

CLAIM YOUR SUCCESS

Are you successful, and if so, in what ways? Are you happy with who you are and what you have achieved? Most often, success is defined by one's accomplishments—favorable endeavors that come to fruition; the attainment of wealth, position or honors; or a person who has achieved success. This description might be true for you, but I also believe the definition of success must include the “who you are” part, and everyone must create their own personal definition of success.

So what does success mean to you? How do you define it, claim it and pursue it? Is it a plentiful bank account, a certain social status, the right home in the right neighborhood, a title at work or an educational degree? Is it your own happiness, the quality of your relationships or a balanced life? How do you know when you have made it to the top, truly arrived at your destination or reached your pinnacle?

Some people feel accomplished professionally. They have mastered their vocation, are recognized by their peers as an expert, have been rewarded financially and continue to find success in their work. Their self-esteem is tied to their career, yet other parts of their life may have suffered. Other people believe they have done well personally by taking care of their relationships, their health, their families—fulfilling the role of caretaker, yet carry a constant disappointment that they have not done enough, achieved enough or accumulated enough. Either way, success is being determined by what they do, not necessarily who they are as a person.

The key to success starts with creating your own personal definition of achievement that authentically aligns both worlds. Most people need a combination of both personal and professional victories, while maintaining life balance, personal connection, shared intimacy through vulnerability, joyful accomplishments, service opportunities and true authenticity to one's life purpose and passionate pursuits. The “being-ness” can be distinguished by your values, a strong sense of self, and seeing the good that already exists within you. The “doing-ness” can be defined by acknowledging what you have already accomplished and what you still have yet to do. Personal success is created by making choices that honor yourself while continually moving forward to reach your dreams and goals... and in the process, not betraying yourself along the way.

FIVE KEYS TO “BEING” SUCCESSFUL:

- 1. Get Passionate** What excites you? Is there anything you are so bothered by that you have to do it? Get inspired, dream big, pursue passion and love what you do. Envision your achievements, engage in creative solutions and be boldly brave. “Success isn't a result of spontaneous combustion. You must set yourself on fire,” said humorist Arnold Glasgow.
- 2. Get Confident** Believe in your personal ability to succeed. Be fearless and adventurous—take risks and dare to succeed. Lead your efforts with self-confidence and unshakable certainty. Women's rights activist and novelist Lydia M. Child said, “Belief in oneself is one of the most important bricks in building any successful venture.” If you do not believe in you, how can you expect others to do the same?
- 3. Get Clear** Intentionally choose what you want and remain authentic to your self on the journey. Decide what is right for you based on all life areas—emotionally, physically, mentally, financially, relationally and socially. “Right-size” your expectations, especially of yourself and others. Realistically, what can you do now? Maximize your time, talent and resources. British journalist David Frost said, “Don't aim for success if you want it; just do what you love and believe in, and it will come naturally.”
- 4. Get Empowered** Artist Pablo Picasso said, “Action is the foundational key to all success.” Take inspired action every day. Be grateful for your accomplishments and learn from your failures. And no matter what, keep moving forward. Do something, anything, towards your goals and do not waste a moment not pursuing your dreams.
- 5. Get Supported** Ask for help... know when, know who and know how. Encourage feedback, make new decisions and learn from everything. Evaluate if what you are doing is effective and recalibrate as needed. Remember, you are always in choice. As French philosopher Albert Camus said, “Life is the sum of all your choices.”

FIVE EASY STEPS TO ATTAINING SUCCESS:

- 1. Define your goal or objective.** Set soulful goals that reflect who you are and the impact you want to make. See the end result and work backward.
- 2. Create a plan** with inspired action steps and a realistic timetable to achieve that success. Pick three things each day to work toward your aspirations.
- 3. Follow your path.** Be purposeful, stay on track and do not waste time, money or energy.
- 4. Re-evaluate and adjust** the plan along the way. Get feedback and make sure what you are doing is working. Remember the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, and expecting different results.
- 5. See the success.** Did you meet your own personal expectations? Was the pursuit of that goal to your highest capacity? Did you do your best, no matter the outcome? Savor your success and then ask, “What is next?”

The combination of “being” and “doing” is met with how you handle the ups and downs along the way. By doing the best you can in any given moment with the knowledge and resources on hand, you can build a strong foundation for continued success in any given situation. Here are some provocative inquiries to see if you are on your path to triumph.

Five Thoughtful Coaching Questions to Move You Towards Success:

1. What would true success look like to you, and what would that get you?
2. What kind of plan do you need to create to get there? What resources are available to you, and how will you be supported?
3. How do you suppose you could change your current situation to better reflect your desired situation?
4. If your whole attention is focused on producing this result, what will you have to give up? Do you need to recalibrate and if so, where do you go from here?
5. What is your contribution to the world going to be? Is this your desired legacy?



Life Coach Jennifer Blair is founder of Excavive, based in Louisville, KY, with an additional office in Fort Worth, TX. Her work focuses on empowering individuals to pursue their passions, increase their self-confidence and build their authentic lives through personal and professional life coaching, creative and entrepreneurial consulting, inspirational speaking, and published writing. Her website is excavive.com. Jennifer can be reached at jennifer@excavive.com or 502.893.9589.