

SUCCESS

Who's More Full of It?

By Nathan March

“Success is one of those things that everyone has an opinion about but no-one really knows what it is”

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'Experience the success'. Isn't that how the bus-stop ad for Pulteney goes? But what success are they talking about? Do we find it in the sexploits of Paris Hilton or Dale Begg-Smith's Winter Olympics gold medal? Can it be measured in bucks or is it all about the warm fuzzies we get from helping someone? How can one paragraph be so full of question marks?

Success is one of those things that everyone has an opinion about but no-one really knows what it is. Often you don't know how far away success is until you get there. The success that Pulteney is talking about could be Donald Trump's version,

"if people screw me, I screw back in spades".

Or it could be the Henry Ford type,

"The man who will use his skill and constructive imagination to see how much he can give for a dollar, instead of how little he can give for a dollar, is bound to succeed."

If success is measured in both dollars and warm fuzzies, Bill and Melinda Gates are definitely successful.

Success seems to be a matter of perspective. Why is Paris Hilton derided for her bedroom adventures but when Australian Idol's Millsy rock and rolls with her, he's seen as a hero? And how about the Dale Begg-Smith story. Or should I say stories. One goes like this...

Skiing Prodigy Begg-Smith Wins Gold for Australia.

After leaving friends and family behind in Canada to pursue elite sports in Australia, Dale Begg-Smith, a 21 year old multi-millionaire, wins gold for Australia. Despite his obvious talent and hard work, Begg-Smith remains modest and unassuming.

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The other story goes like this...

Spam King Takes Gold.

After being told that his business was getting in the way of his sporting aspirations, Dale Begg-Smith left Canada to make use of the more accommodating Australian Institute of Sport. Funded by his internet enterprises that specialise in spam and pop-up advertising as well as software to 'kill' the pop-ups, Begg-Smith drove to training in his Lamborghini. The recent Winter Olympics saw a significant return on Begg-Smith's investment when he edged in to take gold from Finland in the Men's Moguls Freestyle Skiing event.

How successful Dale is depends largely on his perception of his own life. Of course, what other people see as positive or negative will influence that, but it eventually comes down to whether or not he is happy with the work he has done and the results he has achieved.

Dr Martin Seligman of authentichappiness.org believes one of the keys to being happy is to work out what your strengths are and then match that to the challenges you face throughout your life. Then if you can use those strengths for some greater good, something beyond yourself, all the better. That echoes what Albert Einstein thought life was about "Try not to become a man of success, but rather to become a man of value. He is considered successful in our day who gets more out of life than he puts in. But a man of value will give more than he receives."

Too often success is seen as an individual thing.

Getting into uni or earning mobs of money is mostly about 'me', but it seems that real success is about finding our place in the grand scheme. Of course that will sometimes entail uni and dollars. Whatever people around you are saying, I reckon we'd all do well to remember what Mother Theresa said it was about, "Never worry about numbers. Help one person at a time, and always start with the person nearest you."



Nathan Maron is a freelance actor and writer. He is also Sunshine's husband and Dad to Celso and Daisy.

