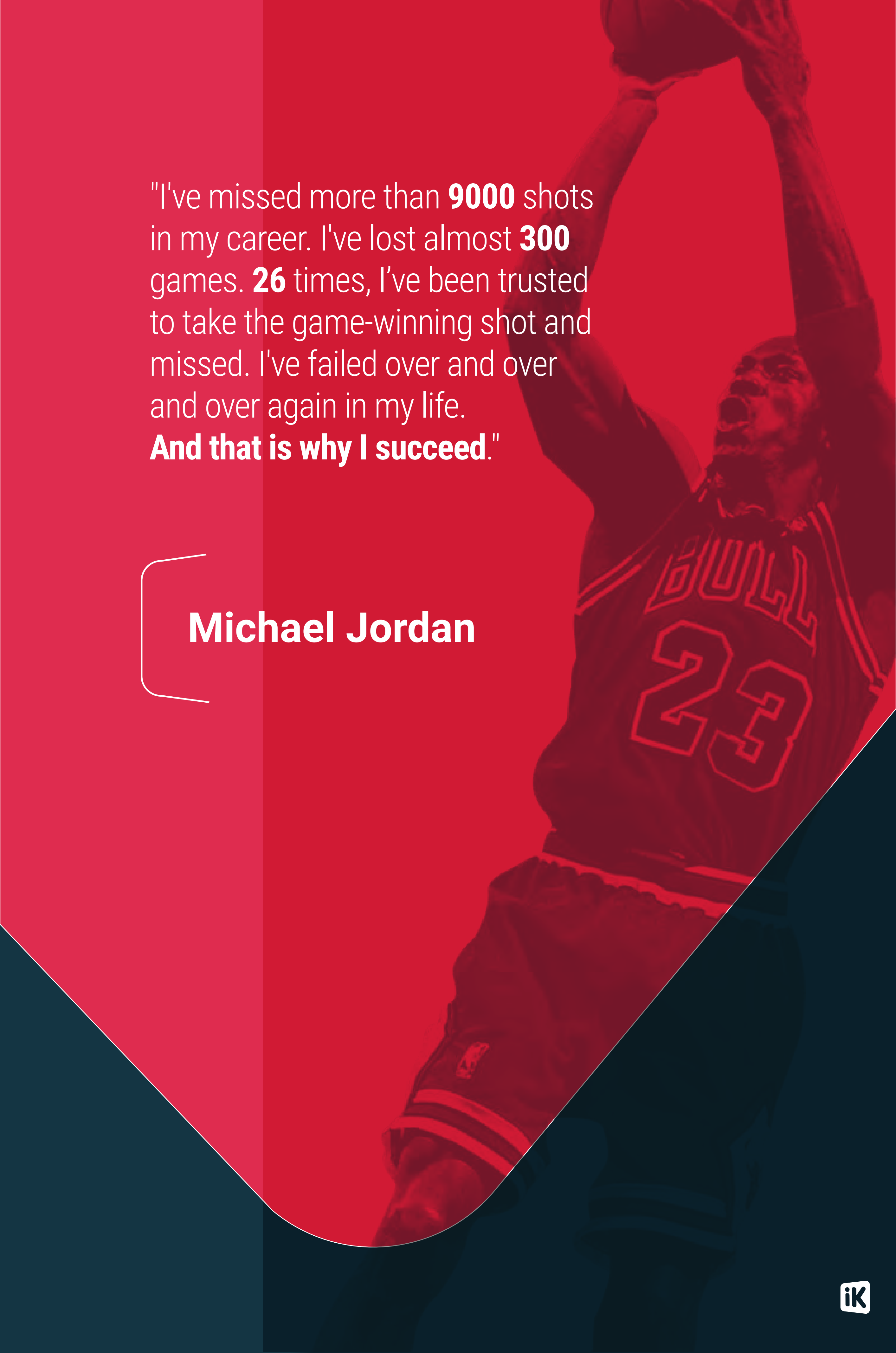


Crash — & — Earn

**How to Deal
with Failure and
Plan for Success**

A full-page background image of Michael Jordan in a Chicago Bulls jersey, number 23, performing a jump shot. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. The text is positioned on the left side of the image.

"I've missed more than **9000** shots in my career. I've lost almost **300** games. **26** times, I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life.
And that is why I succeed."

Michael Jordan

Contents

A red paper airplane is shown in flight, moving from left to right along a dashed line that slopes upwards. The airplane is stylized with a red body and black wings. The dashed line is composed of small red and black segments.

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Chapter 1:

Failure, For What?

**Refocussing failure
and how it makes
us feel.**

**Congratulations,
You've Failed!**

When was the last time you heard someone say:

“You got fired? Amazing work!” or
“Your business went under? Great job!”

Nobody gets a pat on the back for failure, and that’s primarily because from our professional to personal lives, failure is seen as the worst-case scenario; the end of the line.

But, I’m willing to bet that you’ve heard: “You need to fail to succeed” a hundred times over from your mentors, business buddies or on your favourite blog. So what’s the deal?

Everyone knows that failure is part of success, and yet the fear of failure still terrifies us.

This eBook will aim to recontextualise failure by helping you find the positives in your shortcomings and show you how to use them as a springboard for success!

Why Do We Fear Failure?



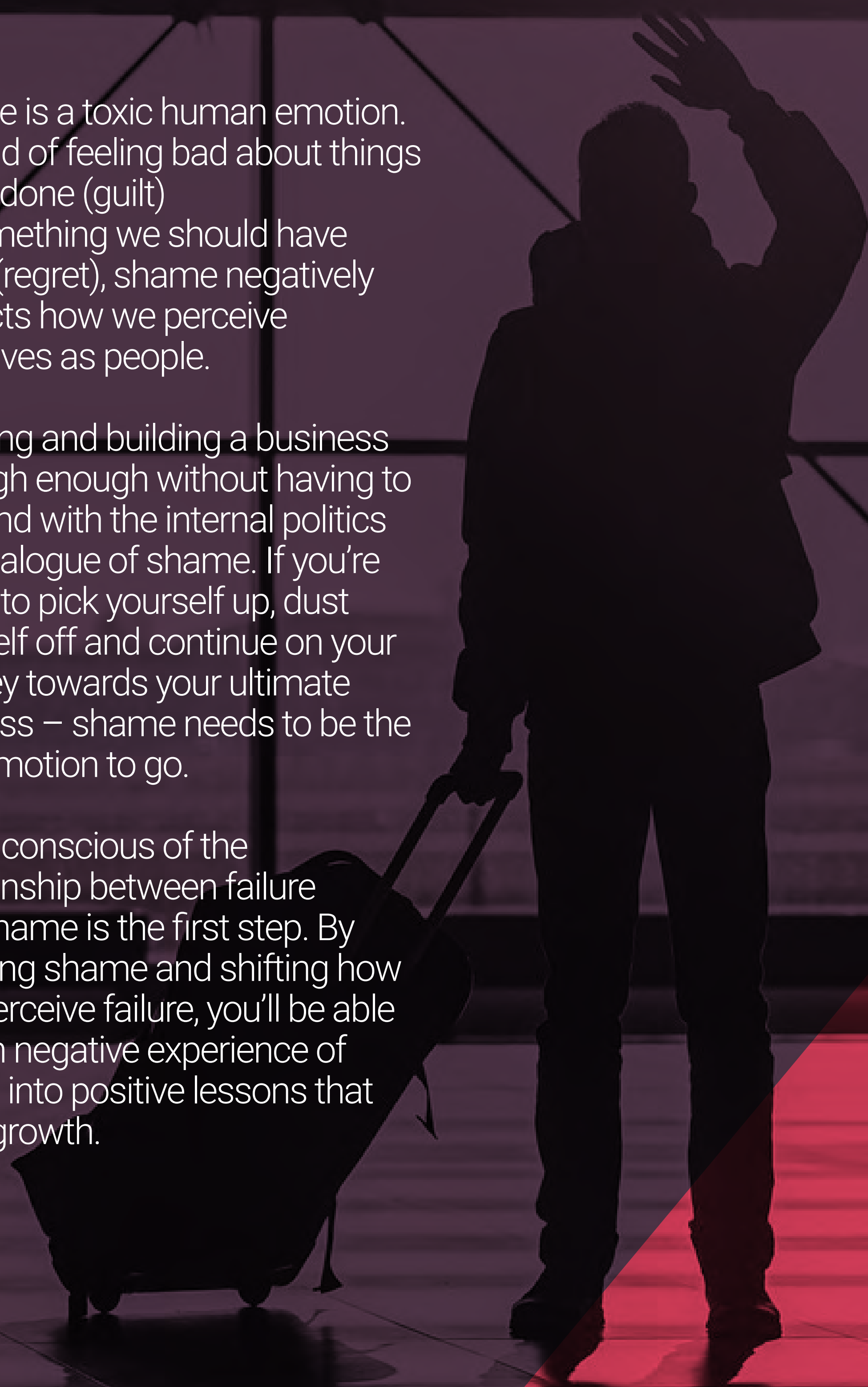
Studies suggest that people don't fear failure. Instead, what we really fear is far more insidious.

Failure causes basic emotions which we all know well, feelings such as disappointment, anger and frustration. It also evokes shame – one of the most unconstructive and debilitating emotions the human psyche can muster.

Rather than looking at a failed effort as a learning curve, shame forces us to immediately look inwardly and unfairly judge the very core of who we are. It bruises our egos, attacks our identity, lowers our self-esteem and negatively impacts our emotional wellbeing.

Say Sayonara to Shame



A silhouette of a person standing on a wet, reflective surface, possibly a train platform. The person is holding a rolling suitcase in their right hand and has their left hand raised towards the ceiling or a high structure. The background shows a grid-like pattern of lines, likely from a glass and metal structure. The overall color palette is dark purple and black, with a bright red diagonal shape in the bottom right corner.

Shame is a toxic human emotion. Instead of feeling bad about things we've done (guilt) or something we should have done (regret), shame negatively impacts how we perceive ourselves as people.

Running and building a business is tough enough without having to contend with the internal politics and dialogue of shame. If you're going to pick yourself up, dust yourself off and continue on your journey towards your ultimate success – shame needs to be the first emotion to go.

Being conscious of the relationship between failure and shame is the first step. By rejecting shame and shifting how you perceive failure, you'll be able to turn negative experience of failure into positive lessons that drive growth.

How Shame Hijacks Success

Does this sound familiar?


Winter strikes and with it a smorgasbord of delicious carb-heavy comfort foods suddenly become irresistible. “Not this year, lasagna!” you say as you delete the Mr D app and start trawling the net for meal plans and exercise routines. “This year I’m working on my summer bod!”

But, as the days grow colder and darker, the mugs of hot chocolate begin to flow. Steaming Debonairs pizzas boxes pile up on the coffee table during Netflix binges, and just like that your diet (and your summer body) go out the window.

Instead of saying, “I wasn’t disciplined enough. Tomorrow will be better” we’ll often say something like: “I don’t know if this is for me. I can’t do this”.

And, instead of finding a lesson in our failure, we admit defeat and have another helping of vetkoek.

**Hello...
I'm Here to Fail**



According to Bloomberg, 8 out of 10 small businesses fail within the first 18 months.

Every entrepreneur knows the risk involved when starting a small business. Despite the risk, the satisfaction of founding, operating and growing a business is worth the sleepless nights, the long hours and the stress.

As entrepreneurs, we must be prepared to fail. We must acknowledge our shortcomings and mistakes and embrace our failures to learn and grow.

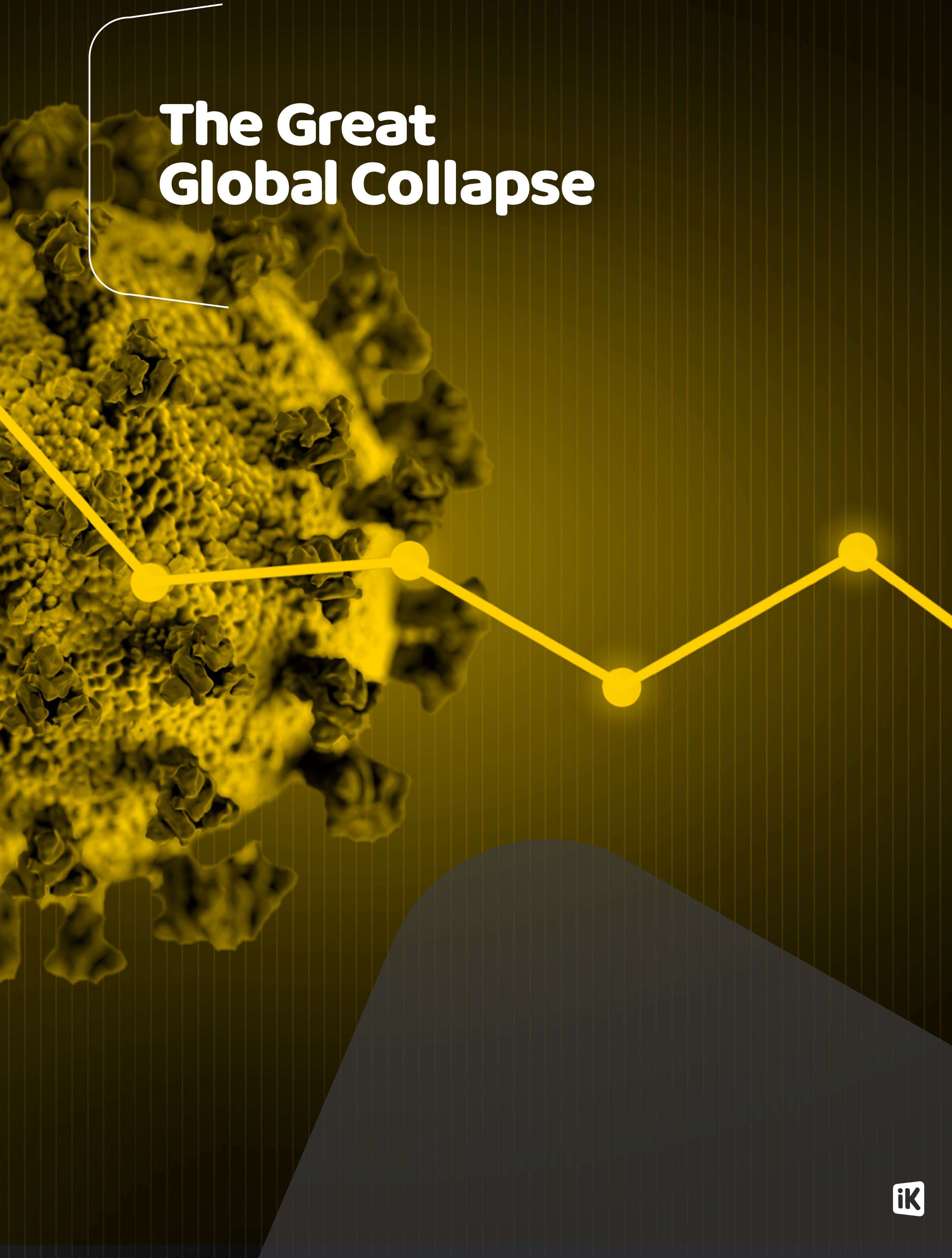


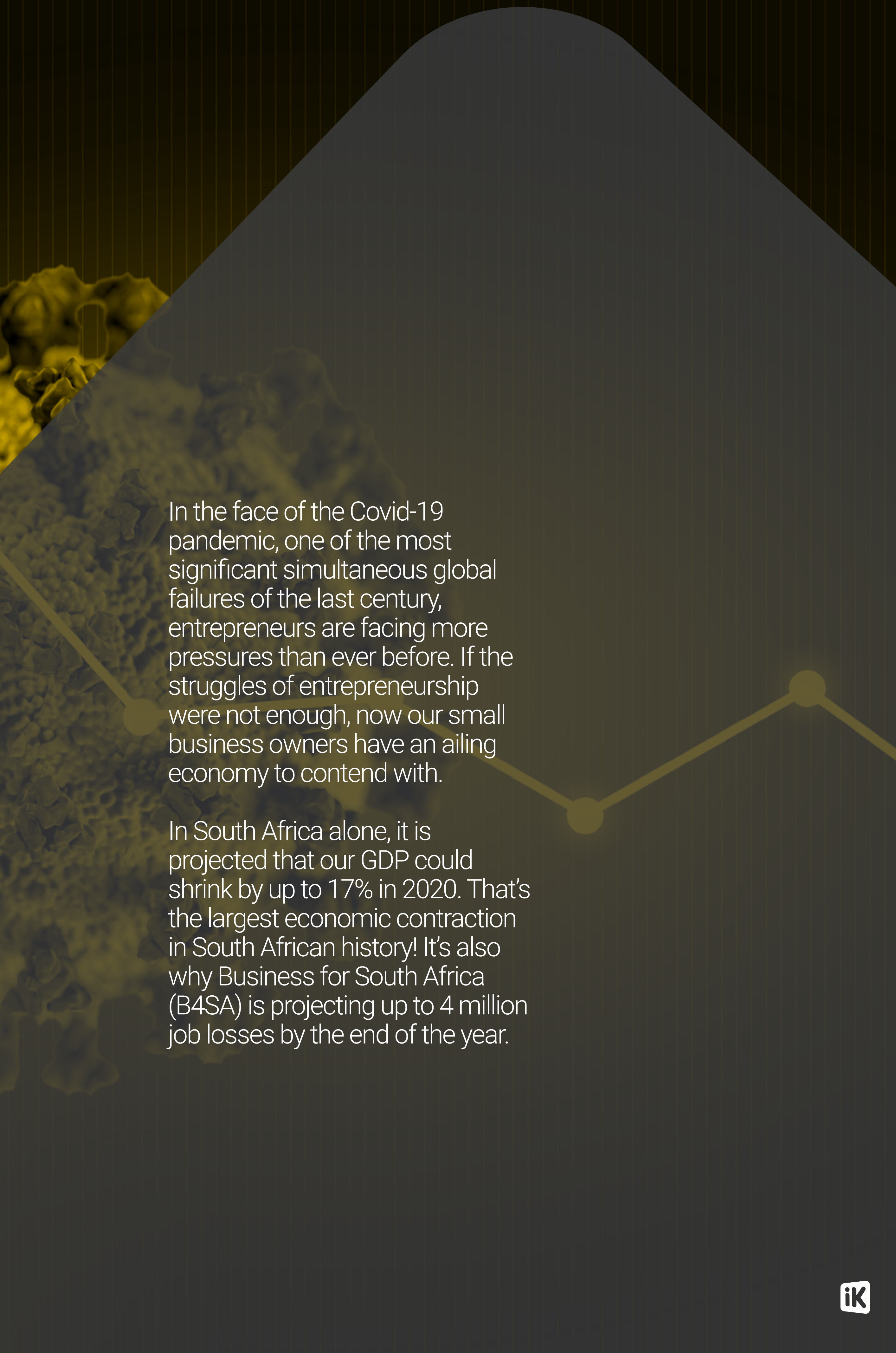
Chapter 2:

The Big Crash

**Finding good news
during the doom.**

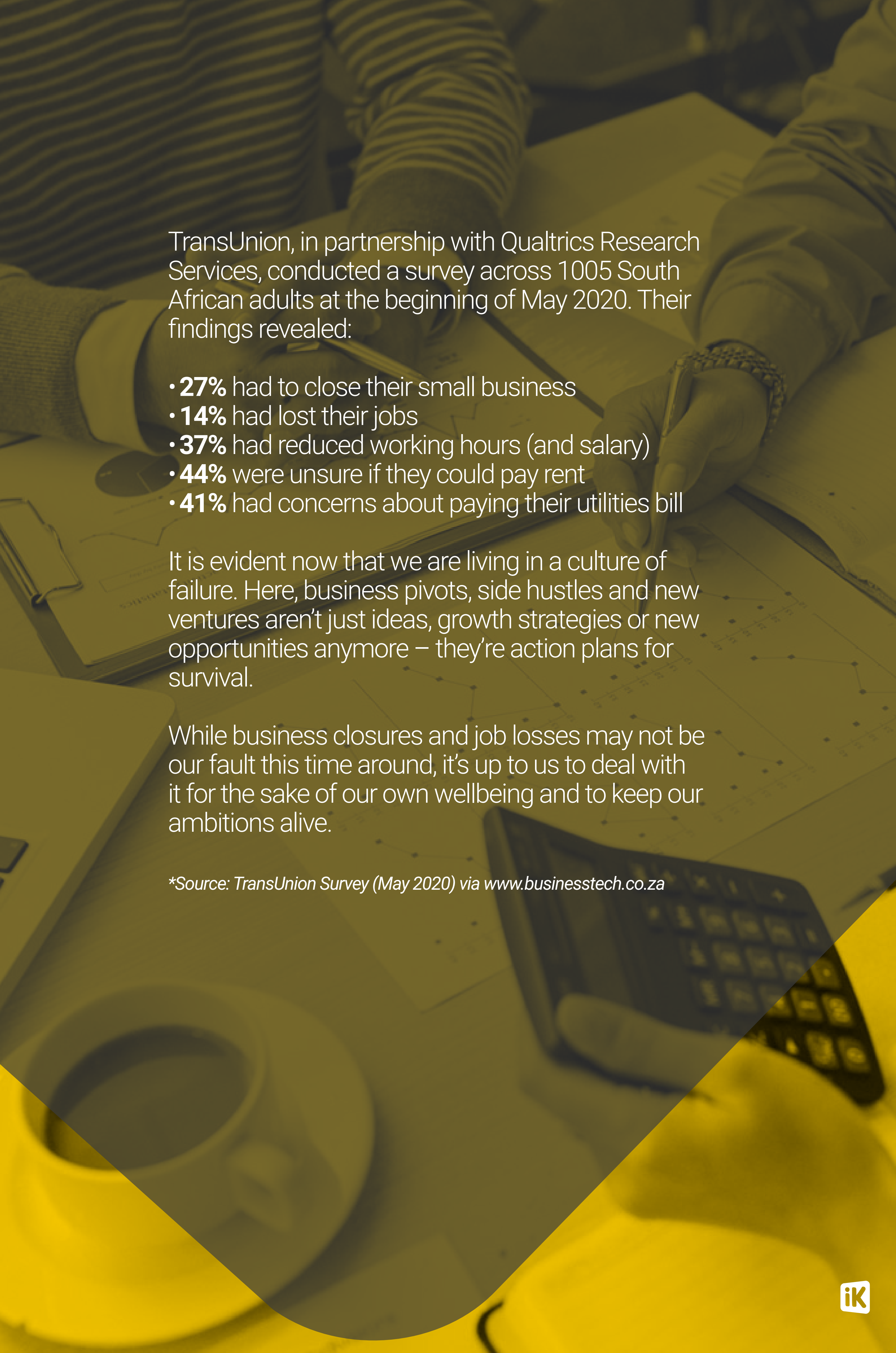
The Great Global Collapse





In the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, one of the most significant simultaneous global failures of the last century, entrepreneurs are facing more pressures than ever before. If the struggles of entrepreneurship were not enough, now our small business owners have an ailing economy to contend with.

In South Africa alone, it is projected that our GDP could shrink by up to 17% in 2020. That's the largest economic contraction in South African history! It's also why Business for South Africa (B4SA) is projecting up to 4 million job losses by the end of the year.



TransUnion, in partnership with Qualtrics Research Services, conducted a survey across 1005 South African adults at the beginning of May 2020. Their findings revealed:

- **27%** had to close their small business
- **14%** had lost their jobs
- **37%** had reduced working hours (and salary)
- **44%** were unsure if they could pay rent
- **41%** had concerns about paying their utilities bill


It is evident now that we are living in a culture of failure. Here, business pivots, side hustles and new ventures aren't just ideas, growth strategies or new opportunities anymore – they're action plans for survival.

While business closures and job losses may not be our fault this time around, it's up to us to deal with it for the sake of our own wellbeing and to keep our ambitions alive.

**Source: TransUnion Survey (May 2020) via www.businesstech.co.za*

Good News: There's Freedom in Failure





Author and essayist Henry David Thoreau said: **“Let your failures refine you, not define you”.**

If we learn a lesson from every mistake, then no failure is ever really a failure, even though it may not feel like it at the time.

To do this, we need to shift the narrative around failure. We need to redefine its meaning from “end of the line” to a stepping stone on the way to success.

Moreover, failure frees you from the shackles of expectation. Once you know what doesn’t work, you can move on and focus your efforts elsewhere.


***“If failure is
not an option,
then neither is
success.”***

Seth Godin

Chapter 3:

Famous Failures

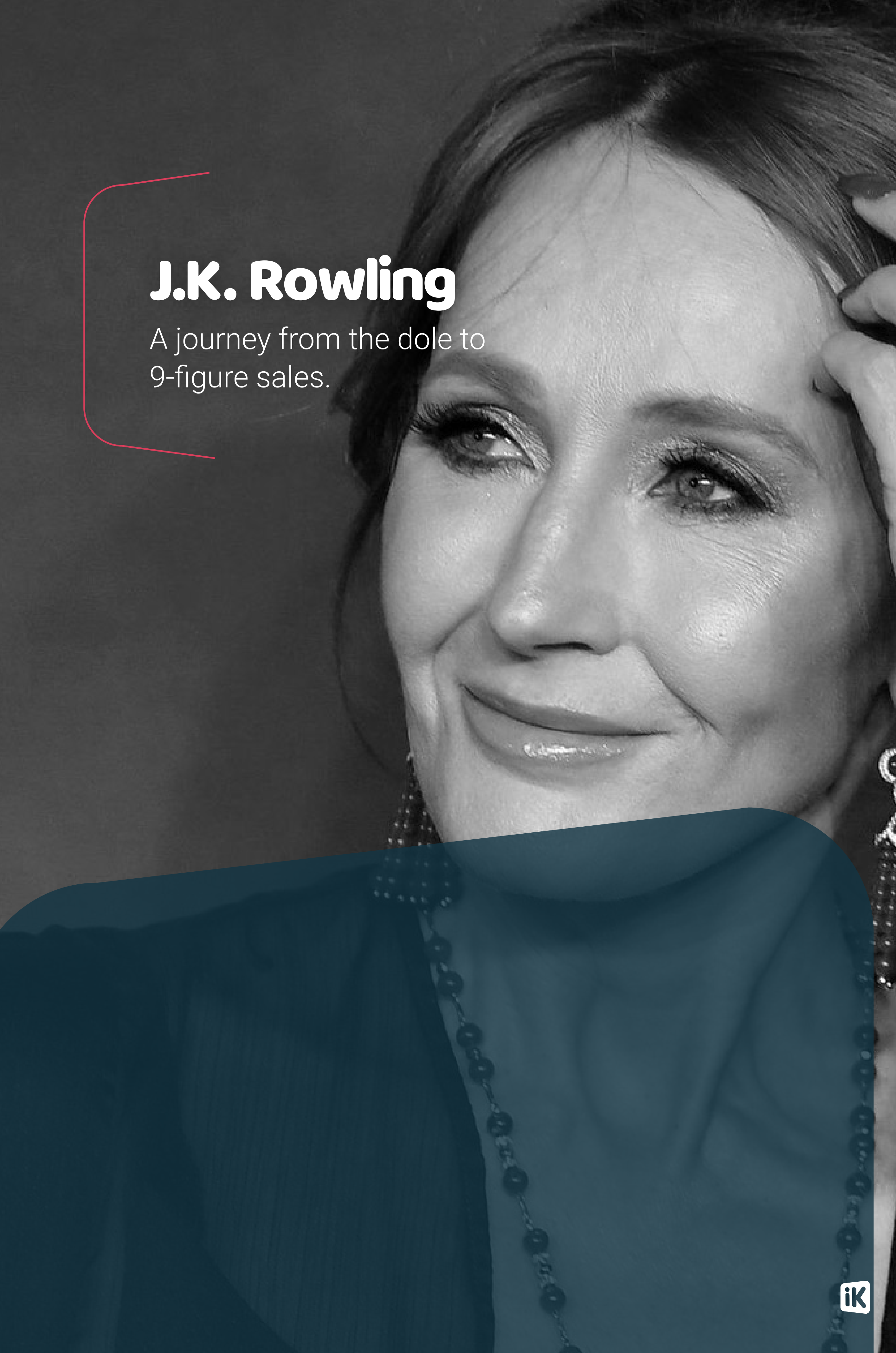
The journey from failure to millionaire.



Success is like an iceberg. When we look at successful people, we see the tip of that iceberg. We see their accomplishments, their triumphs and their wealth.

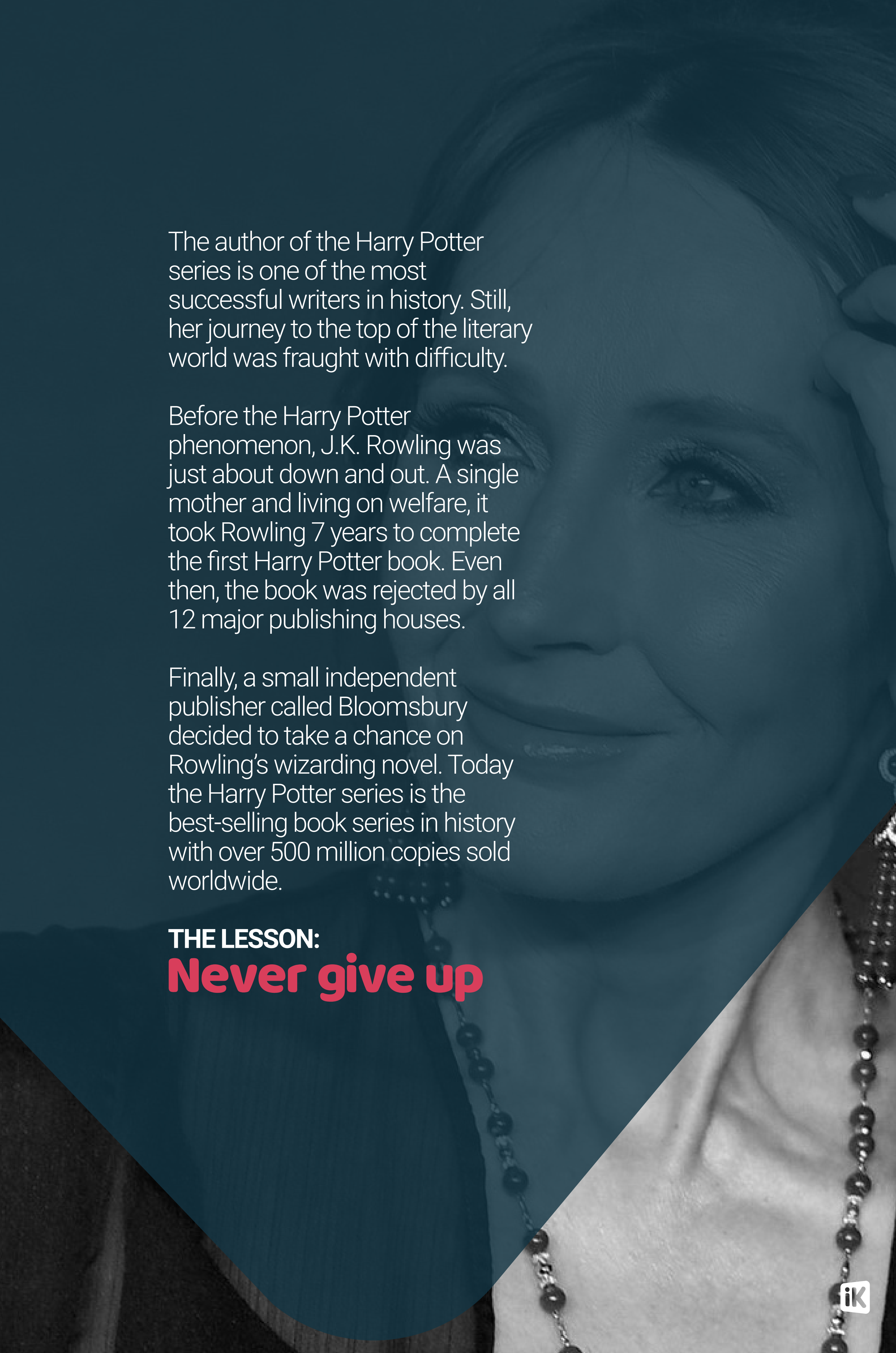
What we don't see is what lies beneath the surface. This is the bulk of the iceberg. The rejections, late nights, moments of searing doubt and, of course, the failures.

Failure is a crucial component in every success story. Take a look at how failure changed the fate of these 5 successful people in spectacular fashion.



J.K. Rowling

A journey from the dole to
9-figure sales.

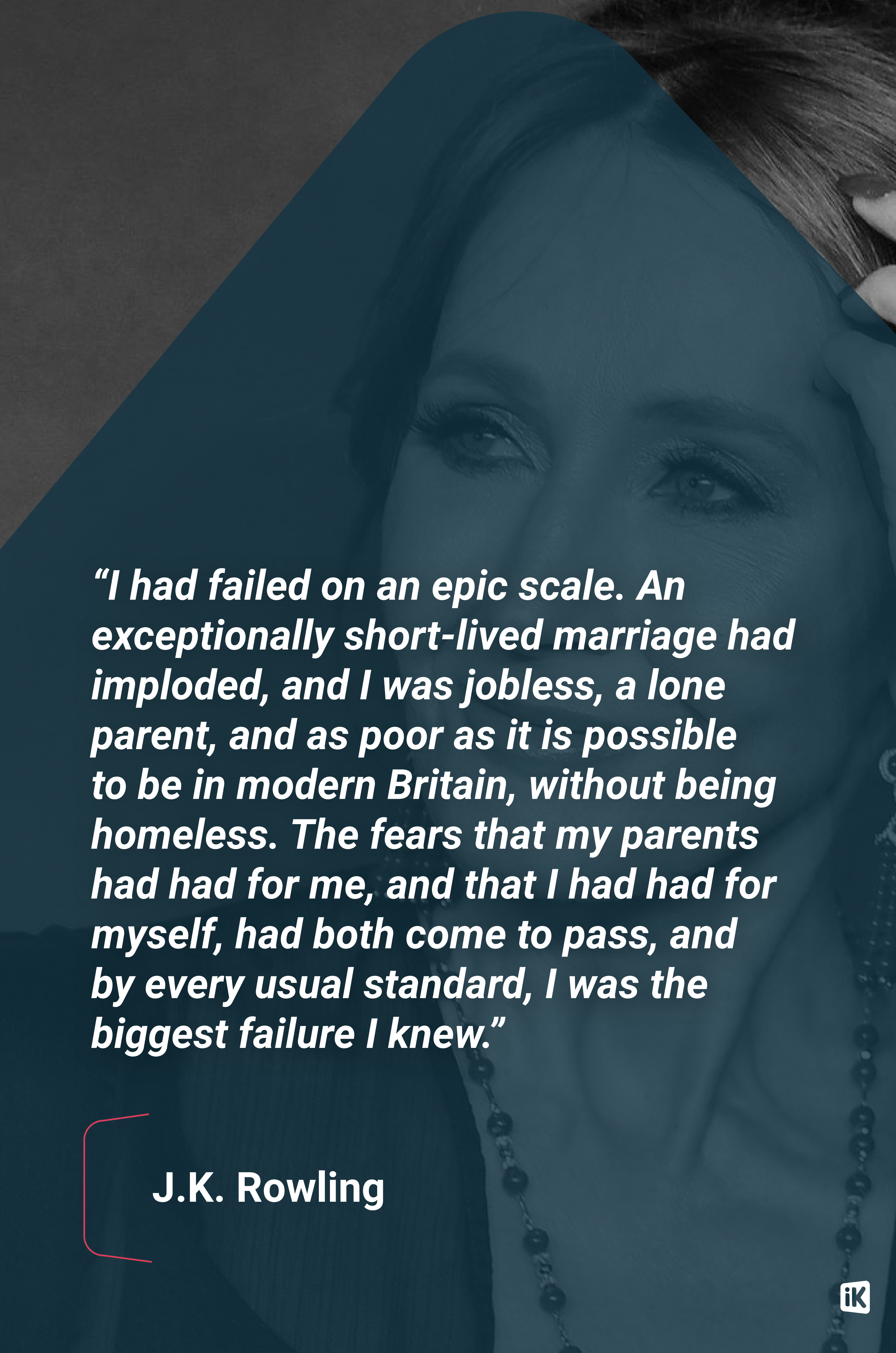


The author of the Harry Potter series is one of the most successful writers in history. Still, her journey to the top of the literary world was fraught with difficulty.

Before the Harry Potter phenomenon, J.K. Rowling was just about down and out. A single mother and living on welfare, it took Rowling 7 years to complete the first Harry Potter book. Even then, the book was rejected by all 12 major publishing houses.

Finally, a small independent publisher called Bloomsbury decided to take a chance on Rowling's wizarding novel. Today the Harry Potter series is the best-selling book series in history with over 500 million copies sold worldwide.

THE LESSON:
Never give up




“I had failed on an epic scale. An exceptionally short-lived marriage had imploded, and I was jobless, a lone parent, and as poor as it is possible to be in modern Britain, without being homeless. The fears that my parents had had for me, and that I had had for myself, had both come to pass, and by every usual standard, I was the biggest failure I knew.”

J.K. Rowling

A close-up portrait of Jack Ma, founder of Alibaba, speaking at a podium. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a green patterned tie. His right hand is raised near his chest. The background is dark with blurred lights.

Jack Ma

The KFC reject that became an e-commerce billionaire.



In April 2020, Forbes named Chinese businessman Jack Ma as the 17th wealthiest person on the planet and 21st on the “World’s Most Powerful People” list. But, Ma wasn’t always a superstar.

He took 3 years to pass his university entrance exams. When he finally graduated as an English teacher, he applied for Harvard Business College and was rejected 10 times. He then applied for 30 different jobs and was rejected from each, including positions on the Police Force and at KFC.

Despite his failures, Ma was an early adopter of the Internet. In 1999, after a string of unsuccessful online businesses, Jack Ma founded Alibaba. Today, Alibaba is one of the world’s largest online retailers.

THE LESSON:

**Don't take no
for an answer**

Colonel Harland Sanders

How a lifetime of failed projects led to Finger-Lickin' Good.



Colonel Sanders is known worldwide as the face of Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC). However, for most of his life, Sanders was considered a failure.

At the age of 65, after failing at just about every business endeavour he had attempted in his life, Sanders set off with nothing more than a \$105 social security cheque and his then not-so-famous chicken recipe.

He was rejected by 1009 restaurants before one finally agreed to try his recipe. Today KFC is valued at over \$5.5 billion.


THE LESSON:

It's never too late to try something new

A black and white portrait of Steve Jobs, smiling and wearing his signature round glasses and a dark turtleneck. He is holding a white Apple device in his left hand. The top of the image is partially obscured by a dark teal curved shape.

Steve Jobs

A comeback for the history books.



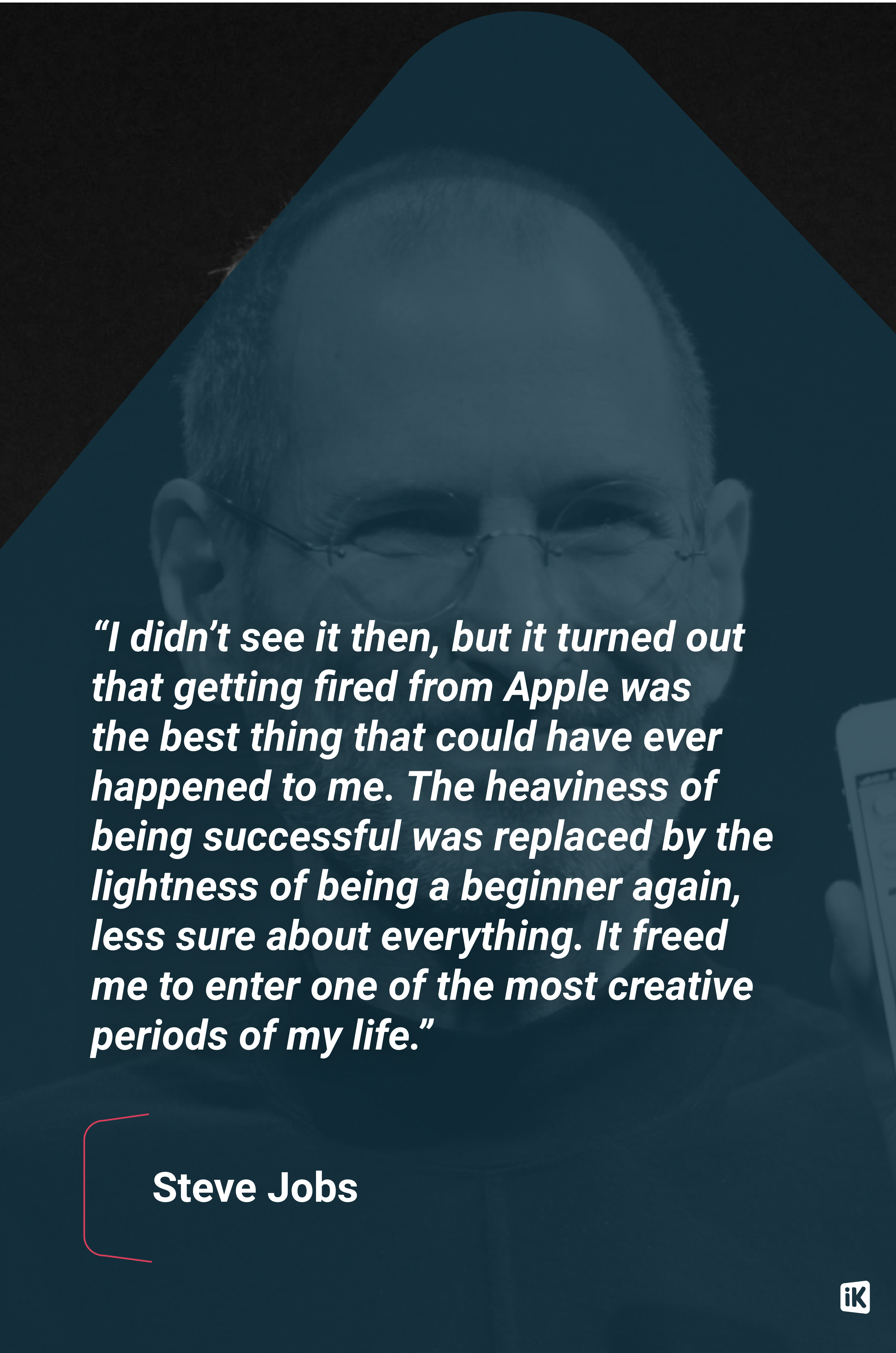
Now revered as the pioneer of home computing, Steve Jobs didn't have an easy ride to the tippy top of the tech world.

From the early days of Apple, where he faced multiple rejections from potential investors to being fired from Apple in 1985, Jobs took his fair share of knocks along the way.

Critically, Jobs saw opportunity in his failures. After leaving Apple, Jobs founded software company, NeXT. He also bought Pixar Animation Studios. He finally returned to Apple in 1997 as CEO and set the company on track to become the most valuable company in the world – a position which it held, for the most part, from 2012 – 2019.

THE LESSON:

There is an opportunity in every failure




"I didn't see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life."

Steve Jobs

Nick Woodman

From a surfboard at backline to
board meetings in San Mateo



Growing up in Menlo Park, California – Nick Woodman was perfectly positioned to make his name in the tech world. Nevertheless, his early career was plagued with failure as two of his start-ups crumbled in short succession.

Both of his early ventures, EmpowerAll.com (an electronics deal website) and FunBug (a marketing and gaming platform) never got off the ground. Disheartened, the young entrepreneur did what every young Californian would do in times of trouble – he went surfing.

On one of his surf trips, he realised that no one was offering a camera that could capture his gnarly surf moves in the water. Shortly afterwards, Woodman launched GoPro – the action camera that is now valued at over \$600 million.

THE LESSON:

**Every failure
brings you closer
to success**



Yeah But, Failure Still Sucks...

It sure does. But there are ways
to deal with it.

Chapter 4:

A Step-by-Step Guide to Failure

Failing like a pro
(and learning as you go).

#1 Embrace Emotions

Accepting, understanding and embracing emotions is critical in dealing with failure and building towards success. No matter how much you tell yourself that failure is part of every success, it still hurts.

Acknowledge this and ask yourself why it hurts. Unpacking your emotions can become a valuable driver that will help you avoid repeating the same mistakes again.

#2 Choose Healthy Coping Mechanisms

That bottle of Merlot may taste great, but as a coping mechanism, it's a short-term solution. Avoid turning to alcohol and drugs as a means of dealing with your failures. Instead, put your frustrations into healthy activities. Take the dog for a walk or go for a run.

Exercise will release positive endorphins, clear your head and help you find the perspective you need to take the next step.

#3 Reframe Your Thoughts

A 2010 study showed that dieters who were fed pizza and told they'd ruined their diets ate 50% more cookies than non-dieters – thus compromising their diets even further.

Try not to let the negative experience of failure hijack your psyche.

Refocus the narrative to create positive associations and take-aways. Remember, there's always a lesson to take away from every failure.

#4 Accept Responsibility

It's easy to blame others for our shortcomings, but shifting blame is just another form of denial – another unhealthy coping mechanism. Instead of looking for excuses, look for explanations.

Why didn't it work? What could you have done differently to affect the outcome? Accepting responsibility for every failure is essential for processing what happened and moving on.

#5 Learn and Improve

Once you've followed the first 4 steps, you'll be in a position to clearly and objectively plan the road ahead. Building a business is a succession of failures and learning curves.

There's no way to avoid it. But, if you're able to take a step back and learn from each experience, you'll be able to recover and grow from a firm foundation.

Chapter 5:

Planning Your Success

**The secret to surviving
and thriving.**

A man and a woman are standing in an office environment. The woman, on the left, is seen from the back, wearing a dark blazer and a light-colored skirt with a small dark pattern. She is holding a small object in her hands. The man, on the right, is facing her and looking towards the camera with a slight smile. He has long dreadlocks and is wearing a patterned long-sleeved shirt and light-colored trousers. The background shows office furniture and a computer monitor. The entire image is overlaid with a yellow-to-blue diagonal gradient.

Talk It Out

Everyone processes things differently. For most people, it helps to talk through your challenges. Whether it's with your partner, a trusted friend or family member, or with a trained professional – take the opportunity to share your feelings.

Keeping your emotions bottled up is unhealthy and may only compromise your efforts further down the road.



Find the Opportunity

Alexander Graham Bell once said: “When one door closes another door opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us”.

The balance of life often dictates that when we fail, another opportunity presents itself. This may not always be clear, but if you look hard enough, you can find an opportunity in every failure.

So, reject negativity, shift your mindset to focus on positive associations and you'll begin to realise that failure might be the best thing that'll ever happen to you.

A person stands on a rocky shore, looking out at the ocean under a dramatic, golden sunset sky. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a long, shimmering reflection across the water. The sky is filled with dark, textured clouds, and rays of light break through near the horizon. The overall mood is contemplative and inspiring. The image is framed with dark blue diagonal overlays in the top-left and bottom-left corners.

In Closing

Whatever happens, remember to always back yourself. You have the ability, the vision, the drive, and the power to make your tomorrow spectacular. It's not always easy, but with the right mindset and work ethic, you'll find success.

Is Your Business in Need?

iKhokha, in partnership with The Multiply Group, recently launched Project Jumpstart – an initiative that is on a mission to help small businesses recover from the impact of Covid-19.

If you are in need, visit **<http://jumpstart.ikhokha.com>** and nominate your business.

Looking for more business tips? Take a look at **<http://info.ikhokha.com>** for handy tips and articles to help you grow your business.



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