12 Habits for Well-Being:
Play to Your Strengths

Goal: Apply your strengths more fully into your work.

What is it that you do well within your career, your relationships, your hobbies and other interests? What is it about you that make you excel in these areas? Perhaps you are detail-oriented, competitive, creative, and/or have a love of learning. These inherent characteristics and aspects of your personality are considered your strengths.

Why might it be important to understand what your strengths are, especially in relation to the work that you do? A 2013 study in the Journal of Happiness Studies entitled, “The Application of Signature Character Strengths and Positive Experiences at Work”, found that strengths-congruent activities at the workplace are important for positive experiences at work like job satisfaction and experiencing pleasure, engagement, and meaning fostered by one’s job.

Part of the process of applying your strengths is to better understand what they are. There are several tools that can assist you in this quest but perhaps the most well-known is the VIA Survey of Character Strengths developed by Dr. Martin E. P. Seligman, Professor of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. Mayo Clinic has also developed an Exploring My Strengths workbook that walks you through the strengths exploration process.

Once you have clearly defined your strengths, it’s time to more fully integrate them into your work. You can do this by identifying opportunities that exist in the areas that you feel that you have the most flexibility and control. It may also be beneficial to have a conversation with your supervisor about how you might bring the best of yourself into the work you do each day.

“Part of the process of applying your strengths is to better understand what they are.”
- Jason Soyring, Employee Well-Being Specialist

Use these quick tips to make it a habit to Play to Your Strengths:

- Focus on the areas of your work that energize you.
- Take on the tasks or projects that excite you and delegate, if possible, those tasks that you are not as excited about.
- Ask your colleagues and supervisor what they think your strengths are, and remain open-minded to their feedback.
- Make a list of positive contributions you have made to your work environment or that you could implement going forward.