

Three Moguls Stories Show How Adversity Inspires Success



Aviva Legatt Under 30 ⓘ

Under 30

I cover issues in higher education that affect millennials.

We can't control everything that happens in life, but we can allow adversity to inspire us to act on our deepest dreams and ambitions. And these moguls have found a particularly sweet kind of satisfaction and meaning in their work because they went through such difficulty and created something new and different than what they initially imagined.

These moguls--including one videographer with over 2 billion YouTube views, one record label owner, and one public relations-company founder--prove that being resilient is absolutely necessary to overcome challenges. Here's what to do when you go through difficulty.

Deal With Your Issues

Jordan Taylor Wright's [film footage](#) that he's created under his company, [Taylor Cut Films](#), has been viewed over 2 billion times. For example, you can find his cuts in the Chainsmokers' video "Closer" and he has toured with artists like Usher and Justin Bieber as a personal videographer.

But Wright had his own issues to deal with leading up to and during his time on the road. As a child, he had spent time in psychotherapy after his parents' divorce. "That was an amazing experience to have [gone to psychotherapy]. At the time, I thought, 'I don't need help. I don't want help. Is there something wrong with me? Am I crazy?' But I later realized that my parents were separating because they wanted space for me to grow."

These early experiences in psychotherapy helped Wright to prioritize his mental health. Wright continued to work on managing his anxiety and depression as an adult --and worked hard on the road not to fall into the trap of attaching his self-worth to the celebrity lifestyle.

"After touring, I planted on solid ground in L.A. and launched my production company. I then started to gain followers and traction. It's been a blessing and I'm super fortunate to say that I get to create my art every day and then make a sustained living and hopefully inspire other people to want to do the same."

MORE FROM FORBES

Wright's focus on his health and creating his own art gave him the strength to launch [IntentOn](#), which provides visual resources designed to help people heal and to create.



LOS ANGELES, CA - JUNE 22: Director/author Jordan Taylor Wright signs copies of his new book 'Forever in the Infinite Now' at The DEN Meditation on June 22, 2018 in Los Angeles, California. (Photo by Paul Archuleta/Getty Images)

Encouraging millennials to take care of themselves, Wright offers, “with anxiety or depression, we're trying to fill this void as opposed to creating and being in a space of stillness,” says Wright. “The more you can free up yourself to be in that space, the more you can express yourself authentically.”

When You Don't Get The Opportunity, Create It For Yourself

Former Miss Black USA [Ezina LeBlanc](#) grew up in a multicultural household with Jewish, Native American and French Caribbean roots. After getting a B.S. and M.B.A. from the University of Michigan, LeBlanc wanted to pursue a new career as an opera singer and enrolled at Julliard.



BEVERLY HILLS, CA - JUNE 30: Ezina attends the Academy Of United States Veterans World Premiere Of 'Not A War Story' at Samuel Goldwyn Theater on June 30, 2017 in Beverly Hills, California. (PHOTO BY TOMMASO BODDI/WIREIMAGE)

But LeBlanc’s Julliard education seemingly did not pave the way to better opportunities. At auditions, directors kept telling LeBlanc that she was a great singer, but didn’t fit the “look” of a lead diva due to her skin color. Instead of resigning to see herself the way directors did, LeBlanc decided to leave Julliard and pursue a more strategic way to get on stage and in front of a crowd: by starting her own record label.

LeBlanc recalls the move to start her own record label, “the turning point was when I began to get more into my spiritual practice and started realizing that it was really important to be happy. And happiness means following your bliss, doing the things you enjoy.”

Today, LeBlanc frequently performs opera pieces at live shows while making time to write books, make movies and devote herself to causes she cares about. She

encourages those who face similar challenges to find alternative routes to achieving their goals.

Let Loss Inspire You

Losing a spouse or a family member at a young age might be enough to break someone down and keep them out of the limelight forever, but not Laura Orrico. Orrico's public relations firm, [Laura Orrico Public Relations, LLC](#) has worked successfully since 2016 to secure national and regional media placements in places like USA Today, Chicago Times, LA Tribune and Reader's Digest.

While she thought she would make her career as a full-time [professional actress and model](#), life had other plans. After losing her husband to brain cancer, Orrico decided to found her public relations firm. In the aftermath of the loss, Orrico wanted a career change that would provide her with greater stability and location flexibility.

Public relations was far from a random career change. Orrico had been accustomed to banging down doors to create opportunities, such as getting featured on *Funny or Die* and even landing herself an audition on *Saturday Night Live*.

While Orrico's life did not go as planned, she knows that she's chosen the right career. "Hearing my husband's support constantly throughout my career, I know he would be very happy and very, very supportive of everything I'm doing now."

Orrico's memory of her husband continues to inspire her to do her best work. While it's not easy to cope with loss, Orrico advises you to "pick back up and do your best to move forward" to honor the memory of your loved ones.

Perfectionism is a pervasive element of millennial culture, and is counterproductive to building resilience--a key element of success. These moguls prove that perfectionism will keep you stuck in one place while action will move you forward.

**Adapted from my forthcoming book, *Mindset Matters: True Stories of How to Find Success Beyond College*

I guide students on how to stand out for admission to top-tier universities and hold a doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania in the field of Higher Education. Also an internationally recognized professor in Organizational Dynamics at the University of Pennsylvania, m... MORE