

“When **LIFE** HURTS, find a way to be **CREATIVE**”
-ANGIE THOMAS

Don't get in your own way.

GO FOR IT
No matter what others THINK.

FOCUS → **DEAR Younger ME**

“YOU NEED TO PLAN TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS.”
-TERENCE GARVIN

#Killingit

You're AMAZING!

HANG in THERE!

“TAKING the EASY WAY OUT isn't WORTH it. TRUST me.” -HUNTER MARCH

We asked three people with seriously cool jobs—a YouTube star, an author, and an athlete—what they wish they had known at your age. Use their advice to set up your best school year ever.

By MEGHANN FOYE • illustration by LINZIE HUNTER



HUNTER MARCH,
Host on YouTube's AwesomenessTV and author of *TBH: 51 True Story Collabs*



ANGIE THOMAS,
Author of the best-selling young-adult novel *The Hate U Give*



TERENCE GARVIN,
NFL linebacker for the Seattle Seahawks

Chances are, you're already following a slew of young adults with envy-inducing lives on social media—authors, actors, athletes, YouTubers, the works. And it may seem like they sprang fully formed and awesome from some factory that churns out success stories as fast as you can say “I want that life!” But the truth is, at some point, they all struggled with the same challenges you're facing right now, from friend drama to procrastination problems. So we asked a few of them: What do you wish you had known as a teen? Here, just in time for the new school year, are some surprising lessons from three people who are now #killingit in their chosen fields—plus simple tips to apply their wisdom to your own life!

JEN SSKA (HUNTER MARCH); ANISSA PHOTOGRAPHY (ANGIE THOMAS); ©2017 PHOTO BY GHERISS MAY, WWW.CHERISSMAY.COM (TERENCE GARVIN)

“**TAKING** the **EASY WAY OUT** isn't **WORTH** it. **TRUST** me.” - HUNTER MARCH

Dear 15-year-old Hunter,

Apparently “studying” is supposed to prepare you for “tests.” Problem is, you aren’t studying anything besides Mario Kart. And one day you’ll arrive remarkably unprepared for a trigonometry test. You’ll know it’s going to be bad. But right before the test is given out, a classmate will hand you the answers. You’ll copy down every number and equation. Then you’ll get cocky and turn the test in first—big mistake.

Your teacher will know that you didn’t know what “x” was in those equations. She’ll find the cheat sheet and take you to the principal. They’ll call your parents and you’ll fail the test.

You’ll be disappointed with yourself for even considering cheating and embarrassed that you’re now known as a cheater.

I know how pointless you think trigonometry is, but it turns out that there are a lot of not-horrible careers that use it—including your favorite, game engineers. Like the ones who made Mario Kart. So not only did you cheat on a test, but you also cheated yourself out of the chance to be an engineer on the best video game ever.

You’ll realize that there are no shortcuts to hard work—and

that’s one lesson that you’ll actually use in your future.

Sincerely,
Future Hunter



HUNTER as a teen

HUNTER'S TIP

PLAN REWARDS, NOT SHORTCUTS. Hunter could have used *Mario Kart* as a treat rather than a **diversion**. Reward yourself with 15 minutes of gaming for each hour of studying.

“**YOU NEED** a **PLAN** **TO ACHIEVE** **your GOALS.**” -TERENCE GARVIN



TERENCE at 17

Dear Young Terence,

First, the good news: Your football skills are going to get noticed by recruiters and one day, you will be suiting up for the NFL!

Now, the bad news: Those C’s you’ve been pulling in aren’t part of that picture. Division 1 universities need to see A’s and B’s—and you’ve never gotten those in your life. You’re going to have to learn some serious goal-setting skills so you don’t let everyone (your parents, your coaches, and most importantly, yourself) down.

Over the next few years of high school, you need to **prioritize** classes, homework, and studying. That means no more parties, and certain friends—the ones who aren’t as motivated as you are—will have to go. It’ll be tough. But when you feel like giving up, remind yourself what’s at stake.

Setting a clear goal about what you want will push you to do things you’ve never done: going to teachers, doing the extra credit, studying hard. You’ll even ask your mom for help with homework. (Hint: She’ll be happy for the extra time with you!) Most importantly, you’ll learn to remind yourself

constantly that you can do it.

Thanks to all your hard work, by the end of high school, you’ll be saying, “Mission accomplished!” But not before you learn a lesson you’ll carry with you your entire life: “Don’t get in your own way.”

By hanging around with unhelpful people and coasting in class your freshman year, you were limiting yourself and your possibilities. But if you start early and stay at it, you’ll never again get yourself in a position where your back is up against the wall. You don’t want to miss out on something this great. Because, trust me, it is. And it all came from learning to focus on what’s most important.

Sincerely,
Future Terence

TERENCE'S TIP

FIND FOCUS. Creating big, colorful “vision” posters or notes-to-self can help you stay focused on your goals. Put them everywhere—in your bedroom, in your locker, even in your books.

“When **LIFE HURTS**, find a way to be **CREATIVE.**” -ANGIE THOMAS



ANGIE at 14

Dear 14-year-old Angie,

About six months ago, your two “best friends” stopped talking to you, and you don’t know why. Soon after, the bullying began—ruthless, cruel bullying from kids who made fun of everything from your weight to your hair. And the two best friends you once had just watched as it happened. You’re not sure what hurt worse.

Everything got so bad that your mom pulled you out of school and decided to homeschool you. Now, you go to class on a computer and make friends online. You’re not sure if you feel free or trapped. You find comfort in words and telling stories, but you still have more questions than answers. Well, I’ve got some answers:

- 1 You are enough.
- 2 You are amazing just the way you are.
- 3 Those weren’t real friends, and it’s OK to let them go.
- 4 Keep writing, keep going, keep living. You matter.
- 5 It’s going to get even better than you can imagine.

Hang in there. You’re **resilient**.

Love,
Future Angie

ANGIE'S TIP

FUNNEL YOUR FEELINGS INTO SOMETHING POSITIVE. If life seems unfair, try spending 10 minutes channeling your experiences into a creative outlet. Studies show writing, music, painting, or dance can uplift you and help you cope.