

The Recipe for Overcoming Adversity

by Jeffrey Leventry

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I recently purchased a book for my son called **“What It Takes”** by Mark Herzlich. It tells the remarkable story of a young college athlete whose life took a drastic turn in 2009 when he learned he had an extremely rare bone cancer. He was told he would never play football again, but he decided to pursue an aggressive form of chemo therapy to battle his cancer.

He eventually recovered but was not drafted by a single NFL team since coaches and general managers were afraid to take a chance on him given his medical history. The New York Giants ultimately offered him a free agency contract and Mark earned a spot on the team. In 2011, Mark became the starting linebacker for the team that would win the Super Bowl, just 2 years after he was written off because of his cancer. In the end, “Mark faced extraordinary adversity and answered it with an extraordinary show of will, faith and strength” as explained by his coach - Tom Coughlin.

Although perhaps not as extreme as Mark’s situation, we all face adversity during our lifetime. It is a normal part of our daily, weekly or monthly existence.

So why do some people overcome adversity while others fail? In my experience, I have found that those who consistently achieve success follow an approach that includes 4 steps as follows:

Define the Adversity (“Face Your Reality”)

- What are the details of your current situation?
- What have you tried so far and what were the results?
- Is there a trusted friend or advisor who can help you by providing an outside perspective?

Articulate the Critical Issues (“Address Key Obstacles”)

- What are the critical issues that must be addressed?
- What are the major obstacles standing in your way?
- Who are the key players involved in the situation and what are their motives or intentions?

Develop an Action Plan (“Evaluate Options”)

- What options exist for addressing the issues and which ones are optimal?
- What has worked for others who have faced the same or a similar problem?
- What has worked in the past when you have faced difficult situations?
- Can you take advantage of a respected coach or mentor who can act as a sounding board and offer sage advice and support?

Implement Your Plan (“Persevere to Achieve your Goal”)

- Tap into your inner strength and willpower
- Find motivation from your outer physical strength
- Put forth the self discipline and effort required to succeed
- Stay positive and focused on your end goal
- Have faith in yourself and your skills, and above all - persevere

Many experts believe that overcoming hardship and adversity builds strength, defines your character and gives us the confidence to tackle life’s challenges. In fact, famous British novelist C.S. Lewis said: **“Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny”**.

I have used the 4 step approach articulated above many times for myself and to help others facing adversity, and it routinely yields great success - especially when we are committed to achieving our end goal.

In closing, if you are facing a difficult situation and need advice on how to apply the recipe for overcoming adversity, please contact us so we can collaborate to formulate a personal solution that will yield success.