

HIGH SCHOOL SUCCESS

choosing a **GOOD ROAD**

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JONATHAN BRENNAN

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JONATHAN BRENNAN

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my deeply loving and supportive wife, Natalia, and to my children, Carmen Alicia and Liam Rafael. I have learned, and continue to learn, so much from you all.

Testimonials

This is a fantastic new textbook. It is truly inspiring and motivating and provides a meaningful experience for teachers and students to share, a great fit for an advisory program! The text is engaging and strong, highlighted by the “See the Value of Failures” section, and the steps for writing a life purpose statement are so clear. The book is packed with relevant quotes, interesting “Cool Facts,” opportunities to write and reflect, and an effective incorporation of cartoons, comics, and sketches. I’m a big fan of the “Never Give Up!” sections.

— **Gaby DiMuro, Humanities Teacher, The Girls’ Middle School, CA**

Dr. Brennan has amassed a dynamic tool chest of learning modalities for students in middle school and beyond. The broad spectrum of examples and exercises allows students the opportunity to explore different learning styles and achieve individual success. The book is filled with vivid visual aids, thought-provoking questions and numerous methods that each student can use to comprehend and express themselves. Choosing a Good Road is inclusive and lively. I am definitely inspired by the techniques derived from it and I look forward to sharing them with my students. Excellent book!

— **Rosetta Saunders, Middle School History Teacher, Menlo School, CA**

The text is great! The focus on myelin and the notion that the brain can be “trained” and behaviors/skills can be enhanced through practice is the most crucial part of the text. “Ideas in Action” offers students a chance to dissect decisions made by others. The writing style, pace, vocabulary and organization are all spot-on.

— **Dan Seder, Principal, Bay Middle College, MI**

Jonathan Brennan brings so much heart, knowledge and experience through this engaging book! What a gift it is to students and teachers, providing an interactive opportunity to learn life skills that have immediate application and lasting value. Jonathan teaches skills even many adults never learn - or don't learn until much later in life, often when they're finally motivated by the pain of failure. This book promises to impart practical skills that not only guarantee greater success in the classroom, but in life. It delivers, in a fun and memorable way! Long after other textbook facts have faded, the skills and wisdom in this book will live on in each student.

— Don Fergusson, former President, Rust-Oleum Corporation

Choosing a Good Road is a comprehensive guide for learning. It combines elements of science, language arts, history, diversity, creativity and sports in a format that will excite students and motivate teachers. The creative and innovative teacher will be able to adapt each lesson to almost any grade level.

**— Dr. Lee Mahon, Professor, Fielding Graduate University & Santa Clara University, CA
(former teacher and administrator, K-12)**

The Book Crew



A national expert in high school and college student success, **Dr. JONATHAN BRENNAN** holds graduate degrees in psychology, English, ethnic studies and education. He is the author of two previous books, has taught both high school and community college students, and has presented student success workshops to thousands of high school and college educators. He is the chair of the On Course National Conference, an effectiveness coach for peak performers, and father of two children in middle and high school.



SYDNEY DELP, from Hermantown, Minnesota, is currently a freshman at Carleton College studying physics and political science. She became a doodler after admiring the cartoons her father drew religiously on her lunch bags and excelled as a doodler during four years of turning in highly decorated math assignments. Her interests include horses, deep thinking and music, and you can see more at www.facebook.com/Sydney.Delp.



KHALID BIRDSONG is a freelance cartoonist and art teacher in Northern California. He is the writer and artist of the humorous webcomic “Fried Chicken and Sushi,” based on his two years living in Osaka, Japan. Khalid enjoys teaching art to kindergarten through sixth grade at a private school in Palo Alto. In his free time, he loves to spend time with his wife and daughter and travel the world. You can check out his work at www.ksbirdsong.blogspot.com and read his comic at www.friedchickenandsushi.com.



Over nearly two decades, **MICHAEL READ** has published numerous books, magazines, newsletters, travel guides and websites. Michael is the Publications Director of the San Francisco Film Society, and has served as editor of four books of fine art photography, as graphic designer of nine more, and editor of magazines including *see: a journal of visual culture* and *Release Print*. He holds an MFA in Photography from the School of Visual Arts in New York.



JOHN MAVROUDIS, the cover artist and one of the book illustrators, lives in San Francisco. He’s been a DJ at a Rock & Roll station, worked on a presidential campaign, designed a cover for the *New Yorker* that won Magazine Cover of the Year, and has created numerous CD and concert poster designs which you can view at his website, www.zenpop.com.

Acknowledgments

My deepest appreciation to the late Fernando Tolivar, singer, inventor, aerospace engineer, master of paella and the loving *abuelo* of my children. I miss you.

I'd like to extend my appreciation and thanks to the many reviewers of this textbook. Your contributions, ideas, feedback, suggestions, support and wisdom have been invaluable. You are extraordinary educators. Any errors that remain in the book are mine.

Much thanks to Lee Mahon, Susan McCaffrey, Susan Hass, Eve Kikawa, Suz Antink, Noushin Bayat, Don Fergusson, Eileen Zamora, Deborah Shulman, Alissa Picker, Alicia Menendez-Brennan, Liam Menendez-Brennan, Natalia Menendez, Donnelle McGee, Rob Jenkins, Denise Dufek, Richard Kiefer, Nancy Brennan, Peter Brennan, and many others who provided feedback and direction.

Thanks as well to the illustrators, Sydney Delp, John Mavroudis and Khalid Birdsong, and the tireless and talented book designer, Michael Read.

I'd also like to thank Dr. Skip Downing for his extraordinary vision, friendship and wisdom. Thanks for helping me stay on course.

Also thanks to my colleagues Yolanda and David Coleman, Ray Charland, Dave Ellis, Pete Chandonnet, Barbara Whiteside, and all of the many educators who have shared their ideas and strategies with me.

My biggest thanks to the thousands of students who have shared their wisdom with me. I'm still learning from all of you.

The Purpose of Choosing a Good Road

1 The purpose of the *Choosing a Good Road* textbook is to give students the tools they need to succeed in high school and be ready for college and career.

THE PROBLEM: Graduation rates from high schools in the United States are frustratingly low and schools have major challenges in promoting student effectiveness.

- Fewer than 70% of students graduate from high school
- 48% or fewer graduate in the 50 largest school districts
- The achievement gap for at-risk students: graduation rates well below 50%

Students who do graduate are often not well prepared for college and the workplace. The challenges are enormous and require a fresh approach.

SOLUTIONS: The *Choosing a Good Road* textbook offers middle & high school students:

- 36 Learning Skills to Improve Learning Outcomes
- 9 Effectiveness Skills to Increase Student Performance
- Brain-Based Strategies to Promote Active Learning
- Life Purpose & Mission Statement Activities
- A Framework for Setting Life & Learning Goals
- An Opportunity to Clarify & Apply Personal Values
- Methods to Shift Negative Beliefs to More Productive Mindsets
- More Effective Peer Pressure & Positive Assertiveness Skills
- Systems to Enhance Organization & Efficiency
- Creative & Critical Thinking Approaches for Better Problem Solving
- Diversity Awareness & Management Strategies
- Leadership & Communication Tools
- Mindfulness Practices & Improved Focus Skills

2 The purpose of the Choosing a Good Road Workshop is to give middle and high school educators the tools they need to help students succeed in high school and be ready for college and career.

The Choosing a Good Road Workshop for middle and high school teachers, counselors and administrators, is an active learning experience that offers proven strategies in learner effectiveness. Educators learn the tools required to dramatically increase high school completion rates and college/career readiness. Workshop strategies are drawn from the work of leading researchers in multiple fields of learner effectiveness.

Educators acquire best practices in:

- Classroom Management Skills & Designing/Facilitating Learner-Centered Education
- Brain-Based Research & Multiple Learning Skills
- Learner Motivation, Academic Goal Setting, Autonomous Learning & Achievement
- Emotional Effectiveness, Leadership Strategies & Organization & Efficiency Practices
- Effectiveness Skills to Empower Students to Make Better Choices as Learners
- Communication Skills, Revising Limiting Beliefs, & Improving Self Efficacy
- Promoting Critical & Creative Thinking & Using Problem-Based Learning

Educators leave the workshop knowing what it takes for their students to become peak performers in high school (and become college/career ready). They will learn how to support students in making more effective choices, giving students the tools they need to succeed.

I like how the workshop is designed to work in so many ways. The information can help you personally and professionally. You stop and think about yourself and then how you can use this information to help others. Lots of great stuff!

—April Johnson,
Counselor, Willamina
High School, OR

You are facilitating what you are trying to get across to others. I realized how much we covered when I started writing down all the new tools.

—Chris Daniels, Principal,
Amity High School, OR

The intended workshop result is to give educators the tools to increase student retention, graduation and college enrollment rates. It also provides tools for educators to prepare students for the workplace and to promote deeper and more long-lasting student learning.

3 The purpose of the website (www.agoodroad.com) is to provide additional resources for students and educators.

The website features additional resources for both students and educators, and it is constantly evolving, with new materials added every month. If you have any suggestions (or requests), please contact agoodroad@sbcglobal.net.

Choosing a Good Road Intervention Models

How can Choosing a Good Road be used with students?

The textbook can be used in numerous student success models. Content can be taught in a single life-skills course, embedded in a single course from a core discipline like English or mathematics, or infused across the school curriculum, in face-to-face or online settings. These models include:

- **Stand-Alone Success Classes**
- **Orientation/Bridge Programs & Workshops**
- **Linked Courses and Learning Communities**
- **Success-Infused Single Discipline Courses**
- **Success-Infused Multi-Discipline Courses**
- **Success Across the Curriculum Programs**
- **Before or After-School Classes & Programs**
- **Distance Education Success Program Delivery Models**
- **Your School's Innovative Model**

If you'd like support in developing methods to introduce these skills to your students (and educators), please contact us through the website and we'd be glad to share both research and success program development strategies.

Textbook Features

Preview Questions At the beginning of each chapter there are preview questions that get students thinking right away.

9 Effectiveness Skills and Activities Every chapter includes an explanation of one of the nine effectiveness skills. In order to promote active learning, students are asked to practice these skills in the chapter activities. The effectiveness skills are evidence-based learner and life skills that provide students the foundation they need to succeed in high school.

What's the Point? Students are frequently asked to reflect on what they've just read in order to sharpen their critical thinking skills (and solidify their learning). This feature offers practice in finding and clarifying main points.

Cool Facts Students are invited to stay engaged by reading interesting brief facts about the chapter's topic.

Road Log This feature invites students to create a blog or online journal that documents their journey down a good road. Students have the option to write on the textbook pages or to use the Road Log to record their ideas on their computer.

36 Learning Skills Every chapter offers students an opportunity to understand three different learning skills. Developed from validated assessments and psychological typing tests, the learning skills are a reflection of the multiplicity of approaches used by learners. Students will review their most effective strategies recorded in these skills, as well as new approaches.

Ideas in Action Using a problem-based learning format, students are given a chance to explore a “real-life” student challenge, and to suggest solutions based on the skills they have been learning.

Maga and Keya on A Good Road Maga and Keya are two fictional Lakota Indian superheroes who appear in each chapter. In this graphic novel-style drama, Maga and Keya struggle against the forces that try to push them off the good road they are traveling. They practice and promote the skills presented in every chapter.

Ready for College This feature is based on recent research on the skills, attitudes and competencies required to prepare students for college. Students have a chance to learn, then practice what they need to know (and do) to prepare for college. All students should have an opportunity to be well prepared for college so that they can then make an informed and empowered decision when they reach this critical crossroad in their lives.

Ready for Career Students also deserve the chance to learn what they need to know to excel in their careers. They'll learn skills they can put to use in their current employment, upon completing high school, while working during college, or after they've acquired a college degree. These skills are based on soft skills competencies researched by organizations such as the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, a national organization that advocates for 21st century readiness for every student (www.21p.org). These competencies are in high demand by employers.

Life & Lyrics Integrating music and effectiveness skills, this feature invites students to listen to songs, answer questions, and discover valuable lessons. It reinforces concepts and strategies from each chapter and embeds them in activities that students find compelling and fun.

What Did You Learn? At the end of each chapter, students are asked to reflect on their most important learning from the chapter concepts and activities.

Never Give Up!!! This is perhaps the single most important concept in the entire book. Students learn a series of strategies that will help them persist until they reach their most important academic and life goals.



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INTRODUCTION



What are you waiting for? It's time to get moving to create a great life for yourself!

I know, I know. You probably already have a pretty good life. Most of you have a place to live, food to eat, clothes to wear, and family/friends who care about you. You may even have an iPod, smartphone and some stylin' footwear.

But what else? How do you get from a pretty good life to a great life? How can you be sure you graduate from high school, make it into college, and find the job you want? How do you keep making new friends, manage not to go crazy when your family is a pain, and spend most of your time being happy and excited about your life?

It's easy (kind of). You just need to keep choosing a good road. Just by opening to this page, you've taken the first step down the road to an amazing life. But there are many paths to choose in life, and so many people end up going down the wrong road. This book teaches you what you need to know to pick the right path. I hope you get what you want.

You have an opportunity to create a life that is even better than the one you have. You could even learn to really appreciate the life you have. But will you actually choose to do so? The truth is, many people don't make choices that get them what they want. Each time they arrive at a crossroads, they pick the wrong road, a road that leads them away from what they want. They keep choosing to be unhappy because they keep choosing the wrong road. It's really hard to live life like that. I think you can do better than picking the hard way to do life. In fact, I know you can do better than this. Here's why:

I waited a long time to choose a better road for myself. I made lots of mistakes. In fact, I never chose to graduate from high school. I dropped out instead. It was a big mistake. I was unhappy, confused, argued a lot with my parents, had a go-nowhere job and made many bad decisions. I kept choosing the path that took me far away from my goals and dreams. I did not use the life skills that would have made a big difference in helping me reach my dreams and goals. After many years of creating a life that I was not enjoying, I began to learn new skills, and soon I put these new skills to use. I enrolled in a community college and finally transferred to a university and completed my undergraduate and graduate degrees. As I began to make better choices, I finally started to see what was getting in my way (and it was mostly me, by the way).

Sometimes I wish I had learned all this when I was much younger. Other times I'm happy to recognize that if I hadn't done it the hard way, I wouldn't have learned so much. I understand more about why many students don't succeed, and how to help them do better in school.

Since I have such a great life, I decided to give back. For many years, I have been teaching high school and college students how to create extraordinary lives. I teach them how to dream big, set goals and take action to get what they want. I teach students the same life skills that helped me finally reach my dreams. You can learn these the hard way (like I did) or the easier way (by reading this book and trying out the tools). It's your choice.

I would like to offer my mistakes as valuable learning opportunities. I am hoping that you will choose to gain more wisdom and get what you want. Fun is optional (but recommended).

Jonathan



CHAPTER ONE

BRING ON THE LEARNING!

Read the chapter to answer these preview questions.



How do you give your brain a workout?

What is a dendrite?

What if you could get a lot smarter?

Are you visual? verbal? hands-on?

How do you speed up your brain?



Bring On the Learning!

Ever wonder what's happening in your brain? How do you actually cram all that information in your head? How do you come up with all those ideas? Why do you think what you think? How do you get smarter at math or better at shooting hoops? Scientists have discovered a lot about what happens in our brains. Here's what's most important:



The harder you work, the smarter you get. To become a great basketball player or excellent at solving algebra problems, you need to practice over and over.

NBA star LeBron James is not one of the league's best players because he has talent. He is a great player because he works very, very hard. His personal shooting coach, Chris Jent, says that the number of hours James practices his shots is almost unbelievable. He commits to shooting hundreds of baskets in every practice session.

Retired NBA star Michael Jordan always wanted to be in the best possible shape. He lifted weights, ate right and made sure he was in superb physical condition. He worked hard to turn his weaknesses into strengths. During the off-season, five days a week, for five hours each time, he worked on his skills. Hard work paid off.

Retired basketball star, Lisa Leslie, won two WNBA championships, made seven All-Star appearances, and was a three-time MVP. She won four Olympic gold medals and was the first player to dunk in a WNBA game. How'd she get so good? You guessed it: hard work! She practiced in high school 3 hours a day, shooting 400 shots from all around the court during each practice session.

You're only born with a certain amount of gifts. You have to take advantage of them and put in the work. My work ethic has helped me be the player I am today.
—LeBron James

I'm not out there sweating for three hours every day just to find out what it feels like to sweat.
—Michael Jordan

*Everyone talks about
age, but it's not about
age. It's about work ethic.
Winning never gets old.*
—Lisa Leslie

It's easy to think that the basketball stars on television are just naturally great basketball players. It's more accurate to say it's because of the hard work they have put in over many years. Math is a lot like basketball. Some students just appear to be great at math. They zip through problems, quickly adding or dividing long numbers, or easily reducing fractions. But just like the basketball players, they can do this easily only because they have practiced for so many hours. You can be great at math too (and basketball), when you understand how your brain works.

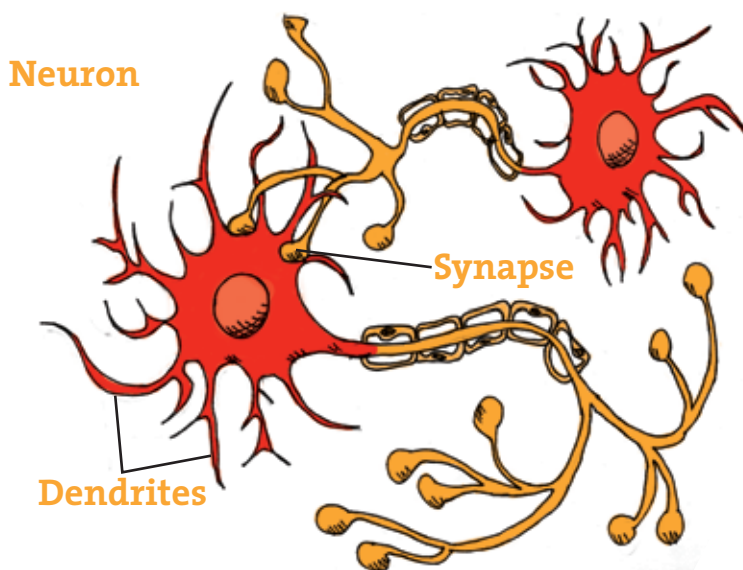
Neurons are cells in your brain. You have about one hundred billion neurons. Operating like an internet cable, they send rapid signals to other **neurons** through the **synapses**, the points where neurons connect. Your brain processes information using networks built from neurons.

Dendrites are like the branches of a tree. The neurons grow these branching networks each time you use them. The more you use your brain, the more networks you grow.

“Math is a lot like
basketball.”



To understand what's happening in your brain, you need to learn about neurons, synapses and dendrites.





The more networks you grow, the better you can think (the “smarter” you become). You need to use your neurons to grow more neurons (to think better), and also to remember things, like how to lift a slice of pizza to your mouth, or how to kick a ball.

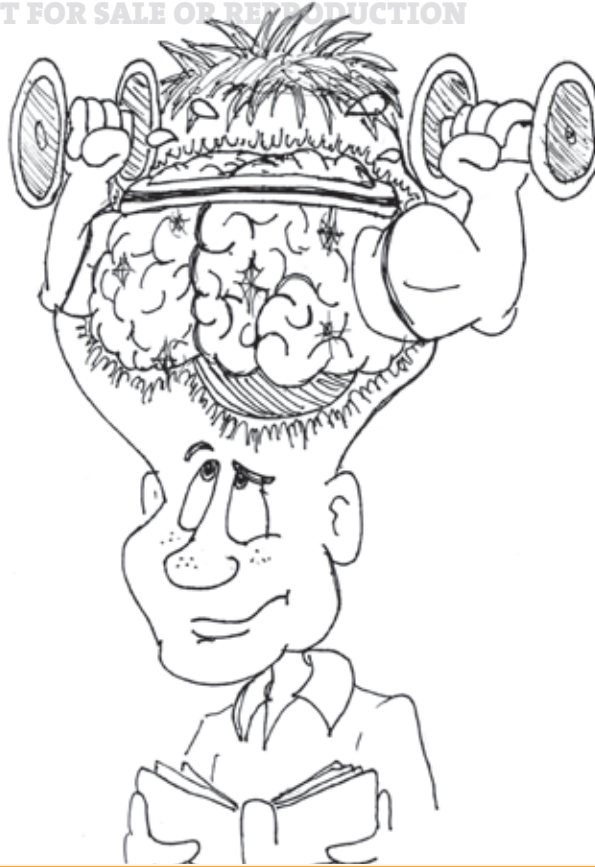
Cool Facts

- As a baby, you start with 100 billion **neurons** (brain cells).
- You then create 1.8 million new **synapses** per second!
- You can have 100 trillion to 1000 trillion **synapses**.
You have more connections in your brain than the number of known particles in the universe.
- You must practice a new skill within two minutes of learning it, or the newly formed **dendrite** will shrivel and disappear (and you’ll have to learn it again).

CHOOSE YOUR ROAD

*The fight is won or
lost far away from
witnesses—behind the
lines, in the gym, and
out there on the road,
long before I dance
under those lights.*

—**Muhammad Ali**



Working Out Your Brain

Weightlifters get stronger by lifting weights.

They don't get stronger by watching other people lift weights, or by eating potato chips while walking past the weight room.

Math students work out their brains by solving math problems. They don't get stronger brains by watching other people solve math problems, or by eating potato chips while walking past other people who are solving math problems.

Your brain is like a big muscle. Do you want a flabby brain or a strong brain? It's your choice. Since you get smarter by working out your brain, get smarter right now by writing down this chapter's main points. Try the What's the Point? activity on the next page.

What's the Point?

Write down 2 main points from this chapter (here or in your Road Log).



1

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2

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Create Your Road Log

If your teacher doesn't want you to write on the textbook pages, log your ideas in a notebook, in a computer file, or online. To create an online Road Log, you can post on a discussion board or in a personal blog (web log) that is viewable (or not) by others. You can also try a videoblog or photoblog.

You can divide your Road Log into sections with the headings from the list to the right, or you can divide your Road Log into the 9 chapters of the textbook. Post daily or weekly by topic. Create your Road Log right now.

.....
Preview Questions

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Notes

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What's the Point?

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Learning Skills

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Ideas in Action

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Other Activities

.....
Ready for College

.....
Ready for Career

.....
Life and Lyrics

.....
Never Give Up!!!

.....
What Did You Learn?

Three Ways to Give Your Brain a Workout

Champions aren't made in gyms. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them: a desire, a dream, a vision. They have to have the skill and the will. But the will must be stronger than the skill.
—Muhammad Ali

Here's how to exercise your brain:

1 The ABCs of Dendrites

A PRACTICE RIGHT AWAY.

Practice a new skill within 2 minutes or the newly formed dendrite will shrivel and disappear. Try it now with this idea.

If a new skill is not practiced, a new dendrite will shrivel within _____ minutes.

B LEARN DIFFERENT WAYS TO BUILD DENDRITES.

Students should learn about the same ideas in many different ways in order to build more dendrite connections. The more ways through which you experience ideas, the more new pathways you create in your brain. Then it's easier to access that knowledge when you need it.

You can take an idea that you just read about and then:

- listen to or write a song
- view or create and upload a YouTube video clip
- draw a picture, map or flowchart
- build a 3-dimensional model
- stand up, move around and form a human model of the idea

Represent this new concept about learning by drawing a picture in the box below that shows a student building dendrites using at least two different methods.



C DENDRITES GROW FROM STIMULATING EXPERIENCES.

You might have observed that you don't learn well when you're bored. Students must have stimulating experiences to stay engaged and motivated. Without a stimulating experience, dendrites do not grow. It would be great if teachers always provided you with a stimulating learning experience, but some do and some don't. Even teachers that often do can't *always* design something that will engage you. So you must engage yourself to keep learning well.

“ Without a stimulating experience, dendrites do not grow. ”

Describe one type of learning experience that you find stimulating and engaging.

.....

.....

.....

2 Build Myelin

Ever notice how some people seem to be really good at soccer...or writing...or singing? Ever think maybe they're just naturally good at singing, or that you might not be good at singing? It seems reasonable, but it's not true.



The **myelin sheath** is a layer of cells that grows on the outside of neurons. Myelin allows you to speed up your brain. The way to get myelin to build is through practicing just the right way:



Practice a lot. It takes many hours to master a skill. Work on it every day and you will get better and better. One day you will discover that you have become an expert. Once you build layers of myelin, the signals in your brain will travel 100 times faster than before.

Myelin allows people to become better at soccer, better at solving math problems or better at any other mental or physical skill. The more myelin you have, the faster you can think and react. You can build up to 50 layers of myelin on each neuron. Once you build layers of myelin through Effective Practice, here's what happens:

The signals that travel along the neurons in your brain can increase their speed from **2 miles per hour** to **200 miles per hour**.

You can send up to **30 times more signals down the same neuron in the same time period**.

The **overall processing in your brain can become 3000 times more effective**.

“ Your brain can
become 3,000
times more
effective. ”

MYELIN SHEATH: 3 RULES OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

BREAK IT DOWN

Break any skill down into its smaller parts:

- A** look at the task as a whole
- B** divide the task into the smallest possible chunks
- C** change the speed at which you practice the task:
alternately slowing down and then speeding up

PRACTICE IT

Practice the action with focus and repetition:

- A** practice daily or very frequently for 1 or 2+ hours
- B** challenge yourself at your maximum ability
- C** stay focused on the skill you intend to practice

SENSE IT

Pay close attention to how you're practicing:

- A** practice concentrating on your actions
- B** reach beyond your capacity, fall short and reach again
- C** be productive and sense mistakes immediately

Three Learning Skills

As a **VISUAL LEARNER**, you learn well with images
you can see, for example:

- viewing PowerPoint slideshows or websites
- looking at colorful graphics, illustrations and animations
- watching YouTube videos
- absorbing diagrams, charts and timelines
- thinking by drawing pictures



As a **VERBAL LEARNER**, you learn well by
speaking and hearing ideas, for example:

- listening to songs and music
- presenting or hearing oral reports
- engaging in debates
- hearing experts speak about concepts
- asking questions about how to do something

As a **HANDS-ON LEARNER**, you learn well
by doing something, for example:

- moving from one learning station to another learning station
- building a model of the concept
- taking field trips
- trying science experiments
- using objects in a lesson role play

3 Three Learning Skills: Visual, Verbal and Hands-On.

Review the three learning skills on the opposite page. Students can learn new ideas and skills in many different ways. If you understand that you have many options and learning strategies, you can use more strategies to be a better learner.

A Number the three skills as follows: 1) the skill I prefer to use most often, 2) the skill I prefer to use sometimes, and 3) the skill I prefer to use least often.

1

2

3

B Write down an example of how you have used one of the strategies from the skill you chose as #1 . For instance, if you chose Hands-On Learner, an example might be: I built a 3-D model of the Gettysburg battlefield.

.....

.....

.....

C Write down one way you could use one of the strategies from the skill you chose as #3. For instance, if you chose Verbal Learner, an example might be: I could bring in a song about soldiers.

.....

.....

.....

ideas in action



It was only three weeks after the first day of high school, but Marcus already knew he wasn't doing well.

*Action is the
real measure of
intelligence.*

—Napoleon Hill

In his English class, he had failed the first 2 vocabulary tests, and his first paper was covered in teacher comments and frowny faces.

His math teacher asked him to stay after class to discuss his homework. She told Marcus that more than half his answers were wrong.

Even in his favorite class, American History, Marcus sometimes fell asleep and when he tried to read his notes to study for a test, he couldn't understand them.

Recommend three things Marcus could do that would help him be a better learner.

1

.....

.....

2

.....

.....

3

.....

.....

Choose Your Road

If you don't like the road you're walking, start paving another one. —Dolly Parton

If someone is going down the wrong road, he doesn't need motivation to speed him up. What he needs is education to turn him around. —Jim Rohn

Sometimes the road less traveled is less traveled for a reason. —Jerry Seinfeld

Choose any one of the three quotes above.

A Rewrite the quote in your own words:

B Explain why the idea is important in words that you might send in an email or text message (optional to send):

Introducing

MAGA and KEYA on A Good Road

MAGA and **KEYA** are two Lakota Indian superheroes who appear in a cartoon page in every chapter. Lakota Indians are a Native American tribe with seven bands or “sub-tribes.” Many Lakota live in North and South Dakota, some on reservations and others in towns and cities across the state. They also live in many other states across the country and in parts of Canada.

Maga and Keya struggle against the forces that try to push them off the good road they are walking.

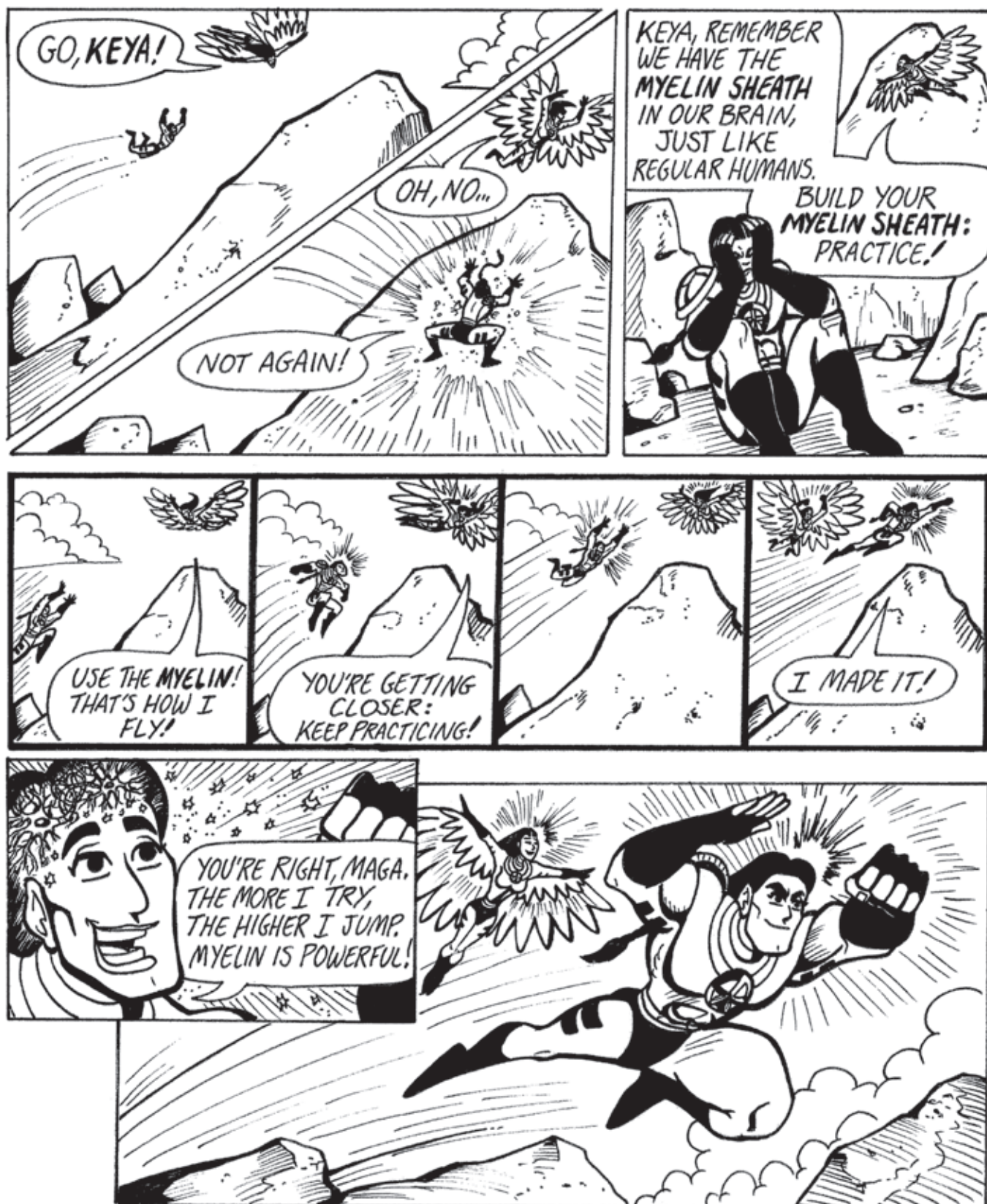


Meet MAGA: Maga means “Duck” in the Lakota language. Maga has wings and can fly anywhere. She is good at staying on track and solving problems. She uses Value Shields to keep her safe from wandering off the good road. You’ll learn more about Value Shields in Chapter 3.



Meet KEYA: Keya means “Turtle” in the Lakota language. Keya can run and jump over mountains (as long as he remembers to practice). He has a powerful protective shell, like a turtle. He also has a collection of Value Shields to keep him safe from wandering off the good road.

MAGA AND KEYA ON A GOOD ROAD



KHALID BIRDSONG

Ready for College

“

The Yankees tried to sign me out of high school as a first-round draft pick in 1981. I turned them down to go to college.

—Bo Jackson

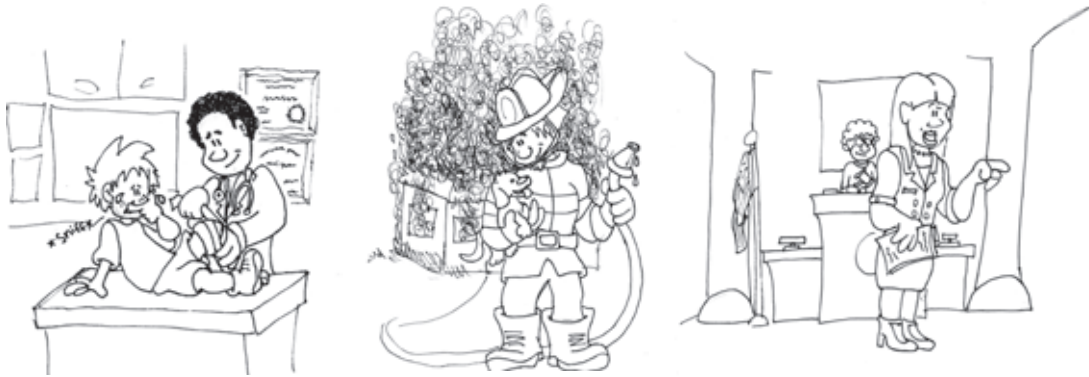
”



- 1 What do you think are the major reasons some high school seniors don't apply to college?

- 2 How would you advise them to move forward if they did want to attend college? What are their next steps?

Ready for Career



Initiative and Self-Direction

When I was in high school, I once worked as a temporary employee on a 3-week assignment entering payments into a computer. As I worked, I noticed that there were nearly two hundred previous payment entries that were incomplete. I asked another employee what to do about them. She said, “Don’t worry, they’ve been there forever.”

I wasn’t worried, but I wanted to do my best at this job. I researched the payments, and updated all the records over the next two weeks. At the end of my temporary assignment, the office manager told me that none of the full-time employees had ever taken the initiative to clear up the old payments. She was grateful and said that if I ever needed to use her as a reference, I could. I thanked her.

The next year, when I was applying for a full-time job, I asked her for a letter of recommendation. Her very strong recommendation allowed me to get both the interview and the job offer.

“

You know you are on the road to success if you would do your job, and not be paid for it.

—Oprah Winfrey

”

“

Genius is initiative
on fire.
—Holbrook Jackson

”

“

I’ve always had
confidence. It came
because I have
lots of initiative.
I wanted to make
something of
myself.
—Eddie Murphy

”

Initiative and Self-Direction

Why wait for someone to tell you to do something valuable? Employers want employees who are willing to get something important done or a problem solved, without being told to do it. Take initiative. Instead of being completely directed by others, be self-directed. In order to practice this, identify two unsolved problems and actions to solve them.

Problem at School (maybe the water fountain has been leaking for weeks or the library printer quit working):

.....

Action to Solve Problem at School (you can ask for help):

.....

.....

.....

.....

Problem at Home (maybe your new dog keeps escaping from the back yard or your room needs a reading light):

.....

Action to Solve Problem at Home:

.....

.....

.....

.....



LIFE & LYRICS



Choose a song about learning from your music library.
Listen to the lyrics carefully, writing down three
important points the songwriter makes about learning.

1

.....

2

.....

3

.....

Which important point do you agree with, and why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

CHOOSE YOUR ROAD

*Life is one big road with
lots of signs. So when you
ridin' through the ruts, don't
complicate your mind. Flee
from hate, mischief and
jealousy...*

—Bob Marley

What did you learn?

I know you've learned a few important things!



“The road to success is always under construction.”

—Lily Tomlin

NEVER GIVE UP!!!



See the Value of Failures


J.K. Rowling is the author of the popular *Harry Potter* book series, but her first book was rejected twelve times by publishers. Now her books have sold more than 400 million copies. Rowling says: “You might never fail on the scale I did, but some failure in life is inevitable.”

Thomas Edison once had a teacher tell him he was too stupid to learn in school. He failed more than 9,000 times before he succeeded in creating the first light bulb. He would go on to create more than 1,000 innovations.

Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team because of his “lack of skill.” Now he is widely seen as one of the greatest basketball players of all time.

Steven Spielberg wanted to be a filmmaker but was rejected by three film schools. He would eventually win an Academy Award, become a co-founder of the DreamWorks movie studio and set records for the most widely seen films of all time, including the *Star Wars* series, *Indiana Jones*, *The Color Purple*, *Jurassic Park*, *Amistad*, and many more.

Babe Ruth struck out 1,330 times. He also hit 714 home runs in his career and is one of the most legendary baseball players of all time. After each strikeout, he knew another home run was just around the corner.



*The roughest road
often leads to the top.*

—**Christina Aguilera**

*Many of life's failures
are people who had
not realized how close
they were to success
when they gave up.*

— **Thomas Edison**

Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all.

—Dale Carnegie

Oprah Winfrey experienced many challenges during her childhood and early career. As a young girl, she was so poor that she wore potato sack dresses. As an adult, she lost her first news anchor job. Yet she would eventually become the host of the highest-rated talk show in history, CEO of a media empire, a billionaire and one of the most influential women in the world.

Abraham Lincoln lost his job, was defeated when running for the state legislature, failed in business, had a nervous breakdown, lost a nomination for Congress, lost a senate race (twice), and then was elected President of the United States.

Failures offer many important lessons, so long as we don't give up just because we failed at something. Re-read the stories above about successful people who have experienced failure. What do you think they might have believed about failure that allowed them to keep trying until they reached their goals?

Belief: Failure is . . .

.....

.....

.....

Write below something that you have “failed” at in your life. I have failed at:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

What motivating belief do you think would help you keep trying to succeed in life, despite your previous failure?

Motivating Belief:

Cool Facts

- People don't make good decisions when they are hungry and tired. They're not good at resisting the temptation of wasting time on the internet. They have a hard time avoiding unhealthy foods. Make important decisions early in the day, or when rested after a healthy meal.
- Some psychologists argue that a sign of maturity is to have a clear purpose in your life. When you have purpose and goals, you have better mental health.
- High school graduates earn almost 40% more each year than high school dropouts. College graduates with a bachelor's degree earn about \$ 1,000,000 more than high school graduates during their entire career. A university master's degree is worth \$ 1.3 million more in career earnings than a high school diploma. University graduates with doctoral degrees earn an average of \$ 3.4 million during their working life.

