

## THE DIP BY SETH GODIN | BOOK SUMMARY

The Dip, by Seth Godin is a quick and easy little read that teaches you when to quit on ideas, and when to stick with them. If something is worth doing, there will be a dip and you need to learn how to navigate it successfully if you're going to come out the other side.

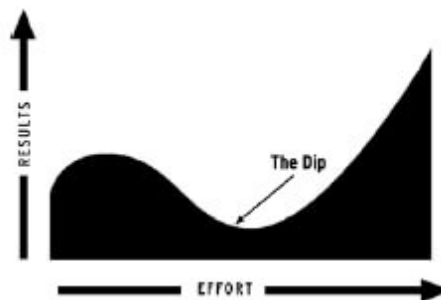
### Being the Best in the World Is Seriously Underrated

- **I feel like giving up.** Extraordinary benefits accrue to the tiny minority of people who are able to push just a tiny bit longer than most. Extraordinary benefits also accrue to the tiny majority with the guts to quit early and refocus their efforts on something new. In both cases, it's about being the best in the world. About getting through the hard stuff and coming out on the other side.
- **The best in the world.** This is a very short book about a very important topic: quitting. Believe it or not, quitting is often a great strategy, a smart way to manage your life and your career. Sometimes, though, quitting is exactly the wrong thing to do. It turns out that there's a pretty simple way to tell the difference.
- **The Surprising Value of Being the Best in the World.** Our culture celebrates superstars. We reward the product or the song or the organization or the employee that is number one. The rewards are heavily skewed, so much so that it's typical for #1 to get ten times the benefit of #10, and a hundred times the benefit of #100.
- **The Best in the World?** Anyone who is going to hire you, buy from you, recommend you, vote for you, or do what you want them to do is going to wonder if you're the best choice. Best as in: best for them, right now, based on what they believe and what they know. And in the world as in: their world, the world they have access to.
- **The Magic of Thinking Quit.** Most people will tell you that you need to persevere—to try harder, put in more hours, get more training, and work hard. “Don't quit!” they implore. But if all you need to do to succeed is not quit, then why do organizations less motivated than yours succeed? Why do individuals less talented than you win? It involves understanding the architecture of quitting, and, believe it or not, it means quitting a lot more than you do now. Strategic quitting is the secret of successful organizations. Reactive quitting and serial quitting are the bane of those that strive (and fail) to get what they want. And most people do just that. They quit when it's painful and stick when

they can't be bothered to quit.

- **CURVE 1: THE DIP.** Almost everything in life worth doing is controlled by the Dip. At the beginning, when you first start something, it's fun. You could be taking up golf or acupuncture or piloting a plane or doing chemistry—doesn't matter; it's interesting, and you get plenty of good feedback from the people around you. Over the next few days and weeks, the rapid learning you experience keeps you going. Whatever your new thing is, it's easy to stay engaged in it. And then the Dip happens. The Dip is the long slog between starting and mastery. A long slog that's actually a shortcut, because it gets you where you want to go faster than any other path. The Dip is the difference between the easy "beginner" technique and the more useful "expert" approach in skiing or fashion design.

It looks like this:



- **CURVE 2: THE CUL-DE-SAC.** The Cul-de-Sac (French for "dead end") is so simple it doesn't even need a chart. It's a situation where you work and you work and nothing much changes. It doesn't get a lot better, it doesn't get a lot worse. It just is. That's why they call those jobs dead-end jobs. That's it. Two big curves (a bonus, the Cliff, follows). Stick with the Dips that are likely to pan out, and quit the Cul-de-Sacs to focus your resources. That's it.
- **If It Is Worth Doing, There's Probably a Dip.** Tennis has a Dip. The difference between a mediocre club player and a regional champion isn't inborn talent—it's the ability to push through the moments where it's just easier to quit. The Dip creates scarcity; scarcity creates value.
- **The Dip Is Where Success Happens.** If you haven't already realized it, the Dip is the secret to your success. The people who set out to make it through the Dip—the people who invest the time and the energy and "the effort to power through the Dip—those are the ones who become the best in the world.
- **Most People Are Afraid to Quit.** It's easier to be mediocre than it is to confront reality and quit. Quitting is difficult. Quitting requires you to acknowledge that you're never going to be #1 in the world. At least not at this. So it's easier just to put it off, not admit it, settle for mediocre. What a waste.

- **Seven Reasons You Might Fail to Become the Best in the World.** You run out of time (and quit). You run out of money (and quit). You get scared (and quit). You're not serious about it (and quit). You lose interest or enthusiasm or settle for being mediocre (and quit). You focus on the short term instead of the long (and quit when the short term gets too hard). You pick the wrong thing at which to be the best in the world (because you don't have the talent).
- **The Big Opportunity.** If you can get through the Dip, if you can keep going when the system is expecting you to stop, you will achieve extraordinary results. People who make it through the Dip are scarce indeed, so they generate more value. When you're the best in the world, you share the benefits (the income, the attention, the privileges, the respect) with just a handful of people or organizations or brands.

### **If You're Not Going to Get to #1, You Might as Well Quit Now.**

- **QUIT!** It's okay to quit, sometimes. In fact, it's okay to quit often. You should quit if you're on a dead-end path. You should quit if you're facing a Cliff. You should quit if the project you're working on has a Dip that isn't worth the reward at the end. Quitting the projects that don't go anywhere is essential if you want to stick out the right ones.
- **Quitting a Tactic vs. Quitting a Strategy.** Yes, I know it's heretical, but I'm advocating quitting. Quitting often, in fact. Not giving up and abandoning your long-term strategy (wherever you might be using that strategy—a career, an income, a relationship, a sale) but quitting the tactics that aren't working.
- **Quitting Is Not the Same as Failing.** Strategic quitting is a conscious decision you make based on the choices that are available to you. If you realize you're at a dead end compared with what you could be investing in, quitting is not only a reasonable choice, it's a smart one. Failing, on the other hand, means that your dream is over. Failing happens when you give up, when there are no other options, or when you quit so often that you've used up all your time and resources.
- **QUESTION 1: AM I PANICKING?** Quitting is not the same as panicking. Panic is never premeditated. Panic attacks us, it grabs us, it is in the moment. Quitting when you're panicked is dangerous and expensive. The best quitters, as we've seen, are the ones who decide in advance when they're going to quit. You can always quit later—so wait until you're done panicking to decide.
- **QUESTION 2: WHO AM I TRYING TO INFLUENCE?** Are you trying to succeed in a market? Get a job? Train a muscle? If you're trying to influence just one person, persistence has its limits. If you're trying to influence a market, though, the rules are different. Sure, some of the people in a market have considered

you (and even rejected you). But most of the people in the market have never even heard of you. The market doesn't have just one mind. Different people in the market are seeking different things.

- **QUESTION 3: WHAT SORT OF MEASURABLE PROGRESS AM I MAKING?** If you're trying to succeed in a job or a relationship or at a task, you're either moving forward, falling behind, or standing still. There are only three choices. To succeed, to get to that light at the end of the tunnel, you've got to make some sort of forward progress, no matter how small.
- **Deciding in Advance When to Quit.** Decide before the race the conditions that will cause you to stop and drop out.