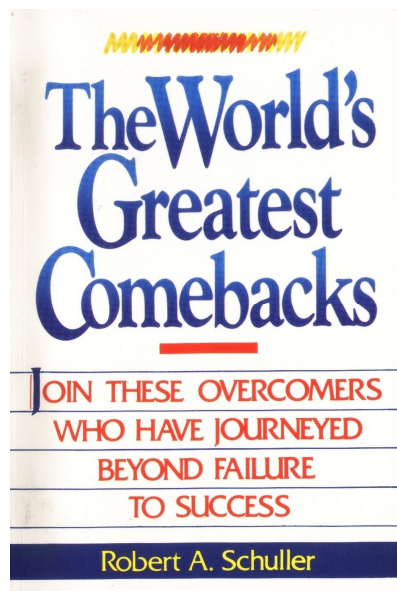


The World's Greatest Comebacks



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■ The Big Idea

If you're struggling because you've been finding it impossible to claw your way back to past success, "The World's Greatest Comebacks" will give you the right steps to begin – and achieve – your comeback.

First, you'll prepare by focusing on your individual situation and mapping out a strategy for success. Next, you'll repair your attitude by learning to eliminate fear, guilt, and the negative feelings that may stand in your way. And lastly, you'll set a course to care by acquiring the attributes necessary for a successful comeback.

■ Why You Need This Book

Down in the dumps? Biting the dust? Struggling to return to a successful position you attained in the past? This book was written to help you come back from whatever setbacks are holding you down in your life – back to life, love, health, happiness, and success.

Choose to recognize your setback as a springboard to your comeback by applying this timeless formula for a positive beginning!

■ If You Can Dream It, You Can Do It!

No matter where you are in life, no matter who you are, no matter what you have accomplished, no matter when or where or why you may have failed, remember: *Anybody can dream! Anybody can plan!*

YOU CAN DREAM – IF YOU HAVE CURIOSITY!

Curiosity is the dynamic portion of the mind that provokes the questions that release creativity. Curiosity is a necessity for every dreamer and every doer!

YOU CAN DREAM – IF YOU HAVE CONFIDENCE!

Have confidence in yourself as well as in your dream. Dreamers who become doers operate emotionally and rationally with:

- (a) confidence in their intelligence
- (b) confidence in their hidden instincts, and
- (c) confidence in their silent and secret intuition

■ The Powerful Steps towards Achieving Your Dream

Dreams become reality through a definite process:

THE DREAM TAKES ON A LIFE OF ITS OWN. When the dream enters its gestation period, success begins. It is a beautiful beginning when the dreamer accepts the dream, when a human being welcomes the uninvited inspiring idea and embraces it as his own private possession. Once success starts, it can never stop. Once a dream has been embraced by the fertile, imaginative, dynamic mind of a Possibility Thinker, in that very moment something new has come into existence.

GOD TIMES THE EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS. Part of the dream-in-process is timing. Sometimes the gestation period is incredibly swift. More often it is geared to a schedule designed to teach the dreamer patience. Impatient dreamers will look for painless

shortcuts and cheap discounts on the price of success! Later, when it's too late, they will discover that in choosing the painless, easy road, they will discover that in choosing that road, they were in fact going down a primrose path to boredom, shame, emptiness, failure, poverty.

SURPRISING SUPPORT COMES FROM UNEXPECTED SOURCES. The dream, like a mighty majestic magnet, begins to attract help from persons who possess the right strengths, skills, and spheres of influence to move the dream forward, onward, and upward! People, power, and positive pressures begin to make the idea possible. You start to witness the enormous mountain-moving energy that is generated when believing minds join to make a miracle happen.

TEMPORARY SETBACKS AND DIFFICULTIES CREATE FRUSTRATION. The dream and the dreamer experience setbacks, delays and frustrations. But the dreamer can always try again tomorrow – failure is never final. Success does not need to end at this dismal moment of discouragement. People and pressures shift. Obstacles will not be the same size tomorrow that they are today. A new day will bring breakthroughs.

THE DREAM COMES TRUE! You have arrived. The business is established. The career is firmly grounded. Now be prepared for surprises – and disappointments! Honor as well as hurt will come unsought and uninvited. Your problem will not be arrogance or destructive pride, but maintaining the self-confidence that what you've done has been right, honorable, noble and good!

THE DREAMER HAS BEEN SHAPED BY THE DREAM. The dreamer has arrived now at the upper stratum. He discovers that he has been changed, shaped, carved, and molded by the dream! He has become as great as – and no greater than – the dream that has driven him, consumed him, and become incarnate in his very personality. So when you choose the dream, the dream will decide your destiny. The size of the dream will determine how big a person you will become.

THE DREAM KEEPS GROWING! Having made the dream come true, you discover that success is not an end in itself, but a positioning in power for greater accomplishments and loftier achievements.

THE DREAMER ENTERS THE DANGER ZONE. The dream now is taking command. And meanwhile the dreamer wants to rest, retire – at least take a sabbatical. When you reach this level – BEWARE! TAKE CARE! And accept a new DARE! Start dreaming again. So where do you get a new dream? Go back to the first step. Success will never stop. It continues to produce new possibilities – sometimes in the form of new problems. Failure must never be final! Try again!

■ Be Sure to Come Back the Right Way

There was once a king who owned a large, perfectly cut diamond. He was very proud of it and made it the national symbol of his country. You can imagine how upset he was when somehow the stone was damaged and its beauty was marred by a long, hairlike scratch. Its splendor was gone and its sparkle dimmed.

The king consulted all his jewellers. "It's ruined," they said. "It's lost most of its value."

In desperation, the king sent word throughout the kingdom, proclaiming, "Anyone who can repair the diamond to restore some of its value will be rewarded."

Finally, just as the king was about to give up hope of restoring the stone to its former beauty, a poor lapidary called on him.

"Sire, this same scratch that has diminished the diamond's worth will become its most beautiful asset," the jeweller promised.

The king entrusted the man with the stone, and many weeks passed before his return.

When the lapidary opened the velvet box to display his craftsmanship, the king gasped in amazement. There was the stone, all right – more exquisite than ever – with a beautiful rose carved on it. Only the king could detect that the rose's graceful stem was the same scratch that had once so dismayed him.

Like the rose, the scratches in your life can be beautiful opportunities for you to turn a negative into a positive. It comes down to choices. Your choices. Life gives you options, but only can you decide how things progress.

■ Emotions that Hold You Back

YES! YOU CAN OVERCOME FEAR

Every comeback requires two bold steps.

Step one: *Trace your fear.* Why are you afraid of what you are afraid of? What is the source of this fear? It can be too easy to block this fear out, encapsulate it – which prevents it from affecting you, but also prevents you from dealing it altogether and learning from it.

Step two: *Erase your fear.* Don't be satisfied with blocking it off – face it directly and eliminate it altogether by putting a distance between the event and you, and emphasizing what you've learned from it and not getting hung up on what happened to you.

Think about it. What are you most afraid of? What is the toughest enemy you face today? The greatest enemy that people battle today is fear. But you can turn your fear into sheer energy if you first trace your fear back to its source – discover *why* you are afraid – and then deal with it definitively.

YES! YOU CAN OVERCOME GUILT

Maybe your comeback is being hindered by guilt. You have made a mistake, and now you subconsciously think, I'm not worthy of a comeback. Yet a complete comeback is possible. Remember, the difference between winners and losers is the way they respond to guilt and failure. People who have comeback capabilities are the ones who face their failures, accept their reality, and learn from them.

YES! YOU CAN OVERCOME NEGATIVE THINKING

You have to exchange your "if onlys" for "next-time boldlys." The formula for doing this is easy to remember. Think of the word B-O-L-D and the four steps the letters might represent:

- **B**anish negative thinking.
- **O**pen your mind to God's dreams.
- **L**ook for ways to come back.
- **D**aily take steps in that direction.

■ God's Dreams Are Bigger Than Ours

Rich DeVos, one of the cofounders of Amway Corporation and a member of the board of directors of Robert Schuller Ministries, tells this story.

A farmer was working in the fields of his beautiful farm one day when a city slicker drove up and stopped her car to admire the acres of well-manicured crops.

"My, but God has given you a beautiful farm," she said. The old farmer thought of all the stumps he had dug out of the ground, all the rocks he had hauled away and all the years he had fertilized the soil, smoothed the terrain, planted the seed, and rotated the crops to make the land more productive.

"Lady," he replied, "you should have seen this farm when God ran it alone."

Rich's point is that God uses us to make good things happen – things that are bigger and better than we can imagine. Rich has seen this firsthand in his own life. When he and his high-school pal, Jay Van Andel, formed their partnership in 1949, they never dreamed their efforts would result in the seventh largest privately held company in America.

Rich never emphasizes the dollars and cents of his business. What's more important is the platform Amway's success has given him. It's a platform from which he can speak out above his faith in God.

"We're a controversial company because we stand up and speak out on our beliefs," says Rich. "In our meetings I make no apologies for my faith or my politics, even though my audience may disagree with both. If those of us who are believers of the Christian faith are unwilling to stand up for what we believe, we're not worth very much."

"When I was in high school in Grand Rapids, the chaplain of our school signed my yearbook with these words: 'With talents for leadership in God's kingdom,'" recalls Rich. "I never forgot that. He put the thought in my mind that I had such talent."

Possibility thinking? Rich strongly endorses it.

"You have to know that through you God can do fantastic things if you'll just believe," he says.

God's dreams for us, bigger and more wonderful than our dreams for ourselves, sometimes suffer setbacks. We must be so committed to His dreams that we look for ways to come back from the setbacks.

■ Positive Attitudes for a Positive Comeback

WISDOM – ASK FOR IT!

Anything's possible, but some dreams have strings attached. Others have price tags attached to the strings. The only carte blanche, open-ended, you-name-it-you've-got-it wish in history is the one God offered to Solomon. When Solomon filled in the blank, he did it with wisdom. Literally.

Solomon was a dreamer, but he was no sleeper. He knew what he lacked, and he knew money couldn't buy it. Only God could provide it.

No strings. No-catch 22s. No compromises. No trade-offs. No deals. This offer wasn't presented by some vaporized genie oozing from an urn or by a mischievous leprechaun bent on blessing some and bedeviling others. This proposition came directly from God. It was the ultimate opportunity and the supreme challenge.

Put yourself in Solomon's place. How would you respond? Would you ask for money? Power? Or would you need time to sleep on it?

Solomon didn't hesitate. He knew exactly what to request. He had the discernment to ask for the one gift that would enable him to live life to its fullest.

Solomon asked for wisdom.

He was able to make his choice quickly because he had already developed three valuable traits: a humble heart, a humane attitude, and a hunger for goodness. These traits are the forerunners of true wisdom.

LOVE – GO FOR IT!

From her suite of offices just down the street from the famous Indianapolis Speedway, Dr. Cory SerVaas stays in touch with hundreds of AIDS victims across America. Cory is devoted to her expanding nest of grandchildren, is a humanitarian in every sense of the word, and likes to surprise friends with quiet little acts of kindness.

Dr. Cory, as she is called, is truly a woman of the eighties – a medical doctor, one of thirteen persons tapped by the Presidential Commission on the HIV Epidemic, the editor and publisher of *The Saturday Evening Post*, and the wife of Dr. Beurt SerVaas, a busy Christian in his own right.

Cory's approach to AIDS is unique. Somehow, she blends all facets of her background to combat the fatal disease. Her scientific side prods her to devour every new AIDS report that crosses her cluttered desk and causes her to keep in touch with the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta where research is ongoing. She's determined that a cure will be discovered, and she's doing her best to make sure it happens as soon as possible. One of her most recent projects has been to launch the AIDS Mobile – a travelling lab on wheels that offers confidential, free testing for the AIDS virus. The AIDS Mobile has crisscrossed the country and parked in malls, in church lots, and even on Capitol Hill to make its voluntary tests and counselling sessions available.

Her humanitarian side moves her to find warm, loving ways to ease the suffering of AIDS victims and their families. She was instrumental in organizing SOFT AIDS, which stands for Sisters of Forgiveness, Together against AIDS.

"The members of the Sisters of Forgiveness, Together against AIDS are so busy they haven't time for anger, which is a most destructive emotion," says Dr. Cory. She likes to explain the group's willingness to swap anger for love by quoting a favorite bit of advice from Ann Landers: "Hate is like acid. It can damage the vessels in which it is stored as well as destroy the object on which it is poured."

As you prepare to take the final steps toward your comeback, you need to remember the loving philosophy of this support group. So often the temptation is to hold a grudge, blame the person who caused a setback, or get bogged down with feelings of anger. But these are negative emotions, and we need to shake them off and replace them with love.

Rather than concentrate on the setback, you need to celebrate the comeback.

EXEMPLIFY

Nicky Margolin is a career counselor at a small Christian college in the Midwest. Part of her responsibility is to offer tips to seniors on resume writing and job interviewing. In her workshops she often has students answer the questions they most likely will be asked in real interview situations. "What kind of problems do you like to solve?" "What is your definition of success?" "What is your long-term career goal?" are a few predictable questions.

A really tough one to answer is this: "What are your strengths and weaknesses?" Students have no problem with the strengths – they can tick off their grade point average, their summer internships, their hobbies and honors – but what about their weaknesses? They don't want to diminish their chances of being hired by publicly confessing imperfections.

Here's Nicky's advice. She suggests that admitting to being a perfectionist is usually a "safe" weakness to mention. However, the student should explain that while he may

spend too much time on details, the finished product is usually very good. The student might also assure the interviewer that he is trying to become less demanding of himself and less of a perfectionist.

Less of a perfectionist? It seems incredible that we have to make excuses for being as good as we can be. Yet in today's work world, trying too hard is often viewed as a weakness.

BE ALL THAT YOU CAN BE

When the great Italian artist Michelangelo was painting frescoes on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican, a friend asked him why he was taking such pains with an obscure figure in the corner. "Who will ever know whether or not it's perfect?" asked the friend.

"I will," replied Michelangelo.

If Michelangelo had not been a perfectionist, would millions of people stream to Rome every year to marvel at the beauty of his masterpiece? At the time he was lying flat on his back laboring over the tiny details on the ceiling, he probably had no idea of the impact his work eventually would have. He knew only that he had to make it as perfect as he could.

"Good enough" was the regret one elderly man suffered when he sadly observed, "Looking back over the years, only now can I see how often it was that when I said, 'I have done my best,' what I really meant, without realizing it, was 'to do more would be too uncomfortable, too difficult, or too painful, so this will have to be good enough.'"

When you truly do your best, you attract attention. You become an example for others to follow. People look at your work and then they look at you, the creator of the work. They ask questions. They want to know about your motivation for working so hard.

Striving for perfection doesn't mean you'll produce timeless works of art such as Michelangelo did. Your contribution may be a special ministry to families of AIDS victims, or it might be a reorganization plan to save a community clinic. It could merely be a positive attitude that lifts the spirits of other people. Never sell a smile short. A smile has been described as a gently curved line that sets a lot of things straight. What's important is to know what contributions can be uniquely yours and then work to make that contribution as perfect as you can.

You should look for ways to magnify your comeback so that it expands and touches others.

■ Welcome Back Home

Like any victory, a comeback usually is accompanied by a burst of energy. You feel good. A problem has been solved, and a new beginning stretched out in front of you. You're going in the right direction, and you have momentum.

But you have to take care not to procrastinate, to stay on course, and be consistent.

Once you commit yourself to a comeback, there can be no detours, backsliding, or about-faces. You have your directions and momentum, and you must travel full speed ahead. With your eyes fastened on your destination, you must keep on keeping on toward your goal.

Success is never certain because success is not a place that we reach. It is a journey and a progressive realization of worthwhile goals. There will always be other setbacks, challenges, possibilities, and opportunities.

As part of any comeback, slowly scale the peaks of your personal mountains, and when you reach the pinnacles of success – the comebacks – you can then peek at the next great mountain. This is the “peak-to-peek principle”: *One goal down, new visions ahead.*

Exciting? Yes. Frightening? Definitely. However, you should not fear the future but put your hands on the plow and move toward the goal. A comeback will always follow each setback.

You just have to keep on keeping on!

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