



Hi,

With all the unsettling financial news it is very easy to start questioning our success not only from national and business standpoints, but from a personal standpoint too. If your stock portfolio decreases significantly in value, are you still successful? This can be a difficult question to answer because personal wealth is often one of the defining factors of success.

I believe that along with personal wealth, we can each discover additional factors that will allow each of us to define success uniquely for ourselves. This quarter's article is devoted to discussing one technique you can use to redefine success for yourself.

I challenge you to read the article and take the time to do the exercises. Examine what your personal definition of success is. If the exercises do not help you unlock what will make you successful, give me a call. I am one of the resources you can use to help you broaden, personalize and achieve your definition of success

Warm regards,

Karen

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## Redefine Success for Yourself

Who are some of the most successful people you know of? What makes them successful? Let me guess, it's probably because they have some combination of wealth, power and fame.

Would you like to be more successful? Most people answer "Yes!", but are not really sure what more successful would be for them. Let's make you instantly more successful. Imagine you are one of the most successful people you know of. What do you like about being rich, powerful and famous? How is your life different? Does this new found success feel comfortable?

My guess is, if you looked deeply at whether or not their success fit you perfectly, you found that some parts did and some parts didn't. The parts that didn't fit may have been too restrictive. Can you imagine having to deal with the paparazzi every time you stepped out of the house? What about continuous requests for funding and contributing to worthy causes? Or maybe parts of their success fit you too loosely. Can you imagine waiting for your agent to call to let you know when you would be working next? Can you imagine being in charge of deciding the direction of an entire nation?

The most common definitions of success in the US usually involve some combination of wealth, power and fame. But I think we can each do better than that and define it much more personally and broadly. In this article, I will share with you why I believe this, how I redefined success for myself and how you can begin to do the same for yourself.

One of my favorite quotes about success is by Dr Cherie Carter-Scott.

### Check it out!

We've completely redone our website. Our address is the same but our look is brand new. We've added News and Events so you can keep up with Karen's speaking and teaching engagements. We've also added a blog for Karen to share coaching tidbits and other [Tailored Thoughts](#).

Check out our redesigned site and let us know what you think of our new look!  
[info@lifetailoring.com](mailto:info@lifetailoring.com)

*“Success is many things. It is both a concept and an experience, a moment as well as an evolution. It is the merging of your aspirations with reality, the weaving of your hopes and dreams with your daily tasks. It is simultaneously tangible and ephemeral, and gives the illusion of being universally quantifiable. Success is externally evaluated yet intrinsically experienced; it is both objective and subjective. The true essence of success, beneath the visible markers and goals, lies in your personal sense of satisfaction and fulfillment.”*

I love this quote because it gives voice to the idea that there isn't just one type of success.

However, for many years I believed there was only one way to be successful. By the age of 13, I knew that I would have to make a lot of money, be well-respected and be famous. I thought that this type of success would guarantee my happiness. I decided my shortest route to achieving these goals was to become an engineer, but not just any engineer. I had to get my Ph.D. in chemical engineering. I believed that I would be paid a high salary. I would automatically have respect because of my degree and that I would have fame because of the research I would do and the papers I would write.

It took me about 20 years, but I actually achieved all of this by focusing on it almost exclusively. I was successful!

The unfortunate thing for me was that this version of success meant that I was also paying an incredibly high price. I had an unfulfilling marriage which ended in divorce; I had shoulders that were trying to implant themselves in my ears, an ulcer and insomnia. My hair was even falling out! I had this fear that I was going to end up looking like Benjamin Franklin when I pulled my hair back in a pony tail because of how fast my hairline was receding. I also had anorexia and only weighed 104 pounds.

Does any of this sound like success to you? I can tell you it sure didn't feel like success to me. That is unless we use the lesser known definition of success which comes from the Machiavellian branch of Latin. If you listen carefully to the word success you hear two distinct syllables. The first is suck. We're all familiar with the word "suck". It's an inhalation to draw something into your mouth or some other receptacle. It's like sucking up soda through a straw. The second syllable is cess. We're all familiar with cess pools, right? You know they're similar to a septic tank which holds the refuse from your drains. So, according to this lesser known definition, success can also mean sucking sh--, well, you get the picture and that's exactly what solely seeking wealth, power and fame were to me.

I almost destroyed myself chasing them. I realized that I needed to change my definition. I needed to make my definition of success a whole lot broader and personal.

I started by looking at what was important to me. By doing so, I realized that my health was pretty important. All of a sudden, my definition of success had expanded. It now included a heavy emphasis on health. Once my health started getting back on track, I became more interested in spirituality. Guess what, my definition of success had expanded again and it now includes spirituality. Although it sounds easy to have me tell you the results now, let me assure you that it has been a long and at times difficult process. Through it all I've learned a lot and made some mistakes too. In fact my sense of success continues growing as I do too. Luckily, I long ago reached the point where my shoulders are back where they belong – well below my ear lobes.

My passion and mission is to prevent as many people as possible from experiencing the agony of pursuing a false sense of success. I believe that everyone can experience amazing levels of success when they define it in the way that best fits them. For example, one of my clients, a stay-at-home mom, feels a tremendous sense of success because of how happy and healthy her children are. Another one of my clients, a small

business owner, considers herself to be successful because she is her own boss and is pursuing her passion on her own terms. The key is that no one and I mean no one can tell you what success is to you. Your definition of success may have commonalities with someone else's definition of success, but it will be uniquely yours.

Expanding their definition of success is the first step I take with my clients who are successful by the narrow definition, but don't feel successful or fulfilled. It's also the first step I take with my clients who are not successful by the narrow definition, but are yearning to be so.

I use several different means to assist my clients in redefining success and discovering what will allow them to feel personally fulfilled. The one I will share here comes from a lovely little book by Gay Hendricks called Five Wishes.

Please sit back, relax and take a deep breath. Now imagine that you are at the end of your life. You continued living just as you are today. You look back at your life and ask, "Has my life been a complete success?" For many of us, the answer is "no". (The great thing about this, however, is that we have the opportunity to do something about this and change the answer to "yes".)

If you answered "no", why not? Like most people, you probably have some pretty specific reasons why your life has not been a complete success. Maybe it is because you have never experienced a deeply committed and loving relationship with a significant other. Maybe it is because you did not spend time getting to really know your children. Maybe it is because you did not leave a legacy.

Take a minute to look at the first reason your life was not a complete success. Ask yourself the following questions:  
Why is this important to me?  
What would it take for me to have this?  
Am I ready to dedicate myself to making this happen?"

If you are ready to dedicate yourself to making it happen, go for it and make it happen! Now is the time to expand your definition of success and make your life fulfilling.

Repeat this process for each of the reasons you have discovered as to why your life was not a complete success.

Take a look at your newly personalized definition of success, it probably still includes wealth, power and fame, but I'll bet that you have added one or two things based on the exercise above.

If you have not taken the time to work through the exercise, I highly encourage you to take the time. You deserve to take the time to define, create, embrace and live a fulfilling and personally successful life. That way, when you are in your 11<sup>th</sup> hour, you will be able to look back on your life and smile knowing that you have lived a life of comfortable, custom-fit success.