Self Education
The Lost Art

By Captain Bob Webb

Through the Power of Self-education you can be anything you want to be or do anything you want to do.
Self-education Power does not require money, fixed time or fixed life style.
Options are extremely flexible.
Rewards are unlimited.
You Can Control Your Destiny.

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Self-Education, The Lost Art

Mission
To inspire a dream and fulfill it.
Without a dream, nothing will happen.

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The information at this booklet is based on my experience and research that agrees with my experience. There is a lot of garbage and wishful thinking floating around out there. Using my experience as a guide, I can sort out and focus on concepts that I found to work.
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"Give a person an idea, and you enrich their life. Teach a person how to learn, and they can enrich their own lives" - Author Unknown

When a person discovers their natural talent they are like a fast moving freight train, there is no stopping them. They will find a way to develop their talent, with or without support from society.
Self Education - Learning Without Instructors

It is possible for man to educate himself without help or support from others. In fact, when we learn the art of self-education (learning how to learn versus how to be taught) we will find, if not create, opportunity to find success beyond our wildest dreams. Self-educated people are not dependent on others for knowledge. If they need a specialized skill, they know how to acquire it without dependence on authority. Unknowingly, people are promoted by their ability to learn new skills fast. Bosses may not recognize how people learn, but they do recognize the results. People, who know how to educate themselves have choices, they have the ability to advance in any endeavor.

There are many ways to acquire a skill that has value to someone else. Everyone is unique and this uniqueness has value, but only the individual can explore and discover what that uniqueness is. People, who do not depend on authority for guidance can start now. People, who want someone to show them the way may never get started. Dependency on self to develop skills is a powerful skill in itself. This is the tool of super achievers.

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

Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Edison, Wright Brothers, and Chuck Yeager have a common connection. Their ideas changed the way we live, they were self-educated, and classroom education was a disaster. Abraham Lincoln never went to school; he taught himself how to read and was a passionate reader. Thomas Edison was in and out of school; his mother let him have a workshop in their garage. The Wright Brothers never finished high school and Chuck Yeager’s formal education was limited to high school. He was the first person to fly faster than the speed of sound and was the pioneer for the space program. Because he did not have a college education he could not become an astronaut. This is when self-education was considered an invalid form of education.

Why was self-education so successful for these people? The first element is natural talent. All of us have talents that are different from others. The second element is learning opportunity that is in harmony with natural talent. Merging natural talent with learning opportunity is highly motivating; it develops into a love-to-learn. The love-to-learn is a lifelong event. The power behind self-education is self-motivated projects and opportunity to develop them.

Today our youth live in homes where the only opportunity offered is on academic subjects. As a result most young people do not know what their natural talent is and cannot develop interest in a productive skill. The only way to discover natural talent is through opportunity. Project based education is a powerful tool that helps people discover themselves. Projects are fun and it hides the education element.
What are the Elements for Self-education?

Discover and opportunity
Self-education has two primary elements; natural talent and opportunity to discover it. In the entertainment industry and sports world, performers that are at the top is the result of their natural talent. Formal education may or may not be a factor. As a rule these performers showed unusual talent at an early age. Talent discovery is the result of opportunity and someone realizing the potential. With this knowledge a young person can be guided into a successful career. Most people do not have this opportunity and have to discover and develop it without outside support.

Motivated and love to learn
People who have discovery their natural talent are motivated and want to learn with or without the support of formal education. They have an attitude that radiates energy and people like to be around them. As a result they are offered opportunity. This is in harmony with the forces of nature. They are considered highly intelligent or talented.

Projects and project based education
How does a person discover their natural talent? Through projects, better yet, self-motivated projects. People want to be associated with projects that relate to their interest. Projects are a form of education where the education part is hidden. Interest to selected projects is a clue to natural talent. A stronger clue is through self-motivated projects that inspire us, because we focus on personal interest and personal interest is related to natural talent.

Projects are in two categorizers, short and long term interest. We have secondary talent and primary talent. With secondary talent our interest has a short life span compared to primary which usually last for years if not a lifetime. Secondary interests are building blocks to expanding knowledge.

Self-motivated projects develop a love to learn which means, we are in a lifelong learning process, which means we are continually expanding our skills. With expanded skills comes more opportunity. Formal education is only an introduction to life.

Project based education is the most efficient way to discover natural talent. Home schooled students are most successful at this because parents focus on what works which is customizing education. All of us have different interest and different ways of learning. If society wants everyone to have a high quality education, they must find ways to customize education for everyone.

Failure, bouncing back and persistent
There is a problem with projects; they may not work as planned. Failure and success is a byproduct, this is a learning tool. If we do not have the required skills for what we want to achieve or have a unique idea, there will be failure. Learning from failures is bouncing back and trying again. In time we will get it right. Persistent is the secret.

Risk and believing in your dream
Seeking opportunity requires risk, but nothing will happen if we don’t try.

Self-Education, The Lost Art
**Formal education**

Most young people going to college have no idea what their interest is or what motivates them. The promoted goal is to get a college education so as to land a higher paying job. A career that is out of harmony with natural talent and does not motivate will not go very far, because they will be competing with people who have careers that are in harmony with their natural talent and are motivated.

Public education is designed for people with academic natural talent. Honor students talent is in harmony with their learning opportunity. Academic talented people have support through their teen years and into the professional world. People with mechanical, artistic, or other natural talent do not have this support in public education. Very often they are labeled at-risk and self-fulfilling prophecy proves everyone right. For these people self-education and self-motivated projects is the passport to a productive lifestyle.
What is Education?

A burning desire to learn is the key to a fulfilling lifestyle. It’s something public educations rarely inspire.

What is education? Is it knowledge in basic skills, academics, technical disciplines, citizenship…or is something else? Our formal education system says only the academic basics are important, emphasizing the collection of knowledge without understanding its value. What about the processing of knowledge—using inspiration, visionary ambitions, creativity, risk, motivation and the ability to bounce back from failure? These skills are associated with understanding the value of knowledge, but many education institutions don’t consider these skills. There is a huge, disconnected gap, which is a problem for high school students in particular.

Thomas Edison and many other super achievers never finished school. They succeeded because they knew how to research information for a selected project and process that knowledge. The classroom environment does not work that way. It focuses on the collection of knowledge with no clear purpose other than high grades. If pleasing the teacher does not motivate, then there is nothing to process, outside of memorizing answers for a test. The typical student is academically challenged while being starved for motivation. Lack of motivation is lack of knowledge-processing skills. The typical college graduate will emerge with a professional skill that can provide for life’s basic needs, but that’s all.

What is education? All the elements in my opening paragraph relate to education, and all should be considered. This would be ideal, but “all” is not possible where performance must be measured. Only what can be measured will be selected, and the measuring tool is the written test. Anyone who does not have the ability to put clear thoughts on paper is labeled a failure. Natural skills, including knowledge processing, do not count. What is exercised grows stronger, and what is ignored stays dormant. The classroom exercises the collection of academics, leaving all other natural skills in the closet.

Tests do not measure intelligence or ability; they do not measure how the mind processes information, how motivating experiences develop persistence, or how the mind sorts out instincts, opinions, evaluations, possibilities and alternatives. Knowledge by itself has no value; it is like a dictionary filled with words. Words alone have no value; they are given meaning by the process of stringing them together. Unfortunately, our education system is becoming a system that memorizes the dictionary. When students have memorized selected knowledge, then they are given a one-day test, based on dictionary knowledge, which will influence their employment opportunities for the rest of their lives. Natural skills are not considered. Is this how America became the world’s economic leader? No! Knowledge only has value when used with a process, and process in an artificial environment is not predictable or measurable.

Achievers in life use inspiration and motivation to overcome barriers. Teaching to the test does not inspire or motivate anyone. Memorizing does not inspire a love of learning; in fact, it does just the opposite. Education’s goal should be to develop a love of learning that stays with students throughout their lives. Education should be a lifetime experience, not limited to youth.
Educators are switching to tests because there is a crisis in education of their own making, and society wants measurable results. This pressure is passed on to political leaders, who base political decisions on measurable academic testing. These tests are based on acceptance of the educational status quo. Every student must now become an academic intellectual, or be labeled a failure. Natural talent and knowledge-processing skills do not count. More and more students are receiving the “failure” label, all because the system measures selected knowledge on a one-day standardized paper test.

Consider a parent who is having a problem with a word processor. On his own, he can’t solve the problem. He’s been collecting knowledge for years, but his knowledge processor is in hibernation. With any new gadget, someone has to teach him; he can’t figure it out for himself. His 13-year-old son comes to the rescue. The boy has limited knowledge, but he knows how to processes available information. He explores the word processor problem until he finds a solution. He is not unusually smart—this is just a teenager’s natural approach to finding solutions.

All young children have a natural talent for creatively processing information. It’s during the teen years that natural creative processing is replaced with the status quo: memorizing knowledge, without regard to how to process it. In the classroom, memorizing is what counts. Standardized testing reinforces the status quo. It kills creative processing ability. Status quo attitudes will follow children into adult life, where they will have to ask their children for help.

Today, the educational system has a new tool on the market: behavior-control drugs. Any student who refuses to accept the status quo is labeled a troublemaker and will be drugged. The glassy-eyed student will then behave in the classroom, and school officials will receive high performance ratings. The student may get passing grades and land a job with a comfortable wage, but that will be the extent of it. His teenage dreams and great ambitions will be gone.

Fact: Self-made millionaires are not “A” students in the classroom. The way they process knowledge conflicts with classroom priorities. The self-made millionaire has a vision. Then he researches specific knowledge, applies intuitive knowledge and processes all the elements, searching for a workable solution. Millionaires are made by finding alternative ways to do common tasks. The secret is vision, research and processing, not pre-stored knowledge alone.

The typical employer wants employees with dictionary knowledge, not visionaries. Businesses want employees who follow orders, are willing to do repetitive tasks, are happy with a limited role, and accept the status quo. Repetitive tasks means efficiency, which is where profits are made. Also, accepting the status quo prevents the exposure of blunders by leaders. Too many blunders and profits disappear. In a status-quo environment, visionaries become bored quickly and soon receive the “troublemaker” label when they offer alternatives or expose blunders. This sometimes leads to dismissal, even though their ideas can increase efficiency and create new sources of profits for the company. In the long haul, visionaries are the ones who make above-average wages, no matter their formal education level. But with behavior-controlling drugs, the education system now has the tools to eliminate this type of person.

As I write this, e-learning is becoming an education model that the present system cannot compete with. It focuses on what motivates, rather than what the system thinks is good for students. It is also sidestepping politicians, textbook industries, testing companies and unions. These forces are now fighting back, trying to maintain a system that is in their own interest,
instead of the students’. At this time, they are focusing on standardized testing, which seems to be a last-ditch effort to maintain the status quo.

What can be considered a quality education? A quality education is custom designed, addressing the unique abilities of each student, and provides a positive emotional experience. Customized education evaluates natural talent and how a student learns. This is why homeschooled students outperform classroom students. Parents learn what works and what doesn’t, and then focus on what works. With this method, students develop a love of learning, and learning becomes a lifelong process.

Which type of education environment do you think will produce consistent winners?
# Measurable Skills and Learning Environments

High school funding and teachers salaries are now based on measurable output in the classroom. This means the system has abandoned the development of skills that cannot be measured. Yet, real-world success attitudes are achieved by developing these skills.

By looking at the chart below, you can quickly understand why academics is just one skill needed for a successful and productive lifestyle. Also, the classroom is only one of many learning environments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurable Skills</th>
<th>Skills that Cannot be Measured</th>
<th>Learning Environments Inspire Learning Ability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>A love to learn</td>
<td>Classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Apprentice programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire knowledge</td>
<td>Natural talent</td>
<td>Team learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorize ability</td>
<td>Competitiveness</td>
<td>Learning with responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>Ability to process knowledge</td>
<td>Learning by teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow orders</td>
<td>Knowing how to learn</td>
<td>Competitive education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job skills</td>
<td>Self-esteem, pride</td>
<td>Non-competitive education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productivity</td>
<td>Motivation, desires</td>
<td>Conflict and debate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persistence</td>
<td>Bragging, socializing, peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vision, goals</td>
<td>Research and analyzing</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>Self-education</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>Risk environments</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Trial and error, learn by doing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Interactive environments</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research and analytical skills</td>
<td>Instinctive environments</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Instinctive ability</td>
<td>Nature as an instructor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Perceptive insight</td>
<td>Leadership styles</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Integrity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bounce back from failure</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willingness to take risk</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creativity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fear control, courage</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reasoning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decision-making</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time management</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applying technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acquire &amp; evaluate information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to get jobs done</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Today’s education system considers academics to be the primary skill needed for job qualification. The system does not consider what can’t be measured. Yet, what can’t be measured is the secret to being selected.

Example: When hiring, employers select applicants with positive self-esteem. A person with negative self-esteem is of no value to anyone, even with education achievement papers.

A person’s ability to acquire knowledge is influenced by the learning environment they are in.

People, who can educate themselves without instructors, will do poorly in classrooms. People who do well in classrooms will do poorly in a self-educated environment.

People, who are given responsibility, will learn faster than those who only follow orders.
Self-educated have a Love to Learn

People with self education skills are motive because of their love to learn. The learning environment is customized, based on their natural talent.

Characteristics of Self Educated People

- They have a love to learn that continues for a lifetime. Continuous learning increases the value of their services as they age.
- They are dependent on self for knowledge, not others. Through self-education, they find ways to acquire additional skills, which increases career choices and competitiveness. They have learned how to learn versus how to be taught.
- They discovered their natural talent and work hard at developing it with self-motivated projects. They develop the habit of finishing what they start.
- They seek change, because it offers new opportunity.
- They have a vision of the person and lifestyle they want.

Characteristics of Job Seekers

- They depend on the formal education system for needed skills. They seek help for additional knowledge. Dependency on others for knowledge promotes procrastination, because learning opportunity is not always available.
- The desire to learn is turned off by the age of 25, because it is easy to accept the status quo and just dream about another lifestyle.
- They may start self-motivated project, but will not finish them. Quitting is a habit.
- They reject change, because it is a threat to their current skill. As a result, they will not discover their natural talent or their capabilities. Their career choices are limited.
- Advancement is by seniority, not by skill.
- They dream of a different lifestyle, but they are locked into the status quo, because they reject change.

   Educators want to believe that personal success is the result of classroom achievement. Super achievers are not dependent on formal education for skills or knowledge alone. President Abraham Lincoln never went to school, he found other ways to educate himself to be the person he became. Today, many professions like lawyers and doctors must have a degree and pass a state exam. These super achievers keep up with fast changing trends through self-education. New information is needed NOW, not when it is available in a classroom. For successful people, education is a life long process.

   Many blue-collar skills do not require a high school diploma, such as auto mechanics. Through self-education, they become achievers. If they maintain a love to learn, in time, they will earn very high wages.
Developing the Skills of Super Achievers

Achievers have dreams, a vision of the person they want to be. They learn with projects that are in harmony with their natural talent. Self-education is a powerful motivating force. The sequence is as follows:

1. The first step is to discover your learning personality, which is a combination of natural talent and how you learn. (visual, hands-on or lectures)
2. Next, develop a dream that motivates or create a vision of the person you want to be. This must be in harmony with your natural talent.
3. Develop a list of mini projects that will help achieve the grand goal. Develop the habit of finishing what you start. Starting and not finishing small projects leads to nowhere. One must learn to complete mini projects so-as-to have what it takes to complete large projects.
4. Research, using methods that work for you. If the classroom is a turnoff, then use other methods, self-education and team education for example.
5. When resources are available, experiment, trying and failing are learning tools. No one has ever become an achiever without first experiencing failure.
6. Develop the ability to bounce back from failure. Thomas Edison had a thousand failures while inventing the light bulb. What if he quit at 900? That’s not likely, because one is motivated to keep pushing when on the right track, even if it is failure number 900. Direction is changed when it is obvious they are headed in the wrong direction.
7. Ability to be persistent. The winners are the ones who hang in there when everything goes wrong.

Project Based Education

Not everyone can learn through lectures. Those that can’t receive the failure label. These same students would become achievers with project-based education. Hands-on projects are inspiring and motivating. Academics would be a by-product.

The argument is that students must learn academics and communication skills first. It is obvious that dropouts, who found success, did not go that route. They first focused on what motivated them and then picked up other skills as needed. Because their learning personality was out of harmony with the system, they depended on themselves to acquire the knowledge they needed.

Project based education is customized to the students’ learning personality that has powerful benefits. They learn the art of processing knowledge and understand need for skills through experience. Project based learning is man’s natural learning method and it is in harmony with the forces of nature.

People who love to learn are not depended on others for knowledge—they develop a learning style that is in harmony with their learning personality. They develop learning tools that works for them. Learning by doing leads to above average opportunity and wages.
Learning Personality

Key to a Productive Lifestyle

Each of us has a social personality that is different from everyone else, we also have a learning personality that is different from everyone else. Our learning personality is the combination of natural talent, personal interest, current opportunity, social environment, character, motivation and how the brain processes information.

People, whose learning personality is in harmony with their social environment, are considered highly intelligent. People, whose learning personality is out of harmony with their social environment, are considered to have low intelligence. Everyone wants to be considered intelligent. They will seek social environments that will give them that feeling.

Public education is a social environment that is built on academics by intellectuals. Intellectual students are socially accepted and rewarded. Non-intellectuals are socially rejected. Having little opportunity to discover or develop their natural talent, they receive the label of “low intelligence.” Self-fulfilling prophecy proves everyone right. Students who don’t fit in, want out, their learning personality is not compatible to the intellectual world.

The formal education helps intellectuals discover and develop their natural talent. The system does not do the same for non intellectuals. These students are labeled failures because they cannot perform like intellectuals. On the other hand, put failing students in a social environment that is in harmony with their natural talent, suddenly, they become highly intelligent and excel.
• Intelligence is a perception of natural talent associated with current social environment.
• The formal education is an intellectual, academic social organization.
• People in social environments that are in harmony with their natural talent, excel.
• Social environments and talents can be divided into hundreds of categories.

Learning Personality Elements

Natural Talent - Our learning personality is built around a strong natural talent, intellectual, artistic, technical, or dexterous. Everyone has at least one strong talent, with other talents varying in intensity. Some fortunate people may have more than one. A person with strong intellectual talent usually has weak technical talent. A person with a strong technical talent usually has a weak intellectual talent. Our strong natural talent is the base from which we can build and become a super achiever. The problem is, recognizing what that talent is. Most non-intellectuals don’t discover their natural talent until they stumble upon opportunity by accident and many never find it. Society offers help for intellectuals only.

Personal Interest - Teenagers are searching for what turns them on. For some, this is next to impossible because relatives, friends and society are pressuring them to accept what they think their interest should be. A teenager, not knowing what motivates him and under pressure to accept others’ opinions, rebels. In this conflict, it is next to impossible to learn what one’s natural talent and interest are.

Parents in particular, have an image of the ideal for their child and many teens have interest that are contrary. A mild manner teen will bow to parents wishes and pursue a career that is out of harmony with their learning personality. The results, productivity will be well below capabilities. A strong willed teen will take control, reject parents advice, strike out on their own and do what they feel is right. If they discover their learning personality, they will build a career that goes beyond their wildest dreams. Parents who recognize their teens natural learning personality and work with them to develop it, usually become very successful at an early age.

Current Opportunity - Opportunity is the only way anyone can discover their natural talent and personal interest. Project based education increases opportunity for self-discovery.

Opportunity is a powerful motivating tool. Motivated people will find ways to acquire knowledge without dependency on instructors. For example, Thomas Edison, the Wright Brothers’, and Henry Ford were people who invented products that changed the way we live. They were also in conflict with the education system, but had the support of their parents. Their parents created the opportunity for them to learn on their own. As a result, these inventors developed a burning desire to learn and it was not on academic subjects.

Society creates opportunity for the intellectual learning personality. They are coached all the way through school to their first job. Their talent, interest, and ability are in harmony with the system. There is little or no coaching for artistic, technical and dexterous talents. Their talent is out of harmony with the system.

Social Environment - People with an intellectual learning personality are viewed as high on the social ladder. People with an dexterity learning personality are low on the social ladder, therefore, their needs are ignored. High school students are taught, “blue-collar skills are
something to avoid at all cost, they are beneath acceptable standards.” The teaching of social prejudice prevents students from discovering themselves.

Everyone could find a productive life style if they could find a learning process with opportunity that matches their learning personality. This is extremely difficult for non-intellectuals because our society says, “everyone must first learn academics before they are allowed to seek other skills.” With this policy, non-intellectuals cannot keep up with natural talented intellectuals. They are labeled failures by the education system, thereby killing their desire to learn. For many, self-fulfilling prophecy kills the last bit of ambition. It is extremely difficult to motivate people whose learning personality is out of harmony with society’s preconceived standard. On the other hand, the few who are self-motivated will ignore opinions and find ways to acquire skills to achieve their ambition.

**How the Brain Processes Information** - Debates are demonstrations on how different people process information. All participants are debating the same topic, but have different viewpoints and conclusions. This is because each person’s brain processes information differently. In the classroom, instructors are trying to plant prepackaged information and concepts into their students’ head. Then that are give a test to be sure they all are thinking alike. This is not natural and only creates a source of rebellion. In contrast, project based education builds on conflicting points of view which is a natural process.

**The Intellectual Learning Personality**

All through history, intellectuals have power because they control money, politics and the education system. They influence our thinking and goals through the media, they report the news, write the laws, and control our schools that create the next generation of people to think like them. Therefore, it is a popular goal to be an intellectual and be part of the influential power structure.

Intellectuals learn through linguistics. They have the ability to express their thoughts clearly on paper. This ability is the source of power, because a piece of paper can be reproduced efficiently. Efficient communication makes it possible for one man’s ideas to influence an extremely large group of people. This influence produces leaders and everyone wants to be a leader.

Intellectuals are naturally motivated with academic subjects. School is a pleasure, because students have opportunity to learn about subjects that are extremely interesting to them. They are motivated. In addition, pleasing their peers with high grades is also motivating.

**The Artistic Learning Personality**

Artists are visual and/or song-and-dance learners. They have the ability to view the world from a abstract perspective, via art or music. In our society, their interpretation of the world is considered entertainment. In reality, it is a source of information and a form of influence. Because artist have high visibility, their ability to influence society is right after intellectuals. For this reason, they are high on the social ladder.

Artists are experiential and intuitive learners. They search the inter-self for ways to express their ideas. They may or may not have interest in academics. Because they don’t fully embrace academics, they are labeled failures by the intellectual world, unless they are making money.

Self-Education, The Lost Art
Over thousands of years, the Polynesians developed education techniques through song, dance, and intuitive knowledge. They never developed a written language. In this society, people who had artistic learning personality became the leaders, because they could communicate their ideas to a large group of people. Intellectuals were at the bottom of the social ladder. With no linguistic tools, they could not communicate their ideas. People with intuitive skills, usually navigators, were high on the social ladder. They guided the dugout canoes that populated the Pacific Ocean from Hawaii to New Zealand without charts or navigation tools. Intuitive skill is a lost art in our society of materialism.

Today’s rap music is an excellent example of education through song and dance. The instructors are the artist who records the lyrics. The problem is, rap music education is under the control of artist who promotes low self-esteem. Our education system does not recognize the arts as a serious education tool. Like school craft shops, the arts are considered an extra curricular activity. To be accepted, the student must have a “C” average or better in academic subjects. This eliminates students who can benefit the most.

Elvis Presley was a failure in school (the intellectual world.) Accepting the belief that he had limited skills, he became a truck driver (the dexterous world.) He discovered his learning personality was music and entered the entertainment world. You know the rest. The same with Frank Sinatra. He was a failure in the intellectual world, but found success in the entertainment world. Note, that classroom environments did not help these entertainers find their career. The system did just the opposite. The system labeled them a failure and they were urged to make room for a cooperative student, someone who had a better chance at success.

The Technical Learning Personality

Technical people relate to mechanical talent and skills. They often ask questions, why, what does it do, and how it can be made to work better? They take risk and learn by trial and error. The past is history, the future holds opportunity. With this attitude, they invented the tools that change the way we live. Chuck Yeager was the first man to fly faster than the speed of sound. His technical skills pioneered the space age. Because he did not have a college education, his application for astronaut was rejected.

Chuck Yeager was self-educated. He found opportunity because he could learn without dependency on instructors and he succeeded as a test pilot for the same reason. If you think about it, pioneers don’t have instructors. If instructors were available, leaders of technology would not be pioneers. Anyhow, the rejection of Chuck Yeager’s application for astronaut also ended the age when self-educated people received recognition. Now companies and technical colleges require applicants to pass academic tests before they are allowed to develop technical skills. The problem with this is, people who are accepted are intellectuals, not technical or dexterous. People with a strong technical ability have limited academic ability. The company who hires “A” students out of technical schools ends up with intellectual employees that have limited technical ability. These students become machine operators, not skilled craftsmen. The person who would make the best skilled craftsman is collecting unemployment checks. He could not pass the academic test.

Our society says everyone must first be an intellectual, and then they can develop other skills. What if society says, “Everyone must first be a technician first, then they can be an
intellectual if they want.” With technical skills, intellectuals can repair their own computer. As it is now, technicians are called when there is a computer problem.

Many teens do not have the opportunity to experiment with ideas, especially those living in apartments. In an environment where teens do not have opportunity to experiment, they will never discover their true capabilities. Home ownership by parents offers a window of opportunity and a chance to experiment, a chance to develop interest and discover capabilities. If the technical learning personality had opportunity to try ideas, they will discover their true talent. They may find they are extremely brilliant.

**The Dexterity Learning Personality**

Dexterity people express themselves with objects, which requires them to know “why,” otherwise, the information is rejected. If they have opportunity first they will understand “why” the need for other skills and find a way to acquire them. It may not be in the classroom, but they will find alternative education methods that works’ for them. Apprentice programs’ is an excellent example of opportunity first followed by training.

Dexterity talented people find success in the blue-collar world such as manufacturing and construction. Because dexterity skills influence a small group of people, usually one on one, they are at the bottom of the social ladder. This low status has created a shortage of skilled blue-collar workers that pay well above average wages.

Society does not support the dexterous personality. They are out of harmony with the education system. This is obvious in high schools that consider craft shops an extra curricular activity, that require “C” average or better on academic subjects to attend. Craft shops could be a golden opportunity. The problem is, high schools focus on preparing students for college, not blue-collar jobs. What public school wants to be associated with blue-collar programs anyhow? Also, current laws force high schools to focus their curriculum on college preparation, not on manual skills. As a result, current programs cannot accommodate the dexterous learning personality. In fact, society teaches that blue-collar work is low-level ambition, something to escape from.

**Other**

We all want to feel important, be considered intelligent and be needed. To do this, we mold our interest and seek out people with similar interest. In this social group, we strive to stand out, and be accepted. We reject social environments that we know we can’t compete in.

Many teens are exposed to criminal activity before they had a chance to discover their natural talents. Society is pressuring them to be an intellectual, which is out of harmony with their natural talents. In the classroom, they are told they are failures five times a day five days a week. This produces low self-esteem. In street gangs, active criminal behavior is considered highly intelligent. In a self-destructive environment, they develop high self-esteem.
Thomas Edison’s short stay in the classroom was a disaster. His mother pulled him out and gave him a workshop so he could develop his natural skills at his own pace. You know the rest of the story. What if he lived in today’s type of government subsidize housing unit? Being a frustrated young man, he would turn to crime and spend his life in prison, all because he could not find his true talent, and/or, an outlet to develop it if found.

- How many Thomas Edison’s are in jail because they were in conflict with classroom environments and lack opportunity to develop their natural talent?
- Many people are in prison today because society says all teenagers must be intellectuals before they can develop their natural talent.

**Conclusion**

We are born with a natural burning desire to learn and take risk. This is how we grow from childhood to adults. During the early years, parents have to control their child’s risk taking while keeping the learning desire active. Somewhere along the way, the desire to learn and risk taking are lost. Some lose the learning desire during the early teens and others later in life. Everyone would have a love to learn and be highly productive if their learning personality was recognized and appropriate opportunity was offered.
Natural Learning Environments

During the last hundred years, our society has moved away from natural learning environments to heavy dependence on classrooms. To further narrow learning opportunity, society is accepting the belief that the standardized test measures achievement potential. The production line mindset that Henry Ford started during the early 1900s, “repetitive action with limited skills and no responsibility,” is now the mindset of our education system.

Natural learning is assuming responsibility, asking questions, seeking answers, analyzing information, which leads to more questions. The answer is never complete because there are always broader possibilities and/or better ways. Learning by asking questions is a treadmill that has no end. This method trains the mind to keep searching, even when a reasonable answer is found. This is the key to educating oneself without dependency on others.

Benjamin Franklin went to school for two years between the ages of 8 and 10, then was out. His continuing education was a life long process of creating challenging projects with familiar objects, asking, “There must be an alternative use?” Then he would seek answers and analyze them. Examples: Lighting has power that can be beneficial to man if harness or moving fire from the fireplace to a stove in the center of the room for greater efficiency. He found answers to these familiar forces of nature by asking questions, then trial and error, then more questions.

For every successful result, there are many incomplete answers or total failures.

Natural learning is based on curiosity and projects where participants share knowledge to reach a goal. Knowledge that is useful for a project is customized to the project needs and personality of the participants. Knowledge is gained by tapping information sources through research, trial and error, networking, and intuitive forces. The ability to tap these resources and make sound judgments is the key to achieving the desired goal. As one goal is achieved, another is established. Each goal requires new knowledge and skills, and this is achieved through the ability to acquire knowledge from many sources.

Unschooled Education

The unschooled concept is where the teenager learns what they want, when they want, and at their own pace. Society says teenagers can’t learn that way, they must be under the control of adults. This belief is based on man’s desire for control. Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Edison, Wright Brothers’ and Henry Ford, to name a few, were educated by the unschooled method. They used the tools of people who love to learn. (There are books on this subject.)

Mr. Henry Ford learned how to build affordable automobiles and became wealthy. He did not have an education as defined by some education leaders. Intellectuals took him to court to prove he was an ignorant man. In court, Mr. Ford was asked questions that high school students are supposed to know and he could not answer them. Mr. Ford’s reply was; “Why do I need to
clutter my mind with information I don’t need? If I need information I know where to find it.”
His critics could not answer that question. Mr. Ford had an education that his accusers did not
have, a vision and the ability to educate himself. He did not have an academic education that
society says is needed for success.

One Room Schoolhouse
Where all grades are in one room, the teacher teaches to the oldest student, customizing a learning
method that works. The older student then teaches the younger student. When students teach students,
peer pressure motivates them to learn. A student teaching, what he has just been taught, increases
interest and understanding. If there is a conflict, the teacher who acts as a coach, instruct students how to
teach and learn at the same time. Students teaching students produce super benefits with super
motivation. By combining teaching with learning, comprehension of all students increases.
Understanding increases the love-to-learn. This is team education, the most powerful education system
in the world.

Team Education

How can a group of teenagers establish the world’s fastest growing company? Their
education is limited, they have no experience, there are too many unknowns and they are not
focused. It is assumed only adults with a proper education and years of experience have the
ability to sort out advanced technology. But then, this is how teenager Bill Gates and his
teenage friends started the Microsoft Corporation.

Team education is a group of people searching for ways to achieve a common goal. They
do this by exchanging information, telling of their experience, consider the pros and cons of an
idea. Everyone learns at their own pace while contributing expertise, based on their experience.
Each person’s natural talents are different, technical, intellectual, introvert, extrovert, cautious,
or risk taker. Each type looks at an idea from a different perspective. Team education joins the
beginner and the experienced. The beginner may listen while the experienced does the talking,
very often bragging. In time, the beginner is inspired, will try his ideas, will learn what works,
and does not work. Team members, through peer pressure, inspire each other to perform at their
best, as a result, everyone competes to be the best. Each suggestion builds on the previous
suggestions, creating an ever-expanding knowledge base. The exchange of information
stimulates new ideas. The discovery of possibilities, recognition from others stimulates
inspiration and motivation that sends the knowledge level to greater heights. Team knowledge
has always been the most powerful learning force in the world.

Home Schooled

Home schooled students average 86% on standardized test while public school students
average 40%. Home schooled students whose parents haven’t finished high school still average
well above public school students. What is the secret? Parents teach to their child’s learning
personality. They experiment with learning techniques, go with what works, and drop what
doesn’t. They customize the learning process to the child. In return, the child develops a love-to
-learn. This love is the source of motivation. Custom teaching programs are not possible in a
classroom of twenty students.
The Love to Learn

Love to Learn - Seek New Experiences
Change is Motivating

From birth to age 13 everyone loves to learn, seek new experiences, experience change, and has a desire to excel. This is not true for everyone after 13.

A - Desire to learn is maintained over a lifetime. This person’s education is not based on years spent in classrooms; it is based on a persistent desire to maintain a continuous natural learning environment. The result is above average wages. These are the CEO’s, and other achievers who have a vision and know how to get things done. These people are independent thinkers and doers. They are NOT dependent on others for knowledge or opportunity, they do not wait for opportunity to come their way, and they go after it.

B - Desire to learn is maintained until a professional skill is mastered that meets basic needs, then it dies. This person is the typical professional that makes average wages.

C - Desire to learn dies before a professional skill is mastered. This person makes below average wages.

These two groups are dependent on others for opportunity. They can rise no higher than the image they have of themselves, which is based on other’s opinions. Associates tell them their limits, which they believe and accept. They do not make efficient use of natural learning tools because they were taught to depend on others for knowledge. As a result, they focus on protecting their comfort zone and the status quo.

Self-Education, The Lost Art
The difference between group “A” and “B, C” is a vision that motivates. People who have a vision control their destiny and lifestyle. For people without a vision, their destiny and lifestyle is controlled by others.

Today, our education system is preoccupied with standardized tests. The goal is to bring failing students from group “C” up to “B,” which is minimum academic standards. These tests are producing a mind-set in all students to accept the status quo. As a result, students that would be in group “A” are dragged down to “B.” They drop any visionary ideas they may have had and focus on testing. The goal should be to give students the tools to move from “B, C” to “A.” This requires a different type of education.

Today’s education goal is to get students to pass standardized test. The results influence teachers’ bonuses and school funding. When the curriculum is controlled by funding, teaching students to have a vision is no longer feasible, because it can’t be measured.

**Super achievers develop a lifetime love to learn. Job seekers desire to learn is turned off at an early age.**

**Personal income is high for people with a love to learn.**
Learning Tools

Becoming involved with projects is the first requirement for self-motivation, creating a desire to learn and implementing learning tools. Learning tools have no meaning without a project. Projects can be from any source including self-motivated or team motivated. Projects have a plan of action and a goal—they are based on man’s natural desire to be an achiever.

Four Tools That Share Knowledge

- **Team Education** - Team member training team member is the most powerful education system in the world. The team has a common goal and all give input to reach that goal. Motivated team members set the example that others want to follow. Team members learn to be responsible for each other. The attitude “this is our task” replaces the destructive attitude “that is your problem, not mine.” Peer pressure is a highly motivating force.

- **Learning by Teaching** - Students teaching students expands knowledge of all while creating a desire to learn. The teacher and the student both develop a better understanding of the concept.

- **Conflict and Debate** - Conflict and debate are real world education systems. Everyone learns limits and possibilities, becomes familiar with the tasks. People left out of debate do not have opportunity to learn different points of view. In empowered work groups, team members must contribute to be accepted in the group. Group acceptance is a very powerful motivating force.

- **Bragging, Socializing, Peer Pressure** - People who have responsibility like to brag how they prevented or solved problems. Team members’ experiences and their lessons are easily remembered. A relaxed environment with the ability to ask questions, tailors training to current needs. Bragging builds positive peer pressure, high self-esteem, and pride.

Four Tools That Acquire Knowledge

- **Research and Analyzing** - Knowing how to find information and analyze it for quality is a developed skill. There is a lot of garbage out there mixed with a few gems of quality information. Knowing how to identify the gems and adapt them to your project is the secret to being viewed as a genius.

- **Self-education** - With today’s fast-changing technology, self-education skills can be more valuable to an employer than formal education. New concepts must always be learned and there is no time to go back to the classroom for knowledge. Self-educated people learn to take responsibility for their own education. Time or money is not a hindrance.

- **Trial and Error, Learning by Doing** - People learn when they try and fail. If people do not have opportunity to try, they will never fail. If they never fail they will never learn. It takes many experiments to find the correct answer. People trying and failing is different from taking orders and failing.
- **Instinctive Knowledge** - Innovation, inventions, or winning strategies are produced by mixing experience with instinctive knowledge. Opportunity is often found in our gut feelings. Instinctive knowledge only works for people who are motivated, either to find a better way if positively motivated or to find ways to do less if negatively motivated.

Teensagers Desire to Excel

- All teenagers want to learn, be somebody and excel. They will try, with or without classroom influence.
- For intellectual teenagers, the education system inspires a vision, helps them discover their natural talent, opportunity to develop it and then helps them find their first job, thereby, helping them to fulfill their desire to excel. It does NOT do the same for non intellectuals.
- For non intellectuals, the education system labels them failures because they cannot master academics like intellectuals.
  - These students are told they are failures 5 times a day, 5 days a week for as long as they can remember. There are various reactions to negative labels.
- People who learn in team environments and depend on others for support, will join street gangs and enter into crime, thereby, fulfilling their desire to excel.
- People who accept and believe the opinions of others, that they are failures, simply give up and become a burden on society. Their teenage desire to excel is now dead.
- Once teenagers leave classroom environments, society has no influence over the paths they will choose.

A one education system for all is not feasible. These teenagers need alternatives, becoming involved with hands on projects, where academics is a byproduct.

Non intellectuals need opportunity to discover their natural talent, whether it be, artistic, mechanical or dexterous.
Projects are Learning Tools

When faced with a challenge, man has the ability to learn without instructors. Self-educated people are not molded by classroom environments—some like Abraham Lincoln never went to school, while others, like the Wright Brothers, almost finished high school. How did they learn? With projects that motivated them. These projects were based on the desire to learn more about the world we live in. Nature is an instructor that uses nature’s learning tool, trial and error.

- Projects start with a dream or vision, to have experiences that are beyond his reach at the present time. In short, an ADVENTURE.
- Projects are learning tools.
- Projects are man’s natural way to learn.
- Projects motivate us to learn more about the world we live in.
- Projects are exploration and adventure.
- Projects inspire a love to learn.
- Projects build positive self-esteem.
- Projects help us discover our learning personality.
- Projects develop self-discipline.
- Projects teach persistence and the art of bouncing back from failure.
- Projects lead us to a career that is in harmony with our natural talent.
- Projects are fun.

There are two types of projects, self-motivated and team motivated. Both produce powerful learning environments.

With team motivated projects there is a support group who make it easier to hang in there when some things goes wrong. Teams learn more when they share knowledge and there is an element of failure. If they only follow orders and there is no element of failure, they learn nothing.

Self-motivated projects are training sessions. Each small project leads to a larger one, which is turn leads to yet another larger one. Confidence and abilities grow with each completed project. No super achiever has ever achieved his goal without first succeeding at small, seemly insignificant projects.

With self-motivated projects, we are under no obligation to anyone except ourselves. This is what makes it difficult—no one cares. If no one cares, why should we continue? Some projects bring opposition. We are told it is a stupid idea. If others think it is stupid, why should we continue? Most projects have no outside support. If people don’t support us, why should we continue? We continue because this is the only way to achieve our dream. In the beginning, we
have to go it alone. No one is interested in our ideas until we succeed. Then everyone wants to be a part of it.

As we develop the habit of finishing what we start, unknowingly, we rise above the crowd of quitters. Project finishers are in demand, and this demand increases as our abilities expand. This ability is recognized by people who need assistance in reaching their goal. When they discover someone who can get things done, they latch onto them and offer opportunity, qualified or not.

When sudden opportunity is offered, what do we do? Our first reaction is caused by barriers of risk, fear and failure. We ask ourselves various questions. “Do I really want to become involved?” “Not being prepared is risky. Am I willing to look like a fool?” “What will my reputation be if I fail?” “What will my reputation be if I don’t try?”

**People who avoid risky adventures are in the habit of watching things happen. People who accept the challenge make things happen.**

There is a catch to learning with projects—one must learn to finish what they start. No one learns anything with unfinished projects or try and quit. The learning process is in trying and failing, learning from mistakes, bouncing back, and trying again until success comes. Thomas Edison took on the ridiculous project of finding a way to burn a steel wire white hot without burning up. Everyone knows everything always burns up—what a stupid idea. He tried and failed a thousand times. But his persistence paid off—the common light bulb is the result.
Project Based Education

An alternative for academic based education.

What do these people have in common? Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, The Wright Brothers’, Frank Sinatra, and Elvis Presley. They educated themselves with self-motivated projects. Academics was a byproduct that was acquired as needed and at the level needed to achieve their goal. These people were in conflict with classroom education. They succeeded because they discovered their natural talent and built a career based on that discovery. Education that is based on projects is highly motivating and is man’s natural learning process. The discovery and opportunity to develop natural talent inspires a productive lifestyle. Project based education can give students that opportunity.

The Project Based Education concept is based on what interests and motivates the student. Because the instructor cannot customize lesson plans for each student, he must implement student responsibility. It becomes the student’s responsibility to develop and research projects and develop a plan of action. The instructor acts as a coach or facilitator. Instructors take an interest in students’ projects instead of students having to take an interest in topics handed down by administrators.

Projects require a goal where students must search for a method, acquire skills and knowledge, accept failure and bounce back from it, and keep trying until the goal is achieved. They learn through experiences, more important, they learn how to research and apply knowledge. Success is measured by the complexity of the project and the ability to finish it. This type of education motivates one to learn more about the world we live in while creating a lifetime love to learn. The laws’ of nature is the motivator and instructor. Positive self-esteem is one of the many by-products.

There are three types of projects:

1. **Class Motivated** - In this case, the instructor initiates the project and sets the goal. Competition type projects are effective. Some students may need to be taught the art of project development before they are assigned to smaller groups.

2. **Team Motivated** - A team of 2 to 5 members agree on a common interest project. With teams, the opportunity to share knowledge has a powerful influence on team members. It motivates others to find ways to contribute information or skills. When things go wrong, strong team members can support and encourage the weaker ones. Support from associates is a powerful force. Peer pressure motivates all to excel.

3. **Self-Motivated** - Some students are independent, strong-willed and have a natural talent with projects. They might do best on their own.

Projects make it possible to offer a wide verity of subjects, determined by the interest of the students. It becomes the students’ responsibility to develop the project with available resources, not the instructor. All teenagers want to learn, be creative and productive, but they need opportunity.

Self-Education, The Lost Art
Benefits of project base education:

- Project base education is empowering students to learn, where the instructor is a coach, a facilitator.
- Projects make it possible to discover one’s natural talent and personal interest.
- Projects make it possible to discover one’s learning personality.
- Projects have a goal that is based on man’s desire to be a winner. Self-satisfaction is a powerful motivator.
- Projects are learning tools that is motivated by curiosity.
- Projects work with the forces of nature and nature is the instructor.
- Projects give students opportunity to learn with objects. Not everyone is a literary intellectual.
- Successful projects are the results of failure and learning to bounce back from it.
- Projects require a plan, which includes ways to acquire needed knowledge and skills.
- Projects have all the motor skills that it takes to start and run a business or become a valuable employee, skilled or unskilled.

Society must abandon the belief that:

- students must meet a predetermined level of academic standards by a selected age. (everyone is different)
- students who don’t meet those standards are failures. (they aren’t)
- all students can learn in a passive environment. (they can’t)
- a diploma is more valuable than positive self-esteem. (it isn’t) In the blue-collar world, employers base hiring on attitudes, not class grades or diplomas
- all students can relate classroom studies to real world experiences. (they can’t)
- standardized test measures knowledge and/or potential success level. (it doesn’t)
- number of years spent in classrooms and class grade level determines success level in the real world. (it doesn’t)
- academics must be mastered before other opportunity is offered. (some people learn by doing)
- Teenagers are not mature enough to make decisions that determine their destiny. (give them a chance)
Teaching Failure in the Classroom

Every year, the percent of teenagers rejecting the formal education is growing. In South Carolina, the high school dropout rate is 49%. The one-system-for-all education system is outdated. The system is based on the early 20th century production line introduced by Henry Ford. Every student is expected to achieve assigned proficiency in each grade. This is cost effective for teaching large groups of people. The problem is, production lines have rejects. Today, a high percentage of young people are rejecting the system for some of the following reasons:

Self-esteem in the Classroom

Students that excel develop positive self-esteem. Students at the bottom of the class develop negative self-esteem. The effects of self-esteem will grow, positive or negative, with years spent in the classroom. Students developing negative self-esteem develop an inferiority complex that prevents them from holding a job, should they get one. A diploma with negative self-esteem has no value.

Competitiveness in the Classroom

Competitive education compares every student with every other student in the class and school. Competitiveness produces winners and losers. The losers become rejects by teachers and classmates. As a result, the education system no longer has influence over them. On the street they seek acceptance and search for opportunity. Very often, criminal activity is the result.

Teenagers Desire to Learn

Every 13-year old wants to learn and be an achiever. They seek opportunity where they are socially accepted. Classroom rejects look to the street for opportunity. What they learn and the goals they set are influenced by their peers. Very often, the outcome is self-destructive.

The Failure/Reject Label

Natural talent - We all have unique talents, academic, mechanical, artistic, music, dexterous, that can be developed. The formal education system is based on academics. Students that do not meet academic standards are considered failures and rejected. Because they do not meet academic standards, they are NOT offered opportunity to discover and develop their unique natural talent. This is missed opportunity for creating productive citizens.

How we Learn - Everyone can learn, but we all have a unique learning skill that is based on visual (demonstrations), sound (lectures) or by doing (hands-on). The formal education is based on lectures. If the student does not adapt to learning by lectures, they receive the failure/reject label. Many of these students could excel if offered hands-on learning opportunity.

Rejects are Not Wanted - It is almost impossible for anyone to excel in an environment where they are not wanted. Teachers and successful students do not want rejects in the classroom. There develops a downward spiral of conflicts between the two groups. Social prejudice determines their fate in the classroom.

Self-Education, The Lost Art
A Teenager’s Dilemma

Bob Webb
motivation-tools.com

Undiscovered Natural Talent

Alternatives With Social Pressure

Rebellion Rejects Alternatives

Anti Establishment Attitudes
Unknown Destiny No Goals

Unknown Destiny A Dream

Planned Destiny With Social Acceptable Goals

There is no dilemma if natural talent is in harmony with social pressure
Self-fulfilling Prophecy

- Self-fulfilling prophecy is a phenomenon by which people’s expectations about the future events lead them to behave in particular ways that, on occasion, can cause the expected event to occur. People tend to find what they are looking for. More than that, they may even tend, unwittingly, to create what they seek.

- If leaders want to control workers, they will lead in such a way that self-fulfilling prophecy will condition workers to do nothing unless closely supervised. If leaders want workers to assume responsibility, they will lead in a way that self-fulfilling prophecy will condition them to assume responsibility. Employee turnover sorts personalities, attracting people who fit the leader’s image and rejecting those who don’t, thus fulfilling the self-fulfilling prophecy.

Social Prejudice

Prejudice in any form, racial or social, is destructive and costly to society. Up until the ‘60s, society accepted racial prejudice, then the target of racial prejudice rebelled and society realized the destructive force of this attitude. Today, social prejudice is accepted by society and few realize its destructive force. It kills motivation and increases overhead cost in business. It forces students to drop out of school with a failure label that prevents them from discovering their natural talent. Self-fulfilling prophecy does the rest.

- Social prejudice believes other people are less capable than we are. If we are managers and we think other people are less capable, then we will establish a management policy that reflects that belief. Through employee turnover and self-fulfilling prophecy, our opinion will be proven right.

- Social prejudice is like any prejudice, "I am better than them, I come from a better neighborhood, I have a better education, and therefore I must make all the decisions." Prejudice in any form, racial or social, carries a heavy price, it lowers efficiency and increases overhead cost. Prejudice kills communications, innovation, motivation just to name a few attributes.

- Social class is a prejudice barrier between white-collar and blue-collar employees. With leaders prejudice as a role model, other, lesser-defined social prejudice barriers develop in the organization. Departments will limit communication with other departments; craftsmen will consider production workers of low intelligence to name two. At each level, people believe lower levels have low capabilities and this becomes the mindset of the organization. Self-fulfilling prophecy proves everyone right.

- Leaders with strong social prejudice use command-and-control leadership. Control is more important than getting the job done. Leaders and subordinates spend a great deal of time in the blame game. It is socially unacceptable for an engineer to ask advice from a front line employee.
• Leaders who are free of social prejudice are willing to use responsibility leadership. Getting the job done is more important than control. Leaders and subordinates work together, searching for a better way. Leaders are free to ask advice from anyone at any level. Asking for advice has a motivating influence by itself.

Prejudice Influences Leadership Styles

In business, social prejudice has always been a barrier to the flow of information. Leadership likes the feeling of its power while the targets of prejudice tolerate it. During the industrial age, the speed of communications was not critical compared to today and the barriers, social prejudice produced, had limited effect. With today’s fast changing trends, there is a need for fast flowing quality information. Social prejudice reduces quality and slows the flow. Social prejudice is a chasm that separates information from the people who need it. Many leaders are too proud to reach across and ask for it, instead, they will ask someone for their opinion on their side of the chasm. In the technology age, information is needed from the source, not chain of command or someone’s theory. To stay competitive, work environments must be free of social prejudice and leaders must be willing to cross social class barriers to seek information.

Command-and-control leadership is the most popular leadership style while being the least efficient. Why it is popular? Because it appeals to man's natural desire for power, control, and influence. It gives leaders a feeling of job security, of being needed and indispensable. It is disliked by people who must follow orders, especially when recipients feel the effects of social prejudice. Conflicts between managers and workers increases overhead cost. Managers spend much of their time finding ways to overcome worker's resistance while workers spend much of their time searching for ways to do less. Worker responsibility is a threat to leaders, because their ideas may be challenged, they may feel they are not in control, and they are uncomfortable with advice from those who they feel are inferior.

Workers have the same natural desires, "My idea is best and I am in control." When it is the worker's idea and they are responsible, they will make their ideas work. Searching for a better way motivates them, which makes them efficient. Efficiency is team effort, where everyone from the CEO to the janitor is considered to have valuable information. Team responsibility produces a highly efficient work environment. This environment is free of social prejudice.

Social Prejudice in the Classroom

The education system is a teacher and promoter of social prejudice. The system relates blue-collar skills to low ambition, because the system is run by intellectuals for intellectuals. Intellectuals do not want to be associated with blue-collar people; therefore, they teach high school students to set higher goals than vocational skills offer. In the typical classroom, many students are technical talented and these students should be encouraged and given opportunity to develop this talent. Technical talented students are not intellectuals, not being able to develop what they are best at, they dropout and become a burden on society. School dropouts are the result of social prejudice in the classroom, it's not because they can't learn.
Self-Education, The Lost Art

Sudden Opportunity

How self-education skills open doors to opportunity

Pilot Boat Captain in Guam

My wife and I designed and self-built a 50-foot ketch named Hunky-Dory. We then sailed the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. As you can imagine, cruising life is very different from home-based living. Cruisers sail a while, then work for a while to build up the cruising budget and move on. Local businesses in the Pacific Islands seek out cruisers because they can hire highly skilled temporaries at low wages. It's beneficial to both parities.

In the early '90s, Joan and I stopped in Guam, a territory of the United States. I wanted to get back in the job market and applied for jobs. I was getting nowhere. I always dressed neatly, which seemed to make the interviewer uncomfortable. They would tell me, "You don't want to work here." I soon learned that some work environments are very abusive, almost like they were in the early 1900s.

I decided to apply for a captain's position at a company that does harbor work. On advice from former employees, I decided to dress down and act as if I had a sloppy attitude. I wore a dirty white "T" shirt, dirty blue jeans, wore flip-flops on my feet, messed up my hair, and did not shave that morning. Looking like a bum, I walked in the company office and told the receptionist I was seeking a captain's position. She told me to have a seat. In a few minutes, I was in a job interview and a job was offered. That was shock number one. My appearance was out of character and I was embarrassed. I always try to look neat. Shock 2 came when the manager said, "The pay is $9 per hour. I know other companies pay $20, but this is what we pay." Considering my sloppy look, $9 should be a lot of money. I later discovered that low wages attracts sloppy management and sloppy employees. My sloppy appearance was the job qualification for this company.

I asked the manager for time to think it over. I never did harbor work before and it would be opportunity to learn a new skill, even if the wages are low. For companies that pay $20 per hour, there are no openings and no one is leaving. After talking it over with Joan, we agreed that I should take the job.

The next day I dressed up to make a better impression. I told the manager I would accept the job. Shock 3 came next. He said, "You start today at noon. You will have an instructor until midnight. Tomorrow you are on your own."

I explained; I never did harbor work before, I never operated twin screws, my experience is on sailboats, I needed more training than twelve hours. I was already screaming at the manager and I hadn't even started yet.

The manager asked, "Do you want the job or not?"

I said I would take it and stormed out of the office to the job site.

During the next twelve hours, with an instructor, I took crewmembers and supplies to and from ships at anchor. The next day I was on my own when I was told to take a pilot off a ship as...
it was leaving the harbor. All I knew was, the ship does not stop and the pilot gets off while everything is on the move.

I was motoring beside the ship when I radioed the pilot and explained, "I never did this before and would like some advice." He did not answer. I asked again and no answer. With the throttles wide open, I decided to go in close and get next to the pilots ladder that was hanging on the side of the ship. I was within five feet of the ship and the ship was moving faster than I could go. Soon my launch hit the stern wake. I knew the stern of ships has a lot of suction, but I didn't realize its strength until then. The stern wake picked up the launch, spun it sideways and slammed it into the stern of the ship. With the throttles still wide open, the launch shot out from under the ship.

At this time, I got the pilots attention. On the radio he screamed instruction and I was so rattled I did not know what I was doing. The pilot kept screaming more instructions. All I could think of was "How am I going to get the launch by the pilot's ladder?" The ship slowed and I was beside it when the launch slammed sideways into it. At that time, the pilot jumped off the ship onto the cabin top. He came down the stairwell screaming and I was screaming back. When he saw I was new, he patted me on the back and said, "You did OK."

Back at the dock, the other captains were listening to the drama on their radio. When I came ashore, they looked at me and shook their heads. My shift relief was there and I went home with tremendous emotional pain. Two days on the job and I wanted out. Anyhow, I knew I would be fired when my supervisor head about this.

The next day I came to work expecting confrontation and was in a fighting mood. There wasn't one peep about the incident. As the day ended, I decided to be the best captain the company ever had. I am going to conquer the emotional pain by learning to get it right and keep at it until I had complete confidence in my skill. Every day for the next six weeks, I hated going to work. I wanted to tell the manager, "I QUIT!" My fears and emotional pain was tremendous.

Three months later, I was taking a ship's crew ashore. They were standing on the bow in front of the pilothouse. The harbor was jammed with ships and finding a place to let the passengers off was not always easy. There was a narrow gap between two ships, and I decided to dock there. The passengers looked at the gap, looked at me at the helm and back to the gap. From a distance, the gap looked too small. By this time, I knew the launch and what it could do. As we slid between the ships to the dock, the passengers looked up at me and applauded. I never felt so good in my life. Experienced seamen applauding me was a badge of honor.

That year a Hurricane hit Guam. I was out in the harbor in 100-knot winds supporting tugs that were trying to keep ships from going aground. With the winds over 100 knots, I radioed the tugs and told them I could not help any longer or I will be on the rocks. I secured the launch, getting ready for the eye of the storm. At that time, other tugboat captains were abandoning the ships to save themselves. When the winds reached 150 knots, twelve commercial fishing boats sank around me and that many more were busted up, but still floating. Our yacht, Hunky-Dory went up on pilings and busted up.
This experience illustrates many elements of risk taking:

1. I developed skills I never had before.

2. I strengthen my ability to hang in when everything goes wrong.

3. By dressing down, I entered a social class that was totally foreign to me. I experienced, first hand, how lower class people are exploited.

4. I became aware of leadership styles. I worked most of my life for a company that treated its employees like royalty. The pay was at the top of the scale. Then I worked for a company that abused its employees badly. The pay was at the bottom of the scale.

5. Man has the ability to educate himself. In this case, I was forced to learn on my own by making every mistake possible.

6. Low paying companies do not spend money on training programs. Employees must find ways to educate themselves to complete the assigned tasks. This is opportunity for limited experienced people. Once experience is achieved, they move on to a higher wage company. This makes room for the next entry-level employee.

7. Risk comes with a battle scare, that's why it is called risk. During this illustration, we lost our yacht *Hunky-Dory*.

When accepting the captain's job, the only benefit I expected was a new skill. The other elements were surprises that led to new opportunity and new challenges.

**Test Your Reaction to Sudden Opportunity**

What would you do if faced with sudden opportunity? Remember, no one knows their true abilities until they have opportunity and take risk. The rewards of risk are endless. Picture yourself in this imaginary situation.

Jesse is flying you to a conference in his private plane. The plane is on autopilot, so the two of you two are relaxed, discussing the conference and commenting on the nice weather. Suddenly Jesse leans back and passes out. He ate too many chocolate chip cookies or something. However, you are faced with sudden opportunity. You must learn to fly the airplane and land it without an instructor. What is your reaction?

Sudden opportunity comes with reactions related to risk, fear and failure. It is your decision to risk all by taking control of the controls. What about your trembling body? You have to take control of that too. What if you fail? If you don't try, it is automatic failure. Trying gives you a chance. How much of a chance depends on how well you control your emotions.

If you were in the habit of taking on projects and finishing them, you have an excellent chance of landing the airplane and surviving. Starting and finishing projects builds confidence.
Confidence is the ability to control our emotions. The problem is, we don't know how we will react until we are in a stressful situation. The only way to find out is to jump into projects that are way over our head. In an airplane, at 10,000 feet, without a pilot, WE ARE IN OVER OUR HEAD! Taking aggressive action is the only way out.

People who avoid projects or quit at the first sign of conflict, may never take the airplane off of autopilot; they avoid taking risk. The results are predetermined. However, you have decided to take control of the plane and land it. You see a small airstrip and decide to circle to learn how to use the controls. You push the throttle in and out to get the feel of its response, turn the steering wheel to get the feel of turning and push the wheel in and out to get a feel of climbing and dropping. Training is over when the fuel is low.

Fuel is now low and it is time to land. A few feet off the ground, you cut the throttle and pull back on the stick. The stall buzzard sounds and the plane hits the ground hard. A crosswind spins the plane and it comes to a halt on the side of the runway. There is damage to the plane, but you and Jesse are all right. After you had time to calm down, what is your reaction? Your self-esteem will be at 10,000 feet. Positive self-esteem is the result of being able to do what others haven't done. This experience will become a turning point in your life and will bring many rewarding benefits.
He used the art of self-education to learn how to read and write during a time when it was against the law for blacks to learn this skill.

Frederick Douglass, born a slave near Easton, Md., in February 1817, died Feb., 20, 1895. He became the most famous of all black abolitionists as well as one of the greatest American orators of his day. He was sent to Baltimore where he learned ship caulking. Already schooled in the alphabet by his master’s wife, he taught himself to write by tracing the letters on the prows of ships. In 1838, with seaman’s papers supplied by a free black, he escaped to New Bedford, Mass. Five months later he came into contact with William Lloyd Garrison’s anti-slavery weekly, The Liberator, and in 1841 he was enlisted as an agent by the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, which had been impressed by his oratorical skill.

Douglass’s speeches evolved from reminiscences of slave life to a denunciation of slavery and a call for immediate abolition. As his speeches became more polished, fewer people believed that he actually had been a slave. To dispel such doubts, Douglass published (1845) his narrative of Life and Times of Frederick Douglass. He then settled in Rochester, N.Y., where he founded his newspaper, the North Star. When the Civil War came, Douglass fought for the enlistment of black men in the Union army and assisted in recruiting the 54th and 55th Massachusetts Colored Regiments, which later won distinction in battle. As the war progressed, President Lincoln conferred with Douglass as a representative of his people. During his last years Douglass served as assistant secretary of the Santo Domingo Commission (1871), marshal (1877-81) and recorder of deeds (1881-86) of the District of Columbia, and U.S. minister to Haiti (1889-91). Douglass remained an active reformer literally until the day he died, when he collapsed after attending a women’s suffrage meeting.

Following is Mr. Douglass narrative on the power of self-education.

I lived in Master Hugh’s family about seven years. During this time, I succeeded in learning to read and write. In accomplishing this, I was compelled to resort to various stratagems, had no regular teacher. My mistress, who had kindly commenced to instruct me, had, in compliance with the advice and direction of her husband, not only ceased to instruct, but had set her face against my being instructed by any one else. It is due, however, to my mistress to say of her, that she did not adopt this course of treatment immediately. She at first lacked the depravity indispensable to shutting me up in mental darkness. It was at least necessary for her to have some training in the exercise of irresponsible power, to make her equal to the task of treating me as though I were a brute.

My mistress was, as I have said, a kind and tenderhearted woman; and in the simplicity of her soul, she commenced, when I first went to live with her, to treat me as she supposed one
human being ought to treat another. In entering upon the duties of a slave-holder, she did not seem to perceive that I sustained to her the relation of a mere chattel, and that former to treat me as a human being was not only wrong, but dangerously so. Slavery proved as injurious to her as it did to me. When I went there, she was a pious, warm, and tenderhearted woman. There was no sorrow or suffering for which she had not a tear. She had bread for the hungry, clothes for the naked, and comfort for every mourner that came within her reach. Slavery soon proved its ability to divest her of these heavenly qualities. Under its influence, the tender heart became stone, and the lamb-like disposition gave way to one of tiger-like fierceness. The first step in her downward course was in her ceasing to instruct me. She now commenced to practice her husband’s precepts. She finally became even more violent in her opposition than her husband himself. She was not satisfied with simply doing as well as he had commanded; she seemed anxious to do better. Nothing seemed to make her more angry than to see me with a newspaper. She seemed to think that here lay the danger. I have had her rush at me with a face made all up of fury, and snatch from me a newspaper, in a manner that fully revealed her apprehension. She was an apt woman; and a little experience soon demonstrated, to her satisfaction, that education and slavery were incompatible with each other.

From this time, I was most narrowly watched. If I was in a separate room any considerable length of time, I was sure to be suspected of having a book, and was at once called to give an account of myself. All this, however, was too late. The first step had been taken. Mistress, in teaching me the alphabet, had given me the inch, and no precaution could prevent me from taking the ell.

The plan which I adopted, and the one by which I was most successful, was that of making friends of all the little white boys whom I met in the street. As many of these as I could, I converted into teachers. With their kindly aid, obtained at different times and in different places, I finally succeeded in learning to read. When I was sent on errands, I always took my book with me, and by going one part of my errand quickly, I found time to set a lesson before my return. I used also to carry bread with me, enough of which was always in the house, and to which I was always welcome; for I was much better off in this regard than many of the poor white children in our neighborhood. This bread I used to bestow upon the hungry little urchins, who, in return, would give me that more valuable bread of knowledge. I am strongly tempted to give the names of two or three of those little boys, as a testimonial of the gratitude and affection I bear them; but prudence forbids; — not that it would injure me, but it might embarrass them; for it is almost an unpardonable offense to teach slaves to read in this Christian country. It is enough to say of the dear little fellows, that they lived on Philpot Street, very near Durgin and Bailey’s shipyard. I used to talk this matter of slavery over with them. I would sometimes say to them, I wished I could be as free as they would be when they got to be men. "You will be free as soon as you are twenty-one, but I am a slave for life! Have not I as good a right to be free as you have?" These words used to trouble them; they would express for me the liveliest sympathy, and console me with the hope that something would occur by which I might be free.

I was now about twelve years old, and the thought of being a slave for life began to bear heavily upon my heart. Just about this time, I got hold of a book entitled "The Colombian Orator." Every opportunity I got, I used to read this book. Among much of other interesting matter, I found in it a dialogue between a master and his slave. The slave was represented as having run away from his master three times. The dialogue represented the conversation which took place between them, when the slave was retaken the third time. In this dialogue, the whole
argument in behalf of slavery was brought forward by the master — all of which was disposed of by the slave. The slave was made to say some very smart as well as impressive things in reply to his master—things which had the desired though unexpected effect; for the conversation resulted in the voluntary emancipation of the slave on the part of the master.

In the same book, I met with one of Sheridan’s mighty speeches on and in behalf of Catholic emancipation. These were choice documents to me. I read them over and over again with unabated interest. They gave tongue to interesting thoughts of my own soul, which had frequently flashed through my mind, and died away for want of utterance. The moral, which I gained from the dialogue, was the power of truth over the conscience of even a slaveholder. What I got from Sheridan was a bold denunciation of slavery, and a powerful vindication of human rights. The reading of these documents enabled me to utter my thoughts and to meet the arguments brought forward to sustain slavery; but while they relieved me of one difficulty, they brought on another even more painful than the one of which I was relieved. The more I read, the more I was led to abhor and detest my enslavers. I could regard them in no other light than a band of successful robbers, who had left their homes, gone to Africa, stolen us from our homes, and in a strange land reduced us to slavery. I loathed them as being the meanest as well as the most wicked of men. As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! That very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish. As I writhed under it, I would at times feel that yearning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity. I have often wished myself a beast. I preferred the condition of the meanest reptile to my own. Any thing, no matter what, to get rid of thinking! It was this everlasting thinking of my condition that tormented me. There was no getting rid of it. It was pressed upon me by every object within sight or hearing, animate or inanimate. The silver trump of freedom had roused my soul to eternal wakefulness. Freedom now appeared, to disappear no more forever. It was heard in every sound, and seen in every thing. It was ever present to torment me with a sense of my wretched condition. I saw nothing without seeing it, I heard nothing without hearing it, and felt nothing without feeling it. It looked from every star, it smiled in every calm, breathed in every wind, and moved in every storm.

I often found myself regretting my own existence, and wishing myself dead; and but for the hope of being free, I have no doubt but that I should have killed myself, or done something for which I should have been killed. While in this state of mind, I was eager to hear any one speak of slavery. I was a ready listener. Every little while, I could hear something about the abolitionists. It was some time before I found what the word meant. It was always used in such connections as to make it an interesting word to me. If a slave ran away and succeeded in getting clear, or if a slave killed his master, set fire to a barn, or did any thing very wrong in the mind of a slaveholder, it was spoken of as the fruit of abolition. Hearing the word in this connection very often, I set about learning what it meant. The dictionary afforded me little or no help. I found it was "the act of abolishing"; but then I did not know what was to be abolished. Here I was perplexed. I did not dare to ask any one about its meaning, for I was satisfied that it was something they wanted me to know very little about. After a patient waiting, I got one of our city papers, containing an account of the number of petitions from the north praying for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and of the slave trade between the States. From
this time I understood the words abolition and abolitionist, and always drew near when that word was spoken, expecting to hear something of importance to myself and fellow slaves. The light broke in upon me by degrees. I went one day down on the wharf of Mr. Waters, and seeing two Irishmen unloading a scow of stone, I went, unasked, and helped them. When we had finished, one of them came to me and asked me if I were a slave. I told him I was. He asked, "Are ye a slave for life?" I told him that I was. The good Irishman seemed to be deeply affected by the statement. He said to the other that it was a pity so fine a little fellow as myself should be a slave for life. He said it was a shame to hold me. They both advised me to run away to the north; that I should find friends there, and that I should be free. I pretended not to be interested in what they said, and treated them as if I did not understand them; for I feared they might be treacherous. White men have been known to encourage slaves to escape, and then, to get the reward, catch them and return them to their masters. I was afraid that these seemingly good men might use me so; but I nevertheless remembered their advice, and from that time, I resolved to run away. I looked forward to a time at which it would be safe for me to escape. I was too Young to think of doing so immediately; besides, I wished to learn how to write, as I might have occasion to write my own pass. I consoled myself with the hope that I should one day find a good chance. Meanwhile, I would learn to write.

The idea as to how I might learn to write was suggested to me by being in Durgin and Bailey’s ship-yard, and frequently seeing the ship carpenters, after hewing, and getting a piece of timber ready for use, write on the timber the name of that part of the ship for which it was intended. When a piece of timber was intended for the larboard side, it would be marked thus—"L." When a piece was for the starboard side, it would be marked thus—"S." A Piece for the larboard side forward would be marked thus "L. F." When a piece was for starboard side forward, it would be marked thus—"S. F." For larboard aft, it would be marked thus "S. A." For starboard aft, it would be marked thus -"L.A" For starboard aft, it would be marked thus -"S. A." I soon learned the names of these letters and for what they were intended when placed upon a piece of timber in the shipyard. I immediately commenced copying them, and in a short time was able to make the four letters named. After that, when I met with any boy who I knew could write, I would tell him I could write as well as he. The next word would be, "I don’t believe you. Let me see you try it." I would then make the letters, which I had been so fortunate as to learn, and ask him to beat that. In this way, I got a good many lessons in writing, which it is quite possible I should never have gotten in any other way. During this time, my copybook was the board fence, brick wall, and pavement; my pen and ink was a lump of chalk. With these, I learned mainly how to write. I then commenced and continued copying the Italics in Webster’s Spelling Rook, until I could make them all without looking on the book. By this time, my little Master Thomas had gone to school, learned how to write, and had written over a number of copybooks. These had been brought home and shown to some of our near neighbors, and then laid aside. My mistress used to go to class meeting at the Wilk Street meetinghouse every Monday afternoon, and leave me to take care of the house. When left thus, I used to spend the time in writing in the spaces left in Master Thomas’s copybook, copying what he had written. I continued to do this until I could write a hand very similar to that of Master Thomas. Thus, after a long, tedious effort for years, I finally succeeded in learning how to write.
More Information

- The below links are live. I included the address should the live link be striped.
- The Motivation Tool Chest website has extensive articles on the topic used in this document.
- Project Based Education — motivation-tools.com/youth/
- Learning Personality — motivation-tools.com/youth/learning_personality.htm
- Comfort Zone Navigation — motivation-tools.com/liki_tiki/navigation.htm
- Workplace Education — motivation-tools.com/workplace/2-workplace_education.htm
- Setting Goals — motivation-tools.com/elements/setting_goals.htm
- The Liki Tiki Story— motivation-tools.com/downloads.htm
- Visions and Lifestyles— motivation-tools.com/elements/life_styles.htm
- The Search for Personal Achievement— motivation-tools.com/downloads.htm