

# Surviving the Fallout: What are Some of the Roadblocks to Successful Transition to College and What to do if Your Student Comes Home

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Early Bird Session 8:30-9:20

To go or not to go, that is the question.

Decision Making: How are decisions made? According to Ori and Rom Brafman, we make decisions based on

1. Aversion to loss; overreaction to potential loss, leading us to→
2. Play NOT to lose;
3. Commitment—following the road always travelled;
4. Value attribution—may dismiss data when it does not fit with what one wants to see.

These combined make doing anything other than the norm VERY DIFFICULT.

Decision Making and College: May decide to go to college to avoid loss--

1. Loss of future income;
2. Loss of prestige and status (for student AND parent);
3. Fear of losing one's edge on everyone else.

Decision Making and College: May also decide to go to college because of value attribution--

1. Achievement-oriented community: going straight to college from high school is the path that is valued;
2. It simply is what you do.

Decision Making and College: May also decide to go to college because of commitment--

1. Student and parent have worked hard for many years to build the portfolio for college—those efforts would be wasted if college were bypassed.

Personal stories: Why we are speaking today--putting a face on two stormy transitions--

1. Laurie's story
2. Kim's story

Harpooning the College Hoopla: Playing the role of the "*blocker*":

1. Role of Devil's Advocate provides balance to decision making during the time of transition;
2. Looking beyond a student's portfolio of grades, test scores, and extra curriculars: identify passions and strengths;
3. Be open to alternatives and changes of direction.

Open Eyes to Reality: A look at the underbelly of college life— things you need to know that nobody talks about--

1. Graduation rates—general population:<sup>1</sup>
  - ▶ Only 54 % of those who start graduate in 6 yrs
  - ▶ 51% of males; 57% of females
2. Graduation rates for students with LD/AD/HD:<sup>2</sup>
  - ▶ 28%
3. Mental Health<sup>3</sup>: students are twice as likely to be depressed and three times more likely to be suicidal than they were a decade ago--
  - ▶ Depression—50% will become disabled by depression during college career;
  - ▶ Alcohol abuse—50% will partake in binge drinking;
  - ▶ Suicide—1 in 10 will consider suicide; it is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death among college students.

Roadblocks to Academic Success: course work load and difficulty has less impact on success than--

1. Stress;
2. Sleeping problems;
3. Concern about friends;
4. Family and relationships;
5. Depression;
6. Alcohol consumption.

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<sup>1</sup> Bowen, Chingos, and McPherson

<sup>2</sup> Landmark College—data pending from National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS2)

<sup>3</sup> Kadison

Importance of Developing Life Skills BEFORE College: other impediments to successful transition and strong mental health--

1. Inability of students to solve own problems—heavily parent-dependant;
2. Students lack resiliency;
3. Inability to create balance in lives;
4. Lack of setting boundaries on behavior;
5. Unable to identify own passions because overly programmed prior to college;
6. Poor sleep and exercise habits;

What if Student Comes Home: what to do now?

1. Most important: shore up executive function skills;
2. NOVA;
3. Gap Year\*—*Where Are You Headed* helps match students with interests and volunteer or study abroad programs;
4. Work;
5. Volunteer.

Personal Stories—Where are They Now?

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Future Quest '09

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