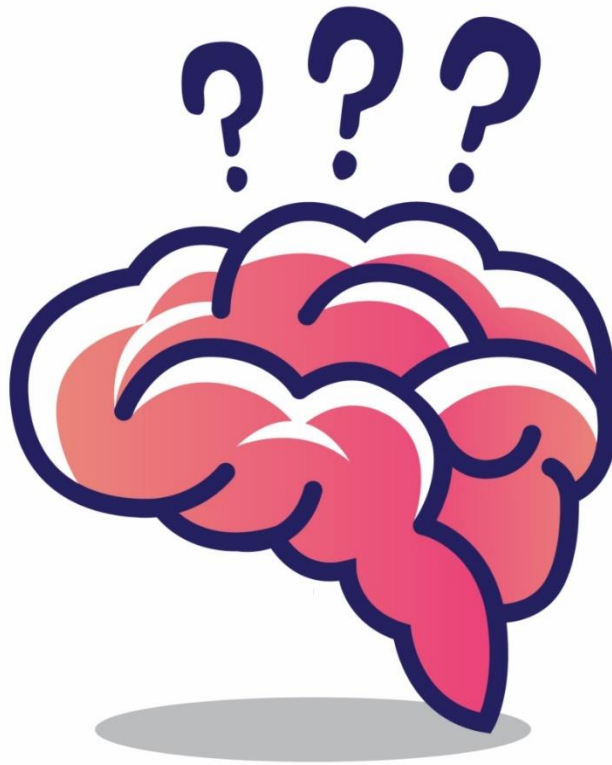


The Thought Book:
An Anthology of Mental Skills and Stories
of Great Thinkers!



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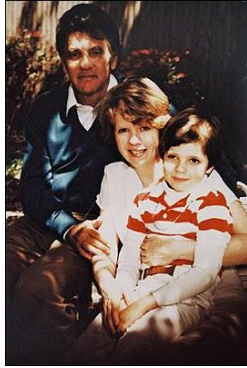
Introduction

“I think therefore I am.” This popular quote from Rene Descartes basically means that if you are capable of thought then you exist. Now the aim of this book isn't to be philosophical (at least not intentionally) but I believe that the quote maybe a little more nuanced than that. If we look a closer at how we think then we can understand how our daily life's performance is dependent on these processes.

This book is meant to shed light on how to utilize our thoughts so that we can ensure that we can perform to the best **possible** extent of our abilities! Just like any other skill we learn in life we must practice. However, for some reason the mental component of performance isn't as emphasized as others. There has been a rise in people's interest in overall mental health awareness and the knowledge of the importance of mental wellness, but the application usually falls short.

The Thought book uses real life anecdotes from people who transcended their baseline expectations some physically, some emotionally but all did it mentally. Facing challenges deemed insane or even impossible, they made the impossible happen. These real-life stories and mental skills to go along with them will you be able to apply them directly to your own life!

In the mind of → Augusto Odone



Any parent would go to the ends of the earth to make sure their children have everything they need, whether it be books for school, clothes, food or shelter. But what if the thing your child needs, is life? The parents of Lorenzo Odone would have to fill this tough order to save their son.

Augusto (an Italian born economist) and Michaela (a linguist) Odone were a loving family living in Washington D.C. with their young son Lorenzo. Lorenzo was a bright boy, by age of five he was fluent in English, French and Italian. His parents even had hopes of Lorenzo one day attending Harvard.

During Lorenzo's kindergarten year, Augusto was sent to work abroad in the Comoros Islands in the Indian Ocean. After this stay teachers noticed that Lorenzo attention span and behavior had been negatively affected, however his thirst for knowledge was unaffected. Lorenzo began losing his eyesight and needed a private tutor. By the age of six in 1984 his behavioral problems intensified and he began to suffer from blackouts and memory lapses, symptoms that are very common in stroke victims.

Augusto and Michaela thought that Lorenzo had contracted some island disease while abroad, but a brain scan showed that he had Adrenoleukodystrophy or (ALD). ALD is a neurodegenerative disorder that prevents neurons from properly firing in turn preventing us from thinking and controlling muscles. It mostly affects males and usually results in death within the first two years.

The Odone family was distraught to hear the news of Lorenzo's diagnoses. At the time there was no effective treatment and Augusto and Michaela refused accept what the current medical professionals deemed inevitable. The Odones were determined to figure out a way to save their son.

Neither of the Odones had a background in medicine and scientific research but they began contacting as many experts around the world as they could while rummaging through the scientific journals. By 1987 Augusto had taken early retirement and enlisted the help of a British scientist named Don Suddaby.

The Odones efforts along with the assistance of Suddaby would go on to find a treatment made from the extract of olive and rapeseed oil. Although, they were warned of the possible side effects, Lorenzo's parents wanted to act in lieu of his deteriorating condition. This new treatment was then known as "Lorenzo's Oil". Augusto attributes the oil to giving Lorenzo an extra 20 years on his life. The treatment would go on to help others suffering from ALD.

Sadly, just one day after his 30th birthday in 2008 Lorenzo passed away. Although he was a young man, Lorenzo's parents gave him an extension on what was thought to be a death sentence. Their inner drive and love for their son led them not only to help Lorenzo but opened up a whole lane of research to help those with ALD.

Just like Augusto and Michaela found the motivation that drove them to create a scientific finding to treat a disease, you can also achieve greater things. Once you find mean and purpose to your goal, the possibilities are endless.



Motivation and Goals: Your gas and GPS

Have you ever been on a road trip? They can be very fun depending on where you're going. However, your destination is irrelevant if you don't have any gas or directions on how to get there. In regard to achieving a task or endeavor consider motivation to be your gas or fuel and goals to be your map or GPS.

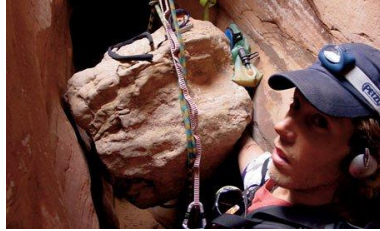


Motivation

Motivation is a psychological construct that drives an individual to a desired goal and can reinforce the action. The two main types of motivation are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

- ✓ Intrinsic Motivation: Intrinsic motivation comes from within the individual. There is no outside factors or rewards to encourage motivation.
- ✓ Extrinsic Motivation: Extrinsic motivation is the exact opposite of intrinsic motivation. This type of motivation requires a reward of some sort from an external variable.

How bad do you want it?



Did you know → A man was so determined to survive that he cut off his own arm! In 2003, adventurer Aron Ralston was trapped by a boulder while climbing canyon solo in Utah. His right arm was trapped in place by the 800lb boulder for 127 hours (5 days 7 hours). After his rations of 2 burritos and a small amount of water were gone he resorted to drinking his own urine. By the fifth day he had come to the realization that he was to die in the canyon. He had an epiphany that he could break his arm using force from the rock and then use his multi-tool to saw himself free. Aron was successful and was later rescued and now is a motivation speaker and still enjoys being an outdoorsman. Do you have that type of motivation and will to achieve your goals?

Below you will describe different motivators in your life and put them in either the extrinsic or intrinsic motivation category.

Extrinsic Motivation	Intrinsic Motivation

Which type of motivation is better? I would say that they both are. A person should have the drive to take action for themselves but sometimes an outside factor can help even the most self-motivated people accomplish their goals.

Studies have shown that if an individual enjoys what they're doing, they are more likely to continue to do it. Not many people would continue doing something they had no interest in doing in the first place. We as humans usually only give time and energy to the things that appeal to us.

Whatever your reason for your goal may be, motivation without a plan means nothing. Yes, you achieve the task but how will you accomplish this? This is where goal setting comes into play.

Goals

Often goal setting is limited to outcomes and results. For example, if I were to ask you what your goals are you may reply “To lose weight” or “Graduate from college”. These goals are fine but don’t give you a clear path to your destination. What about process or performance goals?

Let’s say your road trip is to Texas. The GPS gives you the time of arrival (the outcome goal) at 8:00 PM but no actual directions. Do you go north, south? Do you drive 800 miles or 1,000 miles? You would be completely lost and probably wouldn’t make it to your destination. This is when performance and process goals come in handy. The performance goal would be how fast you go (e.g. 75mph) or which direction to drive (east/west) and the process goal would be getting an oil change or putting your foot down on the pedal. The short processes lead to performance, which leads to outcomes. Make sure your GPS is sending you in the right direction.



Know your goal!

Outcome Goal
You have no control! Ex. You cannot control what the weather or how well someone else performs. This is dependent on a number of variables such as: time limitations, subjective judgments or external intervention.
My Goal:

Performance Goal
You have some control. Given your effort and execution you may have some control of running a certain time or scoring a certain number of points on a test.
My Performance:

Process Goal
You have complete control! You determine how fast you run, how hard you study, or what time you leave your house.
My process:

“Work on the process you won’t get far without one, because process promotes performance and performance shapes the outcome.”

S.M.A.R.T. Goals

S (Specific) *Specific goals should be clear and succinct and not broad.*

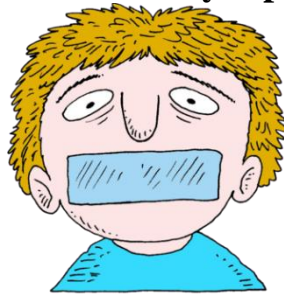
M (Measurable) *If the goal can't be measured how can you track progress?*

A (Adjustable) *Goal setting's dynamic, sometimes it needs to be altered.*

R (Realistic) *Make sure your goals are achievable.*

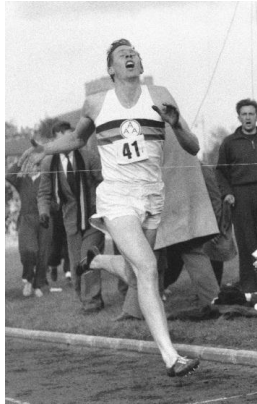
T (Timely) *How long will the goal take to accomplish.*

Say it loud and say it proud?



Did you know → Being too vocal about your goals could actually cause you to lose your motivation? Studies have shown that telling everyone about your goals fulfills the void in self-identity. When this happens you actually lose the motivation to actually perform the hard work to complete the task.

In the Mind of → Roger Bannister



Sir Roger Bannister was a man who knew struggle very well. Coming from a poor English family it didn't seem that his life would lead to anything special. He decided at a young age that his running ability would be his ticket to a better life. Roger's speed and endurance would carry him to a scholarship at Oxford University where he would later practice medicine. Here he would divide time between the track and the classroom to fulfill his ambitious spirit. After a fourth-place finish at the 1952 Olympic Games, Bannister said that he would be the first person to break the four-minute mile barrier.

For several years the world record in the mile would remain stagnant. Many had come close to the sub-four-minute mile, but no one had eclipsed the mark. Since the 1940's the record would remain at 4:01. Runners would push the envelope but fall short of breaking the four-minute barrier. What was making this record so hard to break? For starters, scientists thought it was humanly impossible to break the four-minute barrier. They believed that the human heart could not take that much pressure and anyone who ran that fast would drop dead.

On May 6, 1954 in less than adequate weather and in front of medium sized crowd the impossible would happen. Roger would find himself once again pushing against less than preferable circumstances and as usual he had the belief he could overcome them. The race got off and for a good portion of it Roger trailed in second place. It wouldn't be until the final lap that he would gain the lead. On the last straight away Roger started pulling away from the pack. He would pass the finish line first and as he was trying to catch himself a man came over the loudspeaker. A new world record, 3:89.4, Roger had done it, he accomplished the impossible!

So, what did this now mean? Roger Bannister had broken the four-minute mile barrier and had lived. Were the scientist and doctors completely wrong? Well, we would see less than two months later when Bannisters longtime rival Australian John Landy not only beat him running a sub four minute mile but that time would also become the new world record at 3:58. Within five years twenty men had completed this amazing feat and to this day over fifteen hundred men and occasionally some high school runners have ran a sub four minute mile.

This is not to say some amazing evolution of athletes has taken place, but rather that athletes had seen that it was possible to be done. The fact that they now knew that a man was capable of running the mile in less than four minutes made the feat possible. Roger Bannister saw himself breaking the world record and held this belief in his mind until it came to fruition. This story is motivation not only to athletes but anyone who has a dream they want to accomplish, whether it be finishing school or becoming a successful businessperson. Before any of it can take place you must believe it can happen first.

Beyond Belief: The Belief that you Can

Often times when a person sets out to accomplish a task, they fail long before it was time to perform them. In a more mystical view of the term “believe” one may think of doing a fantastical endeavor that would be unimaginable by normal standards. Although we do not seek to turn water into wine or metal into gold, having unrelenting belief is a powerful tool.

When you go to your car to drive to a destination, you more than likely have the belief that you will arrive safely. We often take this process for granted. This is not to say you should fear for your safety every time you drive but just like you have the faith you’ll reach your destination, you should have the belief in yourself to accomplish the task you set out to achieve.

Belief is often a fickle premise as we tend to give it to others more quickly than to ourselves. Once we can have the unwavering sense of will in our own abilities, the possibilities can be unending. This process of strong belief has many aspects, but it all starts with putting the thought in your own mind that it can be done!

Building Belief

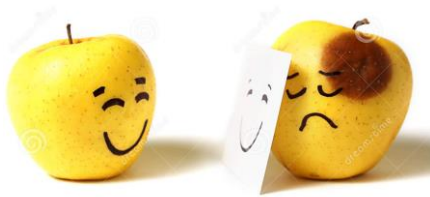
There are several ways someone can practice their abilities to strengthen their belief system. As with exercise you can also improve your thought process. By doing so you can form beliefs that can put you in a better position to accomplish your endeavors.

What do you believe?

Everyone has a set of beliefs that they follow, whether they are core beliefs or family values. These beliefs, whether directly or indirectly, influence how you carry out your everyday behaviors. Before being able to build our abilities in our beliefs we must first take a look at the things we already believe in. Thinking in black and white can be detrimental because when you are fixed in an always or never mode it really limits your perspective.

See how you feel about the following questions and statements
1. Are people able to change or are we always who we are?
2. If it's meant to be then it will just happen.
3. Some things just can't be changed.
4. Luck has to do with a lot of things.
5. If it didn't work out then you probably weren't meant to be doing it?
6. If you work hard then you will get what you deserve.

Fake it 'til you make it!



Did you know→ That pretending that you are happy by performing different acts, such as smiling even when you don't want to, can cause you to become happy. We associate smiling to happy feelings and thoughts. When we make ourselves smile even when we aren't happy, our brain chemistry is still affected releasing feel good hormones such as endorphins and dopamine. It's easier to control our muscle than our emotion so slap on a smile!

How do you go about changing beliefs?

To make a change, it takes a change! If you are stuck with a belief such as you won't graduate from college because you're not smart enough, then you will make the wish come true. The first step would be to apply and have hope your credentials will get you in. Regardless of what your goal may be, the belief of failing or not having what it takes will fulfill exactly what you don't want. Whatever your endeavors or struggles are, how you think about them will shape future outcomes.

View Changer:

Being able to look at things from a different point of view can allow you to become more flexible on your perception and beliefs on certain situations. In the following exercise you will be given several topics and you will give your actual interpretation on how you see them.

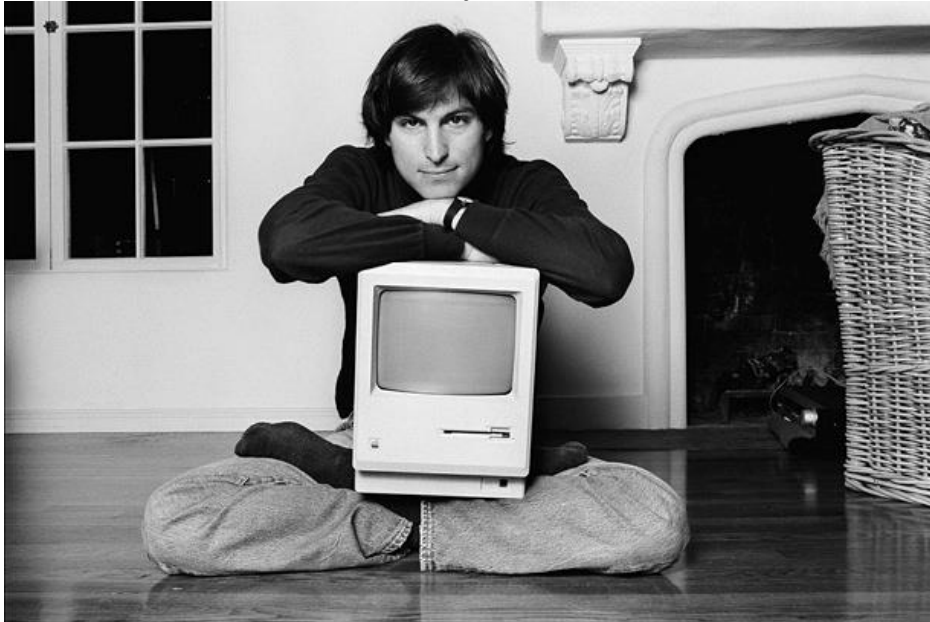
Scenario	1.	2.	3.
You receive a \$50 increase on your pay.	I would make an extra \$600 a year.	My monthly phone bill will be covered by this pay increase.	Money I can donate to charity.
Fail a math test.			
Get turned down for a job.			
Perform a speech in front of a large audience.			

Hey! Why does everyone have my car???



Did you Know? → ***Your Brain has a built-in filter!*** Ever wonder why when you buy a new car all of a sudden you start seeing them everywhere? There is an area of your brain called the Reticular Activation System or (RAS) that controls attention and consciousness. Simply put, the RAS directs attention on what you prioritize as important. So no, everyone didn't go and buy the same car you did, you are just more aware of them now. In regard to beliefs, the stronger the regard you hold and the more you think about it, your RAS will direct attention to the things associated with those beliefs. If the beliefs are detrimental to your goals, you may miss task relevant cues involved in being successful. Plain and simple, you only pay attention to what you think about!

In the Mind of → Steve Jobs



Odds are that you have a smart phone and it's likely you are reading this book from your smart phone. There is also a 45% chance (for Americans) that the phone you're using to read this is an iPhone. Well the founder of Apple Steve Jobs has a lot to do with that. While the late innovator ended his life as one of the most influential people on the planet, he entered without knowing his biological parents. Jobs was put up for adoption after his biological-mother's family were disapproving of their daughter dating a Syrian Muslim. His biological mother didn't tell the father or anyone else that she was pregnant and moved to San Francisco. She searched for college educated, catholic families to adopt Steve and one was interested but later backed out. Fortunately, Paula and Clara Jobs (neither were college educated) took Steve in.

As a kid Steve was very bright but had trouble fitting in at school and could be trouble. He would lose interest in subjects but made friends with the local engineers in the neighborhood. Steve had an interest in how things world and how they were built. He

would later skip ahead a grade. His thirst knowledge was high but his disregard for structure led him dropping out of college.

His journey between school and Apple involved working out of his parents kitchen and garage, working for Atari and finding his cofounder of Apple Steve Wozniak. The two Steves had a vision of the personal computer becoming the wave of the future but the industry may have not been sold on a no name company bringing this into fruition. However, the two Steves and Apple would take the industry head on and getting the Apple computers to the front of the line being worth over \$250 million by age 25. Although the growth of his company would continue, how he ran Apple would be later disputed.

In 1985 Jobs would be asked to switch positions by the board because IBM had beat out sales and the administrative board felt some restructuring was due. Jobs wasn't in agreement with this as it would basically make him powerless in the very company he started. Steve devised a plan to overtake Apple, but it was foiled, and he ended up leaving Apple on his own accord.

Down but not out Steve started a new venture called NeXT. With a backing from billionaire and future presidential candidate Ross Perot, NeXT was able to contribute a lot to the technological world. While having expensive equipment, they were able to lend a hand to the invention of the World Wide Web, provide software for educational

institutions and revolutionizing the email. While it took a little over a decade, Jobs would return to Apple after being bought for \$427 million in 1997!

Steve would once again be in charge and he was tasked with getting Apple back to profitability. He would merge some of the developments that he made with NeXT with the Apple products and services. Over the next decade plus Apple would bring us the iMac, iTunes, the iPhone and many other products that would revolutionize how we use technology! Just think all this came from a guy who was told that he was unfit to run a company that he built.

Failure is an option

Success and perfection are often used synonymously with each other. When most people picture accomplishing major goals, they see one perfect move after another improving step by step. In theory this sounds great, but we all know (at least we should) that failure is inevitable and a part of life.

We must learn how to be failures! That's right we must become failures. This is not to say that you must intentionally do wrong on purpose to get a negative outcome, it just means learning how properly appraise and interpret failure is imperative to your mental and physical wellbeing. Many interpret failure as the end of a mean. Sometimes failure can be the spark to fuel the fire to achieve great things.

There are some things that we fail to do when failing (pun intended). Listed below are a few common errors that most people make that can keep them from achieving the best outcome possible.

Failing Mistakes

- **Thinking success means not messing up.** No one's undefeated in life, success is not a linear process, it's cumulative meaning that it is the total of all sums of your journey.
- **Letting failure negate your abilities.** People often underestimate how well they performed based off how much they fear failure. Give it your best shot regardless of the risk and difficulty of the task.

- **Sabotaging yourself is a common when facing failure.** Sometimes see we purposely put ourselves into positions that will hinder our performance so we can have an excuse for not succeeding.
- **Putting a large emphasis on variables that are not in your control** is very harmful to positive outcomes. Some circumstances are out of our hands and we must focus on the things that we can directly control.

We have established that failure is unavoidable, but do you know how you react to it? By knowing how you personally appraise and respond to failure you can gain insight on how you cope with defeat. In the table below read the question and answer either yes or know to the statement.

Question	Yes	No
When I lose I often wonder what I did wrong.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to try things outside my usual skill level or comfort zone.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I fail it usually takes me a while to want to attempt again.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Luck has a lot to do with the outcome of a situation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If there was an easier route I'd prefer to take it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important for me to have things go precisely as I had planned.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If I work hard and don't get anything out of it then my time was wasted.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Total: _____ Total Yes: _____ Total No: _____ _____		
<p>After finishing the questionnaire, you total your score and a higher total means you may have some trouble dealing with failure while a lower score means you may handle it a little better. Regardless of your score, remember it is a dynamic process that can constantly be worked on and improved.</p> <p><i>*Answer key is located at end of chapter</i></p>		

There are something's you must be willing to embrace about failure. Once you understand these truths, it will be much easier to set out on whatever endeavor you wish to achieve.

1. **Everyone fails:** You are not alone, there is not a single person on this planet that hasn't experienced some form of failure. The sooner you realize this fact the easier you can accomplish bigger things.
2. **Failure is a byproduct of taking action:** If you never failed, then you have never truly tried. Face it, the more demanding the task is the higher the likeliness of not succeeding. So, if you find yourself coming up short, it's ok it means you actually put in an effort. Try to put yourself in more higher stake challenges that have a little more risk, you may be surprised by the outcome.
3. **Failure is a state of mind:** Failure is a lot like anxiety, it's usually all in your head. How you assess a loss can become your actual personality. If you are programmed to react a certain way to a hardship or defeat then it may be difficult to properly persist through the tough time. Understand that you have the final say in your actions so nothing outside of you can prevent your effort.
4. **You can learn and build from failure:** Thomas Edison has a saying that "He didn't fail, he just found a thousand ways on how not to do something." Having an optimistic view of failure allows for more positive associations so that you will have more confidence moving forward. Learn from what you did wrong or what you did right so the next attempts can be your best attempts.
5. **Failure doesn't have it out for you:** Don't take failure so personally! Trust me, bad luck is not out to get you. When you fail it could be a multitude of





reasons. Some of those reasons can be external and sometimes they can be directly in your control. Regardless of who or what is to blame don't take it to heart, things happen and remember you aren't a victim.

6. **Failure is a nomad:** Never think that failure is your new roommate. Many people fall into slumps and sometimes you can face a period of downfalls. This doesn't mean your trouble is there to stay. Failure never settles for too long, it comes, and it goes. Try not to get into the mindset that your failures will continue because indirectly you will lead yourself down that path. Everything is temporary and it is up to us to work for it to reoccur this includes success also.
7. **Failure is an option:** Plain and simple just fail and get it over with already! We have established that it is inevitable and a part of life so what's the point of holding out any longer. Know in whatever you attempt there is probability that you may fail but there is also a chance you can succeed. Why put all your focus on how it cannot work and emphasize what can work.

The Best Losers



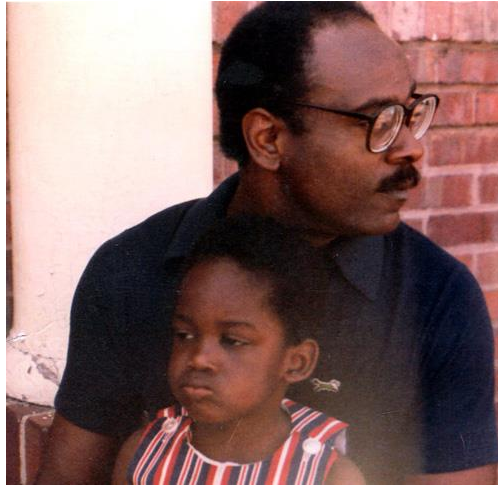
Did you know → If we can take anything from the sports realm, it's that underdogs and imperfection are always capable of great things. Other than the 1972 dolphins, not too many teams in major sports can say they had an undefeated season. So, it's safe to say that failure and loss is a part of every champion. In several different sports there have been some major figures who are regarded as the best, but many are unaware of their downfalls. **Babe Ruth** considered one of the greatest players of all time struck out twice as many times as he would hit a homerun. The **1967 Toronto Maple Leafs** lost and tied more games than they actually won but went on to win the Stanley Cup Championship. **Terry Bradshaw**, hall of fame quarterback with 4 super bowl championships and 2 Super MPV awards threw an interception for every touchdown he scored. **Michael Jordan** probably one of the most iconic figures in all of sports missed his shots more than 50% of them time. Despite all these failures and setbacks, these athletes became great because at the end of the day you have the final say in being victorious.

Famous Failures	
<p>JK Rowling “Creator of Harry Potter Novels”</p> 	<p>While being a single mother on welfare, 27 Publishers Rejected her before she found one to print her first Harry Potter novel. Now she has sold over 400 million copies and an estimated net worth of 1 Billion dollars. It’s safe to say her perseverance and drive worked magic for her!</p>
<p>Colonel Sanders “Chicken Restaurant Empire”</p> 	<p>Colonel Sanders the Founder of KFC was rejected by over 1,000 restaurants. Most people have trouble hearing no just once let alone 1,000 times! You can now find a KFC in over 19,000 location in over 118 countries.</p>
<p>Vincent Van Gogh “World Renown Artist”</p> 	<p>While alive Van Gogh suffered from mental illness, failed relationships and a failed art career. He only sold one painting in his lifetime and sadly committed suicide at the age of 37. However, his works would see great success posthumously. Despite his hard life and tragic end Van Gogh painted over 900 paintings, showing that despite failing to pursue your passions.</p>
<p>Abraham Lincoln “16th President of the United States”</p> 	<p>Known as the “Great Emancipator” Abraham Lincoln is regarded as one of our nation’s greatest presidents. Most people don’t know tumultuous journey he endured. He was born into a very poor family, was demoted in the military, lost in politics and business, but yet he still reached the highest office in America. It is safe to say not much could stop Honest Abe.</p>

Answer Key:

1. Yes= 1 No= 0
2. Yes= 0 No= 1
3. Yes= 1 No= 0
4. Yes= 1 No= 0
5. Yes= 1 No= 0
6. Yes= 1 No= 0
7. Yes= 1 No= 0

In the Mind of → Chris Gardner



You can't stop! Constant moving was the life of Chris Gardner and he had learned at a very early age that when life goes one way you have no choice but to make the best of a situation. Chris Gardner's name may not ring as many bells as Will Smith or Michael Jordan, but he has something in common with both of them! Chris would later buy a Ferrari from MJ and then in 2006 he would be portrayed by Will Smith in the hit movie "The Pursuit of Happyness".

Chris would start life off without his father and with very limited father figures, he would have a hard time in life. An abusive stepfather would later lead to Gardner and his siblings being placed in foster care. At this time, he would form a closer relationship with three of his uncles. His uncle Henry would have the greatest influence inspiring Chris later in life to join the Navy after hearing of his adventures. Unfortunately, Henry would drown in the Mississippi river when Chris was nine. Although a tumultuous upbringing, Chris's mom made sure to instill in him that he should believe in himself and never give up.

Chris was a very bright man and while in the navy he would work under a highly decorated surgeon named Dr. Robert Ellis. Here he would learn an abundance of knowledge and conduct research alongside Ellis. This relationship Ellis would then lead to an opportunity in San Francisco.

His new journey in San Francisco would have him running a lab co-authoring research articles. This would prompt Chris to pursue a career as a doctor.

Chris envisioned that the medical field was changing and by the time he finished his schooling he would be behind the curve. Here began the part of his life that would be depicted in “The Pursuit of Happiness”

An affair with a dental student named Jackie Medina would lead to the birth of a son and after being unable to support his family he would take a job selling medical equipment. While on a sales call he would see a sharply dressed man driving a red Ferrari. After finding out that this man was a stockbroker Chris has his mind made up that this was the business for him.

Chris would get a chance in a training program for stockbrokers at E.F. Hutton, but later finding out that it did not pay. This choice would later hinder his relationship with Jackie. It also would lead to him raising his son Chris Jr. on his own. They would have to bounce around between motels, flop houses, homeless shelter and even bathrooms at the BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit)

station. This was a hard time for both Chris's, but the hard work and sacrifices would pay off.

Chris made a habit of coming into work extra early and staying later than his peers and it would lead to a full-time position. This would spark a startup of Gardner Rich & Co which would eventually be sold in a multi-million-dollar deal in 2006. He had overcome a rough upbringing, failed relationships and homelessness, but Chris showed how he knew that his hard work would lead him to his goal as long as he believed in himself and the process.

It's going to be work!

It doesn't matter how bad you want it, there is no getting around the effort it takes to make a change. You're going to have times when you're going to put in maximal effort and get minimal return. This doesn't mean you haven't worked hard enough but delayed gratification is a key part the process. Put in the work and keep moving forward!

Knowing your values on work effort is important. The following will assess your beliefs on work effort.	Strongly Disagree -----Strongly agree				
	1	2	3	4	5
There should be a balance between the work put in and the outcome that is returned.	1	2	3	4	5
If I put in work I expect to get the results I want in the time that I want it.	1	2	3	4	5
To work repeatedly with (little to) no result is pointless.	1	2	3	4	5
When performing a task, it is very important to know when I will see a result.	1	2	3	4	5
If a task is boring to me I'd be less inclined to do it.	1	2	3	4	5

Hard work or hardly working?

When we talk about hard work, there are many variables to consider. There is scientist that study the effect of practice and work effort on goal achievement. They call this term deliberate practice. This refers to the intentional practice that is specific and goal oriented.

Take for example driving, most people over the age of 16 do this every day. We are issued a license to drive and then after we carry out the task of driving. However, simply being on the road everyday doesn't technically make you a better driver. What habits have you been practicing, what tendencies have you developed, are you even safe and cautious when you drive? Imagine if I asked a person who has driven their car on a regular basis for the last 25 years to drive in a NASCAR race. They probably wouldn't be too good at it. Yes, they have been driving for a long time, but they haven't trained for the specifics of going 180 mph amongst many other cars making tight turns. This same concept can and should be applied to any endeavor in any field!

Talent vs. Hard work

Did you know→ Talented people still have to work hard? Maybe you did know that but often times people attribute a person's success to "natural" ability. Whether it be LeBron James or that one friend who can eat whatever they want and still look great, there is a level of work that must be done. Looking at people who are deemed naturals, we could look at two very similar people Tiger Woods and Mozart. You are probably wondering how are these two related? One is a golfer and the other is a music composer, oh yeah and they were born more than 200 years apart! Believe it or not they both have a lot in common. For one both were touted as child prodigies in their respective fields, both had fathers who were well skilled in the field they trained their sons in and they both worked very hard. Mozart spent a great deal of his days as a youth composing and practicing music. If you ever heard the nursery rhyme "twinkle, twinkle little Star" you are familiar

with one of Mozart's compositions. By the age of ten he had put in more work into his craft than those well into their twenties. As with Tiger Woods, he had competed in many major tournaments as a youth and could compete with the best of them. Although both came from good stock, the common variable was the amount of work that went into their skills. So regardless if you are a phenom or not the potential to be great lies in the effort you put in.

- **Work on your weaknesses-** Many people love to emphasize their strengths but in actuality you should work on your weaknesses just as much if not more! Most avoid working on the things they are not good at because it emphasizes their shortcomings. By doing this you limit how well you can actually improve and remain unbalanced and regardless of what your goals may be being unbalanced is never a good thing. Imagine if you were a great at math and that's all you practiced because it feels good to excel, but you never wanted to emphasize your writing skills because you always did poorly in English class. You would most likely ignore doing anything writing related and flock to anything math related. In this scenario you probably fail English while getting an A in math. Don't run from what you aren't good at, turn those weaknesses into strengths!
- **Focus on little things-** Attention to detail is very important. No stone should go unturned when striving for a goal or improving a skill. Think about the small steps that lead up to the bigger picture. You want to be specific as possible when

embarking in your endeavors. If you want to get in shape, specify how (lose weight, increased endurance, build muscle, etc.). Don't say that you want to go for a run, say that you want to cover 3 miles in 30 minutes. This specificity will give you direct improvement versus random shots in the darks that do not guarantee progression. If you are practicing for a test break it down by individual parts. If you were to build a house you just don't throw a bunch of concrete and nails together would you? You would first get your tools and supplies, competent workers, set the foundation and build one step at a time from the ground up. The same approach should be taken when working toward your own goals.

- **Repetition-** No one ever attempted something one time and was an expert at it. No matter how good you may or may not be at something you must continuously practice at it. There is no way around it. As mentioned earlier you want to specify what exact skills you want to target and once you this you want to make a routine of executing these skills. Make sure you aren't just going through the motions either. For example, if you were to practice a new dance and lackadaisically went through each step, you wouldn't become too good at it. Regardless of what you're working for you will always perform how you practice. So, if you practice poorly odds are you will perform the same way. So, make sure you are consistent and give genuine efforts.
- **Intense Concentration and Mindfulness-** There's nothing wrong with having breaks and intervals when striving toward your goal, but you must keep a clear vision on what you wish to accomplish. Concentration is key and what I mean

by this is that external distractors will always be a factor. This is not to say you must ignore fun things you enjoy, but there will be times you have to abstain. There will be times when your friends will be asking you to come out, but you will have to turn them down. They may be planning for a vacation or dinner party, but you may want to stay in and work on a project you been trying to finish. You see the task right in front of you instead the outside influences that are down the road. Being in the moment of what you need to achieve may sometimes come off as arrogance or boring, but it is important to stay in the here and now and get what you need to get done finished!

- **Solitary Practice**- We often give ourselves a pat on the back for doing the typical needs of a particular job, sport, project or educational endeavor. When it comes achieving something you must go beyond the norm. The musician that practices only when he's with his orchestra can never truly ascend to greatness just as the person who wants their goal must go beyond basic measures. The person who takes extra shots after practice wins the medal, or the employee who puts in free overtime will get further in the company. We usually don't like to do this because it takes away from other activities that we find more fun. However, these extra practices separate the people who just get by and those who become masters of their craft.
- **Get objective feedback**- Don't surround yourself with yes men. Yes, men will tell you everything you want to hear and have you believing you can do no wrong. This alludes back to the concept of working on your weaknesses. You can't work on your weaknesses if you think that you have none. Constructive

criticism is vital to get because we can't assess ourselves objectively. Our own biases will cloud our judgment and we would miss things a third party wouldn't. From a psychological standpoint people always tend to overestimate their abilities. Imagine if you are trying to perfect your running form. In your head you are getting your knees up, following through with your stride, but in reality your knees are barely moving, you're running on your toes and swing your arms across body. These are all things an external eye will capture.

- **Take notes from the greats**- If you want to be the best, you must learn from the best! If you want to become a lawyer, then look at what good lawyers are doing. Want to be a dancer, then find out what the tops dancers do to improve. They say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but it can also be very helpful achieving your goals. Research shows that social learning and vicarious learning are helpful to acquire new skills. By trying to imitate what others in your field have done, you can realize how you can improve your own weaknesses and how you compare to their strengths.

How to Master being a Master

Did you know→ It takes 10,000 hours of practice to become an expert in any field. Well not exactly? The infamous 10,000-hour law has been circulating for some time and there is a little more to it than how much time you practice. First off the amount of 10,000 hours can vary plus or minus a few thousand hours. The number 10,000 comes from performing 3 hours of practice every day over 10 years. However, it can be as few as 7,000 hours or as many as 20,000 which all comes down too many different variables. Also, practice is a vague term, what scientist refer to it, as “Deliberate Practice” a term coined by Florida State Psychologist K. Anders Erickson. Deliberate practice is defined as highly structured activity with a specific goal to improve performance. For example, there is a difference between going to a basketball court and taking 100 shots versus going to the basketball court and making 100 shots with a 5 second limit to get the ball off. As mentioned earlier in the chapter simply doing a task repetitively doesn’t make you good at it. Think about when you were in school, you and your classmates attended class everyday receiving the same lessons from the teacher but not everyone got an A grade. Some students sat at their desk staring into space, some were listening to music and others were diligently taking notes. After school some would hang out with their friends, while others study. These behaviors shaped the outcome of who passed with flying colors and who just got by on the skin of their teeth. So, remember practice can only get you so far if it isn’t deliberate.

Below you will list a goal you wish to achieve and explain why you may want to accomplish it. Then you will list negative hardships and dislikes in accomplishing your goal and how you will overcome them.

Goal	Motivation	What you don't like	How you will achieve it despite hardships.
EX. Losing 20 lbs.	I have been unhealthy for years and it is taking a toll on me.	Working out is time consuming, I like junk food too much, and exercise is boring.	I will manage time to work out, plan my meals, and find an exercise program I can enjoy and if it's hard or boring I'll stick it out.

Check it out →



Traits of the most successful people:

- Work for the process, not the outcome- The end result definitely matters, why else would you be doing it? Be that as it may these people focus on the next step and try to win the small battles, which in turn win the war.
- Don't need rewards- It's good to have a pat on the back every now and then, but these people could do fine without it. Rewards are beneficial to reinforce behaviors but when they occur too frequently it can cause a person to lose motivation and not put as much effort when there is no compensation involved. The most successful people can do what needs to be done regardless of what they will get out of it.
- Do not think they are above learning or improvement- A lot of us have no problem taking instruction when we aren't knowledgeable about a subject, but sometimes when we have some experience in a field we don't want to take direction. People who go on to master their craft tend to be open to criticism and coaching despite their level of expertise. Think of all the best athletes, do they not have coaches or trainers? These are the top people in the world in their respective field, yet they still allow for outside objective sources to give them feedback and guidance. Make sure you are open to be guided and recognize you don't know everything.

- Don't need perfect conditions- They say if you wait for the right time to do something then you will be waiting forever. Have you ever heard (or said) any of these “I'll wait until Monday to start working out”, “Once I take some time off I'll go back to school” or “Once I get everything in position then I can finally start”. Preference is definitely a beneficial thing to have but in most cases in life we may not be afforded this opportunity. People who reach higher levels of mastery and success tend to work well in adverse conditions and in some cases prefer them. The more comfortable you become with being uncomfortable the better opportunity you have to achieve your goals.
- Work despite boredom or hardship- You knew working hard towards your goals wouldn't be easy, but you didn't know there would be a lot of parts that were not so fun. The parts of your endeavors that are considered boring are usually the difference between mediocrity and excellence. Regardless of the entertainment and enjoyment of the task you must approach it in the same manner and look to achieve an optimal result/

In the mind of→Peter Freuchen



The popular beer Dos Equis had a character in their popular commercials called the most interesting man in the world. This fictional character would tell the most interesting stories of his life some too much to believe. Interestingly enough, while not based on Peter Freuchen, you can see there had to be some sort of inspiration from him.

Freuchen was quite an interesting figure, being born in Denmark in the late 1880's. He was in school to become a doctor, but allegedly this wasn't enough to quench his wild spirit. Standing at 6 feet 7 inches he was quite the imposing figure! He looked to become an adventurer, partaking in many expeditions in the arctic. He would go on his first expedition in Greenland in 1906 and would eventually lead him to adventuring out more and more.

While it takes a certain type of tenacity to adventure into the freezing arctic wilderness, but Peter gave a new meaning to the word survivalist. HE would travel on dogsled across the frozen wastelands of Greenland where he would run into the Inuit. He'd learn their language, trade with them and hunt whales, wolves, polar bears walruses and seals! Peter

would spend the few years with the Inuit at Thule (a post he would set up) where the average daily temperature was -12 degrees Fahrenheit. He would meet his first wife and have two children but unfortunately he would lose his wife to the Spanish Flu epidemic in 1921. Upon returning he would begin writing for a newspaper called Politiken and being his first of what would be about 30 books!

Despite the loss of his first wife Freuchen would eventually remarry a multi-millionaire heiress of a Danish Margarine company. While becoming a millionaire and best-selling author, Peter didn't lose his passion for the great outdoors. In 1926, Peter would find himself back in northern Greenland trapped in a horrible blizzard. This moment would be a defining moment for Peter as he would be trapped for thirty hours beneath the snow in a small pocket in the snow. He then resorted to using his own frozen feces to dig his way out of the snow! After three hours he would finally get back to base and see his toes had gangrene. Without anesthesia and only with pliers and a hammer he removed his own toes to avoid further infection.

At this point he was forty years old and had an already extraordinary life, however it didn't get any less interesting. During the onset of World War II while Germany occupied Denmark, Peter would be part of the Danish Resistance. He would hide refugees and undermine the Nazi's so much that they arrested him and sentenced him to death. If his past brushes with death were any indicator of his ability to preserve and survive in the toughest of circumstances, then it should be no surprised that he escaped to Sweden before they could execute him.

Peter Freuchen would finish out the rest of his life in America with his third wife. He would spend his last years writing, spending time at the New York Explorer's club, and winning popular game show "The \$64,000 Question! It was easy to see that Peter Freuchen was a man who could get through anything the world threw at him.

R.S.V.P.



Life is a party and we are all invited to it! Have you checked in yet? Life's circumstances and responsibilities is the DJ is, the different people that influence your life is the bartender and stress is the that pesky person bothering you the whole time while you want to have a good time. These different influences are pretty much out of your control. However, this doesn't mean you can't still have a good time. This is why we must R.S.V.P. whenever we participate in this party called life.

When facing adversity, you must make sure you have the proper tools to maintain. The R.S.V.P. method well ensure that you can best handle and adapt to certain situations and scenarios in the most efficient way possible.

Resilience- How well can you bounce back from adversity and unexpected events.

When your environment has harmful conditions, resilience protects the individual from the adverse effects of those conditions. There are usually 3 ways one can go about approaching adverse conditions.

1. Reacting angrily: Being mad at your situation and making choices based off disdain can have hindering effects later on. This mode of coping may lead to misplaced anger and unwarranted projection on others.
2. Become numb and don't react: This form of coping can be harmful because you don't address the matter at hand, and it gets bottled up.
3. They are upset about the adversity: These people tend to want to do something about the situation since they are more aware of what it is their facing.

Choices 1 and 2 are usually affiliated with playing the victim role and blaming external factors for their downfalls. People who use the third choice typically have an internal response to their adversity and respond to stop the crisis.



Method

How you appraise a situation can affect how you later respond to similar circumstances. Knowing how to properly handle yourself in time of stress can give you the upper hand on your emotions. The ABC method is a cognitive behavioral intervention used to help people make better judgments.

	Healthy	Unhealthy
What happened (The Event)	You see a friend at the store on the phone and they give you a short quick wave and continue.	You see your friend at the store on the phone and they give you a short quick wave and continue.
What you saw (The interpretation)	It must have been an important call.	They are too good to talk to me.
How you react (The Response)	Next time you see them you greet them as normal.	You avoid interaction with that person.

Resilience vs. Mental toughness

These two terms often get interchanged and while they both involve bouncing back through tough times, mental toughness refers more to your attitude and performance through the adversity. For example, a person who is resilient can come back from experiencing trauma but may have issues overcoming certain barriers that may remind them of the trauma. A mentally tough person will maintain their composure despite the adversity they face and remain confident in their abilities in overcoming the struggle.



This can be applied to tough times in your life, how do you interpret it? Is it a stress or a challenge? The better you get at analyzing events the stronger your resilience will become.

If you are more likely to see a threat your body will react by prepping for some type of

stressor. When you see an obstacle as a challenge you are more likely to see an opportunity for growth.

Threat- How can this obstacle hold me back or harm me?



Challenge- How can I figure out how to use this obstacle to uplift me?



Self-Efficacy- This isn't just confidence; this is confidence in your abilities. How well you feel about performing certain task. The ironic thing about self-efficacy is that to get better at a task you must be confident in doing said task, in turn you do it more and if you do it more, you will get better and become more confident in doing it! It is like an endless cycle. Unfortunately, many don't take that first step to even experience how it feels.

The Confidence Cycle: Think Positively → Take Risk → Enjoy Success



Whether you are trying to lift 100lbs or attempt a brand-new hairstyle you must put yourself in position to do it. The confidence cycle is a basic idea of aiming for the best outcome, giving it a try and then enjoying the fruits of your labor. Now every attempt won't be a success, so if it doesn't work out go back to step one. The more comfortable you get with your abilities you will find yourself attempting harder task more and more.

Live through someone else?



Did you know→ By modeling yourself after someone performing or handling a specific task can help you gain the confidence and master certain skills. By imitating someone similar to yourself you can get insight on the best approach to achieving your goals. Make sure they are not too high above your level as this can be defeating to your endeavors.

Vigor- Being physically prepared is important. All the confidence in the world won't help a physically unprepared person.



Imagine trying to go to a competition but you haven't practiced. It isn't likely that you will perform well. Even if you have a high belief in your abilities, a positive outcome is unlikely. The only thing worse than low confidence is false confidence. If you have low confidence you can build it up, but if you have false confidence you will set yourself up for unwinnable situations.

Ready Checklist



- Did you put in a sufficient amount of practice?
- Have you gathered all the resources necessary?
- Do you feel confident that you are where you need to be to carry out the task?
- Do you feel up to the challenge?
- Do you meet the criteria needed to properly execute?

Perseverance- Being able to endure the long haul is a key trait, but it is more than just tolerating. Persevering through situations that are unnecessary and detrimental to your success can hold you back.

Is staying here hurting me more than helping me? Take a look at different aspects of your life and see if staying is better or worse?



	Benefits of staying	Benefits of leaving
Relationships		
Jobs		
Habits		
Other		

Once you know what is needed to stay in your life, enduring the long road will be much easier with more beneficial influences.

In the mind of → Brandon Burlsworth

There are over 5 million participants over the age of six playing tackle football and a majority of them have dreams of playing on Sunday in the NFL! Some won't go past youth league and others will have a good run in high school. Some will have the opportunity to play and college and out that lot, some will play at the division 1 level.

Usually those who play division 1 football have "IT" or what some call natural talent. However, Brandon Burlsworth was not that (well at least by most people's standards)! What Brandon was many things, a man of faith, hard worker, and a visionary. At a very young age Brandon made it his mission to one day play for the Arkansas Razorbacks football team.

While Brandon was a big kid, he was not exactly what most people would call athletic. His early coaches would see a kid who wasn't the fastest, wasn't that aggressive and lacked the football I.Q. to even start in high school, let alone play division 1 football.

However, what young Brandon didn't lack was heart! His determination and hard work would lead him to becoming not only a starter but also an all-state selection. Unfortunately, again in Brandon's life he would be told he wasn't good enough. Despite being a top player, schools just weren't interested in Brandon. This didn't deter Brandon from his vision. He saw himself in only a Razor back uniform playing on Saturdays. He rejected his only two division 2 scholarship offers to be a preferred walk on at Arkansas. This basically meant he would have to pay to take classes and get pounded on by the players who actually get in the game. While a long shot, Brandon told himself that he would make his vision come to reality.

Brandon arrived at Arkansas 6 foot 3 320 pounds but unfortunately he was the wrong kind of big. He would have to remind himself of why he came constantly because unlike his scholarship counterparts, Brandon was being financed by his mother who was struggling to make ends meet so this meant he had one year to earn a scholarship. Brandon was redshirted, so this meant he wouldn't actually get to play in the games that season. This motivated Brandon more and more to lose the fat and put on solid muscle to his frame. He would be the first to arrive at practice and the last to leave no matter what. This eventually led to him earning a scholarship and starting spot!

Becoming a Razorback is what Brandon always saw himself becoming and he did that. He saw himself earning a scholarship and he did that. Brandon told himself he was going to play and start, and he did it. There seemed nothing that Brandon couldn't do if he put his mind to it. His next goal would soon be the NFL. After a coaching change during

his senior season, Brandon would help lead his team to one of their best seasons in years. Brandon would be voted an All-American in football and in the classroom and become the first Arkansas player to earn a master's degree while still playing. In April of 1999 he would get drafted by the Indianapolis Colts! Everything Brandon saw himself doing was now his actual life. Sadly, before he could step on the field for the Colts in the regular season (which he was favored to get significant playing time) he died in a car accident just a few weeks after joining the team.

While Brandon's life was cut short at just 22 years old his vision and legacy now lives thru other players who start their careers as walk-ons and too can try to accomplish their dreams. Brandon's story can be inspiration in sports as well as in everyday life, as we all can have a vision that we can turn to reality.

See it, Say it, Do it!

Ever heard the old saying that if you want something you must see it first? There is a lot of relevance to this saying. When we set a goal or have a belief, how we see it in our mind's eye shapes our approach towards the future outcome. There is a term called mental practice also known as “visualization” that involves you seeing a goal or performance in your headfirst before actually executing it. This is when having a vivid imagination can really come in handy.



How does it work?

Every action, whether it be kicking a soccer ball, driving a car or brushing your teeth starts with an electric impulse from a nerve cell. These neurons are triggered to perform an action when you need to activate your muscles. Now when you visualize an action or goal it call on those same neurons needed to perform the action in real life. By calling on these neurons your body is primed and can get used to doing the task. We all know doing something repetitively allows us to get better at and with visualization you can get a limitless amount of practice.

Where can it help → When you use mental practice you give yourself a sense of déjà

vu. If you already experienced it then you take out some of the unexpected.

- Job interviews- see yourself getting nervous and getting asked the difficult questions.
- Sport performance- See yourself shooting the basket or hitting the ball under pressure.
- School- See yourself taking the test and facing difficult questions.
- Relationships- visualize how you can positively handle interactions
- Goals- Visualize the positive and negative outcomes and how you can adapt as well as the process to your goals.

The real-life Matrix



Did you Know? → *That your brain doesn't know the difference between a dream and reality.* Have you ever had a crazy nightmare and when you woke up your heart was racing, and you were short of breath? This is your body responding to a stressor with the fight or flight response. Although there was no actual danger in real life the brain is convinced you were actually about to get eaten by a lion. It then prepped you actual

physiological responses to get ready for the challenge of running or attacking the lion.

This phenomenon shows how powerful imagery in your mind can be and how it transfers over to the real world.



Like any skill, mental practice can be learned and should be practiced on a consist basis.

Below are a few drills to help you improve your visualization skills.

Directions: Find a place where you can have a quiet and peaceful zone. You can lay down or sit in a chair, find a position to make you most comfortable. Once you are ready close your eyes and visualize the following.

1. A circle, a square, a triangle and a rectangle.
2. A red circle, blue square, green triangle and yellow rectangle.
3. 2 green circles, 1 red square, 3 blue triangles

Once you have visualized the different shapes you can try more dynamic images.

1. Someone shooting a basketball into a net.
2. Riding on a rollercoaster.
3. A dog chasing a cat.

Once you have become more comfortable with the basic concept of visualization you can start utilizing it with your own actions and endeavors. You can also change the perspective of which you view the imagery from 1st person (through your eyes) or 3rd person (through someone else's eyes).

List goals or actions you would like to start rehearsing in your mind

1. _____

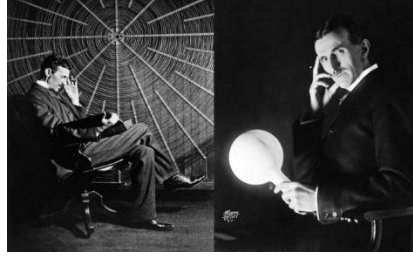
2. _____

3. _____

4. _____



When you see yourself visualizing your goal or task make sure you make it as realistic as possible! This means you should see the environment, feel the body movements, hear the sounds and even smell the aromas. Utilize all of your senses and make sure it is close to your actual abilities also. If you visualize outcomes extremely out of your reach you dilute the process.



Nikolas Tesla: A man of the future!

While you may be familiar with the name Tesla that's synonymous with Elon Musk's car company, the man that it is named after was just as innovative. In his lifetime he had over 300 known patents in multiple countries. He was of Serbian Nationality, but he did a lot for American society with his work in electricity. He is a big part of the AC (alternating current) usage that we still utilize today! He had many ideas on using radio waves to transmit information (technology we now use daily even at a personal level) years before most accepted it. His knowledge and ability to turn what he saw in his head to reality is almost unmatched in history. Nikola Tesla definitely exemplifies how to see it, say it, do it!

Watch what you say to "ME"

Do you talk to yourself? Of course, not right, you're not crazy are you? No, you're not crazy but odds are you talk to yourself, matter of fact we all do. When we are thinking to ourselves, we are inherently talk to ourselves. This inner dialogue is called self-talk. So, the question isn't do we talk to ourselves but what are we saying to ourselves.

Often times we may say self-defeating thoughts and the thing about our mind is that we tend to believe them. Positive self-talk is very important but must be done realistically and consistently. Many people confuse positive self-talk with just saying overly optimistic and happy statements. This is far from what positive self-talk is. Positive self-talk involves taking a defeating thought and turning it into a productive one.

Thought Stopping



Address the negative thought → Reframe into a productive thought → Practice/Repeat

Thought stopping is a technique used to address negative thinking. When you have a thought enter your mind, tell yourself stop either in your head or even out loud. Make it aware that you had this negative thought. Change the thought to a more rational way of thinking and carry on.

For example: If someone was to make the statement “I am no good a math I will probably fail this class” they could reframe that thought as “I can work on my weaknesses so on the next test I can perform better”. The point of reframing the statement is to address the negative thought not ignore it and then reframe in a positive way.

Here list all the negative thoughts and worries that may detract you from positive behavior.

On the opposite side of the table write in the reframed positive thought.

Negative	Positive
I can't do it, it's too hard.	If I focus and put the effort I can do it.

How much are you saying



Did you Know? → On average we say between 300-1400 words to ourselves per minute! Let's assume that you are on the higher end of the spectrum at 1400 words per minute (wpm). In one hour, you would have thought 84,000 words. In a course of a day (say you're you are awake 16 and sleep 8 hours) you would have thought 1,344,000 words! That is approximately 200,000 more words than all seven harry potter books combined. This is a lot of thinking. So, what are you telling yourself over 1 million times?

Sometimes we must be the positive influence for ourselves. When others speak to us in a negative manner we usually won't sit around and take it. The same should be considered when we talk down to ourselves. Have you ever thought about giving that inner voice in your head a name? If you heard Bill telling you that you wouldn't amount to much in life you probably would have some choice words for him. Sometimes you have to put yourself in check and let yourself know that you're not going to take the verbal abuse!

Positive Affirmations

Sometimes you have to be your own motivator and reaffirm positive traits or characteristics about yourself. Below list a few qualities about yourself that can reinforce your abilities.

Ex. I trust myself to make the best decision.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Personal Achievement Reminders

If you have done it before you can do it again, right? Sometimes we lose sight of what we have done in the past. It is human nature to recall the negative occurrences in life without a problem, but we often have difficulty remembering the good. Recalling the better times in your life whether it be a target body weight from high school or a happier time when you accomplished a big goal in your life. Regardless of what it is, there is nothing wrong with giving yourself a pat on the back every now and then.

Below list any achievements from your past to remind you of a successful time in your life.

Ex. I once scored the highest in my class on the SAT.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Don't think about the white bear



Did you Know? → Suppressing your thoughts doesn't work! Ever had a song stuck in your head that you couldn't get rid of? Or maybe you saw an image that just left you mortified and was imprinted on your brain. Well trying not to think about it will do you more harm than good. When we suppress thoughts we actually give the thought more relevance. In an experiment by Harvard psychologist Dan Wegner, he asked participants to verbalize their thoughts for five minutes and whenever they think of a white bear they were to ring a bell. Participants talked about their day and were frequently stopped by the intrusive bear thoughts. For the second part of the experiment participants were told to verbalize their thoughts but this time to not think about the white bear and ring the bell if they did think of one. Surprisingly, they rang the bell more frequently! So, you see trying to ignore your thoughts actually cause you to think about them more. Imagine telling yourself "Don't think about failing, don't think about failing." Indirectly you are still thinking about failing. So, make sure readdress those unwanted thoughts in productive manner.

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