

George Washington's Secrets for Winning Your War of Financial Independence

As we celebrate our first president George Washington's birthday today, let's apply some wisdom from the leader of America's War of Independence to your financial war of independence.

Like you, George Washington faced a much stronger and richer opponent as he struggled to gain America's freedom from oppression. Like your financial oppressors, his enemies were determined to fight against his efforts to gain freedom. Against the odds, Washington won and achieved his destiny, and so can you.

Paradoxically, the two events that prepared him to be a great general were two humiliating defeats he suffered in the French and Indian War. In his first outing as a commander, he was forced to surrender to the French. Later, he was part of a British force decimated by the French and their Indian allies. However, he took charge and led the survivors in a fighting retreat that saved the force from total destruction. Washington teaches us that you can rise again from disaster.

Lesson?

Adversity is a great teacher.

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During the revolution, Washington put his lessons to work, knowing that you don't have to win every battle; you just have to survive to fight again. His army was defeated again and

again by superior enemy forces as his volunteers fought the best professionals in the world, but he never quit. The Americans lost their largest city and their capital, like many of us who have lost jobs and homes. Yet Washington was able to preserve his fighting ability by not sacrificing all in a hopeless battle. He survived his losses, kept on trying and was able to overcome his adversary at an opportune moment. And so can you.

Another lesson for us is the wisdom of reaching out for help when you need it. To fight the most powerful nation on earth, Washington sought a powerful ally, his old French enemy, to help him inflict a final defeat on his enemy at Yorktown. You, too, should look for allies in your war of independence: allies such as attorneys, accountants and counselors who can help you get free.

Finally, Washington teaches us to consolidate our victory. Even after winning the War of Independence, he knew that there were forces just waiting for the opportunity to destroy his hard-won freedom. Washington finished the job of securing freedom by helping establish a new government that could not enter into the oppressive practices that had caused the War of Independence. Similarly, you can govern yourself to stay free by avoiding bad financial practices like living on credit, which put you into bondage in the first place. Like Washington, you can achieve a destiny of success and freedom by keeping the independence you have won.

Learn from the father of our country, and you can become the father of yours.

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