

Enthusiasm – The Sixth Key to a Successful Future

In my previous series of articles on the Keys To Your Future, I have given you the first five keys to your success: Focus, Unique, Teamwork, Urgency, and Recommit. The first key, Focus, is what keeps you on track toward your goal. The second key, Unique, describes the unique talents that each person has that help us obtain our goals. The third and fourth keys, Teamwork and Urgency, enable you, with the help of your team, to achieve your goal and keep you moving toward your goal, respectively. The fifth key to your success is to Recommit every day to your goals as consistent daily commitment is essential to your ultimate success. The sixth key to your future is **Enthusiasm**.

Enthusiasm, the final key to your future, may be the most important key of all. Without enthusiasm, the other five keys become virtually powerless. Enthusiasm is the energy, the fuel, the blazing fire that brings about a successful result. A famous writer once said that nothing great ever happened without enthusiasm. If you want to accomplish great things; if you want to realize great goals; if you want to live a great life, you absolutely must possess enthusiasm for everything you do.

Why is enthusiasm so important to success? The reason is that the difference between success and failure is often minute. Two people with virtually the same amount of skill and talent can differ vastly in the amount of success they achieve. This difference can't be attributed to having more ability than the other person. In fact, in many cases, the more successful person actually has less ability. The difference is in enthusiasm.

This difference between success and failure is what we call the "Slight Edge." The Slight Edge means that you don't have to be 10 times or 20 times or 100 times better than the next person. You must simply be slightly better to achieve great success.

In the world of professional golf, less than half a stroke per round separates the top player from the fiftieth or hundredth best player. Yet, this half a stroke difference is the difference between success and failure.

It is the difference between winning many tournaments and not winning. It is the difference between millions of dollars and barely making a living.

How do you take advantage of the Slight Edge? The key is enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is like a magnet. It attracts to you those things that you set out to achieve. It creates the conditions for a successful result. It enables you to take advantage of the opportunities as they present themselves.

Recently, there have been a number of books published about the importance of emotional intelligence. These books have shown that the critical determinant of success is not a person's academic intelligence, but rather their emotional intelligence – their ability to control and manage their emotions in various situations and settings. Enthusiasm is the key to this emotion management. Enthusiasm allows you to control the emotional climate of any given situation.

How do you develop the power of enthusiasm? **There are three critical steps:**

◆ **Interest** – First you must have a strong interest or curiosity in knowing about a specific subject. In other words, if you want to be enthusiastic with people, you must be interested in them. You must want to know about them. You must want to establish a relationship with them. If you want to be enthusiastic about your work, you must be interested in it. You must want to know everything there is about your particular job. You must want to read about it in your off hours. You must want to learn, learn, learn.

◆ **Knowledge** – Many people are interested in any number of subjects, but until they really learn about these things, they never develop the knowledge necessary to create enthusiasm. Action is the key to turning interest into knowledge. When you are interested in something, you must act on it to find out the knowledge that you are seeking. As you build knowledge of the subject you are interested in, this then creates the condition for the third important step.

◆ **Belief** – Belief is where you transform your knowledge from simple academic information and facts to emotional commitment. This is where true enthusiasm



is created. It is not enough just to know everything about a subject – you must believe it. The only way to believe something is to test your knowledge of that subject. By putting your knowledge to the test, you create belief in the validity and truth of that knowledge. This belief generates a strong emotional commitment, which fosters intense enthusiasm.

I enjoy playing golf as much as possible. It is one of my favorite pastimes. I am most enthusiastic about golf when I learn something new about it and actually test it on the golf course and find out that it works. Whenever I learn a new technique or a new skill and practice it on the golf course and improve my score, I become extremely enthusiastic about it. The same holds true for every area of life, whether it be relationships, work, physical fitness, spirituality, or personal development.

Most people are sleepwalking through life, suffering "quiet lives of desperation." Is this going to be the story of your life or are you going to wake up? Are you going to feel the enthusiasm and passion of living a life that you have always dreamed of?

The problem is that most people wait to be enthusiastic about something. Unfortunately, enthusiasm doesn't hit us – it must be created. We must take responsibility for creating this enthusiasm in our lives. It is only then that we can fulfill our dreams and truly accomplish our future.



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