

I'm Paul Devore. I'm from Los Angeles. I received my education in Los Angeles, both of my degrees Bachelor's and MBA in Finance from UCLA. I am a financial planner, president of Pacific Insurance Management Corporation, Chief Executive Officer of FMS Financial Partners. We are a firm in Los Angeles that does financial planning, employee benefits, investments, and insurance, sometimes referred to as welfare workers to the rich. I also currently have the privilege of serving as Chairman of the Advisory Board of Directors of Partners Financial, which is a national organization of 350 firms, part of an organization on the New York Stock Exchange, National Financial Partners. I also had the privilege a few years back to serve as Chairman of National TSA.

I was diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome when I was 45, not until that time, and it really happened as a result of my now wonderful wife, Anne. We had just started dating at that time and she suspected that I might have had Tourette Syndrome. She did a little bit of research and she orchestrated a doctor's appointment with an expert in Tourette Syndrome. And I went out there and I did a little bit of reading about it and pretty much concluded it wasn't me. And he gave me some tests to take, some tests for members of my family to take. And when I got there after about 45 seconds I said, "So this to find out if I have Tourette Syndrome?" He said, "You definitely have Tourette Syndrome. This is about what we do about it."

The definition of self-esteem is to think favorably of, to have high regard. Low self-esteem, of course, is just the opposite. Now, it's easy and natural for people with Tourette Syndrome to have low self-esteem. I mean after all we get rejection. We're outcasts. We get ridicule, a lot of embarrassment. Very often when we're young we get beat up. There's a constant comparison to others by ourselves, by our parents, and by others doing that. And to conclude that we're inferior it becomes a pretty obvious conclusion. It's real easy with what we have to endure, the challenges that we have to go through, the social interactions and self-assessments that lead us, almost inevitably, to a result of low self-esteem. However, we must realize and accept that TS is what we have. It is not who we are. All people have flaws, defects, shortcomings. TS happens to be more visible and more audible than many others, but I can tell you many others that are less audible are a heck of a lot worse. There are a lot of maladies afflicting human beings. So when you consider it all, TS isn't necessarily so bad. The challenge is finding the balance, this balance between realizing that I have Tourette Syndrome and it presents certain challenges versus an excuse for non-performance, non-achievement, and failure. It's a terrible trap that's easy to fall into, a trap of self-pity, and that's what we need to try to avoid.

Early on in my career I did a fair amount of speaking and I spoke to an organization, a professional organization of other financial planners. And I heard round about that one of the fellows there had expressed to somebody else. He said, "You know, it's amazing that Paul can be so successful despite his handicap." When I heard that back I said, "What handicap? I don't know what he's talking about." I didn't know if I was supposed to be afraid, offended; certainly I was surprised. What is this handicap he's talking about? And later I talked to my partner and I asked him. I said, "You know, I don't understand it. I am fairly successful. How is it that I could be so successful when people find it so annoying to be around me? I mean I make all these noises. I do all these things. How can that be?" And he gave me a very surprising response. His name was Gary – still is. He said, "I don't think anybody notices." He says, "You know I think everybody notices at first that you're something. But after a while it's just you. It's just who you are. Some people are blonde. Some people are brunette. Some people are redheaded. You have Tourette. You make some noises. You tic. I don't think anyone even notices." And I said, "What an amazing revelation." Is this stuff, this stuff I do, this thing I have, this Tourette Syndrome, is it irrelevant? Is it possible to rise above

Tourette Syndrome and focus on my strong points? Is it possible to overcome outside negative influences and achieve high goals? Is it possible that one can indeed have high self-confidence and high self-esteem without being good at everything, just excellent at a few things? Does my success in business and other areas entitle me to high self-esteem? Indeed success certainly should enhance self-esteem. Well, I believe the answer to all these questions is yes. Does that mean I have high self-esteem, a big ego? Well, success is a journey; it's not a destination. It doesn't just happen. It's a constant struggle. But I deserve to have high self-esteem and so do you.

I made a decision then that for me Tourette Syndrome was and is irrelevant. And as national chairman when I came into that position, I was asked what my vision was for the Tourette Syndrome Association. And I said, "My vision, my objective – long range it might be – is to render Tourette Syndrome irrelevant." Doesn't mean it's going to go away. Doesn't mean we're going to cure it. But people who have it will be able to live their lives, to strive for excellence, to go on and achieve high aims despite having Tourette Syndrome. That is not to say that we don't all experience the problems, the issues, the obstacles, the setbacks of the disorder. Certainly we do, but only to view it, to act as if it's truly not a relevant factor in our striving for excellence and having a happy, successful life.

So what should we do? Well, examine the negative aspects of Tourette Syndrome. That's easy to do. But then convert it to positive advantages for you. For example, as a young person I wasn't invited to parties. I mean no one wanted this freak who made noises and did all this stuff to parties. So I became a musician. And when you're standing up playing a saxophone, you can make all the noises, and all the movements you want, and I got invited to parties. I got invited to lots of parties 'cause I was playing. I was working and I was even getting paid to go to the parties. And I think I was having more fun playing. I had a band. I had my own four-piece band. I had a five-piece band. And then I had a 15-piece big band. And I was having a ball and I got to go to the parties too.

When I entered my field initially of life insurance it was while I was in graduate school in UCLA. And it was a good internship opportunity but I was very nervous. You take the stereotype life insurance salesman. That person is gregarious, aggressive, social, a true extrovert. They're good at meeting people and keep pushing and pushing to sell life insurance. I'm an introvert. It isn't always obvious when I'm speaking because I move my hands a lot and talk loud and fast but I truly am an introvert. I'm the one that you can go to a party and I'm going to be the one standing in the corner irrespective of what the party is, who's there, that's just me. I'm not social and I'm very un-aggressive. So I was worried. How am I going to be able to make it in this business where the accepted stereotype is one of extrovert, gregarious, and so forth? So I felt frustrated and, of course, inferior. But I thought of a way around that. I said you know, a lot of people who sell life insurance don't know very much. Very often I find they don't even know about the product they're selling. They just know selling. So I decided I would become hyper-knowledgeable. I'd learn everything there was to know about life insurance, the uses of life insurance, and then got into qualified plans – those are pension, and profit sharing, and 401K plans, and estate planning – and said I'm going to become so knowledgeable that people are going to come to me for that knowledge. It happened. I got all the knowledge. I became creative at using it. People did come to me and I didn't have to be all those things that I was so worried that I wasn't and therefore couldn't become. I think a large part of my success is actually linked to my having Tourette Syndrome.

OCD – guilty! I have it. But I think that's very helpful. I'll get into that in a minute. Feeling of responsibility – well, when you're making noises in class and constantly being disruptive, you very quickly learn that you're responsible for everything that goes wrong, everything that's bad, and I had

that too. But in my work as a financial planner and doing employee benefits, I feel very responsible for my clients' financial well being. I'm a perfectionist. It's a real problem. It drives people around me crazy. Clients like it. I've got to get it right before it's done for them. Truth telling – for some reason somewhere along the line I became a compulsive truth-teller. There are certainly times when it would be more convenient to do otherwise, but I find in every case being a compulsive truth teller serves me very, very well because people know when I say something they can bank it. It's going to be absolutely true. And it may be something they want to hear and it may be something they don't want to hear. Either way they know it's the truth. I work hard. I spent so many years of my life being embarrassed all the time that I work to avoid embarrassment. How do I do that? I just make sure that before I say something I know I'm right. I've researched it and it's not going to come back to find out that I said something that wasn't right or wasn't the best way of doing it. And I need to excel all the time in order to prove myself worthy. So I have all these TS oriented characteristics. They serve my clients and me very, very well. Of course it drives many people on my staff absolutely nuts but clients love it because they know they win with it.

So let me talk about some tools that you can use to build self-esteem. First of all, be the best person you can be. Focus on what you can do, not what you can't do. Not less of a person but how you're more of a person. Set objectives. What are the important objectives in your life? Focus on them. I'm reminded of the differences between miners and farmers. If you take the miner, the miner goes in whether it be a diamond mine, a gold mine, a coalmine, an oil driller goes into where there's natural resources, and he takes those natural resources and then he resells them at a profit. Contrast that with a farmer who takes his land, prepares his land, works his land, plants it, takes care of his crop, nurtures it, ultimately harvests it, and provides it to others. And then he starts doing that all over again. Farmers add value, provide value. Be a farmer. Bring value to others. Focus on the positive. Positive energy attracts positive people. Negative energy attracts negative people. There's lots to be a negative about in this world – no question about that. But focus on the positive. Avoid the negative people. Hang around with winners. You know they say it's hard to soar with the eagles when you hang around a flock of turkeys. Think optimistic, not pessimistic. Certainly bad things happen and they happen to everyone. There's a book I read decades ago. The author was a psychiatrist named Viktor Frankl. The name of the book was *Man's Search for Meaning*. Viktor Frankl was a psychiatrist during the holocaust and he was incarcerated in a concentration camp. And he wrote this book about the terrible things that happened to people in the Nazi concentration camps, the terrible things that happened to him. But what he concluded from it is that the people who made it through and survived, versus the people who did not was not what happened to them, was not the mistreatment by the guards and the interrogators, it was their response to it. The same bad things happened to everybody. But those who responded to it in a fatalistic way died, weakened. Those who said, "Okay, this is one more opportunity for me to grow. What am I going to do with this?" Those people survived and flourished. And it was a, a fascinating book. And, many years ago, it did a lot to changing my thinking about how do we approach life. How do we view things versus what actually happens to us?

Think about your unique ability both from a standpoint of a career and in every other way. One of the things I found in school – and it may be different today; it's been a while – but schools focused on weakness. For example, for me when I was as young as, I guess, kindergarten or the first grade I could not draw. I could not paint at all. I was a total failure at that. So every morning the teacher would give out the assignments. And Johnny you go work on clay. And Mikey you're going to go work on the bars. And you're going to play ball. And Paul, you're going to do art. That teacher was committed to getting me over the handicap of not being able to draw or paint by continuously getting me to do that which I hated, that which I was not good at. The right way to do that is determine those

things you are good at. Certainly, we can't ignore math and reading and science, and all those obvious things that we have to know to successfully get through life. But if we focus on those things we're good at and we like, we have a possibility, the potential, to not only enjoy our life but to develop a passion for what we do. And that is, a passion is, how you become excellent at something. So, avoid your weak areas. Acknowledge them. There was a time when I had to acknowledge that I was probably not going to make it as a basketball star. I had to accept that reality. I was perfectly comfortable with it. And I moved on. Had I decided to continue pursuing that objective I wouldn't have much opportunity to play. I wouldn't have liked it. I would have been a failure. And so segment out those kinds of things in life. There are things that you might be poor at and you don't like them. Get rid of them. Don't do it. There might be things you're good at but you don't like. To the extent you can, get rid of them. Then there are those things that you like and you're good at, and of course focus on those. Become the best you can at those kinds of things. And seek and search for what are your personal strengths, your unique abilities. And to the extent that you can discover those things that you do better than most anybody else, you're going to develop passion. You're going to develop high-level skills. And you're going to become incredibly successful at anything you set out to do.

How do you find out what your strengths are and your unique abilities? Well, ask your friends. Ask your family. They know. Just take a poll. Ask five people and say, "What do you think? If you were to select something that I do probably better than almost anybody else, what would it be?" Of course you already know to some extent those things you like and you're good at. Pursue those. You also might be surprised at some of the things people tell you. You might, something you thought was a handicap, like OCD, someone else might say, "What I really like is you focus on a project and you keep striving to get that thing done right no matter what." Say, "I thought I was a pain in the neck doing that. And you tell me it's a benefit? Wow!!" What an opportunity to get better and to become superior.

Project your best qualities. Think about, think about what your best qualities are and concentrate on them. Don't think about your insecurities but on your strengths. Don't beat yourself up for having weaknesses. Take pride in your strengths. Another thing to do – and this is a hard one, I can tell you – accept compliments. People say, "Gee, you do that very well." "Thank you, that feels good." As opposed to what many of us do naturally in this state is, "No, it's not so good. I – nah – I really should have done it better. I should have worked harder at it." That certainly is my natural inclination but it's so much better to just say, "Thank you. That does feel good. I am pretty good at that. And I, not only that I really appreciate you're acknowledging it and saying thank you."

Promises – I have a hard and fast rule. I don't make a promise unless I know absolutely certainly that I can keep that promise. That's a credibility builder. It gives you credibility and reputation for others, and certainly makes you feel a lot better about yourself than going out and easily making promises about all those kinds of things that you later have to renege on. Others feel bad about it. You feel bad about it. It's a self-esteem destroyer. Just make promises. Be very careful about the promises you make. And then do whatever is necessary to keep that promise. Your reputation is absolutely, in my opinion, the most valuable asset you have. You could have real estate. You can have stocks. You can have great wealth. Your most valuable asset, the one that's the hardest to build, and by the way, the easiest to ruin, is your reputation. Work on it; that reputation as a solid citizen, a fine person, one who can be counted on to do things right, and counted on to keep their word.

Then there's layering versus channeling – too often we layer problems and issues. What do I mean by that? Say you have a problem. You have a work problem. Maybe it's a personnel problem. You have that problem. You have a customer problem. You have a car problem. You have a problem with your house. You have a health problem, all kinds of problems. And what the natural human tendency is, is to layer problem, after problem, after problem, after problem until finally, "I can't take it anymore. I have all these problems. I can't do it." A better way instead of layering, channel it. What do I mean by that? Well, let's say you're on television watching Channel 2. When you're watching Channel 2, what happens to Channel 4? Are they gone? Or are they still playing? You just don't happen to be aware of it. Well, of course they're still playing. Channel 4 is going on. Channel 5 is going on, 11; they're all going on but you're only focusing for that moment on Channel 2. So when you have tasks, or issues, or problems, you channel it; take that problem and just give it all of your time and attention, and all of your focus until you either get that problem solved or you've done as much as you can during this particular time frame on it, and then to go back to it another time. Don't be thinking about all the problems you have; just be thinking about the one that you're focusing on and working on. It'll relieve a tremendous amount of frustration and help you get a lot more done, a lot more productively.

Learn and grow – seek opportunities to learn and to grow, which you obviously do by the very fact you're watching this video. That means that you want to learn. Exercise – very important. If you exercise regularly, you feel good. You look good. You could be healthy. You have energy. And you don't have to like it. What I used to tell myself when I was out jogging in the cold rain at 5:30 in the morning. I said, "I don't have to like this; I just have to do it because for that hour of exercise, or even a half hour, to feel so much better, and to be so much healthier, and to stay away from illness is a wonderful thing." Get involved in the Tourette Syndrome Association. It's a safe place for us with Tourette Syndrome. Your contributing to others feels good, helps you achieve things. The accomplishment you get by helping others and getting involved, and working towards the objectives of TSA are a wonderful feeling. And in fact I find that I learn more by helping others and doing things for others than I do by having someone do something for me. So the learning, the growth is a wonderful experience. Think about it. How can you make life better for people with Tourette Syndrome? Give praise to others at every opportunity. You deserve high self-esteem. You don't have to be perfect. There is no need for perfection. You don't have to be good at everything. Just make the best of your strengths. Reduce the focus on your weakness. Identify and work on your unique abilities. Pursue them and achieve great things. Feel good about who you are because you are terrific.