

HIGHLIGHTING MY STRENGTHS

THINKING STRENGTHS

1. I feel like I have control over things that happen to me.
2. I can have a positive attitude towards life.
3. I can be optimistic and hopeful.
4. I know I'm good at some things.
5. I know what some of my personal strengths are.
6. I have confidence in myself, and I believe in myself most of the time.
7. If I have any weaknesses, I don't let them get me down. (I know I can't be perfect all the time.)
8. I have a good sense of right from wrong.
9. I usually accept and take personal responsibility.
10. I speak up for what I believe in, even if there is opposition.
11. I tell the truth even when it's not easy.
12. Deep down inside, I always know what's good for me, even if I don't always make the right choices.
13. I like to watch non-violent TV shows and play non-violent video games.
14. Sometimes I'm curious and like to find out about new things.
15. When I'm bored I can usually figure out something to do (sports, reading, watch a movie).

COPING & EMOTIONAL STRENGTHS

1. I have a sense of humour and the ability to laugh.
2. I bring smiles to others and can see the lighter side of things.
3. I can manage my anger most of the time.
4. When I'm angry I don't hurt myself or others (physically or verbally).
5. I can usually resolve conflict in a healthy way.
6. I can ask for help when I need it.
7. I'm okay with disappointment sometimes.
8. I am aware of my feelings and the reasons for my behaviour.
9. I can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
10. I like to be active and play sports.
11. I like music.
12. I can play a musical instrument.
13. I like to read.
14. I like to express myself in creative ways (writing, painting, drawing, graffiti making, taking photos, making crafts or woodworking, singing, rapping).
15. I use computers sometimes.
16. I take care of myself (eating well, sleeping well, exercising, trying to have a positive frame of mind, trying to relax).

MOTIVATIONAL STRENGTHS

1. I can be enthusiastic about life sometimes.
2. I can be energetic and approach things with excitement.
3. I like adventure.
4. I believe that my life has a purpose.
5. I expect that things will go well and work to achieve the best (planning a party for a friend, studying for an exam, coming to treatment)
6. I know how to plan ahead and make choices.
7. I like to learn new skills.
8. I enjoy school and usually feel motivated to do well.
9. I work hard to finish what I've started.

SOCIAL STRENGTHS

1. I can be playful.
2. I can tease and be teased.
3. I act in a genuine way (what you see is what you get. I don't act fake).
4. I value close relationships with others. I can love and be loved.
5. I can be kindhearted (enjoy doing things for others, help others).
6. I usually have a good understanding of how others are feeling and why they act the way they do.
7. I can be sensitive to other people's needs.
8. I know what to do to 'fit in' to a social situation.
9. I can put other people at ease. Others feel comfortable around me.
10. I have some knowledge of, and feel comfortable with, people of different sexual orientation and different cultural/ethnic backgrounds.
11. I usually give others a fair chance and treat others equally.
12. I don't consider myself as more special than others.
13. I usually forgive others who have done wrong. I give people a second chance.
14. I can work in a team and I'm willing to do my share.
15. I like exploring and discovering and asking questions.
16. I care about my school (the place, the teachers, my peers).
17. I like doing stuff in my community (belonging to a club or a youth program, going to the arena, skateboard park, swimming pool, volunteering, hanging out at the mall, going to an all ages concerts, attending a demonstration or rally or fundraising event).
18. I like to take care of and/or play with little kids.
19. I like animals and can take care of a pet.



Clarifying Strengths in My Life



Please answer the following questions thoughtfully.

1. The three strengths I would most like to be known for in my role as a parent/counselor/teacher etc. are:

2. The three strengths my "boss/co-workers/partner/child" can count on in me are:

3. The three strengths I'm most counting on in myself to move my career ahead are:

4. The people who have given me special understanding, support, and guidance are:

5. What occurred in my life that brought out my strength and capacity?

6. How am I connecting this knowledge to what I do in my program/life?



Clarifying Strengths in Others Lives



Please answer the following questions thoughtfully

1. The three strengths I most value in (Name of person) are:

2. I value these strength's because:

3. I've noticed these strength's have helped (name of person) overcome adversity by:

4. This person has the following special talents and abilities:

5. The people who are important to this person are:

Story of "The Bridge Builder"

The Bridge Builder - A Parable of Education

By: Lisa Marie Brackin

(Soon to be a published childrens book!)

A king once told his servant to go into the countryside and to build a bridge across a river. The young man had no money and no tools with which to work, but took along his juggling balls and a bird. At first the boy stopped at the site where the bridge was to be built. He felt hopeless because he did not have the tools and materials to build the bridge and he had never built a bridge before.

The next day the king's servant trudged slowly into a village where he came across a black smith selling axes on the street. He asked the man how much the axes cost, but realized that whatever the price he could not pay it.

The axe salesman simply said, "Juggle those balls for me and have your bird sing me a song, and I will give you an axe". The bird sang a simple but sweet tune, while the young man juggled. After his act was complete the servant was given a small axe.

The young man had never chopped wood before, and at times lacked the strength to even hold a hammer, so he decided that he should practice chopping wood. The bird knew of a forest very close to where the bridge was to be built. It was there that the bird guided the boy and helped him find trees to chop. At first the servant chopped only the smallest of twigs. After days of practice, and piles of logs, however, the servant had enough wood for the bridge and some left over. Even though the man had been successful in chopping wood, he was still very dismayed at the idea of building a bridge. He had no tools and no experience at being a carpenter.

As he sat there discouraged an old lady came by. She looked at the young man's wood, and said, "I have no coins to give you, but may I have some of that wood for my fire tonight?" The servant gave some wood to the old woman, and in return was given a few nails. This gave him an idea.

The next day the young man took his bird, his axe, his nails, his balls, and some wood into the village. He asked the blacksmith where he could sell his wood. He pointed the juggler in the direction of the bakery. The baker needed wood to bake his bread. He had no coins, but gave the servant two loaves of bread for his wood. One loaf of bread the young man ate, the other he took into a blacksmith shop. There in the blacksmith shop was a man and woman who were about to have dinner, but only had beans at their table. The couple said "entertain us for dinner by having your bird sing for us, and by juggling, and also give us your loaf of bread, and you may have a hammer and a saw." That night the young man returned to where he would build the bridge. He was happy that he had all the supplies that he needed, but he still had never built a bridge.

Early the next morning, the servant began to saw wood into planks. He could feel the strength that he had gained over those days of chopping in the forest. He began to hammer the planks together and realized that the coordination and balance he had learned through juggling was helping him to hold a bridge up as the river raged beneath him. At times there was discouragement, as the pieces of his bridge began to topple. The bird sang an encouraging song, and the bridge builder worked to solve his problems and continued to build.

In the end a man with hidden strength and skills built a bridge that could withstand wind and floods. When the man returned to the castle, the king almost did not recognize him as the

boyish servant that he had sent away. The king announced that together they would take a journey to the bridge. There, before his servant, the king crossed the bridge. As he walked to the other side the king declared him the official bridge builder for the kingdom, and then asked him to simply juggle while his bird sang a tune.

~

Author's note:

As an educator I believe strongly that a child's strengths can be tools to help them gain new strengths. At the beginning of this tale, the young man has nothing besides some juggling balls and a bird. The bird is his teacher, his encourager, and his guide. His balls are his most treasured talent. As the story unfolds the servant uses his juggling to gain new skills and reach his goal. In the end it was his balance and coordination from juggling, and strength from chopping wood that set him apart as a bridge builder. At times teachers only see surface skills, the sort of skills easily documented on achievement tests and worksheets. It is important in the area of special education that teachers utilize even the seemingly minute of skills, talents, or interests. These can be used as a tool through which encouragement can be given and more skills gained. It is my hope that as I work with students of all types that I keep in mind Howard Gardiner's various modes of intelligence, and realize that intelligence is not always revealed on paper, and that new skills can be gained by using old ones.

What would be helpful from my counsellor

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. It would be helpful to have a counselor who _____

2. When I'm feeling really troubled I would like my counsellor to _____

3. It is important that my counsellor doesn't _____

4. I think the most important quality of a good counsellor is _____

5. I'll know my counsellor is really helping me when _____

6. My counsellor must be willing to _____

7. I'm afraid that my counsellor will _____

8. Sometimes professional people can be too _____

9. When I'm feeling really low or depressed, it's important that my counsellor

10. When I'm angry, the best thing my counsellor could do is _____

THE PURPOSE OF COUNSELLING IS TO BUILD ON YOUR STRENGTHS.

IN OTHER WORDS OUR JOB IS TO WORK WITH YOU SO YOU FEEL
MORE EMPOWERED IN YOUR LIFE AND IN THE DECISIONS THAT
YOU MAKE.

In order to give you the best treatment that we can, it is important that we know what brings you to treatment, what areas of your life that you are wanting to work on and how will you know that treatment was helpful. (Attach another page if you have more to say.)

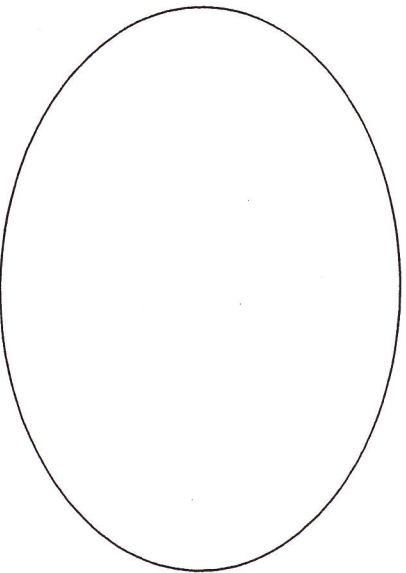
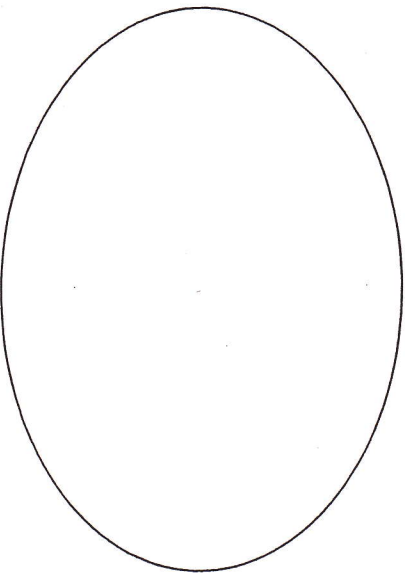
Accepting	Confident	Insightful	Reliable
Accomplished	Controlled	Inspired	Resourceful
Active	Courageous	Intelligent	Responsible
Adaptable	Creative	Intuitive	Secure
Adventurous	Dedicated	Keen	Sensible
Animated	Dependable	Knowledgeable	Sensitive
Approachable	Dynamic	Lively	Sincere
Artistic	Eager	Logical	Skilled
Assertive	Easy-going	Loyal	Sociable
Aware	Energetic	Motivated	Supportive
Balanced	Enthusiastic	Open	Sympathetic
Brave	Fair	Optimistic	Thorough
Bright	Faithful	Original	Tolerant
Calm	Flexible	Patient	Tolerant
Capable	Forgiving	Perceptive	Understanding
Caring	Friendly	Personable	Willing
Charitable	Gentle	Positive	
Cheerful	Honest	Progressive	
Compassionate	Hopeful	Rational	
Competent	Humble	Realistic	

My Circles of Support

In the circles below, identify the people who can provide you with that particular type of support.

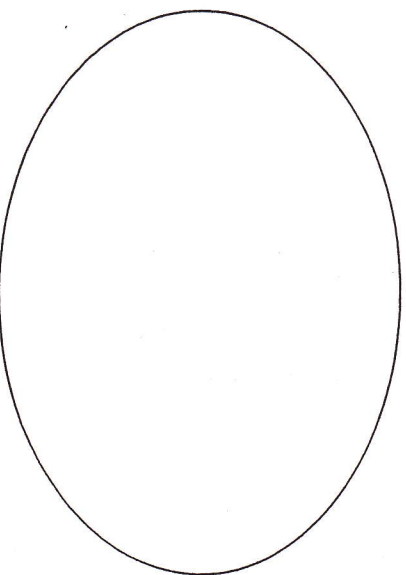
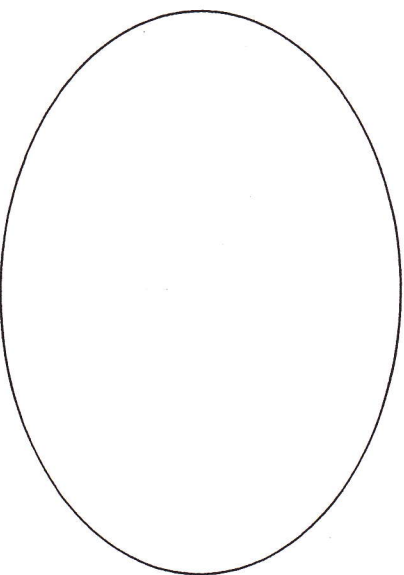
UNCONDITIONAL EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

(you can tell them anything & they won't judge you)



GIVES ME ADVICE

(they give you advice or his/her opinion)



PRACTICAL SUPPORT

(drive you to appointments, help with homework, loan you \$\$, etc)



INFORMATIONAL SUPPORT

(people/places you can go for info)

**YOUTH COMMITMENT TO PARTICIPATE
IN TREATMENT AT
SISTER MARGARET SMITH CENTRE**

I **feel free** to do what I want about getting Substance Abuse Treatment for myself

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

I **choose** to get Substance Abuse Treatment for myself

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

It is **my idea** to get Substance Abuse Treatment for myself

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

I **have a lot of control**, over whether I get Substance Abuse Treatment

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

I **have more influence than anyone else** as to whether I get Substance Abuse Treatment

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

My Top 10 Strengths

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

DENNIS SALEEBEY'S FIVE TYPES OF QUESTIONS TO ASSESS STRENGTHS

Survival Questions

- How have you managed to survive (or thrive) thus far, given all the challenges you have had to contend with?
- How have you been able to rise to the challenges put before you?
- What was your mind-set as you faced these difficulties?
- What have you learned about yourself and your world during your struggles?
- Which of these difficulties have given you special strength, insight, or skill?
- What are the special qualities on which you can rely?

Support Questions

- What people have given you special understanding, support, and guidance?
- Who are the special people on whom you can depend?
- What is it that these people give you that is exceptional?
- How did you find them or how did they come to you?
- What did they respond to in you?
- What associations, organizations, or groups have been especially helpful to you in the past?

Exception Questions

- When things were going well in life, what was different?
- In the past, when you felt that your life was better, more interesting, or more stable, what about your world, your relationships, your thinking was special or different?
- What parts of your world and your being would you like to recapture, reinvent, or relive?
- What moments or incidents in your life have given you special understanding, resilience, and guidance?

Possibility Questions

- What now do you want out of life?
- What are your hopes, visions, and aspirations?

- How far along are you toward achieving these?
- What people or personal qualities are helping you move in these directions?
- What do you like to do?
- What are your special talents and abilities?
- What fantasies and dreams have given you special hope and guidance?
- How can I help you achieve your goals or recover those special abilities and times that you have had in the past?

Esteem Questions

- When people say good things about you, what are they likely to say?
- What is it about your life, yourself, and your accomplishments that give you real pride?
- How will you know when things are going well in your life—what will you be doing, who will you be with, how will you be feeling, thinking, and acting?
- What gives you genuine pleasure in life?
- When was it that you began to believe that you might achieve some of the things you wanted in life?
- What people, events, and ideas were involved?

From The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice (3rd Edition), Dennis Saleebey, University of Kansas. 2002, NY: Allyn & Bacon.

YOUTH SERVICES
SISTER MARGARET SMITH CENTRE
EXIT INTERVIEW

The purpose of this interview is to discover what our program did well and what we need to improve on. Your opinions are valuable in shaping the program for future youth and therefore we ask that you be honest. Your identity will be kept confidential ensuring that you feel safe in expressing your thoughts and feelings.

PRETREATMENT

1. Prior to treatment you completed a screening interview, received a treatment date, regular telephone contact and information in the mail.

- (a) How did this process assist you in preparing for treatment?
 - (b) Anything that you were not told about or you found as a surprise?
 - (c) Was there anything we could have done differently to better prepare you for treatment?
2. Were you involved with community/outpatient counseling prior to coming to treatment?
- (a) If local youth ask- Did you attend the YES Group?, Individual Counselling?
 - (b) If yes- how did that assist you with preparing for treatment?

TREATMENT

3. Describe your thoughts and feeling about your first day? (Admission day)

(a) Is there anything we could have done differently on this first day?

4. What did you find helpful/not helpful in the day programs? (ie. SAG, HOPE, SASSY, Greet the Day, Recreation, School, YOGA, Spiritual Group)

5. What did you find helpful/not helpful in the evening programs?

6. What did you find helpful/not helpful in the weekend programs?

7. Did you feel comfortable sharing your thoughts/feelings/opinions in the group settings? If not what would have been more helpful?

8. Would you have preferred any of the groups to have been split by gender?

9. Do you feel you developed a positive relationship with the staff (include case manager, group facilitators, youth workers?)

10. What information received in treatment did you find the most helpful?

11. Are there any changes/suggestions you have regarding the program?

12. What kind of advice would you give to help the next youth coming into treatment?
13. As a result of being in this treatment program are you more hopeful about your life?
14. We talked about your strengths a lot in this program, what strength would be most helpful for you when you leave?
15. Do you feel ready to go home? If yes, what makes you feel ready to go home?, If no, what else do you need to feel ready to go home?
16. How would you summarize your experience in the program?
17. Would you recommend this program to others? What would you tell them?

Strengths Jewelry

Objectives

Behavioral:

1. Youth will identify 5 strengths that will help them get through treatment.
2. Youth will make a piece of jewelry to wear that symbolizes their strengths.
3. Youth will participate in a group activity that involves sharing materials and ideas.

Cognitive:

1. Youth will nurture a positive self concept by identifying their strengths.
2. Youth will remind themselves of these strengths by wearing their symbolic jewelry.
3. Youth will reflect on positive aspects of their peers.

Materials:

Leather thongs, wire or string for making necklaces or bracelets.

A variety of beads in numerous shapes and sizes, colours and materials.

- Ask youth to identify five of their favourite strengths that they think will help them the most to get through treatment.
- Ask the youth to select a bead to represent each of the strengths they have chosen. (Suggest they choose each bead carefully so that each bead reminds them of a specific strength. For example, the most intricate bead may represent "creativity", a yellow bead may represent "optimism").
- They use the beads to make a necklace/bracelet for themselves.
- When the group has completed making their jewelry, ask each member to show his/her creation and identify the strengths each bead represents.
- When they look at their special piece of jewelry, they are reminded about their strengths!

* Note. Youth will sometimes need to finish their jewelry during their free time, and then present at next SAG group or at Greet the Day group.

BOTTLE O' STRENGTHS ACTIVITY:

Obejective:

This activity is an opportunity for the youth to take yet another tangible tool away from the strengths group. Because their water bottle will have their strengths written on them, they will make the water "positive". So when the youth is feeling low or like s/he is not good at anything, they can drink from their water bottle and be filled with the positive energy of their strengths.

Distribute laminated sheet on Masaru Emoto and molecular changes in water for youth to observe.

You will need:

- Some form of water bottle or plastic beaker.
- Something to use to write on the water bottle
- List of "strength words" and images that youth identify with to place on their vessel.

Youth may use "hodgepodge" glue to affix images and words to outside of vessels.

LEISURE/RECREATION ASSESSMENT

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Do you have any physical disabilities or health problems that would stop you from participating in recreational activities? Yes____ No____

2. What did you do in your free time **before** you got involved in using drugs/alcohol?

3. When you started using drugs/alcohol did the activities that you use to do in your free time change?

3. Do you like school? ____yes No ____ Sometimes____ Not sure____
What subjects do you enjoy?

4. Were you involved in sports/clubs/teams at school or after school?
Yes____ No ____
If yes, what activities?

5. What are some of the things that interest you? What kind of things do you want to learn or know more about.

6. What do you do to keep your body active and in shape.

7. How much energy do you have? Some____ lots____ no energy____

8. What time of day do you have the most energy and feel most awake?
Morning____ Afternoon____ Evening____

9. How is your sleep? Check all that apply: Do you have a hard time falling asleep? _____. Do you feel rested when you wake up _____. Do you wake up several times during the night? _____.

10. Do you have any cultural or religious beliefs? If yes, do you practice them.

11. Do you volunteer? Or have you ever volunteered your time?
yes___ No___ If yes, where?

12. What are some of your hobbies, special interests or talents?

13. What do you do in your quiet time, how do you relax?

14. Do you have any sober friends? ___yes No___
If you have friends that don't use drugs, what are some of the things that you do when you hang out?

15. Will your friends be supportive of you when you have completed treatment?
Yes_____ No_____ Not sure_____

16. Do you think you will have a problem with your free time if you're planning on not using drugs/alcohol when you finish treatment? Yes_____ No _____

If you don't think you'll have a problem, what are you going to do with your Free Time? Have you thought about this? YES_____ NO____

17. What kind of things do you do with your family members in your free time.

18. What are some of the things that would stop you from doing what you want to do in your free time. **Example:** peer pressure, money, motivation, transportation etc.'

19. What kind of a life do you want for yourself.

20. What do you want to learn while you're in treatment.
