A GUIDE TO CompleTING YOUR
STRENGTHS ASSESSMENT

Mary
ART
WRITING
GENEROUS
BOOKS

St. Vincent’s Mental Health Service

Developed by C Crimmings February 2013
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Every Case Manager at St. Vincent’s Hospital Mental Health Service works within the Strengths Model: A Recovery-Oriented Approach to Mental Health Services. St. Vincent’s adopted this model in 2006.

The Strengths Assessment was developed by Rapp & Goscha (2006) and is part of the tools we use to help you to identify your strengths to help you on your recovery journey and make your own choices and decisions.

The Department of Health Victoria also has set Recovery Principles for each mental health service or agency to implement.

The Strengths Model has 6 Principles that underpin all the work that you do with your Case Manager.

The Principles are on the following page!
The 6 Strengths Principles

1. People have the capacity to recover, reclaim & transform their lives

2. The focus is on the individual’s strengths rather than deficits

3. The consumer is the director of the helping relationship

4. The relationship is primary and essential

5. The preferred setting for our work is the community

6. The community is an oasis of resources

Rapp & Goscha, 2006
The Strengths Assessment helps you to:

- Identify what your strengths are
- Gain awareness of who you are
- Encourage you to take control of your life and make choices and decisions
- Learn about yourself from past and current experiences
- Understand what you want in the future
- Helps you to focus on what is positive in your life and not dwell on the things that are not so good
- Know what resources you have within yourself and around you
- Enables you to look at what community resources there are where you live
- Give you hope when you feel you have lost a sense of direction or purpose

Your Case Manager will help you to complete your Strengths Assessment. You may be asked about some of your strengths they have noticed or learned from you and think have helped you in the past and would help you in the future.
What are your strengths?

Strengths can be in many forms:

- Personal qualities & characteristics
- Talents
- Skills
- Interests
- Hopes and wishes
- Environmental

**Personal qualities and characteristics**

- Honest
- Caring
- Hopeful
- Hard Working
- Easy to talk to
- Sensitive
- Intelligent
- Reliable
- Friendly
- Generous

**Talents and skills**

- Good card player
- Good at budgeting
- Can repair engines
- Computer wizard
- Good with numbers
- Good memory
- Knows a lot about music
- Good cook
- Good at writing poetry
Environmental strengths

A safe and comfortable home you really like

An older brother who goes with you to appointments

Being part of the local church

A pet you are very fond of

Have a good relationship with the local shop keeper

Use local library service

A neighbour you get on well with

Links to local mental health facility/PDRS

Personal Interests and Aspirations

Love to go fishing

Enjoy watching old movies

Would like to be an electrician

Would like to have your own car one day

Be happy and settled

Would like to have a paid job

Would like to be free of MH services

Would like to learn how to cook

Would like to be a successful musician
It is very important that you are able to tell the story about your life so far. You may have experienced a lot of painful times. You may have struggled with many things.

Your Case Manager will listen and acknowledge what has happened to you, both good and not so good! You will then be helped to look at what strengths you have drawn on in the past to help you through bad times.

It is up to you what goes in to your document. Your Case Manager and members of your treating team will see it and a copy will be kept in your file.

You can sit and chat with your Case Manager; write it down; use Art; chat over a coffee; while taking a walk; doing something you enjoy.... you can take it away and work on it yourself and with family and friends if you wish.

Your Case Manager will start the Strengths Assessment for you if you are not in a place where you want to think about it. Then it will be discussed with you when you are ready to. It is then up to you what you want to be included in it.
My Strengths Assessment

STEP 1 When you start working on your Strengths Assessment, think about some of the things you would like now. For example:

- A satisfying job
- A relationship
- Some spare money to enjoy yourself
- Good relationships with friends and family
- A good place to live
- A good social life

These go in the middle column (future wishes)

You don’t need to know the detail or understand what you want or why. You will be helped to explore these things when you begin working on your goal plan.

STEP 2 Think about what has been good in your life; what has made you happy and worked for you before? These things go in the last column (past strengths).
STEP 3  Think about what is good in your life now; what is making you happy or content, what and who are the people who are positive and make life better for you (current strengths)?

STEP 4  What is most important to you from all the hopes and dreams that you have now? Try and list them 1-3 with number 1 being the most important

You can develop your Strengths Assessment over time, when you are ready and as your life changes.

You may decide that some of your current strengths become your past ones for the moment. Circumstances, people and things around us change as well as within ourselves. You may like to start a fresh one so it shows what is really meaningful for you at any point in time.
Your dreams, wants and needs will change over time too. Maybe even from day to day.

Your Case Manager will continue to help you identify your strengths and help you to write them down in your own words and the language you would normally use. You can use pictures, drawings, photos in it! Whatever you like.....

Whilst continuously working on your Strengths Assessment, you will also be working on your Goal Plan.

Your Case Manager will explain to you what this is about and how it fits in with your Strengths Assessment.

This is what your Strengths Assessment will look like....
## Strengths Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Current Status:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Future Wishes:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Past Experiences:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What's going on today? What's available now?</td>
<td>Desires, aspirations. What do I want?</td>
<td>Personal, social, resources. What have I used in the past?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Daily Living Situation</td>
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<td>Financial Situation</td>
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<td>Work/Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leisure/Recreation</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Personal Qualities**

**What are my priorities?**
1. 
2. 
3. 

**Consumer’s comments:**

**Case Manager/worker’s comments:**

**Consumer’s signature:**

**Case Manager/worker’s signature:**