

Strength's Perspective Formula: "Rally clients' interests, capacities, motivations, resources, and emotions in the work of reaching their hopes and dreams, help them find pathways to those goals, and the payoff may be an enhanced quality of daily life for them." –Dennis Saleeby (Power in the People)

Basic Principles of the Strengths Perspective:

- 1. Every Individual, Group, Family and Community Has Strengths**
-even though they may be hidden by stress, illness, or crisis
- 2. Trauma and abuse, illness and struggle may be injurious, but they may also be sources of challenge and opportunity.**
“..We are active and developing individuals who, through trials, learn skills and develop personal attributes..” that help us survive future challenges.
- 3. Assume you do not know the upper limits of the capacity to grow and change-take individual, group, and community aspirations seriously**
-Hold high expectations with patients and make allegiance with their hopes..”
- 4. We best serve patients by collaborating with them**
-The professional is not the only one with relevant knowledge and experience to contribute.
- Shared responsibility
- 5. Every environment is full of resources**
“In every environment, there are individuals, associations, groups, and institutions who have something to give, something that others may desperately need.”

Summary: “ While we must respect the impact of problem on the quality of life for our [patients], we must also exercise extraordinary diligence to assure that the resources and positive attributes of our [patients] draw our attention and define our efforts.”

Questions to Get at Strengths (From “Beginnings” –Dennis Saleeby)

Survival Questions:

- How have you managed to survive (or thrive) this far, given all you have faced?
- How have you managed to rise to meet the challenges put before you?
- What have you learned about yourself during your struggles?
- What strength, insight, or skill do you think your difficulties have given you?
- What are the special qualities on which you can rely?

Support Questions:

- What people have given you special understanding, support or guidance?
- Who are special people you can depend on?
- What is it these people give you that is exceptional?
- How did they come to be in your life?

- What organizations, or groups that have been especially helpful to you in the past?

Exception Questions

- In the past, when you felt that your life was better, more interesting, or more stable, what about your world, your relationships, your thinking was special or different?
- What parts of your world would you like to recapture or relive?

Esteem Questions

- When people say good things about you, what are they likely to say?
- What is it about your life, yourself and your accomplishments that give you real pride?
- What gives you genuine pleasure in life?

Possibility Questions:

- What now do you want out of life?
- What are your hopes, visions, and aspirations?
- How far along are you in achieving these?
- What people or personal qualities are helping you move in these directions?
- What are your special talents or abilities?

Change Questions

- What are your ideas about how- thoughts, feelings, behavior, relationships etc. might change?
- What has worked in the past to bring about a better life for you?
- What do you think you could do to improve your status, your affairs-how can I help?

Meaning Questions

- What are those beliefs that give you a sense of purpose? Where do you think they come from?
- What part do they play in your everyday life?

References

Saleebey, D. (2009). *The strengths perspective in social work practice*. Boston: MA. Pearson Education, Inc.

Specific Selections Pulled from:

Chapter One: Power in the People (Dennis Saleebey)

Chapter Five: The Strengths Approach to Practice: Beginnings (Dennis Saleebey)

Chapter Nine: The Strengths Model with Older Adults: Critical Practice Components
(Nelson-Becker, Chapin, & Fast)