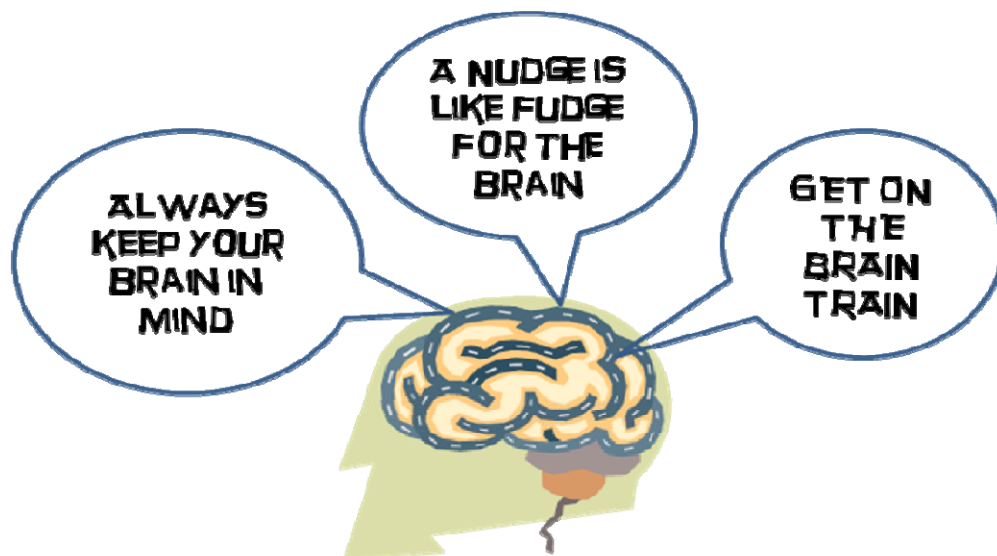


Chapter 3

# The Art of the Nudge

## Part 1

***HIGH LEVEL  
BRAIN-TRAINING***



## ***Part One: High Level Brain Training***

### **Leader Notes for Module**

#### **As general objectives for this module, participants will:**

Learn how impulsive actions begin in the brain

Explore ways to nudge the brain toward more controlled thinking

#### **Rationale**

Adolescents are often troubled by impulsive thinking and actions that result in many of their problems with substance abuse and treatment engagement. This session introduces teens to the notion of developing their own personal cues introduced as “nudges.” Nudges are defined as reminders that are created physically (e.g. maps, calendars, post-it notes) or stored as cognitive cues (“just do it;” “count to 10”) that teens are taught to create and access to offset the often negative consequences of thinking or acting impulsively.

#### **Activities**

Quick “Check In”	10 minutes
Magic Trick Slap Jack	20 minutes
The Art of the Nudge (Brief didactic; group mapping practice)	25 minutes
Nudge Game Plan (Guide map activity)	25 minutes
Wrap Up/Thinking assignment	5 minutes

## Materials needed for this session



### ***Opening Board:***

Copy the brain map on the front cover of this session on erasable board or flip chart so participants can read it as they come in

### ***Cognitive Magic Trick: Slap Jack***

A deck of cards for each pair of participants, with Jacks removed. Save Jacks to reinsert in deck later in activity. Have an intact deck for group leader demonstration. Decks with backs that are all the same (e.g. red, blue, etc.) with simplify the activity.

### ***Inner Nudge/Outer Nudge guide map***

Provide copies of the *Inner/Outer Nudge* guide map (page 58)

### ***Positive Nudge/Negative Nudge guide map***

Provide copies of the *Positive/Negative Nudge* guide map (page 59)

### ***Nudge Game Plan guide map***

Provide copies of the *Nudge Game Plan* guide map to participants (pages 60)

### ***Mapping materials***

Make sure you have plenty of pencils, pens, markers, colored map pencils, crayons, and mapping paper for the group

### ***TRIP Session Evaluation***

Provide copies of the Session Evaluation (page 61)

# THE ART OF THE NUDGE PART 1

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## STEP ONE

**Welcome participants to the group. Take a minute to acknowledge any new members with a quick introduction:**

*If this is your first TRIP group - Welcome! In this group, we take some time to think about thinking. You heard right - it's all about learning more about the thinking process. It will be a little different from some of the other groups you attend here, but every session is different, so you won't have any trouble joining in.*

**Go around the room quickly and ask group members to introduce themselves to any new members.**

**Ask participants:**

*What has been on your mind the last few days?  
What have you found yourself really thinking about?*

**Use erasable board or flip chart to make a map of participants' thoughts or issues that they volunteer.**

**Summarize the check-in activity:**

*As always, it looks like there has been a whole lot of thinking going on over the last few days. Brains have been active. I have made a map or layout of your thoughts or the ideas you all have been having. We'll leave these posted here, and see what kind of influence today's activities might have on everyone's thinking before we leave.*

## STEP TWO

**Introduce *Slap Jack* activity by asking how many people remember how to play the old card game called "Slap Jack."**

**Use your intact deck of cards (one with the Jacks in it) to quickly demonstrate how it is played with a volunteer from the group.**

## **THE ART OF THE NUDGE PART 1**

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*This is an old game from childhood. In a deck of card there are cards with numbers and cards with faces. The face cards are Kings, Queens, and Jacks. In a deck there are 4 Kings, 4 Queens, and 4 Jacks.*

*The objective of Slap Jack is to capture as many cards as you can. You do this by being the first person to slap a Jack. If you correctly slap a Jack, you win all the cards underneath it.*

*Only slapping a Jack wins the cards in the pile. If you accidentally slap any other card, you forfeit the stack to your opponent. So you really have to focus and think in order to win.*

**Arrange participants in pairs at tables or surface where they can play. Demonstrate how one person can turn cards so that both maintain an "alert" hand near the card stack.**

**Distribute decks with Jacks removed and start participants playing with "Go."**

**Once they are finished with the game, process the experience:**

*What did you learn about your deck?*

*When did you figure it out?*

*How many "false" hits were there? (People winning a stack because their partner hit another face card?)*

*How many found it harder to "hold back" the shorter the deck was getting?*

**Return 4 Jacks to each pair of players and ask them to shuffle their decks and try again. Help out with shuffling decks, as needed. Give them a "Go" start:**

**Once they are finished, process the entire experience:**

*What was different playing the second time?*

*How did you think differently about "slapping" or holding back?*

*Were there more or fewer "false" slaps?*

*What did say to yourself as you concentrated on the second round?*

# THE ART OF THE NUDGE PART 1

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**Summarize with a few key ideas:**

*In the Slap Jack game, you had a chance to experience different parts of your brain in action together. One part screaming "Slap and Win, Dude!!!" and the other saying "Watch! Wait! Be Cool."*

*You know that if you slap too fast, you lose. So chances are, as you played the second round, inside your head you developed some faint reminders to "concentrate" or "focus on the J," or maybe even "count the Jacks and estimate the odds" (for you math whizzes).*

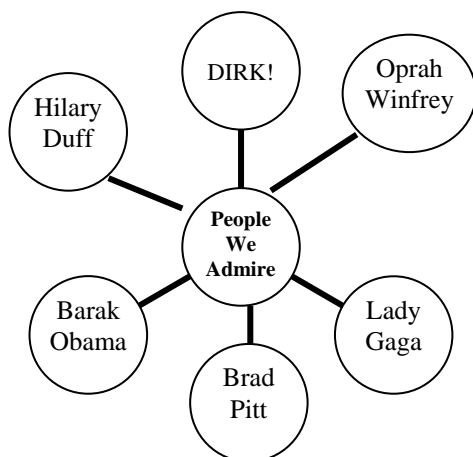
*Regardless, somewhere in your brain, in your own personal way, you worked to develop some reminders to help you win the game. Similarly, when you play video or electronic games, over time you develop and remember strategies to help you play well and win.*

## STEP THREE

**Introduce the Art of the Nudge discussion by generating names of people that the group admires.**

*To start off today, let's make a quick map of famous people that we like and admire. These can be favorites from music, TV, or movies. Think of people who you think are talented or who have made great achievements in their lives.*

**Use erasable board or flip chart to make a map of participants' choices. Here's a thumbnail example:**



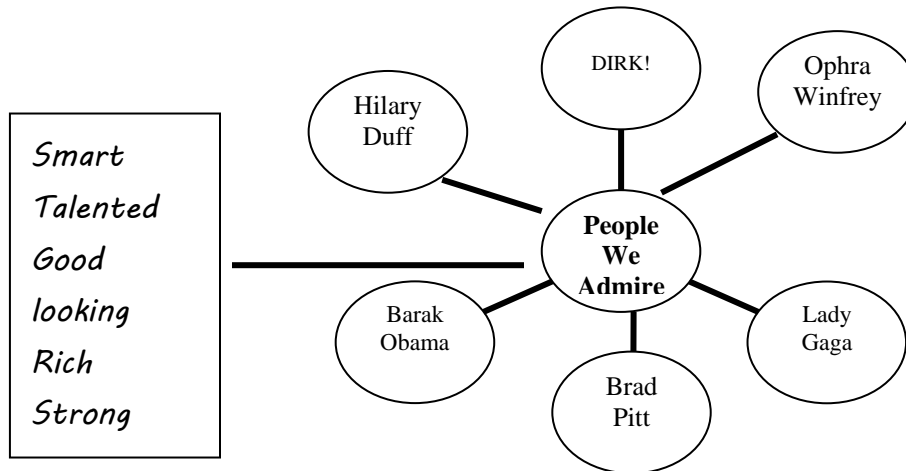
# THE ART OF THE NUDGE PART 1

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Generate 6-8 responses, then ask:

*This is a very diverse list of people. What is one thing you think they all have in common? What would you say they all have in common?*

**Create a node off to the side and add their ideas about what the famous people have in common. Here's a thumbnail example:**



**Summarize with the following ideas:**

*Your ideas about what all of these famous, talented people that you admire have in common are very good. It's true that all these folks are... (add their ideas from the map, for example "It's true that all these folks are good looking, rich, connected, and strong").*

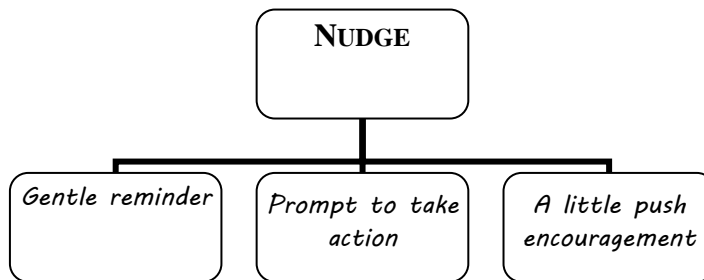
*However, there is something else I'm thinking they have in common. It has to do with what's going on in their brains. Way back when, before the money and the connections and the fame, most of these people had one important thing in common that paved the way for their success. They learned how to Nudge themselves.*

*In their own personal way, in their own personal style, they all learned the Art of the Nudge. Nudging involves developing and listening to your own "inner coach." It's what you learn to say to yourself and what you teach yourself to do in order to reach your goals and handle disappointments and setbacks.*

# THE ART OF THE NUDGE PART 1

*The good news is that we can learn the Art of the Nudge, too. It is the key to success in anything. Learn to Nudge, Nudge every day. Let's stop here and break it down - What do we mean by a nudge?*

**Build an information map to define “nudge,” using the group's responses, as illustrated in the thumbnail below:**



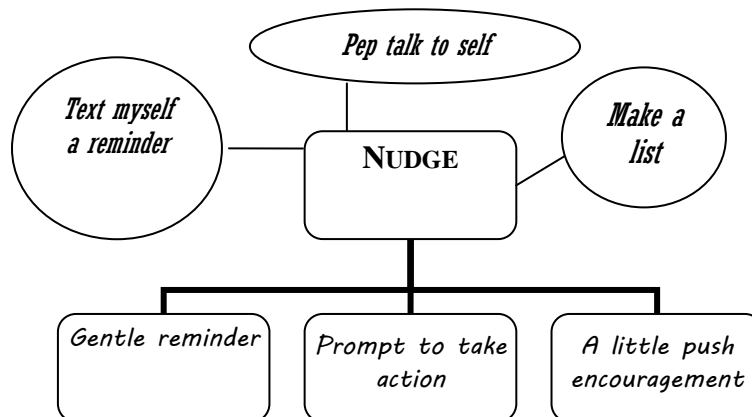
*A good definition of a “nudge” might be a “gentle reminder.” It can also be a “cue” or a “prompt” to take action or to remember to do something. Kind of like a little “push” or an “encouragement.”*

*For example, if your best friend was in danger of getting in serious trouble for cutting class, you might give him a “nudge” by encouraging him to go to class, reminding him about the consequences, and maybe add an extra little “push” by walking with him to class.*

*That's an example of how we can nudge others. But equally important is learning how to nudge yourself.*

*What are some example of how we nudge ourselves?*

**Add responses to the nudge definition, as shown below:**





## **THE ART OF THE NUDGE PART 1**

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*We nudge ourselves by acting like a good coach to ourselves, giving ourselves reminders, encouragements, pushes, memory aids, and other creative cues that keep us focused and motivated on what we know we need to do to be successful or get the job done.*

**Distribute copies of *Inner Nudge/Outer Nudge* guide map. Provide the following explanation and instructions:**

*What we see developing with Nudges is much like belly-buttons. There are "innies" and "outies." Some Nudges are in the form of MENTAL reminders and coaching. These are thoughts and self-talk that are inside our heads, so we call these Inner Nudges. Other Nudges are in the form of PHYSICAL reminders and cues. These are things like lists, post it notes, posters and other things that we can see and touch, things we create to serve as reminders. We call these Outer Nudges.*

*Use your Inner Nudge, Outer Nudge worksheet to list as many examples of each of these nudge-types as you can think of. Put some thought into it and be creative, but realistic.*

**Ask for volunteers to provide examples of Inner and Outer Nudges. Use some of the following questions to probe their answers.**

*Where did the idea for this nudge come from?  
Have you ever tried this type of nudge? What was the situation?*

**Distribute copies of *Positive Nudge/Negative Nudge* guide map. Provide the following explanation and instructions**

*Let's look at another guide map worksheet.*

*In the world of Nudges, like in everything, there are bound to be Positive and Negative Nudges. In other words, some inner or outer nudges can serve to nudge us in a positive or negative direction.*

*Positive Nudges push us in the direction that is in our best interest. These nudges push us toward success and getting things done. Positive Nudges can equally be Inner and Outer. For example, Jaime is motivated to get in shape. He keeps a calendar to schedule his workouts (outer nudge) and tells himself "just 5 minutes more" (inner nudge) when he wants to quit.*

## **THE ART OF THE NUDGE PART 1**

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*Negative Nudges, on the other hand, often are in the form of Inner Nudges such as thoughts, ideas, and self-talk that encourage us to give up, not try, drop out, get high. In other words, nudges that push us to thoughts and actions that are not in our best interests. Negative Outer Nudges often are actions or associations with others that usually lead to trouble. For example, Tony is angry and spends the day thinking over and over that "treatment is just a joke" (inner nudge). Later that day, he meets up with another guy who wants to sneak out and smoke (outer nudge). These nudges lead to a potentially disastrous direction - down and out!*

*Take a few minutes to complete your Positive Nudge, Negative Nudge worksheet to list as many examples of each of these nudge-types as you can think of. The nudges can be Inner or Outer, just focus on whether you would call them Positive (helpful) or Negative (unhelpful).*

**Ask for volunteers to provide examples of Positive and Negative Nudges. Use some of the following questions to probe their answers.**

*(For Positive example): How will this type of nudge help the person be successful?*

*(For Negative example): What would happen if a person followed this type of nudge?*

**Summarize the discussion about Nudges with some of the following ideas:**

*Our brains are not really muscles, but, like a muscle, learning to create and use Inner and Outer Nudges that are Positive in focus can strengthen different parts of the brain. These are parts of the brain associated with memory, with motivation, and with controlling impulses.*

*For example, Outer Nudges like lists and calendars help remind us what needs to be done (memory), and Inner Nudges like "you can do it" (motivation) help us reach the goal.*

*Nudges can help us avoid the problems that impulsive decisions can bring. Impulsive means "acting without thinking clearly," often in a "quick" way that might sometimes be "reckless" or "careless," or even "foolish." Things done "impulsively" are often "unthinking" and done "without*

## **THE ART OF THE NUDGE PART 1**

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*regard" to obvious and natural consequences. For example, deciding to dive headfirst into a pool without checking the depth of the water.*

*Here is where Nudges come in. Nudges can serve as thoughts or reminders to slow down and think before acting. For example, John sees another guy talking with his girlfriend and he gets mad. He might act impulsively (without thinking) and run over to start a fight or hit the other guy in the nose and cuss him out.*

*However, John has trained himself in Nudges. He uses Nudges a lot, so that part of his brain is very well developed.*

*Here's what he does instead of having a meltdown: He calls on his favorite Inner Nudge. His self-talk tells him to stand back, count to ten, take a deep breath. He reminds himself that fighting will only cause bigger problems!*

*Then he uses his favorite Outer Nudge. He pulls out his cell phone and takes a picture of himself. He uses the picture to remind himself that he looks stupid when he's mad, and this helps him relax his face.*

*This helps him let go of the impulse to start a fight. Suddenly his girlfriend is standing next to him, talking about being glad she was able to **stop one of her class mates in time to get tomorrow's assignment**. John realizes that's why she was talking to the other guy and is very glad that he didn't over-react.*

*Another example of Nudges saving the day!*

*We want to strengthen the "nudge" part of the brain, because that's where our "wisdom" is stored. It gives us reminders of how to stick with things that are in our own best interest. In others words, things that keep us from getting in trouble or failing in things we want to work for us. A Nudge or two a day can keep trouble away.*

### **STEP FOUR**

**Distribute copies of *Nudge Game Plan* guide maps (pages 57-59).**

# THE ART OF THE NUDGE PART 1

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*The best way to begin using Nudges is to have a game plan. Here's how it works. Your Game Plan map asks you to think about two issues or goals that you want to end successfully.*

*Fill in the map as indicated. Think about nudges, both inner and outer, that would be helpful for keeping you on track to solve the issue or get closer to the goal.*

*You also want to think about nudges that you need to avoid, as these could steer you wrong. These would be Negative Nudges. These are thoughts or actions that would not be helpful in getting us where we want to be.*

**Allow time for participants to complete their maps. Once maps are complete, process the activity by asking for volunteers to share their experiences, using some of the following questions to get things started:**

*What are some examples of helpful kinds of nudges in your game plan? How did you think of these?*

*What about unhelpful nudges you identified? What makes it a Negative Nudge?*

*How can we turn off or unarm a Negative Nudge? What can we do to take away its power?*

**Conclude activity with a few key points about nudges:**

*So the take-away message is - Nudge, baby, Nudge.*

*As simple as it sounds, the more you develop and use your own unique, creative Nudges, the stronger your brain becomes for memory, motivation, and avoiding potentially stupid decisions.*

*Let's think back to that map of famous people we admire - What kind of nudges do you think helped them get where they are today?*

## STEP FIVE

**Summarize session and briefly review the opening map reflecting things participants stated they had been thinking about.**

## **THE ART OF THE NUDGE PART 1**

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*Nudges are the secret to success. Developing cues and reminders that help keep you focused on your goals and on things that are in your best interest will be one of the smartest things you do in your life.*

**Ask for discussion:** *What nudges fit you the best - inner, outer, or both?  
How are nudges a "brain tool?"  
How can they help your thinking?*

*Before we break for the day, let's review some of the things that were on your mind when you first arrived (**review each point on the map**). So here is your take away question to think about:*

**Ask:** *What kind of nudges might help you with what's been on your mind this week?*

**Distribute copies of the *Session Evaluation* (page 61) and ask participants to complete and hand in before leaving.**

**Thank members for their participation and encourage them to attend their next TRIP group.**

# INNER NUDGES AND OUTER NUDGES



**Inner nudges**

Your  
Examples



**Outer nudges**

Helpful thoughts, ideas, self-talk  
What your inner coach would say

Creative physical reminders  
Ways to catch your own attention

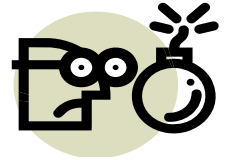
# Positive and Negative NUDGES



## Positive nudges

Inner and Outer Nudges  
Push you in the Right Direction

Your  
Examples

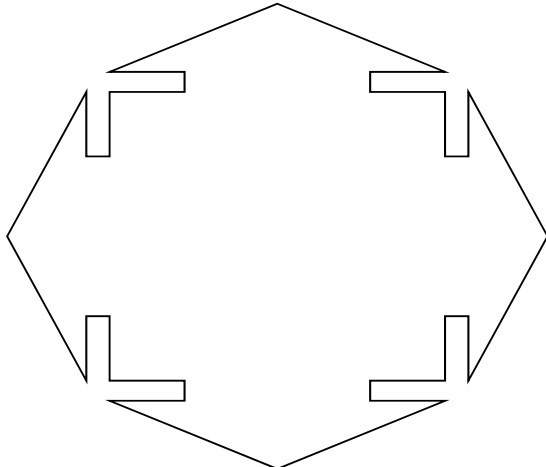


## Negative nudges

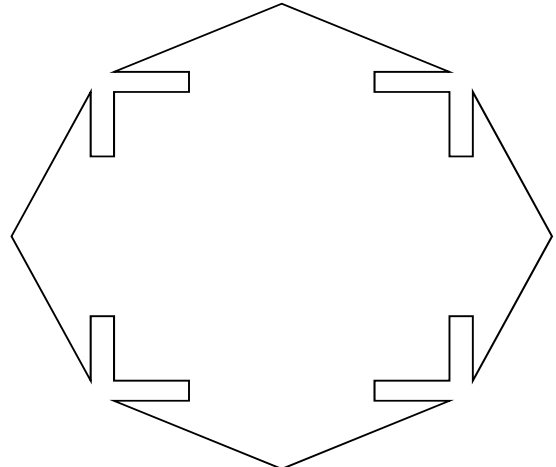
Inner and Outer Nudges  
Try to Push you in the Wrong Direction

# **NUDGE Game Plan**

*Here's an issue  
I want to deal with successfully*



*Here's a goal  
I want to reach successfully*



**Positive nudges**

**My Inner Nudges**

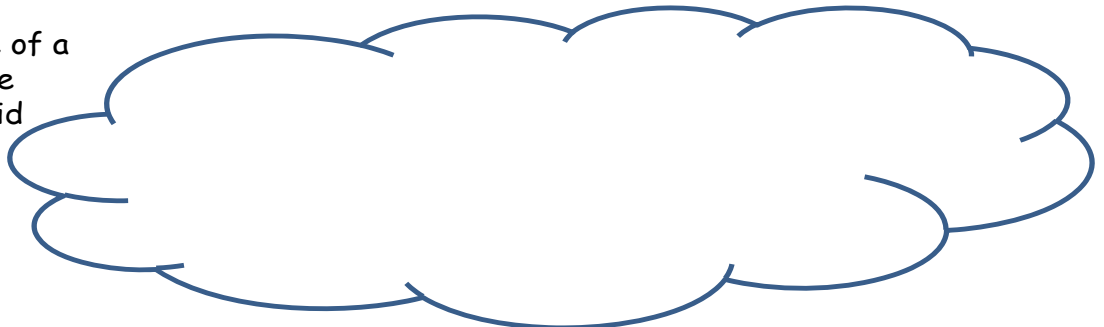
**My Outer Nudges**

**Positive nudges**

**My Inner Nudges**

**My Outer Nudges**

Here's an example of a  
Negative Nudge  
I'll need to avoid





# ***THE ART OF THE NUDGE PART 1***

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## **Session Evaluation** *The Art of the Nudge Part 1*

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please take a minute to give us some feedback about how you liked this session.

1. Use one word to describe your feelings about today's class \_\_\_\_\_

2. What was the most important thing you learned today?

3. On a scale of 1 to 10, how do you rate today's class? (Circle your rating.)

<b>01</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>10</b>
Poor			Pretty Good				Excellent		

4. Do you have any suggestions to help make this class better?