



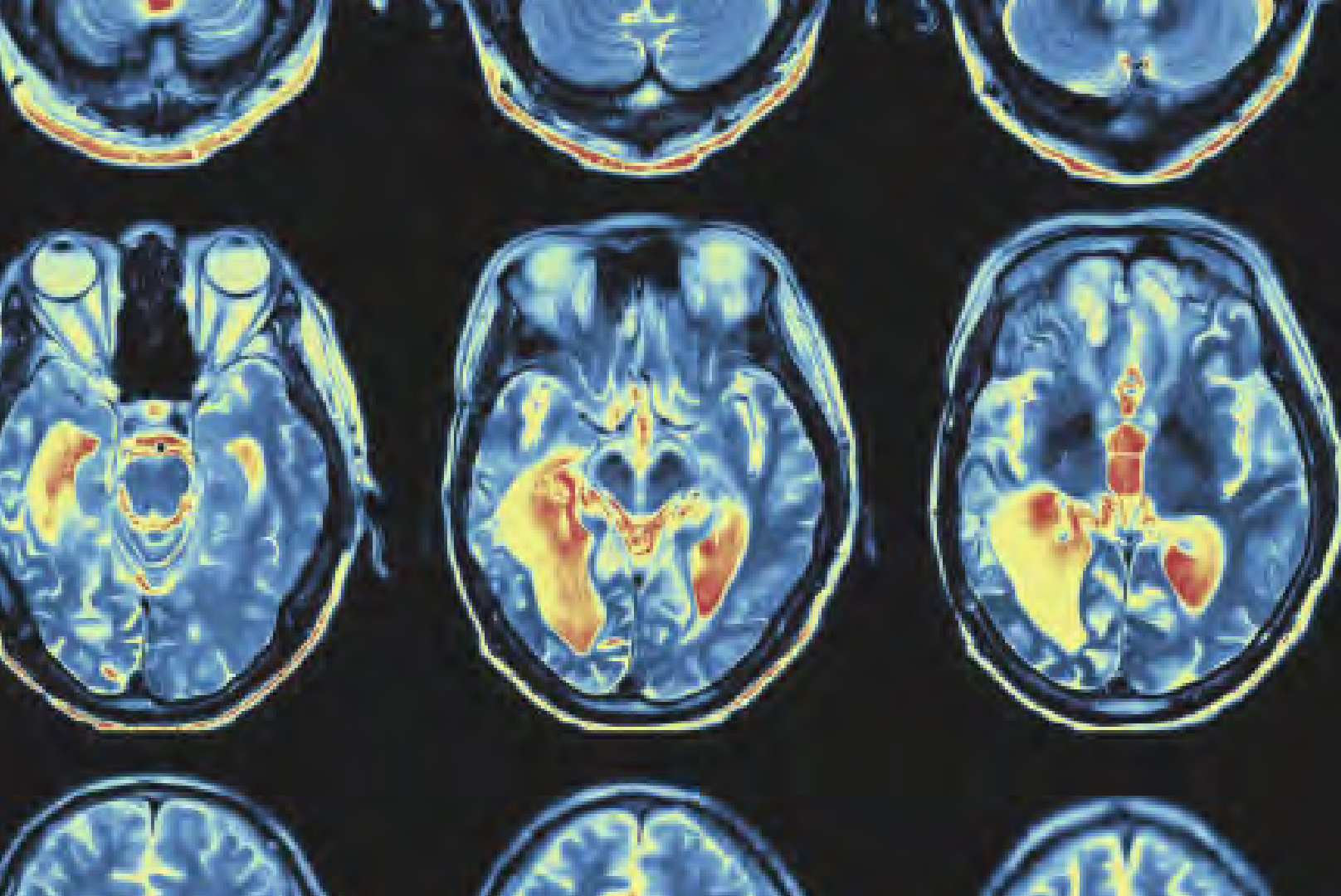
DISCOVER WHO  
YOU CAN BE

SUMMER INSTITUTE IN  
APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY

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EMPIRICAL WISDOM





## How much can people reasonably expect to be able to improve their lives?

Ten years ago, we set out to answer this question.

First, we curated best practices from the scientific literature to create an intensive training program in personal development.

Then over many years, we ran a series of rigorous studies at UC Santa Barbara to evaluate the impact of the program.

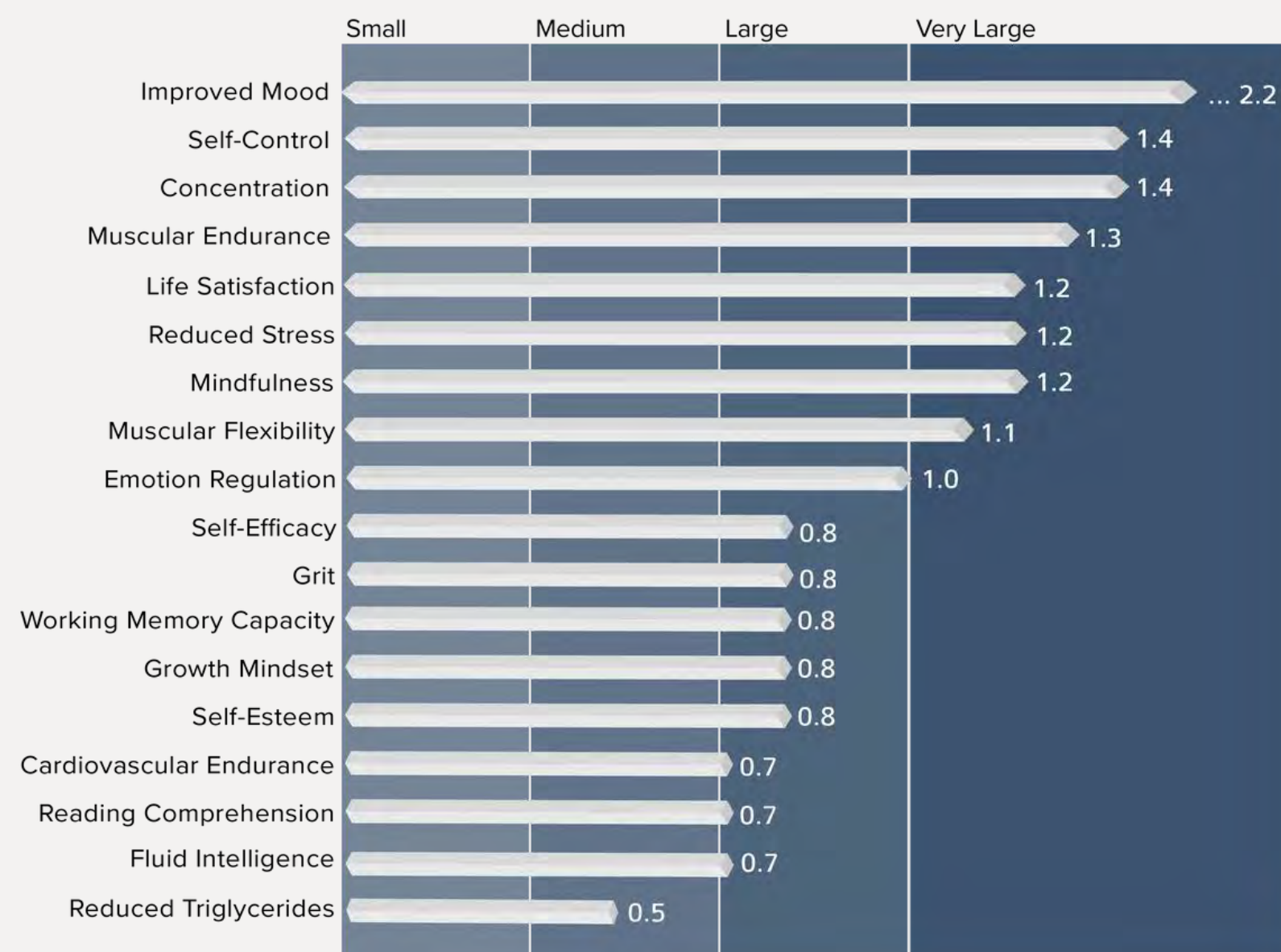
By participating in the program, students experienced dramatic and enduring improvements in dozens of highly valued outcomes, including health, fitness, cognitive abilities, and well-being. Collectively, these studies have redefined scientific understanding of how rapidly a person can change.

The Summer Institute in Applied Psychology was established to make this kind of training more widely available to college students.



# OUR RESEARCH

Our peer-reviewed research demonstrates that college students can make remarkable improvements in their lives if they have access to the right training. This graph shows the size of improvements observed for each outcome measure. For context, typical effect sizes in psychological research are small to medium (0.1 to 0.5).



**“This set a new benchmark for my social, intellectual, and physical capabilities. My life can never be the same now that I've realized the extent of my potential.”**

-former student

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# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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The three-week summer institute is a residential program where students live on-site with peers and faculty. Each day, students participate in classes that teach them about scientific discoveries in the field of Positive Psychology. These classes are unlike anything offered at traditional colleges and universities. Our classes are always highly experiential, and they are designed to equip students with practical tools to improve their health, performance, leadership, and well-being.

Each day also includes two exercise sessions where students receive expert instruction on both improving their health and fitness as well as learning to appreciate the body they have. Each morning there is a mindfulness class where students learn how to focus their minds and cultivate a truly reliable happiness.

All these experiences are shared among a select group of 20 students, making it easy for our students to develop close and lasting friendships. This creates a safe and supportive community in which students can discover their true potential.







# IN-SESSION VS. INTEGRATION DAYS

We follow a schedule of two days “in session” followed by one day without formal instruction. We’ve learned that this is the best way to ensure everyone stays rested and can fully process what they are learning. We call the days without formal instruction “integration days” because this time is crucial for reflection, discussion, and application. We still provide meals and also facilitate optional activities and excursions.

Every day spent “in session” involves new ideas, discussions, and activities, but we follow a consistent schedule:

## Morning Session

8:00 - 9:00  
Breakfast

9:00 - 9:45  
Morning Exercise

9:45 - 10:15  
Mindfulness Class

10:15 - 10:45  
Break & Refreshments

10:45 - 12:00  
Lecture & discussion on  
scientific best practices

## Afternoon Session

12:00 - 12:45  
Lunch

2:00 - 3:30  
Group activity &  
experiential learning

3:30 - 3:45  
Break & Refreshments

3:45 - 5:15  
Afternoon Exercise

6:00 - 6:45  
Dinner



# FACULTY

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We have spent our entire careers researching evidence-based strategies to optimize health and well-being. Just as importantly, we have also spent this time learning how to effectively teach these strategies to college students. We work hard to create an environment of trust and support where all our students can feel at home. Nothing is more fulfilling for us than helping students clarify an inspiring vision for their lives and empowering them with the tools to achieve it.

“THIS IS THE MOST  
SUPPORTIVE AND MOTIVATING  
ENVIRONMENT I HAVE EVER  
WITNESSED IN MY LIFE.”

-former student







# MICHAEL MRAZEK PH.D.

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Michael received his B.A. from Rice University and his Ph.D. in Cognitive Neuroscience from UC Santa Barbara. He is the co-founder and Director of Research at UCSB's Center for Mindfulness & Human Potential. Michael has published more than 30 peer-reviewed scientific publications, and he is the author of *Presence of Mind: A Practical Introduction to Mindfulness & Meditation*. His work has been featured widely in international press, appearing in dozens of outlets including the New York Times, Forbes, and Scientific American. Over the last decade, Michael has taught a wide variety of college-level courses with an emphasis on Health Psychology and Positive Psychology. He is also a mindfulness teacher and a certified yoga instructor.





# KAITA MRAZEK

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Kaita received degrees in Dance and Psychology from the University of Wisconsin before discovering yoga and pilates as vehicles for her continued exploration of the relationship between body and mind. Kaita completed her Pilates Comprehensive Teacher Training with Body Arts and Science International. She is also an E-RYT 200 Certified Yoga Instructor. Additionally, she is certified in Fascial Stretch Therapy and has trained in Resistance Flexibility. As a visiting researcher at UC Santa Barbara, she has worked to integrate the best of many physical disciplines into an optimal approach to enhancing health and fitness.





# ALISSA MRAZEK PH.D.

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Alissa completed her B.A. at Cornell University, her Ph.D. in Psychology at Northwestern University, and her post-doctoral fellowship at the University of California Santa Barbara. She is currently a Research Assistant Professor in UT Austin's Department of Psychology, where she teaches a course on Positive Psychology. Her research has been funded by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. As an educational consultant, Alissa draws on insights from over a decade of research to help optimize the Summer Institute in Applied Psychology. She also offers one-on-one coaching to adolescents as well as evidence-based training programs that target health, mindfulness, and motivation.





# FACILITIES

The spaces that surround us influence how we think and feel. That's why our summer institutes take place in beautiful settings, with comfortable accommodations and healthy food.

In 2022, our summer institute will be hosted at Vida Asana, which is a retreat center located in a Costa Rican surfing village. Vida Asana is just 10 minutes from the town of Jaco and 90 minutes from San Jose's airport and medical facilities.





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# YOUR HOME IN PARADISE

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Vida Asana offers eco-lodge accommodations surrounded by mature trees, a river, and other native vegetation and wildlife.

Some highlights:

- Our group will have exclusive use of the retreat center
- Classes will be held in beautiful open-air yoga studios
- Double occupancy rooms with private bath
- Just a 5 minute bike ride to black sand beach Playa Hermosa (bikes provided)



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# GARDEN-TO-TABLE CUISINE

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We provide three healthy vegetarian meals each day (pescatarian available). This food is mostly organic and locally sourced. Excellent local coffee and fresh fruit are also provided daily. We can work with you to accommodate most dietary restrictions upon request.

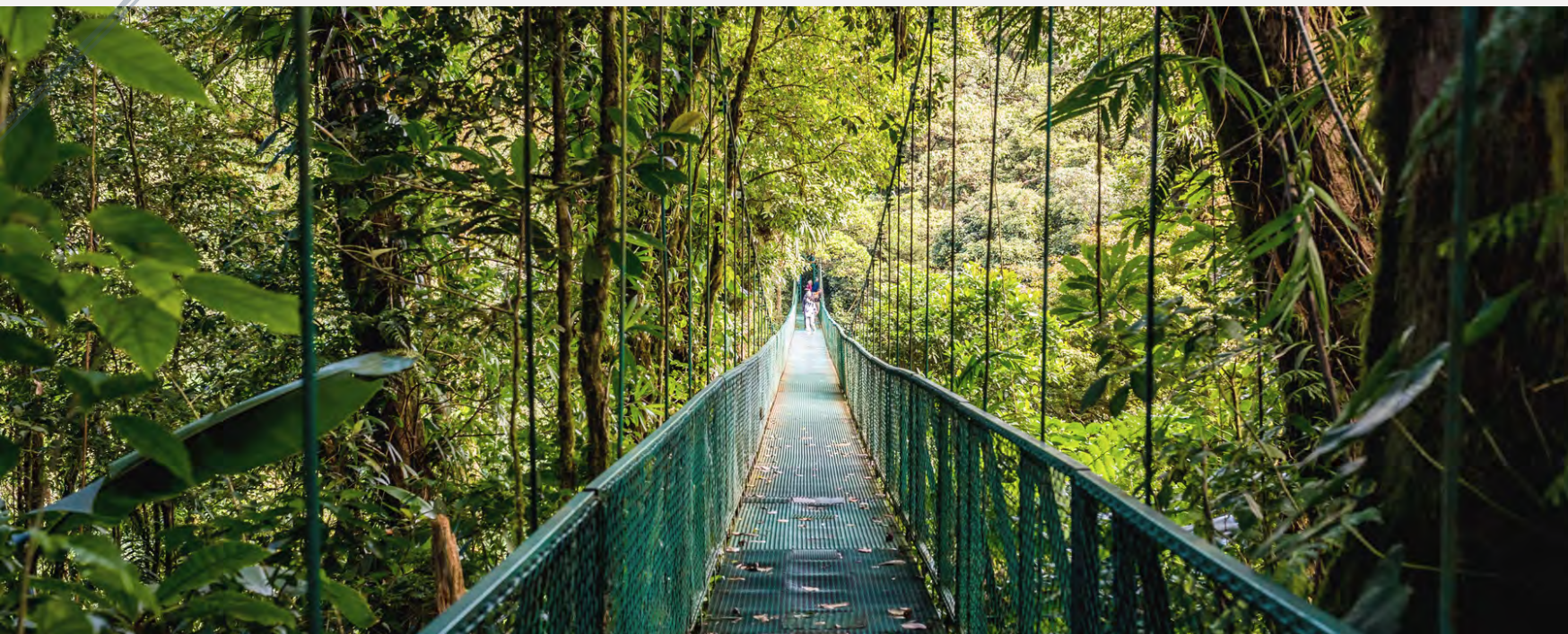




# ADVENTURES

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We have built some epic group excursions into your program to ensure that you won't miss out on the beauty, adventure, and culture of Costa Rica. Additional excursions to the ziplining park, sweat lodge, and more are available for booking upon your arrival.



## **Rainmaker Conservation Project**

Rainmaker Park is a hidden gem. It is a true rainforest experience, complete with hanging bridges, rushing rivers, waterfalls, and clear fresh-water swimming pools. Our guide will ensure that you see as much wildlife as possible, while educating you about the inner workings of the rainforest. The tour concludes with a home cooked traditional lunch.



## **Manuel Antonio National Park**

A Costa Rican 'bucket list' item. Your hike through the rainforest reserve will culminate in one of the most beautiful beaches in Costa Rica. You are guaranteed to see a variety of native wildlife. On your return to Vida Asana, you will stop at the famous 'El Avion' restaurant for a bite to eat. The spectacular views are unforgettable.



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# CULTURE & COMMUNITY

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Relationships are arguably the most important part of our lives, and each summer institute is designed to facilitate deep and lasting friendships. We are committed to creating an inclusive learning environment in which every student feels welcomed and supported. Students come from all walks of life, but they share a commitment to creating an inclusive culture based on kindness and respect.

“THE TEACHERS CREATED A  
SPACE OF OPENNESS WHERE  
WE WERE EACH ABLE TO LET  
OURSELVES BE SEEN AND  
HEARD WITHOUT FEAR OF  
JUDGMENT.”

-former student





# BUILDING YOUR RESUME

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The summer institute provides personal and professional development training that is relevant to most career paths. We recommend you feature your participation on your resume. Students often describe the institute in a manner that aligns with their professional goals.

Two example resume descriptions:

## **Example 1:**

Empirical Wisdom's Summer Institute in Applied Psychology

-120 hours of personal and professional development training

-Completed all coursework for a college-level course in Positive Psychology

-Extensive training in interpersonal communication and presentation skills

## **Example 2:**

Summer Leadership Program hosted by Empirical Wisdom

-120 hours of personal and professional development training in the areas of critical thinking, goal setting, time management, and interpersonal communication




# EARN A STRONG LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

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Strong letters of recommendation are crucial for securing competitive jobs or acceptance into graduate school. Unfortunately, undergraduate settings often make it challenging for students to build the kind of relationships with faculty that lead to highly effective letters.

At the summer institute, students and faculty work together closely every day. Students also have weekly one-on-one mentoring meetings with faculty. This environment makes it possible for faculty to become very familiar with students' strengths and aspirations, which leads to strong and highly personalized letters of recommendation. Upon request, faculty are also available to serve as references for up to four years.





"I will carry the things I learned with me  
for the rest of my life."  
--former student



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# ONGOING SUPPORT

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Our students leave the summer institute with the perspective, strategies, and skills that will help them succeed for years to come. We think about it as helping students reach escape velocity—the speed at which they are no longer trapped by the gravitational force of counterproductive habits and mindsets.

To that end, significant portions of the curriculum are focused on preparing students to carry forward independently. To further promote students' long-term success after the program ends, we provide nine months of remote support via monthly group coaching.



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# HOW TO ENROLL

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Each summer institute accepts approximately 20 students. We welcome current college students, recent grads, and those young at heart. Students come from diverse backgrounds and areas of study.

## THIS PROGRAM IS A GOOD FIT IF YOU HAVE:

- An open mind and passion for learning new things
- The desire to engage wholeheartedly in a rigorous and rewarding process of personal development
- The willingness to help create a supportive and non-judgmental community of friends

**View pricing details and enroll today at: [www.empiricalwisdom.com/enroll](http://www.empiricalwisdom.com/enroll)**