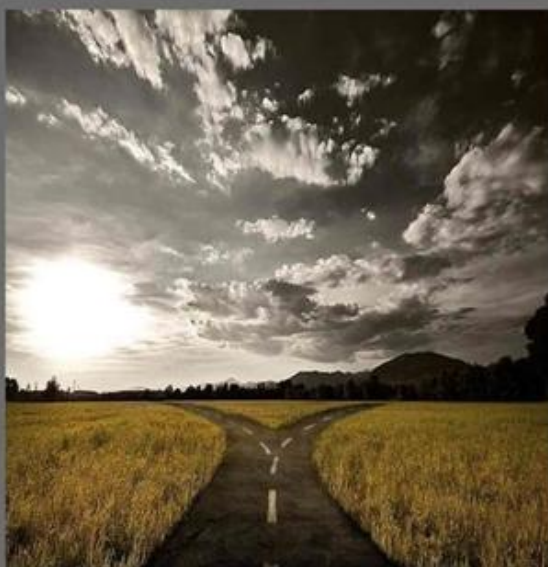


When The Storm Hits:
Language of Enduring



Dr. Whitney Gillespie

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Table of Contents

- I. Preparation for the Storm
- II. Preordained Separation
- III. Patience in the Process
- IV. God's Timing Not Man's
- V. Art of Saying "No"
- VI. Time Set Aside Daily
- VII. What's in You
- VIII. Appreciate Humble Beginnings
- IX. Instructions, Strategies & Budgeting
- X. Deadly Tongue
- XI. Fight in You
- XII. Importance of Partnerships

Acknowledgements

It wasn't until I had enough that I realized my potential. It wasn't until I had someone speak into my life, instead of withdrawing, that I woke up. I want to acknowledge those "mentors" who saw beyond my exterior. I thank you for really seeing me. I thank you for showing me that I was definitely here for a purpose. For this, I acknowledge you and will be forever grateful.

Dedication

I dedicate this book in memory of Angel. Mommy loves and misses you so much. I know that I am here for a purpose. Living without you is so hard. However, I am determined to make you proud and truly tap into all of my potential. I will succeed on all of our goals including the unspoken ones. I love you. S.I.P and continue to watch over me. This journey isn't easy. However, every success is a win for us.

Preparation for the Storm

In life, we focus on creating and maintaining success. Preachers will get in the pulpit and talk about money coming and the transference of wealth. You will even see motivational speakers talk about the law of attraction and positive affirmations. All of that is wonderful! However, everyone needs to prepare for a storm.

I often thank God for going through my struggle first before the success. It was during my struggle that I saw who my true friends were. It was humbling and eye opening when I waited at the GRTC bus stop while others passed me by in their cars. It was during my struggle that I heard the doubt and judgment of people who were close to me. The struggle made me appreciate the blessings. The struggle showed me what was truly inside of me.

It is imperative that you prepare for the storm. In life, we are not promised sunshine every day. There are going to come days when you don't feel like getting out of the bed. There are going to be days when you don't feel like biting your tongue. There are going to be days when the bed looks more inviting and promising than the day before you. There are going to be days where the money is funny and friends are few. There are going to be days where you have motivated everyone else but are dangling on the edge of depression yourself.

There will be days where you wonder if it is all worth it. There will be days where you wonder if God truly knows how much you can handle. There will be days where staying in the comfort zone seems more realistic than going after your goals. Trust me, there will be days like these.

However, it is in these days that the true you come out. It is in these days that all the preparation needs to come forth. It is in these days that you have to determine whether you truly believe all those positive affirmations and scriptures. Do you really believe them or were you just reciting them for the moment?

Just like you would save money for a rainy day or for an emergency fund, you need to prepare for the storms of life. What do you do when you unexpectedly get pregnant only to miscarry? What do you do when the loved one dies without any sickness in the body? What do you do when you find yourself starting all over in your career after an unexpected setback? What do you do when after paying all your bills you are left with only \$20 for gas, food and to last till next payday? What do you do when you work 80 hours only to have a garnishment take your money?

What do you do when you started off in a relationship but now find yourself a single parent? What do you do when you work two jobs and still are struggling? What do you do when you spend all those years in college only to struggle and find a decent job and salary? What do you do when you are the one everyone looks to but you have no one to inspire you? What do you do when you are

on the verge of a breakdown but you have too many obligations in front of you? What do you do when bills are due and you barely have enough gas to make it to work for the week? What do you do when the storms of life hit? P-R-E-P-A-R-E!

P is for perception. When the storm hit you need to have your mind right. You cannot think about what you should have done right. You cannot focus on what could have been. You need to have the right perception whether times are good or bad. You need to understand that you don't need it until you need it. That means don't worry about what you feel you need. God's timing is not ours. Have you ever wasted time trying to figure out how things were going to come together? You cried yourself to sleep. You wasted paper trying to add up money coming in and how you could maneuver things around.

You tried to make all the pieces come together. Just when you were about to have a meltdown, something happened. Just after you had the meltdown, something happened. A check came in the mail. A bill collector told you that you had overpaid or they were giving you an extension. You found unexpected money in a coat pocket. A family member or friend sowed a seed of money into you. Have you ever given yourself a headache trying to fix your situation only for things to work out without your input? Of course, this has happened to you! It has happened to all of us.

P is for perception. What you focus and dwell on magnifies. You can take a small situation and completely blow it up into something extreme. The key here is to

make sure your perception is correct. Even if you made a bad decision and landed yourself in that predicament, change your perception. See yourself coming out of that storm. See yourself victorious. See yourself better than where you are. It is all about the mind. What you believe turns into what you speak. What you speak becomes actions. Your actions then turn into a habit. Habits become lifestyles. Before you know it, you are walking out your destiny and satisfied.

R is for reflect. Even before you get into the storm you need to have a time to reflect every day. Every day you need to take time and reflect on your life. Reflect on your success. Reflect on your setbacks and lessons. Reflect! When you reflect, you see just how you came through similar situations. You see how you worked yourself up only for things to work out right on time. You reflect on the time, energy and money you wasted. You reflect on who was in your corner and who abandoned you.

You reflect on the whole process. When you reflect, you are able to get your mind right. Reflection is key because it helps you stay calm when the storm does hit. When you reflect, you understand that if God came through before He will surely come through again. When you reflect, you understand that rain only lasts for a short time. Sunshine eventually has to come out. Reflection keeps you calm.

E is for evaluate. Before trouble comes, you need to evaluate. When things are going good, evaluate your decisions, past relationships and even who is on your bus.

Evaluate past decisions. Sometimes we find ourselves going around in circles because we don't evaluate our decisions. Insanity is doing the same thing while expecting different results. Just because you say it differently or dress it up, does not change the same behavior. For example, you leave the relationship with Jack only to get with Tom and experience the same things. Evaluate decisions and learn from them. Some storms we create from the decisions we make.

Evaluate past relationships. The problem some of us face is that we jump from relationship to relationship without having the exit interview. We need to evaluate why we entered the relationship. What drew us to that person, business or idea? We need to evaluate what went well in that relationship. What did we learn about ourselves? What did we learn about the relationships we attract? What could we improve on? What did we take away from the whole experience? If we can evaluate the relationship, maybe we can avoid the repeat and storm all together.

Evaluate who is on your bus. I like the bus analogy because it is very fitting for life. People come on our bus and will either ride with us to the end or get off at a specific stop. Sometimes they are destined to ride with us until a certain point and then get off only to get back on at another stop in life. The question truly is who is on your bus? Don't be so caught up in the people exiting and entering the bus. Find the lesson to be learned and appreciate their presence and contribution. The worst thing one can do is try to keep people on the bus who

should have left three stops ago. When you do this, you will feel negative energy.

Not everyone is meant to go with you to the next level. Some people are here for seasons and reasons. Appreciate the reason and enjoy the season. Who is on your bus?

P is for posture. Before you go through any storm or life event, you need to have a posture about you. Do the little things cause you to break down? Do you carry your emotions on your sleeves? Do your situations dictate your attitude? You need to have a posture of strength and determination. When you reflect on your past, you build up your strength. You realize what is truly on the inside of you and understand your worth and tolerance level. When you have a determined mind, you understand that nothing can deter you from reaching your goal. When you have a posture about you, people are drawn to you. They see your eagerness for more and will even want to help you succeed. When you have a certain posture, you also send a message to people with drama to stay away. What is your posture saying?

A is for attitude. Honey! I don't care what you go through in life. Make sure you have an attitude of gratitude and success. Life is not promised to be easy. However, if you fix your attitude before a storm hits, you won't be so easily swayed. Your situation should never determine your attitude. Whether things are good or bad, make sure your attitude doesn't stink. You could be going through the worst time in life, but your attitude should never show it. Make sure your attitude is always in check.

Your attitude can cause amazing opportunities to come your way. The right attitude can cause your storm to end sooner and unlikely allies to come help you.

R is for resources. Have you ever seen someone who stocked groceries in their pantry or separate location for rainy day? Have you ever seen someone search out grants and funding to accomplish a goal or fund a project/education? Have you ever seen someone go to a networking event to meet different people who can help them get to the next level? My point is that getting resources together is essential. You should not wait until you are in struggle mode to find resources.

Preparation is key. I know, some people may say that they barely make enough to stay afloat. However, I know for a fact anything worth having is worth the work. I know that people will find money to do whatever they want. Maybe that means you don't eat out as much but save some money. Maybe that means that you think about long term. Instead of buying that Chinese food that will only have you feeling full for a short time, you make groceries. Maybe you prepare your monthly budget and find a way to put aside \$20 or more a paycheck.

The essential take home message here is not to do some big act. The point is to get the ball rolling. Save some money. Go meet new people. Write that business plan. Take that leap of faith. Start pulling together your resources when things are good so you don't feel the hit when the storm comes. Preparation is all about looking ahead to what could be. You can go 10 years and everything be great. Then one day you look up and one

tragic event has you at your lowest. Get the resources together now and don't struggle later.

E is for enjoy. So many times, we work so hard and say that we will enjoy and rest later. Don't let the daily hustle of life cause you to miss out on the little things. I have seen too many times where we work so hard, only for an injury to slow us down. In preparation, you need to enjoy the process. Enjoy the little moments and humble beginnings. Enjoy every step in the right direction. When you enjoy the moment, you can find the true appreciation and meaning behind life.

When the storm hits, you will reflect on the joy you have and the little moments leading up. You will be able to laugh at the storm and understand that there is a process to everything worth having in life. Take time to enjoy.

The keys to preparing for a storm are perception, reflect, evaluate, posture, attitude, resources and enjoy. I truly believe that if you do these things it will take some of the pressure off of the storm. No one knows what tomorrow holds. However, preparation can be the difference between sleepless nights and sweat less victory.

Preordained Separation

Preordained Separation is simply me saying that some people were preordained to separate from your life. Some situations and circumstances were preordained to last for only a short period of time. Some experiences were preordained to end at a set point. Some relationships were preordained to separate. Why? You ask amazing questions!

Sometimes, we enter relationships that were not meant for us. We wanted it when we wanted it. We felt we could transform the situation or person over time. We felt that the timing was right and it had to happen right then. Sometimes, we enter relationships because we beg God for it so long and He knows we are not ready. We are determined that it has to happen so He gives it to us.

Sometimes, we enter relationships and situations because God is trying to grow us or shape us. Sometimes, the only way we will truly realize our true potential is to go through something. Sometimes, the only way we will truly appreciate life and things is to feel some pain. Sometimes, the only way to humble us is for us to go through. Sometimes, the only way for us to shake loose a person, habit or relationship is for tragedy to hit.

Think about it! You ever have a relationship or friendship and it wasn't until something bad happen that you saw their true colors? Like, it wasn't until a rough

situation hit that you saw just how “for you” they really were?

I truly believe that everything happens for a reason and a season. There is a reason why you had to go through it. Maybe, it was to show you just how strong you truly were. Maybe, you went through it because you needed to humble yourself and change your stinky attitude. Maybe, you needed to see that the circle of friends and associates were nothing more than leeches. Maybe, you needed to see that you don’t have to be in control of everything.

Things happen in seasons. There is a season where you feel as though you work your butt off and nothing seems to be going right. There is a season where it seems as though everyone depends on you and you are all alone. There is a season where money is funny and bills are due. There is a season where life events happen back to back without time to heal from the previous one. There is a season where opportunities flood you and doors open all around you. There is a season where it feels like God is blessing everyone but you. There is a season where finally all your hard work pays off. There is a season where money flows in and love is so pure. There is a season for everything.

My point is there are preordained separations that all of us go through. Stop trying to hold on to dead situations. God will move things out of your life to make room for bigger and better things. Embrace the change and accept the preordained separations.

Patience in the Process

Patience in the process is a concept I am still working on grasping. When you are use to a certain lifestyle and then life hits, having patience is the last thing you want to hear or focus on. In life, things will test your patience. I know this all too well.

I know for a fact that going through pregnancy, miscarriage and surgery was a patience process for me. The idea of carrying life was the greatest accomplishment I could achieve. Then to have that snatched from me so rudely was a hard thing to accept. The worst part was not being able to immediately heal because I had to have major surgery to remove five fibroid tumors and large cyst. Honey! Patience and I were not good friends during this process. I wanted my body to heal, the pain to leave, the heartache to disappear and my tear ducts to dry up.

Patience in the process is a section I shook my head while writing. It's like you work so hard in life waiting on the payoff to come. You work hard at your goals and business adventures waiting for the right connection to come along or opportunity to present itself. You work hard on getting your life right waiting on the right mate or job to come along.

The key here is not to play God and fake patience. So many times, we can put on the good game face that we are patiently waiting. All it takes is for something to appear to be what we want and the true us comes out. Do

we jump on that opportunity like it's our last hope? Do we question its motive because it is too good to be true? Do we immediately try to fix it up to be what we want because we are tired of waiting?

I am a down to Earth person who says "what you see is what you get". I will be the first person to tell anyone that patience is something I do not like but am working through the process with. Don't lie about how you feel. Be true to you.

If you are tired of waiting, say you are tired. If you want more for yourself, say it. If you feel that you should be further than you are, admit it. The key here is to be true to your feelings. Don't dwell and stay in your feelings but be true to what your heart and mind feel.

Patience in the process is the difference between you rushing into something prematurely just to say you have it or you waiting for the God-designed-bla for you. Bla could be man, job, house, career, business or whatever. Patience is in no way easy.

In order to assist with this section, I want to give you homework. Every time you feel impatient ask yourself some questions. Am I truly ready to handle what I am asking for right now? If God sent me the mate I desire, would he or she want me in the state I am in? Can I truly handle the magnitude of what I am believing and asking for? If I got what I am asking for, would I make a mess out of it or be able to succeed?

When you can truly answer those questions, and see yourself, the patience in the process doesn't look like a

hard thing to do. Patiently wait and watch it be better than you can ever imagine when it finally does come. Patiently waiting does not mean to do nothing. It means while you are working on you and accomplishing goals, you patiently wait for whatever you believe or are working towards.

God's Timing Not Man's

Things will happen and fall into place when they are supposed to. So many times, we have this microwave mentality. We feel as though we are ready for what we are asking for. If God sent you that man or woman, would they want you? So many times, we fail to realize the process is put into place to prepare us mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually for what we are asking for.

God has a set time that everything will fall into place. Maybe you are not ready for what is to come. Maybe it is not ready for you. Maybe you need the scenic route to appreciate life and humble yourself. Maybe you need the scenic route to shake off people and relationships that would only manipulate and mess up the blessings in store for you.

Everything happens at a set time. I don't understand why my child did not live. However, I do know that since my baby passed opportunities and personal growth has surfaced. Not everything in life is meant to be explained. However, with each opportunity we must

appreciate the process. God has a set time where doors will open that no man can shut.

I know that the time in which I did not have a car until now has made me appreciate life. I was able to see people for who they truly were. I was able to sight see and walk to places. I was able to see just how strong Whitney was. No, the process is never easy. However, growth is inevitable.

I use to say it can't get no worse. I felt as though once you are down to the ground you can only go up from there. Little did I know the ground had a basement level of hell. I said all that to say, trust the process and God's timing.

It may not be going the way you feel it should. Things may look hard to see past. You may feel overworked and unappreciated. However, I truly believe that everything will pay off in time. It is not when we feel it should come. When we are truly ready for a thing, everything will fall into place. I truly believe that no one can stop what is meant to come to you. Your mouth and attitude can delay it, but ultimately it will come to you in the right timing. When it does come to you, it will definitely be worth the wait. Just be patient!

Art of Saying “No”

So many times, we find ourselves being the one everyone runs to. We are the one who people get advice and encouragement from. We can become the crutch for people that they never take effort themselves.

It wasn't until I went through my storm that I saw people's true colors. This is when I saw that they didn't have time to help me. They couldn't drop me off on my side of town because they had to preserve gas. They didn't have time to hear my problems because they felt I dwelled on my situation too long.

Honey! When I got on my feet, the word “no” rolled off my tongue so easy. What I learned is what I am going to share with you. If you say “no”, people magically get up and do it themselves. When you stop being an enabler, people will become Houdini and figure it out for themselves.

When you start to say “no”, then you no longer will feel pressure and can easily stop answering the phone to hear drama. Saying “no” is a freeing thing. Saying “no” can help you live your life and stop bailing other people out. Saying “no” is not you being rude. It is you realizing that if you constantly put out to everyone else, you won't have anything left for yourself.

Look at it like this....

You cannot constantly withdraw from an ATM without making a deposit. Eventually your account will be closed and a letter will show up in the mail showing an outstanding balance. A collection department will call or send you correspondence to fix account issues. Treat all relationships like this. If you are not making deposits but constantly withdrawing, we need to have a talk. If you are not willing to change your ways, I am closing this account and sending a collections letter to collect my peace of mind. I will put an end to my wasted free time with your foolishness.

You have to value yourself so much, that you are willing to eliminate people and situations to maintain your peace of mind. At the end of the day, if anything happens to you, life will go on. Learn to say “no”.

Time Set Aside Daily

You need set aside time daily to meditate and be creative. You need time to meditate or talk to God. This is time where you center yourself and shut out the distractions of the world. Maybe, this time is utilized for you to focus on positive affirmation, prayer or reading of scriptures. With everything going on in life, you need time to find you again. This is the time to unwind and bring yourself into your peace.

You need time to be creative. This is important. You need to set aside time every day to be creative. I don't care if it is an hour or more. You need time to research ideas. You need time to work on your projects. You need time to create new streams of income. You need time to write that chapter. You need time to create that idea. You need time to develop that business plan. You need time to research available properties and grants.

Instead of spending hours watching television or socializing about nonessential things, work on you. Take time to develop ideas that will create a better today and tomorrow for you. You should not be waiting for a new year to come in to start fresh. Take every opportunity given to you and begin creating.

Get a journal and let the pen flow. Get in the car and ride into potential neighborhoods for your next venture. Google organizations that are flowing in your interested area. See what they are working on. Meet with them. See what works and what can be improved on. See how you can incorporate your ideas into a system that may or may not be already working effectively.

Get busy. Take time every day to focus on building your empire. You cannot leave a legacy if you don't do anything. It is one thing to talk about being great and another to take actions to accomplish this.

What's in You?

It is imperative that you evaluate what is in you before a life storm hits. The storms of life will show just how stable you truly are. It is easy for us to dress up the exterior and meet our obligations while masking the pains on the inside. However, I want to prepare you for the storms of life so that you won't have to wear a mask. I truly feel that we can successfully go through any storm life brings us. The goal is not to "barely survive" the storm but to dance in the rain of the storm.

Rain is not only therapeutic but cleansing. The storms of life show just how fragile or strong the person truly is. There are three points I want to get across in this section. First, I want you to evaluate your self-talk and intake. Second, I want you to expect and prepare for the unexpected. Finally, I want you embrace what is currently in you and be open to improvements.

It is imperative that you evaluate your self-talk and intake. What you feed yourself will ultimately show in your attitude and how you handle certain life situations. It is so critical that you talk to yourself. Speak life over your situation even before it happens. This could simply be you waking up and repeating a catchy saying over and over again. The saying could be as easy as "I will accomplish all of my goals and positively impact one person's life today."

This could also be accomplished by having several sticky notes with positive messages posted all around your home. The take home message is that when you feed yourself positive vibes during the good times, you will have something to fall back on when the rough times hit. You can only rely on what you already have on the inside of you. A good example is that you can only open your umbrella during a thunderstorm if you stay prepared with it in your bag. You can only put a coat on when the weather changes if you remembered to take it with you.

The next critical point is to prepare for the unexpected. This point goes great with the section on what's inside of you because preparation is essential to success. Things could be going great for you. However, you should be prepared just in case a rainy day comes. This simply means you need to expect the unexpected. For example, be openminded and not stuck on a routine. It is always when we have planned out the day that little detours come up or unexpected events occur. If you are flexible with the unexpected, as inconvenient as it may be, it will not be hard to adjust or move forward.

Attitude goes a long way here. It is crucial that you maintain a positive attitude regardless. When you make a mental note that something could alter your plans, you have the opportunity to adjust your attitude accordingly. It is crucial that you can say to yourself "Good or bad, I am determined to maintain a positive attitude regardless the situation." It is an empowering feeling when you can shake off an unexpected event or situation and not let it ruin

your attitude or day. You feel a sense of growth and even may bring a smile to your face.

The next critical point is that you embrace what is currently in you and be open for improvements. I would say everyone needs an honest critic in their life. You need someone who can give you a “mirror check” to who you are and where you are realistically in life. This person will give you the truth about what you possess in skills and areas of improvements. The essential take home component is that you embrace what is in you. Be open to the constructive criticism and realize we are all a working progress. When you can be honest about where you are as an individual, you can overcome any obstacle you may face.

The problem comes with unrealistic personal reflections. When you can be real about you, you can accomplish anything and weather any storm.

Appreciate Humble Beginnings

You have to start somewhere! I truly feel that you should embrace where you begin. All it takes is one step, one connection, and one right move to land you a million-dollar contract. When you are openminded to the endless possibilities, doors will open for you. It is critical that you start somewhere.

Not everyone is going to believe in you or even support your dreams. Failure is not when you bump your head and hit rough times, but when you give up

completely. As long as you get back up, you are still on the road to success.

This section is critical for those who want to leave the rat race and become an individual. No one ever created anything or became an extraordinary person by doing what everyone else does. When you want something more and different it requires hard work and for you to step out on faith. I truly feel that the humble beginnings make you appreciate the good times.

In these humble beginnings, you will run into a couple of storms. You will have people doubt your abilities, question your reason to go beyond the norm, and have various opinions on what you should be doing. It is in these humble beginnings that you close your mouth and open your eyes and ears. It is not about lip action. In these times your focus needs to be on who actually has your back, who puts in work with you to accomplish the said goals and the actions of those individuals closest to you.

Instructions, Strategies & Budgeting

Instructions, strategies & budgeting are all essential when it comes to you preparing for the storms of life. I often have heard and even say myself that the best teacher is not experience but wisdom to take heed to the

experience of others. You don't have to go through something to get the take home message. It is okay not to know everything. Sometimes, it is best to listen to the experiences of others who went through similar or the same situation.

When you can take heed to someone else's experience and apply it to your life, you can avoid repeating some of the same heartaches. Listen to the instructions of the wise and avoid the heartache. The next to consider is strategies.

You should always be thinking about strategies to do things easier and to better your life. You should consider what goals short-term and long-term you want to accomplish. When considering these goals, you are able to put strategies into perspective for not just rainy days but for life in general. You should definitely have creative concepts on how you can create multiple streams of income. When you are not relying on one source, you won't be heartbroken when things happen. You can have a rainy-day fund or another source of income that can supplement the shortage one source may unexpectedly cause.

The final component is crucial to weathering any storm. The final component is budgeting. When you can be realistic about income to expense ratio, you are able to know where you stand financially. I feel that even if you save \$5 a week or \$20 a month, save something. That money could be exactly what you need when money is low and the gas tank light on. That money could be exactly

what is needed when an unexpected bill comes up or that tire blows out.

The key to this section is to prepare for the unexpected by listening to wisdom from others who traveled down the same or similar road, create strategies to prepare for the unexpected and knowing where you stand with finances and budgeting.

Deadly Tongue

The saying that there is power in the tongue is an understatement. You can definitely find out the true contents of someone's heart and mind when they are going through a storm. They will literally chew your head off and spit it across the room, if they are having a difficult time managing the storms of life.

It is so important that you watch what comes out of your mouth. You can apologize all day long, but the words you say will play repeatedly in their head. They may even make a statement to the effect of "Tell me how you really feel" or "So, that's what you think about me?"

This goes back to the piece on adjusting the attitude. It is critical that you adjust your attitude and mental perspective before a storm hits. It is important that you understand that what you say can truly damage a person. What you can say can also keep you in the same storm for an extended period of time. If you make statements that you will never get out of debt or that you

will always struggle, you are setting yourself up to have what you say.

How? You ask great questions. When you speak negatively about your situation, you begin to believe what you say. Once you start believing what you say, it become actions. The actions then become a pattern or habit. The habit becomes a lifestyle and before you know it you are struggling to get out of debt.

The overall take home message is to watch what comes out of your mouth. Even when things look tough, speak life. When things are great, prepare for the unexpected and speak life over your situations. Prepare for the storm and watch what comes out of your mouth.

Fight in You

It is so important that you realize we all have a fight in us. It is our nature to fight or flight. This means fight or run away. We all have seen a mother go off while defending her baby. We have all had a breaking point where we felt enough was enough. We have all seen a movie where the villain finally got what was coming to them by karma or the victim. We have all seen or heard of a pivotal moment where the breaking point has been reached.

When it comes to the storms of life, you need to realize that there is a fight in you. You are stronger than you think. You can handle more than you give yourself credit for. You can achieve anything in life and have the fight to see it through. There is a fight in you that will come out when it is needed. Understand, whatever you may face will grow you, wake you up, strengthen you and encourage someone who may be watching.

There is definitely a fight in you and you need to embrace it. Understand, nothing will happen to you that you cannot survive or bounce back from. Embrace the fight in you and understand that you are more than a conqueror.

Importance of Partnerships

It is so critical that you network. I often say a business card can travel further than the human body ever could in a quick exchange. You are a walking business card. It is important that you are friendly to everyone you meet. You could be talking to an entrepreneur in disguise that could take you from struggle to success in one interaction.

No matter how you feel, show up and be present. It is not just good enough to show up but you need to also be present. Have you ever found yourself sitting somewhere but your mind was all over the place and definitely somewhere else? That is what I call showing up but not being present.

No matter what your situation is be present. Be aware of your surroundings. Be aware of individuals who

can help you get to the next level or through a particular situation. Be aware of partnerships with people, businesses and ideas that are similar or identical to what you are working on or looking to be a part of.

The worst feeling in the world is going through a storm of life with no one to call. When you have to go through a storm and have no one to depend on, this section will immediately become important to you. My message is that you need to make the right connections and form the right relationships. Don't dwell on just the good times but have a steady backup for whatever comes your way.

It is a true statement that it is not about what you know always, but who you know. It is important that you understand you can have an amazing resume but ultimately land a job because the hiring person knew of your work or mutual acquaintance. The same is true with the storms of life. You can find favor with someone because of a past interaction or a mutual friend/relationship.

A perfect example is of Susan who is normally a positive person. She finds herself in a rough patch after an unexpected divorce. Funds are tight and she has three bills that are past due and close to disconnection. Her spirits are low but she maintains what little positivity she has. She goes into the office hoping to find some favor with the bill collector. As she approaches the window of the collector, she runs into someone she helped while she was married. She sowed a seed into that person that she felt

was insignificant. That person ends up paying off her debt and taking her from almost disconnection to paid in full.

Again, it is all about who you know. When you take time to network and treat everyone as someone of significance, the doors of possibilities are endless. Make the right connections during the good times and avoid the heartache when the storms of life hit.

The take home message from this entire book is that the storms of life are inevitable. With preparation and realistic expectations of life and yourself, you can weather any storm. The concepts in this book are realistic and easy to apply to anyone's life. Overall, prepare when times are good so you can be ready for whatever storm life throws at you.

The storms of life are inevitable. However, this book will teach you strategies to prepare when things are going well for the challenges of life you may face.



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