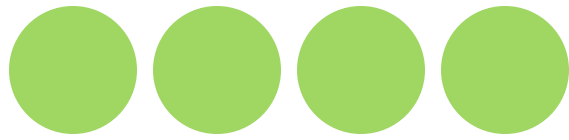




Strengths Academy

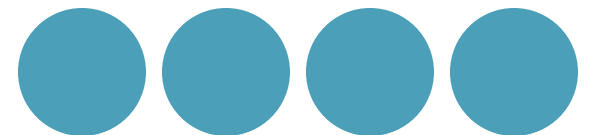
A Strengths-Based Approach to Helping Students Discover a Sense of Calling

Azusa Pacific University



Overview of the Presentation

- Define Calling
- Elements to Include in a Calling Model
- What is a Strengths-Based Approach?
- Pepperdine Program
- Azusa Pacific Program
- Baylor Program
- Other Programs
- Questions and Answers

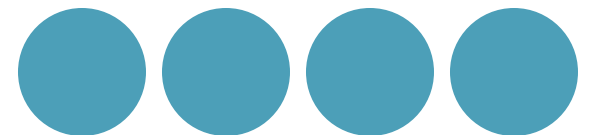




What is calling anyway?

Three general elements of calling found in many religious traditions

- A calling is rooted in who we are designed to be.
- A calling is something bigger than ourselves.
- A calling demands a choice, a struggle, a letting go





A call is rooted in who we are designed to be

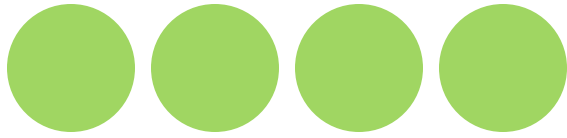
“Vocation [calling] does not mean a goal that I pursue. It means a calling that I hear. Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am.”

Parker Palmer

“People cannot find their missions until they know themselves.”

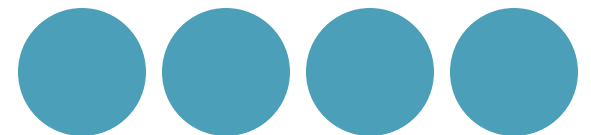
Laurie Beth Jones





A call is something bigger than ourselves

- The purpose of calls is to summon adherents away from their daily grinds to a new level of awareness, into a sacred frame of mind, *into communion with that which is bigger than themselves.*” Levoy

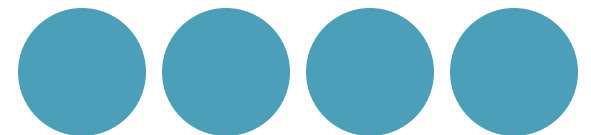




A call is something bigger than ourselves

“Calls, of course, beg the question ‘Who, or what, is calling?’ But in attempting to answer this question even an exhaustive list of every name for Soul or Destiny or God would be beside the point.

It is clear, however, that ‘living means being addressed,’ as theologian Martin Buber once said, and whatever or whoever is addressing us is a power like wind or fusion or faith: We can’t see the force, but we can see what it does. **Primarily this force announces the need for change, and the response for which it calls is an awakening of some kind.**” Levoy





A call demands a choice, a struggle, a letting go

Letting go of external evaluation

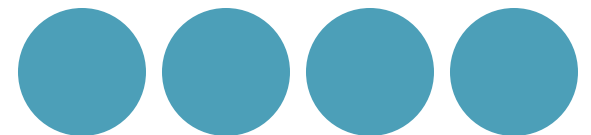
“Tim was never going to open up to his own gifts until he was able to turn off his need to prove his worth by other people's yardstick.” Bronson, 2002

Failure's hard, but success is far more dangerous. If you're successful at the wrong thing, the mix of praise and money and opportunity can lock you in forever. It is so, so much harder to leave a good thing.”
Bronson, 2002

“Now I become myself.

It's taken time, many years and places.
I have been dissolved and shaken,
Worn other people's faces...”

May Sarton





A call demands a choice, a struggle, a letting go

“The things we really want to do are usually the ones that scare us the most. The things you’ll not feel conflicted about are the choices that leave no one hurt.”

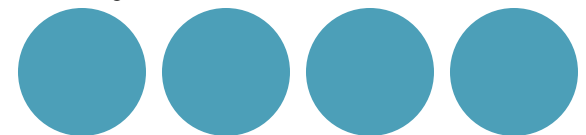
Po Bronson, 2002

- **“Some people are born into their passions. Some never get them and don’t care. But if you’re really struggling to find it... I mean, you’ve gone all over the country to find it – it’s almost certainly for a reason.**

I think the depth of your struggling is the sign there’s something there. Something in you that’s trying to get out. People who don’t have passions don’t struggle.”

Noah Goldfather

in Po Bronson’s *What Should I Do with My Life?*

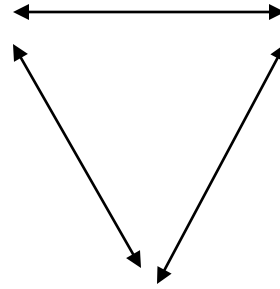


Calling Model

Calling is the place where
“our deep gladness and the world’s hunger meet.”
Frederick Buechner



Identity



Influences



Impact



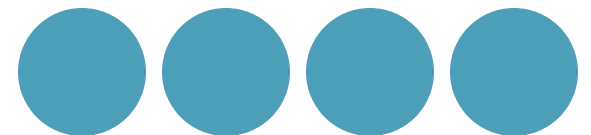


What is a strengths approach to developing calling?

- Strengths are the qualities that enable you to do specific things very well.
- They are ways of seeing the world and interacting with it that enable excellence.
- What Gallup research has shown is that highly successful individuals learn to play to their strengths and minimize their weaknesses.

“Individuals gain more when they build on their talents, than when they make comparable efforts to improve their areas of weakness.”

--Clifton & Harter, 2003

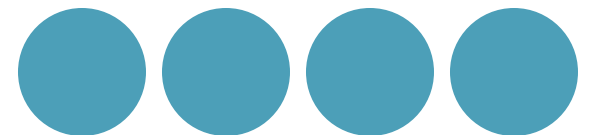




Capitalizing on Strengths

Results:

- Higher levels of motivation
- Greater engagement in the task at hand
- Personal satisfaction
- Productivity and higher levels of performance
- Improvement in self efficacy and confidence
- Deeper understanding of others and our interrelated nature





The Educational Focus Changes

Fundamental Educational Shift

“Survival of the fittest”

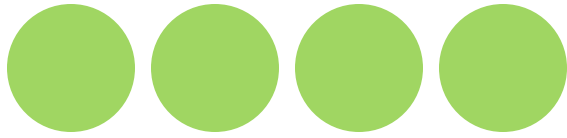
“Deficit remediation”

“Strengths-based education”

- "As educators, our challenge and our joy is helping students move to levels of personal excellence by becoming the persons they have the potential to be. And the marvelous thing about this perspective is that in the process we also move toward our own levels of personal excellence, becoming the persons we have the potential to be."

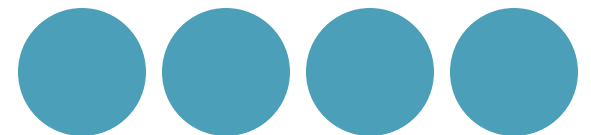
Chip Anderson





Strengths Progression

- Self awareness
- Other awareness
- Self management
- Other management





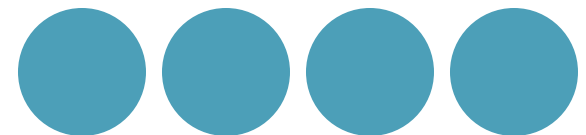
THE GALLUP ORGANIZATION

Clifton StrengthsFinder™

- Published by The Gallup Organization
- Used with over 4 million people in 17 languages
over 150,000 college students
- 34 signature themes – top 5

StrengthsQuest

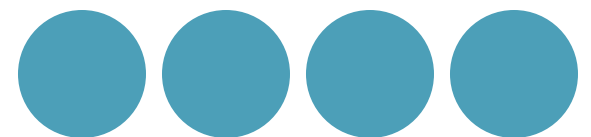
- StrengthsQuest was developed to address the particular needs of a college age population.
- Gallup has provided free StrengthsQuests books with codes in the front





Why Use an Instrument?

- Provides a common language to talk about strengths
- Validates and affirms students' experiences
- Jump starts the conversation and provides a springboard for discussion





Pepperdine's Approach

Funding provided by the Lilly Endowment

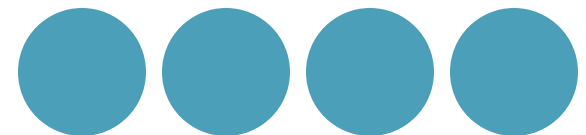
2003

Introduced a strengths approach to
Head RAs
Resident Advisors
Spiritual Life Advisors and
Selected Student Affairs professionals



2004

Student Affairs professional staff trained to lead Strengths
Quest training
Common Leadership Training





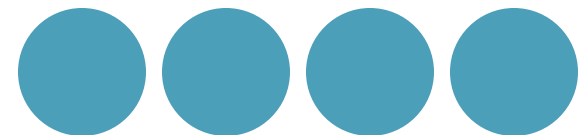
Pepperdine Common Leadership Fall 2004 Training

Over 250 Student Leaders Participated

Areas Represented:

- Housing and Community Living
- New Student Orientation
Volunteer Center
- Intramurals and Campus
Recreation

**Campus Ministries
American Humanics
Pepperdine Ambassador Council
Student Alumni Office
Student Government Association
Clubs**





Evaluations and Outcomes from Fall 2004 Leadership Training

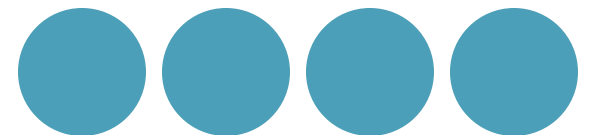
Strengthsquest Seminar On a 5 point scale (5-Strongly Agree)

I feel empowered to use my strengths and talents as a leader on this campus. – **4.41**

The seminar provided me with useful resources and tools to develop a strengths-based approach to my own leadership. – **4.27**

I am now more confident about developing a strengths-based approach to my own leadership. – **4.35**

Overall, I rate the seminar: - **4.53**



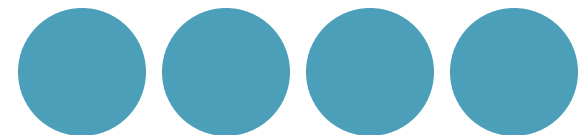


“I am not sure how it [Strengths based approach] has transformed the culture, but I know it has influenced it a great deal. Even for those students who have not taken the strengths finder quiz, have benefited from me personally telling others about it.

I have told my friends to **really search themselves and find what they are good** at as it pertains to various facets in their life. Then I try and get them to focus on what is good instead of trying to overcome what is not as good.

By doing this, I feel that for myself and others, it has helped relieve some stress that is ever-present on college campuses because **people are not only being themselves, but being the best of themselves as possible.**”

Mark Baucum Spiritual Life Coordinator Spring 2006





Pepperdine's Approach

Summer 2005

Student Affairs retreat was **“Rising to the Call”**

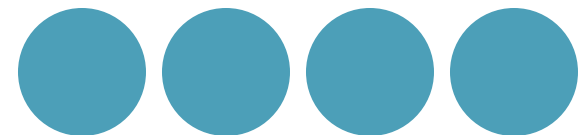
Focused on our calling and applying our strengths to what we do

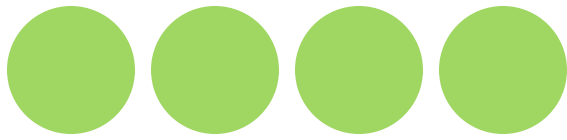
Fall 2005

All student leaders took the StrengthsQuest inventory and each department incorporated it into Fall training

Several Student Affairs staff members taught freshman seminar courses utilizing a strengths-based approach

Resident Advisor and Spiritual Life Advisor program utilizes the strengths-based approach for training and staff development





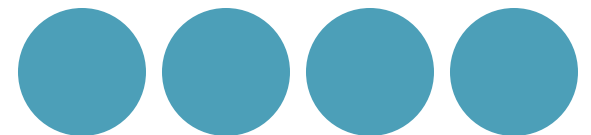
What are Pepperdine's strengths-based initiatives in 2006?

2006

Growing our strengths training program to include International Programs RAs

NSO leaders will be strengths mentors for first year seminar classes where they begin discovering their calling through strengths-based curriculum

Continued staff development opportunities for Student Affairs staff





Pepperdine Student Quotes

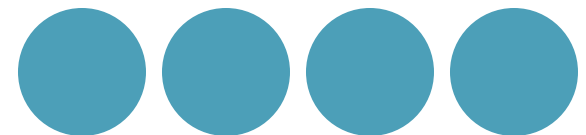
“My friends and I always talk about StrengthQuest. I ask people all the time, “What are your strengths?” It really helps me understand people better and even see them from a new light. Knowing others' strengths, I am able to communicate to them differently and utilize their strengths when working together with them. For example, my roommate has analytical and input. I know that when I ask her questions or ask her for advice, she needs time to think over it.”

Wendy Tran RA of freshman women/Spring 2006

“It made the transition from high school to college easier. Talking about my strengths and my passions made me think about the real reason for my education and choosing to attend Pepperdine. This course helped me start my college career with a focus on cultivating my strengths and confidence in my ability to impact the world.”

Pepperdine freshman

Freshmen seminar evaluation/Fall 2005





Azusa Pacific University's Approach

- **Beginnings Program**
- **Omega Program**
- **Faculty Training**
 - New faculty orientation
 - Faculty training sessions
 - Operation Impact
- **Noel Academy for Strengths-Based Leadership and Education**





Baylor's Approach

Why Strengths at Baylor?

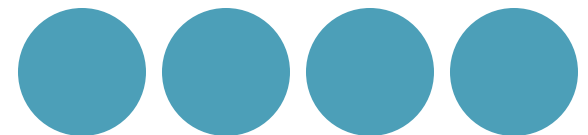
Committed to students' holistic development

Aid students in developing their sense of calling.

Identity -Who are you uniquely created to be?

Influences -Who/what do you allow to influence you?

Impact - Who/what will you impact?



Baylor's Approach

▣ Identity

- Orientation
- Academic Advising
- Baylor Line Camps

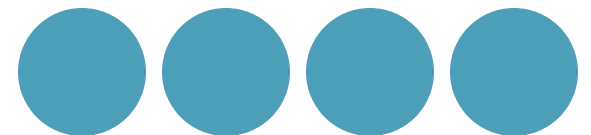




Baylor's Approach

Influences

- University 1000
- Career Counseling
- Counseling





Baylor's Approach

Impact

- Academy for Leader Development/Civic Engagement
- International trips (Africa '05 & '06, Armenia, Honduras)
- Living-Learning Centers (ECS, Leadership, Honors, Global '06)

Staff Development

- Strength profiles used to select divisional committees
- On-going professional development



Become



▶ A Person of Strength



▶ A Person of Influence



▶ A Person To Impact The World



watch movie
calling & strengths

A journey that shapes the heart and soul...

GET A BETTER GRADE



GET TO KNOW PEOPLE



GROW SPIRITUALLY



GET ALONG WITH MY ROOMMATE



Other Universities

▣ **Texas A&M**

▣ **Texas Tech**

▣ **TCU**



Learning to change the world.

