



Succeeding When You're Supposed to Fail: The 6 Enduring Principles of High Achievement

Rom Brafman

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IN COUNTLESS STUDIES, PSYCHOLOGISTS HAVE DISCOVERED A SURPRISING FACT:

For decades they assumed that people who face adversity—a difficult childhood, career turbulence, sudden bouts of bad luck—will succumb to their circumstances. Yet over and over again they found a significant percentage are able to overcome their life circumstances and achieve spectacular success.

How is it that individuals who are not “supposed” to succeed manage to overcome the odds? Are there certain traits that such people have in common? Can the rest of us learn from their success and apply it to our own lives?

In *Succeeding When You're Supposed to Fail*, Rom Brafman, psychologist and coauthor of the bestselling book *Sway*, set out to answer these questions. In a riveting narrative that interweaves compelling stories from education, the military, and business and a wide range of groundbreaking new research, Brafman identifies the six hidden drivers behind unlikely success. Among them:

- The critical importance of the Limelight Effect—our ability to redirect the focus of our lives to the result of our own efforts, as opposed to external forces
- The value of a satellite in our lives—the remarkable way in which a consistent ally who accepts us unconditionally while still challenging us to be our best can make a huge difference
- The power of temperament—people who are able to tunnel through life's obstacles have a surprisingly mild disposition; they don't allow the bumps in the road to unsettle them

By understanding and incorporating these strategies in our own lives, Brafman argues, we can all be better prepared to overcome the inevitable obstacles we face, from setbacks at work to challenges in our personal lives.

Succeeding When You're Supposed to Fail: The 6 Enduring Principles of High Achievement Details

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Ron says

This was an insightful and blunt analysis of the qualities and factors which make individuals successful. It seems a bit passive as it focuses mostly on environmental factors and individuals' responses to them.

Nikki says

Psychological orthodoxy dictates that if you experience some sort of trauma, you are more than likely to shut down and be affected by it for the remainder of your life. You connect the dots to that single moment, and blame it for the reasons you failed at or cannot achieve A, B, and C.

But none of this is actually true. Research being conducted on tunneling and positive thinking counters this argument. When you fail, do you attribute that failure to external forces or do you reflect on what YOU could have done better? When you face an obstacle, do you try to find meaning in it, or do you allow it to conquer you? Do you believe you're the captain of your own fate, or do you think fate leads you? What are you passionate about, and can you extract meaning from it? Do you view negative events in your life as challenges you want to surmount or challenges that can - and will - defeat you? Consider your answers: are you a nontunneler, or a tunneler? Brafman's book effectively provides substantial evidence - using statistics, past experiments, and firsthand accounts - to help you determine just who you are.

Mohammed alkindy says

a small dosage of self development. Tunnelers were introduced, those who manage to make it despite all the odds. locus control is being considered as one way classifying individuals, internals are those who think all what is happening to them have much to do with them selves while externals are those who always find a way to blame others and come up with excuses. over all, the book was a light short read and reasonably insightful

Martin Goldberg says

I really liked this. I thought it was "Malcolm Gladwell"-like, and very interesting and compelling. Good writer. Also reminded me of the Power of Habit. Surprised more people didn't rate it higher. It's a winner.

Eleftheria says

να ακ?μη εξαιρετικ? βιβλ?ο που αδικε?ται απ? την ελληνικ? του ?κδοση!

Σε κ?θε περ?πτωση το περιεχ?μενο παραμ?νει ιδια?τερα χρ?σιμο και ε?χρηστο. Ιδανικ? ?λους

ήσους θήλουν να μήθουν να τα "βγήζουν πήρα" σ' αυτή τη ζωή και "να φτήνουν στο φως ήξω απ' το τοήνελ".

Βασισμήνο σε επιστημονικής ήρευνες κι ήχι απλή σε θεωρήες, αλλή σε απήλυτα κατανοητή γλήσσα, το θεωρή σημείο αναφορής. Το συνιστή ανεπιφήλακτα σε ήλους και ειδική σε (υποψήφιους ή ήμπειρους) μήντορες.

Dave B. says

The book "Succeeding when you are supposed to fail" follows the same format found in most self-help books. A thesis is presented to the reader. Each point of evidence for the argument is supported by either a clinical or experiential case studies. The book is concluded with a summary of key points with direct application to the reader's life. In this case the title is essentially the argument. Premise: When faced with adversity what personality traits turn this obstacle into an opportunity for success? Mr. Brafman claims there are 6-8 traits that overcome adversity. These are central to one characteristic; the ability a person has to tunnel through the problem. These traits are the ability to: take responsibility, laugh during trials (think 'don't sweat the small stuff') and connect with others (in a group and individually). These aspects were further subdivided into six factors.

I believe the book provides an easy flow of ideas and examples. It doesn't provide new insight for a person familiar to "The Six Habits of Highly Effective People" and other self help books of this era but, it does have some interesting clinical examples. Read this book if you want a quick reminder of self determination, a balanced attitude and need for community support.

The value of a good self help book is its ability to provide a link between theory and application.

Unfortunately, this book is not very strong in this regard. My rating doesn't reflect the argument as much as it reflects the lack of tools needed to apply what we already implicitly know.

Daniel P. says

This was a quick read for me and I loved the concept of tunneling. A great read for what keeps some people going while others stop.

Chris says

This book covers the basic concept of locus of control; internal vs external, in a fresh and compelling way.

BLACK CAT says

SUCCEEDING WHEN YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO FAIL

Main skills to cultivate:

Internal locus of control: you can create your destiny, you have the power to change yourself and your circumstances. Learn from your mistakes and be accountable.

Humor: always laugh is good for physical and mental health.

Meaning and goals: create small challenges and goals. always have a goal even a small one.

Stay calmed - Relaxed and good mood - stable in the face of tough circumstances.

Be persistent and tackle of find a way around obstacles.

Treat yourself with encouragement and positive talk.

Have a satellite: someone who cares about you unconditionally - good, upbeat, optimistic, rational coach or friend.

Be inspired and have a role model. Take into account your successes: celebrate them and remember them.

Savor life from the smallest thing to the biggest thing.

Jack Cheng says

This is a short, informative book that I thought was very useful, particularly in my work teaching the Clemente Course in Boston. I took notes and made some reflections in a blog post:
<http://jackchengphd.blogspot.com/2013...>

Yuna Lee says

Rom Brafman explains the keys to "tunneling" through adversity by breaking it down into three primary components--drive, orientation, and contact. He tells us to do what most of us already know we're supposed to be doing: hold yourself accountable, find your own solutions, seek meaning, be relentless, etc. But the way he ties it all together with his inspiring anecdotes and catchy terminology is what makes "Succeeding When You're Supposed to Fail" a perfect read for when life gets messy and you're looking for some perspective.

Mitch says

This was a good book full of information about achieving anything you want. The author does a great job relaying information and giving scenarios to make everything more understandable. I will more than likely be reading this book again!

Jennifer says

A typical self-help book, nothing too new. Worth a quick read if you like that kind of thing. Helpful for sure.

Wellington says

In the epilogue Rom Brafman talks about hating textbooks, and this book is not a textbook. In a casual breezy narration, Rom Brafman shares inspiring stories and ideas, and I finished in less than a day.

I liked hearing more about the man who discovered (really just found a useful application) to the microwave and the POW stories of just trying to maintain sanity. And hey, I'm not a POW but my life now is about keeping my sanity motivated and engaged.

And I'd like very much to not fail.

Greg says

A quick easy conversational approach to building resilience by psychologist Rom Brafman. He describes people who rebound as tunnelers and describes the tools they use to rebound when they face setbacks and challenges.

1. Focus internally; hold yourself accountable for your actions and reaction to challenges.
2. Squeeze meaning out of life.
3. Perseverance. Use the above two principles to maintain inner drive.
4. Under react. Model an easy going temperament...avoid perfectionist attitude
5. Use humor to release tension and strengthen connections.
6. Communicate empathy and respect.
7. Find a mentor, he calls it a satellite to help provide a sounding board and support.

I liked how he rolled his story into practical ways to implement in your own life and as a parent for your kids.
