

Navigator

FINDING YOUR WAY TO A
HEALTHY AND SUCCESSFUL FUTURE



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CHAPTER 1

Vision



HIGHLIGHTS:

Determining your course

Your personal uniqueness

Thinking forward



Vision: Future Goals and Dreams

A wilderness adventure can be fun — and dangerous. When hikers or climbers get lost in a mountainous area, they need to be rescued — frequently by helicopter. Hikers and climbers often use a global positioning system (GPS) which sends signals to a satellite to map out and record their precise position so that they don't get lost. The GPS device enables them to know exactly where they are and how to get to their destination. Whether mapping a course for a wilderness hike or mapping a course for your life, knowing where you are and where you are going is critical to having a safe and successful hike — or life. Are you wandering aimlessly or walking purposefully?

Everyone has a different destination in life. *Navigator* is a guidebook, like a GPS, to help you figure out where you are and where you are going. This book can help you to determine your destination in life and learn how to make sound, healthy decisions in order to get where you want to go and navigate through some of the most challenging and exciting years of your life.

Planning Ahead

Having vision means picturing your future and establishing goals for your life. It prepares you for tomorrow and helps you face the challenges that come your way. Planning for your future now is one of the best ways to stay on course to accomplish your future goals and dreams.

Consider the following questions. *Read all three and then check one.*

- I have a clear picture of where I want to go with my life and how I intend to get there.
- I have some idea of where I want to go with my life and how I intend to get there.
- I have never really thought about where I want to go with my life and how I intend to get there.

My Purpose: What my life is about

Whether or not you have a clear picture of your future, this book will help you to further develop your vision for your life as well as to consider how your present choices and decisions can affect your future. This book is designed to help you develop your goals and dreams, to resist pressures to engage in sexual activity and to learn ways to build healthy relationships now and in the future. Navigating your teen years is critical because most of your life is ahead of you.

- Why is it so important for you to properly set your course before you reach adulthood?
-
-

The Millennial Generation

Researchers say that today's generation of teens, often referred to as "The Millennial Generation," has the potential to be one of the most successful and accomplished generations in the history of America. Today's teens are often described as having a positive outlook on their future and being willing to work hard to make their lives meaningful and productive. The vast majority of teens hope to marry and have families some day.¹ Many teens are interested in learning how they can help others through volunteer service.



- Does this view represent your own outlook? Yes No

Explain:

Personal Uniqueness

Although generational trends have some impact on our lives, your future will be determined by who you are as an individual more than by the generation to which you belong. You are unique.

Out of the six billion people living in the world today, there is no one exactly like you. We all have certain unique features and abilities that help us perform certain tasks. Some people love to read and some don't. Some people enjoy math and science while others prefer music or the arts. All of these likes and interests play a significant role in our future success at certain roles and responsibilities. Understanding your unique interests and abilities can help you determine your future goals. This chapter will help you analyze your interests and begin charting your course for the future.

Personal Interests

Think about where you'd like to go in your life. Consider the things that interest you most as well as the accomplishments that you've already achieved. Interests and accomplishments can be in the areas of sports, music, academics, building, creating, community service, computer skills, or things that you do around your home. Think about your personal interests and accomplishments and list as many as you can think of.

- Things I'm Most Interested In:

Goals for Your Future

What does your future hold? Accomplishing all that you desire in life doesn't happen by accident. It happens as a result of careful planning and a strong commitment to stick to your plan. Like rock climbing, life happens one stage at a time. We don't start off at the top of the rock; we start at the bottom and work our way up. Getting to the top takes thought, dedication, and a lot of hard work.

Setting goals can help you to realize your dreams. If you could have three wishes for your future, what would they be? What are your greatest dreams?

- _____
- _____
- _____

My Educational Goals: I hope to accomplish each of the following. Check all that apply.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> High School Diploma | <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational Training and Certification |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associates Degree (2 year college degree) | <input type="checkbox"/> Masters Degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors Degree (4 year college degree) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

1. Whether or not you are planning to go to college, do you think that your work habits and decisions in high school will affect your option of attending college in the future?

Explain: _____

- When is the best time to begin thinking about whether or not you will attend college?

<input type="checkbox"/> Freshman Year	<input type="checkbox"/> Sophomore Year	<input type="checkbox"/> Junior Year	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior Year
--	---	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------
- If you're planning to attend college, do you know the name of the college you would like to attend?
If so, what is the name of the college? _____

2. Do you have an estimate of what the annual costs for college will be? Yes No

- If you answered yes, approximately what is the annual cost to go to college? \$ _____
- Why is it important to begin thinking about how much college will cost and how you will cover these costs?

Did you know that working hard and studying now can help you gain scholarship funding for college? By planning well and working hard, you may be able to accomplish anything that you desire.

My Career Goals

Whether or not you attend college, you will need to choose a career. Choosing a career is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. In considering a future career, it may be helpful to think about the things that you enjoy and find meaningful. Since your career will occupy a significant portion of your life, it's a good idea to plan ahead and choose a career that you will enjoy.



Things I enjoy and find meaningful.

Check as many as you like.

<input type="checkbox"/> Sports	<input type="checkbox"/> Building	<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching	<input type="checkbox"/> Writing
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Designing	<input type="checkbox"/> Helping	<input type="checkbox"/> Creating
<input type="checkbox"/> Cars	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Organizing	<input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning
<input type="checkbox"/> Math	<input type="checkbox"/> Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/> Cooking	<input type="checkbox"/> Painting
<input type="checkbox"/> History	<input type="checkbox"/> Gardening	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> Electronics
<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing	<input type="checkbox"/> Animals	<input type="checkbox"/> Music
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____			

Careers or life goals I am interested in pursuing and would enjoy most. *Check as many as you like.*

<input type="checkbox"/> Architect	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Politician	<input type="checkbox"/> Receptionist
<input type="checkbox"/> Machinist	<input type="checkbox"/> Researcher	<input type="checkbox"/> Nurse	<input type="checkbox"/> Veterinarian
<input type="checkbox"/> Carpenter	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot	<input type="checkbox"/> Plumber	<input type="checkbox"/> Flight Attendant
<input type="checkbox"/> Athlete	<input type="checkbox"/> Father	<input type="checkbox"/> Artist	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Designer
<input type="checkbox"/> Mother	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planner	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef	<input type="checkbox"/> Paramedic
<input type="checkbox"/> Librarian	<input type="checkbox"/> Contractor	<input type="checkbox"/> Coach	<input type="checkbox"/> Government Worker
<input type="checkbox"/> Painter	<input type="checkbox"/> Historian	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Planner	<input type="checkbox"/> Florist
<input type="checkbox"/> Gardener	<input type="checkbox"/> Physician	<input type="checkbox"/> Insurance Agent	<input type="checkbox"/> Auto Sales Professional
<input type="checkbox"/> Accountant	<input type="checkbox"/> Mechanic	<input type="checkbox"/> Office Assistant	<input type="checkbox"/> Police Officer
<input type="checkbox"/> Scientist	<input type="checkbox"/> Author	<input type="checkbox"/> Journalist	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Technician
<input type="checkbox"/> Psychologist	<input type="checkbox"/> Biologist	<input type="checkbox"/> Philosopher	<input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacist
<input type="checkbox"/> Store Manager	<input type="checkbox"/> Lawyer	<input type="checkbox"/> Nutritionist	<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Fighter
<input type="checkbox"/> Dentist	<input type="checkbox"/> Banker	<input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Agent	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Musician
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Owner	<input type="checkbox"/> Park Ranger	<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Biologist	<input type="checkbox"/> Military Professional
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____			

As you look at the things that you enjoy and find meaningful as well as at career ideas, look back at the list of career ideas and life goals and list your top three career choices in order of preference.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

My Future Family Goals

Have you ever thought about whether you'd like to get married and have a family some day? Marriage is "only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife."² Of course not everyone gets married, and that's okay. Some days it may seem like it would be great to be married. Other days, it may not seem like such a fine idea. You may want to get married in the future, but you're unsure if it will ever happen. These thoughts are normal and you can expect to experience the full range of thoughts about marriage. It's not uncommon for people who are not interested in marriage to fall in love and find that they can't wait to get married when they are older. Everybody is different.

1. What are some of the benefits of marriage?

2. What are some of the benefits of having a family?

3. If you do get married some day, what would you want your husband or wife to be like?

Consider some goals you might want to set for having a family in the future.

- I would like to get married around age _____.
- I would like to have a family some day.
- I would like to live in (city) _____.
- Right now I'm not planning on getting married or having a family.



My Goals for My Community

Helping others is healthy and adds purpose, meaning, and even length to life. People who volunteer service to help others generally live longer than those who don't. Maturity is demonstrated by looking not just to your own personal interests, but also to the interests of others. Consider some of the ways that you might think about serving your community, both now and in the future.

- Are you presently involved in some type of community service? If so, what?

- What are some areas of community service in which you would like serve in the future?



Determination

Three Keys To Achieving Your Goals

Understanding and developing a sense of purpose for your life is the first step in planning for a healthy and successful future. Your life's goals and dreams should be consistent with your life's purpose. Vision is a combination of having purpose and a set of goals to achieve your purpose.

1. Determine your goals by writing them down.

Using the information on the previous pages, summarize your goals for each of the categories listed above.

Education _____

Career _____

Family _____

Community _____

2. Determine a plan for achieving your goals.

How will these goals be achieved? What steps are necessary to get to where you want to go? What choices will you have to make now to accomplish your goals? Write out your overall plan for achieving your goals.

3. Determine to stick with your plan and see it through to completion.

Writing down your goals and having a plan is meaningless, unless you actually do it. How committed are you to having a healthy and successful future? You can accomplish your goals, but you must be determined to implement your plan and to stick with it.

Future Shock

On December 9, 2001, the University of Notre Dame offered its high paying, high profile head football-coaching job to a very successful coach at Georgia Tech. The coach had twice been named conference Coach of the Year, had seven successful seasons and had taken his team to five straight bowl games. With much fanfare and media attention, the coach resigned his position at Georgia Tech to become the head football coach at Notre Dame.

On December 13, 2001, just four days after he had accepted the job, the coach submitted his resignation and held a national press conference on the following day. The coach explained that, early in his coaching career, he had lied on his resumé in order to get a job and had used this same resumé throughout his career. Now in the national spotlight, his past accomplishments came under greater scrutiny. The coach was forced to confess that he had exaggerated some of his previous experience and accomplishments.

Just four days after reaching a pinnacle in the college football world, this coach found himself out of a job and nationally humiliated. Seemingly insignificant lies he had written on his resumé — lies which had gone undiscovered for over 30 years — had suddenly crushed an extremely successful career. Although he later accepted a job as an assistant coach for another football team, the lies on his resumé cost him his reputation and the opportunity to take a job that most coaches only dream of. The coach concluded his press conference with these words:

"I pray that my experiences will simply be yet another coaching lesson to the youth of this country — that we are all accountable for our actions and that there can be no double standard."³

Thinking It Over:

- Do you suppose that when the coach was writing his resumé many years earlier he thought he would one day be hired as the head coach at Notre Dame? Yes No
 - Do you think he gave much thought to the possible long-term results of lying on his resumé? Yes No
 - Do you suppose he ever considered that the false statements on his resumé would one day be reported in newspapers and on television around the world? Yes No
 - How do you think he felt when this happened? How do you think his family felt?
-



Future Thought

On the following scale determine how much impact you feel your present daily choices have on your future. *Circle one:*

No Impact

Some Impact

Moderate Impact

Much Impact

Huge Impact

Every choice has potential benefits or consequences.

- Good choices bring positive benefits.
- Poor choices bring negative consequences.

- For each of the choices listed below, put an “X” in the column to mark whether you think the result of this choice will likely be a positive benefit or a negative consequence.

	Benefit	Consequence
Watching TV late into the night		
Doing drugs		
Joining the swim team		
Copying someone else's paper		
Donating blood		
Choosing not to be sexually active		
Saving money that I earn		
Using foul language		
Spreading rumors		
Having sex		
Playing in a band		
Getting a summer job		
Reading a book		
Smoking		
Learning sign language		
Going backpacking		
Using alcohol		



- Sometimes people think that they can make poor choices and not suffer any negative consequences.

What do you think?

By thinking forward to your future goals and dreams you will be better equipped to make choices and decisions that you won't regret in the future. Every choice to do something is at the same time a choice not to do something else. By choosing to falsify his resumé, the coach in the previous story unknowingly chose not to be the coach of Notre Dame — the very thing he ultimately sought. Although the consequences of his decision didn't occur for many years, the long-term effect was significant.

Thinking Forward

In the same way that poor decisions now can negatively impact your future, good decisions now can help you achieve your goals. Good choices, hard work, and determination are the necessary ingredients for realizing your dreams in life.

Stephanie's Dream

(A true story, taken from a speech to a group of teens in Chicago)



I have always had big dreams — really big dreams — of furthering my education and going places. Because of the financial situation of my family, I knew that without scholarships, I would not be able to go to college. Coming from a divorced home was tough, and a lot of my goals seemed impossible. One night when I was in high school, however, I made a decision to work as hard as I could to make my dreams a reality. I promised myself to abstain from any kind of risky behavior that would keep my dreams from coming true, including having sex outside of marriage, or doing drugs or alcohol. I was determined to become an attorney to help those who are less fortunate. After I made the decision, I worked really hard — and now three years later I have earned \$100,000 in scholarships including a scholarship which allowed me to study at Oxford University in England.

I wear this ring on my wedding ring finger as a symbol of my promise to not have sex until I am married. One day, on my wedding night, I will give this ring to my husband as a symbol of the love I have for him... a love that is so strong it made me wait for him. I can then give myself to him completely because I saved myself for him.

I want each of you to know that you can achieve your goals. If you are saying, "I don't know how this is going to happen. I don't have the money," I want you to know that there are resources out there — but you have to be willing to work hard and abstain from risky behaviors that will steal away your dreams."

Stephanie Acosta Inks, Miss Michigan All-American Latina 2001, graduated college in 2003.

- What do you think about Stephanie's decision to wait until marriage for sex? Does it seem like a positive or negative choice to you?

- What do you think is the relationship between Stephanie's decision to abstain from sexual activity and the use of alcohol and other drugs and the accomplishment of her goals for college? Explain.

PARENT LINK:

Take these questions home to discuss with a parent or mentor.

- What are the most important choices that I can make as a teenager in order to have a healthy and successful future?
- What things should I avoid, and what things should I pursue?