

“More Truly Educated Out of College Than In It.”

It seems you can't turn around these days without seeing some type of article or list describing the top 10 ways to get into the best college or grad program. Such a mentality stems from the idea that true education is gained from an institution or organization.

But by continually enforcing the idea that true education only happens within the four walls of a classroom, have we discouraged young people from learning on their own or getting ahead by their own grit, hard work, and determination? Does society need to return to a more traditional view of education, such as the one presented below by the 1897 text [*Ethics of Success*](#)?

“Many persons, young and old, think of education as belonging only to the schools. This is a grave mistake. If the school alone can give culture, such men as Henry Clay and Abraham Lincoln never would have been known, for their best teachers were outside the schoolroom. Scores and hundreds of our successful men, – statesmen, merchants, manufacturers, and even scholars, – owe their distinction to the culture of business, supplemented by the discipline of leisure moments devoted to reading or study.

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Webster defines education to be ‘that series of instruction and discipline which is intended to enlighten the understanding, correct the temper and the manners and habits of youth, and fit them for usefulness in their future stations.’ Hence, there may be education without the schoolroom. It is possible for a youth to be more truly educated out of college than in it. Abraham Lincoln was

*better educated than half the graduates of Harvard and Yale. Proof of this is found in the fact that he was fitted for 'usefulness in his station.' The farm, shop, and warehouse teach eminently practical lessons. They teach much even about science and art. The successful man of business knows more about philosophy, mathematics, and psychology, after he has amassed a fortune, than he did before. **Experience is a good schoolmaster.**"*

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