

[Success: Persistence](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on February 3rd, 2015

Recently I was asked:

How long did it take before you had any results from your client development efforts?

I responded that it was at least two years and maybe more. I was then asked how I stuck with it when I was seeing no results. I responded that I guessed I wanted to develop my niche practice badly enough that I was willing to be persistent.

What does it mean to be persistent? I always look to words to inspire me. Let me share some with you.

[Winston Churchill](#) had a pretty good idea. He said:

Success is stumbling from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm.

I have always liked what [Calvin Coolidge](#) once said about the importance of persistence:

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan Press On! has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.

If neither Churchill or Coolidge inspire you, perhaps [Jimmy V](#) can do it. Watch this short video clip from his [ESPY](#) award speech:

[Jimmy V Remembered - "Don't Give Up, Don't Ever Give Up" Speech \(1993 ESPYs\)](#)



If you are a regular reader, you know that when I was a teenager I first read Napoleon Hill's book, "Think and Grow Rich." The book is really about what it takes to be successful. The title comes from the fact it was published during the depression, so the focus is on making money as a measure of success.

In the book, Napoleon Hill lists symptoms of a lack of persistence. Have you ever experienced any of these?

1. Failure to recognize and to clearly define exactly what one wants.

2. Procrastination, with or without cause. (Usually backed up with a formidable array of alibis and excuses).
3. Lack of interest in acquiring specialized knowledge.
4. Indecision, the habit of “passing the buck” on all occasions, instead of facing issues squarely. (Also backed by alibis).
5. The habit of relying upon alibis instead of creating definite plans for the solution of problems.
6. Self-satisfaction. There is little remedy for this affliction, and no hope for those who suffer from it.
7. Indifference, usually reflected in one’s readiness to compromise on all occasions, rather than meet opposition and fight it.
8. The habit of blaming others for one’s mistakes, and accepting unfavorable circumstances as being unavoidable.
9. WEAKNESS OF DESIRE, due to neglect in the choice of MOTIVES that impel action.
10. Willingness, even eagerness, to quit at the first sign of defeat. (Based upon one or more of the 6 basic fears).
11. Lack of ORGANIZED PLANS, placed in writing where they may be analyzed.
12. The habit of neglecting to move on ideas, or to grasp opportunity when it presents itself.
13. WISHING instead of WILLING.
14. The habit of compromising with POVERTY instead of aiming at riches. General absence of ambition to be, to do, and to own.
15. Searching for all the short-cuts to riches, trying to GET without GIVING a fair equivalent, usually reflected in the habit of gambling, endeavoring to drive “sharp” bargains.

16. FEAR OF CRITICISM, failure to create plans and to put them into action, because of what other people will think, do, or say. This enemy belongs at the head of the list, because it generally exists in one's subconscious mind, where its presence is not recognized.

One final thought before I let you go: Have you read or listened to the book: [Unbroken](#)? I have not seen the movie, but I loved the book. If you haven't, I urge you to read or listen to it.

I cannot picture how I would have ever been resilient enough to endure what Louis Zamperini did. He is an inspiration for us all. He passed away at 97 last year. You can watch this CBS segment to learn more about him: [Remembering the "Unbroken" spirit of Louis Zamperini](#).

Cordell M. Parvin built a national construction practice during his 35 years practicing law. At Jenkins & Gilchrist, Mr. Parvin was the Construction Law Practice Group Leader and was also responsible for the firm's attorney development practice. While there he taught client development and created a coaching program for junior partners. In 2005, Mr. Parvin left the firm and started Cordell Parvin LLC. He now works with lawyers and law firms on career development and planning and client development. He is the co-author of *Say Ciao to Chow Mein: Conquering Career Burnout* and other books for lawyers. To learn more visit his Web site, www.cordellparvin.com or contact him at cparvin@cordellparvin.com.

17.