

Work / Life

The Problem and Solution Lie Within YOU

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NAVIGATOR

Whatever your lot in life, you doubtless consider it to be a combination of external factors—some positive and others negative. Doubtless, this is partly true. However, it may surprise you to know that at any point, barring acts of God, your future is almost entirely in your own hands.

This may sound like too much to bear or believe. After all, if it were true, there would be no excuses left. You could not blame your situation on your parents, the Government, your boss, your husband or wife, your race, or anything else. Hence, most of us prefer to reject this thought. That leaves us with plenty of excuses and a comfortable, if rather mediocre, life.

Napoleon Hill's book *Think & Grow Rich* makes it clear that success only comes to those rare few who (a) create a major definite purpose to achieve in their lives and (b) pursue that purpose with total determination and persistence to the point of apparent folly in the eyes of others.

Interestingly, the qualification is NOT that you need any prior experience or talent in that which you seek. Rather, it is the purpose, backed with the determination to never give up in attaining it, combined with tapping into the infinite intelligence of the universe, which brings about lasting success.

However, most of us think differently. You may think that you cannot succeed because you do not have enough experience or because you have little money, or because you are disadvantaged in some other way. If so, you need to consider the examples of people like Henry

Ford and Thomas Edison. Both of these men had nothing more than basic schooling. Van Gogh learned to paint relatively late in life. Stevie Wonder is blind. The world's leading cosmologist, Stephen Hawking, is in a wheelchair and cannot even speak without a voice machine. Oprah Winfrey was born black, dirt-poor, and was abused as a child—excellent qualifications for becoming the highest-paid TV personality in America?

The basic problem that holds the vast majority from achieving astonishing success is that they lack self-esteem at the very deepest subconscious level. We place a ceiling on what we are capable of achieving because it makes us feel better about ourselves and our own mediocre achievements. It's better to shield ourselves with dozens of excuses than to admit to ourselves that we could have done better if only we had the guts and the self-belief.

We spend our entire lives crawling around on our knees beneath this insanely low ceiling we created for ourselves. An absurd image? That's the way you are probably living your life.

Within certain obvious physical limits (e.g., a 70-year-old trying to win the Olympic 100m), there is almost NOTHING that someone else has achieved that you could not achieve too, if you had a burning desire to do it, made this the major definite purpose of your life, and pursued it with relentless determination. Burn the ships and the bridges, and then head forward. No excuses or fallbacks. You succeed or you die. That is the only attitude for achieving the very highest levels of attainment. The artist Michelangelo said he would not be con-

sidered a genius if people only knew how many hours he had sweated to achieve it.

The comfort zone is the greatest barrier to success. If you achieve a certain level of the latter, the temptation to relax and bask in the weak sunlight of what you've attained can be overwhelming. A high level of dissatisfaction serves as excellent motivation to spur you further. That way, you will take risks, which is the only way to move forward rapidly. If you take NO risks in life, you may as well be already dead. In fact, the most common regret of dying people is the things they did NOT do and the risks they did NOT take.

Attaining success in any undertaking SHOULD make you feel uncomfortable and challenged. Things are only totally comfortable when you are not making any progress. That is why it is called the comfort zone. However, it's that way because nothing is happening. Maybe a coffin is comfortable too?

However, to succeed in your chosen major definite purpose, you need to shed the garbage of your upbringing. Examine your beliefs and values carefully. Where did they come from? Did you think them up or inherit them? Are there any contradictions there that hold you back? For instance, if you want to become rich, but have a deep-seated belief that rich people are crooks, how likely are you to succeed? Isn't it like driving with the handbrake on?

Most of the time, this is exactly what you are doing. Another example. You want to be promoted and given more responsibility at work? However, when you look within, you don't feel

worthy of it, or you even believe that your colleagues are better than you.

Some deep self-examination is necessary. Take time with yourself and ask yourself what your limiting beliefs are. Working on deepening your sense of self-esteem is the most important work you can do. It precedes any external success you may wish for.

Once you have deep self-esteem, you won't "care what the morons think," as multimillionaire businessman Dan Pena so graphically puts it. If you are afraid of failure, it's almost certainly because failure is frowned upon in our society. After all, how will you look to friends and family? "I told you so" will be the inevitable response. Right?

So what? Why care? Don't bother with what the morons think. When Tom Watson, founder of IBM, was asked by a hungry young executive how he might progress much faster within the company, Watson answered, "Double your failure rate."

THAT should teach you how important the opinions of the morons really are. This is something they don't and can't understand. That is why they remain exactly where they are. INCREASE your rate of making mistakes in order to accelerate your successes and make them ever more dramatic. It's the only way. However, you can only do that if you feel good inside about yourself and don't care what others think.

In conclusion, external factors have less to do with where you are at than you may have ever imagined. The main factor for dramatic success or failure lies within. So, next time you stand in front of a mirror, ponder the eyes looking back into yours. The answers to every success in your life, now and in the future, lie right there . . . staring back at you.

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WEB SITE PICKS

<http://www.davideck.com>

This site covers quizzes of all types. Not only will your brain be bent by these puzzles, but you'll also discover some things about yourself and your personality. There are lots of different quiz types for each general category, and each one takes a different approach at testing a specific aspect of you.

SUMMER HEALTH TIP

Protect Your Picnic

If you use a picnic table this summer, throwing a tablecloth over it may protect your health. Chromated copper arsenate (CCA) wood is a chemically treated wood used in many outdoor structures, such as picnic tables and playgrounds. To keep from acciden-

tally ingesting any harmful chemicals from the wood, throw a tablecloth over the surface and wash your hands before eating.

"It is the law that any difficulties that can come to you at any time, no matter what they are, must be exactly what you need most at the moment to enable you to take the next step forward by overcoming them. The only real misfortune, the only real tragedy, comes when we suffer without learning the lesson."
—Emmet Fox

HUMOR

London Underground

Those of you who suffer the underground will find this a laugh; it's a list of actual announcements that tube train drivers have made to their passengers.

"Your delay this evening is caused by the line controller suffering from elbow and backside syndrome—not knowing his elbow from his backside. I'll let you know any further information as soon as I'm given any."

"Ladies and gentlemen, I do apologize for the delay to your service. I know you're all dying to get home, unless, of course, you happen to be married to my ex-wife, in which case you'll want to cross over to the westbound and go in the opposite direction."

"Please allow the doors to close. Try not to confuse this with 'Please hold the doors open.' The two are distinct and separate instructions."

During an extremely hot rush hour on the central line, the driver announced in a West Indian drawl "step right this way for the sauna, ladies and gentlemen . . . unfortunately towels are not provided."

"Please note that the beeping noise coming from the doors means that the doors are about to close. It does not mean throw yourself or your bags into the doors."

"May I remind all passengers that there is strictly no smoking allowed on any part of the underground. However, if you are smoking a joint, it is only fair that you pass it round the rest of the carriage."

"Do you want the good news first or the bad news? The good news is that last Friday was my birthday, and I hit the town and had a great time. The bad news is that there is a points failure somewhere between Stratford and East Ham, which means we probably won't reach our destination."

"Ladies and gentlemen, we apologize for the delay, but there is a security alert at Victoria station, and we are therefore stuck here for the foreseeable future, so let's take our minds off it and pass some time together. All together now . . . Ten green bottles, hanging on a wall . . ."

"We are now traveling through Baker Street. As you can see Baker Street is closed. It would have been nice if they had actually told me, so I could tell you, but no, they don't think about things like that."

"This is a customer announcement. Please note that the big slidy things are the doors, the big slidy things are the doors."

"Apparently, this train is no longer terminating at Barking, but is in fact, terminating here. I'm sorry about this, but I too was under the impression that this train was going to Barking, but 'they' have other ideas. I mean, why tell me—I'm merely the driver."

"We can't move off because some idiot has their hand stuck in the door. Let the passengers off the train FIRST!" He gave up . . . "Go on then, stuff yourselves in like sardines, see if I care. I'm going home."

"To the gentleman wearing the long gray coat trying to get on the second carriage, what part of 'stand clear of the doors' don't you understand?"

Death is nature's way of telling you to slow down.

—Dick Sharples

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Amazing Childhood Survival Stories

If you were a child in the 60s or the 70s, (or in the 40s and 50s) looking back, it's hard to believe that we survived as long as we have!

As children, we rode in cars with no seatbelts or air bags.

Riding in the back of a pickup truck on a warm day was always a special treat.

Our baby cribs were covered with bright colored lead-based paint.

We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors, or cabinets, and when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets.

We drank water from the garden hose and not from a bottle. (Horrors!)

We spent hours building go-carts out of scraps and then rode down the hill, only to find we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned to solve the problem.

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on.

No one was able to reach us all day. No cell phones. Unthinkable.

We played dodgeball and sometimes the ball would really hurt.

We got cut and hurt and even broke teeth, and there were no lawsuits from these accidents. They were accidents. No one was to blame but us. Remember accidents?

We had fights and punched each other, got black and blue, and learned to get over it.

We ate cupcakes, bread and butter, and drank sugar soda, but we were never overweight because we were always outside playing.

We shared grape soda with four friends, from one bottle, and no one died from this?

Instead of "play dates," we had friends. We went outside and found them. We rode bikes or walked to a kid's home and knocked on the door, or rang the bell, or just walked in and talked to them.

Imagine such a thing. Without asking a parent! By ourselves!

Little league had tryouts, and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't learned to deal with disappointment.

When students failed a grade, they were held back to repeat it! Tests were not adjusted for any reason.

Our actions were our own. Consequences were expected. No one to hide behind.

This generation has produced some of the best risk-takers and problem solvers and inventors, ever. The past 50 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas. We had freedom, failure, success, and responsibility, and we learned how to accept, cope with, ignore, and/or handle the situation.

And you're one of them. Congratulations!

HEALTH

Vitamin D Deficiency

Vitamin D deficiency, which leads to osteoporosis, is increasing in young adults, and drinking vitamin D-fortified milk is of no help, but taking vitamin D supplements and getting out in the Sun can be important preventive steps.

Vitamin D deficiency is extremely prevalent in the elderly, but young adults aged 18 to 29 years have an equal to greater risk of vitamin D insufficiency.

Vitamin D, which helps you absorb calcium, is made by your body when skin is exposed to sunlight. The deficiency of vitamin D places you at risk for osteoporosis as well as chronic bone and muscle pains, and also may increase the risk of certain cancers. Muscle pain and fatigue can be first signs of vitamin D deficiency. Treatment is simple: 800 IU of vitamin D and getting out into the Sun for about 30 minutes a day. If your intake of antioxidants is high enough, the Sun will be protective (even for preventing many kinds of cancer), rather than harmful.

Many young adults who take daily multivitamin supplements during the summer and winter months have vitamin D levels 30 percent higher than those who do not take the supplements.

(Source: *American Journal of Medicine* 2002; 112: 659-662; *Biogerontology* 2002;3 (1-2):

73-7. Excerpted by Betty Kamen, Ph.D., and Michael Rosenbaum, M.D., at <http://www.bettykamen.com>)

WORDS OF WISDOM

Proverbs for Abundant Living

In life we are to encourage and build up each other; not to discourage and tear down one another.

In life we are to add, not subtract; to multiply, not divide.

In life we are to leave an enduring impression; not a careless dent.

In life we are to smooth out the rough roads along the journey; not create new potholes.

In life we are to sing a joyful song; not just drone a groan.

In life we are to add our harmonious strains to life's symphony; not strain the symphony with clatter and clang.

In life we are to soar on eagles' wings; not to peck and cluck with our beaks in the dirt like chickens.

In life we are to radiate light into unseen places; not permit unknown fears to dim our radiance.

In life we are to leap in faith; not to limp with doubt.

In life we are to give freely of our time, our love, our resources; not to cling on to them greedily.

In life we are to lift up others; not push them down.

In life we are to open our hands to those in need; not to clutch our hands in fists of distrust.

In life we are to lend a helping hand to make loads lighter; not use heavy hands to hold others back.

In life we are to be messengers of peace, signs of joy; not Chicken Little portents of gloom-n-doom.

In life we are to enjoy, to savor, to remember, to reflect; not to overlook, to forget, to ignore, to reject.

In life we are to seek conscious awareness; not doze in the doldrums of half-awake.

In life we are to dare mighty things; not to fear things gravely.

In life we are to show up, stand up, step forward, and speak up; not to cringe in fear, choosing to sit down, to step back, allowing the voices of silence to speak so loudly.

In life we are to exercise proper stewardship of Earth's resources; not pillage the heritage of future generations.

In life we are to move forward through forgiveness; not grind to a halt mired in bitterness and resentment.

In life we are to be wacky, weird, and wonderful in our own unique God-given way; not to be staid-n-proper lemmings, stuck on life's treadmill.

In life we are to reach, to stretch, and to soar; not to slink in fear, held back by mistrust and doubt.

In life we are to realize "I am a remarkable Somebody!"; not listen to others' jabs such as "You're a nobody, an everybody, an anybody."

In life we are to comprehend "I am worthwhile;" not tremble with feelings of worthlessness.

In life we are to create, to laugh, and to live life nobly; not to despair, to moan, or to live life less.

(Source: Fr. Brian Cavanaugh, TOR, who began collecting quotations, anecdotes, and stories in 1977 as a form of journal-writing therapy. <http://www.appleseeds.org>)

"The only thing that stands between a man and what he wants from life is often merely the will to try it and the faith to believe that it is possible."

—Richard M. DeVos

HEALTHY HOME TIPS

Make Your Own Nontoxic Cleaning Kit

Most modern synthetic cleaning products are based on age-old formulas using natural ingredients that were passed down through the generations because the chemistry was right. Going back to the original naturally derived ingredients is a way to make cleaning products that work, don't pollute, and save you money. Most are found in your kitchen cupboards.

SUPPLIES

baking soda
washing soda
white distilled vinegar
a good liquid soap or detergent
tea tree oil
6 clean spray bottles
2 glass jars

THE FIVE BASICS FOR NONTOXIC CLEANING

Baking Soda

A commonly available mineral full of many cleaning attributes, baking soda is made from soda ash, and is slightly alkaline (its pH is around 8.1; 7 is neutral). It neutralizes acid-based odors in water and adsorbs odors from the air. Sprinkled on a damp sponge or cloth, baking soda can be used as a gentle nonabrasive cleanser for kitchen counter tops, sinks, bathtubs, ovens, and fiberglass. It will eliminate perspiration odors and even neutralize the smell of many chemicals if you add up to a cup per load to the laundry. It is a useful air freshener and a fine carpet deodorizer.

Washing Soda

A chemical neighbor of baking soda, washing soda (sodium carbonate) is much more strongly alkaline, with a pH around 11. It releases no harmful fumes and is far safer than a commercial solvent formula, but you should wear gloves when using it because it is caustic. Washing soda cuts grease, cleans petroleum oil, removes wax or lipstick, and neutralizes odors in the same way that baking soda does. Don't use it on fiberglass, aluminum, or waxed floors—unless you intend to remove the wax.

White Vinegar and Lemon Juice

White vinegar and lemon juice are acidic—they neutralize alkaline substances such as scale from hard water. Acids dissolve gummy buildup, eat away tarnish, and remove dirt from wood surfaces.

Liquid Soaps and Detergent

Liquid soaps and detergents are necessary for cutting grease, and they are not the same thing. Soap is made from fats and lye. Detergents are synthetic materials discovered and synthesized early in this century. Unlike soap, detergents are designed specifically so that they don't react with hard water minerals and cause soap scum. If you have hard water, buy a biodegradable detergent without perfumes; if you have soft water, you can use liquid soap (both are available in health food stores).

Mold Killers and Disinfectants

For a substance to be registered by the EPA as a disinfectant it must go through extensive and expensive tests. EPA recommends simple soap to use as a disinfectant. There are many essential oils, such as lavender, clove, and tea tree oil (an excellent natural fungicide), that are very antiseptic, as is grapefruit seed extract, even though they aren't registered as such. Use one teaspoon of essential oil to 2 cups of water in a spray bottle (make sure to avoid eyes). A grapefruit seed extract spray can be made by adding 20 drops of extract to a quart of water.

MAKE YOUR OWN PRODUCTS

Note: Make sure to label all your homemade cleaning products and keep them away from pets and children.

CREAMY SOFT SCRUBBER

Simply pour about 1/2 cup of baking soda into a bowl and add enough liquid detergent to make a texture like frosting. Scoop the mixture onto a sponge and wash the surface. This is the perfect recipe for cleaning the bathtub because it rinses easily and doesn't leave grit.

Note: Add 1 teaspoon of vegetable glycerin to the mixture and store in a sealed glass jar to keep the product moist. Otherwise, just make as much as you need at a time.

WINDOW CLEANER

1/4–1/2 teaspoon liquid detergent
3 tablespoons vinegar
2 cups water
Spray bottle

Put all the ingredients into a spray bottle, shake it up a bit, and use as you would a commercial brand. The soap in this recipe is important. It cuts the wax residue from the commercial brands you might have used in the past.

OVEN CLEANER

1 cup or more baking soda water
A squirt or two of liquid detergent

Sprinkle water generously over the bottom of the oven, then cover the grime with enough baking soda that the surface is totally white. Sprinkle some more water over the top. Let the mixture set overnight. You can easily wipe up the grease the next morning because the grime will have loosened. When you have cleaned up the worst of the mess, dab a bit of liquid detergent or soap on a sponge, and wash the remaining residue from the oven. If this recipe doesn't work for you, it is probably because you didn't use enough baking soda and/or water.

ALL-PURPOSE SPRAY CLEANER

1/2 teaspoon washing soda
A dab of liquid soap
2 cups hot tap water

Combine the ingredients in a spray bottle and shake until the washing soda has dissolved. Apply and wipe off with a sponge or rag.

FURNITURE POLISH

1/2 teaspoon oil, such as olive
(or jojoba, a liquid wax)
1/4 cup vinegar or fresh lemon juice

Mix the ingredients in a glass jar. Dab a soft rag into the solution and wipe onto wood surfaces. Cover the glass jar and store indefinitely.

VINEGAR DEODORIZER

Keep a clean spray bottle filled with straight 5 percent vinegar in your kitchen near your cutting board, and in your bathroom, and use them for cleaning. I often spray the vinegar on our cutting board before going to bed at night, and don't even rinse, but let it set overnight. The smell of vinegar dissipates within a few hours. Straight vinegar is also great for cleaning the toilet rim. Just spray it on and wipe off.

MOLD KILLERS

Tea Tree Treasure

Nothing natural works for mold and mildew as well as this spray. I've used it successfully on a moldy ceiling from a leaking roof, on a musty bureau, a musty rug, and a moldy shower curtain. Tea tree oil is expensive, but a little goes a very long way. Note that the smell of tea tree oil is very strong, but it will dissipate in a few days.

2 teaspoons tea tree oil

2 cups water

Combine in a spray bottle, shake to blend, and spray on problem areas. Do not rinse.

Shelf Life: Indefinite

Storage: Leave in the spray bottle

Vinegar Spray

Straight vinegar reportedly kills 82 percent of mold. Pour some white distilled vinegar straight into a spray bottle, spray on the moldy area, and let set without rinsing if you can put up with the smell. It will dissipate in a few hours.

(Source: Annie B. Bond, author of *Clean & Green*, Ceres Press, 1990.)

FINANCES

Free for the Night

If you own a vacation home, you can rent it for up to 14 days per year and have no obligation to report the rental income. It makes no difference how much money you receive.

However, if you go over the 14-day mark, rental income will be taxable. So it probably doesn't make sense to rent your vacation home for a few days in excess of the 14-day limit.

What if your rental expenses exceed your income? In order for you to deduct losses from renting out your vacation home, you have to show that you're attempting to make money. Activities that are not aimed at making a profit are deemed to be hobbies, by the IRS, and cannot generate deductible losses.

The IRS presumes that an activity is not a hobby if profits result in any three of the five previous years. Thus, if your vacation home rental shows profits, more years than not, you probably can deduct rental property losses in the other years.

If you can't show profits in most years, though, don't be discouraged. You can show that renting your vacation home is a business, not a hobby, if you keep records showing that you approach your vacation home rental activities in a businesslike manner, trying to make a profit.

(Source: *Retirement & Financial Planning Report*, published by *FEDweek*.)

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An online version of this newsletter may be found at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codec/cc/navig-7.pdf>