

Positive Psychology In Action: Mining Strengths in Campers and Staff With Chris Thurber

This Breakout session was a lot more educational than the last. Positive Psychology in Action: Mining Strengths in Campers and Staff. Led by Chris Thurber. Chris is a certified clinical psychologist. He earned his BA from Harvard and his PhD from UCLA. Chris cofounded ExpertOnlinetTraining.com, which is now the most respected educational resource for youth development professionals. He now currently resides in Exeter, New Hampshire, where he serves as a school psychologist at Phillips Exeter Academy, a private boarding high school.

In Chris's lecture he talked about the strengths and virtues that come from experiencing authentic happiness, which comes from positive emotions about the past and the future, and savoring these emotions. Chris suggested that there are 6 virtues that are attained through strengths of character: Wisdom & Knowledge, Courage, Love & Humanity, Justice, Temperance, Spirituality, and Transcendence. Chris also mentioned that there were 24 characters of strength. The few that caught my attention were Curiosity/Interest in the world, with curiosity the brain is allowed to wander and imagine anything it wants. Also Self control, with self-control I am able to push myself when needed and also hold back when needed.

Chris preformed a social experiment with his audience, which had to do with savoring. He handed out chocolate truffles to the audience. We were told to examine the wrapper, openly discuss with neighbors what we examined about the wrapper and the conclusions we made about the packaging of the truffle. Then in complete silence, we were to close out eyes, open the chocolate, place the truffle on our tongue, in our mouth and hold it there for 1 whole minute without eating it. Chris wanted us to savor the experience, what did we feel about the truffle, what was its texture, what was its flavor, and so on? Through this experiment Chris wanted us to take the time to enjoy some that we usually would hurry through.