

I'm not a bot























[illegible]

of effort, over time is the key ingredient to success. Passion can be developed - beginning with interest. If one is willing to practice and get better, passion can grow. One's work is not necessarily a flame in the heart, a God-given calling. It can develop over time. She makes the obvious analogy to finding a mate. Growth Mindset -> optimistic self talk -> perseverance over adversity. Her discussion of the difference between deliberate practice - which is effortful - and "flow" - which is effortless. Lots of deliberate practice leads to increasing expertise of flow. The hugely important balance between being challenging and supportive that parents, coaches, mentors must find to develop grit in others. My challenges to her position, as I understood it: I found her grit scale based on self-assessment to be less than adequate. We tend to compare ourselves to others we know, and in each judgment, I questioned "compared to what?" It is easy to have over-inflated, or under-appreciated views of oneself. While I appreciate her advocacy of deliberate practice, I felt she under-appreciated the value of constant continuous, if not necessarily focused practice as an element of grit. Staying with something for years, even if not particularly focused in one's practice toward becoming great or mastering the activity, also demands commitment and grit. I appreciate that quality because that's me in most of what I do - golf, swimming, playing the fiddle, triathlons, and more. I believe there is grit in staying with the habit of practice and pursuing one's activity, through thick and thin, even if one doesn't have the energy to truly focus on effortful, deliberate practice. She also doesn't mention the down sides of very gritty people who through their grit pursue excellence in one activity, but miss the joys of a wide variety of activities. She doesn't discuss the opportunity costs of being a "paragon of grit." I wish she'd addressed the grit required to overcome bureaucratic or cultural intransigence. There is a special type of tenacity and perseverance that is necessary to get any large organization to change or adopt a new program, unless the organization is forced to change by powerful outside forces. This type of grit requires a level of patience and emotional intelligence that is not addressed in her formula, which focuses mostly on personal performance. Many of the changes that have had the most dramatic effects on peoples lives have come because of the passion, grit, and perseverance of a few people in the face of cultural and bureaucratic opposition - eg, civil rights movement, women's suffrage, gay rights, establishment of US SDCOM, etc. I know some people who are not at all achievement oriented, but are very relationship oriented and are very happy and well adjusted. For example, the amazing woman I'm married to. I appreciate (more than most I believe) the advantages of grit, but I also appreciate that at least in some cases, it may be over-rated. Duckworth does address in her conclusion that grit may not be the most important character virtue, but it is very much an American model to judge a people, organization, and cultural success largely by where and how they have excelled in measurable or competitive activities. I accept that family, relationships, and sense of community may be more important to some. Here is an interesting article by NPR in which Angela Duckworth responds to criticisms to Grit, and an article in The Atlantic Monthly with the provocative title "Is Grit Overrated?" --- Below is a brief summary of the book, chapter by chapter for my review when I return to this book, which I expect to many times. Chapter 1 -Showing Up: Reminded me of Woody Allen's line that 90% of life is simply showing up. She makes the point that scores on her grit self-assessment test bore no relationship to IQ nor to great resumes, which often seem to reflect innate talent. And yet grit scores were much more closely aligned to success in completing arduous training programs (1st year West Point, Army SF training) than most other selection criteria. Grit is different from talent. Talent is potential. What we do with it depends on grit. Chapter 2 - Distracted by Talent: This chapter reiterates what I've read in Mindset and Bounce that though we have a bias toward natural talent, this distracts us from what really makes a difference - the grit to make it mean something. Effort counts twice. Chapter 3 - Effort Counts Twice: Unlike Dweck's Mindset, she does give talent its due, but noted that effort and grit count for much more. Talent is merely potential. Grit is what actualizes it. She has a graph that says that Talent x Effort = Skill, and Skill x Effort=Achievement. Effort figures into the calculation twice. Chapter 4 - How Gritty are you?: Grit is more about stamina - consistency over time - than intensity. She offers a version of her "grit scale" that she developed for her study at West Point. It is a self-assessment. She distinguishes between passion and enduring devotion - between enthusiasm, which she says is common, and endurance which she says is rare. This chapter introduces us to Pete Carroll of the Seattle Seahawks and his philosophy toward grit. Also she talks about focus on a top-level goal and the need to set mid-level and low-level goals to reach that top-level goal. She also notes the need to have the wisdom to change low and mid-level goals if they aren't getting one to that top-level goal. This is where grit becomes problematic and requires judgment - to know when to give up on intermediate level goals in the interest of the top-level goal. "The higher level the goal, the more it makes sense to be stubborn." 74 She also offered an assessment of some of the greatest "geniuses" in history and found that there were four qualities that distinguished the best from the rest: two were reflections of passion, two were reflections of perseverance. Chapter 5 Grit Grows: She discusses how grit evolves and grows as we get older, "...that indeed, grit grows as we figure out our life philosophy, learn to dust ourselves off after rejection and disappointment." PART 2 Growing Grit from the Inside Out. Four qualities that mature "paragons of grit" have demonstrated that led to great achievement: Interest , Practice, a sense of Purpose, Hope. Chapter 6 - Interest: First one must have some interest in something, and that interest serves as the seed which over time, with practice and commitment, can grow into passion. I like how this chapter reinforces a great line from Mike Rowe (of Dirty Jobs fame) who argued AGAINST the idea of following your passion - advice which stalls so many people who are looking for something worthwhile. He said, "Don't follow your passion, but take it with you wherever you go." Duckworth says, "Passion for your work is a little bit of discovery, followed by a lot of development, and then a lifetime of deepening." 103 Chapter 7: Practice: As in Mindset and Bounce, she emphasizes not just quantity of time on task, but quality of time on task, and the importance of deliberate practice - reaching toward "stretch goals." She makes the point that deliberate practice takes effort and is often uncomfortable - sometimes supremely effortful. She says that most "experts" can only handle 1 hour of deliberate practice before needing a break. She advocates studying the science of practice and offers suggestions. A fascinating part of this chapter is where she contrasts deliberate practice, which she identifies with grit, with flow. "Deliberate practice is carefully planned, and flow is spontaneous. Because deliberate practice requires working where challenges exceed skill, and flow is more commonly experienced when challenge and skill are in balance...deliberate practice is exceptionally effortful, and flow is by definition, effortless" 129 Chapter 8- Purpose: After people find something they love to do and enjoy practicing it in order to develop their skill, most find that to stay motivated over time, they need a greater good that pursuing that interest serves. Most start out with a self-centered purpose (this feels good and is fun) to an other-centered purpose (this activity can serve a greater good.) "Purpose required a second revelation: 'I personally can make a difference.'" 163 Chapter 9 - Hope: She identifies two kinds of hope: 1. Hope without responsibility - a yearning for a sunnier tomorrow - where the onus is on God or the Universe to make things better. 2. Hope with responsibility - grit depends on the expectation/belief that our own efforts can improve our future. "The Hope that gritty people have has nothing to do with luck and everything to do with getting up again." 169 She talks about suffering where we have no sense of control, which can lead to learned helplessness, and contrasts that with learned optimism. She gives examples of people who are taught a fixed, pessimistic, fatalistic view of life, versus those who are taught that they can overcome adversity with their own efforts. Her "paragons of grit" explain events and setbacks optimistically. Quite a bit of this chapter is about Carol Dweck and Growth Mindset and how attribution of success to effort rather than fate or talent are key qualities of grit. Hope: "Just keep working hard and learning, and it will all work out." 187 PART 3: Growing Grit from the Outside In Chapter 10- Parenting for Grit: The main points from this chapter are that in order to develop grit in a child, the parent must 1) find the proper balance between challenging and supporting the child, 2) that surrogate parents, in the "ecosystem" of adults that influence a persons life, can play a huge role in challenging and supporting a child. One of the main examples she offers is of Steve Young, whose parents epitomized the "tough" and the "love" in "tough love." Parents must stress and exemplify the importance of what it means to "commit." Chapter 11 - The playing fields of grit: She stresses that activities that develop grit in young people should involve an adult in charge -ideally one who is not a parent, but also is wise, challenging and supportive. And these activities should be designed to cultivate interest, practice, purpose, and hope. These activities could be anything from dance, to the arts, to sports - doing hard things that interest them. These extra-curricular activities need to be structured, skill-focused, and (wise) adult-guided. And she says, these activities need to be pursued for at least 2 years. There is too much temptation to quit after 1 year. Stay for at least 2. She emphasizes purposeful, continuous commitment to certain types of activities (in high school) versus sporadic efforts in diverse areas. "Following through on our commitment while we grow up both requires grit and at the same time builds it." 233 Grit takes practice. She refers to how she grew up in her family with "The Hard Thing Rule" and she strongly advocates using some version it to develop grit in children. Parents must comply and lead by example. The Hard Thing Rule has 3 parts: 1. Everyone has to do a hard thing. 2.You can quit, but not until the season is over, the tuition payment is up, or some other natural stopping point has arrived. 3. You get to pick your own hard thing. Chapter 12 - A Culture of Grit: "The bottom line on culture and grit is: If you want to be grittier, find a gritty culture and join it. If you're a leader, and you want the people in your organization to be grittier, create a gritty culture." 245 She says you must make a categorical - complete - commitment to your culture - not to be half-way, or a sort-of member. She refers to the reciprocal effect of a team's particular culture on the person who joins it. When we become part of a great, or gritty culture, we ask ourselves "Who am I? What does a person like me do in a situation like this?" "Thinking of ourselves as a person who overcomes great adversity often leads to behavior that confirms that self-conception." 252. And she talks about how West Point has evolved from an "attritional model" to a "developmental model." Grit is about "finishing strong." Anyone can begin strong. Chapter 13- Conclusion: Grit goes hand in hand with happiness and well-being, no matter how she measures it. She addresses what having "too much grit" might mean, and notes that grit may not be the most important thing in one's character, but perhaps is the most important thing for achieving one's goals. She says that "character is plural" - there are many virtues that encompass it. She breaks character down, as Aristotle did, into intra-personal, interpersonal, and intellectual, and places grit in the intra-personal category. Some useful quotes from Grit - with page numbers from the hardcover edition I grew less and less convinced that talent was destiny and more and more intrigued by the returns generated by effort. 20 There is a gap between potential and its actualization. 21 During the next several years of teaching, I grew less and less convinced that talent was destiny and more and more intrigued by the returns generated by effort. 20 "With everything perfect," Nietzsche wrote, "we do not ask how it came to be." Instead, "we rejoice in the present fact as though it came out of the ground by magic." 39 In other word, mythologizing natural talent lets us all off the hook. 39 Most of us become more conscientious, confident, caring, and calm with life experience. 86 To do anything well, you have to overextend yourself. Necessity is the mother of adaptation. 87 Lectures don't have half the effect of consequences. 89 Interests are not discovered through introspection. Instead, interests are triggered by interaction with the outside world. 104 Interests thrive when there is a crew of encouraging supporters, including parents, teachers, coaches and peers. 105 Half of grit is perseverance...but...nobody works doggedly on something they don't find intrinsically interesting. 106 For parents: Before hard work comes play. 106 (Quoting Jeff Bezos' mother) "It is not important that I understand everything. It's important that I listen." For the beginner, novelty is anything that hasn't been encountered before. For the expert, novelty is nuance. 114 Deliberate practice is behavior, and flow is an experience. 131 Deliberate practice is for preparation, and flow is for performance. 132. Gritty people do more deliberate practice and experience more flow. 131 There was a small but growing body of scientific evidence that happiness wasn't just the consequence of performing well at work, it might also be an important cause. 177 Following through on hard things teaches a young person powerful, transferable lessons. 236 ...without directly experiencing the connection between effort and reward, animals, whether they're rats or people, default to laziness. 240 (Quoting Dan Chambliss) "The real way to become a great swimmer is to join a great team."246 (Quoting Dan Chambliss) "There's a hard way to get grit and an easy way. The hard way is to do it by yourself. The easy way is to use conformity - the basic human drive to fit in - because if you're a round a lot of people who are gritty, you're going to act grittier." 247 Quoting George Bernard Shaw: "The true joy in life is to be a force of fortune instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy." 258 To be gritty is to invest, day after week after year, in challenging practice. To be gritty is to fall down seven times, and rise eight. expand. moreLit Guide Menu Duckworth writes because she believes in "the power of grit to help you achieve your potential." Duckworth argues that grit—the passion and perseverance for long-term goals—matters more than talent. She proposes that grit can develop from the inside out and from the outside in. She explains that grittier people tend to be happier and more emotionally healthy. People with grit keep going in the face of adversity, staying focused on a goal they find interesting and purposeful. Still, although grit is important, Duckworth acknowledges that it is not the only important quality. Goodness is important, too. By the close of the book, the reader has explored the mystery of success, guided by Duckworth, who has established herself as both an expert and a friend. She shared the perplexing questions that propelled her interest and took the reader to the offices of noted psychologists, celebrities, and professional athletes. "This book has been my way of taking you out for a coffee and telling you what I know," she writes. In this concluding chapter, she continues to share her expertise and does so with encouragement and respect for the reader. She believes in the reader's ability to develop grit and help to grow it in others. Her optimism is believable because she is an expert and has shown how to grow grit in manageable ways. Most important, Duckworth has modeled grit throughout her quest to understand success better. Meet your new favorite all-in-one writing tool!Easily correct or dismiss spelling & grammar errors and learn to format citations correctly. Check your paper before you turn it in.Meet your new favorite all-in-one writing tool!Easily correct or dismiss spelling & grammar errors and learn to format citations correctly. Check your paper before you turn it in.