

What is success?

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Let's talk about success. Do you feel successful? Would you like to be?

So what is success? The dictionary says success is the achievement of something desired, planned or attempted. To a Christian, success is hearing God's voice and doing everything he asks you to do.

First, let's look at how we measure success in the different areas of our lives.

At work, how do we measure success? Increases in salary, promotions. Happy customers, coworkers and supervisors. That's all important, but what really makes you successful at work is when you enjoy it, have good relationships and the feelings that go with them.

What about at home? What is success in marriage? Is it that you take out the garbage and pay the bills? No, it's all about loving relationships and good feelings.

What is success in parenting? Is it that you remembered to feed the baby? That you were able to drop the kids off in all the right places and remember to pick them up so that by bed time the head count was the same as yesterday? No, it's all about loving relationships and good feelings.

So what characteristics of success are common to all 3 areas of life? Healthy relationships and good feelings. These are emotional characteristics. Your success in life depends on your emotional well being. Yes, emotions are very important and your emotions are very important to God.

You can be the greatest technical genius in the world, but if you don't have healthy emotions and the ability to get along with people, you will never succeed to your potential. You can even have money, fame and possessions, but it will mean nothing if there are no good relationships or feelings to go with it.

True success is not measured in dollars and cents but it can be achieved when you are obeying God with a joyful heart and healthy emotions.

So where are we supposed to learn healthy emotions that will prepare us for work or home life? We are supposed to learn that at home, where we grew up. How many of you though, want to duplicate as an adult, the emotional environment that you grew up in? It may not have been a very healthy place.

Your emotions are to a large extent based on your self image. Your self image is based on how you were treated in childhood. If you had a functional family that met your emotional needs, then you would more likely have a positive self image.

If you had a dysfunctional family that was abusive, or neglected your emotional needs, then you would have a more negative self image.

What you experienced as a child has shaped your view of yourself as an adult. Your self image has a great influence on the quality of your current relationships. It even determines if your overall mental attitude is positive or negative. A negative self image will limit your success since you will always be expecting the worst outcome in every situation. It's a major handicap.

So you can see that many of us have emotional pain and handicaps because of what we experienced as children.

The Bible says in Proverbs 15:13 – A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit.

God knows that when you have a broken heart and are in chronic emotional pain you are blocked from reaching the success that He intended for you. Unfortunately, too many of us just ignore the pain in our hearts. We just presume that with time it will go away. The bad news is that it doesn't.



When you just sweep all your pain under the rug, over time, you end up living on a pretty lumpy rug, like this man.

You think that because you are a mature adult, that you can just forget about it, pull yourself together and get on with life. The problem is that when you are sitting on a mound of pain, it's like living on the top of a volcano. Sooner or later someone will do something that will trigger your pain. When that person hits your button, your pain will explode and you will look like this.

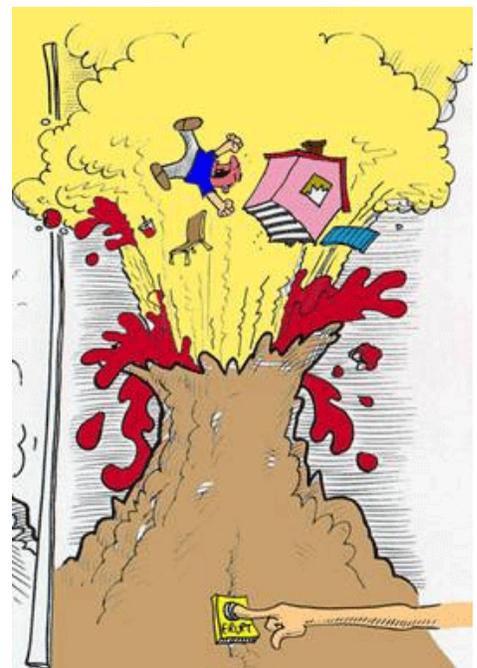
Who do you think is the most likely person who will hit your button? Yes, you guessed it, your spouse, and if not them, someone you work with. Does this kind of explosion limit your success at home or at

work? You bet it does.

So what can we do now if we realize that we don't have healthy emotions and we are sitting on a volcano? There's good news for you. God knows how much we struggle in this area and he is very interested in helping us through the process of emotional recovery. He has provided pastors and counselors who can walk with you down this pathway.

First though, you need to look at yourself. Have I described you today? Are you tired of living on a volcano and having your success blocked by emotional pain?

Listen to God's voice; he's calling you to freedom.



In this series of articles we are going to look at the ways that God wants to heal our hearts and restore us to emotional health. These will be the keys to your success, both at work and at home.

Have the courage to start your recovery journey. Get off the couch and do something. Call a pastor or counselor today.

Remember, God wants you to be emotionally free.

Dr. Grant Mullen is a mental health physician and author who lectures internationally on the keys to emotional recovery and healthy relationships. He has a special interest in the integration of medical treatment with spiritual and emotional healing models to see people transformed.

Dr. Mullen is the author of [Emotionally Free](#) and the producer of [14 DVD's](#)

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