Fiona
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TRANSFORMING CHALLENGES INTO TRIUMPHS

RESOURCE GUIDE

Strategies for encountering life's roadblocks



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Optimism is the ability to continue to look forward past the current situation to what lies ahead



BUMPS, TWISTS & ROADBLOCKS

Life is a journey with many bumps and twists and turns in the road. If there were no bumps or turns, life would be very monotonous. Sometimes the bumps and twists are big challenges that we weren't expecting and we aren't sure how to manage them.

However, we can learn a range of skills that can be used to help us take the challenges head on. If you implement the strategies I outline in this e-book you can find a way to a positive outcome regardless of the challenges you are faced with.



Learning from the past

We all have a journey to follow. For some of us, the bumps in the road seem to affect us more than others. But, when you think about it, do you really want a smooth road all the time?

If there were no bumps in the road, or winding paths, no crossroads or hills to climb and descend, we would be stuck in monotony. We may even fall asleep at the wheel and just let life happen. We all know where that leads – generally a big fiery crash!



Falling asleep at the wheel can lead to a big fiery crash

So how do we embrace the bumps in the road? How can you learn from the challenges before you and those that you have already transversed?

In this eBook I will provide some basic information, followed by practical tips and ideas on how to change your viewpoint and reframe experiences to demonstrate that, even if you do not believe it at the time, bumps are essential to our life journey – we simply need to learn to take positive advantage of the outcomes.

Reflection Exercise

Reflect upon the five biggest challenges or most difficult things you have ever experienced. Take yourself back to the moment. Where were you? What was happening? Who was there?

Now look at one of these events from another perspective. What was the outcome long term? Have you learned anything about yourself or others from this experience? How have you seen others manage a similar situation? Did they do the same or different to you?

How do you feel their experience was different to yours? Have you forgiven yourself and others for the way this situation unraveled? What are the things you would say to yourself with hindsight? What can you take away from looking at this situation in more detail with the benefit of another perspective on it? Are you able to see this situation more logically now there is less emotion attached to the event?

Once you have completed this exercise you should be able to identify your strengths in overcoming adversity. Name three strengths that you have brought forward during the remembering exercise.



Building resilience

Being able to overcome the challenges and adversity you face in life is all about building resilience. What I mean by resilience is being able to navigate those road blocks or putting your car into 'fly' mode like George Jetson and get past the things that are blocking your way forward.



Navigate the road blocks and get past the things getting in your way.

It is important to acknowledge that we are all going to need to tap into our sources of resilience at times in life. Some of us are better than others at this, and in a crisis it may seem impossible. So what is it that will help get us through? Simply - and YES - the answer is simple - it is all about reframing and Optimism.

Optimism

When I speak of optimism, I do not mean endless positivity. We all need to experience some negative or difficult times in order to truly enjoy the good and

great times. What I mean by optimism, is the ability to continue to look forward past the current situation to what lies ahead.

Those who manage adversity effectively do not get caught in the downward spiral of thinking that this moment is the dictator of the rest of their life. It is about feeling the pain, anxiety, fear, loss or embarrassment and knowing it is going to change.

When you can look at the situation and know that it is only temporary and you are the one in control of the way you choose to think about it, you will be less likely to fall into that spiral of dark thoughts and poor reactions.



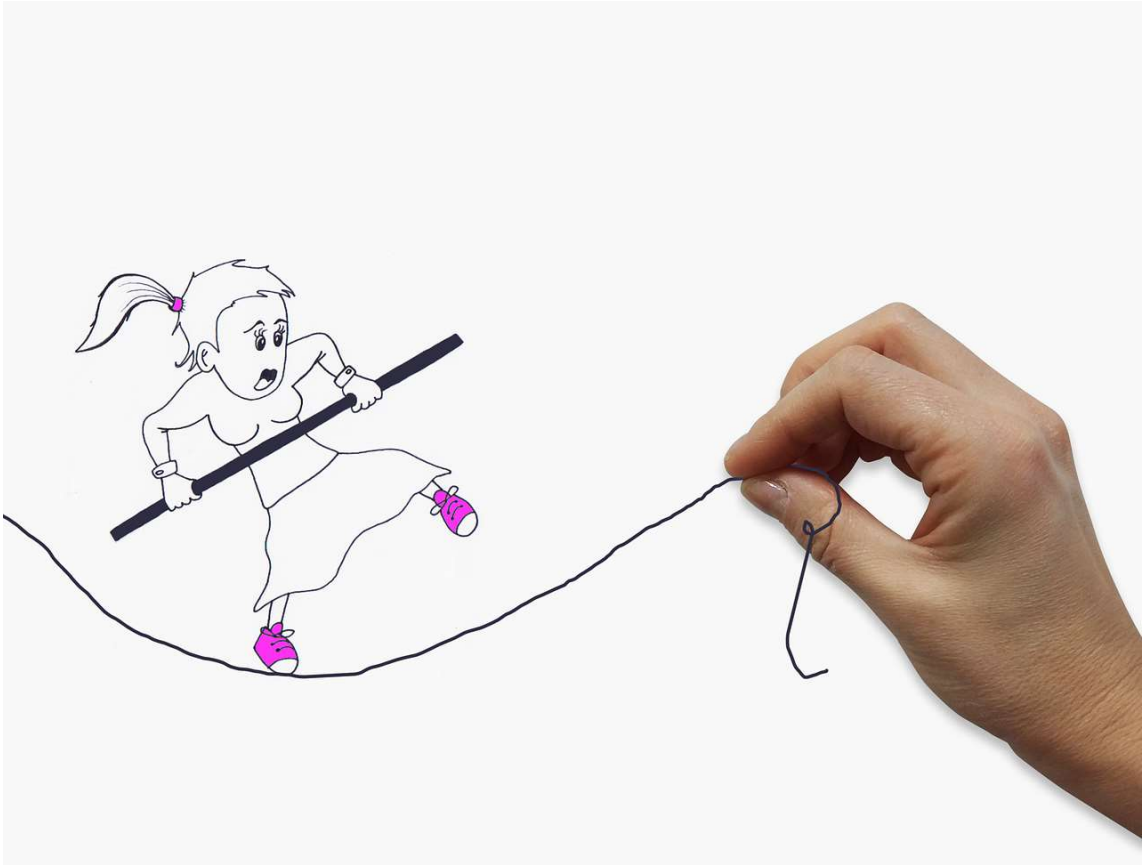
If you have a flat tyre, fix the problem or get help so you can keep travelling the road.

If we think about this in the road trip or journey of life, it is like having a break down or a flat tyre. You can either fix the problem yourself, or go to the garage and get some help with the problem before continuing your journey. It does not mean you forget this experience, but you do put it behind you and keep travelling the road ahead.

So now we have acknowledged that we are going to experience negative situations in life, there are many aspects of your life you can control, manage, and use to grow. Following is my list of top strategies to help you keep moving forward in life, even when you encounter the roadblocks.

STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING LIFE'S CHALLENGES

Life is full of many challenges. We all need to experience some negative or difficult times in order to truly enjoy the good and great times. We cannot always control the challenges that come our way, but we can arm ourselves with a variety of strategies to help us navigate our way through those unexpected hurdles.



Be Prepared

Once you have built a resilient mindset you will be ready to face the challenges front on. Develop and build your inner strength and grow your ability to bounce back from adversity. Have an idea about how you will manage the challenges that may pop up, have a support network and keep this list as a 'go to' to remind you the steps to help get you through.

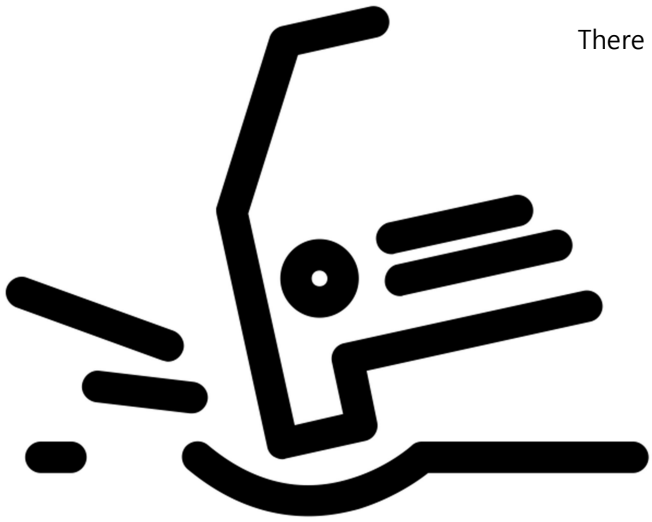


Bounce back from adversity

Examine your values and beliefs and see if there is anything that is limiting you or holding you back. Is there a coping technique that really did not work for you last time you faced adversity? Let's not repeat the past – is there a better way you can manage this current situation?

Expect the worst and hope for the best

Think of the worst case scenarios. How likely are these things to happen? When you really investigate the potential outcomes - it is often that our fears are dictating the end of the road – but remember this may just be a pothole along the way.



There will be potholes along the way.

Once you can look at the situation a little more clearly the worst case scenario you have imagined is often unlikely to occur – and if it does, how bad is that really? And how would you manage that situation?

Breaking any challenge down into these smaller chunks gives your brain the possibility to add some logic and reality rather than the initial emotional response.

Practice being positive

Take a moment to be mindful of your thoughts - both conscious and the unconscious belief systems below your reactions. This is time to bring awareness to negative self-talk that is potentially sabotaging you. Remember, be kind to yourself! Our own inner self talk is often so negative, hurtful and harmful.

Take a moment to acknowledge the negative response and replace it with something more positive. Be especially aware of the use of words such as 'always' and 'never' this is often making the small short term issue into the feeling of it being a larger problem than it really is. Remember to be optimistic "this too shall pass"

Keep a routine

When faced with challenge often, we feel as though life is out of control. We can feel as though we want to stay in bed all day, not see our social connections and sometimes even forgo self-care and hygiene.

Try to continue your routine as much as possible. Activities such as continuing your regular daily meditation or exercise routine, attending scheduled events and maintaining connection with others will assist in keeping you on track.

Listen to music

How often when you are having a bad day, do you find yourself suddenly smiling when your favourite song comes on the radio? We all have had that moment when you have found yourself humming or singing along or having a little dance to your favourite tune even though your mood was low.

Have a 'favourite tunes' playlist or you will often find one of these on your preferred music streaming source. Go for it - put those songs on loud, enjoy the moment and let yourself be free of the thoughts in your head.



Exercise

Even if you are not a gym junkie that goes to pump iron, simply going for a walk outside will help lift your mood. Sunlight and some fresh air, a new environment and things to look at around you will help take you outside your head.

To increase the benefits of this, be mindful of the environment around you. If you are having a walk, see the trees and the cars on the road, the sounds of the birds and the smells in the air.

If you are doing more active exercise such as running or going to the gym, focus on your breath, the feelings in your body as you exercise and the feel of the impacts of your body with the environment.

Why not put this step with the one above and take your music with you and listen through headphones while you exercise?

Eat and Sleep well

Even if you feel like you have lost your appetite or are finding it difficult to sleep, it is important for overall health to ensure that you keep a good routine in these areas. Try not to rely on drugs or alcohol to help with sleeping because this will disturb your natural patterns.

Instead try a warm bath or relaxation before bed. Do not skip meals and try to continue a healthy diet, even if you do not feel like it as you will need to keep your energy up to help your brain work through what you are dealing with.

Keep Focused

No matter what happens in life, think of the long term goals you have. Is this just another bump that you will face in your journey? Is this a crossroad where you can make a different choice and recreate your plan? Maybe it is time for a

Having Plan B instead of just relying on Plan A is a great idea. Hey, why not have a Plan C and a Plan D too! Visualise the end destination and reset your focus



detour and a different route which will take you to the same destination via a different way.

Sometimes having Plan B instead of just relying on Plan A is a great idea. Hey, why not have a Plan C and a Plan D too! Visualise the end destination and reset your focus.

What doesn't kill you will make you stronger

Think of all the challenges you have already faced along life's journey. You are strong and have already overcome a lot in life and have developed skills to get you through tough situations before.

Know that you have the inner strength to do this again. Have the confidence in yourself to know that you can handle this challenge just as you have managed the past.

What can you learn?

Finding the lesson or the benefit from the situation will help to put it into a new perspective. Even if that lesson is that you will never make the same particular mistake again, it is a lesson.

We will all have failures and times in our life when things go wrong. The opportunity to learn from this and bring something from the outcome is what can turn a bad situation into something more positive.

This does not mean that it makes those tough times easier in the moment, but take a second to imagine how important this situation is for you in a year or five years. What do you think that 'future you' would tell you about the current circumstance?

The lesson from now can be determined by some self reflection. Where did things go wrong? Now I know what I know, how would I do things differently?

Find your sense of humour

Finding your sense of humour is easier said than done in some circumstances. But try to reflect upon the funny aspects of the situation if there are any. If not, try to think of happy or positive things. Like listening to music or exercise, it may be that you need to use a resource such as a funny movie to make you laugh or spend some time with a funny friend.

They say laughter is the best medicine, and truly it does help. Even if the situation is very serious and upsetting, do not feel guilty about having a laugh and releasing some of that pent up energy.



Find your sense of humour

Stay determined

Know you can get through this and keep that mindset. Commit to finding a way forward. Instead of passively accepting your situation, know that you have the

ability to move forward and keep motivated. This is a roadblock to overcome and solve, not to stay stuck behind the barrier.

Make peace with the situation and yourself

The past is the past. Now it is done, you need to let it go. Do not blame yourself or others. You may not be able to forgive right away, but know that this is the best option for the future, and in the meantime be kind to yourself and stop replaying events and wishing things were different.

Have a Purpose

Set yourself mini goals. Every day, or even if it is broken into every hour, have a mindset of looking forward and achieving the next small thing. Sometimes it is difficult to keep focused on the big picture, but when you break your time down into smaller chunks it is more manageable to keep that forward momentum.

Even if you need to pause and fall into self pity for a while, set a time frame for this and then when that time is up, move on to the next thing.

Focus on your skills and maybe take on a new challenge

To move you from feeling low and defeated it is important to focus on your strengths and continuing to develop and grow. It may also be a good time to learn something new or find a new hobby or interest that will take your focus from the current situation. If you are using your brain to learn new things, it will find it hard to keep replaying the current negative thoughts.

What do others do?

This may be a good time to find out what others in your social group or networks have done to help themselves through a similar situation. You can also

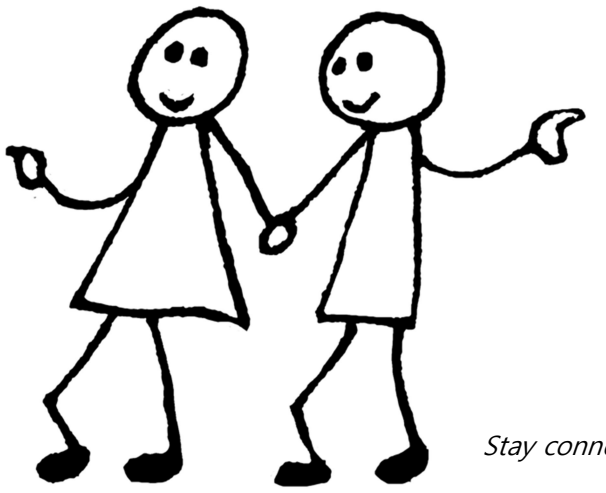
resource biographies or stories of others who have written of their experiences and how they have overcome adversity.

Collect as much information as you can. Like this list, you will find some ideas that work for you and others that do not. Take what works and discard the rest.

Keep connected

Continue to interact with others. Your friends, family and network are a great source of distraction when things are not going well. You may wish to speak to someone that has a good shoulder to cry on and a listening ear.

Equally, you may wish to spend time with people who will uplift you and take your mind off of your circumstances. Joining a support group either in person or the internet may also be a useful resource.



Stay connected with friends, family and your network.

Get professional help

A coach or counsellor may be required to help you get 'out of your head' and continue moving forward. If you feel that you cannot reach out to your support network, there are a range of professionals that will be able to assist you to get past this roadblock and continue with your life.

Well done! You now have the skills to tackle challenges head on.

So now you have the magical list. It does not mean you will not experience stress, challenges and emotional pain. What it does mean is that you have the skills to effectively manage your thoughts, feelings and actions to move past the experience.

Resilience and the ability to overcome adversity is a learned skill. As with all skills, it will take practice. You will find that you are more resilient in some situations and struggle with others. The ability to develop resilience step by step and situation by situation is normal and once you master this skill by using the techniques above, you will find that every time you face the bumps in the road you will feel better equipped to deal with them.

Remember, we all learn from the journey of our lives, you can embrace the challenges and see them as strengths or lessons learned instead of holding on to the pain.

You are the one that has the power to rethink and reframe and to become a more active participant in your journey. There is a huge difference between being the driver of the vehicle you are navigating life's adventures with, rather than being the passenger.

About Fiona Demark



Fiona Demark is an Inspirational Speaker and Life Coach. She helps people who are stuck and frustrated with their lives to create a new reality. Fiona has been legally blind since birth and loves to share her story of resilience, positivity and life achievements to inspire and motivate others.

Fiona knows the importance of a positive mindset and a 'Can Do' attitude. This has helped Fiona to overcome adversity and think outside the square in order to achieve her dreams. Her interest in natural therapies has led her to study hypnotherapy and reiki to compliment her skills in life coaching and social work.

Fiona never says "No." to a challenge or opportunity, never letting her disability prevent her from achieving the things she sets her mind to.

Fiona speaks to community groups, job seekers, and corporate organisations to share her story of inspiration, motivating others to set goals and achieve their dreams. She also works individually with clients to provide one-on-one support and coaching.

Through keynote presentations and short training workshops, Fiona will challenge participants to identify their true goals and break through the barriers and obstacles blocking them from reaching their full potential.

Fiona offers a free 30 minute discovery session where she will help you identify areas for transformation and tailor an individualised package to facilitate change. If you enjoyed this e-book and would like to work with Fiona as a keynote speaker, life and job coach or training workshops contact her on:

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