

# WHY MOTIVATION ISN'T ALWAYS MOTIVATIONAL

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## WHY CHAPTER ZERO?

Most people don't read the introduction of books. I guess you should just think of this chapter as the introduction that I'm strongly encouraging everyone to read. This material will help you tune in to the attitude and objectives of the book, and it tells you how and why I wrote it. After reading this chapter, the body of the book will make more sense.

## THE QUESTION

Every year, I talk to thousands of people. I regularly speak to audiences in convention centers and board rooms all across the globe, and my audiences come from every walk of life. Without exception, there is one burning question that I get more than any other. It's the one thing people tell me they most appreciate about what I teach. My life experience has lead me to answer the question in ways that no one else does, and in fact, my answers often fly in the face of conventional

wisdom and contradict other experts. My answers to the question are the reason I wrote this book. And my answers have changed my life and the lives of many who have heard them. It's a great question, and I'm thrilled every time people ask it because it means that they are ready to experience some incredible truths about happiness, success, and the richness life has to offer.

Sometimes, people use slightly different language. Sometimes, they ask follow-up questions to explain their query more fully. But essentially the question is "In spite of life's obstacles, how do you keep going?"

That's not a simple question, and there are lots of answers too. I've dedicated my life to understanding the answers to that question and then sharing those answers with others.

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*In spite of life's obstacles, how do you keep going?*

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I am an avid aviation fan. I fly helicopters and airplanes, and I even hold a flight instructor's license (although I rarely have time to give lessons). When someone asks, "How do you fly a plane?" unless I have a lot of time, I usually give them this short answer: "You push the stick forward, and the houses get bigger; you pull the stick back, and the houses get smaller."

When I have time to give lessons to a close friend, I enjoy giving the long answer. I especially enjoy watching my friend progress, and I experience the thrill of learning to fly all over again with each new student pilot along the way. The short answer is cute and gets a laugh, but the longer answer is the one with all the true rewards. This book is a long answer.

The reason I have taken the time to write this book is because the sincerity and value of the question "How do you keep going?" deserves as thorough an answer as I can give. In these pages, we'll look at the question itself. We'll discuss some of the associated questions that cover topics like suc-

cess, wealth, motivation, optimism, happiness, and positive thinking. But the real value in this book is the collection of real-world examples and tools you'll be given to keep yourself going and achieving for the rest of your life.

### WORD PLAY ISN'T THE ANSWER

Too often, people are willing to accept answers from self-styled experts who are clever with language or say things that seem deep. In the course of my career, I have found that adults often listen better if you use clever language or stories to get a point across. Think about all the speakers who motivate or inspire you. Most of them use great stories or clever word play to capture your attention and to help you remember their points. Unfortunately, too many people who have mastered the media and who have a magnetic personality have nothing but clever answers that don't do much for us in the long run.

Now, don't get me wrong. I use stories too. They help people remember the points I'm trying to get across, and they make my points easier to understand. Anecdotes are a great training tool, but they aren't an end in themselves. It seems to me that simply making an observation about something and illustrating it with clever word play or a great story is the beginning and end for a lot of personal development experts. I see the need to go further. I always have tools or exercises to help people go beyond their current circumstances.

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I get some interesting feedback from people who hear me speak, because my goal is developing and delivering tools that help real people in actual situations, rather than simple motivation. Lots of public speakers love hearing praise after

their events, and they are thrilled to hear that audiences are motivated. Although that seems like a terrific result and it shows everybody loved the speaker, getting motivated rarely helps people accomplish any more than they would otherwise. Ultimately, it doesn't do much more than provide a short-lived, warm, fuzzy feeling like you get from drinking a glass of wine. That's why I strive to look for tools that people can use to accomplish things once they feel motivated. Motivation is an important step along the way, but true progress comes from correct, consistent action, and motivation alone can lead to action, but not necessarily correct action. It's like pushing a parked car: You'll be active, but you won't be accomplishing anything.

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The tools you'll read about in this book are designed to get you moving and continuing in the right direction, and then keep you achieving for the rest of your life. The beauty of getting going and working with these tools is that the results will start a momentum. And the right momentum will automatically motivate you to keep going and achieving. Your life will become an automatic, self-improving cycle.

Keep in mind, though, that my tool kit is filled with dozens of useful tools, but every tool won't work in every situation. What's more, not every tool in the kit will even appeal to you. If you don't like a suggestion or particular tool, you don't have to use it. Different personalities approach obstacles and life problems (notice I didn't call them challenges, but we'll discuss that later) in different ways. What you will find is that most of the methods I teach work for most people.

Admittedly, I am an action-oriented personality. I have a drive to accomplish things (this book isn't just for people

who are driven). But I was only inspired to tackle my current profession when I was slammed by life experiences that brought me down, and I found myself asking the question "How do I keep going?"

Initially, I reasoned that there had to be lots of people who had been there before me, so I looked to experts for insights. I found dozens of platitudes and a lot of clever word play but far too little substance that I could use to climb out of the place where life had dragged me. I had been dealt an incredible amount of tragedy in a very short time frame, and the typical solutions weren't sufficient for me.

One of the most annoying solutions suggested by friends and experts alike was to simply think positive. Some people think positive thinking feels good at first and seems to get you out of the really low places in life, but positive thinking was a lie, and it didn't help me at all. I was so far down that positive thinking was amplifying how bad I felt. What's more, people suggested that positive thinking was an end in itself and that was all I needed to do. That turned out to be as hollow as all the other answers people were giving. I think you'd agree, life's a bit more complicated than that. I still found myself asking, "Yeah, but how do I really keep going?"

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I am where I am today because I had the good fortune to have a mix of very good and very bad experiences in my life, coupled with an interest in what drives people, and, of course, my faith. As an action-oriented personality, I was a true success story as a teenager. And when all that I had worked for was gone in a few short months, I didn't just ask, "How do I keep going?" I followed up with the question "And how did I get here in the first place?"

Unlike most people who have problems in their lives and work for years to get over their past, only to eventually chalk things up to a whole lot of bad luck and timing, I wanted to know more about the why. What was most frustrating to me was the fact that I would experience so many negative emotions in my life and I didn't know how to change them. And what was even worse was not being able to understand how I got them in the first place.

I didn't just want to know how to keep going, but I wanted to know everything about the experience so that I could master that situation and help others do the same. I came to the realization that it helps if you can identify how you came to feel a negative emotion. If this isn't done first, it's very difficult to change the emotions to something positive. What's worse than the negative emotions themselves is not knowing where they came from. At least if you know their source, you have somewhere to start.

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Think of this book as the result of my study of human behavior and a toolkit full of great strategies you can use to help you in your own life. In it, I'll show you how to play games with your mind instead of your mind playing games with you.

Interestingly, most people specifically avoid lingering too long on their bad experiences because that can be depressing. There is also some truth to the belief that whatever you focus on is what you will get out of life. Focusing on bad things can bring more bad things into your life. But I focused on my experiences, both good and bad, from a detached, clinical perspective so that I could work on mastering any circumstances life could throw at me. That's actually what many of my exercises help people do in order to master their own life.

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## WHEREVER YOU ARE, THAT'S WHERE YOU NEED TO START

Later in the book, you'll discover that I have an action-oriented personality, and you'll find out how I have been beaten down by life's circumstances. That low point is where I started. This is *not* a book of ways to simply overcome depression brought on by life's circumstances, nor is it just a way to get rich or be successful, although it will help you with any of these ambitions or goals. There are tools in this book that can help anyone get to the next level, regardless of what that means.

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## ARE YOU READY TO ASK THE QUESTION?

More important, are you ready to take action when I tell you how to continue to keep going despite all obstacles?

Over the next few hours or days as you read this book, you will find yourself inspired and motivated. You will find your view of circumstances in your life will change. Then in a few more days, weeks, or months, you'll see that your life has improved, and you will have overcome problems that were keeping you back. You'll achieve more, feel better about yourself, and be more optimistic as you move forward. When you realize that your life is better, pick up this book again, and read it once more.

Two things will come from revisiting this text. First, you will reevaluate the tools you've used to get where you are, and you'll see that my suggestions are more than just words on a page and funny, memorable stories. This will crystallize in your own mind that these tools really do work and you should be willing to try more of these ideas. The other thing that will happen is that you will be in a new place in your life,

and you'll be inspired to try new tools—or maybe try the tools that worked earlier, on new situations.

Again, this is where my approach is truly different from many others. Sometimes, books tell you to come back every year or two and read again, but most of the time their programs are based on rah-rah, pump-up motivation. They want you to get reenergized and re-inspired. But remember, motivation is good and helps for a brief while, but it takes more than motivation to progress in life. It takes the proper mind-set and correct action to move forward and accomplish more. Because most motivational programs don't offer many usable tools, you need to just read the motivational stories again. What's worse, you need to wait a year or so to give yourself time to forget the stories so that they can re-inspire you when you read them the second time.

When I ask you to come back, it's because I want you to see that the tools are working, and I want you to find new tools to apply to new situations. You may reread some stories that motivated you, made you think, or made you smile or cry, but that's not the main reason to come back. In fact, you'll find that the second time around, the stories do less motivating. It's the tools and your realizations about them that will help to keep you moving in the right direction.

Psychologists have identified a part of the brain responsible for increasing your awareness. It's called the reticular activating system. You know how it is when you buy a new car—all of a sudden cars just like yours start appearing everywhere! This book uses the reticular activating principle to help you build momentum. You'll use examples and tools from this book, and when you come back, you'll use your newly increased awareness to do even more.

Because my program is full of real, practical devices for helping real people to move to the next level in their life, the true motivation you'll experience will come from a different, better place. Your future inspiration should come from your

successes (and perhaps some failures), not from my stories. And it will.

### **WHAT DO MOST PEOPLE WANT?**

Usually, the question “how do you keep going?” is preceded or followed by a question about how to accomplish something, buy something, win someone’s affection, or get past a bad experience. However you define success or whatever it is you want out of life, desires are essentially driven by certain needs we all have in common. Understanding these needs will help you to refine your personal goals and understand which tools will work best for your needs.

Most humans have several things in common. Considering that there are a few notable exceptions to these rules, usually associated with personality disorders, the following wants are shared by practically everyone. We want to be happy. We want to be healthy. We want to be loved by others. We want to have control of our own circumstances. We want to be successful. And to one degree or another, we want possessions. Usually, desired possessions point back to one of our other wants because many times we believe these things will make us happy or reflect our success, and although that may seem true to one degree or another, in the long run we need to resolve our wants differently.

Ultimately, to achieve our own definition of happiness, love, control, success, and health, we must truly master more than just obtaining the possessions we think we want. One of the real keys to happiness is to understand the entire process of personal achievement and all of the success components as well.

If you’ve read any book on success, time management, goal setting, increasing sales, or any topic remotely related to personal achievement, this truth isn’t new to you. What’s more, you have probably even read books or seen infomercials advertising even programs that offer classes in how to reach

some amazing level of personal happiness and success you only dream about.

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And if you've invested in a book or personal achievement program, you have already been exposed to a few of the ideas that most experts agree will help you reach your dreams (or your sales goals or whatever the desires of your heart truly are).

I think you'll find this book to be a little different in two important ways. First, you will be given many specific tools. You can expect detailed information that takes you well beyond what positive thinking proponents suggest. Ultimately, positive thinking is little more than a simple tool that doesn't even work unless you've laid an appropriate foundation to be ready for it, and then you have to know what to do after positive thinking.

And while I'm talking about positive thinking, let me just say this. When you hear some people talk, it seems as though the skills involved in positive thinking are relatively easy to master and that they can frequently make you feel good and overcome negative feelings in some situations. And because they make positive thinking sound so easy, it is an apparently attractive solution. Unfortunately, most positive thinking proponents offer little beyond this false hope. The truth is, depending on your situation, positive thinking and affirmations can make you feel even worse. There may be a time and a place for positive thinking, but it's not as useful as most people believe. This book will show you when it does and doesn't work.

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This book will take you well beyond positive thinking and give you a comprehensive collection of tools, each with its own specific role to play along your journey of personal achievement, success, and increased happiness. But, remember I said this book is different in two ways? Giving you a complete set of great tools and the necessary instructions to understand how they work and when to use them is only the first way this book is different.

The second way this book is different is that it is far more grounded in reality than others, and before you finish reading the last page, you'll understand that you will need to do some actual work to accomplish your goals. If that doesn't sound intimidating enough, maybe this will.

Although this book will help you to achieve your definition of success and happiness, the unfiltered truth is, bad things will still happen. You'll discover that the utopia promised by other self-help programs ignores the fact that life will continue to throw new obstacles in your path. No matter what you accomplish, you'll continue to ask, "How do I keep going?"

If you want a book that promises to make you feel good about yourself or human nature, you can find dozens of them. Unfortunately, they don't deliver real-world results, and any good feelings you may experience won't last. Just remember, motivation alone may feel good for a little while but rarely produces the results people rightfully demand in the long run.

There's a maturity in wanting to pursue life goals in spite of the work they require. If you've had enough of feel-good philosophies and you're finally ready to dig in your heels and accomplish your goals or whatever it takes to make your life worth living, and always keep moving forward, then turn the page and get ready for a life-changing experience!

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**SUMMARY**

- This book is about how to keep going in spite of problems and challenges.
  - Clever sayings and stories are great if they help you remember something valuable, but too often experts try to motivate and inspire people with stories and clever words alone. You must go deeper.
  - This book is a toolkit with ideas for overcoming obstacles and getting to the next level.
  - Many popular answers are wrong and this book will dispel myths and help you understand truths behind human behavior.
  - You need to understand the entire process of personal achievement in order to be able to truly achieve in your business and personal life.
  - Depending on where you are in life, positive thinking may be counterproductive.
  - Accomplishment requires work.
- <http://www.pbooktop.com>