



PENNY HOLBURN COACHING

It's about You and Results

How do you deal with Obstacles?

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"History has demonstrated that the most notable winners usually encountered heart-breaking obstacles before they triumphed. They won because they refused to become discouraged by their defeats." - B. C. Forbes

So how do you deal with obstacles? There are many ways in which different people deal with them. You could be someone who throws their hands up in despair and gives up. You could be someone who tries a few times to figure a way through but eventually decides that this is too difficult and abandons the task. Maybe you are someone who looks at the obstacle and thinks this must not be my path. After all, if it was my true path it would be easy. You might be someone who goes right on in and plugs away working and working at the same things and making a small dent in removing the obstacle but never quite getting rid of it.



None of these is the best way to deal with an obstacle that is really and truly a big obstacle. When facing an obstacle you can do many things to help you move past it. Below are some suggestions for you to think about and use.

- If you are freaking out and becoming highly emotional and distressed, distance yourself from the drama. Leave it alone for the moment. Take a break. Do something else for a while. Maybe even have a short holiday.

- Ask yourself if you need more skills or knowledge to find your way around this obstacle. If you do then look at how you can find the skills and knowledge needed. What do you need to read? Who do you need to ask? Has someone else faced the same or a similar obstacle before?
- Is there something about this obstacle that is similar to previous challenges you have encountered? Could the way you dealt with those obstacles help you in some way to deal with this one?
- Are you staring at the obstacle, looking with the same eyes over and over again? What about looking at the problem from a different angle? What about getting a fresh perspective on the issue?
- Leave the problem for a while. Even if you are not emotionally worked up, leaving a problem can help.
- If you can, break the obstacle down into little pieces. And deal with each piece. Moving a small piece at a time, can be the way to eventually move a big obstacle.
- Visualise the end. Stephen Covey used to say start with the end in mind. Imagine what it will look like with the obstacle out the way. Then see if this helps you work out how you can get past it.
- Don't give up. Those three words are the story behind all success. You have to persist. You have to keep trying. Life tests you to see if you really want this. Keep at it.
- When it becomes really challenging to get past the obstacle, focus on something bigger than yourself. See the bigger picture as to why you are working away on removing this obstacle.



In ancient times, a King had a boulder placed on a roadway. He hid himself and watched to see if anyone would remove the huge rock. Some of the King's wealthiest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around it. Many blamed the King for not keeping the roads clear, but no one did anything to remove the stone out of the way. Then a peasant came along carrying a load of vegetables. Upon approaching the boulder, he laid down his load and tried to move the rock to the side of the road. After much pushing and straining, he succeeded. After the peasant picked up his load of vegetables, he noticed a reward lying in the road where the boulder had been. It contained many gold coins and a note from the King indicating the gold was for the person who removed the boulder from the roadway. The peasant learned what many of us struggle to grasp: Concealed within every obstacle is an opportunity, yet many are unwilling to explore it.

Beyond the frustration what purpose do obstacles serve? Could there be a greater lesson contained within the experience?