

The Huge Value of Being Challenged

Hello. It's Bill Harris, Founder of Centerpointe Research Institute with another Brain Inspiration message, wisdom you can use in 5 minutes or less.

I'm sure you know that some people avoid challenges, while others actively seek them out.

Those who avoid them only do things they already know how to do. They're afraid to go after something unless they're sure they can do it, and already know how.

There's something these people are missing, though, and it's one of the most wonderful experiences a human being can have, and the source of one of the highest possible highs.

What is it? Taking on challenges, being challenged, wanting to be something, have something, or do something that seems to be out of reach, something you don't know how to do or achieve give juice to life. It creates fulfillment. It creates a sense of purpose. It makes life worth living. I'd go so far as to say that if you aren't seeking out challenges, you're really aren't living.

If you're someone who avoids challenges, you may be worried that you'll be disappointed, which is a feeling most people will do anything to avoid. You might think you don't have what it takes, but that just isn't true. Those who achieve big things don't have anything that you don't have.

Here's what you're missing by avoiding challenges. If you decide that you want to do, have, or be something that seems out of reach, difficult to achieve, maybe even impossible, and then you go through the process of figuring out how to achieve it, trying and failing and trying again, and persevering until you do achieve it, *something priceless happens*.

Of course you get the object of your desire, whatever you were challenging yourself to be, do, or have. And that, in and of itself, is rewarding, to be sure. But the greater reward, by far, is the feeling of satisfaction you get in mastering the challenge.

In fact, calling it a feeling of satisfaction doesn't do it justice. When you set and meet a challenge – and the bigger and supposedly more impossible it seemed to be – your brain creates a wellspring of self-produced neurochemicals that turn the pursuits and struggles of life into pleasure and make you feel happy when you achieve them.

WEEKLY BRAIN INSPIRATION, CONTINUED ..

The feeling of euphoria they create is an incredible experience. But the best reward is that each time you set and master a challenge, the more you come to believe that you can do anything you set your mind to to.

This faith in your ability to figure things out, and take care of business, *increases* with every challenge you meet, until you have the feeling that nothing can stop you. This is fueled by a neurochemical called serotonin.

Serotonin lowers your “rejection sensitivity” which allows you to step up to the plate and put yourself in situations that will increase your self esteem, your feelings of worthiness, and your sense of purpose and belonging.

The more of this faith you develop, the more you see setbacks and what most people would call failures as learning experiences, opportunities, and a source of increased wisdom.

Seeing them this way, you don't fear them. You don't worry about them. You don't waste time feeling bad when you have a setback. Instead, you immediately begin looking for the wisdom and the opportunities they provide.

This feeling of faith and confidence in yourself is worth ten times more than the actual reward or achievement.

In fact, if someone gave you the reward you wanted, and you didn't have to do anything to get it, you'd miss all the extra goodies: the high, the increase in confidence, the growing faith that you can do anything you set your mind to, and all the wisdom you get in the process of achieving something that initially seemed impossible.

Let's say that you wanted a car when you were a teenager, which motivated you to work to save the money. Then, when you finally got the car, and knew that you did this, on your own, your pride in that car was much greater than if you had been given a car.

Psychologists would say that those who have come to have this faith in themselves have high self-efficacy. They approach challenges as tasks to be mastered. They set challenging goals and commit themselves to accomplishing them. They have a deep interest in the activities in which they engage.

They accept setbacks and disappointments as temporary and due to insufficient effort or knowledge, and believe that goals are ultimately achievable. They continue to sustain effort in the face of setbacks, and quickly recover their sense of efficacy.

On the other hand, those with low self-efficacy tend to avoid or withdraw from challenging tasks. They have lower aspirations and weaker commitment to goals. They often believe that challenging situations are beyond their capabilities. They focus on personal deficiencies, obstacles, and negative outcomes.

WEEKLY BRAIN INSPIRATION, CONTINUED ..

In the face of challenges they decrease their efforts and may give up. When they experience setbacks they take a long time to recover feelings of self-efficacy.

Obviously, you want to be the person who seeks and meets challenges, and in next week's video, I'm going to tell you how to become that person.

Until next time, be well.

Bill

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