



Creating a Culture of Wellbeing: Part One

Robin Lilly -16 August 2018 - Newbury Park High School

Index Cards

Information

Please write the following on your card:

- × Your Name (nickname)
- × Preferred email address
- × Phone (optional)
- × Why you chose this session

Uses

I used these throughout the year for:

- × seating distribution
- × student information
- × selection and grouping
- × formative assessment
- × participation notes

Today, I'll collect as exit ticket

A hand holding a lit sparkler against a dark, splattered background. The sparkler is bright and glowing, with many small sparks flying out. The background is dark with white splatters and a circular vignette effect.

Hello!

I am Robin Lilly.

I am here because I love to talk about wellbeing & education.

You can find me at [@uteachme2](#)

& [robinlilly.edublogs.org](#).

Create the culture of wellbeing

Or, get to know and appreciate your students as
fellow human beings

Week 1 activities

- × Index cards & initial writing allowed me to learn names on the first day
- × Introductions, like many of us do
- × First wellness activity

Wellness activity 1: Learning how to stand up

Note length: it only takes a couple minutes/day!

5 ways to affect positive change

Mindfulness

Developing awareness of our thoughts; taking moments to calm down, focus, and be less reactive. Meditation is a longer form.

Gratitude

Taking moments to focus on what's good in our lives, to appreciate and even savor particular moments, people, objects, observations.

Exercise

As little as 10 minutes a day just to move the body more than before; stretch, become aware of and appreciate what our body does for us.

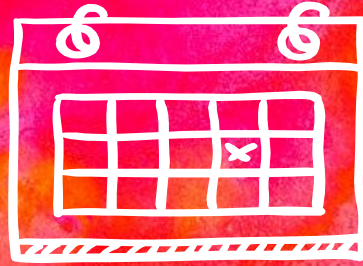
Kindness

Committing acts of kindness, reinforcing our relationships and building social networks.

Reflection

Journaling for a variety of purposes: to clear the head, to reflect on positive experiences, to create or share ideas.





Themed Days

Borrowed from Project Happiness

www.projecthappiness.org

Mindful Monday

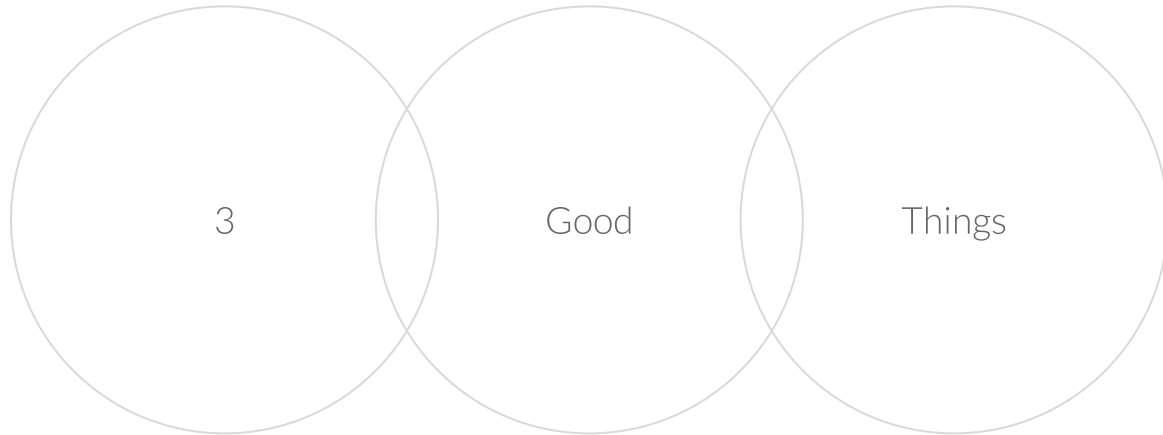
Brief mindfulness exercises, such as:

- × Sound of silence
- × Breathing
- × Chime
- × Sphere
- × Glitter jar
- × Savoring

Descriptions and instructions can be found on my blog.



Grati-Tuesday



Wellness Wednesday

- × Short exercises, many yoga poses
- × Can incorporate mindfulness
- × Breath of Joy was a favorite
- × Silent walks



Thoughtful Thursday

Acts of kindness

Students would commit to some “random” act of kindness

We would generate ideas

Letting someone in line

Paying it forward

Extra help at home

Volunteering

Notes to Others

Post-it notes to others

Notes to future self

Thank you cards

Holiday or other cards

Texting mom from class

GRATITUDE VISIT

Social Circle

Reaching out to friends

Contact old friends


Lunch with new friends

Lunch with solo eaters

APPRECIATION CIRCLE

Free Friday

- ★ Freewriting (or other activity -e.g. choice reading)
- ★ Could reflect on positive experiences of the week
- ★ Create/muse/vent/correspond
- ★ Negative visualizations (what would not be if...)
- ★ Strengths reflections and application brainstorming



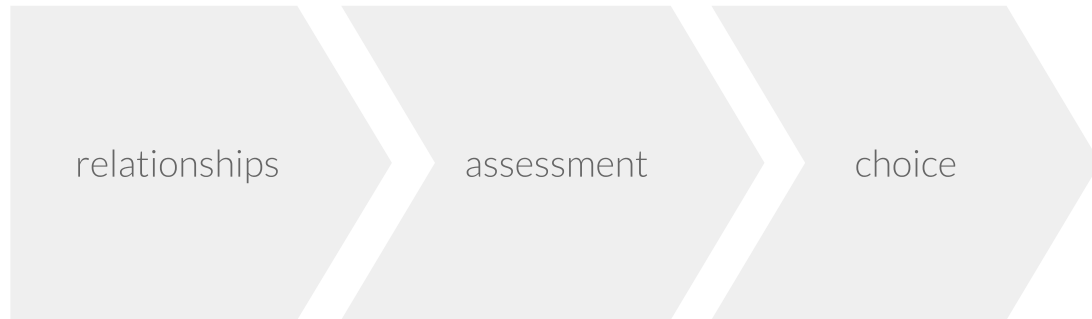
“Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them.”

- James Baldwin



These routines give students tools for resilience.
Practicing these with students helps you, too.
START A NEW HABIT.

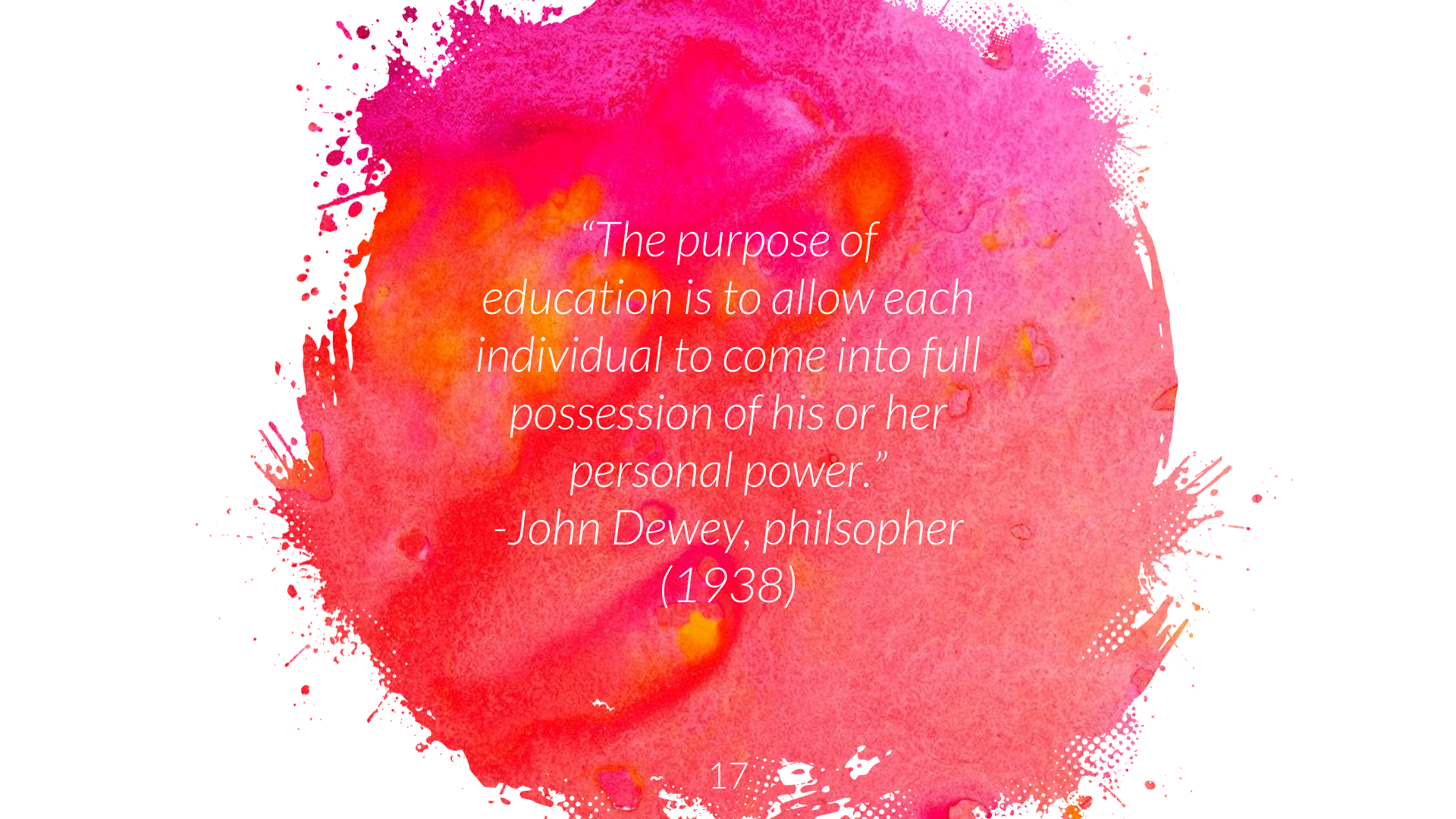
Other aspects



Consider policies

What do your policies communicate about student wellbeing?
As you finalize your syllabus, consider:

- × Bathroom use
- × Food
- × Homework
- × Late work
- × Grading
- × Other procedures? Assignments?



*“The purpose of
education is to allow each
individual to come into full
possession of his or her
personal power.”*

*-John Dewey, philosopher
(1938)*

1. What was the most salient idea, practice, or activity for you today?
2. What is one thing you'll try?
3. What is one question you have?
4. Would you be interested in learning more? If so, what topic(s)?

Exit Ticket

Please answer these questions on your index card and leave for me.



Thanks!

Any questions?

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- × Strengths notes

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Strengths-based teaching & learning

Or, countering our natural and ingrained
negativity bias and using strengths to support
learning, thriving, & flourishing



“We succeed by fixing our weaknesses *only when* we are also making the most of our strengths.”

-Alex Linley, Ph.D., CEO of CAPP

Overcoming our natural & learned biases

Selective Attention

Are we paying attention to others' strengths? Or only their weaknesses? Do we look for what's good, what's right? Or only what's wrong?

Binary Thinking

We tend to think in terms of opposites, but real behavior and traits are more complex and context-dependent. The opposite of kind is not necessarily cruel.

Negativity Bias

Evolution has given us tools to survive, but we don't need to be constantly living in fear/looking for the bad. We can overcome this natural tendency.

Poor Predicting Skills

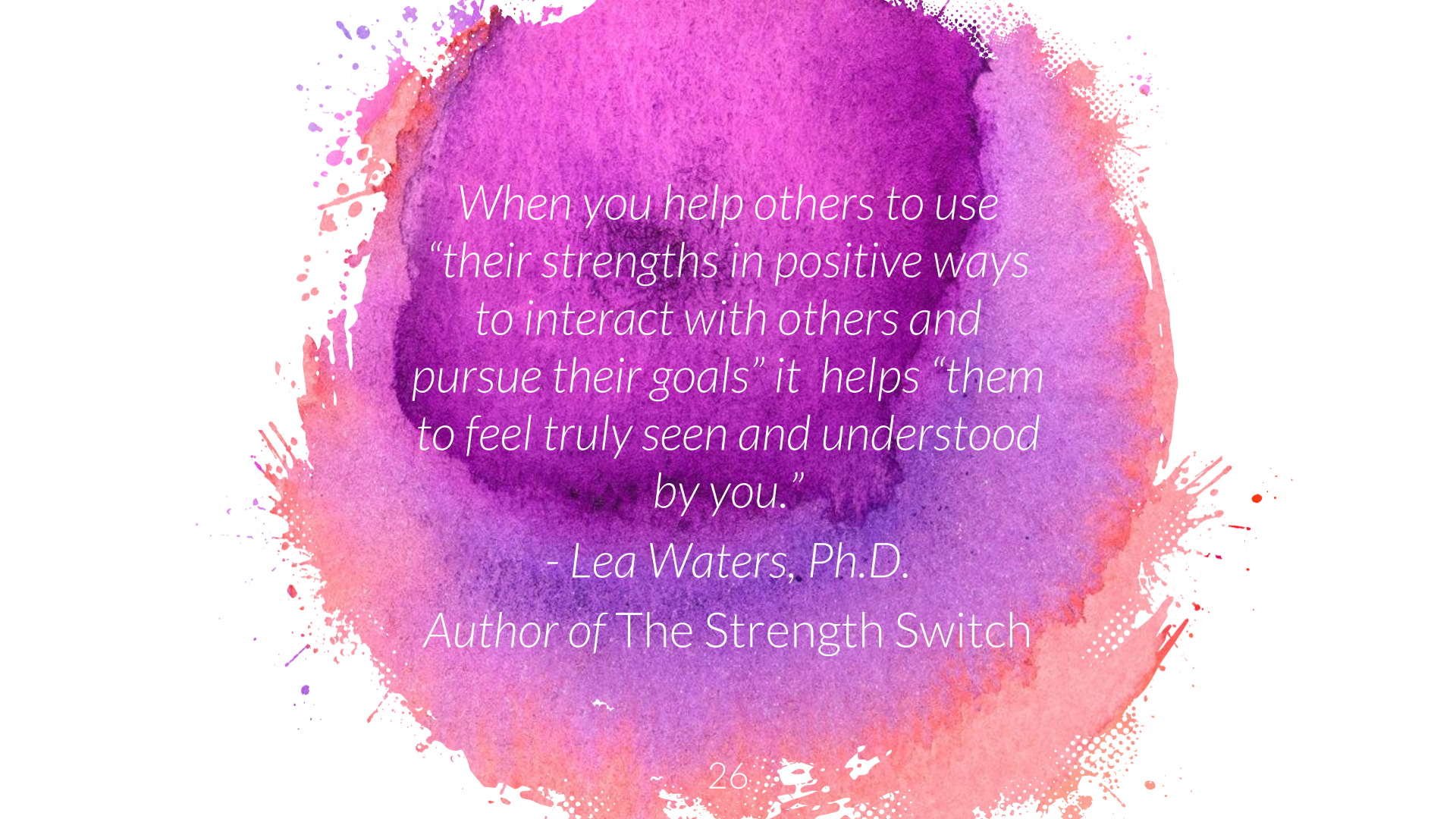
We are not so accurate knowing what will be good for us, how good it will be, or how long that "good" will last. And worse, we aren't aware that we have bad intuitions about this.

Projection

This is the psychological phenomena of noting, reacting to and/or blaming others for faults we have / are sensitive about.

Social Comparisons

We think relatively rather than in absolutes. And we are susceptible to comparisons that are not relevant or realistic.



*When you help others to use
“their strengths in positive ways
to interact with others and
pursue their goals” it helps “them
to feel truly seen and understood
by you.”*

- Lea Waters, Ph.D.

Author of The Strength Switch

Seeing our Strengths

1. Using either version of the VIA Classification of Character Strengths (and virtues), identify your own 3-5 areas of strength.
2. Take 2-3 minutes to write about a time when this strength was exhibited.
3. WITHOUT SPECIFYING THE STRENGTH, Share your story with a partner. When it is your turn to listen, note the strengths evident in the story. Tell your partner what you heard. Compare and discuss the strengths selected, how they were used, and how they could be applied.

How can we use this...

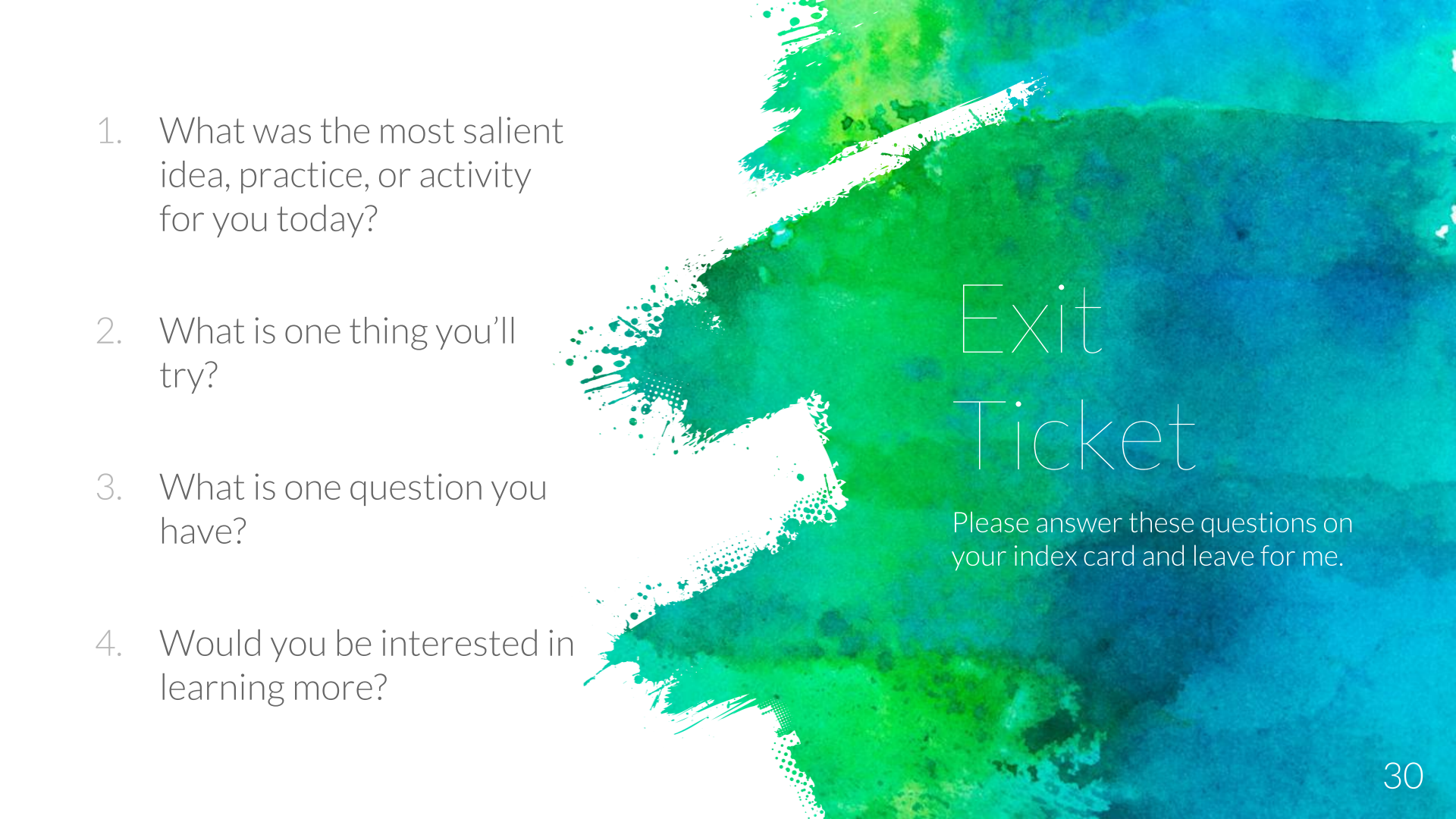
For ourselves?

With
colleagues?

With
students?

For more information:

- × [The Principles of Strengths-Based Ed \(2009\)](#)
- × [What's Right With You \(2006\)](#)
- × Strengths Finder & more [VIA Institute on Character](#)
- × [Brene Brown's website](#)

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Credits

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

- × Presentation template by [SlidesCarnival](#)
- × Photographs by [Unsplash](#)
- × Watercolor textures by [GraphicBurguer](#)