
Patience And Persistence In Educated: A Memoir By Tara Westover

To begin, in the book *Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover, there's no doubt that she has had her share of hardships throughout her life that started at a young age. Although Westover went through a lot as a child and as a teenager, that didn't stop her from her goal of pursuing an education, but of course to reach this goal she had to have plenty of patience and persistence. Having patience and being persistent is beneficial as it allows one to overcome any challenging situation they might face and allows them to have the determination to finish what they started, no matter how tough and that is what Westover was able to do on multiple occasions. These two characteristics have several key features that Westover demonstrates throughout the book and they impact the story by allowing a few major themes to break through.

To be patient, there are some key features you should have and they may need to be practiced to really understand it. The features I believe that are most important when it comes to being patient are having focus, self-control, and being tolerant. When you're focused, the only thing on your mind is the center of attention, and when you're focused on just getting that one thing done and taking your time with it, then you're building your patience. When you have self-control you're able to control your emotions and behaviors even in difficult situations. Lastly, when you're tolerant you are more open-minded and other people's opinions or behaviors don't really bother you, even if they differ from what you think.

Along with this is persistence. The key features I believe that come with persistence are being committed, being adaptable, and in my opinion the most important, having a passion or goal that you want to reach. When you have a commitment to a certain thing then that might be one major thing you're focused on and will stop at nothing to finish it. When you're adaptable, you're able to easily adjust to different situations and settings which helps in being persistent because different scenarios won't affect you. Finally, when you're passionate about something or have a goal, then you're more determined to get it done and constantly work on that goal. All of these features play a role in persistence and patience.

In addition, on her journey to basically a new life, Westover was able to be patient and have persistence nearly the whole time while demonstrating those characteristics. An experience that Westover was dealing with in her childhood and as she was growing up that I believe she showed incredible strength and patience in was all the times she was dealing with her brother Shawn. Shawn was very manipulative not just towards Westover, but nearly every woman in his life. He was also physically, mentally, and emotionally abusive to Westover and all of his girlfriends. Everytime Westover was abused, she would tell herself that Shawn "didn't affect [her]", and since it happened so frequently, she ended up believing it (Westover, 145). I believe that this shows patience from Westover because even though she endured all that abuse from Shawn, she still held on, showing the self-control characteristic of patience and didn't let Shawn affect her or stop her from her goal of going to school.

Another time that Westover demonstrated patience and persistence was with the whole process of her wanting to go to school. As a child, Westover was never allowed a formal education, and she was barely homeschooled that she couldn't even "remember the last time [she] read a

textbook.” (156). After her brother Tyler convinced her to go to college, Westover “drove forty miles to the nearest bookstore” and bought an ACT study guide and an algebra textbook (160). She also tried getting help with her math from her mother and her brother Tyler because she was determined to learn it. Westover easily demonstrates the commitment characteristic of persistence by doing this because she wants to pass the ACT, so she is using her resources and getting the help she needs to try to pass it.

Continuing on with her school journey, Westover exhibited extreme adaptability which is another characteristic of persistence. Not only did she have to adapt to a different lifestyle, the college lifestyle, she had to leave the place she lived her whole life. She moved another state away and had to adjust to living there and she also moved to a whole other country and had to adjust to living there. Westover was able to adapt well at Cambridge. She “believed she belonged in Cambridge.” (336) and even “had become a [...] family” with the friends she made while being there (346). While still dealing with family crises, like her father catching on fire, Westover was able to make genuine connections with other people and have the strength and determination to keep pushing through with school. Eventually Westover was able to finish school with her PhD and become “Dr. Westover.” (392), which is an incredible achievement considering her circumstances of only being homeschooled for a few years and further showcases her patience and persistence.

Next, there are multiple ways that patience and persistence are represented as themes throughout the book. One way is the patience that she has with her family. When her dad basically disowned her and told everyone in her family to do the same, even her aunts and uncles, Westover still cared and tried talking to her parents and was able to have a strong connection with certain brothers. This represents the patience and love that she has with her family. She was also patient when it came to learning new things either when she was studying for the ACT and when she was in school learning things she never heard of before.

Persistence was also represented throughout the story as a major theme. Westover was very persistent even as a young child. For example, when she auditioned for all those plays and ended up getting the roles, she was determined to do the best she could as that character. When she played Annie she cut and dyed her hair to look more like her, and she bought and borrowed dresses too, all to play the part. As mentioned before, Westover was also very persistent when it came to her schooling. Although it was tough for her at first she always tried her best in her classes, talked to her professors when she needed to, and would stay up all night to get her work done.

Nevertheless, others might say that Westover wasn't always patient and persistent with her school or family life. On one hand, I agree with them because Westover did have her fair share of struggles throughout school, like when she had her breakdown and kind of quit everything for a while. But on the other hand, I still insist that even though she did give up for a little, she ended up back on her feet, excelled, and finished school. I feel that as long as she didn't entirely give up, go back home, and fall into the trap her father used to have her in, then she was still able to represent patience and persistence.

All in all, Westover went through many challenges and hardships in her life, and came out thriving on the other side. She had the patience and persistence to get through school and struggles that she had with her family. Having patience and persistence, she was able to make lifelong friends, build new connections with family members, and she was able to become her

own person which is the most important thing. Having these two characteristics allows one, like it allowed Westover, to get through any tough situation and be okay when it's all over.

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