

Exercise: How I became me

Start with a review of your qualities and abilities. Using the blanks in the two columns below if you like, list several of your most important strengths and weaknesses—the qualities that make you feel good about yourself or special, and the ones that make you feel inadequate or inferior. (If you need extra space, go to giftofbeingordinary.com or guilford.com/siegel4-materials.)

Strength	Weakness

As you look at the list, note what feelings arise in connection with each strength and each weakness. Let yourself feel those emotions.

Next take a few moments to reflect on how each strength or weakness came about. Was it through the luck of genetics—you were just born good (or bad) at it, or with (or without) that particular

talent or quality? Did it come about because of good or bad life circumstances—you had parents or others who introduced you (or didn't) to the ability, helped (or didn't help) you develop the skill or quality? Did it happen because of hard work (or avoidance)? Did that hard work (or avoidance) come about because of genetic or environmental influences?

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