**Ways to Use VIA Character Strengths**

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**CORE VIRTUE: COURAGE**

**exercising will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition, external or internal**

**II. Persistence [perseverance, industriousness]:** Persistence is the mental strength necessary to continue striving for one’s goals in the face of obstacles and setbacks. This sort of perseverance requires dedication, focus, and patience. Persistent individuals finish what they start, persisting in the quest to achieve their goals in spite of any hardships they encounter along the way. The broader and more ambitious one’s goals are, the more necessary persistence is in order to achieve them.

**Too much:** obsession, fixated, pursuit of unattainable goals

**Too little:** slackness, laziness

**Movies:**

1. *Life of Pi (2010)* – An epic journey of a young man to survive under open sea, who strikes an unlikely connection with beast, a ferocious Bengali Tiger. The movie displays a number of strengths from persistence, courage, spirituality, social intelligence, creativity, and hope and optimism.

2. *127 Hours (2010)* – A remarkable display of persistence and courage of Ralston, a mountain climber who becomes trapped under a boulder while canyoneering alone near Moab, Utah. Ralston, display an inspiring and gut ranching struggle to survive.

3. *Pursuit of Happiness (2006)* – Based on a true story Christopher Gardner shows exemplary persistence, hope, and courage to pursue his goals despite significant financial and relationship challenges.

4. *Aviator (2004)* – This Martin Scorsese movie tells the story of Howard Hughes’s industriousness who was one of 20th-century America's most pioneering and influential figures. Hughes made significant contributions to both the film and aviation industries. At only 25 years of age, Hughes directed the most expensive film ever made up to that point, *Hell’s Angels* (1930) and then continued to test the limits of flight technology, building bigger, faster, and stronger aircrafts.

5. *The Piano* (1993) – This movie centers on the obstacles faced by a woman who voluntarily stopped speaking as a child, communicating exclusively through written notes and playing the piano. A marriage is arranged between her and a man who takes her to New Zealand and sells her instrument to a neighbor. When she is given the opportunity to earn back the piano and resume her playing, the extent of her determination becomes clear.

Also see, *Driving Bell and Butterfly (2007, French) & Inception (2010)*

**Songs:** My Way (Frank Sinatra), On the Road to Find Out (Cat Stevens)

***Suggested Actions***

1. Plan a big project and finish it ahead of time. Don’t be deterred by unexpected obstacles along the way.

2. Select two activities that you find engaging and meaningful and give 100% to them. Try to immerse yourself so that you are totally focused.

3. Set five small goals weekly. Break them into practical steps, accomplish them on time, and monitor your progress from week to week.

4. Work harder than usual at your most important goal. Let the momentum of your productivity carry you forward.

5. Select a role model who exemplifies perseverance and determine how you can follow her/his footsteps. If this person is alive and someone you know, speak with him or her about this strength.

6. Read an inspiring quotation or poem that motivates you to achieve your goals. Write it on a card and carry it with you for when you need inspiration.

7. Seed some flowering plants early in the spring and tend them throughout the summer. Appreciate their life cycle and your role as caretaker.

8. Write your goals and aims and post them where they can inspire you regularly. Keep your list short enough that it doesn’t seem overwhelming.

9. Manage a challenging task from start to finish at your work. The experience will demonstrate your persistence to yourself and your co-workers.

10. Take control of at least one new situation at home or work, one that you can handle. If you fail, revise your plan but don’t give up until you finish.

11. Regularly articulate your goals into specific actions. This helps you to stay motivated and persistent.

12. Keep a checklist of things to do and regularly update it. Make each item relatively simple to accomplish, so that you have the satisfaction of a shrinking list to spur you on to further progress.

13. Attend a seminar or workshop on time management. Write the key ideas down and review them weekly.

14. Share your goals with your loved ones. Let them inspire you with encouragement and advice.

15. Think about what you would like to accomplish in the next five years. Develop a road map and assess how your present skills match with your goals.

16. Be aware how to cut your losses in tasks that don’t require persistence. Apply your energy where it is most productive.

17. For your next challenging task, make a realistic timeline and stick to it. Allow yourself some extra time to correct unexpected problems.