

Success ... What I Know For Sure

Have you ever wondered why some people fail at everything while others seem to have the *Midas touch*: everything they touch turns to gold? How many times have you pondered the key to success?

If you stood on a busy street corner and asked the average person the key to success, you will more often than not hear: ***hard work or luck***. Regarding hard work, think on this: How many *hard working* people do you know? Like most of us, many. Yet, these hard working people struggle from day-to-day to make ends meet. On some level, we all know that while hard work is important, it's only part of the success equation. I can unequivocally say that hard work *alone* has never brought success. And, when it comes to "luck", I don't believe in lucky breaks. You make your own luck by being prepared and by recognizing and taking advantage of opportunities when and if they show up. Or, you create your own opportunity. Whitney Young, social reformer and civil rights leader, said it best: "It is better to be prepared for an opportunity that never comes than to be unprepared when one does come."

What, then, is the key? While I don't believe there is a specific key, here are five truths about success that...*I know for sure*.

Know what it looks like. To achieve success, you must have a clear idea of what it looks like. If you don't know what it looks like, it's difficult to achieve or to even know when you have reached it. Success is personal. It means different things to different people. For some, success is money, power, prominence, or importance. For others, it's excellence, meaningful relationships, peace of mind, or meeting specific goals. Only you can describe what your success looks like.

Have a clear intention. Marva Collins, an American educator, once said, "Success doesn't come to you – you go to it." This statement tells me that success starts with an intention. You must "intend" to be successful. You must make a deliberate and conscious effort to be successful and have a hunger and desire to have more, be more, and do more.

Envision the possibilities. See it, picture it, and imagine it. And, keep the picture in your mind's eye – no matter the circumstances or what your own mind or others may say. When negative messages enter into your consciousness, simply respond by saying, "thank you for sharing". And, continue to see the possibilities.

Commit to lifelong learning. The more you know, the more you grow. Become addicted to learning. Keep your mind and your heart open to learning new things – big things and small things. At the end of each day, ask yourself, what did I learn today?

Take action. Success is available to all who want it, believe they deserve it, and are willing to take some definite actions. You must make a conscious effort every day to do something (no matter how small) to move toward your ultimate goal.

Success isn't a rare gift given only to a few. It's a gift that's within everyone's capacity to achieve. Success isn't an accident, it's a choice!

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