

Mental Toughness Is Not an Option

“Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.” -Proverbs 4:7

In *Lovingly, Georgia: The Complete Correspondence of Georgia O’Keeffe and Anita Pollitzer*, Georgia O’Keeffe wrote

Anyone with any degree of mental toughness ought to be able to exist without the things they like most for a few months at least.

When I recently shared this quote on social media, someone asked the following question in reply: “I could, but why?”

Here’s the answer: “Because you must.”

No matter how much things may seem to be going your way right now, you’re going to get “no” for an answer at some point in the future. The fulfillment of at least some of your wishes, expectations, desires, and plans will be delayed or altogether denied. That’s not just a philosophical opinion for you to accept or reject, that’s a stone cold reality that everyone has to face.

There’s only one guarantee during this life: Before you leave this earth, you will know what it means to not get your way. Mental toughness is the ability to endure that fact.

Go after what you want, but don’t forget to develop what you need: the ability to manufacture meaning and motivation when the things you want don’t seem to want you back.