

When Dread Tries to Overcome You

Have you ever faced a situation in which dread nearly shut you down? It might have been a looming tough decision, an unpleasant confrontation or some obligation totally outside of your comfort zone. It could be that you are faced with something you hate to do or for which the passion to do has left you. If you have, you have probably encountered the terrible feeling of dread.

It is so important to identify the onset of dread in its earliest stage. Not only does dread bring on extraordinary physical discomfort, but it also kills momentum, robs you of your joy and blocks productivity and progress. Dread is not your friend. To keep from being paralyzed by dread and maximize your momentum you must recognize the dread factor at its onset and deal with it firmly.

Recognize it as a common reaction. You may feel unique but you are not alone. You are no worse than anyone else simply because you feel it. Even though it is common you don't have to become a victim of it.

Recognize that dread begins with an either an external groan, an internal groan or both. Identify it at its early stages, and deal with it quickly.

Recognize that dread is an entry point for fear. Fear, left unchecked, paralyzes; you will lose productivity and momentum. Dread steals resources from you. It robs you of your good feeling. It will rob you of dollars left unearned and productivity declined, never to be recovered. It is extremely difficult to think clearly or to be creative when under the influence of dread. You cannot afford dread on your business' bottom line—what you do in the next hour or the next time

dread comes knocking will impact how much money is added to business' bank account.

The next time dread knocks on the door of your day, try these three steps:

- **Recognize—Know you are in the driver's seat.** You are not out of control. You can decide whether to be dread's victim or to be a victor over it. Once you decide not to agree with the dread, voice that decision aloud. Do not give your voice in any way to agree with dread; do not state it in any way that gives it a way forward in your day. Instead of proclaiming fear and loss, proclaim productivity and gain.
- **Redirect your energy into productive activity.** Just like a star basketball player, pivot from the block of fear and dread to focus and from distraction to productivity. Choose and take actions that agree with your proclamation of productivity.
- **Maximize your momentum in the right direction.** Dread is the fork in the road at which you must choose wisely. Do so, and you will maximize your momentum in the right direction, and dread will not be allowed to derail you.

This is for you today! Are you going to apply these simple principles for yourself to gain momentum forward? Great leaders are often faced with dread and discouragement. Daily they must decide to conquer rather than to be conquered. Join them today and decide not to fall prey to the profit drain of dread.

Job identified the normal outcome of dread and its power as a self-fulfilling prophecy:

“For the thing which I greatly feared has happened to me, and that which I dreaded has come to me” (Job 3:25).

Dread and fear are real. You still have difficult people and situations in your life. This can't be ignored. The power you

have is to refuse to let the added weight of dread and fear to take root in your spirit and rob you of momentum when these situations arise. Deal with dread powerfully and, as I have witnessed many times, you will gain momentum.

Here is a simple example from my experience of dealing with a difficult situation that had the potential for derailing my momentum. Recently I had to have an interesting discussion over a marketing issue that had the potential to be somewhat awkward. To avoid losing momentum to dread, I followed the advice I am giving to you.

As I felt dread rise in me, I immediately reframed the issue. Instead of framing it as a confrontation to avoid, I framed it as a productive conversation from which momentum was to be gained. All of this in a short three-minute conversation.

First, I took a moment and identified with her in her own struggles. I acknowledged the magnitude of the job she had to do. I expressed confidence in the things I had seen her do well.

Then, I expressed the need that was common for both us: the need to serve our customers well.

Then I planted the seed of a suggestion or two for her to think through over the next week or so. To follow that up I said, "I'd love to know how I can help you serve our customers better. Think about it. Let's do coffee in a week and figure this out."

What at first was a defensive posture turned into a smile and agreement. Instead of giving dread the opportunity to put the breaks on our momentum, together, we found a productive way forward.

At times of dread and fear we are not left on our own. The psalmist reminds us we can turn to the Lord at times of fear.

"I sought the Lord, and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears" (Ps. 34:4).

Paul encourages to take on a thought transplant: to replace thoughts of dread and fear with:

"Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue, and if there is any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8, emphasis mine).

The way you use your mind will determine your productivity. You can receive incredible results with these simple steps. Use the momentum of the dread and turn it to productivity. Seek to understand before being understood. When it arises, you get to decide.

How are you going to confront dread the next time it knocks on your door? {eo}

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