

What Does Success Mean to You?

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Recently, I was asked to speak to young, budding businesswomen about running a successful business — and at first I thought, "Me? You want me to speak to others about success?!" It struck me as being odd as I don't see myself as knowing anything more than any other small business owner who has kept their company alive and running for 10 years. But, it was a compliment and it was something I felt honored to do. When I met with this group of young women, all just out of college, I found that what I had to say had very little to do with running a business and everything to do with how one runs their life. That's likely because, when I first started practicing, a colleague whom I saw as being very successful said to me when I commented on his success: What does success mean to you? To truly be successful, you must first figure out what your definition of success is.

Looking back, I can see that his contemplation had a strong influence upon my career and ultimately my own personal success. As it turns out, my definition of success has always been to do what I love which is to help guide people towards feeling good or least better than how they currently feel. When I strip everything away - my end goal is to help people. Sure, paying the bills and supporting my lifestyle is super important too. But, I am of the mindset: do what you love and the money will follow.

Since then, many colleagues have posed the same question to me - how do you do it? Do what, I wonder as I'm sincerely just doing what I love. And for sure I know I'm lucky to be able to say that.

I'd like to ask all of you to ponder what success means to you. Is success financial? Is it seeing 40 patients per week? Is it providing good care no matter what? Is it providing for your family? Is it nailing the diagnosis? Is it helping the patient? Is it paying off your student loans? Is it a little bit of all of these things?

One of my longstanding teachers, Deepak Chopra, asks in his book, *The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success* (I often refer to this book as my "bible"): if money didn't matter would you still do what you do? If the answer is yes, then he states that you are living your dharma, also known as your purpose. If the answer is no, it's time to seriously check in with yourself and make some adjustments.

So I guess the real questions are:

- Do you put your happiness first?
- Do you have passion for what you do?
- Does helping your patients make your heart sing?

If you answered yes to those questions, then in my opinion, you are truly succeeding.

Remember success is how you define it. Be easy on yourself and listen to your heart - it will guide you to the next "successful" venture. Personally, I never had a game plan. I never intended to write books or have a media presence or really do anything other than to practice a medicine I love and

to help my patients thrive. I hope for myself that that always remains my core goal. And, I wish all of you, all the success in the world.

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