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# What Is Your Legacy of Success?

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## What Is Your Legacy of Success ?

By Kathleen Gage

**S**uccess! Easy to talk about, but difficult to achieve. Or is it? Success is defined differently by virtually anyone you ask because success is a very personal experience. Is your definition of success based on the values, dreams and beliefs of others? How often do people strive for accomplishments that will show they are “successful” yet they are left spiritually and emotionally lost?

As we grow and change our definition of success is bound to change. For some, success is doing whatever it takes to gain material wealth regardless of the personal, spiritual or emotional cost. For others, success is defined quite differently.

When our life is in balance, we become a magnet for success. An important key to achieving what we desire is to become clear about our *personal* definition of success physically, emotionally, spiritually, financially, personally, professionally and in our community.

There is a real paradox with success. You must have an idea of what success means *to you* and the outcome you *desire* to achieve. On the flip side, to truly fulfill the path intended for you at a higher level, you must be willing to let go of the *actual* outcome. This can be very

challenging since many of us have been taught to do whatever it takes to assure a particular outcome of a situation. By holding on when it is time to let go, we may be shortchanging ourselves in life. If we are able to let go of the end result and trust the process that gets us there, we may end up with more than we ever dreamed possible.

Life frequently holds interesting twists and turns. What often seems like a tragedy and failure can become one of life’s greatest blessings. Such was the case for me in late September 2002. I had achieved a level of outward success that I worked very hard for. I held an executive position with a Salt Lake City firm, made an excellent income, had the corner office, a dedicated staff and accomplished much of what I put my mind to. When I found out there were things going on in the company that went completely against my core values, I had to redefine what success really meant to me. Upon deep reflection I realized there was nothing I could do to change the situation in this firm and made a decision to leave, taking a leap of faith into the unknown. Somewhat confused and not sure what was to come next, I knew from previous experiences that life had something more in store for me.

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Within only days of resigning, my good friend and competitor in speaking and training, Lori Giovannoni, was diagnosed with breast cancer. Lori had also reached a high level of success in her business. She had a book that was selling great and had speaking and training engagements lined up as much as a year in advance. Then the call came. Within only a matter of hours surgery was being scheduled. Suddenly life was turned upside down.

With her health to think of, there was also the thought of how she was going to fulfill all the speaking engagements she had booked. A seemingly impossible situation soon became crystal clear. Myself and another friend, Lynda Jeppesen, also a highly regarded competitor, decided we would step in for Lori. Her clients were informed of the situation. They trusted Lori's judgment and there was no question of us filling in for her. We insisted the clients send the speaking fees directly to Lori. After all, it was she that needed to have financial stability and a peace of mind to begin her healing process.

A week before, success was defined by my position within the company I had just left. Now it was defined by the love for a friend.

Amazingly, over the next year, Lori was able to focus on her healing, continue to build her business and, as always, keep friends in the forefront. I focused more on family and friends and chose to return to consulting, speaking and training. I had the best year ever - both personally and professionally. Lori and I also wrote a book that was born out of the experience we shared late in 2000.

Our book, *Workplace Miracles, Inspiring Stories and Thoughts of Possibility*, would have probably never been written had life not put a twist in the road, nor had we recognized this as a part of our path. Obviously, there was something in store for us that we needed to be open to in order to receive it.

What I learned from this, and other experiences, is that life holds many secrets for all of us. Often, when I attempt to define what life and success should be about, I will shortchange myself. When I have a focus, take the appropriate steps to achieve my dreams and goals, and then let go of the outcome, life will always offer me more than I ever would have offered myself.

What is life offering you that will be a part of your legacy of success?

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