

## What Is Success?

So what is success? *It is wholeness in every area of your life.* It isn't the achievement of one area to the detriment of one or more of the others.

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A company entitled "Made for Success" begs the question: Just what is success? So, join me as I wax philosophical and pursue this question in this brief article.

Success has been an elusive term since the beginning of time. For ages, men and women have pursued that which would make them happy and fulfilled. At the same time they have tried to determine that which would make them feel as though they have achieved success. Some have defined success themselves, while others have been content to have others, or societies at large, define success for them.

**We would most certainly all agree that to a large degree, "success" is defined by the individual or group that is pursuing it.**

Is there an objective definition of success? I do think that there are some general principles, shown throughout history, which measure true success. I would like to give you some principles that I believe are helpful when thinking about the subject for yourself, your family, and your career.

Before we begin, I need to say that I am excited about the direction that much of the recent success literature has taken. While I don't agree with all of the viewpoints that are expressed, I am glad that more emphasis has been placed on what I call "whole-life" success, including such things as family, health, and spirituality. Success literature that is centered on financial wealth and the attaining of material possessions only, is not truly

success literature in the broadest sense of the term. While financial success is good, it is certainly not the final measurement of the fulfilled life.

To truly understand success, one must first understand the nature of human beings. I believe that you would agree with me that humans are in their very nature a trichotomy, that is, they are made up of three parts: Body, Soul (the mind, emotions, and will), and Spirit (that part of us that transcends this body). To achieve whole-life fulfillment, "Success," each of these areas must receive special attention in order to bring balance to our lives and achieve true success.

In the past, success has come to be measured by a basic core of measurable objectives, all of which, in and of themselves are fine, but in and of themselves are totally inadequate to fulfill a person. Some of these are:

**Money.** The accumulation of money has always been a pursuit of man. The more money the better, it has been believed. And yet many who have achieved this end have looked back at the rest of us and warned that it isn't all that it is cracked up to be. Now, don't get me wrong, having money is not a bad thing. Many people misquote the New Testament when they say, "Money is the root of all evil." In fact, the N.T. says "*The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.*" Money is neutral. What people allow money to do to them, is not. So the pursuit of money, in the right frame of mind, can be a good thing.

**Power.** Power, like money, is high on the list of success goals. And, like money, power is bad or good based on the use it receives in the hands of people. Power, whether political or simply untitled influence, can be a good thing. If you achieve power, that is good, as long as you are good with it.

**Happiness.** This is almost entirely subjective and usually includes one or all of the other success goals. People define their version of success and then pursue it. Usually it means a sense of fulfillment and peace, which I will discuss later on.

**Freedom.** Whether as individuals or groups, freedom has rightly been a pursuit and definition of success. America, even with its faults, is still the epitome of freedom. This is why so many people from around the world long to come to America or other fine democratic countries. As individuals, they want to be able to choose their own destiny, to wake up

every day and do what they want, to as opposed to what someone else chooses for them.

**Healthy relationships.** Let's face it, life is not lived alone. We are in a plethora of relationships, from the very superficial to the most intimate. Let's also agree that unhealthy relationships are not good. Nothing can bring a person down quicker or for a longer time than trouble in a cherished relationship. And yet, millions of people have realized that the pursuit of some goals have been to the detriment of their personal relationships. This is what John R. O'Neil calls "The Paradox of Success."

**Health.** The joy of success is not in the achievement of it, but the experience of it. It is the conscious knowledge of your success, the fruit of your success, which brings fulfillment. And if you are not healthy, you can almost certainly not enjoy your success. Your health is perhaps the most cherished of all possessions. Without it, you cannot enjoy your other possessions.

**A relationship with God.** For most people, eternal questions are important, even the most important. To be sure, we live after this life a lot longer than we do in this life! Having a belief in God and an understanding of his ways has long been a pursuit and goal of people, regardless of age, nationality, race or gender.

So, how can we sum this all up? What is success? Is it one of the above? All of them? Others? I have found something that helps me understand the concept of success very well. It is the Hebrew word "Shalom." Most people have heard this word interpreted as "peace," and, in its simple definition, that is indeed what it means. But the understanding of the word peace to those who originally used this word meant something very broad.

**When someone said "shalom" to you, they were wishing you peace in every area of your life. They meant success to you. This incorporated all areas of your life. It meant wholeness. They were saying, "*May your finances be***

***well. May your health be well.  
May your mind and heart be at  
rest. May your relationships be  
good. May you know and  
understand God. May you be  
blessed in every area of your  
life."***

So what is success? *It is wholeness in every area of your life.* It isn't the achievement of one area to the detriment of one or more of the others. This isn't balance and won't bring us peace.

This is what Made for Success is all about, to challenge and encourage you to true success, to peace in every area of your life. This is why you will find articles on a very broad range of topics. Articles on health, finances, spirituality, relationships and the like will fill the pages in the months and years to come. I hope you find them helpful.

Shalom!



**Chris Widener** is an example of how anyone can overcome any odds to achieve a successful life and help others achieve the same. Chris has overcome many obstacles... living through his father dying suddenly when he was four, being sent away from his family to live with relatives at age nine and becoming involved with drugs and alcohol by the age of twelve. Chris overcame those obstacles and

has for the last ten years worked with some of the most financially successful families in America, helping them to achieve both personally and professionally. Now he can do the same for you!