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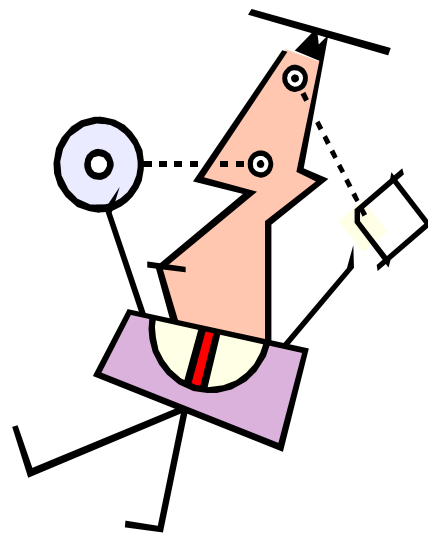
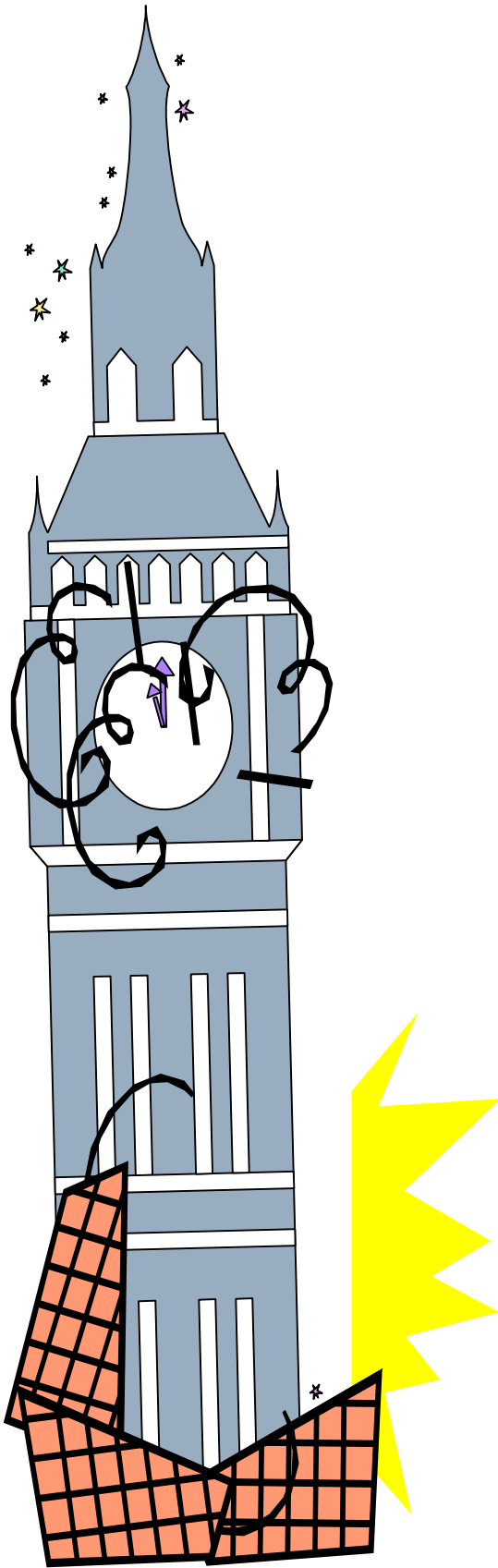
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# **SECTION 1**

## **HOW TO SET UP AND USE THE TOWER OF STRENGTHS ACTIVITY\***



\* Some of our readers may want information on how the activities were developed, tested and used. Feel free to skip ahead to Section 3: Background Information.

## OVERVIEW OF THE ACTIVITY

*The Tower of Strengths* (Figure 1) on the next page has been filled out to serve as an example when instructing people how to complete this task. It can be copied and/or made into an overhead. To suit variations in aesthetic tastes, copies of different styles of blank "*Tower*" maps are included in Appendix A (pp. 30-33).

Ten strengths that a person already has are selected from a set of 60 pro-social cards (see pp. 34-41 in Appendix A) and then written into the "Foundation of Actual Strengths" on *The Tower* map along with the associated letters that are found on each card. The letters stand for different parts of the self that the strengths reflect. These are called "parts of you," and are described on an explanation sheet (pg. 29 of Appendix A). After reading the "parts of you" explanation sheet, the existing strength summary is filled in on the bottom flag of *The Tower*. Each participant draws a picture or writes a brief phrase to serve as a personal reminder of when it has been successfully used in the past. Five desired strengths are then selected and written, with their associated letters, on the upper part of *The Tower*. Finally, the "parts of you" summary of desired strengths is written in on the top flag on top of *The Tower*.

**Figure 1.**






**PARTS OF YOU**  
 Write down how many strengths of each type you desire.  
 S = 2    T = 1    H = 1    E = 1  
 M = 0    L = 0

Write down how many actual strengths of each type you have.  
 S = 2    T = 3    H = 2    E = 0  
 M = 2    L = 1

ADAPTABLE    T

HEALTHY	H	PATIENT	E
POLITE	S	FRIENDLY	S

**DESIRED STRENGTHS**

 family	LOYAL	S	SINCERE	S	commitment
business ↑	AMBITIOUS	M	SMART	T	★ At X-mas
 Good times	MUSICAL	H	PRACTICAL	T	Repaired TV
	ATHLETIC	H	CURIOUS	M	☾ science
	HONEST	L	LOGICAL	T	 work

**FOUNDATION OF ACTUAL STRENGTHS**

**THE TOWER OF STRENGTHS**

## WHAT DO I NEED TO SET UP *THE TOWER OF STRENGTHS*

Each *Tower of Strengths* set consists of a *Tower of Strengths* map, a strengths card deck, a "parts of you" explanation sheet, an instruction sheet, and something to write with.

### ***The Tower of Strengths* Maps (Pages 30-33)**

*The Tower of Strengths* map contains 15 boxes that are to be filled in with personal strengths from the card deck. The bottom 10 boxes are to be filled in with strengths the participant currently has (existing strengths) and the 5 boxes at the top are to be filled in with strengths the participant would like to have (desired strengths). The summary flags on the top of *The Tower of Strengths* are filled in with how many desired and existing strengths from each of the "parts of you" a person has chosen. Strength card types are indicated by the letter on each card and described on the "parts of you" explanation sheet (p. 29). Pages 30-33 of Appendix A have several different *Tower of Strengths* maps to choose from. We include several versions so that each *Tower of Strengths* can be aesthetically appealing and unique.

### **The Strengths Card Deck (Pages 34-42)**

The strengths card deck consists of 60 different strength cards (pp. 34-40). The cards should be printed in different colors to symbolize six different parts of the self (social, thinking, health/performance, emotional, motivational, and life view). We also include a page of blank cards so that more strength cards can be added to the deck if desired (p. 41). A strength list is included also for situations in which using a card deck is not convenient (p. 42).

### **A "Parts of You" Explanation Sheet (Page 29)**

A "parts of you" explanation sheet is included in Appendix A. This explanation sheet explains the parts of self that the strength cards come from (indicated by the letter on each card). Participants can then see in which parts of themselves they are strongest and weakest.

### **The Instruction Sheets (Page 26-28)**

An instruction sheet for participants (p. 27) and a procedure sheet for counselors (p. 28) is included in Appendix A. The instruction sheet should be passed out to each participant. The counselor procedure sheet is helpful if you are doing this activity in a group.

Some additional materials are needed that are not included in the manual. They are:

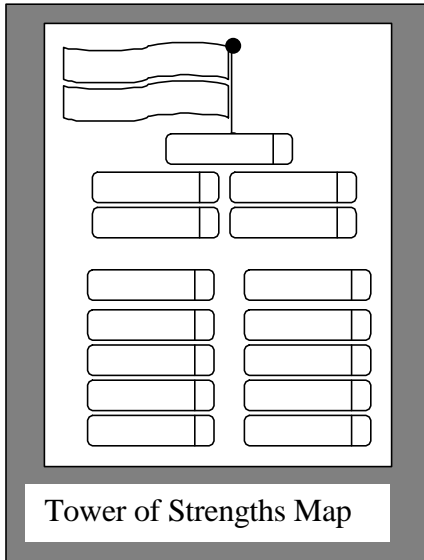
- access to a copy machine *Note: Some copy machines cannot use cardstock. Find out the types of paper your copy machine can handle before buying paper.*
- 8.5" x 11" regular weight paper for *The Tower of Strengths* Map, the "parts of you" explanation sheet, the instruction sheet, and the counselor procedure sheet (3 pieces of paper per *Tower of Strengths* set, plus one for the procedure sheet)
- red, white, green, yellow, blue, and purple cardstock for the strengths cards (1 piece of paper of each color per card set). Plain white can be used for all decks, if colored cardstock is not available.
- scissors to cut out the cards
- a rubber band to hold the deck together
- a pen or pencil *Note: Since participants sometimes like to decorate their Tower maps creatively, providing crayons, felt pens, or calligraphy pens is often useful.*

## HOW DO I SET IT UP?

First decide how many *Tower of Strengths* sets you would like to make initially. You will want to multiply "the recipe" by that number. Copy out of the manual the "parts of you" explanation sheet, your *Tower of Strengths* map preference, and the instruction sheet. Copy as many of these as needed on regular 8.5" x 11" paper. Keep the originals in good shape so that new decks can be made whenever needed.

Carefully copy the six pages of strength cards. Each of the pages of strength cards tells you which color cardstock to use. Copy the strengths onto the appropriate color cardstock (e.g., the social strengths page is copied onto red cardstock, the cognitive strengths page is copied onto white cardstock, etc.). If for some reason you cannot use cardstock, regular colored paper can be used. However, we do not recommend regular paper for the cards because the card deck will be rather flimsy and unlikely to last long. If this is an issue, cards made on regular paper can be protected by lamination, using a protective spray, or by covering the cards in transparent shelf paper (make certain you do this before cutting the cards out).

Cut the cards on the dotted lines and assemble the card deck. Shuffle the different colors together. If you are making more than one deck, make certain each deck has all 60 strengths from the different areas of self. Then put a rubber band around each deck, include something to write with, and you are done! A step-by-step checklist is included for your convenience on page 25 of Appendix A.



## HOW DO I USE THE TOWER OF STRENGTHS?

Give each person who is participating 1) a *Tower of Strengths* map, 2) a strengths card deck, 3) an instruction sheet, 4) the "parts of you" explanation sheet, and 5) something to write with. The counselor procedure sheet gives detailed instructions (p. 28 of Appendix A). Have participants put all of the materials except the strength card deck out of the way. Explain that the purpose of *The Tower of Strengths* is to consider existing strengths and strengths that would be useful to develop. Then have them go through the card deck and choose 10 strengths that describe them. These should be their 10 most important strengths.

Next, have the participants take out *The Tower of Strengths* map. Have them write their 10 strengths and the associated letters (from the right side of each card) in the 10 boxes at the bottom of the page (The Foundation of Actual Strengths). The "parts of you" explanation sheet will tell what each letter stands for. Mention that the flags and the top of *The Tower* (Desired Strengths) should remain blank for now. Have them keep the 10 strength cards separate from the rest of the deck even after they have written them on their map.

### In Brief Using the Tower of Strengths

1. Pass out materials: Tower map, card deck, instructions, "parts of you" explanation sheet, and a pencil.
2. Sort through strength deck, choose 10 existing strengths and write into the Tower map.
3. Draw a picture as a reminder of when the strength has been used in the past.
4. Read the "parts of you" explanation sheet.
5. Fill in "parts of you" summary flag.
6. Discuss existing strengths.
7. Sort through deck, choose five desired strengths and write them in.
8. Fill in the desired strengths summary flag.
9. Wrap-up discussion.

Have the participants draw a picture or write a brief description that shows how they have used each of their strengths in the past. This step is especially useful if you are doing the project in a group, because the people who finish early can work on this while others continue to select their 10 strengths.

Next, have them take out the "parts of you" explanation sheet. Explain that the letter (and/or color) on the cards indicates the part of the self that strength is from (e.g., s = social).

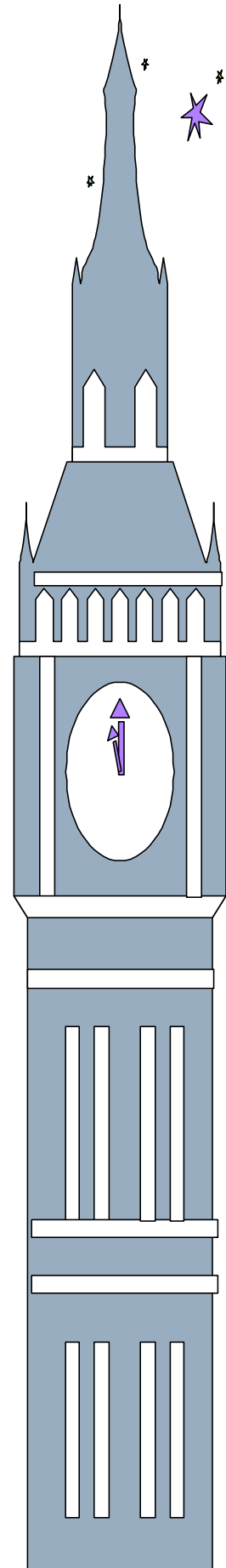


Explain what the different parts of self represent or let them read about them on the explanation sheet. Then have them fill in the "parts of you" summary flag (on the top of the *Tower*) that refers to actual strengths, indicating how many of their 10 strengths came from the various parts of the self.

After everyone has had a chance to complete these steps, you may want to have a discussion about the strengths selected (see the discussion topics on pp. 43-45 of Appendix A). It is often helpful to have the participants share their strengths and discuss how they have used them in the past and how they may use them in the future. It also may be useful to discuss how certain strengths can become weaknesses. For example, being too adventurous may be problematic for some individuals. Discussions about the strongest and weakest parts of the self also can be helpful.

After the discussion is over, have participants sort through the remaining strengths, and have them choose five strengths they would like to develop. Emphasize that they should choose strengths that are realistic goals for them. They should write the strength that they most want to develop at the very top of *The Tower of Strengths*, along with its code letter indicating the card type. Then, they should write the remaining 4 desired strengths in the blank boxes that remain in the top section of *The Tower of Strengths* map. Have them fill in the remaining flag on *The Tower* with the number of desired strengths from the divisions of self.

A wrap-up discussion can follow (see pp. 43-45 of Appendix A for discussion questions). Participants can keep their completed *Tower of Strength* map for future reference.



## WHAT ELSE CAN I DO WITH THIS ACTIVITY?

### ***Tower of Strengths Updates***

Although it is not necessary, it may be useful to have a follow-up discussion a few weeks or even months later (see p. 45 of Appendix A for follow-up discussion questions). Participants can discuss progress they have made on developing their desired strengths, as well as difficulties encountered. Participants can also discuss new ways to apply their existing strengths. They can also do a new *Tower of Strengths* to indicate the strengths they may have developed.

### **How Do Others View You?**

Another way to use *The Tower of Strengths* is to use it as a tool to see how other people view the participant. Have the participant give *The Tower of Strengths* tasks to a supportive friend or family member who can indicate what they think the participant's strengths are and which strengths would be useful for him or her to have. Participants could then discuss any discrepancies between their personal *Tower of Strengths* and those that others created for them.