

can guess for some of you, that question conjured up images of old western movies or Sigourney Weaver wielding some serious weaponry to combat alien bad guys. What exactly is grit? The term has come to mean that thing that pushes or pulls us through life events that are difficult, uncomfortable, or just downright inconvenient. It goes beyond motivation, with its own intrinsic and extrinsic drivers, to get to that stuff that keeps us from quitting when the going gets tough. When we are tired enough, cold enough, hot enough,

frustrated enough, hangry enough, or *anything* enough to give up—even if we really wanted to do something in the first place but lost that "want to" along the way—it is grit that steps in to get us to the bitter (or dare I say triumphant) end!

Angela Duckworth is a psychologist who has studied grit for years, learning about it through researching the admissions process and outcomes for cadets at West Point. Her methods factored in SAT and ACT scores, grade averages, recommendations, and other benchmarks to predict who would likely

69



finish the arduous course of education and militarization and make the transition from cadet to soldier. But even with all those boxes checked, why do so many young aspiring military officers go through all that preparation for something they have to want badly, only to quit within the first semester?

Angela figured out that intelligence and talent have little to do with the stuff of stick-to-itiveness. Rather, it looks more like having the patience to explore interests until a passion emerges is key, then add a level of capacity for perseverance, let that simmer over time, and make sure there is clear direction. Voila, now we're getting somewhere! Want to try the Grit Scale? Visit:

https://angeladuckworth.com/grit-scale/

Let's add to this new formula the critical foundation of well-explored beliefs. Everything we do in life, big or small, high stakes or low, is based on what we believe about it. You may not have rolled out of bed this morning unless you had a belief about the implications if you didn't! We will stick to anything, no matter what, if we believe in it. That is what is so powerful about love as a motivator. We would give our very lives for someone we love

or a cause we believe in down to our socks. Bottom line: passion and perseverance over time in an intentional direction, on a foundation of well-explored beliefs, is the stuff of grit.

So, how gritty are you?



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