Three fundamental principles of growth and greatness

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Many people spend a majority of their time thinking about their current situation without trying to change it. They find a comfortable space to park in their lives. They want to turn things around, but they are stuck. They know what they want in their lives, but do not know how to go about achieving their dream. In this article, I will share with you three steps that have transformed my life, from what people referred to as as a misguided youth to climbing the walls of greatness.

**The first step: Go above and beyond your thoughts**

Our thinking does not contain anything outside of our own experiences. Some experiences do not help you because they only take you back to your past. Therefore, it can be difficult to think outside of these limited memories. That is why imagination is so powerful. You have to visualize yourself achieving whatever you want to accomplish. And you must have a mental picture in your head of how your life will look after you achieve your aspiration.

In business, this is called “Top of Mind.” This is where an individual or business asks the question, “Who do I want to be seen as? What do I want people to think of when they think of me or my product?” All progress humans have made first comes from imagination. When you visualize yourself being what you want to be or achieving that which you want to achieve, whatever you envision should inspire you.

**Second step: Embrace the change**

The second step is to embrace the change. Now that you have a mental picture of yourself achieving that goal, you have to remember that every individual is given the gift of imagination, but not all individuals are capable of bringing what they envision to reality. To embrace the change is to take that which you envision, the life you imagine having, the person you visualize yourself becoming, and bring it to your life. In other words, raise your standards and start living it. Fulton Sheen once said, “If you do not live what you believe, you will end up believing what you live.”

If you want to change your life for the better, you must be determined to do anything in your power to make it happen. That does not mean you are not going to have struggles and doubts. In fact, some people are going to discourage you, because they might not like the changes you are going to be making. However, if you are tenaciously trying to become the best version of yourself, doors begin to open and opportunities start flowing.

Nothing in life should hurt you as much as it should motivate you to make the rest of your life the best of your life. Try to persist and persevere because you are passionate about your life and the change you wish to make. At this stage, it is no longer about hype, it’s about heart. How bad you want it?

You must have motive and passion that are strong enough to make you say, “I don’t care how hard this is going to be. I will get through this!” Believe me, this is the stage where most of us fail, give in or quit. This is the stage where you cannot stare at the prize while your shoes are untied. This is the area in your life where if you wake up without enough passion, you create it!

**Third step: Keep the discipline**

The last step, which is the most difficult of all, is to keep the discipline. They say it is one thing to buy a house, but it is another to keep a house. It is one thing to get inspired and be at your best for one month, but it is another to be at your best for the rest of the year. It is one thing to make goals, but it is another to follow them.

Everything is not going to go perfectly. We all make mistakes, and I believe mistakes are lessons we should learn from and then choose to move on. I once read a quote that said, “To be a failure is not the worst thing. The worst thing is to remain a failure.”

How do you keep the discipline? You probably have heard the old saying “You cannot eat an elephant in one bite.” To keep the discipline, you make small goals to accomplish each and every day. Your goals should keep you motivated and hungry. They should take you closer to your milestone.

Today, I still use the three steps. These steps are my shield, and I use them to get the results I want in my life. They took me from the despair I encountered during the years of poverty and displacement, to the hope I was able to imagine and envision. I am reminded of the African proverb, “If there is no enemy within, the enemy outside can do us no harm.”