

# **The 5-Minute Guide to Building Your Mental Strength**

**- SPECIAL REPORT -**

There's at least one thing that all successful people have in common: they have developed their mental strength. Whether it's at work in an office or training for the Olympics, mental strength is necessary to deal with all the conflicts life throws at you.

What exactly is mental strength? Put shortly, it's the ability to deal with conflict, confrontations, and pressure to still perform the best you can. Many tasks in life are challenging and require a level of mental fortitude to get through it. If you tell yourself that you can't do something, you're probably right.

You have to be able to keep pushing yourself and telling yourself you *can* do something. Your thoughts will influence the actions you take. To act with success, you must first *think* with success. If you want to start cultivating mental strength, continue reading and find out how you can start cultivating the mental strength to tackle any challenge ahead of you.

## 1. Building Mental Endurance

Building mental endurance is one of the first steps to take if you want to build mental strength. Mental endurance is the ability to wade through challenges without giving up. Many tasks can be agonizing and you may want to quit as you perform them.

If you have mental endurance, then you can bear hardships without letting them get to you on a psychological level. Here are a few ways to start building mental endurance:

- **Running.** Not only is running healthy for your body, but it's great for your mentality as well. Exercise is good for the brain in more than a few ways, but it's especially good for building the mental endurance needed to push through difficult tasks.

While you're running, you experience at a very fundamental level what your mental endurance is. If you don't run frequently, this is more so the case. Not only do you feel your body telling you to stop, but your mind will start telling you to stop as well.

When you run, there's a little voice in your head that tells you to stop. Every time you don't listen to that voice, you build your mental endurance a little more.

- **Sleep.** Sleep is crucial for good health. Many bodily functions are regulated by sleep, and the amount of sleep you get directly impacts your performances while you're awake.

You know the feeling of when you haven't gotten enough sleep – grogginess, clouded thinking, and poor memory. In a sense, your mind becomes lazy when you don't get enough sleep.

If you want to develop strong mental endurance, make sure you let your mind rest when it needs to. It's hard to build mental endurance when your mind is lazy. With enough sleep, your mind will have the strength it needs to say no to the voices telling you to quit.

- **Motivation.** Finding your motivation is key to keeping yourself going. If you don't have any motivation to do something, chances are you may not even do it. And if you do start something without motivation, you're unlikely to put in 100% effort.

This is often easier said than done. Motivation comes in spurts; one day you might be feeling the motivation to do

things you normally wouldn't, while other days you may want to lay in bed and waste the day away.

It's okay to not feel motivated all the time. It's normal to want to take a break from things, and sometimes taking a break is the best thing you can do. As long as you can find the motivation when you need to, any task will appear doable.

- **Distraction.** Distractions are contradictory. At times, it's good to be able to distract yourself. Distracting yourself on purpose can be beneficial when practicing mental endurance.

Take running for example. While running, putting your thoughts on something else not related to running can be a good exercise to distract yourself from the voice in your head telling you to stop.

On the other hand, distractions can prevent you from doing the thing you're supposed to be doing. Letting yourself get too distracted can cause laziness.

Use distractions to your advantage. By controlling when you let yourself get distracted, you can turn a negative into a positive.

## 2. Positive Thinking

Positive thinking is an important aspect of mental strength. It can help you get through tough times and difficult challenges. If you aren't able to stay positive, getting through a challenge will be more arduous than it needs to be. Negative thoughts may even dissuade you from completing a task at all.

Your thoughts are always with you. Just as your actions influence your thoughts, your thoughts influence your actions. To be suc-

cessful, you have to truly believe it. Here are some tips on how you can stay positive:

- **Letting go of limitations.** The one person who decides whether or not you can do something is you. The limitations you impose on yourself are often the only ones holding you back. By deciding whether or not you can do something beforehand, you create a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Self-fulfilling prophecy is a term that means you create the outcome of a situation by thinking it. When you set expectations for yourself, you subconsciously behave in a way that makes that expectation turn into a reality.

If your actions follow suit of your thoughts, your actions are limited by what you think you can do. Let go of your limitations and you'll be surprised to find out what you're capable of.

- **Creating good habits.** Actions and thoughts have a back-and-forth relationship. Forming positive habits creates a positive mentality. Something as simple as cleaning a room in your house can make you feel good afterward.

Good habits are also a stepping stone to success. Success is a lifestyle, not one single thing that you do. To become successful, you must practice finding success even in things that may seem mundane.

- **Assigning blame.** We are often our own worst critics. Late at night when you're lying in bed, you may think of all the

mistakes you've ever made. That one small mistake you made in 6<sup>th</sup> grade? Nobody else remembers that, but you do.

It's easy to blame yourself, but it is a negative habit that bears nothing good. While it's important to take responsibility and own up to your errors, you must accept that there are other factors at play.

You must also refrain from placing blame on people or events around you. Things happen, good or bad. That is life and instead of sitting around blaming people or things you have to move on.

- **Comparing yourself to others.** The expectations you set for yourself are often based on the success of others. It's all too easy to fall into the trap of thinking you're not good enough because you didn't do as well as somebody else.

If you always compare yourselves to others, you will forever live in the shadow that others create. There's always going to be someone out there with a bigger house, a more expensive car, or a better paying job. This does not mean that they are better than you.

Success is relative. While having a lot of money might define for success for some, others find their wealth in less tangible assets.

Comparing yourself to others creates a cesspool of negative thoughts. All you have to know is that you are doing the best job you can, and success will come out of this.

### 3. Open-Mindedness

Keeping an open mind is essential in building mental fortitude. It is the tree that bends that does not break, as they say. If you form stiff mental walls that block out impossibilities, they will eventually break, leaving you with no defense at all.

Closed minds are closed to the possibilities that could occur. You cannot take everything for what it is, and you have to be able to accept that you may be wrong sometimes. Nobody is right all the time, and if you never recognize you're wrong then you'll never grow. Here are some ways to practice keeping an open mind:

- **Compassion.** Empathy is built into your neural pathways. You empathize with people so that you can relate to them. Humans are naturally social animals, and being able to relate to somebody is the best way to connect with them.

You may be asking 'How does compassion lead to mental strength?'. Put simply, compassion is a result of mental strength, not a cause. It is easy to hold contempt in your heart, but to forgive somebody is truly difficult.

If you want to build mental strength, practice being compassionate. This means you're strong enough to let go of the emotional and mental baggage that holds you down. Once that pressure is released, you will no longer be weighed down by the past and you'll have more room to grow.

- **Changing your point of view.** One of the greatest benefits of keeping an open mind is the ability to view things from a different lens. Often you will not be able to solve a problem because you are looking at it wrong.

A fantastic mental exercise you can try is just to look at things differently. If you're a hammer, then everything you see is a nail and this can lead to you framing a problem incorrectly. Approach your problems with a new set of eyes.

If you need help looking at something from a different perspective, then talk to others to understand how they view it. Everyone has different experiences, and it's these experiences that determine how we respond to a stimulus.

## 4. Setting Goals

If you want to overcome a challenge, then set a goal and stick to it. Goals are good motivators and they can help you keep your focus on what's important or what you want your end-game to be. Goals will keep you on the right track and if you ever start to question why you set out on overcoming a challenge, your goals can help remind you why.

Setting goals needs to be done the right way to be effective. Creating goals that are constantly out of reach and never achieving them can be discouraging, so practice the following tips to set goals that you can reach:

- **Realistic milestones.** This should be a term that most people are familiar with. There's a difference between a dream and a goal.

Dreams are often grandiose and may be impossible to achieve. Goals are achievable and can be done with your given circumstances. You can dream big, but set realistic goals along the way to get closer to that dream.



Setting realistic milestones is also important because it gives you a sense of accomplishment. If you are constantly setting goals that you never achieve, you might think that it's through some fault of your own when really, it was the goal that was wrong.

- **Meeting deadlines.** Deadlines are a source of stress for most people. This can be a good thing, however. Stress is a form of motivation, and if you can put that fire behind you instead of in front of you then you can push yourself to keep going.

Setting deadlines for yourself is also a good way to break your goals down into steps. Don't say 'I'll be a doctor by year X'.

Instead, create deadlines that break this goal down into multiple steps. Try 'I'll apply for undergraduate school by X', and once you achieve that you can say 'I'll graduate from undergrad by year X and I'll apply for graduate school by year Y.

Accomplishing ambitious goals takes time. By expecting to achieve a goal within too short of a time frame you set yourself up for failure. Create realistic deadlines and meet them if you want to come out on top.

## Conclusion

Mental strength is not something that can be built overnight. It takes time, patience, and good habits over long periods to grow your mentality. Think of your mental strength as a tree. You don't just plant it and forget about it; you water it over time and it grows slowly.

Take the time to develop habits that fortify your mental strength and before you know it, your mental strength will grow into a mighty oak.