



*Includes free downloadable  
Leader's Guide!*

## Leadership and Life Skills Course Overview

The *What I Wish I Knew at 18 Leadership and Life Skills Course* is an innovative and engaging program based on the practical life wisdom contained in *What I Wish I Knew at 18: Life Lessons for the Road Ahead*. Developed to reflect the dynamics of classroom or small group instruction, this nine- (or 18-) week course engages students by integrating relevant subject matter into an enriching and empowering format.

As students consider key “success pointers” with their peers, they will experience powerful outcomes and learn to harness the qualities and methods of honorable leaders. Through a strategic combination of personal assessments and exercises as well as interactive discussions, collaboration, and role-playing, they will learn how to apply positive leadership attributes to everyday life situations.

The *What I Wish I Knew at 18 Leadership and Life Skills Course* is comprised of nine multi-session chapters that fit perfectly into either a nine-week (quarter) or 18-week (semester) time frame. The chapters do not need to be presented in the order given, and can be easily adapted to any length of course as needed.

### Why a Leadership and Life Skills Course?

#### Acknowledging the Challenge

In today’s globally competitive world, too many young people are not fully prepared for the challenges of adulthood. The reasons are varied and complex:

- Cultural, familial, and economic shifts in our society have created a void in leadership and life skills training
- Educational institutions do not always offer life skills courses for various reasons
- Parents and educators often assume the *other* is covering essential life topics (e.g., finance)
- Students are facing a lack of employment opportunities to gain real world experience

The end result is that leadership and life skills development is falling through the cracks and our young people are paying the price. The ramifications are felt on both an individual and socioeconomic basis. The U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, summarizes it well:

***“...preparing young people for success in life is not just a moral obligation of society but also an economic imperative.”***

## Working toward a Solution

Two elements are necessary to address this growing life skills deficit. One is a comprehensive vision for honorable leadership that inspires and empowers students toward lives of purpose and impact. Second is need for effective and practical guidance in the key decision arenas of life. The leadership and life skills course based on *What I Wish I Knew at 18* can help schools and organizations be on the cutting edge of closing this gap by:

- Achieving their missions of preparing students to succeed as independent adults and make wise decisions
- Developing productive people who will lead with integrity in the various settings of life

## Course Methods and Resources

*What I Wish I Knew at 18*'s leadership and life skills training utilizes a variety of methods to achieve desired student outcomes. Portions of the course involve personal reflection through self-assessments, exercises, and journaling. The remainder involves collaboration with fellow students on relevant discussion topics as well as role playing, mentoring, and feedback. The goal is to simulate “real world adulthood” in an age-appropriate manner and prepare students for successful independence. The curriculum includes:

### ***What I Wish I Knew at 18 Study Guide (workbook)***

160 pages, “8 ½ X 11”

This student handbook is the practical, hands-on companion to the *What I Wish I Knew at 18* book and addresses both character-related and decision-related topics:

- *Character-related*: vision for success, life purpose and perspective, values and personal integrity, relationships, handling adversity, and spirituality
- *Decision-related*: personal productivity and decision making, post-high school academics, career selection/advancement, financial management, dating and marriage

By incorporating both perspectives, students will learn to appreciate and understand the holistic components of a successful life and how to apply them along their journey. Accordingly, it provides the necessary tools for effective leadership and a purposeful life.

### ***What I Wish I Knew at 18: Life Lessons for the Road Ahead (book)***

240 pages, "6 X 9"

*What I Wish I Knew at 18* is an engaging, comprehensive, and conversational book written to help young adults achieve success in life. It provides practical, road-tested wisdom in essential life arenas as life perspective, character, relationships and communication, spiritual life, handling adversity, personal productivity, college academics, career selection and advancement, love and marriage, and managing finances. Through illustration, instruction, and reflective questions, the book reveals 109 success pointers for a soaring launch into adulthood. Unique in scope, universal in its message, and timely in its wisdom, *What I Wish I Knew at 18* is designed to serve as an invaluable life coach.

#### ***Leader's Guide***

23 pages including instructions and lesson planning pages, available as a free, ready-to print, download from this website (with permission to copy for instructor use)

## **Course Applications**

The resources of this course can be used in a variety of ways:

- As a leadership, life skills, or advisory course/program
- For integration by all faculty into their specific courses to promote leadership
- For colleges and secondary educators as a freshman orientation course
- For school counselors as they advise specific students
- For parents, caregivers, and home school facilitators
- For service organizations who mentor teens and young adults
- As a library resource for teachers and students

NOTE: The student guide is a consumable workbook. The book serves as an invaluable guide and reference and is recommended as an accompanying text for each student to keep. However, due to budgetary restrictions, some schools and groups may choose to purchase classroom sets for repeated use.

## **Pricing**

Regular retail prices of books purchased separately:

**Book - \$18.95**

**Student Guide \$15.95**

**Purchased as a set: \$27.95/set**, including free downloadable Leader's Guide

NOTE: Discounts are available on bulk orders of over twenty books or sets. For bulk pricing, refer to the website ([www.dennistrittin.com](http://www.dennistrittin.com)) and click on "Need to place a bulk order?"

## Endorsement

*“As a university president, I have the privilege of working with some of the brightest, most amazing young people. Although all of the students who come to Whitworth are academically talented, what often separates those who perform very well from those who seem to struggle during their first years away from home is the understanding of basic life skills. What Dennis Trittin does in his book, *What I Wish I Knew At 18*, is to provide a very accessible and clear account of the important things that young adults ought to be thinking about as they enter adulthood. I wish that I had this great resource when I was 18 and headed off to college, and I am confident that students who spend time considering these topics will be best prepared for a life of independence.”*

**Beck A. Taylor, Ph.D.**  
**President, Whitworth University (Spokane, WA)**