

One Step Forward

There are times in life when we know something needs to change, but we keep waiting.

We wait for the right time. We wait until work slows down. We wait until the kids are older. We wait until we have more money, more energy, more confidence, or a better plan. Sometimes we even convince ourselves that tomorrow will be the perfect day to start.

But here's the problem with waiting for the perfect time:

The perfect time rarely comes.

Sometimes the only thing standing between where we are and where we want to be is one decision to take one step forward. That was something I was reminded of recently.

I had been talking about getting back into the gym for a while. I knew I needed to make some changes. I knew I wasn't where I wanted to be physically, and I knew that waiting wasn't going to make things better.

It would have been easy to keep telling myself, "I'll start next week."

But eventually, next week has to become today.

So I took a step. Not ten steps. Not a complete transformation.

Just one.

I walked through the doors and started.

And that's something I've learned over the years: we often make progress much harder than it has to be because we think we have to see the entire path before we're willing to begin.

We don't.

Think about walking down a dark road at night with a flashlight. That flashlight doesn't illuminate the entire road. It might only show you the next twenty or thirty feet. But that's enough. You take those few steps, and then the light moves with you.

The same thing can happen in life.

We don't necessarily need to know what the next six months are going to look like. We need to know what the next right step looks like.

That lesson became even more meaningful to me this week when I had a conversation with a veteran I'd never met before.

We were talking on the phone, and he was dealing with some challenges in his life. I didn't have a magic answer for him. I couldn't fix everything he was facing. And honestly, sometimes we put too much pressure on ourselves to have the perfect answer for somebody else.

Maybe what people need isn't someone to fix everything. Maybe they simply need someone willing to listen.

Someone willing to sit in the uncomfortable conversation.

Someone willing to say, "Let's figure out the next step."

That's something all of us can do.

Whether we're dealing with challenges in our careers, our families, our health, our finances, our relationships, or simply trying to figure out what comes next, we can become overwhelmed when we look at everything at once.

So don't.

Break it down.

What's one thing you can do today?

Maybe it's making a phone call you've been avoiding. Maybe it's walking for twenty minutes. Maybe it's asking for help. Maybe it's apologizing. Maybe it's finally starting that project. Maybe it's getting out of bed on a difficult morning and deciding that today isn't going to be defined by yesterday.

The step doesn't have to be big. It just has to be forward.

And here's another thing I've learned:

Taking one step forward doesn't mean you're never going to take a step backward.

Life doesn't work that way.

There will be setbacks. There will be bad days. There will be moments when we question ourselves. There will be times when we fall short of the goal we set.

That's okay.

A setback isn't necessarily the end of the journey. Sometimes it's simply part of the journey. The important thing is what we do next.

Do we stay down? Or do we get back up and take another step?

I think that's where this conversation becomes bigger than the gym. It's about life.

It's about refusing to allow the size of the mountain to keep us from taking the first step. Sometimes we look at a goal and think, "There's no way I can get there."

Maybe you're right. Maybe you can't get there today. But can you get a little closer?

That's the question. Can you take one step? Then another? Then another?

Before long, you may look back and realize you've traveled much farther than you ever thought possible. And sometimes the most important step isn't the one that changes our circumstances.

It's the one that changes our mindset.

It's the moment we stop saying, "I can't." And start asking, "What can I do?"

That's a powerful difference.

The Coffee Cup Club isn't about having all the answers. It's about having conversations that make us stop for a minute and think. Maybe something we talk about today applies directly to your life. Maybe it doesn't.

But if you walk away with one thought, one idea, or one little push to do something you've been putting off, then the conversation was worth having.

So here's my challenge for you this week.

Think about one thing you've been waiting to do. Not ten things. Just one.

Write it down. Then ask yourself a simple question:

What's the smallest step I can take toward it today?

Not tomorrow. Not next month. Today.

Take that step. And tomorrow, take another one.

You don't have to change your entire life in one day. You just have to stop standing still.

Because sometimes progress doesn't look like a giant leap. Sometimes it looks like getting up, putting one foot in front of the other, and saying:

"I'm moving forward."

So wherever you are today, whatever you're dealing with, whatever you've been putting off, remember this:

You don't have to have the whole road mapped out. You don't have to know exactly where every turn will take you. You don't have to be ready for everything that's coming.

Just take the next step. One step forward. Then another. And another.

We'll figure out the rest along the way.

So grab your coffee, take a breath, look at where you are, and ask yourself:

What's my one step forward today?

Now go take it.

Until next time, Coffee Cup Family — keep moving forward.

One Person. One Conversation. One Cup.

C O F F E E C U P C L U B

Episode 8 Workbook

ONE STEP FORWARD

A seven-day guide to taking the next step — whatever it is.

This workbook belongs to: _____

Date started: _____

How to use this workbook

Work through sections 1–6 in one sitting — about twenty minutes. Then use section 7 to track seven days. Come back to sections 10 and 11 when the week is over.

1. Where Am I Right Now?

Before we can move forward, we have to be honest about where we are. Take a few minutes and think about your life right now.

What area of my life feels like it needs the most attention?

- ☐ Health & Fitness
- ☐ Family
- ☐ Career / Work
- ☐ Finances
- ☐ Relationships
- ☐ Personal Growth
- ☐ Mental & Emotional Well-Being
- ☐ Spiritual Life
- ☐ Other: _____

How would I describe where I am right now?

2. What Have I Been Waiting For?

Sometimes we're not stuck because we don't know what to do. We're stuck because we're waiting for the "right time."

What have I been putting off?

Why have I been putting it off?

What am I waiting to happen before I begin?

3. What Is Holding Me Back?

Be honest. This isn't about judging yourself. It's about identifying the obstacle.

The biggest thing holding me back right now is:

Is this obstacle something I can control?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Partially

If I can control it, what can I change?

4. Change the Question

Instead of asking:

“Why can’t I do this?”

Ask:

“What CAN I do?”

Think about your challenge again.

One thing I CAN do is:

One resource, person, or source of support I can use is:

5. My One Step Forward

Forget about the entire journey for a moment. What's the next step?

The ONE thing I will do is:

I will do it on: _____

By this time: _____

Where: _____

6. Make It Small Enough to Start

If your goal feels overwhelming, make the first step smaller. For example:

Instead of: “I need to get healthy.”

Try: “I’m going to walk for 20 minutes today.”

Instead of: “I need to fix my finances.”

Try: “I’m going to review my bank statement tonight.”

Instead of: “I need to reconnect with my family.”

Try: “I’m going to call someone I love today.”

My smaller, more manageable first step is:

7. My 7-Day One Step Forward Challenge

The goal isn't perfection. The goal is movement. Write one step for each day, then check it off when it's done.

Day	My One Step	Done
Day 1		☐
Day 2		☐
Day 3		☐
Day 4		☐
Day 5		☐
Day 6		☐
Day 7		☐

8. Who Can Help Me?

We aren't meant to do everything alone.

Someone I trust who can encourage or hold me accountable is:

I will tell them about my goal because:

What I need from them is:

9. When I Have a Setback

A setback doesn't erase the progress you've already made. If I miss a day, fall short, or lose momentum:

I will remind myself:

Instead of quitting, my next step will be:

10. Looking Back

After completing your seven-day challenge, take a few minutes to reflect.

What did I accomplish?

What surprised me?

What was harder than I expected?

What was easier than I expected?

What did I learn about myself?

11. My Next Step

The seven days are over. But the journey isn't.

What is my next step?

What will I do next?

When will I do it?

My Coffee Cup Commitment

I don't have to have everything figured out.

I don't have to know exactly where the road will lead.

I don't have to wait for the perfect time.

I simply have to be willing to take the next step.

My one step forward is:

I will take that step on: _____

Signed: _____

One Person. One Conversation. One Cup.