

Editors Column



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Is Hustle Culture Worth It?

Hard work equals success. It's a phrase that, at some point or another, we've all heard, and for good reason. Look at any accomplished person within their field, and their success usually comes down to one thing—hard work. But are some people taking this saying too far? In this day and age, as working hard has become increasingly glorified, the notion of hustle or “grind” culture has become embedded within society.

This hustle or “grind” culture means exactly what it sounds like—constantly “hustling” or committing as much part of one's everyday life into doing work. If someone is not spending every open hour of the day working towards their goals and dreams, they're falling behind. Whether one is at the workplace, at home, or riding their daily commute, work should be the number one priority. And the idea of this mindset sounds simple. Anyone who wants to achieve major success in their life should be willing to give

up their leisure time to maximize their productivity. Essentially, the harder and longer one works, the more they should be rewarded.

This culture has especially been prevalent among students, as the college admission process for elite schools has increasingly become competitive. As a result, many students have been compelled to follow this “grind” mindset and follow a routine that is all too familiar: working tirelessly to maintain straight A's and being involved in multiple extracurriculars, clubs, internships, and other resume-boosting qualities, all while having to sacrifice basic sleep needs and free time to maximize the day.

However, is this notion—the belief that one must be obsessive and always stay focused on the task at hand to be successful in today's age—true? And is it worth it? First, there's nothing wrong with wanting to work hard. If one wants to attain high levels of academic and career



In this day and age, the notion of “hustle culture” has become an increasingly prevalent idea, especially among students. [Source: Author, Jonathan Kim]

success, the ability to make priorities, be willing to sacrifice, and manage stress is essential.

Nonetheless, there is a difference between working hard and committing to hustle culture. By completely disregarding the importance of breaks and sleep through constantly committing to one's work and future goals, hustling will eventually lead to overwhelming stress, burnout, and other health problems, which ironically stifle productivity. Additionally, this unhealthy work-life balance can create the

notion that one's work is one's identity and ultimately prevent one from exploring other interests, skills, and hobbies that are important not only to build a more well-rounded life, but also to simply have ways to relax and enjoy oneself amid stressful times.

Being able to know one's limits and find the balance to be a successful, yet also happy individual is the most important skill. So instead of pulling another all-nighter, close your computer, get some sleep, and don't be afraid to just take a break.

Student Reporter

How Damar Hamlin's Incident Shook America



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On January 2nd, during a football game with the two top-seed teams in Cincinnati, 24-year-old safety guard Damar Hamlin tackled Bengals receiver, Tee Higgins. At first, it seemed like a normal hit, but Hamlin was seen standing up and falling back down onto the field. Moments later, Hamlin went into cardiac arrest, and his heartbeat was revived by medical professionals. He was then taken to the University of Cincinnati Medical Center in critical condition. Hamlin's hit forced the postponement of the game, and it was later called off.

The incident shocked America, ironically reminding the world that football is a dangerous and physical sport. It sobered fans to see how ignorant consumerism has become, where we consider players as mere entertainment. Recent developments, like Fantasy Football, have



Despite the weather, Bills fans support their team in the playoffs. [Source: Teryll Kerr Douglas, Unsplash]

reinforced the idea of consumerism, where many users regard players as “trading cards.” Hamlin's incident reminded us that football players are also people, despite their status and popularity. It showed us that the “show must go on” mentality of viewers has gone too far and that we should be grateful to the

NFL for calling off the game.

But what does the incident mean for the NFL? The largest study of brain injuries in the NFL, published in Science in 2017, unveiled that 87% of 200 former football players who had symptoms of mental disorders and motor impairments showed traces of neurodegenerative diseases associated with repetitive head trauma. The percentage rose to 99% with those who played professionally in the NFL. So far, the NFL has not made any drastic changes to its rules, mostly adjusting its concussion protocols and requiring padding for players exposed to constant hits during the preseason. However, the use of padding has not been made mandatory during the regular season, and rules have stayed flexible.

Even so, the recent events have

also brought in fruits of good labor from Americans nationwide. There is a strong belief that little can unite our nation, but Hamlin's injury proved otherwise. People across America looked to help, donating to Hamlin's Chasing M's Foundation toy drive, which aimed for a goal of 250,000 dollars but raised over 8 million in funding. The Foundation, which originally had low expectations, aims to provide toys for children in need. Fans gathered outside his hospital, showing immense support for the player, also sending out letters and prayers for a quick recovery. Hamlin's injury has proved that the American spirit is still alive, and unity is still possible. Despite our political, religious, and economic differences, the incident shows Americans that we are capable of solidarity, which is a beautiful thing.

Student Reporter

Riding in a Storm



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Just like that, 2022 came to an end with a chilly finish. Throughout the month of December, Northern California, like the majority of the U.S., experienced heavy snowstorms and low temperatures. Many states suffered from a build-up of several feet of snow from the heavy winds and nonstop precipitation. While the abundant snowfall produced beautiful layers of fresh powder on the ski slopes, the blizzards actually caused a lot more trouble than you would think, especially for those going on their annual winter trips to the mountains.

Mammoth Lake is one of many popular locations in California for skiing and snowboarding during the winter. As our final trip for 2022, my friend and I went to Mammoth to snowboard together for the first time! We packed our bags the night before, got up at four in the morning, and eagerly went on our way. Before even setting foot in Mammoth Lake, we entered a massive blizzard that lasted for

the remainder of our drive up—a good 2 hours. When we finally arrived at the ski lodge, my friend and I quickly changed into our snow gear, bought our lift tickets, and rushed up the slopes for our first snowboard run. By afternoon, the blizzard had stopped, and the view was incredible! The sky was clear and we could see all the surrounding mountains covered in their own blankets of snow and trees. We snowboarded all throughout the morning, until late afternoon, before calling it a day.

However, the second day of snowboarding wasn't as easy as the first. All throughout the night, until morning, there was constant snow and heavy winds. The ski resort workers warned everyone that there was a possibility that they would have to close the slopes for the day because the weather was too dangerous to ski in. Fortunately, the blizzard died down just enough for the beginner slopes to stay open, and everyone from every

lodge nearby crowded the ski lifts. Though the storm left conditions that were safe enough to snowboard in, it was still very windy and icy as we went up the lift. Finally, we reached the top and readily mounted off on our first run of the day.

That's when disaster struck. Amid the loud, icy winds that rushed around me, I lost my friend at a steep intersection! I was so disoriented that I couldn't keep track of which path she took and ended up taking another slope. We'll meet up at the bottom, I thought, as I zoomed down the mountain, but I was quickly humbled when I suddenly crashed head-first into several feet of fresh, powdery snow. For many skiers and snowboarders, a good amount of fresh powder is preferable because it makes for soft landings and smoother riding. However, three to four feet of snow in the middle of a blizzard is more trouble than help. I was stuck waist-deep in snow and couldn't see two feet in front of me as I struggled my way down the slope. My panicked



After snowboarding for many hours on end, my friend and I needed to take some breaks before getting back up on our feet. [Source: Author, Seanna Kim]

friend had even considered calling for my rescue because I had been gone for so long! After a grueling, thirty minutes of trudging through snow, I finally made it down the mountain.

That day I learned my lesson to go slow and steady, especially in a snowstorm.

Student Reporter

The Thrill of the Roller Coaster



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Roller coasters have a long history, and are interesting in how they work. [Source: Pixabay]

My heart is pounding as if it were about to explode, and the sense of moving quickly through the air is thrilling. The train, with people leaning on safety bars and belts, and crossing dangerous courses, makes me excited every time I see it. Roller coasters, one of the most popular rides in the world, are easy to find at any amusement park. People enjoy riding roller coasters, but they don't know why they are fun or what principles make them enjoy such a deformed course. Believe it or not, there are actually scientific princi-

ples used in roller coasters.

First introduced in Russia in the mid-1600s, the ice slide, the first official roller coaster, appeared in many places. One of the most famous is the ice slide in Saint Petersburg. The ice slide, called the "Russian Mountain," was a slide with a 50-degree slope, with a wooden frame and thick ice on top of it. Passengers were able to climb up to the starting point and slide down the ramp on a sled. This slide was very popular not only with the general public but also with

the upper class of Russia. With the development of the steel industry and the production of quality iron that could make hard and safe rails, these ice slides disappeared, and the roller coasters that we can see now began to be produced.

The train on the roller coaster has no power source. Without using fuel like a train, a chain lift installed on the rail is only the mechanism responsible for the movement of the roller coaster when it goes up from the start. This can be explained by the law of conservation of energy. Simply put, it converts the positional energy of the roller coaster into kinetic energy. The definition of positional energy is that using the potential energy of an object can move it from a particular position to a standing position, and the magnitude of that energy is proportional to the position of the object. In terms of the shape of a roller coaster, the high position that rises at the start of the roller coaster corresponds to "positional energy," and the accelera-

tion that starts when the roller coaster falls from that high position corresponds to "kinetic energy." According to the law of conservation of energy, the total energy of an object, that is, the sum of the potential energy and kinetic energy, has a constant sum even if the position or speed of the object changes. In other words, the roller coaster that climbed the chain lift to a high place forms a high "positional energy" from a high position, freely falls along the rail, replaces a high "positional energy" with a high "motor energy", and quickly completes the entire course at a terrifying speed.

There are so many roller coasters in the world, and each has its own special characteristics and course, but no matter how scary it is, it shares the same origin and uses the same principles to move the ride. If you remember this in the future, you can think that no matter how scary a roller coaster you ride, it is not much different from an ordinary ice slide.

Student Reporter

Annual First Tech Challenge Tournament



Joyce Kang
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La Canada High School



Students from FTC team 5921 fix any last-minute problems as they prepare for their first round. [Author, Joyce Kang]

On the 14th of January, the annual First Tech Challenge, or FTC robotics tournament, was held for teams within Los Angeles County at La Canada High School. This was the second out of three mandatory tournaments, in which all 14 competing teams are required to attend.

Each season, FIRST, a global robotics community that sponsors the tournament, announces the challenge with a game video and rules. This season, the goal was to build a robot that could pick up a cone and place it onto sticks of

differing heights. The higher the stick was, the more points it was worth. The team with the most points at the end of the match would win. Teams began building the robot around the middle of September, and have been hard at work since. Competing teams arrived at La Canada High School around 7:00 am, each preparing for their first round and making sure their robot functioned properly. During their turn, each team paired up with an alliance at random, with a total of four teams in the playfield per round. Each group of two teams was assigned

a color, either red or blue, and had to work together to receive more points than the opposite colored group. Teams were allowed a maximum of four students: two players who each received a controller for their robot, one to control where their robot moves, and one to control the crane that picks up each cone, one coach, and one human player whose role is to place the cones where their robot can easily access. Although all teams advanced to the third tournament taking place Sunday, February 19, in Monrovia, the top three placing teams were allowed to choose their alliances for the Monrovia tournament. Teams that place well will advance to the state tournament, then nationals, and then worlds.

When asked what the most difficult part of the tournament was, 8th-grade student Trentan Davé replied, "Probably autonomous because of all the difficulties you can face when humans take their

hands off the controllers."

The autonomous was a thirty-second time period at the start of every round where teams received the opportunity to land a cone onto a stick using code, done prior to the tournament. Because the students could not control their robot, they simply hoped that their code was accurate and that their robot didn't malfunction.

Another student, 11th-grade Chloe Lee, captain of FTC team 5921, explained what she thought to be the most difficult part of the tournament. "The hardest part of this whole game is the alliance partners and making sure we have the right strategies."

Since the alliances were assigned at random, teams hoped for partners that could help score as many points as possible. As all teams still have a long way to go, the best of luck to everyone competing in this season's tournament is wished.

Student Reporter

Entering 2023 with Clean Closets



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The new year entails some people to clean out emotional baggage, become more active, and change things about themselves. It also entails others to practice good habits by exponentially increasing their work performance. In a more literal sense, however, some individuals are interested in maintaining cleanliness through closet organization.

While this practice has been recognized as a chore for generations, it can also be regarded as a relaxing pastime for those who want to transform their environment. Visual improvements have been commonly recognized to mark the beginning of a new lifestyle, so one can expect that physical cleanliness can eliminate objects associated with internal struggles. For example, recovering from depression can incline some individuals to do the dishes, organize desk spaces, or clean closets if they previously lacked the motivation



Organizing clothing into categories is one of the factors that qualify closet cleaning as a relaxing pastime! [Source: Author, Audrey Park]

to do so. Considering this, it can be easily deduced that maintaining consistency can act as a coping mechanism, as well as emphasize the importance of good habits and build a sense of self-improvement.

In the process of building routines, cleaning—when implemented correctly—has been found to

specifically benefit these areas. For instance, research from the University of Connecticut was used in The Swaddle's article, "Why Some People Find Cleaning Therapeutic," to prove, "Cleaning gives people a sense of mastery and control over their environment. Life is full of uncertainty, and many situations are out of our hands, but at least we can assert our will on our living space". This information, along with previous observations, supports the gradual transition into self-improvement.

To start building these good habits through closet cleaning, you first need to identify the ideal closet space. Standard closet designs consist of walk-in or reach-in wardrobes, each demanding different methods to maximize capacity. To put into perspective, small rooms that are responsible for providing big closet space can be divided into several sections to store a wider range of clothing. On the other hand, reach-

in closets act as shelves and do not provide as much space. However, restrictions like these have prompted tools to simplify the organizing process. Clothing racks and stackable boxes have become especially highlighted in the media as aesthetic extensions of your closet!

Shortly after starting, you should compartmentalize sections of your closet and group clothing items into those different categories. At this stage, other available resources for ensuring maximum organization are online closet builders: visual tools that map your outfits and clothing categories.

Observations at the beginning of this year have made it increasingly clear that several individuals are making improvement-based changes. Due to this, it is significant that those who are interested in visually rewarding themselves start closet organization.