



TOPIC:
Self-Leadership/
Mental
Toughness

HOW DO YOU STAY MENTALLY STRONG IN TRIALS & FAILURE?

25

Geoffrey Canada

*President and CEO,
Harlem Children's Zone*

VIDEO SUMMARY:

Geoffrey Canada's leadership spans two decades serving kids in tough circumstances in Harlem, New York. He faced pressures both from inside and outside the organization. Along the way, he developed a resolve and a mental toughness that fuels his passion as a leader.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What part of this clip resonated most deeply with you?

2. Canada started the clip by talking about a time where he failed—and failed publically. He said, “What you want to do is go and hide. And it’s tempting to scale down the vision. But what you need to do is to say, ‘I failed. And now I’m going to try again—twice as hard.’”

Think of a recent time that things did not go as planned. Share with your team. What was your mental state at that time? How did you gain resolve to keep going?

3. Geoffrey's mental resolve is fueled by a white hot sense of urgency. He said, “I have a stronger sense of urgency now than ever before. I think we've lost our way. We don't have time to waste.” As you think about the core mission of your work, rate your mental resolve on the scale below and then discuss with your team.



I have lost some of my
mental resolve around
our mission.

I am fully resolved
feel urgent about
our mission.



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4. Brainstorm with your team the experiences or relationships that help to build your mental resolve and keep you motivated when times are tough.
5. Of all the ideas you brainstormed, have each person identify the most powerful motivator for them and share with the team. Write your motivator on an index card and place it in your workspace to remind yourself of where you can go for encouragement in tough times.
6. Close your time by committing to encourage one another along the journey.