

How Children Succeed: Grit and Self-control

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Global goal: Academic success

Temptation: Angry Birds

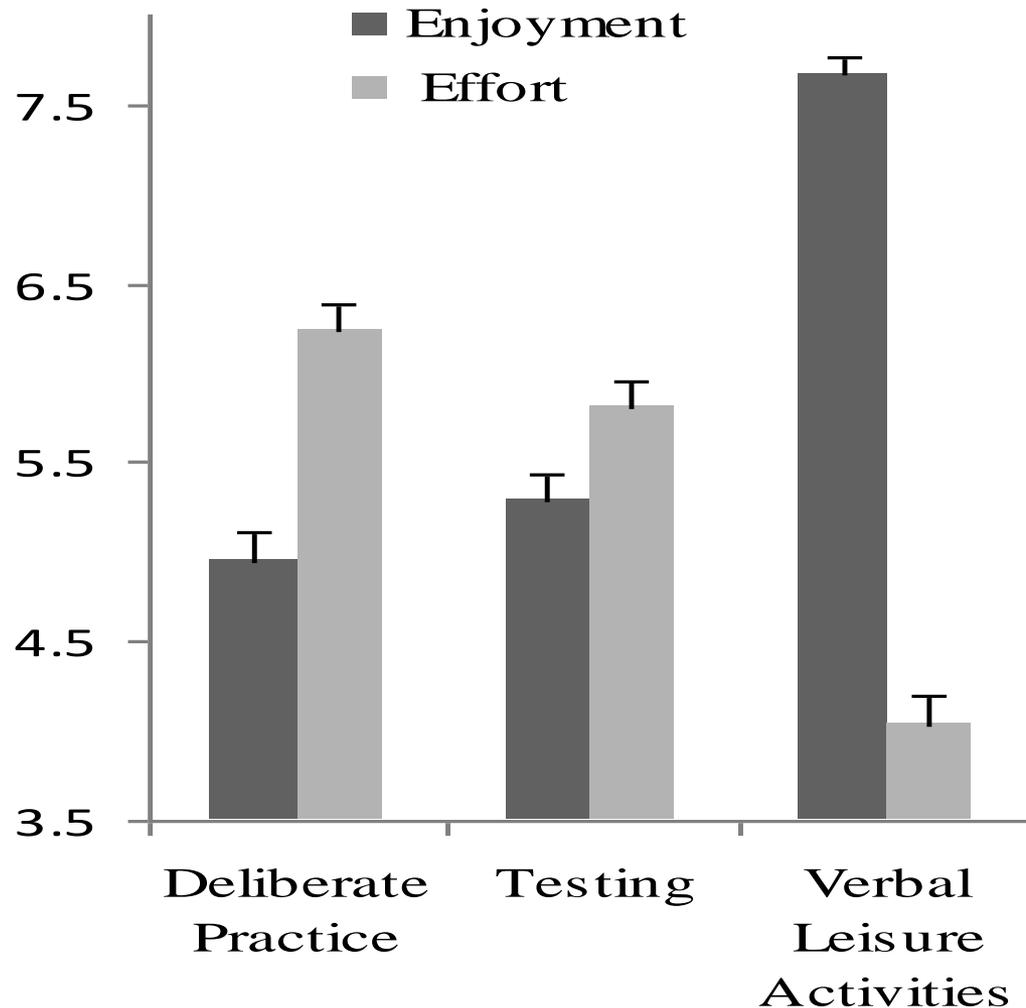


VS



THE ROOTS OF EDUCATION ARE BITTER,
BUT THE FRUIT IS SWEET
-ARISTOTLE

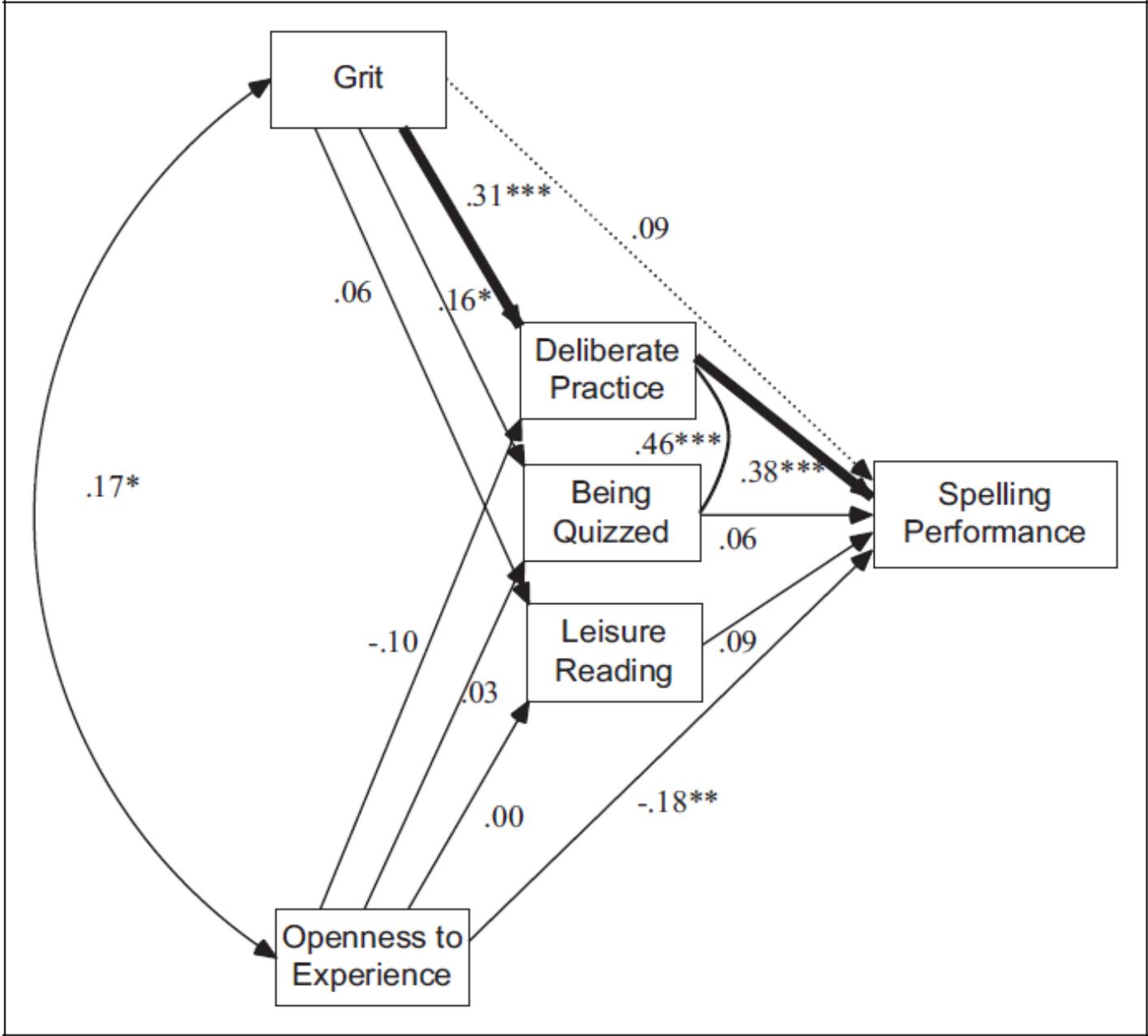
Deliberate practice is hard ...and not that fun





National Spelling Bee



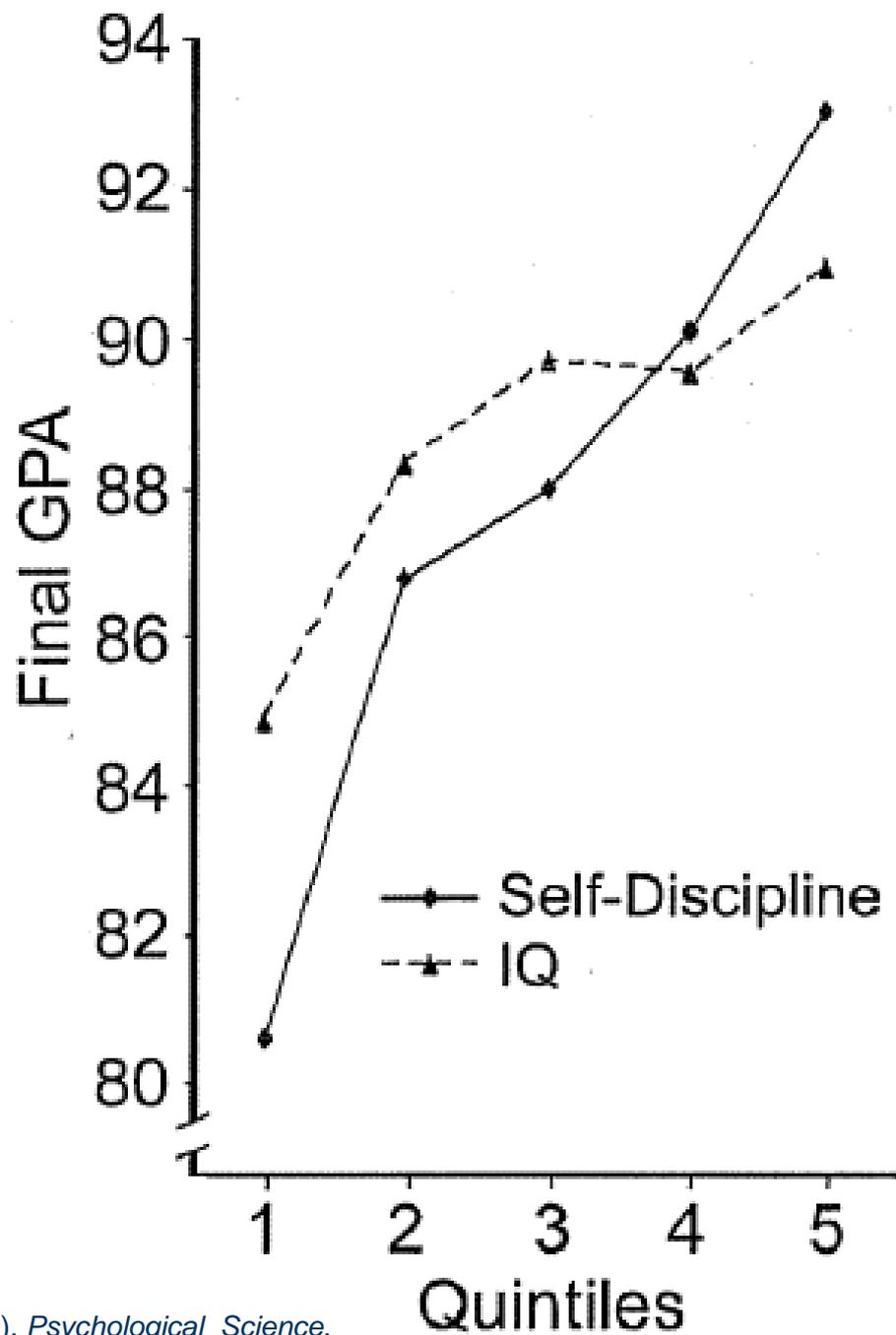


Grit also predicts...

- Teacher effectiveness
- On-time high school graduation
- Total years of lifetime education
- Consistency in career direction
- Stable romantic relationships
- Happiness

Self-control: resisting the “hourly temptations”







Some children tend to act more self-controlled than others

Temptation is in the eye of the beholder





2 strategies that work

Psychologically distancing oneself from an angry memory...

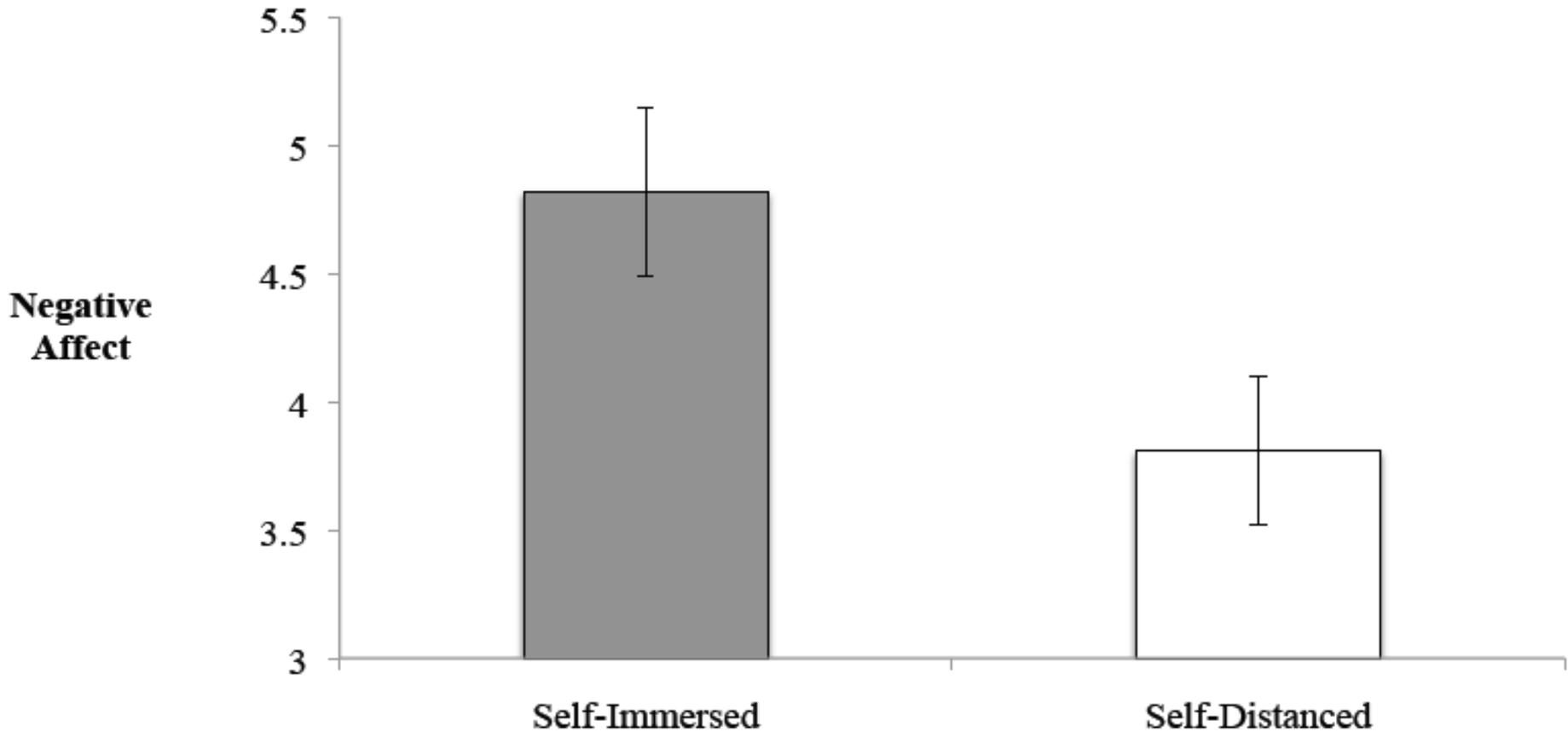
...Replay the event as it unfolds in your imagination through your own eyes.

VS

...Replay the event as it unfolds in your imagination as you observe your distant self.



...reduces negative affect

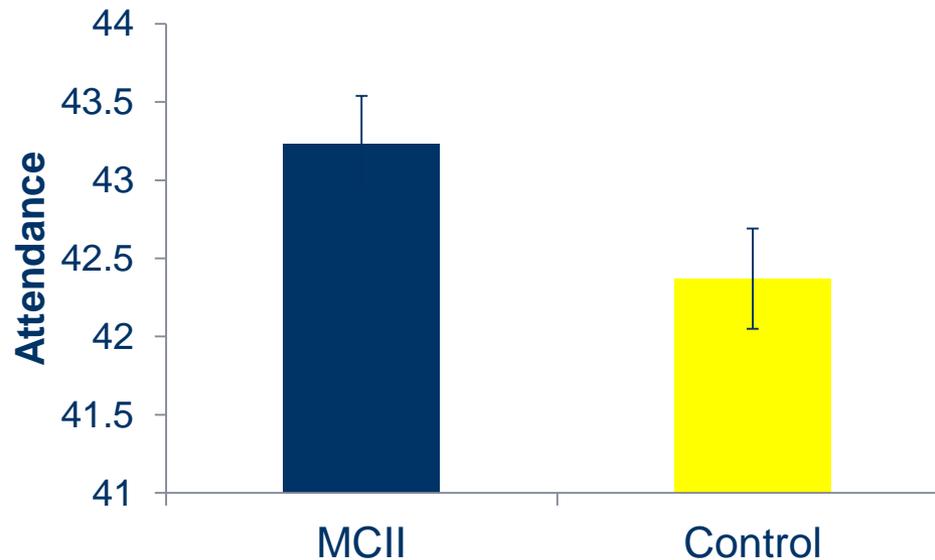
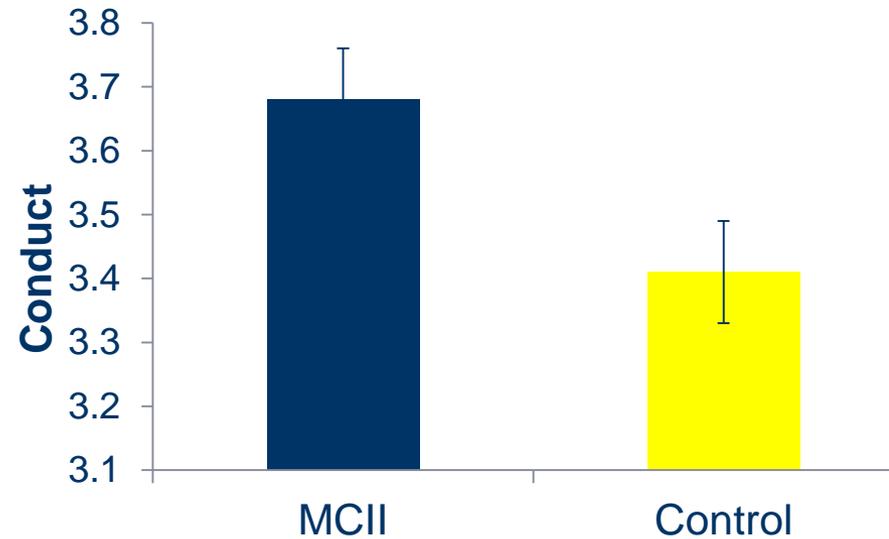
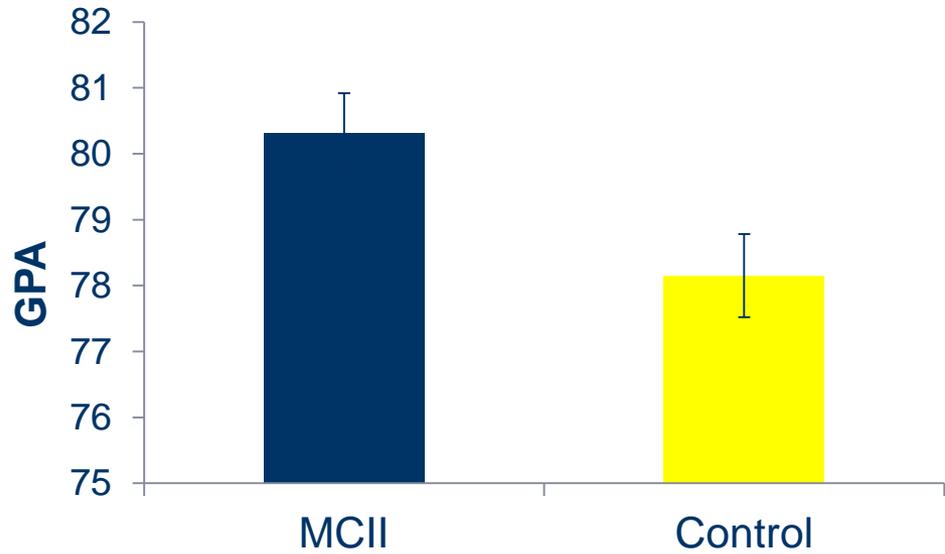


Kross, Duckworth, Ayduk, Tsukayama, & Mischel. (2011). *Emotion*.

MCII*

- Mental Contrasting promotes effective goal setting
 - What is my specific goal?
 - What good thing will happen if I achieve this goal?
 - What obstacles stand in the way of my reaching this goal?
- Implementation Intention plans specify where, when, and how you will get around the obstacles
 - “If it is a weekday at 6pm, then I will go to my bedroom and do my work.”
 - And, “If my brother bothers me, then I will...”

Longitudinal study of fifth graders in Harlem



From strategies to habits

- “Our virtues are habits as much as our vices...our nervous systems have grown to the way in which they have been exercised, just as a sheet of paper or a coat, once creased or folded, tends to fall forever afterward into the same identical folds”
--William James (1899)



Thank you!