



NEW MEXICO START / THERAPEUTIC COACHING

Objectives

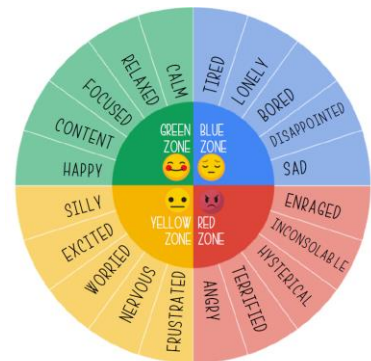
- Participants will learn about emotion regulation and will leave with tools and strategies to implement in professional and personal settings.
- Participants will be able to understand how schedules and communication strategies provide predictability and reduce anxiety not only in individuals with Autism and Intellectual disabilities, but, in their own daily routines.
- Participants will gain an understanding of strength spotting, it's importance, as well as two strategies to use when strength spotting friends, family members, and individuals they serve.

Emotion Regulation

BY WILLIAM SZUMIGALA

What are Emotions?

n. a complex reaction pattern, involving experiential, behavioral, and physiological elements, by which an individual attempts to deal with a personally significant matter or event. The specific quality of the emotion (e.g., [fear](#), [shame](#)) is determined by the specific significance of the event. For example, if the significance involves threat, fear is likely to be generated; if the significance involves disapproval from another, shame is likely to be generated. Emotion typically involves [feeling](#) but differs from feeling in having an overt or implicit engagement with the world (American Psychological Association, n.d)



has autism therapy

What is Emotional Regulation?

- The ability of an individual to modulate an emotion or set of emotions to environmental stimuli (American Psychological Association, 2018)
- Simply: Ability to modify and manage an emotional state (Happy, Sad, Mad, Worried, etc.)
- Explicit emotion regulation: conscious monitoring of emotions, using techniques in order to manage emotions better, changing the target of an emotion to produce a positive outcome
- Implicit emotion regulation: happens unconsciously and automatically, modulating the intensity or duration of an emotional response, relies on habitual patterns

Emotional Regulation and Executive Functions

Executive Functioning and IDD

Key Executive Functions	What It Means	How It Looks if Not Looking Well	Ways to Support Executive Functioning Deficit
Impulse Control	Impulse control helps a person think before acting	Person may blurt out inappropriate things, take risks, or strike out at others	Provide consistency and routine so that individuals know what to expect, offer grounding or calming strategies in the moment to allow individuals to gain a sense of control again
Emotional Control	Emotional control helps a person keep feelings in check	Person may overreact, have difficulty dealing with criticism, have difficulty handling when things go wrong	Frequent check ins, use of stoplight system for emotion recognition, emotion recognition cards, proactive practice with calming strategies
Flexible Thinking	Flexible thinking allows a person to adjust to the unexpected	Person with rigid thinking does not "roll with the punches", has trouble thinking about things from a different angle	Utilize First/Then language, offer simple and actionable choices for a sense of independence, offer an alternative if something is not able to happen
Working Memory	Working memory helps someone keep key information in mind	Person may have difficulty remembering directions, learning from past experiences	Do not assume someone remembers past experiences and can put in practice, use social stories, picture cards, set guidelines and expectations ahead of time

Emotional Regulation and Executive Functions

Self-Monitoring	Self-monitoring is the ability to evaluate one's own behavior	Person may not understand or may be surprised by their own failures of mistakes	Have a point person available to provide reminders, offer coping strategies that have been practiced when individual is doing well
Planning and Prioritizing	Being able to decide on a goal and steps to reach it	Person may have difficulty knowing what should be done first and what is most important	Use visuals to illustrate steps, give 1-2 step directions at a time, provide time to process and repeat instructions
Task Initiation	Ability to get started on a task or activity	Person may have no idea where to begin with a task, may need prompts to start even an easy or well-known activity	Provide verbal and/or visual prompts and assistance. Allow time for the individual to process, then provide directions again
Organization	Ability to keep track of things physically and mentally	Person can lose their train of thought, may lose personal items, homework, etc.	Provide consistency, routine and visual reminders so that individuals know where personal items are; allow time for them to communicate on their terms, offer one-word reminders to get back on track

What does difficulty with emotional regulation look like?

- Emotion dysregulation – Difficulty with modifying and managing an emotion/emotions in response to a situation

Can look like:

- BIG Reactions
- Low Frustration Tolerance
- Irritability and/or Anxiety
- Intense, Quickly changing moods
- Impulsivity

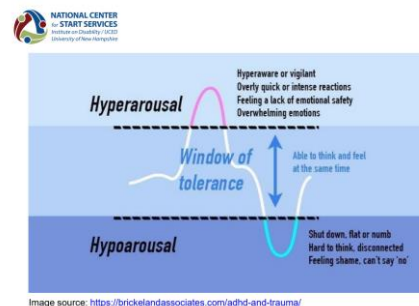


Image source: <https://bricklandassociates.com/adhd-and-trauma/>

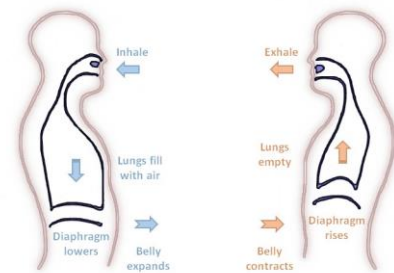
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How do we regulate our emotions?

We already do it!

- We have to understand what emotions we feel first!
- Can use strategies to help regulate
- Can practice with other individuals (coregulation)
- Some strategies include:
 - Deep breathing
 - Taking a walk outside
 - Writing down your emotions in a journal
 - Listening to music



To help other people regulate..

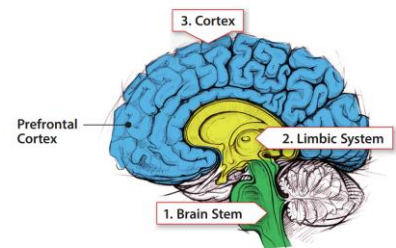
- Understand the individual - Account for other peoples challenges (vulnerabilities)
- Trauma awareness
- Executive functioning impairments
- Communication differences
- Sensory differences
- Tailor strategies based off of what you know about the individual you are helping
- Practice strategies/using tools when in learning mode!

The Three R's

- Dr. Bruce Perry
- Regulate – Brain is in fight/flight/freeze mode (bottom)
- Relate – Brain activity has moved up to emotion part of brain (middle)
- Reason – Brain is in thinking mode (top)
- This is a bottom - up approach

Move:

1. Brainstem
2. Limbic system
3. Cortex



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Grounding Activities – Brainstem

1. Brainstem/Regulate part of the brain:

- Modify environment/reduce sensory stimulation
- Model simple rhythmic movements (deep breaths, rocking, drumming, walking)
- Rubbing hands together or light pressure on hands
- Introduce familiar soothing objects (stuffed animal, weighted blankets, etc)
- Listening to music or soothing sounds (rain!)

In this phase: No social demands or trying to “get” someone to think. Focus on calming person down



Grounding Activities – Limbic System

2. Limbic System/Relate (Emotion) part of the brain:

- Repetitive movements: tossing soft objects, rolling ball back and fourth, dribbling basketball
- Counting, sorting items, naming objects
- Touch objects in area, name objects touched
- Previously taught/practiced strategies: safe space, thoughts in a bubble, positive self statements, deep breaths, etc.
- Playing familiar games or working on arts and crafts

In this phase: Person can tolerate more interaction. Time for modeling familiar strategies



Grounding Activities - Neocortex

3. Neocortex/Reason part of the brain:

- Cognitive grounding: Describe the environment in details using sense (see, smell, touch, etc), Tell jokes or look up jokes
- Re-engage with schedule
- Practice previously learned strategies

In this phase: Should not go backwards to why someone did/did not do something

Remember: You may move downwards to the previous phases. If this happens, repeat the grounding activities. Everyone is different and requires different amounts of time in each phase. Always try to move upwards and forwards!

NMSTART Tools for Emotion regulation

- Stress balls, mood puddy, objects
- Teaching caregivers and individuals emotional regulation strategies
- Emotion identification cards with scenarios
- Exploring PERMA+ of individuals
- Social Stories to teach emotions and coping skills
- Individualized visual supports
- Matching colors to emotions
- Board Games (Chutes N ladders, Uno, Candy Land, Emotion Regulation games)



What hasn't worked with emotion regulation

- Presenting generalized visual supports in times of crisis
- Holding an ice cube, splashing cold water on hands
- Modeling 4x4 breathing, other deep breathing activities (hand tracing while deep breathing)
- Asking a lot of questions and making statements (why are you feeling this way, what do you want, just calm down)
- Lack of understanding of an individual (challenges, interests, wants/needs)



What has worked with emotion regulation

- Simple board games (chutes n ladders, candy land, uno)
- Wet wash cloths (Warm/Cold), stress balls, mood puddy
- Going outside, spotting and labeling different objects (ex: blue pickup truck, lights)
- Physical activity (basketball, walks)
- Validation of feelings and staying calm
- Writing emotions down on a piece of paper or usage of an object to help express emotions



Points to remember

- Meet people where they are at
- Remain calm if you are supporting another individual
- Emotional regulation strategies take practice!
- Not a “quick fix” – repetition and tailoring of strategies are needed
- Move bottom - up
- Try different things, everyone is different!

Thank you! If you haven't already, come stop by our table! Next Angelica Gutierrez will be presenting adaptive strategies!

Adaptive Strategies

BY ANGELICA GUTIERREZ

What is an Adaptive Strategy?

- A supportive tool or approach used to help individuals successfully adjust to changes, challenges, or new environments.
- Examples of Adaptive Strategies:
 - Environmental Cues
 - Community Skills and Access
 - Self-Care
 - Schedules
 - Communication Strategies
- The two strategies we are focusing on today are Schedules and Communication Strategies.

Why are Adaptive Strategies important?

- Many individuals with Autism and Intellectual Developmental Disabilities often experience difficulties with transitions, sensory processing, and understanding social cues.
- Adaptive Strategies help create predictability, reduce anxiety, and independence.

They can also promote:

Self Advocacy



Emotional Regulation

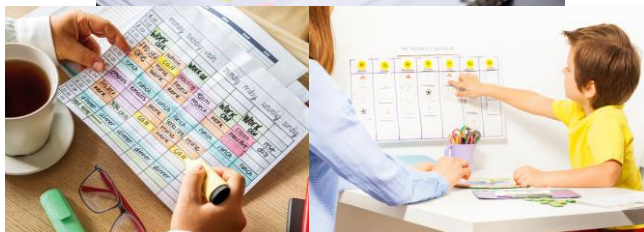
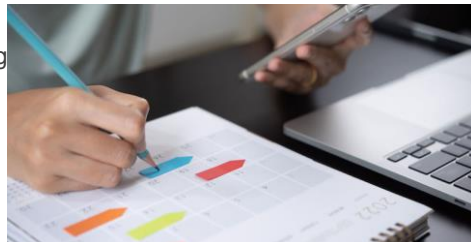


Participation



Schedules











- Benefits of implementing schedules:
 - Improve Time Management and Routine Building
 - Enhance Understanding of Expectations
 - Encourage Flexibility
 - Facilitate Transitions
 - A sense of safety and control





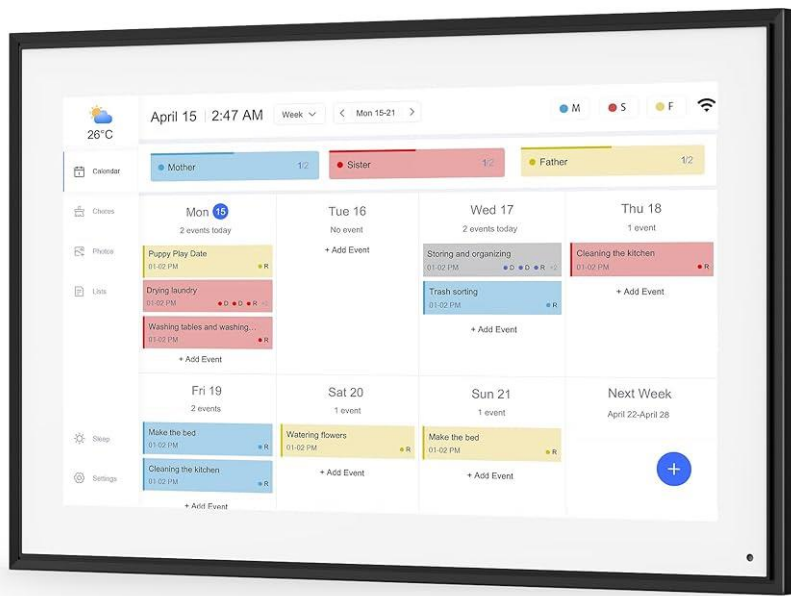
My Daily Schedule



first	then
	
 whole group	 seat work
 ipad	 books/ library
 free choice	 snack
 special activity	 music/ movement

Daily Schedule

Before 9:00 AM	Wake up!	Make your bed, eat breakfast, brush teeth, get dressed
9:00-10:00	Outdoor Time	Family walk or outdoor play
10:00-11:00	Academic Time	No Electronics! Reading, homework, study, puzzles, journal
11:00-12:00	Creative Time	Creative play, drawing, Legos, crafts, music, cooking, baking
12:00-12:30	LUNCH	
12:30-1:00	Home Chores	Clean rooms, put away toys, take out garbage, pet care
1:00-2:30	Quiet Time	Reading, nap, puzzles, yoga
2:30-4:00	Academic Time	Electronics OK! Educational games, online activities, virtual museum tours
4:00-5:00	Outdoor time	Family walk or outdoor play
5:00-6:00	Dinner time	Family dinner, help with clean-up and dishes
6:00-9:00	Free Time	Relaxing before bedtime
9:00 PM	Bedtime	Put on PJs, brush teeth, clothes in laundry



How can YOU create an effective schedule?

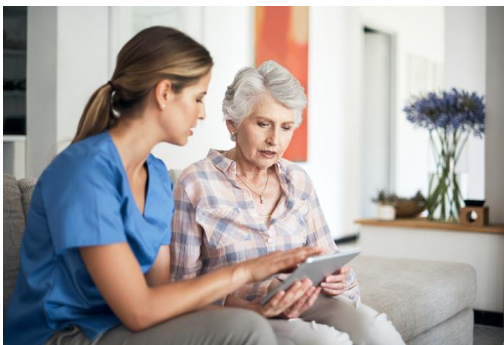
- Be clear and consistent
- Establish Predictability
- Allow for flexibility
- Review and adjust as needed



Communication Strategies

Benefits of implementing Communication Strategies:

- Supports language and skill development
- Clearer understanding of expectations
- Stronger connections
- Increased independence



Visual Supports



Prompting and Modeling

- Verbal Prompting
 - Example: "What do you say when you want help?"
- Gestural Prompting
 - Pointing to the restroom icon on a visual schedule when it is time to transition.
- Modeling
 - Demonstrating how to perform a task: Brushing teeth



Social Stories and Scripts



J goes to the hairdressers in the car

haircut



J has his haircut with scissors and clippers



J does not like getting his haircut, this is ok. J can watch TV or play on his IPAD when at the hairdressers

milkshake



After J has his haircut he can get a milkshake



J has his haircut, well done J

Sometimes I see something I want



But someone else is playing with it



I ask "Can I have a turn?"



If they give it to me . . .



Then it is MY turn



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Augmentative and Alternative Communication



Tips for coaching Adaptive Strategies

- Assess needs
- Choose the right strategies/tool
- Model
- Practice it together!



Something to note: What works for you, may not work for everyone, and that's okay.

What strategies the other coaches and I have implemented:

- I have created numerous schedules including a Morning Schedule and School Schedule.
 - Were they helpful?
- Another coach has found that communicating through writing was an effective strategy he discovered with an individual.
 - Maybe what didn't work in the past, will work now.
- Another coach created a reinforcement system utilizing behavioral therapy to encourage stability and alternative behaviors that increase safety.
 - How did it help?

Get Creative!

• If your strategy is tangible, adding things like a theme the individual likes may help them be more engaged and connected.

• Some themes I have incorporated to my adaptive strategies are:

- Minecraft
- Harry Potter
- Color Theme (Blue)

ABCDEFGHIJKLM
 NOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 abcdefghijklm
 nopqrstuvwxyz
 0123456789
 !@#\$%^&*()

Before School Schedule	
6:00 - 6:15	Wake up
6:15 - 6:25	Restroom
6:25 - 6:30	Brush Teeth
6:30 - 6:40	Wash Face
6:40 - 6:50	Brush Hair
6:50 - 7:00	Breakfast

MORNING SCHEDULE	
7:30 - 8:00	BREAKFAST
8:00 - 9:00	T.V./NINTENDO TIME
9:00 - 10:00	CHOICE LIST TIME
10:00 - 10:40	BUS ARRIVAL

Thank you!



Strength Spotting

BY TANYA BURNETT



VIA Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues

The Character Strengths of a Flourishing Life

WISDOM	COURAGE	HUMANITY	JUSTICE	TEMPERANCE	TRANSCENDENCE
 Creativity Originality; adaptive; ingenuity	 Bravery Valor; not shrinking from fear; speaking up for what's right	 Love Both loving and being loved; valuing close relations with others	 Teamwork Citizenship; social responsibility; loyalty	 Forgiveness Mercy; accepting others' shortcomings; giving people a second chance	 Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence Awe; wonder; elevation
 Curiosity Interest; novelty-seeking; exploration; openness to experience	 Perseverance Persistence; industry; finishing what one starts	 Kindness Generosity; nurturance; care; compassion; altruism; "niceness"	 Fairness Just; not letting feelings bias decisions about others	 Humility Modesty; letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves	 Gratitude Thankful for the good; expressing thanks; feeling blessed
 Judgment Critical thinking; thinking things through; open-minded	 Honesty Authenticity; integrity	 Social Intelligence Emotional intelligence; awareness of the motives/feelings of self/others; knowing what makes other people tick	 Leadership Organizing group activities; encouraging a group to get things done	 Prudence Careful; cautious; not taking undue risks	 Hope Optimism; future-mindedness; future orientation
 Love of Learning Mastering new skills & topics; systematically adding to knowledge	 Zest Vitality; enthusiasm; vigor; energy; feeling alive and activated			 Self-Regulation Self-control; disciplined; managing impulses & emotions	 Humor Playfulness; bringing smiles to others; lighthearted
 Perspective Wisdom; providing wise counsel; taking the big picture view					 Spirituality Religiousness; faith; purpose; meaning



VIA INSTITUTE ON CHARACTER
 (where the world finds strength)
www.viacharacter.org

What is Strength Spotting?

- Strength spotting is defined as “the act of recognizing and identifying the strengths that a person possesses, through a process of naturalistic observation in day-day settings, or through more formal assessment approaches” (Linley, 2008).
- Strength spotting helps to shift the focus of what's wrong with a person to what is strong with them. We do this using the character strengths that we have been discussing and finding what are the signature or top strengths within those for an individual.
- The signature strengths are a subset of the 24 strengths that are unique to each individual. There are universal strengths that we all have within us, and the recognition of them helps us to notice them in ourselves and others.
- The VIA institute has created a survey to help measure these strengths. This survey was created by leading positive psychology researchers as an evidence-based tool for people to inventory what is RIGHT about themselves.

Strength Spotting is not

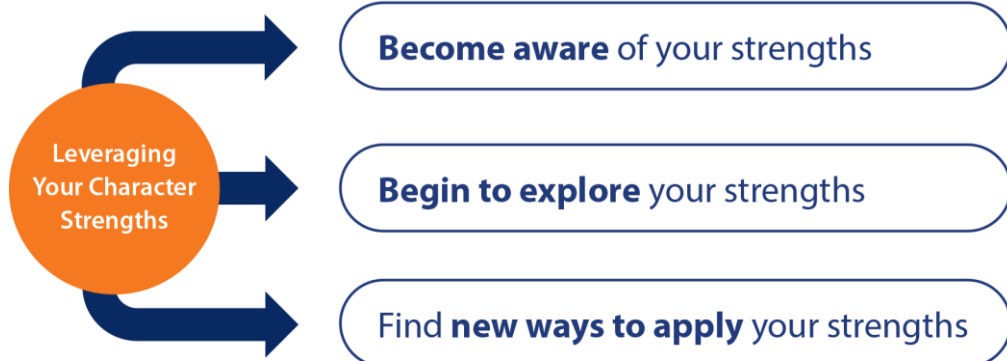
- Ignoring reality or turning a blind eye
- Sugar coating or “kid gloving”
- Forced or toxic positivity
- Some passing fad or made up
- Wishful thinking
- Fake it till you make it
- Should never be used to point out fault or to shame people



Strength Spotting is especially important to the people we serve.

- People with IDD are often viewed by their vulnerabilities first and underestimated in regards to their own strengths.
- Imagine what it would be like for the people to know you by your worst moments, your mistakes and shortcomings, you're physical and mental health issues first and foremost. Imagine being labeled by your problems or diagnosis instead just being able to be you.
- When we meet people we want to put our best face on, start off on the right foot. Instead this is often foreshadowed by stigma and most vulnerable moments. Do you think people might respond to you differently? Think about what this does to one's self identity and self perception, their sense of self worth.
- This makes it all the more crucial to shift the narrative. Through looking first for people's strengths we not only start to cultivate and grow these strengths but we also start the process of unpacking these negative messages and replacing them with positive ones that uplift and strengthen.
- This is how we help people to realize that they are the hero, not the villain in their own story.

Character strengths In ourselves



Adapted from R. Niemiec (2012)

How do you know if a strength is truly a signature strength for you?

- When a strength is truly a signature strength, you feel authentically *you* when you're using this strength, true to yourself.
- You may feel a sense of deeply Knowing this is what's right with you.
- Can you look back and see ways in which you have sought out use of these strengths in activities, relationships, academics or career choices throughout your life?
- Imagine that you can't use one of your top strengths over the next month. How would this make you feel? Would this be difficult for you? Would this take away your happiness; what you have to look forward to day to day; or your sense of purpose?

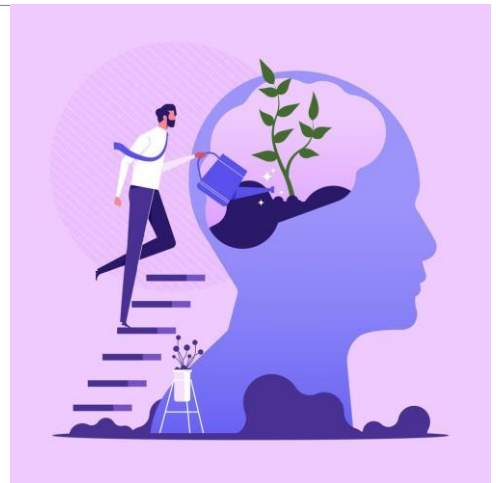
How to strength spot



- Develop a strengths mindset
(Believing that every person you encounter has strengths you can name & nurture.)
- When talking to someone pay attention to what makes them come alive.
- Pay attention to when people are more involved in activities that create high levels of energy and motivation. The activity will seem effortless.
- When people are using their signature strengths they will be at their most authentic and real self.
- Identify the strength, tell them why you know that's a strength in them. Be genuine and honest. Explain what you observed or you know to be true about this person that exemplifies that strength. Let them know why it matters to you or in general. **Help them to do more of it!**
- When working with an individual's family or caregivers ask for a story that shows the person at their best or that exemplifies the person at their essence.

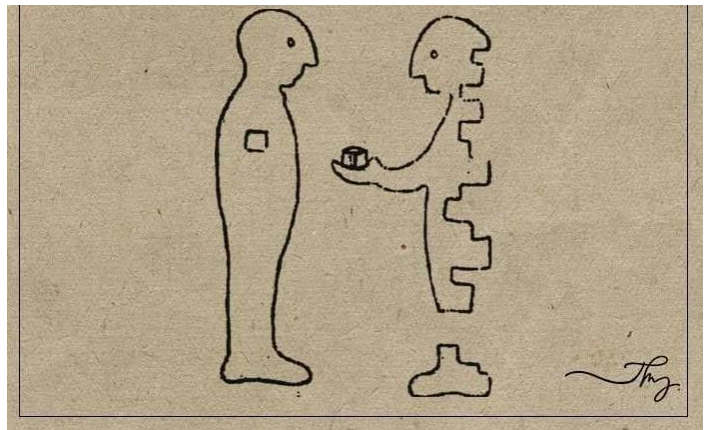
Why it matters

- Character Strengths predict resilience regardless of demographics. They have shown that:
- Noticing strengths builds relationships and provides the tools for resilience.
- Enhanced overall wellbeing and life satisfaction
- Greater happiness and less depression
- Greater relationship satisfaction
- Less stress and reduced anxiety
- Higher levels of positive work experiences
- Increased intrinsic motivation and engagement
- Evidence shows that strengths play a role in growth even in dire life circumstances.



Downsides

- That's not to say that you can't have too much of a good thing.
- Character strengths can be over used.
- Character strengths can be used at the wrong or inappropriate times.
- Just like everything else in life, moderation is still be important.





FLOURISHING

What does it mean to be truly flourishing?

To live your best life.

The absence of ill-being does not equal the presence of well-being.



The privilege of a lifetime is
to become who you truly are.

C.G. Jung

“ quote fancy

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