WHAT GREAT LEADERS CAN TEACH US ABOUT SUCCESS IN LIFE: AN EXPLORATION OF THE LIVES OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN, FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT, WINSTON CHURCHILL AND MARTIN LUTHER KING

Great leaders it has been said are not born, but made through the struggles and challenges that they faced throughout their lives. Abraham Lincoln faced many challenges including political setbacks and depression. Franklin Roosevelt had personal family issues as well as a debilitating illness that left him paralyzed for a majority of his adult life. Winston Churchill had a troublesome childhood having been neglected by his parents and physically abused while attending boarding school. He suffered throughout his life from depression that he referred to as his “black dog”. Martin Luther King grew up in an era where racial discrimination and segregation was rampant in this country, denying African American’s equal opportunity and the freedoms that others enjoyed.

Some of what great leaders possessed was: tenacity in the face of setbacks and adversity; personal philosophy of optimism; a vision for the future and the ability to be proactive toward personal and national goals. This paper will look at several factors that made these men great and how we can apply it to our lives.