

## DECEMBER: FEAR OF FAILURE



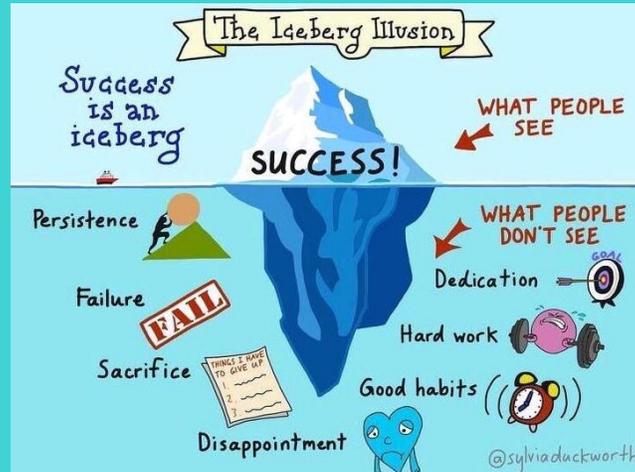
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## FEAR OF FAILURE



*Believe it or not, failures contribute to SUCCESS and is another element of the "iceberg diagram".*

Overcoming fear of FAILURE is crucial for SUCCESS. For many highly successful men and women who have accomplished great things in life, failure was merely a stepping stone to achieving greatness, they also understood that failing to make the attempt is the 'real' failure and that doing nothing, gets nothing - least of all success.

Why then would someone have a fear of failure?

**Not knowing what it really takes to succeed.**

One reason is that many of us are so focused on success and the appearances of it, that we forget what it really entails. We rarely think about failure as being a part of life and how

many success stories have emerged from sheer failure. No one talks about how Michael Jordan failed to make his high school basketball team before becoming one of the greatest basketball players ever or that Ted Ligety and Bode Miller were not on the podium when they were young ski racers. Or that remember that guy Hermann Maier ("The Herminator"? They told him he wasn't good enough for the Austrian Ski Team. They all have in common the fact that they didn't let some failures get in the way of their success. As the iceberg model illustrates it is often the glamorous side of success that anyone sees not the harder parts.

### **Having unrealistic expectations.**

We often expect to succeed on our first attempt in whatever it is we are trying to achieve. The same applies in competitive sports. Athletes must learn to accept loss before they discover what it takes to win. In any sport, expecting to win from the onset is totally unrealistic. Failure is part of the process of learning how to win.

In his book [\*Outliers\*](#) Malcolm Gladwell repeatedly talks about the "10,000-Hour Rule", in which he states that the key to success in any field is largely a matter of practicing a specific task for a total of around 10,000 hours. Needless to say, 10,000 hours of practicing anything would include many occurrences of failure, some frustration and falling short of goals.

### **Perfectionism.**

Some of us are afraid of failure because we believe we must be perfect. If we make an attempt and then fail at it, we risk looking foolish and therefore feel somehow flawed.

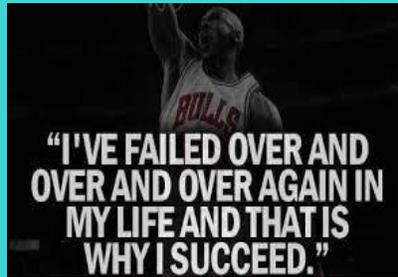
Perfectionists believe everything must be done at a high level with no room for mistakes. If they can't get something done perfectly, they'd prefer not do it at all. Unfortunately, this type of thinking deprives the perfectionist of real learning and the benefits and value gained from experience.

**How to Overcome Fear of Failure:** Only by overcoming fear of failure can we achieve success in life. Here are some tips on how to eliminate fear and focus on success:

- **Understand and expect that at times you will fail.** Realize that you are human and humans make mistakes.
- ***Don't take failure personally.*** *Instead, view it as a stepping stone. Make certain you learn from it and then apply what you've learned to future situations.*
- ***Remember that 'failure' has produced many successes.*** *Consider how many people in history had failed before they became successful and indeed because they failed.*
- ***Believe in yourself.*** *Rather than giving up when things don't work out, take it as an opportunity to build perseverance and resolve. Believe that you've got what it takes*

*to work through the obstacles and difficult times. Remind yourself how many failures became successful because they wouldn't give up.*

- **No one succeeds all of the time, probably not even most of the time.** So it is in life. You won't fail at anything if you don't make the attempt. You also won't succeed!
- **Appreciate the benefits of failure.** Your chances of getting things right on the first try are slim to none. The more you try, or experiment, the better you'll get at it.



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