

THE DREAM WITHIN

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M.W. COUCH

P.O. BOX 23109

PHILA., PA 19124

WWW.NBCOP.ORG

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Whether we are embarking on a new life change or want to discover our life's dream, we will all face obstacles along the way.

We are all embarking on the hero's journey to some extent or another. We are all heroes of our own story, struggling and finding our own way. The hero's journey is a mythic, universal story of transformation and awakening. It is full of challenges and tests. It is the path towards true self, one that if ventured successfully, will inevitably bring good deeds back to our own community.

But there are things to be aware of when we want to live our dreams. Major challenges that show up as obstacles and resistance.

Setting goals is the first step... achieving them is the second step... and it's at this second step that most of us stumble. We stumble not because the goal is unachievable, but rather because of unexpected **obstacles** and challenges that arise along the journey that make the goal seem unachievable.

It's important to understand that every goal we set naturally comes with a plethora of landmines that are attached to that goal. These land-mines show up in our lives as a set of obstacles, challenges and problems that we must surpass in order to get to our end destination, which is our goal. In fact, unless we successfully maneuver through these land-mines and overcome them, then we will fail to learn the valuable lessons that are required to help us achieve — and keep — our goal when we get to that end destination.

Types of Obstacles

There are three types of obstacles that you will likely face along your journey towards your goals. These include personal obstacles, environmental obstacles and social obstacles. Each is outlined separately below.

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Personal Obstacles



Personal obstacles are related to our psychology, behaviors and state-of-mind. They can include limiting habits, debilitating emotions, fears and beliefs. These obstacles prevent us from moving forward towards the attainment of our goals and objectives because of the thoughts that we tend to dwell upon every day. These thoughts naturally prevent us from making effective decisions and undertaking the actions that will help us create the momentum we need to get to our end destination.

Here is a list of personal obstacles that could be preventing you from moving forward in your life:

- Lack of pain
- Lack of discipline
- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of inspiration
- Lack of desire
- Lack of skill
- Fear of change
- Fear of failure
- Feeling unworthy
- Procrastination
- Perfectionism
- Disorganization
- Pessimistic thoughts
- Too many time constraints

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- Too much complacency
- Too much blaming of self and others
- Too many excuses
- Too much complaining

Identify if any of these obstacles are currently preventing you from getting what you want most out of life, and choose today to take control of your thought patterns and begin making better and far more effective decisions.

Social Obstacles



Social obstacles are related to people who either do not cooperate with you, sabotage you, or are simply incompetent and unable to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to them.

When it comes to social obstacles, it's important to do a little forward planning, to make sure that you clarify your needs adequately, your knowledge thoroughly and your instructions carefully — ensuring that the communication doesn't break down at any stage. It also helps to develop good strong bonds and relationships with the people you rely on most.

You will go out of your mind if you try to control everyone's behavior, decision and action. Instead try to subtly influence people and understand their needs, motives and desires. Only in this way will you successfully improve your chances of maneuvering through the social obstacles in your life.

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Environmental Obstacles



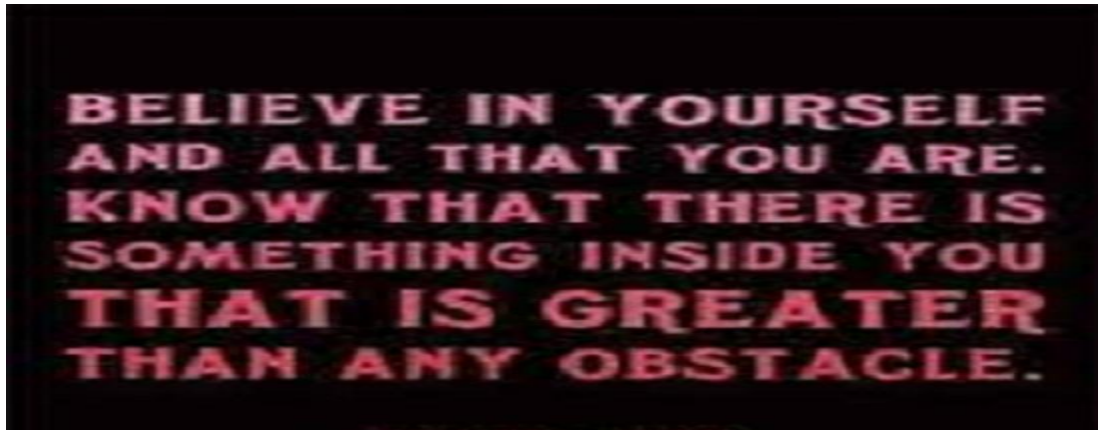
Environmental obstacles are often unexpected conditions, occurrences and circumstances that you have very little control over.

Because these events and circumstances are unexpected, we are often ill-prepared and unable to deal with them effectively. However, if we do a little research and use some forward planning we may be able to predict and oftentimes influence these occurrences by setting into place contingency plans. To do this, begin by following Murphy's Law:

Anything that can go wrong, will go wrong at the worst possible time, all of the time when you least expect it. So what are you going to do about it?

When you plan for the future, you gather a better understanding of the possible scenarios and consequences of your decisions and actions. Planning also gives you insight into additional resources you may need to help you overcome environmental obstacles that lie on the journey ahead.

TIPS For OVERCOMING OBSTACLES



When confronted with obstacles, problems and challenges, it's easy to become a little overwhelmed, especially when the circumstances are unfamiliar and seem a little threatening and urgent. However, no matter what life throws your way, keep in mind that there are always options available, there are always things you can do, actions you can take and decisions you can make that will keep moving you forward in the right direction.

Step Back Emotionally

When unexpected obstacles suddenly show up, it's easy to react emotionally to the circumstances. However, emotional reactions are often not very productive, and more times than not they don't alleviate the situation. Instead we must learn to step back from our emotions and see the situation from an external perspective — through logic and reason. It's only once we grasp the circumstances from an intellectual perspective that we begin to identify the true relevance and significance of the events that have taken place.

Gain Necessary Resources and Support

At times we simply do not have the necessary resources to help us deal with the situation at hand. In such circumstances we must question what pieces of the puzzle we are currently missing, and then look for the necessary tools, strategies, knowledge and the support we need to help us overcome this obstacle successfully.

Acquire Different Perspective

Sometimes obstacles are only as real as we make them out to be. In fact at times obstacles are simply misunderstandings and generalizations that we have made about circumstances. At other times obstacles are only as real as the assumptions that are clouding our vision.

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To begin shifting your perspective, start by viewing the situation you find yourself in from another person's perspective. Alternatively you can use a plethora of framing and reframing techniques that will help you shift the way you think about your circumstances.

Seek Guidance

Often the answers we need to help us overcome the obstacles in our lives can be found by simply talking to other people. In fact, other people might have already dealt and successfully overcome the circumstances you find yourself in. You must therefore seek out mentors, life coaches or experts to help you find the answers you need to move you forward towards your goals and objectives.

Breathe, Take Control and Take Action

When obstacles overwhelm us, our first automatic response is to freeze. This paralysis may seem unhelpful at first, however it gives us time to ponder and think strategically about the circumstances we find ourselves in.

Take these moments to breathe deeply and ask yourself the following questions:

What is it that I control?

What is it that I don't control?

How can I gain control over these circumstances?

If I cannot gain control, then how can I influence these circumstances?

If I cannot influence them, then maybe I am not seeing things clearly. Where must I look for more information?

By asking and taking action on these questions you will gain some semblance of control over your circumstances and can slowly start building momentum moving forward towards the attainment of your goals.

Adjust Your Priorities

At times we are unable to overcome certain obstacles in our lives because our priorities are simply out of order. This is especially relevant when you consider that spending a little more time concentrating on developing a certain skill or gaining knowledge in a specific area of your life can have a significant impact on your ability to overcome difficult circumstances.

Assess Your Obstacles

You will rarely be able to overcome an obstacle unless you are able to figure out how it originated and weaseled its way into your life. You must therefore ask yourself:

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What went wrong?

What could have caused this?

What must I do now?

List Possible Options

Sometimes obstacles have a tendency to lock us up mentally in a confined space, thusly limiting our thinking and perspective of the situation. In such instances we must realize that solutions can only be found when we open our minds to possibilities and options that we hadn't considered before. To do this, simply sit down with a pen and paper and ask yourself over and over again:

How can I overcome this obstacle?

What options haven't I considered?

The more options you have, the more opportunity you have to find a suitable answer to the problem you are facing.

Final Thoughts

Obstacles are just "things" that are there to teach and strengthen us for the journey that lies ahead. We must therefore not view them as insurmountable problems that will prevent us from achieving our goals, but rather as small — and at times large — stepping stones that are required "modules" we need to pass in order to obtain our Ph.D. in Goal Achievement. Take time to learn the lessons that life throws your way, because these lessons will be critical to your success as you move forward into the future.