



The Myth of Laziness

By Mel Levine M.D.



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“When we call someone lazy, we condemn a human being,” writes Mel Levine, M.D. In *The Myth of Laziness*, the bestselling author of *A Mind at a Time* shows that children dismissed as unproductive or “lazy” usually suffer from what he calls “output failure”—a neurodevelopmental dysfunction that can continue to cause difficulties into adulthood if left unchecked.

The desire to be productive is universal, says Dr. Levine, but that drive can often be frustrated by dysfunctions that obstruct output or productivity. Drawing on his clinical experience and using real-life examples of both children and adults he has worked with, Dr. Levine shows how to identify and remedy these dysfunctions. A child suffering from language production dysfunction, for example, may be incapable of clearly expressing or explaining his thoughts, thereby leading to low productivity in school. A child who has difficulty making choices may wait until it is too late to complete a project or may act impulsively, creating a pattern of bad judgments. Similarly, a child with memory weaknesses may be unable to draw on his accumulated knowledge for an assignment. In each of these cases, as Dr. Levine shows, writing skills are often the key to diagnosing specific causes of output failure.

Practical, wise, and compassionate, *The Myth of Laziness* offers parents and teachers day-to-day strategies and support to prevent output failure and, when necessary, to help children overcome dysfunction and become productive, successful adults.

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The Myth of Laziness By Mel Levine M.D. Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

A professor of pediatrics at the University of North Carolina Medical School, Mel Levine received acclaim for his previous book, *A Mind at a Time*, which argued that children's different learning capabilities demand diverse teaching strategies. In *The Myth of Laziness*, Levine isolates another group of kids--so-called "lazy" children who aren't working up to their potential in school--and explores the causes of their low performance. Levine scoffs at the perception that any child is lazy, stating that "everybody yearns to be productive." These children, according to Levine, are simply experiencing "output failure" due to different neuro-developmental weaknesses.

Levine produces case studies of seven children and adults who have been labeled lazy and identifies internal sources that are undermining their production. Many of their output issues revolve around difficulties with writing, as is the case with Russell, who is hindered by his low motor skills, or Clint, whose long-term memory lapses prevent him from expressing himself well. Other weaknesses, such as poor oral language ability, mental energy dysfunction, poor idea generation, and organizational problems, plague the individuals in these case studies. Levine talks briefly about external factors that contribute to low output, such as socioeconomic background, family life, and negative role models. In the profile for Scott Murray, Levine even has the humility to admit that he was unable to reach this young man. External influences--namely, Scott's privileged upbringing--were too pervasive in causing his output failure.

The last few chapters are devoted to suggestions for what parents and teachers can do to foster productive output in their children and students and how to detect a problem that is internal rather than environmental. Tips on how to cultivate writing skills, set up an organized home office, and assist with homework are aimed at parents while teachers are encouraged to consider individuality among their students' learning styles. Finally, the appendices offer two worksheets to help students plan stories and reports. Two additional worksheets help pinpoint whether output problems are the cause of poor schoolwork. This is a valuable book that will give parents some guidance in solving their children's productivity issues and preparing their children successfully for adulthood. --*Cristina Vaamonde*

From Publishers Weekly

Pediatrician Levine, a developmental-behavioral expert, offers theories on why it's so hard for some teenagers-even bright ones-to succeed in school. "Often these individuals absorb and process information well; they learn but they don't produce," he says, adding, "people say glibly that they are not `living up to their potential.'" Levine prefers the term "output failure" over "laziness." In a series of case studies, he discusses the biological, neurological and psychological factors that may be responsible for "output failure." He focuses on kids challenged by oral and written communication; he believes parents and educators must pay attention to different learning styles rather than simply label a child as lazy. Even fidgeting, according to Levine, may be a plus: "Isn't it odd that kids get criticized for being fidgety when they should be commended for implementing a strategy that significantly elevates their attention?" Despite the thought-provoking theories and discussions of problems such as impairment in the generation of ideas and memory difficulties, only the final chapter, "Cultivating and Restoring Output," offers a broad range of strategies that can be used to remedy such troubles. Still, the advice-e.g., create a home office for kids, document time spent and level of output, adjust expectations-is on target and should help struggling parents.

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Review

Teacher magazine Insightful...Levine's ideas, culled from his research and broad clinical experience, are as commonsensical and practical as they are wise.

Newsweek Mel Levine wants to revolutionize American education by showing...how children think.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Dan Gray:

Often the book *The Myth of Laziness* has a lot info on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of gain. The book was written by the very famous author. Tom makes some research ahead of write this book. This specific book very easy to read you can obtain the point easily after scanning this book.

Thomas Jones:

The Myth of Laziness can be one of your nice books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in words, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nonetheless delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to set every word into joy arrangement in writing *The Myth of Laziness* yet doesn't forget the main level, giving the reader the hottest and also based confirm resource data that maybe you can be one of it. This great information can certainly drawn you into new stage of crucial contemplating.

Elaine Gold:

This *The Myth of Laziness* is brand-new way for you who has attention to look for some information as it relief your hunger of information. Getting deeper you into it getting knowledge more you know otherwise you who still having bit of digest in reading this *The Myth of Laziness* can be the light food for you because the information inside this kind of book is easy to get by means of anyone. These books develop itself in the form which is reachable by anyone, yep I mean in the e-book application form. People who think that in guide form make them feel tired even dizzy this publication is the answer. So there isn't any in reading a guide especially this one. You can find what you are looking for. It should be here for an individual. So , don't miss it! Just read this e-book style for your better life and also knowledge.

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