Appreciation Of Beauty And Excellence As A Top Strength:

If Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence is your top strength 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.

Virtue Category:

Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence falls under the virtue category of Transcendence. Transcendence describes strengths that provide a broad sense of connection to something higher in meaning and purpose than ourselves.

Key Concepts:

There are three types of goodness for which individuals high in Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence are responsive to:

- Physical beauty. This may be visual, auditory, tactile, or abstract. This type of goodness produces awe and wonder in the individual experiencing it.
- Skill or talent (excellence). This is often energizing, and makes the individual want to pursue their own goals. It produces admiration.
- Virtue or moral goodness (moral beauty). Virtual goodness makes the individual want to be better, more loving, and produces feelings of elevation.
Exercises For Boosting Appreciation Of Beauty And Excellence:

- Keep a "beauty log." When you believe you are seeing something beautiful—whether it is from nature, is human-made (e.g., artwork), or is the virtuous behavior of others—write it down. Describe the beauty in a few sentences.
- Get regular exposure to green space in your environment, especially if you live/work in an urban setting.
- Take part in outdoor experiences, such as camping to enhance appreciation for what is usually taken for granted, such as soft beds, warm showers, etc.

Bravery As A Top Strength:

If Bravery is your top strength, 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.

Virtue Category:

Bravery falls under the virtue category of Courage. Courage describes strengths that deal with overcoming fear. These strengths can manifest themselves inwardly or outwardly as they are composed of cognitions, emotions, motivations and decisions.

Key Concepts:

There are three types of bravery (an individual may possess one of these or a combination):

- Physical bravery (e.g., firefighters, police officers, soldiers)
- Psychological bravery (e.g., facing painful aspects of oneself)
- Moral bravery (e.g., speaking up for what's right, even if it's an unfavorable opinion to a group)
Exercises For Boosting Bravery:

- Observe courageous people. If you can't find an immediate example, think about brave people who once lived or observe courageous characters in movies and books. These observations often lead to feelings of inspiration and a sense that change is possible.
- Identify an area in which you generally shy away from confrontations. Practice the phrases, the tones, and the mannerisms that will enable you to effectively confront the situation next time.
- Don’t be afraid to befriend someone who is different but positive.

Creativity As A Top Strength:

If Creativity is your top strength, 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.

Virtue Category:

Creativity falls in the virtue category of Wisdom. Wisdom deals with strengths that involve the way we acquire and use knowledge.

Key Concepts:

There are two essential components to Creativity - originality and adaptiveness. A creative individual generates ideas or behaviors that are novel or unusual and these make a positive contribution to the individual's life or the lives of others.

Exercises For Boosting Creativity:

- When facing a problem, define the issue clearly and then practice divergent thinking (ex: developing multiple solutions/outcomes rather than just one solution).
- Set time aside each day for creative thinking or creative activities (such as: writing poems or using an everyday household object in a new way)
Curiosity As A Top Strength:

If Curiosity is your top strength, you are interested in learning more about anything and everything. You are always asking questions, and you find all subjects and topics fascinating. You like exploration and discovery.

Virtue Category:

Curiosity falls in the virtue category of Wisdom. Wisdom deals with strengths that involve the way we acquire and use knowledge.

Key Concepts:

There are two key components to curious individuals: They are interested in exploring new ideas, activities and experiences, and they also have a strong desire to increase their own personal knowledge.

Exercises To Boost Curiosity:

- Consider an activity that you dislike. Pay attention to 3 novel features of this activity while you do it.
- Practice active curiosity and explore your current environment, paying attention to anything that you may often ignore or take for granted.
- Pick a favorite topic and do extensive research on it. Discover at least one new thing that you didn't know before.

Fairness As A Top Strength:

If Fairness is your top strength, treating 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.
Virtue Category:

Fairness falls under the virtue category of Justice. Justice describes strengths that make life fair. They are broadly interpersonal and describe the best interaction between the individual and a group or community.

Key Concepts:

Fairness is a cognitive judgment capacity that involves reasoning and making judgments. It involves 2 types of reasoning:

- Justice reasoning which emphasizes logic and weighing principles to determine moral rights and responsibilities
- Care reasoning which includes empathy and compassion; the ability to put yourself in somebody else's shoes.

Exercises For Boosting Fairness:

- Self-monitor to see whether you think about or treat people of other ethnicities and cultures stereotypically.
- The next time you make a mistake, self-monitor to see whether you admit it.
- Watch a film or a documentary which exemplifies fairness, social justice, and equity. (ex: *12 Angry Men*)

Forgiveness As A Top Strength:

If Forgiveness is your top strength, you are good at forgiving those who have done you wrong. You always give people a second chance. You believe in mercy, and not revenge.
Virtue Category:

Forgiveness falls under the virtue category of Temperance. Temperance deals with strengths that protect us from excess. It is the practiced ability to monitor and manage one's emotions, motivation and behavior in the absence of outside help.

Key Concepts:

It is important to distinguish fairness from:

- condoning (removes the offense)
- forgetting (removes the awareness)
- reconciliation (restores the relationship)

Instead forgiveness is a strength that we employ to protect ourselves from the feeling of hatred. It is a specialized form of mercy; a general concept of feeling kindness and compassion towards others.

Exercises For Boosting Forgiveness:

- Take 20 minutes and write about the personal benefits that resulted from a negative incident.
- Think of someone who wronged you recently. Put yourself in their shoes and try to understand their perspective.
- Remember times when you offended someone and were forgiven, then extend this gift to others.

Gratitude As A Top Strength:

If Gratitude is your top strength 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.
Virtue Category:

Gratitude falls under the virtue category of Transcendence. Transcendence describes strengths that provide a broad sense of connection to something higher in meaning and purpose than ourselves.

Key Concepts:

There are two types of gratitude:

- Benefit-triggered gratitude= the state that follows when a desired benefit is received from a benefactor.
- Generalized gratitude= the state resulting from awareness and appreciation of what is valuable and meaningful to yourself.

There are two stages of gratitude:

- Acknowledging the goodness in your life.
- Recognizing the source of this goodness is outside yourself.

Exercises For Boosting Gratitude:

- Write down three good things that you are grateful for each day.
- Over dinner, talk with your loved ones about two good things that happened to them during the day.
- Set aside at least ten minutes every day to savor a pleasant experience.

Honesty As A Top Strength:

If Honesty is your top strength, you are a straightforward person, not only by speaking the truth but by living your life in a genuine and authentic way. You are down to earth and pretense; you are a "real" person.
Honesty falls under the virtue category of Courage. Courage describes strengths that deal with overcoming fear. These strengths can manifest themselves inwardly or outwardly as they are composed of cognitions, emotions, motivations and decisions.

Key Concepts:

This strength involves accurately representing your internal states, intentions, and commitments, both publicly and privately. The strength of honesty is often linked to self-concordance - the extent to which your goals accurately represent your implicit interests and values. Honesty allows people to take responsibility for their feelings and behaviors, owning them, and reaping benefits by doing so.

Exercises For Boosting Honesty:

- The next time you are asked for advice, give constructive, direct and authentic feedback.
- Honor your commitments in all of your relationships. If you agree to do something or schedule a time to meet with someone, be reliable and follow through.
- Write about what living an authentic life means to you and reflect on it often.

Hope As A Top Strength:

If Hope is your top strength you you expect the best in the future, and you work to achieve it. You believe that the future is something that you can control.
Hope falls under the virtue category of Transcendence. Transcendence describes strengths that provide a broad sense of connection to something higher in meaning and purpose than ourselves.

**Key Concepts:**

Optimism is closely linked with having a particular explanatory style (how we explain the causes of bad events). People using an optimistic explanatory style interpret events as external, unstable and specific. Those using a pessimistic explanatory style interpret events as internal, stable and global.

**Exercises For Boosting Hope:**

- Write an internal movie that features one of your goals. Picture yourself overcoming the obstacles, developing pathways around and through problems, to reach your goal.
- Write about a good event and why it will last and spread. How is this event linked to your actions?
- Write about a bad event and how it will pass quickly. Detail how the effect of the event will be limited and who you are not completely to blame.

**Humility As A Top Strength:**

If Humility is your top strength, 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.

**Virtue Category:**

Humility falls under the virtue category of Temperance. Temperance deals with strengths that protect us from excess. It is the practiced ability to monitor and manage one’s emotions, motivation and behavior in the absence of outside help.
Key Concepts:

A common misconception is that humility involves having a low self-esteem, a sense of unworthiness, and/or a lack of self-focus. However, true humility involves an accurate self-assessment, recognition of limitations, keeping accomplishments in perspective, and forgetting of the self. Humble people do not distort information to defend or verify their own image, and they do not need to see-or present-themselves as being better than they actually are.

Exercises For Boosting Humility:

- Resist showing off accomplishments for a week and notice the changes in your interpersonal relationships.
- Notice if you speak more than others in a group situation.
- Admit your mistakes and apologize even to those who are younger than you.

Humor As A Top Strength:

If Humor is your top strength 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.

Virtue Category:

Humor falls under the virtue category of Transcendence. Transcendence describes strengths that provide a broad sense of connection to something higher in meaning and purpose than ourselves.

Key Concepts:

Humor involves the ability to make other people smile or laugh. It also means having a composed and cheerful view on adversity that allows an individual to see its light side and thereby sustain a good mood.

Exercises For Boosting Humor:

- Think about a past even in which you used humor for your benefit and the benefit of others.
- Write down the humor of your everyday life. Each day make a conscious effort to be aware of your sense of humor, others' sense of humor, funny situations, and clever comments and record them in a daily journal.
- Watch a funny sitcom/movie or read a comic/ funny blog daily.
Judgment As A Top Strength:

If Judgment is your top strength, 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.

Virtue Category:

Judgment falls in the virtue category of Wisdom. Wisdom deals with strengths that involve the way we acquire and use knowledge.

Key Concepts:

The strength of judgment is a corrective strength in that it counteracts faulty thinking, such as favoring your current views or favoring ideas that are considered the dominant view, and therefore giving less attention to the less-dominant view. It is the willingness to search actively for evidence against your favored beliefs, plans or goals and to weigh all of the evidence fairly when it is available.

Exercises To Boost Judgment:

- Play devil’s advocate on an issue that you have strong opinions about.
- Examine a past event that you are not happy with (not following through with a goal) and brainstorm ideas for other ways that you could have approached that event/activity.
- Before you make your next big decision, consider the following questions first: "There is another way I could look at this," or "There's probably something I'm not seeing" in order to see it from all sides.

Kindness As A Top Strength:

If Kindness is your top strength 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.
Virtue Category:

Kindness falls under the virtue category of Humanity. Humanity describes strengths that manifest in caring relationships with others. These strengths are interpersonal and are mostly relevant in one-on-one relationships.

Key Concepts:

Kind individuals believe that others are worthy of attention and affirmation for their own sake as human beings, not out of a sense of duty or principle. There are three traits of altruistic personalities:

- Empathy/sympathy
- Moral reasoning
- Social responsibility

Exercises For Boosting Kindness:

- Perform a random act of kindness each day (ex: slowing to allow a car in front of you, complimenting a co-worker, buying a treat for your partner, etc.)
- Say kinder and softer words to people when interacting through email, writing letters, talking on phone. Smile when answering the phone and sound happy to hear from the person on the other end of the line.
- Take out a friend(s) on a surprise dinner and pay for it.

Leadership As A Top Strength:

If Leadership is your top strength, you excel at 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.
Virtue Category:

Leadership falls under the virtue category of Justice. Justice describes strengths that make life fair. They are broadly interpersonal and describe the best interaction between the individual and a group or community.

Key Concepts:

Leadership is a social phenomenon that can be distinguished into two areas:

- Practice - defining, establishing, identifying or translating direction
- Personal quality - the motivation and capacity to seek out, attain and carry out leader roles.

There are two types of leaders:

- Transactional leaders - this type of leader clarifies responsibilities, expectations, and the tasks to be accomplished.
- Transformational leaders - this leader motivates their followers to perform at an extremely high level, fostering a climate of trust and commitment to the organization and its goals.

Exercises For Boosting Leadership:

- When two people are in an argument, mediate by inviting others to share their thoughts and emphasizing problem solving.
- Lead an activity, assignment or project and actively solicit opinions from group members.
- Read a biography and/or watch film of your favorite leader and evaluate how he/she inspires you in practical ways.
Love As A Top Strength:

If Love is your top strength 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.

Virtue Category:

Love falls under the virtue category of Humanity. Humanity describes strengths that manifest in caring relationships with others. These strengths are interpersonal and are mostly relevant in one-on-one relationships.

Key Concepts:

There are four types of love, each with a biological and evolutionary base:

- Attachment love: parent for child; child for parent
- Compassionate/altruistic love: kindness
- Companionate love: friendship
- Romantic love: spouse/partner/boyfriend/girlfriend

Exercises For Boosting Love:

- Convey love at work by making an effort to understand who you're working with, finding out what is important to them and engaging with them on the topic regularly.
- Nurture close relationships by practicing an active-constructive response when someone shares news about an event. This means that you ask questions about the event or the person's experience; show a sense of genuine enthusiasm and energy for their experience, and comment on the meaning it may have for them.
- Engage in a favorite activity with a loved one (e.g., hiking, going to an amusement park, biking, walking in the park, swimming, camping, jogging).
Love Of Learning As A Top Strength:

If Love of Learning is your top strength, 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.

Virtue Category:

Love of Learning falls in the virtue category of Wisdom. Wisdom deals with strengths that involve the way we acquire and use knowledge.

Key Concepts:

Love of learning describes the way in which a person engages new information and skills. Love of learning is a strength that teachers would like to see in their students, parents want to encourage in their children, therapists support in their clients, and employers try to foster in their employees. It has important motivational consequences because it helps people persist through challenges, setbacks and negative feedback.

Exercises For Boosting Love Of Learning:

- Deliberately learn five new words, including their meaning and usage, at least twice a week.
- Read a non-fiction book monthly on a topic you find absorbing and engaging.
- Follow an ongoing global event through newspapers, TV or internet.
**Perseverance As A Top Strength:**

If Perseverance is your top strength, 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.

**Virtue Category:**

Perseverance falls under the virtue category of Courage. Courage describes strengths that deal with overcoming fear. These strengths can manifest themselves inwardly or outwardly as they are composed of cognitions, emotions, motivations and decisions.

**Key Concepts:**

Perseverance involves the voluntary continuation of a goal-directed action despite the presence of challenges, difficulties, and discouragement. There are two vectors of perseverance. It requires both **effort for a task** and **duration** to keep the task up.

**Exercises For Boosting Perseverance:**

- Set five small goals weekly. Break them into practical steps, accomplish them on time, and monitor your progress from week to week.
- Keep a checklist of things to do and regularly update it.
- Select a role-model who exemplifies perseverance and determine how you can follow her/his footsteps.

**Perspective As A Top Strength:**

If Perspective is your top strength, you have a way of looking at the world that makes sense to others and to yourself. 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.
Virtue Category:

Perspective falls in the virtue category of Wisdom. Wisdom deals with strengths that involve the way we acquire and use knowledge.

Key Concepts:

Perspective is distinct from intelligence but represents a high level of knowledge, the capacity to give advice and to recognize and weight multiple sides before making decisions. It allows the individual to address important questions about the conduct and meaning of life.

Exercises To Boost Perspective:

- For your next interaction, first focus on listening carefully and then focus on sharing your ideas and thoughts.
- Read quotes on wisdom, find one that resonates and then re-write it to make it your own and put it to memory. Try to think about ways that you can live more true to that quote.
- Find someone wise (alive or someone who has passed on), read or watch a film on their life, and identify how their life can guide your decisions and actions.

Prudence As A Top Strength:

If Prudence is your top strength, you are a careful person, and your choices are consistently prudent ones. You do not say or do things that you might later regret.
Virtue Category:

Prudence falls under the virtue category of Temperance. Temperance deals with strengths that protect us from excess. It is the practiced ability to monitor and manage one's emotions, motivation and behavior in the absence of outside help.

Key Concepts:

Prudence involves far-sighted planning as well as short-term, goal-directed planning. It is often referred to as cautious wisdom, practical wisdom, and practical reason.

Exercises For Boosting Prudence:

- Think twice before saying anything. Do this exercise at least ten times a week and note its effects.
- Remove all extraneous distractions before your make your next three important decisions.
- Visualize the consequences of your next decision in one, five, and ten years’ time.

Self-Regulation As A Top Strength:

If Self-Regulation is your top strength, 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.
Virtue Category:

Self-Regulation falls under the virtue category of Temperance. Temperance deals with strengths that protect us from excess. It is the practiced ability to monitor and manage one's emotions, motivation and behavior in the absence of outside help.

Key Concepts:

Self-regulation can be viewed as a resource that can be depleted and fatigued. A useful metaphor can be that self-regulation acts like a muscle, which can be exhaustered through over-exertion or strengthened through regular practice.

Exercises For Boosting Self-Regulation:

- Next time you get upset, make a conscious effort to control your emotions and focus on positive attributes.
- Set goals to improve your everyday living (e.g., room cleaning, laundry, doing dishes, cleaning your desk) and make sure you complete the tasks.
- Pay close attentions to your biological clock. Do your most important tasks when you are most alert.

Social Intelligence As A Top Strength:

If Social Intelligence is your top strength, 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. 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.
Virtue Category:

Social Intelligence falls under the virtue category of Humanity. Humanity describes strengths that manifest in caring relationships with others. These strengths are interpersonal and are mostly relevant in one-on-one relationships.

Key Concepts:

Social intelligence involves two general components:

- Social awareness: what we sense about others
- Social facility: what we do with our awareness

Exercises For Boosting Social Intelligence:

- Practice noticing, labeling and expressing emotions. After you become aware of an emotion, label it, and if appropriate, express it to another.
- Write five personal feelings daily for four weeks and monitor patterns.
- Watch a favorite TV program or film muted and write feelings observed.

Spirituality As A Top Strength:

If Spirituality is your top strength 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.
Virtue Category:

Spirituality falls under the virtue category of Transcendence. Transcendence describes strengths that provide a broad sense of connection to something higher in meaning and purpose than ourselves.

Key Concepts:

Spirituality is believed to describe both the private, intimate relationship between humans and the divine, and the range of virtues that result from the relationships. Spirituality is universal. Although the specific content of spiritual beliefs varies, all cultures have a concept of an ultimate, transcendent, sacred force.

Exercises For Boosting Spirituality:

- Cultivate sacred moments in which you set aside time to "just be" with a special/sacred object or space/environment.
- Build in spiritual tools as a regular practice (ex: prayer, meditation, exploring nature) or as a way of approaching life (ex: giving charity, showing compassion to less fortunate individuals).
- When experiencing trauma or a difficult situation, look for the deeper meaning and purpose of the experience.

Teamwork As A Top Strength:

If Teamwork is your top strength, 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.
Virtue Category:

Teamwork falls under the virtue category of Justice. Justice describes strengths that make life fair. They are broadly interpersonal and describe the best interaction between the individual and a group or community.

Key Concepts:

Teamwork is closely related to 3 other concepts:

- Citizenship: responsibility toward one's community
- Loyalty: unwavering trust for a group
- Patriotism: loyalty toward one's homeland/nation without hostility toward other nations.

Exercises For Boosting Teamwork:

- Volunteer for activities such as serving as a Big Brother or Big Sister or constructing a Habitat for Humanity house.
- Help someone close to you set a goal and then periodically check on their progress.
- Start a book club with family members, friends or colleagues. Schedule a time to meet and discuss the selected books.

Zest As A Top Strength:

If Zest is your top strength, you approach all experiences with excitement and energy. You never do anything halfway or halfheartedly. For you, life is an adventure.
Zest falls under the virtue category of Courage. Courage describes strengths that deal with overcoming fear. These strengths can manifest themselves inwardly or outwardly as they are composed of cognitions, emotions, motivations and decisions.

**Key Concepts:**

Zest is a dynamic strength that is directly related to physical and psychological wellness. This strength has the strongest ties to overall life satisfaction and a life of engagement.

**Exercises For Boosting Zest:**

- Improve your sleep hygiene by establishing regular sleep time, eating 3-4 hours before sleeping, avoiding doing any work in the bed, not taking caffeine late in the evening, etc. Notice changes in your energy level.
- Do a physically rigorous activity (bike riding, running, sports singing, playing) that you always wanted to do but have not done yet.
- Call old friend and reminisce good old times.