

Choosing Strengths



Strengths are not only qualities that we have—such as determination, patience, creativity or cooperation—but they are also choices we make. We can actively choose to develop and make particular strengths our own. Learning to make wise choices is a crucial skill. It is at the heart of change-oriented conversations and self-esteem building with children, young people and adults alike.

Each of the 36 beautifully designed, full-colour cards in the *Choosing Strengths* set features the phrase 'I can choose to be ...' followed by a strength that anyone can choose to practise and make their own.

Openers for a workshop, meeting or gathering:

- Pick a card that catches your eye for some reason. Why did you pick it?
- Pick a card that says something about why you are here/what you would like to get out of the event.
- Pick 1-3 and introduce yourself using them.
- Pick a card that is a strength you think you have—or that someone else has noticed in you.

Adding strengths to your repertoire:

- Think of a challenge you are facing. Pick a card that you think would be helpful. If you were choosing to practice this strength, what would we see you doing? What would you notice in your body, breath, thoughts, movements, speech. What wouldn't you be doing?
- What is the first step to choosing to do more of this in the next few days?
- How will you know when you are beginning to choose this strength?
- Are there other strengths that can help you along the way?
- When could you use this new strength the most?

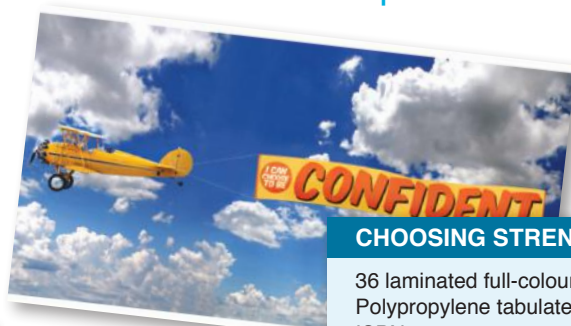
Valuing strengths in teams and families:

- Pick cards for family or team members. How could you learn some of these strengths from them?
- Which cards do your family/team/community choose often?
- Which cards would you like to see your team/family/community choose more often?

Fun in the classroom:

- Place the cards in a bag or box and use as a 'lucky dip'. Students in classrooms can choose a strength of the day or week to study and notice—this is a way to build a strengths culture in your classroom or school.
- Charades: random cards are dealt to a person or team and they act them out as a game of charades.
- Pick card and write or act out a story about it. When did you or your fictional character experience this quality? What did others notice when the quality was shown? How would the absence of this quality have changed the outcome or story?
- Pick 3-6 cards and tell a story with them all in it. Now, pick another card and change the ending of the story!

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