

Perseverance

[Frank Sinatra and Eddie Hodges - "High Hopes" from A Hole In The Head \(1959\) - Bing video\](#)

Once there was a silly old ram
Thought he'd punch a hole in a dam
No one could make that ram scam
He kept buttin' that dam

continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition : the action or condition or an instance of persevering

Synonym for perseverance

persistence determination tenacity doggedness tenaciousness
stubbornness obstinacy decisiveness resolve obduracy resoluteness
purposefulness
stick-to-itiveness confidence readiness firmness decision fortitude
resolution
obstinateness granite obdurateness certitude decidedness
eagerness certainty grit determinedness gameness
sureness alacrity iron sand pluck backbone

Antonyms for perseverance

irresolution indifference indetermination irresoluteness hesitance
hesitation
reluctance oscillation wavering tentativeness apathy delaying
doubt indolence laziness stalling demurral idleness procrastination
cowardice dilly-dallying faint-heartedness half-heartedness
lack of resolution weakness vacillation unwillingness dithering
lethargy

perseverance (n.)

mid-14c., perseveraunce "will or ability to persevere, tenacity," from Old French perseverance "persistence, endurance" (12c., Modern French persévérance) and directly from Latin perseverantia "steadfastness, constancy," from perseverant- past-participle stem of perseverare "continue steadfastly" (see persevere). From late 14c. as "quality or state of continuing or enduring."

Entries linking to perseverance

persevere (v.)

"to persist in what one has undertaken, to pursue steadily a design or course," late 14c., perseveren, from Old French perseverer "continue, persevere, endure" and directly from Latin perseverare "continue steadfastly, persist," from perseverereus "very strict, earnest," from per "very" (see per) + severus "serious, grave, strict, austere," which is probably from PIE root *segh- "to have, hold," on the notion of "steadfastness, toughness." Related: Persevered; persevering.

Suggested reading

[Developing Perseverance - The Mental Tenacity to Overcome and Succeed | HuffPost Contributor](#)

From [Perseverance toward life goals can fend off depression, anxiety, panic disorders \(apa.org\)](#)

“People who don’t give up on their goals (or who get better over time at not giving up on their goals) and who have a positive outlook appear to have less anxiety and depression and fewer panic attacks, according to a study of thousands of Americans over the course of 18 years. Surprisingly, a sense of control did not have an effect on the mental health of participants across time. The study was published by the American Psychological Association in the [Journal of Abnormal Psychology](#).

“Perseverance cultivates a sense of purposefulness that can create resilience against or decrease current levels of major depressive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder and panic disorder,” said Nur Hani Zainal, MS, from The Pennsylvania State University and lead author of the study. “Looking on the bright side of unfortunate events has the same effect because people feel that life is meaningful, understandable and manageable.”

It goes on to say: “Often, people with these disorders are stuck in a cycle of negative thought patterns and behaviors that can make them feel worse,” said Newman. “We wanted to understand what specific coping strategies would be helpful in reducing rates of depression, anxiety and panic attacks.”

From [The Neuroscience of Perseverance | Psychology Today](#)

- A study found that key receptors for dopamine function like gateways that are essential to enable habit formation.
- Like Skinner's famous experiment, you can learn to associate a task with a biological reward of feeling good.
- Even something as simple as congratulating yourself can harness your reward circuitry and tap your dopamine pipeline.

From: [Persistence | Authentic Happiness \(upenn.edu\)](#)

The following exercises for building persistence were adapted from a list provided by psychologist Jonathan Haidt at the University of Virginia:

- Finish a project ahead of time.
- Notice your thoughts about stopping a task, and make a conscious effort to dismiss them. Focus on the task at hand.
- Begin using a time management aid of some sort (a palm pilot, a daily planner, etc.). Find a system that works and actually use it.
- Set a goal and create a plan for sticking to it.
- When you wake up in the morning, make a list of things that you want to get done that day that could be put off until the next day. Make sure to get them done that day.

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How to be more persistent

- 1. Dream big, start small**
- 2. Know the reason behind your goals**
- 3. Rest, don't quit**
- 4. Find different solutions to your setbacks**
- 5. Don't be afraid to start again**

The dangers of persistence

Like any other good thing in this world, persistence also has a downside. When we can't correctly identify when to persist and when to stop, there are consequences that may befall us such as:

- We waste our resources on meaningless or worthless endeavors.
- We ignore better alternatives.
- We stress ourselves out and harm our mental health.
- We let pride get in the way and refuse to admit that we have failed.
- We find out that pain doesn't always feel rewarding in the end.

As they say, we should always take things in moderation, and persistence is no exception.

From: [When Should I Stop Trying? Some Tips | Psychology Today](#)

But how do you determine if a goal is not achievable? Some hints:

1. You've been at a plateau for a relatively long time now (compared to others working on the same goal).
2. You find yourself realizing that you're going to need to give up other important aspects of your life in order to properly work toward your goal. You find this disagreeable.
3. Other people are telling you to give up, probably because they're concerned for you (which is good).

From: [When to Stick with Something — and When to Quit \(hbr.org\)](#)

Not giving up can mean people persist even when they have nothing to gain.

Remaining fixated on long cherished goals can also mean people ignore better alternatives.

Being unwilling to let go can lead to people being perpetually dissatisfied — even when they end up getting what they thought they wanted.

Being unable to let go of cherished but unachievable goals can also be bad for your mental and physical health

So when you ask yourself whether to stick with a task or goal, or to let it go, weigh the potential to continue learning and developing incrementally against the costs, dangers, and myopia which can come with stubborn perseverance.