



HOW TO SURVIVE AND THRIVE AFTER A SETBACK

It's said the difference between people who succeed and people who fail is how they handle setbacks. We will all suffer setbacks, but whilst one person learns from the experience, the other can be crushed by it. Where one treats a setback as something that comes with the territory, others see it as a reason for quitting. Yet rejection, disappointment, failed relationships or a lost sale are all part of the human experience. My first book which has gone on to sell in excess of 25,000 copies was initially rejected by eleven publishers. Even J.K. Rowling suffered the pain of rejection from no fewer than nine publishers before Bloomsbury decided to take a risk by publishing the first Harry Potter Book.

So what can we do and who should we turn to when we suffer a setback? I'm known as 'The S.U.M.O. Guy' because I teach people to Shut Up, Move On! I show people how to Shut up and stop thinking and behaving in a way that hinders their success and to move forward with their lives. Some people believe that is all we need to do after a setback, Shut Up, Move On. However, for many of us, part of the process of moving involves us first having what I term 'Hippo Time'. Hippo Time is when we allow ourselves some time out to wallow (as hippos do in mud) and to acknowledge our frustration and disappointment and perhaps even anger. We're not robots. We cannot simply turn our emotions on and off at the flick of a switch. What Hippo Time does, is give you the opportunity to experience your emotional lows and to be honest about those feelings.

However, in order to make Hippo Time a helpful rather than a harmful experience, make sure you avoid three kinds of people:

- 1. 'The Hijackers'**. These are the people who take over your Hippo Time with comments such as "I know how you feel, the same thing happened to me"
- 2. 'The Awfulisers'**. These people give too much sympathy and can make you feel even worse about your situation. They say things such as "That's terrible, you must feel awful I had a friend with an in-growing toe nail and he had to have his toe removed!"
- 3. 'The Happies'**. These are the 'I'm really positive but I have no grasp of reality' people. You lose your legs in an accident and they smile sincerely and say "At least you've still got your arms". Or your partner finishes your relationship and they reply "Well there are plenty more fish in the sea!"



How To Make Hippo Time A Helpful Experience?

- 1. Allow yourself to 'feel bad'.** It's actually OK to feel down. Give yourself permission to do so.
- 2. Be careful who you speak to.** Find someone who will listen without feeling obliged to offer advice.
- 3. Avoid hasty decisions.** Allow yourself time to work through your feelings before taking action.
- 4. Learn from it.** Whatever you've experienced, from a missed sale to a failed relationship, there is always something to learn. Ask yourself, "What can I learn from this experience?"
- 5. Treat yourself.** This does not equate to binge shopping, but a small treat can be the ideal 'pick me up'. You're then in a better frame of mind to move forward.
- 6. Treat others.** Do something positive for someone else for no particular reason. You'll feel an 'inner satisfaction' for having done so. Feeling good about yourself prevents you slipping into pity party mode.
- 7. Change the record.** It's not helpful to tell too many people about your issue. You can end up sounding like a broken record. Remember to re-tell is to re-live and that is not always helpful.
- 8. Make space.** You may need time simply to be alone with your thoughts, as opposed to talking through your issue with others. Personal 'alone time' may well be the order of the day.
- 9. Decide on desirable distractions.** Perhaps what you need is to stop thinking about your issue altogether. Watch a movie, take some exercise or surf the net. When you do decide to re-focus, you often have a fresh perspective on your situation.
- 10. Write down your 'downs'.** Putting your thoughts and feelings down on paper can be a helpful way of off loading and working through your issue. Seeing things on paper can create a sense of clarity as well as being an honest account of how you're feeling at the time. You're then in a position to decide how best to move on.

Whichever of the above helps, remember this - Hippo Time is temporary. Successful people make sure they don't spend too long wallowing and realise that setbacks are temporary, but quitting lasts a life time.