

# My personal experience compared to the readings essay

Psychology, Success



Life is a process that entails continuous learning not only through difficult and horrifying moments but also through continued our past successes. This learning process remains throughout our lifetime and only disappears when we take an eternal slumber never to see the rising sun again. This paper intends to focus the learning moments in life by exploring the lessons learnt from both the worst and darkest moments and also through the different successes achieved in life. From Wegener's explanation to ironic errors which are also referred to as counter intentional errors I am able to relate this with personal experiences. Normally, when I am supposed to do, or say something right and I try to fit in social morals and ethics, sometimes, the ironic error happens and i blurt it out unintentionally. However, I have learnt there is a solution to this according to Wegener by accepting symptoms rather than concealing them and also by sharing problems rather than keeping and trying to hide them. From Jonah's article I have also learnt that girt is also an essential part of success in life rather than hard work and concentration. This is possible if I set long term goals and persevere in achieving them since this will keep me on a continuous course with focus on the prize. The following is a personal experience which relates to these two ideas proposed by these authors.

Focusing on the worst darkest moments that I have experiences in life, my mind flashes back to the summer of 2009 when I visited Oman. This day will always remain in my head till I leave the face of the earth. It was one of cold mornings of July. I woke up at the crack of dawn, and couldn't wait to have my morning meal. Clearly, this was going to be a great day. I jumped out of my king-sized bed and headed for the bathroom to have a shower.

Hardly had I reached the bathroom when my friend Ali stormed into room. Seeing Ali in the early morning meant that there was some important news that he had brought. I could wait to know the reason why he had arrived at my house so early. He quickly pointed to me through the window and learning on the window from the outside were two AK-47 rifles. He explained to me that he had stolen them from his dad in that he wanted us to go hunting buffaloes that day. As an anxious teenager this sounded to be a heroic idea. I would have great stories to tell my friends when I returned home in Kuwait. I quickly gobbled my breakfast and explained to my mother that I intended to spend that day with Ali at their house. Mum was not hesitant and therefore our plan was bound to succeed. We ran behind the house picked up the guns and loaded them to Ali's truck making sure that no-one saw any of our moves before heading to a nearby forest.

On arriving at the mouth of the forest, my legs shook like a reed on a stormy gale. Ali kept assuring me that everything was okay. The forest was enveloped by pitch darkness and pin drop silence. The clattering of dry leaves as we made our way into the forest made reverberating echoes making my heart to throb continuously like the Northern Oriental Tom-Tom drums at climax. I held my gun tight in that I vividly knew that this would be the most difficult day in my life. I did not want to look like a coward to Ali especially bearing in mind a story that had been narrated to us by a village elder who claimed that cowards had no place in his society. He explained to us that he had been circumcised using a blunt knife and shed no tear. This

heroic story kept pushing me to keep moving on as I followed Ali who showed no element of cowardice.

After walking for about a mile into the forest, light began to stream into the forest floor making things more visible. I felt a little comfort in that I could now see properly. Abruptly Ali noted a herd of buffalos grazing behind a huge mahogany tree. My blood froze as streams of fear ran down my spine. Ali did not even take time to scan his surrounding or strategize what he wanted to do. The ambitious teenager began to fire. I knew that this was not going to end well I quickly made for a tree as I watched the young warrior accomplish his endeavor. To my surprise, not all the buffaloes fled after Ali began shooting. One huge buffalo was left behind but we could not notice it in that it hid in the neighboring bushes. Ali was excited when he saw the buffalos flee and kept advancing. My plea to him not to go any further fell on deaf ears. No sooner had Ali reached the Mahogany tree where the buffaloes were initially grazing, the lone buffalo rushed at him like a mad rhino. I waited for the worst but hoped for the best. I knew that death and Ali were totally inseparable. Ali dropped his gun as a result of fear and ran as fast as his porgy legs would carry him. As he ran faster the gap between him and the buffalo decreased. The buffalo was only inches from Ali fell to the ground. Due to the speed of the buffalo, the buffalo went past Ali and pierced its horn in the stem of a tree. The buffalo struggled to get its horns off the tree to no avail. I quickly came back to my senses and fired at the buffalo, which caused it to drop dead.

Ali was unconscious. I noted that the buffalo had stepped on his left ear lobe but luckily not much blood was coming out of the ear. I carried him on my back to the truck and took him home. On arriving home I lied to my mother that I had spent the whole day playing soccer with Ali's friend and that Ali had hurt his ear during the match as he tried to make a diving header. Little did I know that Ali's father had noted that his were missing causing him report to the matter to my mother and they had both confirmed that we were not at home and hence we possessed to guns. A thunderous jab landed on my left cheek sending me sprawling to the ground in a feeble coo. Afraid of this unusual reaction from my mother, I narrated the ordeal entirely. I felt very humiliated as mu mother grounded me for two months. I strongly agree with Wegner's analysis in *How to think, Say, or Do Precisely the Worst thing for Any Occasion*, of why we often do or say the wrong thing especially if we are concentrating on not doing it. In my incidence fear of how my mother would react caused to me to lie. I realize that " the control system underlying conscious mental control is unique; however... it can produce errors" (Wegner 48). This because my conscience kept on haunting me to say the truth but the fear of receiving a punishment caused me to lie thereby causing a negative result of shame, humiliation, and a thunderous jab from my mum. In fact, the thunderous jab from my mother brought me to my senses which goes with Wegner's explanation that " distractions, stressors and other mental load interfere with conscious attempts of self-distraction; they leave unchecked the ironic monitor to sensitize us exactly what we do not want" (Wegner 48). Clearly I did not want to tell the truth but the jab caused me to say the truth.

The second way of learning is through our successes. Lehrer in “ The Truth about Grit” says that “ a big part of our success stems from our beliefs about what leads to success (Lehrer 58). This is very true in that our thoughts shape what we strive for and what we struggle to accomplish. Lehrer refers to grit as being a great way for success. Grit is”...long-term goals and doing whatever it takes until the goal has been reached” (Lehrer 1). Perseverance is very important if we are to succeed. We have to “ persist in the face of obstacles...” and not give up on what we have worked for (Lehrer 1). This varies from other kinds of definitions that Lehrer gives in that what leads to success, in Grit, is the level of perseverance and focus and not our belief system. So perseverance and hard work is what leads to success because success is the act of accomplishing what an individual aims or hopes for. From my personal experience I had been aiming at buying a small car for myself. I did not want to really on my parents to buy the car in that I understood that if they bought for me, they would control the way I use it as well as how I use it. I began to save for the car 4 years ago. I kept saving every extra dime I got. Over time I felt like giving up but my conscience kept prompting me to keep trying harder and trying to take up jobs where possible. I took up jobs as a dog runner and even babysitting for my neighbors. Though it has taken four years I have finally been able to acquire enough money to purchase a car for myself. This incidence is a reflection of the growth of the mind set in that I had to structure my mind in a way that I would not deviate from my goal.

In conclusion, life is a complex process that entails learning the hard way through past mistakes as well as from perseverance and motivation from past successes. Therefore we should not give up or stopping working hard because of obstacles that arise to keep us away from our destiny. Our lives and the world in general needs strong individuals who have the motivation to keep working, no matter to obstacles, to the last minute.

### **Works cited**

Daniel W., How to Think, Say, or Do precisely the Worst Thing for Any Occasion, Science 3 July 2009: 325

Jonah L., The Truth About Grit" The Boston Globe, 1 December 2010: 78