



## Introduction

### ***The Spirit of the Dependable Strengths Articulation Process***

"The *Dependable Strengths Articulation Process (DSAP)* is an intervention which increases a person's self-esteem and motivation to achieve. Recent studies indicate that those in the DSAP workshops are also likely to experience change in focus of control from external to internal, and will feel more of an influence on their futures. Other research indicates that participants will use their knowledge of *Dependable Strengths* to make further education, training and career decisions, to reduce the stress in their lives, to focus more on being productive in positive ways, to feel stronger, to relate to others with less conflict, and to communicate more clearly.

Much is known about how this happens but some is a wonderful mystery. Each man, woman, and young person wants to grow in his or her own way. Growing requires change, and is feared because it involves the unknown. What is known is that people rarely apply as much as 20 percent of their potential, so there is much room for growth. When people come to know more of their resources and potential they become less afraid of stepping into the future.

The idea that people learn and grow through their mistakes has become traditional. In the DSAP a new process is started: learning from successes and discovering *Good Experiences* through which each person can recognize and use more of his or her potential. In addition, by uncovering one's own *Dependable Strengths*®, one becomes free to use, develop, or combine them in different ways to accommodate change. Change, then, comes to mean adaptation and flexibility, rather than the unknown and feared.

Old tradition says, "*find out what you did wrong and never do it again.*" New wisdom says, "*find out what you did right, so you can be sure to do it again.*" The old way suggests moving ahead while looking back over your shoulder. The new way suggests moving forward by finding safe footholds and continuing to climb."

*Bernard Haldane, Ph.D.*

*Originator of the Dependable Strengths Articulation Process*



# Dependable Strengths Articulation Process

## What is a “Good Experience”?

*Good Experiences* are the foundation of the Dependable Strengths process so it is important you understand what these are and are not. *Good Experiences* are unique events that have a specific definition and criteria. They are not the same as “nice times”, “good memories”, or a “happy experiences” (although they may be connected to these). Check your *Good Experiences* to make sure they meet these requirements:

1. First, the definition: A “Good Experience” is SOMETHING YOU FEEL YOU DID WELL, ENJOYED DOING AND ARE PROUD OF. The important points of this are:

A. **SOMETHING YOU DID...** means you actively made this experience happen. It is not something that just happened to you or you were indirectly involved in.

Example:

No: My spouse took me on a wonderful vacation to Hawaii and we had a grand time.

Yes: I planned and organized my wedding involving over 300 people, including designing the invitations, arranging for food, flowers, photographs, facilities, and the reception. It all came off without a hitch.

B. **YOU FEEL YOU DID WELL...** means you are the sole judge of how well you did it. It does not matter how anyone else might evaluate it. It is only your opinion and sense of accomplishment that counts.

C. **YOU FEEL YOU DID WELL, ENJOYED AND ARE PROUD OF...** means a Good Experience must meet ALL three criterion, not just one or two of them. You may have done something you feel you did well and are proud of but DID NOT ENJOY. That, then, is not a *Good Experience*. Make sure it meets all three requirements.

2. ANYTIME, ANY PLACE... a *Good Experience* can come from any time and any place in your life. *Good Experiences* can happen from early childhood to the present. You may want to think about each five-year period of your life and search it for *Good Experiences*. They may occur in any part of your life – home, school, work, hobbies, leisure, etc. Do not limit yourself to just one or two areas of your life.

3. SPECIFIC, NOT GENERAL... *Good Experiences* are specific, concrete events with a time, place, action and outcome – not general life “milestones” like “getting a master’s degree”, “raising three children” or “getting married”. If you want to consider these as *Good Experiences*, ask yourself, “*What specifically did I do in that experience that I feel I did well, enjoyed and am proud of?*” – give a concrete example.

4. OFTEN SMALL EVENTS, NOT LARGE... *Good Experiences* do not necessarily involve great accomplishments, success, fame or fortune. They are often events that others know nothing about or might even consider “insignificant”. They can be the small “triumphs” in our life which give us a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment. Don’t eliminate it because it seems silly, trivial or unimportant.



**EARLIEST *GOOD EXPERIENCE***

Draw the earliest *Good Experience* you can remember, before the age of 10



## GOOD EXPERIENCES SUMMARY

A *Good Experience* is something you feel you did well, enjoyed doing and are proud of. Your *Good Experiences* could be associated with any part of your life - childhood, adolescence, adulthood, work, family, school, social, church, sports or hobbies.

1. Begin with the *Good Experience* that first comes to your mind. On each line, write a few words that remind you of a *Good Experience*. When it happened doesn't matter. Try to write between 2 and 5.

I. Earliest Good Experience (Drawing):

II. Recent Good Experience (last 2-3 years):

III. Recent Good Experience (last 2-3 years):

IV.

V.

VI.

2. Check the THREE you feel have been "greatest" or most important to you.

3. Number those THREE in order of their importance to you ("1" is the most important).



## TRIO INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME aloud your top Good Experience, then say what you did to make it happen. Trio members can ask questions about WHAT you did and HOW you did it... but **NO** "Why?" questions.
2. As you talk and give details, your trio members LISTEN CAREFULLY and WRITE down three or more skills, talents or abilities they feel you must have used.
3. Do the same with 1 more Good Experience.
4. When you finish telling both Good Experiences, each listener READS their list of strengths out loud to you, then gives you the list.
5. Listeners ASK you "How do you feel?". You reply, then another trio member becomes the speaker and the process is repeated until all have had a turn.

**(Appoint a Timekeeper)**

***(Includes 2 stories, feedback, and de-brief)***

**25 minutes total group**



# Dependable Strengths

## Articulation Process

### TRIOS

Strengths List for \_\_\_\_\_

*(Listeners ask: "What did you do?", "How did you do it?" and "Any results?")*



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## Articulation Process

### TRIOS

Strengths List for \_\_\_\_\_

*(Listeners ask: "What did you do?", "How did you do it?" and "Any results?")*



## **Guidelines for Identifying Possible Dependable Strengths**

**FREQUENCY** - does this strength/activity show up often in my top Good Experiences?

**PAST** - is this a strength/activity I have used often in the past?

**FUTURE** - is this a strength/activity I strongly want in my future life?

**ENJOY** - is this a strength/activity I enjoy?

**MOTIVATION** - am I inner motivated to use this strength/activity?



## **Dependable Strengths® Resources**

### **1. Center for Dependable Strengths**

1415 Harrison Avenue NW, Suite 201  
Olympia, WA 98502  
855 281-0000 (Toll free)  
[info@dependablestrengths.org](mailto:info@dependablestrengths.org)

### **2. DSAP Facilitator Training**

The Dependable Strengths Articulation Process (DSAP) is a rigorous eighteen-hour, client-oriented, peer-assisted, group process.

DSAP facilitator training is a five-day course provided by the Center for Dependable Strengths. Participants of the five-day training are eligible for CDS Local Instructor Certification upon completion of required post-training experience.

#### ***Scheduled Trainings***

##### ***Washington!***

**DSAP 5-Day Facilitator Training**  
Seattle, October 20-24, 2014

### **3. Dependable Strengths Website:**

- [www.dependablestrengths.org](http://www.dependablestrengths.org)

### **4. Books and Manuals by Dr. Bernard Haldane**

- *Career Satisfaction and Success*
- *The Best That's in You*
- *Job Finding Power*
- *Manual For Career Development*
- *How to Make a Habit of Success*
- *GIFTS - Dependable Strengths for Your Future*

### **5. Dependable Strengths Project**

Dr. Jerald Forster, Director  
University of Washington  
206 523-2931 [counsel@u.washington.edu](mailto:counsel@u.washington.edu)

### **6. Dependable Strengths in Education**

- *Helping Kids Find Their Strengths* by Pat Huggins  
Sopris West (Publisher)  
Longmont, Colorado 80504  
(303) 651 2829 [www.sopriswest.com](http://www.sopriswest.com)
- *Dependable Strengths for Middle School*  
by Len Hoover, Counselor  
Order from Center for Dependable Strengths
- *Dependable Strengths for High School*  
by Allen Boivin-Brown, MA  
Order from Center for Dependable Strengths
- *Dependable Strengths for College*  
by Allen Boivin-Brown, MA  
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