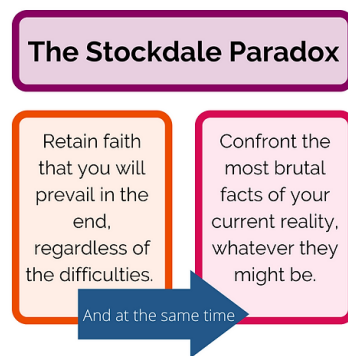


The Tip #2

“Pain is inevitable. Suffering is optional” (Haruki Murikami). Accept times will be truly hard but choose how you will respond.

The Tale #2

I prefer the word “hope” to “optimism.” Optimism is the belief that things will get better; hope is the belief that together we can make things better.



The Stockdale Paradox

Stockdale was a prisoner of war in Vietnam for seven-and-a-half years. Before meeting with the legendary soldier and statesman, author, Jim Collins read Stockdale’s memoir and found its grim details hard to bear, despite his knowledge that Stockdale’s later life was happy. Collins wondered, *“If it feels depressing for me, how on earth did he survive when he was actually there and did not know the end of the story?”*

When he posed that question to the admiral, Stockdale answered: *“I never lost faith in the end of the story. I never doubted not only that I would get out, but also that I would prevail in the end and turn the experience into the defining event of my life, which, in retrospect, I would not trade.”*

Collins asked him about the personal characteristics of prisoners who did not make it out of the camps. *“The optimists,”* he replied. *“Oh, they were the ones who said, ‘We’re going to be out by Christmas.’ And Christmas would come, and Christmas would go. Then they’d say, ‘We’re going to be out by Easter.’ And Easter would come, and Easter would go. And then Thanksgiving, and then it would be Christmas again. And they died of a broken heart ... This is a very important lesson. **You must never confuse faith that you will prevail in the end—which you can never afford to lose—with the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be.**”*

“I lived on a day-to-day basis. ... most guys thought it was really better for everybody to be an optimist. I wasn’t naturally that way; I knew too much about the politics of Asia when I got shot down. I think there was a lot of damage done by optimists; other writers from other wars share that opinion. The problem is, some people believe what professional optimists are passing out and come unglued when their predictions don’t work out.”

In *Good to Great*, management theorist Jim Collins argues that what the great companies (and schools I would suggest) have in common is a *culture of discipline*. In *Great By Choice* he uses

the phrase “the 20 mile march,” meaning that outstanding organisations plan for the marathon, not the sprint. Confidence, he says, comes not from motivational speeches, charismatic inspiration, wild pep rallies, unfounded optimism, or blind hope. It comes from doing the deed, day after day, year after year.

Great companies (and schools) use disciplines that are specific, methodical and consistent. They encourage their people to be self-disciplined and responsible. They do not over-react to change, be it for good or bad. They keep their eye on the far horizon not the choppy water. Above all, they do not depend on heroic, charismatic leaders who at best lift the company or school for a while but do not provide it with the strength-in-depth they need to flourish in the long run. They don't lose faith that they will prevail.

Want to flourish and prevail in the long run? Do you have copious amounts of hope? Are you feeling the need for some Coaching/Mentoring – some ‘Moaching’? I can help. +61 410 586 700 **Be and Become.**