

Handling Frustrations and Disappointments

⇒ How to Avoid Getting Burned Out ⇐

Trying to solve major issues like wind power, property taxes, etc. necessitates dealing with self-serving bureaucrats, double-talking politicians, special interest promoters, the uninformed public, etc. To say the least, this can be stressful, which has mental, social, and physical manifestations and consequences.

Burnout can result from: feelings of lack of control, a perception of insufficient rewards or recognition, an appearance of a divided support community, or little hope of positive change in the situation.

The solutions that I try to employ:

- 1 - **Associate primarily with positive people.** Being with genuine, upbeat, energetic people is contagious. A healthy dose of optimism can help us make the best of frustrating circumstances.
- 2 - **Keep things in perspective.** Changing our viewpoint can be very powerful. Is our cup half full or half empty? For instance, give some serious thought to the predicaments *billions* of other people are facing — like those in Darfur (<http://www.crs.org/sudan/>). Maybe our problems aren't so bad.
- 3 - **Read what others did.** Learn how other successful people dealt with very difficult situations in their lives (e.g. Lincoln, one of my heroes).
- 4 - **Variety is the spice of life.** Periodically take breaks, do something you enjoy, go on a vacation, kiss a frog, etc.
- 5 - **Have realistic expectations.** Frustration is guaranteed if we have unreasonable expectations. Have you ever *written down* exactly what your expectations are? Go about solving a big problem in small steps.
- 6 - **Manage your time well.** When challenged with a large task, it is especially important to be organized and efficient.
- 7 - **Stay in good health:** exercise, have a good diet, and get adequate sleep.
- 8 - **Work as if everything depended on you, and pray as if everything depended on God.**
Once we've done our best, then leave it in the hands of the Big Guy. Sometimes when things don't turn out exactly as we'd like them to, hard as it may be to accept at the time, it may really be for the best. That's the faith part.

An important underlying message: watch what you're thinking. This includes paying attention to our **Beliefs**, which have a *profound* influence on us. Our thoughts *control* the way we see things — and how we feel.