

# Education Freedom Manifesto

by Rob Nielsen

## Preamble

Education means emancipation. It means light and liberty.  
It means the uplifting of the soul of man into the glorious light of truth,  
the light by which men can only be made free.  
Frederick Douglass

Regrettably, much of mankind struggles in ignorance and dependency. Ignorance and dependency are not reserved only for the poor, and they do not result from a lack of institutional oversight. In many cases, ignorance and dependency are actually perpetuated by official sources in the name of education itself. As a result, many people unconsciously trust in a cult of experts to oversee their lives.

Of course, this situation is not new. Throughout history, powerful people have sought to maintain and extend control of others by obscuring knowledge and limiting access to resources. This strategy has always functioned best when the general population has been conditioned over time not to question authority.

One notable victory in this struggle was the invention and proliferation of the printing press, and the mass literacy it helped to enable. For much of the world's history, information was relatively easy to manipulate and control. Once books became inexpensive and rapidly producible, many controlling interests were forced to give way to freedom of thought and expression. The resulting cultural and technological advancements were a testament to the transformational power of freedom.

The Age of Enlightenment popularized important, self-evident truths related to the natural rights of all men and women, including rights to life, liberty, and private property. Those principles inspired an unprecedented expansion of freedom, knowledge, and increase in quality of life for many millions of people. Lamentably, that legacy of freedom and prosperity continues to face strong opposition.

The proliferation of digital media and computer networks have made sharing information extremely inexpensive and almost instantaneous. Knowledge can indeed flood the earth. The remaining challenge is to lead people everywhere by example in truth and freedom to empower them to live in greater independence, abundance, and peace.

In order to enable individuals and families in their natural rights and responsibilities, this document outlines the obstructions to and principles, values, and applications of a true education.

# Section 1

## Modern Schooling

### The Tragedy of Compulsory Schooling

It is in fact nothing short of a miracle that the modern methods of instruction have not yet entirely strangled the holy curiosity of inquiry; for this delicate little plant, aside from stimulation, stands mainly in need of freedom; without this it goes to wreck and ruin without fail.

It is a very grave mistake to think that the enjoyment of seeing and searching can be promoted by means of coercion and a sense of duty.

Albert Einstein

Modern school methods do not help children become great thinkers or creative individuals. Compulsory schooling is a counterproductive prison. After generations of conditioning, it has become difficult for many people to distinguish between what kind of education is beneficial and desirable and the real purposes and results of modern schools.

No trace of slavery ought to mix with the studies of the freeborn man.  
No study, pursued under compulsion, remains rooted in the memory.

Plato

With any captive audience, there is a lack of feedback.

John Holt

In many cases, people don't even consider the matter beyond how convenient it is to have a place for their children to live out most of their young days until someone can help them find a job. Cognitive disconnections like this have perpetuated a system of accredited childcare centers designed to help parents feel comfortable about being compelled to turn over their responsibilities to strangers.

### The Real Lessons of Compulsory Schooling

We want one class of persons to have a liberal education and we want another class of persons, a very much larger class of necessity, to forgo the privileges of a liberal education and fit themselves to perform specific difficult manual tasks.

Woodrow Wilson

The plain fact is that education is itself a form of propaganda – a deliberate scheme to outfit the pupil, not with the capacity to weigh ideas, but with a simple appetite for gulping ideas ready-made. The aim is to make “good” citizens, which is to say, docile and uninquisitive citizens.

H. L. Mencken

Most modern schools are places where bored, lonely children are coerced to echo the approved responses to the wrong questions. These systems do an exceptional job of perpetuating aristocracy. The real lessons of modern schooling affect the workings and attitudes of the unconscious mind. Children are absorbing values like these in schools near you:

#### Appeasement

The authority of those who teach is often an obstacle to those who want to learn.

Marcus Tullius Cicero

Schools teach that success means pleasing those in authority. Students learn to compete for the favor of teachers and administrators. This, they are told, prepares them for “the real world” where making managers happy is the difference between being rich or poor. The reality is that addicting people to praise only prepares them for a life of exploitation where only administrators can provide approval.

### Fear

I think the big mistake in schools is trying to teach children anything, and by using fear as the basic motivation.

Fear of getting failing grades, fear of not staying with your class, etc.

Interest can produce learning on a scale compared to fear as a nuclear explosion to a firecracker.

Stanley Kubrick

Schools teach fear of mistakes, fear of failure, and fear of the unknown. Schools teach that only certified experts are qualified to form their own opinions and define the truth. Students learn to accept constant invasion of privacy and intimidation. Schools schedule no private time, and offer no private space.

### Compliance

If I were asked to enumerate ten educational stupidities, the giving of grades would head the list...

If I can't give a child a better reason for studying than a grade on a report card,

I ought to lock my desk and go home and stay there.

Dorothy De Zouche

Schools teach that motivation and self-control are to be delegated to those who are properly trained to manage others' lives. Schools employ threats and bribes (like detention and grades) which create a mindset of slavery, not one of maturity and individual responsibility.

### Childishness

To find yourself, think for yourself.

Socrates

Schools teach that true freedom is freedom from responsibility, rather than freedom of choice. They teach that choice is too risky to be governed by individuals. They teach that there is safety and fairness in letting experts decide what is best for everyone in every circumstance.

In short, children learn from an early age to turn themselves over to the system. They become conditioned for lives of limited opportunity, subordination, supervision, and control. With this basic understanding, it becomes clear why most people in modern societies crave promises of salvation from difficulties they have been told are too complex to understand. Without even realizing it, generations of people have been trained in willful ignorance and submission to their masters.

### **Truth Hidden in Plain Sight**

It isn't that they can't see the solution. It is that they can't see the problem.

G.K. Chesterton

What everybody knows is frequently wrong.  
Peter Drucker

Most people assume that there are benevolent reasons behind compulsory schooling. They believe that systems that have been in place for decades or centuries would have been changed already by others if changing them would benefit the people they claim to serve.

If everybody is thinking alike, then somebody isn't thinking.  
George S. Patton, Jr.

The strong tendency for invisible assumptions to go unexamined and unchallenged is not surprising. What people don't perceive, they don't consider. The inception of an idea into the subconscious mind is a powerful thing.

The great problem for reform or transformation is the tyranny of common sense.  
Sir Ken Robinson

The truth cannot be recognized until the right questions are entertained. The right questions often challenge assumptions that have come to be mistaken for common sense. When definitions and questions are all formed by those who stand to benefit financially and politically from the implied conclusions and answers, the result is propaganda.

Being an intellectual begins with thinking your way outside  
of your assumptions and the system that enforces them.  
William Deresiewicz

We can't learn to see until we admit we're blind.  
Alan Kay

People don't like to admit that they have been fooled, not even to themselves. It takes courage to accept uncomfortable truths, but it is the beginning of becoming a free-thinking and critically aware individual.

The worst attitude of all would be the professional attitude which regards  
children in the lump as a sort of raw material which we have to handle.  
C. S. Lewis

Children aren't units of production destined to be processed into human resources. People deserve to be treated with dignity, and that means respect for and support of their ability to become truly independent. Education should empower people to take control of their lives.

Earnest falsehoods left unchallenged risk being accepted as fact.  
Monty Montgomery

For the enemy of truth is very often not the lie—deliberate, contrived, and dishonest—  
but the myth—persistent, persuasive, and unrealistic. Too often we hold fast to the clichés of our forbears.  
We subject all facts to a prefabricated set of interpretations.  
We enjoy the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought.  
John F. Kennedy

**School is Not About Learning**

A three-year-old is not half of a six-year-old.  
Sir Ken Robinson

If school were about learning, then it would be very different. It would be a place where students would be allowed to progress unhindered toward greater understanding and ability. Instead, it is a place where students are segregated by age and socioeconomic class to have their time managed. If students learned too quickly, it would cause administrative headaches and funding uncertainties.

It's not that I feel that school is a good idea gone wrong, but a wrong idea from the word go. It's a nutty notion that we can have a place where nothing but learning happens, cut off from the rest of life.  
John Holt

After more than a decade spent in these systems, even most college-bound kids have no idea what they're going to do there, aside from spending the prescribed amount of time and money. Even exclusive, prestigious universities have become glorified vocational training institutions. Training critical thinkers is a dangerous business; they are likely to be critical. It is safer to prepare them for middle-management positions where they can watch over other subordinates.

Education is what remains after one has forgotten everything he learned in school.  
Albert Einstein

### **Too Much, Not Too Little**

He who knows nothing is closer to the truth than he  
whose mind is filled with falsehoods and errors.  
Thomas Jefferson

Proponents of compulsory schooling often argue in favor of more schooling. They promote the assumption that more learning requires more hours spent in classrooms. They propose longer school days and years, more standardized testing, and more power. More schooling begs for more money to solve the problems that it creates. The truth is that a quality education does not require certain amounts of time in certain rooms with certain people. It requires empowered motivation to achieve.

Studied ignorance is the most indelible kind.  
Denver Snuffer

Ignorance is easier to remedy than learned helplessness. The hunger for knowledge is easy to remove. Systems teach that you should wait to be told what to do, when to do it, and the rewards and punishments that depend on your compliance. Not even the agents of the system know the reasons behind the methods, either. The resulting emotional and pseudo-intellectual dependency is much more harmful and difficult to correct than not knowing much at all.

If we forced children to learn to walk with the same methods we use to force them to read,  
a few would learn to walk well in spite of us,  
most would walk indifferently, without pleasure,  
and a portion of the remainder would not become ambulatory at all.  
John Taylor Gatto

People don't need school to learn. They don't need school to learn to walk or talk. They don't need it to socialize or play. They don't need it to read or count. Humanity didn't need school to discover how our

solar system works. It wasn't needed to invent the airplane, light bulb, or television. It wasn't needed to posit the theory of relativity. It wasn't needed to map the human genome.

Most of what we call management consists of making it difficult for people to get their work done.  
Peter Drucker

Most school reform efforts take for granted that students must have a certain amount of their time regulated by school officials. Teacher-proofed school systems waste vast amounts of human time. The debate that centers around how to best waste that time is fruitless.

There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all.  
Peter Drucker

The prime directive of any bureaucracy is to grow in power and autonomy from public oversight, whether the stated purpose is to wage war against terrorists, deliver mail, or educate children. When policy is enacted, it is done to benefit the structure of the system and its key agents. The ultimate justification for all decisions is the threatened existence of the system itself. Administrative adjustments only serve to perpetuate the bureaucracy and show that remonstrance is futile.

Education... now seems to me perhaps the most authoritarian and dangerous of all the social inventions of mankind. It is the deepest foundation of the modern slave state, in which most people feel themselves to be nothing but producers, consumers, spectators, and 'fans,' driven more and more, in all parts of their lives, by greed, envy, and fear. My concern is not to improve 'education' but to do away with it, to end the ugly and anti-human business of people-shaping and to allow and help people to shape themselves.  
John Holt

School doesn't help people learn to regulate their emotions, manage their time, or develop their character. It doesn't make them better; it renders them manageable. The people of the world need less classical animal conditioning, not more.

### **Rising Above Control**

No one is more truly helpless, more completely a victim,  
than he who can neither choose nor change nor escape his protectors.  
John Holt

There is always tension between freedom and control. Freedom implies risk and uncertainty, which is why systems avoid it. Systems require predictability, and impose limits on freedom to get it. However, freedom and independence should take priority, not organizational convenience.

We must be willing to break with the educational establishment  
(not foolishly or cavalierly, but thoughtfully and for good reason)  
in order to find gospel ways to help mankind.  
Gospel methodology, concepts, and insights can help us to do  
what the world cannot do in its own frame of reference.  
Spencer W. Kimball

Getting off of the conveyor belt of compulsory schooling is critical, but it should not be done carelessly. Many people who disconnect from the system do so in order to avoid the harm it inflicts

without sufficient thought for how they might best proceed.

You have to understand, most of these people are not ready to be unplugged.  
And many of them are so inured, so hopelessly dependent on the system, that they will fight to protect it.  
Morpheus, *The Matrix*

School is a hard habit to break. Like other harmful things, it is always better not to start. Disabusing people of false notions can cause them to react in defense of the very systems that have caused them so much harm (to say nothing of how the system itself is designed to respond). Many good people defend harmful systems because they can't imagine a better way.

None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free.  
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

What we call reality is a kind of hallucination, a waking dream.  
Alan Kay

Helping people rise above the system and wake up from their subliminally engineered consent can really only happen by setting the example and encouraging and preparing people to self-select freedom and insist on independence when they are ready.

Wanting something is not enough. You must hunger for it.  
Your motivation must be absolutely compelling in order to  
overcome the obstacles that will invariably come your way.  
Les Brown

## **Section 2**

### **The Education of a Free Mind**

Earth is a school, and learning is freedom in practice. It is the means by which people deal with reality and discover how to transform their lives and their world.

#### **Choice and Responsibility**

The greatest gifts you can give your children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence.  
Denis Waitley

The essence of life is choice; do not cripple others by taking it from them. By the same token, do not shelter them from natural results; let real consequences shape their understanding. Agendas of control and entitlement prevent people from becoming thoughtful and independent. The best preparation for life is living it.

#### **Self-Determination**

The objective of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives.  
Robert Maynard Hutchins

An education cannot be given; it must be taken. The first and most important lesson a free mind must learn is that someone else cannot educate you. Learning can happen without a teacher, but there is no learning without a learner. If people aren't interested, they won't learn. People must consciously make the decision that they will educate themselves. Self-determination is the beginning of learning.

All men who have turned out worth anything have had the chief hand in their own education.  
Sir Walter Scott

Any teaching *that the learner has not asked for* is likely to impede and prevent his or her learning.  
John Holt

You cannot teach someone against their will. The opposite is also true: self-determined people are unstoppable. Those who insist on knowing the truth and are willing to look for it are the ones who will recognize it when they find it. People must pursue knowledge, not the other way around. The same is true of all worthy pursuits: only those who seek will find.

Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal;  
nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude.  
Thomas Jefferson

#### **The Fruits of Self-Determination**

##### Persistence

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence.



Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with 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.  
The slogan, 'Press on,' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.  
Calvin Coolidge

Also known as attention span, persistence is the ability to stay with a task for a reasonably long period of time. Unmotivated people give up easily when they are not instantly successful. People learn persistence when they are successful at a challenging task. Overcoming setbacks and failures shows people that challenges should not be overwhelming.

### Challenge Seeking

Accept the challenges so that you may feel the exhilaration of victory.  
George S. Patton

Motivated people seek challenges. When they have experienced success in meeting a challenge, they welcome other challenges. Mastering appropriate challenges is very satisfying. Unmotivated people will choose very easy tasks that ensure instant success, which is not satisfying.

### Independence

Man's release from a tutelage is enlightenment.  
His tutelage is his inability to make use of his understanding without guidance from another.  
Immanuel Kant

People with strong intrinsic motivation do not need others constantly watching and directing their activities. People who are conditioned to need constant attention and assurance from others cannot function independently. Dependence on others greatly limits a person's ability to live a life of dignity.

### Satisfaction

If you want to be happy, set a goal that commands your thoughts, liberates your energy, and inspires your hopes.  
Andrew Carnegie

Self-motivated people are happy. They enjoy their work and find great satisfaction in it. People who have been conditioned to only follow orders become sullen and bored, and often complain. People should never need to ask if they have done well; they should know and be confident in their own success. It is not necessary to praise and reward people for their own actions as they learn to control their lives and their environment.

### **Intrinsic Motivation**

The process by which children turn experience into knowledge is exactly the same,  
point for point, as the process by which those whom we call scientists make scientific knowledge.  
John Holt

The assumption that people need artificial incentives to learn is false. By the age of 2, children set their own goals and evaluate their own efforts. By the age of 3, they become interested in doing things well,

as opposed to just doing them. They judge their success by their own internal standards, and do not need a lot of adult feedback about the quality of their efforts. By the age of 4, children become active verbal problem solvers and direct their own learning through speech and direct their own behavior to solve problems. They can often be heard talking themselves through a problem. As they get older, this talking becomes an internal monologue.

You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him discover it in himself.  
Galileo Galilei

People learn from everything they do and experience. They are naturally curious; they want to learn and discover. If their explorations bring pleasure or success, they will want to learn more. In their first few years of life, people form attitudes about learning that can last a lifetime. People who receive the right sort of support and encouragement during their formative years are most likely to be creative and adventurous throughout their lives.

You can motivate by fear. You can motivate by reward.  
But both of these methods are only temporary.  
The only lasting thing is self-motivation.  
Homer Rice

When people make their own choices, they achieve satisfaction from both the act of choosing and from pursuing their interest. Their motivation is self-sustaining for as long as they want to continue the activity. Since intrinsically-motivated activity is more rewarding in and of itself, people learn more from this sort of activity, they learn faster, and they retain that learning better. Learning is most dependent on inherent interest, which inspires emotional engagement, authentic social interaction, physical activity, and the pleasure of mastery.

### **How to Think, Not What to Think**

Learning how to learn is life's most important skill.  
Tony Buzan

Giving answers to people apart from teaching how to get answers is wrong.  
Wrong because just giving an answer alone creates dependence upon the one answering.  
That is not the way in which I have tried to proceed.  
Instead, I have tried to teach *how to obtain your own answers*.  
The whole purpose of teaching is NOT to create dependence. It is to make you independent.  
Denver Snuffer

The most valuable skill is the ability to think creatively and independently. The ability to think and reason is more important than memorizing facts and procedures. Facts are only meaningful if you can find them, interpret them, analyze them, and connect them to each other.

We learn more by looking for the answer to a question and not finding it than we do from learning the answer itself.  
Lloyd Alexander

Mental acuity comes from solving problems, not from being told how to solve them. Understanding a meaningful problem is more important than memorizing the related opinions of others. Good questions are more valuable than their answers.

Orthodoxy is unconsciousness.

George Orwell, *1984*

That which can be done without thinking usually is done without thinking. Free minds ask their own questions and are not satisfied with dogmatic responses. Free minds reject the superstition of memorizing and believing things they don't understand.

Education is more than filling a child with facts. It starts with posing questions.

D.T. Max

### **Thinking is a Set of Skills**

Many people think they are thinking when they are merely rearranging their prejudices.

William James

Like other skills, thinking skills can be practiced and improved. Every mind is a tool that can be sharpened. Great thinkers are made, not born; and it's never too late to start.

You are not thinking; you are merely being logical.

Niels Bohr

Deep, critical thinking is more than organizing the apparently obvious; it is an exercise in purposeful examination and problem solving. Beyond logic, great thinkers must learn: problem perception, information gathering, evidence appraisal, relevant context, precise language, historical precedence, unstated assumptions, core values, self-examination, pattern recognition, nuance discernment, accurate interpretation, implication projection, conclusion evaluation, alternative consideration, and effective communication.

Even people who aren't geniuses can outthink the rest of mankind if they develop certain thinking habits.

Charles Munger

When skills of thought are practiced correctly and consistently, they become positive habits of mind. People who develop these habits are not susceptible to the propaganda of marketers, con men, or politicians. They are not easily swayed by irrational arguments or emotional manipulation.

The whole of science is nothing more than a refinement of everyday thinking.

Albert Einstein

Simply trusting important matters to experts is not always wise in a world where experts often disagree with each other. Even great thinkers do not always reach the same conclusions. In matters of significance, everyone must examine the truth for themselves.

He who will not reason is a bigot; he who cannot is a fool; and he who dares not is a slave.

William Drummond

### **Connections to Truth and Greatness**

Those who know how to think need no teachers.

Mohandas Gandhi

Free minds don't benefit from having reality edited on their behalf by certified professionals; they benefit from exposure to truth and greatness in all of their genuine forms.

Experience is a good school, but the fees are high.  
Heinrich Heine

Time is a great teacher, but unfortunately it kills all its pupils.  
Hector Berlioz

Time and experience teach us all, but people ideally learn wisdom from the times and experiences of others as well. Great thoughts and great lives are elevated on the shoulders of others.

I don't pretend we have all the answers, but the questions are certainly worth thinking about.  
Arthur C. Clarke

What is important is to keep learning, to enjoy challenge, and to tolerate ambiguity.  
In the end there are no certain answers.  
Matina Horner

Free minds are not without their doubts and uncertainties. Indeed, it is their doubts and uncertainties that guide them in finding and recognizing truth and greatness. A free mind must develop a tolerance for uncertainty.

Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence.  
Robert Frost

It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.  
Aristotle

## **Great Books and Great Ideas**

To be ignorant of what happened before you were born is to be ever a child.  
Marcus Tullius Cicero

It is chiefly through books that we enjoy intercourse with superior minds.  
William Ellery Channing

The great conversation of human history is filled with experiences and insights that are too often neglected. Even people with years of formal training are often led to accept false dichotomies and flawed assumptions that distract from and distort truly great ideas.

Great minds discuss ideas. Average minds discuss events. Small minds discuss people.  
Eleanor Roosevelt

For a mind to become a great tool, it must be sharpened on great ideas. Great ideas help people find solutions to practical concerns, but they also answer the most basic questions of life. Wrestling with great ideas promotes liberty and prosperity, brings about new technologies, and enriches human life with purpose and meaning.

Employ your time in improving yourself by other men's writings  
so that you shall come easily by what others have labored hard for.  
Socrates

In order to comprehend the ideas that have shaped the world, we need to confront those ideas at their sources. We must face reality and grapple with its complexity and variety. This is best done by reading real books and engaging in real experiences. Reading and writing about great ideas refines the human mind and enlarges its capacity faster than any other activity.

Philosophy is everybody's business.  
Mortimer J. Adler

Exposure to the ideas and lives of great people gives balance to perception and weaves together the common principles in all facets of life: programming machine systems, practicing law, learning languages, analyzing business opportunities, considering politics, playing team sports, settling conflicts, creating art, etc.

It is books that are the key to the wide world; if you can't do anything else, read all that you can.  
Jane Hamilton

Great care must be taken by every free mind to seek out and study the best books.

Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge;  
it is thinking that makes what we read ours.  
John Locke

The combination of critical thinking and great ideas empowers men and women to control their own lives and change the world they live in for the better. Great minds are not only able to converse freely about great ideas; they are able to engage in great causes and bring about good results for themselves and others.

When you want to teach children to think, you begin by treating them seriously when they are little, giving them responsibilities, talking to them candidly, providing privacy and solitude for them, and making them readers and thinkers of significant thoughts from the beginning.  
Bertrand Russell

## **Section 3**

### **The Role of Family**

What can you do to promote world peace? Go home and love your family.  
Mother Theresa

The homemaker has the ultimate career. All other careers exist for one purpose only -  
and that is to support the ultimate career.  
C. S. Lewis

Family is the first and most important thing in society. Family is the foundation for and repository of a good life. Communities, cultures, countries, and civilizations cannot rise above the level of the families that compose them.

#### **Education of Children is a Family Responsibility**

[We should] reassert the primary right and responsibility of parents  
for the *total* education of their children... Parents should stand firm  
on this and not be intimidated by 'professional educators.'  
After all, it's their children and their money.  
Ezra Taft Benson

Parents give up their rights when they drop the children off at public school.  
Melinda Harmon, U.S. Federal Judge, 1996

Parents are responsible for the education of their young children. When parents simply abdicate this responsibility to others, their corresponding rights get assumed as well.

#### **Family is a Living Curriculum**

School can never deal with really important things.  
Only education can teach us that quests don't always work,  
that even worthy lives most often end in tragedy, that money can't prevent this;  
that failure is a regular part of the human condition;  
that you will never understand evil;  
that serious pursuits are almost always lonely;  
that you can't negotiate love;  
that money can't buy much that really matters;  
that happiness is free.  
John Taylor Gatto

Every environment is a learning environment, and teaching happens in every home. Whether children attend a formal school or not, the home is their first and forever most important learning environment. The attitudes and priorities observed in family life are unforgettable.

There is no school equal to a decent home and no teacher equal to a virtuous parent.  
Mohandas Gandhi

The most significant and consistent factor for success in education and life is the direct involvement of

caring parents. Teachers in classrooms cannot replace parents in homes. All people deserve caring adult mentors who teach by example and with whom they have a sincere relationship.

The home is the first and most effective place to learn the lessons of life:  
truth, honor, virtue, self control, the value of education, honest work, and the purpose and privilege of life.

Nothing can take the place of home in rearing and teaching children,  
and no other success can compensate for failure in the home.

David O. McKay

### **Change Yourself, Not Them**

You must be the change you wish to see in the world.

Mohandas Gandhi

Let him that would move the world, first move himself.

Socrates

Parents who want their children to be educated must educate themselves. They must show how important an education is by their actions, not just their words. The most effective and sincere message in true teaching is “do as I do,” not “do as I say.”

The favor you can bestow on your children is to show by your own example  
that hard, painstaking work is the toll an independent spirit charges itself for self-respect.

John Taylor Gatto

Thinking good thoughts is not enough,  
doing good deeds is not enough,  
seeing others follow your good examples is enough.

Douglas Horton

If you want a better life for your family, become what you want them to become. You must be willing to commit to a life of learning. It is never too late to educate yourself. Don't let pride and laziness stop you. You may have to set new priorities, but you and your children will benefit immensely from pursuing truth, wisdom, and success together and being more involved in each other's lives.

We have to abandon the idea that schooling is something restricted to youth.  
How can it be, in a world where half the things a man knows at 20 are no longer true at 40 -  
and half the things he knows at 40 hadn't been discovered when he was 20?

Arthur C. Clarke

### **Beyond the Family**

As important as families are, they should not try to live life in isolation. They should seek out experiences and organizations where they can contribute and receive value from others. They should seek wise mentors and good experiences wherever they can be found.

I have never let my schooling interfere with my education.

Mark Twain

Organizations worth joining should have programs designed to both require and support self-assertion, mental independence, and personal sovereignty. Such self-discipline programs require a commitment

from home to be successful.

### **Official Credentials**

To confuse compulsory schooling with equal educational opportunity is like confusing organized religion with spirituality. One does not necessarily lead to the other. Schooling confuses teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new.

Wendy Priesnitz

Schools typically serve the purpose of offering accredited credentials. The often overlooked truth is that many people with official credentials are not well-educated. If official credentials from accredited institutions must be pursued, remember that only the credentials can be given. Becoming competent is the responsibility of the learner.



## Section 4

### True Human Values

Education without values, as useful as it is, seems rather to make man a more clever devil.  
C.S. Lewis

It is not living that matters, but living rightly.  
Socrates

Whatever an education is, it should make you a unique individual, not a conformist;  
it should furnish you with an original spirit with which to tackle the big challenges;  
it should allow you to find values which will be your road map through life;  
it should make you spiritually rich, a person who loves whatever you are doing,  
wherever you are, whomever you are with;  
it should teach you what is important, how to live and how to die.  
John Taylor Gatto

### A Curriculum of Meaning

Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.  
Aristotle

Values are acquired, doctrine and dogma are imposed.  
Sugata Mitra

Values give meaning to life. They are guiding principles that must be internalized by individuals. They are the origin of attitudes and behavior. Internalizing principles that ennoble human life is an essential part of a true education. Regardless of religious affiliation or lack thereof, all people have ultimate concerns. They desire to connect with others in a positive way and find peace and fulfillment.

### Good and Evil

A great many of those who 'debunk' traditional...values have in the background values of their own which they believe to be immune from the debunking process.  
C. S. Lewis

Good and evil are not subjective. The conscience of all people teaches that freedom, love, and service are good and that coercion, abuse, and harm are evil. Moral relativism results from vanity, and pride leads to manipulation, materialism, and moral degeneration.

Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can,  
in all the places you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can.  
John Wesley

By doing good we become good.  
Jean-Jacques Rousseau

### Love

We must know that we have been created for greater things,  
not just to be a number in the world,

not just to go for diplomas and degrees, this work and that work.  
We have been created in order to love and to be loved.  
Mother Theresa

Love is the greatest of virtues. In its highest form, it encompasses all others. The crowning achievement of human life is to develop more love for others than for oneself.

Not everything that can be counted counts,  
and not everything that counts can be counted.  
Albert Einstein

People are more important than things. The scientific methods used to shape and control our environment should not be used to shape and control people. It is absurd and anti-human.

The end cannot justify the means for the simple and obvious reason that  
the means employed determine the nature of the ends produced.  
Aldous Huxley

All people deserve to be treated with the due consideration of a brother or sister. This means respect for their right to direct their own life while not infringing on others, as well as voluntary compassion and kindness in their difficulties.

The more you are motivated by love, the more fearless and free your actions will be.  
Katherine Mansfield

### Integrity of Character

Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom.  
Thomas Jefferson

Honest conduct in public and private is the hallmark of integrity. Without it, self-respect is impossible, government is invalid, and commerce is amoral.

Joy is the token of a generous personality.  
Mother Theresa

Humility, discipline, and gratitude lead to strength, mastery, and happiness. The development of these three traits will yield an increase in quality of life and welfare in any culture or circumstance.

The supreme end of education is expert discernment in all things –  
the power to tell the good from the bad, the genuine from the counterfeit,  
and to prefer the good and the genuine to the bad and the counterfeit.  
Samuel Johnson

We see things not as they are, but as we are.  
Jewish Proverb

When knowledge is combined with good character, it becomes wisdom. Correct discernment is only possible from the perspective of genuine integrity. Authentic leadership is good and wise rather than clever and cunning.

Courage begins with a commitment to see things as they are, rather than how we wish they were.  
Ron Paul

True courage is not based on blind hope and uncertainty, but on true principles and informed willingness to act in spite of fear or opposition. When good people are armed with true courage, they can stand strong in the face of any challenge.

The man who fights for his ideals is alive.  
Miguel de Cervantes

### Service

People are often unreasonable and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.  
If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.  
If you are honest, people may cheat you. Be honest anyway.  
If you find happiness, people may be jealous. Be happy anyway.  
The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.  
Give the world the best you have and it may never be enough. Give your best anyway.  
For you see, in the end, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.  
Mother Theresa

Every act of service improves the world. The most noble lives of all are lived in service.

If you wish to experience peace, provide peace for another.  
If you wish to know that you are safe, cause [others] to know that they are safe.  
If you wish to better understand seemingly incomprehensible things, help another to better understand.  
If you wish to heal your own sadness or anger, seek to heal the sadness or anger of another.  
Those others are waiting for you now. They are looking to you for guidance, for help, for courage, for strength, for understanding, and for assurance at this hour. Most of all, they are looking to you for love.  
Tenzin Gyatso, 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama

## **Section 5**

### **Knowledge and the Human Curriculum**

Thought is the wind, knowledge the sail, and mankind the vessel.  
Augustus and Julius Hare

#### **The Right to Learn**

He who receives ideas from me, receives instruction himself without lessening mine;  
as he who lights his taper at mine receives light without darkening me.  
Thomas Jefferson

The fundamental freedoms of thought, belief, and sharing belong to all mankind. All people have the right to learn and the right to share knowledge with each other.

Control over the use of one's ideas really constitutes control over other people's lives;  
and it is usually used to make their lives more difficult.  
Richard M. Stallman

Knowledge must be free. That is, free from artificial limits to access, use, adapt, and share. It is also generally available without significant cost, since modern technology has made the cost of copying, storing, and sharing information negligible. Printing and libraries changed the world for the better; electronic media and networks are accelerating that change.

Nothing could be more misleading than the idea that computer technology introduced the age of information.  
The printing press began that age, and we have not been free of it since.  
Neil Postman

Knowledge freedom also requires technology freedom. Computer software, standards, and file formats that respect people's rights to learn and share are increasingly important in our modern world. The alternatives of artificial scarcity and unnatural monopoly of ideas can be profitable for some, but at the cost of ignorance, exclusion, and marginalization of the majority. The tragedy of the commons has no effect on information; it is not conserved like matter and energy.

Access to knowledge determines our degree of participation in society today.  
Free Knowledge Foundation

#### **The Human Curriculum**

A liberal education... frees a man from the prison-house of his  
class, race, time, place, background, family and even his nation.  
Robert Maynard Hutchins

All knowledge is interrelated and must be understood in proper context. The human curriculum has two aspects: intellectual studies and practical studies. These two aspects are naturally linked and provide balance in education and life. Each subject area represents a category of concepts and activities that enable people to live in greater independence, abundance, and peace in our modern world.

## Intellectual Studies

### Language

Be not the slave of words.  
Thomas Carlyle

Language shapes the way we think, and determines what we can think about.  
Benjamin Lee Whorf

Our thoughts are limited by the language we can employ to give them substance. Deep thoughts are enabled by a deep vocabulary and a deep understanding of how to use words.

Most people are unable to write because they are unable to think.  
Henry Louis Mencken

Writing and learning and thinking are the same process.  
William Zinsser

Reading and writing well are the pillars of a formal education. They directly affect the ability to think and create. They also help to clarify ideas that are worth expressing to others.

To have another language is to possess a second soul.  
Charlemagne

In an increasingly networked global society, knowing more than one language is more valuable than ever. Learning another language also provides a unique perspective for examining your own language.

Language exerts hidden power, like the moon on the tides.  
Rita Mae Brown

Essential Topics: Reading, Writing, Grammar, Rhetoric, Public Speaking, Foreign / Ancient Language

### Historical Awareness

If you would understand anything, observe its beginning and its development.  
Aristotle

Mankind are so much the same, in all times and places, that history informs us of nothing new or strange in this particular. Its chief use is only to discover the constant and universal principles of human nature.  
David Hume

History is mankind's collective memory. It is a testament of human nature. People who study the past can see the world and themselves in context. Human nature is at the heart of our past, and those who do not understand it are easily misled.

The only true knowledge of things is the knowledge of their causes.  
Archbishop Leighton

I thought it necessary to study history, even to study it deeply,  
in order to obtain a clear meaning of our immediate time.  
Paul Valery

It is not enough to know the names and dates of historically important events. We must know their context, their causes, and how they have shaped the present. We must learn from the mistakes and build on the successes.

There will always be a connection between the way in which men contemplate the past  
and the way in which they contemplate the present.

Harry Thomas Buckle

For wisdom is the great end of History. It is designed to supply the want of experience.

Hugh Blair

Reading about the past accelerates life experience. By investigating the experiences of others, we become better equipped to discern the origin of current realities, as well as how to best deal with them.

Honest history is the weapon of freedom.

A.M. Schlesinger, Jr.

A complete education must include a historical and practical understanding of governments and economics. Too many history books or courses are focused on details of the lives of famous people and the wars they instigated, rather than on the principles they acted upon. History is not just one long war handed down from generation to generation by famous people. It is a record of the human struggle for freedom. It is essential to investigate and focus on the principles behind people and events.

Essential Topics: The Human Condition, Geography, Civilization, National History, Government, Religion, Law, Philosophy, Economics

### Problem Solving

Intelligence is not about memorizing old answers and avoiding mistakes—  
behavior our old system defines as intelligent. True intelligence is about  
learning to solve problems in order to qualify to solve bigger problems.  
True intelligence is about *the joy of learning* rather than the fear of failing.

Robert Kiyosaki

The world is full of problems to solve. Solving complex problems requires numeracy and the ability to reason. Without an understanding of numbers and logic, people are limited to living with unnecessary problems.

The universe is a grand book which cannot be read until one first learns to comprehend the language and become familiar with the characters in which it is composed. It is written in the language of mathematics.

Galileo Galilei

What we easily forget, in our passionate twentieth-century love affair with abstract thinking,  
is that to make an abstraction out of some part of reality we must take some meaning *out* of it.

John Holt

Too often we give children answers to remember rather than problems to solve.

Roger Lewin

Mathematics and related disciplines should not be treated as a set of abstract facts to be memorized without context or application. Mathematics and related disciplines are tool sets for solving

increasingly complex problems. Mathematical formulas should only be learned as part of the process of solving interesting problems.

Essential Topics: Arithmetic, Logic, Algebra, History of Mathematics, Geometry, Trigonometry, Calculus, Computer Science, Statistics and Probability, Engineering

### Reasoning and Discovery

No doubt those who really founded modern science were usually those whose love of truth exceeded their love of power.  
C. S. Lewis

We gain our ends only with the laws of nature; we control her only by understanding her laws.  
Jacob Bronowski

Educated people know how the physical world works. They are familiar with natural laws of cause and effect, matter, energy, living organisms, gravity, environmental systems, and solar systems.

Science is simply common sense at its best; that is, rigidly accurate in observation, and merciless to fallacy in logic.  
Thomas Henry Huxley

Natural truths are discovered by people who have learned to observe accurately, reason with discipline, and make educated guesses.

Wisdom begins in wonder.  
Socrates

Knowledge is an unending adventure at the edge of uncertainty.  
Jacob Bronowski

Essential Topics: Earth Sciences, Biology, Chemistry, Physics

### Creativity and Expression

My contention is that creativity now is as important in education as literacy, and we should treat it with the same status.  
Sir Ken Robinson

In a world where computers and machines perform so much predictable and physical work, the capacity to formulate new ideas and create new things is crucial to success.

Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep.  
Scott Adams

Creative expression gives meaning and pleasure to effort. It connects what we feel with what we think, and helps us move beyond the limitations of what we know and believe.

Art is a lie which makes us realize the truth.  
Pablo Picasso

Essential Topics: Creativity, Music, Visual Arts, Design, Authorship, Innovation

## **Practical Studies**

### Physical Wellness

To keep the body in good health is a duty... otherwise we shall not be able to keep our mind strong and clear.  
Buddha

Those who think they have no time for healthy eating, will sooner or later have to find time for illness.  
Edward Stanley

Physical activity and healthy eating are essential parts of a good life. Everyone should know how human bodies function and develop.

Knowing self-defense is something everyone should be concerned with. No one has the right to hurt you, ever.  
Michael Janich

Personal safety is a human right, and knowing how and when to defend yourself and others from harm is an important part of life.

Leave all the afternoon for exercise and recreation, which are as necessary as reading.  
I will rather say more necessary because health is worth more than learning.  
Thomas Jefferson

Recreation is not only important for personal reasons, but for social reasons as well. People must set aside significant time to enjoy with others.

Essential Topics: Human Health and Development, Nutrition, Self-Defense, Recreation

### Citizenship

I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education.  
Thomas Jefferson

Free people know what their rights are, how to exercise them, and how to defend them. People in positions of power can only abuse that power with the consent of their constituents.

I am a citizen, not of Athens or Greece, but of the world.  
Socrates

I am a citizen of humanity first and by necessity, and a citizen of France second, and only by accident.  
Charles de Montesquieu

Essential Topics: Manners, Culture, Community, Civics, Ethics, Teamwork, Leadership

### Self-Reliance

Self-reliance is the only road to true freedom, and being one's own person is its ultimate reward.  
Patricia Sampson



Everyone is a self-made person, but only the successful admit it.  
Unknown

Educated people have useful practical knowledge and skills. They know how to produce and prepare food, make and maintain clothing and shelter, and navigate their environment.

The highest manifestation of life consists in this: that a being governs its own actions.  
A thing which is always subject to the direction of another is somewhat of a dead thing.  
St. Thomas Aquinas

Exercises in self-reliance do more than teach the basics of survival. They teach people that they can trust and rely on themselves even when they aren't forced by circumstance to do so. The resulting confidence is something every mature individual should possess.

Essential Topics: Agriculture, Cooking, Sewing, Navigation, Property Maintenance and Repair, Shelter Construction

### Technology

Science and technology multiply around us.  
To an increasing extent they dictate the languages in which we speak and think.  
Either we use those languages, or we remain mute.  
J.G. Ballard

All people should be familiar with basic tools and machines and how to safely use them. They should learn to make simple useful objects from common materials. They should be able to troubleshoot and make elementary repairs on the devices in their daily lives. In modern society, people who do not know how a car functions, how a light switch functions, or how a computer functions are at a considerable disadvantage in life.

Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.  
Arthur C. Clarke

Essential Topics: Hand Tools, Power Tools, Appliances, Machines and Manufacturing, Transportation Technology, Computer Technology

### Business

The number one problem in today's generation and economy is the lack of financial literacy.  
Alan Greenspan

Those who are financially illiterate live their lives at the mercy of others. From a very young age, people should exercise the financial discipline to earn their own money, track income and expenses, and avoid consumer debt. Educated people are comfortable and familiar with topics such as: value, exchange, commodity, stewardship, money, debt, credit, fiat currency, scarcity, abundance, supply and demand, equity, market, monopoly, capital, cash flow, asset, liability, deficit, foreclosure, bankruptcy, surplus, net and gross income, profit, investment, dividend, principle, simple interest, compound interest, compound inflation, liquidity, funds, accounts, risk, exit strategy, tax, tariff, fee, premium, incorporation, insurance, collateral, mortgage, public and private stock, bonds, derivatives, regulations, and so on.

Entrepreneurship is neither a science nor an art. It is a practice.  
Peter Drucker

A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds.  
Francis Bacon

Educated people can earn material things they need for life. They do not believe that the world owes them a job, or that success is decided by chance. They are proactive and prepared to make their own opportunities. They mitigate risk rather than avoid it. They make long-term financial resource management plans for their financial security rather than blindly trusting others with their material future. Regardless of their profession or station in life, they take responsibility for their work.

If a man empties his purse into his head, no man can take it away from him.  
An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest.  
Benjamin Franklin

Essential Topics: Budgeting, Financial Literacy, Entrepreneurship, Business Management, Accounting, Investment

### Spiritual Development

Just as a candle cannot burn without fire, men cannot live without a spiritual life.  
Buddha

I pray thee, O God that I may be beautiful within.  
Socrates

Follow effective action with quiet reflection.  
From the quiet reflection will come even more effective action.  
Peter Drucker

Educated people handle solitude and time well. They are comfortable in their own mind and at peace with their own conscience. They know who they are and what their lives are about. They understand and accept their own mortality. They find meaning in life and strive to live a life of meaning.

Know Thyself.  
Inscription at the Temple of Apollo at Delphi

He who knows others is learned; he who knows himself is wise.  
Lao Tzu

Wisdom and love cannot be developed without careful searching of one's own soul.

For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?  
Mark 8:36

Essential Topics: Spiritual and Scripture Study, Meditation and Prayer, Service

## **Section 6**

### **Learning, Teaching, Evaluation, and Their Counterfeits**

Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel.  
Socrates

You teach who you are, you learn what you live, and you remember what matters to you.

Everyone knows, or certainly should know, that indoctrination is not genuine teaching  
and that the results of indoctrination are the very opposite of genuine learning.  
Yet, as a matter of fact, much that goes on in the classrooms of our schools is nothing but indoctrination.  
The results that are measured by our standardized tests are not products of genuine learning.  
Mortimer J. Adler

#### **Learning is Not the Product of Teaching**

The most important thing any teacher has to learn, not to be learned in any school of education I ever heard of,  
can be expressed in seven words: Learning is not the product of teaching.  
Learning is the product of the activity of learners.  
John Holt

How can teachers be of value to learners? Not by deciding what they are to learn, but by encouraging and helping them to learn what they are already busy learning.

Self-education is the only possible education; the rest is mere veneer laid on the surface of a child's nature.  
Charlotte Mason

#### **You Teach Who You Are**

No written word, no spoken plea  
can teach our youth what they should be.  
Nor all the books on all the shelves -  
It's what the teachers are themselves.  
Unknown

What you do speaks so loud I cannot hear what you say.  
Ralph Waldo Emerson

My life is my message.  
Mohandas Gandhi

How teachers live is more important than what they know. Only virtuous people should be trusted with positions of influence.

Good teachers are first of all good learners, who use their learning  
to teach better and their teaching to learn more.  
Geraldine Van Doren

He who dares to teach must never cease to learn.  
Richard Henry Dann

Teaching made him accountable to his thoughts, and as he became accountable for them he had more of them, and they became sharper and deeper.  
Tobias Wolff

Teachers must show that learning is a means of life improvement. If you stop learning, your life stops improving.

I have never met a man so ignorant that I couldn't learn something from him.  
Galileo Galilei

Everyone's life is an example. Some examples are better than others, but they all have something to teach those who are listening.

### **True Students and Their Counterfeits**

Accept no one's definition of your life. Define yourself.  
Harvey Fierstein

True students are self-motivated. They decide what they want to learn and why they want to learn it. They do not need someone else to manage their motivation, time, or priorities.

Teachers open the door, but you must enter by yourself.  
Chinese Proverb

True students work to exhaust their own efforts before relying on others. They have enough respect for their own abilities and the time of others to turn challenging situations into opportunities to clarify their own questions and optimize their time with a mentor.

The most valuable and indeed essential asset the student brings to any learning task is a willingness to adventure, to take risks. Without that, he can't learn anything.  
The teacher must not kill this spirit, but honor and strengthen it.  
John Holt

True students take responsibility for their learning. They are willing to ask sincere questions and explore alternative explanations. They determine trustworthiness of sources and verify and test conclusions for themselves.

Learning is not a spectator sport.  
Anonymous

True students live according to the truth they find. They are busy living, not just observing the truth.

There is a difference between knowing the path, and walking the path.  
Morpheus, *The Matrix*

To do is to be.  
Socrates

I hear and I forget.  
I see and I remember.  
I do and I understand.  
Confucius

## True Teachers and Their Counterfeits

The best teacher is the one who suggests rather than dogmatizes,  
and inspires his listener with the wish to teach himself.  
Edward Bulwer-Lytton

I never teach my pupils; I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn.  
Albert Einstein

True teachers require commitment and engagement, not compliance. They know that personal motivation and personal responsibility can't be delegated. They know how to guide students in making the most of their independent study time and how to make the most of personalized teaching opportunities.

A thing vitally important in my life ... was brought home to me when one of my oldest friends said,  
"In my house I was a child. In your family's house I was a person."  
Margaret Mead

True teachers influence others through a compact of trust, not from delegated or compulsory means. Authority is not enough to make people your partners.

To teach a man how he may learn to grow independently,  
and for himself, is perhaps the greatest service that one man can do another.  
Benjamin Jowett

A true teacher must always be trying to work himself out of a job.  
John Holt

A teacher is one who makes himself progressively unnecessary.  
Thomas Carruthers

A leader is best when people barely know he exists,  
when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves.  
Lao Tzu

True teachers liberate people from dependency. They do not condition them to rely on it. They do not assume responsibility for the choices of others or manipulate them. They know that the goal of teaching is to enable independence.

The normal curve is a distribution most appropriate to chance and random activity.  
Education is a purposeful activity and we seek to have students learn what we would teach.  
Therefore, if we are effective, the distribution of grades will be anything but a normal curve.  
In fact, a normal curve is evidence of our failure to teach.  
Benjamin Bloom

True teachers help people, not audit them. They are service oriented. They know how to best facilitate learning rather than simply sort students according to prepared criteria.

The best teachers ask many more questions than they answer;  
ideally, perhaps, a teacher should never answer a direct question from a student,  
but instead respond by asking another question that will aid the student to solve his own problem.  
Charles Van Doren

True teachers know how to ask conscious questions. When talking, teachers should not try to elicit a certain response, but to invite others to reflect deeply on complicated issues. Rhetorical questions do not inspire a real exchange of ideas. True teachers ask questions that increase and consciously direct the powers or perception, reason, memory, imagination, judgment, and feeling. Repeated questioning will in time be internalized by true students and they will form the habit of questioning things for themselves for the rest of their lives.

If you want to build a ship,  
don't drum up men to gather wood, divide the work, and give orders.  
Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea.  
Antoine De Saint-Exupery

True teachers exemplify wisdom. They are philosophers, not sophists; that is, they are lovers of wisdom, not vendors of wisdom. True teachers can demonstrate mastery, distill simplicity from complexity, and teach people how to recognize and internalize feedback for themselves. They do not manipulate students, but they can be recognized for inspiring them.

One machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men.  
No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man.  
Elbert Hubbard

Teachers that can be replaced by machines, should. Rather than lecturing to passive observers, teachers should act as facilitators, introducing individual students to new concepts based on their interests and developmental state. Individualized instruction should be the standard.

### **Worthwhile Evaluation and Its Counterfeits**

Measurements are not to provide numbers but insight.  
Ingrid Bucher

You must measure things of value rather than simply valuing things you can measure. Learning evaluation should be done on the basis of demonstrating mastery.

Success in school means remembering the answers to teachers' questions,  
getting clever about guessing what questions they ask,  
and about how to fool them when you don't know the answers.  
John Holt

Multiple choice tests do not provide acceptable evidence of mastery. They are widely employed because machines can quickly provide comparable results. Even relatively well-designed multiple choice tests are vulnerable to a mixture of common sense, process of elimination, and educated guesses.

Description of a grade:  
An inadequate report of an inaccurate judgment  
by a biased and variable judge  
of the extent to which a student has attained an undefined level of mastery  
of an unknown proportion of an indefinite material.  
P. Dressel

Evidence of mastery is best demonstrated by portfolios of work products and by open examination. Open examinations can be oral, written, or practical. Oral and written examinations should use questions that require examinees to reflect on what they have learned and done to formulate appropriate answers. Practical examinations require students to perform real tasks or solve real problems.

An approximate answer to the right question is worth  
a good deal more than an exact answer to an approximate question.  
J. W. Tukey

## **Section 7**

### **Failure, Creativity, and Play**

Aim for success, not perfection.  
Never give up your right to be wrong, because then you will lose the ability  
to learn new things and move forward with your life.  
Remember that fear always lurks behind perfectionism.  
David M. Burns

#### **Conquering Failure**

A good education is not so much one which prepares a man  
to succeed in the world, as one which enables him to sustain a failure.  
Bernard Iddings Bell

Failure is the best learning tool we have. Do not fear it. Analyze it. Conquer it. Conquering failure leads to challenge-seeking activities and self-confidence. Fear of failure leads to risk-averse activities and learned helplessness and dependence. There are important lessons that can only be learned by failing and then trying again.

There are some significant misunderstandings about failure.  
A common one, similar to one we seem to have about death, is that if you don't plan for it, it won't happen.  
All of us fail. Successful people fail often, and, worth noting, learn more from that failure than everyone else.  
Seth Godin

Trying to avoid mistakes by letting others make all of your decisions for you only results in you making their mistakes instead of your own.

It is impossible to live without failing at something,  
unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all – in which case, you fail by default.  
J.K. Rowling

#### **Harnessing Creativity**

Reward excellent failures. Punish mediocre successes.  
Tom Peters

Creativity is coming up with new ideas that have value. If you're not prepared to be wrong, you'll never come up with anything original. Freedom to make mistakes and benefit from them is the basis of intellectual growth. When people are stigmatized for making mistakes, innovation ceases.

#### **Embracing Play**

Combinatory play seems to be the essential feature in productive thought.  
Albert Einstein

Our minds are much more powerful when discovering than memorizing,  
not least of all because discovering is more fun.



John Holt

Boredom is the brain casting about for new information.  
It is the feeling you get when there are no new patterns to absorb.  
Ralph Koster

Whenever possible, learning should be playful. It is more fun that way, but we also remember the experience more clearly. When problems become puzzles, work becomes play. People should experience themselves as triumphant problem solvers. This exhilaration is what makes many games compelling. Like game players, students should go on to the next level only after mastering the previous one, taking as long as they need to solve each problem, and staying with it as long as they like. Everyone should develop a deep internal realization that you can figure things out by fooling around.

You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation.  
Plato

All good gameplay is hard work. It's hard work that we enjoy and choose for ourselves.  
And when we do hard work that we care about, we are priming our minds for happiness.  
Jane McGonigal

Play for play's sake is often seen as a waste of time, but it is an essential part of being creative, and even productive. All work and no play doesn't just make Jack a dull boy, it impedes his brain development at any age. If you aren't having fun along the way, you're doing it wrong.

Play is not just preparation for a future adult life.  
It has a biological place, just like nutrition, sleep, and dreams do.  
It's hugely important in learning and in crafting the brain.  
Dr. Stuart Brown

Games, learning, and life are all a delicate balance between boredom and frustration. Learn to navigate the fun space between the two.

There is a big misconception about games: that they're a waste of time. But 10 years of scientific research show that playing games is actually the most productive thing we can do.  
More productive than most of what we spend time doing at work or school.  
Jane McGonigal

## **Section 8**

### **Money, Business, Success, and Happiness**

Before you speak, listen. Before you write, think. Before you spend, earn. Before you invest, investigate. Before you criticize, wait. Before you pray, forgive. Before you quit, try. Before you retire, save. Before you die, give.

William A. Ward

#### **The Art of Living**

Everyone is engaged in the pursuit of happiness. Many people falsely believe that money and fame will make them happy. Good character and healthy relationships are true assets in the pursuit of happiness, and inner peace comes from living according to true human values.

It is too difficult to think nobly when one thinks only of earning a living.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

There is only one class in the community that thinks more about money than the rich, and that is the poor.

The poor can think of nothing else.

Oscar Wilde

Still, resources and effort are necessary to afford the needs and wants of life. Understanding money and business is crucial to living in abundance.

#### **Understanding the Value of Money**

A wise man should have money in his head, but not in his heart.

Jonathan Swift

Do not value money for any more nor any less than its worth; it is a good servant but a bad master.

Alexandre Dumas

Money is not the root of all evil, but it can't buy happiness either. Money has no inherent value. Money is a convenient way to exchange value. Money is simply a tool. It enables action. It is how money is acquired and used that affects our happiness.

It is not the creation of wealth that is wrong, but the love of money for its own sake.

Margaret Thatcher

When wealth is acquired through honest effort, it is a good thing. Abundance is not a zero-sum game.

Money may be the husk of many things but not the kernel. It brings you food, but not appetite; medicine, but not health; acquaintance, but not friends; servants, but not loyalty; days of joy, but not peace or happiness.

Henrik Ibsen

Wise maintenance of your money increases abundance. Using your means to respectfully care for yourself and others is true human stewardship. To be a true master over money, you must learn to employ and invest it honestly and wisely.

No one would remember the Good Samaritan if he'd only had good intentions; he had money as well.  
Margaret Thatcher

## **Understanding the Manipulation of Money**

So you think that money is the root of all evil. Have you ever asked what is the root of all money?  
Ayn Rand

Give me control of a nation's money and I care not who makes her laws.  
Mayer Amschel Rothschild

It is well enough that people of the nation do not understand our banking and monetary system,  
for if they did, I believe there would be a revolution before tomorrow morning.  
Henry Ford

Humanity now commonly struggles beneath the burden of monopolized artificial money and the consequences of its manipulation. Fractional reserve banking has allowed for the legalized plunder of people all over the world. The downfalls of counterfeit debt being mistaken for capital are felt first and most sharply by the poor and ignorant who do not understand the sophisticated ways in which money and credit are manipulated.

Have you ever wondered why our school systems do not teach us much—if anything—about money? Is the lack of financial education in our schools simply an oversight by our educational leaders? Or is it part of a larger conspiracy? Regardless, whether we are rich or poor, educated or uneducated, child or adult, retired or working, we all use money. Like it or not, money has a tremendous impact on our lives in today's world. To omit the subject of money from our educational system is cruel and unconscionable. ... Our educational system has failed millions of people—even the educated.  
Robert Kiyosaki

## **The Business of Business**

The trouble with the rat race is that even if you win, you're still a rat.  
Lily Tomlin

Everyone has business. Most people choose to sell their time directly to employers who make decisions about how to best spend that time. Other people employ their efforts to create value in greater proportion, which often results in ownership of an enterprise. In any case, everyone has good reason to learn the fundamentals of business because letting others manage your affairs can never lead to stability, maturity, and independence.

Formal education will make you a living; self-education will make you a fortune.  
Jim Rohn

The most basic fundamental of business is value. Part of living in abundance is understanding that prosperity is a result of creating value. If you want to be successful in business, don't serve yourself; serve others something of value. Many people spend time thinking about how to get more money. The only honest way to get more money is to provide more value to more people.

Whoever renders service to many puts himself in line for greatness -

great wealth, great return, great satisfaction, great reputation, and great joy.  
Jim Rohn

Good business management requires both mental and moral discipline. First, you must invest your own efforts to understand how to make good decisions. Second, integrity must guide your analysis and decision making. These two disciplines will blunt greed and give you a wise viewpoint from which to recognize good value propositions, mitigate risks, and cooperate with integrity.

There are two types of education...  
One should teach us how to make a living, and the other how to live.  
John Adams

### **Success, Satisfaction, and Happiness**

The best way to predict the future is to create it.  
Peter Drucker

People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances.  
The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and  
look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them.  
George Bernard Shaw

Success is not determined by luck or magic. When you have defined success, you are ready to live your life on purpose. Lives of meaning, satisfaction, and value are not lived by chance.

Success is not to be measured by income but by influence,  
not by power but by personality, not by capital but by character.  
Stephen W. Gilman

Don't be seduced into thinking that that which does not make a profit is without value.  
Arthur Miller

Even the rich are hungry for love, for being cared for, for being wanted,  
for having someone to call their own.  
Mother Teresa

I sometimes wonder whether all pleasures are not substitutes for joy.  
C. S. Lewis

Success with money only satisfies money concerns. It cannot provide you with purpose or fulfillment.

That which we obtain too cheaply we esteem too lightly.  
Thomas Paine

Everyone must define success for themselves so that they can pursue it, recognize it, and appreciate it. Success, however defined, can only be achieved through effort. Worthwhile effort in itself is a satisfying experience, and increases overall satisfaction by increasing appreciation for the results. Success cannot be recognized without gratitude, and cannot be fully enjoyed without being shared.

Not what we have but what we enjoy, constitutes our abundance.  
Jean Antoine Petit-Senn

## **Section 9**

### **Social Life and Community**

The need for community is universal. A sense of belonging, of continuity, of being connected to others and to ideas and values that make ourselves meaningful and significant—these needs are shared by all of us.

Thomas Sergiovanni

#### **Social, Not Institutional**

Childhood is not preparation for adulthood – it is a part of life.

A. Neill

Humans are social creatures, but not institutional creatures. Real socialization is not something that is done to people; it is something people do naturally and willfully. The so-called socialization of compulsory schooling is an institutional agenda of control based on myths. In such schools, adults control and humiliate students, and students follow suit by controlling and humiliating each other. This social hazing does not help people become well-adjusted adults, good neighbors, or informed citizens. There is nothing ennobling or humane about forcing children to share such miserable conditioning.

#### **Community, Not Conformity**

I learned most, not from those who taught me but from those who talked with me.

St. Augustine

In real communities, people are free to move around and to choose when, for how long, and with whom they will associate and cooperate. There is no other way to develop authentic relationships. People naturally seek and create small groups of friends with whom to share and compare their abilities, opinions, and emotions. When people are free to choose their associates, they are happier. The counterfeit of voluntary participation and engagement is force. Large-scale forced affiliation leads to conformity and other negative behaviors.

#### **Organic, Not Linear**

We would rather be in the company of somebody we like than  
in the company of the most superior being of our acquaintance.

Frank Swinnerton

Life is not linear; it is organic. You cannot predict and control people, but you can foster communities where people can develop in healthy ways. People need opportunities to develop meaningful relationships of their choosing in their communities. Segregating children according to age and socio-economics and isolating them from the productive and the elderly is destructive to communities.

Talent develops in tranquility, character in the full current of human life.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe