

SUCCESS INSIGHTS

#9 Stumbling Block – Not persisting until you succeed.

While I knew lack of persistence was one of the Stumbling Blocks to success, I didn't really know what I wanted to say about it. (Perhaps that's why I put off writing about it until #9!)

"Just do it!" seemed insufficient. "Hang in there!" a bit trite when striving for a goal.

I guess the "no-brainer" nature of persistence is what had me stuck. Of course you need persistence to be successful. Everyone knows that. So what could I write about it?

That's when I started to think about persistence in my own life. Its absence at times and its overwhelming presence at other times. What made the difference?

If persistence is a personality trait that you either have or don't have (as many of us think of it), how come it has come and gone in my life?

So I started to examine those times when I really persisted at something. And I came to a logical conclusion. When I persisted, it was because I really, really wanted something! Persistence wasn't a trait I possessed all the time but it sure was there when I had a burning desire for something.

And so I started to study persistence and those who had it and guess what? I found the same thing! People who had achieved amazing success in any arena had a fundamental, passionate, heated desire that was the basis for their persistence.

One of the stories I came across was that of Ben Hogan, a pro golfer who had a distinguished career in the middle of the last century. Where Hogan's story gets interesting for me is in 1949 when he and his wife, Valerie, survived a head-on collision with a Greyhound bus.

This accident left Hogan with a double-fracture of the pelvis, a fractured collar bone, a left ankle fracture, a chipped rib, and near-fatal blood clots; he would suffer lifelong circulation problems and other physical limitations. His doctors said he might *never walk again*, let alone play golf competitively. He left the hospital on April 1st, 59 days after the accident.

Not only did he resume playing golf professionally, he went on to win three professional majors in one season. That was in 1953, when Hogan won the Masters, U.S. Open and British Open. Hogan was the only man to do this until Tiger Woods did it in 2000.

"People have always been telling me what I can't do. I guess I have wanted to show them. That's been one of my driving forces all my life," said Hogan.

Another story of persistence, fed by burning desire that resulted in amazing results was of Morris Goodman. His story is one of the most inspirational stories of healing I know.

While attempting to land his airplane one afternoon, Morris crashed. With his neck broken at C1 and C2, his spinal cord crushed, and every major muscle in his body

destroyed, Morris was no longer able to perform any bodily function except to blink his eyes. His family was told that his injuries were too severe for him to survive.

He had other ideas. Unbeknownst to the doctors, he decided to focus on willing himself to move his eye and one of his fingers. He said he spent three weeks visualizing himself moving his finger and winking his eye. Then, one day, when the nurse was in the room, he was able to wink his eye and she saw it. The following day he moved his finger, which the nurse also saw. He said he was trying to communicate so the doctors and his family wouldn't give up on him.

Once he accomplished that, he began to visualize himself walking out of the hospital. That was all he focused on. He didn't listen to the doctors that told him he was just lucky to be alive. Over the next few months his body started to function again and eventually he walked out of the hospital.

Both of these cases are of extreme physical limitations being overcome by persistence. But we don't just have to look at ordinary people doing extraordinary things to see persistence.

It's evident in top performing salespeople. Those who have the desire to win persist in the face of rejection. 20% of salespeople take home 80% of the commissions. They know that it takes 7 or 8 calls on a prospect before that prospect is ready to do business. When do most salespeople quit? After the first rejection.

As a matter of fact, that is when most of us quit too – when it gets hard. We stop when we're scared, or stuck. We give up at the first sign of resistance. Or worse, as soon as we're uncomfortable!

I heard someone say "If the dream is big enough – the facts don't matter." I love that thought. It simply means that if you're having a problem with persistence, your WANT isn't big enough.

So instead of thinking there's something wrong with you ("I'm not motivated or ambitious"), look at what you want. And if you're not clear about it – that's where the work for you begins.

Here's the cool thing: Desire can be cultivated! Persistence is a state of mind and it can be cultivated too! I know because I've done it in my life.

But it all starts with the WHAT and the WHY. Which takes us right back where we started with Stumbling Blocks #1 & 2. Don't you just love it when things come together?

QUOTES

Nothing in the world can take the place of Persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan 'Press On' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.

~ Calvin Coolidge

Success comes from two things: having a goal and persisting until you achieve it.

~ Unknown

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