

Engagement

Finding your flow



Engagement signifies complete self-absorption in activity, where time and the self-conscious are momentarily lost.

Engagement in activities helps us to:

- 1- use our personal strengths each day
- 2- be 'in the moment'
- 3- develop, learn and create to our potential

Flow

When we are wholeheartedly absorbed in a task, time is insignificant, we are completely in the moment and accessing our strongest skills to meet the activity at hand, we are in a state that positive psychologists call **flow**.

One of the founders of positive psychology and world-leading researcher on flow Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi describes the psychological state as:

"being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost."

Click [here](#) to watch his TED Talk on flow.

How can we find flow?

Can you think of an activity or activities where you find pleasure and lasting satisfaction? It is these places that will provide opportunity to experience a state of flow.

Flow is activated when the challenge set by an activity is evenly matched with our skillset or strengths to provide us with an adequate challenge. If the activity is too easy or too difficult based on our individual capabilities, then we will be less likely to encounter flow.

Based on this science, one of the best ways to find flow in daily life is to first identify and understand our **character strengths**, so that we can choose and plan our flow-inducing activities wisely.



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Character strengths

Character strengths can be thought of as the positive elements of your personality that are represented in your thoughts, feelings and behaviours. Research into human strength and virtue has produced a common language of [twenty-four character strengths](#) that each of us possess in varying degrees. Knowing and using our top strengths regularly has been proven to contribute to wellbeing.



You can learn more about your character strengths by visiting www.viacharacter.org and taking their free strengths profiler survey to help you **play to your strengths** each day

How can you build moments of engagement into your day?

Incorporate an activity you love into each day. Try making a list of activities that you really love, think of those that challenge you enough to make them fun without being impossible. When have you totally lost track of time because you've been right into a challenging task? Could you build an element of such an activity into each day?

Check out your character strengths and learn how to use them daily. The [VIA survey](#) is the perfect place to start discovering a deeper sense of where the most positive parts of you lie.

Spend time in the present. Have you ever noticed how you spend your time and which activities make it easier to be in the now? Can you identify which tasks or activities leave you feeling energised?

Mindfulness is a skill that can be developed to assist us to spend more time in the present, but it does require practice in order to enjoy its benefits. [Find out more about mindfulness here.](#)

Caring for young minds

Children and young people have such great potential to realise and capitalize on their natural strengths, which can contribute to their overall wellbeing. Find out more [here](#).

Have we caught your attention?

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has a [new book](#) out on the psychology of engagement with everyday life.

