WORKSHEET 109 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My strengths in action

Recognising my strengths and using them differently

AIM

Identify the person's most characteristic strengths and encourage them to use them in a new way each day.

WHO IT IS FOR

Fragile self-esteem, loss of confidence after a failure or burnout, career change, life abroad.

DURATION

20 min in session; then a week of practice

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Introduce the idea of character strengths (curiosity, kindness, perseverance, humour…), without ranking them.
2. Help the person recognise 3 to 5 strengths that represent them, with a lived example of each.
3. Suggest using one, in a new way, every day for a week.
4. Go back over the experience and the obstacles.

POINTS TO WATCH

> The VIA questionnaire (online, free) can complement the worksheet, but it isn't essential. Watch out for overuse of a strength (perseverance turned into stubbornness, for example). Positive psychology complements support, it doesn't replace it. With marked depression, these exercises can increase the sense of failure if offered too early or as an obligation to "be fine": adapt the pace and first validate the difficult emotions.

REFERENCES

Peterson, C. & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification. American Psychological Association / Oxford University Press.

Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N. & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress: Empirical validation of interventions. American Psychologist, 60(5), 410-421.

PSYCHOLOGIST'S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 109 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My strengths in action

We all have character strengths: curiosity, kindness, humour, courage, perseverance, honesty… Recognising them and using them in new ways helps you feel more yourself and more capable.

1. Choose 3 to 5 strengths that represent you (use the word ideas if it helps).
2. For each one, write a moment when you used it.
3. This week, use one of your strengths in a new way every day.
4. Note what you did and what you felt.

My strength	A moment when I used it	A new way of using it

What I discovered by using my strengths differently:

These exercises do not replace therapy. If you are in distress or having suicidal thoughts: 112 (European Union), 3114 (France) or the emergency number of the country where you live.

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