read an interesting article)
3. Wednesday: Humor and playfulness (watch a sitcom or play a board game)
4. Thursday: Love of learning (sign up for a professional development event or webinar)
5. Friday: Judgment, critical thinking, and open-mindedness (write a pros/cons list about an important decision)

Discuss Your Strengths with Others

Find ways to express your strengths with your boss, co-workers, instructors, friends, and family. Focusing on what you do well will boost your self-esteem, positive emotion, and connection with others. It will help you maintain a healthy attitude when you face setbacks and obstacles.