



Live Your Dreams

Transcripts - Module 2 - Identify Your Strengths



Welcome to Module 2 of Live Your Dreams. My name is Liz Jansen and in this module, we're going to be talking about how to identify your strengths and going through some exercises that show you how to do that and then we'll talk about what you can do with that.

Before we get into that, I'd like to get into a Visioning Exercise. You had one of these in your handouts, in your resources last week, and in this module and in every module from here on in, I'd like to start the session with this, just because it helps get us grounded and get our minds free of clutter, just set up for the work that we're going to be doing now. It's important that we have an open and clear mind.

To do this, I'd like you to close your eyes and take slow, deep breaths, conscious breaths. Take some deep breaths in through your nose and exhale slowly through your nose. Take a few of those and just quiet yourself. Get grounded, get centered, take those slow, deep breaths. Get your mind free of the clutter, of all the distractions from the day, leave the day behind you. All the thoughts that are running through your mind, just set those aside for now. You've got work to do. You want to focus on the task at hand and how you use this to live your dreams. Just keep breathing those slow, deep breaths. Feel your power center. Feel where that is in you. Usually it's around your solar plexus. As you breathe in, feel that power that's there. The power you have within you that's waiting to be expressed. That's the one that connects you to Spirit, to other living beings, that's the strength and the energy that's within you. Focus on this strength and how it feels. Keep breathing focusing on that strength, your power. Keep your mind free of clutter and ask that it be open and that you're receptive to what you're about to learn. Take a few more deep breaths, slowly, with gratitude, open your eyes. Thank you.

Last week we talked about how to get your bearings. You'll recall that Step 1 – Get your Bearings – that started last week, is really going to take us three weeks. The reason for that is because it's so important to set a good, solid, foundation from which to build on. We're going to continue with that in identifying your strengths this week. Last week and in the work you did, you identified your top values and prioritized those, then you went and defined the dream that you have, as best as you could. The last thing, the third thing you did was to identify where you are now in relationship to that dream.

Now I'm going to ask you to put those things aside for now. We're going to work on another component of that, which is identifying your strengths, and we're going to come back to that. For now, you can put that aside and just keep working. As we do this, this week and next, you'll gain clarity as to what your

Copyright © Liz Jansen 2014 This document may not be reproduced or utilized for any purpose other than personal educational use without the permission of its author. www.lizjansen.com

dream is and also to what your current situation is. And that's going to help you. We're going to bring them all together at the end. This week we're going to tap into your strengths. How do you tap into unused resources? We all have them. The strengths, the talents that you have—these are what you're going to use to live your dreams. These are what are calling out for you to use and to seek creative expression. You're going to leverage those and work those into the action steps. The last objective for tonight is to Power Up—and how to do that.

You may have heard of a term called “projection.” This is something we do all the time, and we do it without even realizing that we're doing it. We do it when we look at other people that we admire or dislike. What we're actually doing is projecting characteristics of ourselves on them. We do it because it's easier to have to deal with it that way than face it ourselves. We do this with both positive and negative attributes. We're going to be talking about only the positive attributes tonight. Tonight we're going to be focusing only on your strengths. A lot of these things you can do for your shadows too, we're going to talk about that next week though.

The reason you want to identify this and to make it real for you is because now, when you're attributing it to another person, rather than taking ownership of it yourself, you're giving away your energy. You want to bring back that energy. You also want to claim those positive attributes that are there, because those are things that are in you.

It's often hard to admit – it's easier for us to accept that we have qualities that are not so good. Our shortcomings. They're easier to accept than our strengths sometimes. Bear in mind though, when you see somebody and you see something positive in them, those qualities are also in you.

Let me give you an example of that. This is something that somebody wrote on Facebook. It had to do with a story that I was in and it also had to do with a little motorcycle mishap and we talked about that in the story. This was her comment about that article.

“I actually loved reading about how you got yourself into that jam Liz! how it made you feel and how you got out of it. Empowered comes to mind when I think you Liz Jansen.”

That's quite a high accolade and I was humbled by it, and grateful for her having said that. What I turned around to her though, because I know this person, how much work she does and how hard she works, how empowered she is as a person, she didn't see this, she doesn't see this in herself. I turned back that mirror analogy to her and I said, “You know, these are characteristics that are in you too. Thank you for all the work that you're doing.”

While she was giving me an extreme compliment, I wanted to make sure that she realized that I was reflecting back to her what is actually in her. This is the kind of thing I'm talking about when I'm talking about projection.

Mirroring is another way of talking about it. So others reflect part of your own consciousness back to you. And you say, "Really? Those things are in me?" Really they are! This is an opportunity to see yourself as you really are. Think about the people who are around you and think about the kind of people you're attracting. They all have lessons for you, some to a greater degree than others. See it as that – as an opportunity, as an opportunity for you to grow. You've seen the image which I didn't have, but there's an image with a mirror where a little kitten is looking in and what's looking back at her is a big lion and that's what she saw when she looked in the mirror.

Look in the mirrors. The mirrors are other people that you see around you. The reason I'm asking you to do this is because it's hard to identify those strengths, or hard to admit that we have those strengths. So if we use what we admire in other people and come back to that, it's easier to do it that way.

Not only are other people your mirrors, you are also a mirror for other people. So you are both a student and a teacher. I am a student and teacher. People mirror things back to me all the time. And if I'm thinking about what they're bringing back to me, I can use that, I should use that, I can use that as an opportunity to grow and to become stronger. Focus on what other people are trying to tell you.

One of the exercises, the first part of the exercise that you have for homework this week, is to find out who your mirrors are. I've got on your worksheet a couple of examples that I want you to think about. I want you to think about a few different people who are in your life and qualities you admire. I don't want you to think about qualities you dislike right now. We'll save that for next week.

Look at the qualities that you admire in other people. You're going to write down what the name of that person is, and what the qualities that you admire. You're going to do this for at least three people. You can do it for more if you want, but three is the minimum. When you're done with that, I want you to look at, what are the common things? What are the common themes that you see in those people? List those. It's all explained in your handouts. That's the first part of the exercise. It's kind of interesting to do – just remember to take people that you admire, and write down what it is that you admire about them.

The next thing I want to talk about here is repeating patterns. We all have them. Events in our lives follow predictable patterns, and we follow the same patterns over and over again. If you look at anybody's life, you can see that they have these patterns as well. If you read biographies of great people, you will see that they also have patterns in their life and they're used to handling things a certain way. We want to be able to identify those patterns and the rhythms that we have

in those patterns, because even the most accomplished amongst us have highs, and we have lows. We all know that life isn't just smooth. The lows are the times that we're learning. If everything was just good all the time, and we didn't have to worry about anything and there were no challenges, we would never grow. What kind of a boring life would that be? Sometimes we wish for that but can you imagine if that was really the case? It's the times that we have the challenges, and the times that we need to call from within our reservoir of strength and pull up those reserves, and deal with ourselves, that's when we grow. That's when we experience new things and that's when we realize how much power we really have. Think about that power center that you felt when we were doing that visioning exercise earlier.

These repeating patterns are the central element of this module. Being able to look at them and look at how you handle things. It's really hard to see them in ourselves. It's easier to see them in other people. You can think about people in your lives and think about patterns that they have, with relationships or with jobs, and you think, there they go again. Same old thing. Same old pattern. You can almost predict how it's going to end up.

We want to stop those repeating patterns that aren't working for us and we want to identify how we can make them work for us, because this is about living our dreams. So how do we do that? How do we break out of the patterns that we've adopted, that we're comfortable with, even though they may be difficult, how do we do that and live our dreams?

Even though the details in these patterns may be different, so one may be with relationships and another may be with jobs, you can probably pick out the same theme, even though the characters and some of the roles are different. The theme will be the same. That's because we have our favorite ways of adapting and responding. These are ways that we've been taught. We've been taught this from a really young age. We act unconsciously. Our subconscious is telling us what to do from tapes that were recorded in our head before we were even seven years old and they play a major part. We don't even know that they're there. So we're going to spend some time, and again, this will be in the work that you have coming up in the next week, about how to do this.

Let me give you an example from my own background on what I mean by this. I'm going to be asking you to do this for your self and think about patterns. You're going to do this for a few different patterns that you have.

Here's a pattern that goes back a ways, to when I was nursing. And this was a pattern that has repeated itself. I want you to think about a time when you were successful. When you did something successful. An event. What led up to it? What were the steps that led up to it? Who else was involved? What were some of the decision points and how did you make them?

Here's my example. This was when I was working as an occupational health nurse in a factory. I was also working in health and safety. I was doing well in this job, it was time though for me to do something else. I was feeling a little restless. I was looking for more of a challenge to do. You've got to remember at this time, or realize, because you don't know this, that I was very different. I was a very different person then, the same person I guess but I responded to things differently. I did not have the same sense of power even then, that I do now. I definitely didn't.

Nonetheless, I was doing well in this job but I was restless. I was bored. I was looking for more to do. It hadn't occurred to me that I would be able to leave this job and look for something else. I was looking for something else within this organization, in this small town that I was working in. So I saw an opportunity because there wasn't really much going on in terms of a training department. I thought, "I'd really like to do that. I enjoy training, and I've already been doing some safety training, so maybe there's an opportunity for me to work in training, to move into that and to add that to my responsibilities."

Now this was non-traditional because this was a bit of a conservative place. I was already working in a non-traditional role because I was working in health and safety in a manufacturing plant which was usually a role that was given to men, it hadn't even dawned on me. It was just something that I wanted to do. So it was non-traditional. And now this opportunity, the reason it was non-traditional was because I was identified as a nurse. As a matter of fact, if I went back to that place right now, they'd probably still call me the nurse. I had trouble breaking out of that role because I wanted to be seen for other skills than besides being a nurse, because there were other things that I was doing. So I saw this opportunity and I said, "No, I'm not good enough for that. I would never...I'd have to stand up in front of people and talk, I'm not qualified....." All these things that go through your mind. It would take too much out of me and they're never going to go for it anyway, and I'm just not good enough to do it. Just forget it.

That was something that I discounted. And then, as these things happen, like the dream that you're living, you're wanting to live now, it comes back to you. It doesn't go away because this is something your spirit wants to do. This is where you're being led so you can be the most that you can be. That's why we're here with our unique skills and abilities. I had a skill, an ability that wasn't being expressed, so it was making itself known and making me restless again.

I still wanted to give it a try and I knew that I could do it. I really in my heart of hearts knew that I could do it. Finally I said, "Why not? What's to lose?" I made an appointment with my boss who I was somewhat fearful of, and I went in to talk to him. I said, "You know, what do you think if I could try working in training? Here are some ideas that I have and some things that I could do." He looked at me, and it had not even occurred to him, because he also saw me as a nurse, that I could do health and safety training, I could also do other, human resources

kinds of training. Now at this time I was not working in Human Resources, but I'd been taking courses and I felt an interest and that's what prompted all these things. It hadn't occurred to him that I could do anything else because why couldn't I just be happy being a nurse? Not that there's anything wrong with that. It's just that there was something different that I wanted to do. He said, "Sure, we'll try it." I ended up getting an expanded role, I ended up getting a raise out of it and I loved what I did. It was great. I really enjoyed it and it became a big turning point for me. I still remember that. I started in a whole new role.

That was the end of my cycle the success pattern that I was in, except that it's a cycle, so it's not the end of the pattern. When I think about it now, I was doing something else. So what you do then is test it in another situation. What happened with me was that I got back to the top where I was doing well in this job, and that was OK for a while, but then I wanted more again. I was looking for more of a challenge and to take on more. When the company was bought out by a larger company, I saw another opportunity, and I had to again make myself known, I had to go and ask for this, and to buck tradition, if you will, and ask for this. Again that was something that I was successful with. It was new boss I was dealing with now because the old boss went with the old company. This was a cycle that again was repeating.

Once you've identified your pattern, I want you to do this. And think about a pattern of success. It can be in a work situation, it can be in a personal situation like a relationship. Or you could start with a work situation and then test it against a personal situation. Because you want to test this again to make sure that it indeed is another pattern.

The next step in this is to think about the decision points, because what you want, remember we want to continue these positive patterns that lead to success and we want to remember where the decision points were, where were the opportunities where we could have chosen differently, and why didn't we choose differently?

If I look back at this situation that I was in, the decision points were, that I was doing OK, I was making good money, I could have stayed there, it was very stable, I had good holidays, I didn't really have to work too hard, I could work my hours, go home and do other things.

But I was restless. I wasn't happy. I wasn't fulfilled. I knew that there was much more that I could contribute. That was a decision point. I had to decide whether or not at that point I wanted to move ahead or if I wanted to just stay where I was. I decided, as in this pattern that I had, to go ahead. With the pattern however, is the questioning and self-doubt and the lack of confidence, the lack of self-worth. That whole questioning thing.

When you give way to that, your intuition is telling you to do this, of course you can do this. I'm asking you to do this. Maybe I needed a little more training. Maybe I needed a bit of on-the-job experience. Whatever it was, there was no question that I could do it. Then after that period of questioning myself, that restlessness returns. You really want to do this thing. And so.. I've learned to listen now so that when I feel that restlessness, I pay attention to it more the first time, rather than going through all these cycles and wasting time, because that's really just all that i was doing.

Nonetheless, it took time, and it took confidence, wanting to give it a try and being successful with it. Every time you do that, no matter how small, no matter how small the step is, or how small the success is, it builds energy and releases energy for you to grow and to develop your strength. It's all there within you, waiting to be expressed. It's not something that anyone else is going to give you, nor can they take it away. it's all there within you, so keep that in mind. it's wanting to be expressed. It's a matter of letting it be expressed and letting down those barriers that you've got, that you've erected to hold that in, and to hold that dream in, whatever it is. Those voices that are telling you why you can't do it - too old, not enough money, too late, not enough people to help, whatever it is.

there was a great deal of fear that I had, not really life-threatening fear that I had, but it was because I wasn't confident in my own abilities. One of the books that I read at that time was called *If Not Now, When?* That was very meaningful for me, because i realized that-- that was pivotal. If I'm not going to do it now, when am i going to do it? I can't start it yesterday. I'm moving forward in this life, what am I waiting for? There is absolutely no reason. This is a tactic that I use a lot now. I used it just last summer. I was debating about a vacation, actually a working trip. I was going to be away for what turned out to be six weeks and i thought, there's no way that I can do this. I can't afford it, I can't be away from my home base for that long, all of these excuses. And then I thought, "Wait a minute. If I don't go now, when am i going to go? And if I really think about it, why am i not going? I can work from the road, I've got the time, and if I'm working, it doesn't really matter where I am. And so you reason and rationalize and get this current reality like we talked about doing last week, but that whole thing about "*If Not Now, When?*" that's become a major question that I ask myself when I'm trying to stop myself from doing things, or when those questions come up. And that's been really helpful for me.

It's surprising but when you ask for things, and it can be hard to ask for things, but when you ask, most often people are going to say yes. They can see that you're interested in doing and often times they're just waiting to be asked. If you ask people for help, or resources -- it takes some gumption though - but try it. You'll be surprised what happens. And then there's this elation that happens when you got up the nerve to ask for something, and then secondly, you got a positive answer and a positive response, and that thirdly, you were successful at it so it builds on itself and it continues to build strength, and to open up more of

your power and to have more of your power available to you. it also opens up your creativity, and signals to Spirit, to the Universe, that you are open for business and you are willing to take those steps, you're trusting. Those things are all there, we are just holding ourselves back. We do this all the time without even realizing it. That's why it's important to look at the patterns that you have, and to look at where these decision points are. If, at the very beginning, when I experienced that restlessness, if i had said, "No. I'm not going to do this." I could have retreated back. I could have stayed where I was. I would not have felt good though. I did that for many years in my marriage. This cycle could have been applied exactly to that. I knew that things weren't right and there was this restlessness, that I was not in the right role for me. I kept saying, "Everything looks perfect to someone looking in. What's the matter with me? I've got this good job, I've got this beautiful house, I travel all over the world, I make good money, why am I not happy?" That was the questioning part of myself, and that would stop things maybe for a while, and then that questioning would come back again. I can apply right through to the same way that I dealt with my relationship, that particular relationship.

Take a look at the patterns in your life. I want you, over the next week, to look at the successful patterns. Again, we won't look at the ones where you're unsuccessful, we're going to look at those the following week. I want you to look at those patterns where you're successful. The reason you're doing this is because remember, we are identifying your strengths here. What were the strengths that kept you going, that helped you to be successful, and that help you keep being successful with your repeating patterns?

Maybe you haven't noticed that there's that much of an escalation in the patterns just yet. That's Ok. This is where we're starting and this is what we're uncovering, and what's going to be there for you to use as you put this dream into action.

Look for your patterns. This is on the handouts that I have for you on your homework as well. Look for the patterns and write them down. If you need help thinking about them, do that visioning exercise again. Just close your eyes, take some deep breaths and think about, when is a time that you were really successful? What were the steps that led up to that? Write them all down, one by one - right up to the time where you come out the other end and it was a period of success for you.

Once you've done that, think about another situation where you were successful and see if the pattern fits in. There may be a few variations-- one could have happened over a month, one could have happened over three years. what you're looking for is the underlying theme. Not the exact same situation, but you're looking for the theme and the pattern. This is something you're going to be doing over the next week.

It may seem that all these things are unrelated right now, but we're going to be putting these all together in getting you to live your dreams. I want you to be patient as we work through this. I know for some of you, I've heard about some of the things that you're doing and it is so exciting. Take the time now to do the groundwork, so that you're set up properly for huge success, the most success that you can have, and do this work. You will soon be doing it and living your dream, and Power up.

Once you've done this, there are two basic exercises for this week. One is to identify those people that you admire and the qualities that you admire. Those are going to become your assets because those things are in you. Pick as many as you want, and write them down. This is hard to admit sometimes that we've got these things (qualities) in ourselves. Really? I'm really like this? Yes you are. That person is mirroring that back to you. So that's the first part of the exercise. Get those people whom you admire, even if it's people that you don't know. Who are people that you admire? Why do you admire them? And then the second part is to look at those patterns that you've got, and identify what those steps are, what the decision points were.

The last part of the homework exercise is for you to have daily affirmations that say, "I am....and whatever those assets are." "I am empowered." "I am beautiful." "I am loving, caring, compassionate, whatever it is.. Whatever those things are that you see in other people, you're going to affirm those to yourself. And imprint through those, that those are really in you. It helps you believe them yourself.

So that's the homework that you're going to do. I'll have a few more resources on the website as well. Those are really the formative parts of this module: Identifying your strengths and writing them down, writing them down imprints them and helps you believe them yourself, and accept them. You're going to need these to live your dream. Be open with them and call on them and use them. These are your gifts, your attributes, your talents. Those things that are uniquely yours that have come together so that you can fulfill your unique purpose here.

That's what we've got to work on in this module, and I really want you to focus on what your strengths are. This is exciting because you're going to come up with strengths that you didn't know you had that you're going to be seeing in the mirrors which are other people.

That brings us to the end of Module 2 and the end of Identifying your Strengths. If you have any questions about how you go about this, or if you're unclear as to how to identify these patterns, please make sure to let me know. I want you to grasp these concepts and to use them. It's fundamental, really important that you have them and use them in living your dream. Thank you.