

# MIND OVER MATTER



ARSH ELLAHI



Hi Arsh

Thank you for responding to my previous emails. I did not think I would get such a personal reply!

I would like to know how you keep going ... do you come across any mental blocks? Recently I have been stuck in a rut and do not feel like I am progressing as much I would like to have done in 2017.

What tips and advice can you offer?

An avid reader

Mrs P – Sussex

**Thank you for your email, Mrs P. This is a timely subject for me as I regularly question my level of productivity. However, I also encounter the mindset barriers that every property investor must face. Reviewing progress so far this year, I felt that although I had exceeded my targets, I needed a further challenge that would challenge me not only mentally, but also physically.**

At the time of writing this article, it is the August Bank Holiday weekend. My wife had registered me to do a half marathon (13.2 miles) on Bank Holiday Monday. When she did that, I thought nothing of it, assuming it would be in a few months' time. But little did I know that she had entered me into the Wolverhampton Half Marathon, which was set for the following Sunday, a mere six days away! She decreed that this would challenge me physically, but mentally as well. She then left the conversation with the statement, "it's all about what your mind tells your body to do."

Is it possible to run 13.2 miles with no training? **Yes.**

Is it advisable? **ABSOLUTELY NOT!**

I confess that the following thoughts ran through my mind:

- Am I capable of doing this?
- But what if I fail?
- What's the worst that can happen?
- Am I looking to finish or to challenge myself?
- What am I risking?

**"Going beyond the doubt is all about your mindset; you need to think like a successful property professional"**

The more I thought about it, the more I realised that running a marathon is very much like the property game – it's not about how fast you can do it, it's about keeping your pace steady in order to achieve your goal. Don't burn out in the first quarter! I can pretty much guarantee that many people who start something new have these niggly questions creep up on them at some point,

and that's entirely normal. It's how you see past them that is the key to moving beyond doubt.

Going beyond the doubt is all about your mindset; you need to **think** like a successful property professional. You have to believe that you are going to achieve what you are setting out to do. This will give you the confidence to go and get it done. I guess that's where I started on race day. With my running number carefully pinned to my T-shirt and my laces tied up tight, I told myself over and over again, "**I AM going to do this, I will NOT stop, I WILL finish.**" The adrenaline coursed through my veins and off went the race gun.

What I did, simply, was visualise success. I gave myself a positive affirmation and told myself I would achieve. I visualised myself keeping going. I visualised running across the finish line. I visualised the end, the same as I do in property. Admittedly there were moments along the race where doubt crept up on me unexpectedly, such as when I saw the marker for the fifth mile and thought I was a lot further on. I hit the wall at mile nine. For an agonising split second, I thought "**I can't do it, I need to stop**" ... but I didn't let my brain ponder there. I switched back to the positive statements and visualised completing the race.

The next time you come across a task you have been putting off for a while, visualise yourself completing it and think about how it will feel when it is done. Then simply do it and enjoy that moment. All top performers, regardless of profession, know the importance of picturing themselves succeeding in their minds before they actually do so in reality.

One of my mentoring clients is a great example of someone who has had to endure a journey of confidence and overcome barriers. Let's call him 'Roger'. Now, Roger's first language is not English; neither does he live in this country or have vast experience of UK property. When he approached me six months ago, he told me he wanted to be successful. He also had a great number of reservations, namely the language issue and the problem of location – he lived halfway around the world! Roger also works a gruelling 12-hour day for his employer, six days a week, so you could say that he is limited on time. But his drive and ambition were stronger than his doubts. Have you ever heard the statement, "**Fake it till you make it**"? Well, that's simply what you do with regard to confidence, you pretend you are confident doing something until you learn a bit more and actually are confident at doing it.

Roger hasn't had it easy. He dived into deep end and decided to chase a portfolio of eight properties in Sunderland, worth in excess of £800,000. Firstly, he didn't have the money, or the experience for that matter, to take on the properties. A newbie to property taking on eight! But he didn't give up, he came up with an alternative option and we were able to structure a deal in a way that meant he didn't need a stack of cash to secure it.

One of the first obstacles we came across was the estate agent who only wanted to speak to Roger if he had the means to purchase the property traditionally, with a deposit and mortgage or cash. Sound familiar? With a bit of research, we decided to bypass the agent and speak directly to the owner. If you come across an agent who does not share your creative (and realistic) vision, you have the ability and resources to approach the owner directly. This can be achieved by going to the land registry website and downloading the property title, which provides you with the proprietor's name and correspondence address. I know that sounds really harsh, but sometimes in order to succeed, you have to do whatever it takes.

Roger approached the owner of the properties in question and proposed a strategy that created a win/win scenario for all involved. "**Great!**" thought Roger, "**how**

**could he not take up this offer?**" But unfortunately, the owner declined the offer on the basis that he wanted a straightforward sale. When Roger picked up the phone to me, he said "**I don't think I can do it, I can't give him what he wants**". In my view, giving up is not an option, and with a supportive nudge, Roger pursued the deal. We just had to figure out another way of making it work. This was his first lesson in resilience – he had to strengthen his ability to bounce back from adversity.

Roger continued to build rapport with the owner and during one of the conversations, the owner explained that his partner was in ill-health and the matter needed urgent attention. The motivation had changed now; it was no longer about the price, it was a time factor. Roger offered a solution where he would take over the management of the properties immediately, with the option to purchase within a specific time frame. As the circumstances had changed, this ticked many of the boxes for the owner, and Roger was back in the game. Within a month, he had control of eight properties that, it is worth noting, cost him nothing to acquire. Instead, he had signed a 10-year lease with an option to purchase.

Of course, it doesn't stop there. He will need to do further work to:

- Manage and maintain the properties
- Collected the rents in order to pay the landlord
- Generate cash flow

The point I am trying to get across is that Roger **NEVER GAVE UP**. Yes, at points he felt low, as the first negotiation did not go as expected. But let's face it, life never does go as expected. For me, these are the three key factors to success:

## BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

Do not let negative thoughts and experiences cloud your path to success.

## VISUALISE SUCCESS

See yourself as winner. Just as Mohammed Ali talked with great confidence and in great detail about knocking someone out, visualise yourself doing the same in property (without actually knocking them out physically, of course ...).

## BE RESILIENT

Bounce back from adversity, knowing you have learnt something along the way that will help you in the future.

Finally, **ENJOY YOURSELF** along the way. You are more likely to want to give up if you do not enjoy what you are doing! After all,



If you have any specific questions, please email me: [arsh@arshellahi.com](mailto:arsh@arshellahi.com)

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Arsh Ellahi is the author of "**Boom, Bust and Back Again: A Property Investor's Survival Guide**"

