

## What Do The Mentally Strong Avoid?

**Mental Strength**

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**Given 18-Jan-14; Sermon #1194c**

Even though mankind in general rejects God's way of life, sometimes man seeks and finds the best way to accomplish something through experience and reason by looking at the facts, learning through experience, and analyzing the result as successes or failures. If he took the time to notice, he would find that God-inspired principles written down for us in Scripture are not only true but are the absolute best way to view and handle something. He could save himself a great deal of time and agony if he were to study God's Word—but man chooses to find out the best way to do things through hard knocks.

Amy Morin, a psychotherapist and licensed clinical social worker, compiled a list identifying the things mentally strong individuals *don't* do. The information appeared in *Forbes* under the subject 'Entrepreneurs', dated November 18, 2013. The title of which is, "Mentally Strong People: The 13 Things They Avoid." The definition of entrepreneur is simple: "A person who organizes, operates, and assumes the risk for a business venture." In a similar way, Christians must organize, operate, and assume the risk for their own lives and that of their families and brethren. So, it is wise for us to notice what successful and mentally strong people "avoid," "dodge," "evade," and "shy away from."

For all the time executives spend concerned about physical strength and health, when it comes down to it, mental strength can mean even more. Particularly for entrepreneurs, numerous articles talk about critical characteristics of mental strength—tenacity, grit, optimism, and an unfailing ability. Nevertheless, it's interesting to see how these 13 things that are important for entrepreneurs to avoid can help us improve our Christian lives.

Here is the list of what mentally strong people avoid, according to the list this woman compiled. I'm going to follow up each avoidance with one applicable scripture and no additional comment, for the sake of time.

**1. Avoid Wasting Time Feeling Sorry for Themselves.** You don't see mentally strong people feeling sorry for their circumstances or dwelling on the way they've been mistreated. They have learned to take responsibility for their actions and outcomes, and they have an inherent understanding of the fact that frequently life is not fair. They can emerge from trying circumstances with self-awareness and gratitude for the lessons learned.

**II Corinthians 10:12** For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

**2. Avoid Giving Away Their Power.** Mentally strong people avoid giving others the power to make them feel inferior or bad. They understand they must be in control of their own actions and emotions. They know they have the ability to manage the way they respond.

**Matthew 13:57** So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house."

Anything that people said about Jesus did not bother Him. He let it go.

**3. Avoid Shying Away from Change.** Mentally strong people embrace right change and they welcome the challenge. Their biggest fear, if they have one, is not of the unknown, but of becoming complacent and stagnant. An environment of change and even uncertainty can energize a mentally strong person and bring out their best.

**Revelation 3:15** "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot."

**4. Avoid Wasting Energy on Things They Can't Control.** Mentally strong people don't complain (much) about bad traffic, lost luggage, or especially about other people, as they recognize that all of these factors are generally beyond their control. In a bad situation, they recognize that the one thing they can control is their own response and attitude.

**Matthew 6:34** Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

**5. Avoid Worrying About Pleasing Others.** Know any people pleasers? Or, conversely, people who go out of their way to dis-please others as a way of reinforcing an image of strength? Neither position is a good one. A mentally strong person strives to be kind and fair and to please others where appropriate but is unafraid to speak up. They can withstand the possibility that someone will get upset and they will navigate the situation, wherever possible, with self-control.

**II Timothy 2:24-25** And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,

**6. Avoid Fearing Taking Calculated Risks.** A mentally strong person is willing to take calculated risks. This is a different thing entirely than jumping headlong into foolish risks. But with mental strength, an individual can weigh the risks and benefits thoroughly, and will fully assess the potential downsides and even the worst-case scenarios before they take action.

**II Timothy 1:7** For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

**7. Avoid Dwelling on the Past.** There is strength in acknowledging the past and especially in acknowledging the things learned from past experiences—but a mentally strong person is able to avoid miring their mental energy in past disappointments or in fantasies of the “glory days” gone by. They invest the majority of their energy in creating an optimal present and future. They plan ahead.

**Ephesians 4:20-23** But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in

Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

**8. Avoid Making the Same Mistakes Over and Over.** We all know the definition of insanity, right? It's when we take the same actions again and again while hoping for a different and better outcome than we've gotten before. A mentally strong person accepts full responsibility for past behavior and is willing to learn from mistakes. Research shows that the ability to be self-reflective in an accurate and productive way is one of the greatest strengths of spectacularly successful executives and entrepreneurs.

**Lamentations 3:40** Let us search out and examine our ways, and turn back to the Lord;

**9. Avoid Resenting Other People's Success.** It takes strength of character to feel genuine joy and excitement for other people's success. Mentally strong people have this ability. They don't become jealous or resentful when others succeed (although they may take close notes on what the individual did well). They are willing to work hard for their own chances at success, without relying on shortcuts.

**Proverbs 24:17** Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles;

**10. Avoid Giving Up After Failure.** Every failure is an opportunity to improve. Even the greatest entrepreneurs are willing to admit that their early efforts invariably brought many failures. Mentally strong people are willing to fail again and again, if necessary, as long as the learning experience from every "failure" can bring them closer to their ultimate goals.

**Psalms 73:26** My flesh and my heart fail; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

**11. Avoid Fearing Alone-Time.** Mentally strong people enjoy and even treasure the time they spend alone. They use their downtime to reflect, to plan, and to be productive. Most importantly, they don't depend on others to

shore up their happiness and moods. They can be happy with others, and they can also be happy alone.

**Lamentations 3:25-28** The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth. Let him sit alone and keep silent, because God has laid it on him;

**12. Avoid Feeling the World Owes Them Anything.** Particularly in the current economy, executives and employees at every level are gaining the realization that the world does not owe them a salary, a benefits package and a comfortable life, regardless of their preparation and schooling. Mentally strong people enter the world prepared to work and succeed on their merits at every stage of the game. Of course, we know that God is the one who blesses us for such efforts.

**II Thessalonians 3:10-12** For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread.

**13. Avoid Expecting Immediate Results.** Whether it's a workout plan, a nutritional regimen, or starting a business, mentally strong people are in it for the long haul. They know better than to expect immediate results. They apply their energy and time in measured doses and they celebrate each milestone and increment of success on the way. They have "staying power." And they understand that genuine changes take time.

**Romans 2:7-8** eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath,

All 13 of these things actually would make a good sermonette. If anyone needs a subject, you have 13 right there if you want to expand any of those.

This list identifying things mentally strong individuals don't do—the things they avoid—are also ways not to be discouraged. They are ways to stay more positive and become more successful. If people without God's Holy Spirit can find a certain amount of benefit from avoiding these things, how much more will *we* benefit by avoiding them?

There lies before everyone a choice between entering the way of wisdom (that is, things to do) and the way of folly (that is, things not to do—things to avoid). Which path is taken will determine the outcome of one's life.