



## **EVALUATION OF TELEHEALTH SERVICES ON MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES**

for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

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**Using positive psychology principles  
to facilitate capacity of collaborative  
research teams**

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# Objectives

- Review concepts of collective strengths (15 minutes)
- Illustrate how the telehealth engagement team fostered a culture of strength (20 minutes)
- Evaluate collective strength use on our team (15 minutes)
- Discussion (20 minutes)
- Questions/Reporting (10 minutes)



# Funding: Grant #14MN50 (PI, Beasley)

## Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)

### Our Vision

Patients and the public have information they can use to make decisions that reflect their desired health outcomes.

### Our Mission

PCORI helps people make informed healthcare decisions, and improves healthcare delivery and outcomes, by producing and promoting high-integrity, evidence-based information that comes from research guided by patients, caregivers, and the broader healthcare community.

### Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As a research funder, convener, and employer, PCORI is dedicated to advancing and accelerating diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in our work.



# Terminology used in this presentation

- Persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health service experiences (IDD-MH)
- Mental health in persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities



# Strengths Based Approaches

What is it, and why should we do it?



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# What is the problem?

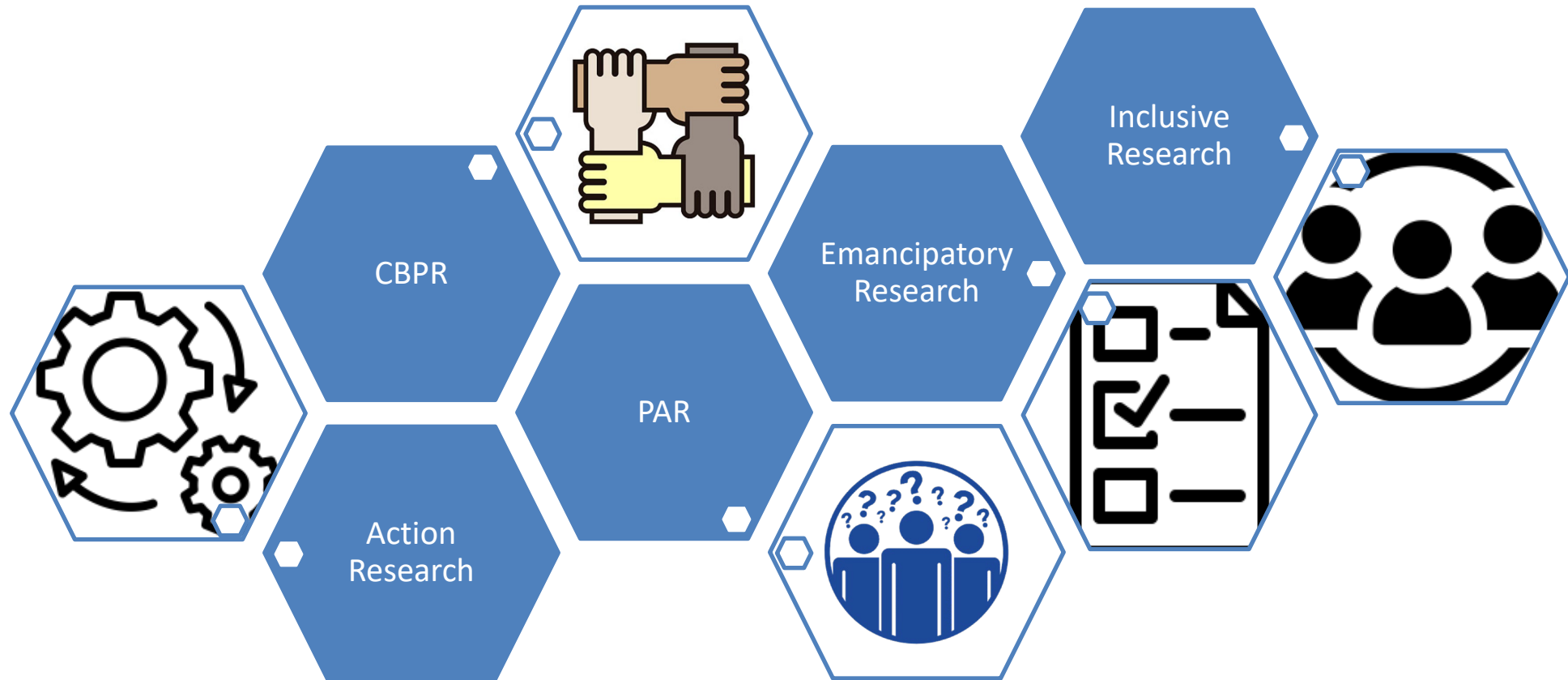
Sometimes people with IDD-MH are not considered able to partner in research because of discrimination.

Discrimination happens when people or groups of people are treated differently from other people, in a way that is unfair or unequal.

This may be related to negative bias about disability.



# What is collaborative research?



# Why strengths?

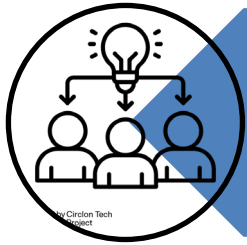
- A strengths based approach can counter the prevailing deficit focused view of disability
- Strengths use is associated with positive mental health and well being

(Moore et al., 2022; Taylor et al., 2023)

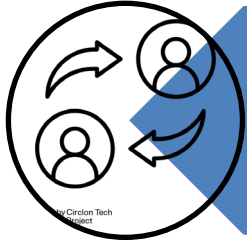




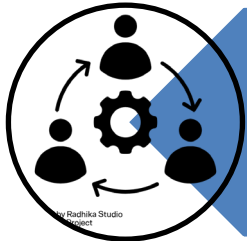
# Collective Strength Use



Strength Awareness



Credibility



Coordination

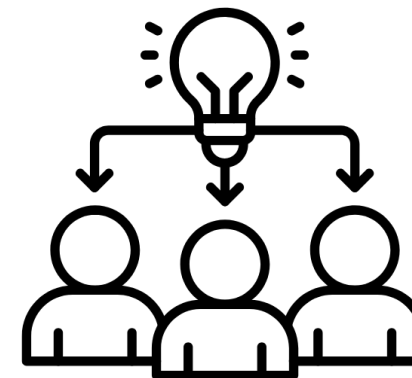
(van Woerkom et al., 2022)



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# Strength Awareness

- Awareness of all strengths
- Ability to identify and recognize strengths can be learned and developed over time



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from Noun Project

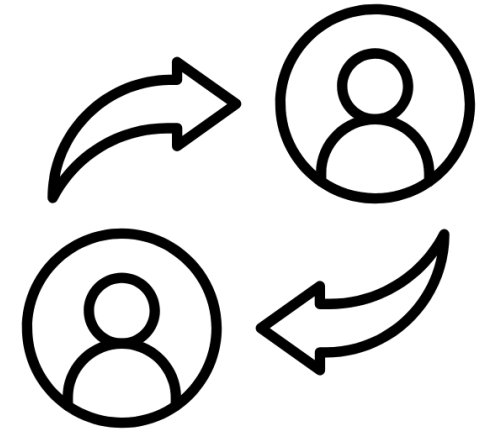
(Moore et al., 2022; Szucs et al., 2019)



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# Credibility

- Believing or expecting that other people can and will apply their strengths to our (mutual) benefit
- Developed through repeated interactions between team members over time (relational trust)



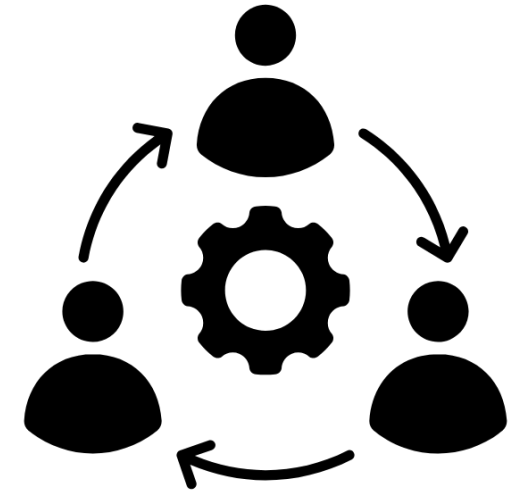
Created by Circlon Tech  
from Noun Project

(Cottrell et al., 2007; Meyers et al., 2023)



# Coordination

- Orchestrated, interdependent actions by team members to meet a common goal
- Implicit and explicit



Created by Radhika Studio  
from Noun Project

(Meyers et al., 2023; Lewis 2003)



# Factors Facilitating Collective Strength Use

- Strengths based climate
- Task complexity
- Strengths diversity

(Cable et al., 2013; Ding et al., 2020; Gander et al., 2020)



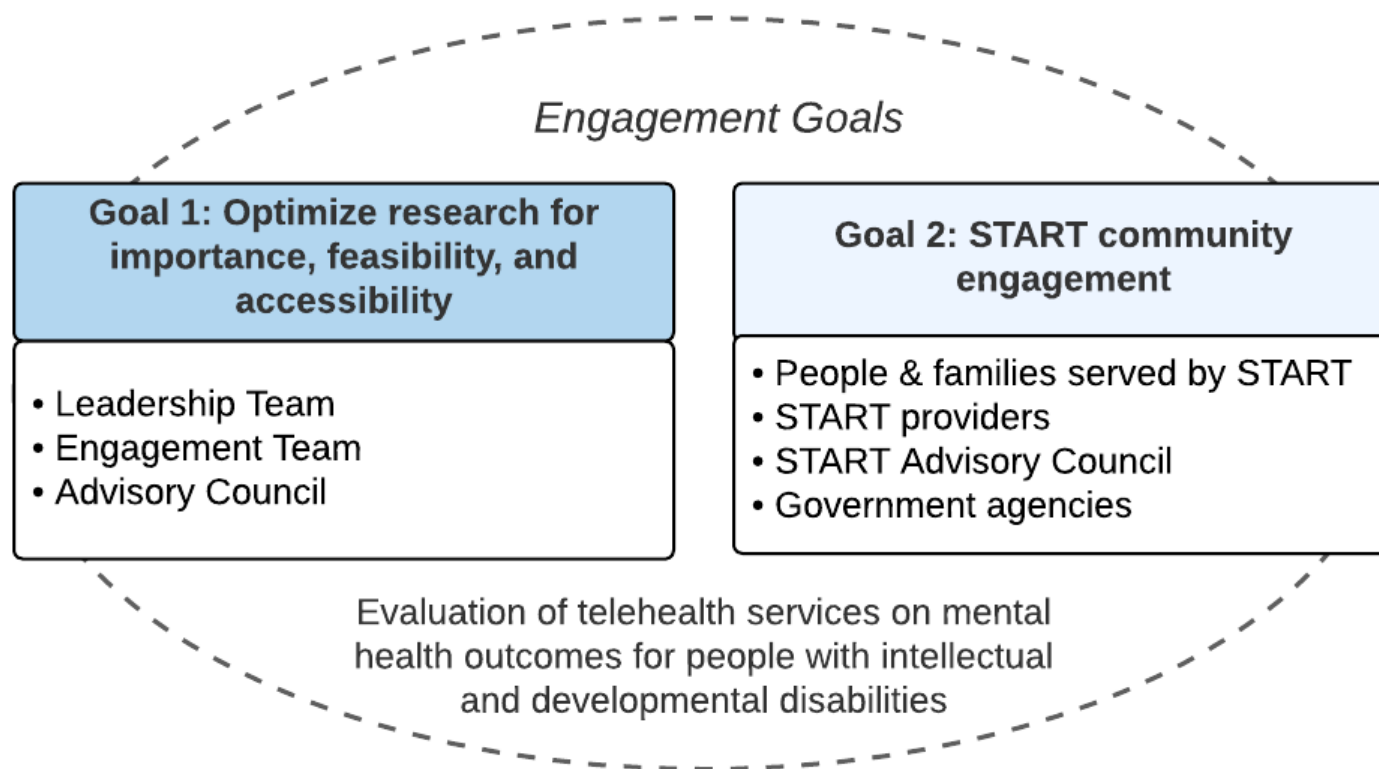
# Building a culture of strength

Examples from our team

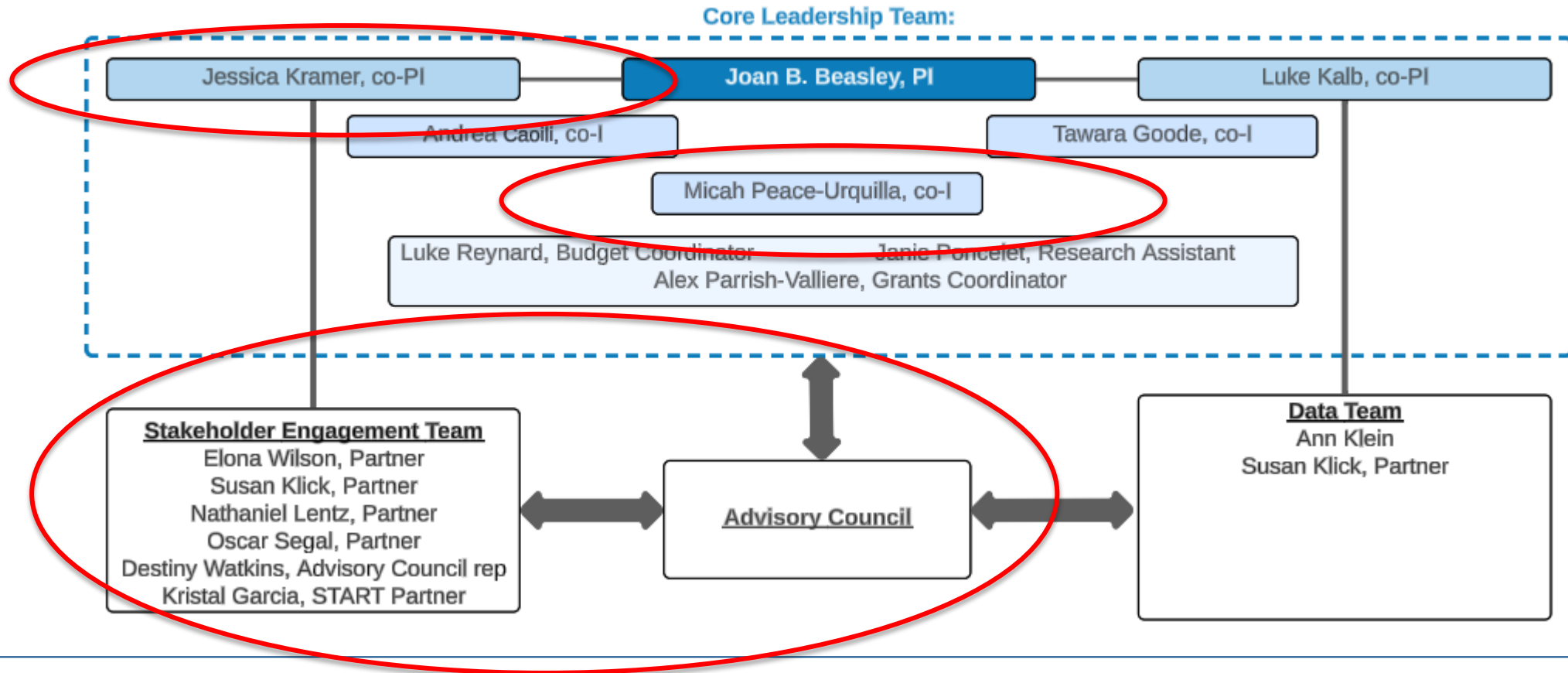


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# Engagement goals for our project

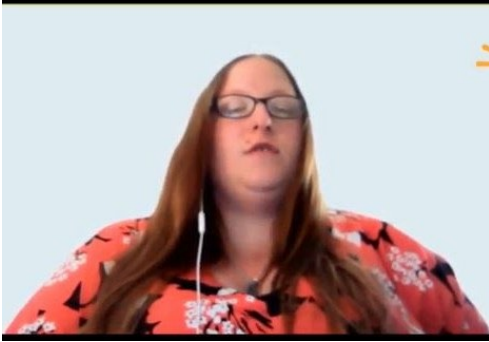


# Engagement Team





# Who is the Engagement Team?



**Destiny Watkins, ID**



**Nathaniel Lentz, WI**



**Oscar Segal, NY**



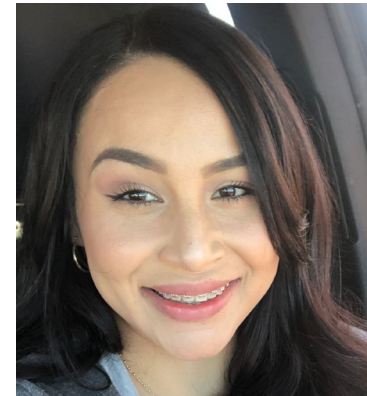
**Dr. Jessica Kramer, FL**  
**Leadership Team**



**Elona Wilson, NC**  
**Parent**



**Susan Klick, CT**  
**Parent**



**Kristal Garcia, TX**  
**START Provider**



**Micah Peace Urquilla, KY**  
**Leadership Team**



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# Engagement team meetings

- About every other week for 3 years, then 1x month.
- 1:1 meetings as needed to prepare
- Reminders & agenda sent 1 week, 1 day, 1 hour before each meeting

## Meeting Agenda

**Date:** Friday February 16, 2024

**Time:** 3:00- 4:00 ET, 12:00-1:00 PT

**Zoom:** <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/8968286121>

### To prepare for the meeting:

**Read or Watch:**

- The agenda
- The attached draft plain language description of the Aim 1 telehealth focus group study. This study is called “Optimizing telehealth delivery for therapeutic activation for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health service experiences”

**Think:**

- Are there any words or ideas that are hard to understand?
- What images or pictures could help people understand the words and ideas?

**Do:**

- Write down your ideas and questions (see “Think”)
- Review the draft with [Micah](#), if you want.



# Strengths Awareness

- Our agenda reminds us of our strengths

## Meeting Attendees & Their Strengths:

- ☐ Kristal: Honesty, Creativity, and Bravery
- ☐ Micah: Perspective, leadership, Kindness
- ☐ Destiny: Honest, kindness, creativeness
- ☐ Elona: Love, fairness, bravery
- ☐ Susan: Hope, creativity, honesty
- ☐ Jessica: Fairness, love, love of learning
- ☐ Nathaniel: Honesty, Perseverance, Leadership



# Group processes to foster collective strength use

- “Question of the day”
- ‘Real- time’ editing
- Strength activation through strengths spotting



# Question of the Day

- Form relationships
- Share experiences
- Directed by team member
- Builds foundation for credibility

Have you had a doctor/provider go “above and beyond”?  
What did they do?

What have you accomplished that is amazing?

What 3 items would you take with you to a deserted island?



# Example

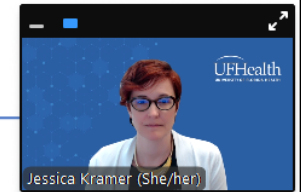
- Question of the day



# Real-time editing

- Complex tasks of:
  - Making abstract ideas concrete
  - Creating accessible materials
  - Formatting for clarity and usability
- Requires coordination





## Step 2: Engage

~~The second step, Engage,~~ Being engaged on telehealth is about working together ~~on Telehealth.~~

People with IDD might need accommodations to join in on activities on Telehealth. Define accommodations here (modifications- changes how you access and learn the same material)

Getting accommodations make it easier for people to focus and interact/understand over telehealth.

- pay attention and have a good conversation/connect/have a better experience.

~~IF someone doesn't get the accommodations they need, they might get distracted or even frustrated with Telehealth.~~

There are a few ways that mental health providers can help People with IDD get more involved in Telehealth meetings.



# Example

- How we made the “What your provider can do to make telehealth work for you” video and guides



# Strengths Activation through Spotting

- Recognize the unique contributions each person brings to the table
- Process the ways that we work together
- Grounded in positive psychology
- Strengthens awareness & credibility

Niemiec, R.M (2014) Mindfulness and character strengths: A practical guide to flourishing. Hogrefe.  
Seligman, M.E., & Csikszentmihayl, M. (2000). Positive Psychology: An Introduction (Vol 55 No.1, p.5) American Psychological Association.

## Strengths- Based Collaboration



What strengths did our team use today?  
How did those strengths support our team and goals?

- ☐ Appreciation of beauty and excellence: Recognize, emotionally experience, and appreciate the beauty around us and the skills of other

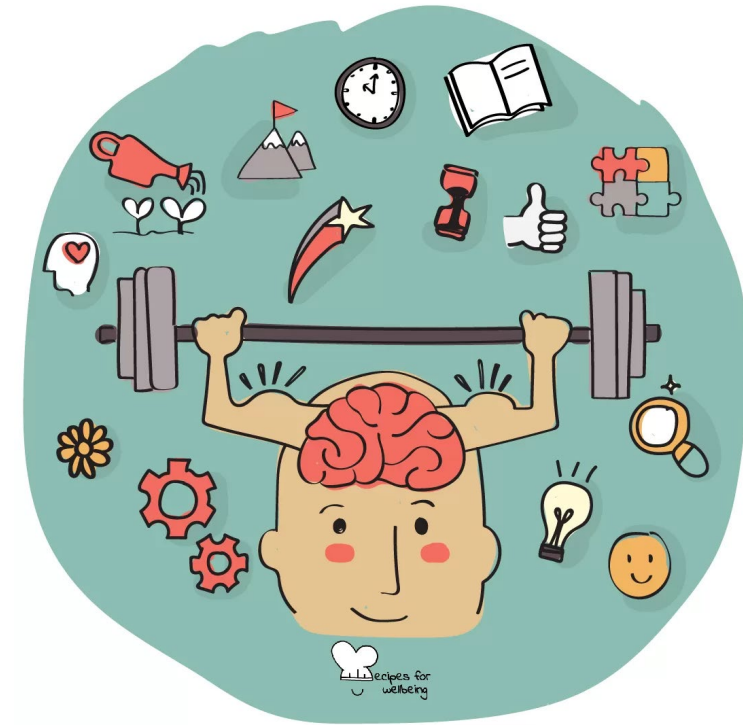
- ☐ Creativity: Think of new ways to do things that is worthwhile

- ☐ Fairness: Treat people justly and giving everyone equal opportunity.



# VIA Character Strengths

- The positive parts of our personalities that impact how we think, feel, and act.
- 24 strengths classified into six core virtues, organized according to the Values in Action framework
  - Universal – we all have all of them to varying degrees
  - Unique – in their “distinct constellations,” our individual top 5 signature strengths, which can change over time
- Assessed using the scientifically validated VIA Survey
- A positive psychology cornerstone – knowing, having opportunities to use your strengths supports wellness



## The VIA Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues



# Character Strengths in Action

- Promotes team-building, improves working relationships
- Catalyzes collaboration, fosters synergy & overall positive group culture
- Increases sense of self-efficacy, satisfaction, and confidence

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# Example

- Completing the Engagement Tracker



# Strengths Activation Evaluation



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# Evaluation Questions

- What strengths is our team activating most and least often?
- How does our strengths activation change over time?
- Who is being recognized for activating their strengths?



# Methods

- Each member of the team completed the VIA Strengths Inventory following the first meeting
  - Each members' top 3 strengths were represented in the engagement tracker
- Completed engagement tracker as a team at the end of every meeting
  - 66 meetings between 12/9/21- 8/22/25
  - n=58 completed surveys (12.1% missing)
- Shared screen, facilitator types when people talk





# Analysis

- Counts of each strength used at each date
- Descriptive statistics
  - Within a meeting
  - For a specific strength
- Qualitative coding for individual vs. collective strength use
  - Named person(s) vs. “we/team”



# Most used strengths



- Teamwork = 52 meetings



- Leadership = 47 meetings



- Creativity = 46 meetings



# Least used strengths



Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence = 22 times  
– New member strength added after 12 meetings



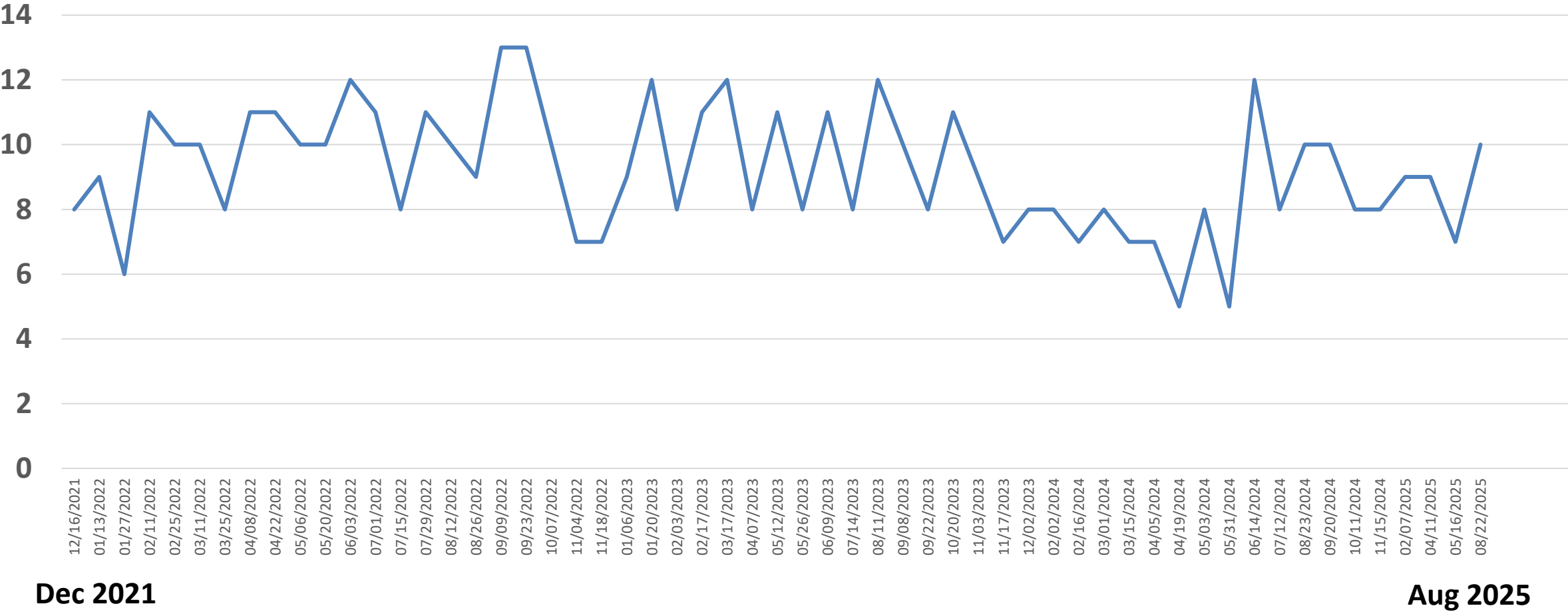
Fairness= 22



• Forgiveness = 17 meetings



# Strengths Use Over Time

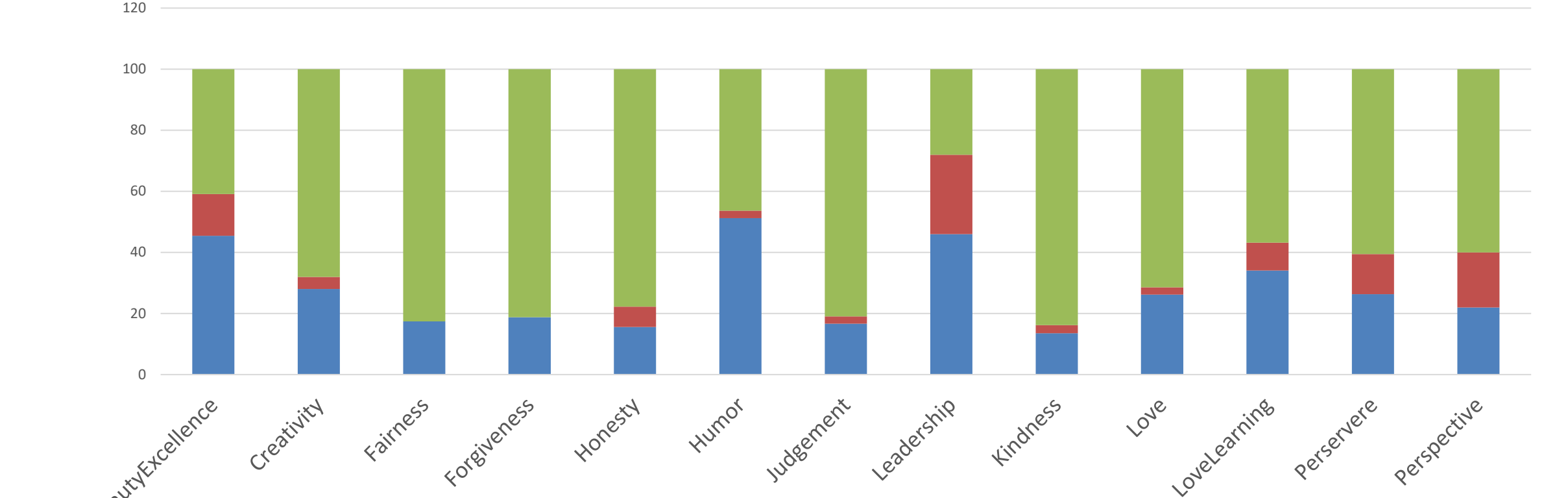


Dec 2021

Aug 2025



# Collective & Individual Use of Strengths



AppreciationBeautyExcellence

Creativity

Fairness

Forgiveness

Honesty

Humor

Judgement

Leadership

Kindness

Love

LoveLearning

Perservere

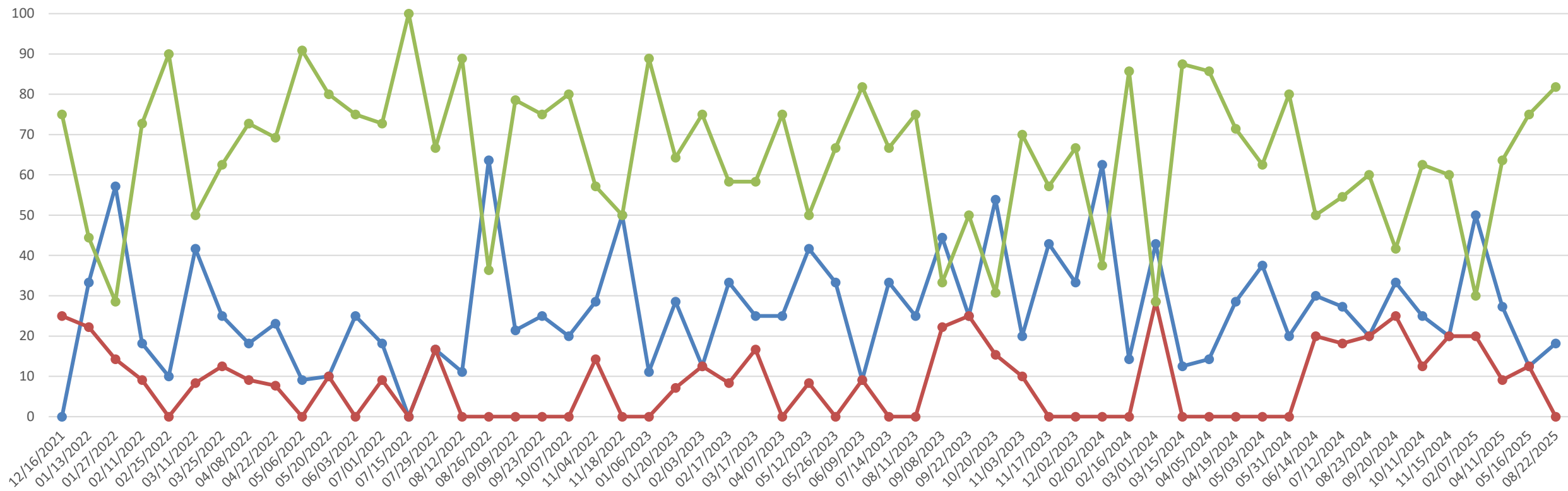
perspective

	We, team, or general
	2 or more people named
	1 person named



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# Individual & Collective Strength Use Over Time



	We, team, or general
	2 or more people named
	1 person named



# Discussion Activity

Breakout groups



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# Take Home Messages

- It's possible to foster collective strength use from the beginning by creating a culture of strengths
- Collaborative research teams use strengths as individuals and as a collective





# Discussion Questions

- What do you/can you do on your teams do:
  - Build awareness of strength
  - Foster credibility/trust of each other's strengths
  - Coordinate use of the team's strengths



# Visit and share our webpage!



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# References

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