



THE EVEREST *Leadership Academy*

Character Strengths Matter

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Introduction

- How can you live a full life?
 - Leverage your character strengths
- What are character strengths?
 - The components of a good life
 - Elements of strong and virtuous behavior
 - Referred to as one's signature strengths
- Be more concerned with your character than your reputation because your character is what you really are while your reputation is merely what others think you are



Exploring Character Strengths

1. Appreciation –

- Ability to find, recognize, and take pleasure in the existence of goodness in the physical and social worlds

- Actions to build appreciation:
 - Every day – notice one instance of natural beauty
 - Weekly - appreciate the beauty of positive human behavior
 - Notice how others appreciate beauty and excellence



2. Bravery –

- Ability to do what needs to be done, despite fear
 - Courage – the will to take action despite fear
 - Fear – holds us back from actions that would make life rich and rewarding
 - A balancing act – when and how to act
- Actions to build bravery:
 - Respectful of other opinions without backing down from yours
 - Don't keep questions inside merely because they are hard to express
 - Identify areas in which you shy away from confrontations
 - Collect stories of bravery in everyday life situations

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3. Creativity –

- Ability to generate original solutions
 - Having creative confidence to meet life's challenges and problems helps us avoid feeling helpless

- Various actions to build creativity:
 - Weekly – define one original idea in your area of interest
 - Read about famous creative people
 - Look for creative ways to spend more time at tasks you do best



4. Curiosity –

- The active recognition, pursuit, and regulation of one's experiences in response to challenging opportunities
 - Openness to experience represents one's intrinsic desire for experience and knowledge - the engine of growth

- Actions to build curiosity:
 - Expand your knowledge in an areas of interest – books, internet,
 - Connect with a person of a different culture
 - Visit one new town, state, or country yearly
 - Get engaged in more open-minded learning experiences



5. Fairness –

- The product of moral judgment – the process by which people determine what is morally right, what is morally wrong, and what is morally proscribed
 - Concerned that all people get their fair share

- Actions that build fairness:
 - Be more forthright about your mistakes in the future
 - Foster a reputation as an “includer”
 - Self-monitor your principles of justice and fairness
 - Level the playing field
 - Be a voice for the rights of others

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6. Forgiveness –

- An internal state where the person lets go of resentment and does not hold grudges
 - Display forgiveness and mercy

- Actions that build forgiveness:
 - Don't demand a formal apology
 - Understand the offender's perspective
 - Think of ways the offender has done good deeds
 - Identify how a grudge tortures you emotionally



7. Gratitude –

- A sense of thankfulness
 - An awareness that one has benefited from the action of others

- Actions that build gratitude
 - Select one small yet important thing that you take for granted
 - Express thanks to all who have contributed to your success
 - Savor a pleasant experience



8. Hope –

- A stance towards the future and the goodness it might hold
 - In the face of setbacks, we should look forward to opportunity
 - Hard to imagine being truly hopeful without also being happy

- Actions to build hope:
 - Focus on someone who overcame an obstacle and succeeded
 - Sketch a pathway – one, five and ten years
 - When facing adversity look for where the opportunity is
 - Surround yourself with optimistic and future-minded friends



9. Humility –

- Not that you think less of yourself, just less of the time
 - To assess one's own mistakes and imperfections accurately

- Actions to build humility:
 - Resist showing off accomplishments in an arrogant way
 - Allow others to notice your skills on their own
 - Accept compliments from others humbly



10. Humor –

- A playful recognition and enjoyment of life's incongruities
 - Ability to see the light side of adversity and make others smile

- Actions to build humor:
 - Strike a balance between not taking things too seriously
 - Be friends with someone who has a great sense of humor
 - Go out with friends in casual settings and laugh together



11. Integrity –

- True to oneself – your internal intentions and commitments
 - Involves truthfulness and taking responsibility for one's actions

- Actions to build integrity:
 - Monitor every time you tell a lie
 - Monitor to catch lies of omission
 - Think and act fairly when you face your next challenge
 - Try to act in a manner that is consistent with what you say
 - Identify your area of strongest moral convictions



12. Kindness –

- An awareness of the needs of others and the willingness to supply those needs without expecting a return
 - It's the motivation of the act of kindness that counts

- Actions to build kindness:
 - Consider doing small acts of kindness for those whom you know
 - Say kinder and softer words when interacting with people
 - Share your belongings with others



13. Leadership –

- Involves directing group activities toward collective success, creating good relationships among group members, and preserving morale
 - Setting goals and accomplishing them
 - Executing, influencing, relationship building and strategic thinking

- Actions to build leadership:
 - Encourage other leaders to emphasize fairness in their groups
 - Rotate leadership
 - Read a biography of a favorite leader
 - Emphasize problem solving



14. Love of Learning –

- People experience positive feelings in the process of acquiring skills, satisfying curiosity, building on existing knowledge, and/or learning something completely new

- Actions to build love of learning:
 - Visit museums
 - Follow an ongoing global event through newspapers, TV, internet
 - Travel to new places and blend education with leisure
 - Learn from those who have succeeded



15. Open-Mindedness –

- The willingness to search actively for evidence against one's favored beliefs, plans, or goals and to weigh such evidence fairly when it is available

- Actions to build open-mindedness:
 - Identify the last three actions that you weren't happy with
 - Ask a trusted and wise friend to appraise your judgement
 - Give yourself time to think before you act next time



16. Persistence –

- A voluntary continuation of a goal-directed action in spite of obstacles, difficulties, or discouragement
- In life, it's rarely about getting a chance; it's about taking a chance. You'll never be 100% sure it will work, but you can always be 100% sure doing nothing won't work.
- Actions to build persistence:
 - Set small goals weekly
 - Select a role model who exemplifies perseverance
 - Apply your energy where it is most productive
 - Setbacks are an essential ingredient of success

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17. Perspective –

- People with perspective and wisdom address important and difficult questions about the conduct and meaning of life

- Actions to build perspective:
 - Find purpose in your significant actions/decisions
 - Find someone wise
 - Offer advise, but only when asked and only after listening
 - Build a network of friends and confidants / different perspective



18. Prudence –

- A form of practical reasoning and self-management that helps to achieve the individual's long-term goals effectively

- Actions to build prudence:
 - Think cautiously – very few emergencies in one's life
 - Remove all extraneous distractions
 - Visualize the future consequences of your decisions
 - Make important decisions when you are relaxed



19. Self-regulation –

- How a person exerts control over his or her responses

- Actions to build self-confidence:
 - Monitor and eliminate distractions
 - Control your emotions and focus on positive attributes
 - Create routines that you can follow through systematically
 - Do your most important tasks when you are most alert



20. Social Intelligence –

- Concerns one's relationships with people, including the social relationships involved in intimacy and trust, persuasion, group memberships, and political power

- Actions to build social intelligence:
 - Listen to your friends and siblings empathically
 - Find a positive element in a motive when someone offends you
 - Discuss emotional misunderstandings
 - Emulate the emotional skills in your friends



21. Teamwork –

- A strong sense of duty, works for the good of the group rather than for personal gain, is loyal to friends, and can be trusted

- Actions to build teamwork:
 - Volunteer community service
 - Help at least one person yearly
 - Play sports
 - Place “we” before “me”



22. Zest –

- Displaying enthusiasm for any and all activities
 - Mental and physical vigor

- Actions to build zest:
 - Do a physical activity of your choice
 - Improve your sleep hygiene
 - Think of ways to make an assignment exciting and engaging before you undertake it



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“Nearly all men / women can stand adversity,
but if you want to test
a person’s character, give him or her power”

Abraham Lincoln

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