Now We Have Hope: The Strength of the START Community
Discussion Guide

Now We Have Hope: The Strength of the START Community, produced by award-winning documentary filmmaker Dan Habib, captures the unique and groundbreaking practices and philosophies of the START model. START's impact is viewed through the perspectives of START clients, family members, and local service providers in Fort Worth, Texas, New York City, and Durham, North Carolina. The film was premiered at the 2020 START National Training Institute, followed by a live Q&A session with Dan Habib, producers, and special guests. The film has three parts:

1) Shelle: Strength Spotting, 2) Logan: Finding his Purpose, and 3) Rosa: Shining her Light

For the Discussion Facilitator

The role of the facilitator is to engage participants in exploring the underlying themes from each part of the START film and to aid them in identifying core START principles and practices at work. Definitions of these core principles and practices are described in the glossary (below). Below you will find discussion prompts and questions for each part of the film. There are questions to facilitate discussion **before** viewing each part to help participants clue into key concepts. Then, there are questions and prompts to use directly **after** viewing. It is recommended that facilitators chose one or more of the following methods for engaging the group in discussion:

- Ask participants to jot down responses to questions posed prior to viewing the film. Then revisit these questions following viewing to see if participants would like to add anything else.

- List reflective and discussion questions on cue cards, handouts or some other means

- Ask participants to work in small groups to discuss clusters of follow-up questions (for example, for part 1, three groups can form, each focusing on one of the START philosophies addressed in the film)

- Small groups can report out to the larger group of participants regarding key points of their discussions

- Facilitators are welcome to generate their own questions based on the needs of the audience

Glossary of Terms

Positive Psychology & Strengths Based Practice

Positive psychology is the scientific study of strengths that enables individuals and communities to thrive. It is founded on the belief that people want to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives that enhance their life experiences. The three pillars of positive psychology are 1) positive experiences; 2) positive individual traits; and 3) positive institutions. Positive psychology is built on the concept of character strengths, the psychological ingredients for displaying human goodness. There are 24 universal character strengths that are present in everyone and each person has primary or "signature strengths". Signature strengths are ones that are practiced more regularly and help put a person in "flow," which means that the fostering of these primary strengths is more likely to promote experiences of happiness, contentment, and wellness.

A core concept of positive psychology is PERMA, which is a theory of wellbeing that attempts to answer what enables human flourishing and puts a person in flow. The five building blocks of PERMA are: Positive Emotions, Engagement, Positive Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment.
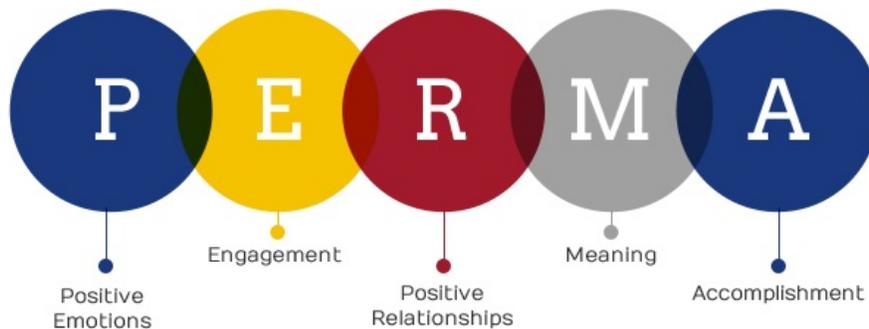
Strengths-based practice builds on the positive psychology premise that all people have inherent strengths and skills that promote resiliency and resourcefulness in the face of challenges. By focusing on strengths, the START team creates a shift in attention from "what is wrong" to "what is strong" and how to draw on inherent strengths and resources when experiencing adversity. Strengths-based interventions include empowering individuals and systems to take a lead in identifying and applying solutions, the development of respectful and reciprocal collaborations between the individual, family and providers and drawing upon already existing personal resources to solve problems. These interventions create sustainable, positive change through the process of capacity building.

Cultural and Linguistic Competence

Culture is at the core of our humanity. Everyone has a cultural perspective that helps us to know who we are. Without attention to and acceptance that there are unique perspectives, we miss opportunities to enlist our collective character strengths toward individual, professional and organizational growth.

The National Center for Cultural Competence at Georgetown University, defines cultural and linguistic competency as "*The capacity of an organization and its personnel to communicate effectively and convey information in a manner that is easily understood by diverse groups including persons of limited English proficiency, those who have low literacy skills or are not literate, individuals with disabilities, and those who are deaf or hard of hearing. Linguistic competence requires organizational and provider capacity to respond effectively to the health and mental health literacy needs of populations served.*"

Leading the way through acceptance and awareness is part of the mission of START and allows for important connections that expand individual and system capacity. All the approaches, practices and tools endorsed by START should be applied through a cultural and linguistically competent lens. Cultural competency is a journey and goal of the START model and additional opportunities for reflection, collaboration and learning are available through the Center for START Services.

Trauma-Informed

Trauma-Informed Care is a strengths-based framework that is responsive to the impact of trauma, emphasizing physical, psychological, and emotional safety for service users and providers. It is an organizational structure that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. According to SAMHSA, the five primary principles for trauma-informed care include:

1. **Safety** - Staff and the people they serve feel physically and emotionally safe.

2. **Trustworthiness and transparency** - Operations and decisions are conducted with goal of building and maintaining trust among staff, service users and family members.

3. **Peer support and mutual self-help** - These are integral to the organizational and service delivery approach and are understood as a key vehicle for building trust, establishing safety, and empowerment.

4. **Collaboration and mutuality** - Recognition that healing happens in relationships and in the meaningful sharing of power and decision-making. Everyone has a role to play in a trauma-informed approach.

5. **Empowerment, voice, and choice** - Individuals' strengths are recognized, validated, and built on, rather than responding to perceived deficits. There is a recognition that every person's experience is unique and requires an individualized approach to promote resiliency.

6. **Cultural, historical, and gender issues** - Actively move past cultural stereotypes and biases (e.g., based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, geography), offer responsive services, leverage the healing value of traditional cultural connections, and recognize and address historical trauma.

Discussion Questions

General Reflection Questions (can be used for each of the 3 parts)

What was your biggest takeaway/a-ha moment after watching this film?
How might you use what you've learned in your daily life?
What do you want to learn more about after watching this film?

Part 1: Shelle: Strength Spotting

Before You Watch

- What is strength spotting?
- Have you used it personally or professionally? How do you know?
- Do what extent can strength-spotting impact people's lives?

After You Watch

Positive Psychology	Describe two instances where you saw positive psychology strategies in action. How does strength-spotting impact a person's overall functioning? How does strength-spotting impact a person's system of support? Whether you have prior experience with START or not, how does this impact you? How do you see positive psychology strategies such as the ones identified in the film applying to your life and work?
Cultural and Linguistic Competency	What evidence of cultural and linguistic competency did you notice in this video? How were concepts of CLC integrated into work with the person, their family and team?
Trauma Informed Care	Identify at least one instance in which trauma-informed practices were demonstrated How can trauma informed care approaches shift or change potential outcomes for a person or their family?

Part 2: Logan: Finding His Purpose

Before You Watch

- How do you promote positive engagement for all?
- How have you seen respite centers being used in your community?
- What are the typical means by which people are supported in typical respite facilities?
- Have you used or observed effective means of helping others achieve PERMA+ (positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, achievement, and health/wellbeing) in their lives? How have those strategies worked?

After You Watch

Positive Psychology	How were the aspects of PERMA applied with Logan and others in the film? What role does promoting PERMA play in building resilience? How does the Resource Center incorporate concepts of PERMA into their work with Logan? Where do you see examples of increased resilience in Logan? How can these concepts be described and shared with systems in your community? How do you see positive psychology strategies such as the ones identified in the film applying to your life and work?
Cultural and Linguistic Competency	Describe the use of cultural and linguistic competency at the resource center How did these strategies make activities and engagement accessible to all guests? How did cultural competency promote PERMA for guests?
Trauma Informed Care	Discuss the importance of trauma-informed care in supporting Logan. How did using trauma-informed approaches help Logan? Where did you see evidence of this in the film? Describe instances when you saw active application of trauma-informed strategies in this film.

Part 3: Rosa: Shining Her Light

Before You Watch

- What are some strategies you have observed or used in the past to develop cohesion and forward movement in working with systems of support?
- How did those strategies also impact the individual person who was in crisis?
- Have you used reframing in your work? What were the related outcomes?

After You Watch

Positive Psychology	How did reframing and education used by the START team impact Rosa and her family? How did developing a common understanding about Rosa help her school system and family? How do you see positive psychology strategies such as the ones identified in the film applying to your life and work?
Cultural and Linguistic Competency	Discuss the importance of cultural and linguistic competency in this film. How did the START team use their cultural and linguistic competency to expand the lives of Rosa and her family? In what ways were cultural and linguistic competency critical for those outcomes?
Trauma Informed Care	What trauma-informed practices did you see in this film? How did those practices help Rosa expand her life again? Where were they used? By whom? How is trauma-informed care important not only for people receiving services but their families?