

VIA Classification of Character Strengths

These are the 24 strengths that are measured by the VIA Signature Strengths Survey. The names and descriptions of the strengths are taken from *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* by Christopher Peterson and Martin E. P. Seligman, Oxford University Press, 2004. The earlier versions used in *Authentic Happiness* and on this site are provided in italics.

WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

Cognitive strengths that entail the acquisition and use of knowledge

- **Creativity [originality, ingenuity]**
Thinking of novel and productive ways to do things; includes artistic achievement but is not limited to it
Creativity, ingenuity, and originality - 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.
- **Curiosity [interest, novelty-seeking, openness to experience]**
Taking an interest in all of ongoing experience for its own sake; finding subjects and topics fascinating; exploring and discovering
Curiosity and interest in the world - You are curious about everything. You are always asking questions, and you find all subjects and topics fascinating. You like exploration and discovery.
- **Open-mindedness [judgment, critical thinking]**
Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; *not* jumping to conclusions; being able to change one's mind in light of evidence; weighing all evidence fairly
Judgment, critical thinking, and open-mindedness - 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.
- **Love of Learning**
Mastering new skills, topics, and bodies of knowledge, whether on one's own or formally; obviously related to the strength of curiosity but goes beyond it to describe the tendency to add *systematically* to what one knows
Love of learning - 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.
- **Perspective [wisdom]**
Being able to provide wise counsel to others; having ways of looking at the world that make sense to oneself and to other people
Perspective (wisdom) - 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. You have a way of looking at the world that makes sense to others and to yourself.

COURAGE

Emotional strengths that involve the exercise of will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition, external or internal

- **Bravery [valor]**

Not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain; speaking up for what is right even if there is opposition; acting on convictions even if unpopular; includes physical bravery but is not limited to it

Bravery and valor - 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.

- **Persistence [perseverance, industriousness]**

Finishing what one starts; persisting in a course of action in spite of obstacles; "getting it out the door"; taking pleasure in completing tasks

Industry, diligence, and perseverance - 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.

- **Integrity [authenticity, honesty]**

Speaking the truth but more broadly presenting oneself in a genuine way; being without pretense; taking responsibility for one's feelings and actions

Honesty, authenticity, and genuineness - You are an honest 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.

- **Vitality [zest, enthusiasm, vigor, energy]**

Approaching life with excitement and energy; *not* doing things halfway or halfheartedly; living life as an adventure; feeling alive and activated

Zest, enthusiasm, and energy - Regardless of what you do, you approach it with excitement and energy. You never do anything halfway or halfheartedly. For you, life is an adventure.

HUMANITY

Interpersonal strengths that involve "tending" and "befriending" others

- **Love**

Valuing close relations with others, in particular those in which sharing and caring are reciprocated; being close to people

Capacity to love and be loved - You value close relations with others, in particular those 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.

- **Kindness [generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, altruistic love, "niceness"]**

Doing favors and good deeds for others; helping them; taking care of them

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.

- **Social Intelligence [emotional intelligence, personal intelligence]**

Being aware of the motives and feelings of other people and oneself; knowing what to do to fit in to different social situations; knowing what makes other people tick
Social intelligence - You are aware of the motives and feelings of other people. You know what to do to fit in to different social situations, and you know what to do to put others at ease.

JUSTICE

Civic strengths that underlie healthy community life

- **Citizenship [social responsibility, loyalty, teamwork]**

Working well as a member of a group or team; being loyal to the group; doing one's share

Citizenship, teamwork, and loyalty - 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.

- **Fairness**

Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice; *not* letting personal feelings bias decisions about others; giving everyone a fair chance

Fairness, equity, and justice - Treating all 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.

- **Leadership**

Encouraging a group of which one is a member to get things done and at the same time maintain good relations within the group; organizing group activities and seeing that they happen

Leadership - You excel at the tasks of leadership: 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.

TEMPERANCE

Strengths that protect against excess

- **Forgiveness and mercy**

Forgiving those who have done wrong; giving people a second chance; *not* being vengeful

Forgiveness and mercy - You forgive those who have done you wrong. You always give people a second chance. Your guiding principle is mercy and not revenge.

- **Humility/Modesty**

Letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves; *not* seeking the spotlight; *not* regarding one's self as more special than one is

Modesty and humility - 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.

- **Prudence**
Being careful about one's choices; *not* taking undue risks; *not* saying or doing things that might later be regretted
Caution, prudence, and discretion - You are a careful person, and your choices are consistently prudent ones. You do not say or do things that you might later regret.
- **Self-regulation [self-control]**
Regulating what one feels and does; being disciplined; controlling one's appetites and emotions
Self-control and self-regulation - 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.

TRANSCENDENCE

Strengths that forge connections to the larger universe and provide meaning

- **Appreciation of beauty and excellence [awe, wonder, elevation]**
Noticing and appreciating beauty, excellence, and/or skilled performance in all domains of life, from nature to art to mathematics to science to everyday experience
Appreciation of beauty and excellence - 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.
- **Gratitude**
Being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen; taking time to express thanks
Gratitude - 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 your thanks.
- **Hope [optimism, future-mindedness, future orientation]**
Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it; believing that a good future is something that can be brought about
Hope, optimism, and future-mindedness - You expect the best in the future, and you work to achieve it. You believe that the future is something that you can control.
- **Humor [playfulness]**
Liking to laugh and tease; bringing smiles to other people; seeing the light side; making (not necessarily telling) jokes
Humor and playfulness - You like to laugh and tease. Bringing smiles to other people is important to you. You try to see the light side of all situations.
- **Spirituality [religiousness, faith, purpose]**
Having coherent beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of the universe; knowing where one fits within the larger scheme; having beliefs about the meaning of life that shape conduct and provide comfort
Spirituality, sense of purpose, and faith - 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.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS SELF-EVALUATION

Please rate yourself by using a 0-10 scale with 0 being extremely low and 10 being extremely high to determine which you view as your primary character strengths.

WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

AVERAGE _____

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| CREATIVITY | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| CURIOSITY | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| OPEN-MINDEDNESS | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| LOVE OF LEARNING | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PERSPECTIVE | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

COURAGE

AVERAGE _____

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| BRAVERY | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PERSISTENCE | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| INTEGRITY | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| VITALITY | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

HUMANITY

AVERAGE _____

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| LOVE | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| KINDNESS | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

JUSTICE

AVERAGE _____

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| CITIZENSHIP | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| FAIRNESS | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| LEADERSHIP | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

TEMPERANCE

AVERAGE _____

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| FORGIVENESS | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| HUMILITY | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PRUDENCE | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| SELF-REGULATION | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

TRANSCENDENCE

AVERAGE _____

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| APPRECIATION | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| GRATITUDE | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| HOPE | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| HUMOR | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| SPIRITUALITY | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

TOP 3 STRENGTHS: _____

TOP AREA OF STRENGTH: _____

STRENGTHS YOU ARE MOST SUCCESSFUL WITH: _____

HOW CAN YOU USE YOUR STRENGTHS TO IMPROVE YOUR CURRENT SITUATION: _____

AREAS THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR YOU TO IMPROVE: _____