

Be the Tree

I was enjoying my lunchtime ritual of walking around the trail at Centerpoint. As I walked, I looked at the boarded-up windows and thought about all my colleagues who were displaced by the recent tornado.



Then I saw it. Another victim of the tornado. It was a tree that I had walked by hundreds of times but never really noticed. It was impossible to miss it now. What used to be a 20-foot mature tree, was now relegated to a splintered stump. Even though this tree was destroyed by the storm, it started proudly reaching to the sun to give life another go. I immediately thought, now that is perseverance.

In cases like a tornado, we simply must figure out a way to persevere. But what about the setbacks we experience every day that present us with a choice? It might be that idea you pitched that was turned down. It could be that disagreement with a coworker. Maybe you have been handed a project that seems insurmountable from your perspective. What can you do to make it easier to lower your shoulder and plow forward? Try:

1. **Setting Clear Goals:** Define what you want to achieve and set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals. Having a clear sense of purpose can motivate you to keep going when faced with difficulties.
2. **Staying Focused:** Concentrate your efforts on your goals and avoid distractions. It's essential to maintain your focus to make progress, especially when things get tough.
3. **Breaking it Down:** Divide your larger goals into smaller, manageable tasks. This can make your objectives feel less daunting and more achievable.
4. **Embracing Failure:** Understand that setbacks and failures are a natural part of the journey. Instead of seeing them as obstacles, view them as opportunities to learn and grow. Resilience is a key aspect of perseverance.
5. **Staying Positive:** Maintain a positive mindset and believe in your ability to overcome challenges. Optimism can help you stay motivated and resilient during difficult times.
6. **Seeking Support:** Don't be afraid to ask for help or lean on your support network when needed. Having people who believe in you and can offer guidance or encouragement can be invaluable.
7. **Staying Consistent:** Consistency is key to building and maintaining perseverance. Stick to your plans and keep working toward your goals, even when progress seems slow.
8. **Visualizing Success:** Create a mental image of what success looks like for you. Visualizing your goals can help you stay motivated and focused on your desired outcomes.
9. **Adapting and Adjusting:** Be flexible in your approach. If you encounter unexpected obstacles or circumstances, be willing to adapt your plans and strategies while keeping your end goal in mind.
10. **Be Persistent:** The first no you receive doesn't always mean the end. In the language of progress and continuous improvement, "no" translates to "maybe" or just "not right now". Refine your pitch or argument and give it another go.

We all face setbacks. Most of these setbacks present us with a choice. Fold or continue to persevere. The next time you are faced with an obstacle, or something doesn't go your way, lean on the ten items listed above and keep driving forward.

"Every great story happened when someone decided not to give up." - Spryte Loiano

Don't let a setback deter the writing of **your** story. **Be the tree.**

-Scot

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