

What is Productive Struggle?

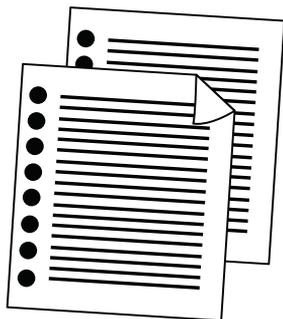


Step 1: Watch the video and get ready to complete the worksheets on “productive struggle.”



[Click Here for the Video](#)

[Click Here for the Worksheet](#)



Step 2: Read

People often give up when faced with challenges.



For instance, when a reading assignment becomes difficult, many students instinctively turn to their phones or start chatting with friends. They seek comfort in mindless, easy distractions to avoid the discomfort of struggle.



But when we only pursue what is easy, we limit our growth. If our workouts are effortless, our muscles won't grow. If we avoid long, complex books, our minds won't develop the capacity to grasp deep, intricate ideas.



To become stronger, smarter, and more capable, we must embrace productive struggle.

It is through pushing past difficulty that we unlock our potential.



Productive

struggle means

working through

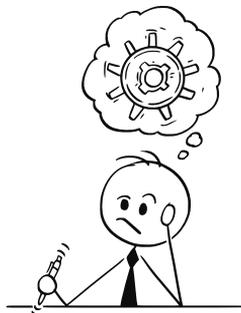
something

challenging and

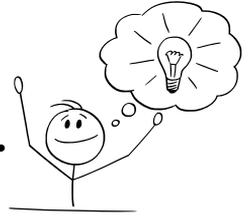
not giving up,

even when it's

hard.

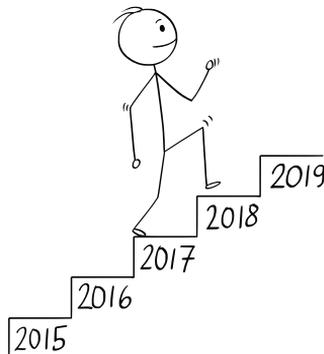


When we engage in productive struggle, we're not just learning a new skill or concept — we're reshaping our mindset.



Every challenge we face and overcome helps us build resilience and confidence.

We learn to trust in our ability to persist, adapt, and grow.

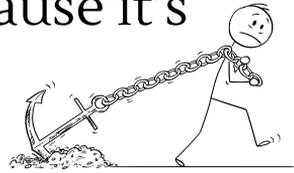


Step 3: Create a Plan to Embrace Productive Struggle

Identify a Challenge:



Think of one activity you sometimes avoid because it's difficult.



- Do you avoid reading books with advanced vocabulary?
- Do you give up too easily on your math homework?
- Did you quit piano lessons because it felt too tough?

Write your answer on your worksheet

Reflect and Plan:

Once you've chosen your activity, answer these questions:

- Why does it feel challenging?
- What can do to push through the struggle?
- What are one or two strategies you can try next time you face this challenge (e.g., asking for help, breaking the task into smaller parts, or reminding yourself that struggle helps you grow).

Write your answer on your worksheet

Think about a skill or profession you'd love to have in the future:

- Maybe you dream of becoming a professional basketball player.
- Perhaps you want to be an author who writes amazing stories.
- Or maybe you'd love to speak seven different languages fluently.



Choose something that excites you — a skill or profession that feels meaningful and inspiring to you.

Write 150 words or more explaining the productive struggle you would have to endure to develop that skill or enter that profession.

- What challenges would you face? For example, would you struggle with self-doubt, frustration, or fear of failure?



- How much time and effort would you need to practice, read, or study?



- What strategies could help you push through these tough moments and stay motivated?

Reflect on how productive struggle could help you grow and make your dream a reality.

If you enjoyed that mini-lesson, you can get more resources here:

Website: briantolentino.com



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