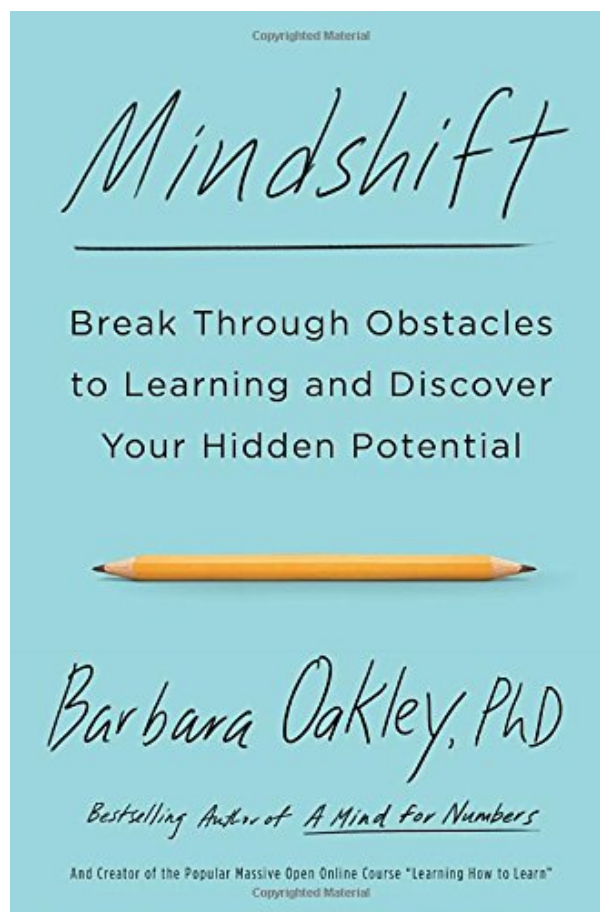


**MINDSHIFT: BREAK THROUGH
OBSTACLES TO LEARNING AND DISCOVER
YOUR HIDDEN POTENTIAL BY BARBARA
OAKLEY**



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Mindshift

Break Through Obstacles
to Learning and Discover
Your Hidden Potential



Barbara Oakley, PhD

Bestselling Author of A Mind for Numbers

And Creator of the Popular Massive Open Online Course "Learning How to Learn"

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Review

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"Significant change is possible. With those four hopeful words, Barbara Oakley opens the door to an entirely new way of seeing and reaching our potential. Don't hesitate, it matters."

-- Seth Godin, bestselling author of *Linchpin*

"Brace yourself: This book will change your entire perception of what you thought was possible. Barbara Oakley will make you realize that you can change and change quite profoundly by making just a few tweaks to how you learn, and she will show how these methods are becoming increasingly available to everyone. Upgrade your mind, upgrade your life, with this book."

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Chapter 1

Transformed

Graham Keir's career was charging forward, unstoppable as a bullet train. He wasn't just following his passion—it was driving his life.

Or so he thought.

Even in gradeschool, Graham was obsessed with music. An upbeat child, he played violin from the time he was four, then nimbly expanded his repertoire by picking up the guitar at eight. In high school, the smoky world of jazz beckoned, and he began practicing this new freeform rhythm with nearly every breath he drew.

Graham lived just outside Philadelphia, once the home of jazz greats like Billie Holiday, John Coltrane, Ethel Waters, and Dizzy Gillespie. In the evenings, he would slip away from the spacious yard of his family's old Victorian house right next to a train station and onto the clanking Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority R5 train. Disembarking onto the stained concrete in Philadelphia, he'd step into the magical world of jazz clubs and live jam sessions. It was in listening to jazz that he came alive.

Eventually, Graham would train at two of the best conservatories, the Eastman School of Music and the Juilliard School, and he would be featured in *DownBeat* magazine as Best Soloist at the college level.

This wasn't to say that Graham was a success in every area of his life. Far from it. Pretty much anything that wasn't music-related was given short shrift. Math was a frustration—he blundered through algebra and geometry and never touched calculus or statistics. His high school science record was lousy. After his final exam in chemistry class, he came home and burned all of his work in the fireplace, thrilled to have passed. The night before the SAT, while other college-bound students lay awake nervously reviewing proofs and Advanced Placement history, Graham, flaunting his academic mediocrity, went to a jazz concert.

Graham knew that he wanted to be a musician and that was that. Even the mere thought of math and science made him uneasy.

But then something happened. Not an accident, or a death in the family, or a sudden shift of fortune. It was something much less dramatic, which made the change all the more profound.

Mindshift

For decades, I've been fascinated by people who change career paths—a feat most often seen among the well-to-do, who have ample social safety nets. Even with plenty of support, however, a major career change can be as fraught as jumping from one high-speed train to another. I'm also interested in people who decide, for whatever reason, to learn the unexpected or the difficult—the expert in Romance languages who overcomes his deficits in math; the floundering gamer who finds a way to soar academically in competitive Singapore; the quadriplegic who shifts into graduate-level computer science and becomes an online teaching assistant. In an age when the pace of change is ever increasing, I've become convinced that dramatic career changes and attitudes of lifelong learning—both inside and outside of university settings—are a vital creative force. Yet the power of that force often goes unnoticed by society.

People who change careers or start learning something new later in life often feel like diletantes—novices who never have a chance of catching up with their new peers. Much like wizards who think they're Muggles, they often remain unaware of their power.

Like Graham, I had a passionate contempt for math and science and did poorly in both from an early age. But unlike Graham, I didn't show any early talents or special abilities. I was a goof-off. My father was in the military, so we moved a lot, often landing at the rural margins of suburbia. Acreage on the edges, at least back then, was cheap, which meant we could have animals—big animals. Each school day ended with me dumping my books, leaping bareback onto my horse, and hitting the trail. Why would I care about academic learning or a lifelong career when I could be galloping through the afternoon sunshine?

Our household was monolithically English-speaking, and I floundered in seventh-grade Spanish class. My wise father listened to my whining and finally said: “Have you ever considered that the real problem isn't the teacher—maybe it's you?”

After we moved again, my father, surprisingly, was proven wrong. The new high school language teacher inspired me, making me wonder what it would be like to think in different languages. I learned that I liked studying languages, so I began to study French and German. Motivating teachers matter. They not only make you feel good about the material—they make you feel good about yourself.

My father urged me to earn a professional degree grounded in math and science. He wanted his children to be able to make their way in the world. But I remained convinced that math and science were outside my playbook. After all, I'd flunked my way through those subjects in elementary, middle, and high school. I instead wanted to study a language. At the time, there were no readily available college loans, so I bypassed college to enlist in the military where I could get paid to study a language. And I did learn a language—Russian.

But against all odds—and despite my early plans—I'm now a professor of engineering, firmly planted in the world of math and science. And with Terrence Sejnowski, the Francis Crick Professor at the Salk Institute, I teach the most popular online course in the world—“Learning How to Learn”—for Coursera/UC San Diego. The course is a MOOC—a massive open online course—and there were a million students from more than two hundred countries in the first year alone. By the time you read this book, we'll be accelerating well past the two million student mark. Educational outreach and impact like this is unprecedented—it is clear that people are hungry to learn, shift, and grow. My lifetime list of jobs and careers is eclectic, to say the least—waitress, cleaning lady, tutor, writer, wife, stay-at-home mother, U.S. Army officer, Russian translator on Soviet trawler on the Bering Sea, and radio operator at the South Pole Station. I discovered, more or less by accident, that there was more power within me to learn and change than I had ever dreamed. What I learned in one career often enabled me to be creatively successful in the next phase of my life. And often, it

was seemingly useless information from a previous career that became a powerful foundation for the next.

Now, as I watch millions of learners all over the world awakening to their potential to learn and change, I realize it's time for something new. We need a manifesto about the importance of mindshifts in producing vibrant and creative societies and in helping people to live to their full potential.

A “mindshift” is a deep change in life that occurs thanks to learning. That's what this book is about. We'll see how people who change themselves through learning—and who bring prior seemingly obsolete or extraneous knowledge with them—have enabled our world to grow in fantastically creative and uplifting ways.

And we'll see how we all can be inspired by their examples—and by what we now know from science on learning and change—to learn and grow and achieve to our fullest potential.

Discovering Your Hidden Potential

People have unexpected twists in their career paths all the time. You sit down at your desk one morning, lean in to the day's work—and see your boss, flanked by security guards, ready to escort you from the building. Out of the blue, you've been let go, after two decades of hard-earned experience and mastery of the company's systems—systems that, like you, are being dumped.

Or . . . maybe you work for a jerk, and suddenly a joyous opportunity arises to escape the dungeon—if, that is, you're willing to learn something new and challenging.

Maybe you don't feel like you have a choice. Perhaps you are the obedient child who always followed your parents' admonitions, so you feel trapped in the luxury of your high-paying salary, nose pressed up against a window of longing for the career not chosen.

It might be that you eked your way through to a professional career in a place where good jobs were hard to come by. You wouldn't dream of taking a risk to shift careers, especially now that you've got children who will pay the price if you screw up.

Or . . . maybe your mother died the night before a critical exam, and you were one of the myriad students who failed the program in a system that seems purposefully designed to eliminate everyone possible. So you're stuck in a low-paying job.

Or . . . it could be that you graduated with your shiny new degree that you pursued like a zealot because you were determined to follow your passion. (That's what your friends always told you to do, after all.) And then, suddenly, you realize that your parents were right—the pay's lousy, the job's even worse, and to top it off, you have a career-change barrier in the form of a boatload of student debt to pay off.

Or . . . maybe you love your work, but you just feel there's something more.

Now what?

Different societal and personal situations place varying obstacles—some insurmountable—on learning new skillsets and on changing careers. But the good news is that worldwide, we're moving into a new era, in which training and perspectives that were once available only to the fortunate few are becoming available to many—with smaller personal and financial costs than ever before. This is not to say that a mindshift is easy. It's usually not. But the barriers have been lowered—in many cases and for many populations.

This availability of new ways of learning—new tools for a mindshift—is so overwhelming that the reaction

has often been a collective No, no, no, the older systems of career development and learning are fine. They're the only ones that matter! This new stuff is a flash in the pan. But slowly—often unnoticed—the mindshift revolution grows. Such mindshifts don't just involve learning new skills or changing careers, but also changing attitudes, personal lives, and personal relationships. A mindshift can be a side activity, or a full-time occupation, or anything in between.

There's good evidence that our abilities to be successful in any given area aren't at all fixed. Stanford researcher Carol Dweck's "growth mind-set" centers around the idea that a positive attitude about our ability to change can help produce that change. As adults, though, it's hard to know how this attitude plays out in real life. What kinds of changes can people really make in their interests, skill sets, and careers? What are the latest practical suggestions from research? And what role do new means of learning play in these processes?

In *Mindshift*, we'll follow people from all over the world who have made unusual career changes and overcome enormous learning challenges. There are profound insights from these "second chance" learners that are valuable no matter what career you might be shifting to or from or what you might be interested in learning. We'll watch people make difficult shifts from the humanities to the sciences or from high tech to the fine arts. We'll see how overcoming depression shares attributes with starting a new business; how even the world's most brilliant scientists can be forced to hit career reset buttons; and how being not so smart can turn out to be an asset when you are learning tough topics.

We'll examine people's motivation and learn the tricks they use to keep themselves on track during the often disconcerting process of major change. We'll hang out with fascinating adult learners and see how, especially in this digital age, you actually can teach an old dog new tricks. (Hint: video games can help.) We'll see what science has to say about the fresh perspectives that career changers and adult learners provide, and we'll learn practical ideas from neuroscience that can allow us to better understand how we ourselves can continue to grow mentally even well after we've reached maturity. We'll also meet a new group of learners—"super-MOOCers"—who use online learning to shape their lives in inspiring ways.

Mindshift is so important that countries are even devising systems to foster its growth. So we'll travel to Singapore, one of the most innovative of those countries, to learn of new strategies that can enhance our careers. Insights from that tiny Asian island will allow us to see innovative new ways around the passion versus practicality conundrum that often bedevils us.

Through this book, we'll also travel around the world to share a fun insider's perspective on learning, as seen from my perch at the top of the world's most popular course—a course devoted to learning. What does it look like to peer into a camera lens with millions of learners on the other side? You'll find plenty of practical advice about how to select the best ways to change and grow through learning, both online and in person.

But it isn't all just high tech; simple concepts like mental reframing and even taking advantage of some aspects of a "bad" attitude can do a lot to get us past the hurdle that life throws our way. Unconventional learners can give us unusual ideas to get around seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

This book tends to emphasize changes from artistic to mathematical or technological skill sets, rather than the other way around. This is because people often don't think an "artistic to analytic" change is possible. And, whether we like it or not, there are more societal tugs at present toward technology. But whatever you are interested in, you will find plenty of inspiration here—from the bus driver who overcomes depression, to the electrical engineer who converts to woodworking, to the publicly tongue-tied, mathematically gifted young woman who finds within herself a talent for public speaking.

Break Through Obstacles to Learning and Discover Your Hidden Potential—the subtitle of this book—paints a broad canvas. But that canvas is your canvas. As you'll see, the scope of your ability to

learn and change is far broader than you might ever have imagined.

For now, though, let's return to Graham's story.

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Mindshift reveals how we can overcome stereotypes and preconceived ideas about what is possible for us to learn and become.

At a time when we are constantly being asked to retrain and reinvent ourselves to adapt to new technologies and changing industries, this book shows us how we can uncover and develop talents we didn't realize we had—no matter what our age or background. We're often told to "follow our passions." But in Mindshift, Dr. Barbara Oakley shows us how we can broaden our passions. Drawing on the latest neuroscientific insights, Dr. Oakley shepherds us past simplistic ideas of "aptitude" and "ability," which provide only a snapshot of who we are now—with little consideration about how we can change.

Even seemingly "bad" traits, such as a poor memory, come with hidden advantages—like increased creativity. Profiling people from around the world who have overcome learning limitations of all kinds, Dr. Oakley shows us how we can turn perceived weaknesses, such as impostor syndrome and advancing age, into strengths. People may feel like they're at a disadvantage if they pursue a new field later in life; yet those who change careers can be fertile cross-pollinators: They bring valuable insights from one discipline to another. Dr. Oakley teaches us strategies for learning that are backed by neuroscience so that we can realize the joy and benefits of a learning lifestyle. Mindshift takes us deep inside the world of how people change and grow. Our biggest stumbling blocks can be our own preconceptions, but with the right mental insights, we can tap into hidden potential and create new opportunities.

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Like Graham, I had a passionate contempt for math and science and did poorly in both from an early age. But unlike Graham, I didn't show any early talents or special abilities. I was a goof-off. My father was in the military, so we moved a lot, often landing at the rural margins of suburbia. Acreage on the edges, at least back then, was cheap, which meant we could have animals—big animals. Each school day ended with me dumping my books, leaping bareback onto my horse, and hitting the trail. Why would I care about academic learning or a lifelong career when I could be galloping through the afternoon sunshine?

Our household was monolithically English-speaking, and I floundered in seventh-grade Spanish class. My wise father listened to my whining and finally said: "Have you ever considered that the real problem isn't the teacher—maybe it's you?"

After we moved again, my father, surprisingly, was proven wrong. The new high school language teacher inspired me, making me wonder what it would be like to think in different languages. I learned that I liked studying languages, so I began to study French and German. Motivating teachers matter. They not only make you feel good about the material—they make you feel good about yourself.

My father urged me to earn a professional degree grounded in math and science. He wanted his children to be able to make their way in the world. But I remained convinced that math and science were outside my playbook. After all, I'd flunked my way through those subjects in elementary, middle, and high school. I instead wanted to study a language. At the time, there were no readily available college loans, so I bypassed college to enlist in the military where I could get paid to study a language. And I did learn a language—Russian.

But against all odds—and despite my early plans—I'm now a professor of engineering, firmly planted in the world of math and science. And with Terrence Sejnowski, the Francis Crick Professor at the Salk Institute, I teach the most popular online course in the world—"Learning How to Learn"—for Coursera/UC San Diego. The course is a MOOC—a massive open online course—and there were a million students from more than two hundred countries in the first year alone. By the time you read this book, we'll be accelerating well past the two million student mark. Educational outreach and impact like this is unprecedented—it is clear that people are hungry to learn, shift, and grow. My lifetime list of jobs and careers is eclectic, to say the least—waitress, cleaning lady, tutor, writer, wife, stay-at-home mother, U.S. Army officer, Russian translator on Soviet trawler on the Bering Sea, and radio operator at the South Pole Station. I discovered, more or less by accident, that there was more power within me to learn and change than I had ever dreamed. What I learned in one career often enabled me to be creatively successful in the next phase of my life. And often, it was seemingly useless information from a previous career that became a powerful foundation for the next.

Now, as I watch millions of learners all over the world awakening to their potential to learn and change, I realize it's time for something new. We need a manifesto about the importance of mindshifts in producing vibrant and creative societies and in helping people to live to their full potential.

A "mindshift" is a deep change in life that occurs thanks to learning. That's what this book is about. We'll see how people who change themselves through learning—and who bring prior seemingly obsolete or extraneous knowledge with them—have enabled our world to grow in fantastically creative and uplifting ways.

And we'll see how we all can be inspired by their examples—and by what we now know from science on learning and change—to learn and grow and achieve to our fullest potential.

Discovering Your Hidden Potential

People have unexpected twists in their career paths all the time. You sit down at your desk one morning, lean in to the day's work—and see your boss, flanked by security guards, ready to escort you from the building. Out of the blue, you've been let go, after two decades of hard-earned experience and mastery of the company's systems—systems that, like you, are being dumped.

Or . . . maybe you work for a jerk, and suddenly a joyous opportunity arises to escape the dungeon—if, that is, you're willing to learn something new and challenging.

Maybe you don't feel like you have a choice. Perhaps you are the obedient child who always followed your parents' admonitions, so you feel trapped in the luxury of your high-paying salary, nose pressed up against a window of longing for the career not chosen.

It might be that you eked your way through to a professional career in a place where good jobs were hard to come by. You wouldn't dream of taking a risk to shift careers, especially now that you've got children who will pay the price if you screw up.

Or . . . maybe your mother died the night before a critical exam, and you were one of the myriad students

who failed the program in a system that seems purposefully designed to eliminate everyone possible. So you're stuck in a low-paying job.

Or . . . it could be that you graduated with your shiny new degree that you pursued like a zealot because you were determined to follow your passion. (That's what your friends always told you to do, after all.) And then, suddenly, you realize that your parents were right—the pay's lousy, the job's even worse, and to top it off, you have a career-change barrier in the form of a boatload of student debt to pay off.

Or . . . maybe you love your work, but you just feel there's something more.

Now what?

Different societal and personal situations place varying obstacles—some insurmountable—on learning new skillsets and on changing careers. But the good news is that worldwide, we're moving into a new era, in which training and perspectives that were once available only to the fortunate few are becoming available to many—with smaller personal and financial costs than ever before. This is not to say that a mindshift is easy. It's usually not. But the barriers have been lowered—in many cases and for many populations.

This availability of new ways of learning—new tools for a mindshift—is so overwhelming that the reaction has often been a collective No, no, no, the older systems of career development and learning are fine. They're the only ones that matter! This new stuff is a flash in the pan. But slowly—often unnoticed—the mindshift revolution grows. Such mindshifts don't just involve learning new skills or changing careers, but also changing attitudes, personal lives, and personal relationships. A mindshift can be a side activity, or a full-time occupation, or anything in between.

There's good evidence that our abilities to be successful in any given area aren't at all fixed. Stanford researcher Carol Dweck's "growth mind-set" centers around the idea that a positive attitude about our ability to change can help produce that change. As adults, though, it's hard to know how this attitude plays out in real life. What kinds of changes can people really make in their interests, skillsets, and careers? What are the latest practical suggestions from research? And what role do new means of learning play in these processes?

In Mindshift, we'll follow people from all over the world who have made unusual career changes and overcome enormous learning challenges. There are profound insights from these "second chance" learners that are valuable no matter what career you might be shifting to or from or what you might be interested in learning. We'll watch people make difficult shifts from the humanities to the sciences or from high tech to the fine arts. We'll see how overcoming depression shares attributes with starting a new business; how even the world's most brilliant scientists can be forced to hit career reset buttons; and how being not so smart can turn out to be an asset when you are learning tough topics.

We'll examine people's motivation and learn the tricks they use to keep themselves on track during the often disconcerting process of major change. We'll hang out with fascinating adult learners and see how, especially in this digital age, you actually can teach an old dog new tricks. (Hint: video games can help.) We'll see what science has to say about the fresh perspectives that career changers and adult learners provide, and we'll learn practical ideas from neuroscience that can allow us to better understand how we ourselves can continue to grow mentally even well after we've reached maturity. We'll also meet a new group of learners—"super-MOOCers"—who use online learning to shape their lives in inspiring ways.

Mindshift is so important that countries are even devising systems to foster its growth. So we'll travel to Singapore, one of the most innovative of those countries, to learn of new strategies that can enhance our careers. Insights from that tiny Asian island will allow us to see innovative new ways around the passion versus practicality conundrum that often bedevils us.

Through this book, we'll also travel around the world to share a fun insider's perspective on learning, as seen from my perch at the top of the world's most popular course—a course devoted to learning. What does it look like to peer into a camera lens with millions of learners on the other side? You'll find plenty of practical advice about how to select the best ways to change and grow through learning, both online and in person.

But it isn't all just high tech; simple concepts like mental reframing and even taking advantage of some aspects of a "bad" attitude can do a lot to get us past the hurdle that life throws our way. Unconventional learners can give us unusual ideas to get around seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

This book tends to emphasize changes from artistic to mathematical or technological skillsets, rather than the other way around. This is because people often don't think an "artistic to analytic" change is possible. And, whether we like it or not, there are more societal tugs at present toward technology. But whatever you are interested in, you will find plenty of inspiration here—from the bus driver who overcomes depression, to the electrical engineer who converts to woodworking, to the publicly tongue-tied, mathematically gifted young woman who finds within herself a talent for public speaking.

Break Through Obstacles to Learning and Discover Your Hidden Potential—the subtitle of this book—paints a broad canvas. But that canvas is your canvas. As you'll see, the scope of your ability to learn and change is far broader than you might ever have imagined.

For now, though, let's return to Graham's story.

Most helpful customer reviews

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

A guide to making a deep change in your life

By J. Brew

What is a mindshift? Barbara Oakley provides this definition: "A "mindshift" is a deep change in life that occurs thanks to learning. In the book, Oakley describes a framework of tools that can be applied to best take advantage of learning. In each case, she uses provides a vignette of how a real person faced a life difficulty, how they solved it, and why it matters. One great part of this is the diverse group of individuals, women and men of all ages, from across the globe. Oakley discusses a variety of topics, asks the reader to work through a series of questions, and provides tools and resources to enable a person to answer these questions. Here are a sample of the topics and questions that Mindshift considers:

Broaden Your Passion >> "What could you do or be if you decided to instead broaden your passion and tried to accomplish something that demanded the most from you? What skills and knowledge could you bring with you from your past that could serve you as you really challenge yourself?"

Taking Active Steps >> "What mindshift are you trying to accomplish? What thoughts are keeping you stuck? Do you tell yourself that you are too old to make a career change?"

Considering What Underpins Your Mindshift >>

"Should the reality of the working world be a factor in your mindshift? If so, how strongly? Do you have a weakness you can change into a strength?"

I really enjoyed Mindshift, but it is not a "one-shot", quick-read book that provides all the answers. It's a book that can help someone making a life change to do so in a coherent manner. Oakley's shares her own failures and successes; along with others in a global community. Mindshift provides a framework for a

learner's next logical step: How to apply what you learn when making a shift in your life. In addition, Oakley provides valuable insights into maximizing learning using new tools, such as MOOCs. (She also provides a fascinating look behind the scenes of making a MOOC). Finally, I appreciated the thorough job of providing references that support the facts on learning that are provided. If you are considering a life or career change, I recommend Mindshift as a very useful guide.

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Five Stars

By Patrick J Deagen

insightful, fascinating stories

1 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Five Stars

By Kenneth A. Becker

Good

See all 5 customer reviews...

MINDSHIFT: BREAK THROUGH OBSTACLES TO LEARNING AND DISCOVER YOUR HIDDEN POTENTIAL BY BARBARA OAKLEY PDF

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Review

"Mindshift is essential reading for anyone seeking a reboot, reset, or reinvention. As Oakley trots around the globe and across disciplines, she explains the power of taking a 'pi' approach to your career, why worriers often get ahead, why negative traits can house hidden advantages, and why it's smarter to broaden your passion than follow it. Jammed with inspiring stories and practical tips, Mindshift is a book that can change your life."

-- Daniel H. Pink, author of Drive and A Whole New Mind

"Significant change is possible. With those four hopeful words, Barbara Oakley opens the door to an entirely new way of seeing and reaching our potential. Don't hesitate, it matters."

--Seth Godin, bestselling author of Linchpin

"Brace yourself: This book will change your entire perception of what you thought was possible. Barbara Oakley will make you realize that you can change and change quite profoundly by making just a few tweaks to how you learn, and she will show how these methods are becoming increasingly available to everyone. Upgrade your mind, upgrade your life, with this book."

--Scott Barry Kaufman, scientific director of the Imagination Institute and coauthor of Wired to Create: Unravelling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind

"The message of Mindshift is utterly convincing you can learn, change, and grow, often far more than you can imagine. Read, learn, and enjoy!"--Francisco Ayala, University of California, Irvine, Former President and Chairman of the Board of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, author most recently of Evolution, Explanation, Ethics, and Aesthetics. Towards a Philosophy of Biology.

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“Following your passion is easy. Finding it is hard. This book is full of examples to help—people who have found their way around roadblocks or just plowed right through them.”

—Adam Grant, New York Times bestselling author of *Originals* and *Give and Take*

“Oakley’s work is remarkable for its breadth and depth...fascinating.”

—James Taranto, *The Wall Street Journal*

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"*Mindshift* is a fantastic book about how we learn and how we can use our talents (or learn new ones) in order to create a more satisfying career for ourselves. If you're stuck in a rut and don't know what to do next in life, this is a phenomenal resource to help you find your way. Dr. Oakley is a master of storytelling and of sharing ideas that can help inspire you to get out of your comfort zone and learn!"

—Nelson Dellis, 4-time USA Memory Champion

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"Open this book to open your mind. In *Mindshift*--both a collection of inspiring stories and a field guide to creating change--Barbara Oakley shows how deep learning, deep practice, and deep transformation work and drive progress and possibilities."

—Guru Madhavan, author of *Applied Minds: How Engineers Think*

“In an age when more and more Americans find themselves changing jobs and careers, *Mindshift* provides indispensable advice and help.”

—Glenn Harlan Reynolds, Beauchamp Brogan Distinguished Professor of Law, The University of Tennessee

“Oakley convincingly argues that a few conscious changes in the way people learn activates an astounding new capacity for personal change.”

—*Success Magazine*

"Oakley profiles a variety of men and women who have left successful careers in one field to become novices in another. By bringing along their accumulated knowledge and applying her study tips, they have been able to view new bodies of knowledge from fresh viewpoints, often achieving amazing results. . . . The author has an international scope and gleans examples from a variety of locales and age groups."

—Booklist

About the Author

Barbara Oakley is a professor of engineering at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan, and Ramón y Cajal Distinguished Scholar of Global Digital Learning at McMaster University. Her research involves bioengineering with an emphasis on neuroscience and cognitive psychology. Dr. Oakley teaches two massive open online courses (MOOCs), "Learning How to Learn" (the world's most popular course) and "Mindshift" (based on this book), alongside legendary neuroscientist Terrence Sejnowski. Dr. Oakley has received many awards for her teaching, including the American Society of Engineering Education's Chester F. Carlson Award for technical innovation in education and the National Science Foundation New Century Scholar Award.

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Chapter 1

Transformed

Graham Keir's career was charging forward, unstoppable as a bullet train. He wasn't just following his passion—it was driving his life.

Or so he thought.

Even in gradeschool, Graham was obsessed with music. An upbeat child, he played violin from the time he was four, then nimbly expanded his repertoire by picking up the guitar at eight. In high school, the smoky world of jazz beckoned, and he began practicing this new freeform rhythm with nearly every breath he drew.

Graham lived just outside Philadelphia, once the home of jazz greats like Billie Holiday, John Coltrane, Ethel Waters, and Dizzy Gillespie. In the evenings, he would slip away from the spacious yard of his family's old Victorian house right next to a train station and onto the clanking Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority R5 train. Disembarking onto the stained concrete in Philadelphia, he'd step into the magical world of jazz clubs and live jam sessions. It was in listening to jazz that he came alive.

Eventually, Graham would train at two of the best conservatories, the Eastman School of Music and the Juilliard School, and he would be featured in *DownBeat* magazine as Best Soloist at the college level.

This wasn't to say that Graham was a success in every area of his life. Far from it. Pretty much anything that wasn't music-related was given short shrift. Math was a frustration—he blundered through algebra and geometry and never touched calculus or statistics. His high school science record was lousy. After his final exam in chemistry class, he came home and burned all of his work in the fireplace, thrilled to have passed. The night before the SAT, while other college-bound students lay awake nervously reviewing proofs and Advanced Placement history, Graham, flaunting his academic mediocrity, went to a jazz concert.

Graham knew that he wanted to be a musician and that was that. Even the mere thought of math and science made him uneasy.

But then something happened. Not an accident, or a death in the family, or a sudden shift of fortune. It was something much less dramatic, which made the change all the more profound.

Mindshift

For decades, I've been fascinated by people who change career paths—a feat most often seen among the well-to-do, who have ample social safety nets. Even with plenty of support, however, a major career change

can be as fraught as jumping from one high-speed train to another. I'm also interested in people who decide, for whatever reason, to learn the unexpected or the difficult—the expert in Romance languages who overcomes his deficits in math; the floundering gamer who finds a way to soar academically in competitive Singapore; the quadriplegic who shifts into graduate-level computer science and becomes an online teaching assistant. In an age when the pace of change is ever increasing, I've become convinced that dramatic career changes and attitudes of lifelong learning—both inside and outside of university settings—are a vital creative force. Yet the power of that force often goes unnoticed by society.

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This *Mindshift: Break Through Obstacles To Learning And Discover Your Hidden Potential* By Barbara Oakley is extremely proper for you as novice visitor. The readers will certainly always start their reading routine with the favourite theme. They could not consider the author and also author that create guide. This is why, this book *Mindshift: Break Through Obstacles To Learning And Discover Your Hidden Potential* By Barbara Oakley is really right to read. However, the principle that is given in this book *Mindshift: Break Through Obstacles To Learning And Discover Your Hidden Potential* By Barbara Oakley will certainly show you lots of points. You could start to love likewise reading till completion of the book *Mindshift: Break Through Obstacles To Learning And Discover Your Hidden Potential* By Barbara Oakley.