

# How to have true grit!

## The intangible element in your success.



### Heather Traeger

Professional Development Officer  
Law Society NT

When we describe someone as being 'gritty', it means we think they show courage, are bold, valiant, spirited, hardy, tough, determined, resolute, will get up after falling down, again and again, persistent and plucky, etc. No doubt you have your own interpretation and usage.

Psychologist, Angela Duckworth, famous for her book and TED talk\* on Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance, left a high paying consultancy position to teach math in a public school in New York and later became a psychologist, explains 'grit' is a better predictor of success than a 'high IQ' or even 'natural talent'.

Can you recall someone you know who has a high IQ but others with more 'G&D' (guts and determination) perform better, consistently? It may be surprising to learn that innate talent alone, does not guarantee success. People are surprised when 'rising stars' drop out or give up.

### Are you a paragon of perseverance?

Duckworth, identifies two key elements common to all high achievers:

1. They are unusually resilient and hardworking, and
2. Have a deep sense of direction and purpose (passion), which make undertaking and completing some boring or grueling aspects, bearable.

### Have you been working at law for 10 years or more?

Regardless of the industry you work in, it is widely

acknowledged it takes approximately 10 000 hours or 10 years at something, to be regarded an 'expert'. This high-level of achievement is gained through persistent study, focused engagement, a drive to be better backed by repetitious 'deliberate' practice, and a relentless pursuit to know more about the discipline chosen, until 'dazzling mastery' is achieved. (Duckworth, 75-77).

'Deliberate' practice has a goal, broken into mini-goals with specific targets and a way of recording one's level of achievement towards those goals, by a set date. Experts record their goals and their progress towards those goals; they set goals that will stretch them well beyond where they are now, they will envision their goals and the feelings they'll experience when they obtain their goals. Then, they will develop a plan to reach their goals and 'strive to improve specific weaknesses' by undertaking regular and honest assessment of current performance against their end point. They will 'intentionally seek out challenges they can't yet meet'. They will do so repeatedly until they master the skill and knowledge of what they set out to do. Until 'conscious incompetence becomes unconscious competence'. (Duckworth, 77).

**You can get a coach and a mentor but you can get started without these. The basic requirements of 'deliberate practice', are as simple as:**

- A clearly defined stretch goal;
- Full concentration and effort;

- Immediate and informative feedback;
- Constant repetition with reflection and refinement. (Duckworth, 84).

### Finding your passion – your calling, your vocation

For some people, this may take a long time. To speed up the process of finding your passion or confirming you're already working in the area of your passion, Duckworth suggests asking yourself the following questions and putting the answers in writing to help obtain clarity.

3. What do I like to think about? Where does my mind wander?
4. What do I really care about? What matters most to me?
5. How do I enjoy spending my time? And, in contrast, what do I find absolutely unbearable? (Duckworth, 72).

### How Gritty are you?

For some self-reflection, find your 'Grit scale' by completing this quick survey—there are no right or wrong answers, just a score that reflects how passionate and persevering you see yourself to be. <https://angeladuckworth.com/grit-scale/>

#### References

1. 2016, Duckworth, Angela, GRIT – The power of passion and perseverance, Scribner eBook, Sydney. *eBookNews.SimonandSchuster.com*. ISBN: 978 1 5011 1112 9 (ebook)
2. \*Duckworth's six minute TED talk: [https://www.ted.com/talks/angela\\_lee\\_duckworth\\_grit\\_the\\_power\\_of\\_passion\\_and\\_perseverance](https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_grit_the_power_of_passion_and_perseverance)

#### Other Resources

Angela Duckworth's Q&A about grit: <https://angeladuckworth.com/qa/>  
 Angela Duckworth & James J Gross' article titled, Self-control and Grit: Related but Separable determinants of Success. <https://upenn.app.box.com/s/67xyf6b2zqtuacd1jrbh>

Download a free PDF version of 200 pages, of Duckworth's book, at: [file:///C:/Users/PDO/Downloads/Grit\\_%20The%20Power%20of%20Passion%20and%20Perseverance\(May%203,%202016\)%20\(%20PDFDrive.com%20\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/PDO/Downloads/Grit_%20The%20Power%20of%20Passion%20and%20Perseverance(May%203,%202016)%20(%20PDFDrive.com%20).pdf)

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