

## HOW DO WE ACHIEVE SUCCESS?

**A young man wishes to become successful more than anything in the world, so he goes to see the wise guru, who knows the ultimate secret to success.**

The young man says to the teacher, “I want to become successful. Can you help me?” The guru smiles and says, “Meet me at the beach tomorrow at 4 AM, and I will show you the secret to success.”

So the next morning, the young man arrives on the beach at 4 AM, just like the guru had asked. Upon arriving, he realizes that the guru is already in the water swimming.

The guru spots the young man and motions for him to come in the water.

The young man, not wanting to get his clothes wet, goes to the edge of the water.

“Come out further,” the guru says with an understanding smile.

“I came here to learn the secret to success, not the secret to swimming,” the young man replies.

“The secret must be told in this water. It is your choice to learn the secret or not.”

So the young man goes waist-deep into the water, soaking his clothes.

“Further,” the guru says.

The young man becomes irritated.

“Listen old man,” he says with impatience, “I’m already in the water. I didn’t come here for a swimming lesson. Tell me the secret to success right now or I’m leaving.”

The guru, unaffected by the young man’s outburst, replies calmly, “You are already waist-deep. What’s a few more steps?”

So the young man wades deeper into the water until the water is up to his neck. The sun is beginning to rise.

“So what’s the secret?” the young man demands.

The guru says, “Sure,” and suddenly forces the young man’s head under the water.

The young man, caught off guard, swallows large gulps of salty sea water and immediately begins to drown.

He flails his arms and tries to push the guru off him, but the guru continues to hold the young man’s head underwater, using all of his strength to keep him there.

Just before the young man loses consciousness, he stops flailing his arms around and musters the last bit of strength in his body to throw a vicious elbow into the guru’s solar plexus and break free. But the guru surprisingly does not reach out to grasp the man again. After rubbing on his stomach a few times, he wades back to the shore until the water is knee deep, and he stands with great pride, looking at the young man with a big smile on his face. The young man spends the

next half minute coughing and spitting in the water, cursing the guru as he wades back to shore as well. The guru ignores his foul language, his smile never fading.

“Quite an elbow you got there!” The guru cried out to the young man, smiling even more widely.

The young man looks at the guru with intense rage, but before he is able to make a move, the guru puts his hand out as if to say, “Stop, let me explain what just happened.”

The guru then proceeded to give the young man one of the most important keys to success:

“When your head was under water, what is it that you wanted to do?”

“I wanted to kill you for deceiving me.”

“I have not deceived you. You have asked to learn the secret to success and I showed you. What else did you want to do, while you were under water?”

“Be at home again, get some sleep....be dry...” the young man offered, but the guru shook his head.

“I don’t know, breathe??” the young man said in a sarcastic tone, and he folded his arms at the seemingly meaningless question. He did not make a move to leave though. Although slightly embarrassed and extremely aggravated that he had just almost drowned, he figured he might as well stick around to see what this guru was trying to show him. He was an ambitious young man; a smart young man; and he was aware that sometimes wise men communicated in eccentric ways.

“Ah, breathing,” the guru said, casting his eyes out towards the rising sun. He then closed his eyes and took the deepest, most satisfying, breath that inspired the young man to take a deep breath as well.

The guru continued: “Something so simple, yet so important—something we take for granted, until we can no longer have it. And when we realize we no longer have it—”

“We are *compelled* to do *whatever it takes* to have it back,” the young man chimed in, remembering how he decided throw his elbow into the seemingly fragile guru.

The guru, with much pride, saw it in the young man’s eyes that he had got “it.”

As he waded back into the water, he shouted one last final sentence to the young man:

**“When you want success as much as you need to breathe,  
then, and ONLY THEN, will you find success.”**

And with that, the guru began to sing and swim far into the ocean.