S.M.I.L.E. (Success Means Initiating Life Everyday)

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Buffalo State College
State University of New York
International Center for Studies in Creativity

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A Project in the Creative Studies Program
by
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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
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Dates of Approval:

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Project Advisor: J. Michael Fox

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Candidate
Abstract

Motivation exists as an important aspect of our lives. Motivation comes in two main forms, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. No matter the type motivation employed, at some point we all experience motivation to help achieve our goals and in order to reach success in any capacity. The use of Creative Problem Solving (CPS) can also help in the process of motivation and succeeding. When the going gets tough, it is imperative to SMILE – Success Means Initiating Life Everyday.

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Date
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Although my motivation and success is due to my motivation and determination in myself in fighting to become anything I wanted to be, and to show others who doubt me that I can do anything, I do owe my gratitude to other people in my life for supporting me. Sometimes when I felt like giving up as a result to some obstacles in my life, I looked to the people I trusted the most for support and advice.

My brother Ronald D. has always been my number one person in the world. When I needed someone to talk to, he was always there and we continue to share some great memories together. He is not only my brother, but also most importantly, my friend. When other people walk in and out of my life or disappoint me, my brother remains my right and left hand man. Thank you and I love you.

Despite growing up in a single household with my mother, I owe both my parents and the rest of my family my gratitude. Sometimes my mom and I may have experienced ups and downs in our relationship, but I am more than grateful for her. Her tough love and support made me the woman I am today, and I know at any moment I can always count on her. I love my mom. My dad on the other hand, has always given me one thing most people cannot: respect, love, an ear to listen, and advice without judgment. He might not be the perfect dad but I still appreciate him. He is the reason I think I am a princess and the most important person in the world. I love my dad. Finally, the rest of my family supports me and loves me throughout every step of my life, and I love them and appreciate everything.

My family supports me, however, my Uncle Freddy really is unbelievable. He is the only person on my dad’s side with a bachelor’s degree, and has been with me every step of the way. I
appreciate him helping me find the best high school to get out of my bad neighborhood, and helping me with college. I appreciate the upmost support given by him. I love him.

My boyfriend Brian T. is an incredible person. We have been together for five years, since freshmen year of college. Despite our ups and downs in the past, I can count on him for anything. He treats me great and knows how to make me smile always. I love him.

Brian D. was my boss in Residence Life for three years, but has known me since my freshman year of college. During these three years, he serves as a mentor and most importantly a friend. He gives great advice and always makes time for me. I appreciate all he has done for me and other people around me.

To my Creative Studies family, I appreciate everyone in the International Center for Studies in Creativity especially Dr. Jo Yudess, Dr. Jeffrey Zacko-Smith, and Dr. Mike Fox. I am very pleased and grateful for the faculty in the department and for the friends I have made in the program.

Last, I must acknowledge friendship. I have come across some interesting friends since college. Some are still like family, while others were in my life to teach me lessons. All the relationships shared with my friends have made me a better person because they each taught me something. Thank you.

“Sometimes the girl who has been there for everyone else needs someone to be there for her.”

- Unknown
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Introduction

"Logic will get you from A to Z; imagination will get you everywhere." - Albert Einstein

The achievement of success and making progress in life occurs as a result of an individual’s motivation. Reviewing the background of motivation concludes motivation consists of two main parts, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation involves something or another individual motivating themselves through rewards or some kind of gratitude. While intrinsic motivation examines self and an individual feeling good about the outcome. No matter the type of motivation employed, at some point all individuals experience motivation to help them achieve their goals. Success comes in different forms whether excelling in a career or in the work place, working at a dream job, excelling academically, losing weight, getting married, etc. In addition, sometimes the lack of motivation and failure leads to an individual unveiling fear, and second-guessing themselves. However, failing remains nonexistent if an individual tries until they succeed because an individual only fail when they do nothing. The use of Creative Problem Solving (CPS) can also help in the process of motivation and succeeding. In the words of Winston Churchill, “Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.” When the going gets tough, it is imperative to SMILE – Success Means Initiating Life Everyday.
Statement of Need

Individuals sometimes lose sight on the important aspirations and elements in their lives that they want to achieve, and fail to make a difference in their own lives and in others. The antidote to any failure relies on an individual’s motivation. Consequently, building a bridge from the start line to the finish line create challenges, some more than others, because each individual’s life consist of different support systems and knowledge, but motivation, especially self, empowers achievement. Anyone can make it with motivation and determination, but not if they themselves do not understand that anything is possible. Some people experience more disadvantages than others. Some examples include race and ethnicity, the neighborhood you grew up in, growing up in a single parent household, etc. Whatever a individual’s background may consist of, impossible should never be the reason because I’m possible is written in the word.

S.M.I.L.E. stands for Success Means Initiating Life Everyday. Observing freshmen in college, high school students, and individuals who never attended college or made their life useful shows sometimes individuals rely heavily on extrinsic motivation and forget about intrinsic motivation or motivation in general. Also, some individuals find it acceptable to fail and give up because of the morals bestowed upon them, low confidence in themselves, and the influential bad leaders. Unfortunately, this cycle occurs continuously until someone steps in and/or reminds the individual anything is possible. In addition, some individuals forget that it is acceptable for others to not always support them or send them in the right direction, however if they themselves believe that they can do something then nothing else should be a concern. As a result, some individuals need a self-help book for guidance or to understand how to find motivation. In addition, the FourSight Model, creativity, Creative Problem Solving and its tools
can help an individual with success and motivation. It is acceptable to live life but never forget any dreams and/or goals. But if all else fails, remember these words:

**Try Again**

If at first you don't succeed
Dust yourself off and try again
You can dust it off and try again.

– Aaliyah

The question remains, what is the importance of motivation and how can you apply it to your life?
Literature Review

What is Motivation?

Motivation is essential. As Amabile once quoted, “People will be the most creative when they feel motivated primarily by the interest, enjoyment, satisfaction and challenge of the work itself – and not by external pressure” (Reis, 2008). As Beck (1983) explains, because motivation describes an individual’s behavior to do something, and consist of many theories, while Ibrahim and Zulystiawati (2013) gives a section dedicated to definitions of motivation by researchers, a singular definition of motivation cannot be stated. However, for the purpose of this topic, Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary and Thesaurus (2006) defines motivation as “a motivating force, stimulus, or influence (p. 690). Different factors in the world motivate different people whether fear, money, success, a raise, graduation, etc. “Motivation is considered to be one of the most significant factors determining success or failure in college or in any other undertaking” (The Counseling Center, n.d.). What motivates an individual depends on their goal(s) and what they want to achieve.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

There are two types of motivation – intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation represents “motivation to do something for its own sake (it gives you joy)”, while extrinsic motivation exemplifies “motivation to do something for an external goal (i.e. money, obedience, recognition, etc.)” (Miller, Vehar, Firestien, Thurber, & Nielsen, 2011, p. 16). At some point in life, each individual in the world used the two types of motivation to progress in any age. For example, parents extrinsically and/or intrinsically motivate their child or children through the use
of money if they babysit, receive good grades in school, or complete chores. Both motivation types fall into this example because it depends on if the child is motivated intrinsically or extrinsically. Some children receive good grades because they want to excel and it makes them feel good, and some kids babysit or complete chores around the house because they want to help out their parent(s), which stands as examples of intrinsic motivation. However, other children may hate school, struggle, or just do not feel motivated so the use of money extrinsically motivates the child to achieve to receive a reward, and babysitting for a reward makes a difference sometimes because children, especially teenagers, love money and may sometimes hate babysitting just because their parent(s) told them to or they have plans.

Figure 1 demonstrates three types of motivation known as amotivation, extrinsic motivation, and intrinsic motivation. This figure shows the processes between the three human motivations, and that amotivation perceives as impersonal, extrinsic motivation perceives as external, and intrinsic motivation perceives as internal. Although Deci and Ryan (2000) explains intrinsic motivation exists as the most important motivation used, extrinsic motivation, as Figure 1 demonstrates, focus on more aspects and values that make up this motivation, such as external regulation, introjection, identification, and integration which leads to intrinsic motivation.
Figure 1: A Taxonomy of Human Motivation. This figure illustrates a categorization of three types of motivation on humans: amotivation, extrinsic motivation, and intrinsic motivation. Source: Deci & Ryan (2000, p. 61).

Examples of Motivation

Motivation may be exercised in many different situations. Some examples include in school, at work, overcoming disorders, overcoming addictions such as alcohol and drugs, fighting a disease, winning a game, etc.

Physical Climate

Physical climate stands as an important factor that impacts motivation in an individual, which Amabile’s research revealed (Miller et al., 2011). Physical climate, also known as environment or physical press, represents the place an individual surrounds himself or herself
around in order to complete a particular task, goal, or challenge. These physical climates may include, for example, the classroom, school, work, home, the bathroom, a bedroom, the grass, the hallway, a restaurant, etc. With this said, an individual’s surroundings impact their motivation and determination because depending on if their physical climate gives off positive or negative energy, and what type of energy they are motivated by, depends on the individual’s success and behavior. “Climate impacts motivation which impacts creative behavior” (Miller et al., 2011, p. 16).

**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder**

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a very serious disorder that many individuals develop and sometimes inherit. Merriam-Webster’s Medical Dictionary (2006) defines OCD as “a psychoneurotic disorder in which the patient is beset with obsessions or extreme anxiety or depression through failure to think the obsessive thoughts or perform the compelling acts” (p. 513). Up until three decades ago, OCD seemed untreatable and patients faced “a lifetime prevalence of approximately 1% to 3%” because as patients increased in age their OCD worsen (Riccardi, Timpano, & Schmidt, 2010, p. 274). As a result to this percentage and obstacle, motivation became the key factor in helping OCD patients recover from this disorder and increase their lifespan due to motivational interview techniques. A 39 year old non-Hispanic white man named Henry (the study does not give his real) who suffered from OCD due to inheriting the anxiety, underwent treatment for his disorder because Henry’s OCD affected his marriage which resulted in his wife frustrated, decreased his job performance, resulted in him “spending an average of 5 hr and 30 min in the shower when he returned home from work every
day. In addition to his daily shower ritual, Henry also spent approximately 2 hr a day in washing his hands and avoided a number of situations and objects as a result of contamination concerns” (Riccardi, Timpano, & Schmidt, 2010, p. 275). This shows that not only does OCD affect the patients severely but also take a toll over other individuals involved in OCD patients’ lives. In Henry’s situation, this study and the use of motivation deemed as important because he wanted to make his and his loved ones lives better. As a result in partaking in this treatment at the specialized anxiety-treatment clinic, Henry’s shower time decreased significantly as illustrated in Figure 2. Also, his relationship with his family and his wife improved, sexual activity with his wife improved, he became happy, and Henry started attending family gatherings and going on vacation. Although therapy helped Henry overcome his OCD, he sometimes faced drawbacks. When Henry came “into contact with flammable substances (e.g., gasoline)” it resulted in him experiencing OCD symptoms, however, he overcame this by using the cognitive behavior therapy techniques (CBT) learned and practiced in his therapy session (Riccardi, Timpano, & Schmidt, 2010, p. 280).

![Figure 2](image.png)

*Figure 2.* Results of Henry’s Treatment. This illustrates the impact the treatment sessions had on Henry’s shower time. Source: Riccardi, Timpano, & Schmidt (2010, p. 280).
Disabilities and Children

Just like individuals with disorders such as OCD patients, children with disabilities also need motivation in order to overcome their disadvantages. Majnemer (2011) defines motivation for disabled children as an intrinsic psychological force allowing children with disabilities to overcome moderate challenges in mastering skills because therapists look at motivation as a critical element and as a pediatric rehabilitation intervention (Majnemer, 2011). The lack of motivation by children with disabilities, result in them facing limitations on achievement, life roles, “past experiences, current challenges, environmental context or fear of failure”, which results in rehabilitation specialists enhancing motivation to avoid failure (Majnemer, 2011, p. 1).

School and Children

School and children exemplifies as another example of motivation. Children face extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in school. “Educators, coaches, and executives commonly use goal setting as a strategy to motivate task performance” in children (Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1994, p. 968). Goal setting involves the children creating what they would like to accomplish in school during a particular time period. Research concludes particular standards intensify a child’s interest in an uninterested task as a result of intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation (Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1994). Sometimes a child may be given an assignment to complete that the child has no interest in, however, when the teacher instructs the child to complete the assignment using a particular method or standard, this child then completes the same boring assignment with interest. In addition, children remain extrinsically motivated because “it appears that intrinsic motivation becomes weaker with each advancing grade” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.
60). As students increase their grade level, the work becomes harder, and standards and requirements become continuous. As a result, students no longer view school as fun and enjoyment to internally grow, but instead as a requirement and a need in order to advance to the next grade or excel in school.

Although as students move on to the next grade in school, decreases their intrinsic motivation, teachers can still help students find their intrinsic motivation through writing. Many students find writing as an enjoyable and meaningful experience, as a result, teachers should sometimes give their students feedback in their writing in order to help them intrinsically, but, should let their students know which assignments will undergo evaluation in advance (Baer, 2013). Writing acts as a growth mechanism for students or anyone in general if writing on their own. As Emily Dickinson once stated, “A word is dead when it is said, some say. I say it just begins to live that day”.

### Games and Children

With a changing world, children today experience an increased use of technology, and a decrease interest in school. In education, the education system does not change with the world lived in today, which explains why the new generation of students no longer take much interest in school at times and what the educational system intended to teach them (Kovacˇevic´, Minovic´, Milovanovic´, Pablos, & Starcˇevic´, D, 2013). Students today grow up with computers, phones, social networks, games, and other technology systems. As a result, Kovacˇevic´ et al. (2013) hypothesized two things, “educational games can be used as an effective teaching tool”, and “there would be difference in learning contexts regarding the students’ motivation” (p. 360). Since students focus on technology more and takes interest in that
subject, changing the educational system around the interest of this new generation can make a
difference. Results from the study with motivation, games, and students showed that both
hypotheses were correct. The Kovacˇevic´ et al. (2013) study showed that educational games can
become a teaching tool, and that alternative ways of learning helps motivation because both
results showed students accepted this project because it allowed them to use their creative skills,
learn in a different way, and that learning can be fun.

**Leadership**

If a leader does not feel motivated themselves, how can they motivate others? As Puccio,
Mance, and Murdock (2011) state“…leaders who do not pay attention to change are likely to
suffer from a range of unpleasant consequences, from incremental change that may cause some
mild discomfort to more radical change that threatens the survival of a cause, a team, or an
organization” (p. 32). In addition, leaders need to remain focus and understand the goal in order
to reach success for their team and followers. Change leaders must find intrinsic motivation and
follow the following principles to bring motivation and change as described by Fullan (2011):

- Create motivational experiences with directionally clear tasks.
- Motivational leadership; leaders that influence what happens.
- The effects of motion leadership cause positive movement. “Motion leadership
  increases intrinsic motivation and group identity that results in collective
  ownership and commitment to keep going” (p. 7).
- Leaders have resolute purpose and impressive empathy.

Change leaders can also follow Maxwell (2007) twenty-one laws of leadership:
1. **The law of the lid.** “Leadership ability determines a person’s level of effectiveness” (p.1).

2. **The law of influence.** “The true measure of leadership is influence” (p. 11).

3. **The law of process.** “Leadership develops daily, not in a day” (p.23).

4. **The law of navigation.** “Anyone can steer the ship, but it takes a leader to chart the course” (p. 35).

5. **The law of addition.** “Leaders add value by serving others” (47).

6. **The law of solid ground.** “Trust is the foundation of leadership” (p. 61).

7. **The law of respect.** “People naturally follow leaders stronger than themselves” (p. 73).

8. **The law of intuition.** “Leaders evaluate everything with a leadership bias” (87).

9. **The law of magnetism.** “Who you are is who you attract” (p.103).

10. **The law of connection.** “Leaders touch a heart before they ask for a hand” (p.113).

11. **The law of the inner circle.** “A leader’s potential is determined by those closest to him” (p.127).

12. **The law of empowerment.** “Only secure leaders give power to others” (141).

13. **The law of the picture.** “People do what people see” (155).

14. **The law of buy-in.** “People buy into the leader, then the vision” (p. 169).

15. **The law of victory.** “Leaders find a way for the team to win” (p. 179).

16. **The law of the big mo.** “Momentum is a leader’s best friend” (p.193).

17. **The law of priorities.** “Leaders understand that activity is not necessarily accomplishment” (p. 207).

18. **The law of sacrifice.** “A leader must give up to go up” (p. 219).

19. **The law of timing.** “When to lead is important as what to do and where to go” (p. 233).
20. **The law of explosive growth.** “To add growth, leader followers- to multiply, lead leaders” (p. 245).

21. **The law of legacy.** “The leaders lasting value is measured by success” (p. 257).

Maxwell’s (2007) twenty-one laws of leadership not only helps a leader become an effective leader that can help and motivate other individuals, but the laws can help a leader understand and develop their own growth. Last, these laws help leaders become successful.

**Success**

**Understanding Success**

What is success? Success can be defined differently by an individual depending on the different factors taking place in their life and what success means to t. Some individuals may feel that celebrities are successful and “regular” individuals are not, while other individuals may feel that when an individual reached their goal(s), they have reached success no matter how big or small the achievement may consist of. Enman (2011) defines success as, meaning “but is not limited to--a level of social status, achieving an objective or goal or the opposite of failure" (p. 1).

Although satisfaction plays a character role in knowing when success exists, different situations require an individual to understand the measurement of success. When working in a team, group, organization, or company, everyone must remain on the pathway to success and understand what success should look like. This clear pathway and understanding what success look like must start with the leaders because
…too often boards of directors, CEOs, C-level, owners, operators and/or managers are all defining success differently. They aren't in agreement on their strategy and too often have not even discussed their viewpoints, or worse, they can't because they can't agree! How can you get your employees to your goals if you have not defined them clearly for yourself, your managers and your team (Enman, 2011, p. 1)?

To avoid confusion and inefficiency as stated, goal setting allows an individual, a team, group, organization, and/or company to reach success. Goal setting “puts meaning in people’s lives, helps them achieve their dreams and ambitions, and sets up positive expectations for achievements” (Dembo, 2000, p. 70).

In some situations, when collaborating with other individuals to reach success, each individual may not shine because the “background” characters may be overlooked. In theater, television, or in movies for example, the actors and actresses shine more than the extras, the stage crew, and stunt doubles, and also receive bigger checks than the “background people”, however this does not mean the “background people” did not reach success. The actors and actress might reach success by starring or playing a role in a movie and succeeding in that role which helps to make them more famous, while the “background people” may reach success by being able to make the stage look correct or being successful in allowing the light to come on at the correct time. Each individual may not receive the recognition or reward they deserve which may result in dissatisfaction, however, “a sense of pride” matters the most (Martin, 2011).

Examples of How to Reach Success

Example 1. Table 1.1 demonstrates an example of how to prioritize in order to reach success through achieving goals. This table can be used if an individual first writes down a couple of goals he or she wish to achieve in the left column titled Goals. Then the individual will write
down a list of measurements for each goal when they know they reached their success in the column called *Measurements*. Last, the individual will write down the targeted date they wish to complete each goal in order to prioritize and create a targeted date for achievement. Sometimes knowing what you want by mapping it out visually can help success become a reality.

Table 1.1
*Reaching Success*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Targeted Date of Competition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example 2.** Figure 3 illustrates the four goal setting steps on the pyramid by first identifying an individual’s values to achieving the individual’s daily tasks. Each individual grows up with different beliefs and values as a result of the relationships and morals from our families, friends, environment, school, teachers, themselves, and other influential factors. Knowing this, Figure 3 illustrates that an individual starts off with governing values, which determine their goals and future because everyone’s beliefs and values differ, which gives each of us a different destiny pathways. After values are developed, then “long-term goals are developed by translating principles and beliefs into long-term achievements. Long-term goals, in turn, are attained through a series of intermediate goals. Finally, the immediate goals are attained through a series of specific, goal-orientated daily tasks” (Demo, 2000, p. 67). For example, an individual who values love may set a long-term goal to find a husband or wife. This individual’s intermediate goal may involve finding a great female or male then dating them and trying everything they can to keep each other happy and make everything work between them. Maybe this individual may
strike out a couple of times by meeting the wrong man or woman, but finally they meet the right man or woman and then marry them. Marriage allows this individual to reach their long-term goal of love and his or her daily tasks will then reflect their intermediate goals, long-term goals, and governing values.

**Example 3.** Creating an action plan can help implement a solution and help solutions become a reality. First, “generate a list of everything that needs to be done” and “include action steps that involve acceptance and resistance”, then “draw up a list of who will do what by when, reporting completion to whom” (Miller et al., 2011, 60). Last create a chart like the one in Figure 1.2 to map out your action plan.

*Figure 3. Goal Setting. This figure illustrates the steps on the pyramid leading from identifying values to achieving daily tasks. Source: Demo (2000, p. 67).*
Table 1.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>by whom?</th>
<th>by whom?</th>
<th>reporting to whom?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>short-term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid-term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long-term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In 24 hours….</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Creative Problem Solving**

**Creative Thinking**

Creative thinking is sometimes needed because with change comes problems. Puccio, Mance, Switalski, & Reali (2012) explains that change evolved throughout the centuries from the trends in the industrial age to the knowledge age to the innovation age, leading us to a world of creators in the 21st century. For example, cell phones and tablets today can act as replacements of computers we once needed. However, many problems develop that need the help of creative thinking because using the example above, tablets and cellphones undergo updates and new versions in order to fix technical problems, and demands by the people. Figure 4 illustrates the
types of problems an individual would face, and the approach to take to help solve the problem. The two categories, algorithmic and heuristic, sort the nature of the problem into the approach of proactive or reactive by using the factors predicament, opportunity, formulaic, or maintenance to help solve the problem (Puccio, et al., 2012).

![Figure 4](image)

*Figure 4. Types of Problems. This figure illustrates the different types of problems that require creative thinking and how to approach the problem. Source: Puccio, Mance, & Murdock (2011, p. 35).*

**A Short CPS History**

Creative Problem Solving (CPS) was developed in 1942. Alex F. Osborn instructed the corporate leaders to involve all their workers to help come up with ideas to make their organization better in his 1942 article, “How to Think Up” (Osborn, 1942). This instruction led Osborn to believing that anyone can be creative through teaching the subject. After Osborn
discovered creativity, the many processes and phases of CPS went through many modifications and designs up until now and is still undergoing modifications with help from colleagues, creativity scholars, and Creative Studies professors. The CPS process helps generate ideas based on an individual’s or group challenge, and uses creative thinking and Creative Problem Solving to find, strengthen, and implement solutions.

Understanding the FourSight Model

Gerard J. Puccio (2002) first developed the assessment called FourSight: The Breakthrough Thinking Profile based off of his research, in order for individuals to discover their thinking style preferences. The four thinking style preferences of FourSight: The Breakthrough Thinking Profile consisted of clarifier, ideator, developer and implementer. After FourSight: The Breakthrough Thinking Profile developed, in 2010, a model of FourSight was visually developed by Dorte Nielsen and Sarah Thurber, allowing the CPS process to be “easier to teach and remember” (Miller et. al., 2011, p. 105). The model included four steps: clarify, ideate, develop, and implement, as illustrated in Figure 5.1. The FourSight model currently exists as one of the latest CPS models used to help solve an individual’s challenge.
In each step of the FourSight model as illustrated in Figure 5.1, dynamic balance must be used in which Table 2 explains. This is why the FourSight model consists of a diamond shape for each step, “to remind you to diverge and converge at each step” (Miller, et al., 2011, 65).

Figure 5.1. The FourSight Model. This figure illustrates the different steps of the FourSight model. Source: Miller et al. (2011, p.).
Table 2  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rules for Divergent Thinking</th>
<th>Rules for Convergent Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defer Judgment.</td>
<td>Be affirmative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strive for quantity.</td>
<td>Be deliberate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek wild and unusual ideas.</td>
<td>Check your objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build on other ideas.</td>
<td>Improve ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consider novelty.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Remember the wildcard = Allow for Incubation*

Sometimes walking away and taking a break from the problem at hand can be the best way to solve it. By letting your unconsciousness work, you have a better advantage of looking at the problem with fresh eyes when you return to it.

As Miller et al. (2011) explains, the definitions of the steps of the FourSight model include:

- **Assessing the Situation.** Determining a proper diagnosis for the problem at hand. This stage gathers data based on the challenge at hand, then determine if CPS should be used based on ownership, and if so what stage of the CPS process is needed.

- **Clarify.** This stage unveils the real challenge at hand in order to diverge on challenge statements then generate ideas, and end with solutions through the use of clarification.

- **Ideate.** This stage idea generates based on the current challenge in order to move forward with strengthening solutions.

- **Develop.** This stage strengthens the ideas generated from ideating and become workable solutions. Also, this stage examines the pulses, possibilities and concerns of ideas chosen.

- **Implement.** This stage takes the solutions for the challenge, and makes them into actions for completion based on short-term, long-term, and mid-term goals.
As Figure 5.1 illustrates, *Assessing the Situation* remains at the middle of the model because it shows that the process can be linear and flexible allowing an individual to move around the model if needed and start from any step, not necessarily always clarify. However, before deciding on which of the four steps the current challenge needs in order for a proper diagnosis, *Assessing the Situation* remains as the first step in order to determine this proper diagnosis.

With any model in the CPS process, tools are utilized in order to help with the process, so the FourSight model is no different. Figures 5.2 and 5.3 illustrate the tools used for each step and when to use them.

*Figure 5.2. CPS Toolbox for Divergent Tools. This figure illustrates the different tools in CPS, and when to use it in a particular step. Source: Puccio, Mance, & Murdock (2011, p. 35).*
Miller et al. (2011) explains that the following CPS language should be used in these steps:

- **Assessing the Situation** stage, the language of:
  - I wish…
  - It would be great if… (IWBGI)

- **Clarify** stage and **Develop** stage
  - How to... (H2)
  - How might... (HM)
In what ways might... (IWWM)

What might be all the... (WMBAT)

• **Ideate stage**
  - What I see myself doing is....

• **Develop stage**
  - What I now see myself doing is...
  - Will it...
  - Does it...
  - Is it...
  - It might...

**CPS and Motivation**

CPS can be used to help motivation by allowing an individual to figure out their future and the steps needed to take in order to succeed by first stating their vision and then following through with ideas and solutions to make their vision a reality. Also, using the CPS process allows an individual to use motivation to produce creative change. Last, CPS allows an individual to use tools to help strategically plan his or her future and achieve goals. For example, one of the tools for the step Clarify, called Storyboarding, allows an individual to draw out their vision in six boxes from step one to where they want to be, and the steps it take to achieve their goals. Some individuals are motivated through achievement.
Motivational Tips

Students sometimes do not feel and understand the purpose of homework, school, and studying. This can result in low performance in school and dropping out. As a result, students can follow the five following motivational tips mapped out by Fleming (2011) that can increase their drive to want to succeed, complete homework assignments and study:

1. Get Perspective!
2. Get an Attitude!
3. Get Competitive!
4. Get your Eye on the Prize!
5. Get Support (p. 1-2)!

Evaluating Your Motivation

Students With Low Motivation

How do you know if you exhibit low motivation? The Counseling Center (n.d.) at the State University of New York (SUNY) – Buffalo State considered the following to be key points in knowing if a person exhibits low motivation:

- Are usually not clear about how college fits in with their own personal, academic, social, and occupational goals.
- May be easily distracted when listening to their teacher or completing assignments on which they are working.
- May find it difficult to get started on their homework or other projects.
- May not put much effort into assignments and they may find it difficult to start or complete homework.
- May find it difficult to participate in class and to stay focused on learning the information being taught.
- Are more likely to blame someone or something else for their poor performance, such as the teacher or the difficulty of the test, rather than accepting responsibility for not studying enough or for not studying the right material, and are likely to put forth less effort on challenging tasks.
Students With High Motivation

How do you know if you exhibit high motivation? The Counseling Center (n.d.) at SUNY – Buffalo State considered the following to be key points in knowing if a person exhibits high motivation:

- Understand how succeeding….fits with their own personal, academic, social, and occupational goals.
- Focus on goals to help them stay committed to putting forth the effort and doing what is necessary to benefit from college.
- Are more likely to work hard at participating in their classes and at learning the material presented.
- Are more likely to keep working in the face of difficulties when trying to understand a concept or complete a long, complex assignment.
- Tend to see success as a function of their effort.
- Understand that there are factors they can’t control (e.g., the type of test or assignment given), and focus on the factors that are controllable (e.g., how much time, energy, and effort they can apply to the work).

Increasing Your Motivation

There are many things a person can do in order to increase their motivation. The Counseling Center (n.d.) at SUNY – Buffalo State considered the following to be key points in taking action to increase your motivation:

- Produce some realistic, concrete career goals that are appropriate to you abilities and interests.
- Relate present academic work to your future career goals.
- Spend time with others already in your profession to reinforce your plans.
- Decide what grade you want in each course and then record your progress.
Assessing Your Motivation

Ask yourself:

- Are you clear about your goals?
- Are you successful in both setting and achieving your goals?
- Do you believe you can be a successful student?
- Do your beliefs about yourself and college help you to succeed, or do you have self-sabotaging beliefs?
- Do you think high achievement is more a matter of luck than effort?
- Do you think your academic abilities are something you were just born with or do you think that there are things you can do to help yourself earn better grades?
- Write three academic goals for yourself.
- How can you assure your attainment of these (The Counseling Center, n.d.)?

After going through each list of deciding if you exhibit high or low motivation, and assessing your motivation, you should be able to better your motivation if determined.
Methods

The following describes two methods used for S.M.I.L.E. (Success Means Initiating Life Everyday). The two methods used consisted of a survey and book both based on motivation.

Method 1 - Survey

Subjects

The study consisted of 25 college students in the bachelor’s program, master’s program from SUNY – Buffalo State, and post-college graduates. Observations show students in college or with a college education view the world with a different perspective and experiences, only college-educated students participated. Knowledge on the topic of motivation was not needed prior to the subjects taking the survey.

Materials

The materials used included a one-page survey with three questions that included information at the top of the survey about the purpose of the survey and important information for the subjects (see Appendix A). In addition, the bottom of the survey asked the subjects for their permission to use quotes written by them in the project book. Materials also included pens for the subjects to use in order to complete the survey if needed. Last, after the subjects completed the survey, they received candy as a thank you
**Procedure**

Selecting the subjects took place at SUNY – Buffalo State in the residence halls, at work, in staff and faculty offices, and in the CRS 635 course. In the course *CRS 635: Creativity and Change Leadership* and at work, the subjects completed the surveys during class and handed it in before they went home, in the residence halls when a resident stopped by the office they completed the surveys on the side, in staff and faculty offices they received deadlines when to complete the surveys.

**Method 2 - Book**

**Subjects**

The targeted audience for the book S.M.I.L.E. (*Success Means Imitating Life Everyday*) includes high school students and freshmen in college. However, anyone may benefit from reading S.M.I.L.E. because it will result in a self-help book. High school students consist of the main target for S.M.I.L.E because observations show teenagers face difficult processes filled with negative influences, confusion, finding themselves, and low self-esteem. As a result, the book aim at showing these teenagers why they should finish high school and that there is a positive life after high school, like college and a career. As for college freshmen, especially those students staying on campus far away from home, observations show they sometimes face being independent for the first time, freedom for the first time. They lose focus on the college goal, and stop attending classes, as a result, S.M.I.L.E. attends to show these students that they need to stay in college all until they graduate with whatever degree desired, and to make their goals and dreams come true.
Materials

The materials used included the survey results from Method 1 – Survey, information on the author’s background, and references on: motivation, Creative Problem Solving (CPS), FourSight, and goals. In addition, printing paper, binding, and colored ink was used.

Procedure

Selecting the subjects took place at SUNY – Buffalo State in the residence halls, at work, in staff and faculty offices, and in the CRS 635 course. In CRS 635 class and at work, the subjects completed the surveys during class and handed it in before they went home, in the residence halls when a resident stopped by the office they completed the surveys on the side, in staff and faculty offices they received deadlines when to complete the surveys.
Results

Survey

The administrator reached the goal of 25 subjects completing the surveys. It took the administrator almost two weeks to reach the goal of 25 surveys as a result of spring break, and the administrator wanting her subjects to be diverse in age, class year, and the department the faculty/staff members came from in order to receive a diverse group of responses. When subjects completed the survey, they received the opportunity to converse for debriefing one on one in case they wanted to ask questions and for the administrator to say thank you and/or answer any questions. Then the administrator provided them with Starburst candy as a thank you for their help, however majority of the subjects did not want candy or just took one. Candy not only acted as a thank you gift for the subjects that completed the surveys, but some people needed a reason to fill out the survey so the use of extrinsic motivation was used.

Figure 6.1 shows the results of the first question on the survey, what motivates you? The results are broken up into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation from the responses given by the subjects. An example of an intrinsic response includes, “I am motivated by my intrinsic desire to do the best I possibly can.” An example of an extrinsic motivation response includes, “Money – because of the freedom it gives you.” For more examples of responses for intrinsic and extrinsic motivation based on the question, what motivates you, please refer to the book S.M.I.L.E. on page. The reason the total of Figure 6.1 does not add to 25 because some of the responses consisted of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation responses on a survey. For example, “I am usually motivated by my inner passion for something, by anger, and by time constraints.” The beginning of the response, “inner passion for something”, exemplifies intrinsic motivation, while
the rest of the response shows extrinsic motivation. It is interesting that other aspects like family, students, passion, emotions, and accomplishments motivated the subjects instead of money. The results showed quality and thought out responses, and left the administer wondering if the same responses would be received if a group of subjects were asked the same questions that never attended college.

![What motivates you?](image)

*Figure 6.1. What motivates you? This figure illustrates the results of intrinsic motivation versus extrinsic motivation from the survey.*

Figure 6.2 shows the results of question two on the survey, what and/or who pushed you? This chart shows that most of the twenty-five people were pushed by their loved ones then self was the second most response, and professional staff (advisor, professor/teacher, mentor, and dean) was the third most response. *Note: In Figure 6.2, “lead the people” include people the subjects wanted to prove wrong when people down talked them, and people who succeeded already that the subjects look up to or have a similar career interest with.*
S.M.I.L.E. (Success Means Initiating Life Everyday) – Book

As a result to the research and methods section, a book called S.M.I.L.E. now exists. S.M.I.L.E. stands for Success Means Initiating Life Everyday because it covers motivation, the importance of motivation, and being able to reach success. S.M.I.L.E describes the author’s positive energy and the author’s love to smile, thus this book strives to bring positive motivation and energy to others who read it. The book includes four parts: I Am Me; Imagine Motivate Achieve (Motivational Tips); Be the Solution, Set Goals; and You Are Not Alone (refer to Appendix B).

I Am Me talks about the author’s journey from childhood to college, and then into the future. It ends with explaining, that once upon a time, the author felt that she could never make it
far in life because of her disadvantages. Despite those drawbacks she has a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice with three minors, will graduate with a Master of Science in Creative Studies on May 18, 2013, and still dreams of goals she wants to achieve in the future.

*Imagine Motivate Achieve (Motivational Tips)* explores five quotes by five different scholars as tips for individuals to use to help them succeed with the help of motivation. In addition, the quotes represent subheadings with paragraphs following each quote, not necessarily explaining what they mean, but giving advice and insight on how to use them.

The next chapter, *Be the Solution*, explores FourSight (one of the Creative Problem Solving (CPS) models) by explaining the history of CPS and Foursight, the steps of FourSight (Clarify, Ideate, Develop, and Implement) and examples of tools used for the process, and CPS language used. After the reader understands FourSight, a hands-on section in the book allows the reader to experience the CPS process by using FourSight. It will be helpful for individuals to plan their lives by prioritizing, and solving challenges, goals or wishes.

The fourth chapter, *Set Goals*, illustrates two examples of how the reader may achieve a goal(s). In the first example, the reader will write goals in the table, then establish measurements for when they know their goals will be reached in the second column, and last the third column ends off with the date the reader wants to achieve the goal(s). However, the second example illustrates a different goal-achieving method. The reader first diverges on up to twelve goals he or she wishes to achieve. Then choose his or her top two goals. Next, the reader places each of his or her top two goals in the diagram and comes up with four steps to reach the goal along with the date they want to complete it.
The last section of the book called *You Are Not Alone* consist of direct quotes from the surveys distributed to the 25 subjects. This section allows the reader to understand what other individuals who already possess, or on the pathway to possess a college degree, feel about motivation, who or what pushed them, and what success means to them. As a result, the reader can understand others’ insights and can use the subjects’ words as a motivation technique.

The five chapters combined create a self-help book for readers. Although the intended audience consisted of high school students and freshmen in college, anyone may benefit from reading S.M.I.L.E., especially individuals with low self-esteem and those who need guidance. Feedback from the few individuals who read S.M.I.L.E. shows that the book resulted in its purpose to motivate, and was deemed easy and quick to read and understand.
Conclusion

The research, survey results, and the book created, supports the contention that motivation is important for anyone. Motivation affects everyone in a positive way. Not only does motivation serve as an important role in school and in an individual’s life in reaching success, but also with crucial things such as overcoming medical illnesses, low self-esteem, and goal setting. In addition there are two types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, that help influence and motivate people in order to succeed or find their drive. Last, it has been determined that intrinsic motivation is the best type of motivation, and that anyone can increase their motivation by first evaluating themselves, and then taking steps to help them increase their motivation and success.

Both intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation are important, however intrinsic motivation is the most important. Intrinsic motivation involves yourself, and being self-driven. Extrinsic motivation involves external things motivating you to do something. Two examples of extrinsic motivation include money and family. The survey results showed that out of the 25 surveys distributed and collected, more of the subjects looked for extrinsic motivation such as emotions (fear and anger), people, and the way the world and society looks and acts. In addition, the survey showed that family, self, and professional staff were the top three factors that pushed the subjects Results also showed that family and professional staff were extrinsic motivation factors in the subjects’ lives, and self was an intrinsic motivation factor in the subjects’ lives. Last, the book S.M.I.L.E. (see Appendix C) represents many intrinsic motivation techniques as being a self-help book in order for readers to find their own motivation and growth.
It would be great if the book S.M.I.L.E. reaches high school students and freshmen students in college, especially those who recently graduated from high school. The book S.M.I.L.E. can help these students find their way, create goals to achieve and an action plan, and learn from other people about what motivates them, who and/or what pushed them, and what success means. The book S.M.I.L.E. is to show these students with low motivation that they are not alone, and that they always have themselves even when it feels like everyone else is against them.

Although a singular definition of motivation cannot be stated, motivation acts as the key to success and failures, and brings change and hope in individuals. As Bob McConnell once quoted, “Little is done by any of us without motivation and a goal in mind. Motivation is the internal fire which allows each of us to ascend to something we have yet to achieve…. Although we can all be temporarily mislead [misled] in our journey, if your goal is sound and your motivation to achieve your goal receive at your university will provide you with knowledge necessary for the attainment of many future goals” (“College Motivation,” 2013).
References


Appendix A

S.M.I.L.E. (Success Means Initiating Success Everyday) Survey
The purpose of this survey is to gather information on your viewpoint of what motivates you, who motivates you, and advice you would give someone who wanted to succeed in any capacity. This survey will be used as part of my research for my Master’s Project called S.M.I.L.E (Success Means Initiating Life Everyday) for the spring 2013 semester. Please answer the following questions honestly. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to answer any question or discontinue your involvement at any time without penalty or loss benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with Buffalo State. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this research study. I appreciate your participation and cooperation in advance. Thank you for time.

Charisma Dupree

Are you at least 18 years old? Yes No

1. What motivates you? __________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________

2. What and/or who pushed you? __________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________

3. If you could give advice to someone about succeeding in life, what would it be? _________
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________

The information received not only will be used for my master’s project paper but also the product I will be creating. As a result, I would like to use direct quotes from the statements above. Please check yes or no below to let me know if you are comfortable with me using this information. Also, please write a name below if you want me to share your name with the quote (you do not have to put your actually name if you do not feel comfortable, it can be your initials, a made up name, just your first name, etc.).

Do you give me permission to use direct quotes on the information you stated above? Yes No

If you would like your name disclosed, please state your first name: _______________________
Appendix B

Bibliography of Suggested Reading
Bibliography of Suggested Reading


Appendix C

Preview of S.M.I.L.E. (Success Means Initiating Success Everyday) Book
S.M.I.L.E.
(Success Means Initiating Life Everyday)

"The question isn't "Who's going to let me?" It's "Who's going to stop me?""
– Fitness Magazine

Charisma C. Dupree
S.M.I.L.E.

(Success Means Initiating Life Everyday)

By
Charisma C. Dupree

April 2013
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Printed and bound in the United States of America.
Dedication

To my family, boyfriend, and mentors, thanks for all the love and support you have given me.

To my brother Ronald, thanks for always being my number one no matter what. Keep on doing your thing!

To the professors in the International Center for Studies in Creativity at SUNY Buffalo State, thanks for all the support you have given me, and for teaching me creativity.

To everyone in the world, especially the youth out there, keep on believing in yourself and look for motivation when anything seems impossible. Keep your head up!
Acknowledgments

Although my motivation and success is due to my motivation and determination in myself in fighting to become anything I wanted to be, and to show others who doubt me that I can do anything, I do owe my gratitude to other people in my life for supporting me. Sometimes when I felt like giving up as a result to some obstacles in my life, I looked to the people I trusted the most for support and advice.

My brother Ronald D. has always been my number one person in the world. When I needed someone to talk to, he was always there and we continue to share some great memories together. He is not only my brother, but also most importantly, my friend. When other people walk in and out of my life or disappoint me, my brother remains my right and left hand man. Thank you and I love you.

Despite growing up in a single household with my mother, I owe both my parents and the rest of my family my gratitude. Sometimes my mom and I may have experienced ups and downs in our relationship, but I am more than grateful for her. Her tough love and support made me the woman I am today, and I know at any moment I can always count on her. I love my mom. My dad on the other hand, has always given me one thing most people cannot: respect, love, an ear to listen, and advice without judgment. He might not be the perfect dad but I still appreciate him. He is the reason I think I am a princess and the most important person in the world. I love my dad. Finally, the rest of my family supports me and loves me throughout every step of my life, and I love them and appreciate everything.

My family supports me, however, my Uncle Freddy really is unbelievable. He is the only person on my dad’s side with a bachelor’s degree, and has been with me every step of the way. I appreciate him helping me find the best high school to get out of my bad neighborhood, and helping me with college. I appreciate the upmost support given by him. I love him.

My boyfriend Brian T. is an incredible person. We have been together for five years, since freshmen year of college. Despite our ups and downs in the past, I can count on him for anything. He treats me great and knows how to make me smile always. I love him.

Brian D. was my boss in Residence Life for three years, but has known me since my freshman year of college. During these three years, he serves as a mentor and most importantly a friend. He gives great advice and always makes time for me. I appreciate all he has done for me and other people around me.

To my Creative Studies family, I appreciate everyone in the International Center for Studies in Creativity especially Dr. Jo Yudess, Dr. Jeffrey Zacko-Smith, and Dr. Mike Fox. I am very pleased and grateful for the faculty in the department and for the friends I have made in the program.

Last, I must acknowledge friendship. I have come across some interesting friends since college. Some are still like family, while others were in my life to teach me lessons. All the relationships shared with my friends have made me a better person because they each taught me something. Thank you.

“Sometimes the girl who has been there for everyone else needs someone to be there for her.”
- Unknown
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Chapter 1

I AM ME
Introduction

There once was an African American little girl, who told her dad she wanted to become a lawyer. This little girl was inquisitive as a child and consequently asked questions about her environment. Growing up in Brownsville, a bad neighborhood in Brooklyn, NY, she directly observed the effects of homelessness, poverty, violence, teen pregnancy, and negative influences in a way that some people can only imagine. There were cops on the corners of different ethnicities, project buildings with graffiti and a urine odor, tall train stations with trains making loud noises running on top of the ground, candy stores, a liquor store on the next corner from her old elementary/junior high school that sells liquor and lottery tickets behind the counter, and project buildings and complexes all around. In the middle of it all are two schools, a combined elementary/junior high school and a regular elementary school across the street. Where she grew up, kids still do not make it far; they are lucky to get a GED or make it to age 20 or 30. Becoming a lawyer is just another dream for most minorities, but it is a challenge that can be accomplished. These disadvantages could hinder anyone from succeeding and reaching their goals, but motivation and determination changes all obstacles. This little girl is me!
My Journey

Childhood

Some of us are lucky to grow up with siblings, older or younger, and if not so lucky maybe close cousins, friends and/or God sisters and brothers. Me, I am the only girl and oldest child with three younger brothers ages eight, eleven, and eighteen. I mainly shared my childhood and experiences with my eighteen year old brother who I am very close to and cousins. Growing up, I was my brother’s keeper, his protector against school bullies, and anyone else. Now we both protect each other. Since I depended so much on my family, friends were not as important to me. As a result, I value the few friends I have and I treat them like family.

My success story starts from the day my mom gave birth to me. One of us was supposed to have died between my mother and I, but we both survived. For this reason my dad said I have always been a fighter when it comes to anything. I consider myself a miracle child. I remember always being in the top classes in elementary and junior high school, and always being on the honor roll. In my family, one of my uncle’s on my dad’s side, the youngest child, is the only one who graduated with a bachelor’s degree. So when it came to choosing a great high school and taking the correct steps to enroll in college, my help only consisted of my uncle and advisors. My uncle lived out of New York State at the time and in his career, so I commend him for taking the time to help me choose the best schools to get out of Brownsville, NY.

I attended James Madison High School in Brooklyn where I graduated with a diploma from the Law Institute, which was my major, and a great school. During high school, I had a couple of things to juggle. The following is not meant to sound like a sob story, but these are obstacles that took place in my life in which I was strong, motivated, and determined enough to overcome. When I first started high school my freshmen year, I wanted to join the booster team, step team, and track team. Unfortunately, my mom would not allow it sadly to say. As a result, I had to come straight home, and helped take care of my two brothers at the time but then the summer of 2004 going into my sophomore year, my mom had another son, and I also experienced my first job that summer. After that summer I worked for the same organization, Police Athletic League (PAL), and every summer after that. In addition, junior and senior year of high school things started to get a little tough and challenges increased. I had to jungle being a high school student, having the PAL job and working as a Youth member in a youth court for Red Hook Courthouse, and was completely responsible for my brothers. These are some disadvantages faced growing up in a single parent household. Despite these disadvantages, I was able to excel in high school and graduate although I had chances to do the wrong thing. In my last two years of high school, I was the last one to leave my house and the first to reach home. I had many chances to dropout, get pregnant, do drugs, and take other wrong paths but my motivation in myself, and determination for a better future allowed me to follow the path to success.

It bothers me at times when I hear people complain that they could not make anything of themselves because they had no leader, no help, a lot of bad influences, and never a chance. I feel that if you want to make something of yourself nothing else will stop you! And if you are placed in situations where you seem to have more disadvantages than advantages, be your own motivation. You are responsible for yourself!
As I always say, “Brownsville raised me, college made me. I am not a product of my environment.” I think people sometimes forget that it is not where you are from, it is where you are going. Because of this, a lot of people, especially where I am from, allow themselves to become trapped in a bad cycle and situation, but do nothing to make their lives better. Me. I had a bigger and better agenda. I wanted to be somebody because I have dreams. So, why not go to college? This is where dreams come true, right?

As a first generation college student on my mom’s side, I am now twenty-three years old with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and three minors in Creative Studies, Leadership, and Legal Studies from the State University of New York Buffalo State, however, my relationship with some of the Creative Studies professors and experience in those courses as an undergraduate influenced me to apply for the program as a graduate student. In my six years of college enrollment, I experienced a great deal, which also shaped me as the person I am today. I wanted to be involved because I was robbed of the chance to do so in high school. The way I looked at college was not just as an opportunity to graduate with my bachelor’s degree as a first generation student and make it to law school, but also complete the things I was not allowed to do in high school like:

- Hanging out with friends.
- Talk and text on the phone as much as I wanted.
- Join organizations and clubs.
- Having fun.

This I did with no regrets, and maintained over a 3.0 grade point average as an undergraduate and currently over a 3.5 as a graduate student, dean’s list for three semesters as an undergraduate, and involvement on campus because I was determined and motivated. My determination and motivation in myself allowed me to (refer to my resume on page for more information and a complete list):

- Join Residence Hall Association (RHA) as a treasurer.
- Become a paraprofessional (also known as RA) for 5 years.
- Become a Student Justice of the Residence Hall Judicial Board.
- Make my honor society Chi Alpha Epsilon active again as the president.
- Take the role of a Conference Assistant.
- Become a Mentor for the Educational Opportunity Program incoming freshmen.
- Become an Academic Mentor for the Educational Opportunity Program to help tutor students.
- Become an intern for the Emerging Student Leader’s Program in Student Life.
- Become a facilitator.
- Become Head Apartment Assistant of my residence hall, a made-up position.
- Build good relationships with different individuals both staff and students across campus.
- Supervise two office assistants.
• The best accomplishment – become an effective leader and mentor that others trust and believe in.

I feel that my accomplishments helped me create a pathway for others to follow especially my loved ones. I currently have a younger cousin who graduates this year with her bachelors and two others who have their associates, a brother who is a freshman in college, and an older cousin with her associates. I noticed that after I attended college, all my family members younger than me did as well and I also always help them out with no hesitation. It has been a journey for me to reach thus far with little or no help, so I am more than grateful to help anyone who wants help, and want to do anything with their life whether family or not. This I pledge so hard that sometimes I become overwhelmed because I put other people before me, and do not know how to say no when others want help. The way I see it is everyone needs some kind of motivation and direction sometimes, so why not help! My family and friends have been there for me no matter what which I am grateful for. But I would like to thank the following individuals for their superb help and support:

• My parents
• My grandmother
• Frederick D. (uncle)
• Stacey D. (uncle)
• Curtis B. (uncle)
• Sanford D. (uncle)
• Charlene D. (aunt)
• Ronald D. (brother and friend)
• Brian T. (boyfriend and friend)

• Brian D. (friend and supervisor)
• Laura L. (friend and old supervisor)
• Dr. Jo Y. (professor)
• Dr. Jeffrey Z. (professor)
• Dr. Mike F. (professor)
• Residence Life Office at Buffalo State

This year on May 18, 2013, I will graduate with a Master’s of Science in Creative Studies, which will make me the first of my entire family to graduate with a master’s degree. When people ask me to name something that is significant to me, I always say my bachelor’s degree. My bachelor’s means the world to me, more than any degree I will ever receive because it says to anyone who knows my background that anyone can make it if they want to. Think about it. I was born with a couple of disadvantages: growing up in a bad influential neighborhood, having two parents with no college degree, being raised with a single mother, being a minority (black), and being a woman. Despite my disadvantages, I feel like the most accomplished person in the world even if my accomplishments did not change the world, it at least changed me and made a difference in someone’s life.
Future

Although I intended on becoming an attorney and one day opening up a youth court similar to the one I worked at in high school, sometimes journeys change just like people. The pathway I have taken thus far led me to develop the passion to want to help others out with their challenges and/or goals, and no longer argue in a courtroom. Sometimes the influences of others, such as family, can blur the vision of what you want to become in life. I realized I still love law but my passion is empowering others. As a result, I want to one day open up my own business mediating others whether children, couples, adults, etc. on their lives and facilitating their challenges and/or goals to help them find solutions and direction in their lives. Also, I want to one day teach freshmen in high school about the importance of finding themselves, their own direction, using motivation, and making a difference. For now, after graduation, I will gain more experience with conflict mediation and facilitation. This is what my Creative Studies master’s degree is about, this is what my experience as a paraprofessional taught me, and this is what I love to do!

Conclusion

Once upon a time, I felt that all I am accomplishing now was a dream that I wished to come true, but as I aged and entered the college doors, everything became a reality. Anything is possible nothing is impossible (Remember, the word impossible has I’m possible written in itself). But when all else fails, remember these words:

Try Again
If at first you don’t succeed
Dust yourself off and try again
You can dust it off and try again.
– Aaliyah

I AM ME! I am:

Charismatic
Happy
Ambitious
Responsible
Intellectual
Skilled
Motivated
Able to do anything!
Chapter 2

Imagine
Motivate
Achieve

(Motivational Tips)