



# WONDERFULLY MADE!

PSALM 139:13-14

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Seven Ways Understanding  
Your Natural Talents Can  
Bless Your Marriage, Bring  
Peace to Your Family, and  
Help Your Children Succeed

by Lisa Mladinich

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Wouldn't you love to be the best version of yourself? Fulfill God's plan for your life? Leave a lasting legacy?

*These are holy desires.*

But though we are lovingly designed by God for a purpose, a precise knowledge of how we were "knit together" (Psalm 139)--how we think, problem-solve, communicate, and relate--often eludes us, leaving us operating at a fraction of our potential.

It's like owning a sports car, but not knowing how to shift into high gear.

This free guide, WONDERFULLY MADE! named after my new program for Catholic families, will start you on the road to understanding, developing, and leveraging your natural talents, to yield *transformative* insights and create *real momentum* in several key areas:

1. **Joyful Self-Discovery**
2. **Accelerated Growth**
3. **Strong Relationships**
4. **Excellent Quality of Life**
5. **Productive Conflict Management**
6. **Team Building for Results**
7. **God-glorifying Success**

**PLUS**

8. **Putting Your Talents Into Action**
9. **Learning Together As a Family**

*You formed my inmost  
being; you knit me in my  
mother's womb.  
I praise you, because I am  
wonderfully made;  
wonderful are your works!  
My very self you know.*

(Psalm 139: 13-14)



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## INTRODUCTION



Hi, I'm Lisa Mladinich. You may already know me as an instructor at [Homeschool Connections](#) or as the host of the [Homeschooling Saints Podcast](#). Perhaps we've already met through my books, talks, and media appearances at Catholic events around the country. But what you may not know is that I'm a professionally-trained [life coach](#) specializing in helping individuals and families achieve their dreams through their God-given strengths. I love this topic because, when we understand our talents, we gain a blueprint for *growing at an exponential rate*.

My favorite tool for unearthing and leveraging natural talent for parents and children is the world-renowned Clifton Strengthsfinder Assessment (CSA), owned by Gallup. You may have heard of it--and even taken the assessment at some point in your life. By the time I took the CSA, I was already a fan of Dr. Don Clifton's research and had started using it as a tool with my clients. I've since had the thrill of going through Gallup's intensive professional training program, specifically for coaches.

The CSA is respected and extremely popular in the business world, as well as on many college campuses. It's popular because, in the words of the [Gallup](#) organization:

*Our data show that people who have the opportunity to use their CliftonStrengths are six times as likely to be engaged in their jobs and to strongly agree that they have the chance to do what they do best every day. (emphasis mine)*

*Six times more likely to love what they do--and do it superbly. More importantly, Gallup reports that they are three times as likely to report an excellent quality of life.*

### **But it's so much more than the scientific data.**

Think what would happen to the world if *even half of us* could discover our God-given gifts and use them well. As St. Paul points out in First Corinthians, Chapter 12, we are all members of the same body, but each has a special purpose the body cannot do without.

*But as it is, God placed the parts, each one of them, in the body as he intended.  
If they were all one part, where would the body be?  
But as it is, there are many parts, yet one body.  
(1 Corinthians 12:18-20)*

We're not like anybody else. *And we're not supposed to be.*

### **Here's a cool fact:**

Did you know that in the sixty years that Strengthsfinder has been used all over the world, it's been confirmed that it's extremely rare for two people to have the same *top five* talents ranked in the same order of dominance? (That's out of 34 talent themes, so--just the top five.)

**The odds against it are staggering:** *One in 33.4 million.*

And that's not even considering your top ten--or a thousand other ways we are wonderfully made by God. We should rejoice to hear that social science is discovering what we have known all along: We are wonderfully made (Ps 139), and our souls are "unique and unrepeatable" ([CCC 2275](#)).

### **What does this mean to us?**

As homeschooling parents, we do NOT want a cookie-cutter education for our kids because they're not clones.

*Our children need personalized development to achieve their potential.* So helping our children identify, understand, and leverage their own natural abilities fits neatly with our holiest desires for them. We are willing to sacrifice a great deal to prepare them well for whatever God calls them to, knowing that it will be the means he uses to sanctify them and to speak his love and mercy into the world through their lives.

Here's an interesting distinction. The CSA clarifies that talents are not really about *what* we do, but about *how* we do things: how we think, react, and behave. This is why CSA-coached teams become enthusiastic about working cooperatively and interdependently, rapidly innovating and solving problems, working out conflicts in a spirit of trust and mutual understanding, and achieving or exceeding their financial and personal goals. *Strengths-based Teams*, as they're called, are also highly-skilled at finding ways *to bring out the best in each other.*

### **Sound like the attributes of a healthy family to you?**

It does to me, too.

So, to be clear, the WONDEFULLY MADE! program, which helps families go deep into their natural strengths, won't tell you or your children *what* to do with their lives. It will help them to *be at their best* whatever vocations, passions, and interests they pursue--and to appreciate and support others at being the best *they* can be. When we live and operate out of God's design for us--we are far more energized, life feels authentic, we're happier and more magnanimous, and our growth is *exponential.*

I created this program because I am convinced that God desires to use our gifts to make the world a better place. I invite you to read through this guide, which briefly unpacks seven

ways a deeper awareness of talent can bless your marriage, your family, and your children's future. You'll see why.

Use this guide to help you get more out of your own Clifton Strengthsfinder Assessment, which is available at the Gallup website. However, I highly recommend working with a Gallup-trained coach equipped with specialized learning tools that can accelerate your ability to identify, understand, and develop your natural talents into genuine strengths.

At any time in your discernment, feel free to contact me for a *free* inquiry call to get all your questions answered, with absolutely no obligation and no pressure. I'm very happy to help you discern if the program is a good fit for your needs.

Drop me a line, and let's talk about how your family can really start *thriving* in their natural talents.

You are *wonderfully made*. Read on!



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## I.

### JOYFUL SELF DISCOVERY



#### True Story

When I was a little girl, I often got notes sent home from school: *Daydreams in class.*

I was so embarrassed.

In spite of the fact that I was considered gifted and did well in school, I was made to feel that the natural flow of my thoughts was something to feel bad about, and I took that insecurity with me into adult life. Any time my mind wandered, I would feel guilty and wrench my attention back to checking things off my task lists. It was exhausting.

Eventually, I crashed. In 2019, after an intense period of work, travel, and deadlines, I experienced a devastating case of burnout. It felt like my creativity had died, and I was worried. I prayed for a solution, but nothing I tried helped much. After months of frustration, I took a personality assessment I had admired for years for its incredible depth of research. I discovered that I have a highly-ranked talent for something called, "intellection."

People who have intellection love to think, and as they reflect and imaginatively explore their thoughts, they make connections, their learning deepens, and they experience *joy*. That so-called "daydreaming" was a hidden superpower for me, and I'd been *avoiding* it for decades.

But since discovering my talent for intellection, I've started *scheduling* time in my day just for thinking, and the *very first time I did that*, my creativity roared back like a blow torch-- and it *hasn't stopped*. This is no exaggeration. To me, it is nothing short of miraculous.

It seems counter-intuitive, but it turns out I get more done if I include time each day for reflection than I do if I race through my day, checking off tasks and fighting to stay focused. This one insight has been life-transforming. Fast-forward into the present, and I can tell you that this has been an incredible season of collaboration, productivity, and personal growth. I couldn't be more excited about my life and work. And my increased happiness and self-awareness continues to bless my family.

Why such a sudden and profound shift? Because our natural talents are doorways to accelerated growth. Read on!

## II.

### ACCELERATED GROWTH



Your talents give you an *edge*. Consciously applying your innate abilities to your daily tasks and challenges brings direction, inspiration, and confidence.

We can perceive the outlines of God's plan woven into our personalities, at certain times we might call "peak experiences." When we operate in our gifts, we sense that "something is right." Things are easier. Our energy increases, we relax, we smile more, and we're *more competent with less effort*. We think with greater clarity, solve problems more quickly, and slip right into the flow of what we're doing. Time seems to fly by and work becomes play.

So, taking the time to understand and develop talent is important. It also requires you to not waste time, effort, and money trying to become something you are *not*. Yet, in American culture, many of us grew up believing that, "If you work hard, you can achieve anything!"

#### **Focusing on Weakness**

It sounds like such a harmless sentiment, doesn't it? And yet, generations of Americans have been forced into an educational system that treats them like they are all exactly the same, with the same learning styles, talents, and potential. It's a system that incessantly focuses on fixing areas of weakness, not developing strength; on cramming round pegs into square holes, not on honoring the uniqueness of every human person (CCC 2275).

Culturally, we waste a whole lot of time pursuing energy-draining dead-ends.

It's ridiculous, really, and Catholic homeschoolers simply don't buy it.

Understand, we're not talking about virtue, here. The struggle to grow in virtue is a lifelong work of great value, and we should never, ever give up. In fact, the struggle is good for us! Even so, God's grace does the heavy lifting, as long as we cling to sacramental life and keep asking for help.

However, when we blindly follow the culture and spend our efforts trying to gain mastery in areas of *low-talent*, we actually work against God's plan for our lives. Yes, with perseverance, we may eventually become *passable* in the non-talent area--and there are some instances, like requirements for graduation, which may demand some extra effort. But in practically every other case, we wear ourselves out for marginal gains--and for what reason, exactly? And at what cost of time, money, and emotional well-being?

Over-focusing on areas of weakness impacts our self-image and can generate a mindset of *never enough* and *not important to God*. If our lives are lackluster, it's easy to imagine that we were simply made that way, and that nothing of any note is even meant to happen to us.

Another problem is that a lack of appreciation for our own individual gifts ultimately keeps us from lifting up the lives of others. When we know our own strengths, we confidently seek out those who possess talent in the areas where we are weak. Working together becomes productive and powerful. But if we can't even appreciate ourselves, we end up in a dead-end mindset that stunts our ability to recognize what could be beautiful complementary partnerships, where everyone functions at their best--and no one is wasting time trying to be someone else.

## **Talent Themes**

Let's add a little more insight to this discussion by unpacking a useful idea.

The late Dr. Don Clifton's remarkable research (which is ongoing and still continuously updated by Gallup) concluded that there were too many different talents to isolate and leverage individually. However, because many of them were linked, he grouped them into 34 talent "themes." Those themes are evaluated by the CSA, to give you a remarkably clear picture of your natural abilities.

For instance, a person might have the knack for choosing just the right word to express an idea; another might be strong in public speaking; another gifted in the art of friendly conversation. In the CSA, those talents are grouped together into a talent "theme" that Clifton dubbed "Communication." Make sense?

So, your talent themes tell you about some of the abilities that come naturally to you, which can be further defined for your particular personality, then rapidly developed and deployed to accelerate your growth. Talent themes reveal not only what you easily do well, but just as importantly, identify important human *drives* and *needs* that show how you best thrive as a human being. It's powerful knowledge.

*One caveat.*

It's important to understand that talent themes are not meant to be labels, ever. You are not your talent theme. And no talent theme is better than any other. Talent is something *you naturally possess*, which can quickly be developed into a genuine strength. Here are Gallup's own definitions:

***Talent:*** *a naturally recurring pattern of thought, feeling, or behavior that can be productively applied.*

***Strength:*** *the ability to consistently produce a positive outcome through near-perfect performance in a specific task. To finish with strength, start with talent.*

A simple equation for understand this dynamic might be represented like this:

$$\mathbf{T \times E = S}$$

Talent *plus* effort equals "strength"--that ability to perform at near-perfect levels, consistently. What you put into your talents will determine your yield. Like a muscle, the talent needs to be "flexed" and aimed at a challenge. High-performance individuals invariably have combined natural abilities with consistent efforts that have developed into solid strengths.

Conversely, if a person has little or no talent in a particular area, the equation would look more like this:

$$\mathbf{NT \times E = P}$$

Non-talent *plus* effort equals "passable," lackluster outcomes. The person with low talent in a particular area is wasting effort that could be poured into areas of natural talent. That unfortunate person probably feels tired a lot, struggles with focus, and lacks a sense of purpose.

### **But what exactly do we mean by *effort*?**

Think *practice*, *skill-building*, and *knowledge acquisition*. Nourish and exercise your talents, and they'll pay you back a hundred-fold. When you intentionally embrace and cultivate your God-given gifts, you unleash the powers God intended specifically for your use.

Remember, you are a member of the Body of Christ and you are *wonderfully made* (Ps 139:14). Your *innate abilities* were woven by God into your being, for the sake of his plan for salvation! You are not like anyone else in the history of the world. And that's exactly how God intended it.

*If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God placed the parts, each one of them, in the body as he intended. If they were all one part, where would the body be?*

(1 Corinthians 12: 17-19)

When we understand our gifts, leveraging them to overcome obstacles and achieve our goals, these peak experiences recur regularly, and our growth explodes. When we understand our own gifts and needs, we become aware of the gifts and needs of others. This has a profound impact on our relationships.

### III.

#### STRONG RELATIONSHIPS



I've got a talent theme the CSA calls, "activator." It means I like to get going. NOW. I love generating new ideas, new projects, new plans! I'm a high-energy motivator in team situations, so you can trust me to keep the momentum going. The downside to this gift is that I'm impatient, so I tend to make decisions too quickly, without really gathering enough data or taking enough time to reflect (remember my need for "intellection").

My husband, on the other hand, is more "deliberative," which means that he takes his time to make decisions. He's a great comparison shopper, handles our finances with care, and designs complex and elegant computer code. He takes his time at most things he does, but in the long run, he saves time--and pain--by looking ahead to prevent or design contingencies for potential problems that he is able to correctly anticipate.

As you might imagine, there have been times in our married life when I wanted to GO! and he wanted to WAIT. (Agh! Cue sound-effect of *grinding gears!*) It was frustrating, and sometimes lead to friction in our relationship.

But with an understanding of his talent for deliberating, gathering data, and planning ahead to avoid potential problems, I can easily shift into *appreciation mode*. Because now I value his input on my decision making process, I can leverage his ability in a grateful spirit that strengthens our relationship and affirms his strength. Oh, and he admiringly calls me "a self-starter" and gives me great peace about my decisions. I'm a lot less "ready-fire-aim," and the stress levels in my fast-paced life are more under control.

In the corporate world, strengths-based teams are the most productive, most engaged, and the most profitable. And when families come together to delve into a greater appreciation of their own and each other's natural abilities and needs, one of the beautiful outcomes is much better relationships. Instead of getting mired in petty misunderstandings, everybody starts to think in terms of appreciating and leveraging talent for the good of the group.

And that's a critical point for discussing quality of life.

#### IV.

### EXCELLENT QUALITY OF LIFE



For most of us, learning about our natural abilities will be a game-changer. Why? Because the broken system most of us were raised in that focused on our weaknesses *weakened us* and made life unnecessarily hard. When we're operating outside our natural talents, we struggle with focus, we're drained of energy, and even our goals can be obscured. Life becomes one long battle with stress, disappointment, and conflict.

The Gallup researches have seen this unhappy syndrome time and again; yet, when people learn about their talents and start aiming those abilities at their relationships and objectives, the results are stunning:

*Plus, people are more confident and more likely to achieve their goals. They're more likely to report having ample energy, feeling well-rested, being happy, smiling or laughing a lot, learning something interesting, and being treated with respect. And they're less likely to report experiencing worry, stress, anger, sadness or physical pain.*

Remember I said that people who recognize their natural abilities and conscientiously develop them are three-times more likely to report an excellent quality of life? It makes perfect sense. When our behavior *flows freely out of our authentic being*, we operate in harmony with the way God made us. With more energy, confidence, and success, comes joy.

And because life for us is dramatically on the upswing, we also appreciate the gifts and needs we encounter in others. This makes us treasured spouses and parents, professionals, volunteers, mentors, and leaders. Life is authentic and energized with the divine hope unleashed by God's plan (Jer 29:11). And when we encounter problems, we recognize the opportunity it represents.

#### V.

## PRODUCTIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT



Even the best trained teams would break apart if they didn't understand that different talents also generate vastly different *worldviews*. Someone who is visionary, fast-paced, and captivated by new plans will typically clash with the coworker--or family member--whose strengths lie in analyzing data, maintaining consistent systems, and mapping out the ramifications of every decision.

One of them sees the world as an adventure unfolding moment to moment, while the other embraces each day as a fascinatingly complex set of data points and patterns to be analyzed for optimal outcomes. They both make powerful contributions to the good of the team, and each has a need to function in the way that comes naturally. When their personalities are misunderstood and devalued, serious strife is bound to come.

### **Gallup says this:**

*People's talents filter their interactions, decisions and activities. As such, our talents can sometimes leave us vulnerable to our thoughts and behaviors — and to others' perceptions or misconceptions. People can even have misconceptions about a theme itself. When a theme or theme-based action is mistakenly devalued, team members may lose opportunities to contribute their most valuable talents.*

Here's what this unfortunate dynamic looks and sounds like (note the talent-theme name and description at the top of each interaction):

**FOCUS** (*takes a direction, follows through, makes corrections necessary to stay on track*)

#### ***Mistakenly devalued:***

*"He is too intense. He gets so absorbed in what he is working on that he becomes unapproachable."*

#### ***Appreciated and valued:***

*"He is our point person. His disciplined, purposeful approach keeps us from time-consuming distractions."*

**FUTURISTIC** (*inspired by the future and what could be, they energize others with their visions of the future*)

***Mistakenly devalued:***

*“She is a dreamer. There are times when she just is not in the present.”*

***Appreciated and valued:***

*“She can see things we cannot see. It’s as if she can see in detail what tomorrow might bring. This helps us anticipate and stretch our thinking and our goals.”*

**CONTEXT** (enjoy thinking about the past and understand the present by researching its history)

***Mistakenly devalued:***

*“He is always slow to move and react to the changes we make. It’s as if he gets stuck in the past.”*

***Appreciated and valued:***

*He helps us avoid the mistakes we have made in the past.”*

As I've mentioned, the CSA identifies not only talents--the powerful ways each person can contribute to the group--but, just as importantly, it identifies their inborn personality *needs*. The team or family that values each human being's internal wiring becomes far more respectful and supportive, tending to create group dynamics that honor the dignity of everyone involved--and helping them to truly shine.

In addition, strengths-based teams see conflict as an opportunity for learning and innovation. Disagreeing and hashing out the best solutions in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect can pay massive dividends.

If everyone embraces healthy conflict as a necessary component of team interactions, they're more likely to be open with their sharing, while keeping the desired end in sight, especially the good of the group and the achievement of mutual goals. To put it simply, they don't take conflict personally, so they appreciate the opportunity to learn from each other--and that learning moves the team forward.

## VI.

### TEAM BUILDING FOR RESULTS



Strengths-based teams are super-effective at both individual and group development, giving us a field-tested blueprint for ramping up the functionality and happiness of our families.

Why? Because the strengths framework helps us understand that every member of the team, *though imperfect*, is uniquely gifted; that each has special areas of high value to the team, but also *areas of weakness*; and that leveraging each other's strengths is the pathway to greatest success for *everyone*.

In a nutshell, achieving success as a team means each member discovers their own talents, recognizes their weaknesses, and understands how someone else's abilities complement their own. This framework operates best in a spirit of healthy humility and makes for great cooperative partnerships.

Here's more from Gallup--keep your marriage and family life in mind, as you read:

*Three factors help determine how well people's abilities mesh with their partners':*

- 1. The partners recognize that their strengths complement each other.*
  - 2. They acknowledge that they need each other to get the job done.*
  - 3. Each partner understands that the other does some things better than they do and that they do some things better than the other does.*
- Everybody also has weaknesses and blind spots that create obstacles to reaching a goal. One of the most important reasons for teaming up is to work with someone who is strong in areas where another is weak and vice versa. Two people with complementary strengths can work together to tackle challenges more effectively than either could alone.*
  - Understanding everyone's talents and strengths and how each person uses them inspires, motivates and mobilizes people.*
  - A strengths-based approach starts by focusing on what people do well. It emphasizes and builds on strengths to help individuals become more effective individually and collectively.*

Using the CSA, teams go through a process together that teaches them about themselves and ramps up their appreciation for each other:

**Name It:** Team members can name and understand their individual talents and each other's dominant themes.

**Claim It:** Team members see a clear connection between each other's dominant themes and past and present behavior. They can see the link between strengths and success.

**Aim It:** Team members use their knowledge of each other's dominant themes to plan, strategize, analyze and direct their actions and behavior.

By working as a group to *identify* our talents and needs (Name It); *understanding* those talents and needs as they play out in our unique personalities (Claim It); and then *leveraging* each other's gifts and talents toward our shared goals, obstacles, and areas of weakness (Aim It), *the team thrives*. The harmony that results gives glory to God by lifting everyone up and helping them to experience consistent success.

## VII.

### GOD-GLORIFYING SUCCESS



For years, I've been writing and speaking in the Catholic space, doing radio and television, and serving in my community as a catechist. I've written or contributed to several best-selling books, and I've taught and presented at Catholic events in many parts of the United States.

Even as a coach, my writing and speaking is part of what I bring to the table. I delight in providing guidance, resources, and game-changing insights to my clients. I've learned so much about my relationship with God through these experiences, as well as my relationship to the Body of Christ.

But for a period of a year or so, a negative mindset crept into how I thought about my passion for writing and public speaking. You see, my personality is such that, every single time I receive an insight in prayer, hear something that resonates deeply, or find something exciting in a book, I immediately want to mark it, save it, and turn it into a lesson to share with others. It's a major drive in my personality, and it's always been so.

Yet, in a well-meaning but misguided way, I worried that this instantaneous impulse to package and teach every little thing that ignited my enthusiasm was a sign that I was getting too "full of myself," that somehow it meant I was becoming self-important. I

wondered if I had developed an ego problem, and if I should fight the desire to always be designing the next presentation featuring *myself* as the *know-it-all*.

Those thoughts make me laugh, now, but without an understanding of my talent, I was mistaking a genuine, God-given *need* in my personality for a *lack of virtue*.

### **Talent to the Rescue**

After taking the CSA, I found that one of my top-five talent themes is called, "input." People with input love to collect and archive information, and they have a *need* to share it. They get so excited about valuable information that the drive to offer it to others kicks in and makes them productive and generous knowledge-sharers! They're valued members of corporate teams, parishes, and families because they often have valuable information to add to important discussions.

Realizing that God had wired me this way turned my attitude around. Now I believe that to discover and share awesome gems of truth and beauty is part of who I am as a member of the Church, and that this holy desire is *an indication of my calling in the Lord*. Just thinking about it makes me happy!

To be clear, that nasty little voice of self-doubt was not my conscience urging me to greater virtue; it was a false spirit of discouragement, eroding my peace and potentially damaging my trust in the Lord. These days, I humbly thank the Lord for this gift of "input," and I'm more energized and enthused to coach, write, and create beautiful programs than ever before. I'm grateful to God for his delightful plan, and I know from experience that he will continue to stretch and surprise me along my earthly journey.

We are meant to live boldly (2 Tim 1:7), not live in fear of the powers he has "knit" into our being (Ps 139:13). We have a role to play in God's plan of salvation, and each of us is provisioned with a life's purpose chock full of hope (Jer 29:11). Our gifts are designed to be *luminously* visible to others (Mt 5:15), *developed and used*, not buried or neglected (Mt 25:14-30).

And because these talents are known to be permanent features of our personalities, we can rejoice with St. Paul, who reminds us:

*For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable.*

(Romans 11:29)

Understanding our talents with more clarity shows us--not necessarily *where* to go, but *how* to go where God is calling us: *how* to overcome obstacles, *how* to have more fun, and *how* to succeed. Knowing how we most naturally operate means that family cultures built on this awareness set their children up for success.

Now, defining success is very personal, but it is always the result of *using our talents well* and using them *in partnership with others*. Since our top-ranked talents have the most potential, developing them can really make us stand out from the crowd.

In fact, aligning our talents with the way we conduct our relationships and professional lives guarantees a much higher level of performance. And people who conscientiously practice their natural talents quickly achieve both competence and *confidence*.

When our talents develop into strengths, we do things well without even having to think about it, and *both the quality and quantity* of our achievement soars. Working within our dominant talents unleashes passion and energy, quickly revealing where our best opportunities for success lie. This energy and passion is attractive to others and opens doors both professionally and personally.

Think of what it would mean for your children to go out into the world knowing their own unique capabilities and *confident* in their ability to make powerful contributions. What if they knew how to leverage their own and other people's talents to persuade, influence, and win people over; to achieve important objectives, build new initiatives, and make real and lasting change?

With that critical self-awareness, they would also take into the world a respect for the unique lens through which every *other* human person sees the world. They'd be ready and able to support and accelerate the growth and engagement of their families, as well as the people on their work and ministry teams, providing opportunities for *everyone* to be amazing.

## VIII.

### PUTTING YOUR TALENTS INTO ACTION



What follows are practical pointers recommended by the Gallup organization.

First, your Clifton Strengthsfinder report is the beginning, not the end. Explore your talents, harness their power, and bring them to life in an intentional way, every day.

Second, remember, talents are like super-charged muscles. Flex and challenge them consistently, and your growth will be exponential. This truly is a life-changing opportunity.

Here are some steps you and your family can try together for drawing out value from your CSA report, noting your powers, preferences, and underlying needs:

**NAME:** Go through each of your dominant talents, and highlight words and phrases that resonate with you--the ones that make you think, "That's me!" Reflect with your spouse or family, or journal out your responses:

- When has this talent shown up in my life?
- Which ones do I use most?
- Which ones least?
- Which ones would I like to develop further?

**CLAIM:** Post your top five talents where you'll see them every day. Share them with people close to you and get their reactions. Start noticing your talents showing up in the moment. Discuss:

- What talents are most comfortable for me?
- Which are least comfortable?
- What talent am I using right now?
- What talents are other people aware of in me?

**AIM:** Choose one highly-ranked talent theme to focus on, for a whole day. Journal out some questions:

- How can I use this talent theme, today?
- Where can my theme make a positive difference in my life--or the life of someone else, today?

**FLEX:** Using action items from your journaling or the ones from your report, get your talent *moving*. Challenge the talent like you would a muscle. Don't let it wither. Talents need regular exercise to get and stay in shape

**SPEED BUMP:** If you're butting heads with a family or team member, stop to reflect:

- What theme am I using right now?
- What need am I trying to fulfill?
- What differences in our wiring may be creating a misunderstanding?
- What is my desired outcome?
- How can I operate in an attitude of greater respect?

Once you find you're using a particular talent daily, move on to the next strength and focus on it, until it's part of your go-to style. Building on your areas of greatest strength leads to authenticity and achievement. Your greatest talents are part of how you are made in the

image and likeness of God. Your self-awareness will bless you, your loved ones, and the people God calls you to serve.

## IX.

### LEARNING TOGETHER AS A FAMILY



I hope you enjoyed WONDERFULLY MADE! *Seven Ways Understanding Your Natural Talents Can Bless Your Marriage, Bring Peace to Your Family, and Help Your Children Succeed.*

It would be my pleasure to guide you further in getting the most out of your natural talents!

Through my new program, WONDERFULLY MADE! families like yours now have the opportunity to experience the same tools and exercises that successful corporate teams have been privileged to harness, for decades.

It would be my sincere honor to help you develop a family plan for appreciating, affirming, and leveraging yours and your children's natural abilities for greater happiness, professional success, and--above all--God's greater glory.

Drop me a line, and take advantage of a *free* inquiry call, with no obligation and no pressure, to learn more about how your family can start really *thriving* in their natural talents. I'd love to speak with you and answer all your questions. Click my signature image below or contact me by email or text.

You are *wonderfully made*.

In the peace of Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary,

*Lisa*



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