

Opportunity or Obstacle thinking

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## OPPORTUNITY OR OBSTACLE THINKING

### Introduction

Life is a compilation of many events. How we deal with these events determine our success and our general overview of life. These events shape our perceptions and attitudes towards life. Obstacles or opportunities are subjective to perception. We can either see an event as an opportunity or Obstacle depending on our mental programming that is shaped by past experiences, context, or even our preference. Most of the outrageous success stories involve people who overcome great events that would have been deemed as obstacles in life and took them as opportunities and become successful. This document discusses famous individuals who took life as either obstacles or opportunities.

Helen Keller is one of the outrageous success stories. She was born on 27th June 1880 in Alabama. Helen Keller, after only Living for 19 months, she contracted an unknown disease at that time of which it could have been meningitis or Scarlet fever. The doctors at that time described it as "acute congestion of the stomach and the brain." The disease left her blind and deaf, and she lived like that for the rest of her life. She described it as "living at sea in a dense fog" (Juliastuti, 2019). At an early age, she was able to formulate a few signs that she used in communicating with their family cook. By seven years old, she had formulated about 60 signs to help her communicate. At this early age, she was able to recognize and differentiate people depending on the vibrations that their footsteps made.

Helen Keller's big 'OW' came when Sullivan, her later companion in life, came into her life and began teaching her to communicate. A month after Sullivan arrived into her life, she identified the signs that Sullivan was intent on teaching her. She recognized the sign for water when Sullivan was teaching it to her, and that is when she realized that every object in the world has a different name than it is identified with. After that experience, she pressured Sullivan to

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teach her about all the words that exist in which she is familiar with the object. Despite being deaf and blind, she pushed herself to understand the mystery of language under the most difficult of events (Davidson, 2016). Even though she delayed in understanding language, it did not hinder her from communicating. Despite being deaf and blind, she did not isolate herself from the outside world. She enjoyed music by feeling vibrations of beats. Additionally, she developed connections with animals through touch.

In her situation, you'd have expected her to stay shy from the outside world due to her difference, but she does not, It showed the strongness of her will. Later she attended school for the blind and graduated in 1904 at the age of 24. She became a member of Phi Beta Kappa and the first-ever deaf and blind person to graduate with a degree in Bachelor of Arts. Wilhelm Jerusalem was among the first people to discover her talent literary and with whom she maintained a correspondence. Keller was determined to communicate with people as fluently as possible. She spent most of her life learning to speak and giving speeches on her life aspects. She figured out how to understand what other people are communicating by reading their lips as they spoke.

Additionally, she had a heightened touch sense. She used the braille proficiently, and she could also read the sign language with her hands. She was also taught by Zoellner Quarelet shortly before world war one; she could experience music close by placing her fingertips on a resonance table. In 1916, she delivered a speech at the "Mabel Tainter Memorial Building," and the details of that talk were gazette. The audience will always remember it as an inspi5ring speech. Helen Keller had overcome dumbness, deafness, and blindness, to give a full speech using her own mouth and lips to talk. She learned to talk despite all these conflicting issues in her speech development. She progressed in life to become an advocate for people living with

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disabilities and other numerous causes. Keller would later on become among the world's most famous author and speaker. In her life, she traveled to over 25 different countries in which she gave speeches on the conditions of the deaf. She became a radical socialist, a supporter for birth control, a suffragette, and a pacifist. In 1915 she formed the "Helen Keller International organization" together with George A. Kessler. The organization was devoted to nutrition, health, and vision research (Zhang et al., 2018). Additionally, she helped in the founding of the "American Civil Liberties Union." Keller was also active in politics, and she was friends with most of the famous figures in politics. In her life, despite her disabilities, she was a prolific author during the time of her life. By the age of eleven years, she had written "The Frost King." She wrote on a great number of things; she wrote on her thoughts about the world, giving insights on how she felt. In her life, she was able to achieve a lot. Despite being deaf and blind, she was so accomplished. She reacted to these disabilities as opportunities to do something great in which she did. In her life, she was widely celebrated for her courage and everything she was accomplishing. She did not view her inability as an obstacle but rather used it to become successful.

Another example of a human who defied the odds to become a great success is Ronald Reagans. Ronald Reagan was born from a low-income family. However, he did not let this define him as he grew to become a president in the United States of America. Despite coming from humble beginnings, Ronald Reagan was able to accomplish a lot in his life. He graduated in 1932 from Eureka College and worked for several radio stations as a sports commentator. Later in 1937, after moving to California, he became an actor and was the star in a few productions that were major( Brands, 2016). He was the elected president of "Screen Actors Guild" twice, in which he worked to remove underlying communist influences. He moved to television in the

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1950s as a motivational speaker, and it was during this time that he became a conservative. By the year 1962, he was a democrat but later changed to become a Republican. He was elected as California's governor in 1964 and created attention as a conservative spokesman. He did great a number of things coming from humble beginnings. He was elected twice as President of the United States of America despite failing to get nomination twice from the Republican Party. Ronald Reagan was strong-willed. Most people would not have accomplished as much or would have even given up on their bid for the presidency after failure in getting their party's nomination twice, but he did not. Additionally, he became the oldest president to be elected for office with 69 years old until recently when Donald Trump was elected with 70 years. Moreover, he won the elections with the largest number ever recorded in electoral votes. As president, he did not forget about the struggles of low-income families owing he came from one. He implemented policies that made the low income lives better by reducing taxes and other policies which eased their survival.

Not all of his activities were supported. Some met opposition to a point where there was an attempt on his life. He survived the assassination attempt and increased the activities, which almost got him murdered (Krason, 2018). He stood his grounds on matters that were life-threatening, and the economy improved, reducing inflation significantly. He left office with an approval rating of 68 percent, which is among the highest rating for presidents who are departing. In his life, he faced numerous challenges but decided to view them as opportunities instead of obstacles and was able to achieve great success in life. Coming from humble beginnings, it was unimaginable that he would one day rule the United States nation and also become among the best ones that the country has had. He was the first president to serve for both

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terms as the first five who he had succeeded did not complete two terms in office. In the list of American presidents, Ronald Reagan is associated with the Upper tier.

Tim Tebow is another phenomenal character. He was born under trying circumstances. When his mother was pregnant with him, she fell into a coma due to infection by Amoebic dysentery. The medications caused her placental abruption severely. This led the doctors to advocate for an abortion since they foresaw a stillborn. Abortion was illegal in the Philippines, even if the case was severe. The Tebows decide that they will risk birth and not abort the baby, and Tim Tebow was born in 1987 14<sup>th</sup> August in Manila. Tim's parents' homeschooled him and his siblings, instilling deep Christian values and beliefs in them. Tebow was born dyslexic, but he did not view this as an obstacle but as a uniqueness provided to him by God. He began his career in high school football at a tight end in "Trinity Christian Academy." The school allowed him to play in their team and also stay homeschooling because he did not have to enroll to play in their team. He later became prominent in his junior days as a footballer due to his outstanding throwing and running abilities. He was also intensely competitive and even became Florida's player of the year. In his senior years, Tim Tebow was named Mr football in Florida and also won several other awards for his skills. He was later drafted in the NFL in 2009 in his senior season. Tim Tebow always knelt after making a pass to thank God, showing his deeply instilled cultures and values (Frost, 2017). The action of praying in the field was later called Tebowing due to his actions. His state of being dyslexic did not stop him from pursuing a career in professional football as a quarterback. He also went on to become a broadcaster.

In conclusion, life offers different experiences to choose from. We can either take part in it live proactively despite the differences we might have or accept defeat in life as a challenge. All of these examples are cases in which they turned what many would have seen as misfortune

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to an opportunity to do greatness. They refused to view their differences or limitations as obstacles to becoming successful. From these examples, we can learn how to make the best out of every event and make it a success story.

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