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by Guest Blogger Flip Flippen

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The Five Laws of Personal Constraints by Guest Blogger Flip Flippen

Tags: Business, competition, Flip Flippen, life, Personal Development, SUCCESS Magazine

There’s a reason swimming with barbells isn’t an Olympic event.

Yet most of us attempt something just as illogical—we strive to reach our potential without first getting rid of the traits that weigh us down.

The greatest swimmer in the world couldn’t do much more than tread water unless he or she lets go of the barbells. It wouldn’t be the swimmer’s great abilities that determine the level of success but rather the weights that hold him down. In exactly the same way, things other than our talents, personality or academic achievements play a greater role in determining how far we go in our professional careers and personal relationships.

In a [recent article](#) I wrote for *SUCCESS* magazine, I included a quiz for the readers that must be completed in 10 seconds or less. It was a simple question:

What is the number one personal constraint that keeps you from being more successful?

Most people don’t have a clue and, simply put, if you can’t identify it, you aren’t working on it.

Identifying personal constraints is not usually an easy process. In fact, sometimes we have the most trouble self-assessing, which means that a close friend, spouse or colleague can be incredibly helpful. With my clients, I also offer in-depth assessment tools to assist them in this process.

Before you can overcome your personal constraints, you will want to understand the five laws:

Law 1. We all have personal constraints. Some are inconsequential and some are “hirable” (like employing a highly-efficient assistant to keep your disorganization from becoming fatal), but others are “owned constraints” such as self-confidence, self-control and maintaining effective relationships.

Law 2. You can’t rise above constraints that you don’t or won’t address. The constraints set the ceiling. We are sometimes blind to our constraints, but we also tend to cling to some obvious constraints that stare back at us in the mirror—a common one being stubbornness.

Law 3. Our personal constraints play themselves out in every area of our lives. They are with us 24/7—at work, at home, and anywhere in between.

Law 4. Personal constraints are role-specific. Behaviors leak into every compartment of our lives, but they become constraints only when they get in the way of attaining specific goals. For example, high aggression can be beneficial in competitive sports but disastrous in social interaction.

Law 5. Those with the least personal constraints...WIN! It’s not necessarily the most talented or the hardest working people who win but rather those who remove their most impacting constraints.

The next step is to diagnose your constraints and then design a plan to overcome them. The constraint-breaking process is fully explained in my book *[The Flip Side](#)*. It presents tools that help identify your constraints and it also mirrors our one-on-one training by providing specific behaviors, known as TrAction Steps, that you can implement immediately to begin making a difference. Dropping the weights will make anyone a better swimmer. You will quickly find that the air is easier to breathe when you’re on top of the water. We’ll see you there.

*Flip Flippen, an internationally renowned speaker and psychotherapist, developed **The Flippen Profile**, an unparalleled psychometric assessment tool that accurately identifies individual strengths and weaknesses. His book, [The Flip Side – Break Free of the Behaviors That Hold You Back](#), is a New York Times and USA Today Best Seller. Visit [www.flippengroup.com](#).*

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Eye opening observations Darren!
Thanks! Peace! Jeff...
Said jneubs on 2009-09-15 13:38:17

Wow! This is a great post Darren, I am glad you had such a great experience in E...
Said dimi on 2009-09-15 13:18:36

There's a famous quote about this, too.
"You laugh at me because I'm different, ...
Said lynnmora on 2009-09-15 12:17:52

...thanks Shawn L e s...
Said SmilesPs on 2009-09-10 18:41:35