

How to Overcome being Overcome

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The feeling of being chased down is a familiar feeling to every entrepreneur. By virtue of our title, we are pushing limits untested. In this environment, weather can change quickly. Below is a list of practical and subjective tips that will help you when you feel you are being overcome by life and circumstance. In an airplane, every pilot has with them an emergency checklist. Look at this in that way. At a quick glance, look at this list, re-evaluate, adjust, and move forward.

1. ***Place all your value in unconditional caring relationships.*** Put your life eggs with people who value your time, your health, your mind, and your enthusiasm; with those whose attraction to you is not based on the success or failure of your latest project or undertaking. Kids are oblivious to stress and pressures...especially at a very young age. They are so to remind us of what is real and what is conditional. Tie your ship to what is real.
2. ***Take mental time outs.*** Just like in boxing....the bell rings and you rest. Make a list of those things that can be done easily and quickly that bring you joy, make you laugh, put you at rest, and in some way bring a boost of recharge. This list should be able to be accomplished in thirty minutes from start to finish. I can drive five minutes, walk on to a golf course, drop off in the woods on a steep hillside about 200 yards off the tee and be looking for lost golf balls in ten minutes. In ten minutes of looking I find any number of golf balls, head back to the truck, and in thirty minutes from leaving my office I am back and on the phone again. For me, the fresh air, the woods, and finding what was once lost charges me up and gives me focus and energy to continue the day with strength.
3. ***Finish things.*** If there is no headway that can be made on this topic today, declare for that day that it is done. Don't allow the thought of it to bleed into the next task. I use separate yellow note pads for each independent task subject. When that task is done for the day or completely finished all together, I turn the note pad over giving my mind a visual that it is OK to not think on it again for that day. Start with the most important thing to do and make every effort to finish it completely. If it cannot be done in one day, take it as far as you can and then turn the pad over. Go to the next pad and do the same. Mental tidiness is a big key in staying in control of many moving parts and not feeling overcome.
4. ***Do not answer calls or check e-mail during the task process.*** Stay focused. Pick a scheduled time in your day to return e-mails and calls that are not associated with your priority tasks. Set a limit to this time. The computer and the phone can be our friend and one of our greatest enemies of distraction. Walk the dog....don't let the dog walk you.

5. ***Limit your time each day on the front line of the battle.*** Working the solution is more important than reiterating the problem. Don't run or hide from the problem, just limit your exposure. The best way you can help yourself and those around you is to stay alive. When you are continually exposed to difficult and stressful conversations and confrontations it is draining on your strength and emotional reserve. It is like being unzipped at thirty below zero and windy. In small doses you can take it, fully exposed for long stretches of time, and you will die. I find that dealing with these difficult situations by e-mail is a good tool when your stamina is low.
6. ***Exercise is critical when the water is rising around you.*** Physical exercise gets the blood moving and when the blood moves, the brain works better. I find that when I wake up, my brain is going strong. A quick shower and I am off. Mid-day is the time I need to get the blood going, and so for me, this is the time to work in a brisk walk or a quick work-out. Keep your energy up by snacking on fruit and veggies, trail mix, and alike throughout the day. Avoid sit down lunches at all costs.
7. ***Take the heart rate down and slow down the mind.*** Meditate. Find some inner peace. Listen to some Yogi! Be in control of a mind that wants to race. Deep breaths. Stretch. Find your spirituality. Prioritize this and stay with it until the volume of chaos around you is barely audible. Being mentally at rest is critical to navigate the treacherous waters. This is a time to respond carefully and thoughtfully, not react out of panic and haste. Find your center and never venture far away.
8. ***Be OK with zero!*** Remember when you were young and you had nothing! The world was your oyster! There was no where to go but up, and your enthusiasm, work ethic, and dreams would lead the way. What if you were there again? Only this time you have more experience, contacts, references, and knowledge of the road. Is this really a bad place to be? I think of some of the best nights I have ever slept in my life have been in a wall tent....straw on the floor, fire pit outside, and fresh air all around. Be OK with zero. When you are, it will show in your face and that look will take power away from the difficulty that surrounds you. Studies show that our perception of what "things are necessary" increase dramatically the greater our income is. Simply put, the more money we make, the more "stuff" we need. Find romance in the old car that gets you there....where air conditioning is rolling down the window. My day planner does not need batteries or an internet connection. Keep things simple. It is a choice.

9. ***Be aware of, and avoid escapism.*** Recognize that when the heat is on around you that this puts you in a vulnerable place. In this place, we are prone to making choices that can easily make the problem we are in go from bad to worse. There are stretches of the big mountain climb where making a mistake in that particular place would be deadly. Pick your steps carefully. Do not allow yourself to be drawn to meaningless distraction that gives temporary relief. Endless hours watching television, video games, drinking in excess, on-line surfing, shallow ego boosting relationships....all these things make the problem you are in worse and can potentially be disastrous. Find something harmless and somewhat brainless and productive to fill these down spaces. Wash a car, paint a wall, weed a garden....all of these are better than vortex escapism. Any team winning the game has a strong defense as well as an aggressive offence. Play defense well.
10. ***Be tough.*** Visualize and declare the outcome that you desire. Think of the current conditions as an honorable challenge, and that overcoming it will be your finest hour. Value your opinion of yourself more than others people's drive by opinions of you. Know what you are made of. Recognize that getting knocked down will happen, but resolve that you will get up.

When you are overwhelmed...

When you are getting further behind each day...

When your best efforts seem to leave you short and misunderstood....

When you are tired and down and it's not just one thing....its everything.....

When you were right there....but the timing window closed....

When the one you trusted turned their back...

When your effort is not even noticed....

When there is not time for pain, much less passion....

When those you have esteemed say they never knew you....

When you are not chosen even though you deserved to be....

When the commitment of others does not match your own...

When you wonder if anyone really even has you on their radar....

When what was said in confidence becomes the tool to tear you apart....

When the mutual gamble turns out to be your fault and loss...

When your body seems unable to keep the pace of need.....

When the doctor says its not good news...

When you cannot save them.....

When you should have and could have but didn't...

When everyone doubts you....

When your words are twisted and your standard used against you...

When another says to you...not on this....and not for you....

When they would like to....but at this time....they can't....they won't....

You get up. Stand. Under no circumstances do you stay down.