Overcoming Adversity:
A Journey Of Mindset And Resilience

The question I have asked myself countless times is, “How did you overcome the adversity”? People often refer to my ability to live life to the fullest despite the amputation of my left leg and they wonder how they would handle a similar situation. I have pondered this question deeply, searching for the right words to articulate my journey. While I initially considered attributing my success to faith, family and friendships, I realized that something more profound was at play. It was not the amputation I overcame, but rather my mindset about being an amputee and having a disability. In this article, we will explore the transformative power of mindset and delve into the hurdles one must conquer to overcome adversity.

The Power Of Mindset

When faced with challenging times, we must confront the mindset associated with what we aim to overcome. It is not the adversity we conquer but our perspective and attitude toward it. Why? Because the event that caused the adversity is in the past, while our thoughts and beliefs about it exist in the present. Our fear or faith regarding the event resides in a future state yet to manifest. Therefore, our ability to overcome adversity lies in reshaping our mindset.

The Hurdles Of Overcoming Adversity

To better understand this process, let us turn to the metaphor of a hurdler. A hurdler doesn't simply run hurdles; they attack them with determination and resilience. Similarly, we encounter three pivotal hurdles that demand our attention when overcoming adversity.

The Reckoning Moment

The first hurdle is “The Reckoning Moment.” It signifies the realization that we cannot reclaim what we have lost or return to how things used to be after experiencing trauma or adversity. While initially we may yearn to return to normalcy, we must accept that embracing a new reality is the path forward. It requires acknowledging that life has changed, and adaptation and growth are essential.

The ReVision Moment

The second hurdle is “The ReVision Moment.” This hurdle is cleared when we commit ourselves to a new vision. We must redefine our adversity and strive to find possibilities amidst the challenges. However, there are obstacles to overcome in this process.

Firstly, the influence of others can shape our beliefs about what we can or cannot achieve based on their perceptions. The influence of others might become more challenging because it is our inner circle who has the most influence over us. Think about it - a doctor states to an amputee, “You will never walk again,” and that information is believed because the doctor is highly respected knowledgeable. They are a person in authority.

Secondly, societal pressures often stigmatize individuals with disabilities, making it harder to have open conversations about mental health or physical limitations. Overcoming these hurdles requires individual courage and breaking free from external influences. Think about what we watch at the movies during the month of October. When Halloween comes, we pay our money to be scared by goons and goblins
who have disfigurements. We are conditioned as society to fear people who are different and disabled.

Thirdly, we must decide to hurdle adversity. I have had some amazing hurdle coaches in my life. A couple of them were able to train me to make the Olympic trials. None of them ever ran a hurdle for me.

The Renewal

The final hurdle we encounter is “The Renewal.” It is cleared when we celebrate our journey and growth. Renewal begins with the process’s most challenging aspect, the rebirth. After committing to the new vision, we enter a phase of rebirth where we make a definitive choice to move forward. This commitment implies that we cannot revert to how things used to be. It demands embracing change and accepting that there is no turning back. During this phase, we need to provide ourselves with space and grace to grow in the new environment.

The Importance Of Space And Grace

After committing, we must allow ourselves the space and grace to adapt and grow in the new environment. The new environment represents uncharted territory devoid of any prior reference points. Showing old systems and ideas that no longer serve us is crucial. We must create new rituals, develop fresh perspectives, and establish a new rhythm that fosters a belief in the possibility of a better future. Patience and perseverance are paramount, as progress takes time.

Conclusion

Overcoming adversity is a journey of resilience and mindset transformation. It is not about conquering adversity but rather about reshaping our perceptions, beliefs and attitudes. Through the metaphor of hurdling, we have explored three crucial hurdles: The Reckoning Moment, The ReVision Moment and The Renewal.

In The Reckoning Moment, we come to terms with the fact that we cannot regain what we have lost. It requires a shift in our mindset from longing for the past to accepting and adapting to the present. The ReVision Moment demands that we redefine our adversity and commit to a new vision. We must break free from others’ expectations and societal pressures, courageously embracing change and exploring new possibilities.

The Renewal signifies the celebration of our journey and growth. It begins with rebirth, where we commit resolutely to our chosen new path. In this phase, we must give ourselves space and grace to adapt and grow in the new environment. It involves developing new rituals, perspectives and rhythms that align with our desired future.

Throughout this process, it is essential to understand that overcoming adversity is not an instantaneous achievement. It requires time, resilience, and unwavering determination.

In conclusion, overcoming adversity is a testament to the power of mindset and resilience. It is about shifting our perspective, redefining our limitations and embracing new possibilities. The journey is not without its challenges. However, by hurdling The Reckoning Moment, The ReVision Moment and The Renewal, we can emerge stronger, more determined, and capable of achieving our dreams. Let us approach adversity with an unwavering spirit, knowing that our mindset has the power to transform our lives and lead us to a brighter future.

John Register is a two-time and two-sport Paralympian and silver medalist, combat Army veteran, author, and professional keynote speaker. He focuses on change management and works with business professionals who are ready to hurdle adversity, amputate fear and embrace a new normal mindset to transform obstacles into opportunities. Learn more at www.johnregister.com.

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