

LIFE'S 10 PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESS

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As with any subjective list, there could be points you believe are missing and perhaps points you believe don't belong here. I'm under no illusion that everyone will agree with everything I say, so take what you can use and leave the rest behind.

LIVE THOUGHTFULLY

When I was a very young man I tended to live for myself. I thought I was thoughtful at the time because I would help my friends, remember my mom's birthday, hold the door open for people and things like that. But I really wasn't very thoughtful. I confused being polite and being helpful with being thoughtful. I didn't think too far ahead. I didn't look for ways to make people feel good about themselves. In truth, something would have to be very obviously wrong with someone before I'd even notice it.

When we're that wrapped up in ourselves we really don't make a very impressive package. I can say that with hindsight. We really need to live for more

than our own benefit and comfort. If we just take the time to find ways to add sweetness and light to the lives of others our own joy will increase.

LIVE REFLECTIVELY

Great philosophers from antiquity to modern times have encouraged us to live an examined life. To mark the growth and decay of our soul, as George Herbert put it, is to let go of ego attachments and learn what we can from our daily living. The idea is simple—learn what we can about ourselves from each day so we can be better tomorrow. Hard to argue with that.

LIVE WITH INTEGRITY

Integrity means moral soundness, and I mean it in that way, but I also have a deeper mean-

ing in mind for living with integrity. It's also being true to yourself. It's standing up for what you believe in. It's not compromising your deeply held beliefs for the sake of convenience, profit, or to gain an unfair advantage over others. It's also respecting others as your equal, and yourself as the equal to others.

OWN YOUR LIFE

In an age where it's popular to blame our parents, the government, our teachers, religion, lack of religion, and everyone or anything but ourselves for our troubles, it may seem odd to say we have to take responsibility for our own life and everything in it, but that's how it is.

Until we come to that point, where we own our lives and all the results we get from living it, we'll never have the kind of life we want. Being a victim, however legitimate or illegitimate the claim, just does not produce happiness and prosperity. Playing the victim role is antithetical to happiness and prosperity. Until we accept responsibility for all we do and say, and for all the outcomes of what we

do and say, we will never be in charge of our own evolution. We cannot assign blame to someone without also giving up some of our power and promise.

LIVE WITH INTENT

The difference between living with intent and just living can be subtle. Living with intent is having a passion for life and choosing our course, while just living is going through the motions needed to get by. Perhaps most of us are not called to do great things, but we can all do small things in a great way.

Living with intent is also choosing the direction your life takes as much as possible, as opposed to taking the path of least resistance. We are not made strong by being washed downstream by every passing influence. We are made strong by choosing our own course and standing against the tide when it isn't flowing in our chosen direction.

BE WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE

Success is never guaranteed, but if you want to succeed, we have to be willing to pay the price. The "price" depends on

what we want to succeed at: it could mean years of education, years of developing a skill or skills, years of sacrifice, years of failure, or any number of things.

Paying the price may also mean being willing to make changes. These changes could be in our self, in our environment, in our location, or even in who we associate with if they are detrimental to our success. This trips up a lot of people. We humans like our comfort zones. The trouble is, we grow very little within our comfort zones. We must step outside of the familiar and safe and into the unknown in order to become more than we already are.

HAVE FINISHING POWER

Fortitude is having the strength of mind to endure adversity with courage. Focus is the ability to concentrate our attention where it's needed. Having the fortitude and focus to keep working toward our goals in the midst of difficulties, distractions, obstacles, and opposition will give you the finishing power that carries you past any hindrances and into the rarified

air of high achievement. Finishing what they start sets the winners apart from those who shrink away in laziness or defeat.

LIVE IN THE NOW

Someday never gets here, it is always now. Don't put off your goals because it isn't the ideal time, or you lack funds, or lack time. You can work toward your goals in spite of all those excuses. The time will never be right if you aren't prepared for it, so prepare! You can prepare while you save money as well. As for not having the time, a person that says they have no time for something usually does find time to do other things that aren't necessary, such as watching television for example. In most cases, it's really a matter of where we place our priorities....

NEVER STOP LEARNING

The more knowledge and wisdom you possess, the better the mental resources you have to draw upon for problem solving, brainstorming, product development, creativity, and a host of other needs. It's been proven that learning helps keep us

young, and some studies indicate learning helps stave off diseases...And then there's the way Dr. Albert Einstein put it, "Once you stop learning, you start dying." ...

BE A GOAL SETTER

We can have all kinds of marvelous ideas, but until we set them down on paper as goals we aren't likely to act on them. If we don't set them down on paper we are more likely to give up on them in the face of difficulties. By putting our goals down on paper and making an action plan to achieve them, it sinks into our mind better. We will be more likely to follow through.

Writing our goals down also serves notice to our subconscious that these ideas are important because we made the effort to separate them from the thousands of other ideas that flow through our consciousness on a daily basis. That tells our subconscious mind these are the ideas to go to work on, on our behalf, bringing ideas and intuition to us that will help us achieve our goals.

There you have my ten principles to success. I firmly believe **you** can succeed at anything you care enough about.

