



## Rebounders

### How Winners Pivot From Setback to Success

#### THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

Let's face it: Setbacks happen, and failure is always a possibility. But here's the good news: Amazing success has been achieved by people who once fell flat on their faces. The secret lies in how we respond to life's bumps and potholes and unwelcome detours — from getting fired or losing a business to enduring a professional rejection or pursuing a passion that fails to pan out. Misfortune, it turns out, can be a springboard to success.

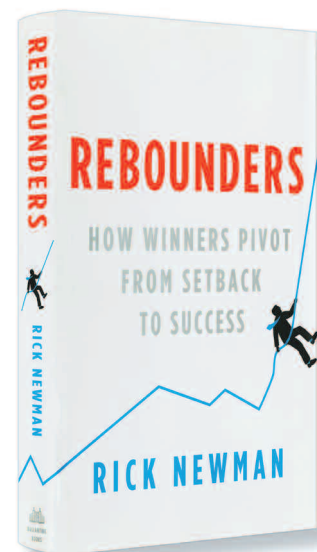
In *Rebounders*, prominent journalist Rick Newman examines the rise and fall — and rise again — of some of our most prolific and productive figures in order to demystify the anatomy of resilience. He identifies nine key traits found in people who bounce back that can transform a setback into the first step toward great accomplishment. Newman turns many well-worn axioms on their head as he shows how virtually anybody can improve their resilience and get better at turning adversity into personal and professional achievement.

Each lesson is highlighted by candid and inspiring stories from notable people, including Vanguard founder Jack Bogle, musician Lucinda Williams, inventor Thomas Edison, army veteran and double-amputee Tammy Duckworth and former New York Yankees manager Joe Torre.

In this uncertain and unstable time, *Rebounders* lays out the new rules for success and equips you with the tools you need to get ahead and thrive.

#### IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- Why setbacks can be a secret weapon.
- How defensive pessimism trumps optimism.
- The importance of knowing when to walk away at the right time.
- How to “own the suck” and rise above true hardship.



by Rick Newman

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# THE COMPLETE SUMMARY: REBOUNDERS

by Rick Newman

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## Introduction: Four Surprises About Failure

What am I doing wrong?

This is a lousy question to have to ask yourself. Most people, when faced with a major disappointment, come up with a lot of other explanations before they begin to examine their own culpability.

I avoided asking myself that uncomfortable question for years — but finally ran out of convincing alternative explanations. I had been divorced for a while. A custody battle had gone against me, forcing me to move two hundred miles to another city to be near my two kids. That meant giving up a prominent job with a lot of valuable connections — the lifeblood of success for a journalist like me — and taking a more obscure one where I started with an empty Rolodex.

I lived in a cluttered rental apartment. Many other people I knew seemed to be in an upgrade phase of life. For me it was like trudging up a long stairway, gasping for air while other people were cruising upward on an escalator. Then my industry started to struggle, as news began to appear free on the Internet, and newspapers and magazines began to lose money, then go out of business altogether.

To overcome the career setback, I applied the doctrine of hard work: Keep applying effort until you get what you want. But it wasn't paying off. So after I pondered the awful possibility that maybe I was doing something wrong and causing my own frustration, I asked myself an even worse question: Was I failing?

I applied my journalistic instincts and started to research failure. What I found was more enlightening than I expected. A lot of renowned and successful peo-

ple had failed at something, occasionally at something big. The lucky ones failed early and learned quickly, whereas others failed later or took longer to get over it. But the important thing always seemed to be that they learned from failure and used that knowledge to become better and more successful.

As I continued my inquiry, one revelation followed another, and I made these four important discoveries:

**1. Setbacks can be a secret weapon.** When I began to study successful people and ask them to tell me their stories, it became clear that the pivotal events in their lives weren't the breakthrough moments when everything finally fell into place, but the quit points, when success was in doubt and support was scarce. Overcoming setbacks can make people stronger, smarter and more durable. Psychologists call this quality resilience.

**2. Small adversities matter, just like big ones.** Many non-traumatic events count as legitimate adversities: job or relationship stress, money woes, a nagging illness, even getting stuck in traffic. Small challenges are the building blocks of resilience. That's how we develop the vital skills that help us cope with bigger setbacks in the future.

**3. We're addicted to alluring shortcuts and incomplete slogans.** It's not really true that you can do anything you set your mind to. Just loving what you do probably isn't enough; you also have to be good at it, often really good. And if you love to do something that nobody's willing to pay for, don't expect to make a living at it. Consider it a hobby instead.

**4. Optimism is overrated.** For some people, optimism is the same as denial. If you believe that things will work out simply because they should, you might be ignoring problems. Successful people rarely believe



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things will simply work out. They're more apt to practice "defensive pessimism," anticipating worst-case scenarios so they're prepared when things go wrong.

Some people, I began to realize, react to failure much better than others. I began to call them Rebounders because they have an enviable set of skills that enables them to bounce back from adversity. Wallowers, by contrast, often do the opposite. They get rattled when something goes wrong, even something small. They spend a lot of time figuring out who to blame for problems, usually absolving themselves.

I wanted to know what kept Rebounders going, where their confidence came from, how they found their way in the dark and what they learned along the way. ●

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### What Makes a Rebounder

"What doesn't kill me makes me stronger," wrote German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche in his book *Twilight of the Idols*. Nietzsche, it turned out, was more right than he knew: enduring a few slings and arrows can make people happier than living a charmed life and experiencing none at all.

Resilience is the core strength of a Rebounder. And while Rebounders have been around forever, the science that helps us understand their special qualities is relatively new and still evolving. Researchers have proven that some resilience is innate. About one-third of people are born with a natural reservoir of resilience that allows them to cope effectively with challenges or setbacks, overcome them and end up better off.

But what about the other two-thirds? One of the most important insights about resilience is that it's as learnable as any other skill, and it doesn't take years of psychoanalysis or other rigorous effort to accomplish.

The opportunities to learn resilience and add to our natural supply begin when we're kids. Decades of research now make it clear that "controlled" exposure to adversity helps kids become confident and adaptable. Several of the Rebounders I interviewed and studied endured some kind of unusual stress as children, such as an abusive parent, divorce, financial strain or neighborhood violence. Some people feel comfortable taking measured risks as adults because they learned as kids that they can survive scary challenges. The good news is that resilience is learnable at any age, and it pays dividends no matter when it starts to work in your favor.

There can be an upside to stressful events, which can transform and improve the way we react to them. ●

### The Elements of Persistence

Americans find it gratifying to think of their nation as a land of natural geniuses or trailblazers destined for greatness. But that's highly romanticized. Since its founding, America has been a nation of failers. What makes it a remarkable place is that America is also a nation of Rebounders.

Benjamin Franklin ran away from his parents in Boston at the age of 17. His first business venture left him out of money and stranded in London for 18 months, unable to pay the return fare. George Washington lost his father at the age of 11, which forced him to forgo a college education, a gap that nagged at him his entire life. He bumbled through a variety of frontier skirmishes early in his military career, suffered financial duress and lost more battles than he won during the Revolutionary War.

Thomas Edison was perhaps the ultimate Rebounder. He cultivated failure in his hundreds of laboratory experiments because he knew that rich learning came from studying mistakes and capitalizing on them. He endured three economic depressions in his career and ran short of money many times. Yet he rarely got discouraged. He famously said, "Genius is one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration."

Edison's boyhood seems to have been a model experiment in itself, a series of small challenges that gradually grew bigger as the boy became adept at handling them. Edison learned that he had the ability to land on his feet. He was becoming resilient.

#### Edison's Lessons for Innovators

But Edison's legendary persistence — the "perspiration" part of his "Genius is one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration" formula — wasn't simply the result of hard work. Edison succeeded over and over for three reasons that are as valid for innovators today as they were then. First, instead of making all-or-nothing gambles on one or two consuming ideas, Edison developed many ideas at once and prioritized those that seemed to be most promising. He was an inveterate multitasker. Second, he learned to let pragmatism be his guide, prioritizing practical inventions over ones he grew emotionally attached to. Finally, Edison found remarkable value in failed experiments and other setbacks, which often produced insights and nuggets of knowledge that contributed to other breakthroughs later on. Edison rarely felt discouraged when he hit a quit point because to him every setback was a signpost that might point to a more productive outcome in a different direction.

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Edison's first major invention involved a rookie mistake that many first-time entrepreneurs have repeated since: he came up with a clever innovation before bothering to find out if anybody would be willing to pay for it. Edison vowed to "never waste time inventing things that people would not want to buy." Another early lesson for Edison was the value of backup plans, and if one project didn't pan out, he usually had another to turn to.

Edison's breakthroughs were laborious, and many occurred only because he had the confidence to challenge his own assumptions. ●

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### When Hardship Is a Privilege

Jack Bogle was born just a few months before the Wall Street crash that marked the start of the Great Depression. Bogle's parents lost a sizable inheritance from a lucrative family business. Bogle's father became a heavy drinker. There never seemed to be enough money for anything. Bogle's father eventually lost his job, then moved out.

Jack got into Princeton, where a scholarship covered part of the cost, and he took jobs to pay for the rest. Years of privation made him determined to build a successful career, and he chose as a topic for his thesis, "The Economic Role of the Investment Company." He interviewed for a job with Wellington Management Company. Walter L. Morgan hired the smart young Princetonian and tapped Bogle to be his successor.

The stock market began to plunge in 1973, the start of a bear market that would last five years. It was 10 to one in favor of firing Bogle. Then, another option materialized. Bogle had a second role at Wellington as chairman of the various mutual funds the firm administered.

### The Birth of Vanguard

He named the fund company The Vanguard Group. He proposed that it start an "index" fund that wouldn't be managed by so-called experts trading stocks every day. Instead, it would be "passively managed," simply holding shares in all the firms comprising the S&P 500 stock index. The advantage would come from extremely low costs. Like many innovative new ideas, it barely survived its debut. Critics dubbed the fund Bogle's Folly, and some of his own colleagues suggested scrapping the idea. But Bogle trusted his math. No, he said, it will just take some patience.

By 1990, Vanguard was the second largest mutual fund company in America.

After getting fired as CEO, he could've been satisfied with the role he salvaged for himself and the fund com-

pany and quietly fulfilled his duties instead of launching a disruptive reform plan and trying to remake the business. He could've given up when Vanguard's first index fund flopped. All along, Bogle had heart problems that provided ample excuse to take extended leave or to retire.

"I have come to regard failure as another essential of leadership," Bogle wrote. "It is often best if things do not come too easily in this life." On a list of lessons for entrepreneurs that Bogle generated, number two was, "Turn disaster into triumph." Number four was, "Get fired." ●

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### The Dangers of Optimism

For a while in his 40s, Jon Luther worried that he might never reverse a sharp career downturn that left him struggling to pay his bills and pushed his boldest ambitions far out of reach.

Luther grew up in a tough, working-class neighborhood. He left the local liberal arts college after two years because of too much partying and too little studying. He flipped burgers and tended bar. His first real job was managing the cafeteria of a Wurlitzer plant in North Tonawanda, New York, where 400 hungry Polish women came for lunch every day.

After a stint at Aramark running the company's luxury restaurant division, Luther felt it was time to break free of the corporate mothership and do something on his own. He started talking to some investors. They offered him the chance to run a food service company called Benchmark. He invested most of his life savings in Benchmark.

His dream popped quickly. The economy began to slow. He thought the investors were just as committed as he was. He learned otherwise when they decided to sell the whole operation and abruptly fired him one day in late 1990. It left Luther out of a job and nearly out of money. Both of his kids were in college by then, and a nationwide recession was beginning.

### A Rebounder Takes Off

Jerry Jacobs's company had contracts to provide the food at a variety of stadiums and arenas. The weakest part of the company serviced airports. Luther's name came up when Jacobs started looking for someone to turn around the airport division. Jacobs offered him the job. Luther became president of a money-losing subsidiary known as CA One, operating 38 airport restaurants that were far down the food chain from the luxury bistros he once ran. High costs and falling revenues left understaffed restaurants serving stale, unappetizing food.

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He started by asking the airports to slash their rent in exchange for a pledge to remake the restaurants, bring in more customers and boost revenue by 30 percent.

The first level of reforms was to make some airport dining areas more like the food court at the mall, with familiar brands and food that was at least tasty and affordable. He brought in chains like Au Bon Pain and Burger King. Los Angeles became a turning point. Luther's first move was to approach renowned California chef Wolfgang Puck. The first Wolfgang Puck Express opened in LAX's Terminal 7 in 1995. Puck's imprimatur helped draw other upscale eateries. Luther's new concepts drew strong reviews in the press. CA One turned a steep loss into a healthy profit.

He's far from the first human being to be motivated by poverty — or the fear of it — but that alone isn't what got Luther through a crucible moment. He also summoned Rebounder skills that helped him identify his weaknesses, strengthen his own capabilities and sustain the confidence it took to keep taking risks.

Sometimes it's the stumbles that reveal what you still need to learn. "I always felt I had to work harder because I didn't have that four-year degree," Luther told me. "I've always been a continuous learner." ●

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### How Passion Misleads

The dangerous myth about passion is that if you love something intensely enough, you'll be successful at it. Just do something you love, the saying goes, and the rest will fall into place. Many of us know people who disprove that adage, and there's now some scientific data that backs up the anecdotal evidence. The concept is pleasingly simple: Practice makes perfect, and 10,000 hours of it seems to be a threshold at which greatness becomes possible. Yet devoting 10,000 hours to any one thing is a huge commitment that requires a lot more than passion and blocks out many other activities people find enjoyable, so it could be a goal reached only by people who are extraordinary to start with. You can still get good at something by devoting 5,000 hours to it or 2,000 hours, but don't expect to develop the kind of expertise that makes you a breakthrough success.

Musician Lucinda Williams followed her bliss down a rutted, unmarked road that seemed to lead nowhere for a long time. She spent much of her career struggling in the professional dead zone between country, folk, rock and blues. Record companies repeatedly dropped her because they couldn't figure out how to promote her music. She refused to conform to more recognizable styles that would have been far easier to commercialize.

### The Long Road to Success

Twenty-five years after she started performing, Williams finally produced a bestselling record and earned one of the most coveted adjectives in her profession, becoming a Grammy award-winning musician. Her uncompromising individuality became the very thing that drew thousands of fans. But for a long time, it seemed like a liability that could derail her career. Her ambition was modest. "Pay the rent and just make a living playing music," she said. It took years to reach it. "I've seen so many people with talent but without the drive," she said.

As somebody who had made an all-or-nothing bet on a music career, she was a case study in the cost and the reward of following your bliss. Most people can't afford to stick with something they love for 20 years if they are not earning a decent living at it. But Williams also personifies the challenges that many people face at decision points that force them to choose a direction in their career and try to get better at something they love.

Lucinda Williams didn't have to bounce back from one huge or daunting failure. Instead, she had to withstand a series of minor setbacks that were exhausting in their endlessness. Like many Rebounders, she also had an accurate understanding of what she was good at and what she wasn't, a key component of resilience that helps distinguish Rebounders from unrealistic dreamers.

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### When to Quit

Tim Westergren had passion, drive and talent, and he probably hit the elusive 10,000-hour threshold associated with high achievement at a fairly early point in his career. But after years of effort, all he had to show for it was a raging case of burnout and an empty bank account. So he tried something else for four years and struggled at that, too. In his third attempt at a career, Westergren founded the Internet radio site Pandora, which *The New York Times* described as a startup that spent most of its first decade on the "verge of death."

Westergren's story provides an alternative view of persistence and shows that Rebounders follow no fixed template. Instead of sticking with one thing until he got it right, Tim Westergren quit one thing, then another, then tried something nobody had ever thought of after his first two efforts didn't work out. He showed the ability to shift his goals and even change his mind when new circumstances arose. And there was consistency to Westergren's pursuits because all along, he was indulging something he loved — music. If he hadn't failed to make a living at it, Pandora probably wouldn't exist.

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After graduating from Stanford University in 1988, he formed a six-person band called Yellowwood Junction, which did all the things a band needs to do to have a shot at commercial success. But Yellowwood Junction never made enough money to ease the financial stress on the band members, and tensions grew. “I remember the relief I felt when I decided one day I’m no longer going to do it,” Westergren said. “In some ways, that’s your compass.”

### Mapping the Mind of Music

For his next act, Westergren got into something equally competitive: composing film scores. While analyzing different types of music, he realized that he could create a mental map of hundreds of musical attributes. Most listeners, he realized, tended to prefer certain musicological characteristics — distinct elements of melody, harmony, tempo, instrumentation, rhythm, vocal style and mood.

Then he realized that this idea — mapping all the individual characteristics of music the way scientists had started mapping all the characteristics of DNA — might be the basis for a business. He envisioned a service that might help music lovers and musicians connect more efficiently.

In the late ‘90s, venture capitalists were eager to fund almost any idea that might turn out to be the next technology breakthrough. But after the dot-com bubble burst, Westergren spent most of 2002 firing his staff as the money ran out. He maxed out 11 credit cards and took out all the personal loans he could. It amounted to about \$250,000 in personal debt.

He made hundreds of pleas to investors, begging for money to keep his company alive. On the 348th attempt, he got what he was after. The investors ponied up \$9 million, which was enough to plug the huge hole in the ship and start running his organization like a more professional company. He rehired some of the talented employees he had been unable to keep back in 2002 and then recruited a CEO, Joe Kennedy, who had run successful businesses at E-Loan and General Motors.

By 2007, Pandora had 7 million registered users and more than half a million songs in its database. But unforeseen problems are a fact of life at startups. A government panel that regulates music royalties tripled the fee that online radio services like Pandora had to pay record companies every time they played a song. More than 1 million Pandora users contacted Congress. The regulators didn’t give Pandora everything it wanted, but they lowered the royalty rates enough for Pandora to stick with its business model.

By adjusting his thinking, Westergren found new ways to follow his bliss until one of them finally paid off. Westergren capitalized on his failures. The unique challenges of managing a band turned out to be good practice for running a startup. An awareness of his own limited prospects led him to seek ways to distinguish himself. The jobs he left behind were contributions to his personal database of knowledge, which finally became deep enough to persuade skeptical venture capitalists to invest millions in him. ●

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### Own the Suck

Severe hardships can be the toughest tests we face in life, capable of neutralizing ambition and wrecking years of careful planning. People who overcome traumatic adversities often do it by applying habits learned through lesser setbacks. In the same way that small triumphs can help build incremental layers of competence and toughness, overcoming major hardships can generate new-found capabilities that may not emerge any other way.

One day toward the end of 2004, 36-year-old Tammy Duckworth awoke in a hospital room, wondering where she was and what happened. She heard doctors and nurses talking about a helicopter crash. It came back to her in fragmented, terrifying snapshots. Iraq. Heat. Sky. Dust. A deafening flash. Screeching machinery. Blood. Fear. For days in the hospital, she felt an overwhelming sense of dread as she grasped at comprehension.

Over the following months, Duckworth would transform shock, horror, pain and a crippling new disability into an intensified sense of purpose. Modest goals grew into more ambitious ones. Her pace of accomplishment accelerated. Barriers to advancement that had once seemed imposing no longer got in the way. Duckworth developed the confidence to try bold and difficult things because the risk of failing no longer intimidated her.

Captain Tammy Duckworth, call sign Mad Dog 06, was a Black Hawk helicopter pilot assigned to the Illinois National Guard’s 106th Aviation Battalion when it was sent to Iraq in 2004.

On November 12, 2004, Duckworth and her crew started flying around 7:00 a.m., ferrying troops and supplies around Baghdad in support of a big battle raging near Fallujah, about 40 miles west of the Iraqi capital. When they were just 10 minutes from landing, Duckworth heard the alarming metallic sound of small-arms fire strafing the side of her aircraft. Almost simultaneously, a blinding fireball tore through the floor of the helicopter’s right front quarter where her feet were and blew straight through the top of the aircraft.

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Duckworth instinctively tried to press the foot pedals that controlled the helicopter to get it on the ground. But the pedals had been blown off. So had most of her right leg and her left leg below the knee.

Duckworth had never experienced personal trauma or anything remotely close. But she still felt like she knew what she needed to do in order to recover. Like Jack Bogle and many other Rebounders, she had learned early on that hard work was a reliable formula for overcoming challenges.

She wanted to know what it would take to pilot a helicopter with artificial legs. The answer started with a lot of mundane and often painful exercises. She welcomed them, doing four repetitions if the therapist told her to do three. “Rehabilitation was my new mission,” she said.

### The Hard Road to Washington

As she recovered, Duckworth got drawn sporadically into the klieg lights of official Washington. Sen. Richard Durbin, from her home state of Illinois, invited her to be his guest at the 2005 State of the Union address. She met top officials from the Pentagon, who occasionally stopped by Walter Reed to visit with injured troops. Duckworth also got to know Barack Obama, the other senator from Illinois.

The idea of running for office terrified Duckworth. She was comfortable taking on tough challenges as long as it was in the incremental, familiar manner that had helped her excel at flight school. But doing something new and risky was something she had always dreaded. For all of her pluck, Duckworth was still a political novice, running as a Democrat in a district that was largely Republican. She lost the sixth district by a narrow 51 to 49 margin.

It was just the sort of rejection she had long feared, and for a while, it felt crushing. But three days after the election, Illinois’s governor offered her another job as director of veterans affairs for the state. She jumped at the chance. She campaigned for Barack Obama when he ran for president in 2008, and after he won, Obama appointed her to be one of the top officials in the Department of Veterans Affairs in Washington.

“In Iraq,” she said, “we had this phrase: ‘owning the suck.’ It sucks being over there. It sucks being deployed. Know that it sucks. Acknowledge the suck. Own it. But keep doing your job. Because you have to do your job.”

After serving more than two years in the Veterans Affairs office, Duckworth left in the middle of 2011 to prepare for another run for Congress in the 2012 elec-

### The Soldier’s Creed

Duckworth asked her husband to hang a copy of the Soldier’s Creed near her bed. It says, in part, this:

*I will always place the mission first.*

*I will never accept defeat.*

*I will never quit.*

*I will never leave a fallen comrade.*

The creed, notably, doesn’t say, “I will never fail.” Instead, it says, “I will never accept defeat,” no doubt because there are many failures in military affairs, which is often the art of accomplishing the difficult. Defeat would be yielding to those failures and giving up.

tions. Losing again, she knew, would suck. But she also knew that if it happened, she would own it. ●

### From Wallower to Rebounder

Rebounders don’t always know they’re Rebounders. Anybody who doubts their potential as a Rebounder should learn about the transformation of Joe Torre, the professional baseball player and manager who led the New York Yankees to six American League titles in the 12 years he spent managing the team and four World Series championships. When the Yankees hired Torre in 1995, he had the hallmarks of a has-been: He was in his mid-fifties with a career losing record as a manager. Plus he had been fired from each of the three teams he had managed before.

One big factor in Torre’s long-sought success was longevity. Like Lucinda Williams, John Luther and many other Rebounders, he stuck with his craft long enough to overcome mid-career setbacks and capitalize on the experience that takes years to build. But other key factors were the peaks and valleys of his own playing career, from the highs he hit when winning the MVP award in 1971 to the lows he endured as a part-time player in decline on a losing team.

### The Voice of Experience

Torre knew what it felt like to be a cocky up-and-comer hiding his own fear of failure, a star and a discouraged down-and-outer questioning his own contribution to the team. There were 25 talented professionals on a team, and a lot of them had to deal with less playing time or other managerial decisions that seemed unfair. “I know what it’s like to play on a part-time

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basis,” Torre said. “I knew how to sit down at somebody’s locker with them. They respect the fact that I’ve experienced it. It made me a better manager.”

Torre also felt that beneath the fear and anxiety he endured when he was younger and the dismissive arrogance that later masked those feelings, he had a kind of empathy for the underdog that made him a good listener, another skill that helped him as a manager. Listening to his players and figuring out how best to use each one of them game by game gave Torre the kind of edge that made him a repeat World Series champ. “It’s a matter of continuing to learn, continuing to find things out about people. We won four World Series, but we did it a different way each time.”

Joe Torre could have remained arrogant and self-absorbed and still ended up with an impressive playing career. But Torre probably would not have become a model manager if he hadn’t learned how to break free of his own struggles, understand his failures and listen to other people worth trusting. He was a Rebounder long in the making. ●

### The Nine Attributes of Rebounders

All the Rebounders I studied exhibit basic qualities that are typically associated with success but aren’t unique to Rebounders. Here are the nine additional attributes that give Rebounders an important edge:

- **They accept failure.** For Rebounders, failure is frequently an option. That’s because they attempt things that are hard to do. Most Rebounders hate to fail. But if that happens, they fail productively.
- **They compartmentalize emotions.** A kind of equanimity allows them to overcome guilt, blame, anger and other bad feelings that often accompany setbacks. They don’t internalize bad feelings or become dominated by emotion.
- **They have a bias toward action.** Taking purposeful action to fix a problem is one of the hallmarks of resilient people. They do it because they believe they can influence what happens next, instead of capitulating to the vagaries of fate.
- **They change their minds sometimes.** Changing your mind often means you have to be able to recognize your own mistakes. Rebounders have confidence in their ability to adjust.
- **They prepare for things to go wrong.** Few Rebounders expect everything to go their way just

because they feel they deserve it or because they’re lucky. They’ve learned through personal experience that effort produces results.

- **They’re comfortable with discomfort.** Rebounders are willing to accept hardships and inconveniences as long as they feel they’re getting close to an important goal.
- **They’re willing to wait.** There’s rarely a substitute for time when it comes to the accumulation of vital experience. What sets Rebounders apart is the determination to succeed on their own terms no matter how long it takes.
- **They have heroes.** Some Rebounders are romantics with a surprisingly strong belief in the power of narrative and their own role in something historic. Heroes help Rebounders set and meet higher standards.
- **They have more than passion.** Passion is a powerful motivator but also has a way of leading Rebounders into trouble since they’re willing to take risks to pursue it. But passion doesn’t always get them out of trouble. That takes a higher form of resilience.

Some people are sure that everything happens for a reason. I have my doubts, but more important, the problem with ascribing hardship to some cosmic scheme that’s beyond our comprehension is that it diminishes our own responsibility to extract something valuable from something difficult. It is not inherently good when bad things happen. It’s up to us to turn a bad situation to our advantage. If growth or knowledge comes from tribulation, it’s only through our own effort that it happens. Rebounders don’t possess a magic formula, but over time, through practice and dedication, they develop a kind of psychological muscle memory that enlarges their capacity to harness adversity. Rebounder or not? Nearly everyone has the ability to ask themselves that question and, sooner or later, answer yes. ●

#### RECOMMENDED READING LIST

If you liked *Rebounders*, you’ll also like:

1. ***The Adversity Paradox* by J. Barry Griswell and Bob Jennings.** Two experienced consultants show you how to use the very experiences that would stall or tumble a career to build uncommon success.
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