



APPRECIATION OF BEAUTY & EXCELLENCE

VIA Survey calls this strength *Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence*



Virtue: Transcendence. These strengths allow people to rise above their trouble and find meaning in the larger universe. Strengths of transcendence are appreciation, purpose, gratitude, optimism, and humor.

WHAT DOES APPRECIATION MEAN?

You notice and value the world's beauty and people's skills. You don't take things for granted.

Appreciation of beauty and excellence is the ability to identify and enjoy that which is admirable in the world. There are three types of goodness in which positive psychology focuses: physical beauty (e.g. a sunset, song, or building); an exceptional skill or talent; and moral goodness (e.g. a character strength). Appreciation of beauty can generate awe; appreciation of a skill can generate admiration; and appreciation of moral goodness can generate moral elevation. All of these feelings (awe, admiration, and moral elevation) help us forget ourselves and find increased joy and meaning in the world.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Appreciating beauty and excellence helps an individual experience positive emotions and connect to the world around him/her. It's an outward facing strength, meaning the individual is focused on the world outside his/her head. And, not only is the individual outwardly focused, but often deeply absorbed in a sense of awe or admiration, freeing him/her to forget anxieties and troubles. And it is associated with other strengths, such as gratitude, curiosity, love of learning, and connection/purpose.

On a group level, those who appreciate beauty and excellence make our lives more enjoyable. First, it means that they're not looking to criticize the world or its people, but instead take pleasure from their excellence. Second, it is the writers, painters, musicians, and filmmakers who help us better appreciate the world around us. It's due to their admiration for the way the sun hits off a wave or the quiet perseverance of a cross-country runner, that we are able to see the world with fresh eyes.

Individuals with this strength might be described as:

- Enraptured
- Enthralled
- Admiring
- Approving
- Fascinated
- Captivated

Individuals with this strength are likely to think, feel, or behave in the following ways:

- I'm grateful for the beauty of the natural world around me.
- I appreciate the skills and attributes of others, even my opponents.
- Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around, you just might miss it.
- I get goose bumps when I hear a beautiful piece of music.
- Seeing the character strengths of other people inspires me to be a better person.

QUOTES ON APPRECIATION

"There's always a sunrise and always a sunset and it's up to you to choose to be there for it," said my mother. "Put yourself in the way of beauty."

-CHERYL STRAYED

"If the stars should appear but one night every thousand years how man would marvel and adore."

-RALPH WALDO EMERSON

"Appreciation is a beautiful thing: It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well."

-VOLTAIRE

"At some point in life the world's beauty becomes enough. You don't need to photograph, paint or even remember it. It is enough."

-TONI MORRISON