

The Student Success Curriculum

Topic One: Transitioning

This class seeks to accomplish a number of important goals to improve student resilience and decrease unnecessary attrition. Studies show that students in early stages of training drop out at higher rates than other student groups. When a student's academic experiences share an affinity with his or her goals and commitments, the student is more likely to persist when things get challenging. This is why career visioning, taught in this class, is so important early in a massage training program. This class also attempts to empower students to take charge of their educational experiences by helping them understand how their attitudes, choices and beliefs directly correlate to their successes or failures. For example, resilient people view failures as learning, which becomes a resource for success in future endeavors.

When people understand the nature of fear, negative self-talk, and worry, they are better able to talk back to the negativity and brainstorm solutions. Finally, students socially integrate during this class by sharing important events from their past, defining a meaningful and positive educational

experience, and by *choosing* who they want to be as a massage student. There is a powerful message that massage school is their choice—and their creation. It can be positive or negative depending on what they bring to the classroom every single day.

Time Frames

Teaching Strategies

Lecture

Small Group Discussion

Journaling (visioning)

Self-Evaluation

Group Brainstorming

Large Group Discussion

The implementation time for this material depends on the size of the class and the amount of discussion that occurs in the group. Smaller groups of 1–10 students should plan two hours. Instructors with larger groups of up to twenty-five students should plan three hours. The material can be modified to a shorter time frame provided that the visioning exercise is conducted at home as homework and the Dirty Dozen activity is moved to a different class.

Instructor Preparation

- ✓ Read Topic 1: Transitioning in the *Student Success Guide*.
- ✓ Complete all worksheets and activities in Topic 1 of the *Student Success Guide* to understand how the worksheets are designed and used.
- ✓ Review the PowerPoint slides side by side with the lecture outline/activity for topic one.
- ✓ Review the activities included in this teaching kit and decide how to best implement them in the class.

Resources

- ✓ Locate and read any of the following resources to support an understanding of the topic.
- ✓ *Moving Successfully from High School to College* by D. Cooper, S. Watt, S. Sanders, Counseling and Human Development Website available at www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3934/is_is_199905/ai_n8848211.
- ✓ *Retaining Adult Students in Higher Education* by S. Kerka. ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult Career and Vocational Education, available at www.ericdigests.org/pre-9212/adult.htm.
- ✓ *Faculty Professional Choices in Teaching that Foster Student Success* by J. Braxton. Commissioned Paper for the National Symposium on Post-secondary Student Success, conducted by the National Post-secondary Education Cooperative (NPEC) available at <http://nces.ed.gov/npec/papers.asp>.

Supplies & Equipment

- ✓ *Student Success Guides* (one per student)
- ✓ Student journals (optional)
- ✓ List of planned breakout groups
- ✓ Whiteboard and markers or chalkboard and chalk
- ✓ LCD/DLP projector, laptop, and PowerPoint presentation, or printed overheads and an overhead projector.
- ✓ 5x7 cards (optional)
- ✓ Poster boards (optional)
- ✓ Dirty Dozen handout (optional)

Learning Objectives

After reading Topic 1: Transitioning and completing the worksheets associated with this topic, each student will:

- ✓ Identify one family member, friend, or event from the past that influences the person he or she is, and the choices he or she makes today.
- ✓ List three personal values that influence his or her choices and behavior on a daily basis.
- ✓ Describe one personal passion and the way in which this passion helps identify the components of “doing well.”
- ✓ Vision and define a positive future massage school experience.
- ✓ Vision and define a positive view of himself or herself as a massage student.
- ✓ Differentiate between real fears, imagined fears, and worry.
- ✓ Identify fears and doubts about massage school and plan ways to overcome perceived obstacles to school success.
- ✓ Define resiliency and list three behaviors of a resilient person.
- ✓ Define self-awareness and three behaviors of a self-aware person.
- ✓ Discuss three ways to get support from family and friends during schooling.
- ✓ Describe two characteristics of a strategic learner and explain how these characteristics help a person balance work and school.

Activity: Ice Breakers

These ice breakers can be used even if the class already knows each other slightly and has conducted ice breakers in other classes.

Option A: People often have interesting stories about their names. Hearing these stories usually provides an insight into another person's background and also creates a memory link to the person's name.

1. If the class is a small one (ten students or fewer) there is no need to break students into groups. If the class is a large one, break students into groups of five, as these stories can get long depending on how much each person shares.
2. Each person tells the story of his or her name to the group. This might include why his or her parents selected the name, the origin of the last name, and how the family came to America (for instance, was the family name changed at Ellis Island?), and any nicknames.
3. If the class has been divided into smaller groups, each group should choose one name story to share with the larger group when the class reconvenes.

Option B: In option B, each person uses his or her first name as an acronym. The letters of the name represent something important about the student. For example, Steve might say, "Hi, my name is Steve. S is for Santa Fe where I grew up. T is for trout fishing which I love to do on vacation, E is for energy, which I have a lot of. V is for Vivian, my girlfriend, and E is for being environmentally conscious, which is important to me."

1. Give students five minutes to come up with their acronyms and then have students sit in a circle.
2. Go around the circle and have students share their acronyms and descriptions.

Lecture Outline

This lecture outline is meant to be used in combination with the *Student Success Guide* and the PowerPoint slides included with this teaching kit. The information in this lecture/activity follows the information presented in the *Student Success Guide* with page numbers of the associated materials provided to the right of the heading in parentheses. Instructors are encouraged to add or delete slides and information as they deem appropriate to meet the particular needs of their student groups. The PowerPoint slides can be shown with an LCD projector or printed onto transparencies for overheads.

Tip!

Plan student breakout groups so that students work with all of their classmates during the Student Success Training Program. Avoid allowing students to choose their own groups, as this may lead to the formation of cliques and the exclusion of some students.

Slide 1: Title Slide

Introduce the topic and direct students to page 4 in their *Student Success Guides*. Ask students to share some of their feelings as they begin massage school.

Slide 2: Goals of this Lecture/Activity

The goals of this lecture and activity are to help students vision a positive massage school future, identify fears and doubts, better understand their personal values and behaviors, and identify attitudes, behaviors, and actions that lead to student success.

Tip!

Some schools have students keep an ongoing massage journal. This is a great time to begin the journaling process. If a journal is used students place all of the worksheet information directly into their journal.

Slide 3: Life Vision (p. 4)

Describe the benefits of reflecting on the past and creating a vision for the future. Explain the components of visioning.

Slide 4: Exploring the Past (p. 5)

It is important to recognize both the positive and negative influences that family members, friends, and past events impart to our belief systems. When these behavior patterns are understood, it is easier to identify when they are slowing progress and how to make new choices to achieve important goals. Ask students to turn to Worksheet 1-1 (Exploring the Past) in the *Student Success Guide*. Briefly discuss each of the areas that require investigation. Give students twenty minutes to complete Worksheet 1-1. Instruct students who finish early to go back and add more detail under the questions on their worksheets.

Tip!

If only the most talkative students are sharing, or if the instructor wants the chance to get students on their feet while sharing, try the Ball Toss exercise. Have students stand in a circle. Hand the ball to a student and ask each student to give one attribute of a positive education experience when they receive the ball. Students toss the ball until every student has given at least one idea. The instructor stands outside the ball toss circle and writes the ideas on the board.

Slide 5: Exploring the Past—Groups (p. 4)

Break students into groups of three and ask them to discuss, for approximately fifteen minutes, what they learned from completing the worksheets. It's helpful to give new students parameters for sharing information. For example, it may be important to remind students that they don't have to share very personal information. It can be disconcerting for listeners to hear very personal information from people they don't know well. It helps listeners to know that they can listen and not respond. To hear someone is enough. You never have to find an answer or offer an opinion just because someone shares information with you.

The questions listed on the slide help students structure their discussion productively. At the end of the discussion, bring the students back together and ask them to express their feelings and thoughts about completing the worksheet and discussing it with other classmates. Process those feelings and thoughts.

Slide 6: Begin to Vision (p. 6)

In most self-growth models, positive visioning exercises are used. The idea is that a clearly defined vision is easier to achieve than an undefined one. If a student can identify who they want to be, what they want to do, and how they want to live, then it follows that they are more likely to take the necessary steps to achieve their vision. Talk about the components of visioning the future and ask students to complete Worksheet 1-2 on page 7.

Slide 7: Begin to Vision—Groups (p. 6)

Break students into different groups of three and ask them to discuss what they learned from completing Worksheet 1-2 (approximately 15 minutes). The questions listed on the slide help students to structure their discussion productively. At the end of the discussion, bring the students back together and ask them to express their feelings and thoughts about completing the worksheet and discussing it with other classmates.

Tip!

During slide 8, students brainstormed the elements of a positive education experience. Write these attributes down on a poster board and post it in the classroom as a constant reminder that everyone in a class contributes to either a positive or negative educational experience.

Another idea is to write up a class conduct contract using the items from the brainstorming session. Have each student sign the contract as a pledge to contribute to a positive educational experience for all.

Slide 8: What is a Positive Educational Experience?

Students don't always view their own behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs as influences that can lead to either success or failure. More often, they see successful students as simply more intellectually capable than unsuccessful students. Oftentimes students develop a misguided view of their own abilities due to past academic failures. Usually these failures are not related to the student's intellectual capacity, but are related to other skill sets, like time management, exam preparation, effective goal setting, and note taking. Ask students to brainstorm all of the qualities that contribute to academic success, excluding intellectual ability and list the qualities on the whiteboard. Next, ask students to brainstorm the attributes of a positive educational experience (e.g., all of the students get along and treat each other respectfully, people are supportive of one another and form study groups, no one disrupts the classroom with their cell phone, etc). List these attributes on the white board. At the end of this discussion have students complete Worksheet 1-3 on page 8.

Slide 9: Who Do You Want to Be as a Student? (p. 7-8)

Break students into different groups of 3 and ask them to discuss their findings on Worksheet 1-3. At the end of the discussion, bring the students back together and ask them to express their feelings and thoughts about completing the worksheet and discussing it with other classmates.

You can collect Worksheet 1-3 and make a copy of the worksheet (return the originals to the students). After four weeks hand out the worksheets and ask students to read them over. Dedicate twenty minutes of class time to revisit the student's future visions and how they feel now, after only four weeks of school. Ask students to amend their vision if they feel it is appropriate. Plan a time sixteen weeks in the future to again revisit and amend the vision statements. Plan to revisit and amend the vision statements every sixteen weeks until the end of the training program. Instructors should keep a copy of the amendments so that they always hand out the latest version of the student's vision statement.

Tip!

Pass out 5x7 note cards and ask each student to write one positive sentence that describes who they want to be as a student. Cards remain anonymous; the students don't place their names on the cards. Collect the cards and compile the sentences onto a poster board. Hang the poster board in the class. This helps students remember that they can be any student they want to be, and they have control over the choices they make in life. They can choose to be the on time, always-prepared student now, even if they have been the late, never prepared student in the past.

Slide 10: Break!

Send students on a break and then have them return for the next section after 10-15 minutes.

Slide 11: Overcoming Fears and Doubts (p. 9)

Discuss some of the fears and doubts that students have when they start school. As students share their fears/doubts, list them in general terms on the whiteboard but do not discuss them in depth yet.

Slide 12: Understanding Fears (p. 10, 11)

It is helpful for students to understand something about the nature of fear and fear-based thought. This is also a good time to introduce students to the idea that they can choose how they respond to adversity and learn new skills for overcoming obstacles. Discuss the different types of fear and give examples of each type of fear. Look at the list on the board and mark each fear listed earlier as a real fears (R), imagined fears (I), or worry (W).

Slide 13: Overcoming Real Fears (p. 10, 11)

Discuss some of the real fears listed on the whiteboard. Discuss some general solutions to overcoming real fears.

Slide 14: Overcoming Imagined Fears (p. 10, 11)

Discuss some of the imagined fears listed on the board. It is very common for students to have fears around making friends and not being accepted, but not to list these fears. It works well to ask students to close their eyes and raise their hands if they are afraid they might not be liked. The instructor can then count up the hands and tell students how large a percentage of the group feels fear about acceptance. It is also important to teach students to question negative self-statements like "I'm too old (or young) and no one will take me seriously," or "people will laugh at me if I get it wrong." Where did the student get this idea? Where did it first come from? Track it down, identify the root, and question the source.

Slide 15: Overcoming Worry (p. 10-11)

Discuss worry and explore the story of Susan in the *Student Success Guide*. Susan worried herself into failing a quiz. Students often worry themselves into failing when they could succeed if they could put their doubts aside. Ask students to describe a time when they worried so much they prevented themselves from being successful.

Slide 16: Question Fears and Doubts (p. 10-11)

Review the questions a student might ask himself or herself when exploring fears and doubts. Ask students to assess what they have learned thus far about fear and doubt. Ask them to identify any information they need in order to be less fearful and doubtful in the future. Process anything that comes up for the group.

Slide 17: Worksheet 1-4: Resilience Assessment (p. 13)

Ask the students to turn to page 13 and complete Worksheet 1-4 as honestly as possible. Do not process the worksheets at this time, but hold them for a later slide.

Tip!

During slide 20, students made a list of areas where they needed to work to build better self-awareness and resilience. Plan a date two weeks in the future to remind students of this list and ask them if they have made any progress. Revisit the concept of self-awareness and resilience regularly.

Slide 18: Adversity and Life Stresses (p. 14)

Discuss the idea that every student will experience some adversity and life stresses during the course of a training program. Ask students to explain their ideas of why some students overcome these setbacks (even serious setbacks like the death of a family member) and succeed in school while others give up.

Slide 19: Self-Awareness is a Key to Resilience (p. 14)

Discuss the characteristics of self-aware people and describe some of the indicators that a person lacks self-awareness.

Slide 20: Resilience (p. 14)

Define resilience and discuss the relationship between self-awareness and resilience.

Slide 21: Build Resilience (p.15-16)

Now ask students to return to their completed Worksheet 1-4. Any areas where the student marked “disagree” or “strongly disagree” are areas where the student is less self-aware and less resilient. Ask students to evaluate the areas that need improvement and to make a list of these

Tip!

This is a great time to bring in a graduate of the massage program or some students from later terms or modules. Ask these guests to describe the skills they needed to develop to be successful in school. Ask them to describe how they felt in the early weeks of school and how they overcame their fears and doubts to achieve their academic goals.

areas. Discuss some of the ways that students can build their self-awareness and resilience.

Slide 22: Model the Skills You Want to Cultivate (p. 16)

Discuss the idea that people can model new skills that they see working for the people around them. Ask each student to state one skill they would like to learn to enhance their success in massage school. List the skills on the whiteboard and discuss behaviors associated with these skills.

Slide 23: Getting Support from Friends & Family (p. 18-19)

Break students into new groups of three and ask them to talk about the people who will be most affected by their decision to begin school. Use the questions on the slide to structure this discussion. After twenty minutes, bring the groups back together and have them share their general feelings about what starting school will mean for their life now.

Slide 24: Transition Successfully (p. 18-21)

Discuss some strategies for getting support from friends and family members and talk about ways to balance work and school.

Slide 25: Breathe!

Conclude the lecture/activity by acknowledging that students have just taken a hard look at the challenges of massage school. By thinking about the tough stuff they have helped themselves to mentally prepare for any challenge. The vision that students wrote for themselves in Worksheet 1-3 is home, the place to return when things get tough. By reading and reviewing their positive message for themselves and their school year regularly, they are more likely to stay on track to make progress.

Activity: The Dirty Dozen

Introduction: This activity is adapted from *Emotional Intelligence Activities for Busy Managers* by Adele Lynn. The goal of the exercise is to raise awareness of the Dirty Dozen, or beliefs and behaviors that impact our rational thinking and cause us to overreact in certain situations.

Tip!

Post a copy of the Dirty Dozen in the classroom and remind students to watch the Dirty Dozen during specific classroom activities. For example, before learning a new massage technique it might be important to let go of the fear of making mistakes to fearlessly explore how the technique is applied to the body.

Directions:

1. Direct students to sit in a circle and hand out the Dirty Dozen descriptions included below. Talk through each of the twelve limiting behaviors so that students understand each. Provide examples of how each of the Dirty Dozen stop a person from growing or impacts a rational thinking process. For example, a student who feels that making a mistake is a catastrophe is going to spend a lot of time in massage school feeling very stressed out. Instead, the student could view mistakes as an opportunity to learn and grow.
2. Ask students to study the list and identify the three that are most prevalent in their thinking.
3. Go around the circle and have each student share one or two of their personal dirty dozen and give examples of how this thinking impacted his or her life.
4. Process the sharing by asking the following questions:
 - a. Why is it important to be aware of the Dirty Dozen and the way in which these thought processes effect us?
 - b. Now that we are aware of the Dirty Dozen, how can we use this information?
 - c. What are some of the things we might do as a class to help each other let go of our personal Dirty Dozen?
 - d. How could releasing our dirty dozen help us work more effectively as a team?

Handout: The Dirty Dozen

Needing Approval: People must approve of me at all times. When people don't approve of me, I work hard to win their approval.

Making Mistakes: I must be thoroughly competent at all the skills I learn at the moment when I learn them. Making mistakes is embarrassing and I won't accept anything less than perfection.

Changing Others: If other people behave unfairly or in an obnoxious manner, it is my duty to point out the error of their ways and change them.

Catastrophic Thinking: When I am treated unfairly, when I get frustrated, when I get rejected or face a disappointment, I have to view things as awful, horrible, and catastrophic.

I'm not Responsible: My emotional misery and bad luck comes from external pressures or factors that I have little or no ability to change.

Worry and Fear: If something seems dangerous or difficult, I must preoccupy myself with it and make myself anxious about it.

Avoidance: It's easier to avoid facing difficulties and self-responsibilities than to do something about them.

The Past: My past remains all-important, and because something strongly influenced my life, it has to keep determining my feelings and behavior today.

Unrealistic Expectations: People and things should turn out better than they do, and I must fix them.

Competition: My worth is measured by competitive situations.

Source of Problems: The people and conditions in my life are the source of my problems.

Negativity: Certain occurrences or events are negative by nature.

Tip!

It works well to share these posters in a circle at a later class where students explain the images, items, and words and their relevance to their classmates. Some instructors affix student posters to the walls of the classroom to help students stay connected to their positive vision of their career.

Homework (optional)

Introduction: Pictures speak to us on a mental, emotional, and spiritual level. It can be helpful to have a visual representation of your conceptualization of positive massage training and for your future as a massage professional.

Direction: Take a piece of poster board and make a collage of images, words and items that represent your vision. Situate the poster board where you can see it regularly. This will help you stay connected to your powerful positive ideas for your future.

Transitioning Milestones Checklist

Name: _____

Date: _____

0 = The student does not have this skill.

1 = The student sometimes demonstrates this skill.

2 = The student almost always demonstrates this skill.

0	1	2	
			Shows an interest in exploring past events and understanding how the past influences current behavior and attitude patterns.
			Recognizes influences of family members and friends on attitudes and beliefs.
			Demonstrates enjoyment of past personal achievements.
			Connects personal values to current life choices, attitudes, and behaviors.
			Identifies areas where values and behaviors conflict.
			Views past educational experiences as resources for current educational experiences.
			Clearly articulates a positive vision for the future.
			Distinguishes between real fears, imaginary fears, and worry.
			Demonstrates an interest in questioning and exploring fears, doubts, and worry.

0	1	2	
			Labels and articulates personal feelings and moods.
			Demonstrates empathy while listening to the stories and experiences of fellow classmates.
			Relates personal choices and attitudes to past achievements or failures.
			Displays willingness to make mistakes and discuss weaknesses with others.
			Shares ideas, thoughts, and opinions while remaining open to the ideas, thoughts and opinions of fellow classmates.