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WHY IS SUCCESS IMPORTANT?

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There are many books and self-help material available to teach us how to be successful. If we do not know why we strive towards success, our efforts can turn out to be null and void.

Aristotle (Greek philosopher) once said: *"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence therefore, is not an act, but a habit."*

In this article we identify four reasons why we all have a responsibility to strive towards success, according to our definition thereof.

1. To enable you to achieve your full potential

All of us have very unique talents and gifts. We will be never experience fulfillment if we do not apply our real potential and strive to live towards it.

This implies that we have a responsibility towards ourselves to make the best of our lives. Even though we have some natural talents and gifts, we still need to hone and development them further. Think of Novak Djokovic – although Novak is the number one tennis player in the world, he still exercises every day and continuously strives to improve his game.

We do not need to accept mediocrity if we are prepared to develop our talents and gifts. The ideal is to find a natural fit between your talents and gifts and your career, sports and other pastimes.

2. To make it possible for you to achieve your dreams and goals

Children have the wonderful ability to create an imaginary future world through their dreams and fantasies.

Then you leave school, accept a job or enroll for further studies, become of age, marry etc.. Somewhere along your path, you are woken up to the realities of life - *I do not pursue my dreams and ideals - I am unhappy / dissatisfied with my life.*

And the good news is.....?

You are not alone with these emotions - most of us go through the same uncertain periods, sometimes even a few times over the span of a lifetime.

Become CHILDLIKE and BELIEVE that everything you strive for, is possible.

3. Because you have the responsibility of relationships

As people we are social beings with emotional ties which we inherit or create. Our family is an example of an emotional connection that we "inherited". When we marry, we enter into an emotional commitment (hopefully voluntarily).

These commitments result in certain responsibilities. This implies that we will give or sacrifice something of ourselves.

When we pursue success (always according to our definition thereof), our travel companions also share in the benefits of our success.

The output of success can be emotional or intellectual fulfillment or financial benefits. Our success enable the people closest to us to experience us at our very best and they may even rely on us to achieve and maintain a specific outcome.

4. To ensure that you are provided for BEFORE and AFTER retirement

I do not want to beat about the bush on this one. We need to decide:

- What we want to become and own?

- How much money is enough to maintain the lifestyle that we strive to achieve?

If we do not, the marketers of this world, our neighbours, colleagues and friends will become our benchmark against which we measure our success.

What does it mean to be "provided" for? This implies that it is within your financial ability to meet all your basic needs.

The mistake we often make is to buy something we cannot afford (ie. on debt) to impress people whom we do not even like

If you would like to increase your earning potential and grow your financial assets, you will have to consider a combination of activities:

- Get better qualified by further studies
- Change work (for better remuneration and career options)
- Put in extra hours to attain above average results and output
- Implement a financial plan
- Know how your money is applied in order to identify areas where waste or overspending occurs.

The underlying message is that your lifestyle should be aligned with your disposable income. Be cautious that when your income increases (for example: salary increase, promotion, bonus) you do not automatically increase your standard of living by purchasing a new and bigger car or house. This leaves you in the same cash position or even worse off.

You will be successful when you apply a disciplined savings effort over a lifetime, so that you and your dependents will be cared for after retirement. Less than 5% of people make adequate provision to maintain their standard of living after retirement. Are you one of them? Have you done the calculations? *The art of living is to enjoy your life in the present and to make adequate provision for a bright and carefree future.*

Robert Collier (Lifestyle Coach) said: *"Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out."*