



## **COACHING FOR COLLEGE e-Tip Sheet** for parents who have a student preparing for college

### **Commencement Speech - May**

Welcome to your graduation. I congratulate you on your graduation! Before you toss your mortarboard in the air and head to the party, I have a few words to share with you.

- *Life is a journey...enjoy the ride.*
- *Life is a highway, create your roadmap and bring a compass.*
- *If you don't know where you are going, you will probably end up somewhere else.*

This is about your adventure, plan, hard work, perseverance, dreaming, and wonderment. You're about to begin the first independent leg of your journey through life as you expand your world to continue to learn, to work or to serve. This is your starting point and often, a pivoting point as well. Like a sailboat that moves across the lake, tacking allows the boat to move forward, but not in a straight line. Moving from point A to B, from here to there, from today to tomorrow is not always linear. All of us want to move forward in life...sometimes we can catch the breeze and can be on a run. Other times we will tack along our educational path or career path moving this way and that way to reach our destination.

#### **Ah, destination...do you have a destination?**

In the 1967 movie, *The Graduate*, Dustin Hoffman plays the lead as Benjamin Braddock who is adrift after graduating from college. Uncertain about his future plans, he receives a word of career advice from one of his parent's friends. The word is "plastics." The word doesn't click.

Is there a word that would connect you to a future plan for training, a college major, a career path? It's a tough question. It's often not that simple. Who can sum up a future plan in one word? At age 18, it's a tall order.

Many students have not taken time in their busy lives to find the words that work for them, but it's really a worthwhile exercise. The words that probably would surface are the words that name a value. Words like people, creativity, adventure, beauty, peace, helping, outdoors, travel, computers, big bucks and so forth. These words can be a window to see what you are passionate about. These words are words that fuel our lives. These words give us purpose and inspiration in how we want to live our lives. As we age and have more life experience, some of our values will be adjusted or redefined, but they often are the threads that are woven into our life. Values often last a lifetime.

#### **Create a VALUES MAP**

I encourage you to take time to find the words, the values that work for you. Find a quiet place or a place you can be alone with your thoughts, feelings, ambitions, and dreams. Write down the words and values that are important...just blurt it out on paper in any order. If you get blocked or run out of words, come back to it later. Review your words. Is there anything else you want to add?

Feel your teen could use a jumpstart for the college planning process? Perhaps as the parent, you realize you could use a tune-up on your career path as well or want to prepare to become an *Empty Nexter*®. Contact Beckon Call and let's talk!

Coaching for College e-Tip Sheet© is written by Barbara Wulf. Send questions, comments, and article ideas to: [Barbara.wulf@me.com](mailto:Barbara.wulf@me.com) or call 920-725-2930.



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### for parents who have a student preparing for college

Next, take your list of words and map or plot them out on a clean sheet of paper by sorting the words into “word families.” Some of the families or groups might have several words and others will only have one or two. Look at the patterns. What jumps out at you? Gain insight by seeing what shows up. Do you the things you value tend to lead you to work with People, Things, Ideas, or Information/Data?

You will probably be more excited about pursuing a college degree, technical training, or work experience where your values would be honored, in other words, a place where you could bring your values to work. We often don’t find we can “have it all,” but noting what is important to you can help you earn a fulfilling, richer life.

Many adults have not done this exercise, so they meander through life looking for the right job. Why? They probably did not have a destination in mind. They let their values slip away. Your values are your compass. Your values can point you in the right direction as you start your life journey. Come back to check your compass occasionally to see if you are honoring the values in your life. Good Luck!

#### Here’s a sample VALUES MAP:

Family People	Beauty Nature Living Plants Blooming Flowers Outdoors
Helping Teaching Volunteering Serve Humanity	Exercise Physically Fit Health Nutrition
Honesty Integrity Truth Peace	

“Life is no straight and easy corridor along which we travel free and unhampered, but a maze of passages, through which we must seek our way, lost and confused, now and again checked in a blind alley. But always, if we have faith, a door will open for us, not perhaps one that we ourselves would ever have thought of, but one that will ultimately prove good for us.” ~ A.J. Cronin

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