

# 12 Things To Do When We Get Discouraged

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Everyone deals with discouragement at some point in their life. It's part of what makes the human experience rich—the highs and the lows. If we didn't experience the lows, then we wouldn't appreciate the highs.

Discouragement, disappointment, failure, and setbacks—these are all things that can help us if we maintain an empowering mindset. The key to life is to learn from these experiences, and minimize the amount of time that we allow ourselves to stay discouraged. So the next time you start to feel discouragement, here is what you should do:

## 1. Take the long view.

Discouragement generally occurs when our expectations (what we think should happen) don't align with reality (what actually happens). In many cases our expectations are unrealistic, and this often has to do with how long we think things should happen. If we take a longer view, and relax our expectations a little, it can really help to decrease discouragement. The reality is that most things that are worthwhile take a lot of effort and time to come to fruition. So be patient!

## 2. Remember, there is no such thing as failure. There is only education.

When we feel like we have failed at something, discouragement often follows.

However, failure doesn't really exist, except for the meaning that we give it. If we

don't get the result that we want, when we want it, we just need to take new action.

We can choose, instead of thinking of failure as bad, to think of failure as education, and therefore good. When we view it this way we realize that failure isn't something that is bad, or something to be avoided. It is simply feedback. It is simply education. When we think this way we ease discouragement.

### **3. Stay true to our vision. See it again in our mind.**

If we are feeling discouraged, think about our vision. Think about what we want to create in our life. See it clearly. Feel what it would feel like if the image came into reality. What would this mean for us? How would we feel. Once we see it, and feel it, we will also feel empowered and our discouragement will dissipate.

### **4. Don't let our ego get in the way of our development.**

Our ego is often the primary cause of our feelings of disappointment and discouragement. It doesn't have to be this way. We can control our ego. When we do this, we are on the path of development. When we are internally strong enough to handle constructive criticism, and feedback, we receive the rewards of growth. Growth leads to happiness. When we are growing we feel good, and we aren't discouraged.

### **5. Stop comparing yourself to others. We're on a unique path.**

A sure fire, 100% guaranteed way to get discouraged is to focus on other people in a comparative way. Here is why: we generally see their victories, successes, and strengths. We see what they have and what we don't. We see why they are better than us. When we do this we get discouraged and we feel sorry for ourselves. We don't as easily see their struggles, their fears, their setbacks, and their failures. So

don't do it. It isn't empowering. Don't compare. We are on a unique path. It is great to be inspired by another, but if by hearing another's story, we feel that we are lesser, then we need to just focus on our own path.

## **6. Detach from rewards, focus on our actions and giving our best work.**

If our sole motivation for doing something is the reward that we might get from the action, then we are setting ourselves up for discouragement. Action should be its own reward. When it is, we are forever free. Freedom is at the heart of happiness. When we don't need someone else's praise for doing something, when we don't need a "carrot" for performing our work, then we are truly free to just focus on our work and make it great. When we create great work we are happy.

## **7. Change our "rules" for being happy.**

What rule do we have to be happy? What has to happen for us to feel successful? Is it in our control? If it isn't then we might be setting ourselves up for failure. By rules I mean the set of circumstances that must be present for us to feel accomplished. For example if I have a rule that says something has to happen to feel successful, what if I don't ever reach it? Or even worse, does it mean that I never get to feel successful until I reach it? That is a sad way to live. We have to create rules that serve us. We have to live by rules that are within our control. Here are some of my rules: I am successful when I grow and improve. I am successful when I give my very best.

## **8. Consider who we are spending time with.**

The people who we spend the most time with might be a major contributing factor to

feeling discouragement. This can be a very hard one, especially if those people are family and loved ones. We have a tendency to become who we most frequently associate with, and if we spend all our time with people who are constantly negative, and feeling sorry for themselves, we can be influenced to see life through a similar lens. So what can we do? We can't simply cut loved ones out of our lives. So what we should do is simply expand our social network. Join a peer group that is positive. Start to surround ourselves with positive people as a balance. Over time we will start to take on their mindset and this will help with any feelings of discouragement we may have.

## **9. Get outside, move and breathe.**

Fresh air and sunshine can have an amazing effect on our feelings. Sometimes when we are feeling down, all that we need to do is simply to go outside and breathe. Movement and exercise is also a fantastic way to feel better. Positive emotions can be generated by motion. So if we start to feel down, take some deep breathes, go outside, feel the fresh air, let the sun hit our face, go for a hike, a walk, a bike ride, a swim, a run, whatever. We will feel better if we do this.

## **10. Talk to our mentor.**

Our mentor can be a great source of wisdom when we are feeling down. So when discouragement rears its ugly head, go have a coffee with our mentor. They will be able to give us wisdom based on experience. In many cases they will also give us tough love and help us to snap out of it if we are feeling sorry for ourselves. They will also help us to make a specific plan of action to work our way out of discouragement.

## **11. Do a mind map.**

A mind map is a simple and empowering exercise that can help trigger our creativity and also pull us out of discouragement. Take a blank piece of paper or a whiteboard. In the middle write out what it is that we want (our goal). Then map our ideas that will get us there. Use arrows originating from our goal and pointing to the various actions that we could take. Break those actions down into sub actions.

Spend a good hour or so on this activity. Once we are done we will have a great plan of action. Then get to work. Work will break the chains of discouragement better than anything.

## **12. Go find someone who we can help.**

This is a great way to alleviate discouragement. Go find someone who needs help, and then help them. It is really that simple. When we serve others, when we go out of our way to help other people in need, we feel better. It is impossible to be discouraged when we are giving all our efforts on behalf of another.

Discouragement is a really a self-driven symptom. We are focusing on ourselves. That is why we feel bad. Something isn't right in "our" life. However, when we stop thinking about ourselves, and when we direct our attention to another, we feel better.

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