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MOTIVated

THE MAGAZINE THAT MOVES YOU!



Never Give Up!

The Fourth Leaf

9 Smart Perseverance Tips

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We have all read about them: famous people who persevered in times of adversity, overcame obstacles, or went on to success despite extremely difficult circumstances. Some of us may have had the privilege of meeting or knowing someone like that, and as we hear their stories, we stand in awe.

But there is another kind of quiet heroism, as illustrated by this anecdote:

A small group of people, while in conversation, concluded that eventually everybody had to practice some kind of heroism. A young man turned to an old woman who looked ordinary and serene. He did not know that life had been a series of tragic events for her. "And what kind of heroism do you practice?" he asked with an obvious air of superiority. After all, what kind of heroism could there be in a life like hers. "Me?" she said. "I practice the heroism of going on."

Most of us experience trouble or face adversity at some time in our lives. To persevere quietly and patiently in the face of obstacles or difficulties can be the greatest heroism of all.

The true stories and articles in this issue of *Motivated* attest to that, and hold encouragement and helpful advice for all.

Christina Lane
For *Motivated*

NEVER GIVE UP!

By Elsa Sichrovsky

Ben is a white-haired man whose house I pass on my errands route. He always calls out a friendly greeting, and over time, we've become good friends. His cheerful demeanor and lively personality make him a joy to be around, despite our age difference.

Last spring, Ben slipped on a wet bathroom floor, fell backwards, and hit his head hard. The impact brought on a stroke that resulted in recurring dizzy spells and headaches, blurred vision, permanent damage to his left eye, and loss of stamina.

After his granddaughter phoned with the news, I went to visit Ben in the hospital. I had pictured a sad, sullen Ben greeting me from his wheelchair, but to my surprise, I was met by a smile. Ben waved me over to his chair with his usual enthusiasm. His speech was slow and halting and he was evidently in some pain, but Ben's glowing smile never faded. We enjoyed a wonderful time together, sprinkled with Ben's laughter and fresh sense of humor. How could he still be so upbeat after such a debilitating accident?

As if he knew what I was thinking, Ben touched my arm and said, "You know, Elsa, my dad is already 100 years old, but he's stronger than I am. Recently he fell down a flight of stairs. Most people his age would have died instantly or at least suffered permanent injury. Not Dad! Instead, he immediately got up, turned around, and

walked back up the stairs." My mouth dropped open. "I may not have my dad's physical strength," Ben continued, "but I can share his strength of spirit! I'm getting back up again!"

I had a lot to think about on my way home. How many times, when stepping out to try something new, make a lifestyle change, or pursue a goal, have I lost my footing and taken a fall? And how many times have I lain there questioning whether I had the strength or will to get up and try again? But each time that I refused to give up, I found deep within me enough strength to get back up.

Failure, disappointments, and setbacks are all part of life, but I can refuse to allow them to get the best of me. As Ben said that day, "As long as I live, I have the choice to not give up!" ❁





THE FOURTH LEAF

By Joe Johnston

I collect four-leaf clovers. It's a sort of hobby, like knitting or shooting hoops.

According to the noble creed of clover collectors, each leaf represents something: the first leaf, hope; the second, faith; the third, love; and the fourth, not surprisingly, good fortune. To most of those who are fortunate enough to have found a four-leaf clover, that fourth leaf means a lucky day, health, or maybe just a little snack. To me, that fourth leaf means another precious addition to my collection.

I found my first four-leaf clover five years ago. I was sitting in a gloomy gas station, staring at the shoes on my feet, when it jumped out at me from a patch of lawn in a corner. It was smiling—the only thing in that gas station with a smile on that cloudy day. I almost left it where it was, to smile at others, and I did for a while. Even though a hungry bug had eaten a circle out of one leaf, I ended up taking it with me. I couldn't help it.

That day the fourth leaf represented cheer—and I needed as much of that as I could get. Nothing astonishingly lucky happened though, so I pressed it between the pages of a big book, and all

but forgot about it.

I happened to mention it to some friends one day, and ended up passing around the book with the bug-eaten fourth leaf still grinning from between its pages. Many of them had never seen a real four-leaf clover, and they all offered to keep their eyes open for contributions to my “collection.”

The contributions began to pour in. Just the next week, Jessica presented me with four she had found and pressed, which I laid carefully in my book beside the bug-eaten smiling patriarch. Over the next few weeks, a few other friends brought more. Before long, there was a whole little community of four-leaf clovers in my book.

I had still only managed to find one.

I did occasionally search for the elusive four-leaves, fingering through whichever velvet patches of green I chanced not to step on. I found many three-leaves, even a few twos, but no fours. I couldn't help but be a little frustrated when Jessica, week after week, brought me two or three little four-leaves for “my” collection.

It has been estimated that there are approximately ten thousand three-leaf

clovers for every four-leaf. Who could compete with those odds?

Well, Jessica, apparently.

The next week she brought over seven petite four-leaves, smiling tiny smiles from between her fingers—the fourth leaf, as usual, a little smaller than the rest. It wasn't fair, I muttered to myself as I stored them away in my book. Who had the time to sort through tens of thousands of almos^ts? (She babysat kids and often looked for four-leaf clovers while they were playing happily beside her in the park.)

I turned back to Jessica, intending to lavish upon her my heartfelt appreciation, but before I could say a word she whipped out her crowning contribution with a wicked smirk—a beautiful clover with six luscious emerald leaves.

I couldn't stand it one second longer. After I took that six-leaf clover from her, I begged Jessica for her secret.

I will never forget her words.

"I don't have a secret," she insisted.

Then, suddenly, she stumbled upon an enlightening truth that will hold just as true one thousand years from now as it did then. With pursed lips and sparkling eyes, she whispered, "I don't stop looking till I find one."

I have since found a few four-leaf clovers for myself, and my collection now spans the pages of my book from cover to cover. It all comes back to that simple principle: Don't stop looking till you find one.

Do ten thousand-to-one odds scare you?—Edison had two thousand failures before he invented the light bulb, but it only took one success to start lighting up the whole world. Who has the time to sort through tens of thousands of almos^ts? That depends on how much you want the prize.

Whether it's clovers, success, or love you're looking for, determine that you won't stop until your fingers have closed around your goal. Maybe the very next one will be it.

Maybe that fourth leaf on the clover doesn't represent health, happiness, or good fortune after all.

Maybe it represents perseverance. 🍀

Stubbornly
persist, and
you will find
that the
limits of your
stubbornness
go well
beyond the
stubbornness
of your limits.

—Robert Brault

[American freelance writer;
www.robertbrault.com]



9 Smart Perseverance Tips

Adapted from an article by Andrew on www.personalhack.com

Perseverance, or persistent determination, is a common personal development topic, and therefore I will not be discussing perseverance in its traditional sense. What I will be discussing is smart perseverance. The problem with the traditional concept of perseverance is its vagueness.

Smart perseverance simply is a conscious persistent determination. It involves regularly evaluating each one of your goals and actions, and deciding whether you should keep going. The following tips will shed more light on smart perseverance.

1. Pursue your heart's true desires.

We often don't really go after what we want because of fear or insecurity. We end up pursuing lives that don't feel like they are truly our own. Instead, they are just what society and others consider appropriate. No one wants to look back on life with regrets. This is why you must really go after what your heart desires. You must approach it like an innocent young child, who sees a world full of endless possibilities. Once you are pursuing your heart's true desire, you will be naturally motivated to pursue it.

2. Do not confuse the means with the end.

When asked what we want out of life, most of us would conclude happiness. Our capitalist society often associates money with happiness. While money is necessary, it's important to realize that it's just a means to an end. In the long term, money by itself never makes a person happy. Once you make this clarification, you will realize that there are many more means to happiness than just money. For example, building friendships with positive people, giving back to your community, and being grateful for all you have, will add to your quality of life and increase your happiness.

3. Do not give up because of laziness.

An easy, satisfying life is an ideal. Life is a journey, not a destination. Living a lazy, easy lifestyle will never be satisfying in the end. In fact, it usually leads to feeling slightly depressed. Living a happy, satisfying life is hard work.

4. Do not give up because of slow, or lack of, progress.

If you are pursuing your heart's true desires, progress will become irrelevant. However, there still will be times where you might become discouraged because of slow, or lack of, progress. Remember that while in a movie you can see a character change his whole lifestyle in a matter of hours, in real life progress is much slower. Aim for steady, slow progress.

5. Success is closer than you think.

Success might just be around the corner, but even if it's not, by persevering in pursuing your goal you are building a great lifelong habit. If you give up on your goal, how do you know that you will not give up on your next goal, or the one after that? Be careful not to make giving up a habit. If you hang in there and keep working at it, you are building a persistent, determined character.

6. Be flexible and willing to change.

Do not let your current identity or self-image limit the pursuit of your goals. Be willing to make changes, to try new things, and to learn new skills. Be willing to look like a fool every now and then. Remember that if you keep doing the same things you will always get the same results. So to achieve a new goal you must slowly make changes and try different things.

7. Start visualizing.

Visualization is very powerful. Whatever your goal or endeavor, close your eyes and start visualizing yourself as having achieved it. Visualize how happy you feel as a result. If, for example, you are pursuing weight loss, then visualize a thin version of yourself with your ideal weight and body shape. Visualize how lean your body looks, how well clothing fits you, how energetic you are, and how confident and happy you are with your amazing body shape. Visualize becoming a lot more successful in other areas of your life because of the confidence you now have from achieving your weight loss goal. Daily review your goals, and visualize achieving them.

8. Add emotions to your goals.

A goal is just a goal, a few words or sentences. However, once you add emotions, it starts becoming part of you. Achieving that goal becomes a strong part of your character. Let's say you set the following goal, "I want to get out of debt." This is a plainly stated goal. What does it look like when you add emotions? "I want to get out of debt because I can't stand constantly worrying about how I'm going to pay off my loans or credit cards. I'm tired of having no money to invest or to set aside for my future, and having to pay it all in interest fees." The more emotional reasons you can come up with for achieving a goal the better. They will give you the impetus to make the needed changes in your habits and lifestyle. You should regularly review and add to your list of reasons.

9. Regularly review these words of Calvin Coolidge.

"Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing in the world is more common than unsuccessful people with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent." ❀

NEVER GIVE UP
ON SOMETHING
THAT YOU CAN'T
GO A DAY WITHOUT
THINKING ABOUT.

—Unknown

GENIUS IS
ONE PERCENT
INSPIRATION
AND NINETY-
NINE PERCENT
PERSPIRATION.

—Thomas Alva Edison

MOST OF THE
IMPORTANT
THINGS IN THE
WORLD HAVE BEEN
ACCOMPLISHED BY
PEOPLE WHO HAVE
KEPT ON TRYING
WHEN THERE
SEEMED TO BE NO
HOPE AT ALL.

—Dale Carnegie

MANY OF LIFE'S
FAILURES ARE
PEOPLE WHO DID
NOT REALIZE HOW
CLOSE THEY WERE
TO SUCCESS WHEN
THEY GAVE UP.

—Thomas Alva Edison



BLIND MAN'S LEAD

By Olivia Bauer

I had just moved to Winnipeg, Canada. The Internet connection at my apartment had yet to be installed, so I was on my way to a nearby Starbucks café to get online and do some work.

Halfway there, I wondered if I had remembered to put my wallet in my backpack, and stopped to look. At that instant, I felt a sharp blow against my ankle. Without thinking, I spun around to see who was “attacking” me.

Imagine my surprise when instead I faced a pleasant-looking blind man, white cane in hand, apologizing profusely. Under these circumstances, it was hard to be angry. The man said a few more words and continued down the street.

I had forgotten my wallet, so I went back to my apartment to retrieve it. When I finally got to Starbucks, I reflected on this odd little encounter. It wasn't the part where I got rapped on the ankle that had left the impression, but the image of this blind man striding confidently down the street.

I started thinking about my own life and current situation. I had recently moved to a new city, away from all my close friends and the colleagues I'd worked with for years, and was still learning my way around. I needed to find a new job, but wasn't even sure what sort of job I wanted. I also needed to make several other related, time-sensitive decisions. What should I focus on? Could I manage both work and university? What should I make my financial priorities? And how did those sync with my long-term goals? On some questions, I didn't even know where to start.

Being at the beginning of something new was exciting, but also unsettling. Questions seemed to be more plentiful than answers.

In my mind's eye, I saw the blind man navigating the streets of downtown Winnipeg, unable to see where he was going, but going nonetheless—and doing so with confidence. If he can figure it out and find his way around, I told myself, I could too! 🍀

A young boy with light brown hair, wearing a red polo shirt and large white headphones, is focused on playing a piano. His hands are on the keys, and he is looking down at the instrument. The background is blurred, showing other people in a room.

Perseverance Activities for Kids

By Tiffany Roget, eHow Contributor

1. Story time

One quick and easy way to convey the importance of perseverance to children is to read stories that teach this quality. Request that children act out the characters, performing their physical actions, as you read the story aloud. Drive home the idea you are trying to convey by having coloring pages accompany each story, or activity worksheets on hand for the children to complete after story time ends. A few examples of applicable books include “The Tortoise and the Hare” and “The Little Engine That Could”.

2. Collage action

Engage children of any age with an art project that enables them to express their feelings about perseverance in a creative way. Give each child one piece of colored art paper, and instruct them to draw a line down the center of the page. Label the top of the left column with “Persevering Rocks!” and the right column with “Not Persevering!” Offer the children a variety of magazines to choose from and instruct them to search the pages for interesting images that reflect these two ideas. Glue images to the applicable side of the paper, allowing for overlapping if desired for additional visual artistic expression. Ask the children to write a couple sentences on the back of their collage that reflects a time they personally persevered, and applaud them for their actions.

Help children learn the importance and benefits of persevering and simultaneously enable them to work on establishing self-discipline. Both of these qualities enable young people to develop self-confidence and grow into capable teens and adults who can adequately make healthy, personal decisions. Set small goals for kids to accomplish and praise them when they meet their intended result. A home-based chart, where they receive gold stars for accomplished goals, keeps wandering minds motivated.

3. Host puppet shows

Kids love puppets and as a result enjoy receiving information from these friendly characters in a non-threatening manner. Take advantage of this situation by hosting puppet shows and have the children take turns acting out the plays. Offer up scripts that reflect a young person facing challenging circumstances, choices, or obstacles, and cover how they persevere through the difficult situation. You might consider finding stories and quotes that offer inspiring messages regarding learning how to persevere and integrate these stories and characters into your plays.

4. Play games

Many games offer the opportunity to help children learn about the art of perseverance, and practice skills to acquire it. Croquet is one game where players are required to hit a ball with a mallet through small metal arches stuck into the ground. Like golf, the less strokes it takes you to get a ball through an arch, the better your chances to win the game. The first person to pass through all the arches and successfully tap the end post wins. This game takes concentration, patience, and an ability to be able to calmly plan your next move. Children often don't realize that while they are playing they are simultaneously practicing how to persevere every time their ball doesn't go where they intended it to. 🌀

Read more: Perseverance Activities for Kids | eHow.com

PERSEVERANCE

NOTABLE
QUOTES



The difference between perseverance and obstinacy is that one comes from a strong will, and the other from a strong won't. —Henry Ward Beecher

Consider the postage stamp: its usefulness consists in the ability to stick to one thing until it gets there. —Josh Billings

Perseverance is the hard work you do after you get tired of doing the hard work you already did. —Newt Gingrich

If one dream should fall and break into a thousand pieces, never be afraid to pick one of those pieces up and begin again. —Flavia Weedn

It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer. —Albert Einstein

People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them. —George Bernard Shaw

The drops of rain make a hole in the stone not by violence but by oft falling. —Lucretius

Don't be discouraged. It's often the last key in the bunch that opens the lock. —Author Unknown

You learn you can do your best even when it's hard, even when you're tired and maybe hurting a little bit. It feels good to show some courage. —Joe Namath

With ordinary talent and extraordinary perseverance, all things are attainable. —Thomas Foxwell Buxton

Difficult things take a long time, impossible things a little longer. —André A. Jackson

Let perseverance be your engine, and hope your fuel.—H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

