

S. A. Kumpayrson  
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### The Tough Get Going

Life can be difficult and can deliver disappointment and pain. Many times, people let life get them down and behave as if they are defeated and have no chance for success. However, it doesn't have to be this way. *Staying in the Game*, by Jarod McNamara, shows that the best achievements in life are won through the hardest struggles.

One hardship people may have is problems within their family that slow their goals down. For example, Todd Lamereaux, a parent featured in the book, lost his job, and consequently, his son had to delay college and reaching his educational goals. His son decided, though, not to give up his desired career as a laser technician. It just took more time and effort to reach his goal. In another example in the book, a divorce split a family apart and required a move that meant starting all over again for a mother and her two young children. They struggled to make new friends and find a place in a new location, but the experience brought them closer and made them better appreciate the friends they eventually found. The book illustrates through many other examples that problems experienced within our families can actually teach relationship skills that will serve well in a professional career. These family problems can be difficult situations, but overcoming these issues can make a person emotionally flexible and more mature.

In addition to family problems, McNamara's book illustrates how injuries can slow someone down. For example, Brad Johnston, a basketball player who wanted to play professionally, injured his knee as a sophomore and was told by doctors that he might not be able to play again. But he decided never to give up, and he worked hard at getting his knee back into shape by going to the gym every day and exercising his knee. After a lot of hard work, pain, and plenty of struggling, he got back into the game and came back stronger than anyone could have believed. Johnston shows how a weakness can be turned into a strength through effort and the will to overcome physical pain and make an injury only a temporary setback.

Finally, not only dealing with physical injury but struggling with a disease can seem to make a lifetime goal impossible to reach. Many people discussed in the book had faced a terminal cancer, for example, but by fighting back with sometimes excruciating treatments and keeping a positive attitude, they beat the odds and went on to achieve their goals, one woman eventually finishing medical school and becoming a doctor herself. Other people with crippling conditions, such as muscular dystrophy or ALS, refused to give in to defeat and found a way to live fulfilling, productive lives. They may have had to find another way of doing things, but today's technology gives more possibilities to those who refuse to be mired in self-pity.

Life is rarely easy, and achieving goals can be a struggle sometimes. However, as McNamara's book shows, those who hang on to their goals through personal problems, injury, or disease will have the biggest reward they ever imagined. As the saying goes, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going."

(534 words)