

Grit to Great: How Perseverance, Passion, and Pluck Take You from Ordinary to Extraordinary (Kaplan Thaler, Linda;Koval, Robin)

Grit is about sweat, not swagger. Character, not charisma.

“I’ve missed more than nine thousand shots in my career. I’ve lost almost three hundred games. Twenty-six times, I’ve been entrusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life, and that’s why I succeed.”

Failure is how we learn—it’s how we develop and acquire grit.

Guts—Grit begins with the courage to take on a tough challenge, and not falter in the face of adversity.

Initiative—By definition, initiative—being a self-starter—is what makes grit dynamic, what sets it in motion.

Tenacity—Tenacity is the relentless ability to stay focused on a goal.

The most effective leaders are those who never see themselves as victims of other people’s actions, they don’t blame and they don’t rationalize.

The Termites were superachievers by most traditional measures of success. Most graduated from college several years ahead of their nongifted peers, and landed professional jobs in greater numbers, which meant, of course, that they earned bigger salaries. But not all of the child geniuses were success stories. Some couldn’t hold jobs at all. Others struggled with substance abuse. Twenty-two committed suicide. And not a single one achieved the fame or made the outsize contributions to society that Lewis Terman had predicted.

As it turned out, two of the students Terman had passed over for his study—they didn’t quite measure up—went on to win Nobel Prizes. Not a single Termite did.

Because it speaks to one’s character. Unlike talent, character is shaped by our experiences, by exposure to other people and to the situations

we encounter in life—and our response to them. Character is something you can mindfully develop over time, regardless of income, education, or connections.

Many people think of work in terms of what it takes out of you; Wendy was taught early on what work instilled in you.

For his book *Hiring for Attitude*, Murphy spent three years studying twenty thousand new hires. He found that 46 percent of them failed within eighteen months. “The shocker,” he reports, is that “only 11 percent of those failed for lack of technical skills.” The rest didn’t make it because of their attitude: poor motivation, negativity, and emotional issues made them lackluster team players, ineffective leaders, inconsistent problem solvers, and, worst of all, a drain on their workplace’s collective energy. Most probably had the smarts for the job—what they lacked was the optimism, grit, and determination to succeed.

A half hour each day adds up to 180 hours of extra practice a year!

That’s because, unlike elite athletes, who first popularized visualization training, we tend to fast-forward the fantasy to the good part, picturing ourselves accepting the gold medal, rather than visualizing us training for it, and anticipating injuries or other obstacles and setbacks along the way.

Researchers found that the fantasy gives us a feel-good buzz, which robs us of the motivation to get off our butts and do the work to achieve the real thing. It creates expectations of instant success. And when reality turns out to be harder than we imagined, our performance falls short, our motivation evaporates, and our anxiety increases.

Why? Thinking about an idealized future can feign having already attained the dream, and detract from the effort of reaching success.

Despite what the self-help and coaching industry wants us to believe, positive thinking should not be about the outcome of your dreams, but about all the roadblocks in the way and what you can do to move past them.

What we need to do is to prioritize our ambitions and goals, ranking them from easiest to achieve to hardest to achieve, and from most important to least important to our lives. If something is hard to achieve (“travel around the world by motorcycle”) and not terribly important (“someday, just to say I did”), scratch it. If it’s tough (“lose thirty pounds”) and crucial (“prediabetic, daughter’s wedding next summer”) then get started by

Indeed, failure today is often seen not as something to be embarrassed about, but as one of the keys to learning faster, being more creative, getting better, and ultimately finding a way to win and succeed.

Children need to feel competent and confident, Ginsburg says, by being given opportunities to develop important skills, and by being allowed to recover themselves after a fall. They need to develop a clear sense of right and wrong and a commitment to integrity. And they need to learn coping strategies and self-control to help them get through failure or times of pressure and stress.

Keep Your Brain Alive,

A 2013 review of forty international studies suggests that regular volunteering can add years to your life—with some evidence pointing to a 22 percent reduction in mortality, according to study coauthor Elizabeth Lightfoot, an associate professor at the University of Minnesota School of Social Work.

When it comes to the team and the workplace, people benefit from guidelines that encourage them to think before posting. Of course, players and other employees can voice their opinions, but they must be aware that when they make public remarks, they are representing the organization. An off-the-cuff comment can hurt the team, so social media education is crucial.