

Today's Challenges, Tomorrow's Rewards

by Diane Pein

Be stronger tomorrow because of today. In our fitness goals we train today to be stronger tomorrow, to prepare for the "big race." Why not live our lives with the same philosophy? How do you strengthen your resolve, how do you strengthen your thoughts and actions, how do you become more confident and determined to succeed? All good questions. Let us take the dive here, and I promise to not be too philosophical.

How do you use the experiences in your life to become more confident and determined? We all encounter difficult situations where we need to pull from our psyche to find the tenacity to fare through the chaos. Subconsciously, we go to fight or flight in moments of trouble. How do you find the strength to not run from a difficult situation but stay and fight? How do you challenge yourself to be better, stronger, more capable?

Our past experiences help prepare us for future battles. We learn from our past and, as I like to say, fill our (personal) inventory room with tools. Evaluate the occasions where you won a battle; assess the emotions and actions which empowered you to cross the finish line like a champion. Reflect on the challenges you have faced and how you managed through those challenges. Try to figure out the qualities that you lacked. When you can do that, you get closer to success. In those moments, what mental skills did you acquire which will serve you in the future to become a stronger warrior? Store those tools in your inventory for future battles. Spend time reassessing and reaffirming; allow yourself to prepare for the next steps, the next hardship, the next struggle. Learning from the past prepares you to navigate the next difficult encounter and gives you better tools tomorrow because of today.



What you choose to do today defines how strong you will be tomorrow.

You do not know what you cannot do until you have tried. You cannot stop growing for fear of failing. The first run you took, the day you decided to stop smoking, the day you decided to start eating clean, the day you started a new business venture: you have all had those moments of reckoning where you are not sure where that decision was going to take you, yet you took the journey anyway. You are always making choices that set you in

new directions. You do not grow by staying in the same place, rather by getting out of your comfort zone. Stretch deeper, climb higher, run farther, stock up your inventory today for tomorrow's challenges. You develop your capabilities when you train in the areas you are least comfortable. Attempt what you believe you cannot do; get uncomfortable. Face the difficult situations with a new perspective; put your new tools to the test and win the

confidence to keep growing. If not now, then when? Do not fear putting in the effort today for tomorrow's rewards.

What are the consequences of not taking that run, not quitting smoking, not eating clean, not challenging yourself, not starting that new business? Ask yourself what it will look like to not put in the work: Is that choice going to reap the greater reward? What does failure mean to you? What does success look like? You must decide if the rewards are worth the risks and if so then you need to be prepared to put in the work. Growth stops when you choose the path of least resistance—the rewards are lesser, and the potential for future progress disappears. Attempting the unattainable may be the most courageous way you strengthen your mind and body. Don't be afraid to fall off the horse.

A lot of rhetoric here. What I am trying to impress upon you is just how important it is to be introspective when you are making choices which affect your tomorrows. What you choose to do today defines how strong you will be tomorrow.

Undeniably, you need to know what your finish line looks like, but just as important you need to focus on why this is the goal worth pursuing. I talked a lot about the "whats" and the "hows" so let us focus now on the "whys." Why are you working towards being stronger, why are you pushing to do better, be smarter, more resilient? By knowing what your failure might look like and what your success should look like, you now have a better perspective on your objective. You want to be sure the rewards are greater than the risks or at least worth the risks. "Why?" is the most important question in the universe; its potential is immense. The answers can empower you with the knowledge to unlock forces unmatched by any other. It is so easy to pass over this question and move forward without perspective. With great emphasis, I suggest you take this most important step in your growth; know what drives you, how it drives you, and more importantly why it drives you, to get stronger today for tomorrow.

Strength comes from overcoming obstacles and challenges, preparing for future hurdles. Know why you push yourself to the finish line of your goals. Utilize past experience to help jump the hurdles in your path.



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Remember what you are looking to achieve on this journey. Do not forget to reward yourself for your wins, but more importantly allow yourself some latitude especially when you fail. Pick yourself up, brush yourself off, and get back on that pathway to success. No one ever wins all the time, and no one ever learns how to succeed without failing. Again, do not fear failing so much that you never step out of your comfort zone to succeed, to grow, to

get stronger and better every today for every tomorrow. Our wounds from today make us rise stronger tomorrow. ■

Diane Pein is NAFED's board chair and president of Approved Fire Protection Co., Inc., in South Plainfield, New Jersey.

