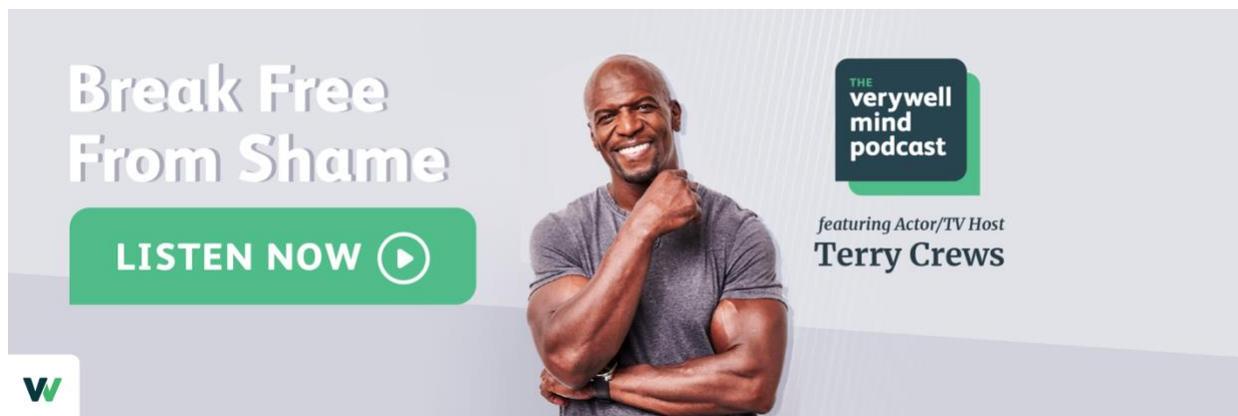




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Break Free From Shame with Actor/TV Host Terry Cruz

Amy Morin:

Welcome to *The Verywell Mind Podcast*! I'm Amy Morin, the editor-in-chief of Verywell Mind. I'm also a psychotherapist and a best-selling author of four books on mental strength. Every Monday, I introduce you to a mentally strong person whose story and mental strength tips can inspire you to think, feel, and do your best in life. And the fun part is we record the show from a sailboat in the Florida Keys! Don't forget to subscribe to the show on your favorite platform so you can get mental strength tips delivered to you every single week. Now, let's dive into today's episode!

Do you feel a deep sense of shame about something in your life? When you make a mistake or reach for an unhealthy temptation, do you tell yourself that it's a sign of weakness? Do you work hard to mask your problems and your insecurities so that you can look good to other people? If you answered yes to any of those questions, this episode is for you.

Today I'm talking to Terry Crews. Terry's a former NFL player, turned actor and TV host. He started in shows like *Everybody Hates Chris* and *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*. And he's hosted *Who Wants To Be a Millionaire* and *America's Got Talent*. Terry's also an author. His latest book is called *Tough*. In it, he shares stories of a difficult past and how it led him to believing that the only way to get through life was to act tough. He also talks about how he made it to the NFL, how he developed an addiction to pornography, and how he eventually learned that true toughness actually involves empathy and vulnerability.

Some of the things he shares in today's episode are how he addressed the deep shame he carried around for decades, how he changed his self righteous attitude, and what it really means to be mentally tough. Make sure to stick around until the end of the episode for The Therapist's Take. It's the part of the show where I'll break down Terry's mental strength-building strategies and share how you can apply them to your own life. So here's Terry Crews on how learning to let go of shame can help you grow mentally stronger!

Amy Morin:

Terry Crews, welcome to *The Verywell Mind Podcast!*

Terry Crews:

How you doing, Amy?

Amy Morin:

I am great. And I'm so excited that you've taken the time to come talk to us. I know how busy you are. You've got another season of America's Got Talent on the horizon and you just came out with this new book that you're promoting. You're a busy guy these days, huh?

Terry Crews:

First of all, I love being busy. I love what I do. Everything that I'm doing right now, I would be doing for free anyway. So it's perfect.

Amy Morin:

And that's the dream, right, to say, I love my job so much that I would do it even if I didn't get paid?

Terry Crews:

That's right. It's beautiful. It's a beautiful way to live. And I'm just so thankful to be able to do that. I am. I'm just so honored.

Amy Morin:

Well, I loved your book, your new book called Tough. Absolutely amazing book. When I first saw that you had written a book called tough though, I had a slight concern that you were going to talk about mental toughness in the way that so many other people do, whether it's a Navy Seal or another former athlete who just talks about the fact that you have to get up at 4:00 AM, you have to go through the grind, pretend like you're never

sad, and as long as you never cry at a funeral, you're okay in life. And I was so relieved to see that you quickly debunked that myth about mental toughness.

Terry Crews:

That's right. That's right. I had to redefine what toughness meant, what it was. And previously in my life for almost my first 40 years on earth, toughness was what you just described. It was a battle to get up the earliest, to work the longest, to do the most work. And then I wore myself out. I've been in the most competitive industries you could imagine, be it professional football in the NFL, all the way to Hollywood and entertainment, from movies to television. And this grind will eat you up alive. It's literally a grinder. And if you have that mindset, it will totally take you out in a lot of ways and you'll be over it before you think you're started. But it can really, really eat you up. And I had to redefine what toughness was. Toughness used to be the ability to throw punches. But now in my revelation, it's really the ability to take things, and to really endure the right way and to really just understand your weaknesses, understand your strengths and the wisdom to know the difference in a lot of ways.

Amy Morin:

Yeah. You talk in the book about how the old you used to fight. You felt like you always had to stand up for yourself. Any sign of vulnerability would've been a hint of weakness, and you felt like you couldn't show any of those things.

Terry Crews:

Right. Right. First of all, what I would like to say, I created an image, and it was an image that everybody loved, everybody looked up to, everybody worshiped. Even I worshiped it, but I wasn't that. My internal compass was way off. And my external success never matched who I was internally. And all my rewards were extrinsic. Everything I did was what I call getting Scooby snacks. You know what I mean? It was all about approval, all about what other people thought of me. And that way I constructed this brilliant image that everybody loved. But what was happening is slowly but surely inside, it was a facade I could not keep up. And literally culminating with the day my wife said, "I'm out of here. I'm out of here. I'm done. I don't want anything to do with you."

And what was so crazy is that I was extremely successful. And that was the thing, it was kind of like what the world had told me was the fact that, hey, man, you're winning. And I was like, but why am I losing? So it was a catharsis that I had to really just work through. And through therapy was one of the things that I really got to the heart of what were my issues, all my problems. But the problem also, the big problem was the obstacle was therapy itself. In my community and where I grew up, it was

therapy was seen as quackery. And actually doing something to really talk through your own issues, thinking about your own thinking was viewed as quackery.

It was kind of wild, because some of the phrases that were used was you're being indoctrinated into being white, which was one of the things that was really hard for me to do, because it was just like, come on, man. You're like, black people don't do that, which was a really big obstacle. And it's so wild, because when I look at the trauma that most black men have been through, just such as myself, and the areas that I've been through, and the fact that your answer lies in therapy, but you think that therapy itself is a problem, how can you ever really find a true answer? How can you really, really get help? And that was something that took years for me to overcome. And when I did, it saved my life.

Amy Morin:

I'm so glad to hear you say that. I happen to be a therapist. And telling people, hey, you should go to therapy, is one thing when they hear it from me, but when they hear it from you and you can say, I made that choice and it wasn't a sign of weakness, but I took that first step and that it helped you so much, it's really powerful. How did you get to that point where you said, okay, I'm going to go talk to somebody?

Terry Crews:

Well, again, my wife left. And it was so weird, because Amy, at first I said, you know what? Fine. Go. You know what? I'll just find another woman. It was no big deal. I was in my pride, I was in my ego. I was trying to hold up that image and keep that thing up on stilts. But they just kept cracking. And I finally, it was so wild, because I literally was blaming her for everything that was wrong with me. And a friend of mine gave me the best advice I ever received in my entire life. He said, "Terry, I can't promise you you're going to get your wife and family back, but you've got to get better for you." And that was watershed. Amy, when I tell you, it was like, what are you talking about?

It was because I did everything in my life for rewards. Everything in my life was based on, if I do this, I'm supposed to get this. If I did this, I'm supposed to get this trophy. I'm supposed to get this money. If I do this, I get sex. If I do this, I get fame. And having the rewards be intrinsic was a totally different concept. Everything else was extrinsic. It was about, okay, now I can show everybody that I won, because I got the car. I got the house. I got the wife, I got this. And then you point all these things out and intrinsically you were hollow. And I was hollow. And finally, I was at rock bottom. My wife was gone. My family was gone. And I had no other choice. That whole phrase about you getting better for you meant therapy.

And I said, just getting better for its own sake. And I went, all right. And I tried it out. Let me tell you, the first couple days I was like, oh, this is all wrong. This is not me.

Oh my God, these people are crazy. This is literally what I said. But then they kept reading my mail. They kept saying, "hey man, was your father an alcoholic?" I was like, "yeah. Yeah. Yeah, he was." And they were like, "hey, was your mom really religious?" I said, "yes. Wait a minute." And all these things started to connect and they started to come through. And every time I would try to dismiss something they said, it would hit me in the heart even deeper. I learned about what true intimacy was and that that's what we're truly looking for.

I also learned about me being a pleaser. The adult child of an alcoholic, there's these same things that they tend to do over and over again. And all I was trying to do was keep peace in my house with my mom being super religious and my dad being an alcoholic, that I hadn't had no idea about what I wanted. So everything was outwardly based. And so everyone's opinion about me meant way more than my opinion of myself. Amy, only way I can really phrase it is believing that the sun revolves around the earth, and then finding out, just finding out in one fell swoop that no, wait, we go around the sun. And I was like, what? But the thing is, because we know now correctly that we go around the sun, now we can go into outer space.

But before we got that fact right, before we understood how the rotation of earth went, you could never go into outer space. You could never get to the goal that you keep saying you want. And we want to try this, but if you have it backwards, how in the world? Everything you're going to do is going to fail. And I realized this version of toughness was not working. It was not working for me. It just made me angrier. And the biggest thing I discovered is I live my life like it was a revenge movie, and that is a very, very typical adult male fantasy. Okay. And I tell this all the time, it's like, it's better than sex for a lot of men, where anyone who ever counted you out, or degraded you, or dissed you, or insulted you, you want to get them back one by one.

And it's a really real fantasy that motivates a lot of successful men. And I'm sure women are too. I'm sure. But I like to just speak in the way my frame of mind was, it was this vision. It's like a revenge movie. It was Death Wish. It was Man on Fire. It was Payback. It was Taken. It was like, I'm going to get you all one by one. But the watershed moment for me is I realized is that I could either have success or revenge, but I couldn't have both. It was like revenge required me to go back to the mud. It required me to go back from a place that I escaped, to go back into the pain, and the trouble and all the problems in an effort to even the score.

But success is about leaving everything behind. It's about just saying, you know what? I'm just going to start over. And another great quote that I heard that changed my frame of mind forever, it said that intelligent decision making sometimes requires us to forget what we've lost and reevaluate the situation as it exists today. It was so eye opening, because forgetting what you've lost now says it gives you a good reset. It's like a magical reset button. And you can basically leave all that crap behind and start over.

But in our minds, we tend to not do that. I know for a fact, for me, it was all about going back and showing people what I got. If I did get some success, let me go back and show you and now I can prove it to you. But it would always leave me empty.

And my goodness, I know I'm rambling here, but I tell you, all of these things kind of just culminated one after the other. The book even is almost like five books in one, because I would find one thing about myself, but I could see how it affected me in all these other places. In my money, in all my relationships, in my work. And I just found out it was affecting every aspect of my life. And one thing that I really discovered is that with this therapy, and with this discovery of myself and discovering how I worked, now I was able to counteract all of these things that I had learned wrong. If I born in Germany, I probably would have learned German. And growing up where I grew up in sports culture, in hood culture, even in hip hop culture, there were so many things that I learned wrong, which were the misogyny.

There was one big belief that I had was that I believed that I was more valuable than all the women in my life simply because I was a man, because everything around me told me that. And I was like, there was no reason to refute it. In fact, you would go up to anybody and they'd be like, yeah, man, you the man, and you get your wife in line, you get your family in line. You didn't really love your family, you owned your family. And these were things that I had to challenge. These were all these little lessons and sayings. One phrase that as an example, is that I always heard, hey man, it's a dog eat dog world, and you got to get yours before they get theirs. And always dog eat dog and this is the thing. And I had taken that to heart. Like, yeah, you're right. You're right. It is a dog eat dog world. But the thing is, dogs don't eat other dogs. You have never, ever seen a dog eat another dog.

Amy Morin:

You're right.

Terry Crews:

Dogs work together. They call them a pack and they work together to find food to eat. You know what I mean? So it's funny, if you ever see wild dogs, there's usually more than one, and they hang out and they make sure each other eat. And I just said, wait a minute. All these things that we take in as tenants or laws, we have to start questioning. And I have to say this, even in the book, I don't want to give any answers. I don't even know any answers. But for me, my breakthrough was in just asking the right questions. If I just keep asking the right questions, you eventually will come to something that says, wait a minute. And it tends to be eye opening. I stopped trying to look for answers, but just started to start asking the right questions. And I was able to find breakthroughs and find things and look at things in an entirely different way that allowed me to say, oh

wow, and allowed me to question all the things that had already been given to me that were really wrong.

Amy Morin:

One of the things in your book that you talked about too, is how you broke out this cycle of shame.

Terry Crews:

Yes.

Amy Morin:

And you discussed how you had this addiction to pornography, shame kept you stuck in it. And one of the most interesting things I thought when you talked about shame too, was you said it gave you this idea that you should be judgmental of other people, gave you permission to be self righteous. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Terry Crews:

Oh my goodness. Yes. First of all, the self-righteousness that we can get into is extremely dangerous. Extremely dangerous. Simply because you feel right. My father, one of the biggest things my father did was he was very abusive. So one of my earliest memories was him knocking my mother out, hitting her in the face as hard as he could. And he felt right in doing that. There was a self-righteousness that came in my community and my hood that all men, you were almost expected to be able to beat your wife if you needed to. And as horrible as that sounds, it was the norm in my neighborhood where I grew up. The women's shelters were full of women who had basically ran out in the middle of the night. And I was praying that my mother would.

I remember, there was so many times we had all our bags packed and we were ready to go. And she would just come back home and she'd say, "no, we're not leaving." And I was pissed. But that self-righteousness my dad had was something I picked up. And this is the thing about being self-righteous, anyone can be self righteous, which blew my mind. You could be black and self-righteous. You can be gay and self-righteous. You could be a poor, you could be rich. You could be any ethnicity, any place. You could be male or female. But that self-righteousness, it allows you to do the most heinous, evil things to other people because you feel correct. Growing up in the church, the problem with, I went to a very, very super religious church, and ultra religious.

And I would say, the whole thing, when I was a kid, I wasn't allowed to go to the movies. I wasn't allowed to listen to secular music. I wasn't allowed to dance. I wasn't allowed to play sports. Everything that I did with my life, I was not allowed to do as a

young man. And what happened is people who didn't do those things had deemed themselves self-righteous. To this point where a person would put a TV in the window sill, plug it in, and then walk around and tell everybody that they do not have a TV in their house. Listen, I mean, when you're talking about, now we're playing games. But these are the kind of games I was playing with myself. And it was the thing where, yeah, I think women are equal. Of course they're equal.

And everything in my life said something else. My wife was telling me, "hey, you not respected me." And I was like, "of course I respect you." But everything that I did did not do that. And I became totally self-righteous because I was successful. And I decided, hey, I'm doing it right, because the world told me I'm doing it right. And man, once I had to rid myself of that, because one thing I understood is that shame says that you are bad. Shame says that you are wrong. It doesn't say you did something wrong, it says you are wrong. And after years of therapy, I had come up with a technique for myself that I felt worked. There's a picture of myself when I was six years old. And I had my two teeth missing and they were growing in, the whole thing.

And man, I get choked up when I think about it. But just looking at that, I put it on my desktop. And I was like, is that kid bad? Is that kid bad? No, he's not. There's nothing in him that's bad. And he may have done a bad thing. He may have messed up. He may have made some errors. He may have gotten angry, but he's still a good boy. And one thing that hit me is that, hey, at no time in my life did I ever stop being that little boy. He's still there. I think we all like children to some extent. And it allowed me the grace, and the mercy and the forgiveness to myself that allowed me to make different decisions, to not lead with shame, but to actually say, all right, but I can correct this behavior. Just like I would if I was a little boy and I didn't know how to ride a bike and I kept falling off, if I just keep working on it, I will eventually learn and I will grow, and then I'll be the best bike rider you've ever seen.

And that's the way I like to look at myself. And it helps me, because I do have a lot of things, there are a lot of things in my past that I did wrong. Again, my addiction to pornography, there was infidelity in the past. And it's something that tends to, if you let yourself get into it too deep, you just feel like, man, is there any way out? I don't know. You want to go back and wallow in that. But treating myself with forgiveness allows me to move on. And I just think shame is one of the most horrible, horrible things, because it's insidious. Telling yourself you should do these things and you should be this way. Anytime I hear the word should, I know shame is involved. And so I'd start to back up and I tell myself, wait a minute, I can do this. I can do that. Which is a different framework. It doesn't lead with shame. Now it leads with empowerment. I know I can choose a different path. It's true freedom. And when I say true power, that's exactly what I mean.

Amy Morin:

And how did you find the courage to come forward with this book? Throughout the book, you don't paint yourself in a very good light sometimes. You tell some stories that are hard to read. There's a story about you losing your temper with a puppy. But then you also talk about, you talk about your very public issue that happened when you were sexually assaulted years ago and how you came forward with that. Then you have other stories where you say, I lost my temper. You got in this fight with your dad. How did you find the courage to come forward and talk so openly about these things knowing that you're a public figure?

Terry Crews:

Well, this is, to me, I also felt like why write a book if I was going to gloss it over? And this is the thing, the 12th step, when you go into the 12 steps, the 12th step, the last final step, the step that they say, if you can't do it, you're probably going to go back into addiction, is you have to help someone else. That's the deal. And I knew that if I didn't tell it the way it really went down, it really wouldn't help, because there was some way I would still try to hold on to my righteousness. You know what I mean? There was still a way to hold onto that image to keep that thing propped up just a little bit so that it can give a nice little cover.

I left myself no cover, that was thing. I ripped all down. This is Terry Crews, warts and all. And what was so thrilling and so refreshing is that people were like, "thank you. I can't believe you are just like me." People Magazine has this thing like, celebs, they're just like you. You know what I mean? But if you read this book, you'll say, oh my God, Terry was worse than me. Looking at the Academy Awards, and a lot was said about Will Smith and Chris Rock and the whole thing. And I can tell you, I did worse than Will, it just wasn't in front of 100 million people. But it was worse than that. And how could I ever point at anybody, and judge anybody and be like, oh, you are a failure, when knowing that I did worse than that? So this is a way for me too, to also just keep the empathy blowing for anybody out there, because hey man, there before the grace of God go I.

I mean, I could easily, this could have been a whole nother story. And I knew it was my job to be transparent in this book to really pass that 12th step, because that was, to me, the only thing that was going to help people. Because this is the thing about celebrity and being a public figure, is that people tend to feel that you're special. They feel like, no, but you had all these other things that I never had. You know what I mean? And I'm here to tell you that I am no different than anybody out there. When you look at my beginnings, I mean, Flint, Michigan right now is arguably one of the worst cities in the United States. And when I look at my upbringing, when we look at my home life, all these issues, man, I just had to tell it. And then I had to tell exactly how bad it was for me so that you could see how far it was that I traveled. If the book started out good and ended up great, I don't think it really would've helped anyone.

Amy Morin:

Well, I thought so too. And when I read it, I thought, wow, this is impressive that you've told these stories. But then I was curious, because I knew that you wrote a book back in 2014 called *Manhood*. So I went back and I read that book, because I thought, I want to know whether you came clean about all these things in the first book as well. And I discovered some interesting things. So in your first book, you mentioned the word empathy exactly once. In your second book, you say it seven times. Your first book, you said shame 5 times. And your second book, 46 times. So as a therapist, I was curious about how you've learned about these things over the years. And then I saw this evolution of Terry that you weren't done yet. When that first book came out, you still had a lot of things to talk about.

And even in this book, you end it with sort of stories about your family and how the dysfunction that you've survived, that it's not necessarily over. And yet you've kind of changed your family's story by saying you used to look at it as a place of, I think it came from a place of shame, the family dysfunction. But now you're able to see a little bit differently to say, but these are also, there were some heroes in your family line who have been through tough things, and because of them you're here today.

Terry Crews:

Yes. Even in my first book, there was a lot I didn't know. I was just speaking. I could say both books were from the heart and they were where I was at the time. But I learned a lot more since 2014. And even when I wrote *Manhood*, I hadn't been through that experience with Adam Venit and the sexual assault with my agent and the whole thing, and going public and joining the women of Me Too. And I mean, that had not happened. And I have to be honest, that was when I learned about being transparent, the power of what transparency and vulnerability really do. I thought I was being vulnerable, but actually putting yourself out there as a sexual assault survivor, as a man in the middle of the Me Too movement, it was an uproar. Some good, a lot bad.

I mean, people were just like, what are you talking about? It didn't make sense to a lot of people. There were people who were like, yeah, man, you're too big to be sexually assaulted. And I thought, but when you really put the thing to it, just like the dog eat dog reference, I mean, that's like saying you're too big to get shot. I mean, does being 240 pounds make you bulletproof? No, it doesn't. I mean, anybody can be sexually assaulted. And this is the thing, and this is one thing that I had to really, really understand, I mean, imagine the number of men that are in jail right now that were getting revenge for their assaults, but would never tell. Would never, ever put that out there in the open because it comes with shame. And so they'd rather go to jail and rather take the punishment than to say that they were assaulted, to say that they were abused.

It's an eye opener. And what was so wonderful again, because when I did come forward, before this, it was always seen as a woman's issue. And I knew we needed men to come forward simply to make it a humanity issue and to really put it in a 3D context, to know that if the women aren't safe, if all of us aren't safe, none of us are safe. And it was by coming forward that way, believe me, I went back into therapy, you know what I mean? It was one of those things where, man, how am I going to deal with the way people perceive me, the way people think about me? And then I also understood it was like, hey, wait, you know what? It happened. That's the thing, I wasn't making it up. This is how it went down.

And the thing is, the only way people knew is because I told you. It wasn't that people found it out, the whole thing. And I realized there's a power in owning your own story. I owned my story. I talked to Tarana Burke, and that was one thing, she was like, "hey, your story is your story." And that hit me really, really hard. So I had the ability to tell it, and by telling it, it gave me power.

Amy Morin:

I love that. And I think that's one of the best ways that we can all get rid of shame is by taking back that power is by saying, if I hide it, if I keep it a secret, it owns me. But if I own up to this and I have the courage to tell somebody, then suddenly I own it. And I'm going to take back the power and say, it's not going to run my life anymore.

Terry Crews:

Amy, I do want to say, I would never advise people to go publicly about their issues. You know what I mean? I'm not a therapist. You are. I am not. I'm just here to say that I am in the public eye already. It's something that I'm very used to. I've been in the public eye since I was 20 years, actually earlier than that, since I was 17 playing college football. So there was always eyes on me. And to be honest with you, there were always eyes on me since I was 13 years old. As a young, black man just walking into a building, I was seen as a threat. So I would always get eyes. I was always a little bit bigger, and everybody looked at me like, what is he about?

So I was always used to ogles, and being looked at and being like, wait, wait. But I do recommend that people find someone, like yourself, a counselor, someone that loves them, clergy, someone that they trust and love that they can share their heart with. A lot of times, me going public is a part of my therapy because it holds me accountable in a lot of ways, because a lot of times people know a lot more about me than I know about them. But I would tell you, I would never advise people to do what I did. But I would say do find someone that you love and trust that you can share at all your stuff with, and you can work it through.

Amy Morin:

Wise advice. Terry Crews, thank you so much for being on The Very Well Mind podcast.

Terry Crews:

Oh, you got it, Amy. Thank you for having me. This is great. I love what you guys are doing. I love it.

Amy Morin:

Oh, we appreciate that. Thank you. And I'm just so thankful that you wrote this book. And I know that you've already helped a lot of people and you're going to help a lot more.

Terry Crews:

Thank you so much. Thank you, Amy!

Amy Morin:

Welcome to The Therapist's Take. This is a part of the show where I'll break down Terry's mental strength-building strategies and share how you can apply them to your own life. Here are three of Terry's strategies that I highly recommend.

Number one: check your intrinsic motivation. Terry talked about how he spent most of his life chasing after external rewards, or as he called them, Scooby snacks. He said he was hoping to earn something for his good work all the time. But earning those rewards left him feeling empty in the end. It wasn't until someone suggested that he get better for himself that he realized that the real prize in life was choosing to become the best person he could because that's what he wanted to do, not what someone else wanted him to do. Sometimes it's helpful to step back and ask yourself why you're doing something.

Whether your goal is to lose weight or to get a better job, why do you want to do that? If your only reason for doing it is so that you can get an external reward, like you want more attention or a nicer car, you probably won't experience the next level of happiness that you think that you will. The happiness you gain is going to be fleeting and you'll have to quickly move on to another achievement to feel good. If, however, you want to prove to yourself that you can do something, or you want to learn from an experience, you might find working on a goal is much more rewarding, even if no one gives you any credit for doing it.

Number two: look at a picture of yourself as a kid. I really like that Terry said he keeps a picture of himself as a kid nearby. When he looks at that picture, he sees himself as an innocent little boy, and it reminds him that he's still a good person now just like he was back then. And of course, while he might make bad choices sometimes, he's not a bad person. That's really the key to overcoming shame. Someone who's filled with shame because of something that happened to them, or because of something that they did, might become self-destructive. Shame can cause you to believe that you don't deserve good things to happen to you.

It will tell you that you aren't capable of making good choices. And it will convince you that you aren't worthy of love and kindness. But there's something about seeing a childhood picture of yourself that might help you remind yourself that you are a good person. After all, you were once a kid who probably had big dreams, who might have had a big heart, and who didn't yet know what kind of challenges were ahead. Looking at that old picture might remind you that you're still the same person, just a grown up version of you. You might give this a try. Dig out an old photo of yourself, and look at it often. You might decide that you owe it to that kid to still work on doing and being your best as an adult. And no matter what you've been through or what you've done, you have options in how you move forward.

And number three: use what you've learned to help other people. Terry's book is filled with unflattering stories about himself. But he said that he shared those stories because he wants people to see the mistakes that he's made. And while some of the stories he shared could have harmed his career, he said it was worth it because opening up helped him get rid of his shame. People often talk about finding meaning in their suffering. But one of the best ways to find meaning is by using your story to help someone else. So rather than wait for something good to happen, or rather than wait for something good to come out of something bad, take action and make it happen. Whatever you've gone through or whatever you've done, I guarantee that there are people out there who can relate. And if you've come out on the other side of something, you can share what you learned along the way.

Just remember that you don't have to have everything figured out before you reach back and help someone else. Simply telling someone that you're struggling with something and that it's an ongoing struggle for you might help them feel less alone in their struggles. And although Terry made his story public, he doesn't recommend everyone do that. That's a good point. It's important to be mindful of who you share your story with.

So those are three of Terry's tips that I highly recommend. Check your intrinsic motivation, look at a picture of yourself as a kid, and use what you've learned to help other people. For more of Terry's stories and the strategies that have helped him grow mentally stronger, check out his book *Tough*.

If you know someone who could benefit from hearing this message, share it with them. Simply sharing a link to this episode could help someone feel better and grow stronger.

Do you want free access to my online course? It's called "10 Mental Strength Exercises That Will Help You Reach Your Greatest Potential." To get your free pass, all you have to do is leave us a review on Apple Podcasts. Then, send us a screenshot of your review. Our email address is podcast@verywell.com. We'll reply with your all-access pass to the course.

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