

TOP TIPS: FOR OVERCOMING ADVERSITY AND RESILIENCE



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Up until a few years ago Justin was a highly skilled pipe technician and a team leader within the utilities industry. On the 28th October 2015 the decision to attend to a burst water main with a colleague proved to be one of life or death...

Whilst repairing a burst water main a miscommunication resulted in the mains water being switched on before the job had been completed and the pressure of the water forcing a torque wrench into his face at around 80mph. Justin was knocked unconscious and was at the bottom of a hole which was rapidly filling with water; fortunately he was wearing a hi-vis vest which meant he could be seen under water, especially as a street light was directly above the hole. Whilst still unconscious, his colleague got into the hole and dragged him out, by chance a local resident who worked for St Johns ambulance was able to stabilise him until help could arrive.

After undergoing numerous operations in a specialist hospital, Justin lost all vision in his right eye. But more devastating news was to follow when the Surgeon informed him that due to the severity of his head injury, it would be inevitable that he would get an infection and was likely to live for no more than 4 years. Justin chose to undergo an operation that carried a 50% risk of fatality.

1. Choices – Ripples in the pond

Some say destiny is no matter of choices, others say if it's to be, it's up to me! All I know is seven years ago I made some choices that had a major affect on myself and my family forever. I threw a stone into the pond, and it didn't just create a ripple but a Tsunami. My choices effected family, friends, colleagues, and complete strangers. Sometimes we can't change what happens to us in life but the thing we can change is how we respond to it and that is our choice, I had to choose how I wanted to respond to what had happened and I dug deep inside and wanted to turn a horrific accident into a positive.

2. Chances – rolling the dice

Why did I roll the dice? Why did I have the mindset to just get the job done? Perhaps to make money, or to be the best gang in the yard. Taking chances in life can help us expand the parameters of our experiences and help us reach the goals we set out to achieve but we rarely think about what if I take a chance that is unsafe and what would the consequences be. If you are going to take risks, make sure they are smart risks, develop a system of assessing smart risks don't always look at the upside take a couple of seconds to step back and just think Is it worth it?

3. Time Vs Risk – 168 drive

We all operate to a 168 drive, or they say humans are 168 machines, that's how many hours there are in a week and sometimes we do some crazy things to save a bit of time, whether it's carrying all your shopping into the house with a bag hanging off every finger or strimming in the summertime with flip flops on. Nobody ever comes up to you and says "hey, there is a longer way of doing that!" Of course, they don't, it's always a quicker way, but rarely do we whey up the risk we take to save that bit of time, yes, we can achieve greater business efficiency but sometimes the balance is not equal.

4. Change – Life is short, live it to the fullest

We have always lived in a world of change, but we recognise we are now in a world with an unprecedented speed of change. Desires can be made so quickly for whatever reason, but take your time to always think critically to make informed judgments, to ensure desires are always made so far as in reasonably practicable. Pioneering humour researcher Rod A Martin, who has studied the effects of different styles of humour has found that witty banter or affiliative humour can lighten the mood and improve social interaction.

5. Consequences – The night of the dark side

Everyone around me and myself have had to learn to live with the results and the impact of the accident that night, some stuff that couldn't be avoided some stuff that could either way it happened. I never knew in a million years that it would be my family who took the biggest impact that night especially my wife, they are the ones who are left behind to pick up the pieces. I live my life now on the philosophy that if you get knocked down seven times you get up eight and you keep moving forward, life doesn't stop or go backwards, everyone has the ability to achieve whatever they want in life you just have to talk to yourself in a positive way, self-esteem is the bedrock to human performance.