

Celebrate Your Success to Empower Yourself

Are you stuck waiting for the Success Fairy to pat you on the back?

As a business coach, I talk with many, many professionals and business owners who never take the time to acknowledge their own successes. Many rush from goal to goal without the smallest self-celebration even when they overcome amazing obstacles.

Some are uncomfortable acknowledging their success-even to themselves-because they were taught not to "toot your own horn." Others dismiss any milestone short of their ultimate goal as unworthy of celebration. A few just don't know how to recognize success when they achieve it, because they are so focused on the next goal.

There is no Success Fairy who takes care of making sure you get your pat on the back. So you need to learn to acknowledge and celebrate your own successes in order to reap the full rewards of all your hard work.

I encourage my clients to celebrate all the mini-goals and milestones along the way as well as doing a victory lap or end zone dance when they win their ultimate trophy. These mini-goals and milestones might be things like redesigning a web site (or getting the first one launched), revising a newsletter layout, giving a speech, or making it through a list of cold calls. These are all successes, and they should be acknowledged as worthy of celebration.

Why is it so important to celebrate the little things? There are many reasons. People who have difficulty acknowledging and celebrating their own successes often also have trouble accepting compliments and praise from others. They're almost determined not to hear good things about themselves, or to discount praise in light of the vast number of things yet undone. When you refuse to celebrate, you're cheating yourself out of the rewards of your success every bit as much as if you ripped up a check or declined an award. You deserve better.

Acknowledging successes-even small, incremental ones-helps you gain confidence. You feel empowered when you stand back and realize that you overcame something that was a struggle. That confidence gives you a "yes, I can" attitude and it fuels you to dream bigger and enjoy more in life. It stokes your enthusiasm, which gives you the strength to tackle new challenges.

Recognizing your successes also helps you create a more balanced self-perspective. Many people are very aware of their shortcomings and of the items yet unfinished, but they don't have a realistic picture of their good points. When you stop to enjoy, acknowledge and praise your own successes, you start to think of yourself as a winner. And you are a winner!

I've talked with business owners who have overcome amazing obstacles, only to hear them dismiss their achievement as "it wasn't really a big deal." Oh yes, it is! Many people wilt in the face of opposition, or give up when the going gets rough. The fact that you showed persistence, courage and ingenuity is worthy of praise-first and foremost, from yourself.

When you wait for others to notice and acknowledge you before recognizing your own success, you give away your power. You let others control your feelings about yourself. That's another reason why self-validation is so essential. It is part of owning yourself.

While we have Bosses' Day, Secretaries' Day, Mother's Day and days to acknowledge the importance of other people, there is no National I Did a Great Job day. So what's stopping you from declaring your own micro-holiday? It doesn't even have to wait for your birthday. Do it now! Buy yourself lunch. Treat yourself to flowers. Make a good cup of tea and take fifteen minutes away from the computer to savor your success.

Don't wait until you reach your ultimate goal to celebrate. Break up your big goal into mini-goals and milestones, and celebrate as you go. If you were managing a team on a big effort, you would do exactly that kind of thing to increase morale. Take charge of your own morale and celebrate!

When people don't know how to celebrate their wins, they are more likely to believe only the negative about themselves. They become disempowered, looking to others for validation, and feel worthless when others don't magically recognize their value. Or, they reach their ultimate goal and suddenly feel empty because they have nothing left for which to strive. Don't be that kind of person.

Practice celebrating your achievements, large and small, and feel the power of confidence empower you to continue succeeding. Do it now!

Faith Monson is a Success Consultant who works with entrepreneurs, designers, retailers and sales-driven organizations. She makes people and businesses better by daring them to be great and helping them to reach their full potential. Visit www.FaithMonson.com or contact her directly at Faith@FaithMonson.com or 703-237-2077.