GRIT: THE POWER OF PASSION AND PERSEVERANCE

Presented by: Professor Laurie Siegel, Nina McMahon, Taylor Oakland, Cindy Danzzell, Amoni Reynolds, Michelle Olejnik, and Jeff Thompson

OVERVIEW
- What is grit?
- How gritty are you?
- How do we cultivate grit in our students?
  - Passion & Purpose
  - Perseverance
  - Mindset and Words
  - Deliberate Practice
  - Parenting

WHAT IS GRIT?
- "Perseverance and passion for long-term goals."
- Our interests and passions combine to fuel the desires that become our goals.
- The gritty perseverance response comes in to help us, or our students, achieve a more long-term goal.
- Long-term goals are multi-step goals that can be harder to achieve if we lack the stick-to-
  itiveness required to achieve them.

**NOTE:** Unless otherwise stated, all material in this presentation is based off the work described in Angela Duckworth's book "GRIT: The Power of Passion and Perseverance"
WHY DO WE LACK GRIT?

We have lost our tolerance for failing.

- We lack a strong work ethic that is continuous
- Understanding that it takes time and things are not instant. Start from the bottom and work to the top.
- In order to be gritty, we need to be able to endure the mundane activities
- We do not help ourselves or our students learn the importance of failing and then getting back up to keep trying.

HOW GRITTY ARE YOU?

Angela Duckworth created a measurement tool called the Grit Scale.

- Add up your answers on the scale and divide by 10 to get your grit scale.
- 5 is the most gritty and 1 is not gritty at all.
GRIT SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Not at all like me</th>
<th>Not much like me</th>
<th>Some-what like me</th>
<th>Mostly like me</th>
<th>Very much like me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Setbacks don't discourage me. I don't give up easily.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I often set a goal but later choose to pursue a different one.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am a hard worker.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I have difficulty maintaining focus on projects that don't result in a clear outcome or completion.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I set realistic goals for myself.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My interests change from year to year.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I am diligent. I never give up.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I have been obsessed with a certain idea or project for a short time but later lost interest.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SO WHY DOES GRIT MATTER?

- More than innate talent, grit is becoming the most accurate measure of long-term success in people.
- Grit is the best predictor of success - over social intelligence, good looks or IQ.

Angela Duckworth’s Research
- Westpoint
  - Mountain Bikers: 71 of the 1,218 dropped out by the last day. Grit was an indicator.
- Olympic Swimmers
- Talent vs. Grit
- Chicago Public Schools
  - Grit is a better indicator for students who will graduate more than how much students care about school or how safe students feel at school.

HOW DO WE CULTIVATE GRIT?

- Finding Your Passion - the Importance of Student Engagement / Activities
- Developing a Sense of Purpose
- Teaching Perseverance
FINDING YOUR PASSION:
IMPORTANCE OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

- Get young children involved in extracurricular activities (sports, choir, band, art club etc.)
- Outside activities help foster practice, hard work and perseverance.
- Surrounding students with other students who share similar interests and work ethic can help strengthen grit.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACTIVITIES

- Students involved in extracurricular activities for at least two years have better outcomes in life such as:
  - Better grades
  - Higher self-esteem
  - Less likely to get into trouble
- After high school, they are more likely to:
  - Graduate from college
  - Have a job
  - Earn more money
- Students involved in more than one activity and who advance in those activities are more likely to:
  - Graduate from college with honors
  - Hold an appointed or elected leadership position in young adulthood
  - Have notable accomplishments for a young adult

DEVELOPING A SENSE OF PURPOSE

Duckworth has 3 recommendations for cultivating a sense of purpose:

- Reflect on how the work you are doing / want to do can make a positive contribution to society
- Think about how, in small but meaningful ways, you can change / enhance your current work to enhance its connection to your core values
- Find inspiration in a purposeful role model
Many of us hold on to the idea that skill comes naturally: that if we’re good—or not good—at something, it’s because we were born that way. The problem with this belief is that it leads many kids to give up on things. Plus, it’s simply not true. Even naturally gifted people have to work hard to hone their ability with hours of practice.

Tools for Strengthening Perseverance

- Growth Mindset / Flexible Thinking
- Manageable Challenges
- Removing Shame
- Wise Praise
- Adjusting Negative Thoughts
- Self-Encouragement
- Deliberate Practice
- Tips for Parents

**NOTE:** Tools in this section are based off the work described in Angela Duckworth’s book "GRIT: The Power of Passion and Perseverance", Carol Dweck’s work on growth mindset, and Caren Baruch-Feldman’s "The Grit Guide for Teens" workbook.

- Resilient children = Flexible thinkers
  - Ability to view problems from different perspectives
  - Increases ability to solve problems independently
  - Multiple solutions to a problem mean built in Plan “B”

- Growth Mindset = the belief that intelligence and abilities can be developed (Carol Dweck)
THE POWER OF “YET”

“The genius is he who sees what is not yet and causes it to come to be.”
~ Peter Nivio Zarlenga

FAIL = First Attempt in Learning
~ A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

HELP TACKLE MANAGEABLE CHALLENGES
- Scaffolding: the framework and or support you provide for students on which they can build.
- Model or demonstrate how to solve a problem, and then step back, offering support as needed.
- Assistance helps success rates and builds confidence to try something new.
- Teaches children that help is available if needed.

REMOVING SHAME & MODELING MISTAKE MAKING
- Baby Steps
- Perfectionism = Fear of failure & Failure = Shame
  Many of our students will never try something just to avoid potential failure.
- From shame researcher Brené Brown we know that “shame is the end of vulnerability and creativity.” To try over and over again we must be vulnerable.
- Removing shame responses
  We must choose our words carefully with kids. Rather than saying, “You’re a mess. You can say you’re making a mess.” Rather than calling a kids effort perfect, we can call it brave.
- Emotion free mistake making
INCORPORATE WISE PRAISE

- When giving praise focus on the process not the product.
- Give feedback about specific things that student has control over (e.g., hard work, perseverance, effort).
- Avoid comments such as “You’re so smart!” or “Good job!”
- Move toward, “I saw you worked hard on this” or “How did you learn that?”
- The goal is to keep practicing improving and learning.

ADJUSTING NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Thinking That Undermines Grit</th>
<th>Thinking that Promotes Grit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>This math problem is too hard, I quit!</td>
<td>This problem is tough, but I will break it down. Also, tough means that I’m learning!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Relationships</td>
<td>I am not going to the party. There will be no one for me to talk to.</td>
<td>I might know a few people at the party, and if I go, I will get to know them better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellness/Health</td>
<td>I’m not going to the gym. I’m too tired.</td>
<td>Every time I work out, I feel so much better afterward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular</td>
<td>This dance move is too hard. I am done!</td>
<td>No one gets better unless they keep trying, so I will keep practicing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>AAAAHH! (Yelling when someone gets on your nerves)</td>
<td>Take a deep breath and count to ten. If I yell, then people will only notice how angry I am, and they won’t listen to my ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TEACH SELF-ENCOURAGEMENT

- All humans need encouragement.
- Encouragement students keeps them more positive and motivated (short term)
- Helps develop an inner voice to encourage themselves during future challenges.
- Mantra to repeat when things get tough. “Practice makes progress!” and “If you don’t succeed, try again. I got this. I can do this.”
13 THINGS MENTALLY STRONG PARENTS
DON’T DO

They don’t:
1. condone a victim mentality.
2. parent out of guilt.
3. make their children the center of their universe.
4. allow fear to dictate their choices.
5. give their children power over them.
6. expect perfection.
7. let their children avoid responsibility.
8. shield their children from pain.
9. feel responsible for their children’s emotions.
10. prevent their children from making choices.
11. confuse discipline with punishment.
12. take shortcuts to avoid discomfort.
13. lose sight of their values.
HOW YOU ACCEPT DIFFERENCES

PARENTS REMEMBER TO TELL YOUR CHILDREN:

▪ Everyone learns at their own pace.
▪ To not compare themselves to others.
▪ That they are enough.
▪ To run his or her own race.
▪ To learn from each other.

It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.

CONCLUSION

▪ What is grit?
▪ How gritty are you?
▪ How do we cultivate grit in our students?
  ○ Passion & Purpose
  ○ Perseverance
  ○ Mindset and Words
  ○ Deliberate Practice
  ○ Parents

QUESTIONS?
REFERENCES


CONTACT INFORMATION

Cindy Danzell - cddanzell@my.nl.edu
Nina McMahon - na4per824@gmail.com
Taylor Oakland - tayloroakland@icloud.com
Michelle Otajek - michahe.otajek@gmail.com
Professor Laurie Siegel - laurie.siegel@nl.edu
Anoni Reynolds - reynold5156@gmail.com
Jeff Thompson - utthompson472@gmail.com