Why Commitment?

Let me sketch for you what your quest for success looks like without commitment. Then let’s look at the difference commitment makes.

Let’s say you’re going after something extremely difficult. You don’t need commitment to achieve the easy. You want to publish your novel? Join the ranks of thousands of new would-be novelists who try and fail each year. You plan to make the Olympic swim team next year? You’re seeking entry into a group so elite that only a handful of excellent swimmers ever make it. You want to become CEO of a wildly successful company? Join the melee of highly qualified candidates, some of whom will stop at nothing to one-up you. Whatever your dream, let’s assume it’s something extremely challenging—and extremely worthwhile.

Let’s say you get up enough courage to go for it, but you haven’t really made a commitment. You tell yourself, “Well, I’ll try.” You’re not committed to doing whatever it takes to succeed. In fact, you’ve given yourself an out. Now, when you fall short of the mark, you can say, “Well, I tried.”

Trying doesn’t work. When you’re not committed, you leave a crack open for hesitation. Hesitation leaks energy. Energy leaks reduce the chance of Quantum Success.

Without commitment, you stay focused on what is rather than what could be. You don’t see how to achieve the impossible because it still looks impossible. You don’t see the tiny path up the mountainside that will get you over the top because you’re too busy staring at the mountain in its enormity.

Now let’s look at the same scenario when you’re committed.

Commitment allows you to switch your focus to what’s possible. You become like Alice going through the looking glass. One minute you’re looking at yourself, just as you are; the next, you’re looking at a whole new world that you couldn’t see a moment before. And all because you took a single step forward. That one step was all it took to punch through from the limited “what is” to the unlimited “what can be.” The force that propelled the step: commitment.

Let’s say you win the job of your dreams, but after two days at work you realize the workload is far beyond your skill. Without commitment, all you see is yourself in your present form: inadequate. You’re certain you’ll mess up, disgrace yourself, and get fired, so you quit to avoid the pain of failure.

If you went into the new job with the commitment to give it all you’ve got, whether you believed you could do it or not, your mind’s eye would see the competent employee that you could be a month from now, with the proper training and some practice, boldly reaching and exceeding the company’s expectations. That vision would become reality for you, and all your efforts would go into making it happen.

Commitment is the ultimate expression of free will. Without it things look impossible, and you give in to appearances. With it, you’re able to keep on moving forward, in spite of discouraging circumstances.