

10 Ways Successful People Push Through Adversity

Hard times happen. Getting past them is a mental game you can win.



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We all face adversity from time to time, but some of us are able to flourish when things get difficult, while others seem to struggle getting out of bed in the morning. Successful people have found a way to jump hurdles and navigate around roadblocks that would stop others completely.

How is it that some people can bounce back and find a way to overcome misfortune and defeat? For one, they don't allow themselves to become overwhelmed with negative emotions or thoughts. They take time to process what they've been through, then they resume moving forward. Their mental fortitude lifts them up to seek opportunities instead of dwelling in despair.

If you want to find a way to continue to grow and achieve a following in the hardest of times, read on. Here are 10 ways successful people push through adversity and bolster themselves, even when facing disaster.

1. Find your sense of humor.

They say laughter is the best medicine. It's your body's way of coping with stress, releasing tension and resetting your brain to be more positive. A good chuckle will release endorphins and dopamine, nature's feel-good chemical.

It might seem unthinkable to find anything funny when you're struggling from one of life's blows. But sometimes just stepping back and seeing the humor of the situation can help lighten your mood and allow you to move forward. You may not be chuckling in the midst of a major setback, but give yourself some time. Finding your sense of humor when facing adversity is a healthy way to build resilience, no matter how bad your situation.

2. Be mentally prepared.

"I am prepared for the worst, but hope for the best." More than 185 years after these words were written by British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, they still inspire. Being prepared means thinking through the and considering how you would react.

What would your plan of action would be if a crisis hit? Running through potential disasters on a regular basis builds mental strength and flexibility to overcome mishaps or catastrophes in real life. It doesn't mean you should dwell on negative possibilities. But if the worst happens, having thought through how you'd react will keep you from panicking and help you stay calm and rational. It won't feel so frightening because you won't be caught completely off guard.

3. Take stock of all you've been through already.

They say what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. The hardships and misfortunes you've been through can give you confidence that you're capable of handling whatever comes your way. You've been in tough times before. How did you overcome adversity that time? What got you through? Your past experiences can help you find your inner strength and resilience.

Author Maya Angelou said during an interview, "We may encounter many defeats, but we must not be defeated. It may even be necessary to encounter the defeat, so that we can know who we are. So that we can see, oh, that happened, and I rose. I did get knocked down flat in front of the whole world, and I rose. I didn't run away -- I rose right where I'd been knocked down. And then that's how you get to know yourself."

4. Adversity offers valuable insights.

Adversity is a great teacher. This is your chance to gain valuable insights; to truly learn from your mistakes so you'll have a better chance of success next time. However, you will have to engage in some self-reflection. Where and how did things go wrong?

Take a hard look at your planning. Did you miss something key? Consider your preparations. Were you ready for the challenges ahead? Look at your execution. Did you put in consistent effort? Focus on areas that are within your control and ask yourself what more can you do next time. As entrepreneur Mark Cuban has said, “With every effort, I learned a lot. With every mistake and failure, not only mine, but of those around me, I learned what not to do.”

5. Make peace with the situation.

Now is not the time to blame others for what happened. Moping around and feeling sorry for yourself will do you no good, and can actually sabotage your ability to come up with solutions and next steps forward. It’s important that you consider what mistakes or missteps you might have made.

Spend time processing what you could have done differently and take responsibility for your actions. Make peace with what happened. Accept the situation for what it is, and then move on. As Steve Jobs said, “Sometimes when you innovate, you make mistakes. It’s best to admit them quickly and get on with improving your other innovations.”

6. Embrace adversity as a chance for opportunity.

Life is full of adversity and struggle. It’s through difficult times that we learn the most important lessons in life and build resilience. Adversity often presents opportunities we might otherwise miss. Now is your chance to dig deep and face this obstacle head on.

Hard times present you with the chance to change course, reinvent yourself or find an undiscovered bridge that will get you over this hurdle. Napoleon Hill, author of *Think and Grow Rich*, framed it this way: “Every adversity has the seed of an equivalent or greater benefit.” The true secret to success is the ability to embrace adversity as a chance to change ourselves and our situation.

7. Refuse to give up.

To overcome a crisis, you need to fully commit to finding a way forward. You must approach the problem determined and motivated. This will create a mindset where you look at adversity as something to be overcome and solved, not passively accepted. Sometimes dilemmas and obstacles are a chance to create alternative paths, to dream bigger, to push forward and take even larger leaps.

But whatever you do, you can’t give up. Michael Jordan has famously said, “I’ve missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I have lost almost 300 games. On 26 occasions I have been entrusted to take the game winning shot, and I missed. I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.” If you refuse to give up, you will always go further than you expected.

8. Have a purpose.

When life gets tough, it helps to have a crystal-clear idea of why you're doing what you're doing. If you have purpose and passion for your goals, you'll be motivated to keep pushing through until you're successful. Sometimes things happen beyond your control, and that can knock the wind out of your sails. But if you're working on something meaningful to you, you'll always find a way back to it.

When something is important to you, you'll be driven to continue pursuing your dreams. Oprah Winfrey is a great example of this. She has overcome great adversity and became a multi-billionaire doing what she loved. As she puts it: "Passion is energy. Feel the power that comes from focusing on what excites you."

9. Keep a positive mindset.

A healthy dose of optimism goes a long way when you're faced with a bad situation. It may seem cliché, but sometimes the darkest storm clouds really do have silver linings. It turns out that developing a positive mindset is an important coping skill when dealing with adversity.

It's true you need to be realistic and see a situation clearly, but if you constantly frame everything in a negative way, you'll only see the bad. Try cultivating positivity and refuse to let pessimistic voices and naysayers invade your mind.

10. Believe in your capabilities.

People who rebound from adversity begin by believing they are capable of finding a way forward. If you feel hopeless and powerless, it's unlikely you'll find a way to be successful.

You have to have self-confidence and a strong belief in your capabilities to overcome difficult times. You have to be open minded and willing to leverage your talent, know-how and ingenuity to overcome adversity. If you need more inspiration, consider the story of Walt Disney, who was fired from his first job for not being creative enough.

However, Disney never stopped believing in himself and in his dreams. He went on to found what is now the Walt Disney Company, a multinational mass media conglomerate. He once said, "All the adversity I've had in my life, all my troubles and obstacles, have strengthened me... You may not realize it when it happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing in the world for you."

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