

The Strength Tree

Purpose: This is a strength-building activity. The purpose of The Strength Tree is to help people identify their internal strengths that help them to cope with stressful events and to highlight the various strengths of individuals in a group.

Materials Needed: Cut-outs of leaves (preferably multi-colored), markers, a large drawing of a bare tree hung on the wall, tape

How to Lead the Activity:

- Explain that everyone has strengths, internal qualities that help them to cope with stressful events and manage the challenges that life presents.
- Say that “Strengths are things that are good about you, or things that make you a ‘strong’ person”. Give them some examples such as being helpful, having a sense of humor, trying your best, etc.
- Explain that “We are going to create a strength tree for our group so that we can see what each of us brings to this group to help us be strong and get through tough times”.
- Give the group members a few minutes to think of one strength, something unique about them, and write it on a leaf to be put on the strength tree. Some people may have a lot of ideas and will not know which strength to choose for the tree. Others will not be able to think of even one personal strength and will need help from the group leader or from other group members. Offer help where needed. Ask for help from the group (“Can anyone think of a strength that Stephanie has?”)
- When everyone is finished writing, have each group member stand up and tell the group his/her strength, and put it on the tree, and then pass it to the next person by giving him or her a “high five”.
- When each group member has gone, look at the tree and point out the strengths identified. Explain that even though each person only wrote one strength, s/he may have many of the other strengths on the tree as well.
- The final step of this activity is for the entire group to receive every strength by passing a “high five” in a wave around the entire circle one last time.

****In a large community center, each group can make a strength tree to be hung in the hall as part of a strength forest.****