

## Applying Connectedness Talents in Academics

*These insights and action ideas can help you apply Connectedness talents to achieve in various aspects of your academic life.*

### General Academic Life

- Ask yourself, "What life lessons am I supposed to learn today through my studies and the challenges they present? What is at work here that is much more important than passing a test or getting a good grade?"
- Search for linkages between your coursework and what you're being called to contribute to the entire human family today and in the future.
- Examine how your life is inextricably tied to those of people in other parts of the world and from the past. Name as many of these connections as you possibly can.
- Find ways to build bridges of understanding between classmates as well as between students and their professors. Realize that you're motivated to show people how world events and close-to-home circumstances bind each individual to all humankind.
- Start each day by reading an inspirational verse or a piece of scripture from your faith. Sit in silence with these words for 10-15 minutes. Open yourself to surprising discoveries about how to best approach your studies and other people.
- Keep a journal. Let your ideas and feelings flow freely. Write without editing. Find purpose and meaning in your personal and academic life.

### Study Techniques

- Pray for guidance before you begin studying. Ask that your mind be freed of worries and distractions. Implore yourself that you can truly trust that all will be well.
- Concentrate on your breathing before starting a test, making a presentation, or working on a project. Spiritually unite yourself with students around the world who are facing similar challenges at this very moment.
- Silence competing scholarly demands of your life by practicing daily meditation. Master the art of letting go. Embrace the art of living in the present moment.
- Be mindful of the abundance of good things. Realize that more than one student can earn a good grade or receive the professor's approval.
- Energize your body, heighten your awareness, and soothe your soul with inspiring background music. Create a calm environment in which to study, work on projects, solve problems, re-search, write, and prepare for exams.

### Relationships

- Converse with individuals who realize that life is a complex web of interdependence among all human beings, living things, events, and inanimate objects.

- Share with curious observers how and why you can remain calm in the midst of uncertainty, losses, successes, defeats, progress, and setbacks.
- Help others understand that you view all life as a continuous, ever-widening circle without beginning or end. Explain how every thought, word, and deed impacts people far and near.
- Bring ideas, projects, and relationships full circle. Tie together loose ends. Describe how your experiences and studies benefit individuals and all humankind.

### **Class Selection**

- Enroll in comparative religion studies. Better understand today's news events by comparing and contrasting the beliefs of the world's great religions.
- Find colleges that offer courses in the study of dreams. Look for listings in the departments of psychology, religious studies, and theology.
- Select history classes in which you can research events through the lens of conflicting religious doctrines and principles held as truth by some groups.
- Register for theology, philosophy, and ethics classes to broaden your thinking. Integrate what you learn into other coursework.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

- Consider meeting with a spiritual advisor every four to six weeks. Describe instances of being keenly aware of the "invisible hand" of a life force, higher power, or God acting in your life. Be attentive to patterns and recurring questions.
- Get involved in campus groups and ministries to nurture your faith tradition or introduce you to new forms of spirituality.
- Opt for nontraditional school vacations. Volunteer to build a Habitat for Humanity® house, travel to a third-world nation to help in a medical clinic, clean up an inner-city neighborhood, or work with urban families to plant a neighborhood vegetable garden.
- Mentor at-risk students during the school year. Become a reading tutor for adults. Teach English to immigrant and refugee families. Record books for the blind. Serve as a camp counselor for handicapped or terminally ill children.