

INTRODUCTION

QUITTING IS NOT AN OPTION

What if the people featured in this mini book quit when times got tough? Well, we wouldn't have Tesla Electric Cars, iPhones, George Foreman Grills, Rocky Balboa, or some of our favorite songs and movies from actors and musicians who struggled at one time or another. What will *you* do next? We'll only know if you keep trying.

This mini book is a quick read designed to encourage and inspire others to have hope no matter what challenges they're facing because whatever obstacle is in their way, someone else has faced worse, and overcame it.

Hope is a powerful thing.



The idea for this mini book came to me after a terrible year (business wise) where I questioned everything. Should I give up my dream? Should I try something else? Should I just quit?

What got me through was reading the stories of others who had also hit rough patches, but kept going. I hope these stories help you, too.

—LEE SILBER

HOLLYWOOD

ROBERT DOWNEY JR

Was Found Passed Out in a Stranger's Home

Downey's addiction problems were legendary—even by Hollywood standards. In 2000, he spent a year in prison for drug possession after multiple arrests. After he cleaned up, he became one of the most respected and highest paid actors in Hollywood, playing Tony Stark and Sherlock Holmes.



"I don't drink these days. I'm allergic to alcohol and narcotics. I break out in handcuffs."

It is possible to overcome addiction.

SYLVESTER STALLONE

Was Homeless and Broke

Early in his career Stallone was so broke he sold his dog to a stranger for \$25. He then turned down over \$300,000 for his *Rocky* script when the studio wanted to use a different actor. Years later he "won" for Worst Actor of the 20th Century, but then got an Oscar nomination for *Creed* in 2015.



"When I was in junior high school, the teachers voted me the student most likely to end up in the electric chair."

You must believe in yourself.

HOLLYWOOD

PAULA ABDUL

Guilty of Hit-and-Run Driving

Abdul was *the* choreographer at the height of the music video era. She then became a star in her own right with a string of pop music hits in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Personal problems derailed her career until she was chosen to be a judge on *American Idol*, and her career reached new heights.

Hang in there, success is around the corner.



“Everyone is your friend when you’re successful. Make sure the people that you surround yourself with are also the people you’re not afraid of failing with.”

CHARLES DUTTON

Spent Time in Prison . . . Twice

Dutton dropped out of middle school and was imprisoned for manslaughter—then went to prison again for possessing a deadly weapon. After serving his time, Charles studied acting and earned several degrees, including an MBA from Yale. He’s seen success in film, television, and on Broadway.

It’s not where you start, it’s where you finish.



“I didn’t go to film school, I went to acting school.”

SPORTS

BETHANY HAMILTON

Lost Her Left Arm in a Shark Attack

While surfing her home break on Kauai, Bethany had her left arm ripped off by a Tiger Shark. Within weeks she was surfing again, then competing (and winning) with only one arm. *Soul Surfer*, a feature film and best selling book about her ability to bounce back have inspired millions.



“Courage doesn’t mean you don’t get afraid. Courage means you don’t let fear stop you.”

Don’t make excuses, make things happen.

JIM MORRIS

Had Trouble Paying His Bills

As a teenager, Morris was a top pitching prospect until his arm gave out. After several surgeries he hung up his cleats and became a teacher and baseball coach in a small town. His players encouraged him to attend a tryout where he dazzled the scouts and made it to the Major Leagues at age 35.



“Something I should have achieved quite easily took me a long time to get around to.”

It’s never too late to try.

SPORTS

GEORGE FOREMAN

Lost His Boxing Title to an Unknown Fighter

As a professional boxer, Foreman finished his career with a record of 76-5, but his loss to Jimmy Young forced him to retire early. He came back at the age of 45 to become the oldest boxer ever to win a title. Most of his net worth of \$300 million comes from his popular George Forman Grills.



“Learning to enjoy today has two benefits: it gives me happiness right now, and it becomes a good memory later.”

Age is just a number.

DREW BREES

Let Go By His Team After Injury

In a meaningless game Drew Brees gave his all and blew out his shoulder, then the Chargers cut him. Only the lowly Saints were interested—then Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans. Drew Brees worked his way back and led his team to a Super Bowl, helping the city come back as well.



“When I injured my shoulder, I said this is the worst thing that could happen to me. Why me, why now? Now I look back and say it was probably the best thing that happened to me.”

Set a good example for others to follow.

MUSIC

NILES RODGERS

Diagnosed With Advanced Prostate Cancer

As the co-founder and front man of Chic, Nile Rodgers was a *huge* star in the disco era. After that he became a star maker for others as a songwriter, producer, and guitarist. Three decades later he was back on top again with the number one hit song *Get Lucky*, done in collaboration with Daft Punk.

Do what you have to do to stay in the game.



“When I was stricken with cancer, it was extremely aggressive and I was told to get my affairs in order. I decided playing music was the most therapeutic thing.”

GREEN DAY

Master Studio Tapes for New Album Were Stolen

Green Day’s 1994 debut album *Dookie* was an enormous success—one they couldn’t match with their next three releases. In 2003, they recorded a new album, but the master tapes were stolen from the studio. They started from scratch and the result was *American Idiot*, a Grammy-winning smash hit.

Bad things happen for a reason, often a good one.



“If we’re going to be onstage for the next two hours, we’re going to treat it like it’s the last time we will ever perform.”

MUSIC

ERIC CLAPTON

His Four-Year-old Son Fell to His Death

Eric Clapton is considered one of the greatest guitarists of all time, making him a millionaire a hundred times over. So why was he so miserable—and an alcoholic and addict? The death of his four-year-old son was a turning point. Clapton sobered up and spent millions building recovery centers.

Fame and fortune alone won't make you happy.



“In my lowest moments, the only reason I didn’t commit suicide was that I knew I wouldn’t be able to drink anymore if I was dead.”

AC/DC

The Band’s Lead Singer and Lyricist Died

After the super successful album *Highway to Hell*, AC/DC lead singer and main lyricist Bon Scott died suddenly. The band was unsure they could continue on without him. Enter Brian Johnson, who stepped in and helped craft *Back in Black*, the second best selling album of all time.

Be open to possibilities.



“People are famous for being famous and nothing else. And good luck to them, because it lasts about a year and then they’re nothing again.”

WRITERS

J.K. ROWLING

Single Mom Living in Poverty

Rowling wrote the first three chapters of Harry Potter just after her mom died and while pregnant and teaching English in Portugal. After a divorce, and struggling financially as a single mom, a literary agent asked to see the entire book—and we all know how this story ends.

Your next project can be the be the *one*.



“It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all—in which case, you fail by default.”

STEPHEN KING

Seriously Injured When Hit by Car While Walking

If Stephen King had given up writing when he wanted to he would still be a janitor—which was what he was doing when his wife pulled his manuscript out of the trash. Although King has sold 350 million books, he considered quitting again when he was hit by a car while walking.

We are stronger than we think we are.



“By the time I was fourteen the nail in my wall would no longer support the weight of the rejection slips impaled upon it. I replaced the nail with a spike and went on writing.”

WRITERS

ALICE WALKER

Considered Committing Suicide

As a young girl she was accidentally shot in the eye and blinded by her brother. While in college she had an abortion and the experience made her want to commit suicide. She channelled her grief into her poetry and later novels. *The Color Purple* was a best seller and critically acclaimed movie.



“Don’t wait around for other people to be happy for you. Any happiness you get you’ve got to make yourself.”

Find constructive ways to deal with difficulties.

ROBERT M. PIRSIG

Book Proposal Rejected 121 Times

Who would have thought *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Repair* would be a best seller? Initially, 121 publishers didn’t think a philosophical novel about a motorcycle trip would sell. One did and said, “This book is brilliant beyond belief, it is a work of genius, and will attain classic stature.”



Before he wrote his first book, Pirsig spent three years in and out of psychiatric hospitals where he was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and clinical depression.

Sometimes it only takes one believer.

ENTREPRENEURS

STEVE JOBS

Fired From Apple, The Company He Co-Founded

Steve Jobs is one of the most important people of the last 25 years. Yet he was fired from the company he started. So what did he do? He started other successful companies (Next, Pixar) until Apple begged him to come back and turn things around, which he did in spectacular fashion.

If you can do it once, you can do it again.



“Ask yourself, ‘If today were the last day of my life would I want to be do what I’m about to do?’”

BILL BOWERMAN

His Top Runner (Prefontaine) Died in a Car Crash

Who was Bill Bowerman? A war hero, an amazing track coach, and co-founder of Nike. While coaching track at the University of Oregon he experimented with making lighter running shoes in his kitchen with a waffle iron—failing, but trying again and again until he got it right.

Do the best you can with what you have.



“Everything you need is already inside you.”

Note: He ran for and lost in a bid for a House seat in the Oregon Legislature before Nike became successful.

ENTREPRENEURS

ELON MUSK

Was Severely Beaten and Bullied in School

Elon Musk is the force behind Tesla Motors, and one of the most successful entrepreneurs in recent times. Tesla was on the verge of going out of business when financing from major investors dried up. Musk restructured the company and turned things around.

Success is the best revenge.



“My proceeds from PayPal were \$180 million. I put \$100 million in SpaceX, \$70 million in Tesla, and \$10 million in Solar City. I had to borrow money for rent.”

SARAH BLAKELY

Credit Cards Kept Her Idea Alive

As a sales trainer for an office supply company, Blakely was required to wear panty hose—which she hated. So she set out to design what would become Spanx. She kept her job while shopping her idea around—with no luck—and worked at Danka (her day job) until sales reached \$4 million.

Don't quit your day job.



“If I had not failed the LSAT, I'd have been a lawyer and there would be no Spanx. I think failure is nothing more than life's way of nudging you off course.”