

Strength Engagement

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Growing up, our parents and teachers wanted us to get A's in all subjects. Like everybody else, there were subjects that were obvious A's and B's for you. But there was at least one notorious subject where you scored a D. Taking home the report card on closing day, our parents would drill us and even spank us for getting a D on that subject, sometimes neglecting to praise us for the A's that populated our report cards. We were expected to be good at everything. So, we grew up thinking that fixing our weaknesses was the way to go. The fault was not with our dear parents and teachers since that was also how they were brought up. And some of us are finding ourselves applying the same principles to our children, pushing them to turn their one or two notorious D's into A's. We even experience it at work as supervisors and supervisees where we are expected and expect others to work on getting better in their areas of weaknesses.

But think about it. Isn't building on our strengths as opposed to fixing our weaknesses what will make us more successful? We can't ignore our weaknesses but they will never become our areas of our greatest opportunity. We grow most where we are already strong.

Your personality doesn't change as you grow older. As you grow you become more and more of who you are. Your values, dreams and aspirations will change but the core of your personality will remain the same.

Your weaknesses are not your areas of opportunity. You grow most in your areas of greatest strengths. Address your weaknesses but they are areas of your least opportunity.

Build on your strengths and manage around your weaknesses.

In this light, shouldn't we put more emphasis on the subjects that our children score highly in; and instead of pushing them to work harder on their D subjects, try and find out why they are doing poorly in them? We may find that the problem is in the method of teaching by a particular teacher, or something else; and addressing that could improve the D to C, and be ok with that as we support them to get better and better in the subjects they are already good at.

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