

*New Patterns for
Learning*

I WANT TEACHERS TO KNOW...

I am the student, not worth your time.
Not as smart as your "favorite" that you can make shine.

You go on, about your busy day,
Catering to the high achievers along the way.

You tell me I'm lazy; I do not listen,
I do not follow directions and I don't pay attention.

Yes, you are right about all these things that you say.
So I will throw in the towel and give up today.

I am the student that gave up years ago.
My life has gone nowhere and is at an all-time low.
You made me feel worthless and too stupid to learn,
So I took the easy way out and made a wrong turn.

Now I am a student, sitting in a class today.
Nervous and tense, not knowing what to say.
Is this teacher going to be like you?
Is she going to think I am stupid too?

I am sitting here, feeling so much shame,
But in no time at all, I know you are to blame.

You feel so proud of what your "star" students have
achieved,
And you go ahead and pass the troubled ones and feel
relieved.

Now at age...well that's not important.
I have a teacher that believes in me.
She has taught me that determination is the key.
She has made me feel that I am worthwhile.
She has taught so much because she went the extra mile!

I now want all teachers to know,
that your reactions will determine if students stay or go.
So please go that extra mile;
make your students feel worthwhile.
Give the gift of self-esteem,
and like the "stars" they will gleam!

To my old teacher, I hope you are gone.
I am not stupid; you were wrong!
I want you to know that I am on my way
And I will be a "star" someday!

Lisa Smith

GED CLASS IS LIKE HAVING A BABY

I have been in the GED class for a couple of years. I know this class helps me a lot to improve my English, but I want to finish this class and move on. From time to time, I am very frustrated and upset. I think to myself, "Why can't I be like other people? They are in class a couple of months and pass the GED and move on." I ask myself all the time, "Are you not smart enough, or do you have a brain problem?"

One day I sat on my couch and studied an English paper and smiled to myself. I had never thought about this before, but it gave me an explanation of why I can't be like others. Of course, we are all different. I remembered when I had my first child. I had long hours to wait. When my husband took me to the hospital, I thought I would have my baby soon, but it did not happen as quickly as I wanted. I remember several ladies came and told the doctor, "I am in pain," and they had their babies. I wondered what was going on with me. I was waiting longer than anybody else. I was in pain, frustrated, afraid, and worried that something had happened to the baby. But after a long time, I had a beautiful boy and the most joyful moment I ever had.

When I thought about this moment, I compared it to the GED class. I can't accomplish things as fast as I want, but I can wait. I did wait longer than other ladies, but I had a baby. GED class is like this. I am in pain, frustrated, struggling, and fearful that I can't pass. But, I have a good teaching staff in my GED class. They give me a lot of help, motivation, and encouragement. It was like my baby doctor. He helped me to have a joyous moment.

I was thankful to my doctor for being patient with me. Someday I will say thanks to all my teachers who have helped me. When I finish the GED call, I will look back and see that

I took longer than others, but I will have done it. I believe this day will come and I smile as I sit on the couch. When I think about this comparison, I laugh to myself.

Kilcha Canfield

PLEASE NO CLASS THE WEEK OF CHRISTMAS

Please no class the week of Christmas. We need the week off to prepare for Christmas. We wouldn't be able to keep our minds on our studies. We would really appreciate class after the week off.

Please no class the week of Christmas.

We just don't have the time.
Please let me explain with a rhyme.
Get out the paper, ribbons and bows;
hang up the stockings and mistletoe.
Go out shopping, buy just the right things;
hurry back home, we've carols to sing.
Up with the tree, trim it just right,
stand back now, and turn on the lights.
So much to do, we'll never be done.
Isn't Christmas so much fun?

Please no class the week of Christmas.

We can't keep our minds on essays and angles. We'd rather think of tinsel and our lights in a tangle. We can't think of history, English or math, our minds are now on Santa's path.

Please no class the week of Christmas.

When we come back we'll appreciate it so much more;
I can see us now rushing in the door.
One week would let us see –
that class is something we all really need.

Please no class the week of Christmas. We can avoid all the rush. We'll keep our minds on Christmas day. We'll appreciate the break. What do you say ???

Joan Kay Joseph

MY OBSTACLES

Hello, my name is Ulises, and I'm from Mexico and have been in the USA for three years. I'm a regular person with many dreams and nothing in my pockets. I'm 22 years old, and my life in my country was normal until my family decided to come to the United States. I left my culture, school, friends, city and home where I lived for 18 years and the most important thing in my heart. I have my parents and 2 brothers, and they live in Chicago. I'm living in Ohio because one of my aunts living in Cincinnati told me I might be able to find a job quicker in Cincinnati than in Chicago, so I said, "Yes." But I was blind; I didn't have any idea what was waiting for me. I was without my family, only in the U.S. for a week, no English, but I had a job.

I started to work in a company making air conditioning pipes. I can remember my first weekend in Cincinnati like it was yesterday. I spent Fridays crying for two or three hours – crazy about going back to my country. Not only did I miss my family, but I missed my girlfriend. I told myself that I had to fight any obstacles. Cincinnati was a new word for me and many other words, so I started to learn English in the morning and work at night. It was difficult to have two jobs and study English, but I had to do it for my future. I needed to learn American ways and be able to do everything for myself like going to shop, going to the hospital, taking my driving test, buying food and clothing – everything in English!

My life those days was busy, but I did it for one year and now my life is easier. I'm not afraid to answer the phone and say "hello," but I know this is only the beginning. I started to see more open doors for me, find new friends, and have fewer problems in my job. One of the biggest problems

I have is people understanding my accent, but maybe with time, I can fix it.

Today, I have too many feelings and worries in my head, and there is not room to rest. Now I'm very close to getting one of my biggest dreams and that is to go to school for Heating and Cooling. I'm starting school the first week in February. I plan to get a degree in heating and cooling from Diamond Oaks Career Development Center. I am off to a new life in the USA.

Ulises Perez

YES, I CAN DO IT!

In 2006, I will achieve my GED,
and my children will be proud of me.

Yes, I can do it!

I can and I will work through all the obstacles in my way
to get my GED.

Yes, I can do it!

I will have that good job. Education is the key!

Yes, I can do it!

I can learn to be a better writer.

Yes, I can do it!

I can do math better and pass the GED test.

Yes, I can do it!

I can enroll in college and start on a new career.
I **am** going to do it!

Yes, I can do it!

Live Oaks Class

JOURNEY OF LIFE

In the years 1986 to 1989, I tried to pursue my GED diploma, but somehow I always got side-tracked and found myself quitting. In September of 2000 I was determined to accomplish my goal that I struggled with in the late 1980's, passing the GED test. I knew that it was going to take awhile, because I quit school when I was sixteen. During my teenage years I abused alcohol and drugs. Now that I'm much older, I have stopped drinking and have God in my life. I began thinking positively that I was going to do it!

I remember walking into Live Oaks for the first time, praying to myself, asking God to stay with me through this challenge. Everyday I would come to class. If I missed a morning class, I would make it up by going to night class. I felt that I was in the fourth grade again.

By the year of 2002, I was still attending class, struggling and getting disgusted with myself. I saw other students come and go quickly, but why wasn't I getting it? I couldn't get through the pre-test. One of the students that I would sit with and who helped me was so supportive and mentioned to me to get tested for Attention Deficit Disorder. I went to the University of Cincinnati to a psychologist and was tested for 8 hours. The psychologist's diagnosis concluded that I have a learning disability. With this in mind, it also gave me extended time when I was ready to get my GED. I studied and worked three jobs. I remember running to class because I had to be at work at 10:45 AM. Class started at 9:00 a.m. It took 25 minutes to get to work. I would ask Marty, my teacher, if we could we do math first and asked the others if they would mind. They didn't at all. They understood because they had been there with me though my journey and knew my schedule. ALGEBRA, GEOMETRY, WORD

PROBLEMS - THINGS THAT I HAD NO CLUE ABOUT.
But, I never gave up!

In the year 2003, my mother was diagnosed with cancer. I was devastated! The doctor explained the treatments to us. I stopped taking classes for awhile and put work aside. Marty knew how important this was to me. She told me to go and finish that journey. While my mom was getting her treatment and knowing the effect that it was going to have on her, I thought to myself how strong she is. She's experiencing a task that was more of a challenge than what I was up against. So, I got stronger. I wanted her to be there to see me finish my task.

Still in school in the year 2004, I was ready to throw in the towel and give up. Mom was getting sick and she felt like giving up. But we made a deal with each other – if she would not give up, neither would I. That made both of us think positively, and we snapped out of it and didn't give up. Having to change jobs helped me a lot. I was closer to school and didn't have to drive as far. In the year 2005, I was tested once again and passed the practice test. I continued attending morning classes. I had learned so much from Marty. I felt that this was going to be the year, gliding right along with no problems. Then my boss decided that he no longer could have me coming in later than the others. In November 2005 I had to say goodbye to Marty and my new friends and was forced to go to night class. I still did not quit. November 17th I was determined that I was going to finish once and for all. I had taken the pre-test and passed and was ready to move on to the real thing. I was hesitant at first, but went for it on December 9, 2005, AND I PASSED! I can't even begin to tell you how overwhelmed I was with gratitude to everyone who helped me keep a positive attitude. I do have to admit that I thought about throwing in the towel. But I did pass and never gave up.

Thanks, Mom, for staying strong and believing in yourself – you got through your biggest journey. By staying strong and never giving up you helped me through my journey. I love you and am as proud of you as you are of me. And I want to thank my teacher, Marty – you were my guardian angel. You showed me how to believe in myself and helped me with my confidence, along with my self worth!

Deborah Shepherd

SPOONS AWAY!

Standing over the deceased feline, I slowly lifted the cold spoon, sterilizing every inch from the panda bear handle to the tarnished scoop. My plan for this utensil was to perform a self-educating autopsy on the motionless creature that lay before me. While tightening the yellow cleaning gloves that were swimming pools for my hands, I thought to myself, "Ok, it's time! Time to unlock the mystery!" My heart pounded; my body trembled. The anticipation grew with every passing second, as if I were a dull green leaf claiming its autumn colors.

As my hand crept towards the corpse, I heard distant footsteps approaching. My mind instantly cluttered with all the many ways my parents were going to scold me. The door pushed open and in came my mother. She stopped in her tracks, and a look of confusion came over her face. Her mouth dropped. That one familiar eyebrow slowly rose into place. Then, she hesitantly voiced.

"Sweetheart, what are you doing?"

"Shhh...not while I'm operating Mommy!" I whispered with intensity.

Little did she know, I was attempting to discover exactly why and how my cat Lipstick had died.

Cautiously she asked, "What do you mean while you're operati...ahhhhh!"

I knew by the terrified scream that my adventure had come to an abrupt end, very much like the career of Vanilla Ice.

"Drop the spoon and step away from the cat!" she sputtered while tightly gripping her nose.

As I reluctantly descended from my stool, I whined, "Aw, Mom, I was so close!"

Of course, my curiosities never ceased due to my mother's finding of our lifeless former pet, which just so happened to be stretched out on my fathers' newly surfaced

pool table. (Oops...sorry Dad!) Nevertheless, at nine years of age, this was the first step towards my destiny, Forensic Pathology.

Forensic Pathology has intrigued me ever since I was a young girl. The concept of exploring, dissecting, and going deeper into the anatomy of the human body (or any unfortunate animal that may expire in my home) gives me chills – the pleasant ones. Although my mother opposed my intention to decapitate Lipstick, both she and my father upheld my interests by producing tangibility and belief. Every Saturday, my mother would take me to check out books on one of the world's most gruesome avocations. My father on the other hand, spent months on end creating a laboratory so intricately defined, even Dexter himself would be amazed.

As my GED graduation approaches, the thought of entering college to fulfill my dream truly exhilarates me. I see Forensic Pathology as a helping profession not only to myself, but also to the society as a whole. A friend of mine once mentioned that your greatest interests as a child could one day become your future career. I hope to make Forensic Pathology mine. I'm getting a new cat tomorrow. Perhaps he'll assist me in achieving my goal!

Shaterra Tillman