

How to Overcome **CHALLENGES**



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“Take into account that great love and great achievements involve great risk.”

- Unknown

INTRODUCTION

Throughout our lives we face challenges in many types of situations. Do you sometimes freeze up when faced with obstacles because you're unsure of what to do? If so, opportunities may pass you by because your resolve to meet the challenge quickly disappears.

However, *the good news is: you can pass any test you face on the way to your goals!*

Opportunities that once passed you by can be turned into stepping stones on your way to victory. Once you add a few simple strategies to your arsenal, you'll be unstoppable on your path to success.

Even big challenges can be surpassed with a few simple techniques. Overcoming these challenges will spur you on and encourage you to live the life you were born to live. *Instead of feeling fear, you'll feel confident when you approach these roadblocks.*

It's okay to feel fear, as long as you allow that fear to propel you forward. The truth is, anything worth having comes with some setbacks along the way and obstacles to overcome. *Your willingness to face these challenges head on will determine the level of success you achieve in your life.*

The strategies you learn here can help you every single day. If you take advantage of these techniques, you'll discover within yourself a much stronger person capable of anything.

Everyone suffers from fear from time to time. Some use the fear as an excuse to give up, and others use that fear to motivate themselves to achieve their dreams. The choice is yours.

GET YOUR MIND ON TRACK

"Mindsets play strange tricks on us. We see things the way our minds have instructed our eyes to see."

– Muhammad Yumus

EXPECT THE BEST

The first step in overcoming any challenge is to expect the best out of the situation. When you go into a challenge with the expectation of failure, chances are good that you will fall short of your goal. Your mindset going into any situation plays a big role in whether or not you're going to come through it with success.

Even when your situation seems overwhelming and completely unbeatable, *you can choose* to think the best of it. Find the good in the situation, learn from it, and focus on solutions. When you do, you'll routinely turn the frustrations of your life into victories.

Try these strategies to focus your mindset on expecting the best:

1. **Use positive self-talk.** When you face a challenge, do you find yourself saying, “I can’t do this?” If that’s the case, your self-talk is sabotaging your success. Instead, tell yourself you *can* and *will* succeed.
 - Give yourself permission to make mistakes and learn from them.
 - Resolve today that you refuse to give up until you reach the goal you’ve set.
 - By simply changing what you say in certain situations, you can alter the way your mind thinks about difficult circumstances.

2. **Replace negative thinking with productive thinking.** Think about the road before you in a way that spurs you on toward success.
 - Replace thoughts of “I can’t” or “I’ll never make it” with productive thinking. Tell yourself, “I’ll figure out a solution.”
 - Then focus on a solution, instead of the challenge. When something’s frustrating you, put your mind to work in a productive manner. Think about what’s great about the situation you’re in. How can you make it the way you want it? This kind of thinking can only lead to success.

Remind yourself that the only way to fail is to give up and, instead, resolve to keep putting one foot in front of the other until you reach your destination.

3. **Believe in yourself.** You're capable of amazing things. You just have to trust in your abilities, gifts, and talents.
- Reflect on your previous accomplishments. You've certainly succeeded at many things before, but you've likely forgotten. Focus on previous victories and you'll feel confident to tackle any challenge.

With the proper mindset in place, your talents, desires, and abilities will naturally draw success to you. Even when you fall short, you'll make the most of the experience by learning from it and moving forward in a positive direction.

LOOK FOR THE SILVER LINING

In every situation, there is a silver lining to be found and appreciated. Do you look at something that's hard and get easily frustrated about how difficult it is? Do you always believe that the worst-case scenario is the likely outcome? You can learn to think differently and steer the ship of your life in a different direction.

What's the high point of the challenge you're facing? *There's something positive about the situation you're in.* What is it? What can you learn from this? How can you grow from this experience? How will this experience

make you a better person? How will this event in your life alter your future for the better?

Think of a stressful situation you currently face. Take time right now to close your eyes and ask yourself, "What's great about this?" At first, your mind will likely answer something like, "Nothing!" Continue to think about it until your mind gives you two or three satisfying answers.

This is different than thinking that everything is perfect when it's not. *Instead of denying reality, you're giving your mind a more accurate, balanced picture of reality.* Allowing your mind to realize that there are both positive and negative aspects of your current situation puts yourself in a more productive frame of mind to deal with those negative parts of that reality.

Discover the lesson. Every situation has something to teach you if you'll look for it. Ask yourself:

- What can I learn from this challenge about my abilities and my circumstances?
- In what ways does facing this situation improve the quality of my life?

FINDING SOLUTIONS

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO MAKE IT BETTER?

The only way you'll find solutions to the frustrations you face is to look for them. Think of something in your life that's frustrating you. Instead of thinking of all the reasons this bothers you, think about ways you can make it better. Is there someone you can ask for help? Are there habits that you can change? Can you schedule your time differently?

The questions you pose to yourself about your situation will determine your attitude. And, your attitude will determine your chances of success. Ask yourself why things are so frustrating, and your mind will return many reasons for you to be frustrated. Ask yourself how you can solve the dilemma you face, and your mind will give you the answers you seek.

If you spend your time complaining about your circumstance, you'll spin your wheels and stand on the same frustrating ground. Instead of denying reality, *make your reality better* by asking yourself how you can affect things in a positive way.

"Worrying is like a rocking chair; it gives you something to do, but doesn't get you anywhere."

– Van Wilder

STAY AWAY FROM UNPRODUCTIVE “WHAT IF’S”

When you worry about what *may* happen in the future, you avoid the productive thinking that can make all the difference in your life. You also miss out on the gift that’s found in the present moment. Challenges can help you grow as a person, or it can cause you to stop you in your tracks. The choice is yours.

Be strong and face what’s in front of you. The more you face your fears head on, the more confident and motivated you’ll become as you consciously step closer and closer to your dreams.

The list of what-ifs you face could go on forever if you let it... “What if I embarrass myself? What if I fall short? What if this doesn’t work?” Your mind will answer those questions and prevent you from ever moving forward. *Is this what you want – or deserve?*

But what if you asked questions like:

- What would I do if it were impossible for me to fail?
- What would my life be like if I attained this goal?
- How would my loved ones be affected by my success?
- Who can I learn from that has already experienced the success I seek?
- What small step can I take today to create an unstoppable positive momentum toward my success?

Can you see the difference? Just thinking about those questions makes you feel more powerful and in charge of your future. One set of questions makes you huff and puff. The other set of questions gets you fired up, believing that your success is inevitable.

With the right set of questions and productive thinking, you'll be a freight train without brakes that's destined for the train station that contains your dream. With a successful mentor and a positive, productive approach, you'll continue moving forward until the success you envision comes to pass.

*"Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow;
it empties today of its strength."*

– Corrie Ten Boom

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO YOU

Solutions may come in several different ways:

1. **Help from others.** Has anyone you know gone through a similar circumstance and come out successfully? Are there books written by people who've succeeded in this area that detail how they arrived at their success? Can anyone in your community help you with this project?
 - Ask your friends and family if they've faced a challenge similar to yours, and ask what steps they took to accomplish their goal.

- Listen to what they have to say and see if you can implement their ideas into your own situation.
2. **Research.** Thankfully, you can succeed even if you lack some knowledge about the path you must take. The web and your local library contain a wealth of information that can shorten your learning curve and speed you on the path to your success.
- Look online for websites or references about your situation. Read through discussion forums and message boards to see what others have to say about similar challenges their readers may have faced. How did they overcome them?
 - *Why waste time making mistakes, when you can learn from others who've gone before you?* Stay focused and determined to find solutions to your challenges.
 - Find out how others have succeeded and you'll be well on your way.
3. **Creative thinking.** Out-of-the-box thinking can help you see your situation in a whole new perspective. Brainstorm new ideas and consider the benefits of each idea as a possible solution.

"Lack of resource has hanged many a person."
– Irish proverb

MAKE A PLAN OF ACTION

YOUR PLAN

Starting today, map out a plan for your project. What's the next step you need to take? If you don't know what the next step is, then your next step is to find out what comes next.

When you complete the first step, what do you do next? What do you do after that? Coming up with a game plan is simple. All you do is list the steps you must take in order. *You can tweak and improve your plan as you receive feedback on what is and isn't working.* The first draft of your plan, therefore, is a preliminary list of steps to your success.

For example, let's say you're battling a fear of heights. Your action plan might look something like this:

1. Go to a high place.
2. Take a step up.
3. Take deep, slow breaths when you feel anxiety.
4. Take another step up.
5. Take deep breaths and remain calm.
6. Take another step up.

This is your plan of action to start conquering your fear of heights. Once you have a plan in place, that plan will be your tour guide to the destination you're seeking to reach.

"A good plan is like a road map; it shows the final destination and, usually, the best way to get there."

– H. Stanley Judd

Sometimes, the best way to lay out a roadmap is simply to brainstorm and write down ideas for possible tasks as fast as you can. You can always edit the list later. Whatever you decide to do, write your list quickly and then *get started on the first task*. Your task list and plan will evolve as you progress toward your goal, gather feedback on your progress, and learn from others.

TAKE DECISIVE ACTION

Once you've set out your plan of action, take the first action step immediately. Instead of sitting around and looking at your plan, hoping things work in your favor, *make* things work in your favor by taking the first step forward. This will create momentum and motivate you to truly believe in the probability of your success.

Following through is the key that unlocks your success. You're strong enough to accomplish anything you want if you're willing to follow through. As you go, notice what is working and celebrate those victories.

Notice what's not working and tweak your plan as you go, learning from your mistakes and seeking the advice of successful people you trust.

The hardest part about accomplishing any goal is getting started. The good news, though, is that once you're moving in the right direction, you'll be unstoppable if you choose to be. Challenges that seem insurmountable when you begin your journey will seem like stepping stones that propel you upward.

Troubles along the way simply serve as feedback. They serve as markers that tell you that a course correction is required. See them for what they really are and allow them to help you on your journey.

Remember that the path to your destiny is far from a straight line. You'll meander to the left and to the right, but you'll achieve what you seek when you keep moving forward.

Whether you succeed or fail is entirely up to you. Often, you have far more ability and creativity inside of you than you think. Even when you lack these things, someone else who has already succeeded can show you the steps and strategies you need. *Your success awaits, and it's worth the effort.*

"No one will believe in you if you don't believe in yourself."

– Liberace

LEARN FROM YOUR CHALLENGES

Learning from challenges is a key factor that separates successful people from those who only wish their future was bright.

When you take the time to reflect on the things you've accomplished and how you got there, you'll find patterns that you can repeat for many other goals you set in your life. Why make the same mistakes, when you've already learned how to succeed?

Every situation is different. *But often the same creative approaches and tactics you've applied in previous situations can be applied again to overcome new challenges.* When you succeed, write down the steps you took and the results you got. Let this be your success journal that you refer to again and again when making plans for new endeavors.

As an added benefit, you'll grow as a person when you reflect on your successes. Too often, we vividly remember our failures and shortcomings. But there are many things in your life that you've accomplished, so magnify those things by taking the time to remember and celebrate those victories.

When you take the time to meditate on your successes, you'll begin to jump at the chance to go after new and more challenging goals. Instead of cowering in fear, you'll welcome the pressure because you know *the talents and abilities you possess are perfect for overcoming any obstacles.*

REMEMBER THE NEGATIVES, TOO

Thinking productively requires you to focus on the downsides, too. We all make mistakes. The key, though, is to learn from those mistakes. *Decide today that you'll welcome mistakes as opportunities to learn and grow.* When you do, nothing can stop you.

As you reflect on the steps you've already taken to reach your goal and begin to create a plan to conquer your next challenge, ask yourself:

- What obstacles did I overcome to meet my challenges so far?
- How do I overcome the newest obstacles?
- What can I learn from my past challenges that can help me be a better person in the future?
- How can these lessons improve the quality of my life?

Productive thinking is a balanced approach. If you ignore the positive things you've achieved in your life, you'll miss the value of those accomplishments. If you ignore the challenges you faced and the lessons they bring you, you'll miss the value in those as well.

Together, your successes and lessons are the teachers and tour guides that will lead you to the fulfilling life you've always dreamed about. When life gets scary, read your success journal and remind yourself what you're capable of. When the negative voice inside of you wants to close your dreams before you get started, your success journal can silence that inner voice.

The only thing that separates a successful person from one who only dreams of success is a willingness to decide what you want, take action, and respond effectively to the feedback you receive as you go. Learning from others can make this process much easier, but you have everything inside of you to succeed.

“Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear.”

– Ambrose Redmoon