

# The Schooled Mind vs. The DeSchooled Mind

Two Ways of Seeing the World and How They Factor Into Your Success

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Photo by [Twenty20](#).

## The Schooled Mind

The schooled mind is a consequence of imposed visions and definitions for the future. It crowds out the vision of the deschooled mind — the vision of the student left alone from imposed systems.

The schooled mind is simultaneously indefinite, while being the consequence of a limitedly definite systems.

The schooled mind is constricted in the options with which it operates. If

options A, B, C, and D are all the ones on the test, then option E isn't on the table.

The schooled mind is systematized and managed. English is a subject separate from Government, which is separate from Algebra, separate from Statistics, from Chemistry, History, Economics, Music, and from "the real world."

The schooled mind is obsequious. It defers to power and to authority. It isn't the role of the schooled student to speak up and speak out. It is the role of experts to imbue knowledge upon the not-yet-schooled.

The schooled mind is fragile. Even in classes designed to benefit from disorder and chaos, these are separate experiences from the schooled process. It is damaged by disorder.

The schooled mind is exogenously motivated. Grades, study halls, recess, gold stars are all incentives to do better on things from which the schooled student doesn't inherently find meaning.

The schooled mind is indefinite. "Let's get to the next level," "let's get an A on this next exam," "if I just get into my top school, that's what will be the goal here." Any individual values it is motivated by are those values considered possible options within the schooled system. The ability to build a definite vision for the future is off the table unless the schooled student has an option to embrace the deschooled alternative for their own future and then choose schooling if that is necessary to reach their individual vision.

## **The DeSchooled Mind**

The deschooled mind is definite in its focus and purpose. When something that is worth pursuing is found, the deschooled mind can focus on it with relentless effort and focus. It isn't pushed in a million different directions by the institutions around it.

The deschooled mind is creative. It can approach the same problem from

multiple perspectives. It doesn't view problems as necessarily constructed with a given purpose in their solution. The deschooled mind is not constructivist.

The deschooled mind is antifragile. It benefits from the disorder of the world. While the schooled mind is naturally resilient-at-best and fragile-at-worst, the deschooled mind is antifragile-at-best and resilient-at-worst.

The deschooled mind is playful. It is capable of taking multiple situations and working with them at the same time, without viewing one as being an all-or-nothing game when it really isn't.

The deschooled mind is confident. It isn't built on the affirmation and accolades of other minds as its foundation. It doesn't need to wait for somebody to say "go" to go and succeed on a task or project.

The deschooled mind is innovative. By being given to viewing problems from multiple perspectives, the deschooled mind can see [secrets](#) more easily than its schooled counterparts.

The deschooled mind is self-willed. By finding its primary drive for purpose and meaning in activities from itself, the deschooled mind is more easily given to finding existential fulfillment than the schooled mind — a mind that operates largely within the context of moving to the next pre-defined level.

The deschooled mind is essentialist. Since its activities are chosen for their own sake and reasons, it must filter through the noise of what is pushed on it. Where the schooled mind is given to doing things because they are assigned or expected, the deschooled mind operates freely outside this paradigm.

## **More Reading**

To learn how to deschool yourself, listen to my podcast series with Jeff Till [here](#).

[Read how recent grads can deschool themselves.](#)

[Listen to my interview on the School Sucks Podcast.](#)

*This originally appeared as two separate posts on [ZakSlayback.com](#) in 2015.*