

The Power of Perseverance

By Kathleen Barton, MBA

What makes a person successful? Those who accomplish great things in life have what I call a “winning attitude”. They are positive, serve a greater purpose, passionate about what they do, determined and believe in themselves. All these qualities allow them to persevere and overcome obstacles. Perseverance is a rare quality. In these days of microwave ovens, fast food, pagers and instant messaging, we have become accustomed to instant gratification. We want everything NOW. So those who persevere to achieve their goals stand out.

Those who persevere have certain qualities. In particular, they have a compelling sense of purpose and they believe in themselves.

Connect With Your Purpose

Successful people have a greater sense of purpose that compels them to succeed. Purpose is our reason for being; it’s why we exist on this earth. A sense of purpose motivates us to do great things. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had a “calling” or purpose in life to fight for equality for all mankind. He had a compelling vision. In his “I Have a Dream” speech that he made at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1963, he declared, “I have a dream that one day right down in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.” He had such a strong sense of purpose that he was willing to serve his cause and ended up giving up his life for it.

Most of us want to make a difference in the lives of others. What motivates you? What difference can you make? Connect with your purpose and visualize your desired end result – whether that is a happy family, a successful business or a worthy cause. What will it look like when you have achieved your goal? How will you feel? Keep focused on your purpose and vision.

Believe in Yourself

Successful people also believe in themselves. They are confident and know that they CAN do it. Half the battle is in our minds. If you are determined and believe you can succeed, you are more than halfway to achieving your goal. Abraham Lincoln once said, “Always bear in mind that your resolution to succeed is more important than any other thing”. This takes confidence. The opposite of confidence is fear. Some of us are afraid of failure. Most of the time fear only exists in our mind. Our minds are very powerful, and we get what we focus on. Instead of becoming overwhelmed with fear, focus on success. Visualize yourself being successful.

Elvis Stojko is a three-time men’s world figure-skating champion, and an Olympic silver medalist. Like other top athletes, he trains hard and practices endless hours. When asked what the number-one reason for his outstanding success was, he simply said, “I believe in myself”. That’s powerful!

Do you believe in yourself? If you're having difficulty believing in yourself, affirmations can help. Do you lack confidence? Pick a powerful, positive affirmation such as: "I am generating new business every week." Or "I am exercising and eating healthy every day." Write these affirmations in the present tense as if you are already achieving them. Post them where you can see them every day – on the bathroom mirror, on your desk, in your planner. Repeat them several times a day until it sinks in. Soon you'll believe them.

Persist and Persevere

Having a compelling sense of purpose and believing in yourself allow you to persist and persevere in the face of difficulty. It allows you to overcome obstacles and bounce back from set-backs. Harlan "Colonel" Saunders devoted himself to the chicken franchising business. In 1952 he lived on \$105/month in Social Security and traveled across the country by car from restaurant to restaurant pitching his chicken recipe. He presented his chicken to more than a **1,000 people** before he got a single taker. Harlan's mission and his confidence in the quality of his fried chicken kept him going during this trying time. Today KFC franchises are found around the world.

How about you? Do you have a compelling sense of purpose? Do you believe in yourself? Are you able to persevere in order to achieve your mission? You can learn a lesson from Colonel Saunders.

*Kathleen Barton is a keynote speaker, workshop presenter, and life coach specializing in life purpose, career success, and work-life balance. She is the author of **Finding Your Purpose and Passion in Life** audio/workbook. Kathleen can be reached at www.YourLifeBalanceCoach.com.*