

BASED ON CONTENT BY JOHN C. MAXWELL

MAXIMIZE **YOUR SUCCESS!**

A 12-WEEK PROGRAM
TO DEVELOP YOUR LEADERSHIP SKILLS

PRESENTED BY THE JOHN MAXWELL COMPANY & WORLD FINANCIAL GROUP

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DEALING WITH DISCOURAGEMENT

By Dr. John C. Maxwell

WEEK FIVE | LESSON NOTES

1. *Everyone* gets discouraged.

2. Discouragement is _____.

“Working with people is double-edged sword: One side, encouragement and the other side, discouragement.”

3. There are *successful* ways to deal with discouragement.

When people get discouraged, they often succumb to:

1. Exhaustion

2. Shrinking vision or _____.

3. _____ avoidance.
4. _____ from others.
5. _____ thinking.
6. _____.
7. Loss of Creativity.
8. _____ Other People.
9. _____.
10. _____ - _____.

We cannot consistently live in a manner that is inconsistent with the way we see ourselves.

The Wrong Kind of Pity

“Pity is one of the noblest emotions available to human beings; self-pity is possibly the most ignoble. Pity is the capacity to enter into the pain of another in order to do something about it; self-pity is an incapacity, a crippling emotional disease that severely distorts our perception of reality. Pity discovers the need in others for love and healing and then fashions speech and action that bring strength; self-pity reduces the universe to a personal wound that is displayed as proof of significance. Pity is adrenalin for acts of mercy; self-pity is a narcotic that leaves its addicts wasted and derelict”.

- Eugene H. Peterson in *Earth and Altar*

How to Deal Effectively with Discouragement

1. Get the Right _____.

A. See the whole _____.

One discouraged person to another, “What I need is a blessing that is not in disguise.”

B. Take a short look at the _____.

“The main trouble with despair is that it is self-fulfilling. People who fear the worst tend to invite it. Heads that are down can’t scan the horizon for new openings. Bursts of energy do not spring from a spirit of defeat. Ultimately, helplessness leads to hopelessness.”

-Norman Cousins

Many people when suffering setbacks ask the question, why? They never make real progress in their life until they move beyond that question.

C. Take an inward look at _____.

Sportscaster Harry Kalas once introduced Philadelphia Phillies outfielder, Garry Maddox, with the following words: “Garry has turned his life around. He used to be depressed and miserable. Now he’s miserable and depressed.”

D. Take a long look at _____.

Persistent effort seems to be one of the most important ingredients for personal success. Napoleon Hill, author of *Think and Grow Rich*, studied the lives of more than 500 of the most successful men in America and got to know many of them personally. He found that the one indispensable ingredient, the common element in the success stories of all of them, was persistence. These individuals kept trying even after repeated failures. It almost seemed that great success was only won by people who overcame incredible obstacles and great discouragement.

Perseverance

Two frogs fell into a can of cream
or so I've heard it told.
The sides of the can were shiny and steep,
the cream was deep and cold.
"Oh, what's the use?" said No. 1,
'tis fate no help's around
Good-bye, my friend! Good-bye, sad world!"
And weeping still, he drowned.
But No. 2 of sterner stuff,
dog paddled in surprise.
The while he wiped his creamy face,
and dried his creamy eyes.
"I'll swim awhile, at least," he said,
Or so it has been said
"It really wouldn't help the world if one more frog was dead."
An hour or two he kicked and swam
not once he stopped to mutter,
But kicked and swam, and swam and kicked,
then hopped out, via butter.

E. Take a wide look at the _____.

Fifty-two percent of the CEO's of the Fortune 500 companies are from lower middle-class or poor families, and 80% of the millionaires in America are first-generation millionaires.

2. See the Right _____.

Mark Twain remarked that he could live for two months on one good compliment.

John Maxwell's Desire: "I want not only to see the right person when I'm discouraged, but I want to be the right person when someone else is discouraged."

3. Say the Right _____.

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, who was at one time the greatest heart surgeon in England, says this in his excellent work, *Spiritual Depression, Its Cause and Cure*: "Most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself rather than talking to yourself."

4. Make the Right _____.

Courage - The willingness to look at _____ as it is, and to look at _____ as you are, and to come to _____.

The Peak to Peak Principle

Making Major Decisions on the Mountain Top

- Why? A. _____.
- B. _____.
- C. _____.
- D. _____.

5. Do the Right _____.

“Despair is a part of our living. We despair when our hopes are dashed; we despair where war persists; we despair when illness lingers. Despair seems like a dead-end street where everything ends. But not a few times, answers have been found in moments of despair; ideas have sparked; hope has been etched anew. Maybe such occasions are telling us that we can use our despair creatively.

The despair that besets us when frustrations come can be of two kinds: a despair that causes us to give up; or a despair that makes us go to the depths and draw from our best resources. One kind is futile; the other is fruitful.

Despair comes uninvited, but only remains where it is entertained. If it is nurtured through depressive thoughts and fed with pessimistic attitudes, it remains. But when the soul takes flight to greater thoughts, despair flees. Hope, faith, and a positive will starve despair.

Despair is not handled by giving in. It is handled best by giving out, giving out something of ourselves to others. By giving out, a person has no time for despair, so it departs”.

-C. Neil Straight

WEEK FIVE | REFLECTION

1. What words do you say to overcome discouragement? If you don't have any phrases or words that you currently use, write the self-talk now that would be helpful to you in the future.

For example: "This too shall pass" or "Do it anyway" or "It's not what happens to me, it is what happens in me"

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

2. Take a few moments and reflect on this quote by Tryon Edwards:

Words are both better and worse than thoughts; they express them, and add to them; they give them power for good or evil; they start them on an endless flight, for instruction, and comfort and blessing, or for injury, sorrow, and ruin.

- Tryon Edwards

How can you add words to your good thoughts to make them better and what words can you use to confront or diminish your negative ones?

3. How would you rate your personal thought life with 1 being extremely negative and 10 being extremely positive? How might you create a positive thought and speaking environment among your team members? Think about practical things you can do with your team to create opportunities for group encouragement.

negative > 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 > positive

4. Review the ten things that happen when people get discouraged. How many from the list describe you? How many describe your team? How can you begin to address those issues in your own life and within your team?

5. How do you see yourself? Compare that with how you want to see yourself. Your view of yourself will eventually make its way into your workflow and into your work relationships. What can you do daily to change what might be a false self-perception?

6. Read through the C. Neil Straight quote with a good friend. Discuss the reality of despair in your lives. Does despair bring out the best in you or does it pin you to the wall, keeping you from your true self? Do you fight despair with high thoughts or do you give in with depressed thoughts?

WEEK FIVE | TAKE ACTION

1

This week, taking action means taking a look within yourself. For many of us, this is hard. We're not used to analyzing our feelings or intentions. But it's important. Review this list that John mentioned in his talk. It takes courage to *do* or *be* these things.

It is not easy:

to apologize,	to avoid mistakes,	to keep out of the rut,
to begin over,	to keep on trying,	to make the best of little,
to be unselfish,	to be considerate,	to subdue an unruly temper,
to take advice,	to endure success,	to maintain a high standard,
to admit error,	to profit by mistakes,	to shoulder a deserved blame,
to face sneers,	to forgive and forget,	to recognize a silver lining.
to be charitable,	to think and then act,	

To deal with discouragement, pick three of these for the week and put them into practice in your everyday routine and in your interactions with your team. As their leader, for example, it may be difficult to know how to take advice from them. Try it. See what listening and heeding the wisdom of others is like. Or apologize if that needs to happen. One of the worst things that can hinder workflow on a team is bad blood. Deal with it and get it out of the way. Don't wait for the other person—as their leader, take the first step towards reconciliation. See what that does to the ethos of your team.

2

Discouragement in our work can come in many different forms. It acts as a block to progressing on projects and connecting with team members. What have you been discouraged about recently with regards to your goals, your team or your business? What actions can you take today to begin churning cream in butter? After you pinpoint your discouragement, make a plan to work through and past it. Remember that persistence is key to overcoming discouragement. Use the table below to sketch out your plan. Then use it as an encouragement to continue to work through the problem.

DISCOURAGEMENT	ACTION	VICTORY
1.		
2.		
3.		

3

Now that you've pinpointed some discouragements, begin to counter them with positive thinking and regular times for renewal. During that time you might consider the following ideas you can do to refuel your life with positivity and disconnect from the negative in your life.

- Start a new project at home in the yard.
- Take your significant other to a movie.
- If you are a person of faith, dig through the book of Psalms for positive verses that focus on hope.
- Encourage yourself by pouring into other people: help your neighbor on a project, invite friends over for a dinner that you cook for them or give of your time at the local YMCA/YWCA.
- Finish something. Start small: a puzzle, a yard or home project. Then go big: run a 5K, hike a local trail or bike a century ride.

4

Who are the "right" people in your life to buoy you up? Make a point to spend some time with them.

5

Who is discouraged on your team? What can you do right now to be that "right" person for them? List three things for each person you identified that you can do right now to help them through this challenging time.

Person 1: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Person 2: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Person 3: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

6

What can you do or what processes can you put in place to inoculate yourself and your team against discouragement so that it doesn't overwhelm? Begin to implement those actions.

Answers: Contagious; Naiveness; Responsibility; Withdrawal; Faulty; Faulty Comparisons; Blaming; Negative Exaggeration; Self-Pity; Perspective; Picture; Problem; Yourself; Leaders Who Have Lasted; Possibilities Before You; People; Words; Decisions; Life; Yourself; See More Clearly; You Are Running To Something; You Leave Others In A Better Position; You Decide On Positive Data; You Get To Stay On Top; Things.