

A strong mind and will power shall take you to the finish line!

“You have never lived until you have almost died,
And for those who choose to fight,
Life has a special flavour,
The protected will never know!!”
-Capt R Subramaniam (Kirti Chakra)

These weren't mere words scribbled in someone's diary, but one of the many brave soldiers who through sheer willpower was able to protect his men from the militants and lived up his life true to this quote.

Building on the concept of willpower, as per the dictionary, it is “the strong determination that allows one to do something difficult” This attribute gives us the strength to bring our dreams to fruition. It helps us overcome negative traits such as procrastination, temptations, or laziness. It enables us to find the stamina and motivation to keep going even when the odds are against us or a part of ourselves is looking for an escape.

As a sportsperson, I've learnt a lot about this attribute through the various matches I've played. A very classic example of willpower that comes to my mind (from the sports world) is the phenomenal match in 1983 World Cup – India vs Zimbabwe.

To give some context – in this match against Zimbabwe, India won the toss and chose to bat first. India was struggling to reach even 80. It was at 9 for 4, which is when Kapil Dev took charge, and it soon slumped to 17 for 5, but Kapil Dev did not lose hope. He went on to score 175 not out where he had made 100 runs without running – 16 fours and 6 sixes, taking India's score to 266/8 in the allotted 60 overs.

India was nowhere near any ranking of a one-day team. So what changed at Tunbridge that day? What made this particular match– in Sunil Gavaskar's words – ‘a game-transforming match’?

One of the catalysts for success in that particular world cup was Kapil Dev's willpower to take charge and respond to the situation with a winning mindset. As Syed Kirmani, Srikanth and Roger Binny mentioned in an interview, “Kapil Dev gave us confidence to win.” It's such a tragedy that there are no video records of the match that changed the entire approach to the world cup!

Even in the world of work, we are faced with instances that shall test our limits. There would be situations which would make us anxious or perhaps make us scared of uncertainty. And it is in that very moment that we should channelize our energies towards taking actions that are aimed at bringing the best possible solution to the table – which can only happen through discipline and motivation – key ways to build greater will power. No matter what term you chose – secret ingredient or invisible push or grit or inner drive – it is willpower that motivates us to take the action and helps us reach the finish line.