



5-7-2020

Do Good Time: Shining a Light on Character Strengths and Well-being in the Prison Population

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Abstract

Defined by their last, worst act, prison inmates are an often-forgotten population. Rates of childhood and adult trauma, such as physical and emotional abuse and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are high among incarcerated persons (Wolff & Shi, 2012). Art can be a valuable tool in correctional facilities, benefitting inmates in the following categories: therapeutic, educational, prison quality-of-life management, and community involvement (Johnson, 2008). Through their intensive two-week art-based program, Shining Light (SL) offers a holistic approach to prisoner rehabilitation, reshaping inmates' perspectives through intentional challenges intended to promote self-discovery, hope, meaning, self-efficacy, relationship skills, and overall enhanced well-being. In an effort to aid SL in supporting inmate well-being post-workshop, we propose an intervention which incorporates and utilizes character strengths in the following capacities: facilitator-training, a talkback, and journaling. This intervention proposes to amplify the positive effects of SL's workshop and implement ongoing support post-program.

Keywords

prison, positive psychology, well-being, character strengths, journaling, talkback, emotional intelligence, hope, mattering

Disciplines

Community Psychology | Other Psychology | Other Social and Behavioral Sciences

Do Good Time: Shining a Light on Character Strengths and Well-being in the Prison Population

Iris Cai, Roger DeWitt, Erica Elam, and Mary Rogers

University of Pennsylvania

A Positive Psychology Service Learning Project Submitted

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
MAPP 714: Applying Positive Interventions in Institutions

Master of Applied Positive Psychology

May 7, 2020

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Keywords: prison, positive psychology, well-being, character strengths, journaling, talkback, post-show discussion, strength-spotting, incarceration, emotional intelligence, emotional contagion, hope, mattering, meaning, mental contrasting with implementation intention, positivity resonance

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	5
Shining Light Overview.....	6
Strengths	6
Needs and Goals	7
Literature Review and Application Plan.....	8
Phase I: Character Strengths – Literature Review	9
VIA Character Strengths.....	9
Emotional Intelligence	10
Application of Character Strengths.....	11
Phase II: Talkback – Literature Review.....	13
Mattering.....	13
Positivity Resonance.....	14
Emotional Contagion	14
Application of Talkback	15
Phase III: Journaling – Literature Review	17
Journaling.....	17
Meaning	17
Mental Contrasting with Implementation Intentions (MCII).....	18
Hope.....	19
Application of Journaling	21
Measurement.....	23
General methodology.....	23
Outcome Measures.....	24
Process Measures	25
Limitations	26
Conclusion	27
References.....	28
Appendix A1.....	36
Appendix A2.....	40
Appendix A3.....	42
Appendix A4.....	45
Appendix B.....	51
Appendix C.....	54

Appendix D..... 56

Introduction

The rate of imprisonment in the United States has quadrupled in the last four decades with nearly one quarter of the world's prisoners – 2.2 million adults – being held in American prisons (National Research Council, 2014). In 2017, the Prison Policy Initiative found that mass incarceration in the United States is costing the government and families of people being processed by the justice system \$182 billion a year, with state correctional spending comprising the majority of that amount at 57% and local governments at 32% (Wagner & Rabuy, 2017). In the 2018 update on prisoner recidivism in the United States, the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that across 30 states, 83% of state prisoners released in 2005 were arrested at least once within 9-years of release (Alper, Markman & Durose, 2018). Considering the magnitude of the incarceration problem and the high rate of recidivism, rehabilitation programs are of critical importance in the United States. Programs of this nature can vary across domains and breadths of focus, but two areas have been found to be effective in enhancing an inmate's well-being and reducing recidivism rates generally: prison arts- and faith-based programs (Brewster, 2014; Johnson, 2008). In a literary analysis of prison art programs, Johnson (2008) found that art is a valuable tool in correctional facilities, noting it benefits inmates during incarceration in the following categories: therapeutic, educational, prison quality-of-life management, and community involvement within the prison. Further, artistic exercises may enhance prisoner rehabilitation as they have the potential to fulfill inmates' basic human need for creative personal development, autonomy, and expression (Johnson, 2008). In addition to the arts, faith-based programs may also be an effective tool in prisoner rehabilitation. In their study, Johnson, Larson, and Pitts (1997) found that inmates who participated in a religious program during imprisonment were less likely to commit institutional infractions and significantly less likely to be rearrested

post-release. Various arts- and faith-based programs have been utilized in prisoner rehabilitation since the 1970s (J. Bohn, personal communication, January 14, 2020).

Shining Light Overview

Through their intensive two-week theatre program, SL offers a holistic approach to prisoner rehabilitation, reshaping inmates' perspectives through intentional challenges intended to promote self-discovery, confidence, self-efficacy, service, and prosocial attitudes. SL aims to support inmates throughout their arts program and beyond, inspiring personal and social flourishing amongst inmates while incarcerated and upon release.

Initially designed as a youth arts program, Shining Light was founded by Jeff Bohn in 1996 in a small rural church in Pennsylvania. Its mission was to challenge members of the program spiritually, culturally, and artistically. As the program for youth grew, SL began traveling throughout the United States performing in prisons. In 2015, they developed what is now known as the "Impact Workshop." In this reimagining of their work, prison inmates would be the creators and performers. Shining Light invited professional performing artists to lead a workshop experience where inmates would write and rehearse a full production of music, spoken word, dance, or theater. They would then perform their work for a portion of the prison population.

Strengths

As an organization, SL sees their strengths originating in their service to a forgotten population (J. Bohn, personal communication, January 14, 2020). This program inspires significant and lasting results among its participants, as they consistently report positive changes in their view of self, interpersonal relationships, faith, and community impact ("Impact," n.d.). Led by a team of seven arts professionals, SL's workshops are executed with the strengths of

perseverance and zest as they continuously strive for high impact with low resources. SL's team approaches their participants with hope and confidence, challenging them to do things they have never done before, and be people they never thought they could be. For example, within 10 minutes of the first meeting, the inmates are up on their feet learning choreography. SL ensures their participants that no performance background, or even artistic skills are required in order to participate in their program. All they ask is for their vulnerability, commitment, and creativity. SL takes great pride in their consistent push for innovation and excellence, a theme that seems to inspire workshop participants. In their 2018-2019 workshop report, SL noted that 98% of workshop participants experienced relational growth, 92% experienced personal growth, and 77% experienced spiritual growth (Shining Light, n.d.). Furthermore, post-workshop self-report questionnaires collected by SL illustrate that workshop participants often develop an increased sense of purpose, improved resilience, and a more positive view of self, peers, and facility staff at the six-month mark post-program completion ("Impact," n.d.).

Needs and Goals

SL feels that they have needs in two main areas. They currently measure workshop outcomes through surveys offered immediately after the program, and again one month and six months after completion. Bohn expressed a desire for *additional measurement tools* to be implemented pre- and post-intervention to further aid in program evaluation and to attract additional sources for funding. According to Bohn, after returning to their cell blocks post-workshop, inmates often experience a significant decline in well-being over the first three days, a concept often referred to among professional performers as the "post-show blues." As such, SL is eager to develop *ongoing and possibly self-sustaining interventions* to combat these negative

results and continue to bolster inmates' personal, relational and spiritual growth long after program completion.

To that end, the focus of the interventions will be inmates' personal and relational growth in areas such as self-perception, resilience (e.g. hope), self-regulation and relationship skills (e.g. emotional intelligence).

Literature Review and Application Plan

The Situation Analysis revealed that Shining Light is lauded for its ability to bring hope and a sense of mattering to prison inmates. The results of the workshop and final prison performance have a long-lasting and meaningful impact, as indicated by survey data collected from inmate's post-program assessment (Shining Light, n.d.). The proposed application plan aims to expand and integrate these positive effects through the utilization and implementation of character strengths during and after the conclusion of SL's program. To that end, the intervention will be introduced in three-phases:

- Phase I: Introduce character strengths – Provide training documents for program facilitators to incorporate character strength language into the existing workshop, which will set the stage for the talkback, and journal phases
- Phase II: Talkback – Propose the implementation of a “talkback” at the conclusion of the prisoners' performance aimed at facilitating a broader sense of connection and community by acknowledging and appreciating the character strengths on display in the performance and in the audience
- Phase III: Journaling – Provide journal prompts exploring personal character strengths and the strengths of others to expand personal and relational growth beyond SL's two-week program

Phase I: Character Strengths – Literature Review

VIA Character Strengths

The recognition of the inmate's individual strengths is a cornerstone of SL's program. Introducing the specific language and interventions of the VIA Character Strengths Profile to their curriculum could further strengthen their efforts. *Character strengths* are defined as "positive traits reflected in thoughts, feelings and behaviors" (Park, Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 603). The 24 VIA Character Strengths are universal and adaptable, meaning individuals each possess them in differing degrees and can improve those which may be considered *lesser strengths* (Niemic, 2017; VIA Institute, 2020). These strengths provide a common language for what is best in people and are pathways to well-being, engagement, and meaning (Niemic, 2017; Seligman, 2012).

SL's workshop is currently replete with activities geared towards recognizing and drawing out the best in all participants. Consistent affirmation and encouragement fortify this effect with a particular emphasis on character strengths such as leadership, teamwork, gratitude, self-regulation, and spirituality. Peterson and Seligman (2004) have found associations with these strengths and several positive outcomes such as empathy, emotional stability, reduced anger expression, social trust, prosocial behavior and purpose.

Signature strengths (top 3 to 7 traits) are fundamental to our identity and can lead to positive outcomes for the individual as well as others (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Niemic, 2017). Research shows that signature strength interventions can have a significant impact on one's happiness, life satisfaction, and even go so far as to reduce levels of depression (Schutte & Malouff, 2019). The use of signature strengths is particularly important for those who are low in

a sense of meaning and purpose – a common struggle for prison inmates (Allan & Duffy, 2013; Maruna, Wilson, & Curran, 2006).

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to perceive, understand, use, and manage emotions in the self and in relation to others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). This ability is critical to create and sustain social relationships (Lopes, Salovey, Côté, Beers, & Petty, 2005). For example, in a social interaction, an individual must be able to accurately recognize and understand one's own feelings and the feelings of others, use that information in the interaction, and regulate her own emotions appropriately for maximum benefit of all involved.

Higher emotional intelligence is positively correlated with better social relationships, improved work performance, and enhanced psychological well-being (Mayer, Roberts, & Barsdale, 2008). Furthermore, greater emotional intelligence correlates with less depression and anxiety, and fewer dysfunctional life choices such as stealing and fighting (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011). Finally, García-Sancho, Salguero, and Fernández-Berrocal (2014) found that higher emotional intelligence is correlated with less aggressive behavior while low emotional intelligence has shown to be a predictor of both alcohol and drug abuse (Riley & Schutte, 2003).

The SL curriculum and Community Code is filled with activities that help inmates gain skills to cultivate emotional intelligence, with an emphasis on managing emotions. The skills needed to manage emotions include labeling one's own emotions, the belief that you can modify those feelings, motivation to do so, and the skills to alter them (Grewal, Brackett, & Salovey, 2006). In their first activity, "Rock, Paper Scissors," SL's participants are taught to lose graciously, accept the experienced emotion (i.e. "brush it off)," and then cheer on their teammates (J. Bohn, personal communication, January 16, 2020). Many of the theater games

interspersed throughout SL's workshop are geared toward recognizing emotions and developing emotional management skills. In the "Emotional Quadrants" game, participants are taught to recognize, express, and transition through emotions like anger and sadness. This type of emotional management, with its focus on the subjective feeling rather than the situation, is critical when an individual is unable to change their circumstances (Larsen, 2000). The practice of identifying and managing emotions may result in improved inmate behavior while promoting a more positive prison culture. It is also important to note that there appears to be a positive correlation between the VIA character strengths and virtues and higher emotional intelligence (Ros-Morente, Mora, Nadal, Belled, & Berenguer, 2017).

Application of Character Strengths

In examining the SL curriculum, it became clear that a significant portion of their work centers around the cultivation of specific strengths in the workshop participants, specifically the strengths of leadership, teamwork, gratitude, self-regulation and spirituality. While these strengths are targeted by SL, research indicates that everyone's individual profile of strengths is different and that using an individual's top or "signature" strengths has significant well-being benefits, specifically increased happiness and life satisfaction, and decreased depression (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Schutte, & Malouff, 2019; Niemiec, 2017). To that end we are proposing a short video or in-person training (See Appendix A1) for the SL staff and teaching artists on understanding character strengths and incorporating them into the workshops with the inmates. In addition to the recognition of strengths during the workshop, we are suggesting the incorporation of the activity of *Strengths Spotting* (See Appendix A2) to the workshop as a way to introduce strengths facility (Linkins, Niemiec, Gillham & Mayerson, 2015). Incorporating character strengths into Phase I of this intervention aims to provide effective language which can

be used to enhance participants' experiences in the talkback and journaling portions of the intervention.

The staff and teaching artists will be asked to take the VIA character strengths assessment and be given five questions to ponder before the strengths training workshop. The purpose of these questions is to give them a personal experience of identifying with their own character strengths. The questions will be:

1. Do you feel these strengths are authentic to who you are? If so, why? If not, why not?
2. Do they feel like essential characteristics to you?
3. Is there one that fuels the rest of them, meaning is there a signature strength that is the catalyst that ignites the rest of them?
4. Do you find yourself regularly expressing these strength or strengths across multiple contexts, single context or in a balanced way?
5. What happens when you don't express any or not enough of them?

In the workshop, SL staff and teaching artists will be taken through a brief history of the VIA character strengths, introduced to some of the benefits and challenges around using their signature strengths, taught the *Aware, Explore, Apply* model (Niemic, 2017) for strengths self-examination, and then taught the Strengths Spotting activity to both experience it personally and use in the workshop.

This process will be most effective for use with the inmates if the inmates are also able to take the VIA profile either before the workshop begins or at the beginning of the workshop. If they have access to a computer, they can take the online version of the test (viacharacter.org). If that is not possible, a pen and paper version (See Appendix A3) designed with prison inmates in mind has been created and previously used in a large, urban area prison institution (See

Appendix A4 for sample strengths report for pen and paper version; K. Healy, personal communication, March 17, 2020). This written version must be hand scored and, while time-consuming, can help the staff to get to know the inmates better. If neither of the above are possible, a description of the 24 strengths (See Appendix A5) may be given to the inmates and they may select their own top five strengths that they feel represent who they truly are at their core.

Phase II: Talkback – Literature Review

Mattering

Most attempts to improve well-being concentrate on the individual, but toxic community conditions can adversely affect even the most resilient individual (Prilleltensky, 2005). Mattering is feeling that you are valued and that you add value, and the community in which one lives can greatly affect how much one feels they matter in the world (Prilleltensky, 2019). This experience of mattering is fundamental to the psychological well-being of all humans; feeling that you do not matter is potentially damaging to both an individual and their community. Many of the exercises taught by SL encourage inmates to add value by practicing vulnerability—contributing their authentic voice and life experience to the show being created. In this way, they are simultaneously adding value to the workshop and feeling valued by the instructors and fellow inmates who respond respectfully. To add value to one's environment, one must feel that she has the *skills* and *opportunity* to contribute (Prilleltensky, 2019).

Theatre interventions in prison have been shown to foster the development of skills that allow inmates to form respectful, trusting relationships and to develop communication skills which may assist with forming and sustaining supportive relationships inside and outside of prison (Heard, Mutch, Fitzgerald, & Pensalfini, 2013). SL not only teaches vital communication

and self-regulation skills, it provides a unique opportunity for prisoners to contribute positively to their community by entertaining, inspiring, and encouraging those observing their performance. However, just because mattering occurs at one community level, it may not mean that mattering is also occurring outside that insulated community (Prilleltensky, 2019). Smaller groups of inmates might feel that they matter within the SL workshops, but that experience doesn't necessarily transfer to the community outside the workshops. The proposed intervention of a "talkback" aims to expand this notion of mattering beyond SL's participants to the prison-community as a whole

Positivity Resonance

Positivity resonance is the shared, simultaneous experience of positive affect, care, and concern, as well as biological and behavioral synchrony between two or more people (Fredrickson, 2016). Experiences of positivity resonance build social bonds and increase feelings of trust, safety, and loyalty while reducing loneliness and depression (Schneider & Fredrickson, n.d.). In order to cultivate this phenomenon, one must create an environment of perceived safety and in-person sensory connection (Schneider & Fredrickson, n.d.). SL's post-workshop surveys reveal their success in creating a culture of safety and vulnerability for their inmate participants; the arts are uniquely adept at fostering high-quality human connection which can elevate personal well-being and a sense of belonging (Schneider & Fredrickson, n.d.). The addition of a talkback is expected to provide an opportunity to extend the positivity resonance directly to audience members by encouraging their contribution to a post-show discussion.

Emotional Contagion

Humans have a tendency to mirror the emotional expressions of those around them and to personally experience the emotions they are mimicking in a phenomenon known as emotional

contagion (Hsee, Hatfield, Carlson, & Chemtob, 1990). A post-show talkback is expected to lead to improved psychosocial and social well-being among both the workshop participants and the audience. Emotional contagion cultivates behavioral and emotional mimicry even when the individuals involved are not conscious of tracking the emotions of those around them (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993). A talkback intervention will facilitate intentional and structured interaction promoting positive emotional contagion between the greater prison population and the workshop participants who consistently report increases in levels of hope, pride, confidence, motivation, joy, patience, and compassion (J. Bohn, personal communication, January 16, 2020). Individual prisoners are embedded in the social network of prison. The health and well-being of individuals in a social network can greatly affect the health and well-being of those around them—particularly individuals of the same sex (Fowler & Christakis, 2008). It is possible for entire societies to develop a collective emotional climate (Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, 2006). While fear (an automatic response) often results in a collective climate of mistrust and violence, a system that values engagement in higher mental activities such as peaceful goal-setting may result in a hopeful emotional orientation for the whole society (Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, 2006).

Application of Talkback

Post-show talkbacks are designed to engage the audience, encouraging them to examine a performance's impact while exploring resulting questions and insights. We propose a post-show talkback, led by SL's teaching-artists, focused on observing and articulating the character strengths demonstrated by the performers. A talkback is intended to extend the reach of SL's work by facilitating a broader sense of connection and community, bolstering positivity resonance, a sense of mattering, and positive emotional contagion among/between the program participants, the audience, and beyond.

While positivity resonance between audience and performer has not been formally studied yet, synchrony in physiology has been shown in collective rituals with a primary “actor” and this may be a significant factor in the appeal of live performance (B. Fredrickson, personal communication, February 24, 2020). As mentioned above, many of the exercises taught by SL encourage inmates to add value by cultivating both the necessary *skills* and *opportunity* to contribute to their community. A talkback is expected to give audience members the opportunity to add value by contributing as well. By directly engaging the audience on the subject of the character strengths, we provide a forum for contributing and verbalizing their thoughts. This kind of reflection can help to organize learning, leading to new understanding and appreciation (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1996).

The proposed format is intended to encourage maximum participation while controlling for the inevitable audience member who simply seeks attention or offers inappropriate comments. Based on successful existing talkback formats, we suggest the facilitator begin by asking for feedback “by show of hands.” This encourages non-verbal participation, a less vulnerable way to share/participate (Fisher, 2015; Lewis, & Fox, 2014). Facilitators then gradually build to questions that encourage brief, specific, positive audience responses on the subject of the character strengths demonstrated in the performance. An intentional, structured talkback focused on identifying and appreciating character strengths beyond the workshop (in oneself and others) could lead to improved psychosocial and relational well-being among both the workshop participants and the audience (see Appendix B).

Phase III: Journaling – Literature Review

Journaling

Journaling has been shown to reduce the likelihood of serious prison misconduct, reduce recidivism, and encourage positive changes to inmates' self-narrative (Camp et al., 2008; Gobbels, Ward, & Willis, 2012; Maruna, Lebel, Mitchell, & Naples, 2004). In addition, journaling that is guided by structured questions, has been found to be an effective learning strategy (Deaver & McAuliffe, 2009; Epp, 2008), and has been considered a desirable intervention due to its time efficiency and the limited interaction required with a clinical professional (Proctor, Hoffman, & Allison, 2012). By helping inmates to become more self-aware, journaling can improve their emotional intelligence fostering personal and relational growth (Boud, 2001). Structured post-workshop journaling assignments may be leveraged to amplify the insights gleaned from the workshop. Journal prompts can remind participants to practice goal-setting and mental contrasting and create a space for them to continue each participant's journey of self-discovery and growth.

Meaning

Imprisonment can be a serious threat to an individual's sense of meaning as it is a time when normal support systems are absent (Maruna et al., 2006). It can also be challenging to find meaning given the negative impact incarceration has on self-identity and self-narrative (i.e. one's view of their life story; Byrne, 2003).

People who view their lives as *meaningful* are more supportive of others, have greater coping skills, are more likely to report growing psychologically, spiritually, or socially after a traumatic experience, and are less likely to abuse drugs and alcohol (Martela, Ryan, & Steger, 2017; Debats, Drost, & Hansen, 1995; Steger, Frazier, & Zacchanini, 2008; Nicholson et al.,

1994). Steger's (2009, 2012) suggests that a meaningful life requires both *comprehension* and *purpose*. Comprehension comes from gaining knowledge about the world, one's abilities and strengths (self-identity), and from a meaningful self-narrative (Parks & Schueller, 2014). Purpose (i.e. motivation) requires an individual to invest in self-concordant goal pursuits (Steger, 2009).

Religion has also been effective in helping inmates change their self-narrative, find meaning in their imprisonment, and establish a new identity which empowers them to be the agent of change in their own lives (Maruna et al., 2006). Religion has been effectively harnessed by SL's existing program, as indicated in their 2018-2019 Workshop Report with 77% of participants experiencing spiritual growth (J. Bohn, personal communication, January 14, 2020).

Forging a more positive self-narrative and identity can be effective in improving one's sense of leading a meaningful life within the limitations of the prison environment. A post-workshop journaling intervention which leverages character strengths is expected to help SL's participants form a positive self-narrative, augment their self-perception, and contribute to their self-identity (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Mental Contrasting with Implementation Intentions (MCII)

SL ends their workshop process with a "Letter to Myself Six Months from Now," when their positive affect is at its highest. They are asked to express things they feel they will need to hear six months post-workshop.

This activity is based on *Fantasy Realization Theory* which states that when an individual contrasts a future wish with their present reality (i.e. *Mental Contrasting*), a drive to act is initiated and goal commitment is high if there is a reasonable expectation of attainment of the desired future (Oettingen, Pak, & Schnetter, 2001). This is in contrast to simply dreaming about the positive future or dwelling on an obstacle alone where there is no necessity to act, and thus

no goal commitment (Oettingen, Mayer, Thorpe, Janetzke, & Lorenz, 2005; Oettingen et al., 2001). Contrasting negative fears with examples of impending positive reality engages commitment to change the future negative outcome (Oettingen et al., 2005). For example, if I fear the possibility of not finding a job upon release from prison, hearing stories about former inmates who have successfully reintegrated makes me more likely to confront my fear.

The positive effects of mental contrasting are contingent on a belief that there is a reasonable chance that the future desire will occur (Oettingen et al., 2005). This belief effect can be enhanced when implementation intentions are added (i.e. if “x” happens then I will do “y”) (Oettingen & Reininger, 2016). Using mental contrasting with implementation intentions (MCII) has been shown to increase self-regulation in goal pursuit (Duckworth, Loew, Oettingen, & Gollwitzer, 2011). This activity can be augmented as a teaching tool for self-regulation and goal attainment by applying MCII in journaling assignments. Daily journal prompts could be designed in a way to help workshop participants envision what an ideal day ahead would look like, “contrast” that ideal outcome with a potential obstacle, and develop an intention of how they could use their character strengths to overcome that obstacle.

Hope

Participants in SL workshops are asked to create narratives about their hopes and share them in a group, perform songs, dances, theatre, or spoken word that convey messages of hope, and are reminded how such activities can serve their peers in the audience (J. Bohn, personal communication, January 16, 2020). Throughout the workshop and final performance, participants create strong, supportive bonds with one another. They are asked to do things they have never done before—renewing self-belief in their accomplishments and learning strategic thinking in the process. Finally, while the founders of the program find hope in dark times

through Christian principles, inmates are encouraged to find a path to hope and/or spirituality that works for them (J. Bohn, personal communication, January 16, 2020).

Hope, one's self-perceived capacity to achieve goals through potentially successful pathways, has been found to predict lower recidivism rates (Burnett & Maruna, 2004). A 10-year study in the United Kingdom found that 70% of prisoners who were doubtful about their future recommitted crimes within ten years compared to about 40% of those who were hopeful (Burnett & Maruna, 2004). Prisoners with higher hope may be better at making good use of opportunities and coping with disappointments (LeBel, Burnett, Maruna, & Bushway, 2008).

Leveraging the *Hope Theory* model, which encompasses goal-setting and four strategies to start and stay motivated during goal pursuit (*hope finding, hope bonding, hope enhancing and hope reminding*; Magyar-Moe & Lopez, 2015), we propose character strength language to be infused in SL's workshop curriculum and use character strengths-infused journaling intervention to cultivate hope post-workshop in the following manner:

- *Hope Finding*: Identifying one's character strengths helps participants build narratives that help them find hope
- *Hope Enhancing*: Learning strategic thinking by setting intentions in their journal on what character strengths to use to make their day more effective
- *Hope Bonding*: Sharing hopes with others through facilitated post-workshop meetings with a social worker or staff member. In addition, teaching the inmates to spot and acknowledge the strengths they see in others (strengths spotting) could further facilitate Hope Bonding.
- *Hope Reminding*: Enhancing motivation and self-belief by writing down their hopes in their journal and reflecting on them afterwards

Application of Journaling

After the final performance, participants go back to their “normal” lives in prison. Depressive emotions often ensue as they lose a sense of community built within the workshop and their performance (J. Bohn, personal communication, January 14, 2020). Support from prison staff regarding workshop participants’ continued growth is often limited (J. Bohn, personal communication, January 14, 2020).

To sustain the positive effects of the workshop and expand the participants’ personal and relational growth, we recommend distributing a journaling workbook to each participant. Given its autonomous nature (i.e. professional oversight is not required) and minimal time commitment, journaling is expected to be an effective tool for SL participants post-workshop completion (Proctor, et al., 2012). These journaling workbooks are to be distributed after the final performance as they are designed to help participants’ use character strengths to support their growth in the following four areas:

1. Find meaning in their lives through making sense of the events that have transpired in their lives and leveraging character strengths to enhance their self-identity and self-perception
2. Accentuate hope through developing new character strengths-informed self-narratives and strategies to stay motivated
3. Improve self-regulation through daily intentions and reflections supported by character strengths
4. Develop relational skills with a focus on developing prosocial character strengths

This recommended workbook contains two parts. Part I of the workbook (see Appendix C1) contains journal prompts designed to promote savoring of participants’ workshop,

performance and talkback experience. Incarcerated individuals have been found to have low self-identity, negative self-narratives, substandard social relationships, and low resilience (Byrne, 2003; Maruna et al., 2006; Armiya'u, Abiola, Bamidele, Nwoga, & Davou, 2019). The first three days immediately following the workshop have been found to be the hardest for most participants (J. Bohn, personal communication, January 14, 2020). As such, journaling immediately after the conclusion of the workshop may help to reinforce their learning and reduce the tendency to succumb to old thought patterns and behaviors. The exercises in Part I of the workbook aim to deepen participants' learnings on three out of the four main areas addressed in the workshops:

1. Self-identity and self-narrative
2. Relationship with others
3. Hope

The focus of Part I of the journaling workbook is immediate reflection on the SL Impact Workshop. Part II contains standard journal prompts and is intended for regular (e.g. daily) usage (See Appendix C2). Part II also focuses on self-regulation. These daily journal prompts include two categories: Intention (to be completed in the morning when the user's day just starts) and Reflection (to be completed in the evening before going to bed). Informed by the strategy of Mental Contrasting with Implementation Intention, prompts in Part II guide users to set daily goals (Oettingen, G., & Reininger, 2016; Oettingen, Kappes, Guttenberg, & Gollwitzer, 2015). A "cheat sheet" of the 24-character strengths with brief descriptions of each strengths will be included (See Appendix A5). Standard daily prompts are inspired by two classic positive psychology interventions empirically found to increase feelings of happiness and decrease depressive symptoms for six months: *using signature strengths in a new way* and *three good*

things (Niemeic, 2017; Seligman, Steen, Park & Peterson, 2005). Journals are intended to be used daily with the guided prompts for a minimum of 14 days. Prolonged journaling beyond the 14 days is strongly encouraged. To facilitate this, Part II of the workbook will contain enough extra pages to sustain one month of daily journaling. Additional copies of the workbooks can be provided upon request.

To provide variety and continuously help users cultivate new skills and reflect, “special edition” journaling topics would be interspersed among the daily journal prompts (See Appendix C). For example, at the end of every two weeks there would be one day when the user is asked to reflect on something positive that they learned about themselves in the previous two weeks and write about what that insight means for their future. This exercise would help the user continue to develop a more positive self-narrative, which has been found to be an effective hope finding strategy (Magyar-Moe & Lopez, 2015).

Measurement

General methodology

SL currently measures the success of its workshops using a 39-item survey evaluating participants’ growth in three domains: personal, relational, and spiritual. Survey data is collected again one to four months and six to twelve months after the workshop during two follow-up surveys (J. Bohn, personal communications, January 16, 2020). Using the additional proposed measures (below) to assess well-being of a group of participants whose workshop does not include our proposed interventions (“control group”) as compared to workshop participants who are introduced to character strengths and given the opportunity to participate in the talkback and journaling interventions (“experimental group”) will help to determine the effectiveness of the intervention.

Since the proposed interventions aim to extend and enhance the impact of SL's workshops by helping participants (1) improve self-perception, (2) accentuate hope through goal-setting (3) improve self-regulation, and (4) strengthen relationship skills, it is our expectation that measurements in the personal and relational domains in the experimental group would improve immediately after the workshop compared to control. At the first and second follow-up, measurements in such domains are expected to decrease at a slower pace as compared to the control group. Currently, self-perception and relationship skills are already included in SL's surveys. To provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the proposed interventions' impact in the four aforementioned areas, we propose additional outcome and process measures as follows:

Outcome Measures

We expect positive affect to increase and negative affect to decrease, and therefore suggest implementing the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988; see Appendix D) to SL's existing self-report questionnaire. We propose SL measure pre- and post-workshop.

In addition, we propose adding in the following survey questions to measure hope and self-regulation to SL's existing post-workshop survey and two follow-up surveys. All questions will be in scale format.

Outcome Measured	Survey Questions
Hope ¹	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem. 2. My past experiences have prepared me well for my future.

¹ Adapted from two items in Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991).

Self-regulation ²	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am able to keep my cool. I don't let things get to me. 2. I am able to notice when something is starting to get to me and can brush it off.
------------------------------	---

Process Measures

The below process measures evaluate the real-time effectiveness of the proposed interventions while they are in progress. Monitoring such measures help us get a pulse of how the interventions are being received and whether any course correction is needed.

- *Journal Completion:* Five weeks after the workshop, participants should have finished using all three of their journal workbooks if they have been journaling daily. We intend to measure the effectiveness of this portion of the intervention in the following ways:
 - Count the number of participants who show up to meet with the social worker / prison staff at the end of the two-week journaling period
 - Social worker to ask how many people have done their journals (yes / no)
 - The number of new journals distributed at the two-week post-workshop meeting with the social worker.
- *Rate of Disciplinary Incidents:* SL's records have shown that 95% of participants reported positive change in at least one area of relational growth (e.g. "View of peers," "View of facility staff"). This growth in conjunction with the participants' enhanced self-regulation skills is expected to lead to a decrease in conflicts between inmates or between inmates and prison staff. Therefore, we propose monitoring each facility's monthly disciplinary record trend to see if there is any decrease that could be attributed to SL's workshops.

² Adapted from two items in Brief Self-Control Scale (Tangney, Boone, & Baumeister, 2018).

- *Prison Staff Survey*: In addition, an anecdotal feedback survey can be deployed among facility staff to understand their observation of participants' growth.
 - What changes have you noticed in the inmates who participated in the Shining Light Workshop? (examples: interactions with other inmates or prison staff)

Limitations

SL is working with a small, non-randomized sample. Participants in the workshop are self-selected which may result in a sample that is more motivated and/or open to self-improvement than the general prison population. Limitations also include outside factors such as personal health, other prison experiences, etc., that may affect the results of post-intervention surveys intended to measure individual well-being.

SL's 2018-2019 workshop report indicated that approximately 5% of its inmates have less than high school education (J. Bohn, personal communication, February 12, 2020). While SL already includes journaling as an element of their current workshops, asking inmates to journal on their own with no Teaching Artist to facilitate may have negative outcomes for those at lower literacy levels. To address the comprehension issue, care has been taken to ensure that simple language is used in designing the journal prompts. The workbook also suggests collaborating with fellow inmates to express strengths through drawing, dancing, singing, etc. as alternative means of self-expression (see Appendix C1).

Another potential limitation of this intervention is the self-regulation required of inmates to complete their journaling. SL intends to distribute a monthly newsletter which may serve as a reminder for workshop participants to continue their journaling. Additionally, we encourage SL to connect with prison social workers to establish facilitated gatherings with former program participants. These meetings may provide an opportunity for inmates to share their learnings

from the two-week journaling period and also provide additional motivation for continued journaling.

Finally, even the most trained and socially intelligent talkback facilitator cannot completely avoid the occasional disruptive audience member. We expect that a trained moderator and the restrictions of the talkback structure will reduce belligerent and/or inappropriate feedback without discouraging overall participation, however, each audience is different and individual reactions cannot be completely controlled.

Conclusion

To conclude, the proposed intervention is intended to amplify the positive effects of Shining Light's workshop and implement ongoing, post-program support for its inmate participants. Through the addition of character strengths principles and language, a structured community talkback, and a follow up of post-workshop journaling exercises, the aim is to give Shining Light an evidence-based platform from which they can continue to build upon as they combat the hopelessness of prison.

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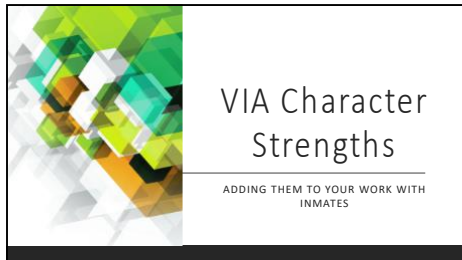
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Appendix A1

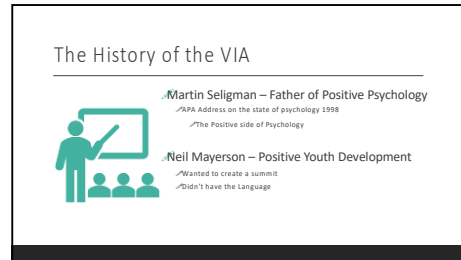
Character Strengths Training Slides

Shining Light - Gray Cohort - MAPP 714

3/20/20



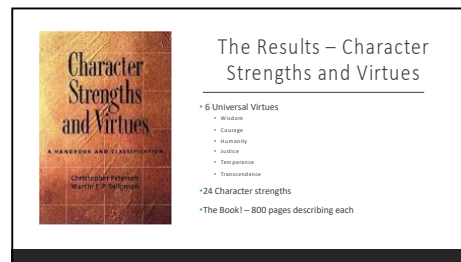
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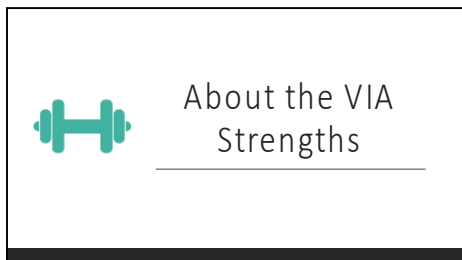
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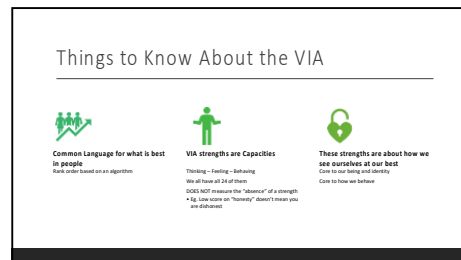
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4




5



6

Things to Know about the VIA

- Character strengths are what we use to build a flourishing life
 - Pathway to well-being
- Character Strengths describe rather than prescribe
 - They give us a way to talk about what is best in us.
 - They do not say what we "should" do



7


What They Are and What They Are Not

- NOT all or nothing
 - Continuum – viewed in degrees of use
 - Context is key
 - Different contexts require different amounts of strengths
 - Chris Peterson – "Character is Plural"
 - They are used in combinations
- The "Golden Mean"
 - Right amount – Right situation – Right combination
- Over Use or Under Use




8

Signature Strengths



Top 3-7 that are core to who you are

Remember we have all 24 but these are core
Test to see if these strengths are truly "Signature"
• Imagine that strength didn't exist




Middle and Lower Strengths

Helper strengths
Can be cultivated
Lower strengths "come up to the top" in certain situations

9

So What Happens Now?

- One of the first questions is ... "Ok, this is great but what do I do with them?"
- The Character Strengths are deceptively complex in their simplicity
- They give you a common language to describe you at your best
- How to Use Them
 - *Aware. Explore. Apply.*



10

Aware


- In order to use them you first must be aware that they are there.
 - Name your strength.
 - Describe your strength
 - Do you feel the strength is authentic to who you really are?
 - How energizing is it when you express one or more of your signature strengths? What happens when you don't express any or not enough of them?
 - Try to think of examples where you have utilized your signature strengths and manifested something fulfilling, joyful, any positive emotion or even a successful achievement

This can be a partner activity, a group discussion or an activity that each individual journals about

11

Explore

- How have you used these in the past? Good times? Challenging times? Problem solving? Different areas of your life?
 - How does this strength think?
 - How does this strength feel?
 - What does this strength say out loud? In your head?
 - What does this strength do?



12

Apply

How might you use this strength more in your daily life?

We use strengths differently in the various areas of our lives (e.g., work, home, relationships etc.)

Using the strengths in new ways.

13

Strengths Spotting Activity

You can notice strengths in any activity or life story if you look from that lens.

This activity is designed to:

1. Help you focus on your strengths and the strengths of those around you.
2. Becoming more familiar with using the "language of strengths."
3. Get more comfortable with sharing positive stories with those around you

Adapted from R. M. Niemiec: Character Strengths Interventions. © 2018 Hogrefe Publishing and VIA Institute on Character

14

Strengths Spotting - Version 1

1. Think of a very specific time when you were at your best. This could be a time at work, home, school, or any place where you were acting in a way that represents who you truly are at your best.
2. Write the story. Make sure it has a beginning, middle and end
3. Read the story yourself or to a friend. Take special notice of the character strengths that you used in that story. If you are reading it to a friend, give them the list of your strengths and ask them which ones they noticed in the story.

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15

Strengths Spotting – Version 2

1. Do this as a partner activity in pairs.
2. Each person should think of a time when they had a good experience and they contributed to that experience in a meaningful way.
3. Share that story one at a time.
4. After one person finishes their story, the other person should share the character strengths that they noticed in the story.
5. Switch.
6. How did it feel to have your strengths reflected to you?

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16

Ideas for Using Strengths Spotting in the Workshop

1. Ideally, have the inmates take the VIA before the workshop. On day one have a conversation about strengths and give each person their top 5 and ask them if they feel like they represent who they are authentically.
2. Get to know the inmate's strengths and use that language when you acknowledge them. At the end of the day, have each person acknowledge the person next to them for a strength that they saw them use (For example, "Hey, Big Tony, I really saw you use your strengths of kindness and humor in that scene.")
3. Incorporate strengths identification into their writing homework.
4. Do a version of the above Strengths Spotting exercise in small groups as part of the workshop.
5. Do a strengths improv. Take a strength that you want to cultivate in them and ask them to act it out. What does it think, feel, say, do?

17


Working with Inmates and Strengths



- >Working with strengths in prison population can be challenging in the prison environment
- >Some strengths may be frowned upon in certain situations – eg. Kindness to a guard could be perceived as "trying to get one up on me" by the guard. Or... Creativity is great to see things in a new way but can also be used to make you a good liar.
- >Remember – Strengths are used in combinations. Help them create strengths formulas that are appropriate for their situation
- >Deciding to improve your family's life by getting your degree while behind bars = Love + self regulation + Perseverance + love of learning
- >Manipulation = overuse of social intelligence + overuse of creativity + underuse of honesty
- >Practical Wisdom - Cultivate what is appropriate for a given situation.

18


Working with Inmates and Strengths



- >< Engage them with questions about their experience
- >< What expression of strengths would NOT be a good use in the yard? With a guard? With another inmate?
- >< How could you use that strength differently so it would be ok? Are there other strengths that you could use in those situations that would be better?
- >< Remember: *The right strengths, in the right combination, in the right amounts, in the right situation = The Golden Mean.*
- >< Remember to have challenge them to frame things in the positive (what they did; what went well; etc.) vs. framing things in the negative (what they didn't do; what went wrong; etc.)
- >< For example – "I didn't lose my shit" vs. "I kept my cool"


19

Final Thoughts



1. Practice working with strengths yourself. The more familiar you are with them the easier it will be in the workshop.
2. There are many more exercises that you can do with strengths, this is one of the easiest to start with. Consider reading *The Power of Character Strengths* by Ryan Niemiec and Robert McGrath. For a more in-depth exploration, *Character Strengths Interventions* by Ryan Niemiec is an exceptional reference book.
3. While people often experience resistance when asked to focus on strengths (because we spend so much time as humans focusing on what is "wrong" with ourselves, our situation, and others), starting to recognize and articulate what is "right" can be transformational.
4. Practice with one another during your workshop off time to feel more comfortable with the strengths.
5. Have fun with this!

20



Questions?

21

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22

Appendix A2

Strengths Spotting Activity Guide³

Purpose

1. Develop facility with strengths language.
2. Develop the ability to notice strengths in self and others.
3. Become more comfortable with positive stories.
4. Articulate some of the qualities of who you are at your best.

Activity – Version 1

1. Think of a very specific time when you were at your best. It could be recently or way back. This could be a time at work, home, school, or any place where you were acting in a way that represents who you truly are at your best.
2. Work out the story. Make sure it has a beginning, middle and end.
3. Write the story.
4. Read the story yourself or to a friend. Take special notice of the character strengths that you used in that story. If you are reading it to a friend, give them the list of your strengths and ask them which ones they noticed in the story.

Activity – Version 2

1. Do this as a partner activity in pairs.
2. Each person should think of a time when they had a good experience and they contributed to that experience in a meaningful way.
3. Share that story one at a time.
4. After one person finishes their story, the other person should share the character strengths that they noticed in the story.
5. Switch.
6. Debrief. How did it feel to have your strengths reflected to you?

Working with Inmates

1. Ideally, have the inmates take the VIA before the workshop. On day one, have a conversation about strengths and give each person their top 5 and ask them if they feel like they represent who they are authentically.
2. Get to know the Inmate's strengths and use that language when you acknowledge them. At the end of the day, have each person acknowledge the person next to them for a strength that they saw them use (For example, "Hey, Big Tony, I really saw you use your strengths of kindness and humor in that scene").
3. Expect resistance or "so what?" People are so focused on their faults and what is not working that they take their strengths for granted.

³ "Strengths Spotting" is adapted from R. M. Niemiec: *Character Strengths Interventions*. © 2018 Hogrefe Publishing and VIA Institute on Character

4. Incorporate strengths identification into their writing homework.
5. Do a version of the above Strengths Spotting exercise in small groups as part of the workshop.
6. Do a strengths improv. Take a strength that you want to cultivate in them and ask them to act it out. What does it think, feel, say, do?
7. Have fun with this! Make modifications on the fly and use your instincts.

Appendix A3**VIA Signature Strengths Inventory⁴**

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Using one of the following five descriptions (5 = Very Much Like Me, 4 = Like Me, 3 = Neither Like Me nor Unlike Me; 2 = Unlike Me; 1 = Very Much Unlike Me), please put the appropriate number on the line next to each statement. This number defines the person who you are, NOT the person you wish you could be. This number should also reflect your life in general, not how you may have behaved in only one or two past situations.

1. You are viewed as a creative person; you see, do, and/or create things that are of use; you think of unique ways to solve problems and be productive.
2. You are an explorer; you seek novelty; you are interested in new activities, ideas, and people; you are open to new experiences.
3. You are analytical; you examine things from all sides; you do not jump to conclusions, but instead attempt to weigh all the evidence when making decisions.
4. You often find ways to deepen your knowledge and experiences; you regularly look for new opportunities to learn; you are passionate about building knowledge.
5. You take the “big picture” view of things; others turn to you for wise advice; you help others make sense of the world; you learn from your mistakes.
6. You face your fears and overcome challenges and adversity; you stand up for what is right; you do not shrink in the face of pain or inner tension or turmoil.
7. You keep going and going when you have a goal in mind; you attempt to overcome all obstacles; you finish what you start.
8. You are a person of high integrity and authenticity; you tell the truth, even when it hurts; you present yourself to others in a sincere way; you take responsibility for your actions.
9. You are enthusiastic toward life; you are highly energetic and activated; you use your energy to the fullest degree.

⁴ These documents were created by Kevin Healy and Mike McGillicuddy in collaboration with Ryan Niemiec and are included with their permission. They have been used in a correctional institution.

10. You are warm and genuine to others; you not only share but are open to receiving love from others; you value growing close and intimate with others.
11. You do good things for people; you help and care for others; you are generous and giving; you are compassionate.
12. You pay close attention to social nuances and the emotions of others; you have good insight into what makes people “tick”; you seem to know what to say and do in any social situation.
13. You are a collaborative and participative member on groups and teams; you are loyal to your group; you feel a strong sense of duty to your group; you always do your share.
14. You believe strongly in an equal and just opportunity for all; you don’t let personal feelings bias your decisions about others; you treat people the way you want to be treated.
15. You positively influence those you lead; you prefer to lead than to follow; you are very good at organizing and taking charge for the collective benefit of the group.
16. You readily let go of hurt after you are wronged; you give people a second chance; you are not vengeful or resentful; you accept people’s shortcomings.
17. You let your accomplishments speak for themselves; you see your own goodness but prefer to focus the attention on others; you do not see yourself as more special than others; you admit your imperfections.
18. You are wisely cautious; you are playful and conscientious; you are careful to not take undue risks or do things you might later regret.
19. You are a very disciplined person; you manage your vices and bad habits; you stay calm and cool under pressure; you manage your impulses and emotions.
20. You notice the beauty and excellence around you; you are often awe-struck by beauty, greatness, and/or the moral goodness you witness; you are often filled with wonder.
21. You regularly experience and express thankfulness; you don’t take the good things that happen in your life for granted; you tend to feel blessed in many circumstances.
22. You are optimistic, expecting the best to happen; you believe in and work toward a positive future; you can think of many pathways to reach your goals.
23. You are playful; you love to make people smile and laugh; your sense of humor helps you connect closely to others; you brighten gloomy situations with fun and/or jokes.

24. You hold a set of beliefs, whether religious or not, about how your life is part of something bigger and more meaningful; those beliefs shape your behavior and provide a sense of comfort, understanding, and purpose.

Scoring Directions: 1. Circle all "5s" 2. Rank order all '5s' 3. If (but only if) you have fewer than five '5s', circle all "4s" Rank order all '4s'

Appendix A4

The VIA Classification of Strengths for XX. (Sample)⁵

Character Strengths are the positive parts of your personality that impact how you think, feel and behave and are the keys to you being your best self. When applied effectively, they are beneficial both to you and society as a whole. They are different from your other strengths, such as your unique skills, talents, interests and resources, because character strengths reflect the "real" you, who you are at your core.

When reviewing your profile of 'signature' strengths, it is important to remember that everyone has all 24 strengths, just in different amounts. A separate list details each of these strengths.

What is unique about your profile is the position of each strength. The five highest strengths, your 'signature strengths,' are listed below. These are likely to be those that are most representative of the 'real you.'

Your top character strength is Loving and Allowing Oneself to Be Loved: You value close relations with others, in particular relationships in which sharing and caring are reciprocated. The people to whom you feel most close are the same people who feel most close to you.

Your second highest character strength is Social Intelligence: You are aware of the motives and feelings of others and of yourself. You know what to do to fit into different social situations. You know what makes other people tick.

Your third highest character strength is Gratitude: You are aware of the good things that happen to you and others. You rarely take them for granted. Your friends and family members know that you are a grateful person because you strive to take the time to express thanks.

Your fourth highest character strength is Spirituality: 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.

Your fifth highest character strength is Kindness and Generosity: 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.

Congratulations, A. Sample! You have completed the first step in discovering your unique character strengths and beginning your journey towards greater well-being and happiness.

⁵ These documents were created by Kevin Healy and Mike McGillicuddy in collaboration with Ryan Niemiec and are included with their permission. They have been used in a correctional institution.

The VIA Classification of Strengths Quotes⁶

Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence: If Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence is one of your top strengths, 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.

Anonymous: "A smile is the prettiest thing you'll ever wear."

H. I. Khan: "Some people look for a beautiful place. Others make a place beautiful."

Bravery: If Bravery is one of your top strengths, 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.

Nelson Mandela: "I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."

William Shakespeare: "Cowards die many times before their deaths. The valiant taste of death but once."

Creativity: If Creativity is one of your top strengths, thinking 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.

Ursula Leguin: "The creative adult is the child who survived."

Maya Angelou: "You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have."

Curiosity: If Curiosity is one of your top strengths, you are interested in learning more about anything and everything. You are always asking questions, and you find all subjects and topics fascinating. You like exploration and discovery.

Albert Einstein: "The mind that opens to a new idea never returns to its original size."

William Arthur Ward: "Curiosity is the wick in the candle of learning."

Fairness: If Fairness is one of your top strengths, treating 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.

H. Jackson Brown, Jr: "Live so that when your children think of fairness and integrity, they think of you."

⁶ These documents were created by Kevin Healy and Mike McGillicuddy in collaboration with Ryan Niemiec and are included with their permission. They have been used in a correctional institution

Victor Hugo: "Being good is easy, what is difficult is being just."

Forgiveness: If Forgiveness is one of your top strengths, you are good at forgiving those who have done you wrong. You always give people a second chance. You believe in mercy, not in revenge.

Mahatma Gandhi: "The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."

Lewis Smedes: "To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you."

Gratitude: If Gratitude is one of your top strengths, 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 thanks.

Albert Schweitzer: "At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer: "In ordinary life, we hardly realize that we receive a great deal more than we give, and that it is only with gratitude that life becomes rich."

Honesty: If Honesty is one of your top strengths, you are a straightforward person, not only by speaking the truth but by living your life in a genuine and authentic way. You are down to earth and without pretense; you are a 'real' person.

Michelle Obama: "We learned about honesty and integrity that the truth matters, that you don't take shortcuts or play by your own set of rules. Success doesn't count unless you earn it fair and square."

George Washington: "I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is the best policy."

Hope: If Hope is one of your top strengths, you expect the best in the future and you work to achieve it. You believe that a good future is something that can be brought about.

Alfred Lord Tennyson: "Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come, whispering 'it will be happier.'"

H. Jackson Brown, Jr.: "Hope is the magic carpet that transports us from the present moment into the realm of infinite possibilities."

Humility: If Humility is one of your top strengths, 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.

Rick Warren: “True humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less.”

Mahatma Gandhi: “It is unwise to be too sure of one's own wisdom. It is healthy to be reminded that the strongest might weaken and the wisest might err.”

Humor: If Humor is one of your top strengths, you like to laugh and tease. Bringing smiles to other people is important to you. You try to see the light side of all situation.

Charlie Chaplin: “A day without laughter is a day wasted.”

Clifton Paul Fadiman: “A sense of humor is the ability to understand a joke...and that the joke is oneself.”

Judgment: If Judgment is one of your top strengths, 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.

Anne McCaffrey: “Make no judgments where you have no compassion.”

Theodore Parker: “Outward judgment often fails, inward judgment never.”

John 7:24: “Do not keep judging according to appearances. Let your judgement be according to what is right.”

Kindness: If Kindness is one of your top strengths 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.

Maya Angelou: “I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” “Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud.”

Amelia Earhart: “A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions and the roots spring up and make new trees.”

Leadership: If Leadership is one of your top strengths, you excel at 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.

Sam Walton: “Outstanding leaders go out of the way to boost the self-esteem of their personnel. If people believe in themselves, it's amazing what they can accomplish.”

Lao Tzu: “A Leader is best when people barely know s/he exists. When the work is done and the aim is fulfilled, they will say, ‘We did it ourselves.’”

Love: If Love is one of your top strengths you value close relations with others, in particular relationships in which sharing and caring are reciprocated. The people to whom you feel most close are the same people who feel most close to you.

Andrew Lloyd Webber: "Love changes everything. Days are longer, words mean more. Love changes everything. Pain is deeper than before."

Victor Hugo: "To love another person is to see the face of God."

Love of Learning: If Love of Learning is one of your top strengths, you love learning new things, whether in a class or on your own. You have always loved school, reading, and museums – anywhere and everywhere there is an opportunity to learn.

Henry Ford: "Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young."

Carl T. Rowan: "The library is the temple of learning. And learning has liberated more people than all the wars in history."

Perseverance: If Perseverance is one of your top strengths, 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.

Thomas Carlyle: "Permanence, perseverance and persistence in spite of all obstacles, discouragements, and impossibilities: It is this, that in all things distinguishes the strong soul from the weak."

John D. Rockefeller: "I do not think that there is any other quality so essential to success of any kind as the quality of perseverance. It overcomes almost everything, even nature."

Will Durant: "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."

Perspective: If Perspective is one of your top strengths you have a way of looking at the world that makes sense to others and to yourself. Although you may not think of yourself as wise, your friends hold this view of you. They value your perspective on matters and turn to you for advice.

Siri Hustvedt: "Each person does see the world in a different way. There is not a single, unifying, objective truth. We're all limited by our perspective."

Edmund Wilson: "No two persons ever read the same book."

Prudence: If Prudence is one of your top strengths, you are a careful person, and your choices are consistently prudent ones. You do not say or do things that you might later regret.

John Ortberg: "Prudence is foresight and far-sightedness. It's the ability to make immediate decisions on the basis of their longer-range effects."

Johann Kaspar Lavater: "Who makes quick use of the moment is a genius of prudence."

Self-Regulation: If Self-Regulation is one of your top strengths, 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.

Epictetus: "No man is free who is not master of himself."

Elie Wiesel: "The only power to which man should aspire is that which he exercises over himself."

Spirituality: If Spirituality is one of your top strengths 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.

Mother Teresa: "The greatest disease in the West today is not TB or leprosy; it is being unwanted, unloved, and uncared for...The poverty in the West is a different kind of poverty – it is not only a poverty of loneliness but also of spirituality. There's a hunger for love as there is a hunger for God."

Martin Luther King: "Faith is taking the first step even when you can't see the whole staircase."

Teamwork: If Teamwork is one of your top strengths, 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.

Helen Keller: "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

Booker T. Washington: "If you want to life yourself up, lift up someone else."

Zest: If Zest is one of your top strengths, you approach all experiences with excitement and energy. You never do anything halfway or halfheartedly. For you, live is an adventure.

Antoine de Saint-Exupery: "True happiness comes from the joy of deeds well done, the zest of creating things new."

Bertrand Russell: "What hunger is in relation to food, zest is in relation to life."

Appendix B

Facilitator Guide & Sample Talkback Script

Goals of the Discussion

1. To facilitate a conversation between audience and performers to acknowledge and savor the positive effects of the show.
2. To increase positivity resonance and positive emotional contagion between audience and performer.
3. To offer audience members the opportunity to add value by contributing their positive reactions and impressions and to savor the experience more fully by verbalizing their thoughts and emotions.
4. To increase awareness of character strengths by asking audience members to consider and point out examples of strengths they witnessed in the performance.

Who will lead/host the talkback?

We believe an experienced Teaching Artist (TA) will be able to most successfully moderate the Talkback. They should be prepared to facilitate active-constructive responses and redirect unrelated or inappropriate comments that may come up.

Sample Facilitator Talkback Script:

[Performers should take a seat onstage, casually facing the audience in a line or semi-circle.]

Thank you for sharing this program with us today! Shining Light aims to shine a light on your experiences and to share our experiences with each other. Our goal now is to hear from you about your experience watching the show and for you to hear one another. There is no right or wrong response, just your individual truths if you care to share them. To keep this a safe space

for each of you and your experiences, we will avoid commenting on each other's responses and instead, hear each person and say, "Thank you."

First, by show of hands:

[This encourages non-verbal participation, a less vulnerable way to share/participate that allows everyone to look around and take in the lay of the land/see they're not alone.]

- Raise your hand if you personally related to any of the stories/messages you saw performed today?

[Pause to observe.]

- Raise your hand if someone onstage used humor to make you smile or laugh.

[Pause to observe.]

- Raise your hand if you were inspired by something brave someone said or did onstage?

[Pause to observe.]

- Raise your hand if you feel different now than when you walked in this room today?

[Feel free to add/replace questions that add to the shared goal of eliciting a sense of positive group connection and appreciation of the character strengths demonstrated in the SL performance.]

Thank you. Now we'd like to come to you for your responses to the show. We often spend a lot of time thinking about the weaknesses we see in ourselves or in other people, but today our performers demonstrated a lot of strengths. What are some of the strengths you saw being used today? Some examples might include creativity, forgiveness, humility, leadership, teamwork, spirituality, or love. Raise your hand if you want to speak and we'll do our best to bring the mic over to everyone so you can be heard. Please keep your responses brief so we can hear from as many people as possible.

[Move with microphone among audience allowing those with hands raised to speak.]

- In one sentence: Can anyone share a moment in the show that felt especially honest?

[Move with microphone among audience allowing those with hands raised to speak.]

- In one sentence: Can anyone share a moment in the show that demonstrated hope?

[Move with microphone among audience allowing those with hands raised to speak.]

- Did you see any examples of bravery or courage?

Let's give the performers one more round of applause for their work today. We all practiced strengths today. By sharing your thoughts with us you have been brave, kind, and honest. Your insights showed wisdom.

[TA/facilitators should share specific examples of character strengths demonstrated by audience members, for example: "You showed great fairness by letting this person ask their question when you had already spoken," "You showed a lot of courage and enthusiasm by raising your hand and speaking up so often," etc.]

We hope you'll continue to notice and point out the strengths you see in yourselves and others.

Thank you all for your attention and thoughtful comments today.

Appendix C

Journaling Workbook Part I: A Time to Reflect Days 1 - 3

This workbook is intended to help you reflect on your experience in the Impact Workshop, performance, and help you write the next chapter in the story of your life. The workshop may be over, but this is just the beginning!

Writing is optional! If you don't like to write, feel free to express your thoughts and feelings through drawing, singing, dancing, or whatever you feel like!

We encourage you to complete this part of the workbook within three days after your performance.

Day 1 – *Reflecting on your experience during the workshop, performance, and talkback...*

1. What did you take away from the workshop?
2. What have you learned about yourself?
3. How do you see yourself differently after participating in this workshop? Why?
4. Which of your character strength(s) do you like the most? Why? Which of your character strengths did you use in the workshop? In the performance?
5. What would you tell your best friend or loved one about the workshop?
6. Would you encourage others to participate in the workshop? If so, why?

Day 2 – *Reflecting on your experience from the workshop, performance, and talkback...*

1. What did you learn about teamwork?
2. What other character strengths are useful when you are working as a team?
3. Has your view of anyone you worked with changed from the first day to the last day of the workshop? If so, how?
4. Are there any character strengths you saw in others that you would like to strengthen in yourself?

Day 3 – *Reflecting on your experience from the workshop, performance, and talkback...*

1. What are some hopes you have now that the workshop is over?
2. What do you need to do to move forward? Are there things you could do to help make those hopes come true?
3. What are the most important character strengths you need to help you move forward? What character strengths might help you to achieve your goals?
4. Who can help you in this process?

Journaling Workbook Part II
Days 4 – 14

[Standard Daily Prompts]

Morning

1. What would a “good day” look like for you?
2. What could stand in your way of having this good day?
3. What strengths can you use to help you make today great? How might you use one of your strengths in a new way?

Evening

1. What are three good things that happened today? Good things can be small like, “I took a deep breath when I got frustrated” or “The sun was shining in the yard.”
2. What do you think caused them to happen?
3. What strengths did you use today?
4. What didn’t go well today?
5. What could you do differently tomorrow? Could any of your strengths be used “too much” or “too little”?

[Sample Special Edition Daily Prompts]

Bi-weekly Reflection

Go over your journal entries in the last two weeks and reflect on your experience so far...

1. What character strengths have you noticed about yourself?
2. What character strengths have you noticed about others?
3. How have you progressed towards what you want?
4. What other steps would you take to move towards having the life that you want?

[Other sample themes could include: Positive vulnerability, mattering, how you view your guard differently, and more...]

Appendix D

PANAS

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent [INSERT APPROPRIATE TIME INSTRUCTIONS HERE]. Use the following scale to record your answers.

very slightly or not at all	a little	moderately	quite a bit	extremely
1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/> interested	<input type="checkbox"/> guilty	<input type="checkbox"/> irritable	<input type="checkbox"/> determined	
<input type="checkbox"/> distressed	<input type="checkbox"/> scared	<input type="checkbox"/> alert	<input type="checkbox"/> attentive	
<input type="checkbox"/> excited	<input type="checkbox"/> hostile	<input type="checkbox"/> ashamed	<input type="checkbox"/> jittery	
<input type="checkbox"/> upset	<input type="checkbox"/> enthusiastic	<input type="checkbox"/> inspired	<input type="checkbox"/> active	
<input type="checkbox"/> strong	<input type="checkbox"/> proud	<input type="checkbox"/> nervous	<input type="checkbox"/> afraid	

Consider using PANAS with the following time instructions:

- Moment (you feel this way right now, that is, at the present moment)
- Today (you have felt this way today)
- Past few days (you have felt this way during the past few days)
- Week (you have felt this way during the past week)
- Past few weeks (you have felt this way during the past few weeks)
- Year (you have felt this way during the past year)
- General (you generally feel this way, that is, how you feel on the average)