



SUMMARY UNIT 5 : Chapter 1 : Defining Your Past

Let's take a look at building strength inside yourself and building strength inside of others. Here is something that I would encourage you to do: write a list of ten things that you did well in your life. It doesn't matter if those things occurred in the sixth grade or yesterday. List those things that made you feel strong inside yourself. Then, two times each day, look at each one of those items on the list and remember how you felt when it occurred. Go back in your mind. Let the emotion well up inside of you. Now, when you get the feeling of the first one, take it in your mind and drop it into the biggest goal or the most important circumstance that you are facing right now.

With that, you're doing two things: strengthening yourself by reiterating your success and coloring your future with a constructive emotion. For the most part, we generally pass over our successes too quickly and too lightly to assimilate them.

So you need to spend more time reflecting on what you did, not because you're trying to become a showoff or an egotist, but because you need that inner strength in order to make the difference you want in your world. The more you build up your self-concept, the more productive you will become.

Next, write a list of maybe ten things that didn't go well: the death of somebody you loved, a job that you went after and didn't get, a project that you messed up, and so on. After you have made your list, go back and—instead of dwelling on the events themselves—focus on how well you recovered from them. Then take that emotion and drop it into a difficult challenge that you're facing right now. By doing that, you're building within yourself the inner strength of resiliency. You're not born tough, you become tough. And so you build that inner strength, which causes persistence and resiliency, which are two of the attributes of very highly efficacious people. And then, when you find yourself thinking about the future, becoming a little scared about a future aspiration or a future problem, you say to yourself, "If that occurs, I'll live through it, because I've done it before."

