

Five ways you can implement the strengths-based approach in your daily life

For about three decades, the strengths-based approach has been used in different social, business, and healthcare environments to provide individuals with an alternative view of seeing and understanding themselves.

Temps de lecture : minute

23 March 2021

It has been a proven method for developing a sense of self-worth with an end goal of developing a self-relying capacity for overcoming barriers.

Yet, it has never been so needed in our daily lives as it is now. With the rise of pandemics, we have faced mental and psychological obstacles that affected our mental well-being as never before.

In the course of shifted life perspectives, more and more psychologists have adopted and successfully implemented the strengths-based approach to help people maintain a sense of worthiness, fulfillment, and meaningfulness.

What is the strength-based approach?

The strengths-based approach's roots can be traced in social work springing up as an alternative model that focuses on an individual's strengths and capacities rather than his/her deficits and weaknesses (Seligman, 1996).

It rests upon the notion that individuals can influence immense change in them and with it find solutions to problems that they deem permanent or unsolvable.

Unlike any other methods, the strengths-based approach can help individuals permanently change their attitudes regarding their dignity and self-respect by focusing on their strengths and enhancing their capacities.

The success of this approach lies in allowing the person to see him/herself at their best, to become aware of the value they bring to the environment they operate within by just being what they are.

Simply put, rather than focusing on existing issues and barriers, individuals are encouraged to identify the strengths that can enable them to overcome an existing difficult situation.

With six standards that define the Strengths-Based Approach (Rapp, Saleebey, and Sullivan 2008) and nine guiding principles, there are numerous possibilities for its implementation and an array of methods for practicing it.

Therefore, we have found five ways where you can implement the Strengths-Based Approach in your daily life and how it can help you redefine yourself and your priorities:

1. Invest in Your Potentials, Strengths, and Capabilities That Make You Shine

It is not just our DNA that makes us unique. It is our personality as well. Every single person possesses certain uniqueness that makes him/her stand out in a way. Yet, in the daily rat race, we often forget what defines us as unique human beings.

Defining and understanding your personal strengths can make you more focused on what you can do, rather than comparing with others and detecting your weak spots.

If you were wondering what counts as strengths, consider the definition of strengths that Saleeby (2006a, p10) gives by using the acronym “CPR”:

- C: competence, capabilities, and courage
- P: promises, positivity, and positive expectations
- R: resilience, reserves, and resources

You can make a list of your strengths and see how they apply in your environment. You can start by utilising each of our strengths in daily chores and observe the effect it has upon you and those around you.

Keep a diary that can help you stay focused and keep track of your progress. This way, your mindset will have another perspective, and you’ll start to gain control over your life (Hammond, 2010).

Resilience is often considered very important when dealing with difficult times. When you learn to separate yourself from your problems and see things from a bird’s perspective, you will learn how to face them and eventually deal with them.



Finally, studies show that people who use their strengths at least once a day feel less anxious, more positive, and mentally stronger.

2. Refocus your attention on what you can

“If you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid” - Albert Einstein.

It is true that our ‘labelling society’ places much more emphasis on what an individual *can’t* do rather than what he/she *can* do.

This leads to comparing ourselves to others and expecting to do everything that people in our surroundings can. Surely, if we live our lives trying to do things we can't, we will rarely find time to do things we have the ability, willingness, and talents to do.

Therefore, psychologists suggest that you find a way to focus on developing at least one strength a month.

Think of what you have always dreamt of doing but haven't had the opportunity to do it, and put your plan into action. Have the big picture in front of you and let your vision guide you through it.

3. Don't resist change, you (and the world) is ever evolving

Change is hard, and we tend to gravitate around familiar people and environments. However, just give yourself a minute to think about all the breakthroughs that happened to this world and shaped it.

And, it is still changing, evolving, and offering endless opportunities despite the immense hardships and losses. Reconsider your potentials to get most of them by changing your way of seeing the world, your habits, and your attitudes.

If your efforts are not rewarded, then scan your situation to detect what could be altered to bring in a positive outcome.

4. Speak positive words

The words you say feed your mind, so it reacts subconsciously to what you say. If you maintain a negative attitude and repeat discouraging words, then the chances are that you'll experience negative outcomes.



On the contrary, accepting and proclaiming positive words will lead towards greater openness to new opportunities and expanding your perspectives.

Studies have shown that people speak positively, rejoice more, and have better mental health. In a nutshell, words over time, create our reality, so make sure they are the foundation for a positive one.

5. You are the master of your life (be true to yourself, dream big, support others, make connections)

A Strengths-Based Approach is a holistic approach that considers the person's unique capacities within their environment and identifies potential constraints that could be preventing him/her from achieving personal growth.

Remember that you steer the wheel of your life, and the basic resource you need to achieve your goals is you.

And this can be accomplished by strengthening your competencies and strengths while minimising the detrimental influence of your weaknesses. You can [visit HIGH5's website](#) to learn even more about strengths and how to find them.

Therefore, instead of focusing on the problem and all the consequences it could bring, you can shift the perspective and consider the positive points that could open a new way of dealing with daily issues.

If you are the one who is providing support to people in your surrounding, make sure that you bond with them by offering a positive perspective instead of criticism and focus on negativity.

This can help you create positive relationships that can enhance the feeling of being understood and supported rather than judged and criticised.

Article by David Johnson