

VIA Signature Strengths Inventory

Please take the VIA Survey of Character Strengths prior to our first meeting. It should take about 30-40 minutes. Here is the link on the web:

www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/register.aspx

You will need to register to take the inventory. There is no cost.

Once you register, click on show questionnaire under VIA Survey of Character Strengths. It should be the first item on the list. Call me if you have any problems getting in. Once you fill out the survey, it will show you your scores.

Click on the button at the bottom that says: Show All 24 Strengths.

Either print the results out (two copies: one for you and one for me) or highlight the page, paste it into word, save the file, and e-mail it to me.

If you need to get out of the inventory and get back into it, your answers to that point will be saved and here is the link:

<http://www.authentichappiness.com>

Signature Strengths

In Authentic Happiness, Martin Seligman identifies twenty-four signature strengths that fall into six categories. These strengths are values in action.

❖ **Wisdom and Knowledge:**

- Curiosity
- Love of learning
- Judgment
- Ingenuity
- Social intelligence
- Perspective

❖ **Courage:**

- Valor
- Perseverance
- Integrity

❖ **Humanity and love:**

- Kindness and loving

❖ **Justice:**

- Citizenship
- Fairness
- Leadership

❖ **Temperance:**

- Self-control
- Prudence
- Humility

❖ **Transcendence:**

- Appreciation of beauty
- Gratitude
- Hope
- Spirituality
- Forgiveness
- Humor
- Zest

Understanding and Using Your VIA Signature Strengths Results

"As coaches, the authors have found the strengths survey to be quietly radical. Many clients have never had their strengths assessed and find that just reading the survey results helps them label or understand themselves in new ways." Carol Kaufmman, Ph.D. Harvard Medical School Department of Psychiatry.

Increasing Your Happiness

Of all the 24 strengths, the five most strongly correlated to happiness are: ***gratitude, curiosity, vitality, hope, and the capacity to love and be loved.***

One way to use your VIA Signature Strength Scores is to look at where these five values are in the order of your values, and identify which ones you want to strengthen. There are very specific steps you can take to increase any of these strengths. When you increase these strengths or focus on them, you will find that you are happier.

In addition, another way to increase your happiness is to find new ways to use your Signature Strengths (your top five strengths). Using your Signature Strengths in your work and personal life will increase your sense of meaning, purpose, and happiness.

You may not fully understand why happiness is important: "increasing happiness is not only an end unto itself; it also correlates with and may even help create greater:

- Competence
- Resilience
- Access to personal as well as social resources
- Physical health
- Deeper connection to society
- A sense of personal mission

Finding Work that Is Meaningful

Martin Seligman, in his book [Authentic Happiness](#), states that if a person uses their Signature Strengths in their work, they will find it more meaningful. The following is a list of the strengths, and jobs that utilize these strengths. You can also brainstorm your own list of jobs that will utilize your signatures strengths.

Examples of Jobs or Activities that Utilize Signature Strengths

Creativity, Ingenuity, and Originality

- Create music
- Decorate houses
- Paint

Judgment, critical thinking, & open-mindedness

- Lawyer or judge
- Teach cultural diversity
- Actuary

Curiosity and Interest in the World

- Investigate crimes
- Research
- Archeology
- Educational travel

Love of Learning

- Take classes
- Pursue a degree
- Be a professor
- Coach

Perspective

- Write
- Coach women-owned businesses

Bravery and Valor

- Fire fighter or policeman
- Public speaker

Industry, Diligence, and Perseverance

- Private investigator
- Genealogy
- Run a marathon
- Construction worker

Honesty, Authenticity, and Genuineness

- Teach ethics
- Quality assurance

Zest, Enthusiasm, Energy

- Personal trainer
- Run a health club
- Activity director for a cruise ship

Capacity to Love & Be Loved

- Volunteer at a children's summer camp
- Teacher
- Help battered wives

Kindness

- Write notes of encouragement
- Volunteer at a hospital
- Nurse

Social Intelligence

- Be a conflict mediator
- Leader
- Facilitator
- Customer service
- Be a Greeter for your city

Forgiveness and Mercy

- Teach people how to forgive
- Write a book on forgiveness
- Teach anger management

Modesty and Humility

- Administrative assistant
- Support staff

Caution, Prudence, and Discretion

- Safety inspector
- Counselor
- Quality Assurance

Self Control and Self Regulation

- Teach karate
- Teach people how to manage their finances

Appreciation of Beauty

- Art historian
- Museum curator
- Docent
- Garden

Gratitude

- Write gratitude letters
- Teach people how to be grateful

Hope, Optimism, and Future-mindedness

- Lead grief support or cancer support groups
- Social work

Humor and Playfulness

- Comedian
- Comedy writer
- Make patients at a hospital laugh

Spirituality, Sense of Purpose, Faith

- Pastor/priest/rabbi/nun
- Healer

- Lead meditation
- Teach bible study
- Write
- Yoga instructor

Citizenship, Teamwork, and Loyalty

- Volunteer in your community
- School board

Fairness, Equity, and Justice

- Judge
- Ombudsman
- Conflict Mediator

Leadership

- Any level of management or executive
- Elected Office
- Activist
- Sports Coach
- Team Leader
- Start a non-profit organization
- Business owner

Donna Schilder's Signature Strengths

- Creativity, Ingenuity, and Originality
- Love of Learning
- Social Intelligence
- Capacity to Love and Be Loved
- Caution, Prudence, and Discretion

VIA Strengths Inventory Questions to Increase Sense of Purpose & Happiness

Your top 5 Strengths are your Signature Strengths.

- Do your top 5 strengths seem like they are your Signature Strengths (authentically you)? When you utilize them do you experience a sense of flow (time passing without awareness that it has passed, being completely engrossed in an activity)? If one of the strengths listed as you top 5 strengths does not seem like it induces a sense of flow, take a look at the 6 strengths and see if it is a Signature Strength instead.
- How can you utilize your Signature Strengths more in your work, avocations, and/or volunteer work?

- How can you utilize your Signature Strengths more in your hobbies and home life?
- How do you currently utilize your Signatures Strengths?
- How could you use them even more?
- If you are exploring careers, which jobs and/or business seem to utilize your Signature Strengths?