

The theoretical underpinnings

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PSYfiers view strengths as stable, positive personality traits and therefore essential elements of psychological human resources. The prominent position of the – often subconscious – potential in this strength approach is based on the rationale of positive psychology.

Strengths: Resources of our mind

Resources are all external and internal characteristics of a person that help this person achieve a goal. By definition, resources are positive, they open up possibilities. They represent the positive potential of a person to fulfil his or her needs. In psychology, resource orientation assumes that people carry most of the resources they need to satisfy their needs and to create a life for themselves within themselves. To identify these resources, to explore them, is never easy. Therefore, the PSYfiers' strength approach provides for an epistemic space that is as positive as possible.

Focus on strengths to access resources

Numerous studies confirm that people react more strongly to bad news (which include weaknesses) than to good ones. Evolutionary biologists explain the phenomenon with the fact that negative bits of information could involve potential danger and are therefore perceived more strongly. Discussions about negative aspects thus tend to provoke deep-rooted mechanisms of resistance and avoidance. If you focus on your strengths and (at least initially) not so much on weaknesses, you are more likely to be able to access what you would like to achieve rather than what you want to avoid. Concentrating on positive factors opens up a broad access to your own resources. A focus on negative factors will narrow that access.

The power of the subconscious

But even when starting with a generally positive sentiment, accessing your own resources is not easy. The findings of modern brain research explain why that is: The reason lies in the power of the subconscious. In his outstanding book "Descartes' error. Emotion, reason and the Human Brain", Antonio Damasio clarifies that we do not only think with our brain, we use our entire body. The extremely high proportion of subconscious influencing factors to our thinking and acting have been proven again and again ever since. Today, it is assumed, that we make up to 95% of our decisions subconsciously. Nobel prize laureate Daniel Kahnemann explains the phenomenon even more vividly. In "Thinking, Fast and Slow", he calls subconscious processes "fast thinking" (system 1). This system navigates individuals similarly to autopilot – often even when



they think they have taken control by means of conscious thinking. Conscious, analysis-based decision making, "slow thinking" or system 2 according to Kahnemann, often lags behind system 1.

Designing the epistemic space

The process of recognising your self starts out all PSYfier programmes. And because there is so much focus on becoming aware of subconscious things, the implicit, visual questionnaire Visual Implicit Profiler (VIP)® plays a particularly important role. On the basis of Professor Julius Kuhl's PSI theory, the VIP measures personality traits and outlines them in an entirely positive manner. In addition, the entire process is embedded in interactions between at least two parties, e.g. between an individual and a team, a family, a coach, etc. Thus, in dialogue, a positive epistemic space is created which enables individuals to recognise and – at a later stage – utilise their talents and strengths.

More information about our strenght approach at [PSYfiers.ch](https://www.psyfiers.ch)