



CONNECTING PEOPLE TO POSSIBILITIES

Turning Talents into Strengths: *Stories of Coaching Transformation*

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Stories of Coaching Transformation

Compiled and Edited

By

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This Book is Dedicated to Coaches Everywhere
Who Maximize Human Potential

If human beings are perceived as potentials rather than problems, as possessing strengths instead of weaknesses, as unlimited rather than dull and unresponsive, then they thrive and grow to their capabilities.

— Barbara Bush

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CONNECTING PEOPLE TO POSSIBILITIES

I have spent a lifetime advising and coaching. It started as a kid, being the go-to person for advice, and then continued throughout my life, both with friends and people at work. Professionally, I ended up starting out as a nurse on a whim, giving up my dream of being an interior designer after a hospital stay. After leaving nursing, I worked as a mail carrier and with people in need of debt consolidation, and then I entered the dental implant field where I have been for almost 30 years in a variety of positions.

During these years, I explored life, and with that, a variety of transformational modalities, many of which I found myself coaching and facilitating in one way or another. As the years went by, I started recognizing similarities between all the different teachings and modalities with my CliftonStrengths® talent of Strategic®.

As I kept looking for new areas to explore that fit my focus, I noticed that the core was often very similar, just using different contexts. They were all such gifts and part of both my journey and who I am today, so I define myself as a “mix n’ match” person who has a little bit of everything in my toolbox.

My introduction to CliftonStrengths® began in 2004 through completing the initial assessment. It blew my mind! Not only did I get present to how powerful I was, or had the potential to be, I also got present to the gap.

It was a chaotic time in the corporation I worked in. At the time of the assessment, I quickly identified why I had been feeling so bad and stressed out. With Relator® as one of my dominant talents, along with Achiever®, Responsibility®, Maximizer® and Activator®, at the time, my entire being was conflicted.

People were being terminated or quitting weekly. Those of us that were still there picked up the slack and morale as a whole at the company was at an all-time low. Many of us had been with the company for years. For many of us it was our life, and during this time people were not being valued, and experienced people were seen as expendable.

I was waiting for my green card at the time, and within six months, once I received it, I was able to leave! Removing myself from that toxic environment nurtured my being. My Activator® talent was finally able to act. Freedom at last! I didn't do anything more with the results, other than take it to heart, heal, and continue exploring different transformational modalities. Coaching continued to be a central part of my life.

Power of Assessments

I took the CliftonStrengths® assessment three times unknowingly. In all cases, my results were similar. Wow! What a wake-up call. In 2016, I was ready to actually digest the information on a different level. I opened up my full talent profile and I saw that all previous talent themes were still dominant. I finally saw myself for who I am. Given my history with transformational work and all the changes I had made in my life since 2004, being more aware of myself than ever, well, that only strengthened the credibility of this assessment for me, and how indeed, it's all about our wiring independent of growth and circumstances.

As I read my Gallup® Strengths Insight Report, I took a step back to take in what the report stated objectively. I got present to what a powerful woman I am and how it was time to do something about it! Looking at my history of advising and coaching in all the roles I've been in throughout my life, I saw how naturally wired I am to coach. I was finally ready to take the leap, claim it and became a Gallup-Certified Strengths Coach in July of 2016.

In July of 2017, I completed the Gallup BP10™ course. The BP10™, also known as the Builder Profile 10, which measures our unique business building talents. For me, that added a whole new dimension to what I've done professionally to date, as I've spent most of my life in the entrepreneurial business realm as an intrapreneur.

One of the keys, from my perspective, is that we don't see our greatness. It's often hidden in the blind spot, and we don't necessarily know what to do with it even after discovering it. Imagine having access to where your entrepreneurial talents are at a young age. If I had access to this when I was in my 20s, it would have saved me years of searching!

I am passionate about the BP10™ because it will save people so much time in building a business. It will help them know how to partner with people who are strong where they are not. To learn the power of delegation so people can thrive where it is a joy for them

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can also be a relief, a win-win in action and empowerment, each person contributing their best to impact the whole world. Add your unique CliftonStrengths® talents and you'll have the tools you need to build something unique to you. How empowering would it be and what kind of world would that create?

When you read your Strengths Insight Report from the Gallup® Strengths Center, you will get present to your greatest potential. Everyone I've coached or spoken with so far all say, "Yep, that's so me," after reading it. You'll also discover the gaps of what could be keeping you from reaching your greatest potential.

A strengths coach can stand in the gap and act as a bridge for you. It's so much faster to have a coach guide you in the process of stepping into your greatness and owning it fully. Walking people through this process and seeing the confidence, engagement, and gratitude for who they are, is amazing to witness! I love sharing the epiphany of why people don't always "get" us. It's a process to embrace your greatness.

I've found that you can shift someone's life and experience of themselves quickly. With a working knowledge of the strengths tools you can move forward in anything that you do! Of course, to sustain change, you need to use the tools and be in action.

Growth is a Journey

Nothing makes me happier than to see people understanding themselves and stepping into their power. Our entire being shifts when we own who we are, play full out and stop making excuses for who we are. It's how we're wired after all, so why not be ourselves?

To me, growth is a journey that will continue until the day I stop breathing. My desire is to be myself, grow, learn new things, expand and step into more of my potential. There are so many possibilities available to us all! When you're being yourself, you inspire others to own every part of their being. Now, wouldn't that be a fun game to play? Instead of pretending to be someone you are not?

What I've always known to be true for me on an energetic level, I now have a language that is in alignment with my inner guidance. From the insights of this assessment, I was able to use this newfound knowledge of myself to create the core of my personal brand.

What I offer as a coach is to help others tap into and trust their own inner guidance as well. To me, the strengths conversation is a natural one for which I'm wired. It's

empowering and works great with the other tools that I have in my toolbox. I have a deeper understanding of my needs and a new appreciation for people that have the talents that I don't have. I can now tap into their talents on a whole new level. As I encourage and inspire others to explore what they know, be more of who they uniquely are, it does the same for me.

We all get to expand who we are as beings and with that, step more into our strengths. My Positivity® talent loves to play in this way! Life can be made so easy when guiding people to do what comes so naturally for them.

It always starts and ends with you. When you know what you bring, you'll have a better understanding of the people around you, including talents to look out for when hiring people and building a business. Of every tool I've explored to-date, I've found the topic of CliftonStrengths® to be a conversation that people can digest easily, while also blending with their life, practices, and beliefs.

Discovering Infinite Possibilities

I play with energy too. Energy is the space that is present between people and within. It's the non-verbal language that is all around us. Asking questions and tapping into what's true for each person and, more importantly, including yourself in the equation. I'm wired for asking questions, which is not always appreciated. I crave what some people consider "out there" conversations. To me, they are simply pragmatic and natural.

When I was introduced to the tools of Access Consciousness®, I found a language for the awareness I had gained (Access Consciousness, 2018). I learned to ask open-ended questions that can change anything. The key is to not answer the question, but rather allow the energy to contribute to new awareness and action. Using these tools and my own awareness, coupled with the inquiries from the CliftonStrengths® materials, is fun and natural to me. Playing outside of the box with its infinite possibilities is what I thrive on. Being "in" the question, rather than the conclusion, is a journey for the energies that are always present for those seeking expanded awareness.

For me, there are no limits to what can be explored in a conversation. Depending on what your unique mix of talents are, we'll explore what your needs are and what topics to explore. There will always be people around us that resist change or who do not seek to be more of themselves. So, are you willing to be in allowance of that while creating a

life that you love? What if you following what's true to you can inspire others to do the same? Are you ready to step into who you are no matter who you have around you?

Your Personal Power Statement

According to Gallup studies, the chances of someone else having your Top 5 talents in the same order is 1 in 33 million (Rath, StrengthsFinder 2.0, 2007). Wow! You are, in a sense, your own product and brand. When you start to understand how unique you are, a tagline for your business or a personal power statement suddenly becomes more than just words.

I've worked with salespeople for many years, and when coaching them, I find that a personal power statement helps each person stand out from the competition. Using your dominant talents themes, crafting a statement about who you are and what you bring to the world can be very empowering. This can then be expanded to a team, a company, a state, and even a country.

I add in some other exercises that help my clients discover why they do what they do. We also work on how to apply their talents powerfully into their lives. The awareness of these may impact what you're doing, and you may very well want to make changes as a result.

It's powerful when you focus on people's greatness and what they provide, instead of what's missing. What if we all had access to our unique wiring, and knew how special that was? What kind of conversations would that create? It starts with one person expressing a new perspective and igniting a new conversation. And that conversation could then spread like wildfire and spark new conversations in a group, on a team, in the whole world. Why not allow consciousness to go viral? What an amazing world we could create if we focused on that!

Once my client has a personal power statement, we then set about to create a visual representation. As they look for images to express each talent theme, they will then put that together in a collage. This collage can offer another reinforcement of their uniqueness and what they want to contribute to the world.

Here's what I discovered about myself during this exercise: I was pinning pictures to Pinterest one morning, and I started looking at the mood of the images I chose. I quickly saw patterns as I was focusing on nature pictures. Most, if not all, had images with the

sun bursting through. The pictures I kept choosing illustrated a silver lining and hope to me, and I was once again reminded how much the sun drives me, and always has. I've even had a fascination with both sunrises and sunsets since childhood. For me, the sunrise represents the future and hope that sparks my CliftonStrengths® talent of Positivity® and Futuristic®. Sunsets offer peace and stillness that nurtures my Adaptability® talent.

What images are you drawn to? Do you find yourself attracted to different moods depending on how you feel? What images uplift or motivate you?

Many of us spend so much time focusing on what's wrong with us. And it's not always because we were "wrong," but rather we offered a different perspective, a new awareness, that wasn't received by others. What if you could break free from the programming of right and wrong and other people's points of view? What if you could allow others to have their interesting point of view and still continue to create whatever you are creating?

While the strengths movement is about focusing on what's "right" about you, to me, it's really about what's TRUE about you. Shedding the stories of limitations and seeing the gift you are in this world creates infinite possibilities. When you start focusing on what's true about you and not have any judgment about who you are and how you're wired, you embrace your past as a gift in action. Confidence, happiness and productivity often follow.

Transformation Through Strengths

Once, I worked with individuals on a team within an organization. After coaching each of them for several sessions, they made some amazing discoveries. One member had a habit of pointing out what people did wrong. His CliftonStrengths® talent of Analytical® made him critical and demanding of perfection until he became aware. After coaching, he was able to see himself in light of others and he recognized that he had a talent that could guide people into greater understanding. We found a way for him to refocus his talents into a more productive use that served him and others.

Another member of the team made discoveries that impacted his entire life. After a rough year, he took back his personal power, now knowing his uniqueness. His entire world changed when he acknowledged to himself how he was reaching his children in energetic ways. He learned that his Relator® talent, coupled with energy awareness,

allowed him to intuitively communicate with his children in different ways. This helped them to hear him. He really understood how much people needed his energy and how he could tap into this as a resource. He is now a happy man! He's so energized that people often tell him they "want what he has," which is the ultimate sign of you being yourself.

A third member of the team was struggling with insecurity and comparison. What he discovered during our coaching sessions was his CliftonStrengths® talent of Competition® getting in the way. He was always comparing himself and coming up lacking. I was able to help him create a new image for himself and embrace how he is wired. We just flipped his perspective of who he is and now, he is confident and a pleasure to be around.

Being part of transformations like this are such gifts to me! It nurtures all my top strengths to be a guide that helps people and businesses step into and build a life based on their talents and what they love.

Appreciation

The possibilities of what can be created with knowing, embracing, and incorporating strengths into your life are endless. It reaches the core of your being and in a quick way and accesses your power. Each journey is different, yet there is a common language available that provides the foundation for discovery and expanded awareness. This allows you to have greater appreciation for who people are without typecasting them.

With strengths, I've found that even people that normally don't express interest in personal growth, are interested to learn more. It's a confirmation about how they view the world. People can be inspired by who they are and what they bring to this world. And then, take aligned action.

We only have this one planet to sustain us at this time, so taking care of it could also be to step into your greatness. What kind of world would we create if we stopped withholding who we truly are and invited others to do the same? What if the strengths movement opened doors where people are otherwise resistant? Are you ready to explore what the strengths movement can do for you in your life?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

PIA JANSSON

Strategic[®], Positivity[®], Maximizer[®], Futuristic[®], Activator[®]

Pia Jansson is a coach for successful men & women who feel like they've lost their mojo in business or life.

She's spent 30 years helping build and reorganize businesses, including areas such as marketing, sales, and education, while also functioning as a strategic partner and executive coach.

She believes that a business is only as strong as its people and helping people step into their best selves is a win-win for everyone involved resulting in a thriving business with engaged employees.

She's a Gallup-Certified Strengths Coach + BP10™ trained, Strategic Partner, Access Bars[®] Practitioner, Photographer, Author, Lover of life, and more.

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APPENDIX

CliftonStrengths® Short Theme Descriptions

Achiever®: People exceptionally talented in the Achiever theme work hard and possess a great deal of stamina. They take immense satisfaction in being busy and productive.

Activator®: People exceptionally talented in the Activator theme can make things happen by turning thoughts into action. They want to do things now, rather than simply talk about them.

Adaptability®: People exceptionally talented in the Adaptability theme prefer to go with the flow. They tend to be “now” people who take things as they come and discover the future one day at a time.

Analytical®: People exceptionally talented in the Analytical theme search for reasons and causes. They have the ability to think about all of the factors that might affect a situation.

Arranger®: People exceptionally talented in the Arranger theme can organize, but they also have a flexibility that complements this ability. They like to determine how all of the pieces and resources can be arranged for maximum productivity.

Belief®: People exceptionally talented in the Belief theme have certain core values that are unchanging. Out of these values emerges a defined purpose for their lives.

Command®: People exceptionally talented in the Command theme have presence. They can take control of a situation and make decisions.

Communication®: People exceptionally talented in the Communication theme generally find it easy to put their thoughts into words. They are good conversationalists and presenters.

Competition®: People exceptionally talented in the Competition theme measure their progress against the performance of others. They strive to win first place and revel in contests.

Connectedness®: People exceptionally talented in the Connectedness theme have faith in the links among all things. They believe there are few coincidences and that almost every event has meaning.

Consistency®: People exceptionally talented in the Consistency theme are keenly aware of the need to treat people the same. They try to treat everyone with equality by setting up clear rules and adhering to them.

Context®: People exceptionally talented in the Context theme enjoy thinking about the past. They understand the present by researching its history.

Deliberative®: People exceptionally talented in the Deliberative theme are best described by the serious care they take in making decisions or choices. They anticipate obstacles.

Developer®: People exceptionally talented in the Developer theme recognize and cultivate the potential in others. They spot the signs of each small improvement and derive satisfaction from evidence of progress.

Discipline®: People exceptionally talented in the Discipline theme enjoy routine and structure. Their world is best described by the order they create.

Empathy®: People exceptionally talented in the Empathy theme can sense other people's feelings by imagining themselves in others' lives or situations.

Focus®: People exceptionally talented in the Focus theme can take a direction, follow through and make the corrections necessary to stay on track. They prioritize, then act.

Futuristic®: People exceptionally talented in the Futuristic theme are inspired by the future and what could be. They energize others with their visions of the future.

Harmony®: People exceptionally talented in the Harmony theme look for consensus. They don't enjoy conflict; rather, they seek areas of agreement.

Ideation®: People exceptionally talented in the Ideation theme are fascinated by ideas. They are able to find connections between seemingly disparate phenomena.

Includer®: People exceptionally talented in the Includer theme accept others. They show awareness of those who feel left out and make an effort to include them.

Individualization®: People exceptionally talented in the Individualization theme are intrigued with the unique qualities of each person. They have a gift for figuring out how different people can work together productively.

Input®: People exceptionally talented in the Input theme have a craving to know more. Often they like to collect and archive all kinds of information.

Intellection®: People exceptionally talented in the Intellection theme are characterized by their intellectual activity. They are introspective and appreciate intellectual discussions.

Learner®: People exceptionally talented in the Learner theme have a great desire to learn and want to continuously improve. The process of learning, rather than the outcome, excites them.

Maximizer®: People exceptionally talented in the Maximizer theme focus on strengths as a way to stimulate personal and group excellence. They seek to transform something strong into something superb.

Positivity®: People exceptionally talented in the Positivity theme have contagious enthusiasm. They are upbeat and can get others excited about what they are going to do.

Relator®: People exceptionally talented in the Relator theme enjoy close relationships with others. They find deep satisfaction in working hard with friends to achieve a goal.

Responsibility®: People exceptionally talented in the Responsibility theme take psychological ownership of what they say they will do. They are committed to stable values such as honesty and loyalty.

Restorative™: People exceptionally talented in the Restorative theme are adept at dealing with problems. They are good at figuring out what is wrong and resolving it.

Self-Assurance®: People exceptionally talented in the Self-Assurance theme feel confident in their ability to manage their own lives. They possess an inner compass that gives them confidence that their decisions are right.

Significance®: People exceptionally talented in the Significance theme want to be very important in others' eyes. They are independent and want to be recognized.

Strategic®: People exceptionally talented in the Strategic theme create alternative ways to proceed. Faced with any given scenario, they can quickly spot the relevant patterns and issues.

Woo®: People exceptionally talented in the Woo theme love the challenge of meeting new people and winning them over. They derive satisfaction from breaking the ice and making a connection with someone.