Building Your Strengths
What’s right with you?

- The strengths approach grew from a relatively new field of research called Positive Psychology.
- Rather than focusing on what is wrong with ourselves (deficiencies, abnormalities), Positive Psychology focuses on the positive and the normal.
Positive Psychology

- Optimism, positive emotions, spirituality, happiness, satisfaction, personal development, and well-being are some of the current topics in this field.

- Positive psychologists focus on maintaining or enhancing successful function.
Models of success

- The Gallup corporation conducted three decades of research with over 2 million successful individuals in a variety of professions around the world.
- This revealed 3 key characteristics of high achievers.
Gallup Research: Three Characteristics of High Achievers:

- They spend most of their time in their areas of strength.
- They focus on developing and applying their strengths while managing their weaknesses.
- They do not necessarily have more talents than other people, but they have developed their capabilities more fully and have learned to apply them to new situations.
Talents – the building blocks

- Each of us has a unique set of talents which allow us to achieve and succeed.
- Awareness of our personal talents allows us to develop and apply these talents towards self-satisfaction and excellence in our studies and work.
Strengths: developed talents

- A strength is produced when talents are refined with knowledge and skill (Clifton and Anderson, 2002).
- Becoming aware of your talents builds confidence and provides a basis for developing them into strengths.
Benefits of developing strengths

- Learning how to develop and apply strengths will improve your levels of achievement/success.
- Awareness of strengths can help you make wise decisions about majors/careers to pursue.
Strengths and other factors

- Our family, culture, and/or society may influence how we experience our talents/strengths and the extent to which we feel free to express them.
You at your best

• To begin identifying your talents, think about something you achieved within the last six months, or a time in your life when you were “in the zone” or performing at your best. What were you doing? How did it feel?

• Now identify your natural abilities that helped you perform at a high level – these are your talents.
Identifying talents in academics

- A subject you learn with ease may reflect talents (e.g. history, psychology, math, chemistry, anthropology, etc.).
- An activity you do with ease may also reveal talents (e.g. library research, studying for exams, taking objective exams, conducting scientific investigations, working with peers in study groups or on group projects, making oral presentations, etc.).
Discover your talents!

- Gallup has developed an online *StrengthsFinder* assessment that identifies your primary talents.
- It takes only 30-40 minutes to complete.
- You’ll receive a report describing your top 5 talents, suggestions on how to develop and apply them as strengths, and access to an online book on strengths.
- Harper students may obtain a *free* access code and instructions for taking the assessment by calling 847-925-6393 and mentioning this online presentation.
Where do I go from here?

- Take *StrengthsFinder*.
- Call 847-925-6393 to make an appointment with a counselor in any of the Student Development Centers on campus to explore ways of developing and applying your strengths toward greater success.
- *We look forward to hearing from you!*
Your feedback is important

Please click on the link below to answer a few short questions about this workshop.

http://harpercollege.wufoo.com/forms/p7w2w7

Thank you!