

# MASTER LIST

## *Must Know Adult Skills* to Prepare to Launch

I have been working with and mentoring teens and young adults for over 20 years. Below is a list of topics that I have thought about, studied, and written about during these years working with families and their youth.

These are **essential habits and skills that lead to a happy, successful life... or if underdeveloped, lead to frustration, sadness or even misery.**

They are critical knowledge and skills that every adult needs to know. They can take a lifetime to master, but we can help our youth by **teaching them to begin now.**

- Greg Denning



# *What are Adult Skills & Habits?*

What is an 'adult'? Some people believe that it's defined by age. But a real adult is identified by their *behavior*.

Psychology Today defines an adult as: **Someone who is self-sufficient and responsible for her or his own decisions and actions.**

Many people believe that as one gets older they automatically become an adult. But this is not true. **Adult behavior is learned** and has to be practiced. **Some teens and young adults just get older. They don't automatically get better or more mature, even as they reach their 20s, 30s, and beyond.**

WE -- their parents -- need to teach them how to become adults. Most of the problems that we, or our teens, will face in our lives will be a result of **having reached the limit of our current skill set and habits** -- whether mental, emotional, physical, social/relational, spiritual, or financial.

The list of WHAT they need to know is below. For help on **HOW to teach it, please reference the Resources at the end of this PDF.**



# Adult Skills & Habits Master List

## MENTAL

- ABSOLUTELY MUST: Understand how your THINKING and MINDSET affects EVERY other aspect of your life
- Learn to **take responsibility** for the outcomes of your actions
- Don't do what you FEEL like doing, but **do what needs to be done** to do to reach *your* desired goals and objectives
- Learn to do what has to be done with a **pleasant attitude**
- Learn to make **wise decisions**
- Become **self-aware** -- WHY do you do what you do? How can you change?
- Discover how to **notice and improve** something about yourself that you don't like.
- Consistently **identify and replace bad habits** with good ones
- Learn to **measure your thoughts and ideas** against the greatest thinkers of history
- Cultivate **self-awareness, social awareness** and **situational awareness**
- Learn to **not whine and complain**
- Know how to **deal with problems with a good attitude**
- Learn to **set -- and ACHIEVE -- goals**
- Learn to **effectively plan** and **stick to a schedule** (aka keep commitments to yourself)
- Learn to **manage your time** and, more importantly, **mental and physical energy**



# *Adult Skills & Habits Master List*

- Learn HOW to **learn and to discover answers**
- Develop **mental grit** (toughness) by doing difficult things daily
- Create **personal 'filters' or standards** -- what you will and won't allow in your life
- Create **systems that foster self-discipline** instead of sabotaging your commitments
- Be **humble** and **teachable**
- Learn to **discover and reach for your full potential**
- Learn to **take 100% responsibility for your life and it's outcomes**
- Learn to **think like leaders think**
- Continually **challenge your mind with new ideas**
- Discover the **POWER of the right habits**
- Be a **life-long learner** - develop the daily habit of reading or listening to a book or podcast
- Learn to develop and **trust your intuition**



# Adult Skills & Behavior Master List

## PHYSICAL

- Learn to **do the things your parents have been doing for you** -- laundry, cooking, dishes, cleaning up, working, earning money
- Learn to **ride a bus, train, or subway or take an Uber**
- Find your **way around a city**
- Learn to **do your own shopping** -- how to decide between wants and needs
- **Create a menu and budget**, find recipes, shop for ingredients, and prepare healthy, delicious meals
- Fill a **car with fuel, change a car tire**, the oil, and other basic maintenance
- Earn **income and budget** -- spend less than you earn
- **Manage your physical energy** with healthy habits and practices
- Develop **physical grit (toughness)** by regularly doing hard things
- How to **clean up and be clean and organized**
- How to appropriately **use technology as a tool**
- How to **fix basic things** around the house
- How to **defend and protect yourself against possible attackers**
- Establish **daily routines and rituals** so you can be productive



# Adult Skills & Behavior Master List

- Learn to **correctly exercise** and stick to a **weekly schedule**
- How to **actually get things done**
- Proper **dressing and grooming**
- Learn **basic first aid** and how to handle emergency situations
- Proper portions and nutrition, healthy eating habits, and a **healthy relationship with food**

## EMOTIONAL

- Learn to **keep calm under high-pressure situations** and to **think clearly**
- Handle **difficulties and problems with a good attitude** and positive outlook
- Face and **overcome your fears**
- Understand, process, and **recover from feelings of anxiety**
- Understand, process, and **recover from depressing feelings**
- Process and **release past negative experiences and trauma**
- Process and appropriately **respond to or release intense, difficult emotions**
- Develop **emotional grit** by consistently doing difficult things
- Learn positive, appropriate ways to **recover from stress, negative emotions**, etc. instead of developing mental & emotional habits that will make things worse and sabotage your life happiness and success



# *Adult Skills & Behavior Master List*

- Learn how to **get and STAY motivated** on a daily basis
- Develop and **maintain a healthy self image**
- **Avoid** greed, selfishness, and overindulgence
- Have an **appropriate view of failure** and use it to help you grow and improve
- Developing your **heartset** -- your ability to be open and vulnerable
- Learn to **deal with disappointment**
- Develop **mastery of your emotions**
- Learn to **live with enthusiasm for life**



# Adult Skills & Behavior Master List

## SOCIAL

- Learn to **say 'no' when necessary**
- Learn to **accept criticism** and use it to help you improve
- Learn to **not worry about the opinions of others**
- **Stop expecting** others to do things for you that you should do for yourself
- **Identify and evaluate social trends** and expectations
- **Learn to work with people**, especially those who are difficult to work with
- Know and **understand human behavior**, attitudes, and habits of the people you date, work with, and associate with
- Study the **principles and practices of leadership**
- Study the **principles of great parenting**
- Learn to **ask great questions**
- Learn to **calmly converse** with those who disagree with you
- Learn to **understand and love** people who have very different lives or beliefs
- Take care of your **personal appearance**
- Learn **politeness, manners, and social grace**
- Go somewhere where **you are the minority** so you can understand what it's like
- Learn how to **be a good friend and make good friends**
- Learn how to **be a peacemaker and diplomat**





# *Adult Skills & Behavior Master List*

- Learn to **develop and nurture great relationships**
- Learn how to **strengthen your family relationships**
- Learn to **forgive others and let go of grudges**
- Learn to **earn and build trust with your parents** and others
- Learn how to **become a leader and influencer** and why it's important
- Learn to **apologize and seek forgiveness** from others
- Learn to become a **great listener**
- Cultivate **sincere love** for others
- Don't let social expectations influence your behavior or decisions -- **live independent of the opinions of others**
- Discover how to **appropriately make judgements**
- Learn to **make a positive difference** in the world around you
- Develop **humanitarian leadership skills** -- helping people to help themselves
- Learn how to **understand other peoples' point of view**
- Learn to **set boundaries**



# Adult Skills & Behavior Master List

## SPIRITUAL

- Learn how to **connect with God/Higher Power**
- Read and study from **spiritual texts**
- Cultivate an **inner compass or conscience**
- Spend regular time in **quiet and/or nature and/or meditation/prayer**
- Learn how to **discern truth from falsehood** -- in what people say and in what they do
- Cultivate **personal refinement and purity**
- Recognize and act on your **Inner Greatness**
- **Believe in yourself**
- **Live a life on purpose** and with meaning by discovering your unique passions and purpose and living true to yourself
- Live with **integrity**
- Become the **best human being you can**
- Develop and live by **personal virtues**
- **Protect and defend** the things that are precious to you



# Adult Skills & Behavior Master List

## FINANCIAL

- Learn the **basics of being financially wise** and use money in the right way
- Develop a **healthy relationship** with money
- Learn how to **earn as much money** as you can by continually improving your 'earning ability' which is your best asset
- Learn how to **budget, manage and save** the money you earn
- Learn to **invest** the money you save so that you can **create long-term wealth**
- Learn how to get **good deals and shop wisely**
- Learn how to **negotiate** and understand the numbers
- Learn how to **create resumes, interview, and get jobs**
- Learn to **work hard** and not cheat your employer
- Learn about **entrepreneurship and how to start a business**
- Learn how to **file and pay taxes** and claim tax right offs
- Learn the **strategies and principles for financial success**
- Learn about **assets, liabilities, balance sheets, revenue, profit**, etc. Your vocabulary (or lack of it) limits you



# Resources

## FOR TEACHING THESE PRINCIPLES

Understandably, teaching all of these skills can feel overwhelming!

Don't worry! You don't have to do it all at once or all alone. It's a lifelong journey and we are here to help.

### Live Online Classes:

- [Habits for a Successful Life](#) ages 14+
- [Mentoring Accountability Program](#) ages 16+

### Self-Paced Class:

- [Habits for a Successful Life](#) ages 12+

### For Parents:

- [Extraordinary Parent Mentoring Method](#)  
includes Live Coaching with Greg & Rachel

