

MAKING THE MOST OF MY STRENGTHS*

▶ ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

- 🕒 **Time:** 10 minutes
- ➔ **Objectives:** By the end of this session, participants will be able to:
 - Identify their personal strengths and how to make the most of them in their work as peers.
- ✓ **In This Activity You Will...**
 - Ask participants to complete a worksheet (8 minutes).
 - Read aloud a poem (2 minutes).
- ✂ **Materials:**
 - Handout - My Plan Worksheet
 - Handout - And Still I Rise by Maya Angelou poem
- ✂ **Preparation:**
 - Print handouts

Instructions

1. Introduce the homework activity. We are now going to think about our own personal strengths that make us women warriors and how we can use them in our work
2. Ask participants to complete the My Plan worksheet for homework.
3. Encourage them to make sure the “pluses” list is long! They should give themselves credit for even tiny things they do, since even one tiny thing can make a huge difference.
4. Also encourage them to just choose a few things they’d like to change, so that it’s do-able and they won’t feel overwhelmed.
5. Ask a volunteer to read the poem (or read all together) “And Still I Rise” by Maya Angelou. Explain that Maya Angelou is another women warrior who works to empower women. The poem we have chosen depicts very well the Lotus Flower which rises from the muddy swamps. The poem’s name also says it all...and still I rise!

Summary

Wrap up by reminding participants to keep their pluses lists and the poem and to pull them out when they need a lift!!

* This module is part of the online toolkit Building Blocks to Peer Success. For more information, visit http://www.hdwg.org/peer_center/training_toolkit. This module comes from the Lotus Women’s Peer Education Training Manual, Center for Health Training and Women Organized to Respond to Life Threatening Diseases (WORLD), 2008.

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SESSION HANDOUT # 1 of 2

MY PLAN WORKSHEET

My **Strength** comes from ...

Pluses “+s”: list some of the wonderful things you do or qualities that you have that will help you in your work as a peer educator.

Wishes: list a few things you would like to start working on to improve your weaknesses.

Choose **one thing** you would like to start doing within the next few weeks.

What is that one thing you want to work on?

What will be your first step?

When will you take this first step?

Who can help you do this new thing?

How will you reward yourself once you've gotten started?

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SESSION HANDOUT # 2 of 2

AND STILL I RISE

By Maya Angelou

You may write me down in history
with your bitter, twisted lies,
you may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.
Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
pumping in my living room.
Just like moons and like suns,
with the certainty of tides,
just like hopes springing high,
still I'll rise.
Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops.
Weakened by my soulful cries.
Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own back yard.
You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,

You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.
Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
that I dance like I've got diamonds
at the meeting of my thighs?
Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
welling and swelling I bear in the tide.
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the
slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise