



Character **Strengths Profile**

John Smith

Introduction and Purpose

This VIA Pro report is intended to be a deep dive into the character strengths of this individual. This report may be used by the individual user or the helping practitioner.

In the case of the helping practitioner (psychologist, coach, consultant, manager, educator) who is working with a client (or employee or student) in the form of a working relationship, be sure to review the Practitioner's Guide which is available in PDF at the time of purchase of the VIA-Pro.

Note that the aim of a consultation based in character strengths is to help the client create an awareness of what's best about themselves and others, and to assist them in embracing and using these strengths. With this heightened awareness they will be better positioned to build positive relationships, discover deeper happiness, and achieve their life goals.

For some clients, a one-hour meeting is sufficient as a starting point of explaining the details of this report and beginning to explore its contents; for others, it is a several-hour process. To be sure, it is likely to be a resource that is often referred back to throughout the process of working with the person. Some of the pages will be particularly useful to photocopy for your client. We especially recommend the graphs, each of which is accompanied by exploration questions. In addition, your client may benefit from purchasing a VIA-Me report which is a user-friendly, consumer report with tailored graphs and practical exercises to work with their character strengths.



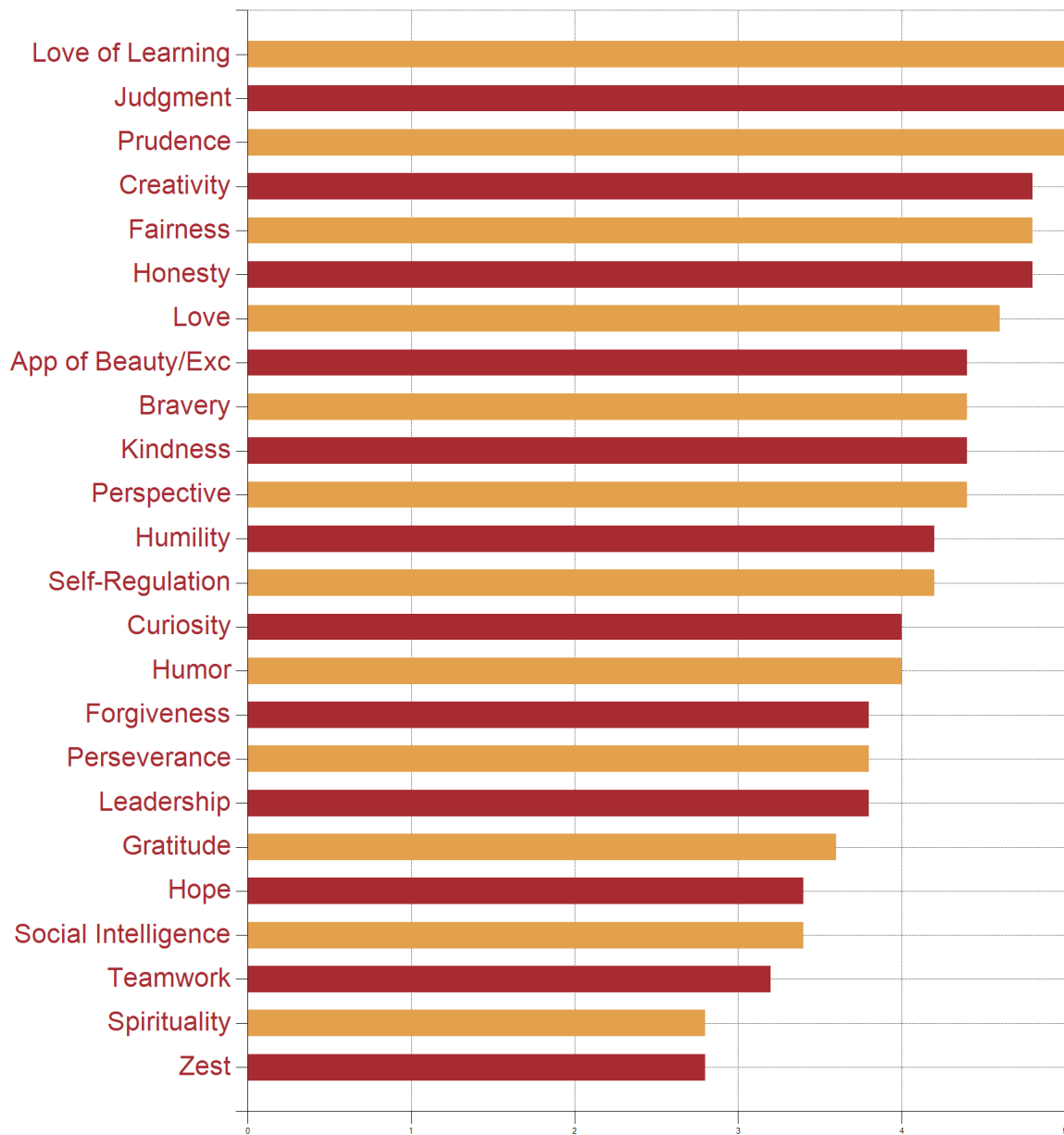
Character Strengths in Rank Order

You will see a top-down rank ordering of this individual's character strengths. The average raw scores that are shown represent the average score over the 5 questions that comprise each of the 24 character scales. The absolute score of a character trait indicates the degree to which that trait is valued and expressed in one's life. It may also reflect a bias in terms of how someone perceives themselves or approached answering the questions in this survey.

Therefore, differences in raw scores between one person and another are not informative. The lower strengths are generally less central to defining one's essence but strengths nonetheless. However, among the middle and lower strengths may be strengths that, when called upon by certain situations can be brought forth strongly. These strengths are referred to as phasic strengths. Low scores do not indicate "weaknesses" of character.

Character Strengths in Rank Order

This graph depicts the character strengths ordered by average raw score: 5 - "Very much like me," 4 - "Like me," 3 - "Not like or unlike me," 2 - "Unlike me," and 1 - "Very much unlike me."



Love of Learning (Score: 5)

You love learning new things, whether in a class or on your own. You have always loved school, reading, and museums; anywhere and everywhere you see an opportunity to learn.

Judgment (Score: 5)

Thinking things through and examining them from all sides are important aspects of who you are. You do not jump to conclusions, and you rely only on solid evidence to make your decisions. You are able to change your mind.

Prudence (Score: 5)

You are a careful person, and your choices are consistently prudent ones. You do not say or do things that you might later regret.

Creativity (Score: 4.8)

Your ability to think of new ways to do things is a crucial part of who you are. You are never content with doing something the conventional way if a better way is possible.

Fairness (Score: 4.8)

Treating all people fairly is one of your abiding principles. You do not let your personal feelings bias your decisions about other people. You give everyone a chance.

Honesty (Score: 4.8)

You are an honest person, not only because you speak the truth but also because you live your life in a genuine and authentic way. You are down to earth and unpretentious; you are a “real” person.

Love (Score: 4.6)

You value close relationships with others, in particular those in which sharing and caring are reciprocated. The people to whom you feel most close also feel most close to you.

Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence (Score: 4.4)

You notice and appreciate beauty, excellence, and/or skilled performance in all domains of life, from nature to art, to mathematics, to science, to everyday experience.

Bravery (Score: 4.4)

You are a courageous person who does not shrink from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain. You speak up for what is

right even if there is opposition. You act on your convictions.

Kindness (Score: 4.4)

You are kind and generous to others, and you are never too busy to do a favor. You enjoy doing good deeds for others, even if you do not know them well.

Perspective (Score: 4.4)

Although you may not think of yourself as wise, your friends do. They value your perspective on matters and turn to you for advice. You have a way of looking at the world that makes sense to others and to yourself.

Humility (Score: 4.2)

You do not seek the spotlight, preferring to let your accomplishments speak for themselves. You do not regard yourself as special, and others recognize and value your modesty.

Self-Regulation (Score: 4.2)

You self-consciously regulate what you feel and what you do. You are a disciplined person. You are in control of your appetites and your emotions, not vice versa.

Curiosity (Score: 4)

You are curious about everything. You are always asking questions, and you find all subjects fascinating. You like exploration and discovery.

Humor (Score: 4)

You like to laugh and tease. Making others smile is important to you. You try to see the light side of all situations.

Forgiveness (Score: 3.8)

You forgive those who have done you wrong. You always give people a second chance. Your guiding principle is mercy, not revenge.

Perseverance (Score: 3.8)

You work hard to finish what you start. No matter the project, you “get it out the door” in timely fashion. You do not get distracted when you work, and you take satisfaction in completing tasks.

Leadership (Score: 3.8)

You excel at the tasks of leadership, encouraging a group to get things done and preserving harmony within the group by making everyone feel included. You do a good job organizing activities and seeing that they happen.

Gratitude (Score: 3.6)

You are aware of the good things that happen to you, and you never take them for granted. Your friends and family members know that you are a grateful person because you always take the time to express your thanks.

Hope (Score: 3.4)

You expect the best in the future, and you work to achieve it. You believe that the future is something that you can control.

Social Intelligence (Score: 3.4)

You are aware of the motives and feelings of other people. You know what to do to fit in with different social situations, and you know what to do to put others at ease.

Teamwork (Score: 3.2)

You excel as a member of a group. You are a loyal and dedicated teammate, you always do your share, and you work hard for the success of your group.

Spirituality (Score: 2.8)

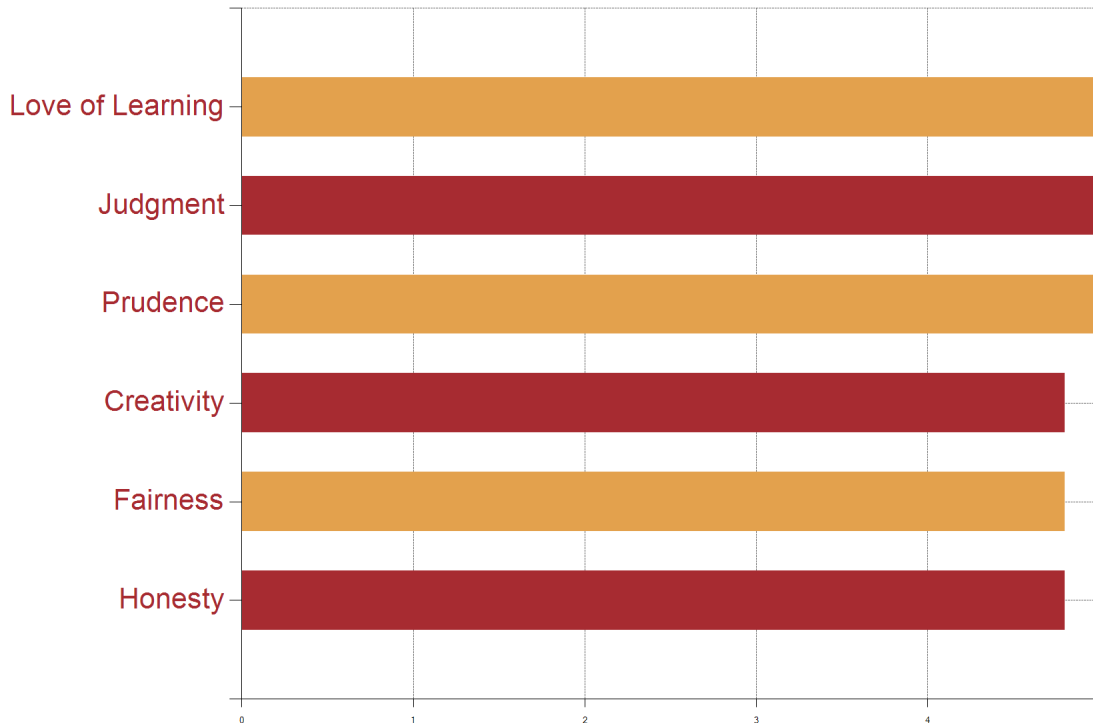
You have strong and coherent beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of the universe. You know where you fit in the larger scheme. Your beliefs shape your actions and are a source of comfort to you.

Zest (Score: 2.8)

Regardless of what you do, you approach it with excitement and energy. You never do anything halfway or halfheartedly. For you, life is an adventure.

Signature Strengths

This graph displays the individual's highest character strengths – called signature strengths. What is most important about the designation of “signature strengths” is that they are the character traits that are most dominant, the ones that define an important core of this individual – who they are. Expressing signature strengths of character feels comfortable and natural, not requiring substantial effort or significant degree of willpower. The designation of the top character strengths as “signature” is a convenience, and confirmation of these top strengths (or their middle/lower strengths) as signature requires exploration with the individual.



Signature Strengths: In-Depth Review

Love of Learning (Score: 5)

Love of learning is having a passion for learning for its own sake. It is mastering new skills, topics, and bodies of knowledge, whether on one's own or formally. Love of learning is sustained curiosity. It describes the way in which new information and skills are acquired and the deep interest shown with particular content. Positive feelings are often experienced in the process of acquiring skills, satisfying one's curiosity, building on existing knowledge, and/or learning something completely new. This strength helps people persist in the face of setbacks, challenges, and negative feedback. Love of learning is inherently fulfilling. However, positive feelings may not always be front-and-center in one's awareness while learning something. Sometimes an individual may not be especially mindful of anything other than the task at hand. Love of learning describes the process of engaging content that may or may not result in immediate achievement.

conversation, or driving to work. When this individual is learning something new, it is like a door opens and there is a strong desire to keep digging for more information. Love of learning may lead to a state of flow in which time flies by as one is soaking up new information.

Exploring the strength of Love of Learning

- What areas of learning (factual knowledge, people, skills, philosophy, or spirituality) are most interesting?
- What areas of learning are least interesting?
- What does this individual love about learning?
- What ways of learning (e.g., reading, experiential, solitary, social) are most/least engaging?
- How does knowledge improve this individual's life?
- How does the breadth and depth of this individual's knowledge impact his or her relationships, from people recently met to people who are close?

What does research reveal about the benefits of this strength?

- Love of learning leads to the development of a deeper base of knowledge, enhancing competency and efficacy.
- Love of learning supports positive experiences, which, in turn, may predispose an individual to psychological and physical well-being.
- Viewing a new setback or challenge as an opportunity for learning and growth leads to greater perseverance.
- Love of learning has been associated with healthy, productive aging.

What does this mean about the individual?

This individual sees himself or herself as having a passion for learning for its own sake. He or she digs deep into topics, never satisfied with a shallow understanding of things. It feels good to this person to increase knowledge by reading, going to museums and libraries, taking classes, or watching educational television. He or she sees most life experiences as learning opportunities, e.g., watching a movie, having a

Signature Strengths: In-Depth Review

Underuse of Love of Learning

Love of learning, like curiosity, can become associated with particular topics as opposed to being distributed equally across all topics and situations. Underuse may simply reflect a lack of interest or lack of opportunity to pursue one's interests. Sometimes the pursuit of learning is limited by the time constraints imposed by one's lifestyle. In such instances, it may be useful to review how the person's life choices reflect his or her priorities and to consider whether love of learning is receiving its proper priority. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for people to forget to apply their love of learning to relationships - striving to know more about others. There are many aspects of the people we know best that we can learn more about and better understand.

curiosity and kindness/empathy in a conversation by asking questions of other people (e.g., What do you think of this information I just shared?) will go a long way to bring balance to these situations.

Novel ways to use Love of Learning

- Visit a museum every month and write about new things learned.
- Read a nonfiction book monthly on a topic you find absorbing and engaging.
- Converse with someone on a topic of mutual interest.
- Develop a new hobby or explore more deeply a current hobby.
- Consider the importance of a subject as an incentive to learn something about a topic that would not normally interest you.

Overuse of Love of Learning

Sometimes people with love of learning can come across as being a "know it all." Their enthusiasm for learning can lead to a desire to share "too much" information, and they either overwhelm people with information or monopolize the conversation. Such individuals may not be aware that so much sharing is overkill because it is routine for them to gather knowledge and facts and then share those as much as possible. It is important for them to understand that they may be unintentionally sending a message of perceived intellectual superiority and that they should share their knowledge judiciously. Otherwise, they may find those they are talking with trying to avoid or minimize conversations. Applying

Signature Strengths: In-Depth Review

Judgment (Score: 5)

Judgment involves looking at things from all angles. It is critical thinking: weighing all evidence fairly, thinking things through, and examining the evidence from all sides rather than jumping to conclusions. It also involves being open-minded and able to change one's mind in the light of evidence. Judgment and open-mindedness make the examined life possible. This type of logical and rational thinking is considered a corrective virtue; it corrects for a tendency to think in ways that favor one's current views and to seek out information consistent with them. Judgment and open-mindedness are the ingredients for stepping back and taking perspective. Open-mindedness does not mean indecision, and it does not mean uncritical tolerance of any and all points of view. Someone with this strength makes decisions and can feel strongly about certain courses of action. What marks good judgment is the consideration of other points of view, the gathering of relevant information, and the willingness to change one's mind.

What does research reveal about the benefits of this strength?

- People who can see things from more than one perspective are particularly skilled in times of change and transition.
- Judgment counteracts biased thinking, contributing to more accurate decision-making.
- Open-mindedness contributes to the search for meaning in life, by helping one to develop pathways to happiness that uncover a sense of what brings deeper meaning and purpose in one's life.
- Individuals with this strength are less swayed by singular events and are more resistant to suggestion and manipulation.

What does this mean about the individual?

This individual sees himself or herself as someone who evaluates all sides of an issue equally, and he or she is less likely to be biased in decision-making. This person thinks through problems and challenges that arise and is not quick

to jump to conclusions. When at his or her best using this strength, this individual weighs issues fairly, is empathic, and is flexible in that his or her mind can be changed in light of new, solidly grounded evidence. This strength can help in avoiding negative thinking traps.

Exploring the strength of Judgment

- How is judgment or critical thinking expressed by this person?
- How do emotions get in the way of the ability to be objective?
- What people and circumstances seem to bring out logical fact-based thinking in this individual?
- When this individual is thinking most rationally, does it ever cause loss of perspective of the big picture?
- How does this individual integrate his or her emotions and the emotions of others into a rational thinking process?
- With what people and in what circumstances is it difficult for this person to think rationally without being unduly confused by strong emotions?

Signature Strengths: In-Depth Review

Underuse of Judgment

In some situations, it is easy to get caught up in emotion, passion, or ideas, and critical thinking then wanes. At these times, one's rational side is less present, and depending on the circumstance, this may or may not be optimal. These so called "hot emotions" that interfere with rational and critical thinking need to be "cooled off" in order to allow judgment and critical thinking to be expressed fully. There are numbers of ways to cool off one's own emotional state and that of another (e.g., counting, relaxation, exercise, mindfulness, getting distance, etc.).

There are also substances (medicines and illegal drugs) that may impair one's critical thinking, as can excessive fatigue related to inadequate sleep. Furthermore, there can be relationships that for any number of reasons do not encourage one to express critical thinking. For example, in some parental relationships, regardless of the fact that the child has grown to be an adult, the relationship pattern of the parent being the instructive and logical one persists. Boosting judgment can be a way to approach situations from both the head and the heart and may lead to wise choices.

Novel ways to use Judgment

- Choose an area of your life and briefly live "as if" you have different opinions.
- Order a meal you would never ordinarily contemplate ordering, or see a movie that you wouldn't typically choose to see.
- If you feel you might be biased about a particular topic, take an investigative approach and examine all the opposing views clearly and constructively.

Overuse of Judgment

Oftentimes, the judgment strength works well in tasks that require critical thinking and the consideration of many points of view. However, in personal relationships, a fact-based approach can be quickly overused and lead to interpersonal conflicts. In these situations, judgment must be accompanied by a heavy dose of listening, empathy, and self-regulation.

The use of curiosity can also help in exploring the other person's opinions and ideas.

Judgment can also take on the form of indecisiveness in an endless quest for all the necessary information and points of view to make a good decision. The truth is that most decisions must be made with a limited amount of information. A highly reasoned approach can become overly rational at times, not giving enough consideration to emotions. This can be frustrating when one is interacting with those who make more intuitive or emotional decisions. It is important to not get too logical and lost in the head, overthinking and analyzing everything. The role of feelings and "heart strengths," such as gratitude, love, and kindness, can achieve a comfortable balance. It is helpful to recognize that many decisions in life are not irreversible and to distinguish between decisions that are greatest in importance and require more information gathering and those that are less important requiring less energy expenditure.

Signature Strengths: In-Depth Review

Prudence (Score: 5)

Prudence is being careful about one's choices, not taking unnecessary risks, and not saying or doing things that might later be regretted. Prudence, like other temperance strengths, protects us from excess. People high in prudence are far-sighted and deliberate. They innately possess a form of practical reasoning and self-management that helps them achieve long-term goals by considering carefully the consequences of their actions - those taken and not taken. Long-term goals are not sacrificed for short-term pleasures. Prudence is akin to judgment/critical thinking, but different in that evidence is weighed against future courses of action and personal costs or benefits. It leads people to do things in a judicious way. It applies to all areas of life, not just to spheres of money, work, and achievement. There are many misconceptions about prudence. It is not excessive caution, thrift, or compulsive self-restraint. It is not timid conformity or a lack of spontaneity. And, it is not compliance with rigid rules.

What does research reveal about the benefits of this strength?

- Prudence is associated with intelligence and optimism.
- Prudence is associated with physical health, job performance, and student achievement.
- Prudence helps us to avoid the mishaps of life, both physical and psychological.
- Prudence is closely linked with the ability to be conscientious and is associated with cooperativeness, assertiveness, interpersonal warmth, and insightfulness.
- Prudence is associated with productivity.

What does this mean about the individual?

This individual sees himself or herself as a cautious person, someone who thinks before acting or speaking. He or she considers the consequences of actions and tries not to say or do things that might be regretted later. This individual is careful with choices and would not consider himself or herself to be a risk-taker. Prudence leads to being practical in making decisions and plans, and it comes across in this

person's ability to reason and think through situations, such as weighing the costs and benefits of actions. When at his or her best, this individual expresses prudence with perspective to see the larger picture and with bravery to take acceptable risks that allow for growth and making progress towards goals.

Exploring the strength of Prudence

- How does prudence or caution pay off for this person?
- In what areas of life is this individual most prudent and in what areas of life is he or she least prudent?
- How does it feel to be prudent?
- How do other people respond to this individual's prudence?
- How does caution hold this individual back, if at all, from positive life experiences?

Signature Strengths: In-Depth Review

Underuse of Prudence

Though being prudent is generally comforting to people high in this character strength, it can at times cause them to feel bad about their lack of spontaneity, and they may even feel pressure from others to throw caution to the wind. In response, prudent people can find themselves swinging to the other extreme of being imprudent. This can be more or less deliberate. For example, a prudent person may purposefully decide to approach a vacation in a spontaneous fashion instead of following his or her impulses to plan every detail. In other words, the person may decide that there are relatively safe havens in life where he or she can afford to be less cautious. Though this may, at first glance, appear as underuse of prudence, instead it is a matter of deliberate balancing of the strength. Alternatively, in a less deliberate and self-aware fashion, a person may find himself or herself underusing prudence in response to peer pressure or as a result of “loosening up” with alcohol. In such instances, it can be helpful for the person to explore situations where he or she underuses prudence so as to more consciously make wise choices.

Novel ways to use Prudence

- Think twice before saying anything. Practice noticing the effects throughout the week.
- Drive cautiously; notice your mental activity and bodily sensations as you do so. Remind yourself that there are fewer time-bound emergencies than you think.
- Remove all extraneous distractions before you make your next three important decisions.
- Consult with a trusted friend or significant other to get his or her view before taking on another project or assignment.
- A cost-benefit analysis can be conducted when facing difficult or risky situations: What are the benefits of doing “x”? What are the costs of doing “x”? What are the benefits of not doing “x”? What are the costs of not doing “x”?
- Write about ways you use prudence in family life, at work, and in the pursuit of pleasure.

- Examine an event from the past when prudence was used to your own benefit and the benefit of others.

Overuse of Prudence

Prudence is a fundamental strength in that it protects us from making mistakes and getting into dangerous or risky situations. However, we all make mistakes and some mistakes are not so disastrous. It is important to keep perspective on what really is at risk. Prudence can come across as being stuffy, inhibited, or superior, which can cause distance or breed resentment in many situations. When prudence is overused it can keep us from reaping the rewards that come with taking certain risks. Many situations require finding the balance between the strengths of bravery and prudence; the use of social intelligence as well as teamwork, judgment, and love can help one gather other views, listen carefully, and think through the various options.

Signature Strengths: In-Depth Review

Creativity (Score: 4.8)

Creativity is thinking of new ways to do things. It involves producing ideas or behaviors that are recognizably original. Words like novel, surprising, ingenious, or unusual often are used to describe creative people. Creativity is found in degrees. At one end of the spectrum are those individuals who are highly recognized for their exceptional creativity, such as great scientists, poets, composers, and painters. This is often referred to as “Big C” creativity. “Small c” creativity is everyday creativity and ingenuity; it is at play when people are able to generate creative solutions to a variety of problems. What really distinguishes creative individuals is not intelligence, but their general approach in life to situations and problems.

What does research reveal about the benefits of this strength?

- Creativity sharpens practical intelligence especially when one is exploring the causes and consequences of everyday life events.
- Creativity helps in promoting divergent thinking (thinking about many ways to solve a problem), and it refines holistic thinking to a level of ideas and details that can be implemented.
- Self-confidence and strong self-knowledge, byproducts of creativity, help one feel comfortable in a variety of situations and adapt to challenges and stressors that come up.
- Creativity helps to inspire and motivate followers and oftentimes helps them become leaders themselves.
- Creativity, though fairly stable over time, can be enhanced by environments that are supportive, reinforcing, open, and informal. On the other hand, creativity can be impeded by time pressure, close supervision, or critical examination.
- Creativity helps drive one's interest in activities and helps one generate ideas that others find interesting.

What does this mean about the individual?

This individual sees himself or herself as an original thinker,

one who can generate unique ideas and strategies that build knowledge and contribute to innovative applications or solutions. People often come to this person with a problem to solve, or when they are looking for help in creating something new or different (e.g., a program, a design, or a different way of organizing something). When at his or her best with this strength, this individual is making connections and putting ideas together in unique ways that often inspire others and lead to new and interesting ideas.

Exploring the strength of Creativity

- What holds this individual back from trying to be creative?
- What encourages creativity?
- How do real or anticipated reactions of other people affect one's creative efforts?
- How would this individual define creativity?
- How does this individual use creativity to help solve life problems or those of family, friends, and colleagues?

Signature Strengths: In-Depth Review

Underuse of Creativity

Everyone has a process that facilitates creativity and when individuals are in circumstances that don't allow for this process, their creativity can be cut off or interrupted. For example, oftentimes the creative process is one that requires time for ideas to be incubated. When one is in a time-pressured situation, it may interfere with creativity. There are also situations in which creativity is off-putting to others. For example, suggesting a new and better way to do something may implicitly send a message to others that their ideas are not good enough. The social unease can be perceived even subconsciously and result in underuse of creativity in the name of not offending others. As we have come to learn that there are multiple forms of intelligence, creativity too can be expressed in different forms. For example, an artistically creative person can struggle to find creative solutions to interpersonal or emotional problems. It may be that a person can generalize the creative processes to some of these areas in which he or she is not ordinarily creative. For example, an artist who intuitively senses the nuances of different colors, may apply the same intuitive sensing to the nuanced differences in voice tone. Employing creativity in these instances can lead to higher levels of interest and engagement.

Novel ways to use Creativity

- Create and refine at least one original idea weekly in an area of your interest.
- Do at least one assignment weekly in a different and creative manner.
- Write an article, essay, short story, or poem or draw or paint in relation to your passion once a week.
- Offer a creative solution to a challenge posed by a family member or a friend.
- Develop multiple alternative solutions rather than just one when faced with a problem.
- Examine an event from your past when creativity was used for self-benefit or the benefit of others.
- Develop a creativity workbook: set aside time each day to think, learn, and perceive in novel ways.

Overuse of Creativity

Creativity can be energizing but also can be a source of tension for both the creative person and those working with him or her. When someone continues to come up with new ideas and new projects, it can quickly become overwhelming to others involved. In addition, the person with many ideas and not enough perseverance will struggle with completing the projects and leave many loose ends. At the same time, for the creative person, it can be irritating when others don't appreciate a new way of doing things or seem resistant to new ideas. When creativity is a sweet spot, there will be situations in which it is better for the individual to lead with another signature strength or consciously temper creativity with love, kindness, social intelligence, leadership, or teamwork.

Signature Strengths: In-Depth Review

Fairness (Score: 4.8)

Fairness is treating people justly, not letting personal feelings bias decisions about others, and giving everyone a fair chance. It is the bedrock of any system of justice. It is the product of moral judgment – the process by which people determine what is morally right, what is morally wrong, and what is morally proscribed. Along with the commitment to fairness in social relations, there is a highly tuned skill in the abstract logic of equitable arrangements - determining what is fair no matter whom or what is involved. Fairness includes two types of reasoning: “justice reasoning,” which emphasizes logic, and “care reasoning,” which includes empathy, care, and the ability and willingness to take the perspective of others.

establish equity and respect.

Exploring the strength of Fairness

- How is the strength of fairness expressed at work, home, and in the community?
- What are the circumstances in which it is easier or harder for this individual to compromise to a position of fairness?
- Are there people or situations encountered where this individual is given feedback about acting unfairly?
- What emotions does this person experience when injustice is perceived and how does that impact his or her ability to be fair?
- How does this individual’s sense of fairness reconcile with the oft quoted proposition that “life is not fair”?

What does research reveal about the benefits of this strength?

- Fair-minded individuals are more likely to engage in positive, prosocial behavior and less likely to engage in illegal and immoral behavior or any type of behavior that has a direct negative impact on others.
- Fairness is enhanced by the ability to take the perspective of others.
- A sensitivity to issues of morality and justice increases self-reflection and self-knowledge. Having a good moral compass enables individuals to get out of conflicting and ambivalent situations in a healthy manner.

What does this mean about the individual?

This individual sees himself or herself as committed to the idea that the same rules apply to everyone, and is vested in giving everyone a fair chance. He or she does not let personal feelings or issues bias decisions about others. Everyone’s opinion counts, regardless of whether or not they share the same opinion. Compromise is important to this person. He or she is sensitive to issues of social injustice, has compassion for others, and possesses the perceptiveness necessary for relational understanding. When at his or her best, this individual uses the strength of fairness to actively work to

Signature Strengths: In-Depth Review

Underuse of Fairness

Individuals high in fairness are typically concerned with equity across people and between people. Although fairness is a core strength for this individual, it is not uncommon for people to express their fairness strength strongly in one setting (e.g., home and personal life), yet lose sight of using it in other situations that are routine (e.g., at work) or vice versa. There may be missed opportunities to express this strength optimally across contexts.

While sometimes underuse of fairness can be nothing more than an oversight, sometimes the expression of fairness can be withheld for motivational reasons; for example, there can be the paradox of not treating someone fairly in reaction to perceiving that you have been treated unfairly by that person. Or, there can be times when being fair may be seen as giving someone an unfair advantage. As a small example, consider the tennis player who calls a ball out of bounds when it was close enough to the line that the fair call would have been to call it in. Similar examples can occur in other competitive environments, such as at work.

Novel ways to use Fairness

- Serve on the board of an organization that offers unprivileged people a level playing field.
- Write a letter to an editor or speak up on an important issue concerning social justice.
- Speak up for the groups you belong to.
- Consider ways to be more fair with friends, family, and colleagues.
- Support others in exploring their beliefs and perceptions about people from diverse backgrounds.
- Consider different viewpoints when approaching a problem.

Overuse of Fairness

Fairness is the most prevalent character strength across the world. From early on, we pay attention to fair play and we react to injustice. At the same time, many things happen in

the world that are not always fair, and we are often tempted to try to correct all injustices as they unfold before us. This can result in frustration and disappointment. It is important to choose our battles wisely. Perseverance can help in addressing the injustices that are deemed most important, and compassion, kindness, and judgment can help in understanding other points of view. We can use self-regulation and prudence to help us rein in our fairness strength when we find ourselves using it in too many situations.

Signature Strengths: In-Depth Review

Honesty (Score: 4.8)

Honesty is speaking the truth, but more broadly, it is presenting oneself in a genuine and sincere way, being without pretense, taking responsibility for one's feelings and actions. This sometimes involves the courage to exercise one's will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition, either external or internal. Honesty is a complex, rich human strength. While it involves accurately presenting information that can be verified - statements that are either true or false - it goes far beyond that. It is the defining character strength of those who make authentic statements. Honest people are consistently true to themselves and publicly represent their internal state, intentions, and commitments. Because honesty is a corrective virtue (protects us against errors in judgment), it shows up best in situations where the decision must be made between an easy thing and a right thing to do. Honesty is universally valued, but especially valued in close relationships. The complexity of this character strength is often revealed when we consider the multiple roles we play in society and how difficult it is to consistently stick to one's values. Honesty is more likely to be found among adults than adolescents. That said, very few people are completely honest all of the time - to others or even to themselves.

What does research reveal about the benefits of this strength?

- Honest people are typically viewed as trustworthy, which contributes to healthy, positive relationships.
- Taking personal responsibility for one's actions can lead to a greater sense of control of one's life.
- Honesty allows for more accurate self-assessment of intentions and commitment — to others and to oneself.

What does this mean about the individual?

This individual views himself or herself as being down to earth and authentic. There is little pretense and others know that he or she is genuine. This person's authenticity creates a sense of trust; what he or she says is meant sincerely. Being "real" is effortless; it is as easy as breathing. However, it is important to use social intelligence when sharing "truths" with others. Honesty without sensitivity can come across as being

blunt or offensive.

Exploring the strength of Honesty

- How are commitments and agreements made and honored in personal as well as professional relationships?
- When this person makes mistakes, how easy is it for him or her to take responsibility for those mistakes?
- How often does this individual neutralize guilt by making excuses, blaming, minimizing, or rationalizing the truth away?
- How is feedback given to others? Is it constructive, direct, or challenging?
- Spiritual practices that entail meditation, reflection, and enlightenment are thought to benefit honesty and authenticity.
- Honesty can be nurtured by modeling and through programs that encourage self-awareness such as youth development programs.

Signature Strengths: In-Depth Review

Underuse of Honesty

The truth can sometimes be difficult to face and therefore truthful people may find themselves underusing this strength when they do not want to be hurtful and cannot find a soft way to express the truth. There are also particular relationships in which the rules of the relationship do not include truthfulness. For example, some parent-child relationships develop around the rule of avoiding the truth since telling the truth would create conflict. Those historical “rules” can persist in relationships such that honest people can find it difficult to express themselves authentically in those relationships. Furthermore, some people high in honesty may have difficulty with the sense of vulnerability that comes with being truthful about their own feelings and therefore may underuse this strength in sharing feelings with others.

Novel ways to use Honesty

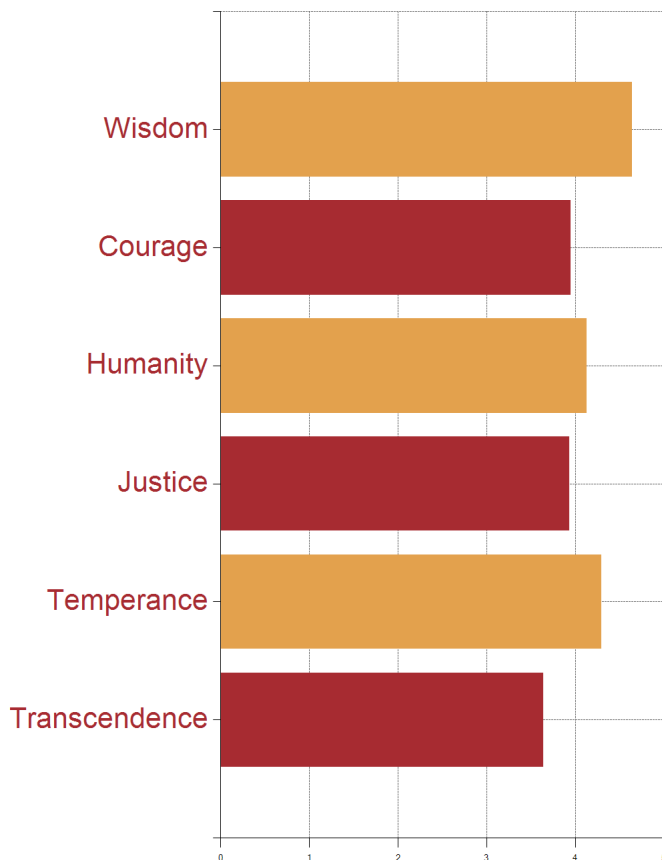
- Write about an issue about which moral obligation is felt. It helps to crystallize and integrate thinking.
- Provide honest feedback when asked to provide critical input.
- Identify an area of strong moral conviction.
- Set priorities according to these convictions.

Overuse of Honesty

We all know that there are times when telling the complete truth can cause problems. Honesty can be blunt and hurtful. It can also violate personal trust when “truths” are told about another that were shared in confidence. Some situations call for the truth, and in other situations it may be prudent to soften the bluntness of the truth. To maintain a balance for honesty, other character strengths offer alternative ways of being/doing good. Sometimes the strength of kindness or prudence must take precedence.

Core Virtues

When scientists reviewed the classic works of virtue and human goodness across religions, philosophies, and classifications, they found strong parallels across all of the great works. They noted there are six broad categories of virtue: Wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance and transcendence. These virtues are part of the VIA Classification and have been found to be universal across cultures and nations. This graph offers a perspective of this individual's strengths across these six virtue categories. It is important to note that the VIA Inventory does not measure the virtues directly; what you see is the average of the individual scores on the strengths that make up each virtue.



The Key to the Virtues:



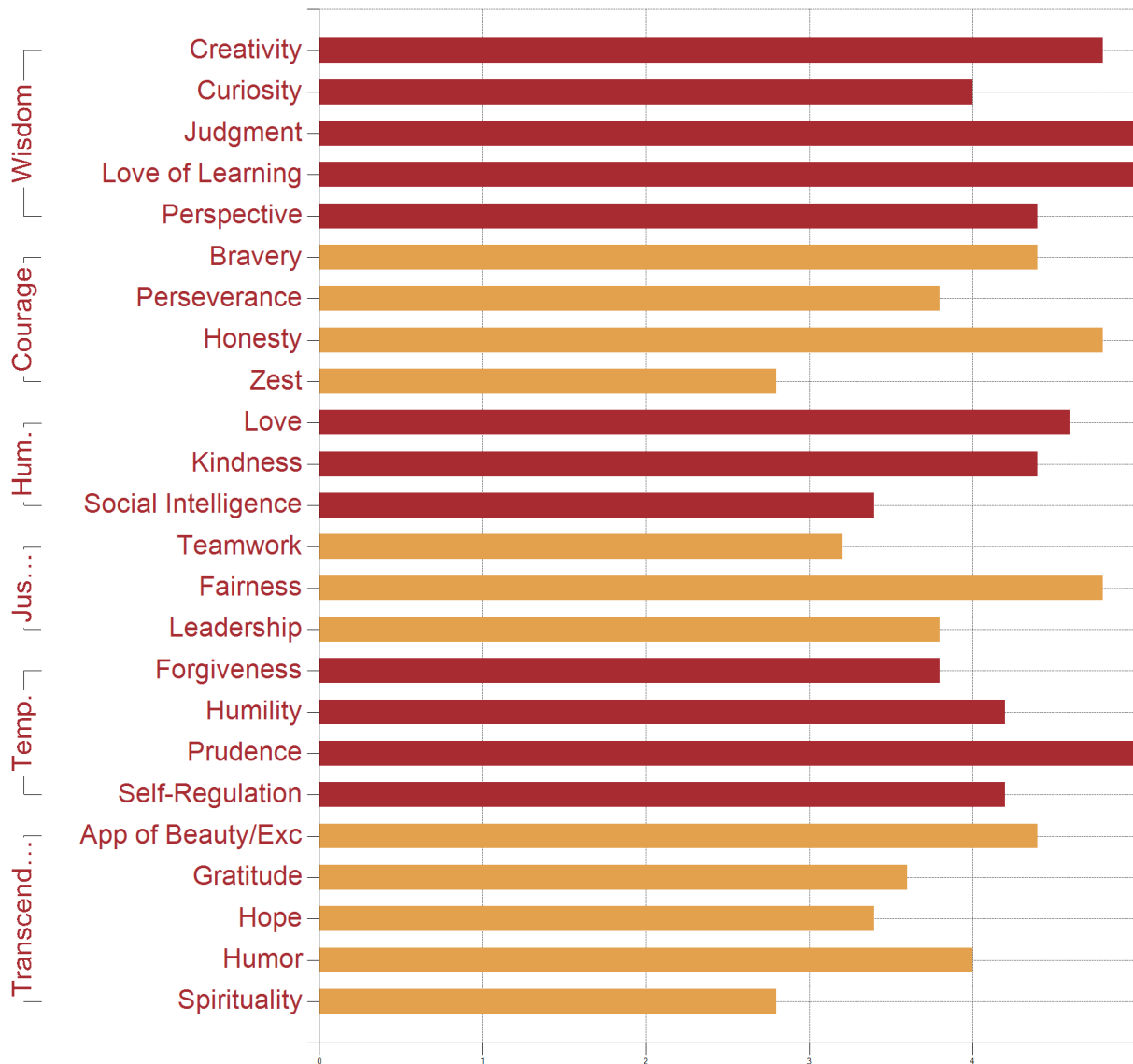
- Wisdom and Knowledge – cognitive strengths that entail the acquisition and use of knowledge. These are creativity, curiosity, judgment, love of learning, and perspective.
- Courage – emotional strengths that involve the exercise of will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition that is external or internal. These are bravery, perseverance, honesty, and zest.
- Humanity – interpersonal strengths that involve tending and befriending others. These are love, kindness, and social intelligence.
- Justice – civic strengths that underlie healthy community life. These are teamwork, fairness, and leadership.
- Temperance – strengths that protect against excess. These are forgiveness, modesty/humility, prudence, and self-regulation.
- Transcendence – strengths that forge connections to the larger universe and provide meaning. These are appreciation of beauty & excellence, gratitude, hope, humor, and religiousness/spirituality.

Questions for exploring the virtues:

- What does knowing one's highest virtue tell someone about themselves?
- What is it like be considered strong in a characteristic that has been valued by the best thinkers throughout time?
- How might an individual tap into this virtue to reach their goals?

Character Strengths by Virtue Categories

This strengths profile shows this individual's character strengths grouped within the virtue categories. The numbers 1 - 5 correspond to raw data scores.



Questions for exploring this graph:

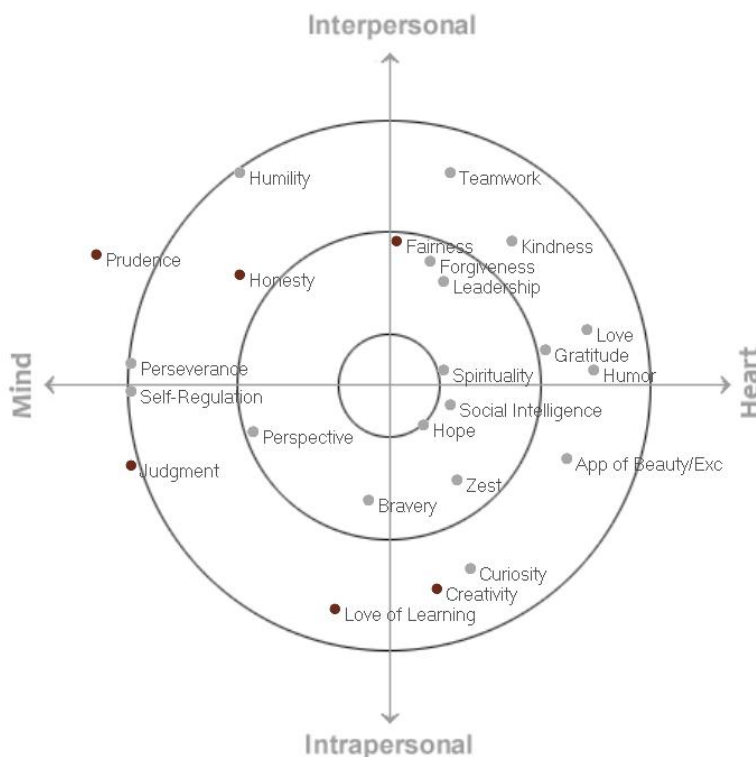
- Which character strengths jump out in each virtue category?
- How might the character strengths that are highest in each virtue category be viewed as a unique pathway or route to expressing that virtue?
- How might a character strength that is high in a virtue category be used to help build a strength that is lower in that category?

Two Factor Balance Graph

This report offers another view of the character strengths. Scientific studies have found the 24 VIA character strengths cluster in particular ways. One way to conceptualize them is across two primary dimensions. One dimension is Heart-Mind, which describes the degree to which a given character strength is based in mental activities (e.g., thinking, logic, analysis) or in matters of the heart (e.g., feelings, intuitions). Strengths that are closer to the left are the highest mind strengths (e.g., judgment, prudence) while those closest to the right are the highest heart strengths (e.g., gratitude, love). The other dimension is the continuum of Intrapersonal-Interpersonal, which describes the degree to which a character trait focuses attention on oneself or on others; “Intrapersonal” strengths generally only require oneself in order to express the strength (e.g., creativity), while “Interpersonal” strengths generally require other people in order to use the strength (e.g., team-work).

Important points to remember about this graph:

- The dots are in the exact same position for everyone as this is the result of scientific findings.
- The individual's highest strengths are shown in red.
- The circles are a way to orient visually to the graph.
- There is no “ideal” profile in that one should have signature strengths in each quadrant or all in one quadrant.
- Two strengths close together on the graph are more likely to comfortably co-occur, while strengths that are far apart are more likely to be traded off in that it is less likely this person habitually shows both at the same time.



Questions for exploring this graph:

- How might this graph inform this individual as they think about the balance of strength expression in their life?
- Does this individual approach life more from a “heart” or from a “mind” perspective, as noted in this graph?
- How might strengths be turned inward towards oneself, e.g., practice more self-kindness or self-forgiveness?

Appendix A

Exercises for Strength-Building

Below you will find one exercise or strategy for boosting or working with each of the 24 character strengths. Many of these are based in good research and for those which research is not available, the best practice from expert opinion is shared. This is a small sample of strategies and it will always behoove the individual to stay current on the latest research around applying strategies and positive psychology interventions.

Creativity:

Practicing divergent thinking is one of the most important research-based interventions to boost creativity. When facing a problem, brainstorm multiple alternatives rather than one solution to the problem

Curiosity:

Curiosity can be built by consciously paying attention to and tracking things in one's daily environment that have not been noticed before or things about familiar people that have gone unnoticed. The key is to encourage being "actively curious," asking lots of questions, and making new, mini discoveries. In a more formal way, an individual may take an approach of naming three novel features of any activity that they are doing.

Judgment/Open-mindedness:

Seeking and considering other viewpoints is the cornerstone of open-mindedness. When one is having a discussion with a person with an opposing viewpoint, take an approach of asking at least one clarifying question. The approach should be one that involves "collecting information" rather than "evaluating information."

Love of Learning:

To build love of learning, it's important to identify where the highest interests in learning are and then work to discover the preferred ways of learning about that subject; whether self initiated, by reading, searching the internet, through a class, via hands-on experiences, peer learning groups, or by viewing video clips or documentaries. Pursue the learning of interest, systematically digging deeply into the material.

Perspective:

An intervention that has been shown to boost wisdom-related knowledge is to imagine having a conversation with a wise person about a problem. Imagine the full dialogue in terms of questions asked, responses given, the nuances of the discussion, and any advice that would be offered.

Bravery:

Research is finding that one of the most common ways people can increase their bravery is to focus on the outcome of the courageous act. In other words, focusing on the beneficial outcome of a brave act rather than focusing on fears can increase the likelihood of acting bravely.

Perseverance:

Reframing setbacks or failures as learning opportunities and ideas for growth can boost the strength of perseverance. Setbacks can be viewed as providing useful information so that the individual can overcome obstacles, be less inclined to "give up," and persist toward their goal.

Appendix A

Exercises for Strength-Building

Honesty:

Recognize the degree to which the individual alters or modifies one's own opinions, feelings and behavior based on what they think other people's expectations are. Work to develop relationships in which they can be authentic.

Zest:

Building zest involves increasing energy. While being mindful of what is manageable per one's physical health status, find ways to increase daily movement, exercise, or activities to engage in. Wearing a pedometer is one way to measure activity and self-motivate toward increases in activity level. The first step is to get a baseline of the average amount of steps taken daily and then slowly work on incremental increases each week.

Love:

Lovingkindness meditation is an effective way to experience and boost the strength of love. This form of meditation provides a way to consciously tap into one's inner resources of love through imagery and affirmative statements of one's capacity for love and of the power and beneficial effects of love in the world. There are books and CD's that can lead an individual through this meditative practice.

Kindness:

Some research notes there are benefits of practicing several random acts of kindness all in one day. Look for opportunities to conduct random acts of kindness and consider how you might set a plan to mix up the variety of kind acts committed each week.

Social Intelligence:

Social intelligence can be cultivated through the practice of mindfulness, increasing awareness of the thoughts and feelings of one's self and others. After one becomes aware of an emotion, the next step is to label it, and if appropriate, express it to another. It may be useful to consider how this has an impact on the social context.

Teamwork:

In order to become a better team member, it is important to notice and express positive emotions (e.g., gratitude, joy, humor, hope) to other team members. In addition, it's important to take an open-minded and curious stance in understanding others' points of view as opposed to just advocating for one's own.

Fairness:

Imagining the experiences and appreciating the differences of others can boost the strength of fairness. Perspective-taking, cultural awareness and sensitivity training, and role-playing are ways to develop a more "other-focused" perspective, particularly when facing complex moral dilemmas.

Leadership:

In addition to competently using one's strengths, leadership requires highly developed organizational skills. This takes planning and goal setting. Consider ideas and opportunities in which the individual can practice taking a leadership role in activities, groups, or organizations, even if the task seems minor or trivial.

Appendix A

Exercises for Strength-Building

Forgiveness/mercy:

There are many ways to boost forgiveness. The following is one example of a five step process: Recall the hurt; empathize as best you can - see the situation from the other person's point of view; consider forgiveness as an act of altruism by recalling the gratitude felt over being forgiven; commit to forgive over the long-run; hold on to forgiveness. Forgiveness is a process that takes time and needs to be repeated and practiced.

Modesty/Humility:

One intervention experts recommend is to look for humility/modesty exemplars among family, friends, philosophical lore, movies, or spiritual readings. Then create a "Hall of Humility" that is a listing of all of these findings and discuss how these learnings might be applied into daily life.

Prudence:

Practice conducting cost-benefit analyses of problems. Write out the costs and benefits of taking a particular action and the costs and benefits of not doing that action (resulting in four quadrants).

Self-Regulation:

Research has found that the best way to build this character strength is to exercise some area of discipline on a regular basis. Self-monitoring is one pathway. Consider a behavior one wishes to change (e.g., eating more healthy, exercising more, managing finances better) and begin to track it with honest detail (e.g., keeping a food diary or an exercise log). Continue to closely monitor the behavior while slowly making changes.

Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence:

Research has shown that keeping a beauty log can enhance an individual's engagement with beauty around them. The key is raising one's consciousness. When something beautiful is seen or felt, whether it is from nature, is human-made (e.g., artwork), or is the virtuous behavior of others (i.e., moral beauty), writing down thoughts and feeling in a log or journal can increase awareness and deepen experiences.

Gratitude:

Counting one's blessings is one of the most widely researched interventions to boost gratitude. It involves reflecting on one's day and tracking the good things that happened throughout the day. Often the approach is to write down three of these good things that occurred, why one is grateful for them, and what role one played in the experience.

Hope:

One research-based strategy that has been shown to boost hope is the – "best possible self" exercise. Take a moment to imagine a future in which one is bringing one's best self forward and everything is happening as one wishes. This should be visualized in a way that is pleasing and realistic. Then, consider the character strengths needed in order to make that image a reality.



Appendix A

Exercises for Strength-Building

Humor:

Some research has found that keeping track of the humorous and funny things that happen each day is a way to boost this strength. Writing down three funny things that occurred throughout the course of the day can build awareness and increase the use of humor.

Spirituality/Religiousness:

Consider who might be “a wise, spiritual role model.” Researchers describe this as taking an approach of “observational spiritual learning.” The model could be someone from a book or movie, someone in the public eye, or a person in one’s life. Reflect on how this person has conducted their life in a way that is spiritually-driven and meaning-filled.



Appendix B

The VIA Classification of Character Strengths

1. **Wisdom and Knowledge** – Cognitive strengths that entail the acquisition and use of knowledge
 - **Creativity** [originality, ingenuity]: Thinking of novel and productive ways to conceptualize and do things; includes artistic achievement but is not limited to it
 - **Curiosity** [interest, novelty-seeking, openness to experience]: Taking an interest in ongoing experience for its own sake; finding subjects and topics fascinating; exploring and discovering
 - **Judgment & Open-Mindedness** [critical thinking]: Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; not jumping to conclusions; being able to change one's mind in light of evidence; weighing all evidence fairly
 - **Love of Learning**: Mastering new skills, topics, and bodies of knowledge, whether on one's own or formally; obviously related to the strength of curiosity but goes beyond it to describe the tendency to add systematically to what one knows
 - **Perspective** [wisdom]: Being able to provide wise counsel to others; having ways of looking at the world that make sense to oneself and to other people
2. **Courage** – Emotional strengths that involve the exercise of will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition, external or internal
 - **Bravery** [valor]: Not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain; speaking up for what is right even if there is opposition; acting on convictions even if unpopular; includes physical bravery but is not limited to it
 - **Perseverance** [persistence, industriousness]: Finishing what one starts; persisting in a course of action in spite of obstacles; “getting it out the door”; taking pleasure in completing tasks
 - **Honesty** [authenticity, integrity]: Speaking the truth but more broadly presenting oneself in a genuine way and acting in a sincere way; being without pretense; taking responsibility for one's feelings and actions
 - **Zest** [vitality, enthusiasm, vigor, energy]: Approaching life with excitement and energy; not doing things halfway or halfheartedly; living life as an adventure; feeling alive and Activated
3. **Humanity** - Interpersonal strengths that involve tending and befriending others
 - **Capacity to Love and Be Loved**: Valuing close relations with others, in particular those in which sharing and caring are reciprocated; being close to people
 - **Kindness** [generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, altruistic love, “niceness”]: Doing favors and good deeds for others; helping them; taking care of them
 - **Social Intelligence** [emotional intelligence, personal intelligence]: Being aware of the motives and feelings of other people and oneself; knowing what to do to fit into different social situations; knowing what makes other people tick



Appendix B

The VIA Classification of Character Strengths

4. **Justice** - Civic strengths that underlie healthy community life

- **Teamwork** [citizenship, social responsibility, loyalty]: Working well as a member of a group or team; being loyal to the group; doing one's share
- **Fairness**: Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice; not letting personal feelings bias decisions about others; giving everyone a fair chance.
- **Leadership**: Encouraging a group of which one is a member to get things done and at the time maintain time good relations within the group; organizing group activities and seeing that they happen.

5. **Temperance** – Strengths that protect against excess

- **Forgiveness & Mercy**: Forgiving those who have done wrong; accepting the shortcomings of others; giving people a second chance; not being vengeful
- **Modesty & Humility**: Letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves; not regarding oneself as more special than one is
- **Prudence**: Being careful about one's choices; not taking undue risks; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted
- **Self-Regulation** [self-control]: Regulating what one feels and does; being disciplined; controlling one's appetites and emotions

6. **Transcendence** - Strengths that forge connections to the larger universe and provide meaning

- **Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence** [awe, wonder, elevation]: Noticing and appreciating beauty, excellence, and/or skilled performance in various domains of life, from nature to art to mathematics to science to everyday experience
- **Gratitude**: Being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen; taking time to express thanks
- **Hope** [optimism, future-mindedness, future orientation]: Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it; believing that a good future is something that can be brought about
- **Humor** [playfulness]: Liking to laugh and tease; bringing smiles to other people; seeing the light side; making (not necessarily telling) jokes
- **Religiousness & Spirituality** [faith, purpose]: Having coherent beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of the universe; knowing where one fits within the larger scheme; having beliefs about the meaning of life that shape conduct and provide comfort



Let us Know What You Think

Take our survey online to let us know what you think of the VIA PRO report.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VRQCMN2>