



E-MENTORING EXCERPTS

Here are some excerpts from actual, unadulterated conversations between mentors and mentees. Mentor responses are italicized and in the responses you'll see that mentors and mentees use nicknames or first names – never their real last name.

These are the subjects of the diverse career advice in the following pages:

- **Pursue your dreams! Don't let others tell you otherwise – says a stockbroker.**
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- **It's highly recommended to do an internship in college if you want to combine business and fashion.**
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Pursue your dreams! Don't let others tell you otherwise – says a stockbroker.

Hello! Thanks for inquiry. Your question is a good one. You do not have to be a genius at math, I myself struggled through some math courses in high school and in college. However you do need to be familiar with numbers, and have some mathematical ability.

If there is anything else I can help you with, or if you have any other questions please don't hesitate to write again

Hi krug1,

Thanks for responding. So what do you do for a living? What are your interests?

Wendy

Wendy,

I work for a large investment bank in Private Client Services. My group manages wealthy individuals money by investing in the stock market. My day to day activities include trading stocks and options, preparing materials for client meetings, and tracking our clients performance. Some days it can be extremely hectic and stressful, while other days there is nothing to do. So if you're looking for a fast paced, exciting career with some down time then you should pursue the financial services sector. There are many opportunities in finance that offer a wide variety of experiences. Finding the right sector for you can be the most difficult part of a job search, but I also think it can be the most rewarding.

My interests include all sports, but especially golf. I like reading and traveling, but I don't travel at all for my job. How about you, what are you're interests and aspirations?

Hi Jkug1,

Do you know everything about the Stock Market? What is it actually? What does it mean when you trade stocks and options? Sorry for the questions but your job seems really exciting and interesting.

My interest are listening to music, surfing the web, I also like traveling. Right now my dreams are going to college, graduating with hopefully a business degree of some sort. Talk to you later. Bye

Wendy

Wendy,

I wish I knew everything about the stock market, I don't think there is a person in the world who knows everything about the stock market. Professionals and experts do have a greater knowledge than most people, but even their predictions and expectations can fall short. Let me give you a brief crash course in the stock market and my job specifically .

The stock market is a place where individuals can buy or sell shares (shares is another word for stock) of companies around the world. A share of stock is, in essence, just a piece of paper with the company's name on it. But what a share represents is a piece of ownership in the company. So if you buy one share of Microsoft stock, you own a small (albeit a very tiny tiny tiny piece) part of the company.

Where my job comes into this place is if you wanted to buy some stock in a company, you would call me and place the order through me. I would then call our trading desk at the exchange and give them the order. Then they would put the order on the floor and find someone who is selling the same company's stock. You would buy the shares from this person, or 'trade' them. Options are a tool used by some brokers to protect against a drop in a stock's price. They are difficult to explain, but I'll do my best.

Say for instance you buy 100 shares of Pepsi stock for 50 dollars a share. You're paying \$5,000 for this trade. (100 shares x \$50= \$5,000) Now if the stock declines to \$40 (share price loses \$10 dollars) you have already lost \$1,000 on your investment of \$5,000. Okay, try and stay with me here :) BUT, if you sold an option when you initially purchased the Pepsi stock then the \$10 drop in the stock price would actually be less. Here's why. When you sell an option, you receive money. Using the Pepsi example...say you sold 1 option for \$200 and purchased the 100 shares for \$50. If the stock dropped to \$40 you would only lose \$800, instead of the full \$1,000. Do you see?? I hope so, but I have a feeling its probably way too much info at once.

Well, Wendy, I hope this sheds some light on what I do here. (sorry its so long!) I know it sounds complicated though. When I first started I had no idea what was going on! In college, I studied US History! I had no idea about options or anything like that. But when you spend all day working on it and being around it, you begin to slowly understand it. Its just like studying for a test...the more time you spend reviewing the material, the better you understand it. My job is essentially studying the market, and the more experience I have, the better I'll understand it. :)

Anyway, I'm sure you'll have even more questions after reading this long guy so feel free to pick my brain any time. Hopefully I'll be able to respond in a way you'll understand (be sure to let me know if you don't)

Talk to you later!

Hi Jkrug1,

I sort have an idea of what your talking about, but you kinda lost me somewhere. I'll ask my teacher, since he knows whats it about. And if I don't understand him I'm sure going to ask you? Its not that I don't want to ask you but I'm more of a visual person, and its kinda hard seeing it when you read it, sorry. It must be really stressing having a job like yours, don't you ever want to quit?

Theres a question that keeps on popping in my head that hopefully you can give some advice on, I ask myself If I'm good enough to be in the business field. Since I always hear how hard the business major is and especially passing the classes in college. See you later. Bye

Wendy

Wendy,

If you have an interest in business and want to pursue it further, then by all means do so! Do not let anyone persuade you away from any goals or dreams you have because they say its too hard. Nothing is too hard and if you put your mind and heart into it, you can achieve anything! It is important for you to remember that. Now some business courses may be difficult but the teacher is there to help you, and your fellow students (especially in college) can help you too! Study groups are a great way to get things done academically. :)

Physical therapy explained.

Hi. I am currently deciding what type of therapist I want to be. I have wanted to be a physical therapist for some time. But, recently I have been looking into occupational therapy and that looks interesting too. Do you know what the biggest difference between the two is? So far I have figured out that physical therapy deals with the joints whereas occupational therapy deals with the mind. But, I'm not much further than that. Could you tell me exactly what physical therapy involves and some classes I should take?

Hi Bigbird. Okay you are a little mistaken when it comes to the differences in Physical Therapy (PT) and Occupational Therapy (OT). But fear not help is here. OT was named occupational because it deals with what "occupies your day." Both OT and PT have many specialties. PT's and OT's work with people in the hospital who are sick (That's what I do). They work in rehab facilities with people who are no longer sick but are recovering from the effects of an illness. For example someone who had a brain injury becomes medically stable in a hospital then has to go somewhere to learn things like how to walk again (that's PT) and learn how to dress themselves again (that's OT). OT's and PT's also help people with orthopedic injuries such as sprained ankles or knees. Orthopedics means the musculoskeletal system, in other words, muscles, tendons, ligaments, and bones. OT's only work with hands when it comes to orthopedics; PT's do everything else.

I work in a charity hospital where we pretty much see everything. I, as well as the OT's work with people who have had a surgery after they fractured a hip to people who have had a stroke. I'll describe an example patient. Say Frank age 60 has a stroke and is brought to the hospital by ambulance. A stroke is where part of the brain is damaged because its blood supply is either cut off or when the artery opens and actually bleeds into the brain. In either case that part of the brain dies so any of its functions have to be taken over by the rest of the brain. Since the brain controls movement among other things, OT and PT are needed. Let's say our patient Frank had a stroke on the left side of his brain. The left part of the brain controls speech and movement on the right side of the body. Now Frank cannot talk well and is mostly paralyzed on the right side of his body. It's also likely that his balance was affected. Both OT and PT would be needed. In fact often we see the patient together but we would work on different things. I might try to help Frank walk again with a cane. The OT might show Frank how to put on a shirt with only one working arm. We would both work on improving his balance. The OT would work on getting in and out of the shower with Frank as that will be difficult with a paralyzed or very weak right side. The OT may even recommend equipment like a tub bench for the patient if Frank can't stand up by himself. Meanwhile I might practice the stairs with Frank. Really we work together as a team so that the patient can function as close to the way they did before their illness.

As for becoming a PT first you need a degree (in anything) from a 4 year college and then a Masters or Doctorate in Physical Therapy from graduate school. I have a masters; it was a two year program. To get into grad school they have a list of prerequisites which generally include, Biology, animal or human physiology, anatomy, kinesiology, chemistry, physics, and abnormal and developmental psychology. Actually it's kind of a bear to get in because you have to do well in all those classes. If you're good at math and science and have better than average study habits it's not too bad. Hope that helps and feel free to ask me more questions. Also how did you get interested in therapy in the first place?

Hi. I decided a couple of years ago to become a therapist because a friend of mine lost her leg in a jetski accident. And another friend's mom is an occupational therapist and she thinks I could be a good one. I like to help people and I think this is a way I can help. What is kinesiology? I like to learn and I work hard for my grades. So, about the studying hard part I think I can handle that. Do you have any more tips about college that I could maybe use?

Hey there bigbird,

Kinesiology is really biomechanics. It's the study of movement. How joints move, how the muscles control and cause movement etc. That science is really what Physical Therapy is based on. Actually it's quite interesting. To study it you need to have a good grasp of anatomy. You look at how the surfaces of the joints are shaped and how that affects movements or the line of pull of a muscle and where it is located in relation to the axis of a joint. As for colleges, most PT programs are masters programs. You can contact the APTA (try APTA.org on the internet) for a list of all the schools. Clearly the best program is the one I went to (of course all therapists will tell you that no matter where they went to school) which is Duke University. But first just think about college and taking all the prerequisites for PT and what you're going to major in. I majored in English for example. It doesn't really have to be related. In fact it probably shouldn't in the interest of broadening yourself. What year are you in High school? Where are you thinking of applying to college?

aram

It's highly recommended to do an internship in college if you want to combine business and fashion.

Retro56,

I am interested in fashion design and bussiness. I hope to find a career where both may be combined. I hope this combination may be of a profitable career and enjoyable one as well. Sometimes i find my-self not completely sure of my interest in fashion. I sometimes question myself if I have the talent or experience for it. This is why I write to you to see if you may help me out with information and advive. I may seem a bit pushy because I am asking many questions but I want to find out what i want to do in life. Please help me!

Thank You,
Angel

Hi Angel,

It's great that you are interested in fashion design and the clothing industry. It is a huge, global industry that has lots of facets.

There are many types of clothing companies- from very small, independent labels to huge multi-brand corporations. Usually the small companies allow each employee to do many types of jobs while the large corporations are broken down in to specific tasks.

I have worked for both types of companies and there are good and bad things with each. You can learn more about which kind you would like to be at with an internship. I did an internship while I was in college and it really helped me to decide how I worked with-in a large company framework.

I would recommend that you look into the clothing design programs that are offered by the universities or colleges that you are thinking about going to. There are some colleges specifically devoted to fashion design - FIT in New York and FIDM and Otis Parsons in California. You should look on their websites.

*regards,
Michael*

Michael,

Thank you for replying back with such great advice. Specially with the names of some colleges that I may explore about. You mentioned FIDM which is a college I have been wanting to research on and actually tried to research about. Last year I called them up to ask for a brochure and information on their college, they just told me to go to their website and that at this moment they were only intersted in seniors. I found myself a bit disapointed, but I am going to call them up one of these days and ask information as if i were a senior.

When you tried to find information about colleges did you get regected? If yes, how did you deal with it?

I was just wondering about the competition out there, how competetive is the fashion industry? Was it hard to get to the position you are in? What is the most dificult part about being in such position?

Thank you and I hope you find things swell in your life.

Sincerely,
Angel

Hi Angel,

I think you should contact them again and act as if you are a senior so you can get the brochure and start thinking about their program. Also, you should visit their website. Have you been to it before? I actually haven't. What is it like? Does the school seem good based on the website presentation? Or is it a boring site?

And check out FIT and Otis Parson's sites too. Let me know how they are.

I've been to FIDM to speak to students about getting into the industry before. It seemed like a good school to me.

I think you said before that you are not that developed as a person who draws. Truthfully, I'm not either, but I wish I was better. I recomend that you draw a lot now and learn to draw well so that you will have that advantage later when you are looking for jobs and in your work.

*good luck and let me know what you think,
Michael*

Math has real applications as a film producer.

Hi,
Do you have to be good in math to do what your working in?

*NO! but you do have to be able to balance your check book - because you are responsible for the budget. as a producer you oversee the actual filming, and the behind the scenes. are you creative and organized??
best
producer*

Hi Producer,
I tend to think that I am a creative but I'm not organized(I'm working on it) Why? Can you please explain in detail what your job is. Thanks.

*hello again!
in detail, or at least a lot, the job of a producer is to make the film (or tv show, or tv commercial, ...) happen. the producer:
1. helps come up with the concept or hires the screen writer
2. gets funding to have the film made and sets the budget
3. hires the director and cinematographer (they usually come together because they like working together) - which takes care of how the film is going to look
4. hires the casting agent and the critical actors
5. hires the line producer, the person that runs the sets and the activities on a day to day basis, the real nitty gritty
6. helps pick the other critical crew - lighting, sound, art director, music, ...
7. watches it all come together, makes adjustments, watches the budget
7. works with a studio or other distributor to get the film to the theaters, tv, ...
8. also works with the studio/distributor on marketing, placement, promotions, timing of release, ...
9. and works with all of the lawyers to make this all happen.
that is the bigger detail of the job. lots of producers don't like to do certain things so they delegate them away to associate producers. some just raise money and are 'executive' producers.
so that is why you need a little creativity (and the ability to let the rest take control), and a bit of organization, b/c there are a lot of moving parts.
still interested??*

Hi Producer,
I'm stuned of the kind of job that you have, I don't think that I could ever handle the stress that i'm sure you go through with your job. Did you ever struggle with math, how about calculus in colloge(If you ever took it)?

*sorry for the delay, for some reason i got blocked. if i had only taken math...
just kidding.
i loved math. i like the structure of it all. and knowing that there is a definite answer. it is very reassuring.
perhaps it helps with the stress, by being mentally organized.
you don't need a lot of advanced math, especially if you don't like it. but making and keeping budgets, contracts, royalties, ... all require a little math.
how far have you gotten in math?*

Hi Producer,
I'm taking Trigonometry right now, and I'm a junior in high-school. Next semester if I pass Trig I'll have to take A.P Calculus(for some reason my high-school doesn't offer regular Calculus), which I don't want to take since I don't like the way the teacher who will be instucting the class is teaching it. I'm planning to check-out some calculus books though, instead of taking the class.
What do you think, any suggestions?

*hello there - happy weekend too -
calculus is probably better for helping you think logically, and dissect a problem, then it is for purely mathematical purposes in your case. but noting how challenging it can be to learn math without actually doing it, i would think that the class would be better for you than reading a book on it. can you take it pass/fail? that might alleviate some of the pressure and the concern?
otherwise, give or take a math course in college (that you won't have to take if you get AP credit), you should be set to concentrate on everything else.
have you started thinking about which colleges you might want to attend? now is a great time.
- me*

Two answers to the same question – graphic designers demonstrate the beauty of icouldbe.org’s resources. Pharoah13 talked to two graphic designers to get a more complete picture.

pharoah13 wrote:

How many hours do you work every day?

This is Pharoah13 and I was wondering what do you do for a Living, and if you can give me some suggestions on how to become a Graphic Designer I will appreciate it very much.

P.S. What courses do I need to take in College to actually become a graphics designer.

Hi Pharoah -

You'll need to take graphic design classes!

But to start, you'll have to enroll in basic beginning art classes, like drawing and painting. Talk to your school counselor though, to find out about schools that have graphic design as a major, and then contact that school to find out what requirements you'll need to be accepted to the program. Usually the prerequisites include basic drawing classes (as I wrote above), and portfolio of drawings, and perhaps other things. I suggest you keep every drawing/art project you work on, and start looking into schools that offer the program.

I work between 7 and 9 hours a day, depending on how much work I have.

TShel

pharoah13 wrote:

What kinds of problems and problem solving do you deal with at work?

This is Pharoah13 and I was wondering what do you do for a living, and if you can give me any suggestions on how to become a Graphic designer.

P.S.Do you have any pets.

Hi Pharoah13,

Graphic design and advertising is all about problem solving. The client has some message they want to get out to the world, and the designer has to figure out the best way to get that message out. Of course there are other problems, such as computer issues or people issues, but the big one is figuring out the best way to say something, usually getting consumers to buy some product or service, or at least consider buying it.

One of my clients sells computers online, and much of that work involves finding new ways to say 'get Free Shipping.' another is a smaller car company, and that work involves trying to get people to think about that car when they are looking for a car.

Best way to get into design is to do an internship at a design shop. Just look in your yellow pages and call around.

PS I live in an apartment, so my only pet is some fish, but I'd like a dog.

PSS ask me any more questions you like! I'm here to answer them!

miatch

The difference between toxicology and infectious diseases in veterinarian medicine.

hi

im a high school student, and i would like you to tell me how much it took you to be a vet, and what kind of company are you working at?

I went to 4 years of regular college and then 4 more years of vet school. After vet school, you take the state and national board exams in order to get your license. I work exclusively with small animals (like people's household pets) and I work at a small hospital. I am one of 3 vets there. We have about 6 technicians and 4 receptionists. It depends on the type of practice you like. You can work emergency hours, or surgery clinics-whatever you want. Are you interested in being a vet? What grade are you in? How is school going? Do you have a job after school?

First, i have to apologize for not writing for so long. i just kept forgetting to go here. Im finishing 9th grade. i like basketball, and hockey, but im not athletic though. right now im in a regular physics class, but next year im going to AP Chemistry (that is college level) and honors math (That is advanced level). Well right now im not taking college that seriously, but i have looked at some colleges around my city. I had a cat back in Europe, for about 4 years and i loved him, but i then came to america, and once i had a cat, for about a week, but then i found out that my brother had allergy for cats, so we had to give him away. what about you? what's your favorite animal? WHO DO YOU LIKE BETTER a cat or a dog? can you tell me some more info on what you do in your job? maybe teach me something if you have some time? thanx

Thank you very much for the info that you wrote for me. I am very interested to be a vet because i really love animals. im in 9th grade right now and my average is about a 90 i dont have a job after school, but i really need one. can you please give me some more info on your achievements on being a vet? Thanks.

Sounds like you are doing really well in school. That's really important. If you want to be a vet, you'll need a good foundation for this stuff. You'll need to take those courses in college, but it's great you're getting exposed to them now. Any big plans for this summer? So, were you born in Europe? When did you get over here? As far as cats and dogs, I must say I am partial to cats. They are usually much harder to work on, though. When scared, they can really do some damage with their teeth and claws. With dogs, you can pretty much use brute force to control them. But cats systems are so sensitive. For instance, fat cats, if they don't eat for 3-4 days, can develop fatty liver syndrome, which can kill them. Dogs can starve twice as long without any similar complication. What are you interested in learning? Surgery? Toxicology? Medicine? Infectious diseases? Let me know and I'll go over some of the more interesting ones...

hello again. i dont think i will do anything in this summer, except relax. i came to america 5 years ago when i was 9. Surgery? Toxicology? Medicine? Infectious diseases?, these are the things that i cant explain. can u tell me what each one of them means?thanks

Surgery is doing operations. I do all sorts of operations-on bone, on intestines, on growths/tumors. toxicology is the study of, basically, poisoning and how it affects the different systems in the body. Medicine is when you get sick inside and people try to find out what's wrong with you. It includes hormones, the intestinal system, the bladder system, etc. Infectious diseases are ones that pets get from other pets. Kind of like a cold, that travels through the air. Some of these viruses or bacteria can be deadly. Some of them, we can vaccinate against, some we can't. I just need to know what you are most interested in.

There are many opportunities to work for non-profits!

What do you like most about your work?

Hello!

I'm a high school student and I've always dreamed of working for a non-profit where I would administrate an institution where they teach immigrants how to read and write. I was wondering how did you decided to work for this and not anything else and how do you get to work for a non-profit organization ?

Hello - What I really like most about my work is being able to help a lot of people in lots of different ways. What I do is to help people finds jobs, or to find the training that will lead them to the jobs they want. Some people need English training, some computer skills, some need their GED, or whatever it is that is holding them back. We deal with all people, from welfare moms and dads, prisoners, people with disabilities, to college graduates and high level business people who have been laid off and are looking for a different type job.

I didn't really decide to do this type work, just sort of lucked into it. I had studied government and politics in college and was planning on working in government. However, when I was looking for a job there was no hiring going on in government. When I was in school I had taken classes in nonprofit management and a lot of classes on social policy and the problems facing different sections of our society, so I knew I liked that area. The nonprofit field is one that is always open and looking for people with skills and a desire to do this type of work so I began looking there. To tell the truth, there were so many opportunities it was hard to decide which one to pursue.

I've now worked in nonprofit management for several years and I love it. Its exciting and always rewarding. Whether its dealing with employment, or working with refugees and immigrants as you want to, health care issues, or a particular segment of society, there are always people who need assistance and not nearly enough people like you with a real desire to make a contribution. Most colleges now have specific courses on nonprofit management and the field is wide open.

The reality of being an engineer.

I wanted to know what you do in your job because it sound interesting and I dont know what I want to be when I grow up and start a carreer. I want to know what skills you need, what hours it is, and what the pay is. Thank You.

First, I still have no idea what I really want to be when I grow up. But I have had some really good opportunities in Quality Assurance for Startup companies. Basically what I get paid to do, is to try to break products for the companies I work for before they get shipped to the customer. Right now I am working for a Video Networking company that sells networking storage systems to Broadcasters like WWSB, PBS, etc, and I work with the hardware and software in an engineering lab and run all kinds of tests on the equipment to find out where it fails. As you can imagine, if a TV show goes off the air because of our products it is a VERY bad thing. So I work with the engineers, field support people, and our marketing department to make sure that the products we are releasing, meet our customers needs and will work for them, with out taking their broadcasts off the air. I took primarily English, history and Computer Science classes in college. The computer science classes have really helped me understand the software that I am working with. I have a better understanding of how the engineers that I am working with think and I am able to look at their code and help them find the problems. The english classes I took helped me to be able to document what I am doing and to communicate with others. This is really important for Quality Assurance positions since Engineers are not very good at communicating what they are doing and you really need to make sure that what has been coded is what Marketing was expecting. The hours for QA can vary. During really busy times right before product releases, I have been at the office till 2am making sure everything is working and ready to be shipped. But then there are weeks when things are slower and I work a 40 hour week. It just depends on how much is going on. Luckily since the long hours are usually put in right before a product launch, you can plan your time accordingly. The pay varies but I started making 35,000 a year. With a few years experience you can make about 50,000 and it seems that the job will max out at about 125,000 as you become a manager. The hard thing about the job is that there is never enough time to get a flawless product out the door and a QA department is always the last thing to be added to a company and usually one of the first things to shrink when times get tough. Quality Assurance adds a lot of value to a company but not everyone always sees the value that is added. I hope this answered some of your questions. I look forward to helping you explore more about what is involved in QA if you are interested in doing so. Jennifer

Thank You for telling me about your job. It let me see the ups and downs of being an engineer. It also showed me how much I can expect to make, and it sounds like an interesting field.

-Chris

*Chris,
You are welcome. I hope that it has helped you get an idea of types of careers that are available with in engineering that do not require you to be a programmer if you do not want to. To be an engineer you really need to have an aptitude for mathematics. Writing programs there is one answer but many ways to get there. You need to be creative but also very analytical. As an engineer you really need to be a problem solver since you are usually told what the solution should be and then need to figure out how to get there with the tools that you have. What kinds of subjects are you interested in at school. Any afterschool hobbies that you are enjoying? Thinking about the things that you enjoy doing and the things that you are good at can really help you figure out where you will be successful. Trust me, it is never a good idea to get into anything because you think it is a good way to make money. If you enjoy what you do, and are good at what you do, the money will follow.*

Scholarships and career planning from a journalist's point of view.

what is soming I can Do for scholarships?
Rejaneche

Hi again -- well, the first step is to do the research. There's a 'links for mentees' page here on icouldbe (button on the front page) that can get you started, or you might give scholarships.com a try -- they have a "scholarship search" there that looks interesting. You tell it about yourself and it looks for scholarships that you might be eligible for.

After that comes the application process -- not exactly fun, but if you're doing a lot of these apps (and you should; you don't ask you don't get, right?) you'll find that a lot of it is the same info over and over. The trick here is to figure out what version of your story is the version that'll let each scholarship committee see how deserving you are and how likely you are to do something wonderful with the change you're asking for. (And yes, money right now is the chance to make your dreams happen. It still doesn't buy happiness or whatever, but it can keep you from a whole lot of misery.)

By "version of your story" I'm not suggesting that you lie -- of course not. That would be wrong. What you're doing is showing what a great fit you are with the goals each scholarship committee has for their money. For instance, some scholarships exist to encourage students in a specific career. Others exist to give low-income students a wider range of options. Still others exist to encourage students of color to consider professions that don't have enough diversity. (The Gates Foundation -- that's Bill Gates, the Microsoft guy -- gave \$1 BILLION a few years back to improve scholarship funding for African American, Latino, and Native American students who plan to get certain kinds of engineering or science degree.)

So you find scholarships that fit who you are, what your skills are, and where you've set your goals. Then you tell them about yourself -- your determination, the things you've already done to make college happen, stuff you've accomplished in school and in your life. You get some of the teachers who know you best to write recommendations telling the committees how good you are and how important the scholarships are for your future. You read over everything and make sure it's all spelled correctly and so forth (yes, it really is a big deal -- most of the people on these committees come from an era long before computer spell-check and they care a LOT). And you send it in and you hope.

*Important to keep in mind: The good news *and* the bad news is that it's not just a one-time thing, the scholarship process. I spent four years keeping an eye out for new sources of funding. Some scholarships are only open to first-year students; some are only open to students in their final year; all kinds of scholarships come and go. You're going to want to be persistent, and remember that once you're in school the Financial Aid Office can be a big, big help in keeping the funding flowing.*

I hope that helps. As always, let me know if you have questions. Take care and have a wonderful weekend!

*Best --
Angela (penandpaper)*

can you help me Plan a long trem goal.
Rejaneche

Hey again Rejaneche -- well, I can certainly try. And I'm happy to. (I still sit down and plan my own long-term goals, even now. And I keep them pinned above my desk at home to remind me what it is I'm supposed to keep working toward. Some days it's harder to remember than others, as you already know just from living :-).) Why don't I make some broad suggestions and then we can work from there on the details?

*The best way to start this kind of planning is to take some quiet time and think BIG. REALLY BIG. This is the time to imagine the best of all possible lives, including everything that's important to you: financial security for yourself and your kid, creativity, a fun workplace, anything else you want to be part of your world (fame, power, travel, beautiful house, deep religious faith, big romance, whatever). Hey, imagine you'd play you in the movie version of your life. Live in that reality for a little bit, enough to envision that you *will* accomplish great things and that you'll be... well, exactly yourself, and living an amazing life.*

So you have big dreams. Now you're going to break the picture down and figure out a path from Point A, right here right now, to Point B, that reality. Along the way there'll be smaller but very important goals. Let's call those checkpoints.

*Before we start mapping out this path, some cold facts -- not fun facts, and heaven knows I didn't ask the world to be this way, but here it is. Thing One: As my grandmother used to say, it takes a whole lot of work for poor folk to get a break in this world. (Remember what I said about the scholarship applications -- if I hadn't worked my butt off during those very crucial few months of applications I'd probably still be waitressing in Nebraska, heaven help us all.) Thing Two: Sometimes you can work your butt off and *still* you don't get the good fortune you deserve. You can hate the universe for that, or you can take a deep breath and move on. For what it's worth, you seem like the deep-breath type to me :-).*

The trick to making Thing One not such a big problem is to get you into a college situation where you can succeed and your talent can be noticed. I'm not sure how long you've got until graduation, but if there's more than a couple of months you're in good shape to target those scholarships like we talked about. (If graduation's coming right up, okay, you can get things in motion for your second year.) So your first checkpoint is getting this college thing squared away. To get to that checkpoint, you need to get out of high school and into a program that's right for you, and you need to get the scholarship \$\$\$ to make that happen.

And though you're going to be crazy busy with that, you also will want to make time every day or two to do the thing that makes all this work worthwhile: being creative, sketching out design ideas, remembering that all this work is for a goal, and that getting the college thing nailed down is just the beginning.

After you're in the door at college, there will be goals to set for developing your design skills, planning your career strategy, and getting your foot in the door at some good design places (internships!!!) and so forth -- but this letter's already gone on quite a while. We talked before about targeting the scholarship folk, but should we talk over how to decide which colleges are the right fit for your goals? If you're okay on that great, otherwise send word. We can talk more about reaching this first checkpoint next time, or we can tackle Checkpoint Two :-).

*Take care and write when you're ready --
Angela (penandpaper).*