



# **DIPLOMAS DEGREES, & LLCS**

**College and Career Guidance Program**

## **Curriculum and Workshop Companion Workbook**



# Rooted to Rise

## A Message to You - Our Lineage and Legacy

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Welcome to the First Day of the Rest of Your Life

My mom's voicemail used to say, "Welcome to the first day of the rest of your life." Her impact on this world—both while she lived and through the legacy she left behind—is carried forward in this companion workbook you now hold. Whether it's a physical copy in your hands or a digital version on your device, whether you're in class or kicking back with friends, welcome to the first day of the rest of your life.

At AAAMotivated, we believe in the power of youth to shape their own futures. Our mission is to empower and amplify youth voices, ensuring young people like you can shape a world where your well-being and success are prioritized. This workbook is a tool, a guide, and a resource designed to center you—your goals, your voice, and your growth.

It's no coincidence that you're here, reading these words. This moment is a divine appointment, and the question is: Are you ready to answer the call? Remember, knowledge alone isn't power—it's applied knowledge that unlocks doors and creates opportunities.

Your voice is the driving force of your life, and the choices you make today will shape the outcomes of tomorrow. Through the work ahead, you'll discover tools, engage in discussions, reflect on your journey, and build connections in a community where you are safe, valued, and supported. This is your space to grow, to be affirmed, and to claim your power.

You are the ones we've been waiting for. Now, go get it.



Joy,  
*Ms. McKinney*  
Ms. McKinney  
Founder | CDEO, AAAMotivated

### **Dedication**

*This body of work is inspired by love and is dedicated to the memory of my mom, Beverly Ann McKinney, and all our ancestors who paved the way. Their enduring impact reminds us that today, we are living proof of their wildest dreams.*

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# Diplomas, Degrees, & LLCs

Welcome to **Diplomas, Degrees, & LLCs**, a program rooted in empowering students to create **pathways to success** in college, career, and life. At its core, this initiative is about more than academics—it's about fostering **lifelong learning**, **personal growth**, and **meaningful contributions** to your community.



Through a **holistic framework**, **Diplomas, Degrees, & LLCs** connects you to **culturally relevant tools and intergenerational wisdom**. This program is designed to guide you as you explore who you are, discover **your strengths**, and unlock **opportunities for growth**. Along the way, you'll engage with **mentors, industry leaders**, and **institutions** committed to your success. Together, we'll spark your interests and provide the **access and support** you need to rise to your **full potential**.

Why is this important? Research shows that disparities in education don't just impact school years—they influence **life outcomes** like **career opportunities, income**, and even **health**. At AAAMotivated, we believe that the **academic achievement gap** doesn't define your future. With the right tools and guidance, you can **leverage your unique assets** to break through barriers and **rewrite the narrative**.

This program is an investment in **you** and **your dreams**. You'll tackle **essential skills**, explore **passions**, and create a **vision for your future**—whether that's earning a **diploma**, pursuing a **degree**, or building your own **business**. We're here to equip you with the **knowledge, confidence**, and **resources** to thrive in a way that reflects **your values and aspirations**.

As you work through this companion workbook, you'll connect the dots between your **goals** and the **opportunities ahead**. Every activity, prompt, and reflection is a step toward building a **solid foundation for success**. So, dive in with **curiosity, intention**, and **determination!**

# How to Use the Companion Workbook

Your Diplomas, Degrees, & LLCs Companion Workbook is designed to guide you through activities, reflections, and tools that will help you build the foundation for your future. Whether you're working through this workbook independently or with an educator, this resource is here to support your journey toward college, career, and life readiness.

By fully engaging with the workbook, you'll create a personalized guide that not only helps you achieve your current goals but also serves as a reference for your future steps and milestones. Let's dive into how to make the most of this resource:

## 1 Engage Actively

Complete all exercises, reflection prompts, and activities to apply what you learn directly to your college and career journey.

## 2 Set Personal Goals

Use templates to create clear, actionable goals with steps, resources, and timelines to stay on track.

## 3 Track and Celebrate Growth

Document your achievements, challenges, and adjustments as you progress. Revisit sections often and celebrate your wins.

## 4 Reflect Intentionally

Take your time with journal prompts to explore your strengths, challenges, and aspirations for meaningful insights.

## 5 Complete Practical Exercises

Engage with hands-on activities like goal-setting templates and case studies to build skills and connect to your community.

## 6 Make It Yours

Personalize your workbook by jotting down thoughts, highlighting ideas, and adding your own reflections.

## 7 Explore Resources

Use tools like BigFuture, UNCF, and LinkedIn Learning to connect your learning to real-world opportunities.

## 8 Use as a Guide

Refer back to this workbook when facing decisions, challenges, or opportunities to stay grounded and inspired.

## 9 Stay Inspired

Recognize your progress and let this workbook motivate you to stay focused on your goals.





# UNLOCKING POTENTIAL:

## Foundations of Success Workshop 1 | Key Concepts



### The Importance of Self-Definition

- Understanding how self-definition impacts your confidence, decisions, and relationships.
- Exploring how external expectations and stereotypes can limit potential unless challenged.



### Cultural Identity, Efficacy, and Agency

- Connecting your personal story to the broader narrative of your community and culture.
- Recognizing the assets you bring as an individual shaped by unique experiences.



**Attitude + Action determines Action**

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# EXPLORING PATHWAYS

Your future is a reflection of your unique strengths, interests, and dreams. Exploring post-secondary options is about finding the path or vehicle that resonates with who you are and what you value. Whether you're drawn to college, vocational training, internships, apprenticeships, or other opportunities, each option offers a way to build your skills, grow as a person, and contribute to your community.

This section overviews key insights about various pathways. From attending an HBCU to joining a mentorship program in your chosen field, the possibilities are vast and meaningful. Take your time to explore, research, reflect, and envision your future. The right path is the one that empowers you to achieve your goals while staying true to yourself. Let's find it together.



College

Vocational

Entrepreneurship

Work Experience

Apprenticeships

Gap Year



# MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

## THE POWER OF SELF-CARE, TIME MANAGEMENT, AND COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

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Your success starts with more than just setting goals—it's about building habits and strategies that keep you going. Self-care, time management, and community accountability are the keys to unlocking your potential. These practices not only help you excel in school but also honor the strength and wisdom of African principles like Ma'at (harmony and balance) and Ubuntu ("I am because we are").

### The Importance of Self-Care: Honoring the Whole Self

Taking care of yourself helps you stay focused, energized, and ready to handle life's challenges. When you make self-care a priority, you're improving your mental, emotional, and physical health—and setting yourself up to succeed in school and beyond. Self-Care Matters.

#### • What You Can Do

- Start small by making a list of 3 things you can do each week to recharge (e.g., journaling, listening to music, or taking a walk).
- Take breaks and give yourself permission to pause and reset during study sessions or stressful situations..
- Sleep matters and a good night's rest will help you to stay sharp and focused.
- Practice deep breathing to reduce stress and refocus.
- Fuel your body with quality food. Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate.

### Effective Time Management: Aligning Actions with Your Goals

When you manage your time wisely, you can better handle schoolwork, extracurriculars, and personal life without feeling overwhelmed. It's about taking control of your day and making sure your actions match your priorities.

#### • What You Can Do

- Plan your week using a planner or digital calendar to block out time for school, activities, and rest.
- Set priorities by focusing on what's most important first. Try using tools like the "Eisenhower Matrix" to decide what needs your attention.
- Divide big tasks into smaller, doable steps.
- Stay consistent by following a schedule that works for you and stick to it.

### Community Accountability: Building Success Together

You don't have to do it all alone. Having a support system keeps you motivated, connected, and focused. When you work with others, you can share ideas, get encouragement, and celebrate wins together.

#### • What You Can Do

- Join an affinity group to meet with friends or classmates weekly to set goals, share progress, and cheer each other on.
- Find mentors to connect with people in your community who can guide and inspire you, like alumni or local professionals. Your local Chamber of Commerce is a great start.
- Celebrate your success by remembering to recognize your milestones—big or small—and celebrate them with your tribe.

Go Get It!!!

Remember, success is a journey, not a race. By focusing on self-care, managing your time, and building strong support networks, you'll be unstoppable. What's your first step today?

### Mental Wellness

[Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) | 24/7 | Call or text 988, or chat at 988lifeline.org

[CalHOPE](#) | 24/7 | offers safe, secure, and culturally sensitive emotional support for all Californians who have experienced emotional challenges | Call or chat: 1-833-317-4673

[Black Mental Health Resources](#)

[The Trevor Project](#) | information & support to LGBTQ+ young people 24/7, all year round

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# CONTACT

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