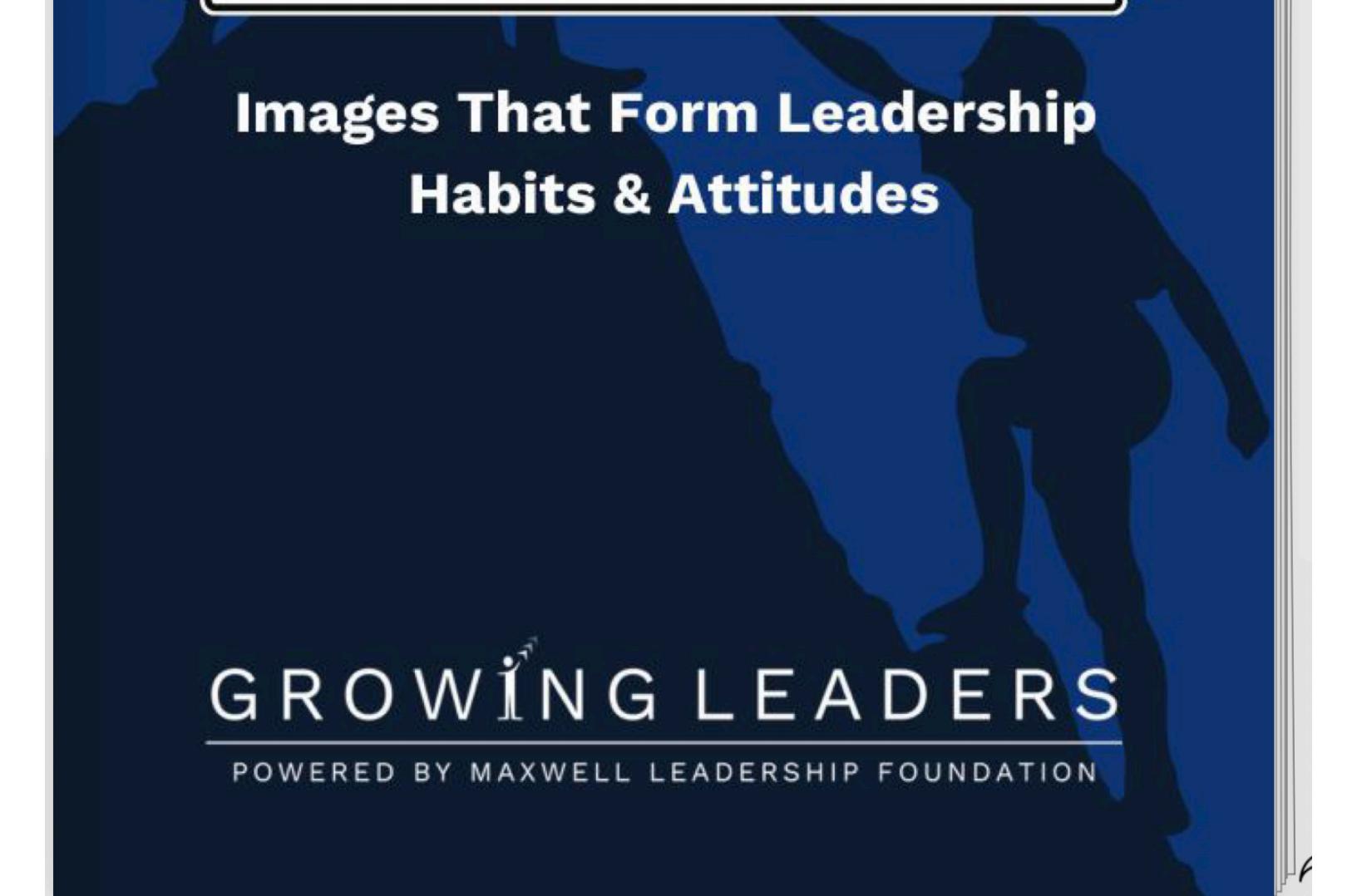

**FOR COLLEGE
STUDENTS (SAMPLES)**



HABITUDES

**Images That Form Leadership
Habits & Attitudes**

GROWING LEADERS

POWERED BY MAXWELL LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION

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Published in Atlanta, GA by "Growing Leaders"
www.growingleaders.com

H A B I T U D E S

Images that form leadership
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College Samples

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USING HABITUDES

This content is simple to facilitate with students to generate maximum impact and connection. Just follow these easy steps.

1. Form groups of 3-5 students. Larger groups can work as long as there is time for each member to be heard.

2. One group member volunteers to be the group leader.

The group leader:

- a. Reads first.
- b. Shares first.
- c. Keeps the group on track.

3. Each group member takes turns reading out loud, using natural breaks in the text (usually paragraphs or sections) to pass to the next reader.

4. While others are reading, participants should **underline** or **circle** passages that stand out to them.

5. When the time comes, **each group member** (starting with the leader) should take time to **share their thoughts** on the content, or their answer to the question or prompt. It is essential that each person's voice is heard.

6. Group members agree ahead of time to respect and value one another.

Nothing that is said should be shared outside of the group without permission.

7. Take time to honestly evaluate yourself and reflect.

8. Everyone commits to an action step and shares with their group. Agree to hold one another accountable.

9. Have fun and enjoy growing together! This is a chance to learn, prepare for your future, and get to know other students.

WINDSHIELDS & REARVIEW MIRRORS



WINDSHIELDS & REARVIEW MIRRORS

SUMMARY

College brings a fresh start—a new environment, new people, and new opportunities to define who you'll become. Many students spend their first semester looking backward—at high school achievements, old relationships, or past mistakes—rather than gazing forward into the future. Like driving a car, your success depends on your ability to glance at the rearview mirror without losing sight of the road ahead.

This lesson helps you let go of the past, focus on what's ahead, and find motivation in your future.

“Don’t let yesterday take up too much of today.”

– Will Rogers

When you drive, the windshield is large for a reason—it shows where you’re going. The rearview mirror is small because you only need to glance at what’s behind you. The same principle applies to your life: your vision for the future should be bigger than your memories of the past. Many students enter college still holding on to their “high school world”—the people who knew them, the comfort of familiarity, and the roles they once played. Yet, just as a driver can’t move forward by staring at the rearview mirror, you can’t thrive in college if your attention is fixed on what used to be.

This lesson is not simply about letting go of the past. It is important to sustain friendships we’ve made along the way. We should be grateful for fun memories and good times. Our past will always help shape our future. But sometimes, the past can hold us back. If our memories are more important than our dreams—we are in trouble.

If we prefer to look in the rearview mirror instead of the windshield, we’ll get stuck—and maybe wreck. Holding on to the comfort of our past can keep us from grabbing the adventure that lies in our future.

Here’s a question for you: Where does your energy come from—the past or the future?

Seriously. How would you answer that question? Some people become fearful about the future because of a single factor: They love the familiar and the comfortable. They only get energy from grasping what’s behind them. Sadly, this confines them and even enslaves them, preventing them from seeing or seizing opportunities, new friendships, or new freedoms they might otherwise enjoy.

This metaphor is powerful because it challenges the way we process both success and failure. The rearview mirror reminds us to learn from the past, not live in it. It helps us navigate forward more wisely. But if we spend too much time looking back at mistakes, regrets, or even victories—we risk losing momentum. The windshield invites us to keep moving, even when the path ahead is uncertain.

PRINCIPLES FOR MOVING FORWARD:

- 1. Learn, Don't Linger.** Reflection is healthy; rumination is not. Learn from past experiences, but don't dwell on them. Every mistake or success is a lesson—take the lesson, leave the rest.
- 2. Replace Nostalgia with Vision.** Instead of longing for what was, start dreaming about what's next. Make your future more compelling than your past by setting goals that excite you.
- 3. Let Go of Old Labels.** You're not defined by who you were in high school, by others' expectations, or by one decision. College is your chance to write a new story—one based on growth, not guilt.
- 4. Surround Yourself with “Windshield People.”** Choose friends and mentors who help you look ahead, not back. These are the people who remind you that your best days are not behind you—they're ahead.
- 5. Focus on Progress, Not Perfection.** Forward movement matters more than flawless performance. Celebrate growth—even small wins—as signs that you're becoming who you're meant to be.

THE BENEFITS OF LOOKING FORWARD:

- Increased motivation and clarity
- Freedom from regret and comparison
- Greater resilience in transitions
- Deeper joy in the present moment
- A stronger sense of direction and purpose

Pause here. Take a few minutes for each person to share one thing from the lesson above that stood out to them. What made you choose that part?

REFLECT AND RESPOND

“A WINDSHIELD MINDSET”

Take some time individually to write your answers to these questions. Afterward, the group should spend 5-10 minutes sharing and discussing their answers.

- 1. In your opinion, what's the greatest reason students get stuck in their past?**

- 2. Is there any memory or person that holds you back from embracing the future?**

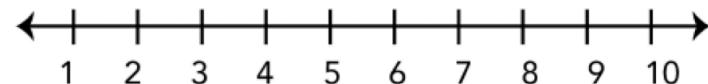
- 3. Talk about where your energy comes from—the past or the future. Why?**

- 4. Can you name a time you saw a student break free from the rearview mirror and look ahead?**

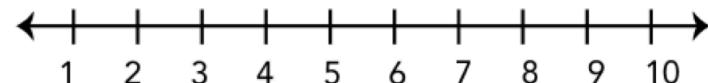
SELF ASSESSMENT

Rate Yourself (1, never true of me – 10, always true of me):

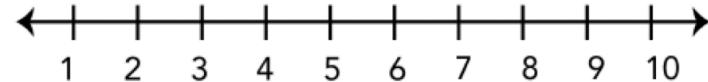
- 1. I focus more on what's ahead than what's behind.**



- 2. I use my past to learn lessons, not to limit my future.**



- 3. I approach new opportunities with optimism and curiosity.**



Pause here. Take a few minutes to share why you rated yourself the way you did in each of the above.

CASE STUDY: MAYA'S FIRST SEMESTER RESET

Maya arrived at college carrying a heavy mental “rearview mirror.” In high school, she had been the dependable one—honor roll student, drum major, the friend who everyone leaned on. She assumed college would feel the same. But during her first month on campus, she struggled to find her place. Her new classmates didn’t know her reputation. She wasn’t recognized for her achievements. No one asked her for help or looked up to her the way her high school peers had.

So Maya retreated. She spent late nights scrolling through old photos, rereading messages from friends back home, and comparing her new reality to the comfort she once had. She avoided campus events because she felt like “just another freshman,” not the leader she used to be.

One afternoon, while sitting alone in the dining hall, Maya overheard two students talking about a service project hosted by a campus volunteer group. Something inside her nudged her to go—not because she felt ready, but because she knew staying stuck in the past wasn’t working.

She showed up to the meeting that night. The students didn’t know her history or her leadership roles, but they welcomed her anyway. Instead of leading right away, Maya chose to listen, learn, and ask questions. For the first time that semester, she felt a small spark of forward momentum.

Over the next few weeks, Maya committed to looking through the “windshield” instead of the rearview mirror. She volunteered regularly, met new people, and even shared an idea that the group adopted for an upcoming event. Her confidence began to grow—not because she was recreating her high school identity, but because she was building a new one.

Maya’s experience reminds us that moving forward often starts with one small, brave step. She didn’t erase her past—she honored it—but she refused to let it define or confine her. By shifting her focus to the future, she opened the door to new opportunities, friendships, and growth.

REFLECT AND RESPOND:

In what area of your own life do you most relate to Maya—trying to recreate who you once were instead of exploring who you’re becoming?

What would a single “windshield step” look like for you this week?

TAKE ACTION

Identify one concrete change you can make this week to focus forward—whether it’s joining a new club, pursuing a goal, or simply adjusting your attitude.

Share your commitment with your group so that you can hold one another accountable.

Look ahead intentionally—plan something in your calendar that excites you and propels you toward your future.

“Change is inevitable. Growth is optional.”

— John C. Maxwell