

Weekly Column
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Melvin University
and Me

Never give up

West Point, a military academy in New York, U.S., goes through a difficult four-year process. More than 14,000 youngsters apply for there at their second year of high school across the U.S. Then 4,000 of them pass document's test; 2,500 through the process of another test, and then finally 1,200 final pass through further tests. However, about 200 to 300 people were dropped on the way, so only about 1,000 people attended the final graduation ceremony.

However, these two to three hundred dropouts were admitted and almost gave up within seven weeks of their first summer training (called BEAST). After two years of admission processed, they give up in the first two months. It gives the most difficult training for the first two months of the summer, and it is the process of changing from a cadet to a soldier.

I think it is intended to completely changed their lifestyle in society previous. Anyway, the curriculum has been organized to change from cadets to soldiers, so strong training runs from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. Furthermore, there are no weekends, no breaks except for mealtime, and they can't meet their family and friends outside the West Point. That's why hundreds of them give up and dropped out because they are train strong even in the hot summer weather.

However, there were studied of cadets who are dropped. Why are they giving up? By the way, most of what was found was the same; namely that they had highly high school scores, leadership experiences, and physical strength as well. In order to enter the U.S. Military Academy, the level of school performance and others should be the highest because coming into Military Academy must be met entering to the same level of universities in Ivy League.

So what is the difference between those who succeeded with seven weeks and those who are dropped? That is, there is a difference in their endurance (Perseverance, Grit*, fighting spirit). Rather than winning because it's skill, talent, and genius, but it's been discovered through years of research that was perseverance.

Most successful people were not excel in IQ, intelligent, and gifted. It was usually people who worked hard in one field. Perhaps, as Stanford psychology professor Dr. Carol said, it seems similar to the discovery that students who feel a little lacking have endurance and continue to work hard to reach the top.

Personally, I thought: People who think they have everything, 100% IQ and 100% talent, don't have to struggle anymore, so there's no room for effort. Isn't it 100% done?

But let's say that there are only 60 percents of people who feel that something is lacking. Those people are trying, and trying to fill 100%, so maybe they are in perseverance and fighting spirit to keep going, and not only to reach 100%, but they can proceed to 120%, 130%. In other words, it seems to be a matter of direction, not a matter of the destination. There are many great people in the world, but I think the best of them are the latter! The best people in the world are those who have gone beyond 100 percent to 150 percent, and 200 percent

further.

In other words, it is not a matter of IQ, talent, but people who are satisfied with dissatisfaction. After achieving something, people are not satisfied with it and are dissatisfied with pursuing a higher level, and like the confession of Apostle Paul in the Bible, "Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on...."

The U.S. Military Academy aims to develop various aspects, it is said to provide mental, physical, military spirit, and social training. However, as they passed the difficult training process, they discovered their weakness, which they wouldn't unbearable. Perhaps they think of a lack of self-esteem. Therefore, they are often dropped out without endurance. Who would pass four years of such a hard process and go to the graduation? Moreover, even the cadets who passed the whole of the military academy's self-test were dropped. They must be fully equipped cadets. Nevertheless, those who eventually go through all the way were the ones who don't give up.

This isn't just a story in the military, though. It is applied to various jobs, businesses, pastors, students, etc. Analyzing successful people, it comes down to two things: one is passion, the other is perseverance. The passion is not cooling down, and perseverance is overcoming difficult problems. If these two are essential to success, is it absurd? Passion is necessary at the beginning, and perseverance is necessary to continue and develop further.

Note)

* Grit is expressed in the Cambridge Dictionary as "grit your teeth".