

“Shooting Hoops to Superhuman Strength”

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What would you do if you knew you could not fail? What dreams do you hold that you would turn into an instant and exciting reality?

Would you begin a business? Learn a language? Write a Hollywood blockbuster and jet about the world living the rock star lifestyle?

Or perhaps your goals are more modest. Maybe you want to find happiness with your partner, or - if you are a regular visitor to my site - you want to get in shape and improve your health.

So what's stopping you?

Well, the answer is scary-simple and might just surprise you. The thing is, *fear of failure halts all possibility in a heartbeat and kills your dreams faster than a trigger-happy henchman.*

Yet people DO achieve. People DO create success and "go for it" in life all the time. Why is that? Are they in possession of some superhuman skills and abilities we don't know about?

To unravel the mystery, let's check out some Homer Simpson philosophy.

If at First You Don't Succeed...

Everyone knows the saying, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." But how many people actually practice this? Not many, should you desire the cold and bitter truth. If you decide to follow your dreams and aim for the snow-capped summit of success, you find yourself in a very exclusive group.

Why is that? Well, success isn't easy. Because of this, most people don't bother to put in the required effort. Living in a modern world where instant gratification rules, most folks simply want the lazy route to success.

No finer example of this is Homer Simpson. When confronted by the lonely path less travelled where there are no guarantees, our

hapless hero has this to say: "If you tried and didn't succeed, you know the lesson you can learn in that? Don't try."

And as funny as that might sound, Homer's words convey a sad and profound truth. Most people DO try... and then they never try again.

Moving Mountains and 4-Minute Miles

Yet it is going for your impossible dream when all around you are playing safe that moves mountains and shatters records. Pushing yourself to your limits, you exceed your own expectations and escalate the development of human potential.

Sounds kinda grand? Maybe. But this peak, positive mindset is your goal. If you are chasing a dream, here is where you burn your boats and put your guts on the line... you blaze a trail so others might follow.

Fear of failure didn't hold back British middle-distance runner Roger Bannister. He held a dream to break the 4-minute mile when others told him it could not be done. What happened? Bannister achieved his goal and took a battering ram to the floodgates...

In two short years, 37 athletes broke the 4-minute barrier. How? The Brit *believed* and backed up his faith by taking action.

Shooting Hoops to Success

Part of this action involved using visualization or mental rehearsal. This powerful training technique is routinely used in sports often delivering almost "magical" results.

A study conducted by Dr. Blaslotto at the *University of Chicago* showed this magic at work and how much the mind affects performance.

Here is what happened:

A team of basketball players were split into three groups and tested on how many free throws they could make.

- Group one practiced free throws every day for an hour,
- Group two did nothing,

- Group three just visualized themselves making free throws.

After 30 days the players were tested again.

Can you guess who scored the best results?

Yes. That's right. Group three - *the players who visualized themselves making free throws and who never touched a basketball!*

What can we learn from this? Simply that, practice alone doesn't make perfect. Why? Physical screw-ups often get in the way.

The secret to success is therefore this:

Perfect practice makes perfect.

See the result in advance. Envisage the goal. Visualize success.
Feel it and live it.

"The Golden Bear" Jack Nicklaus ruled the golf world using mental rehearsal. It was often said he never played a golf ball without visualizing his shot first, imagining exactly where he wanted it to go before he took a swing.

Like the basketball players in the Chicago study, *perfect* practice makes perfect.

So, how can you acquire this "superhuman power" in your quest to build stronger muscles?

Here are 3 easy steps to help you.

Your 3 Steps to Visualization Success

In simple terms, creative visualization works by engaging with the imagination while in a deeply relaxed state. There are many ways to achieve this state of deep relaxation, but for our purposes we will be using a proven combination of...

- **deep breathing,**
- **progressive relaxation, and**
- **mental rehearsal.**

1. DEEP BREATHING.

Pick a quiet spot where you can lie down. With your legs uncrossed and arms by your side, close your eyes.

Now take a few slow, deep breaths, ensuring they make your stomach rise then fall. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. As you inhale, picture a soothing but strong wave covering your body like a blanket; and as you exhale, picture the stress and tension drifting off into space.

2. PROGRESSIVE RELAXATION.

Take three more breaths like this, then roll your head slowly around; shrug your shoulders gently; and make a couple of faces, crunching up your facial muscles and then relaxing them.

Next, move to your toes and feet - tense the muscles, holding for a second, then let it go. Pause for a moment, then repeat with your calves, now move to your thighs, repeating the same process; and now your hips, stomach, chest, shoulders and back - slowly working up your body to your neck and finally your face.

Now take three deep breaths, just as you did at the start of the exercise.

You should now feel more relaxed. Beginning with your right leg, say to yourself: "My right leg is warm and heavy. I am relaxed." Repeat this message five times, then do the same with your left leg. Now do the same with your right arm, and left arm. Finally repeat the message: "My whole body is warm and heavy. I am relaxed." You are now ready for your mental rehearsal, and the final step to exercise visualization.

3. MENTAL REHEARSAL.

To really gain and benefit from the power of mental rehearsal, you must engage all the senses. This means, you must involve sight, sound, smell and sensation.

Picture yourself achieving your goal as if you are watching yourself in a movie. Make the image you see big, bright and bold. Hear the noise around you. Pay attention to how you feel. Finally, put these

sensations together.

For example, if you were one of the basketball player's from our study, you would SEE the hoop in vivid and crisp detail. As you shoot, you FEEL the ball roll off your fingers. Then you would SEE the ball float through the air and HEAR it land squarely in the net.

Now let's walk through a positive mental rehearsal of successful squatting.

First imagine your gym: what do you see, hear, feel - try to make the image as vivid you can. Now imagine your bar loaded to the exact weight you want to squat. Getting into position, don't be afraid to admit to yourself that the bar is heavy - it is - but you are lifting it, and aim to master it.

Now, one by one, begin your repetitions. As you make each lift, feel the growing confidence and power. You are DOING this!

When you've finished your set, return the bar and take a moment to congratulate yourself: *Success!*

Dare to Dream

Many worry about the social stigma of failure. Concerned what other people will think, they live a stunted half-life settling for less than their true worth. Playing small out of fear, their world is the dreary, grey prison of conformity.

But what happens when you dare to dream? What happens when you know you cannot fail? Suddenly you join the heroes whose motto is: fortune favors the brave. You test yourself. You blaze a trail.

No-one wants to live like Homer Simpson. Instead, dream big and remember: perfect practice makes perfect.

To Your Success,

Lee