

Strengths Worksheet¹

Name of the Person using the service:

Name of the worker:

Currently <i>What's going on today? What's available now?</i>	Desires and aspirations <i>What do I want?</i>	Personal and social resources <i>What have I used in the past?</i>
Daily living situation		
e.g. Where are you living now? What things do you like about your current living situation? How do you get around?	e.g. Do you want to remain where you are, or would you like to move? If you could change anything about your living situation what would it be?	e.g. Where have you lived in the past? What was your favourite living situation? Why?
Financial		
e.g. What are your current sources of income, and how much money do you have each month to spend?	e.g. What do you want to happen regarding your financial situation?	e.g. What was the most satisfying time in your life regarding your financial circumstances?
Occupational eg educational, vocational, leisure		
e.g. What kind of things do you do that make you happy, and give you a sense of personal satisfaction?	e.g. What kind of activities or things would you like to do or be involved in?	e.g. What are the most satisfying activities that you have ever been involved in?

¹ From Bird et al, 2011

Currently <i>What's going on today? What's available now?</i>	Desires and aspirations <i>What do I want?</i>	Personal and social resources <i>What have I used in the past?</i>
Social Supports		
e.g. Who do you spend your time with? Who do you feel close to? What do you like to do?	e.g. Is there anything you would like to be different in your social life? Are there any areas of your life you would like to have more support in?	e.g. Have you ever belonged to any groups, clubs and/or organisations? What did you enjoy about them?
Health		
e.g. What kinds of things do you do to take care of your health? Is being in good health important to you? Why or why not?	e.g. Are there things you would like to change regarding your health? Is there anything you would like to learn more about to improve or change your health?	e.g. How do you know when you're not doing too well? What is most helpful during these times in the past?
Spiritual and cultural		
e.g. What meaning, if any, does spirituality play in your life? Are there any strong beliefs held by your family? What do you think of this?	e.g. Would you like to feel more connected to your spiritual beliefs?	e.g. What do you value most in life, have you always felt that way? What gives you strength to carry on in times of difficulty?

Strengths worksheet checklist²

This checklist gives some example prompt questions for areas to discuss in completing the Strengths Worksheet. The checklist has been adapted from elsewhere, and is not a definitive list of areas. Individuals have unique talents, interests and abilities which may not be covered by the questions below.

Daily living

a) Current situation:

- Where the person lives and for how long.
- Does the person live with anyone else?
- Advantages of the person's living arrangements e.g. quiet area, close to town.
- Transport options.
- Pets or animals.
- Personal possessions available to the person (e.g. internet, exercise bike etc.) – this can be used to identify what is wanted.
- Areas of the home or neighbourhood that the individual is proud of or enjoys.
- Daily living tasks that the person enjoys doing or is good at (e.g. cooking, food shopping etc.).

b) Desires and aspirations:

- Where would the person like to live?
- Do they like living alone / with others?
- Desired changes to the living situation.
- Ideal living situation.
- Anything that would make the individual's living situation easier (e.g. appliances, better transport options etc.)?
- Most important aspect of the living situation (e.g. being near friends, good transport links, having a pet).

c) Personal and social resources:

- Past living arrangements.
- What did the person like about past living arrangements?
- Favourite accommodation and living situation.
- Anything from past living situations which the person would like to have now.

² From Bird et al (2011)

Financial

a) Current situation:

- Sources of income.
- Bank account, Savings account etc?
- Does the individual budget and manage their money, how?
- How do they pay the bills?
- Spending money left over.

b) Dreams and aspirations:

- Would the individual like to change their financial situation?
- What is important about their financial situation (e.g. extra money to be able to eat out, go on holiday etc.).
- Additional benefits the person may be entitled to.

c) Personal and social resources:

- Past income sources, (e.g. did they work in the past, get additional benefits).
- Resources in the past that they are not using now (eg savings account, accountant / advisor)

Occupational e.g. work, leisure, education

a) Current situation:

- What does the person do for fun, hobbies? How
- does the person relax and enjoy themselves?
- Different types of activities e.g. paid employment, volunteer work, college and educational activities, helping others, job searching, involvement with services, care giving etc.
- Education (achievements, likes, dislikes).
- What does the individual like about their occupations (educational, vocational and leisure).
- What is important to the person about their current occupations.
- Interests, skills and abilities related to their activities.
- Weekend activities (do they go out at the weekend).
- When does the person get bored and what do they do when they are bored?

b) Dreams and aspirations:

- Does the person want to work, go to college, do more / different activities?
- If the person could do anything what would that be (career, leisure, educational).
- Is the person satisfied with what they are doing?
- What enjoyable things would the person like to be doing?
- Have they ever wanted to try something?

c) Personal and social resources:

- Past work, leisure and education experience.
- What type of activities have they enjoyed in the past, with whom?
- What kind of services (voluntary and involuntary) have they found helpful?

Social supports

a) Current situation:

- Who do they spend time with? Friends, family, who are they close to?
- Organisation, clubs or groups they participate in.
- What things does the individual do with others?
- Pets.
- Types of social support available e.g. family, friends, significant others, mental health workers, religious leaders and members of religious groups, self-help organisations etc. How do people support the individual?
- Likes and dislikes about being with others.
- What does the person do when alone, do they like being alone?
- Where, outside the home does the person feel at ease?

b) Desires and aspirations:

- Any changes the individual would make to their social life.
- Areas of life the individual would like more support in, what type of support?
- Groups, organisations or clubs they would like to belong to?

c) Personal and social resources:

- Important people in the individual's life (family, friends etc.).
- Places that the individual used to enjoy going to.
- Groups or clubs the individual was/is a part of.

Health

a) Current situation:

- Mental health e.g. people individual currently sees, medication, treatments.
- How does the person manage stress.
- How does the individual cope with the illness.
- Physical health e.g. doctors, dentist, any medication.
- Diet and eating habits.
- Exercise.

b) Dreams and aspirations:

- Areas the individual would like to work on.
- What is important to the individual, anything they would like to change?

c) Personal and social resources:

- Resources used in the past to manage physical and mental wellbeing.
- What resources were helpful? Why?
- Has the individual completed a Physical Health Check?

Spirituality and Culture

In this case, spirituality doesn't just refer to an organised religion, instead it relates to any beliefs or practices that give a person's life meaning and purpose, e.g. by generating hope, comfort or connections. Individuals can belong to more than one cultural group, so the conversation should include the different cultures the person identifies with, identifying how strongly they identify with each.

a) Current situation:

- Is there anything which brings comfort, meaning and purpose to the individual's life?
- What gives the person strength in times of difficulty?
- Individual's beliefs, What does the individual have faith in?
- Any rituals the person engages with, Important occasions for the individual.
- Family roles and practices, e.g. mother as main care giver, extended family etc.
- Languages spoken.
- Certain types of food enjoyed by the individual.

b) Dreams and aspirations:

- Any changes the individual would make, e.g. go to church more often, visit parents' home country.
- Connections with others from the same cultural groups.

c) Personal and social resources:

- Past spiritual or religious beliefs?
- How has a person's spirituality or cultural practices / beliefs supported them in the past?
- Celebrations, rituals that the person used to observe or celebrate.

References

Bird V, Leamy M, Le Boutillier C, Williams J, Slade M (2011) *REFOCUS: Promoting recovery in community mental health services*, London: Rethink.
<http://researchintorecovery.com/refocus/REFOCUS%20manual%20final.pdf>
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