

MENTAL TOUGHNESS

ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES
OF LEADERSHIP AND
SUCCESS



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Mental Toughness

Essential Principles of Leadership and Success

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Introduction

Congratulations on downloading *Mental Toughness: Essential Principle of Leadership and Success*, and thank you for doing so. As long as we are living, we are bound to encounter challenges, both in and out of our control.

A wrong investment could cost you millions in losses, but so could the collapse of the economy. You could wake up in the morning, only to lose the job you have held for 20 years. Anything could happen and turn your world upside down. However, the secret to life is in the ability to pick up the pieces, or even start building anew resolutely. To do this, you need to be mentally tough, and downloading this book is the first step towards that.

By yourself, you will find it almost impossible to remain strong at all times. Some challenges you will overcome easily, while others will outwit you. However, if you learn how to be mentally tough, you will build your mental muscles through a combination of skill, willpower, and resilience.

To that end, the following chapters will seek to sensitize you on the relevance of mental toughness towards the achievement of success in your life. You will learn how to distinguish mental toughness from other attitudes of the mind. You will also get to know why mental toughness is a critical

requirement for successful leadership and why it could provide you with a competitive edge against your competition.

You will also get to see some of the big names in the sports and the corporate sector who have excelled in their crafts, courtesy of the mental strength they developed, and how they got to that point. This book is strategically written to point you towards taking up mental toughness techniques that will get you the success that others have achieved.

There are plenty of books on this subject on the market, so thanks again for choosing this one! Every effort was made to ensure it is full of as much useful information as possible. Please enjoy!

Chapter 1: Mental Toughness

Mental toughness for an individual is his ability to deal with pressures, stressors, and challenges, and to give the best possible results, in spite of the circumstances that individual finds himself in. Others define it as the ability to rise after failures and setbacks, and the resolve to spot and take hold of the opportunities that come up.

For your memorization, however, here is a more straightforward definition coined by the legendary Vince Lombardi who played and coached in the NFL football. He said that mental toughness merely is character in action. This definition may be short, but it captures all that mental toughness is: it is the inner drive to push on and pursue what you want to, driven by your wits or character.

Mental toughness is essential because it compensates for the lack of skill, natural ability, and strength. You have often heard it said that the people at the top, in any field whatsoever, are not the most talented; they are those who stayed and kept at it despite the challenges they faced. Mental toughness prevents you from becoming a quitter. In *Pumping Iron*, Arnold Schwarzenegger says that you must go on and on, not caring what happens. This resolve is what gets an athlete through the competition at the marathons - they must keep running until they get to the end.

Therefore, whatever you call it: balls, guts, wits, or will, this is what we are calling mental toughness. The question now is: how do you become mentally strong?

If you ask around, many coaches, athletes, and corporate leaders will tell you that mental toughness is inborn or developed in the earlier stages of life depending on the environment a child grows up in. It is challenging to transform a wuss into a hardcore unless of course, you take him to prison. However, prison matters aside, we can assume that anyone is capable of improving his patience, tolerance, and concentration, and this is what mental toughness is about.

Mental Toughness Skills

Mentally tough people easily rise to positions of influence and power in business, leadership, sports, and even in life. Observing them keenly, experts have lined out some skills common in all of them. These skills include:

A hyper focus

This is the ability to perform at peak levels without giving in to distractions with ease and with a clarity of mind. This is commonly referred to as 'being in the zone.'

A Winning Mindset

A winning mindset is an attitude by a performer that he must win or at least operate at the maximum possible efficiency level, maintaining consistency. For a person to do this, he must have a strong belief and faith in his field expertise, and skills despite the challenges presented to him.

Willpower

As pointed out earlier, willpower combines effort, intention, and courage. Intention is the 'will' in willpower. It is the insistence on staying on the same task until all the work is done. The effort you put into doing something is the power. It propels you into achieving what is required of you despite the challenges you encounter. Courage is the readiness to bear up all the fear and other emotions that you need to accomplish the task.

Composed

A mentally tough person has to keep calm under pressure. As the situation heightens and everyone else is freaking out, the individual remains calm, takes time to assess the situation and then makes the best possible move. He must stay engaged to the case no matter how high the pressure rises.

Lose Nice

Along with the mindset of a winner is the ability to accept that the performer is capable of failure. Sometimes, even with the highest focus and a rich investment of skills and resources, a performer can fail to meet the set objective. However, the trick lies in the ability to extract lessons and values from experience and to channel it to the next trial, for continued success.

Own Up

To develop mental toughness, you need to own up to every situation, both the good and the bad. A mentally strong person is ready and willing to take up that responsibility and pressure. He or she believes that whatever the challenges and the odds, he or she must come up with a solution. In case of failure, the person will take stock, evaluate his steps to see where he went wrong, gather lessons from it, and then move on past it. This person knows how to overcome negative emotions and thoughts effectively.

Preparation

Preparedness involves lots of planning. A performer plans in advance to prepare for any unplanned event, during, and at the end of the event. He or she then creates a backup plan that can be pulled out if indeed the primary plan experiences significant challenges, or that it just will not work. Planning and preparation of this nature allow the performer to remain at ease regardless of the situation. In addition, the task itself can be fully recovered and completed without having to return to the starting point. What's more, the team's or the performer's spirit is not crashed, and the performance rhythm is not affected much by the perceived loss and failure.

Ready to Take On the Challenge

A mentally tough person does not whimper. He does not whine. Whatever comes his way, he readily welcomes it. Be it having to stay up late to work on some project work, be it having to take on more people for training, be it running several extra miles. Whatever it is, this individual has a 'bring it on' attitude, and this produces exposure, experience, and success.

Stress Optimization

This is the ability to manage pressure and stress in an event, without any anxiety, fear or doubt, or at least maintaining performance undeterred by them. An individual who has learned how to optimize stress will take advantage of a stressful environment and come up with results that others could not have presented under similar conditions.

Stretch Out the Limits

This is the ability to exact maximum physical effort even in the face of mental and physical stress. A person could be in pain or physical discomfort and commit himself to give the best performance in spite of it. We have seen athletes in severe physical pain go on to finish the race on the tracks.

A man on one of those races once tore his knee as he ran the last lap. He would have emerged among the top runners, but his painful knee threw him so far back. Instead of giving up, and while still in excruciating pain, the man started limping his way to the finish line. His father, sitting on the pew at the stadium ran up to him and ignoring the security officers, ran over to his son and supported him. The entire stadium cheered them on until the athlete got to the finishing line.

The athlete blew everyone's mind by his mental toughness and the resolve to finish what he had completed. Undoubtedly, he was praised and recognized better than those who won the race. This is what resilience and toughness does; it sets you apart from others, even those who may be more talented than you are.

What You Need to Develop Mental Toughness

A mentally tough person must acquire the following qualities:

Become a Self-Starter

Mental toughness is fundamentally rooted in motivation because a tough person is driven by the drive that comes from within, commonly known as intrinsic motivation. Some researchers studying intrinsic motivation defined it as the desire to become self-determining. People with this kind of drive

are self-starters, and will gladly push themselves beyond the limits for the love of what they do. If necessary, they will only require some bit of encouragement to put in their best efforts.

Unfortunately, this only happens in a few of us. Some people are driven by pressure and will only put in the required effort when the stakes are high. They like to compare their progress with that of others. Their kind of motivation is called achievement motivation . If two people are competing, the person with a higher achievement motivation drive will perform better than the other.

Behind achievement motivation are two conflicting mentalities that drive a person into becoming tough. They are found in all people, but a person is likely to incline more to one than to the other. The first is that, some achievement-motivated persons will gather their best energies when they predict that a great opportunity for them lies ahead. Even if this success cannot be confirmed, these people are sure that if they work harder, they can achieve this success.

The second kind is the motivation to prevent failure. People who follow this kind of motivation response do so only because something is challenging their egos. If you call a person motivated by the need to avoid failure a wuss because he could not do something, he feels as though his entire manhood is threatened, and works to prove himself, and to prevent humiliation.

Once you understand which of the two drivers is more dominant in your life, you can start training yourself to become tougher and more effective, therefore, build your capacity to endure more. Many coaches say that players who are motivated by the desire to succeed do not need much cajoling or instruction when the chips are down; they consider it an opportunity to turn things around and achieve better. Players who are motivated by preventing failure will need more direction. They will need to be advised on what to do so that they are confident that they have done the right thing when the stakes are high. Otherwise, they will think that they do not stand a chance to achieve great results and will back down.

Whichever method of motivation works best for you, focus on becoming good at what you are doing. For example, if the task ahead of you seems too big, break it down into smaller tasks and see yourself finishing each of them successfully. This way, whether you are motivated by the desire for success or the fear of failure, you will achieve success.

Maintain Positivity

Every day, your mind is a beehive of thoughts: those brought by external stimuli and those you have about yourself. A number will be negative. However, to achieve success, you must only focus on those that make you feel good about yourself. This advice sounds cliché, but I bet you to find a successful person that does not practice this daily. The power begins from the mind. If you think you can do something, you can, and if you think you can't, you certainly won't.

One way to get yourself psyched and positive about what you want to do is to create a mission statement. The statement becomes the drive or the compelling reason that gets you through the process. Keep repeating this statement as you carry on with the activity, and at any time, when you start slacking, feeling like quitting, or questioning your motivation.

Locate Your 'Zone'

A professional athlete responds to the stress of an impending race with some form of meditation, where his brain-wave activity goes down. An average runner responds to the stress of an incoming race with panic, stress, and increased brain-wave activity. These are facts, according to a conditioning and strengthening coach. This example is enough proof that getting into your 'zone,' which requires you to be cool-headed, will allow you to perform optimally, even in conditions of high pressure. The 'zone' makes all the difference.

Getting to this state and maintaining it despite the pain, fatigue, distractions, and your self-preservation instincts will cause you to develop mental toughness.

Visualize

Before you do anything of any meaning whatsoever, you should visualize. You should have already seen yourself performing the entire activity or task from the beginning to the end, successfully. Imagine what you will do to get into position, imagine how your body will be positioned when doing it, and think about the time each activity is going to take. Rehearse this information in your mind because when you do this, all you will have to do is repeat all that you did, and now do it with your body.

Meditate

Close in step to visualization, meditation is another strategy for becoming mentally tough. It enables you to relax, reduce stress, and enhance the clarity of the mind. You have to clear your mind of all extraneous thoughts and to prepare your mind for the upcoming task, or contest. One of the most common questions people will have is on whether they are doing it correctly, because in truth, there are some instances when you will be unable to concentrate properly to enter into the meditative state fully. Do not be alarmed. You will soon learn how to block out all forms of distraction because it is a skill learned like any other. However, if you insist, you can also seek assistance from meditation techniques offered on various websites.

Self-talk

No one can coach you better than you can. In all that you do, learn to speak to yourself using second person statements, and you will find yourself becoming stronger by the day. For example, you could say, “You are going to put in every effort you can.” “Only you can achieve greatness in this one.” “You have more strength and energy than you think,” “You are too smart and skilled to fail in this one.” Statements like these will simulate greater motivation to do what is ahead of you.

Constantly Be Uncomfortable

Mental toughness is not birthed in comfort; you cannot settle into a routine and expect to remain strong when presented with different circumstances

and stimuli. If you are trying to learn how to work long hours, then increase your working hour a couple of days a week. If you want to become a tougher runner, go faster or run a few extra miles occasionally. These extra sprints should be done at random when your mind is least prepared.

Increasing the level of challenge in your life will enhance your ability to handle all kinds of stress thrown at you. You will also become better at critical thinking and problem solving, both of which are necessary for you to achieve success in different areas of life.

Be Prepared

If you have watched ‘Hell Week’ during the Navy Seal training, you understand the meaning of “prepared”. The Seal team gets through a week under the worst possible conditions. Among other reasons, this training is meant to get them ready for anything in the field. Whatever they go through, nothing will be new; they will have experienced it all and known how to handle every circumstance, and it will be difficult, if not impossible for the soldier to break.

Preparedness is based on an anticipation of all problems that could arise, and creating a ready solution, even though it is in the mind. What’s more, preparation helps you achieve satisfaction because you know that you have done everything you possibly could, whatever the outcome is.

Once you take on every step listed above, you will be surprised just how much you go, and the level of success you achieve.

Why you need Mental Toughness in your current role or occupation

Everyone in the society needs to learn and practice mental toughness because whatever position you take, there are going to be pressures and challenges, but you still have to produce great results, particularly in performance-based roles such as in competitive sports, business, entertainment, the medical field, and other high-stress jobs.

Here’s a breakdown for some of them:

Athletes : Essentially, the concept of mental toughness was developed for athletes as a way to encourage them to develop an edge against their competitors. Runners, football players, swimmers, figure skaters, golfers, triathletes, gymnasts, and athletes in any other categories can all benefit from mastering the skill of mental toughness.

Entrepreneurs : They work under extreme challenges and pressure in their bid to build businesses from the ground up. An entrepreneur has to sensitize buyers in a market to make them take an interest in the products he is selling. He also must come up with strategies for beating the competition. Above that, the entrepreneur must ensure that the business stays afloat amid challenges like inadequate demand, taxation, employee issues, and others, to avoid losing the money and time he invested into the business.

Medical workers : A medical worker is forever in an environment of stress in his workplace because of the sensitivity of the life-death issue. Nurses, doctors, surgeons, and other medical staff working at the waiting rooms, emergency room, operating room, and other areas can benefit from becoming mentally tough, to allow them to serve patients well in these extremely tough situations.

Parents : No parent will say that he or she has it easy bringing up kids, of whichever age. Parenting causes the parents a lot of stress, and many keep on questioning themselves, wondering whether they are doing it right. Parents can learn how to be mentally tough so that they can deal with their children easier, and also to pass on the skill to their children. Children need to become resilient in readiness for the challenges of life.

Emergency responders : This category carries with it professionals such as paramedics, firefighters, and police officers. Persons in these careers, and others not mentioned, need to be mentally tough seeing that they are always called to stressful life-threatening situations yet must produce high-level results.

Military personnel : In all their endeavors, soldiers and military personnel need mental toughness to perform well because their job requires them to

be focused and undistracted. Their entire training is specifically structured to ensure that they increasingly become tough as their careers progress.

Performing artists : Artists include persons who are involved in film, stage, and television performance. Others like painters and artists who draw and others engaged in other forms of creative talent need to have a competitive advantage by taking up mental toughness in the process of developing their art. They can audition with confidence, recover from failure or rejection, believe in their talent and ability, and even get into the 'zone' when the need arises. Whatever comes along, they must deliver the performance they promised.

Chapter 2: Mental Toughness in Leadership

Mental toughness is the current buzzword among leaders, but a majority of them is yet to implement it or put it into practice. However, to be successful and effective, every leader needs to be mentally tough. The leader needs to come up with the vision, set and communicate it, and bring his followers onboard. He or she then takes charge and leads them through the journey, seizing opportunities that come up on the way and overcoming the inevitable failures and setbacks. To take on these responsibilities effectively, a leader needs to be mentally tough.

When you look at the profiles of most C-level executives, you will be impressed by the educational credentials and the achievements they have had throughout their years in business. These qualifications led them to the top. However, one critical aspect of every great leader is the ability to be mentally tough in the midst of challenges. It is what sets apart a great leader from an average one.

Corporate leaders have a lot on their plates because besides taking responsibility for the success of some of the largest companies across the globe, they still have to make time for their personal lives. Great leaders make it look easy, but it is only because their beliefs, thoughts, and philosophies have allowed them to be better and more efficient in their work compared to others. The good news is that although many of the leaders are naturally mentally tough than others are, the rest can still acquire that attitude, with some bit of practice.

The great Professor Peter Clough developed a model for recounting and assessing mental toughness through his 'four Cs' model. He said that mental toughness is comprised of commitment, control, confidence, and challenge. This means that a mentally tough person needs to take control over his circumstances and his responses, he must be committed to seeing things through to the end, he must be confident that his influence and ability is adequate for getting him through, and he must consider the challenge a growth opportunity.

A leader will be bombarded daily by situations that require him to summon mental toughness every day through the four Cs. Indeed, these qualities are critical in areas that require resilience and grit to overcome. They could be new frontiers that need to be explored, setbacks to get over, ambiguous alternatives from which to choose, negative attitudes that need to be reversed, and strained relationships that need to improve. In all these roles, an overwhelmed weak-willed leader will cave from the pressure.

Whether an individual applied to the leadership role or that the organization heads selected him, it is clear that it takes a high level of innate toughness to rise to some of the highest levels of organizational leadership. Put differently; a leader needs to have or to develop a personality that exhibits mental toughness to be able to handle the issues that arise every day in his organization.

A personality is unlikely to change much in a person's lifetime. This stability prompts the question: to what extent can mental toughness be learned? We have already established that people can still learn how to develop mental toughness through dedicated and purposeful effort. Therefore, the more a leader lacks in natural grit, the more energy and will he has to put on to become mentally tough. Experts warn that it is challenging to develop mental toughness without a structured training program.

Characteristics of Mentally Tough Leaders

From Bill Gates to Thomas Edison, these leaders have had some great deal of mental toughness. Although developing a thick skull helps, it is only a part of it. Here are some more habits you will observe in leaders like them.

Self-Confident

Trying out something outside of your comfort zone requires a great deal of self-confidence. Not too many of us are born with natural confidence. We

develop it when we push hard against the boundaries, barriers, and fears on our paths. This, in turn, increases a person's ability to take on risks and deal with the failures and setbacks that come their way. Once a person is able to reach it, his mental endurance, stamina, and resilience will have developed to a level needed to propel him to the next stage.

Ability to manage his emotions

A mentally tough leader understands when and with whom he can share his feelings. Although being tough does not take away the vulnerability, it is crucial that the leader only opens up to a person that he can trust or count on. This also means that the leader must be able to control his impulses and emotions, especially in places and in situations where the emotions can be viewed as a sign of weakness and be used against them. It is not easy to do this, but if the leader is sensitive enough, he will identify the person he or she can rely on, and keep off those he cannot.

Face Fears and Take Action

When faced with the need to take on risks, leaders will often overcome their fears and take on the challenge. A leader understands that for him to achieve any worthwhile success, he must face the risk of failing. To him, failure is not the worst that could happen. Instead, they dread the possibility or the idea of missing out on a potentially great achievement just because they listened to their fears. To them, the worst-case scenario is experiencing the regret of not pursuing or attempting to pursue an opportunity that came by.

Selective On Whom They Associate With

Wise leaders tend to hang out with people who are positive, and who will think as they do. These people can provide support for each other and to celebrate each other's achievements. If negativity comes along, the mentally tough leader will tune it out. This may take practice, but it is an ideal strategy for preventing negative persons from taking up your valuable energy and time.

Self-Disciplined

Tough-minded people are quite disciplined and are committed to routines meant to secure their health and wellness. I have heard about some CEOs who must take a five-mile run every morning before heading to the office. It is unlike the mentally strong to take shortcuts; they have to maintain a healthy diet, exercise, and sleeping routine. This dedication is not born out of self-absorption or vanity; it is from the appreciation of the fact that for the leader to be mentally tough, he must be healthy, physically fit, and have taken a good rest to ensure his overall wellness. Physical wellness is a prerequisite for large victories that involve the mind.

They Give a 'No' Where They Ought

Most of us are sometimes compelled by the circumstances to give in even when we did not want to. We do these things to please others but later regret and complain about it. However, mentally tough people know better. They can say no without any guilty feelings or excuses. This is good because those around them realize that they are not pushovers and that they should only be approached with reasonable requests.

Independent and Do Not Compare Their Progress with That of Others

Mentally tough leaders do not regard other people's opinion of them. Their goals drive them, not the sideshows of what other people are doing or saying about them. Indeed, they respect the views of others, and whatever happens, they take full responsibility for their outcomes and decisions. They are not quick to lay blame on others when things don't go as they expected. A mentally strong leader measures his performance and self-worth based on their previous performance. This means that the leader becomes his own competition.

Is Ready and Equipped for Anything

It is expected that a leader who does everything right will not fear supervision because he knows that he has given all he could to his work. He is confident that even if his skills are not appreciated in his current role, he can always get another job elsewhere. Lousy leaders, on the other hand, operate out of fear. They easily succumb to pressure and to the politics of the day, which significantly influence how they perform that day. A tough

leader will work out of love and passion for what he is doing, and in a fearless manner. He aims to push his juniors to become better at what they do and achieve what they never thought possible.

A mentally tough leader will not babysit you. He must push people and make unpopular decisions that will yank the people out of their comfort zones. This does not mean that he is a dictator, he also has to be there for the team when the members are feeling down and have hit rock bottom. His overall drive is to bring out the best in people, both in good and sad times. This will call for tenderness sometimes, and in others, he has to be vicious.

You will be surprised to see the risks the mentally tough leader takes to achieve the necessary objectives, to the point that some can be fired. However, the tough leader is ready even to lose his job, so long as his conscience is clear, and he is sure that he did all that can be done to ensure the best results.

Obsessed with Productivity and Positive Outcomes

An average performer measures the amount of work he has done by the time he has invested into a particular task. Mentally tough performers are concerned about the output, results, and overall productivity. This is the reason mentally tough persons work in businesses and jobs that they are passionate about. Because of this, their focus is often on becoming more productive and successful.

Strong

Strength goes beyond the physical ability that lets you plank for five minutes. Strength is the inner resilience which enables a leader to keep focus even when the surrounding gets uncomfortable. A mentally tough leader needs to 'dig deep' for inner psychological and physical strength to soldier through the tough situations. Have a dedication to give continually, the best, whether you are losing or winning. Keep fighting, until the end.

Responsive

When things shift suddenly, there is often little, if any, time to let the dust settle before making decisions. Times like these demand a mentally tough

leader because he is equipped to stay engaged, connected and aware of the factors surrounding the situation at hand. He can also make sound decisions under pressure.

Willing to Learn

Mentally tough leaders demonstrate a constant desire to keep learning, evolving, and adapting to changes happening in the business world and their lives. We are living in a fast-paced, ever-changing world that demands open-mindedness and an attitude of learning and re-learning. Learning produces growth, and this growth is what keeps a team moving forward, as opposed to getting entangled in the past.

They have Control

I recently listened to a yogi telling his class that stress does not exist. He said that stress is only a feeling or sensation that happens when you are not in control of your thoughts. Controversial as it may seem, it is indeed true that a disciplined mind will control what it thinks. It is also in charge of what its holder does and the behaviors he exhibits. This means that you are in control of everything that happens to you unless you allow outside influences to dictate your reactions, thoughts, and behaviors.

Tough-minded leaders understand the level of control they have over their circumstances. It is not uncommon to find employees and team members who have a victim mindset in the belief that they have no control over what happens to them. If a mentally tough leader is in charge of people like them, he carries the duty and responsibility of inspiring them and helping them understand how to own their performance. The leader then creates an environment in which his followers are empowered to think, make decisions, make mistakes, and perform highly.

Focus On the Right Priorities

The world today is filled with noise courtesy of an increasingly fast-paced interconnected world. As such, the leader needs to work towards streamlining the priorities of his organization. It is easy to come up with a list of things that could be done to improve the performance of the team and the organization as a whole. However, the tough-minded leader understands

that achievement is about the quality of results and not the scope the team covers. If the organization focuses on many priorities, it is likely that the teams will be overwhelmed and the results produced will be unsatisfactory. Therefore, the leader must be realistic about the timeframes set and factor in the ability of the team.

Realize the Likelihood of Developing Decision Fatigue

All leaders, even the mentally tough, will experience decision fatigue, but the extent varies from one to the other. As you carry on your day, the ability to make clear-cut decisions reduces. However, the leader should keep in mind this likelihood, and then go ahead to plan his day strategically, beginning with getting an adequate amount of sleep, hydrating, and eating healthy foods. This way, the leader can make more accurate and timely decisions that will increase the productivity of his team, improve the outcome, and position the leader properly in power, as a decisive leader.

Maintain a Flexible Schedule for Activities Meant to Build Your Mental Toughness

Developing a commitment to these activities will help you walk through challenges and overcome the evil of procrastination to get to what you ought to. Some of the areas you should prioritize include your exercise regime, your personal life, or some elements of your work, such as correct planning. Some leaders take an hour of their time, between 1 pm and 2 pm, for a nap. These leaders are refreshed and effective in their work and decision-making. By taking care of these areas, you will increasingly become mentally tough, and your team will respect you and honor your leadership.

Are Positive In Their Thinking, and Only Applaud Positive Things

You are what you think. Henry Ford rightfully said that whether you think you can or can't, you are right. A leader should always think positively about himself. When you put your head and your emotions in the right place, everything else in your life will follow. He should then pass on this positivity to his team. This will help them believe in themselves and you,

and that is what makes a capable team. If you catch them doing the right things, do not stop praising them.

The Bottom Line

A mentally tough leader is likely to produce a motivated, top-performing team because he has control and passes some of this autonomy to the team. He also makes sure to engage in activities that will enhance his mental health and encourages his team to do the same too. Lastly, by cultivating a positive environment, he ensures that his team is happy in their roles, motivated, and encouraged to keep pursuing excellence in their performance.

Chapter 3: Mental Toughness Leads to Success

Ever wondered why some people are very good at what they do better than others? Why do you go to one dentist and not the other? Why do you go to one bakery for your bagels and not the other?

We are used to answering these questions pointing to the talent or the inborn ability of a person. We say the baker inherited the skill from his parent, or that the runner is very fast because he inherited the running genes from his mother.

However, from my view, there is more to these stories than meets the eye. In fact, if you go deep and examine each of these cases, you will realize that natural talent and intelligence did not play a role as great as you thought it did. Research conducted a few years ago found that intelligence only contributes a 30% proportion towards success. What makes up for the more substantial proportion, you ask? It's mental toughness.

Experts swear by the fact that grit, or mental toughness, plays a critical role in your achievement of anything in life. This is excellent news to many of us who desire success in some activity but do not carry the genes. We can still be top achievers, if only we become mentally tough.

Indeed, mental toughness, courage or guts, whatever you will, are the primary factor in most success stories you will hear. It is what has placed successful people at the height of their success and given them the strength to outlast every challenge and beat down every obstacle in their path. A person with guts will aim at giving his best when pushed to the wall.

Success in anything you will ever get into is less about hard work and competence summed up. Mental toughness is what keeps you encouraged and moving on. It allows you to be confident, consistent and strong particularly in situations of high pressure. Sometimes, hardships and obstacles can rise so high that you will be willing to give in, but mental

toughness is the intrinsic pump that will keep you determined and enable you to maintain your focus even when things get rough.

You must already be wondering what you can do to become mentally tough. The truth is that you already are, you only need to kick it up a notch or two. Much of mental toughness is about growing your self-esteem and improving your attitude. When you experience some difficulties, your attitude and what you think about yourself will keep you focused rather than running away from the problem at hand. This is the reason why we said that you are what you think, in the previous chapter. If you think you can overcome, you surely will, and once you overcome the current challenge, you will be more than ready to overcome the next. Now, you will be developing your mental toughness.

In itself, success is not an event that finds you; it is a state of mind. The courage and strength to win develop internally, in the brain. If you want to reach your goals and become a success, you must learn how to get that mental strength by yourself. Perhaps you should begin by letting go of your fears and mentally preparing yourself to take on the challenge. Remain focused in the face of adversity, failure, and hardships. Keep in mind that calm, smooth seas do not make adept sailors; it is the violent and turbulent ones that do. They do it by building their mental toughness. Realize that you will become tough by working on your spirit and your soul, and not the muscles.

How Mental Toughness Causes You to Succeed

Here are some reasons why mental toughness often leads to success:

1. Mental toughness keeps you motivated

It becomes easier to stick to your goals when you are motivated. Motivation accords you the mental strength you need to enable you to move forward with your goal, even on the days when your strength has declined, or you

feel discouraged. This is just because you will have the energy to dig deeper and to discover your inner strength.

2. Mental toughness overcomes self-doubt

As a human being, you are bound to have moments of self-doubt, when you begin to question the feasibility of your goal, given your current ability and resources. This is a normal part of the process. The problem is that some people give too much thought to it and end up getting sidelined from their primary goals and ambitions. However, with a tough mind, you are likely to reframe that doubt and negative talk into a positive source of drive and encouragement. This will increase your confidence significantly, and keep you moving forward.

3. Mental toughness sees to it that you learn from your mistakes

This is not to mean that mental toughness is a strategy or punishing yourself. Instead, mental toughness keeps you from walking away from your mistakes or coming up with excuses for your flops. Hiding from, and burying your mistakes only increases the possibility of repeating them. However, if you are mentally strong, you will humbly accept your mistake and honestly go through the lesson that comes off it. Every learning opportunity will get you closer and closer to the goal you intended to reach.

4. Mental toughness accords you the courage you need to face your fears

Stepping out of your comfort zone is difficult. However, mental grit makes it easier by giving you the courage you need to meet all fears you may have head-on. When you feel strong, you have the confidence you need to tolerate any discomfort, and you develop the will and ability to move forward, your distress notwithstanding.

5. Makes it easier to regulate your emotions

The path to success is one filled with a series of emotional lows and highs. If you lack the skills you need to control your emotions, you will struggle to regulate your impulses. You will have trouble taking calculated risks, resisting temptations, and delaying gratification. Mental toughness gives

you the skills you need to control all these emotions, to ensure that they do not cloud your judgments, and that you do not make decisions that could cause you to suffer losses or lead you astray.

6. Mental strength makes it easier for you to bounce back from failure

When failure comes about, the natural progression for most people is to give up. However, mentally tough people bounce back from failure better than ever. They have high regard for their self-worth and can tolerate repeat failure without fainting or fearing that they will be a source of ridicule. Therefore, when mentally strong, your failure becomes a stepping stone to success. It is said that the guy who invented the electric bulb had made 100 attempts before he was able to come up with one that works. When asked about his experience, he said that it had taught him 100 ways not to make the electric bulb. In the same way, let your failures become your teachers such that when you fail because of a wrong step you took in one area, next time you will be careful not to take that step again.

7. Mental toughness enables you to tune out contrary advice

If you have been around a while, you already know how easy it is for other people's opinions of you and your issues can drown your voice. It is easy to stop pursuing what is important to you and to focus on what other people want you to achieve. Living by the expectations of others often causes you to lead a miserable life. However, a life lived according to your views and values enables one of happiness. You remain strong and focused on making the right decisions, in spite of the reception and feedback you get from people around you.

Kindly note that for any path of life you choose to take, there will be challenges and obstacles at every corner. They are situated there as barriers and derailments towards you achieving success. However, if you work on building your mental strength, you will become resilient and be able to go over the obstacles and setbacks with grace and confidence. Eventually, you achieve success.

How Will You Build Mental Toughness in Your Life?

Walter Mischel, a professor at Stanford, conducted a study examining the benefits of mental grit using marshmallows and a group of children as the test subjects. He gave the children an option of either having one marshmallow immediately or waiting a little while and getting two.

The children who chose to wait got two marshmallows, and a broader search into their lives indicated that they maintained this 'success' even into their later years. Their ability to delay gratification caused them to enjoy greater SAT score, lowered their likelihood of becoming diabetic, lowered their rate of substance abuse, and they generally scored higher in other measures of success in life.

This study goes to show that a combination of perseverance, grit, and self-control, all constituents of mental toughness, may guarantee success in life. Therefore, if you want to experience this success in life, you're going need it.

Epictetus said that things do not disturb the people but by the opinion they have of them does. The challenge you encounter in the course of your life will not matter, what matters is the reaction you will have towards it.

Developing the right attitude towards failure will require you to know that failure does not condemn your abilities; it is merely a reaction or feedback to the effort put. It is not personal in any way. Just like the process of production releases a few mistakes and hiccups, expect the same in your own life. Expect many of these bumps because the road to perfection is as such.

The more attempts you will make, the more mistakes you will make, and the more skills you develop. You do not develop skill because you did it one time and excelled at it; skill is acquired by trying out different things until you get what is suitable.

I compare the process of overcoming challenges to the process of falling in love. Love is born out of mistakes and failures. If someone did too well by you, you wouldn't tell if you loved them in the end, they would be like a machine that works effectively, meeting your needs all the time. However, when you are in love, you have the ability to forgive and overcome mistakes your partner makes. This is when you realize the depth of love you have for him or her. With each hurdle you two overcome, you grow deeper in love. In the same way, strength in life is born out of overcoming challenges, one after another.

Kindly take note of the need to recharge and recover. Although the idea of mental toughness depicts the picture of an individual relentlessly working all the time, the primary reason for this is that the individual gets time for rest. It turns out we are not machines, and there are biological limits to what we can do at a time.

A fatigued mind is ineffective. Experts call this decision fatigue. It comes about because every mental task takes away some amount of strength. Perhaps you could try reducing the number of decisions you make daily to reserve energy for the more important decisions you will have to make. Steve Jobs, Mark Zuckerberg, and Barack Obama, and other great people often wore or still wear the same few items of clothing every day, in a bid to conserve their willpower.

The secret to maintaining the strength of your willpower is also in how you recover. You need to work hard, stop, recover, and then repeat the process. You will only perform at the peak of your performance if you get sufficiently rested and recovered. Do not let the worries of life or work plague you even in your moments of rest. Allow your body to fully be immersed in the rest, without involving yourself in social media chats, and give your entire body the opportunity to regain vitality.

Lastly, mental toughness is a muscle that needs occasional flexing. This muscle cannot grow when subjected to repetition. Grow your tolerance by leaving your comfort zone once in a while. Expose yourself to brutal

situations and occasionally take a step further up. Even if you are going through hell, just keep going.

Once you begin to self-train, you will realize that nothing on the face of the earth that is above you. There is no river too wide or mountain too tall for you.

How will you eat your elephant? A bite at a time.

Chapter 4: Lessons from the Greats

Many great minds have gone through so many struggles to get to where they are. Many swear that if not for these struggles, they would not have gotten the guts and the drive to push on as they did. It is said that behind a pretty smile, are tears, so it is with success. Behind success are hurdles and struggles a person has had to go through.

Here are a few success stories to show you how some of the heroes of our time overcame problems to achieve the success they now enjoy.

Jack Ma

Jack Ma is famous for his business savvy that propelled his internet company into a global success, making him the wealthiest person in Asia. The Alibaba.com founder is not only known for his incredible wealth but also his humble beginnings, and the hurdles he had to jump to get to his current position.

Throughout his life, Ma has faced an abnormal share of rejection, but this has only toughened his mental muscles. At one point, he and his cousin went out to apply for a waiting job at the first four-star hotel in their home city of Hangzhou. After waiting for close to three hours on a hot day, the manager finally came around and hired his cousin, leaving out Ma. The reason given for the rejection was because Ma was shorter and less handsome, compared to his cousin.

Perhaps the most widely known story of rejection, however, was which happened when Ma conceived the idea of starting Alibaba. He called 24 of his most trusted friends to his apartment and spent 2 hours explaining to them the dream he had of starting an online retail company. At the end of his presentation, 23 of them told him to give up on that idea. Only one person gave him some reassurance. He told Ma that if he was set on trying it, then he should go ahead and try it, but if the idea failed, he should come back.

Ma was not put down by the negative reception because after sleeping on it, he woke up with renewed dedication that he would pursue his dream. Right then, he began laying the foundations of his startup.

It is easy to look at these achievements and not give them much weight. However, when you read through the series of tough moments and rejections Ma went through to grow his mental muscles, you will begin to appreciate the critical role mental toughness played in getting him to become one of the greatest success stories of our time.

Ma failed more times, and possibly more spectacularly, than many of us will ever fail in our lifetimes. First, Ma was not good at school. He failed his primary school tests twice and almost didn't make it to middle school. He failed middle school thrice, and twice his college entrance exams. However, just like Ma, other great minds have struggled with their academics early in life, such as Winston Churchill, Forrest Gump, Abraham Lincoln, and Albert Einstein. In one of his math papers in his college entrance exam, he scored 1 point out of 120. Not that he hadn't prepared, he was just so poor at it. Ma went on undeterred even after Harvard rejected him ten times. It is surprising he managed to apply all these times while many of us would give up at the second or third attempt.

After graduating from the Hangzhou Normal University, he happily applied to 30 jobs and was turned down by all. For your humor, he even applied to be a police officer, but they too rejected him with three direct words, "You're no good." Still, in his quest to secure a job, Ma applied for one at a KFC, but of the 24 applicants, he was the only one not picked.

When it came to the establishment of his business, Ma calls Alibaba '1001 mistakes' because of the large number of failures he has made with it. However, his company has grown tremendously, thanks to his uncanny persistence and a tough mind. He is proof that no amount of failure should deter a mentally tough person from achieving his goals. He is also proof

that it takes practice to develop mental muscle so that you are unshaken by failure and troubles.

Mohed Altrad

The story that inspires me the most is that of a Bedouin turned billionaire. This is the story of Mohed Altrad, the Syrian who won the World Entrepreneur of the Year award in 2015. His story starts from a humble beginning like no other.

Mohed was born in a tent, in the middle of the Syrian desert to his teenage mother. His mother had been raped, and upon delivery, she became ill and died on the day her child was born. Mohed was left in the hands of his grandmother and father. His father was harsh and violent, and even beat Mohed's brother to death. Life for him had surely begun on a tragic note.

At the time he was growing up, shootouts and sword fights were commonplace, and the family depended on their animal skin tent to shelter themselves from the chaos.

On reaching school-going age, Mohed's grandmother refused to let him go to school. She insisted that he was to be a shepherd, guarding the animals in the desert sun. Mohed did not agree with his grandma, and he would sneak out, walk 10 miles across the desert in the sun, barefoot, to get to the nearest school. He had to spy on what was happening inside through a hole in the wall because he did not have the uniform or the money to pay for school. A kind teacher saw him and allowed him to sit in for the lessons.

As he went on with his studies, Mohed ventured into the business of renting out his bicycle to get money for books, pens, pencils, and shoes for school. When the results of the national exams were released, he had scored very highly, and he received a scholarship to study abroad. This was in 1969 at the time of the Anti-Arab sentiment in France, but Mohed still chose to go there. He did not know anyone in France and had to survive, eating only one meal a day.

Interestingly, he did not speak French either, which meant that he did not hear what his professors said. Nevertheless, he made an effort to learn the local language, and would often take up low-paying jobs like picking grapes to see himself through school.

At the end of the four years, Mohed graduated with a degree in Computer Science, founded then sold his startup that made computers. With the money he got, he took a risk and purchased a failing scaffolding company that had a million dollars in debt. Unlike many would, Mohed saw the potential in it and gave into the company all that he had.

The Altrad Group is currently the leading cement mixing and scaffolding company in the world. Mohed is now worth \$1.7 billion and is among the wealthiest people in the world.

His is a story of hurdles and challenges at every point of growth: at his birth, when he wanted to go to school, on getting to France, and buying a company with an enormous debt. However, his tough attitude got him through them all, and he is now an inspiration to many.

Michael Jordan

In the list of the greatest sportspersons is this legendary basketball player. Although his story is unlike those of corporate giants we have discussed above, his story is still quite inspiring. It is the perfect example of how a mentally tough mind can overcome so many failures and challenges, to achieve great success. Michael Jordan is considered the greatest basketball player who ever lived.

Michael's story starts a little later in life when he failed to make it to his high school's varsity basketball team. Michael was attending Laney High School, and when he could not see his name on the varsity team, he was greatly crushed. His coaches asked him to play in the junior varsity team,

not because he did not have the required skills and talent, but because of his size, seniority in school, and for a strategic reason.

The coaches felt that Jordan's friend, Leroy Smith, although not as good as Jordan, was more fitted for the varsity team because he was taller, 6'6", while Jordan was only 5'10". In addition, the coaches felt that getting Jordan to the senior team would only accord him a substitute role, denying him the time he needed to perfect his skills on the court. However, if he joined the junior team, he would get a chance to truly grow.

The reason was perfectly logical, but to the 15-year old, it meant defeat and failure.

However, Jordan soon picked himself up and used his disappointment and failure as a drive to step up. He worked twice as hard. He said that whenever he felt too tired and was ready to stop, he would close his eyes and remember the list of players that had made it to the varsity basketball team, and this would give him renewed strength for practice. This also helped to set the precedence for his life so that throughout his life, Jordan would use failures and setbacks as a drive to redouble his efforts. Many people are quick to release the pain of losing and move past it, but not him. The losses he encountered would challenge and push him towards better performance.

His life seemed to take a pattern of defeat followed by huge success. He carried this to the University of Carolina, and the NBA. His drive led him to break many records and become the most decorated player in NBA history. He is also credited for making basketball popular in the United States and other parts of the world. He is also the inspiration behind the current generation of basketball players like Kobe Bryant, LeBron James, and Dwayne Wade. You cannot talk of sports champions without having Michael Jordan at the top of the list.

After his successful NBA career, Michael Jordan became the owner of the Charlotte Bobcats, an NBA basketball franchise. Here too, he continued to experience challenges because, at the time he bought a majority stake, the

business was going down. Jordan took out his own money to cover the massive losses the team was having.

The first season was excellent, but with time, their performance deteriorated. For example, during the 2011-2012 season, the team made seven wins and 59 losses. This was the worst record for any team ever in history. Because of this, the team had poor support from the fans, even though their leader was the basketball legend himself.

However, by the time the 2012-2013 season came around, Jordan was ready to turn things around. Jordan took himself out of managing the team and hired a new coach to do it. He went along and started working on redeeming the brand. He changed the team's name to the Charlotte Hornets and buried himself in community events. The team soon developed a connection with the city.

The efforts paid off because, at the end of the 2013-2014 season, the team was leading with a record 43-39 wins. This was one of the best years in the team's history. It even made it to the playoffs. Ticket and merchandise sales were skyrocketing too, and the public's opinion of the team had drastically improved.

The stories of these successes are quite inspirational. Jack Ma forged his way into the internet retail business when everyone else thought he was misguided. Mohamed Altrud beat his incredibly harsh odds to become one of the wealthiest people in the world. Michael Jordan, the legendary basketball player, faced challenges in his career and as an investor. However, these champions overcame the challenges, driven by their tough mentalities.

From their stories, we see that mental toughness builds over time. By overcoming one challenge today, you will be able to overcome a more significant problem tomorrow. The bigger the challenges you defeat, the greater the glory.

Chapter 5: Mental Toughness as a Competitive Advantage

Majority of the problems that athletes, corporate leaders, and other performers, including yourself, struggle with are not due to inadequate knowledge, poor coaching, poor conditioning, a lack of physical skills, or a lack of technical know-how. Sure, these factors contribute to the success or failure of a project, but the primary issue lies in the individual himself. Whenever the heat of the competition turns up a bit, some teams and individuals begin to fall apart because of mental factors such as lack of confidence, negativity, intimidation, nervousness, poor concentration, or the inability to forget the bad breaks and mistakes.

You will be unfair to yourself and your team if you allow your commitment, dedication, sacrifice, and hard work go down the drain just because of a mental attitude that can be adjusted.

The greatest secret to being your best when it counts the most is to be calm and composed at all times. If you allow your emotions to run over, by either becoming too excited or too nervous, your muscles will tighten up, which causes your confidence to fade away. This is what it means to choke. A person making a presentation or an athlete becomes so nervous that he ends up performing tentatively, a shadow of his usual self.

It is normal to be nervous before a performance or a presentation, but you should know the real source of this nervousness before you can conquer it. You could be nervous because of how big a deal your presentation is, how aggressive your competition is, how good your opponent is, how critical the win is, and you will find very many other reasons that could make you nervous. While these factors are indeed bound to put you on edge, the real source of this nervousness isn't any of them - it is yourself! Yes, you make yourself nervous!

This means that what happens to you does not count much in regard to how your performance goes; you are right behind the steering wheel. You

develop nervousness as an inner response to what is going on around you. The good news is that you can undo all this by changing your internal response to outward pressure. It is likely that your competition understands what is at stake too, and is feeling nervous also. However, if you overcome this nervousness, whether, in a sports environment or a corporate environment, you are likely to have a competitive edge over the competition.

Here's how you do it:

1. Concentrate on what is happening now

If you allow your mind to drift back to the past or to worry about what is to come in the future, the chances are that you will become more nervous. However, if you want to maintain your cool at the clutch, train your mind to focus on the present, especially during times when your performance counts the most. This means that leading up to your moment, you shouldn't have to think about how people will view you, whether they will listen to you, or whether they will accept your ideas. If you are engaged in a competition, you shouldn't think about the significance of the competition or what could happen if you won or lost. Instead, you should maintain your cool and relax. You must keep your concentration on what is happening now. Once the presentation or the game starts, focus on it minute by minute, don't start thinking of the end while you are still at the beginning.

2. Whenever you lose your concentration, bring it back

It is very easy to realize in your mind that you need to maintain your focus on the present, but it is much harder to do it consistently. The way you do it efficiently is by consciously bringing back your thoughts whenever they wander off to the past or the future. Losing this focus ought not to make you nervous, but you will be if you are unable to bring back your thoughts right away. Whenever your concentration breaks and you do not catch that slip immediately, your stress levels soar through the roof, and you end up sabotaging your play.

3. Make yourself the central focus

If you allow your mind to drift to other things other than you (your coach, your boss, your teammates/colleagues, your clients, and other people who are watching), you give room to nervousness and deny yourself the peace you need. This means that whenever your moment to perform comes, you should do it without anyone else in mind. Shake off the comparison and concentrate on what you are doing, now.

4. Enjoy

When you are able to give your best under pressure, it means that you are enjoying yourself. It feels good to beat the system - to overcome what was meant to beat you. Enjoying yourself also plays a critical role in helping you to remain calm and giving your very best in the heat of the competition. If you give too much significance to what you are doing by thinking that it is too severe, you increase the pressure you put on yourself, and soon enough, you will start becoming nervous, and you will choke!

If you value what you are doing, learn to enjoy the game and the process. Embrace the challenges, see yourself overcoming a tough opponent, see yourself blowing the socks off your colleagues or your bosses, and ensure that you enjoy yourself even after the event is done. Whatever happens, you remain the incredible you.

5. Leave your goals behind

One of the mistakes people make is to keep the goals you have in mind as you perform. For example, if you go thinking, “I want to impress my boss,” “I want my followers to understand my authority”, “I want to win this tournament”, or “I want to break the current record”. The chances are that the pressure you are taking up will make you even more nervous. You will be unable to work well and ironically, you may never arrive at them. Instead, do not take your goals with you, keep them at bay and focus entirely on what you are doing.

6. Do not think about the things you cannot control

Many things happen in life over which you have no control. Any time you put your focus on things you cannot control, you subject yourself to unnecessary stress, become nervous, lose your confidence and end up

performing poorly. Therefore, before you immerse yourself into what is at hand, whether in the corporate world, on a race track, or in whichever else kind of activity you plan to engage in, make a list of all things that are likely to happen, over which you have no direct control.

For example, you cannot control whether investors will like your idea or not. You cannot control whether the employees buy into your vision for the company or not. You cannot control the crowd, whether they cheer you on or not. You cannot also determine beforehand, the outcome of the game.

Once you have made this list, factoring in any possible happening, post the list at a conspicuous place in your room, and always look at this as a list of potential mental traps. They are lying in wait for you, and the only way to avoid them is to know that they exist. If you find yourself carried away and thinking of these items, quickly shift your focus to something else, taking back control of your thought process.

7. Distract yourself, before and after your presentation/performance

As we have pointed out, thinking incessantly about something will make you nervous. Although you can't keep yourself from thinking, you can purposely keep your mind off the task at hand. Therefore, in the days, hours, and minutes leading up to the much-awaited event, stay busy. Avoid too much free time because then, your mind will drift to things you ought not to think about. Instead, watch a movie, read a book, listen to music, or involve yourself in things that are not related to the task. Distractions like these help you to maintain calm and remain composed.

Traits to Help You Gain an Edge over the Competition

The following characteristics, when taken up and implemented every day, are essential parts of a mentally tough person's make-up and will help him get an edge over the competition.

1. Focus

Before and after your performance, focus on your preparation and your lifestyle. It enables you to identify the distractions that could easily trip you over quickly and to help you learn how to deal with them effectively.

2. Have a Teachable Spirit

Being able to sit under instruction is mental toughness at its best. It is the acknowledgment that you might not know everything. If you are an employer, realize that your employee is capable of seeing something about the strategy you are using that you might not notice. The discovery could be what gives you a competitive edge against your competitors. This also applies to athletes. Do not ignore the advice your coach gives you, even if he is not on track with you. Remain teachable, despite the heights you reach.

3. Confidence

Saying that you should be very confident does not mean that you get cocky. Self-confidence only gives you a solid belief in your abilities, which makes it easier for you to overcome obstacles placed against your progress. You must believe in yourself, your talents, skills, and in your capacity to emerge the best.

4. Commitment and Motivation

You must already have a good measure of motivation and commitment, or you wouldn't be holding the position you do now. However, how does your level of dedication and motivation compare to that of leaders or employees in a similar position? How does it compare to that of your teammates? How about the competition? Are you putting in an effort better than everyone else? The commitment you have towards excellence should be insurmountable and should originate from deep within.

5. Able To Cope With Difficulties

What is the maximum amount of pressure you can handle before you break? You need to continually go beyond this limit if you want to excel at what you do. The ability to deal with pressure and anxiety beyond what you

usually handle, beyond your comfort zone, needs to grow every day for you to rise to the top.

6. Passion

Without passion for what you do, you will be another nameless participant. Beyond developing a passion for what you do, you must also aim at developing a passion for excellence, integrity, and the development of character. Passion is the element that separates the average and the elite. It is not surprising that some of the most famous names in sports include Serena Williams, Venus Williams, Tiger Woods, Stephen Curry, LeBron James, and a few others names, while the larger number is barely known. Those who are famous today are those that kept at it until they excelled beyond their peers.

7. A yearning for positive perfectionism

Have you gotten to the point of complacency where you do things only out of routine? As you head that corporate meeting, do you have anything new to teach your staff? Are you implementing new styles to increase efficiency in the company? As an athlete, are you improving on your style and your moves continually? Striving to be better than the person you are should be your primary goal in life. Program your mind to reach for greatness continually.

8. Optimism

If you are craving for success, you have to develop a positive attitude and become the 'glass half full' kind of person. Once you lose, you will need to bounce back as soon as possible, and the way to do this is to be hopeful that things will get better. Optimism births courage and resilience.

9. Persistence

You know Michael Jordan as the greatest NBA player that ever lived; he won the World Championship six times. However, despite his greatness, Michael Jordan missed 9000 shots, lost 300 games and missed 26 game-

winning shots. When asked to comment about this record, Michael said that he succeeded because he kept failing over and over. What persistence!

Just like Michael, keep trying, keep moving on. If a particular marketing strategy does not work, keep trying. If your ideal production method is not increasing production as you had hoped, keep trying. The more you try, the more likely you will find errors therein, and the better your chance of fixing the problem.

10. Pain and Hardship

The fact is that you will lose sometimes. Invested money can be lost if the market plummets. The most trusted and reliable employee can leave the company. A new program you invested so much into, may fail even before it is used. An athlete can be injured on the track. You may also have engaged in negative self-talk that wrecked your psyche and self-confidence. Whatever happened, overcoming this pain will require mental conditioning and discipline. Practice hard in these two areas. You are bound to need them from time to time.

If you put into daily practice the ten factors listed above, you will become more resilient and will develop the heart of a winner. It is also true that as you instill these attributes into your life and your heart, your self-confidence and self-identity will soar higher. Your skill, talent, agility and self-control will separate you from the competition.

The Fundamental Three

One former FBI agent talked about how he was almost pulled out of the agency because his running had gotten slower and he was having difficulty doing pushups after he left the FBI Academy. Not believing how petty his superiors were being, he wondered how one thing has to do with the other. How would running help him in becoming a better investigator?

It was not until later that he realized how the two are connected. Physical exercise was a tool to help him develop the mental toughness he needed in his FBI work. He realized that mental toughness is necessary for anyone who wishes to excel in his work. This is what coaches intend to build in athletes as they pass them through numerous training activities.

A recent study conducted on athletes who had just completed rehabilitation for their injuries found that three essential skills speeded their recovery. They included:

Positive thinking : Positive thinkers confront the blunt reality of things and adapt to the new situation without even losing a breath. They are not like optimists who hope that things will go well. Positive thinkers try to make the best of their circumstances. The study found that positive thinking increased the pace of healing and recovery

Goal setting : The researchers found that setting goals that align with what matters most concerning your future well-being and happiness gives you a competitive advantage because it powers you and enables you to achieve

Imagery : Repeatedly visualizing yourself performing well and reaching the goals you have set. When you visualize success, your body releases a dopamine shot, which is enough to keep you moving beyond your limits and beliefs you have about the current situation and your abilities.

Henceforth, practice positive thinking, goal setting, and imagery to propel yourself towards achieving success in what lies ahead.

Chapter 6: Cultivating Mental Toughness among Employees

In the issue of corporate affairs, entrepreneurs know that of all the elements in their companies, the hardest to reproduce are their employees. Therefore, they must make every effort to maintain this factor, and the leaders must do all that they can to ensure that the teams are supported in their roles, emotionally, physically, and mentally. They must also be well.

An American university came up with a model for mental toughness, which showed that people who do show signs of mental toughness are likely to do well at their work. The data from the study indicated that these people are much more successful, have a commendable record of accomplishment, and are mostly the ones who hold leadership positions in the companies. They also tend to be competitive, driven, and ambitious in their dealing. A mentally strong person will also be open to challenges and changes in his working environment.

If you think about the occupants of a regular boardroom, you are likely to agree that many people in there fall into the category of the mentally tough irrespective of the departments they represent. However, you will find that these executives represent a combination of mentally strong and sensitive employees. The sensitive employees are not weak though. A sensitive person has a mix of desirable attitudes and skills, but he finds assessment and transitions quite tricky.

Sensitive workers need targeted support to increase their resilience and ability to handle challenges. It is important to note that while mentally tough people develop their resilience from overcoming failures and moving on swiftly without letting anything deter their performance. Sensitive people, on the other hand, are motivated by success. Once a sensitive person can achieve success after overcoming one challenge, he or she is confident that he or she can overcome the next one.

Sensitive employees need to learn the skills of mentally tough people to develop mental toughness. They should learn that maintaining their ground even during tough times would grant them the confidence they need to keep composure during tough times. It is all right to be emotional, but exercising some level of control over them is of benefit. When you are in control, you will not just give an emotional response driven by your fear and discomfort; you will check your emotions and proceed with the business of the day in a calm manner.

Teaching mental toughness can be quite a task, and it is not certain that employees would even be interested in attending the classes. However, research and experience show that behavior is better learned and adapted when modeled. As such, here is how you can model mental toughness and resilience among your staff.

Become the example : Mental toughness should be modeled right from the top. A leader should lead by example. If he wants his employees to learn how not to freak out and to rise to the occasion when challenges come, then he ought to model that too. Looking at it from a family angle, the leader being the father or the mother, and the children being the followers, it would be impossible for the children to remain strong when their parent is shivering in fright at a corner. However, once you show your child how to show bravery even when the situation is frightening, then the child will learn to be brave. The employees read and borrow from the attitude of their boss.

Promote confidence and control among the staff : No one would feel confident if, at the least sign of trouble, troops are sent over to come to offer help. It would be impossible for employees to become mentally tough if the management is always hovering around them to provide help. Employees who have a sense of control over what they do become mentally tough because they have learned to face challenges head-on, take ownership of their mistakes, and to take the glory when they achieve success.

Nurture a sense of purpose in your staff : A leader or an employer nurtures a sense of purpose by encouraging his employees to look for meaning and purpose in whatever they are doing. When employees feel that what they do has some significance in the world, they are likely to be more vested in their work

Address the levels and the causes of stress in the workplace. Employees experience stress both as a group and as individuals. The management needs to be aware of that. Therefore, the management should be on the lookout for when tensions are rising for the group and come up with a solution for them. As individuals, the management needs to keep track of each person's performance, and attendance records, among other factors, to identify stress in individuals.

Encourage networking among the employees : The establishment of networks and connections among the people fosters an environment of support that helps to nurture mental toughness by providing each employee with people who can help encourage and build them when tough times come.

Manage change effectively : Leaders and employers should ensure that the entire workforce understands the need for change at one time or another. Change should be a welcome challenge rather than a roadblock. Change can happen in any environment, and mentally tough employees can adapt easier than others do.

Nurture resilience : Resilience is an element of mental toughness. It should be a critical point of focus among employees because it keeps them from giving up when the situation becomes tough. Instead of providing solutions every time, an employee should be left to strive with the challenge on their hands until he finds a solution. Avoid providing assistance all the time, lest the employees become too dependent on you. The more an employee struggles and overcomes, the stronger the resilience and mental toughness in him, and in the entire organization.

Treasure a sense of humor : Encourage employees to laugh and be happy throughout their working day. Happiness cancels out the stress that challenges present, and if the employee can keep his mind off the worry, he will be able to come up with a solution sooner. The employee will be able to walk through the challenges without having to break down.

Provide learning opportunities : Learning expands the mind and provides the opportunity for developing professionally. Occasionally, employees should have opportunities to be taught and learning. It is by increasing their knowledge that they learn how to manage themselves through tough situations and to embrace change.

Embrace optimism : Creating a positive, optimistic environment means that you adopt a positive language. Optimism encourages mental toughness by keeping the people from losing heart even when the challenge intensifies. On the other hand, if employees have to suffer through negative language and discouragement, they are likely to have a negative attitude in their work and to give up early when issues arise. The leadership will be at a loss because the turnover rate will rise.

Encourage the employees to become adaptable and flexible : When employees are flexible, they are less likely to crumble when pressure mounts. At a time of intense pressure, they are likely to find creative ways of pushing through the challenges until they overcome.

Make use of the employees' skills of managing and resolving problems. Both the leadership and the staff have some problem-solving ideas and skills that can be taken up to neutralize the issues and their effects. Companies who take this approach towards resolving issues, taking the input of everyone in the organization, have a history of successfully implementing solutions and growing the toughness, resilience, and independence of their employees.

In the corporate world, it is important to remember that tough times do not last, it is the tough people that do. Always yearn to develop mental

toughness among your staff because they are the real assets of your company. If they are tough, whatever the situation that comes up, you and your company will be left standing. It is also easier to rebuild if systems come crashing down.

Key Elements to Building Your Employees' Mental Strength

1. Foster the spirit of community within the organization

No one likes to be alone all the time, especially when others are socializing and getting along. The act of positioning an employee to feel like part of the larger group effectively counteracts loneliness, which can overwhelm a person's mind and keep him from thinking clearly. One researcher observed that lonely people are less likely to receive awards than those who are social. This could also mean that they are less productive than those who engage with others and get to learn about different ways to approach a problem.

In your place of work, you ought to encourage the community spirit by coming up with groups that can help employees relate to each other even beyond the issues that have to do with work. For example, you could create a support group for people who want to quit drinking and smoking, in addition to the establishment of a mentorship program. This way, people will be caring for each other and supporting each other, and with regard for every member.

2. Take up hiring processes that are of benefit to the candidates as much as they are to you

Use a method that will help the candidates realize whether the job matches their likes and preferences and whether they will do the job out of passion or simply to have an occupation. In our job searches, many of us are quite desperate and will send thousands of applications, to see if any company will have a place for us. It is impossible for a human being to be passionate

about what a thousand companies are doing. If you end up taking a role that you are not excited about, you are likely to break under the weight of the stress, pressure, and the challenges that come about.

For this reason, the hiring method ought to benefit both the hiring company and the applicant so that each may identify the right fit. It saves both parties a lot of time and energy. As an employee, you end up doing what you like or were meant to do. If you find a role like this one, you will not have to be encouraged or pushed by anyone. You will love challenges and will be overwhelmed by the thrill of accomplishment and beating them down.

Therefore, as an employer, ensure that you only take in like-minded employees, those with whom you share a passion for what you do.

3. Focus on building physical strength too, in addition to psychological strength

The first thing that wears down a strong mind is physical fatigue, sickness, and generally feeling worn out. Physical wellness requires that you maintain a healthy diet and that you exercise often. Leaders have to proactively take care of these issues by providing these structures, either physically at the workplaces, or through allowances that will allow the employees to afford these amenities. For example, some workplaces have gyms within the job premises where members can go before or after the day's work. Others register their members to private gyms and then issues them with cards. Whichever strategy an organization takes up, the end game should be to boost the physical wellness of the staff.

4. Take note of other things beyond the office

While it would please an employer to have everyone on his team be as passionate about what they do as he is, it is a sad realization to know that not everyone in your workplace is as obsessed as you are about his work. People have other interests and commitments outside the office that could be equally important, if not more, to their current roles. Some have children and parents that need support.

It would be impossible for an employee to give his full attention if sensitive issues in his life are not looked into. For example, an employee will not be in his A-game if his mother has taken ill and is lying in hospital. A mother will not concentrate on her work if you demand that she stays at work past the daycare hours. Do not be surprised if imposing your strict rules causes any of these employees to break and make the wrong decisions, or quit their jobs.

Instead, seek to show concern and care for issues in their lives. If your employee is running late for his child's recital and has to take a bus, offer to drive him there. If an employee's child is unable to go to college for lack of fees, see how you can help. There are many strategies to making employees feel valued and appreciated, and when you make them feel that, they will go through all lengths to make sure that they produce a stellar performance, just for you. By doing this, you will be training them to be mentally strong, to the extent that you do not have to be present for them to put down fires; they will take care of business for you.

The bottom line is that you should seek every opportunity to show that you honor and appreciate your employees and their personal lives.

5. Ensure the expectations you have set for performance are realistic, both the good and the bad

It is necessary that you plan for relaxation time as you plan working schedules. Some employers consider it a waste of time when they set aside downtime during the week. To them, they are fostering laziness among the staff. However, this relaxation time should be attached to targets that the employees need to achieve so that the work is not left behind at the expense of relaxation time. These clear performance expectations become the performance indicators and a measure of accountability such that those who can reach their targets can take their much-deserved breaks. This way, you will allow the minds and bodies of the staff to recover, in readiness for taking down the next challenge.

The bottom line

The entrepreneurs, executives, and managers understandably need to be mentally tough to provide direction and management in their leadership roles. They have the difficult responsibility of managing their juniors, amidst handling the pressures of running a successful business. However, these worries would ease up significantly if the leaders took time to develop the employees so that they too develop or increase the strength of their backbones, to be able to handle the situations and challenges that come up in their line of work.

When an employee is mentally strong, he will not cower in fright when a challenge presents itself. It takes away the dependence too so that an employee will not go running to his bosses yet he has not attempted to resolve the issue by himself. Mental toughness also reduces the turnover rate such because employees become hardy and are unlikely to bow down to pressure and quit their jobs. In addition, mental toughness among the employees will give you a competitive advantage against the competition, which helps to build your business name among the consumers.

As you can see, building a mentally strong workforce is to your benefit.

Chapter 7: Mental Toughness for Success in Life

The fact is that the larger proportion of the global population finds it difficult to succeed in life. No matter where you live, what you do or the opportunities that come your way, success always eludes the majority. The problems are not where we live or what we have in our hands; the problem lies in each individual's ability to gather up his mental, spiritual, emotional, and physical capabilities that could enable him to push ahead. The fact, however, is that the struggle only gets worse with time.

The world population is continuously growing, and so is the number of people fighting to succeed. People are coming up with ideas and strategies to convince us that they have acquired the solution to life while in fact, they are only adding to the confusion that is simmering in our brains. It becomes even harder to find your way through life's murky waters, to succeed in life. The uncertainty is making it harder to succeed in life and to achieve our goals.

Still, others seem to have reached the peak of the proverbial mountain. These are the gurus of our time, and they seem to have figured it out. These people talk of the limited scope of success and swear by certain principles and a particular way of thinking that should embolden us so that we are able to reach the heights they have. This way of thinking merely involves re-aligning and strengthening your mind to be able to overcome all the hurdles that life could throw at you.

Right before we look at the strategies you can take up to strengthen your mind so that you can achieve success in life, let's briefly examine some of the common things that set us back in life. They include:

a. Setting your goals the wrong way - There is a proper way and there is a wrong way of setting your goals. The right way should be the SMART way because it allows you to plan, act, and analyze the progress you have made. The better you are at analyzing your progress and keeping track of things down to the most intricate details, the more likely you are to succeed.

b. Failure to manage your time effectively - Most people do not succeed because they like to indulge in comforts and in laziness, which invokes their bad habits. Time is a valuable asset that once wasted cannot be recovered, which means that once it is lost, you do not get a chance to retrieve it.

c. Listening to the opinions of others - When you listen to people enough, you are likely to do what they say. However, deep down in yourself, you know that you are destined for things bigger than their opinions of you. It is also difficult if you are around negative people. When you focus on what others think, you lose your drive and will continuously depend on them for direction, which could mislead you extensively.

d. Allowing bad habits to overtake you - Everyone has a dark side, but others allow it to take over instead of overcoming it. You overcome bad habits by continuously working hard to improve and to make things better. It takes time to overcome a bad habit; don't expect overnight success.

e. Giving up instead of being persistent - Honestly, failure stinks! It is one of the worst feelings in the world, and it will make you question many things, including your existence. However, the fact is that failure will either drive you to do better or it will stifle you. Many of the world's champions have experienced failure many times in their lives, but they did not allow it to bury them. When you give up, all the effort and work you put in goes down with you. Therefore, whatever you do, keep pushing on, a little bit at a time.

The Secret Is In Cultivating Positivity

From the list of things above that derail us, you must have noted that each item has some negativity tied to it. In a world that is seemingly mostly negative, maintaining positivity can be quite a task. It is so much easier to complain, throw blame, and incline yourself to more gloom and doom. It probably is the reason why many of us suffer from various forms of mental health issues, from stress to depression, and others.

A blogger recently reported about a Facebook post he saw recently. The post announced the upcoming arrival of about a thousand new high-paying

job openings. The jobs would be available in the blogger's locality, and on viewing it, he could not hold his excitement and began to share the information with others who would be qualified and interested in the new job openings. However, after about an hour, he returned to the Facebook post and was petrified by what he saw.

Instead of people being grateful for the new opportunities, the people were now complaining about the location of the offices. People were concerned about how much the state government would be spending to allow the reputable company to operate in the space it had been offered. Others questioned the legitimacy of the jobs, yet the unemployment rate in that area was hitting the roof.

The blogger was amazed that although the post brought good news, a majority of the people only focused on the cost of the project and other negative factors, instead of being happy that the new company would solve the unemployment issues in the area. The blogger was also stunned to see that he was exactly like the people he was criticizing: he only focused on the negative comments and ignored the positive ones that welcomed the move.

From this story, we can see just how success divides between the positive and the negative. There will be positives for every negative, and negative for every positive. Whatever you focus on will determine whether you will achieve success or not. This is to mean that the mentally tough people, those who are able to tune out the negatives and appreciate the positives, are the ones that will find success, or rather, success finds them. Success, in this case, becomes the ability to live life without the influence of negative forces, thus achieving lasting happiness.

Why You Need Mental Strength to Achieve Success

Mental toughness is not a reserve for athletes only. It applies to every area of life. To achieve this success, you need to apply these eight lessons:

1. Avoid Whining; It Wastes Time

When working to accomplish something, time will not be on your side. You only have a window of opportunity, and this is not infinite either. Mentally tough people will, therefore, spend the limited time they have acting, and not reacting. In the course of performing, you are likely to encounter setbacks too. When it does happen, give it a constructive response, and quickly get back on track. Give no room to grumbling, complaining, whining, or criticizing.

2. Maintain Control

A mentally tough person will act as though he is in control of his environment, even when he isn't. This is not pretentious; he does this to maintain his cool in the midst of pressure or adversity.

Control does not depend on luck; it is likely that a solution will even appear in the moment. However, a mentally tough individual will keep striving, no matter what comes against him.

3. Trust is Critical

For a person to experience success, he must express a hope that he will reach his goal, even though he encounters mistakes and failures along the way. This confidence is born by a strong mind that believes in its ability to conquer, even when the situation gets a little too tough.

A big contributor toward gaining and maintaining this level of confidence is surrounding yourself with people that believe in your ability. Negative people will only lower your faith, and reduce your chances of achieving success.

4. Mistakes are Common

The underlying factor in all these is that you are human. Just like anyone else, you make mistakes. However, the tough-minded do not let the

mistakes get in the way of them achieving success. Worrying, reliving and dwelling on mistakes does not help you in any way, but neither will ignoring them. Find the middle ground, where you remember them only enough to learn lessons from them. Let your past guide you, but not define you.

5. Be Willing To Put In the Work

Succeeding in life requires that you spend time, a considerable amount of it, on a particular task. Mental toughness helps you maintain your focus so that you do not give divided attention. Realistically, you know that there is no way you can achieve worthwhile success overnight. However, if you remain focused on a particular task and give it all your energy and concentration, you are likely to realize what others couldn't have.

Without hours and hours of training, it is unlikely that runners and other sportspersons would achieve the success they did. They accepted their situation and persevered through. People who want to succeed do not always seek easier ways out; they are glad to put in the effort.

6. Continually Innovate

Successful people are open to many options. Many of these roads are those that are less traveled, and they can be slightly nerve-racking. It takes a tough mind to push past that uncertainty, walk past familiar grounds and create a new trail. An achiever doesn't depend on the familiar path; they look for new options that can lead to innovative solutions and practices.

While being in an uncharted territory can be uncomfortable, and without mental toughness, you may start doubting your moves. You may even choose to retrace your steps. If you do, you will only go as far as others have gone. However, this is not the path of the successful.

7. Able To Give Back

A majority of the people who feel the need to give back to the society are those who feel empowered enough to make a difference. The need to give

back strengthens your mental toughness because it motivates you to put in positive efforts to succeed. For example, volunteering increases your self-confidence and makes you feel more socially-connected and less susceptible to depression and isolation. The gratitude others present when they receive help enables you to reach higher levels of mental strength.

8. Filter the Noise

Technology has brought new kinds of distractions in the form of live chats, videos, emails, text messages, and news feeds that are a source of noise throughout the day. So long as you are interacting with others, you are bound to fall for these distractions from time to time. A strong mind can filter through the clatter so that the person can concentrate on what is essential. This is easier said than done. However, the person needs to put down his phone, silence his alerts, and avoid getting back to his devices, even when bored.

Mental toughness is what will bring you back to the table when the recess time is over; it is what gets you to cut short a chat with friends to get back to the business of the day.

As you can see, every extraordinary performance demands a person to be in his personal best, and with all the distractions around, the secret to pushing through is to become mentally tough.

Increasing Your Mental Strength for Success in Life

To make your mind tougher and stronger, you need to practice a few things. First, you should know how to label your feelings and emotions correctly. When you put a name to what you are feeling, you decrease its intensity.

Therefore, whenever you have negative emotions, determine whether they are emotions of anxiety, fright, sadness, or anger. It is also important that

you observe how the particular emotion affects how you perform your role. Does anxiety cause you to take unnecessary risks? Does excitement cause you to be impulsive?

When you are aware of your emotions, you are less likely to make irrational decisions because you realize what could be driving you.

Secondly, you should come up with a new and healthy way of dealing with painful emotions. Correctly identifying and naming your emotions is not enough to accord you with the skills you need to regulate the emotions you have. You need to have an effective coping mechanism to serve as an outlet for the emotions you have.

Some people turn to unhealthy coping methods like overindulging in food, drinking, venting, or staying home, and these do not provide a permanent solution. They may provide the temporary relief you need at the moment, but the issues will still come up later. Instead of looking for temporary solutions, focus on those that will do you good even in the long-term and not wreak havoc on your relationships, health or the tasks you are handling. Kindly remember that what works for one person may not necessarily work for you.

If you want to find out the strategy that suits you best, experiment with a number of them, until you settle on one. These strategies could include meditation, exercising, some time alone with nature, and various forms of art.

Thirdly, work towards replacing all the negative thought patterns you might have developed. Your thoughts directly influence your behaviors. Therefore, when you start thinking things like, “I am so stupid,” you are robbed of the mental strength you need to make changes. Therefore, to get the tough winning mind, monitor your thoughts very closely, identify patterns and themes, and try to talk yourself out of the negativity.

To all the irrational and unproductive thoughts, respond with something helpful. Therefore, instead of thinking about how you are going to embarrass yourself making the presentation, see the presentation as an

opportunity to showcase your public speaking talent, or your ability to innovate by coming up with unforeseen solutions to problems.

Fourthly, you should always ensure that any action you take is positive. Therefore, train your brain to think in that direction, always. Do the things that are difficult to do, and maintain consistency in what you are doing. You will find out that you are stronger than you thought you are.

In line with that, ensure that you take up healthy habits too. Eat a balanced diet, sleep plenty, be grateful always, and exercise regularly. When you do that, you maintain your body at its best which also suggests that your brain will be at its best too, ready to make decisions.

As you do this, ensure that you associate only with people who encourage you and challenge you to be your best. An environment of support helps to increase the strength and toughness of the spirit and the mind.

Lastly, you need to keep off bad habits that drain your mental muscles. If you are still practicing the unhealthy habits, the good ones do not help one bit. It is like eating double cheeseburgers after going out for a run. The negative habits rob you of the progress you had already made, and the mental strength you had developed previously. However, once you notice them, replace each of them with positive and healthy alternatives. Once you do that, you will be able to move forward and achieve your goals.

Chapter 8: Mental Toughness for Your Health

The complex ways the body interacts with the mind is quite fascinating. It blows my mind that when I hold anger, repressed grief, unpleasant memories, and emotional pain, I often will experience a migraine or some pain in my lower back. A friend also told me that whenever an ex-lover calls her, she feels very sick and even begins to vomit. Another said to me that whenever she is anxious about an upcoming event, the area between her shoulder blades starts to ache. The aches, pains, and the sickness are the physical manifestations of the feelings, thoughts, and emotions that a person is going through.

The principle of this mind-body connection is that the way a person perceives himself manifests in the outward. If you see yourself as powerless and unable to deal with the situation at hand effectively, this goes right into the body and affects the functioning of the immune system, and is manifested as discomfort, pain, and aches.

Minor stressors, when you view yourself as powerless and react to them in fear, you will be surprised to see that they produce a psychosomatic body and mental symptoms such as viruses, colds, and allergies. Prolonged stress often causes more severe health issues. The opposite is true, however. Healthy and positive emotions will produce a healthy mind.

Scientific Proof

You have heard of the medical ‘placebo effect’ where patients in clinical trials got saline injections, sugar pills, and fake surgeries, but these made them believe that they were getting the miracle treatment they needed. Surprisingly these patients recovered 18 to 80% of the time. The opposite, called the ‘nocebo effect’ is also true. Negative beliefs about yourself and your health poison your body.

Scientists confirmed the nocebo effect according to *The Lancet* . In the article, San Diego researchers reviewed the records of close to 30,000 Chinese-Americans and compared them to those of 400,000 white Americans. They found that Chinese-Americans died earlier than the Whites, especially those whose birth year and disease were considered by Chinese medicine and astrology to be ill-fated. The researchers learned that the more the Chinese –Americans believed in the traditional superstitions, the more likely they were to die earlier. Their beliefs led to their untimely deaths, not the gene factors, doctors’ skills, disease or lifestyle choices.

The same research found that medical students often report the acquiring the symptoms of the disease they are studying currently. This happens because they get paranoid and start to think that they are sick. Their bodies then dutifully comply, and the students end up getting sick in reality.

The placebo and the nocebo effects from these studies prove that what the mind perceives is what becomes in reality. Therefore, if you allow negative thoughts into your mind like “My family gets diabetes,” or “I am the sickly type”, you will surely be sickly and diabetic. It is even said that knowing too much about what could go wrong in your body is harmful to you because the more you focus on the many ways your body can break down, the more likely you are to experience these symptoms.

From this scientific research, you can see the power of thinking positive thoughts. It causes hope, expectation, care, and recovery of the body. Negative thinking, on the other hand, creates feelings of anxiety, fear, unbelief, and helplessness that eventually bring around the disease itself, and its symptoms.

The Mind-Body Connection Concept in Self-Healing

The area of mind-body medicine relies on thoughts. The doctors say that if you think of yourself to be at the mercy of the sickness, receiving your healing will be quite the task. Unfortunately, our worldview and our culture support the idea of we being the subjects of nature and miss the mind-body connection.

We think of ourselves as being at the mercy of viruses, germs, the weather, and our genes, among other factors. We also believe that healing comes from drugs, medical procedures, from cleaning, and from spraying with germicides to keep off the germs. These solutions may be helpful in taking out an annoying symptom, but these interventions are now the leading causes of pollution and illnesses among humans.

The mind-body healing process seeks to let you know the underlying cause of the symptoms you are experiencing so that you can deal with it directly. It does not create any problems on the way; it only points you to the source of your problem. Many people do not think that they have the power to heal their bodies, but it is in our nature to do so. Science and nature also confirm this fact.

To illustrate to you how often you have given up your power to outside forces, consider the following statements:

“This medication will make you well.” (The medication has the power to manage the situation for you)

“Is your back still bothering you?” (The back has the power to cause you pain)

“This pill will take away the stress you have been feeling lately.” (You give up control of your thoughts to the drug)

“Let’s keep you under observation, for now, to see what your symptom does.” (The symptom has the power to determine your health, you have no say in what happens to your body)

“My head is killing me.” (This is subservient language to show that your head has power and intent to cause you harm)

“I have diabetes because my mother and father have it too.” (You are playing victim to your genes. Since you are under their power, you

must follow that ancestral pattern)

Statements like those listed above indicate that you are powerless, and this only allows your sickness to take root better. Instead of supporting your health using positive words, you send messages via your body cells to ensure that they remain subject to whatever you have given authority to take command over you.

The reality is that we are exposed to a large host of bacteria, germs, viruses and other disease-causing organisms that modern medicine effectively works on, to restore us to health. By all means, we should all take medication and go for surgeries if the doctors recommend it, to save our lives. However, we find ease in popping pills and infecting ourselves using our own words. We end up taking medicines, while the real cause of our illnesses is ourselves. Once we understand this, we will be able to take up natural healing and disease prevention that comes with understanding the body-mind connection.

If you deny that negative thoughts cause disease and illnesses, or the existence of an incredible mind-body connection, you certainly cannot contest the positive effects that positive thinking has had on patients over the years. One doctor who spent years observing his patients and their emotional and physical reactions to positivity found that positive words and thoughts led the patients to have a better sleep, hastened recovery from cardiovascular stress, fewer cold infections, and increased their sense of happiness. He concluded that positive attitudes like love, gratitude, serenity, interest, awe, playfulness, and a feeling of deep connection to other people directly affects the health and the well-being of a person. The good news is that this can be improved and perfected with practice.

Adopting Mental Toughness for Your Health

When you become a mentally tough person, you can get a good grasp of your emotions, thoughts, and behavior. You also understand that problems

and stress are common in life. In addition, you feel good about yourself, and you keep company with people who speak positive words into your life. Therefore, if you are intent on improving your health, here are a few tips to help you do it effectively. They are:

Overcome Your Negative Bias

Since our bodies are wired in a way that we are inclined to defend against losses and threats, we tend to give much more thought to bad things over the good that happens to us. Although this is a natural survival mechanism, the truth is that this negativity bias works against us. It means that a person begins to spend more time going over the minor frustrations he encounters rather than the wonderful experiences that happen all through the day.

The secret to overcoming this negativity bias so that you can begin to enjoy a continuous joyful state is to have three positive thoughts or emotions for every negative one. This should be done intentionally, and soon, you will find yourself ‘wired’ to think positive thoughts only. The positivity that builds in you reverses all the adverse effects of negative thoughts and emotions that you had built up. The transformation causes you to live a happy, fulfilled life.

Forgiveness Is Critical

When you forgive, it means that you have fully accepted the weight of the negative event that occurred, and are taking back the negative feelings and emotions towards what happened. Experts say that forgiving is the route towards experiencing better emotional, mental and physical health.

Some scholars proved that forgiveness, like any other skill, can be learned. The students from Stanford University ran a Forgiveness Project and taught a group of 260 adults the basics of forgiving in a period of six weeks. The result was that 70% of the sample reported that their feelings of hurt had decreased, 27% said that their physical pains had decreased (stomach upset, dizziness, general body pain), while 13% said that their anger had reduced significantly.

The practice of forgiving has also been associated with a longer lifespan and better functioning of the immune system. It also lowers a person's blood pressure and improves their cardiovascular health.

The Value of Gratitude

Acknowledging the good things in your life has an incredible effect on your emotional well-being. In a study, people who were asked to name the things they were most grateful about were found to be: exercise more, be happier, sleep better, and they had minor physical complaints, compared to those who listed the things that were troubling them the most in life.

The study found a correlation between gratitude and happiness. The surprising conclusion reached was that it is not happiness that causes a person to be grateful; gratitude is what brings joy. In essence, happiness is a condition, an attitude that you develop when you are appreciative of what is around you.

Positive Emotions for Mental Resilience

Scientifically, positive emotions enable the body to recuperate from the harmful effects that are brought by negative emotions that linger. This means that developing a positive attitude will help you cultivate positivity and help you become more resilient over time, even in times of crisis.

The emotional resilience you will develop behaves like a rubber band, such that despite the pulling and stretching done by the pressures of life and the negative emotions, you can bounce back to your original state. As such, a resilient person can experience negative emotions like sorrow, pain, frustration, and grief without falling apart.

This is not to mean that the person will deny that he or she is going through that pain. Rather, the person can go through it while still maintaining a positive attitude, which hastens the process of overcoming and recovering from the negative emotions and the effects of the situation. What's more, some people can view challenges with so much optimism, knowing that the hardship will only enlarge their view of life and increase their growth. For

example, you could find an emotionally resilient person rejoicing over his job loss, happy that the loss opens up new doors of opportunity to get a better job or to change career.

Chapter 9: The Habits of Mentally Tough People

If you catch sight of a mentally tough person, chances are, he wasn't born that way. He had to develop some critical habits, and practicing them daily set him apart from the rest of the pack. These habits are mostly discernible in the way the mentally tough person approaches life and the challenges that come his way. His methods are different from those of an average person.

Henry Ford reportedly said that failure is the opportunity to start again, but intelligibly, this time. Having identified the mistakes that keep you from succeeding, it is certain that you will want to develop the right mental attitude to help propel you through success, overcoming the challenges, the opinions, and the bad habits that stifle you. This mental attitude is the ability to become mentally tough and strong.

Here are some daily habits you can take up to develop the mental strength and toughness you need:

1. Cultivate Gratitude

Mentally strong people count their blessings every day, rather than their problems, to help keep their lives in perspective. The attitude of gratitude brings the joy that eliminates all negative feelings, and elevates their moods, in readiness for the tasks at hand.

2. Take on Challenges

To a mentally tough person, a challenge is only an opportunity to become stronger. With each victory, the individual becomes more confident and better at what he is doing.

3. Maintain Healthy Boundaries

Emotional, social, and physical boundaries create the room a tough-minded person needs to grow. Even though saying 'no' could disappoint those who

are trying to get past the boundaries, the individual is happy to take that risk, for the sake of securing success in the future.

4. Maintain Personal Power

A strong person does not allow a negative person to exert any control or influence over him or her. He or she is also not willing to use other people as excuses for why he is being held back or dragged down; the person takes full responsibility for his actions.

5. Only Concentrate On Things You Have Power Over

Mentally tough people know the value of being continually effective and productive in your roles. This can be achieved only when you focus on the things you can control, rather than waste precious time thinking about current or future storms that you have no control over. The person only invests his energy in making preparations on how to manage his affairs when the situation comes along, rather than in trying to prevent the situation.

For example, if the country expects to get into a recession, a mentally tough person does not go about trying to prevent the depression; it would be a complete waste of time. Instead, the strong person works on managing his organization and planning on the response the company will give when the recession is here. Will the production decrease? How will that affect the market? A strong mind will think about those issues.

6. Make Peace with The Past

The past is only essential to a tough-minded person for its lessons. These people reflect on it so they can learn from it, not regret their actions or those of others. They do not hold grudges either.

7. Learn From Mistakes

Instead of beating yourself up because of an error, a mentally healthy person will focus on the lessons therein. He takes full responsibility for his

behavior and chooses to move forward, positively.

8. Take Calculated Risks

Each decision a mentally tough person makes must be backed by logic so that each risk taken is calculated for its possible pay off and losses. As such, a mentally strong person is willing to step out of his comfort zone to look for non-traditional opportunities and solutions that will propel him or her to success

9. Have Alone Time

Any successful person will tell you of the value of alone time. When a person is left alone to his thoughts, he is able to meditate, journal, plan, and reflect. Some bit of solitude is essential for any growing and innovative mind.

10. Take Full Responsibility

As mentioned in a previous point, a mentally tough person takes charge of his or her life. The person does not wait around to be handed opportunities or sit around whining about what should have been or what is owed to them. The tough person goes out and makes it happen.

11. Persevere

Strong people are believers of the fact that good things take time, and that they are worth waiting for. They are persistent and patient as they strive to achieve particular milestones in their life journeys

12. Be Realistic in Your Optimism

Mentally tough people are not daydreamers. They refuse to be put down by pessimistic opinions and predictions, but still, will not allow themselves to be overconfident.

13. Allow Discomfort

Pain is a necessary part of the process, and a mentally tough person is not afraid to experience some. It may mean getting overly tired or resisting the

urge to be gratified instantly. This requires a great deal of self-discipline to endure the discomfort.

14. Work on Unhealthy Habits

A mentally tough person will not allow his unhealthy habits get in the way of his success. He understands that the mind has the capacity of becoming the worst enemy to his success. Therefore, he is continually working against overindulging in food, the hot temper, hitting the snooze button, watching altering films, and other negative behaviors that limit success.

15. Use Your Mental Capacity Wisely

A mentally tough person will not complain about things that he cannot change, or keep rehashing about something that happened in the past. He knows better than to devote his energy to activities and tasks that are unproductive. His limited resources like time and energy are used sparingly and in the right manner.

Things Mentally Tough People Do Not Do

Along with the things that mentally strong people do are things that mentally tough people will not do, here are a few more things that you as a tough person should not be caught doing:

1. Give Power Away

It is impossible to feel like a victim and still be mentally strong. If you are operating on victim mode, you have already given your power to another. You cannot say, “My husband does not let me make decisions for myself.” or “My competitors do not allow me to produce more than this threshold.” If you say these statements, you may as well be under their command. No one should have the power to dictate what you do, think, believe, and how you behave.

If you want to take back control, begin by changing your vocabulary, and make and be the master of your actions. Instead of saying that your husband

does not allow you to make decisions for yourself, say, “I allow my husband to make major decisions on my behalf.” This way, you remain the boss of your life. In this statement, you could make all the decisions concerning your life, but instead, you have allowed him to do so. This way, you empower yourself and recognize that your life is a result of your decisions, primarily, and not his.

2. Concerned About Pleasing Everyone

The fact is that worrying about how other people will think of you takes away your joy, and drains your mental strength. You also lose sight of your goals. It takes a great deal of courage to make choices that will disappoint and upset other people, but this is what authenticity calls for. You must live the life that you will not regret; one that is lived according to your values.

3. Repeat Mistakes

You already know that mistakes are bad. You have indeed felt the shame and embarrassment they bring. Your boss must have scolded you; your mother must have lectured you. If you hide or give excuses for these mistakes, you are likely to bury them, along with the shame they made you feel. Doing this will prevent you from deriving important lessons from experience.

Therefore, endeavor to treat every failure or mistake as a point of learning and an opportunity for growth. Evaluate the event and look for what caused you to fail. Now, use the knowledge you have acquired to prevent you from failing another time.

4. Afraid Of Taking Risks

If you are disinterested in something, even taking a small risk might be too much to ask. However, if an opportunity excites you, even the greatest risk will seem like a small hurdle. However, it is during these times of excitement that you should take time to calculate the risk, accurately. With this in mind, remember that it is impossible to stand out and perform extraordinarily without taking risks that others are afraid to take.

You are likely to experience much success if you train yourself to take the right risks. Therefore, be true to yourself regarding how you feel about a particular risk, and don't let your emotions take the place of reason. A list of the pros and cons of making a particular decision will be of great help.

5. Avoid Change

If you are worried that change will bring discomfort, you will remain stuck in the old ways. The world is changing every day, and your capacity to succeed depends on your ability to adapt to the changes. The more you are able to tolerate distress, such as that brought by leaving a toxic relationship, changing a production method, walking out of your job and others, the more confident you will be about accommodating other kinds of risks in your life.

6. Feeling Jealous and Resentment over Other People's Successes

When you see your colleague get promoted year after year, see your friend marrying while you are yet single, see your brother buy his fourth new car while you drive an old secondhand car, avoid becoming envious. Jealousy changes the course of your focus from the mission at hand and impedes your ability to perform at your best.

To prevent being caught up in what others are doing, write down what success means to you. This definition should provide you with security so that you do not feel left out when others check items on their list of goals. You will stay committed to achieving your own goals, and even be more psyched up about them. In doing this, it is important for you to understand that when a person accomplishes his goal, he does not diminish your goals. Besides, there's yet time for you to achieve yours. So long as you keep at it, time will come, and others will celebrate your success too.

7. Fear of Spending Time Alone

Some people are afraid of silence; the thought of being alone makes them nervous. Others do not do anything productive in their alone time; they end up thinking about other people or events that could not possibly add to their value. However, if you carve out 10 minutes out of each day to gather your thoughts, without clattering them with background noise and activity, you

are likely to reflect on your progress so far and to come up with new goals for the future.

8. Feel Entitled

Some people tend to be so out of touch, and they think that the world, or life, owes them anything. This happens even to us when we believe that just because we worked hard and put in a lot of effort, we are owed success, at least. However, waiting for life or the world to reward your efforts is unproductive. Instead of thinking about what you deserve, think about what more you can give. Even if you feel that life has dealt with you unfairly, you still have a lot more to give, so give it!

Chapter 10: Physical and Mental Training Programs for a Healthy Mind and Body

You can take a class, a training program or some home exercises to help you improve and develop the skills you have, and hopefully, this training will increase your potential for overcoming the challenges that come your way.

Here are some mental exercises you can take up:

A. Remove Your Extrinsic Motivators

Think about the following two scenarios. In the first, you get to your clean, air-conditioned gym and you find your instructor waiting for you. He is excited about the morning and keeps encouraging you saying how you are going to crush it today. You put your headphones on and are ready to take up the heat. In the second scenario, after a long, stressful day at work, you arrive home, grab a pair of heavy kettlebells and a sandbag, and walk to your backyard. You are all alone and the weather today is particularly hot. There no headphones, and no trainer to cheer you on.

Considering the two scenarios described, in which one are you likely to have a better work out? Many of us would think the first would have a better outcome because of the environment and the tools available. It is also morning, which means that the individual is well-rested and ready to take on any challenge thrown at him.

It is unlikely that many people would take up the second option because everything seems wrong from the venue, the temperature outside, the timing, and the fact that the individual is already tired. However, in this case, the person is able to take full control of his mind. Sure, there must have been voices in his head nudging him to go in and take a rest or that it would not matter if he skipped only one workout. However, defeating these voices is what toughens your mind.

2. Ignoring the Things You Have No Control Over

The philosophy of stoicism encourages a person to endure pain and hardship without having to display his displeasure or complaining. The premise behind this philosophy is that not what happens to you does not count as much as how you react to it. You have the power to control your reaction to particular situations. However, this control needs to be practiced often, and only on the things that you have a say in. Leave the rest be.

3. Cultivate Good Habits

Mentally tough people value consistency. They understand that motivation does not count because, in fact, it is rarely there when you need it. However, whether you feel up to it or not, you need to remain consistent. The rich, the fit, and the successful people commonly have habits that allow them to achieve their goals. They stick to these habits, even when tempted to go off course. Developing good habits will also help you overcome the challenges and the opposition you will face on your journey. When the problems come, what will keep you going is the intrinsic motivation you will develop everyday.

4. Goal-Setting

Most people rely on properly set goals and established strategies to reach a successful performance. A performance goal is different from an outcome goal. A performance goal is based on your past performances and is set on achieving a new personal best. When a goal like this one drives you, your attention is directed towards the execution of these elements, and this will grant you success in what you do.

Mentally tough people find that focusing on the outcome can be quite distracting, and could cause them to forget to work on what is happening currently. Therefore, they focus more on what they are doing by the minute and make an effort to increase the quality of performance while still in it.

5. Imagery

Imagery is another effective mental skill that you can develop. When executed properly, it will enable you to perform an activity from start to

finish in your mind, as though you were doing it in real life.

Imagery is simply visualizing all that you would do in real life, and it engages all the sense that the real action would. The muscles of your body fire just as they would doing the real thing. Most athletes rely on visualization the most and spend hours envisioning how they would execute and the feelings they would develop in the process. Some even go as far as creating mental situations in which they would feel discomfort and pressure, and from this, they rehearse what they would do in these situations.

If you practice imagery, you are likely to develop the stamina to do things in the physical just as you performed them in your mind.

6. Self-Talk

Self-talk is the undeterred belief a person has in his ability to overcome the challenge he is facing. It is the basis of an exemplary performance and a strategy for cultivating self-efficacy and better performance. It is the internal dialogue you have in yourself.

Throughout the day, you have thousands and thousands of thoughts. These thoughts are powerful, and they can affect your confidence, and the ability to do things right. While it may be difficult to keep track of all the thoughts that come about, you can, instead, engage in self-talk. This talk could include cue words, strength affirmations, and reminders of where your focus ought to be. This process causes a person's confidence and sense of focus to soar, making him ready to face the challenge that comes his way.

7. Arousal Control

The feeling you get when performing at your best can be overwhelmingly good. This feeling marks the optimal arousal level. Some people get pumped up while others remain calm. However, successful people operate as though they have a thermostat for their feelings. They maintain a

particular level of arousal, and if they step out of this zone, a bell rings in their mind, and they immediately dial it down.

You can regulate your arousal by taking deep breaths and engaging in self-talk to keep calm when the arousal level goes high up. If it is low, have shorter breaths or listen to something you like, such as music, to help raise the feeling. The important thing about controlling your arousal is that you feel in control of your emotions.

8. Practice Enduring Discomfort

Mental toughness does not take you out of being human, away from experiencing normal emotions. In fact, mental toughness helps you become aware of all the emotions you feel so that your senses are engaged in how you respond to all of them. Developing a strong mind is, therefore, more about accepting your feelings, without being under their control.

Becoming mentally tough also requires you to understand and take note of the times when you should act contrary to how you feel. For example, if you get an anxiety attack every time you make an attempt to learn or try out something new or to take up a unique opportunity, try getting out of your comfort zone. It may take some time for you to learn how to accept new challenges, but it gets easier with practice.

For example, instead of wishing that you were more outgoing, start behaving like an outgoing person would, whether you feel like it, or not. You will feel some discomfort, but tolerating it will push you to become the person you wished you were.

9. Make a Daily Account of Your Progress

It is becoming increasingly difficult for a person to have some quiet time these days. However, you can consciously set aside some time to reflect on the progress you have made towards growing your mental strength. Do this at the end of each day and ask yourself the effort, the progress, and the lessons you have had about your emotions, your thoughts, and your

behavior. Think about the things you would wish to accomplish and to improve on the following day.

The process of becoming mentally tough is continuous and calls for daily improvement, and there will be times that this will seem more difficult than others. However, reflecting on the progress you have made so far can increase your ability to reach your goals.

10. Use Your Mental Energy Prudently

Your mental strength and energy drain quickly when you spend your time and energy thinking about issues you have no control over. The more brain energy you dedicate to negative issues that cannot change, the lesser energy you devote to creative endeavors. Expand your mental energy only for productive tasks such as setting goals and creating solutions to problems.

Whenever you realize that your thoughts are not productive, immediately shift your focus to helpful topics. The more you do it consciously, the more it becomes a subconscious habit.

11. Assess Your Core Beliefs

We all have core beliefs about ourselves and of the world, in general. These beliefs develop over time mainly due to our experiences. Whether you know what your beliefs are or not, they will influence your emotions and your behavior.

Some beliefs are inaccurate and counterproductive. For example, if you are convinced that you can never succeed in life, you may be less concerned about putting in extra hours at your job. You will not make an effort to look good at job interviews. Slowly, the wrong belief will become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Therefore, if you want to succeed in life, take note of your core beliefs. Modify the ones that could potentially bring negativity to your life. The positivity that ensues after this will bring so much good in your life.

12. Take out The Negative Thoughts; Replace them with Positive, Productive Thoughts

While many of us do not spend much time studying our thoughts, becoming aware of what you are thinking will prove useful in building your resilience and mental strength. The negative, exaggerated thoughts such as, “I never win at this”, will hold you back, even from putting in the necessary effort, and reaching your full potential. Therefore, you should work at getting a hold of all the negative thoughts before they spiral out of control and influence your attitude towards life.

Negative thoughts should be replaced with positive, life-giving thoughts. The positive thoughts need not be extreme, but they should be realistic. For starters, you could try changing your thoughts to make them more balanced. For example, you could say, “I do not do too well in grammar, but I am good at math.”

The process of changing your thought patterns will need constant monitoring, but once you catch the rhythm, you will walk into becoming your best self.

13. Practice Mindfulness

It is impossible to remain strong at the moment while you are reminiscing about what happened in the past, or are terribly worried about what could happen in the near future. Mindfulness demands that you stay in the moment. Since the only window of change you have is the present, then it is only right if you focus on what is happening now.

Scientists say that mindfulness has a ton of both psychological and physical benefits. It reduces stress and helps you to develop a more sensitive inner conversation. Therefore, take some time and think about the things that are happening around you. Listen to the sounds, look at the items placed in the room, be there. Quickly scan through your body too, and see how the body feels.

Once you practice mindfulness on a regular basis, you will learn how to increase your focus, which is only possible to a tough mind, in this fast-

paced world. You will also realize that you take note of your surroundings better, appreciate yourself more and that you are able to enjoy yourself better because you focus on the present, and avoid distracting thoughts of the past or the future.

The Physical Training Exercises

Of the physical training programs created to enhance the strength of the mind here are some techniques you can take up:

Box/Tactical Breathing

Pay attention to your breathing for 4 minutes. Inhale and count to 4. Pause for a count to 4. Exhale for a count to 4. Pause again for the same length of time, and when done, repeat the exercise. The number 4 does not have any special meaning in this exercise; it only makes for a good starting number because most people can handle it. If you choose to increase the count, ensure that you increase the time for each exercise using the same measure of time. For example, if you want to breathe in for a count of 6, hold your breath for 6, exhale for 6, and pause again for 6.

This breathing exercise is meant to help you let go of stress and increase awareness of yourself. It also overcomes panic breathing, which happens when you exhale, especially in sports.

Progressive Relaxation of Muscles

Begin by lying down on your bed or the floor. Take some deep breaths. Finally, take on a deep breath, and hold it in. Stretch your feet as tightly as you can, and count to three. Release your legs and exhale. Do this again. Now, move your body in the exact same way, taking note of how you feel in your calves, abs, butt, neck, face arms, back, hands, chest, and your entire body. This process allows you to be more aware of the tension areas in your body. It is also quite relaxing.

Carrying Heavy Stuff

An infantryman in Afghanistan carries up to 127 pounds, (58kg) of external load every day, and depending on the mission, he could travel several miles a day. The Roman Legionnaires would carry around 28 pounds (13kgs) of armor every day over long marches, of over 35 miles, before using them in battle. You, on the other hand, carry your water bottle and your gym bag... to the car.

Although you are not required to carry loads of crap everywhere, you ought to know how to build your mental toughness as the soldiers do. To do this, take up the kinds of workout that are long, intense, and those that suck the life out of you. If you add them, one at a time, to your routine, you will see just how quickly your brain will adjust to their effects.

Walk Carrying Something

Similar to the technique above, this one requires you to put a heavy load on your back, and simply walk. This is often done in the military. This technique builds your mental toughness. You only go with your thoughts and the load on your back; leave the headphones at home and get comfortable with your thoughts. People who find it hard to be alone are best suited for this one because it forces them to do it, whether they like it or not.

Hang

Now, this is quite easy. It requires you to identify a tree branch or a pull-up, hop up, grab on, and hang. That simple.

Hanging like this has many advantages for you. It enhances your grip and the strength of your shoulders. If you push your limits, it can also be an excellent mentally toughening exercise. Medical professionals agree on the benefits of this exercise; they say that you will be letting gravity do its thing. It helps you remodel your scalps and your shoulders while improving on your overhead pull and push movements.

Take up a number of the techniques described in this chapter and incorporate them into your daily routine. Commit yourself to do it every day, and in 30 days, the routine will be engrained in your system. After that,

continue toughening the challenge, and as you do that, your mind becomes stronger and more robust.

Conclusion

Thanks for making it through to the end of *Mental Toughness: Essential Principle of Leadership and Success*. Let's hope it was informative and able to provide you with all of the tools you need to achieve your goals whatever it is that they may be. How amazing it must have been for you to realize that your mind is the primary determinant of where you are in life. It determines how quickly you move or how much you hesitate. Heck, it even determines how healthy you are. For these reasons, you need to ensure that your mind is continually tough to withstand the challenges that come about and to keep yourself moving ahead.

The next step is to take up the exercises provided therein, both mental and physical. You also need to ensure that you practice the habits of mentally tough people, and avoid doing what is contraindicated therein. Start by establishing what you can do now, without straining, and then increase the intensity of what you do, a bit at a time. For example, if you run five miles every morning comfortably, run an extra half mile tomorrow. If you worked effectively eight hours today, try adding thirty minutes to your working day tomorrow.

It helps when you work on yourself, using your abilities as a benchmark for future improvements, but you could also get inspiration from the works of great men and women that have achieved success in their lifetimes. See what they did when the odds were against them. See what happened when they listened to other people rather than to their own voices. Use their lives as lessons for your own life. You do not have to go through a lesson yourself to learn; other people make great illustrations too.

Finally, if you found this book useful in any way, a review on Amazon is always appreciated!

Description

You have always desired to go against the grain and to achieve what your predecessors did not, or you wouldn't have downloaded *Mental Toughness: Essential Principle of Leadership and Success* . This is the book created specially to lead you down the path of success: the way that only a few have walked. This is the path that allows you to use your mind to direct your path in life, from what you do, what you say, how you think, to how you feel.

Many people walk the earth thinking that they are subjects being controlled, or like pieces on a chessboard. They believe that a higher power is moving the pieces and that what happens to them is out of their reach. They do not realize that they have the ability to influence what happens in them and what happens to them. The world is divided into two: the negative and the positive. Those that position their minds to the negative side live off the negative effects while those that position their minds to the positive experience success and positivity in all they do.

To that end, inside this book, you will find a clear-cut definition of what it is to be mentally tough. You will see how mental toughness makes leadership much more comfortable, and how a tough-minded leader can influence his juniors or employees to be tough-minded too. Herein, you will also get to see the daily habits that successful people have had to take up to and those that they must keep off to ensure that they remain mentally tough and ready to take on the challenges that come their way.

You will be glad to realize the startling connection the mind has with the body. It is the reason why the thoughts you have about your body tend to manifest in the physical. Ever wondered why you would visit a sick person and have the same symptoms the person has the next day? Learn about the role the mind plays in causing this, and how you can overcome it by becoming mentally tough and taking charge of your thoughts.

Lastly, this book will get you in on some physical and mental exercises that you could incorporate into your daily routine to ensure that you are continually pushing yourself, to increase the strength of your mind. Get started by purchasing this book today!

Inside, you will find:

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- The most explicit definition of mental toughness and an explanation of how it works
- The secret to acquiring and practicing mental toughness for yourself
- The most fascinating depiction of the link between the body and the mind
- The most comprehensive list of do's and don'ts of the mentally tough
- A clear description of some of the best physical and mental exercises to strengthen your mind
- The secret to pushing yourself beyond your limits
- The best mental toughness lessons that you should learn from heroes who have achieved great success in their fields
- The mystery towards maintaining a positive attitude in life