

CLIENT WORKBOOK

Strengths-Based Coaching

A Six-Session Workbook for Clients

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Welcome

You are about to spend six sessions getting clearer on what you want, more honest about what is in your way, and more deliberate about how you spend your days. This workbook is your companion through that process.

Two things are worth saying upfront.

First, this work is built on a simple idea: that you already have most of what you need. Coaching is not about installing missing parts. It is about helping you notice the parts that are already yours and put them to better use. You will be asked, again and again, to take your own strengths seriously.

Second, the changes that come from this kind of work are usually quiet. They show up in how a Tuesday afternoon feels, in how you respond to a difficult conversation, in what you notice when you walk through your own front door. Big breakthroughs happen sometimes. Small reorientations happen almost always. Both count.

Your job over the next six sessions is straightforward: show up, tell the truth, do the small experiments you agree to, and let yourself be surprised.

How to use this workbook

Each session has its own chapter. Inside each chapter you will find:

- A short orientation to what the session is about and why it matters.
- A series of exercises with space to write directly in the workbook.
- A homework section at the end describing what to practice between now and the next session.

A few practical notes:

- Write by hand if you can. The slower pace of handwriting tends to surface more honest thinking than typing does.
- Treat the workbook as private. It is for you and your coach, not for performance.
- If a question feels uncomfortable, that is usually a sign it is the right question. Sit with it before answering.
- It is fine to leave a prompt blank and come back to it. Some answers need a few days.

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SESSION 1

Values and Goal Setting

Before we talk about what you want to change, we need to be clear about what matters. Most of the goals people give up on were never quite theirs in the first place. They were inherited from a parent, picked up from a peer group, or set by a younger version of themselves who has since moved on.

This session is a slow look at the territory of your life. We will map the domains that make it up, name the values that animate them, and choose one place to focus the next several months of attention. By the end of the hour you will have a goal you actually own.

Exercise 1.1 — Your life compass

List the domains that make up your life right now. You might include things like work, finances, health, primary relationship, family, friendships, learning, recreation, community, spirituality, home environment, or anything else that takes a real share of your time and attention. Aim for between four and ten.

Then rate, on a scale of 0 to 10, how satisfied you feel in each domain right now. Don't overthink the numbers — your first instinct is usually accurate.

Life domain	Rating (0–10)	Notes

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Looking at the picture as a whole, what stands out to you?

Exercise 1.2 — Values clarification

Your coach will read a list of values aloud. Mark every word that lands as deeply important to you. Then narrow your selection to ten. Then to five.

Write your final five below.

Top value 1

Top value 2

Top value 3

Top value 4

Top value 5

For each of your top five, write one sentence describing what this value looks like when it is alive in your day-to-day life.

When [value 1] is alive, ...

When [value 2] is alive, ...

When [value 3] is alive, ...

When [value 4] is alive, ...

When [value 5] is alive, ...

Exercise 1.3 — Choosing a focus area

Look at your life compass and your top five values together. Of the domains on your compass, which one — if it improved over the next several months — would most change how the rest of your life feels?

It is rarely the lowest-scoring domain. It is usually the one where the gap between how you are living and what you most value is widest.

My focus area for this program:

Why this one, in your own words:

Exercise 1.4 — Drafting a goal you can own

Inside your focus area, draft a goal that meets four tests:

- Personal — it is something you genuinely want, not something you should want.
- Concrete — a stranger could tell whether it had been achieved.
- Approach-oriented — it describes what you are moving toward, not what you are running from.
- Within your influence — its fulfillment depends on actions you control.

My goal for this program:

Read your goal back to yourself out loud. On a scale of 0 to 10, how alive does it feel? If it is below 7, keep editing until it is.

HOMEWORK

Between now and our next session, simply notice — without trying to change anything yet — the moments when you feel most aligned with your top values, and the moments when you feel furthest from them. Bring three of each to Session 2.

Strengths in Action

A strength is more than something you happen to be good at. It is a way of being that energizes you, comes naturally even when you are tired, and is often visible to other people before it is obvious to you.

Most adults can describe their flaws fluently and their strengths with embarrassment. This session reverses that. We will name your strengths, anchor them in real moments from your life, and design at least one new way to put a signature strength to work in service of your goal.

Exercise 2.1 — Strengths spotting

Your coach will walk you through a strengths inventory. As each strength is read, mark it as Core (unmistakably you), Developing (you can access it sometimes), or Not me.

When you are done, look only at the Core list and narrow it to your top five — the ones that, if removed, would make you feel like a stranger to yourself.

Top strength 1

Top strength 2

Top strength 3

Exercise 2.3 — A new use of a signature strength

Bring back the goal you wrote in Session 1. Of your top strengths, which one is most underused in service of that goal right now?

With your coach, design one new way to use that strength in the coming week. Keep it small. The aim is a five-minute experiment, not a transformation.

The strength I will deploy:

The specific experiment I will run this week:

HOMEWORK

Run the strengths experiment at least three times this week. Each time, write one sentence afterwards about what happened and how it felt. Bring those sentences to Session 3.

Designing Behavioral Change

Behavior change is rarely a willpower problem. It is almost always a design problem. The most committed person, dropped into a poorly designed environment, will fail. The least motivated person, supported by a well-designed environment, will succeed more often than they expect.

In this session you will choose a single behavior to practice between now and the end of the program, shrink it until it fits even your worst day, anchor it to something you already do, and decide how you will track it. Small, specific, and repeatable.

Exercise 3.1 — Naming the keystone behavior

If, between now and our final session, you reliably did one thing — and only one thing — that would move you closer to your goal, what would that thing be?

Write it as a verb-led behavior ("walk for ten minutes after lunch"), not as a vague intention ("be more active").

My keystone behavior:

Exercise 3.2 — The floor version

Whatever version of the behavior you just wrote, ask yourself: what is the smallest version of it I could do on my worst day and still count as having done it?

That smallest version is the floor. You will often do more — but only the floor counts as required. The floor protects the streak, and the streak is what produces the change.

The floor version of my behavior:

Exercise 3.3 — Anchor and reward

Pick a stable existing routine to tether the new behavior to. Complete the sentence below.

After I [existing routine], I will [new behavior]:

What can you add — before, during, or immediately after — that makes the experience itself enjoyable? Music, a favorite drink, a phone call, a small celebration, a change of scenery.

Exercise 3.4 — How you will track it

Choose the simplest possible way to mark whether the behavior happened on a given day. A box ticked on a paper calendar. A note on the fridge. A line in a journal. Avoid elaborate apps. Tracking is a tool, not a project.

How I will track:

The rule going forward: never miss twice. One miss is human; two misses is a pattern.

HOMEWORK

Run the strengths experiment at least three times this week. Each time, write one sentence afterwards about what happened and how it felt. Bring those sentences to Session 3.

Obstacles and Coping

Every behavior change runs into the same four kinds of obstacles: internal states (low energy, low mood, anxiety), interpersonal friction (other people's needs and expectations), environmental disruption (travel, schedule changes, missing equipment), and identity stories ("I'm not the kind of person who does this").

People who plan for these obstacles in advance recover from them faster. People who do not, treat the first obstacle as proof that the whole plan was wrong. This session is about preparing for the predictable, and about how you talk to yourself when you slip.

Exercise 4.1 — Mapping your obstacles

For each of the four categories below, name the obstacles most likely to make your keystone behavior harder over the next month. Be specific. "Work travel the week of the 14th" is more useful than "sometimes I'm busy."

Exercise 4.2 — If-Then plans

Pick the three obstacles that are either most likely or most disruptive. For each one, write an if-then plan: a specific, small, rehearsable action you will take when the obstacle appears. Avoid plans that depend on willpower; choose plans that depend on actions.

If [obstacle 1], then I will ...

If [obstacle 2], then I will ...

If [obstacle 3], then I will ...

Exercise 4.3 — A compassionate restart

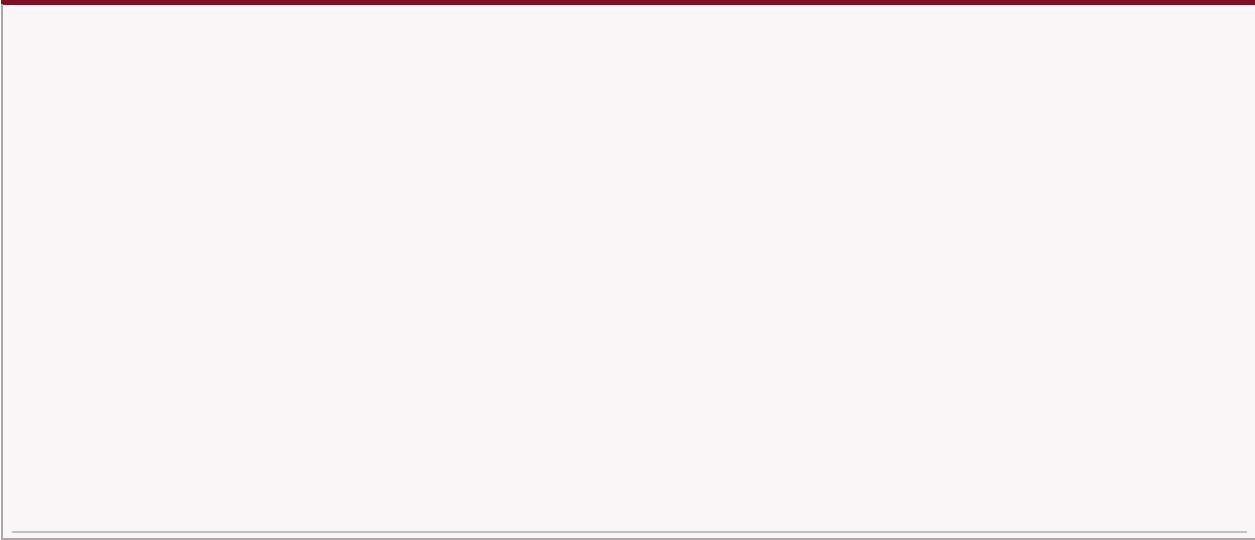
When you miss a day or fall off the plan, what do you usually say to yourself?

The familiar inner voice when I slip:

Now imagine a friend you cared about had missed in exactly the same way. What would you say to them?

HOMEWORK

Continue your keystone behavior. Carry your obstacle map and if-then plans with you, even mentally. If you miss, read your restart script before you do anything else. Notice whether the response feels different.



Cultivating Positive Emotions

Positive emotions are not decorative. In the moment, they widen what you notice and what you are willing to try. Over time, they accumulate into resilience, optimism, and stronger relationships. The catch is that they tend to be quieter and briefer than negative ones, which means they are easy to miss unless you are deliberately paying attention.

This session introduces four small practices, well supported by research, that train that attention. You will not adopt all of them. You will pick the two that fit your life and run them long enough to feel the difference.

Exercise 5.1 — Three good things

Each evening, write down three things that went well during the day, however small, and one sentence about why each happened. The "why" matters more than the "what." Try it now using the past 24 hours.

Good thing 1 — and why it happened

Good thing 2 — and why it happened

Good thing 3 — and why it happened

Exercise 5.2 — A savoring inventory

Make a list of the small daily experiences that already give you pleasure but tend to pass by unnoticed: a particular song, the first stretch of the morning, the smell of food cooking, a child's laugh, a familiar walk. Aim for at least ten.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Choose one to deliberately savor each day for the coming week — to slow down inside it, stay with the experience an extra ten or fifteen seconds, and consciously notice.

Exercise 5.3 — A gratitude letter

Think of a person who has had a meaningful positive impact on your life and whom you have never properly thanked.

Draft a short letter — a paragraph or two — describing exactly what they did and how it shaped you. Whether you deliver it is up to you. The act of writing it produces the effect.

The person:

The letter:

HOMEWORK

Pick at least two of the four practices and run them every day for the coming week. Continue your keystone behavior. Bring observations to Session 6 — what worked, what didn't, what surprised you.

Life domain	Then (0–10)	Now (0–10)	What changed?

Exercise 6.2 — Harvesting what works

Walk back through the program and list the practices, exercises, frameworks, or insights you want to keep. Be concrete: "the restart script," "the if-then plan around evenings," "the savoring practice on the morning walk." Aim for between three and six items. Less is more.

Keep 1

Keep 2

Keep 3

Keep 4

Keep 5

Keep 6

Exercise 6.3 — Your maintenance practice

Design the lightest possible ongoing practice that will keep your gains in place: a weekly review, a monthly self-check-in, a quarterly re-rating of the life compass. If it takes more than fifteen minutes a week, it will not survive. Shrink until it will.

My maintenance practice:

When and where it lives on my calendar:

Exercise 6.4 — The next direction

With everything you have learned about yourself in these six sessions, what is the next direction you want to grow in? Write it as a single sentence. The aim is not a brand new goal with Session 1 precision; it is a direction you now own.

My next direction:

HOMEWORK

Run your maintenance practice on its scheduled day this week. Read your harvest list once. Notice what the experience of the next direction is like without a coach in the room.

Continuing on your own

The end of a program is a strange moment. You have built a vocabulary, a set of practices, and a clearer picture of who you are when you are at your best. You also no longer have a weekly hour to sit with someone whose only job is to take you seriously.

A few things tend to help in the months that follow.

Keep your harvest list visible. Tape it inside a notebook, post it where you start your day, save it as the first page of a journal. Out of sight, out of mind is a real risk.

Honor your maintenance practice. It is short on purpose. Skipping it for two weeks in a row is the early warning sign that something is drifting.

Expect plateaus. The arc of a behavior change includes long stretches where nothing seems to be happening and then, in retrospect, a great deal had been. Trust the slow part.

Come back if you want to. A return engagement after some real life has happened tends to go faster and deeper than the first one. The door is open.