

# SANE

We're people like you

**Peer Group Chat**

**Date:** 11/08/2022

**Title:** Spotlight on Strengths

**Description:** Since there can be a focus on deficits and symptoms in mental health care, it may be difficult to focus on our strengths. It can make a big difference to our wellbeing when we recognise, take advantage of, and celebrate our strengths– from the big to the small and everything in between!

TideisTurning (PSW)	Hi @Summer :)
TideisTurning (PSW)	<p>Hi everyone. First, we'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the various lands we are all joining this event from. We pay deep respect to the Elders of those Countries, past and present, and we further extend that respect to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people joining this group tonight.</p> <p>Welcome everyone to today's Peer Group Chat talking about our strengths.</p> <p>We really value your thoughts on how these groups go, so we will send a link to a short survey at the end of this event for you to complete. While this survey is optional, it is a chance to provide feedback for us to improve our services. In case you might need to leave part way through the event, you can find the survey here now: <a href="https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW">https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW</a></p>

Summer	Hey. How are you?
TideisTurning (PSW)	<p><b>Tonight, Peer Support Workers @TideisTurning and @Girasole will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of strengths. Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both, strengths are really important for all of us.</b></p> <p><b>We'll be moving through a number of discussion questions tonight, and it's entirely up to you how much or how little you are comfortable with sharing. Some of the conversation may be heavy in nature as we talk about mental health struggles, like struggles identifying and owning our strengtths. @Jynx who moderates on the SANE Forums, is working behind the scenes to ensure our safety.</b></p> <p><b>If you're having any technical difficulties, please see our FAQ (<a href="https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faqs#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support">https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faqs#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support</a>) or message @Jynx.</b></p> <p><b>We're looking forward to creating a space where we can reflect and learn together and explore our strengths.</b></p>
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Hi @Burning-Dragonfly and @BeepBoop21 ! Welcome :)
Burning-Dragonfly	Hello!
TideisTurning (PSW)	Hi @BeepBoop21 & @Burning-Dragonfly :)
Burning-Dragonfly	Hello TideisTurning
the magician	hi people
BeepBoop21	hello :relieved:

TideisTurning (PSW)	We will be starting the discussion shortly, and will just allow a bit more time for people to log on and join 😊 In the meantime, feel free to introduce yourselves I'm @TideisTurning
Burning-Dragonfly	I'm Burning-Dragonfly, nice to meet everyone here
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Hi @the magician ! Welcome :)
the magician	hi burning dragon fly and beep boop 21 newies?
Jynx (Moderator)	Hey all! I'm Jynx, I'll be your friendly moderator for the evening :purple_heart:
Burning-Dragonfly	Yes I'm new to the peer chat
the magician	good to see you Girasole and Tide is turning+jynx
Summer	How's everyone's day been so far?
Burning-Dragonfly	It has been alright, just enjoying a day off from work
TideisTurning (PSW)	Hi @the magician :)
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Let's get started with our first question for the evening: strengths are characteristics that each of us have to help us get through the many experiences of life. These can include knowledge, talents, traits, personality characteristics, and skills. What strengths do you think you have?</b>
the magician	employing skills and strengths with stress headaches. :head_bandage:
BeepBoop21	Loyalty
Burning-Dragonfly	Caring towards the people closest to me, resilience

Summer	One of my main strengths is passion. Whether that be for dance or my education
the magician	perseverance and being proactive with insight
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Some of mine that come more easily to mind are critical & analytical thinking, as well as organisation and planning. According to the strengths survey we'll later link to, some other big ones of mine include: perspective (seeing the bigger picture, making connections) ; appreciation of beauty & excellence ; love/valuing close connections with others ; thinking carefully before acting ; honesty ; & kindness :)
TideisTurning (PSW)	I'm loving these!
Jynx (Moderator)	So wholesome! :purple_heart: Mine might be humour, and also honesty I reckon.
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Hi @Wellwellwellnez , welcome! :)
the magician	i could make a list like that too- i have on my fridge two A3 posters on skills and how they relate to life and work. then one on strengths and everything ive gained through lived experience
TideisTurning (PSW)	I think I'm with a lot of you- I am very loyal, kind, caring, compassionate
the magician	thoughtfulness. humour in tragedy
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Hello @Shaz51 ! Welcome, great to see you :)
TideisTurning (PSW)	Welcome @Wellwellwellnez & @Shaz51 Great to have you both with us :)
Wellwellwellnez	Sorry I'm late. Feeling strengthly actually because of the strengthiest the strength. The strength of learning the new things. I'm getting that feeling where I don't recognize my former self as the same. Haven't felt that way n a while.

Shaz51	Hello @Girasole (Peer Worker) , @TideisTurning (PSW) , @Jynx (Moderator)
the magician	identifying motivaters
Jynx (Moderator)	@Shaz51 amazing to have you here :purple_heart:
the magician	listing activities and plans to keep me busy
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Hi @Jelly! Welcome :)
Shaz51	Caring , compassionate, loyal, kind
the magician	overall my organisation of people ability to consult with and planning abilities
Summer	Sorry. I forgot. I have a zoom meeting at 7:20. I have to go. Have a great night everyone :)
the magician	see you next time summer
TideisTurning (PSW)	No worries @Summer. Great to see you
Wellwellwellnez	Hey Magician, any motivator identifying tips? That's something I'm looking to improve on.
Summer	I'll hopefully be on next week :))
Wellwellwellnez	Thanks for mentioning dance, Summer.
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Are your strengths something you've thought much about, or been commended for, or prompted to consider in your mental health support? If your strengths haven't been acknowledged or engaged with</b>

	<b>much in your mental health recovery, what do you think the benefits could be in being more aware of and intentional with them?</b>
the magician	doing the dishes is supposed to get you revved up. being warm and having a mocha. taking a break to go for a run with an mp3player. focussing on what you gain out of an activity. grumbling but keeping going. in the morning a loud alarm in opposite room coffee and shower.
Wellwellwellnez	Interesting question, Tide.
the magician	rewriting your future so it doesn't have to be the same. setting goals but breaking them up into stepping stones and outcomes.
TideisTurning (PSW)	Welcome @Jacques :)
Jacques	hi everyone :D
Jacques	sorry im late
the magician	figuring out what would you want to accomplish if you extended your complete scope of abilities
TideisTurning (PSW)	All good @Jacques. You're here now :) Great to have you here
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Honestly, especially in my earlier experiences with mental health treatment - they weren't talked about much, if at all - let alone being integral the support provided. If they were consciously engaged with more, I think I'd feel more confident, capable, and generally better about myself!
Jacques	i have very low self esteem but i have been told i am very good at managing things and people. but im not sure, people also tell me im smart. i don't feel they are right, just what i have been told
the magician	having a meds regime that works and allows for future change/stress factors i think would improve things

Wellwellwellnez	I think my struggles and strengths can be kind of tied up together. Yes, strengths are considered but I think 'm changing my approach to thinking about them. I like the challenge you lay out in the latter half of the query. Makes me wonder what strengths I could explore.
Shaz51	I have been told I am too nice
Girasole (Peer Worker)	@Jacques I find most people aren't insincere when they say these things - if multiple people have said that about you, I trust there's truth to it :)
TideisTurning (PSW)	. Sometimes it can be a real challenge to identify strengths @Jacques We'll be delving into that more a little later :)
Wellwellwellnez	Reminds me of the elephant story. You know the one where you tie a young elephant to a little stake in the ground and when they grow up not realizing they're become stronger than the stake. Elephant's never forget but they should reassess.
the magician	i like to think at times my dad is of some protective influence at times in my life that gives me strength. (died when was 8)
Wellwellwellnez	That's good advice, Magician. I'm hearing, count everything and make everything count. That's the nail I need hammered, thankyou.
Jynx (Moderator)	@Wellwellwellnez It's called 'learned helplessness' and is also a concept in psychology - could be worth a google for anyone interested!
Jacques	i was thining the same @Girasole (Peer Worker) i just don't know, thank you @TideisTurning (PSW) i don't think i am really strong in anything. you are nice @Shaz51 :)
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>We received the next question in advance from someone in the community: "Hi, I find it very hard to celebrate any [strengths] as all I see are my failures. How does one change this?" Can you relate to this? What do you think?</b>

Wellwellwellnez	Doubting your own intelligence is generally a pretty intelligent thing. Basically the opposite of the Dunning-Kruger effect.
Wellwellwellnez	Those who think they know, can't learn.
Girasole (Peer Worker)	@Jacques when we speak of character strengths, I guess it's not necessarily meaning we're "strong" in something - they're just any quality about us as people that can be valuable to help us manage through life :)
Jacques	yes i can really identify with this question, i often tell people "some people see the glass half full, some see it as half empty, i see it as completely empty" i only see my life long failures, i have let down everyone i love all my life, family and friends.
Girasole (Peer Worker)	We will link to a great resource at the end of this group which can help identify your own character strengths :) Everyone has them! Being around supportive people who can help identify them or cheer you on can be valuable, too
Shaz51	Thank you @Jacques ❤️❤️
the magician	think about: what are the things that keep you living even in the darkest times? what are your requirements in order to overcome obstacles? they become your strengths. turn things around to positives. and eventually things look up.
the magician	even if you don't have the strengths /skills yet you can always develop them along the way
Wellwellwellnez	You know, I also for so long and so often wished I could time machine my life. But recently (today actually) I starting thinking, maybe the fact that I want to do things differently, shows that I could do things differently. AAaaaaaaaand if that's the case, then I have learned something. The learning may have come in rough wrapping but I can still it's a gift.
the magician	change makes change



Wellwellwellnez	I mean "still see it as a gift".
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Are there any qualities you have that you might not have considered as a strength... but actually could be considered a strength? For example, if you aren't great at forward planning, you've probably got a great strength with spontaneity! On the other hand, if spontaneity isn't such a great strength, forward planning might be a huge strength!</b>
Jacques	i am really good with computers sometimes, i can fix most problems, i don't know how, i can just look at computers and know how they work. i don't know if that is what you are talking about @TideisTurning (PSW)
TideisTurning (PSW)	@Jacques, yes!!! Skills with technology can be a huge strength :)
the magician	ruminating on a topic to begin with not getting anywhere but then adding breaks and a checklist and smart goals, making it time bound and with outcomes can develop coping as well as study skills for lengthy periods.
Wellwellwellnez	That's such a gift, Jacques. It's also an amazing world right now. I've been trying to work on my computer understanding and it's been a very uphill battle.
the magician	reflecting I think is a big strength. many years ago I was told it was something most people with my condition don't have.
Wellwellwellnez	Oh that's very interesting, Magician. Unique in your uniqueness.
Shaz51	To encourage others
Jacques	i find it very difficult to reflect @the magician
Jynx (Moderator)	@the magician introspection is a huge strength in my experience!
the magician	im not good at coding but good at asking questions so can piece it together in that way.

Wellwellwellnez	I'm glad you mentioned encouragement, Shaz. I really like that quality in you. I encourage it, even.
Girasole (Peer Worker)	One surprising top strength that came out for me from the strengths survey we'll link to later on, was appreciation of beauty and excellence. How is this a strength? I can really ground myself, and feel myself connected to things greater than me, by deeply appreciating art, music, nature, & activism, etc. It can also often remind me of the beauty and good that exists in the world along with the struggles, which is important in helping me keep a balanced view. This can serve me well throughout life!
Shaz51	Aww thank you @Wellwellwellnez
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>Sometimes we might not be as aware of our own strengths as we could be! In this case, it can be incredibly valuable to have the perspectives of others who know us well and may be better able to see and highlight our strengths. Who in your life might be able to provide this insight? How do you imagine they might describe your strengths?</b>
Wellwellwellnez	I know, just enough to almost know what you mean, Jacques. Feels like the landscape is becoming less about code and more about application.
the magician	strength that you will be right said by my mother kept me attending school when ill and a teenager. that's the positive side to what's in the media about that . which i also empathise with. but a wink and a reinforcing nudge can keep you going.
Jacques	i really trust and believe in what my partner tells me, i have been hurt by so many people so it is really hard for me to trust, she is the first person in decades i have fully trusted. she does see my strengths and encourages me to use them. even when i don't see them. she is my strength.
the magician	when i write about my life people wonder how i got through all that. so inner strength.
Shaz51	My mum has been my rock, my encourager, my push

Jacques	mums are so great @Shaz51 mine is so supportive and so loving, im so lucky to have my mum in my life too.
the magician	my family are close but mums my band aid, sister is my oracle, other sister is my respite, brother is my reminder of a type of prince charming.
Jacques	that is awesome @the magician you so lucky to have a big family.
Wellwellwellnez	In my life? My tiny little life? Ummmmmm. You're making me reflect on how I've been reveling in trying to impress strangers and new people. A teacher called me "So empathetic" the other day. It was validating as all heck.
the magician	i live alone so its easy. i have all my own time and space.
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>What are some ways that you could consciously use your own strengths more in day-to-day life and recovery?</b>
the magician	mindfulness when becoming overwhelmed to avoid headaches and therefore symptoms. using reality checking techniques but really examining them.
Jacques	i guess my strength is im still alive, i keep going even though it is really really hard sometimes. i guess perseverance could help me get through tough times.
the magician	yes Jacques its great to be alive. especially when so many from the past aren't. keep going!
TideisTurning (PSW)	Awareness is a great one @the magician :)
Girasole (Peer Worker)	I think the act of simply remembering that I do have strengths, and there are ways I can cope and do things well, is valuable. Reminding myself of them, when I might be doubting myself, can also be affirming.

	When presented with a problem, I can consciously reflect on my strengths in deciding HOW I might want to address the issue.
Wellwellwellnez	I think that the desire to make new connections is good from an avoidant issues point of view. At the same time it also shows ways that I'm still kind of rejecting attachment by reveling in not being defined by my previous disappointments. Truth is new attachments = at least some future disappointments. I should make peace with that, in advance.
Shaz51	Use my kindness and encouragement for others in every day life and in Sane forumland
the magician	when making attachments: some are for a reason, a season or a lifetime. and all are good (even if they were bad. - they taught you what you don't want)
Jacques	i hope one day i can be as strong as so many people here tonight, you are all amazing :)
Wellwellwellnez	Yeah, Magician. Totally. No spills = no skills.
Jynx (Moderator)	@Jacques maybe you are already and you just don't see it yet ;)
TideisTurning (PSW)	I really like that @the magician- even when things might not seem 'good', it's still something you can learn from
Shaz51	You are awesome my brother now @Jacques
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Knowing how valuable others' perspectives can be, do you think it could be a nice thing to let the people in your life know what you think their strengths are in day-to-day life? What strengths have we seen from each other here tonight?</b>
Wellwellwellnez	I'm glad you can see the work working, Jacques. I can't tell you how hard it's been both for me and the poor wall I've been bashing and still bash my poor head against. In a lot of ways, you guys are an essential part of the helmet I'm trying to build.

the magician	encouragement of others positivity's
Wellwellwellnez	So many ways.
Wellwellwellnez	I think you should definitely put kindness on your list, Jacques. And know that that, YES, that is a mighty strength.
the magician	thanking people when they've been helpful here
Wellwellwellnez	I'm really feeling the mojo here.
TideisTurning (PSW)	@Shaz51- your gentle warmth, compassion & care absolutely shines through in your words, both here and on the Forums :) @The Magician- your articulation of the knowledge you have! @WellWellnez- the way you've been able to reflect what others are saying is a huge skill that has been clear to me especially tonight
Jacques	hugs @Wellwellwellnez
TideisTurning (PSW)	@Jacques your courage and vulnerability in sharing so openly and honestly with us tonight is in itself a massive strength. Not something everyone can do! @Girasole- the thought & care you put into everything. Your responses to the questions and to our community here in these chats as a few examples. @Jynx- your balance of relatable authenticity, warm and kind care, light-heartedness and calm and steady presence is impeccable and second to none!
Girasole (Peer Worker)	I think a huge strength of everyone here tonight, is an openness or willingness to actively learn, connect, and engage with others, as part of a desire to improve your own mental health and wellbeing :)
Jacques	thank you @TideisTurning (PSW) that is very kind of you.

the magician	:two_hearts: and:peace:
Shaz51	I think everyone here tonight is awesome, caring , helping each other
Shaz51	Thank you @TideisTurning (PSW) , you are an awesome friend
Jynx (Moderator)	SO. SUPER. WHOLESOME :heart_eyes: :purple_heart: :sparkles:
Jacques	i like that @the magician the world need peace and love so so much.
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Have you learned anything helpful from others' experiences here tonight that you might be able to apply in your own life? If yes, what did you learn?</b>
the magician	reinforcement of my uniqueness in being unique and that that's a good thing
Jacques	i learned we are all unique and have so much to give each other, healing through groups like this helps me soo im not alone. having weak moments or strong does not matter as long as you keep trying and reaching out
Wellwellwellnez	Being present. That's kind of a big thing for me to say.
TideisTurning (PSW)	@the magician "There is no one alive who is youer than you"- Dr. Seuss :)
the magician	will still be here next week. connecting.
Wellwellwellnez	I think that's actually next weeks topic.
Jacques	i have never felt support like this before, i have had so many terrible experiances in the mental health system, the love, encouragement and help is amazing. thank you all so so much.
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Would some self-care be helpful for you tonight after we finish? If so, what might you do? 😊</b>

the magician	welcome feels good to have helped in small ways.
Wellwellwellnez	I know what you mean. It's nice to be recovering your own recovery. I'm fast becoming convinced it's the only way.
the magician	chat to my band aid. find out if the character in my book has been banished to another land. I'm roping for her to survive.
Jacques	spending some time on the phone with my partner and enjoying a hot cup of coffee. trying to reprocess what i have said here and what others have said about me. maybe some breathing excercises before i go to bed
Girasole (Peer Worker)	There were a couple of particular, interesting thoughts I'll take away – the idea that our strengths don't necessarily have to be internal, they can be our loved ones ; and that skills and qualities can also be developed and worked on, too :)
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>Here are some further resources we recommend having a look at:</b> <b>1: Identifying your strengths <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwNI1F21eK8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwNI1F21eK8</a></b> <b>2: Survey of Your Character Strengths: <a href="https://www.viacharacter.org/survey/account/register">https://www.viacharacter.org/survey/account/register</a> (you just need to quickly register to access the survey)</b> <b>3: Focusing on Your Strengths <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tIFPVhfPzNA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tIFPVhfPzNA</a></b>
Jacques	thank you @Girasole (Peer Worker) @Jynx (Moderator) and @TideisTurning (PSW) for the amazing chat tonight, it is really appreciated by me and i am sure others too.
the magician	all are valued. goodnight.
Jacques	good night all

TideisTurning (PSW)	We'd like to invite you to complete a survey reflecting on your experience in this Peer Group Chat. We'd love to hear any feedback you may have. It will only take a few minutes to complete. Please click this link: <a href="https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW">https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW</a>
Jynx (Moderator)	Aww bless, it's an absolute privilege to be here and be part of such incredibly wholesome and heartwarming moments :sparkling_heart:
Girasole (Peer Worker)	My self care will be trying to get a good night's sleep tonight :)
TideisTurning (PSW)	Thank you for joining, and we hope you enjoyed the discussion 😊 If you'd like to be informed when our next Peer Group Chat will be taking place, you can sign up to our mailing list here <a href="https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat">https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat</a> . You can also ask questions for us to discuss in future peer chats!
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Thank you so much everyone for being here and for all that you've shared; it was a wonderful space we created together :)
Jynx (Moderator)	Thanks y'all, will be grinning into the evening.
Wellwellwellnez	That's mind-blower, Girasole (particularly from an avoidant point of view). Like social learning theory meets self-efficacy theory becoming social efficacy theory, or something like that.
Wellwellwellnez	Night for now. Bless yas.
TideisTurning (PSW)	Thanks everyone for being here, sharing your perspectives with us and making this space the wonderful space it has been :)