

JUST KEEP PUSHING ON

A Book of Encouragement
for people ages 11-17
(and the adults who love them)

L. MORGAN SCOTT

“Just Keep Pushing On: A Book of Encouragement for
Young People ages 11-17”

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(www.SaraMason.wordpress.com)

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Other books by Lorraine Morgan Scott:

1. Loving Myself First: Overcoming Life's Obstacles
(Past, Present, and Future) (hardcover and e-book)
2. 12 Easy Ways to Tame Your Stress Monster (e-book)
3. The College Student's Cookbook (e-book)
4. Beauty Secrets You Can Use at Home (spiral book)

To make this book available to everyone who would like to
read it, the author has made this book available as a free
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(soon) Amazon.

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You all are so appreciated!

"We're all supposed to be different. I want so badly to encourage everyone to say, "Who am I and how do I want to live my life""

Ellen Degeneres

*This book is dedicated to
You - the reader - may it help
you become all you were
created to become
and
the children who
were not able to
"Just Keep Pushing On."*

“Do you ever just sit back and think about all the things that led up to this moment?

You are here with a purpose.”

Caitlin Carmichael

Hey! This book *wasn't created* to tell you not to smoke, drink, do drugs, skip school, or have sex – okay . . . well . . . don't do any of those things (there, I DID say it!) No, this book is really about:

- * Finding a way to be true to who you are –just as you are.
- * Figuring out what you want from life.
- * Figuring out what type of person you want to become.
- * Finding ways to set yourself up for achieving your goals.
- * Figuring out that you're responsible for your dreams and your happiness.

It's about learning ways to push on through the challenges in your life.

*“Today is a good day to
have a good day.”*

Johnny Orlando

I believe this book can help that happen.

Pushing On

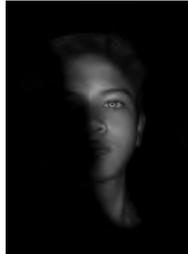
Do you realize how important you are? Yes, you! You may not know this, or maybe you don't believe it's possible . . . you're "just" you, right. But here's the thing. Maybe you're the person who solves the problem of hunger in your community,



or world poverty, or even finds life on another planet. Maybe you find the cure for cancer. You have so many "maybes" up ahead of you.

You are important, and your life – your future (and ours) – depends on you reaching your potential and becoming (and doing) everything you were created to be and do.

Regardless of your age or the maturity of your thinking, there are areas of your life you can control—most importantly—your happiness. Yes, within these pages I'll show you how you *can* have control of your happiness, and how you can Just Keep Pushing On through the ups and downs of life.



We all have ups and downs, and nearly everyone experiences challenge and disappointment multiple times in their life. I believe, how we react to those challenges, disappointments, and even the ups in our life is what is important.

Learning how to handle challenge unfortunately requires facing challenges time and again.

Think about the first time you had something unusual or scary happen in your life, or consider this example. Let's say you were seven and you were watching TV before bedtime. Suddenly, you were enveloped in complete darkness. You don't know what happened, but the lights went



off and so did the TV. Your imagination races. Maybe there's a robber who cut off your power, or space invaders, or too many birds on the wire. The first time the electricity goes off (especially for a young child) can be quite frightening.

But, for the next problem or challenge that arises, you'll be able to use how you felt in previous situations, recall how you overcame, and be strengthened by those experiences.

Then next time it's not so scary something like that happens. You've gained experience and confidence.

Your Vision is a Road Map

To have *any* measure of control of yourself and your life, there are some strategies you need. First, you need an understanding of who you are “*and who you are becoming.*”

Next, you'll need an idea of what you want “*your life to look like*” (a vision).

Lastly, you need a plan to get you from today to your vision. Maybe you



already have a vision for your life (or at least the next few years) or maybe you don't. No worries—this book will help you either create or define your vision, and even help you figure out a few steps toward making your vision your reality. Use the questions in the book to push



on, move forward, make a plan, set goals, and overcome the challenges that will arise as you achieve each milestone toward your vision.

Here's the question. Who are you becoming and what is it you want from the next two-four years?



“Strategy is Key,” says
Carson Leuders. So I say,
let’s start developing your
strategy today.

Are you having trouble with the concept of “what do I want?” Think about the dreams and desires you have. When you dream of being older, what do you see yourself doing? What kind of person have you become? What is important to you? What are your passions? Those are all “deep” questions to ask. However, when you know who and what you want to become, then you’ll be better prepared to make the choices that lead you in that direction.

Thinking about your whole life ahead of you, or everything you might want can be a bit overwhelming, right? So maybe it’s easier to think about what you don’t want. I’m sure that many things popped in your head right after reading that—we know instantly what we don’t want, so why is thinking about what we do want so much more difficult? Hmm, my guess is because we’ve been conditioned (since birth, all of us – mostly) to not want things and not be selfish. In my opinion, it’s not selfish to want a healthy, good life. Why would you not want that?



What do you want?

What don't you want?

Who do you want to become?

So if it's easier for you, start your thinking with what you don't want in life (overall) or be more specific, such as a job, education, relationship, or area of living.

*Here's an example of what I **don't** want:* I don't want to be hateful, or racist, or mean. I don't want to have to work in a hostile environment. I don't want to be sick, or have severe health issues brought on by my actions. I don't want to live surrounded by concrete. See what I meant?

After you know what you don't want, it's probably easier to concentrate on what you do want.

Consider using the format of Be/Have/Do, here's an example that's kind of narrow-focused. You can use this for every area of your life: education, career, place you want to live, how you want to look or eat, and so on.

Be: Be a health-conscious, socially responsible singer.

Have: I want to have my family around me, and I want them to be prosperous and healthy, and happy and to live near me.

Do: I want to tour, and create music videos.

Use the space below to jot down one or two word ideas under the applicable column heading (Be / Have / Do).

Try to write what comes to your mind without censorship – just straight subconscious thought. If you think too long (even minutes) about an answer – then you’re sure to write what you think you want to say (or read) instead of what you truly feel.

Be	Have	Do

“Pursue the things you want, not what others want for you.” Connor Finnerity

How did you do answering those questions? I want you to know that it takes courage to be honest – especially with yourself.





*"I think anyone can do anything they dream of if they put their mind to it and put in the work."
Shawn Mendes*

When you dream, dream big! Get a concrete image of what that dream looks like so much so that you could close your eyes and see it, feel it, or smell it.

You know, it's easy to pass the previous section by without thinking and writing something. Or, to view it as useless and write something like I want new shoes or to lose weight. That's fluff.

Fluff, in your soul-searching (and thinking) is inconsequential and won't help you.

If you're going to take the time to read this book, then do yourself a favor and let yourself get something from it. With that said, as you page through this book, attempt to relate everything to YOU and try and keep the internal conversation going. Keep asking yourself questions.

*"Dig deep. Find your way to your soul."
Kami Garcia*



Have fun completing the activities. They were created for your enjoyment. You may be surprised of the positive effect they have on you.

Give yourself a chance to “push on and move forward.” You **are** here for a purpose. You **are** needed in this life.

“Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.” Mark Twain

Like puzzles? Solve these cryptograms to learn (or recall) important concepts. Hint, on #1, OP is really the word NO. See the trick? So, O=N and P=O (the letter of the alphabet before the one shown). Answers are on page 98.

1.OP POF DBO CF B CFUUF S ZPV – UIBO ZPV.
NO _____

The next puzzle has a different trick, and is a little bit more difficult. No hints though:).

2. GNDOI TAWH SI THRIG SI TON SYALWA YSEA.

Positive Mindset Sentences:

I love myself during challenges, and when things are going smoothly.
I love myself even though I sometimes fail.
I am worthy of the good things life has to offer.
I make good decisions.
I am great at solving problems.
I am smart, and learning more daily.
I can be whatever I put my mind to.
I am a good friend to myself.
I forgive myself and others for their mistakes.
I am gentle with people and animals.
I study hard, but also include fun in my day.
I am awesome and perfect the way I am.
I am joyful, patient, and brave.
I have a beautiful imagination.
I accomplish great results.
I have faith in myself.
I approve of myself.
I am important.



Unscramble These Words:

eoseawm	love
anotelpai	healthy
eileveb	joyful
ntrsgo	awesome
ucruogaseo	hugger
velo	potential
nerpstices	courageous
cfsuclsesu	persistence
nenfocdice	believe
hetlayh	successful
eimredntanoit	confidence
fojuyl	compassion
scimnopsaon	determination
ghgrue	original

Answers are on PDF page 102. How do the words above describe you on any normal day?

I believe thoughts and a positive outlook on life (in general) affect how you feel about your Self and your environment? What do you think? Do you agree?



On the next page, you'll have an opportunity to use the unscrambled words in a new way.

What are ways you can use the words (on the previous page) to describe yourself, so that you are building your confidence and self-worth?

Jot ideas down here:



Talk About It

Either while reading this book or afterwards, talk about it. Many people find when reading positive messages and asking themselves to consider different perspectives, that there is the potential for new ideas to invade their mind and get themselves thinking.

One of the best ways to learn and explore new ideas is through dialogue with a trusted adult. An adult is a better choice (than a friend) to share deeply personal thoughts with for a few reasons. First, you can tap into an adult's vast life experiences (the adult may have

gone through something similar.) You might find a wealth of information that helps you see things differently.

A second reason (to talk with an adult instead of a peer) is that while you might be



BFF's with someone your own age today, tomorrow might be a new forever. One thing you don't want is having deeply personal stuff splattered on social media.

A third reason to talk with an adult about your thoughts and feelings is because that close adult in your life is there to help, guide, and support you.

I believe communicating with your parent (s) or guardian is important as you're navigating through these challenging years. Maybe you don't currently have the type of relationship with a parent to discuss personal matters, but I urge you to try.

"Talk about your problems. There's no need to feel shy. It's always good to talk about issues that concern you." Orlando Bloom

Parents aren't perfect. Sometimes they act and react with closed minds and misunderstanding. Really. If you try to talk with a parent or guardian and that person isn't able to listen, think of someone else you can talk with, like a schoolteacher, counselor, principal, or someone from church.

The important thing is having SOMEONE you can trust to help you sort out the questions, concerns, ideas, and thoughts that are all jumbled inside of you.



Strategies:

Consider using the following tips when you want to talk about something important with a parent or other adult.

1. Ask for an appointment. That may sound odd, but what it really means is that you value that person's time and schedule, and that you know that some time frames are better than others for conversation.

Right when mom or dad gets home from work, or dinner is being prepared, or it's exercise

time, or they're having a cocktail, or trying to get others ready for bed (or school) – these are not good times to have an important conversation.

Ask your parent for a good time (that day) when it would be a good time to talk privately for an hour about something personal.



You may need to tell them that everything is okay, so that they don't worry and start interrogating you on the spot. That wouldn't be good.

2. Prepare in advance. It can be really, really challenging to talk about what is bugging you. You can make it a little easier by making notes of what you want to say. Why? Think of how difficult it is getting up in front of your class at school for a demonstration or book report – and that's not even personal stuff! Having clear notes of what you want to say would help you speak with clarity and confidence.

3. Use “I” statements.

Anytime someone starts a sentence with “You,” the person the “you” is directed at will become on edge and begin preparing their defense. It’s an automatic self-defense mechanism. You know when your parent, teacher, coach, or whomever says, “You didn’t, or you don’t, or you haven’t . . .,” you immediately become alert and defensive. We all do, it’s normal.



When you want to talk with an adult – guess what? if you say, “You never take my side,” or, “You never listen to me,” that person you’re talking with will become defensive.

Guaranteed.

And if it’s an adult, they’ll probably become a touch angry or annoyed—we’re sensitive about our shortcomings. 😊

Instead, word your issue something like this: “I feel that when there is a disagreement, that my side is hardly ever taken.” Then, using tip #2, you can have ready, examples of when this has happened.

4. Stick to the topic.

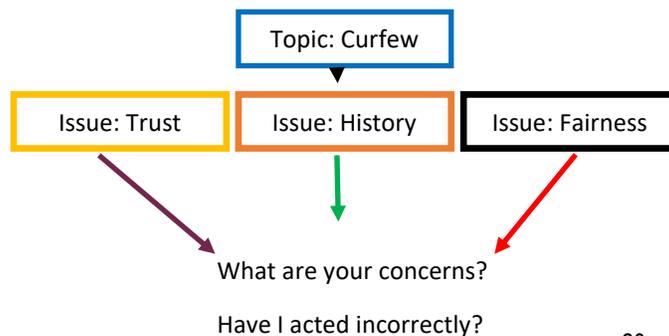
It is so easy to start talking about one thing and then end up talking about some other subject. Often, emotions and



time constraints end the discussion – and you never get to fully discuss the topic at hand, or get resolution of your problem or issue.

If you see this happening, try to tactfully get back on track by saying something like this, “That is a good point, and maybe we can talk about that next, but right now I’d like to continue talking about _____. I hope that is okay with you.”

Preparing bullet points or a diagram on a piece of paper can help you stay on topic, and so could creating an agenda. Example:



5. Use your emotions intelligently. EI, as it's called, is a skill. Just because someone is an adult does not mean that person has the skill of Emotional Intelligence.



It's okay to have a full range of emotions: cry, get angry, laugh with happiness, or become annoyed. That is totally normal for most everyone. The challenge

(and skill) is being able to describe to someone what you are feeling—and also *how* that emotion is making you feel.

As an example, maybe when you're angry your stomach twists in knots, you get hot all over, and your teeth hurt because you're clenching them. Or,

maybe when you're angry you feel like you're

“Miscommunication leads to complication.” Lauryn Hill

going to blow your top! For someone else, though, when that person gets angry, they get real quiet and stiff. Each of us show our emotions differently.



Crying is a release, and nothing to feel ashamed of. When you are able to tell someone how you feel (even if you start crying while talking) that is called using your emotions intelligently.

Just like dealing with challenges, using your emotions intelligently takes practice.

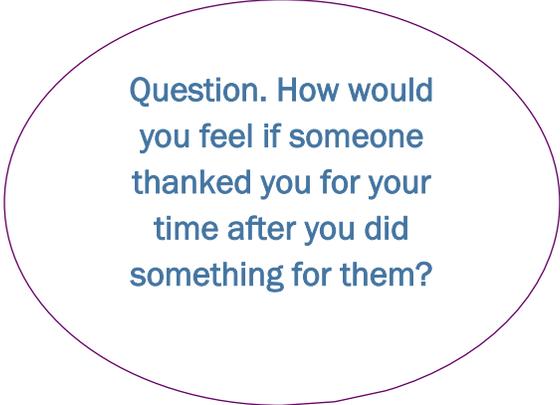
Many adults freak out when they're faced with someone crying because they don't know what to do, or what to say, or how to act.

If this happens, say something like, "I'm really upset, crying is helping me release some tension. I'll be fine, please just give me a minute."

6. Be flexible and open to other perspectives.

"Because I told you so," might be a typical adult phrase, but it wouldn't go too far if you said it. You might have told your parent (or other adult) something three times already, and have given them fifteen reasons why it's a good idea or why you *should* be able to do something, but odds are – you'll have to explain it again. Try a different approach or try to use different words to get your idea across.

Use open-ended questions or multiple examples from different points of view. Refrain from, “Everybody’s doing it, Mom!” Show that you’ve really thought this through. Something like, “Mom, I understand you may have some concerns about me getting a nose ring. I’d like to share with you why I want to get one, and how I plan to keep the area clean and healthy. I even understand that there may be times when you’d prefer I not wear it (such as to church or Grandma’s house) and I’ll respect your wishes. Please share with me any other concerns you might have.”



Question. How would you feel if someone thanked you for your time after you did something for them?

Reach your potential and go beyond.

As *T.F. Hodge* said,

“The sky is not my limit . . . I am.”



7. **Don't assume.** Has this happened to you? You start to say something, and then someone cuts you off and either finishes your sentence, or says, "I know just what you

mean." Ugh! But they didn't know what you meant, or what you were going to say! It's annoying, they had a wrong assumption. Wrong assumptions can also be damaging.

Maybe you're talking to your dad and he gets a funny look on his face. You assume it's



because of what you're saying, so you stop talking and run out of the room and out of the house. Or, maybe you run to your room.

But actually, the funny look on his face is because he had to fart and he was about to blow! Just kidding, but wrong assumptions happen all the time. Feelings get hurt, people break up with each other, people even get in fights, or other bad things happen.

Don't assume. Ask.

If you hear something unexpected or someone is acting weird, ask for clarification. Sometimes what was said could be taken two ways (one positive and one negative).

Adults can easily misinterpret what's been said because they often hear what they want to hear,



or what they expect to hear, or maybe they didn't even hear everything you said—or, and this happens often, they're multitasking (why an appointment is important) so they are distracted. Clarify meaning.

8. Thank him/her/them for listening. Have you ever noticed how difficult it is to keep your mouth shut and just listen when someone is talking? It's crazy hard!

After your parent, guardian, or other close adult has listened to whatever it is that is bothering you, give them a moment to think about what you've said, and then ask for some ideas to solve the issue.

Remember, when asking for advice, try to stay open to suggestion. Refrain from immediately

saying something isn't going to work.

People can feel insulted if you ask for their opinion and immediately refute it. Instead, you can say something like, "That's a great suggestion, I'll think about it." Who knows, maybe their suggestion will work with some consideration or modification. When your discussion is complete, sincerely thank them for their time.

"I have a very close relationship with my mom, and I'm able to talk to her about anything."
Jessica Szohr



May I share a secret?

Chances are, your parent or guardian wants to be a huge part of your life as well as a resource.

Creating a relationship to talk (both during crisis and when things are awesome) would be good for everyone.

Here's the kicker, though. Just because someone is an adult doesn't mean they've developed good communication skills, or know how to start a conversation, or have figured out how to create a relationship.

Each of those areas—starting a conversation, communication skills, and building relationships take practice and often even professional help.



Some adults might as well put on a mask and start snorkeling just to have a conversation starter.

Help your parent or guardian get to know the “real” you. Maybe you can be the point person here using the eight tips just mentioned, or visualize some other ones.

Use the space below to jot down some other methods you can use to start a dialogue with your parent or guardian?

*“I don't think you should try to be anything you're not. If you're not smiling all the time or always happy - I don't think it matters. If you're having a bad day, show you're having a bad day. Don't try to put up something that's fake.”
Elle Fanning*

Break Time.
Solve these bamboozables (a display of
(words in an interesting way.)

<p>1.</p> <p>mine</p> <hr/> <p>you</p> <p>yourself</p>	<p>2.</p> <p>Success</p> <p>Success</p> <p>Success</p> <p>Success</p>
<p>3.</p> <p>Chance</p> <p>Chance</p> <p>Chance</p>	<p>4.</p> <p>Problem</p>
<p>5.</p> <p>Up</p> <p>side</p>	<p>5.</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Self</p>

Aren't these fun:). Here's a hint to solving them:
a slash can mean don't or no.

1. Don't you undermine yourself. Get it? 😊

Answers are on PDF page 102.



Let's make a splash! Or, at least let's recap what we've discussed thus far.

First, we talked about who you are and who you want to become as you get older. I also asked you to identify your dreams and vision for your life. One tool we use (even as adults) is a vision board.

A vision board is something you create to use as a visual reminder. Material, size, or shape used for the vision board is not important. What's important is creating one, and adding all the details that portray each area of your life.

As you start your vision board, you may start to feel a little overwhelmed. Don't give in to that feeling! A vision board is a "living" tool. As life events occur, you can keep updating it. Example:

- ◆ You achieve a milestone
- ◆ Your vision takes a new path
- ◆ Your dream broadens or narrows

On the next page, I've given a sample of what a vision board can look like at the start. The beauty of the tool is that it is solely based on you and your wants, needs, and desires.

You can create your vision board any way you'd like. Websites like Pixabay.com have images you can use to capture your vision in a visual manner. I used some of the Be/Do/Have examples from page 6. As you go through the book, more vision ideas will come to you.

My Vision Board

I want to Be:



a singer



a dancer



a nice person

I want to Do:



Graduate



Travel the World

I want to Have:



live in a house on a hill



DREAM JOB



family healthy & near me



What You Say About Yourself Matters!

More so than what other people say about you (unless you choose to believe them) what you say about yourself, especially repeatedly, sinks into your subconscious and affects your self-worth and self-image.

It may seem like nothing to call yourself an idiot when you forget something, or a klutz or dummy, but those negative labels stick!

Seeing yourself as something (like a klutz or idiot) will continue into other areas without your permission. You'll begin to have a viewpoint of yourself as lacking in other areas too.

But, if you're saying POSITIVE things about yourself, then you can expect to have a "can do" attitude and you aren't driven by fear. You will have the courage to try out for the team or enter that competition.

Are the following traits how you see yourself? They are more than mere words in a dictionary. These are traits each of us ought to consider adding to our personal vocabulary.



Amazing

Able

Ambitious

Beautiful

Brilliant

Daring

Determined

Enjoyable

Giving

Happy

Honest

Inspiring

Incredible

Joyful

Kind

Magnificent

Outstanding

Strong

However, if your self-talk is negative, you will probably talk yourself out of doing things that you really want to do (such as sing, play a sport, attend college, or believe in achieving dreams).

Did you know that when you say something over and over out loud or in your mind—it sinks into your subconscious?

Here's the word list for the puzzle on the next page. Oh, I think you're outstanding! Say these positive words as you search for them. Make an effort to say them daily. Internalize them.

SUCCESSFUL	FUN	OPEN	INSPIRE
COURAGEOUS	PURPOSEFUL		FOCUSED
AWESOME	DETERMINED		INSIGHTFUL
CREATIVE	OUTGOING		KIND
OUTSTANDING	STRONG		VISIONARY
INCREDIBLE	CARING		OPTIMIST
INTEREST	GOALS		GIVING



ABLE
NICE
AMAZING
THOUGHTFUL
PERKY
HONEST
CONFIDENT

I hope you believe the words on the previous describe you and your life. You can find the words frontwards, backwards, and diagonally. Solution is on PDF page 103.

O I N C R E D I B L E A V A T S L F L
 U N O O Y R A K R E P S M I W H U O U E
 T T G N I S A H R Z E S U E T O P N F G V
 S E V I S O O I G O R G I L H S S I I
 T R Y I S O O I M P A M E G I R O A C N E
 A E D D N G G I E N M P A V I R O I L C G R
 N S F E G S O W S U S K S O N I A V E P L C
 D T S O T E G U E O T U S R I V I R O I L C
 I T O S T E G U E O T U S R I V I R O I L C
 G T H S T E G U E O T U S R I V I R O I L C
 G O A L S A L U F T H G U O H T S O I

What Do You Think? Do you dwell on what other people think of you? Do you find yourself pretending to be a different way or are you doing things you don't want to do to make someone like you?

Most people get pressure to hide or change their true Self (even as adults). Someone may tell you not to "act" a certain way, or suggest you not wear something, or tell you to talk in a different manner, or even try and make you believe something you don't (such as religion, politics, racism, or elitism.)

"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken."

-Oscar Wilde



Maybe you struggle with the identity of you? Maybe questions arise in areas of your life - or maybe they don't, but you're not sure if you want to share your true identity. It is my thought that not every question needs to be answered right now. If you're confused, let time and your life unfold to help you to make the right decisions that affect you and your life. However, that said, it is important to be true to the YOU that you are today, especially in your mind.

35

If you don't feel safe or sure of yourself, what can you do to be true to your beliefs? How about you come up with a code word, phrase, or quote that you can always have with you. That way, when someone tries to make you feel bad about yourself for being "authentic," then you can look at your special reminder and not accept (called internalize) what the person is saying.

An example is: "I am wonderfully made and perfect as I am." Or "I am original, creative, and awesome.

What word or phrase would help you remain feeling good about yourself when your self-worth is attacked?



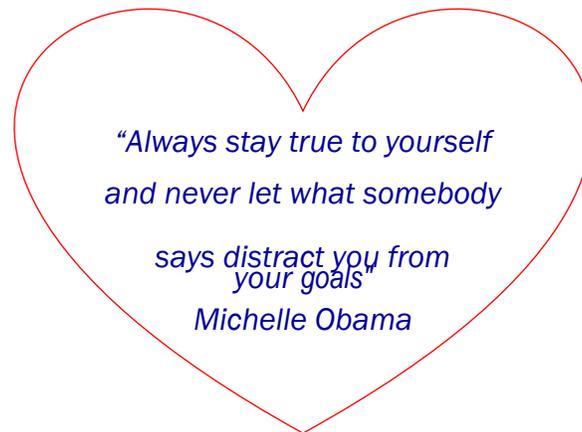
When you try to be someone else, or you try to conform to what someone thinks you should be you will have

dissonance. Dissonance is a lack of agreement. It's a difference between the truth and what someone wants to believe. It's a difference between beliefs and actions. If it's about you, then it's a difference between who you truly are and who you are "faking" to be, and this can cause you some serious-mind-upset and unhappiness.

It's much easier to be true to who you are and let other people come to terms with that. Of course, the same goes for you accepting "them" as they are. 36

be, and this can cause you some serious-mind upset and unhappiness. It's much easier to be true to who you are and let other people come to terms with that.

Of course, the same goes for you accepting "them" as they are.



Pleasing Others and Self-Compassion

It isn't surprising that (in the media) only a small amount of attention is spent on telling you *not* to worry about pleasing others. Why is that? It's counterproductive (which means, it's against what someone wants). People (including you and me) like to be pleased. Wouldn't you agree

that we like it when someone does something for us? However, solely worrying about what someone wants, or how that person wants us to be should not be at the cost of hurting ourselves or feeling negative about our Self.

Say you're playing baseball and you want to hit a home run for your mom so your mom will be proud of you. But you strikeout.



Did you let your mom down? Will your mom be disappointed in you? Duh, NO!

Your mom might be disappointed *for* you (because you didn't get a hit) but she won't but not be disappointed *IN* you. Many people may feel they let the someone down, and then feel negative about them self, and possibly call them self a bad name. That person may even become depressed. However, parents/guardians usually want the best for their child and are proud their child is trying for the home run.

Sometimes though, adults can have unusually high expectations and a child is unable to attain them no matter how hard they try. This may sound mean, but, expectations are the problem of the person holding them.

You can't spend your life trying to please others. All you can do is try to be the Best YOU! 38

When you a person does something solely to please someone else (and I'm not talking about doing chores) or when that person acts a particular way, or does things they truly don't want to do (like drugs or pick on someone) then they are acting like a people pleaser. They are acting fake.

Most people pleaser's are not happy with the person they are because they are always being untrue to themselves. That's how they become an easy target (vulnerable to manipulation) to begin with. Not only do people pleaser's spend a lot of



time trying to become what the other person wants, they often act one way for one person and another way for someone else. It becomes a vicious cycle of manipulation and the people pleaser does not learn to value one's Self. Here's an example: Although you want to be in the drama club *your dad* thinks acting is for sissies. You want your dad to be proud of you, so instead of joining the drama club you try out for the football team—even though you hate football.

Here's the thing. While you are pretending to be someone else - every minute you are "doing" that thing, your mind may go to the dark place and you may start calling yourself names like loser, idiot, or weakling. That isn't a healthy attitude. That's where self-compassion comes in.



You've got to give yourself a break! Yes, try your best. But, if you do make a mistake, or don't hit the home run - that's okay, maybe next time you will.

The same philosophy goes for when you screw up and do something you know is wrong, which I believe 99% percent of us have done at least once! Your parent, guardian, or other significant person (s) in your life will forgive you. Everyone makes mistakes, and everybody fails, or at least doesn't win at something, sometime.

Instead of being critical of yourself, be kind. Practicing self-compassion on yourself is a great way to learn to become more compassionate to other people.

How you treat yourself will eventually become how you treat other people.

How much better would you feel about yourself if you didn't call yourself mean names? What if you looked in the mirror and said, "I fell off my healthy eating plan, but that's okay. Tomorrow, I'll do better." Realize, no one is perfect.

Do you agree that saying words of positive reinforcement would be much better for your self



-worth and sense of Self than if you said words that tore you down, made you feel bad about yourself or supported negativity?

You probably do agree, but often, instead of positive words, the thing we say about our Self is negative (such as, "I'm such a loser, I can't even eat right!") Not good thoughts to think!

Self-compassion is the trait to learn and develop to be to able to give yourself a break (and other people too). It takes some work to allow a person to grow and learn, especially when that person is you.



“I had people in my life who were insane and negative, but they taught me how not to be, how I didn't want to end up.” Channing Tatum

How would your outlook on life change if you were more compassionate to yourself?

How are ways you can incorporate more self-compassion in your life?

Have you thought of mentorship or volunteering as a way to be more compassionate both to yourself and others.



You can use the words listed on pages 29 and 30 to create a self-vocabulary.

Consider looking in the mirror every day (look yourself in the eye) and tell yourself you are strong, able, creative, determined, and ... any other positive and encouraging words.

Really. Try it.

I know you'll start to feel differently about yourself if you start being considerate and kind to your true Self. How could you not?

Also, refrain from saying ANY of these words (listed below) when talking about your Self:

Inadequate unworthy un-loveable

Worthless unable ugly

Lacking failure un-likeable



What other words do you need to remove from your vocabulary?

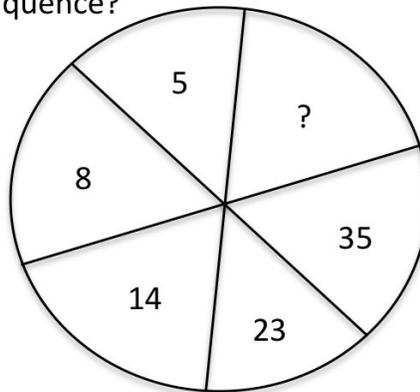
How about a break from deep thinking?

Try and solve these riddles.

1. How many logs does it take to complete a log cabin?
2. If 12 is a dozen and 13 is a baker's dozen, what are 14 and 15?

How did you do? This next puzzle is a little more difficult (at least it was for me when I was creating it).

What is the next number in the sequence?



Solutions for both activities are on PDF page 103.

"Life is too short to worry about what others say about you. Have fun and give them something to talk about." Kevin Hart

Unique? Different? Original?



Are you different? Unique? Do you share your uniqueness with others? Sometimes, a person's display of uniqueness makes other less-than-strong people feel threatened. Some people that feel jealousy or threatened (or small and unsure) tend to lash out and hurt other people, your originality and/or your confidence to be true to yourself.

"I do what I do. You like it, great. You don't, go listen to somebody else. I'm stickin' with the people who stuck with me." Ice Cube

It takes courage to be unexpectedly different and original, yet it can be so satisfying! Think about it, fads and trends happen because someone had the courage to "be weird."

Most people don't have the courage to go through with their ideas or act the way they want to act. Actually, most people are followers.

Most people follow trendsetters and “creatively unique people.” They’re the people who laughed at “the weirdo’s” when the weirdo’s were unknown, but now that everybody is doing it– (colored hair, holes in the pants, nose rings) they’ll do it too.

“People who love themselves don't hurt other people. The more we hate ourselves, the more we want others to suffer.” Daniel Pearce

Following other people isn’t always bad (unless it’s hurting someone), that’s what fads and trends are. But making fun of someone because they’re different or unique – that’s never okay, and it’s never a good thing to do. Instead of making fun of someone try to appreciate their courage to be true to the person they are. Maybe kindness and tolerance will

spread and people no longer will have to fear being unique or different.

I believe, having individual differences colors our world in interest and beauty.



“If you’re lucky enough to be different, don’t ever change.” Taylor Swift

Maybe you know someone who is a little “different.” Consider acknowledging that person’s difference and then sharing a sincere compliment describing what you like about them that is different from the norm. Being able to accept the “wierdness” in others is a sign of strength in you.

Do you know of someone at school that gets picked on because of their uniqueness?



For example, maybe the person likes to dress in costumes (all the time). Or maybe they walk or talk differently. Maybe they burst out in song at inopportune times like I do.

Truthfully, almost all of us have some quirky thing we do. How would you feel about showing them some support or kindness?

“My pain may be the reason for somebody's laugh. But my laugh must never be the reason for somebody's pain.” Charlie Chaplin

Perseverance and Determination

Matt Johnson knows all about perseverance. He tried out for the reality TV show called, “The Voice” every season for seven years (that’s 14 times). Then, on Season 15, in September 2018, he was finally selected as a contestant during the blind auditions. That’s perseverance!

When you are attempting to grow and mature, an area that greatly affects your life today, tomorrow, and over the years to come, is your ability to persevere and do the “growth things” that you probably don’t want to do; such as go to school, do your homework, learn to manage your time, use good personal hygiene techniques and eventually get a job. This is the time to surround yourself with people who are motivated to help you succeed. Follow the mantra, "Don't just go through it, grow through it."

“Your reality is yours. Stop wasting time looking at someone else's reality while doing nothing about yours.” Steve Harvey



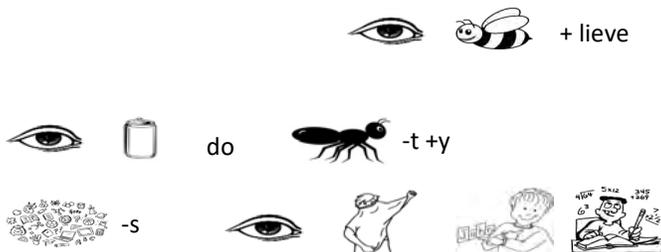
Decisions! Decisions!

"It is our choices... that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities." J. K. Rowling

It's a daily, maybe even a minute-by-minute, decision that you make on how "to be." Every interaction you have with another person is an opportunity for you to be nice, mean, kind, cruel, humble, or prideful. It's your decision.

"I would rather be a little nobody, than to be a evil somebody." Abraham Lincoln

Here's a fun pictogram to solve.



2. (Solution is on PDF page 105.)

*"Don't you ever let a soul in the world tell you that you can't be exactly who you are."
Lady Gaga*



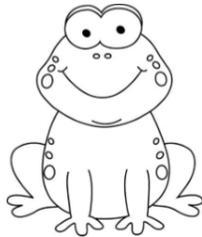
Like a caterpillar transforms into a butterfly or a frog becomes a prince . . . (just kidding) you'll find that through every experience

(whether good or bad) you will grow and mature.

The key is using those experiences to help you become the person you want to be. That's why at the beginning of this book I asked you what you wanted. What type of person do you want to be as a high school student, college student, or even as an adult?

Having an idea now helps you direct your life (to the extent that you can) and make decisions on which way to go and which steps to take to achieve what you want. When you have an idea about the type of person you want to be, anxiety and stress are reduced.

"When I was going on auditions, it was nerve-racking. I'd always say to my mom that it would be awesome if I could get a series. When Modern Family came along, I said, 'You know what, Mom? I believe I'm going to get this role.'" Rico Rodriguez



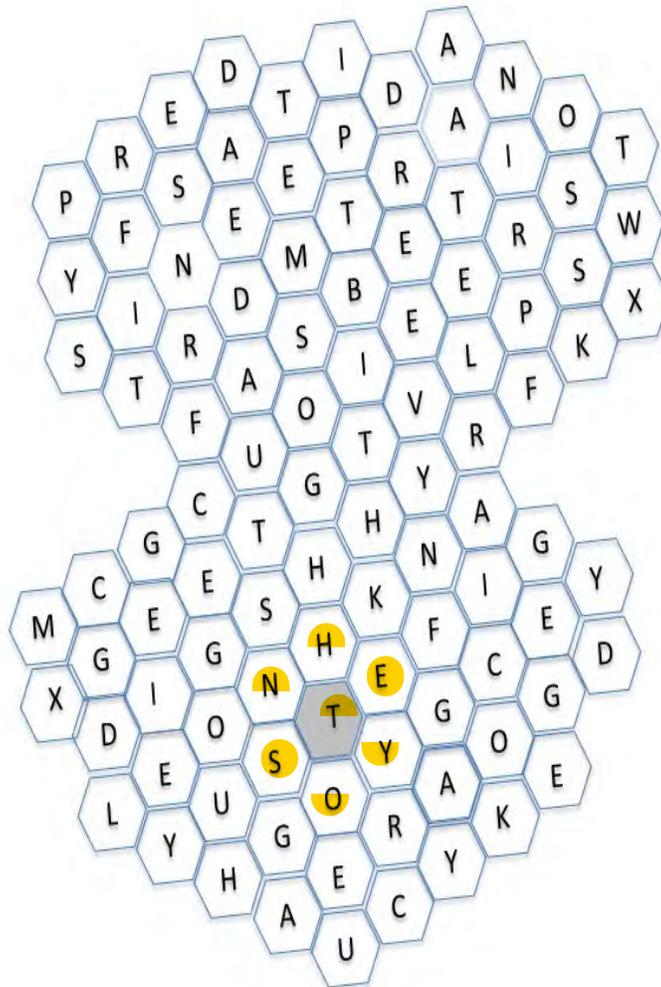
Have some fun with a Honeycomb puzzle. Each honeycomb has a letter. A group of seven letters spells a word which correlates to one of the questions below. Example:

The shaded T and the six letters surrounding it spell HONESTY, which matches clue #1 below. Find seven more seven-letter words and shade the letter in the center. The shaded letters combine to answer the Sweet Word question below.

1. The quality of being honest: **honesty** - T
2. Accept something as true; feel sure of the truth:
3. Persons whom one knows and with whom one has a bond of mutual affection:
4. An idea or opinion produced by thinking or occurring suddenly in the mind:
5. To continue in a course of action in spite of difficulty, opposition, or failure:
6. Make an effort to achieve or complete something, typically a difficult task:
7. Shining or glowing brightly:
8. The ability to do something that frightens one:
Solution is on PDF page 104.

Now, unscramble all seven of the center letters
to spell the **Sweet Word**:

This book is for tweens and _____s.





While you're doing all the "growing-up" things noted on the previous pages, remember that you'll need to find time to dream about your future and do actions that will help you achieve the goals you've set, while creating and living the vision you see for yourself.

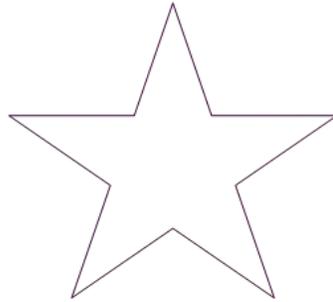
Here are a couple tips to help you create actionable steps toward your vision and goals:

- * Surround yourself with people who are smarter than you, who have more logic and common sense, and also more drive. Being around these types of individuals will help motivate you as you grow and mature.

- * Find a role model and watch, listen, and learn how that person acts, reacts, and lives their life. Apply that to your life. If your role model is a celebrity, realize that much of what that person does (or says) is orchestrated by other people.

*"My advice to anyone with a dream is
to never stop pursuing it."*

Shawn Mendes



Matthew David Morris from Atlanta, GA, aka MatyBRaps, started posting YouTube covers at age seven.

His perseverance paid off. Now, at age 15, he has almost 900,000 Twitter followers of his “BFamily” posts, nearly 15 million followers on YouTube and 6 billion video views.

* Use your action plan and create a list of ideas that will help you reach your goals. Let’s say you have a dream to be a musician, specifically a guitar player. Create a list of all the ways you can become a guitarist: (a) Get a guitar. (b) Take guitar lessons. (c) Practice daily. Okay, that’s the normal way.

Maybe the normal way won’t work for you. Maybe before you can become the next YouTube sensation—you’ve got to get a little creative.

Say you live in a place that doesn’t have a guitar teacher within walking distance, or you can’t afford to buy lessons, or even buy a guitar! But deep down you still want to be a guitarist.

What can you do?



When traditional access to learning won't work for your situation, you'll need to become creative. This is also where desire and determination comes in.

Here's some ideas to get you started:

- You can join your school music program.
- Rent a guitar.
- Make a substitute instrument to practice finger movement on such as wood, string, or cardboard.
- Watch videos from YouTube (using the Internet at the library if you don't have a computer at home).
- Read books on how to play guitar.
- Listen to instrumental guitar music.
- Watch TV specials and old documentaries.

What are some additional ways to learn?

Other ideas for working toward your dream are:

- Find help. Contact art stores, community centers, senior centers, paint stores, neighborhood family alliances, and businesses whose mission is community related.
- Ask to intern for a business in your field of interest or ask if they want to mentor you.
- Ask for donations for what you're trying to do. If you can show how determined you are, and describe how you'll use the resources, people may want to help you.

Maybe you have people in your group that know someone who knows someone who can help you. If this happens, make sure you "do good" for your friend by being a stand-up person.

You can reach your goals, but it takes courage to take the first step, and perseverance to keep going through the challenges (and there will be challenges when you're trying to achieve something).



You have the power within.



According to music blog “Joy Tunes,” quite a few famous musicians (David Bowie, Elton John, Louis Armstrong, Prince, Jimi Hendrix, Frank Zappa, Jack White, and more) are self-taught.

* Find the time (even a couple of minutes) every day to do at least one thing to work toward your goal. Whether it’s to practice, read about your interest, or research . . . just do something.

All those little things and little actions add to success. Hannahlei Cabanilla started dancing at age two and worked on it every day. In July of 2018, she won “America’s Favorite dancer,” on Season 15 of “So You Think You Can Dance.”

* Believe you have the power to do something.

*“Productivity is one of the best feelings.”
Olivia Rodrigo*

Start small. If you want to be a fashion designer, get free or almost free clothes from churches or thrift shops. Want to paint? Dance? Sing? There are so many free tutorials on YouTube. Use free apps for your mobile phone.

Use the example below to start working on your action plan.

I suppose the unicorn isn't *really* required.



My Action Plan

In the next year I want to: _____ . I will do this by:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

In the next 2- to -4 years, I want to:

_____ . I am preparing my path for success by:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Just for fun: Mind Benders:

1. What's The Next Letter? WTN__
2. Taking a picture of a girl with sunglasses is impossible. Why?
3. What can be bigger than you, or smaller than you, but doesn't weigh anything?
4. Which is heavier: two tons of bricks or two tons of feathers?
5. John is five feet tall and has a part-time job at Sal's Produce Stand. He wears size 8 shoes. What does he weigh?
6. What ends school, always?

Answers on PDF page 105.



You can reach your dream. It may take a stool or a ladder, but if you stay with it—the distance between will get shorter and shorter.

Labels



Sometimes labels box you into one way of thinking. That label may keep you under-performing.

Some labels, such as slow, stupid, retarded, and "at-risk" (a label government, social workers, educators, and attorneys use often) can make

the person who has been given that label—give up and quit trying (if that person had ever started) to be something more, or even to be “average.”

Labels can do serious damage to a child’s development. Even children your age can be affected by an adult’s use of a label. If someone put a label on you, consider finding out how and why that came about. If appropriate, understand how having the label might help you, (such as a lower teacher-pupil ratio) and learn to see the label in a different way. Not all labels are bad or damaging—they are used as identification of something (such as autistic, dyslexic, ADHD).

Sometimes, being able to label a feeling or an action can be beneficial, especially if it helps you find ways to cope or learn to overcome the



challenge (the reason for the label). Such was the case for actress Elsie Fisher. She described how

she felt nervous and overwhelmed during middle school.

She learned that a medical condition called anxiety (a feeling of worry or unease) was causing her to “act out” during conversations with people (and I add, possibly at other inopportune times as well).

If you feel anxious, try using the mobile phone app “StopBreatheThink” or www.stopbreathethink.com

I heard a story (second-hand) about a boy who was called “at risk” by his guidance counselor. He was told he would never amount to anything, not make it out of the projects where he lived, and never succeed in life. The boy accepted (internalized) that label (of being “at risk”) and didn’t put any effort into learning or doing anything to change his circumstances.

Then one year, the boy had a meeting with a new



school counselor. She changed his life with just one word. Potential. She told the boy he was “at potential,” and that it was up to him where he wanted to go in life.

“At potential” caught his attention. That little bit of encouragement started to turn his thought-process around. He started caring. He started studying and doing his homework. That boy became successful *every day* because he tried!

I am certain there are a great many stories of children who were told they couldn't make it, or wasn't smart enough, or determined enough, or ... you fill in the blank.

This is a true story. I had a kindergarten teacher tell me my son was a trouble-maker and that he was never going to do anything with his life. Seriously! My son was five. He was in Kindergarten. For him, it wasn't that he was a trouble-maker, it was that he was bored. The teacher was teaching to the students who did not know their colors, numbers or letters, and did nothing to encourage the group of children that came into Kindergarten already having learned them. Yes, you can bet I got angry with that teacher!

Yes, financial circumstances or a crappy school can cause someone to be in a more-challenging place mentally and physically, that's true.

Yet many people who have come from those circumstances (who had self-determination) have made a successful life.

Icons of rags-to-riches stories include: Oprah, Henry Ford, Walt Disney, Steve Jobs, and Ralph Lauren, to name a few. Thomas Edison and Albert Einstein are two people that we owe our comfort and way of life to. Yet, as children they were negatively labeled.

Don't wear a label like a blanket if it's going to hold back your "fire" – use it to propel you and motivate you to find ways to reach your dreams.

When I was your age, I lacked in every area I am talking to you about. I lacked self-esteem, self-worth, confidence, and even self-determination.

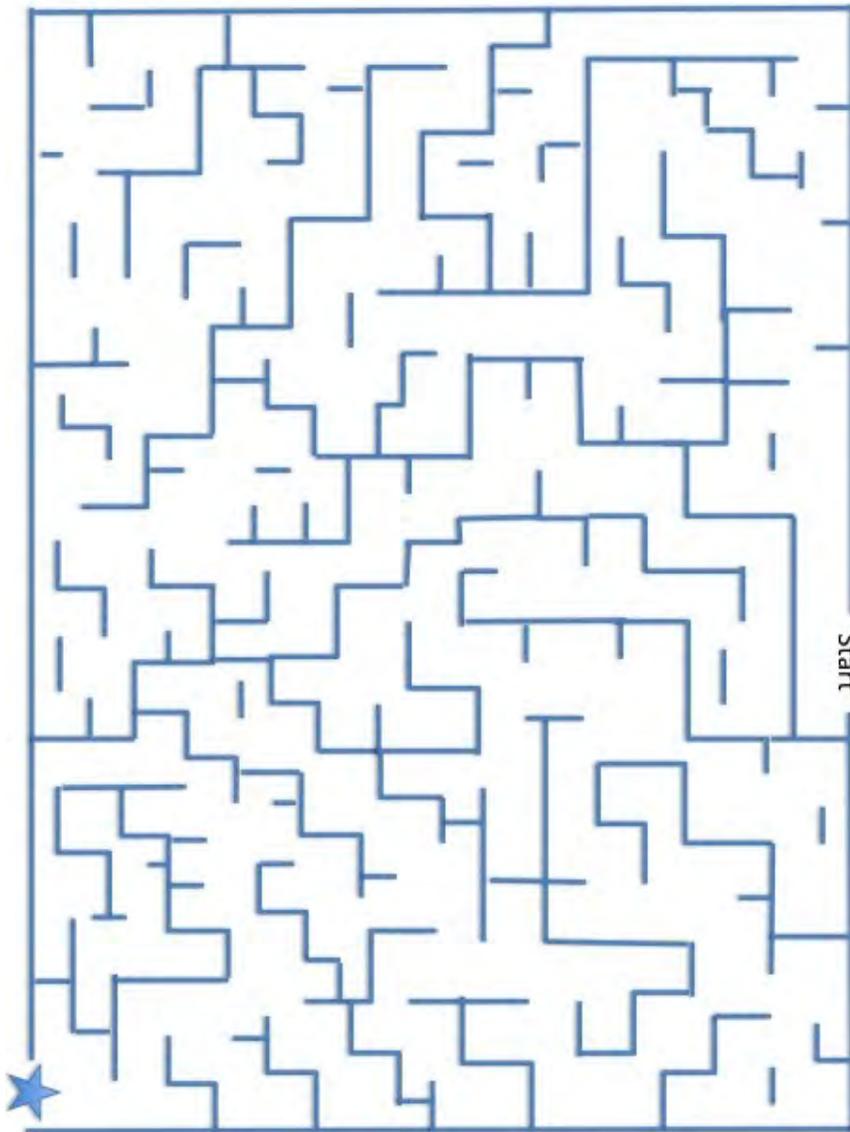
After suffering through the repercussions of many bad decisions, I finally had an epiphany (an intuitive grasp of reality) and developed the tools to turn my life around. I learned to love my-self. I created a vision and set goals.



I wrote "Loving Myself First" to share my techniques with people who had similar upbringings. Age doesn't bring self-worth and

confidence. Try to work through today's challenges so they don't build up and become overwhelming.

Just for fun, give your mind a rest, or a twist completing the maze. Solution is on PDF page 106.



Changing Your Mood



If you're feeling down, depressed, or just plain yucky about yourself, a simple way to change your mood is to change what you're thinking about. Try this: Pick one of the

words listed below (a trait) and think about a time in your life it described you. If your stuck, make up a story about how you performed some deed or overcame an obstacle using that specific trait.

Worthwhile	Passionate	Resourceful
Purposeful	Radiant	Creative
Energetic	Brilliant	Loving
Peaceful	Courageous	Graceful
Kind	Thoughtful	Imaginative
Focused	Persistent	Insightful
Interesting	Compelling	_____

Need an example? Let's say that right now you're feeling overwhelmed with all the requirements you have coming up (test, science project, braces, book report, etc.).

Think back to last year. You went through this then, or

something similar, just not quite as much. But then, you were younger, too. What did you do last year to make it through the challenge that you could apply now?

Just acknowledging that you've been through something similar, and that you can think of techniques or actions to help you in your current situation, can help change your mood.

Or, you can just put on some music and jump around. There's no way you can stay upset when you're dancing like those in the picture below.

Disagree? Try it.



How you feel about yourself affects your mood as well. If you believe in yourself and your potential, no aura of negativity can keep you down for long. Positive self-image strengthens your whole perspective on life and school and friends.

Watch What Your Mind Takes In



If you find a YouTube channel or Internet site where every post is a complaint, a horror story, or a tragedy . . . it will suck the life out of you.

You will probably look for the negative slices of life (and won't even realize you're doing it) and continue to seek out increasingly negative topics and websites. After a while, you'll start to be numb to evil actions (desensitized) and you won't feel any emotions when someone hurts another person (or an animal). That's not good.

When you stop caring (about yourself and the people and animals around you) then what you are in fact saying - is that it's okay. It's not okay.

Instead, visit websites that promote hope, encourage joy, and provide stories of people helping or serving others. You'll find your spirits lifted and you'll feel better about yourself, your environment, and your future.

You've probably heard that our minds are like computers. Everything you see, hear, feel, and taste becomes a memory. Then, when you



have the opportunity to get new information (like meeting a new person, trying new food, or hearing a new kind of music) your

mind instantly accesses its memory and gives you references to draw from. Suddenly you don't like something, or you become afraid – or just the opposite – you lose fear of something you should have hesitation doing.

That's why there is so much talk about young people watching TV and playing games that have sex, violence, drugs, alcohol, and just plain nastiness in them. Those programs, even though you know they aren't real, can make real life not as exciting, or make it seem more dangerous. It all depends on **your** mind and the memories it has.

Instead of a diet of violent programs or games that don't value life – use your time to feed your mind programs that enrich it and give you good feelings about yourself and your future. How would your day (or your life) be different if you felt good about what was going on in it?

Ask yourself this: Do I want to be upbeat and encouraged by my life and my environment, or do I want to feel angry, depressed, and negative about myself? Next, consider how you spend your time. Then, answer the questions below.

TV programs I watch:

What percentage is positive? _____

What percentage is negative? _____

Computer games I play:

What percentage is positive? _____

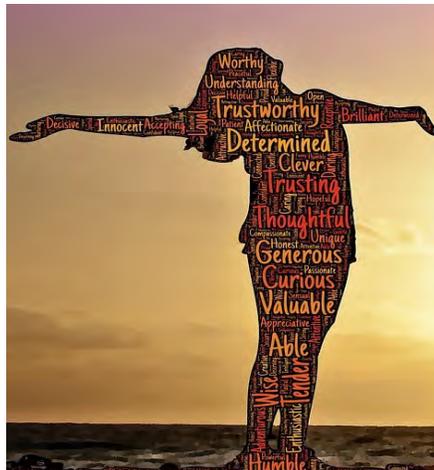
What percentage is negative? _____

Music I listen to for entertainment:

What percentage is positive? _____

What percentage is negative? _____

Ask yourself: what can I change about the way I spend my time that will help me feel good about myself, my life, and my future? Answer below.



Take out your action plan and vision board and note how your dreams and vision don't have room for a lot of fluff. To achieve—you must do the actions and hold the beliefs that support it.

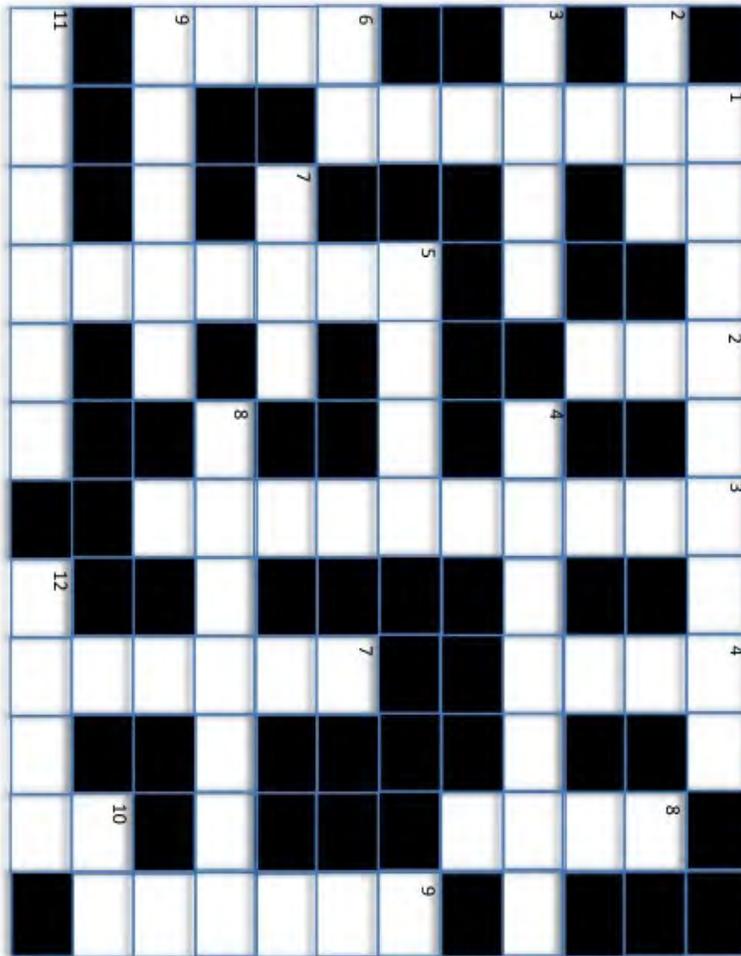
Puzzling Crossword **ACROSS**

1. When you are __, you aren't afraid to try new things.
2. She has a ____ do attitude.
3. Not many instances of this available.
4. When you don't give up.
5. Keep ____ and carry on.
6. To __ in the moment is living.
7. No matter what you do, you may still ____ someone the wrong way.
8. A show of faith in something or someone.
9. When you do this, you discover paths / ideas.
10. You have ____, you just have to believe.
11. As a teen, it's important to have a trusty one of these.
12. Always do your _____.

DOWN

1. Possesses the skill required to complete an action.
2. "Girls Just Want to Have _." (song)
3. He was _____ to make the debate team.
4. Have you heard the _____?
5. It takes this trait to be an original.
6. Be _____, be beautiful.
7. One of a kind.
8. What you do when you see a falling star.
9. This is the best thing you can be with yourself.
10. When you get ____ that you're worthy, you'll feel better.

Answers on PDF page 105





Popularity

"I'd eat my lunch in the nurses' office so I didn't have to sit with the other girls. Apart from my being mixed race, my parents didn't have money so I never had the cute

clothes or the cool back pack." Jessica Alba

Are you one of the popular kids or the unpopular kids? If you're one of the popular kids – here's a tip: you can become even more popular by being nice to people. Your peers already want to dress like you, talk like you, walk like you and do the things you do . . . how much more would they adore you if you were kind to them? Tons!

Yet sadly, one study showed that only 9% of popular children are widely liked by their peers (the other popular people) and schoolmates.

If you aren't popular in school (or even if you are) this section might be interesting to you; it has a few ideas about why some kids aren't popular, but also why being popular isn't always such a good thing.

"I remember when I was in school, the whole reason I started writing songs was because I was alone a lot of the time. I'd sit there in school and I'd be hearing people like, 'Oh my god, this party that we're going to is gonna be so awesome on Friday. Everyone's invited except for [Taylor].'" Taylor Swift

Much research has been done on the subject of popularity, social and anti-social groups, and how all of this affects 11-18 year-olds. In case you didn't know, the age group of 11-13 year-olds is the

most challenging because it's at this age that you are trying to "fit in" to whatever group you desire.

"I'm glad I could do those films, and I was glad to leave school. I couldn't relate to kids my own age. They are mean and don't give you any chance." Kristen Stewart





Rejection (by people you look up to or want to befriend) can be damaging, but it doesn't have to be.

Here are a few questions to consider about popularity. Maybe it's not as "wonderful" as people think.

1. Are you outgoing and friendly? Outgoing and friendly kids are easier to get along with. You may say "duh," but in reality, many kids are shy and a little withdrawn when they're 11-17, especially if they've had a difficult time getting along with others when they were younger. Shy people don't magically become "un-shy" just because they get older. For some people, it takes a lot of effort to be outgoing, even in high school.

2. Are you bossy or one of the team? You might agree, there can only be one bossy person in a group. Who likes to be bossed around? Ah, no one. Being a team player is much more fun. Sure, voice your opinion on what to do or not do (that's important) but it doesn't always have to be your way – you can let others choose too.



3. Do you play a lot of video games?

Spending much of your time online reduces the time you spend face-to-face with peers (another duh,

right?). But think about it.

The social skills you need to “Push On” include handling conflict, negotiating, articulation, communication, and problem-solving (okay, well, according to my son – you need a lot of problem solving skills to play a game).

However, when you spend time with friends (or a group of people) you learn how to handle challenges better because you gain experience “reading” a situation or what’s “truly” going on.

“In high school I was an outcast. I wasn’t cool to hang out with. I ate my lunch in a bathroom stall because that was the one place I could go where I wouldn’t been seen.” Shay Mitchell

Review your action plan and vision board. How important (to your goals) will being able to interact and relate to other people (network or make sales) be toward reaching your goals? I’m guessing they’ll be important.



4. **Do you like an adrenaline rush?** The news (and every social media site) are filled with pictures and stories of young people doing things that are dangerous physically and mentally,

and that can have lifetime effects: Alcohol, drugs, inhaling fumes, sex, strangle-holds, extreme actions (racing, bridge jumping, you-name-it) to one-up their friends.

Accidents, death, jail, and pregnancy – all of these results can and do happen. If you **aren't** trying to impress someone or "people," then you might **not** feel like you have to do all this stuff. That's a good thing.

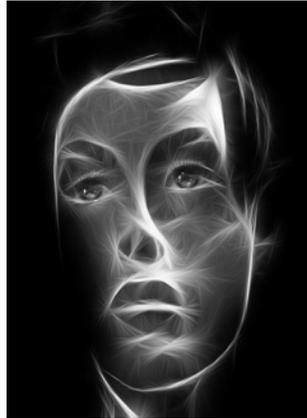
"I hated high school. I didn't have any friends, because I didn't fit in." Chad Michael Murray

5. **Are relationships important to you?** Would you

prefer to have a group to hang out with, or a friend that likes you just as you are? Or, how about a group of friends who like you just as you are?



Popular people, especially girls (or those who identify with being a girl), often are worried about their self-image (and often have a "society-driven" negative self-image or depression) so they're constantly in real (or imagined) competition with friends over what to wear, makeup, cars, jewelry, boys, and everything else - including who is more popular. Competition between friends can ruin a friendship.



Don't Hurt
Yourself and
Don't Hurt
Others

I don't have to tell you that your life is hard and challenging most of the time. But I do have to tell you that you can get through it, and that many of the challenges you face as a teenager mostly disappear once you graduate high school. The pressure of being a teenager isn't as "pressurizing" once bullies, grades, and the need to fit in are taken off the table.

"I took a beating from several boys for years. They put me through hell, punching and kicking me all the time." Christian Bale



Although I've brought it up in other areas of the book, bullying or being bullied is, unfortunately, a huge part of being a pre-teen or teenager. It's terrible! As an adult, I hate, hate, hate, hearing about how some kids meanly and cruelly treat other kids! My feelings are probably nothing compared to yours - if you're going through that now. Being the one getting bullied sucks!

It's goes without saying that words hurt. People use words to intimidate others, to mock them, and to make them feel bad about themselves.

Sometimes, people hurt other people without meaning to. Maybe you've heard the expression, "You can't handle the truth."

Sometimes, when you give your opinion, you are saying it's "the truth" when actually, it's just your opinion. Your opinion is subjective. How well you wrote a book report is subjective. The "amount" of style in an outfit is subjective.

When something is the truth, or true – it means that there is no subjectivity – it is what it is. A basketball when filled with air is round: truth/true. A grand piano has 88 keys: truth/true. Justin Beiber is a good singer: subjective.

“It gets better. It seems hard, you know, I think being different is always gonna be a tough climb. There's always gonna be people that are scared of it. But at the end of the day you give those bullies, those people that are so ignorant, if you give them the power to affect you, you're letting them win. And they don't deserve that. What you're doing by being your-self is you're keeping it real, and you're being really brave.” Adam Lambert



Be part of the solution. Think before you speak. Make sure before you say something that it's true, kind, and necessary.

Here's an example. Your friend asks what you think of "Jason." You think the guy's a jerk. Anytime you've talked with him he's been rude and argumentative. But is your opinion

true, kind, and necessary? No, that's your opinion, or your feeling, or your experience and also based on your belief on how someone should act. It isn't a "truth."

*"I realized that bullying never has to do with you. It's the bully who's insecure."
Shay Mitchell*

Someone else might talk or interact with Jason and be treated the same way and think that Jason is cool, or nice, or being "authentic." How we "see" someone is based on our own values system.

Same thing with a friend asking about something your friend bought. If they bought it, then saying something negative about the item would cause hurt feelings (and maybe hurt your friendship without either of you realizing it).

That's why thinking about what you say, before you say it, is important. Does that mean you should lie? No. However saying something like, "It's not my favorite," can answer whether you like something or not. Also realize that not everything needs to be said.





When someone intentionally seeks to hurt another person's feelings by the choice of words and phrases used, it makes you ask yourself what could

possibly be the reason for it.

Often, it is because that person is attempting to make them self look smarter, funnier, or cooler. Kids, and even adults, think putting someone down raises them up. What do you think? Do you agree? I don't.

Think of a time when you heard someone (call that person John) putting someone else (call that person Jay) down. Did it make you think better of John, or worse? Did you feel sorry for Jay?

When you witnessed someone bullying someone else, how did the situation make you feel about yourself? Did you make the situation worse by laughing? Did you want to say something to defend the person, but didn't? If you felt bad because you did nothing, maybe next time you'll feel like standing up for that person (or whomever).

Would you want someone to stand up for you? I don't even like it when someone is talking bad about someone who isn't even present in the conversation. When that happens, and it does even with adults, I excuse myself, or I say something positive about the person.



Sometimes, it can feel overwhelming to be harassed and hurt. It can seem that it would be easier to give up and end it all, but I think your biggest hurt would be to give up on yourself and give up on the people who love you. You and your life are an important part of the world today, tomorrow, and after school.

"I was bullied every second of every day in elementary and middle school."

Selena Gomez

Hopefully, you aren't a bully - if you are -PLEASE STOP. You're a better person than that, and you don't need to make someone feel bad to make yourself feel better. Becoming the best version of your Self will make you feel better. Learning, growing, being kind - all these actions will feed your soul and help today and in the future.

For those being bullied -bullies aren't worth hurting yourself for (as in committing suicide, running away, or hurting another person). If you do – they win.

Maybe you think, "I can't take it anymore!" No matter what "it" is, you can make it through.

When you're dealing with harassment or anything challenging, remember - you need only push on through today. Instead of looking at "another year of this" think: "I can make it through today. Tomorrow, my strength will be renewed."



Make use of your vision board and visualize a period of time in the future. Map out a dream and an action plan. However, for challenges, day-by-day sight might be enough.

The statistics for young people ending their lives because of being harassed and/or bullied is heartbreaking.

Sadly, many young people do give up. They get to a point where they can no longer suffer the abuse given out by others. Or, they lose faith and belief in the adults who are supposed to be there to help them.

“When I was younger, I was bullied daily, and it led me to face other struggles. I know what it’s like to feel alone and outcast.”
Brittany Snow

If someone is harassing you, hurting you, or making you do things you don’t want to do – there are actions you can take. They include:

1. Make your parents aware of it when it starts.



2. Make your teachers, coaches, counselors, and the principal aware of what is going on.

3. Notify platform administrators and close your social media accounts.

4. Tell your friends you don't want to hear what other people are saying about you.

5. If you feel unsafe or are in fear of your life -- talk with the police. Bullying is against the law.

According to CNN, during 1999-2015, the world lost 1,309 young people between ages of 5 and 12 to suicide. That is 1,309 too many.

You are important!

You are needed!

Please do not let a temporary situation cause you to make a permanent decision. You can push on through the challenges of youth and make it out the other side.





Honestly, you have something to offer the world. Believing in yourself and your potential can help you push on.

Maybe you aren't the smartest person in your class, or the fastest runner in track. But maybe you have something just as important – like a smile that warms a person's heart. Maybe your gift is writing stories or singing songs or creating art.

You may think you don't have anything special about you – but you're wrong in this. Each of us has at least one (probably many more) special traits.

Take a few minutes and think about what makes you special (and no saying "Nothing!") and then use the space on the next page to write down the traits you thought of.

When you're feeling down – look at the list. You can also say the phrases I shared on page 10, or the traits on page 62. There are more phrases (affirmations) at the back of the book. Consider copying the page and keeping them someplace with your list, so you can see them daily.

You can create additional affirmations as well. You may have realized, it's a big responsibility – but you are the number one person in charge of making yourself happy. Write out: I am special because:

Many young people become overwhelmed from the situations (harassment, pain, rejection, imposed beliefs)



other people (including their parents, friends, bullies, peers and other adult leaders) are inflicting on them. They give up! They either kill themselves, or they take revenge and attack

the people who have hurt them.

Neither of these results or actions are good.

According to a New York Times article, “On average, there have been about five school shootings each month, including episodes that were not mass shootings.” The average the article spoke of was for the years

Affirmations in Verse:

Do you like music? Or poetry? How about you come up with lines that finish this verse that will make it true for you. Here's an example:

My Verse:

I know that I – can be set free

From every day negativity

If only I – just believe

My happiness depends - on only me

Now your turn:

Life sure has its ups and downs

Yes, I can keep pushing on through

Music is an awesome mood changer. When you need to pull yourself out of a mood choose uplifting, positive music and stay away from negativity. See page 102 for sample lines.





Forgiveness

*“Resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.”
Carrie Fisher*

It might not be today or anytime soon, but there will come a time (maybe next week, or five years from now) when you are able to look back on how you acted, what you did or didn't do, and even what was done to you, and you'll have the opportunity to forgive.

Anger, hurt, resentment, and hate are emotions that will eat away at your core and affect every area of your life and even future happiness.

“Forgiveness gives you back the laughter and the lightness in your life.” Joan Lunden

Sure, you could have 1,000 reasons to hate someone for the things that person did, but forgiveness is not for them – it's for you. When you can truly forgive a wrong done to you . . . it will be like removing a 100 pound boulder from around your neck.



"I can forgive, but I cannot forget," is only another way of saying, "I will not forgive."
Henry Ward Beecher

At some point in our life, we have to forgive ourselves for the bad or the wrong we've done to others. None of us are perfect.

If you've done something wrong, and you've tried your best to make amends for it (or you didn't know better when you did the wrong) then eventually, you'll need to forgive yourself for whatever you did. Guilt is an emotion that will definitely keep you from pushing on and reaching your dreams.

"I did a lot of things that I regretted and I certainly paid for my mistakes. You have to go and ask for forgiveness and it wasn't until I really started doing good and doing right, by other people as well as myself, that I really started to feel that guilt go away. So I don't have a problem going to sleep at night." Mark Wahlberg



Some Things You **Should Know** **(As A Teenager)**

“You don't need anybody to tell you who you are or what you are. You are what you are!” John Lennon

“You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.” Martin Luther King, Jr. This is such an insightful thought. You don't need to have everything figured out to move your life forward. **Having a vision allows you to take that first step in the right direction.**

You become what you focus on. According to philosopher Laozi, *“Watch your thoughts, they become words. Watch your words, they become actions. Watch your actions, they become habit.”*

If you have a habit of eating healthy and making healthy choices – then it would be expected that you are or become healthy.

Likewise, if you eat a diet of fried and breaded food and/or lots of processed snacks, smoke, and drink alcohol – then it would be expected

you'd have acne, be overweight, lounge around and play games or watch (a lot of) TV, and . . . be susceptible to illness and disease.

Eleanor Roosevelt said, "*Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people.*" Think of the people you think are interesting. What do they talk about? What makes them interesting? They are probably interesting to you because they make you think, or laugh, or feel. You've probably heard the phrase, "Don't say something behind



someone's back you wouldn't say to their face." That is such good wisdom, and something I think each of us should strive to adopt.

Some skills necessary to possess as you grow into your teen and young adult years are:

- honest communication
- assertive behavior
- self-compassion
- But most of all, belief in yourself. Say this daily: I am brave, fearless, bold and strong.

“Create the highest, grandest vision possible for your life, because you become what you believe.” Oprah Winfrey

Developing a positive relationship with your body is also something that’s critical as you deal with body changes during your teen years. If you don’t have a positive self-image when you’re young—it will haunt you into your 20’s and possibly even your 30’s. Yuk!



Becoming comfortable with your body and (overall) acceptance of your size, shape, strengths and weaknesses helps you to be more in charge of how much you allow other people’s opinions to affect you.

With a positive sense of self-worth, a harmful comment won’t have the same effect on your emotions as that same comment to someone who feels less than, inferior, ugly, unattractive, unworthy, and so on.

Sure, you may have things you don’t like about yourself, or things you want to change—most everyone does. But accepting yourself as you are gives you internal strength.

The people you see on TV had expert help. Cut yourself some slack. That said, it is a good trait to practice good personal hygiene (brushing your hair and teeth, showering regularly) and dressing in clean clothes. When you look your best, you feel better about yourself. It's a proven fact.



How you feel about yourself is so important during this time of your life. As I've said, your self-worth and self-

image today "set the stage" so to speak, on how you'll be tomorrow, next week, and next year.

Developing a positive sense of Self – right now, as you are, will benefit you greatly. Self-acceptance is the 1st step in having true happiness. Maybe you don't think you're perfect – almost no one does, but you can still accept the person you are today. You may not like something about your body, or your hair, or even the way you walk or talk. But can I tell you – you are wonderful just how you are.

"Be who you want to be - be free in your own skin, be liberated and feel beautiful, and do what you want to do without judgment."

Adam Lambert



After you push through the challenges of being a teenager, you'll grow into a stronger, more-prepared person ready to handle the next phase of your life (like college or the workforce). Remember this: there is

help available if you are:

- * Having trouble "dealing with" body issues
- * Thinking about hurting yourself,
- * Thinking about self-medicating,
- * Needing to get some information and straight talk about your questions or issues.

Please see the back of the book for websites that may have answers to other questions you have, discussion groups for numerous topics, or representatives answering hotline phones.



"One's dignity may be assaulted, vandalized and cruelly mocked, but cannot be taken away unless it is surrendered." Michael J. Fox

I hope you find the words and the tools I've shared helpful. Throughout my coaching career I have shared the importance of making time to dream. Making a vision board and action plan is important too. Having a visual helps keep your Self focused. For the websites and apps I shared, *I make no claims to the accuracy of the information on them, nor did I receive any benefit for sharing them.* I think they could be additional tools to help you on your journey of "pushing on."

I hope someday soon there is a cure for people who feel the need to bully other people. Maybe if enough people develop a positive sense of Self, and stop judging and criticizing other people – meanness and cruelty will become a thing of the past. But until that happens, and until there is a cure – the tips and techniques in this book, I hope, will help you keep pushing on. You are worth having. **You are important. We need you.** We need you to "Dream * Believe * Visualize * and Achieve™" and in turn – make our world a better place.

L. Morgan Scott



About the author, L. Morgan Scott

My mom was a divorcee with four children of her own, who even after the divorce, (how weird is this?) raised her two stepdaughters. She worked hard, but women were paid hardly anything back then and my dad didn't pay child support. We were on welfare for a few years, and I experienced going to the store and handing over food stamps to the clerk. I know that it sucks to be poor. Period.

Besides living in poverty, I had a lot of horrible personal experiences as a child, as a teenager, and even as an adult—things no child (or person) should ever go through. But I did what I'm asking you to do—I pushed on.

I am the mother of three wonderful and well-functioning children (two biological and one step-child). I was lucky enough to meet my (now) husband at a good time in my life, and as of 2021, we've been married 26 years.

I love to learn, and even as an adult I continue educational pursuits. I have a Bachelors degree in Business, a Master's degree in Education. I started my PhD in Psychology then decided I really didn't need to pursue a PhD, because music, writing and coaching are my passion. SO I enrolled in a music program instead (at this writing, I'm 3/4s done). I'm a certified professional coach. Just Keep Pushing On is my fifth (finished) non-fiction book. I have a few fiction books in the works. Helping others achieve positive self-worth is a passion of mine, Music, art, and writing are my greatest passions. God, my family and my friends are my source of joy and love.

Dream * Believe * Visualize * Achieve™ is my trademark, and my mantra.

I hope this book has been beneficial to you. I do hope you'll share your story and how the book helped you create a vision for your life. My best to you, Lorraine 98

Images came from Pixabay.com, istock.com, or BING creative commons. Quotes came from AZQuotes.com, brainyquote.com, or from Twitter posts. Occupations for quotees in this book are courtesy of Google.com or AZQuotes, or Wikipedia. People Quoted in the book:

Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States, and American statesman, lawyer // **Adam Lambert**, singer-songwriter // **Brittany Snow**, actress, producer, director, singer // **Caitlin Carmichael**, actress // **Carrie Fisher**, actress, writer // **Carson Leuders**, actor, singer // **Chad Michael Murray**, actor, spokesperson, writer, fashion model // **Channing Tatum**, actor // **Charlie Chaplin**, English comic actor, filmmaker, composer // **Charlie Puth**, singer, songwriter, record producer // **Christian Bale**, actor // **Connor Finerty**, dancer, actor, singer // **Daniel Pearce**, English singer, songwriter and actor // **Eleanor Roosevelt**, First Lady of the United States, political figure, diplomat, activist // **Elle Fanning**, actress // **Ellen DeGeneres**, comedian talk show host, actress, writer, producer // **Henry Ward Beecher**, Congregationalist clergyman, social reformer, speaker // **Ice Cube** (O'Shea Jackson Sr.), rapper, writer and actor // **Joan Lunden**, journalist, author and television host // **J.K. Rowling**, British novelist, philanthropist, film producer, television producer and screenwriter // **Jessica Alba**, actress and businesswoman // **Jessica Szohr**, actress // **John Lennon**, English singer, songwriter and peace activist // **Johnny Orlando**, singer // **Kamie Garcia**, writer // **Kevin Hart**, comedian, actor and television host // **Kirsten Stewart**, actress, model and director // **Lady Gaga** (Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta), singer, songwriter and actress // **Laozi**, philosopher // **Lauryn Hill**, singer, rapper and songwriter // continued

Continuation of people whose quotes are in this book:

Mark Twain, writer, humorist, entrepreneur, publisher and lecturer // **Mark Wahlberg**, actor, producer, businessman, former model, rapper, songwriter // **Martin Luther King, Jr.**, Baptist minister, Civil Rights Activist // **Michael J. Fox**, actor, author, film producer, activist, comedian // **Michelle Obama**, First Lady of the United States, lawyer, university administrator, writer // **Nolan Gould**, actor // **Olivia Rodrigo**, actress // **Oprah Winfrey**, media executive, actress, talk show host, television produce, philan-thropist // **Orlando Bloom**, Actor // **Rico Rodriguez**, actor // **Selena Gomez**, singer, actress, producer // **Shawn Mendes**, Canadian singer/songwriter // **Shay Mitchell**, Canadian actress, model, entrepreneur, author // **Steve Harvey**, actor, author, and comedian // **T. F. Hodge**, author // **Taylor Swift**, singer-songwriter.

Resources:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/puberty.html>

https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/?WT.ac=k2t_tab

<http://www.thelearningcommunity.us/tweens-and-teens.aspx>

<http://www.bemedwise.org/abuse-prevention/not-worth-the-risk>

<https://www.nutrition.gov/subject/life-stages/teens/tweens-and-teens>

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/puberty-resources-for-girls-3288406>

References:

https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/elle_fanning_517031

<https://www.joytunes.com/blog/music-fun/15-famous-musicians-totally-self-taught/>

References continued:

<https://www.mensxp.com/work-life/leadership/8984-top-10-ragstoriches-success-stories-of-all-time.html>

<https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/celebs-who-went-from-failures-to-success-stories/6/>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/growing-friendships/201312/popular-kids>

<https://www.buzzfeed.com/rachelhorner/20-celebrities-that-werent-cool-in-school>

<https://www.cnn.com/2017/08/14/health/child-suicides/index.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/02/15/us/school-shootings-sandy-hook-parkland.html>

Comments, questions, or suggestions can be sent via email to publisher@peptalkpublishing.com.

Solutions to the puzzles included in this book follow.

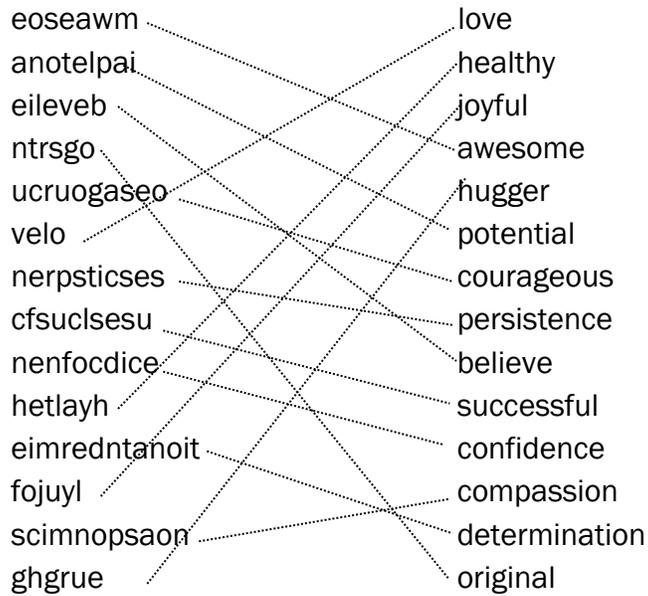
Puzzles were inspired by Boys Town flyer, but created by L. Morgan Scott.

Solutions to Page 9 Cryptograms:

1. OP POF DBO CF B CFUUF S ZPV – UIBO ZPV. =
No one can be a better you – than you. Replace each letter with the one that comes right before it in the alphabet.

2. GNDOI TAWH SI THRIG SI TON SYALWA YSEA. =
Doing what is right is not always easy. The last letter of the word moves to the front of the word, and the second to last letter is the second letter in the word.

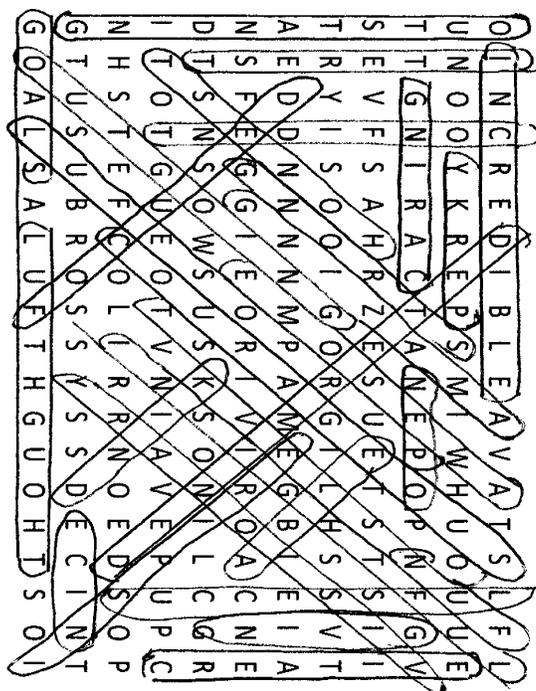
Word Scramble Solution: (PDF Page 14)



Break Time Bamboozables (PPDF age 28):

1. Don't you undermine yourself.
2. Ready for success.
3. Second chance.
4. No problem.
5. Upside down.
6. To love oneself.

Word Search Solution (PDF Page 34):



Solution to the Sequence (PDF Page 44):

The answer is **40** (the next multiple of 3 added to the number. $5+(3 \times 1)$, $8+(3 \times 2)$, $14+(3 \times 3)$, $23+(3 \times 4)$ etc.

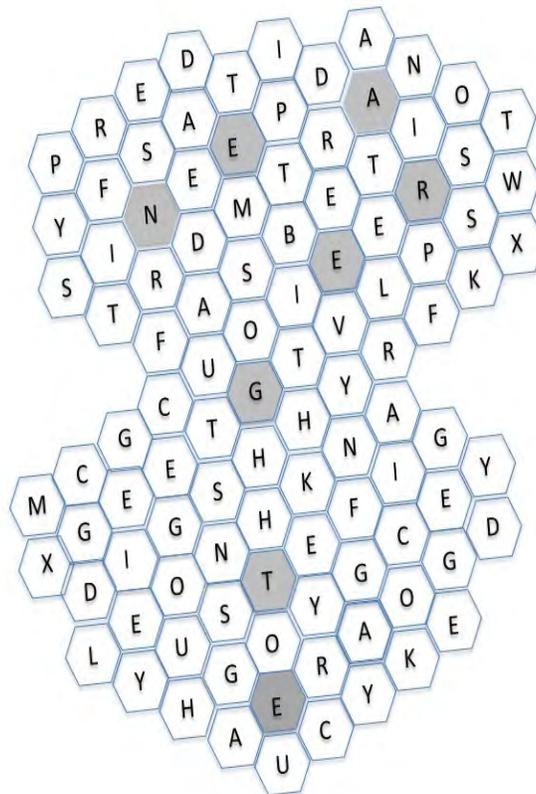
Solutions to Riddles (PPDF age 44):

1. Only one, the last one.
2. 29. ($14+15=29$)

Solution to HONEYCOMB (PDF Page 51):

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. T: Honesty | 2. E: Believe |
| 3. N: Friends | 4. G: Thought |
| 5. R: Persist | 6. T: Attempt |
| 7. A: Radiant | 8. E: Courage |

Sweet Word: Teenager



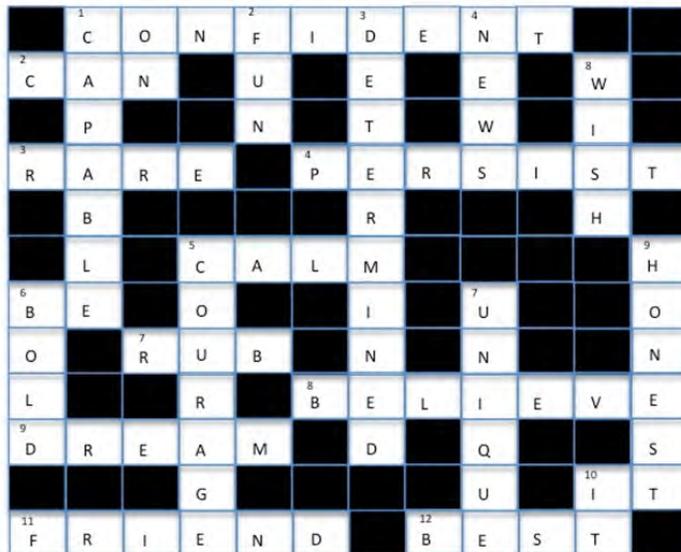
Solution to the Pictogram (PDF Page 49):

I believe I can do anything I put my mind to.

Solutions to Mind Benders (PDF Page 59):

1. "L"
2. You cannot take a picture with sunglasses, you need a camera.
3. Your shadow.
4. They both weigh the same: two tons.
5. Vegetables.
6. "L"

Crossword Puzzle Solution (Page 69):



Possible lyrics for the verse on PDF page 86:

line 2: positive thoughts help leaps and bounds

line 4: with love of self and good friends too

Affirmations you can say every day:

I forgive myself for making a mistake.
I believe in myself.
I am kind to people and animals.
I am okay with who I am.
Wonderful and awesome things happen
to me.
I believe in my dreams.
I have the courage to be myself.
I enjoy challenging myself.
I am optimistic.
I am beautiful inside and out.
I am full of potential.
I respect other people.
I learn from my mistakes.
I get better and better every day.
I discover the beauty in everything.
I have positive thoughts.
I am in charge of my life.
I am confident.
All is well.

"I think it was at 16 when I forced myself [to sing in front of people] because my dad had nagged me for an entire year. Like, 'Come on, sing for people. You have a nice voice,' and I just wouldn't do it. One even-ing, I just decided, 'Screw it, I'll do it.' I re-mem-ber it was really bad. But I did it. So that was good." Charlie Puth

Every day is the start of a new day, and a new opportunity to:

- * Become the person you want to become.
- * Achieve the goals you set out to achieve.
- * Push through any challenges set in your path. So,

JUST KEEP PUSHING ON

As you journey through this book of encouragement

- *read the quotes (more than 30 notable people),
- *complete the puzzles and riddles, and
- *answer the thought-provoking questions.

You'll be enhancing your self-worth, developing a vision and creating an action plan you can use right away and well into the future.

Praise for "Just Keep Pushing On" includes:

"I really like the message and intent of the book. The writing style and attempt to truly connect with our young audience will be so helpful to many students and families in desperate need of encouragement and guidance." - Rick Winters, Superintendent of Mary Walker School District, (Springdale, Washington)



JUST KEEP PUSHING ON

by L. Morgan Scott