

Does it pay to be ethical?

When we're faced with a challenge, our first inclination is to take the easy route to address it. But in doing so, some people discount the impact of those actions in the long term.

What Will Matter



From our guest contributor, Michael Josephson.

Ready or not, some day it will all come to an end.

There will be no more sunrises, no minutes, hours, or days.

All the things you collected, whether treasured or forgotten, will pass to someone else.

Your wealth, fame, and temporal power will shrivel to irrelevance.

It will not matter what you owned or what you were owed.

Your grudges, resentments, frustrations, and jealousies will finally disappear.

So, too, your hopes, ambitions, plans, and to-do lists will expire.

The wins and losses that once seemed so important will fade away.

It won't matter where you came from or what side of the tracks you lived on at the end.

It won't matter whether you were beautiful or brilliant.

Even your gender and skin color will be irrelevant.

So what will matter? How will the value of your days be measured?

What will matter is not what you bought but what you built; not what you got but what you gave.

What will matter is not your success but your significance.

What will matter is not what you learned but what you taught.

What will matter is every act of integrity, compassion, courage, or sacrifice that enriched, empowered, or encouraged others to emulate your example.

What will matter is not your competence but your character.

What will matter is not how many people you knew but how many will feel a lasting loss when you're gone.

What will matter is not your memories but the memories of those who loved you.

What will matter is how long you will be remembered, by whom, and for what.

Living a life that matters doesn't happen by accident.

It's not a matter of circumstance but of choice.

Choose to live a life that matters.

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Michael Josephson is an influential and internationally renowned champion of character education for youth and ethical conduct in business, government, policing, journalism, sports, healthcare and law. He is credited by many as the person most responsible for reviving and professionalizing the character education in school and youth-serving organizations. In 1992, under the auspices of the Josephson Institute he created CHARACTER COUNTS!, the world's most widely implemented character development initiative based on a common language of shared values – the Six Pillars of Character) and Pursuing Victory With Honor (1996), a companion program promoting ethics in sports.

Make no mistake about it

Mistakes have a negative image. So we hide them, play the blame game, or beat ourselves up when they occur. In fact, these actions compound our mistakes by creating stress and anxiety, damaging relationships, squandering time and money, and most importantly, often causing us to repeat the same mishap over and over again. The truth is, mistakes aren't inherently bad — what counts is how we view and react to

them.

Why successful people never blame others

The truth is, when folks deflect responsibility and cast blame, it serves as nothing more than a crutch and a reason to stop trying.

7 things to do when you feel like a failure



You blew the test, you lost the game, and you made a complete

fool out of yourself in front of everyone. (Ouch.) But worst of all, you're beginning to doubt yourself, and you're starting to view yourself as a failure. Please don't do that! Failing one time – or even several times – doesn't make you a failure any more than losing one game makes you a loser. Believing you're a failure, however, can make you act like a failure and that can become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Failing comes in three flavors. First, despite our best efforts, there's nothing that you can do to prevent *accidents*, as they are by their very nature out of your control. Second, everyone makes *mistakes*, such as poor choices or misjudgments ... no one's perfect. The third type of failures — *errors*— is preventable. They're caused by carelessness, inaccuracy, or poor judgment. For the most part, people are very forgiving if you make an honest mistake or act out of character on occasion. But when improper actions – such as lying, cheating, or stealing – are repeated or intentional, your reputation suffers. Even if you offer a heartfelt apology after a transgression, it can still take considerable time and effort to recover.

How Should You React to Failure?

- **Be realistic.** If you demand perfection of yourself, you're setting yourself up for disappointment.
- **Don't take failure personally.** Making a mistake doesn't make you a failure. It's simply a reminder that you're human.
- **Accept responsibility.** Nothing positive is ever gained by scapegoating. Be courageous and accept responsibility for your failure.
- **Be nice to yourself.** Don't tear yourself down for failing. You don't speak to others that way, so give yourself a break.
- **Get back on the horse.** Don't wallow in self-pity. Obsessing over failure won't make it better. You cannot change the past, but you can affect the future.

- **Grow from your mistakes.** Take the time to reflect on your experience, learn from your mistakes, and adapt accordingly.
- **Don't quit.** Most people fail before achieving success; the difference is that successful people never stop trying. As Douglas MacArthur said, "Age wrinkles the body. Quitting wrinkles the soul."

If All Else Fails

Failing should be viewed as a hurdle rather than a roadblock. Successful people aren't discouraged by failure. They know that every worthwhile goal carries some element of disappointment. Failure is a challenge to be overcome, a test to defy your will, and in the end, a learning opportunity. For others, failure is viewed negatively as an opportunity to feel sorry and complain, a reason to belittle oneself, and an excuse to give up too quickly.

The fact is, it's important to remember that most successful people fail BIG TIME before reaching the pinnacle of success. According to Business Insider:

Thomas Edison's teachers told him he was "too stupid to learn anything." Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper editor because he "lacked imagination and had no good ideas." In one of Fred Astaire's first screen tests, an executive wrote: "Can't sing. Can't act. Slightly balding. Can dance a little." Charles Darwin was considered an average student. He gave up on a career in medicine and was going to school to become a parson. Vincent Van Gogh sold only one painting, "The Red Vineyard," in his life, and the sale was just months before his death. Lucille Ball appeared in so many second-tier films at the start of her career that she became known as "The Queen of B Movies." Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, had his first book rejected by 27 different publishers. J.K. Rowling was a single mom living off welfare when she began writing the first Harry Potter novel. Rowling is now

internationally renowned for her seven-book Harry Potter series and, in U.S. currency, became the first billionaire author in 2004.*

The bottom line is that there's still some hope for the rest of us.

The truth is, the difference between a stepping-stone and a stumbling block is the way in which you approach it. Failing can be a blessing or a curse. It can be a great teacher, make you stronger, and keep you grounded, or it can be the cause of your demise. It's your choice. Your view of failure determines your reality. As Zig Ziglar said, "Remember that failure is an event, not a person." You're not a failure unless you make yourself one.

*Source:

<http://www.businessinsider.com/successful-people-who-failed-at-first-2014-3>

This is adapted from *BOOKSMART: Hundreds of real-world lessons for success and happiness* by Frank Sonnenberg released November 2016.



Frank is an award-winning author. He has written six books and over 300 articles. Frank was recently named one of "America's Top 100 Thought Leaders" and one of America's Most Influential Small Business Experts. Frank has served on several boards and has consulted to some of the largest and most respected companies in the world. Additionally, *FrankSonnenbergOnline* was named among the "Best 21st Century Leadership Blogs," among the "Top 100 Socially-Shared Leadership Blogs," and one of the "Best Inspirational Blogs On the Planet." Frank's new book, *BookSmart: Hundreds of real-world lessons for success and happiness* was released November 2016. © 2018 Frank Sonnenberg. All rights reserved.

Learn more about character education.

It pays to delegate



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Contributor, Frank Sonnenberg.

Leave your comfort zone. If you don't feel comfortable delegating, you're not alone. Change is difficult. Think about it this way...if we didn't try to walk, we'd all still be crawling.

Know what matters most. Set priorities and determine which trade-offs are right for you.

Build trust. Surround yourself with talented people who possess a high level of trust and integrity.

Manage the process. Focus on the process as much as on the end result. And make sure to consider strengths and weaknesses when assigning work.

Be explicit about goals and expectations. Tell people your ultimate goal rather than micromanaging how they do it. Who knows...they may come up with a better way.

Set milestones. Delegating does *not* mean walking away from an activity until it's complete. Establish key milestones and review progress along the way.

Delegate responsibility *and* authority. It's not enough to delegate a task. Give the person the responsibility and authority to get it done.

Set the right tone. Create an environment in which dialog is open, questions are encouraged, and mistakes become part of a learning experience.

Give continual feedback. Remember, there's a difference between criticism and constructive feedback.

Recognize and reward excellence. Give credit where credit is due. Compliment people in public; criticize them in private.

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Teaching leadership citizenship:

You can show good citizenship by being a leader in your school or community. Leadership isn’t a job – it’s an action. Everyone in your family can be a leader.

The struggle between wants and shoulds

Ethics, or the lack of it, is everywhere.

Is your commitment as binding as a contract?

We make commitments every day. But do we take our commitments seriously?

Own your life

Everyone is born with the potential for greatness. What happens next is up to you.