

A

Confidence building

# A strengths and skills exercise

*Gill Dickers*

## **Purpose**

This exercise is aimed at building a sense of self. From a position of strength, the client will be more able to state their own goals and dreams, rather than being preoccupied with the expectations of others.

## **Description**

During an individual coaching session, a client may repeatedly use words like ‘ought’, ‘should’ and ‘would’. This can suggest that they are doing something to please other people, or that they think other people want them to behave in particular ways. For example, new students may be doing a course of study to please their teachers or family.

## **Process**

There are three steps to this strategy:

- **Step 1: Self-confidence**

To promote self-confidence, ask your client to talk about a *past experience* or *achievement* they are proud of. Often when people talk about past successes, their posture becomes more upright, they breathe more deeply, they smile and look relaxed. Give positive feedback about this, ensuring that you are congruent with the praise you offer.

## 4 CONFIDENCE BUILDING

- **Step 2: Explore the concept of success**

Based on the experience they offer you, ask the coachee how their senses are stimulated by success. How does success smell, how does it feel, what colour is it, does it have a texture, can they draw it? Discuss the strengths and skills they have demonstrated.

- **Step 3: Devise a positive list**

Before the next session, ask the client to make a list of all the positive things about themselves they can think of, with the number on the list being equivalent to their age. So, if your client is 25 years old, he or she composes a list of 25 things: this will further encourage their self-confidence.

### **Pitfalls**

If the client has very low self-esteem and is depressed, the exercise may be inappropriate or too challenging.