Creating Our Best Selves
Through Strengths and Wellbeing
Discover Your Strengths
Line up by the number of years you have worked for MCCD

• Introduce yourself

• Share a story about a moment you were at your best at South Mountain CC
After completing this seminar, participants will be able to:

- Define talent, theme, and strength.
- Discuss the role that talent and strength play in the success of top achievers.
- Identify and define, in basic terms, their own themes of talent.
- Discuss their themes of talent with significant others.
- Define, in basic terms, the 34 themes of talent.
- Recognize the unique, but different, talents of others.
Writing Challenge
Helping Students, Staff, and Faculty Achieve Academic, Career, and Personal Success.
So what’s stopping you?
The Truth About You
The TRUTHS that allow you to play to your strengths most of the time

- As you grow you become more of who you already are
- You are going to grow and develop the most in your areas of strength
- What your team needs of you most of all is for you to bring your strengths deliberately
Positive Psychology: The Root of Strengths
Deficit Based

Grade and Progress Reports

Performance Evaluations
A story of a rabbit and a duck

The Rabbit
and
the Duck
Donald Clifton
Gallup Organization

- Two million interviews
- Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviors → Success
- Over 400 talents
- Validated
Talent
(a natural way of thinking, feeling, or behaving)

Investment
(time spent practicing, developing your skills, and building your knowledge base)

Strength
(the ability to consistently provide near-perfect performance)

Strengths are talents used productively

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Talents

- Behavior patterns that make you **effective**
- Thought patterns that make you **efficient**
- Beliefs that empower you to **succeed**
- Attitudes that sustain your efforts toward achievement and **excellence**
- Motivations that propel you to take action and maintain the **energy** needed to **achieve**
- You can not not do it
- Talents are **potential strengths!**
Themes

Similar talents grouped into themes

Clifton Strength Finder measures for 34
Identify Talent

- Underline or highlight the phrases in your strengths report that resonate with you.
- Cross out those that don’t
- The highlighted are your talents.
Strengths

- Talents used productively
- Talents are refined with knowledge and skill
  - a diamond in the rough
  - requires purposeful effort
- Strength = Talent \times Skills + Knowledge
“Despite the American myth, I cannot be or do whatever I desire – a truism, to be sure, but a truism we often defy.

Our created natures make us like organisms in an ecosystem: There are some roles and relationships in which we thrive and others in which we wither and die.”

Parker Palmer, Let Your Life Speak
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*Parker Palmer, Let Your Life Speak*
My boss doesn’t care if I’m thriving, or energized by my work…

she just wants the job done.
Energy

Expectations

Outcomes
You're expected to attend a party.
There will be 50 people there and won't know anyone.
What Gives You Energy?

Your closet:
Strengths are the lens that energizes you

Input-Situation

Your Strengths Lens

Your Energy
Different Paths
You are required to attend a “brainstorming” session to dream up new ideas.
What is Your Lens?

You are ask to serve on a team responsible for designing a college wide event
What Makes You Unique?

With a partner...

- What was your first reaction to your Clifton Strengths Finder results?
- What new discovery have you made about yourself?
- What, if anything, surprised you about your results?
- Have you shared your “Top 5” with anyone? What was their reaction?
1. Achiever
2. Relator
3. Learner
4. Responsibility
5. Strategic

5,166,449 respondents
### Discover/Awareness
- Understands, can define and verbalize their themes.
- Has a basic understanding of their themes.

### Develop/Integrate
- Can see a clear connection between their themes and past and present behavior.
- Can link strengths to successes.

### Relationship
- Has a clear understanding of their uniqueness and sees others strengths.
- Has a relationship(s) that is encouraging their strength’s development.

### Apply/Application
- Can utilize the knowledge of their five themes to plan, strategize, analyze and direct their behavior.

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**Session 1**

**Session 2**

**Session 3**
Treasure Hunt

- Talk to other co-workers who have at least one Signature Theme different than your own.
- Jot down the theme you discussed, and at least one benefit of that theme.
I hate getting stuck in these traffic jams.

Not me.

I can wave at the kids in the other cars!
Jake, did you finish that list of chores I left for you?

No can do... I threw my back out.

How?

Lifting the list.
Theme?

So why did you make a bat house, dear?

Well, things I make never seem to work right anyway.

Not really, dear.

If my streak continues, our backyard will never be overrun with bats!

Your mind is constantly grinding out new ideas; isn't it, dear?

Sometimes it's a curse... it's amazing I can even sleep at night.
IT'S ALMOST JULY AND WE HAVEN'T PLANNED A VACATION YET!

IF WE DON'T GET OFF OUR DUFFS AND PLAN SOMETHING FAST—AND I MEAN NOW—WE WON'T GET A CHANCE TO RELAX AT ALL THIS SUMMER!

I'LL START A SPREADSHEET!

CAN SHE HEAR HERSELF?
Theme?

When I get big, I want to be a great doctor.

I want to be a doctor among doctors...a physician among physicians...

I want to be the Willie Mays of medicine!

How ambitious can you get?
"It creeps me out when he watches the History Channel and takes notes!"
Theme?

Our relationship entered its decline at this point.

That's when you started graphing everything.

Coincidence!
The team building exercise got strangely competitive.

As in.. "Who can stay on the hot coals longest?"
Theme?

1. What if everyone was like you?
2. What if we all ran away from our problems? Huh? What then?
3. What if everyone in the whole world suddenly decided to run away from his problems?
4. Well, at least we'd all be running in the same direction!

Footnotes:
1. Peanuts 2/25/10 © 2010 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.
Theme?

Peanuts comic strip with the following dialogue:

Panel 1: Snoopy talks to Woodstock.

Panel 2: Woodstock responds to Snoopy.

Panel 3: Snoopy sighs.

Panel 4: Snoopy lies down on the grass, saying, "Listening to someone else's problems always depresses me..."
Your questions?
Why do I only get my top 5?

- Focus on strength not weakness
- You own your strengths, pick out 5 more
- Feel free to replace one with another
- No one knows your talents like you do!!
Will this change if I take it again?

- Top 5 – Top 10
- Hawthorne effect
How can I get a code for someone else?

$15 at Amazon
Utilizing Strengths language, introduce yourself in response to this greeting:

“Nice to meet you. What do you do at South Mountain Community College?”

Rather than simply sharing your title, try and integrate some of your signature themes into your answer.
Live your strengths!

- Know your top 5
- Be proud of your top 5
- Post your top 5
- Donate your top 5! Donate them every day!
One of my Signature Themes that I want to learn more about and consciously apply more often:

One thing I will do differently starting tomorrow: