



OTR



# STRENGTHS

May 2018

*THIS BOOK BELONGS TO...*

# ***WELCOME TO THE OTR GUIDE TO EXPLORING YOUR STRENGTHS!***

## **So... what are strengths?**

- They're different to skills or talents, strengths are qualities that we have that make up our character. Things like 'calm', 'adventurous', 'loyal' etc.

## **At OTR we often talk about 'building our strengths'...but what does this actually mean?**

- Focussing on the best parts of you
- Not worrying about your flaws and 'weaknesses'
- Using your best qualities more often

## **Why focus on strengths?**

- Everyone has strengths and we mean everyone!
- Building on our strengths can be a massive boost to our confidence.
- We can call on our strengths to help us and help others. Knowing what our strengths are can support us to get through other tough times that we might face in the future.

**(REMEMBER!** It can sometimes feel really hard to talk about our strength especially if we're having a rough time and our confidence has taken a knock. It's not something we're used to and it can even feel like 'showing off', but we think it's really important to have a go...so be brave and give these activities a try!)

To get us started, let's have a think about the strengths in someone close to us...for this let's use your best friend.

Think about your best friend...what strengths do they have? Are they kind, funny, patient or a good listener, for example? When have you noticed them using their strengths? Have a think and write some ideas down...

# 2. HOW HAVE YOU USED YOUR STRENGTHS?

As mentioned, one of the best things about our personal strengths is how useful they can be in our lives. To get thinking about what this looks like in real life, let's pick a time that you did something that you were proud of (This can be overcoming a difficulty, doing well at something or trying something new...) and use the following questions to help you think about how your strengths helped!

1. What things did you do to help achieve this? For example, did you seek help from mates? Did you write stuff down to help you focus?

2. What personal qualities did you show? Were you creative, organised, patient, wise or was it something else?

3. What other stuff helped you? Where there people, things, places etc. that helped? (For example... my best friend, my favourite book, keeping a diary)

4. What did you learn from this? Are there any pieces of wisdom that you would give to others in a similar situation?

### **3. WHAT STRENGTHS DO OTHERS SEE?**

By now, you may have noticed that it's easier to find strengths in others than it is in ourselves... so be brave and ask a friend that you trust to identify three strengths that they see in you to catch anything you missed! (You can always repay the favour after...!)

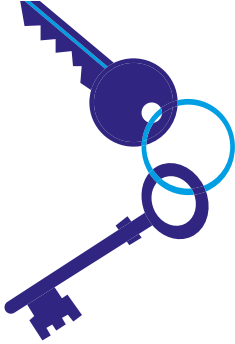
1. Ask a friend to think of 3 strengths that you have (or 3 reasons why they like you) and why.

2. Do you agree with them? Any of them more than the others? And why?

3. Can you think of some times that you showed these strengths? You can use the same examples that your friend gave if you want!

# 4. WHAT STRENGTHS INSPIRE YOU?

At this point, we should have a pretty good introduction to some of the strengths that you have, as well as figuring out which strengths in others you like and which strengths people like in you. Now, let's take a bit to look at some strengths you like in other people...



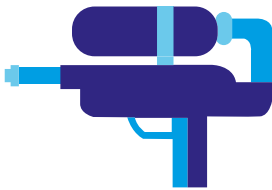
Independent



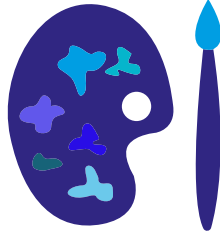
Bravery



Understanding



Playful



Creative



Forgiving

Are there any strengths you've thought of so far that you really admire in other people? Are there any that you would like to be as well? Above are some examples of things that might inspire you!

# 5. EXPERIMENTING WITH YOUR STRENGTHS!

So far, we've looked at what strengths we have, what others see in us, thought about the strengths in those around us and those that we admire and inspire us...

Now, let's finish up with some thinking about putting some of this stuff into practice!

Think of a couple of common challenges/tasks that you face on a regular basis (for example: homework, chores, helping friends, arguments and so on...). How could you use more of your strengths to help with these tasks? Could you be more creative, organised, independent, brave etc.? Jot some ideas down below...

How would someone you admire achieve in these tasks? What would they do and are there any ways you could experiment to do similar things?

Thinking about those strengths that inspire you... How could you start to show more of those strengths in your daily life? Think of some small, manageable things you can do at first and try things out! For example, if you admire someone who is wise and understanding, could you make an effort to listen to a friend next time they have a problem?

# ***OTR HASHTAG CHALLENGE: STRENGTHS EDITION***

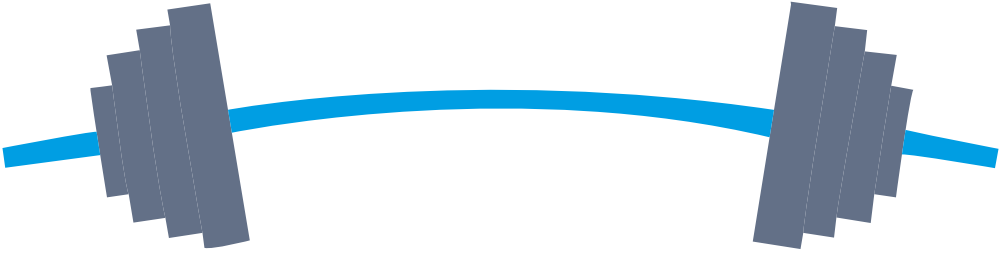
Off The Record is all about bringing people together. We firmly believe in the power of community and people supporting each other. Now that we've had a look at strengths (and hopefully you've seen some strengths in yourself and those around you!), lets share what we've learned and get people talking about strengths!

## **HOW DO I ENTER?**

- 1** Think either about a strength that you have, or a strength in someone else that inspires you.
- 2** Upload a picture that best explains this strength to you.
- 3** Write a couple of sentences about what you've chosen to upload and why.
- 4** Upload/Share it on Instagram/Twitter with the hashtag #OTRShowusyourstrengths
- 5** Our favourite posts will be reblogged by OTR as a celebration the strengths we all have!

## ***WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?***

OTR is all about getting connected, and what better way than sharing something important to us with others, and having them share things with us too!



This booklet was made by OTR Bristol, a mental health social movement by and for young people aged 11-25 in Bristol and South Glos.

For more information on what we do, come and see us at one of our Hubs: [otrbristol.org.uk/what-we-do/hubs](http://otrbristol.org.uk/what-we-do/hubs).

You can also call us for free on 0808 808 9120 (Mon-Fri, 2-5pm).

***FOLLOW US***



***@OTRBRISTOL***