

## **Core Principles of Strength-Based Practice**

Researchers and practitioners have developed the following principles that serve as the foundation for guiding and implementing strength-based practice.

**1)** An absolute belief that every person has potential and it is their unique strengths and capabilities that will determine their evolving story as well as define who they are - not their limitations (not, I will believe when I see – rather, I believe and I will see).

**2)** What we focus on becomes one's reality – focus on strength, not labels – seeing challenges as capacity fostering (not something to avoid) creates hope and optimism.

**3)** The language we use creates our reality – both for the care providers and the children, youth and their families.

**4)** Belief that change is inevitable – all individuals have the urge to succeed, to explore the world around them and to make themselves useful to others and their communities.

**5)** Positive change occurs in the context of authentic relationships - people need to know someone cares and will be there unconditionally for them. It is a transactional and facilitating process of supporting change and capacity building– not fixing.

**6)** Person's perspective of reality is primary (their story)– therefore, need to value and start the change process with what is important to the person - not the expert.

**7)** People have more confidence and comfort to journey to the future (the unknown) when they are invited to start with what they already know.

**8)** Capacity building is a process and a goal – a life long journey that is dynamic as opposed to static.

**9)** It is important to value differences and the essential need to collaborate – effective change is a collaborative, inclusive and participatory process – “it takes a village to raise a child”.