

# MAGNOLIA MINDS: Never give up

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You should never give up. It's easy to just call it quits, y'know? And perhaps there are times when you need to say, "I got nuthin'. I don't need to continue this track. I need to protect myself."

Granted. That's not what I'm talking about. In one sense, there are times when it's absolutely appropriate to back away. Rather, I'm talking about throwing in the proverbial towel just because things are horrendously tough.

There are times when I've given up, to my own shame. Whatever challenges I faced before giving up may have even gotten worse because I simply quit ... because I wanted to avoid any discomfort or potential hurt.

"Quitter." Who wants that title? If you never give up, then being a "quitter" isn't an issue.

I want to believe that "quitting" isn't the same thing as being a "quitter." But to never give up? That's not always been true of me.

- As a youth minister, there were times when I've given up on a wayward kid. My attitude was "I've given you my best shot, but we're done. I don't love you any less, but we're done."
- There have been other times when I've given up on other people. Maybe I just felt like I didn't have any reason to continue a relationship.
- Projects and goals? Have mercy. I have half-read books, half-written articles and even books, abandoned budgets, all sorts of health improvement schemes, and heaven knows what else.

I could go on, but I won't, because I want you to have your own list in mind.

Make no mistake – as I've stated, it is acceptable to fold your tent and move on if it's the thing to do. But when I say "never give up," I'm talking about quitting just because it's *hard*.

So you should never give up, and here are five reasons why.

### **1. You'll be better able to deal with your fears.**

When we give up, it's often because we're simply afraid. There may be some boogeyman out there waiting to pounce ... we quit because the unknown is really scary. Rather than take an acceptable risk, we just turn tail and run.

But if you persevere, you may just find that what was scaring you so badly was all in your head. So never give up just because you're afraid.

### **2. Your past doesn't determine your future.**

We all have regrets. There are things we see in our mental rear view mirrors that threaten to overtake us. We carry scars from bad experiences, bad relationships, and bad choices.

Well, that was *then* and this is *now*. While we are products of days gone by, we aren't trapped in them. We can choose wisely because we've learned from what happened back whenever.

We don't know the future. But we do know that it'll be different from the past, and we have real choices as to how our future will unfold. Never give up just because there's some bad stuff back there. Key phrase? It's *back there*.

### **3. Failure is important.**

Did you choke on that one?

It *is* important, and plays a big part in your desire to never

give up. If you fail, you evaluate what happened, apply whatever lessons you can learn from it, and *move on*. I'd classify this as "tough self-love."

If you've failed, it's evidence that you at least *attempted* something. It didn't work. It could have been a relational failure, a monetary failure, or just a dumb move.

Zig Ziglar said it best: "Failure is an event, not a person." So don't beat yourself up. If you've failed, it may end up being one of the best things that could've happened.

#### **4. You're better prepared for whatever comes your way.**

I like this thought. Think about it. When you're challenged and you're ready to call it a day, you still want to never give up. It's simple. Perseverance now leads to perseverance in the future.

You prove to yourself that you're able to call on resources you didn't know you had. And those little victories of self-control and self-discipline are building blocks for events to come.

Even now, you can probably look back on those little moments when, by golly, you held fast. You did it then; do it now.

#### **5. You can call on the supernatural strength that comes from God.**

Don't overlook this. You never give up because you aren't facing life alone.

I think other writers have said it more eloquently than me.

"We are always in the forge, or on the anvil; by trials God is shaping us for higher things." – *Henry Ward Beecher*

"God knows our situation; He will not judge us as if we had no difficulties to overcome. What matters is the sincerity and

perseverance of our will to overcome them.” – C. S. Lewis

“Nothing paralyzes our lives like the attitude that things can never change. We need to remind ourselves that God can change things. Outlook determines outcome. If we see only the problems, we will be defeated; but if we see the possibilities in the problems, we can have victory.” – Warren Wiersby

And, of course, ancient script:

### **Romans 5:3-5**

*More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.*

### **James 1:2-4**

*Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

That’s some good stuff right there. I don’t have anything to add.

Never give up.

Winston Churchill never gave a speech in which he said, “Never give up.” But he did give one where he said “Never give in.” It seems appropriate, and I’d encourage you to read the whole thing for context. Here’s a quote:

“But for everyone, surely, what we have gone through in this period – I am addressing **myself** to the School – surely from this period of ten months this is the lesson: never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never – in nothing, great or small, large or petty – never give in except to convictions

of honor and good sense.”