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Think Outside The Box

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Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses

We have discussed the importance of knowing yourself. Now it is time to focus on discovering and acknowledging your positive attributes.

People with low self-esteem tend to focus on their weaknesses and forget about the strengths. It's important to have a balanced view of your strengths and weaknesses. We all have both.

The banner features the Explorable logo and the text "Quiz Time!" at the top. Below are three quiz thumbnails:

-  Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2
-  Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2
-  Quiz: Flags in Europe

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What Are Your Strengths?

There are several ways to go about finding your strengths. An excellent online tool is the [Via Strengths Finder](#) [1].

Write down all the good traits you have. If you don't know where to start, it may help to brainstorm adjectives going through the alphabet. Starting with 'A', for example, perhaps you are artistic or ambitious. Then think about 'B', brave or beautiful perhaps. Next, add some evidence. If you've identified as being artistic, is it because you draw, paint, take lots of photos, or perhaps it's because you have an eye for style.

Visualize Your Strengths

Another useful exercise is to create a collage of things that have made you feel good or people you have helped. This will be entirely unique to you. If you don't have pictures, mental imagery will suffice. Perhaps you raised money for a charity, baked a great cake, or kept someone's confidence.

What do these things say about your personality? What does the whole collage say about you? You can return to this collage whenever you need a little lift, and add to it whenever you like.

Turn to Others

Although it's inadvisable to depend on others for your self-esteem, they can help you get started by identifying the best things they see in you. This exercise is called the Reflected Best Self Exercise, which is based on the work of, Jane Dutton, Robert Quinn, Laura Morgan Roberts and Gretchen Spreitzer.

First, think about 10-20 people who know you well and have seen you in different contexts. Then, ask them to write a short story about you when you were at your best, being as specific as possible.

For example: Susie was at her best when she helped organized a bake sale. Not only did she show her compassion and determination to support worthy causes, but she organized a beautiful event and revealed a hidden talent for baking!

As people know you for different things, they will probably come back with various stories. Don't be shy to ask. Most people are happy to help and enjoy completing this exercise as it evokes positive memories.

When you have collected all the answers, read through them carefully and underline or highlight any positive adjectives or verbs. Compile these on a fresh piece of paper. What do you notice? You should have a clearer view on how and what you do best.

Maximize Your Talent

If you've completed the exercises above, you should have a much clearer view of your strengths. Don't rest on your laurels, though! Now it's time to think about how you can make the most of your positive attributes. Perhaps you excel at athletics and are really knowledgeable about sports.

Brainstorm all the ways you can maximize this talent. You could join a local athletics club, contact a coach for personal training, offer to volunteer at local sports events, and try to get involved in any sports in your area. Make a plan for the coming months on how you will use your skills. Tell your friends and family about it to enlist their support.

Don't Dwell on the Weaknesses

Meanwhile, acknowledge your weaknesses but don't dwell on them. Perhaps you can find ways to improve them, or see them differently. For example, if you feel you are weak at languages but enrolled yourself in a beginners' class and went every week, you will most

likely come away being more knowledgeable than somebody who didn't.

Key Points

- All of us have strengths and weaknesses.
- An important part of knowing and appreciating who we are is recognizing our abilities and limitations.
- Identifying and using our strengths helps maximize our potential and increases self-esteem.

Source URL: <https://explorable.com/e/identifying-strengths-and-weaknesses>

Links:

[1] <https://www.viacharacter.org/survey/account/register>, [2]

<https://explorable.com/users/Liya%20Panayotova>, [3] <https://explorable.com/e/identifying-strengths-and-weaknesses>