

## Living Abundantly

We live in a world of abundance – a world that was created for us and filled with a wealth of resources that we may use to fulfill our needs and satisfy our desires. The abundance in the physical world is mirrored in the abundance of human potential within each individual. Much attention is given to the tragedy of wasted natural resources, and rightfully so. Even more tragic, however, is the waste that occurs when people fail to use their full potential. Recognize the wealth of untapped potential that lies within you and you will begin to marvel at its abundance.

When you are successful, you draw vitality and strength from the abundance of opportunity that surrounds you. By setting progressively higher goals, you maintain the necessary momentum to keep yourself on a constant course of personal leadership. The practice of goal setting is intended to be a lifelong pattern. The goal setter, like all winners, is marked by the determination. A winner never quits.

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# Developing Your Self-Image

Although no two leaders are identical in personality or approach to management, all effective leaders share one characteristic: a positive self-image. Effective leaders see themselves as capable individuals, worthy of self-respect and deserving of the respect of others.

Success means something different to every person. For some, success means advancement to even higher positions within the organization. Others count the contributions they are able to make to the lives of other people. Still others measure success by the size of their bank accounts. The success you seek likely consists of bits and pieces of these elements. But here is a definition of success that works for everyone: *Success is the progressive realization of worthwhile, predetermined personal goals.*

This definition implies that success is the result of your own choice – the choice of the specific goals you pursue. The most important factor in making satisfying choices is a positive self-image. A positive self-image enables you to set goals that reflect your values and provide meaning and fulfillment through their achievement.

The factor controlling how much of your real potential you can use—or will use—is your self-image. You begin to acquire your self-image almost immediately after birth. As people in your environment reacted to you with approval or disapproval, you began to form a mental picture of who you were based on that feedback. If many of the messages you received implied that you lacked ability, that you were too young, too inexperienced, or limited in some other way, you may have internalized that message and believed it. Even now, you may be limiting your success based on these old messages, and ignoring the fact that you are now more experienced and more capable than you were in the past.

In contrast, if the people in your early environment were strongly supportive, praised you for your achievements, and expressed belief in your ability to succeed, you may be following that estimate of yourself and using a larger percentage of your potential. But regardless of your background, what you are now is what counts. What you are now depends to a great extent upon what you are willing to believe and become, and what you are willing to do about your self-image. You can change your self-image if you wish. You can enhance the relationship between your self-image and success. The more positive your self-image, the more successful you become as an effective motivational leader!

Choosing to develop your self-image sets the stage for significant contributions to your team and organization. A positive self-image enables you to view organizational opportunities and challenges in new and exciting ways. Then you are ready to develop clear plans for the achievement of organizational goals. Armed with a strong belief in your potential for success, you and your team members are positioned to achieve the objectives which may now seem remote and out of reach.

