

**Participant Packet**  
**for Articulating Strengths Together (AST)**

This packet is organized into four major activities:

- 1) Preparing for the Quad activity
- 2) Participating in the Quad activity
- 3) Preparing for the Poster activity
- 4) Participating in the Poster activity

**Activity # 1** includes Step 1, *Identifying four Good Experiences (GE s)* and Step 2, *Considering 107 examples of Possible Strengths*.

**Activity # 2** includes Step 3, *Describing GE s and Identifying Possible Strengths*.

**Activity # 3** includes Step 4, *Organizing and prioritizing your Strengths*; Step 5, *Identifying actual events when you demonstrated each Strength*, followed by a Worksheet for demonstrating Strengths; and Step 6, *Making a poster of your Strengths, with events that demonstrate each strength*.

**Activity # 4** includes Step 7, *Presenting your Strengths to others*.

-----  
This Participant Packet is found in the Appendices of the book:

*Articulating Strengths Together (AST):  
An Interactive Process to Enhance Positivity*

Jerald R. Forster, PhD.  
Center for Dependable Strengths

Copyright 2009, Center for Dependable Strengths  
Do not reproduce without permission

## Step 1: Identifying four Good Experiences (GE s)

(Recommended Time: 15 minutes)

The definition of a Good Experience is:

SOMETHING YOU FEEL YOU DID WELL,  
ENJOYED DOING, &  
ARE PROUD OF.

Elaborations:

- SOMETHING YOU DID ...means you actively made it happen.
- YOU FEEL YOU DID WELL ...it is your feeling that is important.
- All three criteria should apply to each Good Experience.
- Good Experiences (GE s) can come from any time or any place in your life's journey. Review your whole life for possibilities.
- A GE should be a specific, concrete event that describes a particular short story of your life. It has a beginning and an ending.
- A GE is often a small "triumph" in your life that gives you a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment.

Good Experience #1:

Good Experience #2:

Good Experience #3:

Good Experience # 4

## Step 2: Considering 107 examples of Possible Strengths

(Recommended Time: 10 minutes)

This list of Possible Strengths is offered to suggest some words or phrases that can be used to describe strengths. There are only 107 examples on this list. There are many different words and phrases to describe strengths. These are offered to stimulate your thinking about different ways that your strengths might be described. Hopefully, before you identify four strengths to describe yourself for Step 7, you will think of even better words and phrases to describe your strengths.

To become more familiar with the words on this list, please read each word or phrase and circle the ones that might be appropriate for describing you. When you are finished circling those words, go back to those that were circled and underline four to six that might be the most appropriate for describing yourself.

### 107 examples of possible strengths:

Athletic, Resourceful, Adaptable, Motivated to Achieve, Organized, Initiator, Analytical, Managing, Altruistic, Playful, Ethical, Leader, Communicator, Competitive, Caring, Considerate, Broad perspective, Brave, Observant, Hopeful, Careful, Imaginative, Practical, Sensitive, Mentoring, Strong faith, Appreciative of beauty, Persistent, Disciplined, Authentic, Empathic, Evenhanded, Focused, Goal-Oriented, Curiosity, Socially responsible, Thinks ahead, Articulate, Cooperative, Tolerant, Creative, Kind, Grateful, Trustworthy, Aware of feelings, Honest, Artistic, Sees patterns, Brings people together, Sympathetic, Hospitable, Inquisitive, Cheerful, Intellectual, Self-controlled, Introspective, Follows through, Intelligent, Zestful, Lifetime learner, Inventive, Thrifty, Researching, Charismatic, Efficient, Fair, Open minded, Optimistic, Responsible, Problem solver, Intuitive, Self-confident, Intense, Friendly, Wisdom, Enthusiastic, Balanced, Prudent, Energetic, Generous, Responsible, Even tempered, Enjoys people, Witty, Courageous, Original, Diplomatic, Loyal, Skilled negotiator, Mechanical, Persuasive, Planner, Coordinating, Foresight, Critical thinker, Humility, Spiritual, Musical, Technical, Spatial, Computing.

### **Step 3: Describing GE s and Identifying Possible Strengths**

(Recommended Time: 15 minutes per person ;  
12 min. describing GEs & 3 min. getting feedback)

What to do when in the quad:

- (1) In a quad, each participant will have around 12 minutes to describe 3 Good Experiences (GE s).
- (2) The others, who are in the group will listen and identify qualities they consider to be strengths the talker demonstrated during each GE. The listeners will list these strengths on a blank sheet of paper, which could be titled: Possible Strengths List. Later each listener will give the page of Possible Strengths to each talker after reading the list to the talker. Each page listing possible strengths should have the name of the talker at the top of the page.
- (3) When the first talker finishes talking about 3 GE s, the timer should check the time. If all three GE s were described in around 10 minutes, there will be time to describe the 4<sup>th</sup> GE. After about 12 minutes of talking time, the focus shifts to feedback. During the last three minutes of each talker's time, the other group members will tell the talker the strengths they noticed. After the oral feedback, each group person gives to the talker the written page of strengths prepared by the feedback person while the talker was talking.
- (4) After the first talker has gotten feedback, the attention shifts to the 2<sup>nd</sup> talker for about 15 minutes. After that the 3<sup>rd</sup> talker becomes the focus for about 15 minutes. After that, the 4<sup>th</sup> talker gets a turn.

#### Considerations if the small group is a trio or larger than a quad.

- A. Because a trio has only 3 participants, each participant will have around 20 minutes, instead of 15 minutes, to describe 3 GE s. This will usually mean that a fourth GE can be described.
- B. There is time for at least 2 minutes of feedback from both of the two listeners, meaning that each trio member has 16 minutes for talking about Good Experiences.
- C. If there are more than 4 participants, each talker adds 15 minutes to the total time required to complete this step, which adds up to more than 1 hour.

## Step 4: Organizing and prioritizing your strengths

(Recommended Time: 12 minutes)

- Study the sheets of possible strengths you received from the other participants in your small group.
- Circle the ones that seem to be the best descriptions of your strengths and then add some of your own strengths-words that may not have been mentioned.
- Re-read through the 107 titles of possible strengths shown in Step 2 and double-underline those that you now claim as descriptors.
- From all of these lists of possible strengths, choose 7 to 9 strengths-words or phrases that best capture your own ideas of your strengths. List them below:

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

(6)

(7)

(8)

(9)

- After studying the list of 7-9 Strengths, choose the four strengths that seem to be your most valued and your most dependable. When choosing the four valued strengths, use the following criteria to evaluate each strength:
  - ✓ Does this strength show up in many of my Good Experiences?
  - ✓ Is the strength one that I have used often in the past?
  - ✓ Is it a strength that I enjoy?
  - ✓ Is it a strength that I strongly want in my future life?
  - ✓ Am I *inner-motivated* to use the strength?

Then prioritize the four, listing the one you value the most first. List the four on the Worksheet shown below in Step 5.

## Step 5: Identifying actual events when you demonstrated each strength.

(Recommended Time: 12 minutes)

After you have identified four Strengths, written their titles on the worksheet shown below, identify at least two past events or activities where you demonstrated each of the strengths. In a way, you are offering proofs that you have those strengths. Some of these events may be Good Experiences that you identified in Step 1. Other events that meet most of the criteria of a Good Experience (GE) might be used as proofs of the other strengths listed on the worksheet. Use a couple of key words or a phrase to identify each event, so that you could remember the event and describe it to someone if you were asked to do so.

### Worksheet for Demonstrating Strengths

**Strength #1** \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Event: \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Event: \_\_\_\_\_

**Strength #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Event: \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Event: \_\_\_\_\_

**Strength #3:** \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Event: \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Event: \_\_\_\_\_

**Strength #4:** \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Event: \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Event: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Step 6: Make a Poster of your Strengths, with events that demonstrate each strength.**

(Recommended Time: 16 minutes)

Using the information from the Worksheet you just completed, make a poster that shows your four possible strengths with your best examples of events where you demonstrated each of the strengths.

Title the poster, **Four Strengths of (your name)**

(Make the words legible for readers at least four feet away)

It is recommended that you use a light colored file folder to make this poster. If you have two felt-tipped pens of different color, or two crayons, you might show your possible strengths in one color and the event that demonstrates the strength in a second color.

## **Step 7: Presenting your Strengths to others**

(Recommended Time: 5 minutes per person)

During this last step of these activities, you will have some time to share the strengths you have identified. Hopefully, you might even be able to improve your wording or description of one or more of your strengths during this time of sharing. You might even ask for suggestions as to how you could communicate the meaning of one or more of the strengths you have identified.

It is useful to think of these particular strengths as draft descriptions that you are in the process of improving. Even after you complete these sessions, you will benefit from continuing your efforts to identify and communicate your strengths. Articulating your strengths, especially your Dependable Strengths®, should probably be a life-long activity that will continue to lead to new insights and more elaborate ways of communicating your self-identity. Use your poster as a first draft that you continue to elaborate and improve. Show improved posters to other people who might help you develop new posters that are more clear and useful for communicating your significant strengths. Also, continue to document the evidence supporting the strengths that you have identified.