

# Valuing Students through a Strengths-Based Pedagogy



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**APRIL 28, 2016**

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# PLAN: Learn about Strengths-Based pedagogy that



- ✓ Expands our foci beyond conventional pedagogy
- ✓ Responsive to both educators and students
- ✓ Applicable in our changing and multi interdisciplinary environment





# Current Context

Where do we  
focus our  
attention

- Challenges/Problems
- Deficits
- Tasks/skills
- Conventional ways of teaching and learning

# What is Strengths-based Pedagogy?



## Philosophical Orientation

- Constructivism
- Ontological orientation



## Strengths - based Values

- Health and healing
- Uniqueness
- Holism and Embodiment
- Subjective Reality and Created Meaning
- Person and Environment are Integral
- Self –Determination
- Learning, Timing and Readiness
- Collaborative Partnership

(Gottlieb, 2013, 2014).



# Strengths -Based Principles

1. Individuals have potential
2. What we focus on creates our reality
3. Language we use creates our reality
4. Change is inevitable
5. Positive change occurs in the context of authentic relationships
6. Person's reality is their story
7. Start with what they already know
8. Building capacity is a process and goal
9. Valuing differences and the need to collaborate is important

(Gottlieb, 2013; Hammond, 2013; Hirst, Lane & Navenac, 2011; McCashen, 2010; Rapp & Goscha, 2006)

# Why Strengths-based Pedagogy?







## Case Study

*Adam was a 3<sup>rd</sup> year nursing student in a child health community placement at an elementary school. Upon our first meeting I noticed him to be an extremely reserved young man who rarely spoke without being asked a question. In pre and post conferences he remained quiet and would only speak when asked a question and even then it was a struggle. The teacher in the classroom also noticed him to be very quiet with the children and would prefer to stand off to the side just observing the students, and seemed uninterested. When engaging in any activities such as a health assessment and vital signs he had difficulty communicating and engaging with the children and he preferred his peers take the lead.*

# What if?



- Individuals have potential
- What we focus on is our reality
- Language we use creates our reality
- Start with what they already know

# Strengths-Based Approach



What will happen when we think about what is **right with people** rather than fixating on what is wrong with them?

*Donald O. Clifton*

*Inventor of Clifton strengths Finder*

intentional  
openness  
authentic  
awareness  
active  
understanding values and assumptions  
belief - respect  
strengths  
thinking  
relationships  
valued  
constructivist  
feeling equality  
reflection partners  
inspires  
teamwork  
shared power  
positivity  
confidence  
flexible  
building collaborative  
listening  
student-centered  
engaged stories  
collaboration potential  
approach  
positive  
patient-centered  
leadership  
increase

# Conclusion



**THE LIGHT MAY BE UNCERTAIN  
AND FLICKERING; BUT  
TEACHERS IN THEIR LIVES  
AND WORKS HAVE THE  
REMARKABLE CAPACITY TO  
MAKE THAT LIGHT SHINE IN  
ALL SORTS OF CORNERS AND,  
PERHAPS, TO MOVE  
NEWCOMERS TO JOIN WITH  
OTHERS AND TRANSFORM**

(Maxine Greene)

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