

Sample A: Grit #1

Last name, first name

Although I think of myself as self-motivated, my work ethic and accumulated grit stems from my parents. Growing up, my parents always emphasized the importance of an education and the necessary work habits to achieve it. These instilled beliefs lead me to believe grit comes mainly from effort, rather than pure talent (Duckworth).

During my childhood and adolescence, I noticed my dad getting ready to work the “graveyard” shift as I got ready for bed; this allowed me to see him only for a few hours during the day. After waking up, I spotted my mom already awake in the kitchen, even though I went to bed before she came home from work. They always told me, “Be better than your parents. I want you to be successful.” I see the amount of labor my parents put in daily, and I know how after immigrating to the United States, they left college early to get a job, to support their families. This “work hard” attitude is prevalent in my study habits and work ethic, which led me to UCSD.

However, grit is not the only component to success (Denby), especially when dealing with circumstances. A man can show tremendous grit by battling cancer, only to have cancer and take his life. Although I do believe grit can serve as a predictor for success (Duckworth), it is an arbitrary and intangible entity that has its exceptions and flaws. Grit is best used to predict success when comparing a research group of similar traits, such as college students.

Being in college, away from home, changed my perspective on what “success” is. I used to think anything less than an “A” or “A-” on my transcript was considered a failure. However, after being involved with various organizations on campus and living on my own, I realized grades are not the defining factor of college. This realization highlights the assertion that the

brain is malleable, even post-adulthood (Duckworth). College is also about maturing and learning soft skills such as communication, work ethic, and resilience that will help one succeed in future situations (Duckworth). Failure is when you stop trying. Despite being rejected from numerous internships, I've managed to have a growth mindset regarding my professional development. Grit does not guarantee success, but it has shaped the person I am today.

Works Cited

Denby, David. "The Limits of Grit." 21 June. 2016, <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/the-limits-of-grit>.

Duckworth, Angela. "Grit: The Passion of Power and Perseverance." TED. April. 2013. Lecture

Sample B: Grit #1-Motivation

For me the notion of Grit in general is a little odd, or hard to swallow. It's not that I don't understand it, it's just that Grit seems to be something that has been a problem for me for a while now. In fact, I have a quote from my mother from a letter she wrote me, written on a sticky note, on the wall next to my bed. It reads, "I see so much potential in you, so it frustrates me when you don't seem to put in enough effort." I have it there in the hopes that it will motivate me, because it was kind of an inspiring quote to me.

What motivates me to get out of bed in the morning? I guess just a sense of obligation to go to class so that I can get a good grade and eventually get my degree. There are some classes that I feel genuinely excited about. Why though? I feel like I try to not think about it too hard. Don't look a gift horse in the mouth, I think. Really, that's a difficult question for anyone though. Especially since the classes I'm excited about are my art classes, and to answer that question is

like answering why people like art, and that feels almost impossible to answer. I do it because it's one of the few things that I've managed to find some sort of love in.

What discourages me? Failure, I guess. That's hard for anyone to deal with. It feels especially disheartening in art class though. I put a lot into many of my projects, and they don't always go very well. I haven't even necessarily failed yet, but I already hate it. I failed by my own standards. So really it's all me; I'm what discourages me. But no matter how much I hate art and my projects, I come back to it. That's not Grit though. It doesn't feel like the description of Grit anyway. I don't come rushing back with a hammer in my chest and a fire in my eyes. I come back to art in the same way that someone trips and falls down some stairs. Is that Grit? Probably not. But it's mine and it works for me. I get good grades in my art classes, and my professors like me. Maybe that's enough.