

## CHALLENGE IV

# OVERCOMING THE OBSTACLES

*I can hardly believe how many obstacles I have had to overcome to get to today. I realize now that these obstacles were an important part of this journey. Each obstacle provided me an opportunity to get to know myself better and to affirm why I chose this path.*

The journey into entrepreneurship is filled with obstacles—some we had before the journey, others we create along the journey. Regardless of when these obstacles appear, we need to recognize them and work through them. As we overcome each obstacle, we discover more of our uniqueness—more of who we really are. We persevere as we remove these obstacles or reduce their power over us.

This challenge points out the obstacles that many of the entrepreneurs I counseled experienced, including myself. Many clients did not realize that an issue they were dealing with was an obstacle until it continued to hold them back. Once an obstacle was pointed out and recognized, clients could decide how to deal with it.

This challenge teaches us that we can break through obstacles that either we couldn't break through before or didn't even identify as obstacles. With each obstacle we overcome, we find more of ourselves.

Obstacles are meant to be overcome. They teach us about ourselves. The more we know about ourselves, the smoother the transition into entrepreneurship.

**We must overcome the obstacles...in doing so we find ourselves.**

*Anonymous*

## No More Excuses

*I know I am a single mother. I know that I provide the only income to my family. But is that just an excuse, a reason not to pursue my dream? Not anymore. I owe it to myself to at least try—to give it my all. If things don't work out, I can always go back and get another job.*

Excuses are so convenient. “I have too much going on right now.” “I don’t know what I really want to do.” “I’ve done this job for 20 years.” These are just a few of the excuses I’ve heard. Oddly enough, none of the people who used these excuses ventured away from them. They still use them to stay far from entrepreneurship.

What excuses have you been telling yourself? For example, I would tell myself that I needed to save more money before I could start a business or that my children were too young.

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Are your excuses true or false? Why?

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What action will you take to eliminate your excuses? For example, if one of your excuses is that you haven’t done anything because you don’t know what you’d really want to do, then you can journal to learn more about your likes and dislikes, start reading books on business ideas, start attending small business seminars to get ideas. Write down the actions you will take to break through your excuses.

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*I no longer make excuses.*

## Getting Through the “Not Knowing” Phase

*I can honestly say that for the first time in a long time, I do not know what to do about my career. I feel so much uncertainty. My gut tells me that things are changing, while on the surface it all looks the same.*

The “not knowing” phase is the confusion phase of entrepreneurship. It is both normal and common. This phase has a purpose: to help you know yourself better.

Not only is this phase important, it is critical. It is part of the foundation of you and your business. After I completed a seminar on this topic, a woman asked, “What do I do if I don’t know what to do?” I told her, “Start where you are. Learn more about yourself and be comfortable not knowing until you know.”

It is helpful to read books, magazines and newspapers that relate to entrepreneurial business owners and experiences. How did other entrepreneurs find their way? How can you relate to them?

Allow yourself to “not know” and simply be OK with it. Describe what actions you will take to help you through the “not knowing” phase.

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*I am comfortable with uncertainty.*

