

Know your strengths

You already have a set of character strengths, the things that come most naturally to you. Knowing your top few helps you study, and live, in a way that fits you.

WHAT CHARACTER STRENGTHS ARE

- Things like curiosity, kindness, perseverance, humour, fairness, love of learning.
- Everyone has all of them, in their own order. There is no bad result.
- They are not fixed talents. You can grow the ones you choose to use.
- They also give you words for what you are good at, useful for interviews and applications.

FIND YOURS, FOR FREE

- The VIA Survey is free and takes about fifteen minutes. It ranks your strengths in order.
- Find it at viacharacter.org, and note your top five.
- Read the short description of each. They are written to recognise you, not to judge you.

GROW ONE ON PURPOSE

- Strengths grow with use. Pick one you admire and lean on it for a fortnight.
- Using a top strength in a new way is one of the few things shown to lift mood.

THE SIX FAMILIES

Wisdom: curiosity, love of learning, judgement.

Courage: bravery, perseverance, honesty, zest.

Humanity: kindness, love, social awareness.

Justice: teamwork, fairness, leadership.

Temperance: forgiveness, humility, self-control.

Transcendence: gratitude, hope, humour.

USE YOUR TOP STRENGTHS

- Lean on a strength when work is hard. Curious? Turn revision into questions.
- Strong on perseverance? Spend it on the subject you like least.
- Kind, or a team player? Study with someone and explain it to them.

TRY THIS WEEK

Pick one of your top five and use it on purpose, in one lesson or one task.

Spot a strength in someone else, and tell them you saw it.

When a job feels heavy, ask which of your strengths could carry it.

Work with who you are, not against it.