

Developing Your Strength Connectedness

The genius of your Connectedness talent provides you with a very unique way of seeing events, people, and the world. To you there are no accidents. Your way of seeing events is to recognize that everything that happens is caused by something or someone. Likewise, what is happening right now will have a “ripple” effect into the future. Similarly, you see people in terms of the accumulative events and interaction that formed them and moved them to this moment. Accordingly, this moment and the attitudes that people take to their circumstances will form their future. Extending this way of seeing to the world in general, you see the past, present and future as connected and you see that there is a “master plan” or Master’s plan” at work at all times. Your genius talent of Connectedness provides a way of “making sense of the nonsense” around us and generating meaning and purpose for yourself. When you share what you can see with the genius of your Connectedness talent, you help others gain hope as you help them see the past and “connect the dots” of their past in a more meaningful way. In like manner, you help people see possibilities for the future by making choices now that build a positive future.

Adapted from “The Genius and Beauty found within The Clifton StrengthsFinder Themes of Talent,” by Edward C. Anderson

Applying Connectedness Talents in Careers

- Use service learning opportunities on campus to explore possible careers that interest you. Spend your summers volunteering for humanitarian causes to determine the best fit for your talents.
- Talk to your counselor about the connections you see between your volunteer opportunities, your values, and your mission in life. This relationship can provide a valuable sounding board through which you can articulate the connections that you see so naturally.
- Consider dedicating a couple of years of your life to serving your country or community after graduation. Habitat for Humanity®, the Peace Corps, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), AmeriCorps®, GreenPeace®, and Teach for America® can be good places for you to experience a deep sense of gladness in meeting the world's deep needs.
- Incorporate your need to serve all of humankind into whatever career you choose. Working in fields and for organizations whose values mirror your own will enable you to feel the deep sense of meaning that is so important to you.
- Environments that allow you to interact with others and help them find meaning and purpose will bring out your best. Avoid environments that emphasize routine procedures or rote skills, as they may drain you.
- Talk to people who have made a lifetime commitment to a specific ministry within your faith tradition. Hearing them articulate their sense of connectedness and spirituality may help you determine whether this level of commitment is appropriate for you.

Adapted from StrengthsQuest website: www.strengthsquest.com

Career Plan of Action:

Applying Connectedness Talents in Academics

General Academic Life

- Ask yourself, "What life lessons am I supposed to learn today through my studies and the challenges they present?"
- Search for linkages between your coursework and what you're being called to contribute to the entire human family.
- Examine how your life is inextricably tied to those of people in other parts of the world and from the past. Name as many of these connections as you possibly can.
- Find ways to build bridges of understanding between classmates as well as between students and their professors.
- Keep a journal. Let your ideas and feelings flow freely. Write without editing. Find purpose and meaning in your personal and academic life.

Study Techniques

- Pray for guidance before you begin studying. Ask that your mind be freed of worries and distractions.
- Concentrate on your breathing before starting a test, making a presentation, or working on a project.
- Master the art of letting go. Embrace the art of living in the present moment.
- Energize your body, heighten your awareness, and soothe your soul with inspiring background music. Create a calm environment in which to study, work on projects, solve problems, research, write, and prepare for exams.

Relationships

- Converse with individuals who realize that life is a complex web of interdependence among all human beings, living things, events, and inanimate objects.
- Share with curious observers how and why you can remain calm in the midst of uncertainty, losses, successes, defeats, progress, and setbacks.
- Help others understand that you view all life as a continuous, ever-widening circle without beginning or end. Explain how every thought, word, and deed impacts people far and near.

Class Selection

- Enroll in comparative religion studies. Look for listings in psychology, and religious studies.
- Select history classes in which you can research events through the lens of conflicting religious doctrines and principles held as truth by some groups.
- Register for the philosophy and ethics classes to broaden your thinking. Integrate what you learn into other coursework.

Extracurricular Activities

- Get involved in campus groups and ministries to nurture your faith tradition or introduce you to new forms of spirituality.
- Opt for nontraditional school vacations. Volunteer to build a Habitat for Humanity® house, travel to a third-world nation to help in a medical clinic, clean up an inner-city neighborhood, or work with urban families to plant a neighborhood vegetable garden.
- Mentor at-risk students during the school year. Become a reading tutor for adults. Teach English to immigrant and refugee families. Record books for the blind. Serve as a camp counselor for handicapped or terminally ill children.

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Academic Plan of Action:
