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Confidence and success: Points to ponder

Nothing succeeds like confidence.” “Confidence breeds confidence which in turn breeds success.” Do these sayings sound familiar? Consultant Dr. Chetan Chopra writes: “When you are truly confident, it radiates from you like sunlight, and attracts success to you like a magnet.” As Jackie Gleason used to say in “The Honeymooners” television show, “how sweet it is.”

Self-confidence isn’t something you were born with. It’s something you develop, and it plays an enormous role in achieving success in whatever you do. Unfortunately, there is no instant fix or magic pill that will instantaneously provide you with confidence. However, by taking the time, effort and commitment necessary to build true confidence in yourself, you’ll have it during any situation that comes your way.

As Thomas Edison said, “Many of life’s failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.” A key component in achieving success is your belief in your own potential for success. Dr. Denis Waitley points out that “you must realize that the most important opinion about you is the one that you hold. Ultimately, nobody else is responsible for your life but you. Nobody else is accountable for your actions but you. Therefore, nobody’s opinion about you is more important than yours.”

Harvard Business School professor Rosabeth Moss Kanter explains in her book, “Confidence: How Winning Streaks & Losing Streaks Begin

& End,” that confidence is a fundamental attribute to success and can be enhanced through routines that activate talent. Ask yourself: “What action can I take today to achieve my goal of developing confidence?” Even if you have to take tiny steps, you will need to take that first step, then another step. Day by day, each action you take will add up to much progress in the right direction. Along the way, be sure to set targets and measure your success in reaching those targets. This process in itself will help you in your quest to develop confidence.

Start with one small area in which you want to be confident, then proceed from there. For example, in “Dynamic Laws of Prosperity” by Catherine Ponder, she writes: “You may never know how much your words of confidence mean, or how far they can go. When you speak words of confidence concerning others, you cannot help attracting it to yourself as well, since what you send out comes back multiplied. Self-confidence becomes a habitual state of mind, which then unconsciously goes to work for you to provide an avalanche of success!”

A huge part of self-confidence comes from our previous successes. Look at what you’ve already achieved. Make a list of five key accomplishments (produced best sales figures nationwide, played key role on project management team, did something that made a major difference in the life of someone else). Successful people continually tell

themselves, “I have succeeded in the past; therefore, I know I can succeed in the future.”

Maintaining a positive attitude toward life increases our confidence. Avoid reinforcing your failures. Failure is a detour, not a dead-end street. Failure is a temporary setback, a learning experience, a growth process. You may recall that Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team. The coach told him to find another career.

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Dr. Seuss of the “Cat in the Hat” series was turned down by 23 publishers before his first book was printed. Your value is there. Build your knowledge, and prepare thoroughly so that you will be ready when success comes your way.

You hold in your hands the keys to building confidence and reaping success. Keep in mind, you are one of a kind. No one else has precisely your set of talents, skills, qualities and capabilities. Always remember, being a confident person has many benefits, both professionally and personally. Whatever your ambitions, building up your self-confidence will surely play a major role in achieving your life’s success.

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