Book Notes - Character Strengths and Virtues

- **Source**
  - Character Strengths and Virtues
  - Christopher Petersen and Martin E. P. Seligman
  - Strengths are categorized under the six core moral virtues
    - Wisdom and Knowledge
    - Courage
    - Humanity
    - Justice
    - Temperance
    - Transcendence

- **Wisdom and Knowledge** — Cognitive strengths that entail the acquisition and use of knowledge
  - Creativity [originality, ingenuity]
    - Thinking of novel and productive ways to conceptualize and do things
    - Includes artistic achievement but is not limited to it.
  - Curiosity [interest, novelty-seeking, openness to experience]
    - Taking an interest in ongoing experience for its own sake
    - Finding subjects and topics fascinating
    - Exploring and discovering
  - Open-mindedness [judgement, critical thinking]
    - Thinking things through and examining them from all sides
    - Not jumping to conclusions
    - Being able to change one's mind in light of evidence
    - Weighing all evidence fairly
  - Love of learning
    - Mastering new skills, topics, and bodies of knowledge, whether on one's own or formally
    - Obviously related to the strength of curiosity but goes beyond it to describe the tendency to add systematically to what one knows
  - Perspective [wisdom]
    - Being able to provide wise counsel to others
    - Having ways of looking at the world that makes sense to oneself and to other people

- **Courage** — Emotional strengths that involve the exercise of will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition, external and internal
  - Bravery [valor]
    - Not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain
    - Speaking up for what is righteven if there is opposition
    - Acting on convictions even if unpopular
    - Includes physical bravery but is not limmited to
  - Persistence [perseverance, industriousness]
    - Finishing what one starts
    - Persisting in a course of action in spite obstacles
    - GETTING IT OUT THE DOOR
    - Taking pleasure in completing a task
  - Integrity [authenticity, honesty]
    - Speaking the truth but more broadly presenting oneself in a genuine way and acting in a sincere way
    - Being without pretense
    - Taking responsibility for one's feelings and actions
  - Vitality [zest, enthusiasm, vigor, energy]
    - Approaching life with excitement and energy
    - Not doing things halfway or halfheartedly
    - Living life as an adventure
    - Feeling alive and activated

- **Humanity** — Interpersonal strengths that involve tending and befriending others
  - Love
    - Valuing close relations with others, in particular those in which sharing and caring are reciprocated
    - Being close to people
  - Kindness [generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, altruistic love, "niceness"]
    - Doing favors and good deeds for others
    - helping them
    - taking care of them
  - Social Intelligence [emotional intelligence, personal intelligence]
    - Being aware of the motives and feelings of other people and oneself
    - Knowing what to do to fit into different social situations
    - Knowing what makes other people tick

- **Justice** — Civic strengths that underlie healthy community life
  - Citizenship [social responsibility, loyalty, teamwork]
    - Working well as a member of a group or team
    - Being loyal to the group
    - Doing one's share
  - Fairness
    - Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice
    - Not letting personal feelings bias decisions about others
    - Organizing group activities ad seeing that they happen
  - Leadership
    - Encouraging a group of which one is a member to get things done and at the same maintain time good relations within the group
    - Organing group activities andd seeing that they happen

- **Temperance** — Strengths that protect against excess
  - Forgiveness and mercy
    - Forgiving those who have done wrong
    - Accepting the shortcomings of others
    - Giving people a second chance
    - Not being vengeful
  - Humility / Modesty
    - Letting one's accomplishments spea for themselves
    - Not seeking the spotlight
    - Not regarding oneself as more special than one is
  - Prudence
    - Being careful about one's choices
    - Not taking undue risks
    - Not saying or doing things that might later be regretted
  - Self-regulation [self-control]
    - Regulating what one feels and does
    - Being disciplined
    - Controlling one's appetite and emotions

- **Transcendence** — Strengths that forge connections to the larger universe and provide meaning
  - Appreciation of beuty and excellence [awe, wonder, elevation]
    - Noticing and appreciating beauty, execellence, and/or skilled performance in various domains of life, from nature to art to mathematics to science to everyday experience
  - Gratitude
    - Being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen
    - Taking time to express thanks
  - Hope [optimism, future-mindedness, future orientation]
    - Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it
    - Believing that a good future is something that can be brought about
  - Humor [playfulness]
    - Liking to laugh and tease
    - Bringing smiles to other people
    - Seeing the light side
    - Making (not necessarily telling) jokes
  - Spirituality [religiousness, faith, purpose]
    - Having coherent beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of the universe
    - Knowing where one fits within the larger scheme
    - Having beliefs about the meaning of life that shape and conduct and provide comfort