



Chandler DeWitt

### Why I wrote this book.

I had just graduated high school and was looking forward to an easy summer before starting college when my parents asked me if I would be interested in writing a book. Their company produces television programming and video-based educational materials on teen issues and they wanted to publish a book for teens. At first, I was hesitant. I didn't know if I could do something like that. Writing an entire book was a big deal and I didn't think my life had been that interesting. From the outside looking in, I knew I seemed like a normal kid. No drama. No one big event that changed my life. I had friends, was involved in activities, and came from a stable family. Who was I to talk about teen issues and what qualified me to have a credible opinion on the subject? Did I really want to put myself out there and share my stories? I wasn't sure.

But looking back, there were a lot of little moments that changed me from the inside out. And it was the same for most of my friends. Along the way, there were small choices in middle school and high school that in some way changed our lives. I started thinking about some of the reasons we make bad decisions or head down the wrong path: stress, anxiety, competition, cruelty, the need to please, and all of the day-to-day tension. While I was in high school, sometimes I felt like I was living for someone else. Rather than trying to figure out who I was, I was trying to be the person someone else wanted me to be. I knew many of my friends felt that way too, but no one should live life that way.

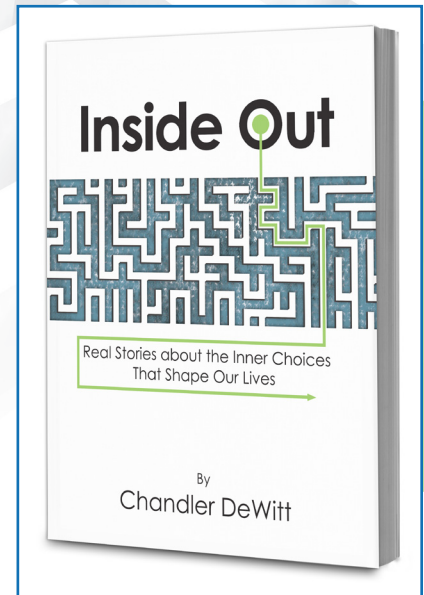
**"Let's face it our parents can't always understand. Even though they were young once, it's different today."**

There were times when I wished that I had something to reference or someone to talk to who had been through it. Let's face it our parents can't always understand. Even though they were young once, it's different today. I just don't think our parents had to worry as much as we do about test scores,

getting into the right college, competitive sports, the pressure of social networks, and the ups and downs of being constantly wired to technology. And, if everybody is honest, a lot of the pressure to perform comes from our parents, teachers and other adults.

So after thinking about it for awhile, I said okay to my parents and started working on the book. It is mostly real stories from my life along with a few others about kids who have been interviewed by producers that worked for the company. It's written from my perspective. There is nothing earth shattering, no secret revelations or formulas, just an honest look at the real life of a normal teen.

I do hope that every kid and adult will realize after reading the book that everything we do and accomplish means nothing if we don't know who we are at our core. And who we are inside will ultimately determine what choices we make and whether our generation will make the world a better place. I've always been told that happiness comes from within. And now, I think I'm starting to understand that. I hope this book will help you understand it too.



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