

## Staying Motivated

- ▶ Do you give up on schoolwork too easily?
- ▶ Do you think negative thoughts about school, yourself, and your abilities?
- ▶ Would you like to feel more confident in yourself or more optimistic about your future?
- ▶ Are you frustrated with your classes or unhappy with your grades?

*If you answered "Yes" to any of the above, it's important that you find ways to feel more confident in your abilities, and more motivated in your classes.*

We all get stuck sometimes. After all, college can be tough—and maintaining the focus, energy, and effort necessary to succeed in college can be difficult. So how do you keep going when you're feeling stressed out, discouraged, or overwhelmed? *You need to keep a positive attitude and find ways to stay motivated.*

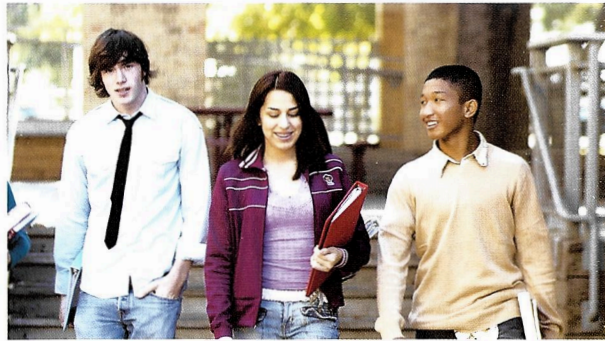
*This InfoGuide will provide you with a number of tips on how you can keep moving forward and stay positive—so that you can be successful in college, and beyond.*

## Be Positive and Goal-Oriented

**A positive attitude will get you far in life. Here are some tips for staying positive, even when the going gets tough.**

### Surround yourself with positive people

We come across all kinds of people in life. Some are positive influences in our lives and some are not. Avoid people who are negative or critical. Instead, choose to be around people who support and encourage you. These are the people who will help you achieve your goals and realize your dreams.



### Set goals

Goals provide direction. They help you decide where you want to go and what you need to do to get there. Create both short-term goals (e.g., get a B on next week's math test) and long-term goals (e.g., graduate with a 3.0+ GPA).

### Focus on your strengths

You are a unique individual with many interests, talents, strengths, and weaknesses. While it's good to work on your shortcomings and weaknesses, your strengths are where your future lies. Pursue your interests, and look for ways to develop your talents and strengths.

## Learn to Cope with Difficulty

**Being able to maintain a positive outlook while dealing with difficult situations will help you succeed in college—and in life.**

### Practice positive self-talk

We all have an "inner voice," and when things aren't going well, that voice can be negative and critical. You can help yourself stay positive and motivated just by changing your "self talk."

Replace "*I'm terrible at math*" with "*I'm smart – I can do this.*" Changing how you think will change how you feel and act.

### Learn to accept negative feedback

Whether it's a bad grade on a paper, a low test score, or classmates rejecting your ideas for a group project, it can be tough to accept that others consider your work less-than-stellar.

In these cases, it's important to remember that comments on your work are not judgments about *you*.

Try to keep a growth mindset. Remember that all feedback (even when it's less than encouraging) is an opportunity to grow. Don't argue, get defensive, or take anyone's comments as a measurement of your worth.



### Have confidence in yourself

College coursework should be challenging, and you should expect it to be difficult at times. Just know that you can rise to the challenge.

## Motivational Tips

**These motivational tips will help you stay engaged and ready for a challenge.**

### **Use motivating “self-notes”**

Write motivating words, ideas, and/or quotes on sticky notes. Put these notes anywhere you’re likely to see them.

### **Visualize success**

For example, before the day of a test, close your eyes and imagine yourself confidently walking into the classroom and answering the questions correctly. *Imagining a scene like this is called visualization.* This is a technique used by students, athletes, and leaders around the world.

### **Turn failures into successes**

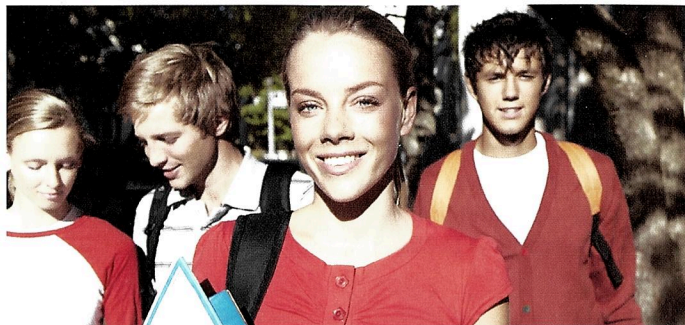
When something doesn’t go well, learn from the experience, and use that knowledge to do better next time.

### **Hit refresh**

When you’re feeling overwhelmed, walk away. Listen to music or have lunch with a friend—then return ready to tackle your work.

### **Figure out what motivates you**

Turn what competes with your schoolwork into a motivator. For example, get a paper done early so you can hang out with friends, or reward yourself with video game time once your homework is done.



## Don’t Give Up

**Most successful people have faced failure and doubt at some point in their lives, but like the people below, they found the motivation to keep going—they refused to give up.**

Michael Jordan was cut from the high school varsity basketball team his sophomore year.

Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper editor because he had “no good ideas.”

JK Rowling received rejections from twelve publishers before her first “Harry Potter” book was accepted for publication.

Raised in extreme poverty, Oprah Winfrey didn’t own a pair of shoes until she was six. She is now a billionaire.

Thomas Edison once had a teacher tell him he was too stupid to learn anything.

Winston Churchill failed the sixth grade.

*“If we did all the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astonish ourselves.”*

Thomas Edison



**WOODBURN PRESS**

**Habits for Success InfoGuide**

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865-19