Twitter Thread by Ana Lorena Fabrega



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“What do you wanna be when you grow up?” is one of the most useless questions an adult can ask a child.

Here’s why■■

First, it fosters the wrong kind of mindset by encouraging kids to define themselves in terms of a career and a single identity.

“As if growing up is finite. As if at some point you become something and that’s the end.” @MichelleObama
■
Second, it ignores two important factors:

What if their ideal job hasn’t been invented?

15 years ago no one thought it would be possible to make a living out of making YouTube videos.

Help kids see that their future self doesn’t exist right now and that their interests may change over time.

https://t.co/THoJZLmF8p

> Roughly \u2154 of today\u2019s grade-school students will end up doing work that hasn\u2019t been invented yet.
>
> The ability to think and act creatively is more important than ever before.
>
> Creative learning experiences > traditional schooling
>
> — Ana Lorena Fabrega (@anafabrega11) February 19, 2020

What if they wanna do more than one thing?

The average person ends up holding a dozen different jobs.

Teach kids that they don’t have to do or be one thing—they can do many things. Teach them that it's ok to rethink their chosen line of work and switch gears when necessary.

In 2012 @Prof_Malhotra gave a moving speech to the graduating class at Harvard Business School.

"Quit early, quit often—not because it's hard, but because it sucks," he proposed.

We don't emphasize this enough in schools.

https://t.co/AYuYcj4DYH

In school, we teach kids the importance of persevering and not giving up, and forget to remind them that it's ok to quit sometimes.

Grit is important, but don't "persevere" if you're going in the wrong direction.

@AdamMGrant suggests that kids might be better off learning about careers as actions to take rather than as identities to claim.

When kids see work as what they do rather than who they are, they're more willing to explore different possibilities.

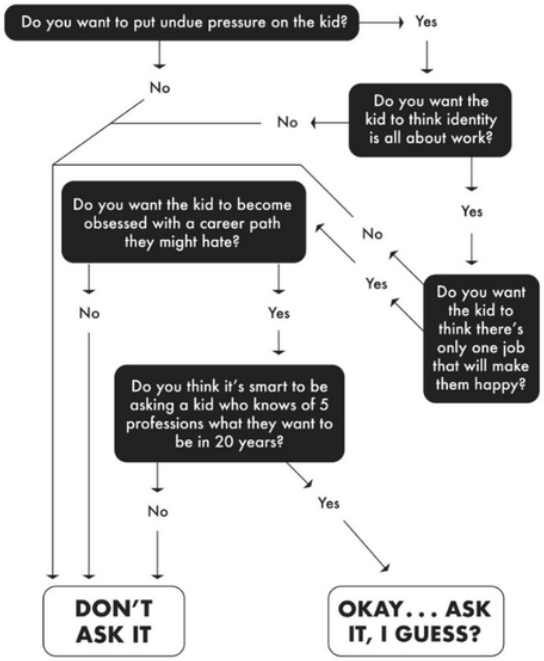
Here's an example ■■

A study showed that when 2nd & 3rd graders learned about "doing science" vs. "being a scientist" they were more excited about pursuing a career in science.■
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"Becoming a scientist might seem out of reach, but the act of experimenting is something we can all try out" @AdamMGrant

So instead of asking kids what they want to be when they grow up, help them:

■Brainstorm all the things they love to do
■Talk about careers as something we do vs. someone we are
■Understand that, sometimes, quitting is better than persevering in the wrong direction

SHOULD YOU ASK "WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?"



THINK AGAIN
By Adam Grant