



# 45

# QUESTIONS

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TO HELP YOU DEVELOP YOUR STORY BANK

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While our time together so far has been about your development of a single story to tell to a specific audience, the best storytellers have a bank of stories that they can make deposits, and take withdrawals from, when the time is right.

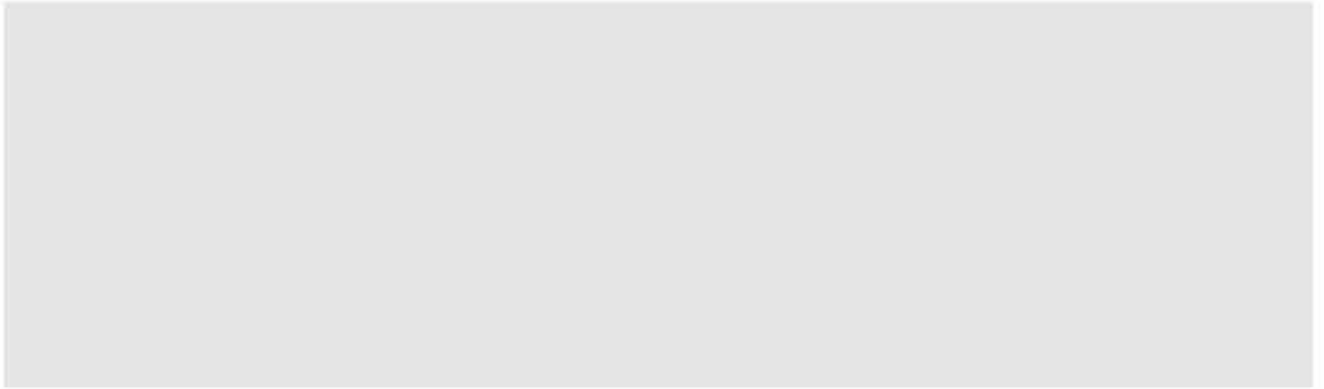
Your ability to begin seeing the stories in your bank starts with these questions. Each one is intended to help you make a new deposit, and the more completely you answer them, the better it will be as a starting point when applying the 10 habits we taught you today.

As a result, you will be able to turn each one of these questions into a short or medium length story.

Often I'm asked how many stories should you have in your bank? The obvious answer is as many as possible. However, a great starting point is at least five or six that you can learn to tell so well that no matter what setting you're in, you will always be ready and able to impress your audience.

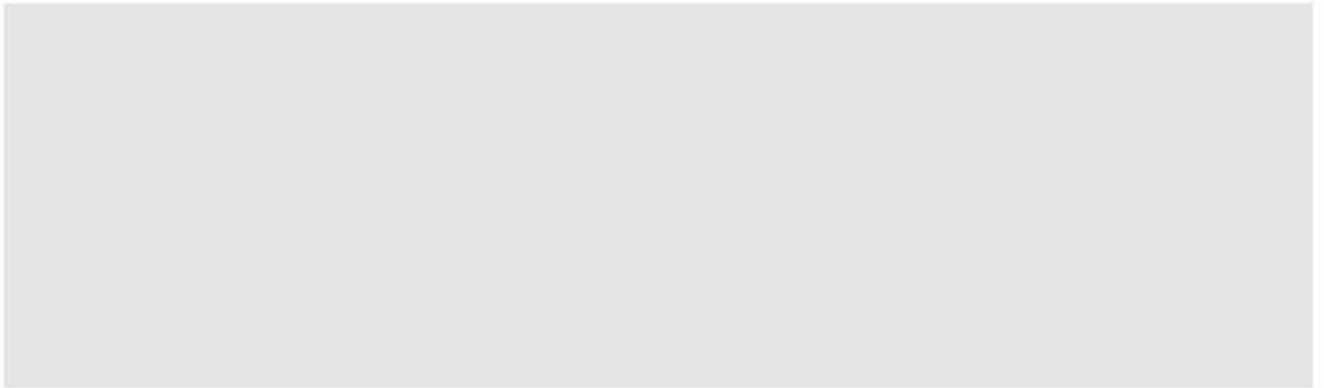
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What have you overcome that you can help someone else overcome?  
(This is a story that can turn pain into purpose)



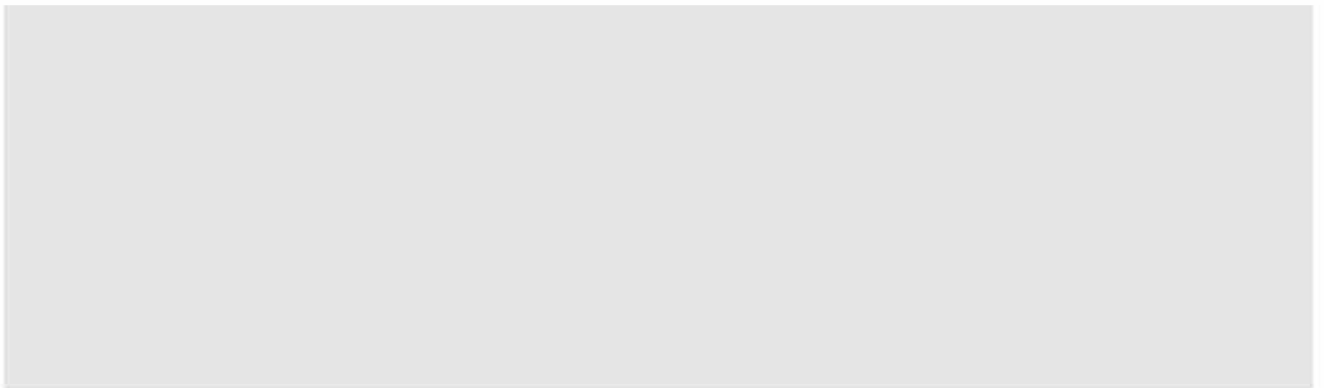
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Many people quietly believe they have a “superpower.” It could be an uncanny gut instinct... the ability to “feel” things about others. For some, it is reading people or empathy. It could be a sense of timing that works for you. It could be a willingness to take risks that just seem to work out. What’s your superpower and how has leaning into it led to a big moment?



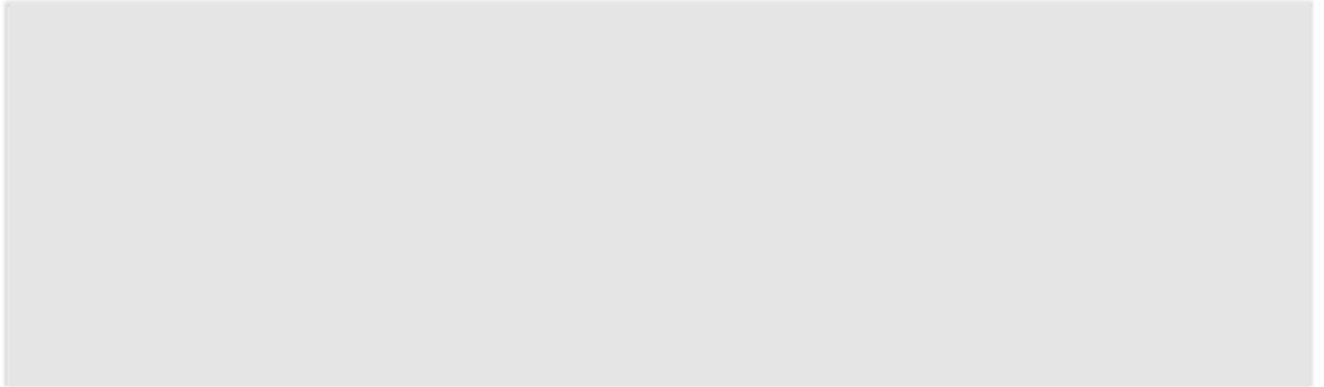
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The fact that you’re looking at these questions makes it clear you are constantly growing/progressing. What is the driver that keeps you from “settling” for a level of success that others would find “acceptable?”



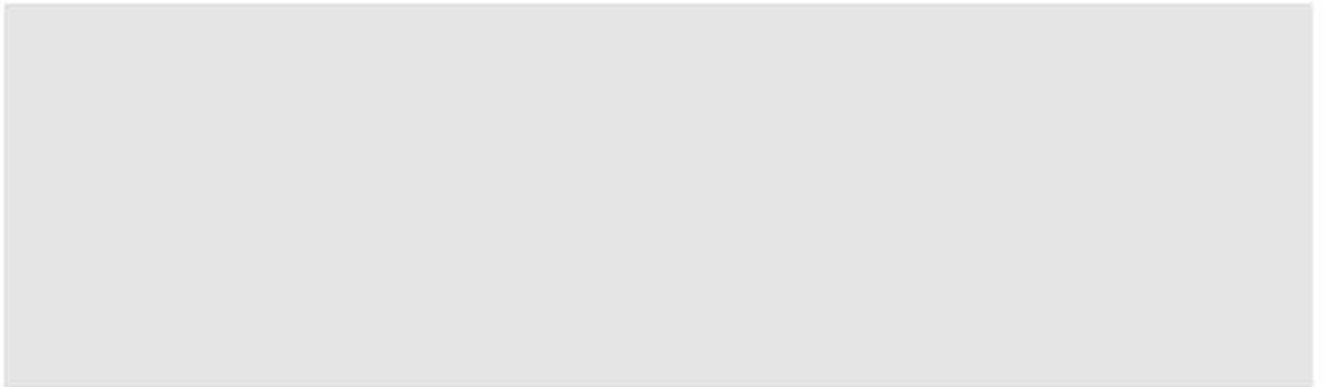
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Many achievers talk about moving from SUCCESS to SIGNIFICANCE. What would that look like for you? Are there things you're doing today to help turn your success into significance?



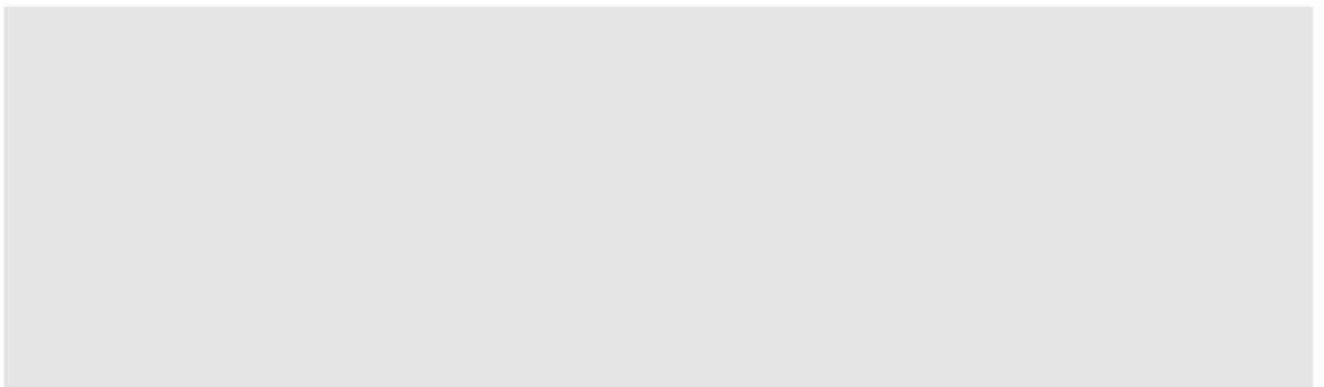
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Most high performers have a chip on their shoulder – someplace where they were doubted or not given an opportunity – that they can instantly recall. Please share your chip.



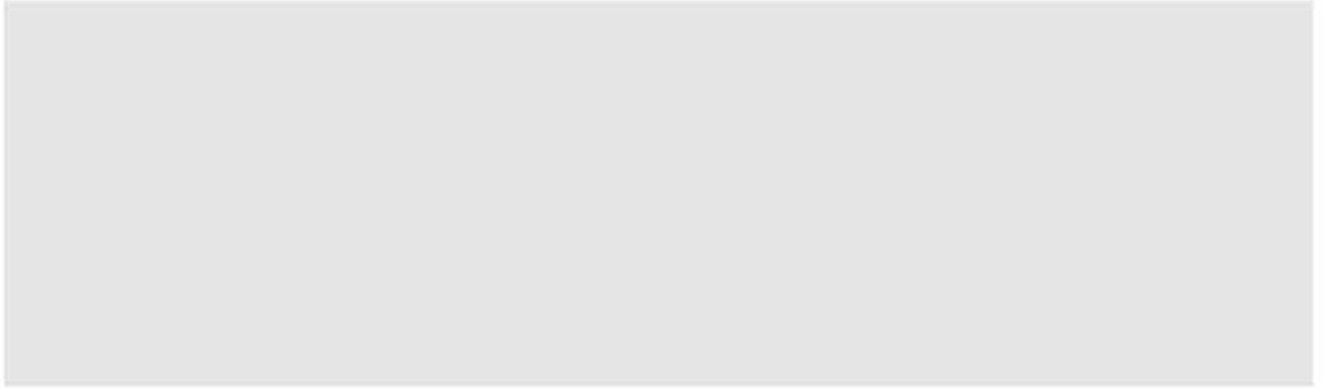
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Have you ever randomly sat beside someone and ended up in a conversation that was game-changing? Give us the setup and the conversation? Tell us how it turned out. What did you do? What did you learn?



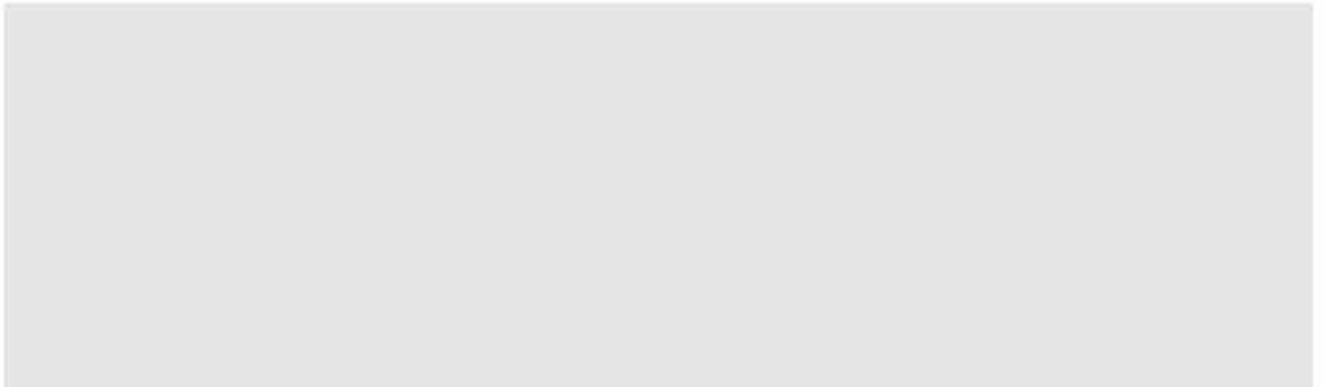
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Have you ever made a life-changing choice – weight loss, for example – that taught you something about yourself?



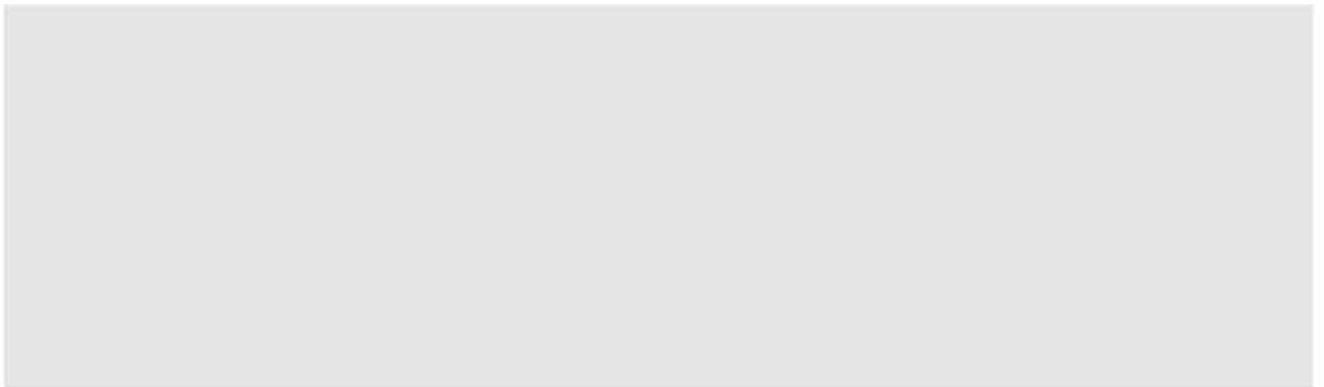
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Almost all “high performance experts” state that your mind has the capacity to go much further past a “pain point” than your body. Have you ever experienced a story where your mind allowed you to go beyond your body’s limits?



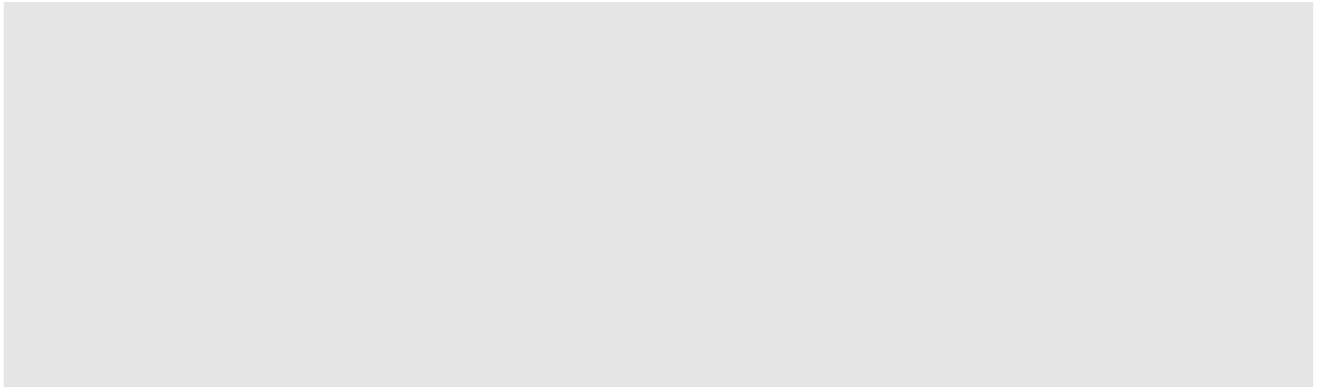
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Most of us have a decision in life that we regret. Many of us have learned a lesson from that moment. Tell us the story of that moment and what you learned.



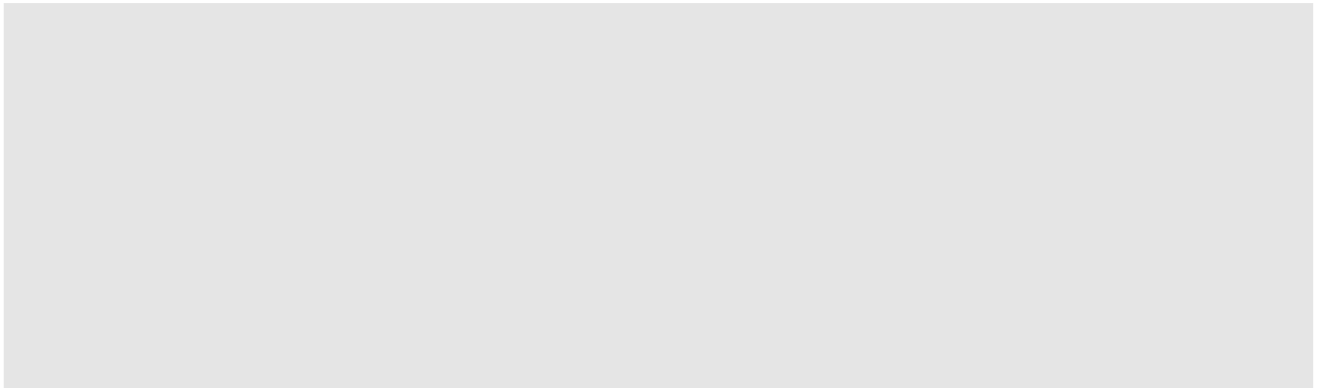
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Have you ever struggled to forgive someone for something? What is the story and what can I learn from your decision to forgive?



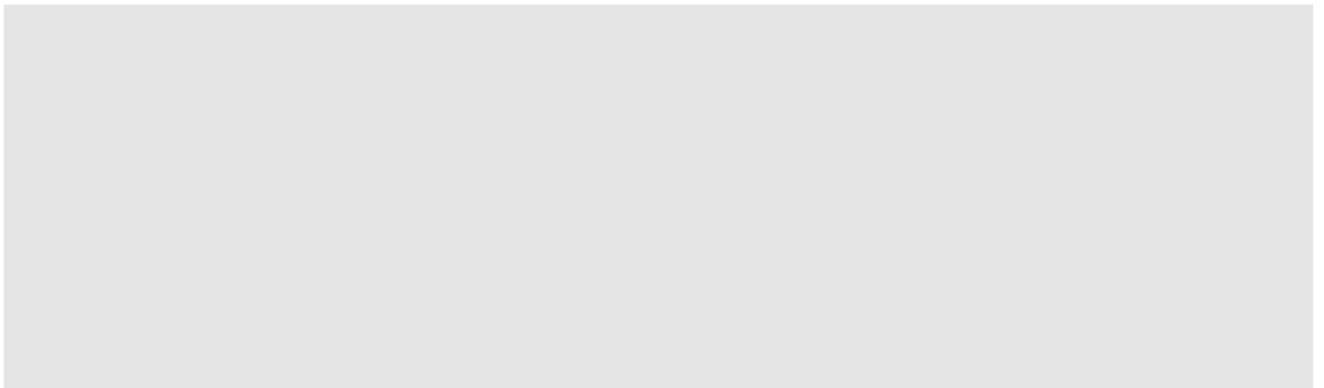
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Some people believe in writing messages of affirmation to themselves...some even put those on their mirror for a morning pick me up. Do you have words to yourself written somewhere?



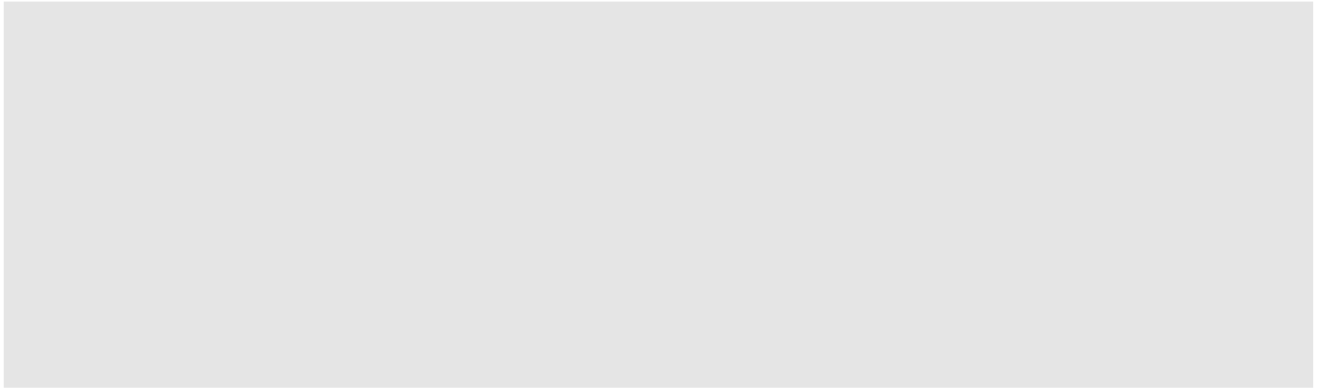
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Tell us a story of a time when you were brave.



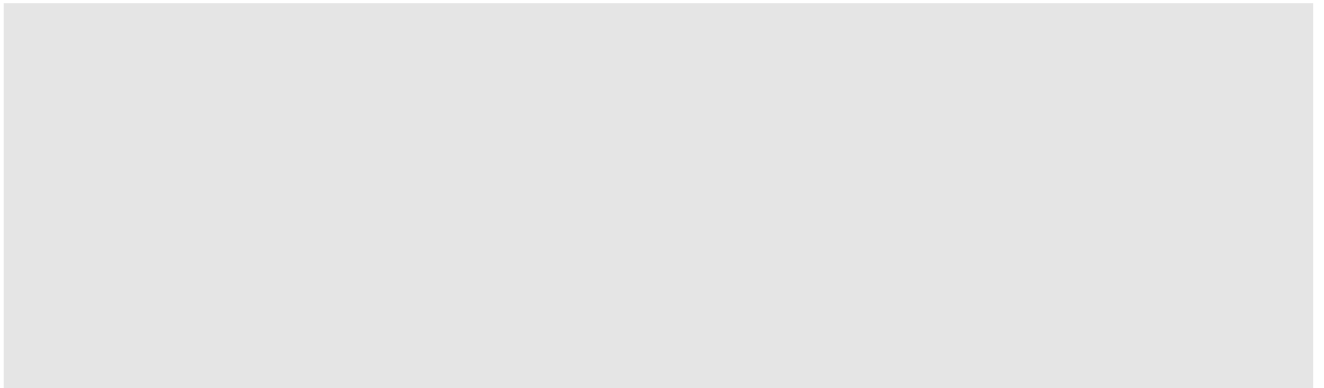
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Did you ever have a nickname? Tell me the story behind the nickname!



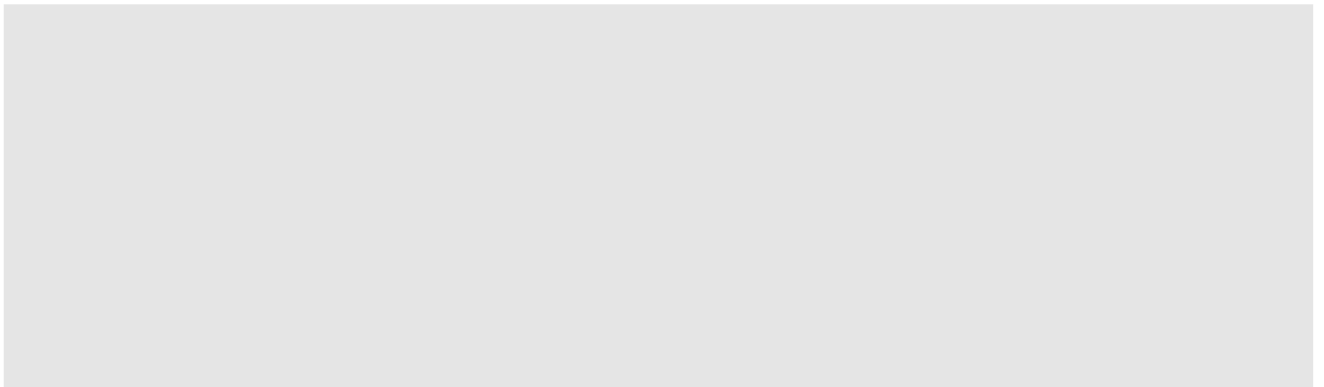
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Have you ever invented anything or come up with a solution for a problem you know frustrates people. Tell me about the problem and tell me a story of how your solution changed things?



15

Tell me a story about the journey that led you to your current job. It could come from childhood, where a moment may have shaped your thoughts on business or money. It could be an event during college when a class or a professor opened your mind. Be detailed.



16

Tell me about a mentor who had great impact on your life. It could be someone who taught you a lesson with their actions – positively or negatively – or someone who took you under their wing.

17

Tell me about a time you served as a mentor to someone and had a great impact on their life. It could be someone to whom you taught a lesson or took under your wing.

18

Can you name a moment in your life when you've had to stand against the "norm" that others around you had accepted? What prompted you to take a stand against the "norm"?



19

If you can, share a story of when you've had to make a decision to stay or go at your current employer. Clearly you chose to stay, so tell me the story of why.

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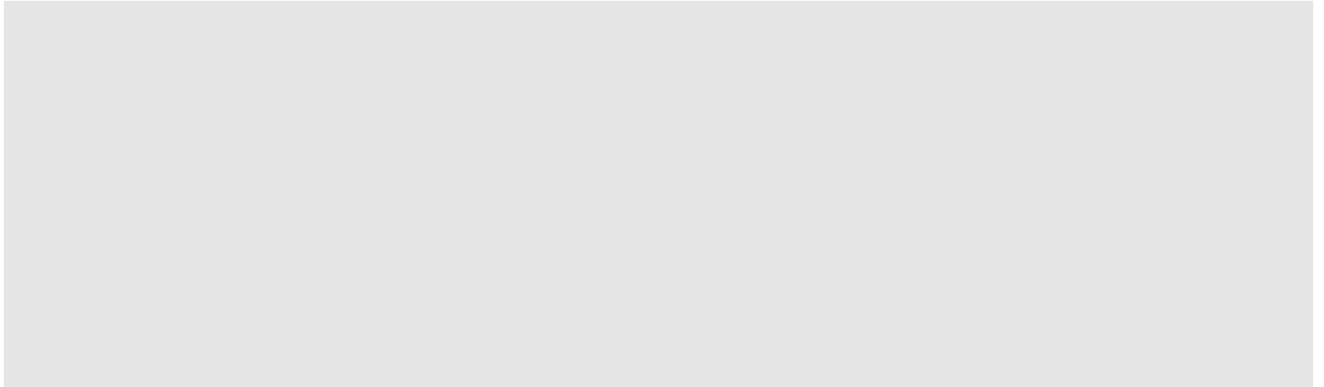
Most of us have skillsets we have struggled to improve upon. It could, in fact, be storytelling! Tell me a story about a skill you have wanted to be better at for some time and what your work to improve has taught you.

21

Is there someone you should say thanks to for a key moment in your life that has passed away? If so, imagine how that conversation would go and tell us the story of what you imagine.

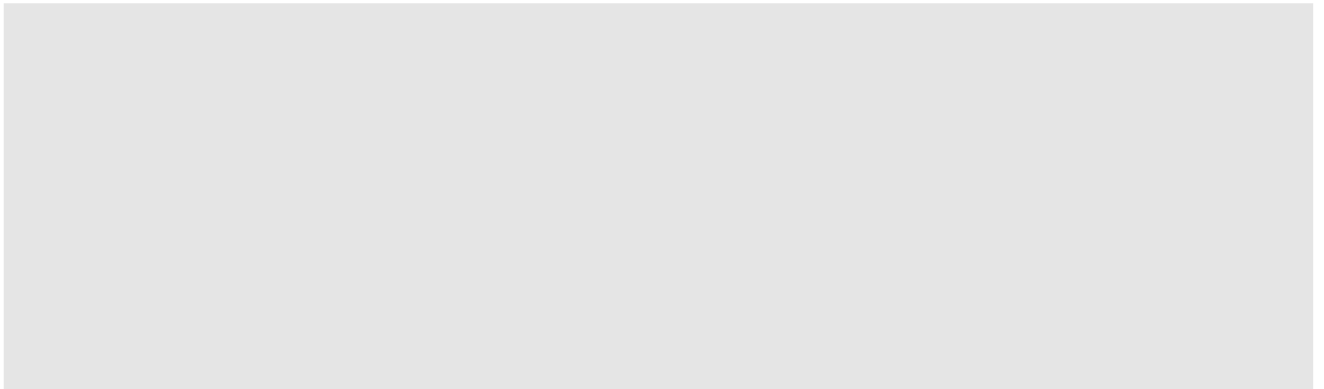
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Most successful people are driven by a keen sense of purpose – their WHY. Tell us how you came to understand your why. Was there a success – or a failure – that drove home your sense of purpose?



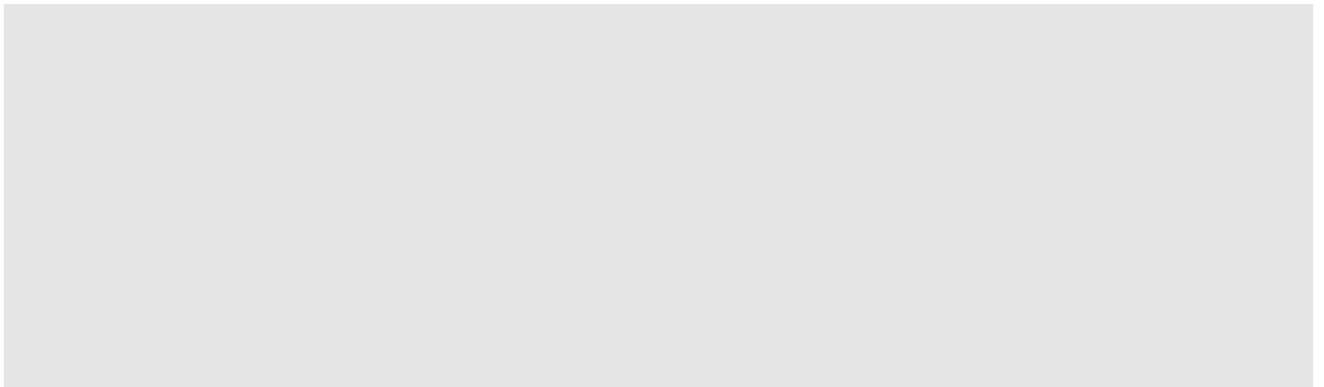
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Do you have a favorite failure? Tell us the backstory and how you responded to that failure.



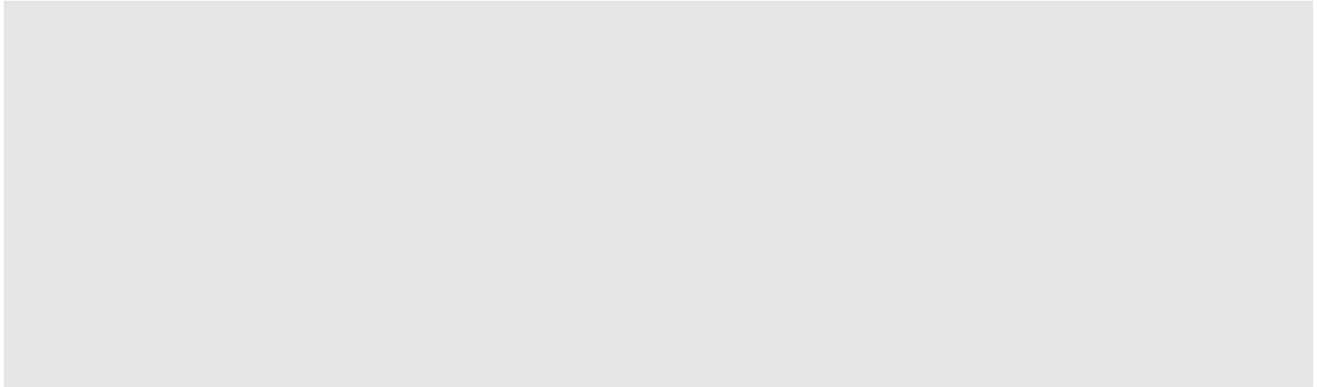
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What success are you most proud of to date and why?



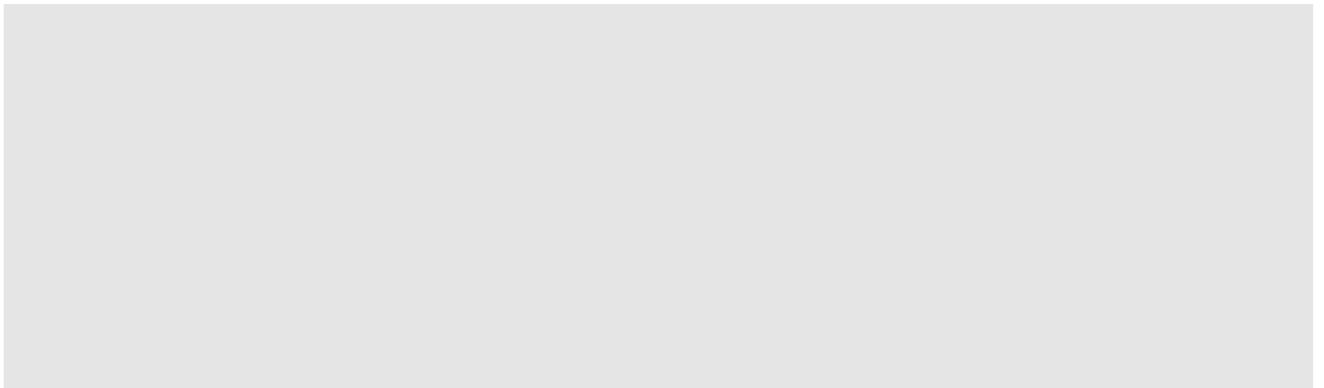
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(If you have children) Many people have a favorite story of a lesson learned from their children – the importance of listening, or of being present. Tell us a story you learned from your child.



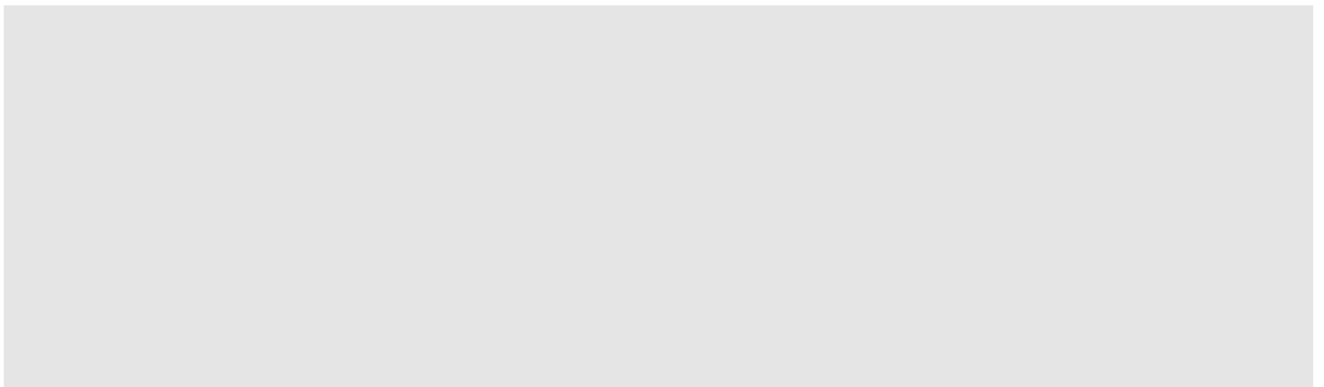
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What do you most want to accomplish that you have not yet? What can your pursuit of that success teach you, and through this story, the listener?



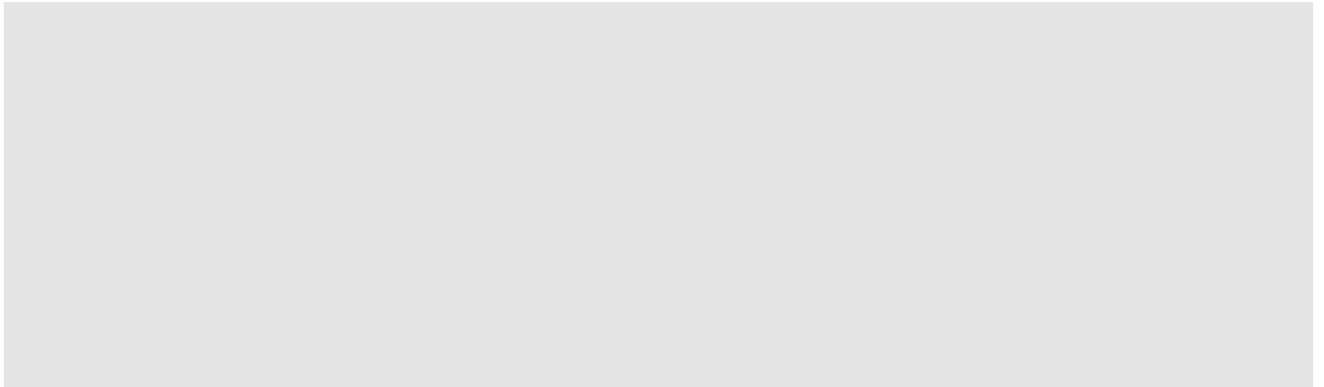
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How important is goal-setting? What techniques or processes do you use? When/how do you review them? How do you keep yourself on track?



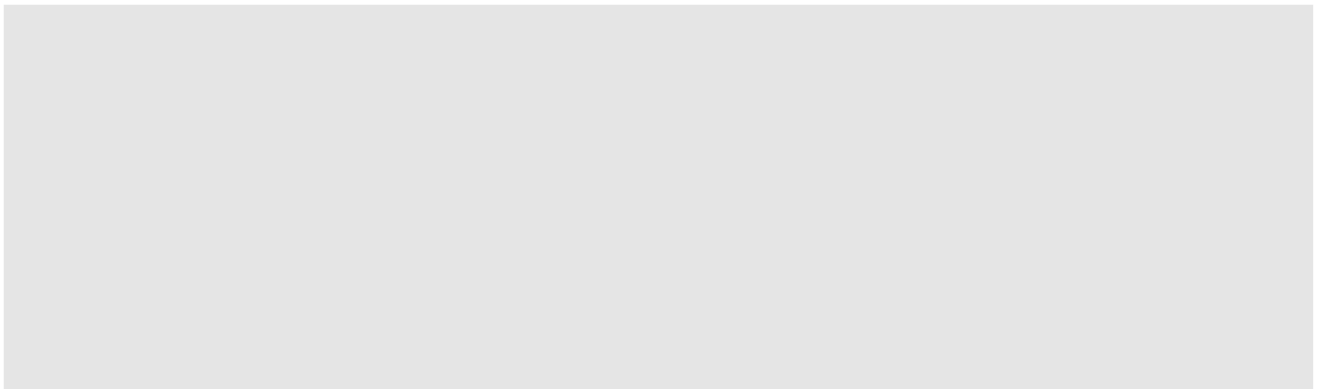
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Have you ever had an idea you were certain was a blockbuster...but it failed? Tell us about the idea, the fail and the lesson you learned.



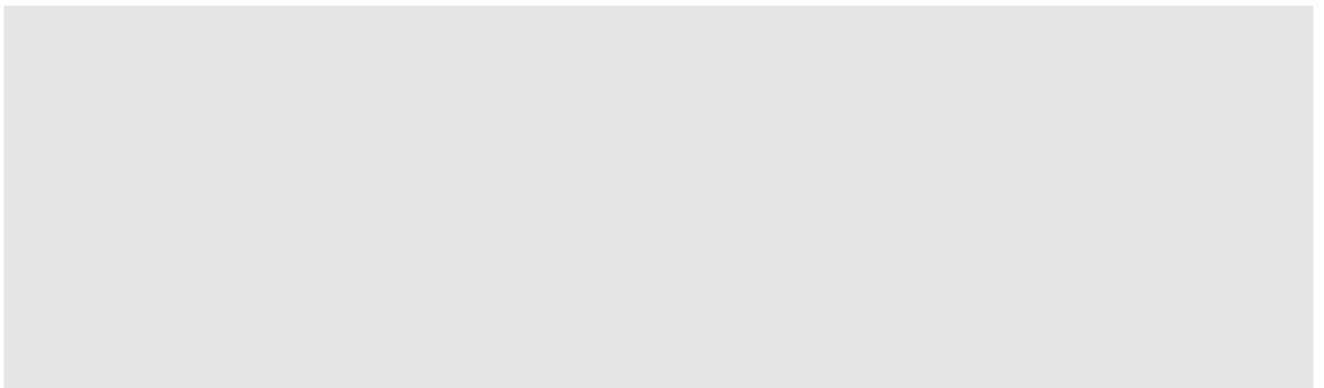
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If you are a high-energy person, do you ever have an off day and have to work a little harder on your self-motivation? If so, how do you do it and do you have tips for the rest of us?



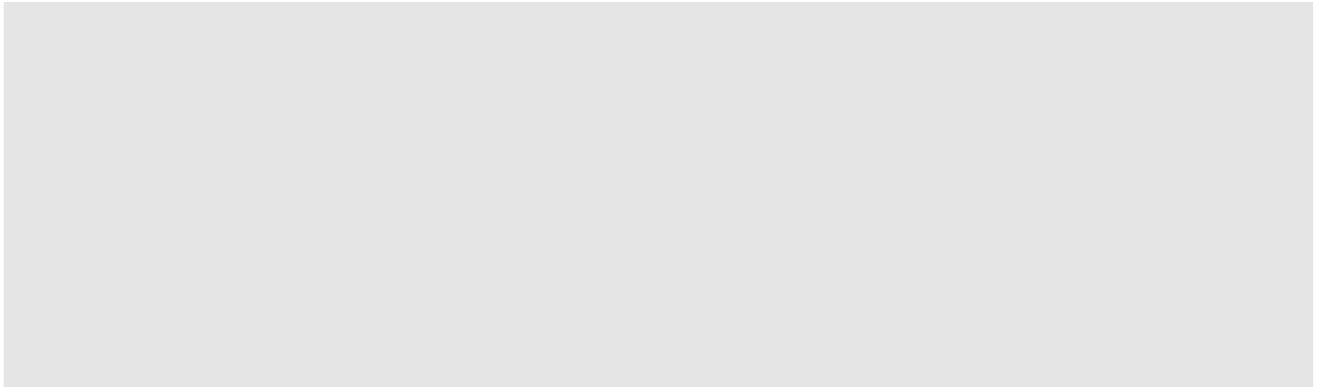
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Do you have any rituals to get a productive day started? Tell us the story of how you developed those rituals.



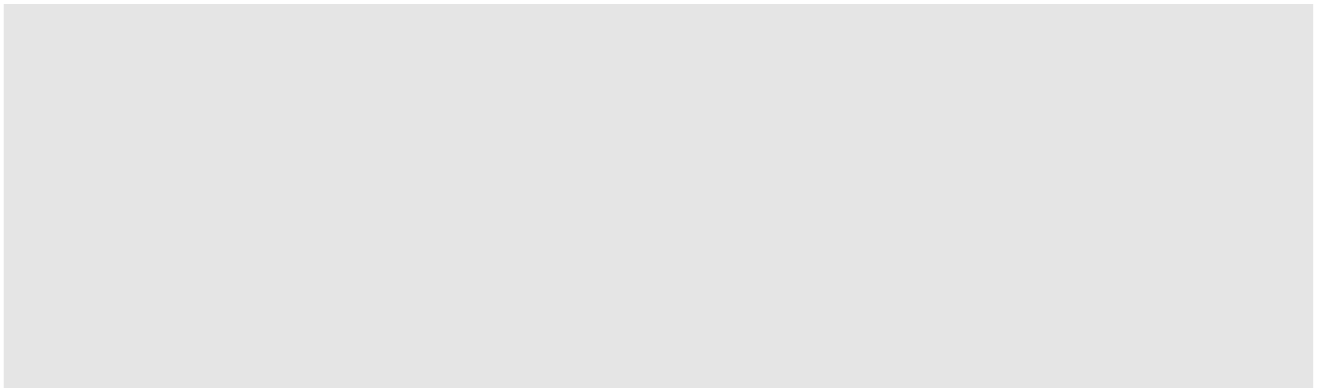
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How do you balance work and family? Is there a story of a moment/period where that imbalance taught you a lesson?



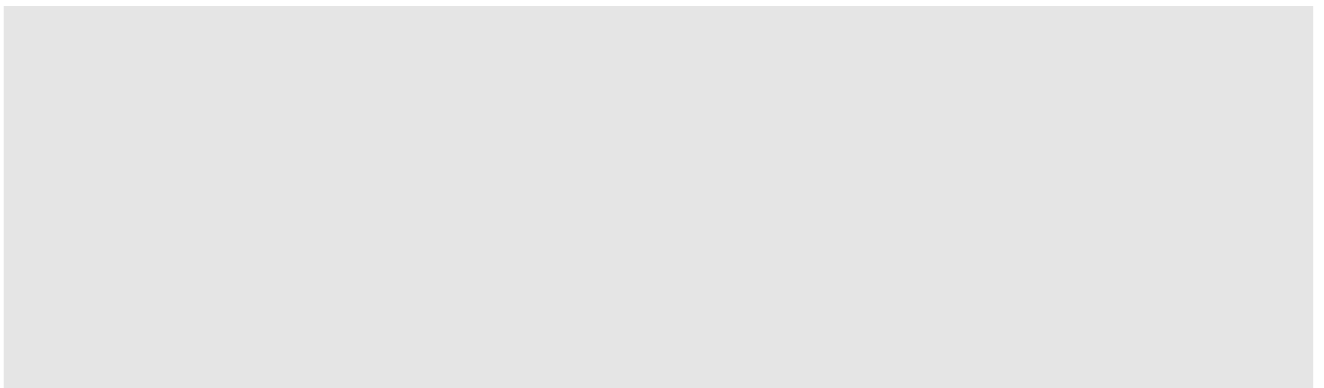
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Sustaining success is tough for most people/organizations. You've experienced periods where your winning streak seemed unnatural. What did you learn during that period? What can you teach us?



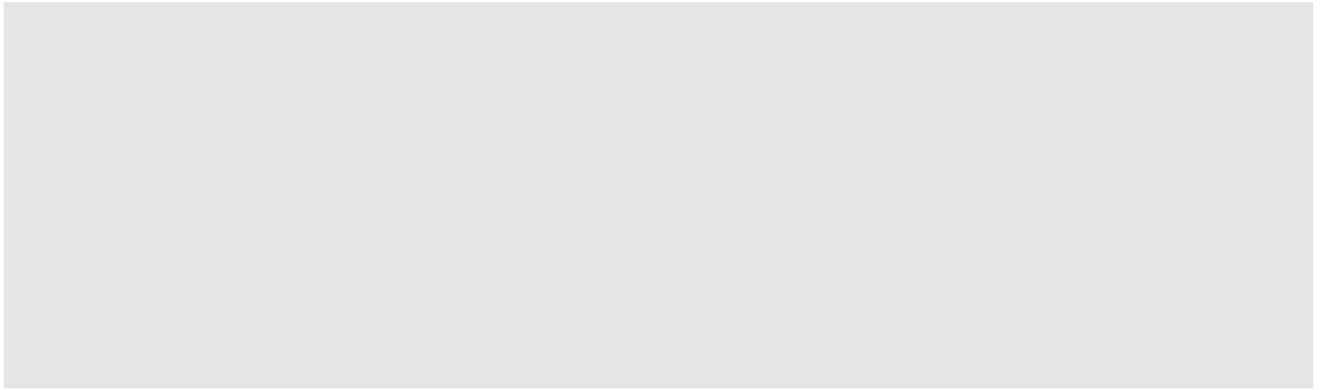
33

Travel is often a place for unique learning opportunities. Where have you traveled that taught you most? Tell us a story of the educational experience.



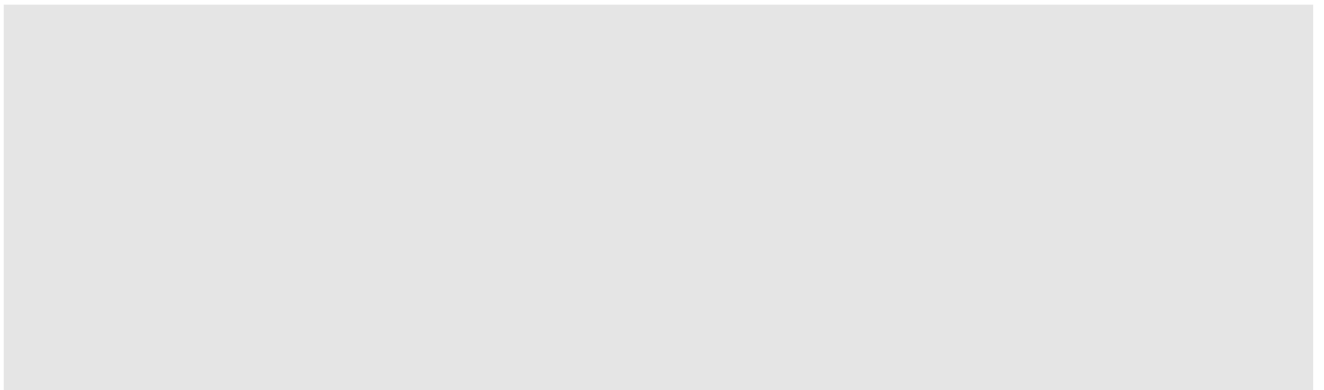
34

Many leaders say loyalty is harder to find in these times than it was in earlier periods. Tell me a story about the most loyal person you've experienced and a moment when their loyalty most stood out to you.



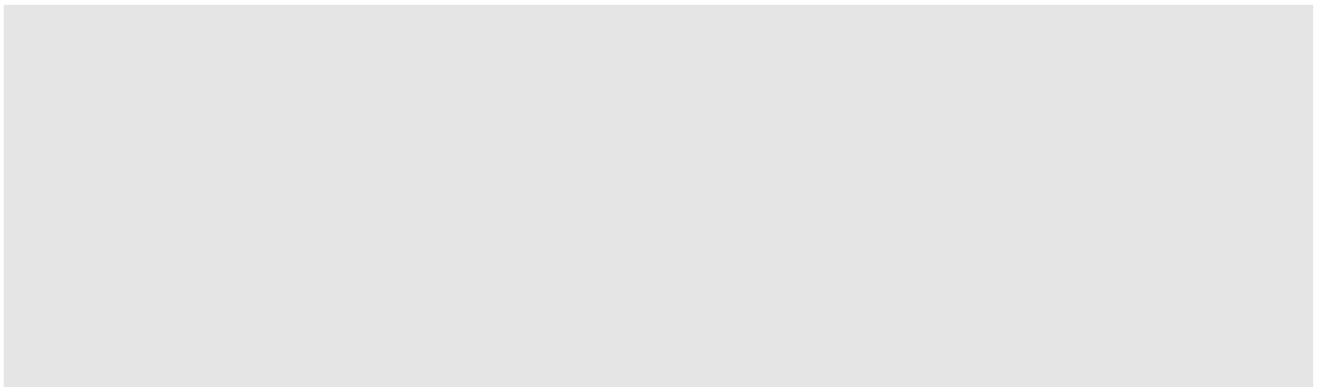
35

Is there some period of your life that you don't want to repeat, and could that be part of your motivation?



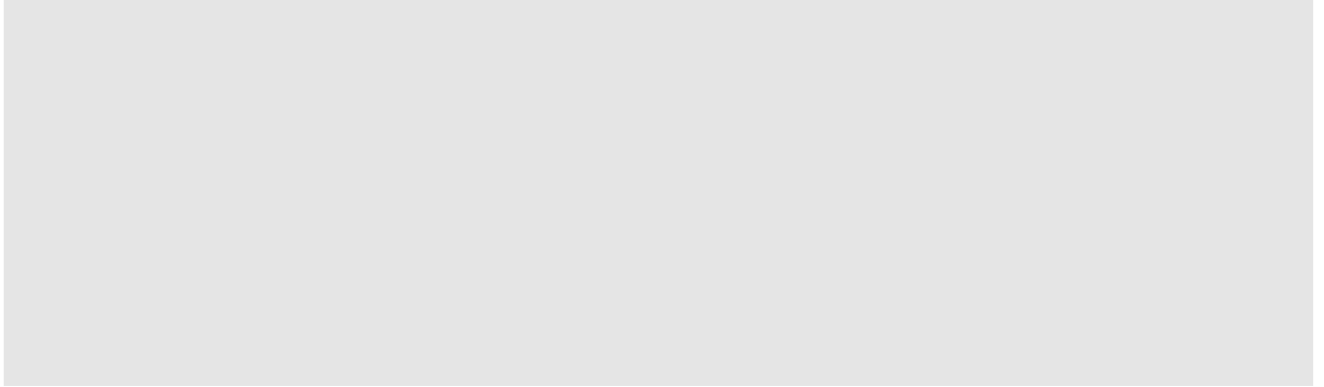
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What living achiever in our society do you most admire? If you had the opportunity to meet that achiever, what would you ask? What would you want to learn from them?



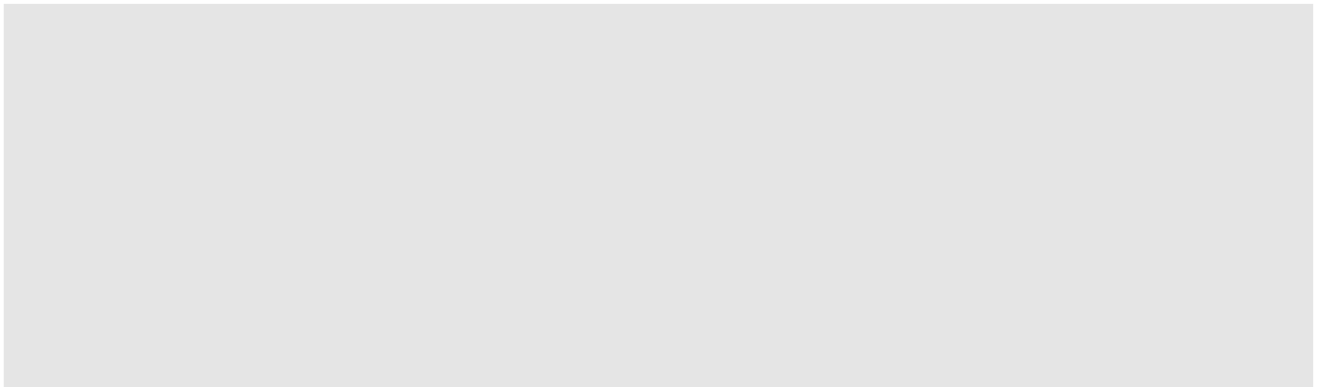
37

Some people have completed an exercise where they have written their own obituary. It is usually an effort at imagining what you would want the world to know about you after you've passed. Have you ever done the exercise? Was there something you learned from the experience?



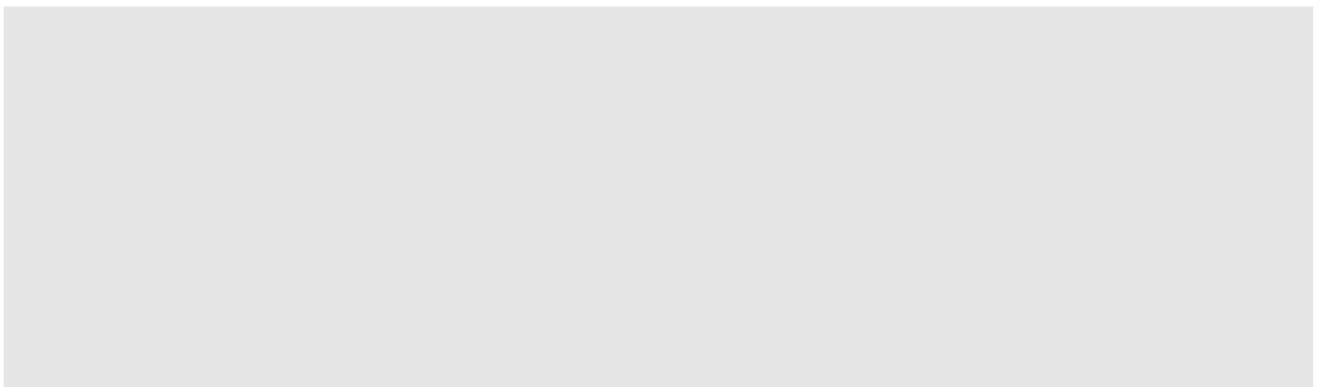
38

Many of us have set out to achieve a "goal" that, once achieved, was unfulfilling? That effort often teaches lessons. Have you had that experience? What have you learned?



39

There's an old saying that "you should never meet your heroes because they'll always let you down." It's point is that most of our heroes aren't as magical or amazing as we thought/hoped. Have you ever had that experience? Tell us the story and what you might have learned from it.



40

Many people understand the importance of who they surround themselves with. Has there ever been a moment when you grew to KNOW that someone in your inner circle was not someone you should have there? What did that moment teach you?

41

Have you ever changed careers? Tell me the story on making that choice and the greatest obstacle you had to overcome. What can others learn from what you went through?

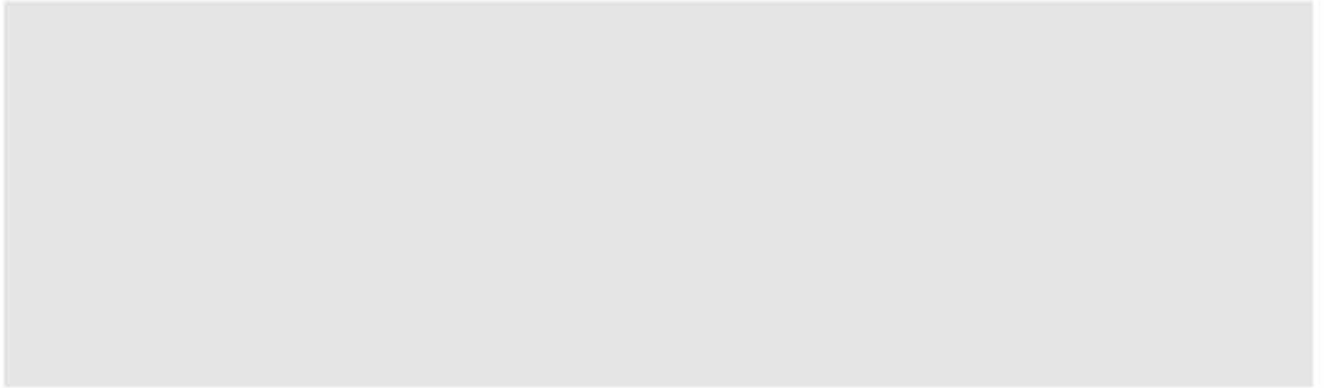
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Most of us have gotten the chance to deliver Great news to someone in our professional life (a new hire, a promotion). Others of us have had to deliver Tough news (a layoff or a decision that's been made that has implications for others like the sale of a company). This is a two-part question: Can you share the story of a "Great News!" moment and a "Tough News" conversation and how you handled each?



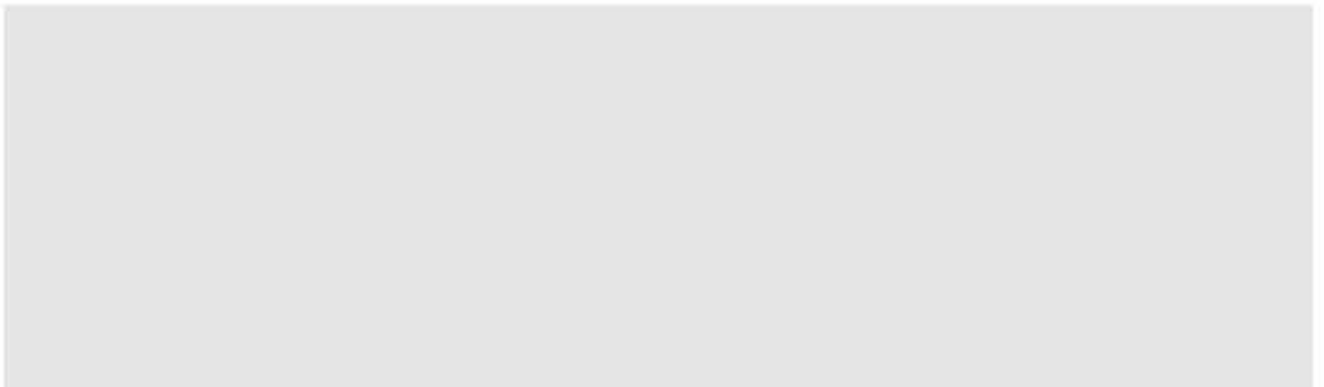
43

Life is filled with tough moral decisions and many of those choices are defining moments. Tell me about a challenging moral dilemma that you navigated.



44

Many of us have a fear (snakes is mine) that can be paralyzing. Sometimes coming face-to-face with that fear results in a powerful lesson or story. Do you have one?



45

What's the scariest thing you've ever done?

