

Good News

CHRISTMAS Break 2022

you
are MORE
THAN who
you were.

YOU CAN START OVER
ANYTIME. LIKE TODAY.

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IMPORTANT DATES

JANUARY 10TH:

FIRST DAY OF 2ND SEMESTER

JANUARY 20TH:

LAST DAY TO ADD COURSES

FEBRUARY 8TH:

LAST DAY TO DROP COURSES

Christmas Break

&

DOS & DON'TS

DO

Get some rest

DON'T

CHECK POWERSCHOOL

DO SPEND

Time WITH friends
and/or family

DON'T

forget to get fresh air

FAIL.

(seriously, do it)

I know, what a strange message to send to this high achieving, remarkably talented school community, right?! I truly do mean it, though; there can be so much personal development value in failing and I hope (with love) that each and every one of you have the opportunity to experience failure at some point in your human development.

Perhaps my perspective would best be explained through some real life examples. There are so many samples of fantastic, successful human beings who have endured personal or professional failure.

Here are a few:

OPRAH WINFREY:

As told in Oprah Winfrey: A Profile in Failure, by author Jeff Stibel, USA Today

Prior to setting TV Show records and running one of America's most successful businesses, Oprah Winfrey experienced notable failure. Oprah's first TV gig was in a prime-time news co-anchor spot with ABC. This was a huge opportunity for any journalist, and especially for a young, black, female, aspiring journalist. This groundbreaking accomplishment came along with a major publicity campaign, throwing Oprah Winfrey right into an intense spotlight on billboards, busses, and TV ads, as her journalist debut was anticipated. (talk about pressure!!) This extremely important opportunity

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unfortunately did not launch Oprah Winfrey into the powerhouse career we know today. Miss Winfrey had conflict with her co-anchor and low ratings with her viewers, ultimately leading to low show ratings. Oprah was fired a few months later. Thankfully, this set back did not stop this incredible woman.

WALT DISNEY:

As told in: 12 People Who Failed Before Succeeding, WanderlustWorker.com

I cannot believe that Disney, the King of all things animated, was fired by one of his first Editors because he “lacked imagination and had no good ideas”. What might our entertainment world be like if Walt Disney had allowed this failure to end his career aspirations?!

JK ROWLING:

As told in: 12 People Who Failed Before Succeeding, WanderlustWorker.com

Did you know that in 1995, all 12 major book publishing companies rejected JK Rowling’s *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*?! Had she accepted this failure experience as defeat, we may have never known this game changing series of literature and films!

JIM CAREY:

As told in: 12 People Who Failed Before Succeeding, WanderlustWorker.com

Jim Carey faced multiple failures in his personal and professional life before finding success. He was booed off stage during his first shot as a stand-up comedian and lived through years of failed auditions, including one for Saturday Night Live. It was roughly seven years later when he landed a notable acting/comedy job.

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And a less famous example...

ME : (Mrs. Trish Brown)

One giant failure experience I am proud to share involves my first semester of College. I went into my first year of Undergrad with super hero level confidence and feeling totally ready. Prior to that year, school was kind of always my thing-I did really well and loved to learn. Simply put: College life was just way harder than I anticipated; I found my 3 hour, 200-500 person lectures to be extremely difficult to learn from, I really struggled with the lack of student-instructor relationships, I realized that since I never needed them, I really never developed strong study skills, I was supporting myself financially, and got caught up in the distractions of complete independence and social freedom. Needless to say, my first semester GPA was abysmal. (And not like, “Oh, I got my first B!” bad, like...*bad, bad.*)

I was devastated. I was disappointed in myself and uncertain of what to do next. I came back to school in January and immediately set up an appointment with my Adviser, certain I would be removed from my program. I remember nervously pouring my embarrassing experience and subsequent feelings all over my Adviser’s desk and will never forget her reaction... **she laughed at me!** I do not remember everything she said after that, although I remember one moment of her lecture, and it has stuck with me ever since; she asked me: “You’ve never done this before. Why did you assume that failure was not an option for you?”

I did not have an answer for her. She was right, I had never been to College before, so why was it so shocking to me that it would be such a challenge? She also asked me why I had not sought out help, as soon as I started to struggle in school. Then it hit me-it was not about me assuming that College would be easy, it was more about my *fear of failure* and the assumption that if I was not successful, **I** (as a student, future Counselor, person etc.) **was a failure.** Together, we evaluated my experience. We talked about what lead to my lack of success, what I could do differently

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the next semester to improve, and what resources were available to help me accomplish my goals. Yes, second semester went much better and the rest of my College

im career went very well. More valuable than that provement, though, was the lesson I learned about life and failure. I learned: 1. Failures will happen and experiencing failure does not mean that I am a failure. 2. There is so much growth and learning that can come from a failure experience. and 3. That is what failure is: a learning opportunity.

For what it is worth, here is how I would advise one to approach future failures:

1. MOPE, POUT, CRY, YELL, & FEEL BAD

You are allowed to feel however you feel about your failure! Failure hurts! The trick here is to give yourself a deadline in your moping. I like a 24-48 hour window of pouting. After those 2 days, I force myself to move on to the next step.

2. EVALUATE

Pause and ask yourself (in your head, in writing, or in conversation someone you trust): how did this happen? What can I learn from this? Was there anything that I or someone else could have done to prevent this failure? How will I do things differently from this point on?

3. REFRESH

Now, with your self-reflection and learnings noted, you move on. You live life, you pursue your goals, you get back at it. TRY AGAIN. This time, though, you are wiser, you are more experienced, and you are more prepared.

I do not think I said it then, so I'll say it now: Thank you, failure.

Written by Mercy Counselor, Mrs. Trish Brown

TAKE WHAT YOU NEED

You may need one of these messages today.

YOU CANNOT BE
EVERYTHING
FOR
EVERYONE

A BAD DAY
(OR SEVERAL)
IS NOT EQUAL TO
A BAD LIFE.

NOT
ALL
THOUGHTS
ARE
TRUE

THE ONLY
WAY OUT
IS THROUGH

ALL
FEELINGS
ARE
REAL & VALID

EVERYTHING
IS
TEMPORARY

Protecting Your 11th or 12th Grader During the Holidays

This time of year usually involves gatherings of friends and family. These gatherings can be particularly stressful for your high school student, especially our juniors and seniors. Trying to escape conversations about Uncle Herman's snail connection turns into the dreaded "where are you going to college?", "what are you majoring in?", "have you started looking at schools?" barrage of questions. This is where you, as the adult in your high schoolers life can really make a difference. Even if a student is excited about their journey, they may not want to talk about their thoughts or plans at a gathering. So how can you as a grown-up serve as the buffer?

1. Some families plan a standard answer, "I am enjoying high school right now and have been working with my counselor on my plans."
2. Make a game out of it. I happen to have 5 seniors in my family right now, between cousins, nephews, my own child and a granddaughter - have them wage a friendly competition on who gets asked the question the most. If your student is the only one going through the journey - have a competition between your family. As parents we get asked the "so what is Edith thinking about next year" question too!

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3. Some parents will let their family members know that we have a rule that we don't talk about college/major unless Mary Sue brings it up.

Be present. If you notice your child grimacing at a conversation, step in and rescue them. Help them prepare for the evening and ask how they want to handle these situations. A simple plan can go a long way toward easing the stress that can accompany "what's next for you" conversations

Written by Mercy Counselor Mrs. Holly Bennetts

The Gift of Reflection

Reflection is a key practice in the high school journey and eventually in the college search adventure. Too often however, this step is bypassed to rush to future planning, whether it be planning for the next semester, next year or researching colleges. Reflection is key to setting goals for the future. As the days get shorter and the weather turns colder, drawing inward is more natural. As the first semester comes to a close, spend some time with your Mercy student reflecting on the semester. Share your own thoughts about your journey this semester as well.

What has been your favorite class or activity this semester? Why?

What is one thing you are proud of this semester?

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What was your biggest failure? What did you learn from that failure?

How are you different today than you were in August?

What are your goals for next semester? How can I help you achieve them?

Start a journal with your Marlin! Writing is a great way to reflect and to learn about each other. There is a great book, 300 Writing Prompts, that can help you create a journal. Grab a composition notebook, write the prompt on the top, and answer the question, give the book to your Marlin and have them write the same response, share this back and forth, sometimes you might want to talk about the reflection, and that is ok! Some of my favorite from the book, “Complete the thought: “Today I hope...”, “What traffic sign best represents your life right now”, “Which is stronger, love or hate?”, “What is the best piece of advice you have ever been given?”

So how does all of this relate to the college process? The more we know ourselves, as students and parents, the easier it is to navigate the college adventure. The more we teach and model reflection the more we grow. Self-advocacy, time-management and goal-setting becomes easier when we have a better understanding of who we are.

Written by Mercy Counselor, Mrs. Holly Bennetts

BREAK AN UNHEALTHY HABIT

over break

Constant Complaining

WE ALL NEED A VENT SESH EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, BUT
A HABIT OF COMPLAINING CAN CREATE AN OVERALL
UNHEALTHY NEGATIVE MENTALITY AND MOOD

Perfectionism

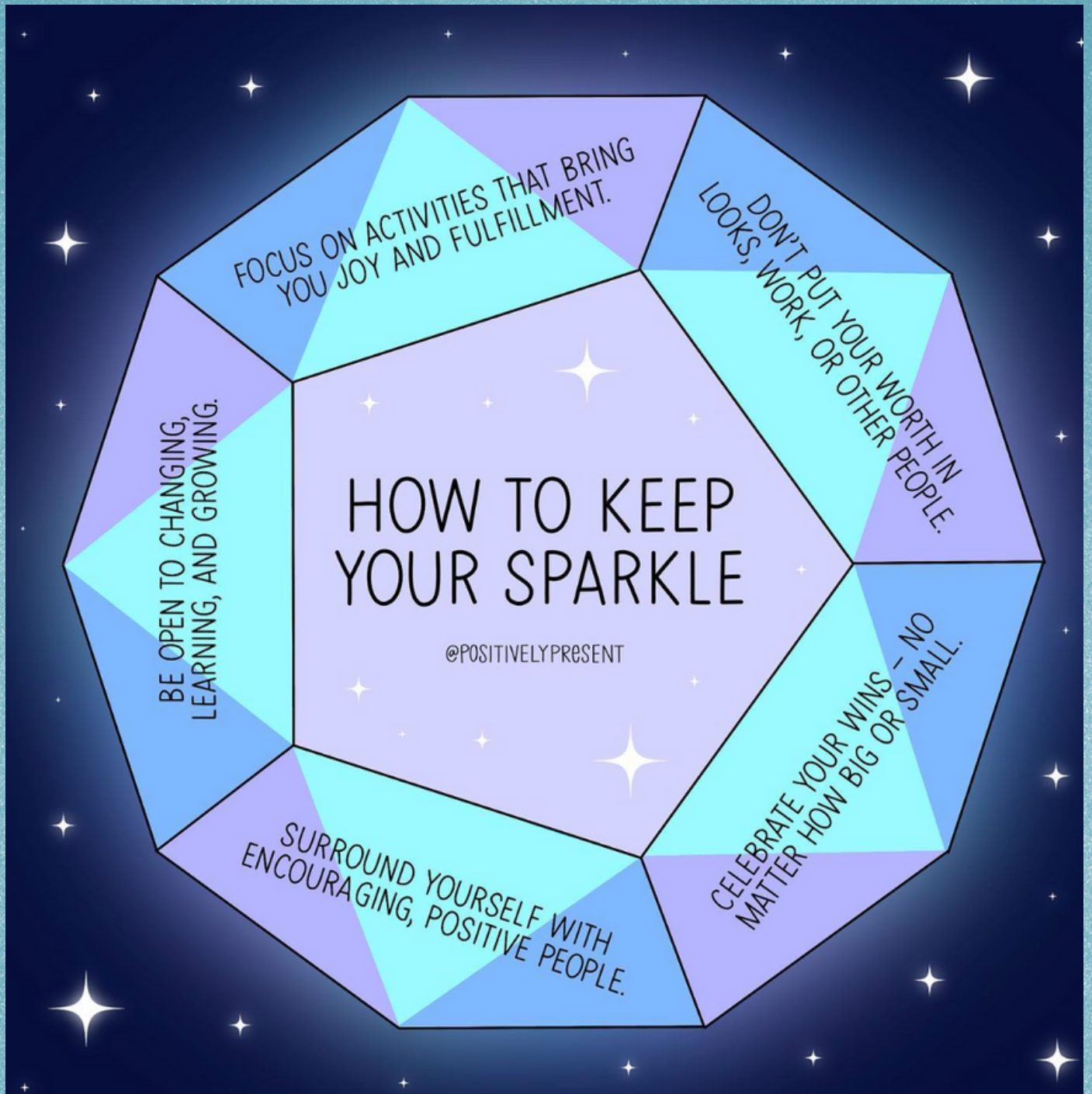
CONSTANTLY STRIVING FOR AN UNATTAINABLE GOAL
IS UNHEALTHY, UNREALISTIC, AND IS
GUARANTEED TO LEAVE US FEELING "LESS-THAN"

Worst-Case Thinking

ASSUMING THE WORST-CASE-SCENARIO ELIMINATES
HOPE AND POSSIBILITY FROM OUR THOUGHT PROCESS.

Trying to Control Everything

INSTEAD OF STRIVING FOR THIS IMPOSSIBLE GOAL,
IDENTIFY WHAT IS TOTALLY OUT OF YOUR CONTROL
(WHAT OTHERS SAY/THINK/DO, WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU IN LIFE, ETC.)
AND SHIFT FOCUS TO WHAT IS WITHIN YOUR CONTROL
(HOW YOU COPE, WHAT YOU SAY & DO, HOW YOU TREAT OTHERS, ETC.)



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