

# GRIT CONCEPTS



## GROWTH

In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point.<sup>1</sup>

## RESILIENCE

The process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress.<sup>2</sup>



## INITIATIVE

A personal quality that shows a willingness to get things done and take responsibility. An initiative is the start of something, with the hope that it will continue.<sup>3</sup>

## TENACITY

Extremely persistent in adhering to or doing something; stubborn or relentless.<sup>4</sup>



1) Dweck, C. (2015) Carol Dweck Revisits the 'Growth Mindset'. Education Week. 2) <https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience>. 3) <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/initiative> 4) GRIT acronym retrieved from: <https://www.abbreviations.com/GRIT>

# WHAT IS GRIT?



Perseverance of effort can be defined as the tendency to work hard even in the face of setbacks<sup>1</sup> and is a significant predictor of first-year GPA<sup>2,3</sup>, whether it is self-reported or reported by a parent or guidance counselor<sup>1</sup>. Perseverance of effort was the second most reliable predictor of year-end grades only behind self-efficacy<sup>4</sup>.

Consistency of interest can be defined as the means of sticking to a specific goal, for years if necessary, without changing to a new goal that might seem more attainable<sup>1</sup>. Consistency of interest is not as strongly associated with motivation and achievement as perseverance of effort<sup>4</sup>.



1) Akos, P., & Kretchmar, J. (2017). Investigating grit at a non-cognitive predictor of college success. *The Review of Higher Education*, 40(2), 163-186. <https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2017.0000>

2) Muenks, K., Yang, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2018). Associations between grit, motivation, and achievement in high school students. *Motivation Science*, 4(2), 158-176. <https://doi:10.1037/mot0000076>

1) Duckworth, A., & Gross, J. J. (2014). Self-control and grit: Related but separable determinants of success. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 23(5), 319-325. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721414541462>

# HOW TO MEASURE GRIT

Directions for taking the Grit Scale: Here are a number of statements that may or may not apply to you. For the most accurate score, when responding, think of how you compare to most people -- not just the people you know well, but most people in the world. There are no right or wrong answers, so just answer honestly!

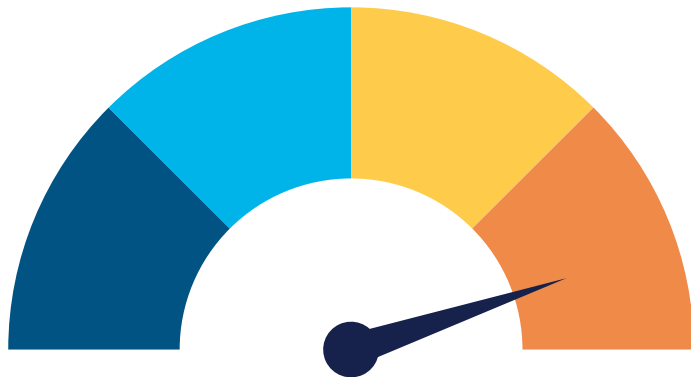
Your choices are:

Very much like me, Mostly like me, Somewhat like me, Not much like me, Not like me at all



# PERSEVERANCE PREDICTS COLLEGE GPA

## 3.51 GPA



A student with high (5 out of 5) perseverance of effort (one construct of grit) would earn a 3.51 first-year GPA.

## HIGH PERSEVERANCE OF EFFORT

Perseverance of effort was a significant predictor of first-year GPA while consistency of interest was not (Akos & Kretchmar, 2017).

## 2.92 GPA



A similar, average student, with lower (2 out of 5) perseverance of grit would earn a 2.92 first-year GPA.

## LOW PERSEVERANCE OF EFFORT

Total Grit-S scores did not differ significantly by gender, underrepresented minority status, or first-generation-college status (Akos & Kretchmar, 2017).



This study explores how self-reported grit scores can accurately predict GPA as well as the frequency of changes in a major. In 2014, data were collected for the empirical research article that consisted of a cross-sectional survey. The survey took place at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and included 209 first-year college students. The survey consisted of the 8-item grit scale (Duckworth), where both the student and the student-selected informant were to complete the survey. Self-reported Grit-S scores significantly predicted first-year GPA ( $\beta = .13, p < .05$ ) using a single hierarchical multiple regression. A second hierarchical multiple regression was performed, adding perseverance of effort simultaneously as separate scores in step 2. Perseverance of effort was a significant predictor of first-year GPA ( $\beta = .22, p < .05$ ).



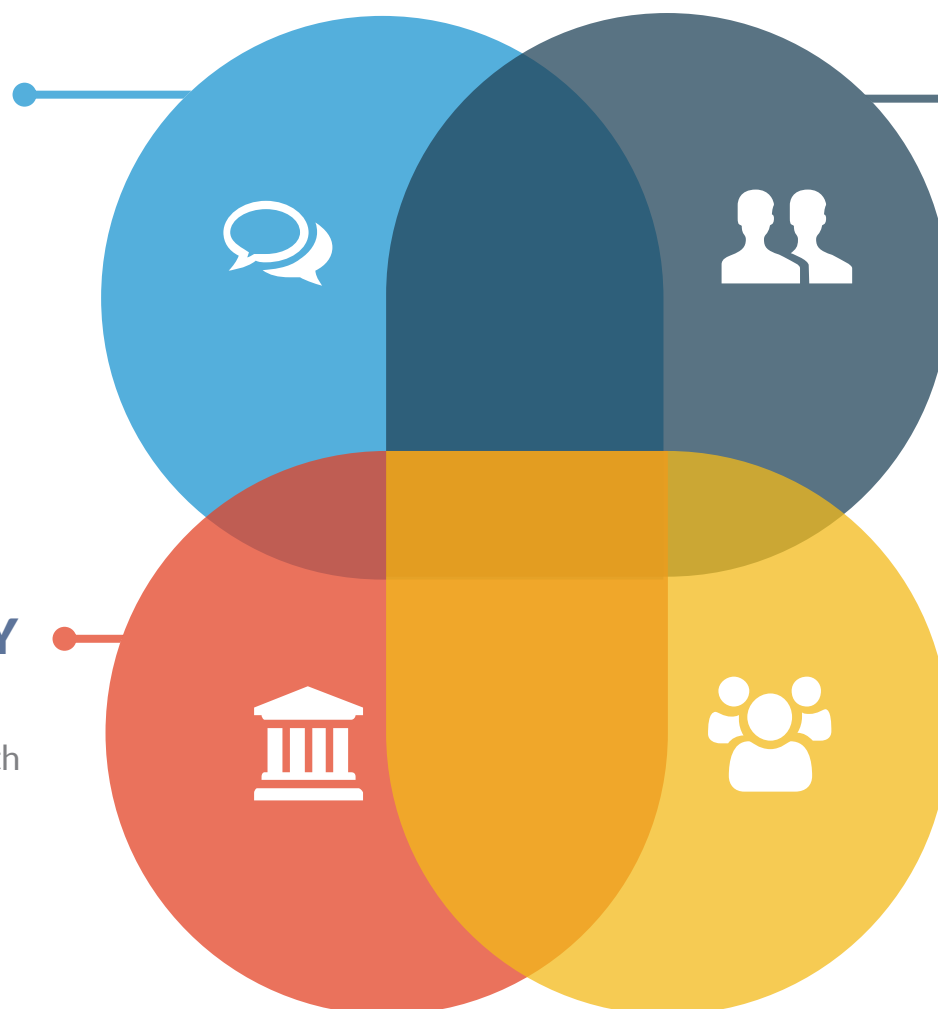
# TYPES OF STUDENT SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

## TO OTHER STUDENTS

One of the ways students actively engage in the classroom is through group work. Students that engaged at a high level in group work graduated college at a much higher rate than those that weren't highly engaged.<sup>1</sup>

## TO CAMPUS COMMUNITY

Students that participate in student groups report a positive association with the college community and feel more connected. Holding a part-time job on campus leads to better retention.<sup>3</sup>



## TO INSTRUCTORS

When teachers connect with students and get to understand their struggles, stories, and history on an individual level, it makes for meaningful connections that can help students be successful. Sometimes it means putting student relationships ahead of content and curriculum.<sup>2</sup>

## TO FAMILY

When students feel pressure from family members to return home frequently and provide resources of time or money to the family, their GPA tends to suffer.<sup>4</sup>



1) Wolfe J., & Gold, S.C. (2017). Predicting business college retention and persistence: Game-based behavioral indicators. *Academy of Business Journal*, 1, 7-25..

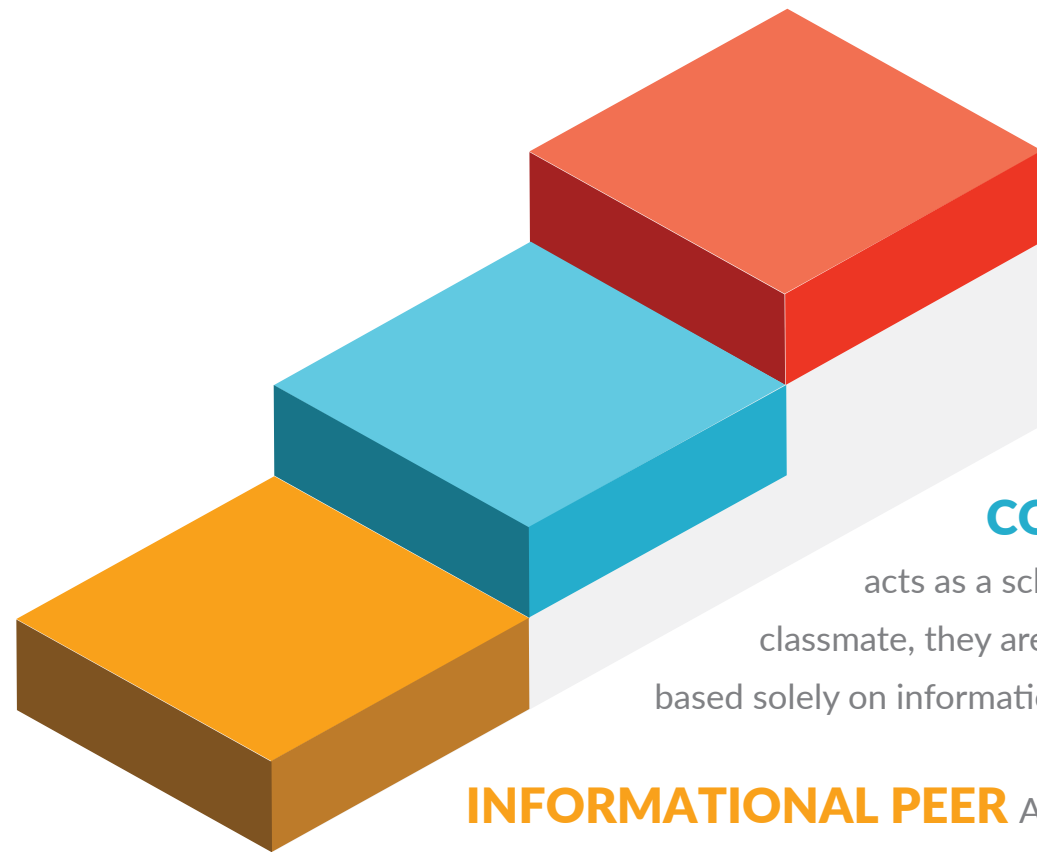
2) Figueroa, I. (2014). The value of connectedness in inclusive teaching. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, (140), 45-49. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.20112>.

3) Astin, A. W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 25(4), 297-308.

4) Wilson, S. P., Gore, J. S., Renfro, A., Blake, M., Muncie, E., & Treadway, J. (2018). The tether to home, university connectedness, and the Appalachian student. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 20(1), 139-160. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1521025116652635>

# TYPES OF STUDENT FRIENDSHIPS

The type of connection that is forged between students can vary from simply sharing information with each other in the classroom to being friends outside of the college classroom.



**SPECIAL PEER** A special peer is considered to be a classmate who is also a friend outside school.<sup>1</sup> Students enrolled in a course with all special peers reported a higher level of classroom connectedness than students enrolled in a course with both information peers and special peers.<sup>2</sup>

**COLLEGIAL PEER** A collegial peer is considered to be a classmate who also acts as a school-based friend.<sup>1</sup> When students report at least one quality relationship with a classmate, they are more connected to the class as a whole than with students with relationships based solely on information.<sup>2</sup>

**INFORMATIONAL PEER** An information peer is considered to be an acquaintance with whom communication is focused on the exchange of school-related information.<sup>1</sup> Students enrolled in a course with information peers reported the lowest levels of classroom connectedness.<sup>2</sup>

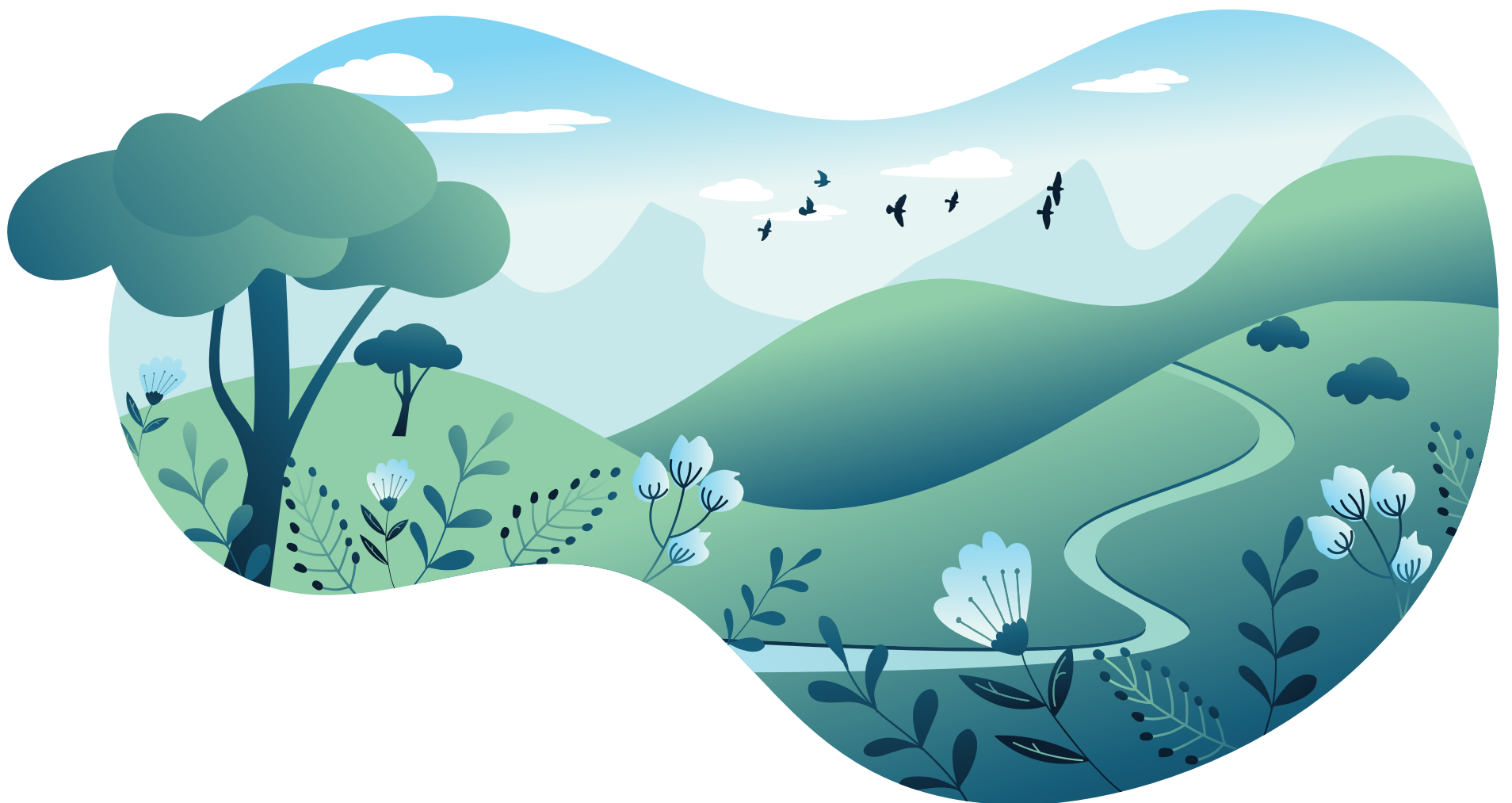


1) Kram, K. E., & Isabella, L. A. (1985). Mentoring alternatives: The role of peer relationships in career development. *Academy of management Journal*, 28(1), 110-132.

2) Sollitto, M., Johnson, Z. D., & Myers, S. A. (2013). Students' perceptions of college classroom connectedness, assimilation, and peer relationships. *Communication Education*, 62(3), 318-331. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03634523.2013.788726>

# WHAT IS ECOLOGICAL TETHERING?

Ecological tethering is where the student misses the physical aspects of home, such as lakes, mountains, or cityscapes. Fear of success, isolation, and low study times all led to lower GPAs in students that reported ecological tethering.<sup>1</sup>



**Students that experienced ecological tethering reported the highest levels of isolation, the highest fear of success, the lowest levels of study time, and the lowest GPAs.<sup>1</sup>**



1) Wilson, S. P., Gore, J. S., Renfro, A., Blake, M., Muncie, E., & Treadway, J. (2018). The tether to home, university connectedness, and the Appalachian student. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 20(1), 139-160. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1521025116652635>



# TWO TYPES OF ATHLETE MOTIVATION

1

## TASK-ORIENTED ATHLETES

Task-oriented athletes judge success primarily against personal standards of skill and mastery of goals and tend to have:

- Higher athletic social connectedness
- Better well-being

Coaches, athletic directors, and student-athletes can encourage athletes to focus on their own mastery of skills and goals (task motivation) and not judge their success by comparing themselves to



2

## EGO-ORIENTED ATHLETES

Ego-oriented athletes that are motivated by ego define success by being better than someone else and tend to have:

- Lower athletic social connectedness
- Lower well-being

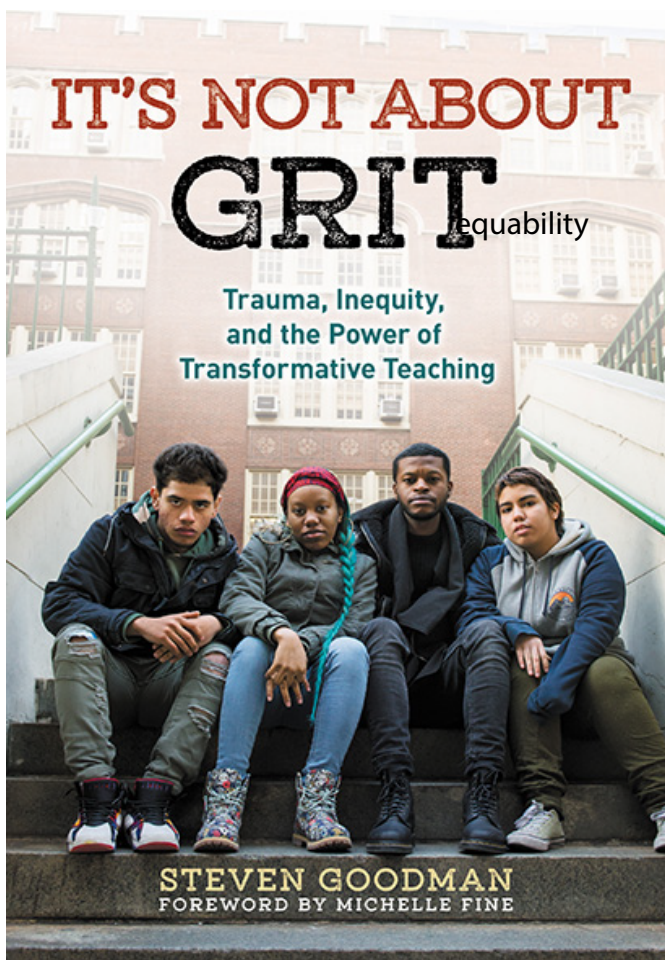
other athlete's accomplishments and success (ego motivation). The well-being of an athlete is positively impacted by being socially, emotionally, and psychologically connected to their teammates.



# EQUABILITY AWARENESS

## TRANSFORMATIVE TEACHING

In his book, **It's Not about Grit: Trauma, Inequality, and the Power of Transformative Teacher**, Goodman suggests that teachers need to better job teaching to the whole student instead of the viewing them as only students in the classroom. He provides a background about the issues and includes pertinent research while outlining how to practice transformative and culturally sustaining pedagogy.



Transformative teaching means bringing an understanding of the whole student into the classroom including both their school and out-of-school community experiences, and the systemic interconnections between housing, health, and education that shape them.

Sometimes, this means not promoting grit as a way to achieve high academic standards but teachers should instead be fighting for systemic changes in:

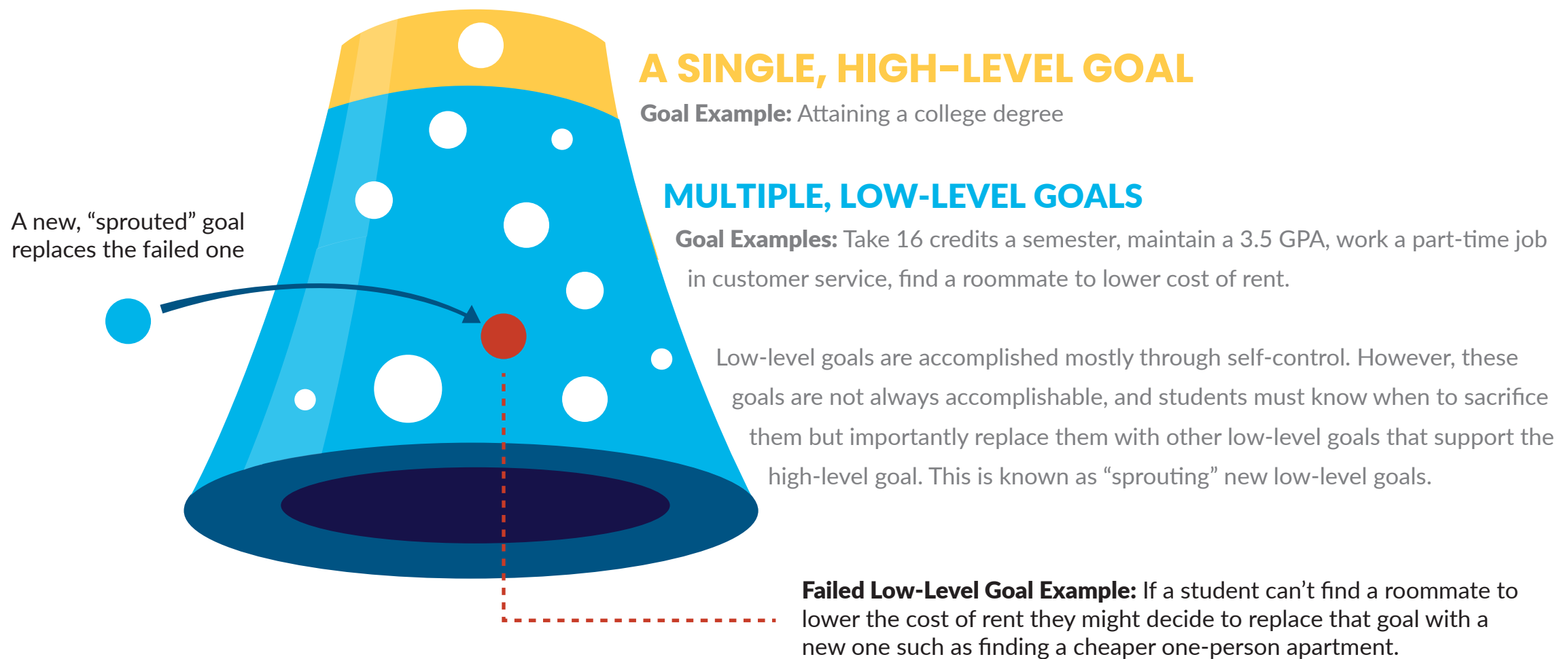
- Health and housing
- Police and juvenile justice
- Immigration
- Gender and identity
- Foster care
- Child welfare

**Goodman encourages all teachers to find compassion for students by being perceptive to the issues which impact their abilities to excel in school.**



# GOAL HIERARCHY

## USING GRIT AND SELF-CONTROL



# FIXED MINDSET VS GROWTH MINDSET

Which one sounds more like you?



- ◆ Failure is the limit of my abilities.
- ◆ I'm either good at it or I'm not.
- ◆ My abilities are unchanging.
- ◆ I can either do it or I can't.
- ◆ My potential is predetermined.
- ◆ When I'm frustrated, I give up.
- ◆ I stick to what I know.



- ◆ Failure is an opportunity to grow.
- ◆ I can learn to do anything I want.
- ◆ Challenges help me to grow.
- ◆ My effort and attitude determine my abilities.
- ◆ Feedback is constructive.
- ◆ I am inspired by the success of others.
- ◆ I like to try new things.



# GRIT STRATEGY: **BECOME A PEER TUTOR**

The success of peer tutoring for both tutors and tutees is likely from incorporated instructional features such as frequent opportunities to respond, increased time on-task, and regular and immediate feedback.”<sup>1</sup>

By engaging in the tutoring process, **the tutors themselves learn the rules of persistence to task completion** and this learning can generalize to the tutor’s own performance in his or her academic classes.



**Students can be trained to tutor on-task behaviors rather than academic content.** The act of serving as a tutor can result in enhancement of one’s social status with peers.



1) Polirstok, S. (2017). Strategies to improve academic achievement in secondary school students: Perspectives on grit and mindset. SAGE Open, 7(4), <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244017745111>

# GRIT STRATEGY: **CREATE A STUDY-GROUP**

Create a study-group outside of class, where students will spend more time on academics and less time socializing.

## **Create or join a study-group**

College students that focus on other people, by valuing them and serving them tend to reflect more of the purpose of life, which connects to having broad, long-term goals, called grit.

The most influential predictor of grit was having an “others-focused purpose”.

Three meaningful ways to build grit:

- 1.) Have an “others-focused purpose”**
- 2.) Spend time doing academic activities**
- 3.) Create a success-focused purpose**



1) Saunders-Scott, D., Braley, M., & Stennes-Spidahl, N. (2018). Traditional and psychological factors associated with academic success: Investigating best predictors of college retention. *Motivation and Emotion*, 42(4), 459-465. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-017-9660-4>

2) Tips retrieved from: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relievers/art-20047257>

# GRIT STRATEGY: **DIGITAL LEARNING STORIES**

Personal narratives by students that describe how they have overcome obstacles, triumphed over adversity, and attained a level of success.

**Learning stories typically include**

- (a) a discussion of a problem or project,**
- (b) the learning challenges and the degree of difficulty the problem/project presents**
- (c) the actions the student chose that kept him or her engaged and working in the face of difficulty**
- (d) the way success with this problem/project was assessed, and**
- (e) the extent to which the student was successful.**

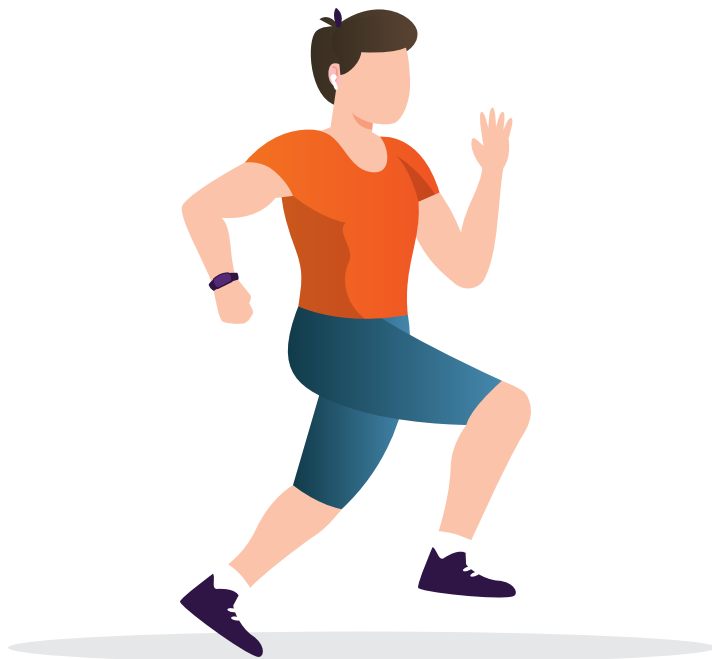


# GRIT STRATEGY: **LOWER STRESS**

Students with high-stress levels dropped out at the highest rate after one and a half years of college.<sup>1</sup>

## **Get active**

Virtually any form of physical activity can act as a stress reliever. Even if you're not an athlete or you're out of shape, exercise can still be a good stress reliever.<sup>2</sup>



## **Laugh more**

When you laugh, it not only lightens your mental load but also causes positive physical changes in your body. Laughter fires up and then cools down your stress response.<sup>2</sup>



## **Connect with others**

When you're stressed and irritable, your instinct may be to isolate yourself. Instead, reach out to family and friends and make social connections.<sup>2</sup>



1) Saunders-Scott, D., Braley, M., & Stennes-Spidahl, N. (2018). Traditional and psychological factors associated with academic success: Investigating best predictors of college retention. *Motivation and Emotion*, 42(4), 459-465. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-017-9660-4>

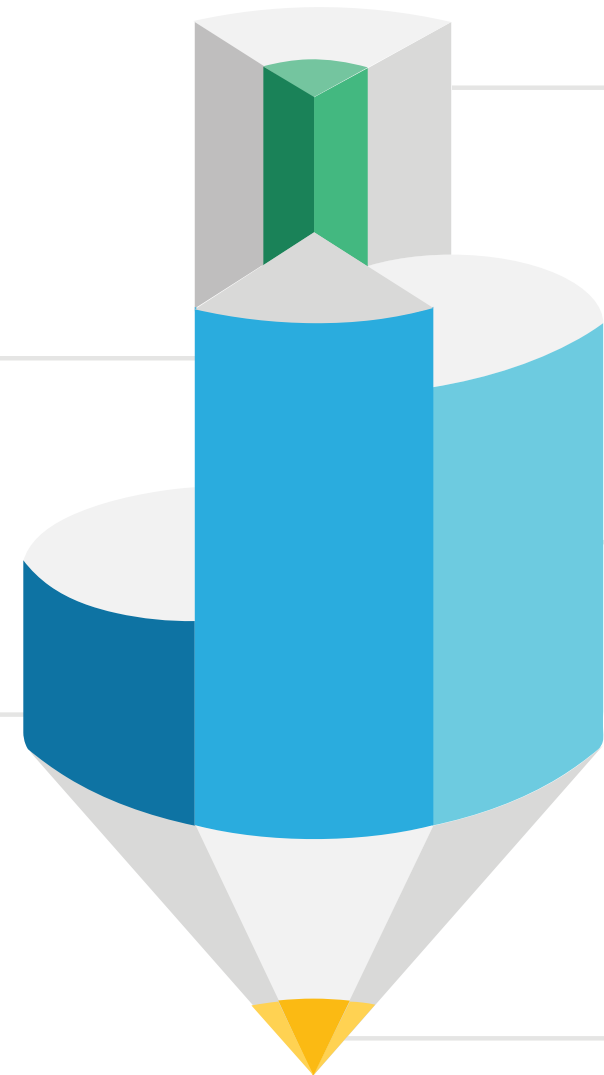
2) Tips retrieved from: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relievers/art-20047257>



# GRIT STRATEGY: **SELF-EVALUATION**

Interventions using self-evaluation have been widely reported as useful in **strengthening proacademic and prosocial behaviors.**

**The students rates his or her own performance independently** and matches those ratings to those collected simultaneously by the teacher.



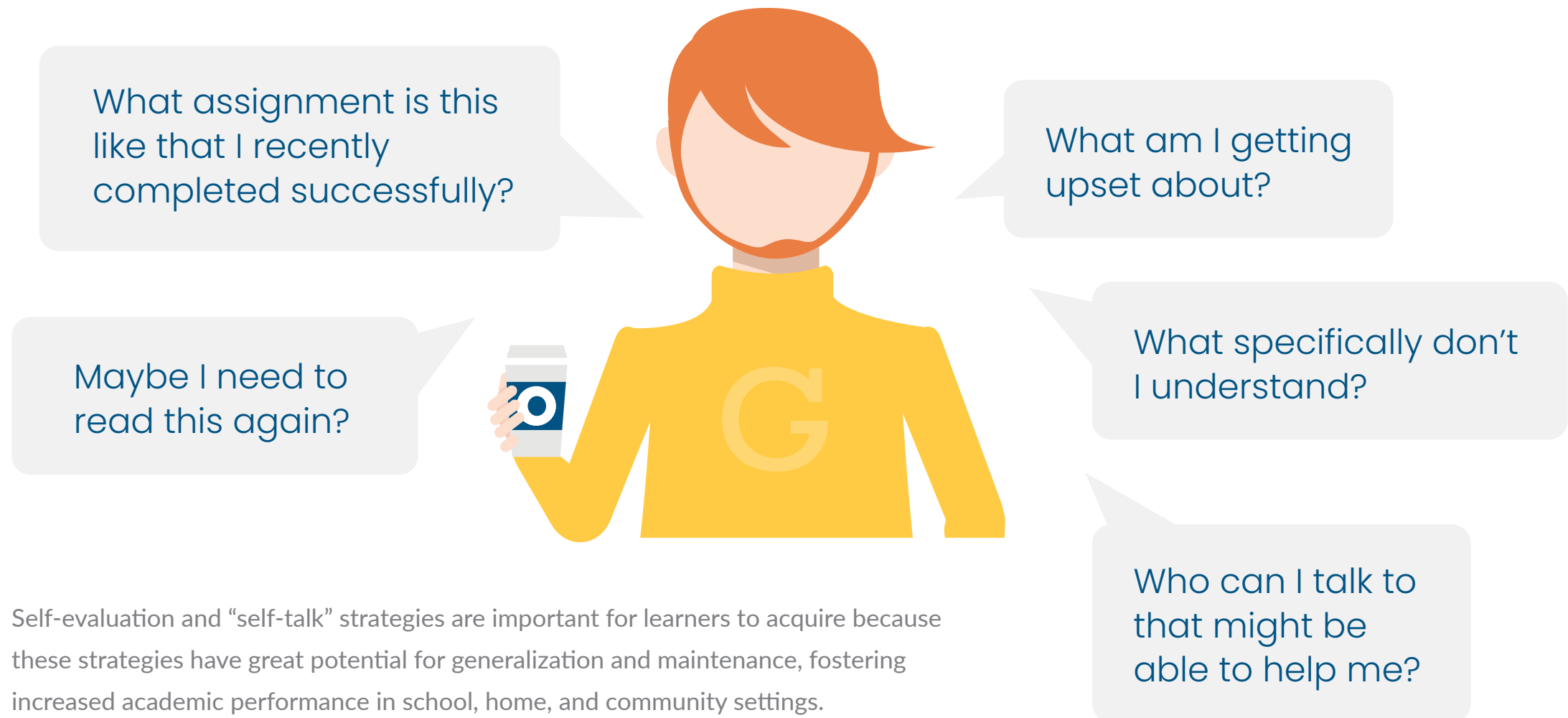
**3 Bonus points or other reinforcers can be earned** for the degree of match between the adolescent and the teacher, thereby increasing the motivation to evaluate one's own performance.

**4** This student/teacher matching component is extremely valuable in helping the adolescent to **understand the teacher's perspective.**

Self-evaluation can help the student begin to think differently about himself or herself as a learner, **moving toward a more open or growth mindset.**



# GRIT STRATEGY: “SELF-TALK”



Self-evaluation and “self-talk” strategies are important for learners to acquire because these strategies have great potential for generalization and maintenance, fostering increased academic performance in school, home, and community settings.



# GET CONNECTED WITH **INSTRUCTORS**

Instructors play an important role in retention when they can connect with students on a personal level.

Teaching teachers to build relationships with students may be more important than the curriculum content.<sup>2</sup>



When teachers connect with students and get to understand their struggles, stories, and history on an individual level, it makes for meaningful connections that can help students be successful.<sup>1</sup>

**For instructors to make the connection to students, they sometimes have to put the teacher and student relationship ahead of content and curriculum.<sup>1</sup>**



1) Figueroa, I. (2014). The value of connectedness in inclusive teaching. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, (140), 45-49. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.20112>

2) Astin, A. W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 25(4), 297-308.

# GET INVOLVED: **CAMPUS COMMUNITY**

Students that join social fraternities or sororities or participate in extracurricular activities are more likely to stay enrolled and not drop out.<sup>1</sup> Students that participate in student groups report a positive association with the college community and feel more connected. This positive connection within the college community leads to senior year satisfaction of the college experience.<sup>2</sup>



1) Astin, A. W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 25(4), 297-308.

2) Branand, B., Mashek, D., Wray-Lake, L., & Coffey, J. K. (2015). Inclusion of college community in the self: A longitudinal study of the role of self-expansion in students' satisfaction. *Journal of College Student Development*, 56(8), 829-844.