

The following is a highlighted summary of the book, A Year of Growing Rich, published by Plume. The statements below are key points of the book as determined by James Altfeld and have been made available at no charge to the user.

Napoleon Hill's

A Year of Growing Rich

52 Steps to Achieving Life's Rewards

Foreword by W. Clement Stone

“What is your one definite purpose in life—and what plans have you made to attain it?”

To be successful, you must at this moment decide exactly what your goal is and lay out the steps by which you intend to reach it.

The person who acts with purpose and a plan attracts opportunities. How can life give you anything if you don't know what you want yourself? How can other help you to succeed if you haven't decided how to get there yourself? Only with definiteness of purpose will you be able to overcome the defeats and adversities that will stand in your way.

Motivate Yourself to Achieve Success

...there is a difference between merely wishing for something and deciding definitely that you are going to have it.

Some Succeed, Others Fail...Why?

The successful person is open-minded and tolerant on all subjects, toward all people. The failure has a closed mind, steeped in intolerance, which shuts her off from the recognition of favorable opportunities and the friendly cooperation of others.

The successful person keeps abreast of the times and makes it an important responsibility to know what is going on, not only in her own business, profession or community but throughout the entire world. The failure concerns herself only with her immediate needs, acquiring them by whatever means are available—fair or foul.

Strength Grows Out of Struggle

My grandfather was a wagon maker. In clearing his land for crop, he always left a few oak trees standing in the open fields where they were exposed to the full force of the blazing sun and blasts of wind.

The trees that strained against Nature were far stronger and tougher than the protected oaks deep in the forest. It was timber from the trees that had struggled that he used for the wagon wheels, bending them into arc-shaped segments, without fear that they would break. Because they had struggle, they had grown strong enough to bear the heaviest loads.

Struggle similarly toughens the human spirit.

I received when I once asked one of Henry Ford's top aides for his formula for success. "I manage to get in the way of men like Mr. Ford," he said, "and hope that when they want something done they'll call on me."

By running to embrace struggle, rather than trying to avoid it, you too, can use it to help you learn, grow—and succeed.

Sincerity

Ask yourself this question: "Granted I'm seeking personal gain in what I'm about to do. But am I giving fair value in service or goods for the profit or wages I hope to make, or am I hoping to get something for nothing?"

Flexibility

Flexibility means the ability to bend mentally and physically, to adapt one's self to any circumstances or environment while maintaining self-control and composure.

Flexibility, perhaps, can best be described as the ability to survey and assess a given situation swiftly and react to it on the basis of logic and reason with a minimum of emotion. By developing flexibility you are prepared to take prompt action in seizing opportunity or solving problems. It can help you become decisive.

The head of the Bank of America in San Francisco once said, "When we hire men and women, we rate them on four traits: loyalty, dependability, flexibility and ability to do a given job well,"

Enthusiasm

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Nothing great is ever achieved without enthusiasm."

Use Your Personal Initiative

..."Young man, there are two kinds of people who never get ahead or amount to anything. One is the fellow who will not do what he is told, and the other is the fellow who will not do anything more than he is told."

Get a Promotion

The surest way to success is to render more and better service than is expected of you.

Start with the philosophy that the boss isn't going to promote—you are going to promote yourself.

Begin by seizing every opportunity to demonstrate your ability to hold a higher position. Instead of shirking responsibility, go out of your way to seek it. When others pass the buck, you be the one to make decisions. The most significant mark of leadership is the willingness to make decisions and accept responsibility for them.

How One Man Won a Promotion

“What position higher than my present one am I qualified to hold?”

Think how the world would be transformed if each of us adopted someone else to help through life. In turn, each of us would be adopted and receive help.

Let Others Help You Achieve Success

Success will come more quickly and surely if you learn how to make use of the education, experience, ability and influence of others.

Welcome Help from Others

Clear thinking never comes from a worried mind.

Work with your Team

When you get to the heart of any large, successful corporation, you find that its every heartbeat is teamwork, inspired from the top down.

“Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap,” becomes crystal clear. For it is true that whatever you do to or for another, you do to or for yourself.

Work well with your team—and your team will carry you to success.

Wake up and Meet your Positive Self

You do not see your real self when you look into a mirror. You see only see the house in which your real self lives.

If you aspire to the higher planes of success in life, you should become better acquainted with that great, powerful, positive self who lives in your body.

Let Habits Work for You

An oak grows from an acorn—always—and the pine grows from the seed of its ancestor. You know that Nature never makes a mistake and grows a pine from an acorn and an oak from the seed of a pine. These facts you can see. But do you recognize that they do not just happen by chance? Something has to make them happen! That something is the same power that fixes habits and makes them permanent. The Creator permits humanity alone the privilege of fixing their own habits to suit their own desires.

The habits of every living creature except humans are fixed by what we call instinct.

Think Accurately

James B. Duke had no formal schooling and never learned to write, but he developed a keen sense of accuracy in his thinking, which made him one of the richest men in the world. He didn't waste time debating with himself over trivialities or unimportant facts. He reached decisions quickly after he had the facts.

One day he met an old friend who was shocked to hear that Duke planned to open two thousand tobacco stores. "My partner and I," said the friend, "have enough trouble with just two stores and you're thinking of opening two thousand. It's a mistake, Duke."

"A mistake!" Duke exclaimed. "I've made mistakes all my life, and if there is one thing that has helped me, it is the fact that when I make one, I never stop to talk about it. I just go ahead and make some more."

So Duke went ahead with his chain of tobacco stores which eventually did a weekly business of millions. He left several million dollars to build Duke University, and that was only a small fraction of the wealth he accumulated by his willingness to make quick, accurate decisions, some of which were right.

Elbert Hubbard once defined an executive as "a man who makes a lot of decisions and some of them are right."

Progress Call for an Open Mind

The human mentality withers unless it is in constant contact with the stimulating influence of fresh thought.

The Blessing of Failure

Watch your reaction to your failures and you will know if you have the potential for leadership. If you can keep on trying after three failures in a given undertaking, you may consider yourself a candidate for a leadership role in your present occupation. If you can keep on trying after a dozen failures, the seed of genius is sprouting within you.

It seems that Nature often knocks individuals down with adversity in order to learn who among them will get up and make another fight.

Learn from Defeat

The truly great achievements were attained by men and women past the age of fifty, and he expressed the opinion that the most productive years of men and women engaged in brain work were from sixty to seventy.

Overcome Fear to Reach Your Goal

As President Dwight Eisenhower said, "One can attain a high degree of security in a prison cell if that's all he wants out of life." The successful person is one who is willing to take risks when sound logic shows they are necessary.

Sorrow Can Be a Blessing

A strong character is like fine steel that has undergone repeated heating and chilling. Instead of breaking under adversity, it becomes tempered to even greater toughness.

Your Source of Power

I have observed two of the most important facts concerning men and women who are successful in their chosen occupations and those who are not. The successes speak in the future tense of yet unattained objectives which they intend to achieve. The failures speak in the past tense of their defeats and disappointments. I have never know the rule to fail.

Remember, no one can make you angry or hurt your feelings in any manner whatsoever without your wiling cooperation.

Your mind is your own. You are the sole supervisor of its reactions to every circumstance which affects your life.



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