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Chapter 1

THE WIN

By Mark Gorman
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To be a winner, I must realize that my greatest competition is not another person or group. My greatest competition is that part of me which is tempted to give up in the face of adversity.

Whether we want to admit it or not, there is a part of each of us that wants to quit when the going gets tough. Each person has a different breaking point, at which we begin to reason with ourselves, saying that it's OK to give up now. The winner is the person who says "No", and doesn't allow himself to quit.

It's easy for anyone and everyone to get excited at the start of the race. A great start does not make you a winner. The winners can be seen more clearly when few are left standing, when the majority has called it quits because it got to be too hard to keep going.

At that moment, you had better have a reason to keep going, or believe me, the pain will make you want to throw in the towel.

Yes, it's easy to get all revved up when you are starting a new business, or signing up to be part of something bigger than you. That's so easy. In fact, you don't need much drive or fortitude to start. We won't even know who's who until it is no longer "fun" or "new". But when the newness has worn off, and the spotlights have dimmed, and you can no longer hear the cheers of the crowd, now it's just you against yourself. Forget the competition. The only enemy who can really defeat you is you.

One of my heroes, Winston Churchill, gives us a great example of the "winning spirit". In reality, by all appearances, England, and all of Great Britain should have been defeated by Adolph Hitler and his evil campaign of murder and destruction. And yet, Great Britain is still alive and well, and Hitler's act of suicide, confirmed the defeat of Nazi Germany. Why did Great Britain survive such a horrifying onslaught by Hitler's forces, after so many other nations had been defeated? In my opinion, it was attitude.

When the "court of public opinion" suggested that all hope was lost, and that Great Britain should surrender, a voice rang out with words of resolve, which caused a nation to rally with a determination to win. On June 4, 1940, while addressing the House Of Commons, Churchill said, "We shall fight on the beaches. We shall fight on the landing grounds. We shall fight in the fields, and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills. We shall never surrender!"

Keep in mind that this was after the end of World War I, and before the start of World War II. Hitler's forces had already defeated most of Western Europe. Basically, Great Britain was alone in the battle against Hitler. It was not until December 7, 1941, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, that the United States officially joined our allies in what would be known as World War II. Churchill spoke these words in 1940, during "The Battle Of Britain".

On the 29th of October, 1941, just weeks before the attack on Pearl Harbor would prompt America's decision to fight alongside the British, Winston Churchill gave a speech to the boys at the school he had attended as a boy, Harrow. Even when addressing young boys, who were not yet old enough to fight in the military, he spoke with the heart of a winner as he said, "Never give in - never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in... Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy." Now, that's a true winner.

Winning is not the result of trying to avoid loss.

To win, you must press through the crowds of mediocrity, to stand with the few who know the difference between mere survival and true victory.

The greatest thrill that winning brings to those who earn its title, is not the cheers of the crowd, the trappings of wealth, or the medals & trophies of achievement. For those who have the heart of a winner, their greatest satisfaction is to be able to say, "I did it. I didn't quit. I didn't give up. I refused to listen to the voices of the critics. I faced my own doubts, fears and pain, and I overcame them because of one thing - I made a decision to WIN!"

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