



Habits of Mind

Teacher's Companion

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THE INSTITUTE FOR
HABITS OF MIND

Educating for a more thoughtful world

Introduction

Make no mistake about it—we live in a time not unlike Guttenberg’s, where fantastic tools remade the world over. The printing press made information available cheaply to everyone. And we observe the current revolution by casually referring to youngsters as “digital natives.” Truly, Neil Postman’s observation is even more prophetic today than it was 30 years ago: “Children are messages that we send to a future we will not see.” The digital tools available to this and succeeding generations is changing human beings and societies forever, just as the printing press did.

Joel Garreau (2005) in his book *Radical Evolution* describes the future that currently exists. One university has taught an owl monkey to move objects with its mind. Yes, telekinetic energy. Another university has developed an exo-skeleton. Put this on and you can lift 160 pounds like it is 4.5 pounds. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency DARPA, an experimental arm of the government has created a pill to alleviate chronic pain. The pill will take effect in 30 seconds and last for a month. If you have chronic pain, this would be a great find. Would you use this pill on the sidelines of NFL Sunday? Would you use it on the battlefields of Iraq? The point is that we can do just about anything we want to. The question also is, “should we?”

Business and industry know that creativity and good thinking are their lifeblood. High levels of good thinking and creativity will continue to be requirements of those who get hired in this increasingly technical and complex world. So, for educators, the question is what knowledge do we teach and how; AND how do we teach processes

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to support students' using knowledge creatively and effectively? We believe the Habits of Mind so skillfully articulated by Drs. Art Costa and Bena Kallick are the necessary backbone of educational processes that are and will be foundational for an ever-changing future. We really do need continuous learners for a future that we cannot see.

"Sometimes it is easier to behave yourself into new learning rather than learning yourself into a new behavior." Knowledge is important AND insufficient. Pfeffer and Sutton (2006) wrote a book on the *Knowing-Doing Gap*. Collectively, we know tons of stuff, but a question is are we using that copious knowledge to make a contribution to others and our institutions.

Behaviors are learned by watching those who are in our environment. Behaviors are learned from those who take time to teach us new ways to do things. Behaviors that are repeated become habits. As with most things, habits can be positive (getting the results we want), habits can be negative (getting results we don't want), or they can be neutral (actions that neither move us forward or backward).

Ralph Waldo Emerson admonishes us to:

"Watch your thoughts; They become words. Watch your words; They become deeds. Watch your deeds; They become habits. Watch your habits; They become character. Character is everything."

As you reflect on your life, we are sure you will see results you have gotten through sheer determination to be successful. The Pygmalion Effect has been around for many years. Modeling is the first teacher.

Art Costa and Bena Kallick have provided educators important descriptive processes that encourage deep, disciplined thinking and acting, vastly increasing our ability to solve knotty problems and live together successfully and peacefully. We think there is real power in modeling and teaching *The Habits of Mind* as foundational life skills required for continuous learning and success in the 21st Century and beyond.

Dr. Costa and Dr. Kallick have been champions for learning for a long time. The recent updated information on the “Habits of Mind” is presented as some transferable skills that students can develop and keep with them for a lifetime. We want to support modeling and teaching those habits so that children, students can continue to learn in a changing climate as the future becomes reality.

Our book, then, is how to support, encourage, teach, and sustain continued development of the habits that are transferable across content. We are engaged in helping students become successful for life not just successful in school.

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|  <p>1. Persisting <i>Stick to it!</i> Persevering in task through to completion; remaining focused. Looking for ways to reach your goal when stuck. Not giving up.</p> |  <p>2. Managing Impulsivity <i>Take your Time!</i> Thinking before acting; remaining calm, thoughtful and deliberative.</p> |
|  <p>3. Listening with understanding and empathy <i>Understand Others!</i> Devoting mental energy to another person's thoughts and ideas; Make an effort to perceive another's point of view and emotions.</p> |  <p>4. Thinking flexibly <i>Look At It Another Way!</i> Being able to change perspectives, generate alternatives, consider options.</p> |
|  <p>5. Thinking about your thinking (Metacognition) <i>Know your knowing!</i> Being aware of your own thoughts, strategies, feelings and actions and their effects on others.</p> |  <p>6. Striving for accuracy <i>Check it again!</i> Always doing your best. Setting high standards. Checking and finding ways to improve constantly.</p> |
|  <p>7. Questioning and problem posing <i>How do you know?</i> Having a questioning attitude; knowing what data are needed and developing questioning strategies to produce those data. Finding problems to solve.</p> |  <p>8. Applying past knowledge to new situations <i>Use what you Learn!</i> Accessing prior knowledge; transferring knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned.</p> |
|  <p>9. Thinking & communicating with clarity and precision <i>Be clear!</i> Strive for accurate communication in both written and oral form; avoiding over generalizations, distortions, deletions and exaggerations.</p> |  <p>10. Gather data through all senses <i>Use your natural pathways!</i> Pay attention to the world around you Gather data through all the senses. taste, touch, smell, hearing and sight.</p> |
|  <p>11. Creating, imagining, and innovating <i>Try a different way!</i> Generating new and novel ideas, fluency, originality</p> |  <p>12. Responding with wonderment and awe: <i>Have fun figuring it out!</i> Finding the world awesome, mysterious and being intrigued with phenomena and beauty.</p> |
|  <p>13. Taking responsible risks <i>Venture out!</i> Being adventuresome; living on the edge of one's competence. Try new things constantly.</p> |  <p>14. Finding humor <i>Laugh a little!</i> Finding the whimsical, incongruous and unexpected. Being able to laugh at one's self.</p> |
|  <p>15. Thinking interdependently <i>Work together!</i> Being able to work in and learn from others in reciprocal situations. Team work.</p> |  <p>16. Remaining open to continuous learning <i>Learn from experiences!</i> Having humility and pride when admitting we don't know; resisting complacency.</p> |

Chapter 1
Persisting



Stick to it!

Persevering in task through
to completion; remaining focused.
Looking for ways to reach your goal when stuck.
Not giving up.

Persisting

Never give up
Relentless
Perseverance
Sustained
Indefatigable
Systematic
Focused
Tenacity
Try and try again
Diligence
Stamina
Reliant
Continuing
Enduring
Stand your ground
Stick-to-it-tiveness
Undaunted
Hang in there
Drive
Hang tough

Chapter 1: Persisting

Stories

Room of 1000 Demons

Why We Like This Story

We begin with the obvious: learning is voluntary. No one can make you learn. You enter willingly. Sometimes, however, we are confronted in life with challenges we cannot avoid. It reminds us of the often-used quote, “The only way out is through.”

So entering the room of 1000 Demons is a choice—and a metaphor. Nothing compels you to enter the room. However, once inside the room (like once in the middle of a knotty problem), the only way out is to find the doorknob on the other side of the room. Once we face our own learning situations, we constantly have the choice before us: quit or persist.



Persisting to find answers, solve problems, and gain new insights is invaluable to success in life. We don't want to perseverate (repeat a response after the cessation of the original stimulus) by blindly and automatically repeating the same behaviors. We do want to stay with problems and challenges when the answers and the way forward are not readily apparent. We are reminded of a few lines of Wendell Berry's poem, *The Real Work*:

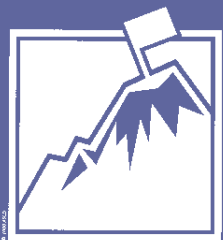
It may be that when we no longer know what to do
We have come to our real work,
And that when we no longer know which way to go
We have come to our real journey.

The wonderful story and the questions following may offer insights into what it takes to develop persistence.

You can download the book at this address in either text or pdf format. After downloading the book, go to page 55 and copy the text for use in class. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/2413959/Do-One-Thing-Different-Bill-OHanlon>.

Questions for reflection:

1. What are some of the demons you face in your life? At work? As a student?
2. How will you keep your feet moving?
3. What help do you expect in keeping your feet moving forward? Who is your support community and how will they support you?
4. Describe the future you want. What journeys do you have to complete to get there? How will you deal with difficulty and doubt?
5. What helps you overcome fears, doubt, and uncertainties?



The Myth of Sisyphus

Why We Like This Story

This is a story of continuing to work at a job with no end. The constant hard work of Sisyphus is always met with the same result. All the hard work is for naught, the stone always rolls down the hill after the great expenditure of energy and time of pushing the stone up the hill.

Many jobs are like that. We go to work, work hard with good intentions, and it seems that nothing changes. It is very difficult to keep coming back, working hard, and not feeling we are making a difference.

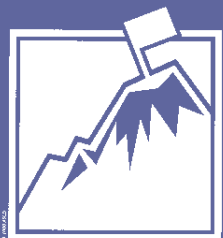
We make the connection of students who show up each day at school, trying to be successful and either failing or not understanding concepts as well as they would like. It takes great persistence to keep showing up in school every day knowing that you may not understand, may not get a good grade, or may not make the friends you had hoped to.

There is also a connection for colleagues who want to make a difference for kids. Sometimes teachers and administrators feel they are not making a difference for students. When it feels hopeless it is hard to continue to work toward a goal.

The story is available at

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Myth_of_Sisyphus

<http://www.mythweb.com/encyc/entries/sisyphus.html>



Questions for reflection:

1. What can you learn from the process of learning even though the result may not be what you want?
2. What sustains your effort when you do not see immediate results?
3. What helps you to keep going? Who are your best supporters?
4. There always comes a time when one must choose between contemplation and action. How do you determine that action is not enough?
5. How are you a support to others who are working hard and not getting results?

Picture of Sisyphus at work: <http://hubpages.com/hub/The-Story-of-Sisyphus>. You may want to show this ahead of time and use the illustration with Visual Training Strategy explained beginning on page 24 of the introduction in the section *Dealing with Images*.

Images

In looking at these images and the ones throughout the book, remember that these can be models for student work and projects. They may find quotes, pictures, and other media that they can put together (mashup) to express their view of persistence or what ever theme you're working on.

http://www.getfrank.co.nz/assets/images/Halfwidth/NewFolder-6/_resampled/

http://www.artbythomaskinkade.com/images/kinkade_perseveranceB.jpg



Persistence posters <http://www.art.com/gallery/id--b7821/persistence-posters.htm?ui=5C655DB0B4C84D7FA9C79F962B9E1525> As you can see here there are a number of posters that can be used.

Video Clips from DVDs and/or videotapes

Cast Away — *The Coconut Problem*

The clip is from the 2000 movie starring Tom Hanks. Hanks plays Chuck Noland, a FedEx troubleshooter whose plane crashes in the remote Pacific Ocean. The full plot summary can be found on the Internet Movie Database at <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0162222/plotsummary>.

Clip Setup: Chuck Noland is the only one that survived an airplane crash somewhere in the remote Pacific Ocean. He makes his way to shore and begins the task of trying to survive in this new and threatening environment. He determines that coconuts contain liquid that might sustain, so he sets about trying to get at the water inside the coconut. In what ways was he persistent? How did persistence pay off? What were his alternatives?

Start the video: 39:35 as Tom Hanks, a shirt on his head, drops boxes in the sandy beach amongst other FedEx boxes. He then drops to his knees and unwraps his head.

Stop the video: 42:19 as Tom Hanks breathes what looks like a sigh of relief, having solved the coconut (and water) problem.

Commercials

Michael Jordan “Failure” Nike commercial: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45mMioJ5szc>

Just what is failure? What is the line between failure and persistence? And where does being stubborn fit in?

Addidas “Unstoppable” commercial: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-3CoR0dy0o>



What does it mean to be “unstoppable”? What challenges do you face every day that try to tie you down or get in your way to make success difficult? How do you overcome the challenges? What happens when you don’t overcome the difficulties? How does your attitude play a part in your success or failure?

Video from Web Streaming Resources

The Man Who Planted Trees:

<http://fr.truveo.com/The-man-who-planted-trees/id/3280381358>

http://www.stupidvideos.com/video/animals/Persistent_Hamster/#64380

“The Old Man and the Sea”

Part 1 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1EbNvHDxbA>

Part 2 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2_KszEnlq0&feature=related

This wonderful animation won an Academy Award and is available for about \$20.00 USD at: http://www.amazon.com/Old-Man-Sea-Animated-IMAX/dp/B00080M2UI/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=dvd&qid=1274195932&sr=8-1

Poems

Two poems are prominent when we think of persisting: “Don’t Quit” and “Mother to Son” by Langston Hughes.

“Don’t Quit” has been variously attributed to Edgar Guest, but there is some question about this. It has also been attributed to anonymous. Our own search on the web left us in confusion, but the story might be interesting



as a way to introduce or explain copyright issues to the students. After all, any work that they publish on the web should strictly follow copyright guidelines. That is precisely we've included where you can obtain free music and images for student work—and even then, they should be attributed.

The poem is short—24 lines—and very approachable. Possible questions for discussion are:

1. Why did the poet give this advice?
2. What are some circumstances in your life where you could have used this advice?
3. Relate some stories from your own experience about when you didn't quit? What were the outcomes?
4. What is the meaning of "Success is failure turned inside out—"?
5. How could you help yourself and others remember the advice in this poem?
6. When would this advice be important to you in growing up or getting older?

The poem can be found at any of these sites:

<http://www.collegegrad.com/jobsearch/Graduation-and-Still-No-Job/Dont-Quit/>

<http://www.thedontquitpoem.com/thePoem.htm>

<http://www.motivatingquotes.com/dontquit.htm>

Here is a video on YouTube that is interesting not only because it includes the poem "Don't Quit", it serves as a model for a video project that a student might do. On both the Windows and Mac, free or inexpensive tools exist for students to put together their own film to a poem, song lyrics, tell a story, or present a point of view. You might be interested in teaching the poem from text and then downloading and showing the short video. You could certainly follow up with a student assigned paragraph or two about the strengths and weaknesses of each way of dealing with the poem. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VkCFeNeqyHk>



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Here is another way the address the poem and possibilities for student projects. Here the photographer simply added the verses of the poem to a photograph—another possibility for student work. Found here: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/envina/3347912290/>

Langston Hughes’s “Mother to Son” is speech and piece of advice from a mother to her son. As Hughes comes out of the 1920s “Harlem Renaissance”, the poem presents an opportunity to explore the “Harlem Renaissance” and other artists that were a part of it. Also, students might research how persistent Langston Hughes was, how do we know, and how might this have been advice from his mother?

Possible questions:

1. What are some of the images in the poem? Why do you suppose the poet chose those images? And could the images represent something else like a flag represents a country of a dollar sign \$ represents money?
2. How important is this advice to the son? How might the advice been related to his ethnicity and the time in which he lived?
3. What messages do you get and from whom about persistence?
4. What experiences in your life are like the descriptions: “tacks in it”, splinters, “boards torn up”, no carpet, going into the dark?

The poem is found here:

<http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/mother-to-son/>

<http://oldpoetry.com/opoem/10388-Langston-Hughes-Mother-To-Son>

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=177021>



Songs

We think of Frank Sinatra's "High Hopes," written by J. Van Heusen/S. Cahn, as musically and lyrically capturing the persistence, relentlessness, and tenacity of this Habit. The song is on Songza or can be purchased at Amazon or the Apple store or brought from home on a CD. Lyrics are available here:

http://www.lyricsfreak.com/f/frank+sinatra/high+hopes_20055241.html

<http://www.risa.co.uk/sla/song.php?songid=13668>

<http://www.metrolyrics.com/high-hopes-lyrics-frank-sinatra.html>

<http://www.mp3lyrics.org/f/frank-sinatra/high/>

Another song that captures the spirit of the persisting habit is Electric Light Orchestra's "Hold on Tight to Your Dream." The song is available on Songza.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7ChoM2Rh60>

Lyrics:

<http://www.sing365.com/music/lyric.nsf/Hold-On-Tight-lyrics-Electric-Light-Orchestra/8C696EC63099DF0F48256AB8001207BF>

<http://www.project80s.com/lyrics/song-lyrics.php?song=hold-on-tight-elo>



Quotes

“Success is 90% perspiration and 10% inspiration.” — Thomas Edison

“Energy and persistence conquer all things.” — Benjamin Franklin, Inventor and Statesman

“Talent is cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work.” — Stephen King, Author

“I will persist until I succeed. Always will I take another step. If that is of no avail I will take another, and yet another. In truth, one step at a time is not too difficult... I know that small attempts, repeated, will complete any undertaking.” — Og Mandino, Author

“Persistence is what makes the impossible possible, the possible likely, and the likely definite.” — Robert Half, Executive

“I am not judged by the number of times I fail, but by the number of times I succeed. And the number of times I succeed is in direct proportion to the number of times I can fail and keep trying.” — Tom Hopkins, Sales Trainer and Author

“You may have to fight a battle more than once to win it.” — Margaret Thatcher

“We must always go the second mile. When we go the first mile, we simply do what is required of us. It is when we go the second mile tha excellence is achieved and minor miracles happen.” — Deborah McGriff

“Studies indicate that the one quality all successful people have is persistence. They’re willing to spend more time accomplishing a task and to persevere in the face of many difficult odds. There’s a very positive relationship between people’s ability to accomplish any task and the time they’re willing to spend on it.” — Joyce Brothers, Psychologist and Author

“Nothing can take the place of persistence.” —Ray Kroc



“Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with great talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. —Calvin Coolidge

“Never, never, never give up.” — Winston Churchill

“Half way thru any project it looks like a failure.” — Rose Beth Cantor

Persistence: The harder you work... the luckier you get.

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