

# Mindset Expert Gary E Smith On 5 Things You Need To Overcome Self-Doubt and Build Confidence

## An Interview With Stanley Bronstein

[Stanley Bronstein](#)

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Success builds on success. I make my bed every morning. Then, I go to the gym every day and then home to write. See the pattern? All things I have control over. Each success builds on the one before and builds confidence to face the more significant challenges to come.

*Self-doubt can hold people back from reaching their full potential, whether in their careers, relationships, or personal growth. Confidence is a skill that can be developed, but what are the most effective strategies to overcome negative self-talk and build lasting self-assurance? In this interview series, we are talking to mindset coaches, psychologists, authors, and other experts who can share actionable insights on overcoming self-doubt and cultivating confidence. As a part of this series we had the pleasure of interviewing Gary E. Smith.*

*Gary Smith was born in 1948 in Hayward, California. After high school, Gary joined the Naval Air Reserve and entered the electrical construction trade. Gary started his own electrical construction company in 1978. This became a large company doing large industrial jobs throughout the country until Gary's retirement in 2011 when he began writing.*

**Thank you so much for joining us in this interview series! Before we dive into the main focus of our interview, our readers would love to “get to know you” a bit better. Can you tell us a bit about your childhood backstory?**

I was born into a middle-class, blue-collar family. My mother was a stay-at-home mother, and my dad was a cement finisher. We lived in a part of Hayward, California, that was Apricot Orchards before the Second World War. The street was gravel, and our water came from a well in the backyard. There's not much to do but use your imagination to build things in Dad's garage. We built crystal radio sets and fireworks for the 4th of July and shot our BB Guns. In the summer we roamed the local hills from morning until dark. It was a great life for a young boy and his friends.

**What or who inspired you to pursue your career? We'd love to hear the story.**

I was the first in the family expected to go to college. In my sophomore year of high school, I went to work for my uncle. He had a construction company doing cement work. Patios, sidewalks, and retaining walls. I loved it. On returning to school, I dropped all my college preparatory classes. I decided I did not want to go to college. It was my first major decision in life and one I never regretted.

It has been said that our mistakes can be our greatest teachers. Can you share a story about the funniest mistake you made when you were first starting?

**Can you tell us what lesson you learned from that?**

It's not a funny mistake but an important one. Early in my career as an electrician, we had rigged an expensive piece of electrical equipment to be lifted by crane to the fourth floor. Just before the foreman gave the signal to lift it, a new apprentice asked a question. It was the first day of his new career. Not knowing a thing about rigging, he asked why one of the turnbuckles was rigged differently than the others. Between the foreman, general foreman, and journeyman, there were about sixty years of experience. If they had lifted that equipment, the turnbuckle would have given way, dropping the equipment, destroying it, and causing injuries to those on the ground. What I learned was to always listen to the one with no knowledge of the task at hand. He is the only one with a fresh set of eyes.

**What are some of the most interesting or exciting projects you are working on now? How do you think that might help people?**

I am working on my eleventh novel and received my seventh award. The awards have generated a lot of opportunities for podcasts to share how to avoid the many false starts I have had.

OK, thank you for all of that. Let's now shift to the core focus of our interview. If someone wanted to take on a major goal — like permanently losing 20 pounds, or writing a book — but wasn't sure they could do it, where should they start?

You just start. Do not think too far ahead. Instead, focus on that day and achieve something towards your goal.

**How much of a role do you think belief plays in a person’s ability to succeed? In other words, how important is it to truly believe they can achieve something? Can you share a story or example that illustrates this?**

Belief plays a large role, and so does the acceptance of failure. Failure is part of the process of success. When I decided to write, I started with my first novel. I was so naïve. I had not been in an English class since high school forty years earlier. I thought you finished the book, and the editor or proofreader would fix everything. But instead, you could hardly see the printed words through all the red comments when I received the manuscript back. The worst was the enclosed letter scolding me for submitting the manuscript in such terrible form and with so many errors. I was embarrassed. It was a great lesson.

**Motivation is key to getting started, but it inevitably fades. When that happens, what strategies do you recommend for staying committed and pushing forward?**

Discipline gets me through the times I am not motivated. Keeping my word to myself. I said I would write every day. So I will write every day. I can always throw it away, but write something. It can be gobbledygook, but write.



**Here is our main question. “What Are The 5 Things You Need To Overcome Self-Doubt and Build Confidence?” (If possible, please share a story or example for each one)**

1. Discipline is most important. I make my bed first thing every morning. It starts my day with a success to build on.

2. Keep your word in all things. If you said you would run a marathon, you have to do it even as the race gets close, and you don’t think you can do it. You have to run, maybe fail; the commitment was to run, not finish. It’s OK to fail, not OK to break your word.

3. Success builds on success. I make my bed every morning. Then, I go to the gym every day and then home to write. See the pattern? All things I have control over. Each success builds on the one before and builds confidence to face the more significant challenges to come.

4. Everyone I know has woken up one day with self-doubt at some point. My last novel, my wife would ask how is the book going? I would answer terribly. I don't know where the story is going, and I don't think it is any good. I had self-doubt throughout the whole book. I said I would write it and wrote every day until I finished. It has gotten great reviews. The answer to self-doubt is to keep working.

5. When I struggle with self-doubt, I read the biographies of Ezra Pound, William Faulkner, and other great writers. Reading about their struggles restores my confidence.

**Have you worked with any clients or patients who achieved results that went beyond what they originally thought possible? If so, could you share a story or two to inspire our readers?**

I have a friend who started a blog. She now has an international podcast and two international magazines. One day at lunch, she said. "This has grown beyond my wildest dreams."

**Ok, we are nearly done. You are a person of great influence. If you could inspire a movement that would bring the most amount of good for the greatest number of people, what would that be? You never know what your idea can trigger.**

It would be a movement that encouraged individuals to help someone daily with the simplest things. For example, to visit an elderly person who is shut in. Help someone young or older learn to read and write. A movement that discouraged criticism and judgment and encouraged empathy

**We are very blessed that some of the biggest names in Business, VC funding, Sports, and Entertainment read this column. Is there a person in the world, or in the US, whom you would love to have a private breakfast or lunch with, and why? He or she might just see this, especially if we both tag them :-)**

I would love to have lunch with Elon Musk. I have a million things about life I would love to ask him.

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**Thank you for these really excellent insights, and we greatly appreciate the time you spent with this. We wish you continued success.**

*About the Interviewer: Stanley Bronstein is an attorney, CPA, and author of more than 20 books. However, he doesn't consider any of those his greatest achievement. His most significant accomplishment was permanently losing 225 pounds and developing the personal growth system*

*that made it possible — The Way of Excellence. As a catalyst for change, he has dedicated his life to helping others maximize their potential, transform their lives, and achieve optimal health. To learn more, you can download a free PDF copy of his latest book, The Way of Excellence Journal, at <https://TheWayOfExcellence.com>.*

## **Published in Authority Magazine**

Written by Stanley Bronstein

Stanley Bronstein, attorney, CPA and author of 20+ books has devoted his life to helping others maximize their potential and gain optimal health along the way.