

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF FAILURE

Babies have a wonderful gift for success. Before a certain age, we tackle all our goals with utter delight, great energy and unstoppable enthusiasm. Watch a baby learning to feed herself: the baby grabs the utensil wherever it can - middle, end, it doesn't matter, PLOW! into the mashed carrots the spoon goes, splattering carrots all over the walls, the baby, Mom, so what? The baby doesn't care, all the baby knows is WOW! sheer joy - "How about that, I got the spoon in!" Next step: find the mouth, this can take a bunch of tries, but does the baby carefully plot out where the spoon should go, no, the baby pretty much shoves the spoon anywhere in the general vicinity of her face, and somewhere along the line some of the carrots actually come in contact with baby's mouth, and ZOOWIE! the baby shrieks with ecstatic abandon - SUCCESS!!!

Notice that nowhere along this adventuresome path, does the baby stop and say: "Hey, kid, you're not getting this fast enough, it took you 17 tries to find your mouth, little Janie down the street did it in 12," nor does the baby stop at try #14 and say: "I give up, I'll never get this, I'm a loser, it's all downhill from here." No. The baby has no concept of failure, neither in terms of the goal (feeding herself), nor in terms of herself as being able/unable to meet the challenge.

What the baby does have is something tremendously important that we all would do well to remember: a completely positive attitude towards its efforts, and committed focus. Let's take a look at each of these.

1) A completely positive attitude

Babies do not beat on themselves, that's a talent we acquire later. You don't see a baby stop, spoon in mid liftoff, saying "Rats, I should have done that better, I'm just such a stupid slow learner." The baby lifts the spoon, smacks herself a load of carrots on the nose, and simply goes: "Woops! Wrong hole - no sweat, let's do it again!"

Consistently reward yourself for your efforts, evaluate what didn't work purely in terms of how you can get closer to your goal on the next try, and go for it. Soon enough, you'll find

your mouth.

2) Committed focus

Committed focus is when you choose your goal (focus), and then are 100% committed to achieving that goal. When you are 100% committed to achieving your goal, you cannot fail, you can only succeed to varying degrees. The baby may not feed herself brilliantly, but she feeds herself.

For example, if you want to learn computers (focus), commit yourself 100% to that task, and you will learn computers. You may never be particularly fast at it, you may never invent any ground breaking software, but you will know how to operate a computer. Your success is only limited by the limits of your creativity, and if you stop and think about it, that's hardly a limitation at all.

You cannot fail. It is utterly impossible, given committed focus, to fail. You may have a more limited success than you desire, but you cannot fail. So grab your spoon and go for it - success is so much fun!



"What would you attempt to do if you knew you could not fail?"

Dr. Robert Schuller