

# Why Try Exercise

## Tips

### Engage Intensely

Intensity trumps time. This section deserves your finest effort. You intuitively know what science has now proved: The more intensely you engage in this process of self-reflection, the more it will stick. The science says the intensity of your focus and effort radically influences how much and how quickly you “myelinate” or hardwire both lessons and habits. Putting that science to practice is pretty simple. Give it your best as you pause, discuss, and/or jot down your answers to the questions throughout the GRIT Mix Challenge. Some people prefer to create a journal to document their journey or simply as a portable tool for reflection.

### Seek Input from Others

Many of these provocations require the kind of insight that you may want others to help provide, by simply turning or reaching out to the right person/people and asking, “How would *you* answer this one?” Even if it’s inconvenient, it’s worth asking. We all have blind spots. The more honest, external input you solicit, the more of the full picture you’re likely to paint.

### Focus and Be Honest

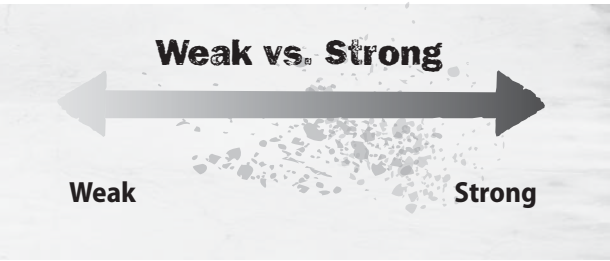
Based on experience doing and teaching this, the GRIT Mix requires not just your uncompromised focus and effort, but also your unvarnished *honesty*. I guess you could say it takes some GRIT to get the most out of *GRIT!* You’ll want to tap your Smart GRIT. Short concentrated bursts with full engagement are better and far more effective than long stretches of halfhearted involvement.

Let’s begin by turning the model of the GRIT Grid Cube into a tool. We’ll disassemble it (three continua and six sides), so you can take a hard look at your GRIT from every angle. You can then reassemble the pieces to get a holographic view of your current and potential GRIT. You may choose to tap your GRIT Gauge report to inform some of your answers.



### THE GRIT GRID CUBE

Before you knew much about the real theory and science of GRIT, if someone had simply asked you, “On a scale of 1–10, compared to everyone else, how much grit do you have?” what would you have said? How would you have scored your basic, everyday grit?



Place a bold “X” on the continuum above to honestly represent your overall level or strength of GRIT.

Now that you know what you know, on a scale of 1–10 (10 is strongest possible), compared to everyone else, how strong or weak is your GRIT? I’m not talking about in different moments or situations, or certain capacities, but *overall*. If a ten is the person with the strongest imaginable GRIT, and one is essentially the one with nearly none, where do you rank? If you can, go ahead and jot down your number on the continua arrow above.

Now go deeper.

## Sample Section of **GRIT MIX JOURNAL**

**WEAK**  **STRONG**

### **My GRIT — Historically**

**STRONG** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**WEAK** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Current**

**GRIT FLUX** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SITUATION/CONTEXT** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

To begin, consider your history. As you think back on your life, even your recent months or days:



1. **Stronger**—In what specific ways and in what specific instances have you shown the greatest (strongest) GRIT?
  - What effect did it have? What, if any, consequences (good or bad) did it create?
  - How did others react? What effect did your GRIT have on the people around you?



2. **Weaker**—In what specific instances could, or even should you have shown more or stronger GRIT? Where/when, on what dimension, was your GRIT relatively the weakest?
  - What effect did your less-than-optimal GRIT have?

- What happened? What *didn't* happen?
- If you had demonstrated greater GRIT, how do you think things would have turned out differently? What effect would it likely have had?

Now, shift your perspective from history to present day.

3. **GRIT Flux**—All of us have some flux or variation in our GRIT. Some show extremely strong GRIT in some situations and extremely weak GRIT in others. Other people have very consistent GRIT.

On the continuum shown below, how much does your GRIT tend to vary or fluctuate, moment to moment, situation by situation, and day by day?



Assuming there are some differences, what are the two to three most important factors that influence your GRIT flux and how much it goes up and down?

What can catapult you to a ten? What demotivates you to a three?

- If it were to vary less and be more consistent, specifically how do you think that might affect you? Others? Those around you? What, if any, benefits might it bring?

4. **Context, Strongest Situational GRIT**—In what situations or context(s) do you tend to show the most or strongest GRIT? (Friends, family, work, school, community, hobbies, by yourself, etc.)

- Why do you show more GRIT there?
- What are the contributing factors?
- As you bring your relatively high GRIT, what are the upsides and/or downsides for you? Others?
- What, if any, key examples come to mind?

5. **Context, Weakest Situational GRIT**—In what situations or context(s) do you tend to show the least or weakest GRIT? (Friends, family, work, school, community, hobbies, by yourself, etc.)

- Why do you show less GRIT there?
  - What are the contributing factors?
  - When you show relatively weaker GRIT, what are the upsides and/or downsides for you? Others? For example, does it make other people want to help you? Does it make them feel closer to you in some way?
  - What, if any, key examples come to mind?
6. **Context, Strongest Rungs of GRIT**—For which rungs in the GRIT Ladder do you comparatively tend to show the most or strongest GRIT? (Individual, Relational, Team, Organizational, Societal.)
- How would those who know you best answer this question?
  - Why do you show more GRIT there?
  - What are the contributing factors?
  - What are the benefits/consequences to you and others as you show your level-specific, relatively strongest GRIT?
  - What, if any, important examples come to mind?
7. **Context, Weakest Rungs of GRIT**—For which rungs in the GRIT Ladder do you comparatively tend to show the least or weakest GRIT? (Individual, Relational, Team, Organizational, Societal.)
- How would those who know you best answer this question?
  - Why do you show less GRIT there?
  - What factors have the biggest effect on how much you show?
  - As you show relatively less GRIT at that level, what are the positives and/or negatives for you? Others?
  - What would be one or two rich examples?
8. **Context, Strongest Capacity of GRIT**—Of the four GRIT capacities (Emotional, Mental, Physical, Spiritual), which one is your strongest?
- Think about the people who know you better than anyone else. How would they answer this question?
  - Why is that specific capacity your strongest?
  - What are the best and worst consequences as you put that capacity into play? For you? Others? For example, if it is Physical, does it make others see you as strong, someone they can count on to endure, to work, to handle the physically demanding tasks?
  - What would be the most important one or two examples?

9. **Context, Weakest Capacity of GRIT**—Of the four GRIT capacities (Emotional, Mental, Physical, Spiritual), which one is your weakest?
- How would those who know you best answer this question?
  - Why is that specific capacity your weakest?
  - What factors contribute to its being your weakest?
  - What are the upsides and/or downsides of this being your weakest capacity, for you? Others? For example, if it is Emotional, does it make others protect you from bad news? Does it give you more permission to get upset?
  - What, if any, key examples come to mind?



Place a bold “X” on the continuum above to represent your net, actual blend of Bad to Good GRIT.

*Everyone* demonstrates some mix of both Good and Bad GRIT. Remember, Good GRIT is defined by relentlessly pursuing things that are ultimately beneficial to you and (ideally) others, and Bad GRIT is the opposite. It means pursuing stuff that even unintentionally is damaging or harmful to yourself or others. Again, the key phrase is “even unintentionally.” Much of Bad GRIT is unintentional.

Given these definitions:



1. **Good**—On the Bad to Good Continuum (above), where do you land? How Good do you think your *overall* GRIT tends to be in comparison to everyone else?



2. **Bad**—What proportion of the goals that you pursue
  - Honestly end up being a “net positive,” benefiting others?
  - Benefit you more than, or even at the expense of, others?
  - Have little, if any, real benefit?
  - End up being a “net negative” to others, causing more downside than upside (even unintentionally)?

- Are intentionally or unintentionally, over time, more damaging to others than to you?
  - Start out with good intentions, but end with bad results?
  - Examples that come to mind?
3. **Good/How**—In what specific ways do you (or have you) recently shown the “goodest” or best GRIT?
- How did (or does) that affect you? Others?
  - How did (or does) it make you feel?
4. **Bad/How**—In what specific ways do you demonstrate Bad, or your worst version of GRIT?
- What effect did (or does) demonstrating your worst version of GRIT have on you? Others?
  - How did (or does) it make you feel?
5. **Bad to Good GRIT Flux**—Beyond your Bad to Good overall Mix, how much does your Bad to Good GRIT vary? Based on the Bad to Good Continuum (“Extremely Bad” to “Extremely Good”), how much does your GRIT fluctuate from bad to good, moment to moment, situation by situation, and day by day?
- How bad is your worst, and how good is your best?
  - If you had to put markers on the continuum, what’s your full range?



- Is your fluctuation extreme, modest, or minimal?
- Assuming, like most people, there are some differences, why do you think your GRIT varies?
- What are the two to three most potent factors that influence the degree and direction of your GRIT, from good to bad?
- If your GRIT were to fluctuate less dramatically and become more consistently Good, specifically how do you think that might affect you? Others? What, if any, benefits might it bring?

- 6A. **Context, “Goodest” Situational GRIT**— In what situations or context(s) do you tend to show the best or “goodest” GRIT? (Friends, family, work, school, community, hobbies, by yourself, etc.)
- Why do you show more Good GRIT there?
  - What are the key contributing factors?
  - How does showing your “goodest” GRIT in this situation affect you? Others?
- 6B. **Context, “Baddest” Situational GRIT**—In what situations or context(s) do you tend to show the worst or “baddest” GRIT? (Friends, family, work, school, community, hobbies, by yourself, etc.)
- Why do you show more Bad GRIT there?
  - What factors contribute the most to that happening?
  - When you show your “baddest” GRIT in that situation, how does that affect you? Others?

**Everyone demonstrates some mix of both Good and Bad GRIT. Good GRIT is relentlessly pursuing things that are ultimately beneficial to you and (ideally) others. Bad GRIT is the opposite.**

- 7A. **Context, “Goodest” Rungs of GRIT**—At what rung(s) of the GRIT Ladder do you comparatively tend to show your best or most beneficial GRIT? (Individual, Relational, Team, Organizational, Societal)
- Why do you think that you show more Good GRIT there?
  - What factors have the biggest influence on how Good your GRIT is at that rung or level?
  - When you show Good GRIT at that rung, how does that affect you? Others?
  - What, if any, key examples come to mind?
- 7B. **Context, “Baddest” Rungs of GRIT**—At what rung(s) of the GRIT Ladder do you comparatively tend to show your worst or most damaging GRIT? (Individual, Relational, Team, Organizational, Societal)
- Why do you show your worst GRIT there?
  - What are the contributing factors?

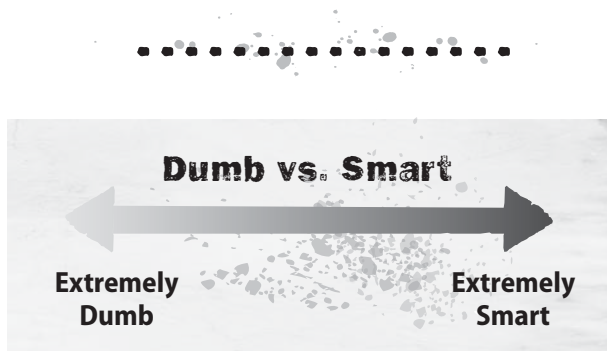


- What effect does it have on you, others, when you show your worst GRIT at that rung?
  - When/where has that occurred?
  - How would improving this help?
- 8A. **Context, “Goodest” Capacity of GRIT**—Of the four GRIT capacities (Emotional, Mental, Physical, Spiritual), which one shows your best and contributes the most benefit?
- Why and how is that your “Goodest” capacity?
  - What factors have the biggest influence on how much of that capacity you show?
  - How does it typically come out or show up?
  - When you use or flex that capacity, how does that affect you? Others?
  - When, where, and how has that happened in the past?

*For example, some people use their Spiritual GRIT to get others to experience hope in an otherwise hopeless situation.*

- 8B. **Context, “Baddest” Capacity of GRIT**—Of the four GRIT capacities (Emotional, Mental, Physical, Spiritual), which one brings out your worst GRIT or is the most potentially damaging?
- Why and how is that capacity your worst/most damaging?
  - What are the key contributing factors?
  - How does that capacity typically come out or show up?
  - When you use or flex that capacity, how does that affect you? Others?
  - What, if any, key examples come to mind?

*For example, some people use their Physical GRIT to the point of injury, or even pushing others beyond their capabilities.*



Place a bold “X” on the continuum above to represent your net, actual blend of Dumb to Smart GRIT.

Pretty much everyone also shows a personal blend of Smart and Dumb GRIT. If Dumb GRIT is defined by relentlessly pursuing less-than-optimal goals in less-than-optimal ways, and Smart GRIT is the inverse (pursuing the most important things in the best or most optimal ways), think about how others would describe your blend.



1. **Smart**—If you had to pick a spot on the Dumb to Smart continuum, what's your GRIT Mix? How Smart do you think your *overall* GRIT tends to be, in comparison to everyone else?



2. **Dumb**—What proportion of the goals that you pursue:

- Is absolutely, without question, the best thing for you to pursue?
- Is pursued in the best possible—most efficient and effective—way?
- Is clearly a poor use of your energy, effort, and/or time?
- Could be pursued in smarter—more efficient and effective—ways?

3. **Smart/How**—In what specific ways do you, or have you recently shown the smartest GRIT?

- When you showed your smartest GRIT, what effect did that have on you? On others?
- How did it make you feel when you showed your smartest GRIT?
- What, if any, key examples of your smartest GRIT come to mind?

4. **Dumb/How**—In what specific ways have you demonstrated your dumbest version of GRIT?

- When you did, what effect did (or does) that have on you? Others?
- How did (or does) it make you feel when you show your dumbest GRIT?
- Is there any pattern to where or how you demonstrate dumber vs. smarter GRIT?
- What, if any, key examples of showing your dumbest GRIT come to mind?

5. **Dumb to Smart GRIT Flux**—Using the Dumb to Smart Continuum ("Extremely Dumb" to "Extremely Smart"), how much does your GRIT vary or fluctuate from one end of the continuum to the other, based on the situation, time (of day, week, year), or your mood (energy, mindset, etc.)?

- If you had to put markers on the continuum, what's your full range?
- In your opinion, is your fluctuation extreme, modest, or minimal?



- Assuming, like most people, there are some differences, why do you think your GRIT varies as much as it does?
  - What are the two to three most potent factors that influence the degree and nature of your GRIT, from dumber to smarter?
  - If your GRIT were to fluctuate less dramatically and become more consistently Smart, specifically how do you think that might affect you? Others? What, if any, benefits would you imagine it might create?
- 6A. **Context, Smartest Situational GRIT**—In what situations or context(s) do you tend to show your smartest GRIT? (Friends, family, work, school, community, hobbies, by yourself, etc.)
- Why do you think that you show smarter GRIT there?
  - What factors play the biggest role?
  - What examples of showing your smartest GRIT in that context come to mind?
  - When you show your smartest GRIT, how does this affect you? Others?
- 6B. **Context, Dumbest Situational GRIT**—In what situations or context(s) do you tend to show your dumbest GRIT? (Friends, family, work, school, community, hobbies, by yourself, etc.)
- Why do you show dumber GRIT there?
  - What factors play the biggest role in sparking your dumbest GRIT?
  - What, if any, key examples come to mind?
  - When you do, how does your showing relatively dumber GRIT affect you? Others?
- 7A. **Context, Smartest Rungs of GRIT**—At what rung(s) of the GRIT Ladder do you comparatively tend to show your smartest GRIT? (Individual, Relational, Team, Organizational, Societal)
- Why do you show smarter GRIT at that rung?
  - What additional factors play the biggest role in that happening?
  - When you do show smarter GRIT at that level, what, if any, upsides or downsides does that cause for you? Others?

7B. **Context, Dumbest Rungs of GRIT**—At what rung(s) of the GRIT Ladder do you comparatively tend to show your dumbest GRIT? (Individual, Relational, Team, Organizational, Societal)

- Why do you show your relatively dumbest GRIT there?
- What are the key contributing factors in your showing your dumbest GRIT at that rung?
- When you do show relatively dumbest GRIT at that level, how does this affect you? Others?

8A. **Context, Smartest Capacity of GRIT**—Which GRIT capacity (Emotional, Mental, Physical, Spiritual) do you tap the most to show your smartest GRIT?

- How does that show up or come out?
- How might or how does it tend to affect you, others, when you put it to use?
- What's an example from your life of how you used this capacity to show your smartest GRIT?
- What changes are you going to make?

*For instance, someone might use Emotional GRIT to defuse an irate customer or boss, and accelerate the path to real solutions.*

8B. **Context, Weakest Capacity of GRIT**—Which GRIT capacity (Emotional, Mental, Physical, Spiritual) do you tap the most to show your dumbest GRIT?

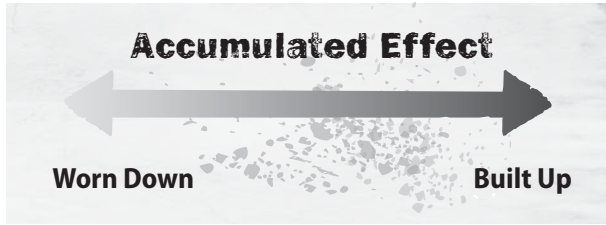
- How does that capacity show up or come out?
- How might or how does it tend to affect you, others, when you put that capacity to use?
- What's an example from your life of how you used this capacity to show your dumbest GRIT?

*For instance, someone might use Mental GRIT to keep analyzing ways to solve a problem long after the issue is dead, and it's smarter to move on.*

## Robustness

I'd be doing you a real disservice if I didn't give you a chance to pause and ponder this culminating factor. As you've seen and no doubt experienced, exercising GRIT wears some people down, and it builds others up. Over the course of years and decades, some people fatigue and dim. Others fortify and brighten, staying fully alive until their final breath. That's our quest.

When you put together all the pieces (G-R-I-T, Strong/Weak, Good/Bad, Smart/Dumb, Emotional, Mental, Physical, Spiritual, at each rung of the GRIT Ladder), how has your GRIT journey affected you so far? How much wear and tear have you experienced along the way?



Place a bold “X” on the continuum above to represent the accumulated effect life has had on you—your energy, optimism, effort, determination—so far.

- What ways have you held up relatively the best? (Mentally, physically, etc.)
- In what ways has life taken the relatively toughest toll on you? (Relationships, optimism, health, financial, etc.)
- If you could be significantly more robust—hold up better against and be more immune to whatever life throws your way—specifically how would that affect you? Those around you?
- What would you experience more or less of as a result?

## **GRIT Mix—REFLECTIONS**

Now that you have successfully completed the GRIT Mix Challenge—forcing yourself, I hope, to confront, ponder, and answer the barrage of provocations I threw your way—here are some final reflections to pull it all together. As a result of your experience with the GRIT Mix Challenge,

- What was/is the biggest “aha!” or takeaway revelation for you?
- What are three to five additional key realizations?
- How do you feel about your current, overall GRIT Mix?
- What is the single biggest or most important adjustment you need to make? Where do you most need to improve?
- Overall, in what ways has your GRIT Mix served you best?
- Overall, in what ways has it hurt or hindered you?
- As you measurably strengthen your GRIT Mix and move along the path toward Optimal GRIT, in what specific ways do you most hope to benefit? Less what? More what?