

Conclusion

Reflecting on Your Growth

Congratulations on reaching the final chapter of this book—even though in many ways, this is just the beginning. The journey to thriving isn't a one-time event. It's an ongoing process of growth, renewal, and empowerment. You have worked the practices of the The Best Questers High Five to Thrive Formula™ and utilized the tools for each practice to feel more connected to your “why”; foster a more thriving mindset and belief in possibilities; transformed our thoughts and self-talk that shape our self-belief and how we handle life; cultivated mind-body harmony by prioritizing well-being without guilt; and, solidified connections by building relationships that uplift and sustain you. Ultimately, by building the five practices of the The Best Questers High Five to Thrive Formula™, you started experiencing a more thriving state of being. You have taken real, actionable steps to reclaim joy, balance, and impact as an educator.

We know there is a desperate need for educators to find calm in chaos because “without peace in our storm, we feel stuck” (Leaf 2021). We know that we function better mentally and physically when we have peace. You now have some new perspectives and tools, and you have had opportunities to decide what ideas best suit your unique personality and circumstances. You have worked through exercises to synthesize and apply your small biggies. How is this landing for you?

Thinking about peace can shift our perception and even change the chemistry and structure of our brain and body. The more we think about something like this, the more likely it is that we will act on it.

To add, please remember that peace doesn't equal happiness. Being at peace doesn't mean the chaos around you will end and you will be happy. You might need to find some time to breathe when you're caught up in the “quicksand” of life.

Meanwhile, be kind to yourself. When things get tough, be patient and show yourself some self-compassion. Chaos is part of life, but it doesn't have to ruin you (Leaf 2021).

Revisiting Your Commitment

At the start of this journey, you wrote a Sample Commitment Statement—a promise to yourself to engage fully in this process. Take a moment to reflect on your growth:

- What helped you stick to your commitment?
- What challenges or obstacles got you off track?
- What strategy or habit helped you the most?

- Would you go through this process again? Why or why not?

Use the space below to jot down your reflections:

Reflection on My Commitment:

FORMATTING: ADD 5 WRITE-ON LINES



Scan to Unlock Bonus Content (Reflection on My Commitment)

Refining Your Commitment – Your Next Step Forward

Reflect on your progress. You started this journey with a commitment to reduce stress, embrace new ideas, and step out of your comfort zone—and now, you’ve gained the tools to make it happen.

Now it’s time to refine and strengthen your commitment. Think about the strategies that have made the biggest impact on you. What habits do you want to keep? How will you continue prioritizing your well-being while empowering your students?

Write your new commitment statement in the space below, using the present tense to affirm your growth and determination. Let this be your personal reminder—a declaration of how you’re moving forward with clarity, confidence, and purpose.

You’re not the same person who started this book. You’ve learned, grown, and taken action. Now, let’s put it into words and own this next chapter of your journey. You’ve got this!

Use the space below to write your new commitment statement:

My Commitment Statement:



Scan to Unlock Bonus Content (Post-Assessment)

Post-Assessment: How Far Have You Come?

Now that you've put the Best Questers High Five to Thrive Formula™ into practice, let's measure your growth and progress by revisiting the assessment from the beginning of the book. This self-assessment will help you reflect on the growth you've experienced and identify areas where you can continue to strengthen your well-being, effectiveness, and fulfillment as an educator.

This pre/post self-assessment is designed to help you reflect on where you currently stand in key areas that impact your well-being and effectiveness as an educator. The bar graph will help you visualize your strengths and areas for growth across five core categories.

Steps to Complete the Assessment

Answer Truthfully – Read each question carefully and rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 4:

1 = Not at all

2 = Somewhat

3 = A good amount

4 = Extremely so

Calculate Your Score – Each category has two related questions. Add your two ratings together for each category.

Find the Average – Since each category has two questions, divide the total by 2 to find your average score for that area.

Plot Your Results – Take your averaged score for each category and mark it on the bar graph.

Reflect on Your Results – Look at your graph to identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth. Use the tools in this book to enhance your well-being in areas where your scores are lower.

Example Calculation:

If you rated yourself a 3 and a 4 in the "Feeling connected to your 'why'" category:

$$(3 + 4) \div 2 = 3.5$$

Plot 3.5 on the graph in the corresponding row.

This visual representation can help you track your progress over time as you implement new tools for growth and resilience.

Questions

Record your ratings by writing down the rating for each question.

Purpose – Feeling connected to your "why"

1. How clear is your sense of purpose and meaning in your work as an educator?
Rating _____
2. Do you have defined goals for the impact you want to make in your students' lives? Rating _____

Hope – A thriving mindset and belief in possibilities

3. How hopeful and optimistic do you feel about your future in education?
Rating _____
3. When challenges arise, how often do you feel confident in your ability to stay solution-focused and resilient? Rating _____

Mindset – The way you speak to and support yourself

5. How often is your internal dialogue positive and encouraging? Rating _____
5. Do you actively try to shift negative self-talk to a more supportive mindset?
Rating _____

Mind-Body Harmony – Prioritizing well-being without guilt

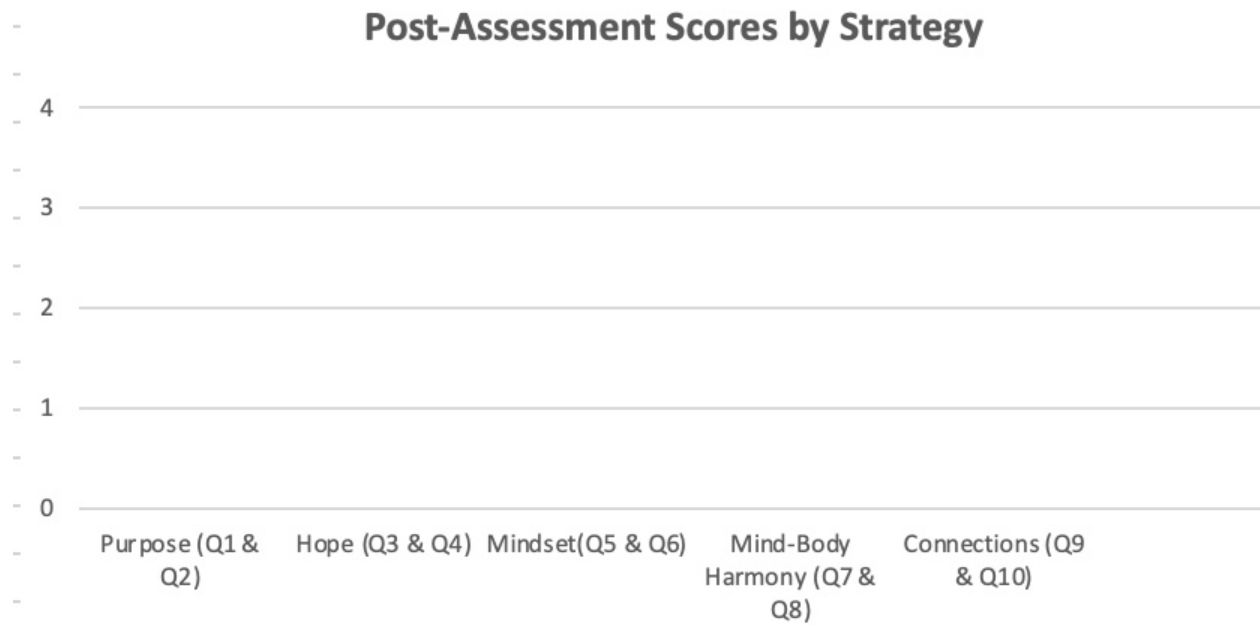
7. How often do you engage in self-care practices that support your mental and physical well-being? Rating _____
7. Do you feel in control (or not in control) of your emotional and physical wellness, especially in stressful situations? Rating _____

Connections – Building relationships that uplift and sustain you

9. How strong are your relationships with your students? Rating _____
10. How connected do you feel to a supportive community of educators?
Rating _____

Input Your Ratings into the Bar Graph

Plot each rating on the horizontal axis next to the corresponding question on the vertical axis



High Five to Thrive Pre- and Post- Assessment Scoring Rubric

This is the rubric with clear descriptors for each of the five practices, scored on a 1–4 scale, to guide reflection and progress.

Practices	1-Beginning	2-Exploring	3-Developing	4-Thriving
Purpose <i>(Feeling connected to your "why")</i>	Completely disconnected from purpose; lacks motivation and passion.	Has moments of passion and engagement but lacks consistency.	Regularly connects with purpose and finds meaning in teaching.	Fully embodies and lives their purpose daily, inspiring and leading others.
Hope <i>(A thriving mindset and belief in possibilities)</i>	Feels stuck and overwhelmed by problems; struggles to see possibilities. Primarily focuses on obstacles and lacks confidence in overcoming them	Beginning to reframe challenges into opportunities and explore solutions. Takes small steps toward positive problem-solving but still experiences self-doubt.	Uses hopeful thinking to navigate difficulties and actively looks for solutions. Demonstrates resilience and begins to apply tools to shift focus from obstacles to opportunities.	Naturally turns obstacles into opportunities and thrives in uncertainty. Fully embraces a growth mindset, confidently taking action to create solutions and inspire hope in others.

Mindset <i>(The thoughts and self-talk that shape your self-belief and how you handle life.)</i>	Negative self-talk dominates, leading to self-doubt and discouragement. Struggles to recognize or challenge negative thoughts.	Uses some positive self-talk tools but inconsistently. Has moments of confidence but still struggles with self-doubt in challenging situations.	Applies positive self-talk regularly to boost confidence and resilience. Actively works to reframe negative thoughts and maintain a balanced mindset.	Mastery of self-talk, with automatic positive thought patterns that uplift and empower. Inspires and mentors others in developing a resilient and confident mindset.
Mind-Body Harmony <i>(Prioritizing well-being without guilt)</i>	Experiences extreme stress, exhaustion, and burnout. No self-care or well-being tools in place, leading to emotional and physical strain.	Implements some stress management techniques but inconsistently. Begins to prioritize self-care but still experiences frequent burnout..	Engages in self-care and stress regulation with reasonable consistency. Has tools in place to maintain energy and manage emotions.	Fully integrates well-being into daily life, effortlessly balancing stress and energy. Thrives in a state of calm, focus, and resilience, inspiring others to do the same.
Connections <i>(Building relationships that uplift and sustain you)</i>	Feels isolated and disconnected from colleagues, students, or the school community. Avoids collaboration and struggles to engage in meaningful interactions.	Actively working on building relationships and collaboration. Finds value in connecting with others but still struggles with consistency or depth.	Builds and maintains meaningful connections with colleagues and students. Engages in collaboration and communication regularly, fostering a positive environment.	Thrives in a network of deep, lasting, and positive connections that uplift all. Acts as a connector, fostering a strong sense of community and belonging.

Scoring Interpretation:

- 5–8: Beginning: Your journey is just beginning—this book will guide you in developing the tools to help you become the best version of yourself!

- 9–12: Exploring: You have some pieces in place. Focus on refining your approach to strengthen your impact and satisfaction.
- 13–16: Developing: You're well on your way! Keep applying these tools to thrive in your teaching and well-being.
- 17–20: Thriving: You are thriving! Continue working the formula to sustain growth and inspire others.

This post-assessment will help you recognize your growth and identify the next steps on your journey. Keep thriving!



Scan to Unlock Bonus Content (Reflecting on Results)

Reflecting on Results

- Compare your scores to your initial assessment.
- What has changed?
- Where have you seen the biggest improvement?
- What areas still need focus?
- Take a moment to celebrate your progress—every step, no matter how small, contributes to lasting growth. As you reflect on your answers, identify one key takeaway and one action step that will help you continue thriving in your life and work. What's your next move?

No matter where your scores **land**, this process isn't about perfection—it's about progress. In fact, we have taken the word "perfect" out of our vocabulary! LOL!

Throughout this book, we addressed some of the most pressing challenges educators face today:

- **Loss of purpose** – You connected to your "why" and aligned your daily work with your deeper mission.
- **Feeling of hopelessness** – You learned how to shift your mindset from frustration to possibility, using hope as a strategy.

- **Unhelpful mindset patterns** – You flipped the script from unhelpful thought patterns and self-talk to empowering thoughts and self-talk.
- **Overlooking mind-body harmony** – You developed tools to help you improve your mind-body harmony enhancing your overall well-being.
- **Feeling disconnected** – You explored how strengthening meaningful relationships with students, colleagues, and mentors fuel resilience and professional fulfillment.

Moving Forward: Keep Growing, Keep Thriving

The journey doesn't end here. Real transformation happens when you keep practicing the tools you've learned and continue taking small, intentional steps forward. Here's how you can keep your progress going:

- **Revisit the Best Questers' High Five to Thrive Formula™ regularly.** Use this framework whenever you feel stuck or overwhelmed. It's your roadmap to resilience.
- **Commit to ongoing reflection and journaling.** Regularly revisit the coaching questions and journal prompts to track your growth.
- **Lean on your Hope Agents,** Surround yourself with colleagues, mentors, and friends who uplift and encourage you.
- **Use hope stacking and hope habits to stay motivated.** Celebrate even the smallest victories, because every step forward is progress.
- **Pass it on.** Share what you've learned with others who need encouragement. Becoming a Hope Agent for others keeps hope alive in you, too.

MEET THE TEACHER → See Real-Life Applications

Ms. Dobbs had always loved teaching, but lately, the job felt like too much.

As a high school ESOL teacher, she was used to challenges—students arriving mid-year with little to no English, navigating cultural differences, advocating for their needs, and helping them prepare for graduation in a system that often overlooked them. Lately, the stress has become overwhelming.

Her desk was buried under a mountain of assignments needing feedback, yet grading wasn't the hardest part. Many of her students faced struggles beyond the classroom—language barriers, financial stress, immigration concerns, and pressure to succeed in a new country. How could she possibly help them all? The weight of their challenges sat heavily on her shoulders, and the joy she once felt in the classroom seemed to be slipping away.

Each morning, she forced herself to walk through the school doors, exhausted before the day even began. Even her students, typically resilient and eager to learn, seemed to sense her struggle. She knew they needed her energy, her encouragement—but how could she give what she no longer felt herself?

Then, one day, a colleague introduced her to *High Five to Thrive*, a program designed to help teachers reconnect with their purpose and find hope in the midst of exhaustion.

Ms. Dobbs was skeptical. Another professional development program? Could a book and a workshop really make a difference when she felt this lost? *I mean, don't we already have enough training sessions that never actually help?*

But with nothing to lose, she decided to give it a try.

A TEACHER'S MEMOIR → Learn from Others

When I first picked up High Five to Thrive, I wasn't expecting much. I was just trying to get through each day, feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. But something about the Best Questers High Five to Thrive Formula, Purpose + Hope + Mindset + Mind-Body Harmony + Connections = Thriving, stuck with me. It reminded me that knowing wasn't enough. I had to do something.

Practice 1: Purpose was a game-changer. Teaching had once been my passion, but the daily grind had buried that spark. This chapter pushed me to reflect on why I started teaching in the first place. I started a simple hope habit each morning—writing down one happy classroom moment from the day before. At first, it felt like any other task, but I'm glad I kept at it because it definitely upgraded my daily reality! In time I noticed that the more I looked for positive moments, the more I saw them. This tiny habit planted seeds of gratitude that grew into a renewed sense of purpose.

Practice 2: Hope taught me to reframe challenges. Before, classroom struggles felt like walls I couldn't break through. But this chapter taught me to reframe those obstacles as opportunities for growth and creativity. One student, Ghandi, was especially disruptive, and I took it personally. But instead of seeing his behavior as a problem, I got curious. I started focusing on him instead of the disruptions. I made a point to talk with him, setting small, manageable goals and celebrating every success. The progress was slow, but it came. His engagement grew, and so did my belief in the power of small, intentional efforts.

I realized that problem behaviors are an invitation to try something different. I wasn't just managing his disruptions; I was helping him build confidence and find his own motivation. Instead of feeling stuck, I felt empowered to make a difference. Harnessing Hope didn't just change how I approached problems; it renewed my belief in the potential for positive change, in both my students and myself.

Practice 3: Mindset opened my eyes to how my own self-talk was holding me back. I'd been carrying a constant loop of doubt: "I'm not good enough," "I'll never get this right." This chapter helped me see that those thoughts weren't facts; they were just stories that were keeping me stuck. My self-talk had been hacking away at my hope. The tools in *Flipping the Script* gave me a way to rewrite that internal narrative. I started replacing them with hope-filled truths. Slowly, those new thoughts took root, and I felt stronger. My confidence grew, not just as a teacher, but as a person.

Flipping the Script wasn't just about changing my thoughts; it was about changing my relationship with myself. The impact has been huge, in my teaching and in my personal life too.

Practice 4: Mind-Body Harmony taught me how to stay grounded in tough moments. Before, when there was a behavior problem or the pressure of looming deadlines was getting to me, I reacted on autopilot. My body would tense up, my thoughts would spiral, and I'd react without thinking, adding to the chaos. I started using tools from the Cool Calm Kit, such as deep breathing and grounding exercises. At first, it seemed too simple to work, but over time, it changed everything.

One of the first things I implemented was deep breathing exercises using one of the breathing cards to guide me. I placed other tools, such as stress balls and affirmations, around the room. One of my favorite techniques is using grounding exercises from the kit; whenever I feel my stress rising, I pause to focus on the feeling of the stress ball in my hand to bring my attention back to the present moment. These small habits help me reset my emotions and approach situations with a clearer, calmer mindset.

My students picked up on my calmer energy, and the whole classroom atmosphere has become more peaceful. I feel more in control, and my students are more on track. I feel like I'm no longer reacting; I respond with intention.

Practice 5: Connections brought me back to a fundamental truth: connection is everything. I made a conscious effort to build stronger relationships—with students, colleagues, and parents. I made time for one-on-one conversations, where they could share their thoughts and feelings. It wasn't always easy to find that time, but the impact has been incredible!

One of my favorite changes was starting a Hope Jar. Students wrote down small wins, things they were proud of, or hopes for the future. In tough moments, we pull out a note and read it aloud, reminding ourselves of the progress we were making. I noticed that we supported each other more and celebrated with each other.

Leaning into the Praise Pack as a starting point to build an environment of unconditional positive regard has turned out to be powerful. Students feel valued not just for what they accomplish but for who they are. Students who had been disengaged have started to open up, and the overall dynamic in the classroom is more positive and supportive.

I also extended this effort to my relationships with colleagues and parents. With colleagues, I prioritized collaboration, turning to them not just for support but as hope agents who reinforced my growth. This has strengthened our professional connections and created a stronger support network. With parents, I reach out more—not just to discuss problems but to celebrate wins, strengthening our partnership. Prioritizing connection was transformative for me and for my students, and it's made a huge difference in all my relationships.

Now that I've completed this part of my journey, I feel like a completely different person. I hardly recognize the overwhelmed, exhausted teacher I once was. I'm more

connected—to my students, colleagues, and parents, and profession. But just as importantly, I've reconnected with my own purpose and sense of self. I'm no longer feeling lost in the chaos; instead, I'm centered, confident, and at peace. I know how to manage the stresses that come with teaching, and I've created a sustainable practice that allows me to stay balanced, even on the toughest days. I'm not just surviving—I'm thriving, and my students are, too!

I'm so incredibly grateful for this experience. High Five to Thrive has given me the tools I needed to turn my teaching career—and my life—around. And the best part is, I know this isn't just a temporary change. The hope habits and mindsets I've developed will continue to support me and my students for years to come.

Highlights of Ms. Dobb's Experience

Ms. Dobbs experienced thriving by working through the elements of the Best Questers High Five to Thrive Formula™ and making intentional choices to apply the five practices. She emerged feeling empowered, hopeful, and deeply connected to her students and my teaching career. Here are the key highlights of what she learned:

Purpose. Ms. Dobbs reconnected with her “why” for teaching by reflecting on meaningful classroom moments and cultivating a daily gratitude practice. This simple habit reignited her passion and enhanced her sense of purpose, supporting emotional well-being and resilience (Emmons and McCullough 2003; Fredrickson 2009).

Hope. By reframing challenges as opportunities, Ms. Dobbs developed a daily hope habit that transformed obstacles into moments of growth and creativity. This shift in perspective fostered optimism and empowered her to support student development, in line with hope theory's emphasis on goal-directed thinking (Snyder 2002).

Mindset. Through the Flipping the Script process, Ms. Dobbs transformed her negative self-talk into hope-filled truths. This cognitive shift not only boosted her confidence but also enhanced her overall resilience, reflecting core principles of cognitive behavioral therapy (Beck 1976; Burns 1980).

Mind-Body Harmony. Utilizing tools from the Cool Calm Kit—such as deep breathing exercises and grounding techniques—Ms. Dobbs learned to manage stress effectively and maintain emotional control. These mindfulness practices helped her shift from reactive to responsive behavior, promoting a calm and focused classroom environment (Kabat-Zinn 1990; Jerath et al. 2006).

Connections. By intentionally building relationships with students, colleagues, and parents—through initiatives such as the Hope Jar and the Praise Pack—Ms. Dobbs created a more positive and supportive classroom culture. Strengthening these social bonds improved communication, increased engagement, and fostered a strong sense of community, which is essential for mental and emotional health (Holt-Lunstad et al. 2010; House et al. 1988).

Weaving It All Together

Ms. Dobbs' story in Chapter 5 wasn't just about her; it was about you and every educator navigating the complexities of teaching. Her journey was a reflection of the real challenges educators face and, more importantly, the real transformation that is possible when tools are put into action.

By reflecting on her journey, you were able to see the reality of implementing these practices—not in a perfect, linear way, but in a way that adapts to real-life struggles. Ms. Dobbs showed that thriving isn't about eliminating challenges; it's about equipping yourself to navigate through them.

Her story was important because it demonstrated that growth is a choice. She didn't wait for the perfect circumstances or for someone else to change her environment. Instead, she took ownership by working through the five practices. She proved that small, consistent actions lead to lasting change.

Why was it important for you to read her story? Because her success is a testament to what's possible for you, too. She started where you might have started—uncertain, exhausted, and searching for change—but she ended up thriving, not because her circumstances magically improved, but because she made the choice to apply the tools and commit to her growth.

Now, it's your turn. How will you take what you've learned and put it into action? Like Ms. Dobbs, you have the practices and the tools. Now, it's about using them to shape a future where you, too, can thrive. Your journey starts now.

Final Words: Your Commitment to Thriving

As we reach the end of this part of our journey together, we want to express how much we've enjoyed sharing the lessons, insights, and experiences we've gathered over the years. It has been an honor to walk alongside you as you navigate this path, and we sincerely hope that these ideas resonate with you and help you bring about the changes you desire in your life and in the lives of your students.

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your journey. We wish you nothing but the very best as you move forward with confidence, hope, and renewed energy. May your work bring light and joy to your students, and may you continue to grow and thrive in all that you do.

We would love to hear from you. Your stories, your successes, and even your challenges are important to us, and we welcome the opportunity to continue this conversation. Please know that we are rooting for you, and we believe in the incredible potential that lies ahead. We are eager to hear great testimonies from you.

You were meant for more.

Thrive forward!

Donita, Viki & Debbie

The Best Quester's Team