

The Black Belt Book of Life - Topic #38 –

The Secret of Greatness

In the realm of greatness
and all of its immensity,
the secret to its attainment
is the overcoming of adversity.

A great man stands on God. A small man stands on a great man.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Responsibility is the price of greatness.

Winston Churchill

No man ever yet became great by imitation.

Samuel Johnson

*Some are born great, some achieve greatness,
and some have greatness thrust upon 'em.*

William Shakespeare

Forget about likes and dislikes. They are of no consequence.

*Just do what must be done. This may not be happiness
but it is greatness.*

George Bernard Shaw

Greatness references a degree of excellence and distinction that is extraordinarily outstanding and superlative. For those individuals, entities, events, circumstances and things that are truly universal, i.e. standing the test of time and culture, they are not unfamiliar to adversity. In fact, greatness is not acquired through the absence of adversity but rather in the overcoming of it.

Adversity is to greatness as heat, pressure and time are to the making of a diamond or as firing, folding and pounding are to the creation of a samurai sword. It's just part of the process.

Given this fact, we should not run from adversity, but challenge and embrace it, as any courageous warrior should. If we want to be good at anything, even be great, we must not only expect adversity but engage it, battle it, defeat it. If we don't challenge it, we can't overcome it and therefore we can't improve our self, our skills or our ability, let alone become great, if that's the goal.

What stand should we take in all this? Emerson's quote offers a clear platform: *A great man stands on God. A small man stands on a great man.* God is as great as it gets. It's only common sense that to be excellent in anything, to achieve the highest goal of all, we stand on God. Anything less, is exactly that, less.

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