



THE ONE COURSE

BECOMING THE ARCHITECT OF YOUR OWN DESTINY

4TEENS

HBCU TODAY STAFF

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Publisher of HBCU Today
www.hbcutoday.net

ISBN being processed
Ebook ISBN being processed

Cover Design by Jennings Design
Book Layout by Marci Designs
Editorial Director, Judy Emmert
Author, John Fleming

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FOREWORD

The One Course 4Teens is not a course offered through traditional educational curricula; however, it could be the one course that makes a difference! We are all students navigating our journey through life. *The One Course 4 Teens* demonstrates and explains how the principles of architecture can be applied to the design and building of one's life. These principles are time tested.

Architecture, though an art form, is really a science. Buildings are not simply built on random thoughts or visions. They must meet stringent tests of engineering principles and formulas. Ultimately, plans are developed and construction crews begin building. What we see in finished buildings and structures, no matter what they are, is the result of many successful processes that have been executed to perfection.

Like architecture, life is a science. This course is about principles, values, formulas, and processes that are at the foundation of true success, happiness, and peace of mind ... the enjoyment of all that life beholds. This course is not about the specifics associated with being successful at something such as a business, profession, skill, or trade.

The teen years are some of the most memorable you will ever have. Therefore, this version of *The One Course* is focused specifically on teens. You are now about to open a new door. You are about to make choices that will impact your life for many years to come. This course will show you how to think through some of

life's fundamentals, helping you make the best decisions possible. Most importantly, when you complete this course, you will be better prepared for post-secondary education in whatever form it may take and you will also be better prepared for life and career. Perhaps you have been searching for such a course?

Each lesson features a summary that provides a high-level overview of the material covered. In addition, each summary includes a building principle that highlights an important step in your personal development.

The activities included in this course serve as guides in developing your plans for your life. They consist of assessments that help you evaluate your goals. We suggest you print your activities and put them into a binder where you can easily review previous activities as you complete new activities. We also suggest that you dedicate a notebook or journal to your reading and study of *The One Course4Teens*. Your journal or notebook will help you to document your thoughts as you design your life.

Once you have completed *The One Course 4Teens*, plan a celebration that truly excites you. Consider it your gift to yourself. After all, you will have completed the steps necessary for designing your life ... for becoming the architect of your own destiny.

Are you ready to begin? If so, turn to the next page.



I. | CREATING A CLEAR VISION FOR YOUR FUTURE

BECOMING THE ARCHITECT OF YOUR DESTINY

Becoming an architect means being in control of the design, being a visionary. You must have a vision for what you want the design to accomplish. Architects are not in the “wish” game. They believe in their abilities to envision what can be, and they believe that they can create designs and develop plans to fulfill those visions. You must now believe in your ability to design your future. We will give you guidelines; however, you are the architect ... you must believe in yourself—your future!

Architects know engineering, and they know how to incorporate their visions within the realm of possibility. Both vision and engineering must come together for a building to become a reality. First, we will determine your vision, and then we will connect the appropriate engineering with your vision. At that point, you will be on your way to becoming the architect of your own destiny.

THE POWER OF IMAGINATION

One of the great advantages of your teen years is that you probably are never short on dreams for what you would like to do or accomplish. We usually have many dreams of what we want to be, what we want to accomplish, and how we plan to enjoy the fruits of our study and labor. As we get older, we tend to let our dreams slip away, dismissing them as childhood fantasies or simply forgetting that we even had them.

This lesson is dedicated to dreaming. You will be reminded that the child inside you is alive and well and that it is so very important at this stage in your life to imagine what you can achieve and what you can become!

Dreaming is the unleashing of your imagination. It's the power to let your thoughts and fantasies stretch out beyond any boundaries. A trip to Disneyland or

the Magic Kingdom is always fascinating. Both are very popular amusement parks; however, they are also very important monuments to man's ability to activate the power of imagination. Walt Disney envisaged the possibility of a mouse becoming a cartoon character that could bring happiness and joy to children around the world. Can you imagine that? A mouse putting smiles on the faces of children? Most people are afraid of a mouse, always forgetting that the mouse is simply a small creature. Walt Disney changed our thoughts about how a mouse might be perceived and that is how we got Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse. Disney used his extraordinary power of imagination to lay the foundation for what has become a global empire. He has also put smiles on the faces of hundreds of millions!

VISUALIZE MEETING YOUR GOALS

Like Walt Disney, you too can dream. Here's another basic truth: There is so much in life to think about. James Allen, noted author of the classic book *As a Man Thinketh*, states that "whatever we consistently think about in our minds and hearts will become our reality." By taking the time to visualize the future you envision for yourself, you can activate exhilarating emotions that trigger a commitment to the changes needed to experience more of the life of your dreams!

In other words, you must know your destination before you can start the journey. If you do not clearly know where you want to go, what you want to become, and what you want to do, then there is no reason to embark upon the journey.

Are you ready to turn on the powers of your imagination? Now is the time to believe that you can be anything that you want to be. Let's not place any limits on your imagination. It's time to focus on your dreams!

Knowing where you are is important, but knowing where you want to go is even more critical to building a successful life. One of the greatest assets you possess is your ability to create a vision of your future. You have the power of imagination, the power to dream great dreams, and the power to engineer exactly what you would like to achieve and what you would like to become.

No matter what your current situation is, you have the opportunity—and the obligation—to make your dreams come true. It doesn't matter if others cannot see your vision. If you believe in its possibility, and you believe it is within your reach, it can become your reality.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

As the architect of your destiny, you can create the exact vision of the life you want to live. Let your imagination take you away. Don't be afraid to chase dreams or dream anew.



II.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MONEY

As the architect of your destiny, you need to make sure you value money properly and manage it effectively. Just as many buildings never get built for lack of funding, so it is with life as well. Many lives never become what they could become because money is never managed properly.

YOUR FINANCIAL PLAN FOR LIFE

Today it would be hard to imagine anyone truly experiencing happiness and peace of mind without also achieving financial stability. Financial stability provides freedom from debt and the ability to enjoy many comforts in life. Happiness and peace of mind comes when we're in position to provide for our families, enjoy sharing great experiences with friends, contribute to good causes, travel the world, and, ultimately, be in control of our own time.

By working on a plan for life, anyone will have a much better opportunity to become financially independent regardless of where you must start.

Cardinal rule: No matter how much you earn or receive, you must pay yourself first. Is this hard to do? Well, yes and no. It is hard to do when you consistently live beyond your means, when you spend more money than you have coming in. Often, the culprit for this type of living is credit. Credit is used when it is impossible to purchase what you want or need with the money you are receiving. Using credit unwisely can be a trap. The way you manage money today will have an impact on the way you manage money in the future. Through budgeting and planning, you must live within your means and save something from all the money that you receive. This is the key to financial independence.

As a student/teen, it is easy to adopt the feeling that you have plenty of time to save money. If you are preparing for college, chances are you are dependent upon someone else's money. Regardless of the amount of money you are required to live on, always commit to saving a portion. There are many calculators online that will even help you determine

how much you need to save to reach certain goals and/or how much you will accumulate over a period when you save “x” amount of money each month. The online calculators are fabulous and they will help you to manage your money.

It’s never too early to start saving and investing—no matter what your current income. The years

pass too quickly and the habits you form today will have an impact on the way you manage your life in the future.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

Regardless of the amount of money coming in, never spend more!



III. | PREPARING THE PLAN

**“MAKE BIG PLANS; AIM HIGH IN HOPE
AND WORK.” — DANIEL BURNHAM**

This lesson is composed of five sections, each one guiding you through a process of preparation. You will explore the importance of a positive **Attitude**, the role **Goals and Plans** play in your life, how **Knowledge** benefits your life, how **Skills** relate to your level of knowledge, and how to convert these ingredients into **Habits and Positive Actions**. To be the architect of your own destiny, you must be prepared!

ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING

Your life is the most precious asset you own, and from this point on, you will learn what makes the difference in terms of what you achieve in life and how you enjoy life. You can accomplish almost anything you want to accomplish once you believe you can.

Belief in possibilities is one of our greatest assets. When we believe in possibilities we understand that problems and challenges are opportunities to

learn. God did not create us to fail. It just makes sense to be excited every day. After all, life is a great gift! Every day represents a new gift and a new opportunity. Expect problems and challenges because life would not be life without them.

PERSONAL GOALS ARE FUEL FOR SUCCESS

Earl Nightingale, a famous writer and speaker on the value of a person's personal development, once said, “A person without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder.” If the ship has no rudder, it can't control where it's going. The ship will simply drift with the currents of the ocean.

Would you expect an architect to design a building, but not provide detailed plans for the actual construction of it? No, you wouldn't. Then why would you expect to make a successful life for yourself without setting goals and developing comprehensive plans to achieve them?

Goals and plans are an absolute must! Any attempt to pursue success without clear goals and plans is no different than a ship attempting to navigate the currents of the ocean and reach a destination without a rudder. Life is your ocean, and it is full of opportunity.

There is a Goal Setting Exercise in your Activity Section. It is simply a template to help you get started. Print it out and adjust as necessary to make it your personal Goal Setting Plan. Once you complete the exercise you will realize how simple and easy it is to plan your life! You will use this exercise many times during your life as your goals will change and evolve as you accomplish those things that are most important to you.

THE ROLE KNOWLEDGE PLAYS

Even the best architects in the world are continually learning. As new technologies in building emerge and new design concepts take hold, architects must stay abreast of the changes or they are left behind.

In college, the architectural student is taught all aspects of how to design a building; however, there is no course offered on how to design a life. How can it be that we can go all the way through grade school, middle school, junior high school, high school, and often college/trade school, and only then realize that we were not really taught or coached on how to design our lives?

What's missing? Our educational systems, regardless of level, invest incredible resources in determining how to educate in the traditional manner. What appears to be missing is a different type of education—education that focuses on the development of the human being and the knowledge needed to understand how to maximize our God-given potential. Books that focus on the following are also important to our personal development. These are not the titles of books, only the themes the books might focus on:

- Belief in Ourselves
- The Importance of a Positive Attitude
- The Awesome Will to Achieve
- The Power of Dreams
- How Our Happiness Is Critical to Our Success
- The Importance of Goals and Plans

Can you imagine the impact of such teaching/reading? If this approach and focus were included from grade school through high school, and then at junior college, trade school, and even colleges and graduate schools, more people in society would experience success. We would learn the basic principles of success and personal development starting at a very early age. These principles would be reinforced throughout our formal education, thus better preparing us to be the architects of our own destinies.

The more knowledge you gain, the better prepared you will be to pursue your goals and dreams, and the more likely you will be to create the successful life you desire. What we know is not quite enough, and what we don't know can prevent us from making those goals and dreams a reality.

As you are now beginning to realize, your life is not going to be left up to hope or luck; it is going to be a direct result of the effort you put into it. Goals and plans will help you increase the probability of achieving your dreams, but you must remember that knowledge—and the continual pursuit of knowledge—will greatly determine your outcomes in life. Knowledge will help you gain control and lead you on your way to becoming the architect of your own destiny!

THE ROLE SKILL PLAYS

An architect may have a vast knowledge of architectural principles and designs, but if he or she does not have the practical skills to connect the design with the engineering, the building will remain just a vision.

So it is with your life. It is not enough simply to know what you need to do to enhance the quality of your life or to succeed in any endeavor. The facts are, you must not only know what to do, but you must also have the skills to be able to execute what you know.

EXECUTING YOUR SKILLS

In simple terms, most people know what they need to do to become successful, but they don't necessarily execute what they do know. They find excuses for not doing what they know should be done. Doctors, lawyers, engineers, educators, and scientists fail no differently than plumbers and housekeepers. Plumbers and housekeepers succeed no differently than those in other professions. There are successes and failures everywhere and in all walks of life. Therefore, a pursuit of success in any endeavor must include a mastery of skills once knowledge has been attained. Knowledge must migrate into skill improvement, and skill improvement must migrate into habits and discipline. As with attitude and goal setting, acquiring the needed knowledge and skills are critical to your success!

CONVERTING KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS INTO POSITIVE ACTIONS

To know something is admirable! Many are showered with recognition, certificates, and degrees for that which they know. To have mastered the skills essential to a trade or profession will ensure employment, opportunities to earn a living and pursue goals and dreams. However, as mentioned previously, there are those who possess both knowledge and skills but don't seem to be able to convert these assets into success, prosperity, happiness, or peace of mind. What is the difference between having knowledge and using that knowledge in a successful manner?

Knowledge and skill must always be converted into habits and positive actions. In simple terms,

we must put both knowledge and skills to work. This sounds so simple, yet it is easy to miss this most important component of your success. A lot of time can be wasted talking to others and doing many different things during a typical day. Days turn into weeks and weeks into months. We spend time traveling to and from school, work, taking care of our responsibilities. We watch television, we gather with friends, study and do homework, and sometimes party. We read newspapers and magazines, manage e-mails and text messages, and check our social sites. On top of these tasks, teens are supposed to work at being successful in life—make important decisions about what to do next, where to go to college or where to enroll in some form of other post-secondary education, and how best to prepare for a career. All the preceding can be managed when we become conscious of the importance of managing our lives.

Focus is key in everything you pursue in life. To be successful in school or on the job, you must make sure that you are spending most of your time working on your priorities. When you do, you will outperform practically everyone else, because so many others are letting “stuff” get in the way of their success.

Here's what we know: It's never easy to stay focused on your main task. There are so many temptations and distractions—family members who want your time and friends who want your company. There is stress associated with just being a teen.

It's tough, but being a success and having a successful life was never supposed to be that easy. If you really want to achieve all you desire, you must **stay focused!**

ELIMINATE NEGATIVE DISTRACTIONS

As a society, we spend a lot of time looking at negative news and negative debates about the news, and then we watch shows whose actors

and actresses are portraying events that, in most cases, never even happened. In far too many situations, those actors and actresses are being paid millions of dollars, and the viewers are watching on television sets that aren't yet paid for!

Our point is this: You must find the time to focus on your goals and plans for your better future. You cannot afford the distractions and temptations. You have one life to live, and it's not a practice session. None of what we just said is to say you should not have some fun. Fun is also essential, but eliminating negative distractions will help you to build the future you desire.

In this section of *The One Course 4Teens* we have covered the importance of a positive attitude, the importance of having specific

goals and plans for your life, and the benefits associated with knowledge and skills and how to convert them into positive actions. Understanding the importance of the preceding ensures that you will not be just another person in the world who is smart and bright but failed to become the architect of their own destiny. You can avoid being in this crowd by staying focused on your “main things.”

GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

An architect stays completely focused on his or her vision throughout the entire building process, eliminating negative distractions that can cause project delays and putting every ounce of effort into converting his or her knowledge and skills into positive actions that lead to the construction of the building.





IV.

BUILDING YOUR TEAM

A successful architect surrounds himself with knowledgeable and skilled people who will collectively help to build the design. Engineers, excavators, those who build the foundation, carpenters, masons, heavy equipment operators, welders, electricians, plumbers, and interior and exterior designers are all experts in their chosen fields and able to help bring the architectural vision to reality.

You would not expect the architect to have the knowledge to weld support beams, install electrical circuit boards, and lay pipe for the plumbing system; therefore, know that you will not—and cannot—build a successful life alone.

To create the life you desire, you must surround yourself with people who will help you achieve your goals—and leave behind those who would condemn your building. You must develop strong relationships and seek out new opportunities to meet those who can positively add to your life.

MENTORS AND COACHES

Do you have a mentor or coach who knows you, sees your potential, and helps you

grow as a person? There will always be people who are more successful than you. Your job is to find successful persons who are interested in your desire to grow and achieve beyond your current level. Parents play a very important role and so can others, such as a teacher you respect, a coach, a friend of a parent, or someone you have met at church or through activities in which you have participated. People are willing to help. You simply need to ask for help.

Coaches and mentors are also the newspapers and magazines you read, the comfort and motivation you receive from your spiritual life, the books you read, and the television shows you watch. We all have these coaches and mentors in some way. But ask yourself this: “Are my mentors supporting me in my desire to maximize my potential, achieve my goals, and make my dreams come true?” Seek coaches and mentors that can help you become the architect of your destiny.

Everyone needs a mentor or coach. Like professional athletes who need coaches to help them understand how to better themselves and their skills, those of us who desire to become the architect of our own destiny need to realize the importance of

having someone to help us as well. This is also why reading from good books is so important. Every author of every book you read is, in many ways, a mentor. You need positive and supportive mentors and coaches to achieve a successful life, so make a commitment to seek them out and learn as much as you can from them.

BUILDING A WINNING TEAM

The process of winning is about adhering to everything you have learned. Winning is an attitude! It is about knowing who you are and taking immense pride in your God-given ability to become what you truly want to be. Winning is about being passionate and grateful for the gift of life and being committed to setting goals, developing plans, and finding the time to increase your knowledge, develop and perfect your skills, and turn everything into positive actions.

But when it comes right down to it, winning is not a singular achievement; it is the collective effort of many individuals and resources that have helped guide and shape your life. Winning is about teams! Winners understand the team mentality; they understand the need for coaching and guidance.

Sometimes the teams are well defined, such as a baseball team or football team, the administrative team working together to bring forth the best support for the school, an organization, or a company. However, other teams are not so clearly defined: the team of husband and wife, the team of family, the team of you and your best friend, or the team of partners and supporters dedicated to the achievement of your goals.

When individuals win, it's usually because an excellent team was in place. Winners understand this; they realize the importance of harmony in the effort, the importance of everyone working together toward the same well-defined/common goals, be it family friends, your school, an organization, or a company.

To succeed in life requires you to engage and participate in a process that simply offers you the best chance of winning. Having a strong team behind you affords you the greatest opportunity to increase your knowledge, strengthen your skills, expand your network of peers, and ultimately, design the life you desire.

Make sure that your mentors and coaches are enablers. Make sure that he or she is an asset who can help you become the architect of your own destiny.

You can find mentors and coaches everywhere—they can be family, friends, co-workers, or the authors of good books.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

Just as an architect surrounds himself with experts to construct the building, you must build a team that can help you achieve your goal of creating the life you desire. Make a commitment to search out mentors and coaches that will increase your knowledge, strengthen your skills, and provide you with the support you need. Once they are identified and in place, spend time with them.





v.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

The foundation is the single most important element in the construction of a building—and the building of a life that yields the success you desire. Your foundation must support everything that you do in the future.

WHAT ARE YOUR CORE BELIEFS AND VALUES?

Regardless of your religious or spiritual practice, or the source from which you have drawn to shape your life, you must have values! You must have a code of principles and values that support positive and productive relationships with the world!

Our most fundamental core beliefs and values are the result of how our parents guided us. Core beliefs and values are also shaped by our teachers, our church affiliation, and even our close friends. Your core beliefs and values have a lot to do with the activities you engage in each day.

It also behooves us to believe in the value and virtue of hard work. Good things do not appear to happen by accident. We must contribute in order to receive. When

we view and believe work to be a virtue, we also operate under a belief that the more effective we are with our study and then our work, the more likely we are to achieve more from our labor.

We must have other reasons beyond self-gain for doing what we do. We must believe in other people and take responsibility for how our actions and behavior may impact them. Whatever we do, if we are attempting to accomplish something that is meaningful to us, it must also be meaningful to others. There are very few things that we can accomplish in life without the involvement of others. When we understand this basic principal and place value upon it, we strive for and achieve “win-win.”

Gratitude for life’s gifts and blessings, and honesty and humility are essential qualities/values. Dealing with others in a sincere manner is a necessity if we expect to build productive relationships. However, we must also be honest with ourselves. Shakespeare made a profound statement when he wrote, “To thine own self be true.” Humility is a great virtue.

Always remember this: As you become better and better at understanding how to chart your life's journey, it will not impress anyone if you are spending too much time talking about how good you are becoming at working toward what you expect to achieve.

Without beliefs and values, we have no moral compass. It's true that without one it is possible to learn much and even master that which we are pursuing. Respect others and never abuse others, otherwise whatever you gain in your achievement will not be sustainable. You know the Golden Rule: *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you*. The rule is solid and has been taught for thousands of years.

You must have beliefs, principles, and values as your foundation that are compatible with others and supportive of positive and healthy relationships. Having them will clearly establish the fabric of your integrity, which is so essential for sustaining

the success and life you wish to experience. As the architect of your own destiny, your principles and values will guide you and sustain you in troubling times. You cannot afford to lose faith in your ability to design a successful life. There will always be challenges. Our minds are designed to allow us to create amazing things. However, we can only accomplish amazing things when we are aligned with solid beliefs, principles, and values.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

The foundation of your building must be strong enough to support everything you do in life from this point forward. As the architect of your destiny, you must have core beliefs to guide you and a code of principles and values that supports positive and productive relationships with other human beings.



CONSTRUCTION PHASE

Are you ready to apply what you have learned thus far? We are now in the engineering phase that is needed to become the architect of your destiny. No architect would attempt to construct a building simply on what he or she visualizes. Engineering standards must be applied to build the structure.

ADDING THE ENGINEERING

You don't just go into the kitchen and throw some stuff into a bowl, put it into the oven, and expect to produce a great cake. You must follow a recipe. When you put the mixture into the oven, time it properly, and bake it at the right temperature, out will come a beautiful cake. The point is that even something as simple as baking a cake involves a process. You do not arbitrarily throw ingredients together; in fact, you follow some very precise guidelines. You use "engineering" to produce the cake.

The same is true for your life and your pursuit of success. Everyone who succeeds at something has learned a process or a series of processes for development of their knowledge and

skills, and has learned how to transfer them into a disciplined approach to their work or profession. If you have ever debated your next steps in life—where to go to school, what to study, what should be your major—think of the architect. The architect knows what he or she wants the building to look like before going in to the construction phase. The building, in fact, has been finished through a series of drawings that show what the builders need to go through to construct it. The construction phase is the process of building the building.

We started this course with an exercise on vision. Where do you want to go and what do you want to become were key questions. Planning to go to college or take advantage of any form of continuous learning after high school requires that you engage in a process for learning. You do not graduate until you have completed the process. When you understand why you are going through the process, you will naturally be more excited about the unique experience. You are simply preparing for what you are planning to be.

Success results when you follow appropriate processes consistently over a defined period. When we understand and think of success this way, we are not as prone to focus on results only or simply think that someone else got lucky because of their good fortune. (We are not talking about winning a lottery.) By focusing on the process, we develop a hunger to learn the steps that produce the result or will produce the reality of our vision, our goals, and plans.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

No architect would attempt to construct a building simply based on a vision. Engineering processes must be applied to the design to build the structure. Success is a result of understanding the processes that must be mastered.



VII.

ASSESSING YOUR PROGRESS/ REFLECTIONS

At some point during the building process, the architect must stop, step back, and honestly assess the progress being made. Is the building going up according to the design and the plans? Is construction on schedule? Is the project on budget? Are delays consuming valuable time? Are there modifications needed?

Therefore, let's take a few minutes to reflect on the building of your life. Let's focus on developing our appreciation for life itself and our God-given talents and abilities. Think about how unique you are. Think about your ability to choose your destiny. Think about what human beings can accomplish, and realize that you, too, can accomplish amazing things when you maintain focus and execute upon your visions, goals, and plans. One of our greatest gifts is the freedom to choose. However, the freedom to choose is also one of our greatest challenges. How we think and what we choose to do with our time will have everything to do with the outcome of our lives. We become what we think about most of the time.

REFLECTIONS

Look around you. Everything you see is a result of an idea and the completion of a plan that was created from that idea. The furniture you see is the result of the execution of someone's vision. The clothing you are wearing went through the same process. The television, the radio, the microwave, the airplane, the automobile, the computer were all just ideas at one time.

Think about the car you drive. Think about what you saw the last time you looked under the hood of your car, how complicated the engine and all the components appeared to be. Think about the fact that people just like you designed the car, the engine, the transmission, and the electrical circuitry, and they figured out that gasoline could be converted into the energy that makes the wheels of the car move you at anywhere from a few miles per hour to more than 200 miles per hour. Think about the genius of people like Henry Ford, and remember that he, too, was just another human being with God-given talents and abilities!

Think about the airplanes that fly in the sky and take us from one place to another at 35,000 feet or above. The Wright Brothers flew only a few feet above the ground when they first tried to fly. Today, we can fly halfway around the world, nonstop.

Think about the power of buses and trucks and trains—all transporting food, goods, and people from one place to another.

Think about the machines and generators that light up cities. Think about the fact that much of this started with a man by the name of Thomas Edison, who stayed true to his vision—despite thousands of failures. Think of that brilliance that can be manufactured through something as simple as a light bulb.

The next time you look at photographs, take the time to treasure the moments that were captured. Look at a piece of art or sculpture and imagine the talent of the artist, that person who can see something that most people can't see and transform his or her vision onto a canvas or into clay or metal or stone.

When you stop and reflect on all that surrounds us, you will see the beauty of human ingenuity and greatness.

Our God-given talents and abilities are simply awesome! Each of us can achieve extraordinary accomplishments when we focus, study, set goals, and execute good plans. When we think about the great and wonderful things that we use and enjoy today—from cars to clothes to airplanes to lights and air conditioning—it's simply amazing what we as human beings have accomplished. And we're not done yet—there's a space station floating above Earth, and astronauts go back and forth to the station periodically to maintain it and to build it into something better. These brave people spend months in space and come back to Earth to resume their lives, acting no differently than the rest of us.

Medical procedures that were once thought to be far-fetched dreams are now practiced with precision and success, and thousands of lives have been saved or extended. When you think about the magnitude of some of the things mentioned, realize that taking control of your life and becoming the architect of your own destiny should really be no big thing. It's what we should do, what we ought to do. We have the freedom to do what we want.

You know what you need to learn to be in control. Regardless of where you are at this moment in time, you now know and understand what is needed to go where you want to go. This course has helped you to define “**what**” you want to be or achieve in your life, “**how**” to accomplish your goals and live your visions, and “**why**” you should be in control of your own destiny. Learning how is never enough, because often, when the why is not strong enough, there will never be enough commitment to study and practice.

The purpose of this lesson is to further strengthen your resolve to be the person you desire to be and achieve your greatest desires in life. It will remind you that all the greatness we experience on this earth is the result of men and women using their God-given talents and abilities to improve themselves and the lives of others. Men and women just like you have achieved everything around you. There is no record of some special being from some other planet or of some special life form accomplishing anything here on earth. It has always been about people making contributions, some of them extraordinary!

We are all created with great potential, and it is up to us to learn how to cultivate our talents and abilities and to use them to live a life of purpose and contribution. As we observe others, we may find talents and abilities that we don't have, and we may observe others with lesser talents and abilities than ours. It simply makes no difference.

What matters most is what we do with what we have and whether we are constantly striving to improve. Our goal is to achieve our purpose and contribute to the lives of others.

CHERISH YOUR BLESSINGS

Our minds have been extraordinarily designed, and we are blessed with the ability to choose. Neither trees nor plants can choose where they would like to grow. Animals do not choose where they would like to live, even though some do migrate from one area to another during certain seasons; however, their migrations are specific and never random.

We, as humans, can choose our circumstances. We can choose to stay where we are and we can choose to go someplace else. We don't have to live in the same place forever. We can choose to work certain types of jobs or we can choose to prepare ourselves for other work. In summary, freedom of choice is a blessing!

Life itself is a blessing! Every day that you can embrace a new day, you have received another blessing. Each day represents another chance—another chance to work on becoming the person you want to be. Every day is another chance to start again, correct an error, learn something new, meet somebody else, share your love for somebody, and contribute to your business, company, and community. Life is full of many opportunities to grow, to win, and, sometimes, to fail. But every day represents another chance! Life is a blessing and it deserves to be celebrated! Think about this: Would you really trade your life for anything?

There are so many things we often take for granted. The circumstances we often find ourselves in are just what they are—circumstances. Sometimes, we end up in situations that we cannot control, but we can always exercise our freedom of choice. Choose to make a difference regardless of

your circumstance. Cherish your blessings and make careful choices. The choices you make will determine how effective you will be as the architect of your own destiny.

Appreciate the greatness of the things around you, and the beauty of life afforded you through the efforts of those before you. Don't take anything for granted. Everything you see is a result of God and the combined efforts of others to create the magnificence of your world.

Cherish the freedom you have. Cherish the blessing of choice, your ability to choose or change your own circumstances. Most of all, cherish the fact that you can be the architect of your own destiny. In case you have not realized the purpose of this lesson it is quite simple: Never, ever give up!

GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

Building a successful life takes passion, commitment, and dedication. Take the time to reflect on what you have accomplished with your God-given abilities and be sure to cherish the blessings that have allowed you to pursue your dreams.

GRATITUDE
UNLOCKS THE
FULLNESS OF LIFE.
IT TURNS WHAT
WE HAVE INTO
ENOUGH, AND
MORE...



VIII. | CELEBRATE THE PROJECT

Have you ever been to the opening of a significant new building? If so, then you know what typically occurs when the doors open for the first time. Ribbons are cut, champagne corks are popped, balloons are let loose, bands play, and hundreds of special guests with “by-invitation-only” passes get sneak peeks at the new wonder. After months or even years of construction, it’s a time for nothing less than a full celebration.

When we work hard and achieve our goals, we should take the time to celebrate, whether they are incremental goals that we realize along the way or major accomplishments that change our lives such as graduation. Our celebration should include those who have played integral roles in helping us realize our dreams, for rarely do we accomplish anything in life without the help, support, and guidance of others.

Think about this: What if there were celebrations in your life every week? Think about how you feel when you celebrate something. Typically, there is some feeling of exhilaration for what we have accomplished or something that

someone else has accomplished. Think about how you feel when you attend a birthday party, a graduation, or an anniversary. Think about how you feel when you celebrate something you have accomplished. Undoubtedly, you are uplifted and joyful.

We enjoy celebrations because we love to feel good. The very act of celebration is an important component of goal achievement. Working on achieving goals is plain hard work, and you can’t push yourself day after day, week after week, and month after month to expand your knowledge, perfect your skills, gain more discipline, and focus unless you also build opportunities for celebration into your plans. It is basic human nature to want to celebrate accomplishments, the small as well as the big. Don’t wait for someone else to celebrate. Plan your own celebrations consistently!

When you achieve what you set out to do, plan ways to celebrate. This is energizing and will remind you that you are making progress. It also lets others know that you are making progress and provides you with an

opportunity to possibly recognize them for their encouragement and support.

Your thoughts about celebration may be quite different than what they have been. Remember, its basic human nature to want to celebrate, to feel good about achieving goals. The feelings we experience when we celebrate are some of the

strongest motivators of the human spirit. Celebration is a major component of goal achievement, so if you plan your celebrations in advance, knowing what you will enjoy once you achieve your goals, you will be more motivated and you will automatically increase your commitment to get it done!



IX.

COURSE SUMMARY

This course was designed to fill in what may have been missing in the traditional educational process you have been guided through up to this point in your life. It is our belief that our formal educational process does not focus enough on helping us understand and use our inherent talents and abilities. Test scores can be helpful in determining the future of a child; however, not all scores are true indicators of ability. We know that stress, a low energy level from not eating a good meal, a concern about a parent or guardian, and other worries can negatively impact youth and skew test scores.

Life is a journey, and how we navigate the journey has everything to do with the destinations we reach. Early in life, we are coached by parents and counselors to go to school, study hard, participate in as much education as possible, secure a job, and get married. This is the “good old” formula that has served as the basic guide for humans. It’s a great formula, but there are breakdowns that can easily occur along the way. Not everyone is going to be able to pursue higher education. Poor grades can end the

dream of college, and the lack of money can often interrupt the pursuit of higher education, making us dependent on the type of work that is available versus the type of work we would really love to do.

Regardless of what happens to us as we journey through life, we believe there is a formula/process that, when followed, leads to success and ultimately, happiness and peace of mind. This formula is one that can be activated at any time in life, and is not contingent upon age, experience, ethnic background, or any other life circumstance. This formula can enable anyone, at any time, to transform his or her current state, no matter what it is, into a journey that will support success. Life is a great gift and every human is given great gifts. There is a formula that enables us to better control our lives.

This course is not a promise that you will achieve all the goals you may set for yourself nor is it a promise that you will achieve financial wealth. Money is a measurement of how well we are doing, but it is also the result of how

strong we are and how well we are doing at managing our lives. It does not take the wealth of multi-millionaires and billionaires to be successful. In this course, you have learned that success is the result of careful planning and execution. You've also learned that you must know where you are in life and precisely where you want to go. When you successfully follow all the phases of building a successful life, you will gain more of everything you desire, money included. The formula for accumulating money is quite simple: Live by the rule of never spending more than you earn, saving and investing the difference each month.

We can accomplish amazing things when we *believe* we can. We also accomplish that which we think about most of the time. Everything created is the result of specific principles and processes at work. Therefore, it is only natural and logical that we should approach the design of life the same way. And that's what this course has done. It has provided you with the principles, helped you understand how to apply them through specific processes, and given you the prerequisite for being the architect of your own destiny.

This course has not been about some magical answer, even though you may feel that the contents of the coursework have worked magic on your mental outlook, your belief in yourself, and your realization that you can accomplish great things. In fact, you probably now realize that you have a lot of work to do. You may feel that you are now capable of beginning a new life, however, you have barely begun to scratch the surface of your possibilities!

As you started this course, you may have been hoping to find simple answers to some of life's greatest challenges. What you may have found instead is that while some of the phases of development seem simple enough, they are, in fact, quite challenging to act upon. Are you ready to face those challenges? Are you ready to become the architect of your destiny? Now

that you understand how to be in control of the design of your life, will you eliminate your barriers and truly become the architect of your own destiny? There is nothing to hold you back.

Guess what? Now that you have no more excuses, you are on the path to finding the life you have always wanted. You no longer need to blame anyone else for your circumstances. You own your circumstances. Whatever you have experienced, you should know by now that life is always so very good because you can shape it. Whatever your life happens to be like at this moment, you can change it—you can re-architect it as you wish.

Your challenge now is to use consistently what you have learned. You should continue to pursue even more knowledge, always striving to better understand how to maximize and use your inherent talents and abilities. You might end up being a surgeon, a great teacher of others, an engineer, a better wife and homemaker, a better husband or friend, a better gardener, a more effective salesperson, a more positive leader, a successful entrepreneur, or perhaps the best house painter in the neighborhood. Regardless of what it is that you pursue, you have an obligation to pursue it with vigor and commitment, because you are destined to succeed when you use what has been given to you.

The One Course 4Teens has been about one thing: **You!** Our sole purpose for writing this course was to help you to understand that **YOU** are the **Architect of Your Own Destiny!**



x.

RECAP OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE I

As the architect of your destiny, you can create the exact vision of the life you want to live. Let your imagination take you away. Don't be afraid to chase dreams or dream anew.

PRINCIPLE II

Regardless of the amount of money coming in, never spend more!

PRINCIPLE III

An architect stays completely focused on his or her vision throughout the entire building process, eliminating negative distractions that can cause project delays and putting every ounce of effort into converting his or her knowledge and skills into positive actions that lead to the construction of the building.

PRINCIPLE IV

Just as an architect surrounds himself with experts to construct the building, you must build a team that can help you achieve your goal of creating the life you desire. Make a commitment to search out mentors and coaches that will increase your knowledge, strengthen your skills, and provide you with the support you need. Once they are identified and in place, spend time with them.

PRINCIPLE V

The foundation of your building must be strong enough to support everything you do in life from this point forward. As the architect of your destiny, you must have core beliefs to guide you and a code of principles and values that supports positive and productive relationships with other human beings.

PRINCIPLE VI

No architect would attempt to construct a building simply based on a vision. Engineering processes must be applied to the design to build the structure. Success is a result of understanding the processes that must be mastered.

PRINCIPLE VII

Building a successful life takes passion, commitment, and dedication. Take the time to reflect on what you have accomplished with your God-given abilities and be sure to cherish the blessings that have allowed you to pursue your dreams.





The Activities on the following pages are created to support the various lessons in *The One Course 4Teens*. The activities can be easily copied and pasted into a Word file or printed out and put into a notebook. You will find them fun and easy to complete, and very valuable to the new process you are learning to enable you to be the architect of your own destiny!

Activity #1

Personal Assessment

(Where Are You?)

This personal assessment is designed to help you think about where you are at this moment in time in terms of preparation for becoming the architect of your own destiny. This is not a test. This is simply an assessment that will be very valuable to you as you progress through the course.

Let's take an honest look at your life right now. Read the following questions and be honest with yourself in your responses. Simply answer Yes or No next to the question.

1. Do you currently have specific written goals and plans? ____

With such strong supporting evidence in the business world for the importance of goal setting and planning, you would think that teaching and coaching students to understand the importance of these activities would be required study throughout the entire educational process. However, such a course is rarely found. Why not? Why shouldn't the plans for our destinies follow the same processes that educational institutions and corporations use to plan their futures?

The One Course 4Teens is designed to fill the gap left by so many educational institutions that do not teach goal setting and life planning—critical elements to understand as a graduating senior from high school or a student in the early years of college. While there are no guarantees for achieving success, it's important to understand certain principles and concepts. It's also important to understand what not to do. During this course, you will learn how to set goals and plan for a successful life—critical elements to becoming the architect of your destiny.

2. Do you have the knowledge and skills you need to succeed? ____

Remember this basic, brutal fact: If you are not operating from your own personal design and plan for your life, chances are you will be a part of someone else's design, goals, objectives, and plans! This course, so essential for high school graduates, helps you to better understand the process of being able to set goals and create the plans to make those goals a reality in your life. Example: Have you set goals for college? Are you planning to pursue a career rather quickly and, if so, what do you need to learn in addition to what you already know?

One of the most wonderful attributes of being a teenager is that there are so many opportunities to learn so much more!

3. Do your current habits support the success you desire? ____

Just as an athlete must be in top condition before he or she plays the game, or a concert pianist must practice for months and sometimes years in preparation for one performance, you, too, must train yourself to be the architect of your own life. Conditioning for this awesome responsibility starts with your mental outlook. Do you have a positive outlook on your life and your circumstances? There should be no excuses at this point in your life. There are so many possibilities!

Example: Going to college is a much easier decision to make than making the commitment to study to ensure graduation.

If it is to grow, it must remain healthy and vibrant. Far too many people who desire to live more successful and abundant lives are simply too tired to take on much beyond their main endeavors. They don't have enough energy or stamina to invest time in learning new things and practicing new skills.

Educating yourself about good dietary habits and the importance of physical exercise is critical to meeting your goals and plans to become successful. It's very difficult to succeed at anything if the body is tired. When your body is tired, your mind cannot function, hurting your ability to think creatively and to visualize the goals and plans that can take you from where you are to where you want to be.

5. Are you ready to start an exciting journey? _____

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Activity #2

Describe in your own words what is most important to you at this stage in your life.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Activity #3

Imagine your life if money and time were not barriers to the decisions you make. Use your journal or notebook to record your answers and feelings to the following questions.

1. What step you like to take next?

College _____ Start Your Career _____ Other _____

2. How would does this goal make you feel?

3. Briefly describe what you would like for your life to be like five years from now:

4. Describe how you will feel five years from now when you accomplish the goals you mentioned in previous question:

Activity #4

Complete the following questions and then add up your score. These questions will provide you with an accurate reading of where your financial state is at this particular moment in time. Be sure to respond honestly.

Rating: Respond on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 indicating that you agree to the statement and always adhere. A lesser rating indicates less than 100% adherence. A rating of 1 indicates no adherence.

1. I try to adhere to a principle of never spending more than my budget.

1____ 2____ 3____ 4____ 5____

2. I have a habit of saving money.

1____ 2____ 3____ 4____ 5____

3. I do not spend on credit.

1____ 2____ 3____ 4____ 5____

What is your rating on questions 1 through 3? A score of less than 12 means that you must pay closer attention to the way you manage money. A score of 12 or greater means you are developing good discipline relative to the importance of money in your life.

Activity #5

The following activity will help you determine where you are in terms of attitude and how you manage your attitude on a day-to-day basis.

Respond to the questions by rating yourself on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 indicating that you have an uncompromising positive outlook. Assess the state of your attitude honestly. If it appears to be more negative than positive, do not be discouraged. The current state of your attitude is not important if you are gaining an understanding that it must shift to a strong state of positive.

What is your current attitude toward the following?

1. Your life

1____ 2____ 3____ 4____ 5____

2. Your career possibilities

1____ 2____ 3____ 4____ 5____

4. Your physical state (energy level, wellness, weight management)

1____ 2____ 3____ 4____ 5____

5. Your spiritual connection/relationships

1____ 2____ 3____ 4____ 5____

6. Your social life

1____ 2____ 3____ 4____ 5____

7. Your financial state

1____ 2____ 3____ 4____ 5____

Describe briefly how you feel about any tendency to personally complain, criticize and/or condemn other opinions or possibilities that you did not think of yourself:

Describe what you have learned about your attitude because of this lesson.

Activity #6

My Personal Goals and Plans (For the Next 5 Years)

Date:

1. I will continue my pursuit of knowledge and skills by: _____

with a major/focus on _____

2. I will graduate by _____!

3. I will give back to my community and/or support a good cause by participating in the following:

My Test: (Check each statement as your affirmation)

____ Yes, these goals are exciting to me!

____ Yes, these goals are very important to my success!

____ Yes, achieving these goals will make me feel very good!

Obstacles/Barriers that I Must Overcome:

Personal Notes:

Activity #7

My Career Goals and Plans (5 Years from Now)

1. I will be employed by (type of entity): _____

I will start my own business by (if applicable):

2 . My position/role/responsibility will be:

3. I will have savings and investments of \$ _____ !

My Test: (Check each statement as your affirmation)

____ Yes, these goals are exciting to me!

____ Yes, these goals are very important to my success!

____ Yes, achieving these goals will make me feel very good!

Obstacles/Barriers that I Must Overcome:

Personal Notes:

Activity #8

My Life Achievement Goals

Thinking about Life Achievement Goals at such a young age may seem a bit ridiculous at this point in your life, but why not? Some of the greatest achievers ever envisioned themselves achieving their goals at a very young age so don't short-change yourself on your ability to dream and envision exactly what you would like your life to look like. Remember, it all starts with a vision so have some fun and get started. You may want to come back to this exercise many times as your visions will definitely change as you gain more and more confidence—as you become the architect of your own destiny!

1. I will: _____

2. I will: _____

3. I will: _____

4. My hobbies & enjoyment activities will be: _____

5. I will have savings and investments of \$ _____!

My Test: (Check each statement as your affirmation)

____ Yes, these goals are exciting to me!

____ Yes, these goals are very important to my success!

____ Yes, achieving these goals will make me feel very good!

Obstacles/Barriers:

Personal Notes:

Activity #9 Evaluating Your Goals

Do not proceed until you complete your goal-setting exercises!

Take as much time as you need to complete the goal setting exercises.

Now that you have completed your goal-setting exercises, respond to the following questions.

1. How do you feel about your immediate and long-term future now that you have taken the time to determine what it is that you want to achieve?

2. Are you feeling confident that you can design your life and learn to create the plans that will support your goals?

3. You may have heard the saying, "Failing to plan is planning to fail." Planning for anything takes time. Are you now willing to commit to a planning process for your life? If so, why do you feel it will be so important to consistently take the time to plan and review your goals and plans?

Personal Notes:

Activity #10

Now that you clearly understand the critical role that knowledge plays in your pursuit of success, complete the following activity to help you determine what else you might need to know to enhance the probability of achieving your goals. (Refer to your Personal, Career and Life Achievement Goals.)

1. What else do I need to learn to support achievement of my personal, career, and life achievement goals?

2. With whom do I need to share my goals so I can find additional help and/or a mentor?

3. What courses do I need to take?

4. What books do I need to read?

5. What other actions do I need to immediately take to enhance my knowledge?

Personal Notes:

Activity #11

This activity will help you determine exactly how you are using your time. All of us have the same number of hours in a day; no one has any more than 24 hours. In the end, it is how we use the 24 hours we have that can make a major difference in the results we experience in life. Treat the exercise seriously and take your time to think through each question before documenting your responses.

1. I currently spend _____ hours per day focused on my studies and my goals and plans.

2. I currently spend _____ hours per day engaged in other activities unrelated to my studies or pursuit of my goals and plans.

Note: It is important to understand whether the hours you invest in other activities exceed the number of hours you are investing in your studies and focus on your goals and plans. Your opportunity for improvement lies in first reallocating as many hours as possible from the other activities and then investing those hours into a better use of your time.

3. Review a typical weekday and determine how you currently spend each hour from the time you wake up until the time you go to bed. All family and other responsibilities must be taken care of. This exercise will make you aware of the importance of each hour of the day. Once you complete this exercise for a typical weekday, you may want to complete the same exercise for both Saturday and Sunday. Adequate rest, relaxation, and fun are all a very important part of your plan!

My Activities for a Typical Weekday

5:00 A.M. _____

6:00 A.M. _____

7:00 A.M. _____

8:00 A.M. _____

9:00 A.M. _____

10:00 A.M. _____

11:00 A.M. _____

Noon _____

1:00 P.M. _____

2:00 P.M. _____

3:00 P.M. _____

4:00 P.M. _____

5:00 P.M. _____

6:00 P.M. _____

7:00 P.M. _____

8:00 P.M. _____

9:00 P.M. _____

10:00 P.M. _____

11:00 P.M. _____

Thought Starters: What am I accomplishing on a typical day? What's wrong with this picture? You may want to repeat the exercise, but this time make the adjustments that are needed to get more out of your typical day.

By documenting how you use your time and planning to use it wisely, you are taking a major step toward becoming the architect of your destiny. Come back to this exercise whenever you feel you are not getting enough accomplished in a day. It is easy to drift into a multitude of activities that consume too much of your productive time. Remember, rest, proper nutrition, relaxation, exercise, and fun are important components of your day. These activities enable the energy needed to get the most out of a full day.

Activity #12

Make a list of possible mentors and coaches who you believe could help you create a successful life and who would be committed to supporting your desire to achieve your goals. Then list other resources (books, magazines, videos, and audio messages) that can increase your knowledge and help you build upon your skills.

Mentors and Coaches

Who?	Why?	When Will I Invite Them?

Other Resources

Who?	Why?	When Will I Activate?

Personal Notes:

My Personal Thoughts/Reflections

Let's now examine your core beliefs and values. There are no right or wrong answers. This is just a personal assessment of your thoughts on how strong you consider your foundation to be.

It is important that you address any negative perceptions, and more importantly, to define what it is you really believe at this moment. Don't worry about where you are right now. This course is about change and transformation and as you continue, you will be amazed at how your beliefs and values will change as well.

I believe that I am:

The values that govern my life are:

The things that are most important to me are:

My greatest challenges are:

Now think about ten things that you are observing or thinking about right now, and write down a brief, appreciative thought about each one. Force yourself to focus on the beauty and greatness of that which you are observing or thinking about. Perhaps you have taken some things for granted and have failed to see the genius of God and humans at work!

Observation/Thought

Reflection

1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____

Have you counted your blessings lately? Consider all that you value and cherish in your life and take some time to write down your thoughts:

In my life, I cherish, value, and am thankful for:

Capture some of your new thoughts about the importance of celebration:

Other Thoughts:

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have completed *The One Course 4Teens!*