



## THE CHALLENGES WE FACE

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We face many challenges in life.

There are many among us who find the greatest challenge to be pleasing others. Getting other people to like them, approve of them and affirm their worth has always posed the biggest and tallest hurdle they need to go over. For these individuals, not being able to get others to tell them they have done well is tantamount to the biggest failure there is in the world. Unless people think of them in exactly the way they want to be regarded, they will never become fulfilled or satisfied.

Thus has come about the rat race. You and I endlessly fight our way to the top, in a world where getting to the top means accolades, honors and awards that tell the world we have arrived, we have overcome. We are better than others beneath us. But is that truly what makes life worth living? That you have been able to overcome the challenge of proving yourself before others?

Then there are a good number of us whose measure of success over challenges is the quantity of material possessions they have. There are those who work hard to reach-or luckily even surpass- company projections because they earn a quota trip to somewhere in the country or the world, win a car or get a house and lot. They work hard to make the cut despite the enormity of the challenge. They find affirmation of their worth once they are able to surpass the challenges of their job AND get the perks in the process.

There's nothing inherently wrong with the perceptions of overcoming challenges for those two types of individuals. However, there's the small matter of why challenge needs to be represented by how others look at you or by how many targets you are able to surpass. Wouldn't it be much more fulfilling to face the challenge of oneself?

Waking up in the morning and pushing oneself to rise before the birds start chirping is a challenge, specially when all other people are still in their beds. Facing the day with a prayer and a smile is a challenge that not everyone can prevail over. It's easier to just mumble and grumble one's way through everything. Getting oneself to prod the kids to prepare for school is a challenge. It could be easier to just leave the children to their own devices. Preparing oneself for work is a challenge. Racing against time while managing to remain sane in a not-so-sane world is a huge challenge. Tiny and mundane challenges that show how we try to conquer ourselves and become better persons in the process, those are things we need to look at more profoundly.

You and I overcome a wide variety of challenges. But the greatest challenge to overcome is our own self. Let us not be limited by what others think of us or by the number of times we meet our quota. Instead, find the wonderful potentials of conquering your own worst enemy: YOURSELF.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What is your biggest challenge in life? How do you think you will be able to overcome it?
2. How important is affirmation from others to you?
3. Why is it very difficult to overcome ourselves?
4. Do you like competing? Why or why not?
5. What was your greatest challenge during your younger years? Have you been able to conquer it?