WEAKNESSES
are like underwear
we all have them, but
most of us prefer not to expose them

YOU’re never
going to succeed
with grades like these!"
Who says something is a strength or a weakness?
If a strength can become a weakness, why can't a weakness, become a strength?

How do we know how far anyone is really capable of going?
What about the stories of “successful” people who were told they would fail?

How do we value the whole person?
How do we balance realism with hope?

“‘You’re never going to succeed with grades like these!’"

Assumptions?

STOP AND THINK

‘It sort of makes you stop and think, doesn’t it?’

Assumptions

THE PROBLEM WITH ASSUMPTIONS IS THAT THEY ALWAYS COME WITH-

- Oliver Blanchard

BLIND SPOTS
“You’re never going to succeed with grades like these!”

Assumptions?

THE UNSUNG POTENTIAL OF WEAKNESS

A Journey of Hope

THE UNSUNG POTENTIAL OF WEAKNESS

Balance & Wholeness

Dysfunctional-focused counselling
- needs
- deficits
- problems
- weaknesses

Strength-based counselling
- positives
- capacities
- successes
- strengths

Dysfunctional-focused counselling
- needs
- deficits
- problems
- weaknesses

Strength-based counselling
- positives
- capacities
- successes
- strengths

over-correction

IGNORE

FOCUS ON

Dysfunctional-focused counselling
- needs
- deficits
- problems
- weaknesses

Strength-based counselling
- positives
- capacities
- successes
- strengths

balance

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Dysfunctional-focused counselling
needs
deficits
problems
weaknesses

Strength-based counselling
positives
capacities
successes
strengths

balance

the whole person

Weakness is a messy word
vague, imprecise, subjective
can mean all kinds of things,
depending on context
easily misused

weakness: adj: American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language
1. Lacking physical strength, energy, or vigor; feeble.
2. Likely to fail under pressure, stress, or strain; lacking resistance: a weak link in a chain.
3. Lacking firmness of character or strength of will.
4. Lacking the proper strength or amount of ingredients: weak coffee.
5. Lacking the ability to function normally or fully: a weak heart.

6. Lacking aptitude or skill; a weak student; weak in math.
7. Lacking or resulting from a lack of intelligence.
8. Lacking persuasiveness; unconvincing: a weak argument.
9. Lacking authority or the power to govern.
10. Lacking potency or intensity: weak sunlight.

a continuum

Determining strengths and weaknesses
is not as black-and-white as it sounds.
Describe a characteristic that you have that could be considered a weakness by some but, from another perspective, could be considered a strength.

Weakness can be confused with dysfunctional relationships with other concepts?  

Danger: Weakness becomes a label
Labels can exacerbate things, can add insult to injury and they can stick

Danger: Catastrophizing
an irrational thought a lot of us have in believing that something is far worse than it actually is.
- John M. Grohol,
a continuum (relative perspective)

Danger: Catastrophizing
looking to the future
and anticipating all the things
that are going to go wrong;
then creating a reality
around those thoughts
- John M. Grohol,

a continuum (relative perspective)

Double Danger:
a catastrophizing label
may become
more of a factor in failure
than the weakness itself

a continuum (relative perspective)

Double Danger:
a catastrophizing label
People may give up
too early, without trying
because they don’t think
they can succeed
with their weaknesses

Potential (relative perspective)

But what if this very perspective
is part of the problem?
But what if it blinds to the
potential of weakness?
But what if weakness does not
inevitably doom people to failure?

What if this perspective is like the
proverbial straw on the camel’s back.

What if these were not the same?
The Unsung Potential of Weakness

Potential (relative perspective)

But what if my weaknesses are just as much a part of me as my strengths?

"Which contributes more to the area of a rectangle, its height or its width?"

What if strengths and weaknesses are not automatically linked to high or low?

What if different levels only suggest different possibilities/limitations?

What if both high and low have the potential to succeed or fail?

What is a "skill?"

SKILL
"strength, good at"

SKILL
"something you do"

HOPELESS
NO
SKILL

HOPE-FILLED

"How well?"

"Who needs this at this level?"

SKILL MELODY
all the skills synergize to make a whole

SKILL MELODY
take away any and the melody is lost
What if it's not just what we have but what we do with what we have?

What if it's not just what happens to us but how we respond to what happens to us?

Other factors besides strength/weakness that might influence success/failure.

- motivation
- resiliency
- external circumstances
- optimism
- happenstance

If we take this perspective, what other potential might we value in weakness?

Not all develop at the same rate or in the same way.

Be careful how you weed out people; they may be late bloomers.
THE UNSUNG POTENTIAL
OF WEAKNESS

Acceptance

Potential (relative perspective)

Fact: my life has strengths & weaknesses possibilities & limitations.

Aware
Accept
Adapt
Advance

Potential (relative perspective)

Acceptance of all of me can help with self-esteem, in avoiding the fear and stress that comes from perfectionism

Humility & Empathy

THE UNSUNG POTENTIAL
OF WEAKNESS

Opportunity for Creativity

Potential (relative perspective)

An honest, humble acceptance of myself with all my strengths and weaknesses can help in empathizing with other's strengths and weaknesses.
The Unsung Potential of Weakness

Potential (relative perspective)

Acceptance of weaknesses and limitations can be the catalyst for creativity along previously unknown paths.

THE UNSUNG POTENTIAL OF WEAKNESS

Hope
Balance & Wholeness
Perspective
Acceptance
Humility & Empathy
Opportunity for Creativity

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