

## Values that Aid Enduring Success

Written by U.S Immigration News

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The modern society no longer holds moral values in high esteem. Morality is one thing we ignore in our affairs because it does not work as fast as its alternatives, and it is not much fun living by its rules. Ironically, we try to inculcate moral values into our children, teaching them that complying with moral rules will earn them a better future. Deep down in our hearts, we believe that morality could help our children attain heights we could not reach, it could earn them more fulfilling lives. We know they will be safer with moral living even though we may be reluctant to admit it; it is the absence or presence of some of these values that has shaped us into what or who we are today. Morality is one legacy we seek to bequeath to our children even though we may not have lived by it.

It seems, therefore, that we accept the fact that certain moral values are good for our children, and as adults we owe the duty of instilling such values into them, but one thing we often overlook is the fact that moral values are necessary tools for enduring success not just for children but for adults too. If your goal is to optimally utilize your potentials and bring your dreams to reality in this part of the world without the system eventually turning against you to pull down everything you have built, you might want to consider borrowing or adopting certain moral values as they are important keys to successful living, even in this relatively amoral world.

The crux of my discourse in this issue is that moral values aid enduring success. Some of these values have been the major highlights of my past contributions in this column but here I will be discussing them specifically as principles or tools that aid lasting success.

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Success is a word which describes the achievement of a goal, or attainment of a privileged height without regard to underlying moral factors. However, the difference between successes based on moral and ethical values and those achieved otherwise is sustainability. Success based on certain moral values endures while those devoid of them are usually short-lived.

Honesty as a virtue is not just something for the religious but for anybody who desires enduring success. The observance of honesty as a moral rule could be viewed in two ways, namely honesty to oneself and honesty to others. Being dishonest with yourself is depriving yourself of the truth about you. As I have always noted in this column, if you always fail to acknowledge your mistakes and face the consequences, shifting the blame to others but yourself, you are being dishonest with yourself. If you blame the whole world for being unfair to you and you never take time to look inward and identify your shortcomings with the purpose of working towards correction, you are deceiving yourself. When you justify your mistakes and misbehavior by telling yourself every other person who thought you were wrong are wallowing in ignorance and you seem to be the only one who is always in the right, you are not being true to yourself. Your spouse may be wrong sometimes, your boss may be too cocky, your colleague may be much of a gossip, but dear reader, you will be deceiving yourself if you never look inward and admit something might need to be fixed in you too. We need to be sincere enough to acknowledge the wrong things we do that our world is always pointing out to us.

On the other hand, we need to be honest in our relationship with others. Success is not achievable in isolation, you need people's goodwill and support, you need to be rightly connected, you need people who can trust you with their resources, you need people who will gladly do business with you again and again, people who based on their experience with you can put in a word or two for you, you need consistent record and credibility. All of these may be difficult for a dishonest individual to earn. Dishonesty is a weak foundation for success, success built on dishonesty never last. Build your life on dishonesty and before you know it, your life will be engulfed by your deception. You will always have to engage more deception to cover up your deceit but someday, somehow, your ill earned goodwill will be consumed by the truth, the truth will take back everything gotten dishonestly. Honesty is a bitter but potent pill. It makes you take responsibility for your mistakes and misbehavior and teaches you to be more careful next time, but dishonesty provides a means of escape without hardship or reprimands, it has no corrective attributes. Men who deceptively escaped punishment for their errors never attain true greatness. Greatness is achievable only by those who stand by the truth and own up to their mistakes, men who by punishment outgrew errors to achieve greatness. If you will always resort to dishonesty to get out of every difficult situation, you will never find any situation that will not

demand that you engage deceit to escape from punishment.

Moderation is another value we often endeavour to inculcate in our children. The heavy bills some people have to settle every month testify to their lack of moderation. Sometimes we get so carried away by foolish competitions that we forget what we are worth, and acquire things which are beyond our means. We feign success trying to cover up our failures by driving the latest model of high class cars, wearing the latest and the hottest designer clothing, throwing the wildest parties, and hanging out in the classiest joint in town, we buy more than we could reasonably afford, thanks to the American credit system, but the gospel truth is that success goes beyond make believe shows, success is a product of reasonable living, and sometimes self deprivation. Moderation is living within your financial limit, acting within reasonable limit, and eating and drinking without being consumed by food and drinks. Anyone who lacks moderation can never manage success profitably even if by a stroke of luck he stumbles on it. American prisons have more inmates lured into crime by greed than by need. Immigrants particularly need to realize this. Success is achieved bit by bit; you can have everything here, but don't let your greed for everything consume you. Cut your coat according to your cloth, if you are too big for your cloth, get on a weight loss scheme and make yourself fit your cloth or work harder to be able to afford one that is proportionate to your size.

Also, parents teach your children to be respectful, courteous and humble; these are some of the many moral values that are deeply embedded in the African customs and norms. The western world observes it but not with much ardor as it is in other parts of the world. Humility is not subjecting oneself to mortification but recognizing the need for one to desist from thinking too highly of himself. Humility does not reflect low self esteem but holding other people in equally high regard. If you want to achieve success, you don't hold your head up on your way up, you must have high regards for others, never look down on anybody, make people around you feel important, respect and deal courteously with everybody you come across, acknowledge your imperfections and appreciate others' workmanship. That way, you will make most people comfortable with your rising fortune and have less people working to prove you wrong. People consider haughty individuals as a threat, they work against them, they have more enemies than they can imagine and people find fulfillment in their fall. On the contrary, if you think you have arrived and you have got all it takes to show others your superiority and flaunt the edge you have over them, damn modesty, hold your head high, walk tall, tell them you are the best if they are slow in acknowledging it, believe you me, your success party will soon be steeply stopped

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and the only thing you might get from your satisfied neighbors are their hypocritical sympathies if they are generous enough to spare you any. Humility is one of the bedrock of enduring success. Develop a high sense of modesty and you will be attracting more people to your side. Success is one factor that provokes jealousy and hatred on its own; do not worsen the situation by being haughty. It never pays to be bad in the perception of the majority. Don't go about kissing everybody's boots, but treat every individual you come across with respect even when their status does not seem to attract such reference. You just might need their help someday.

I can remember one of the moral lessons I had while growing up is being appreciative. My mom made us understand that nobody owes us anything, so whenever we are allowed a privilege or given a gift by anybody, we must never forget to show our appreciation. Then, the normal way of showing appreciation was to say thank you, but for an adult, appreciation goes beyond oral expression of gratitude, it entails more, our appreciation should reflect in our subsequent dealings with our benefactors. Some of us immigrants, got here through a relative or a friend or a spouse, or had to put up with somebody until we could find our footing. Those who came to our succor in such time of need deserve more than a mere thank you from us. Our thank you should reflect in the way we handle what belongs to them, it should restrict us from ever turning our backs against them except if necessary so we do not aid illegality of some sort. They of course may sometimes overstep their boundaries, but they still deserve to be treated with respect. The mistake we often make is that, when we go about defaming our benefactors, emphasizing their imperfections, other people who could be of help are watching the way we treat someone who has been good to us. They will not hope to have a better treatment from you; hence they will rather not have anything to do with you. The best way to appreciate a spouse who brought you into this country is not to divorce him after having him pay your way through college, because you suddenly realize he might never cease being a gate man. The best way to appreciate the man who got you the link to your job is not to lobby for his position. The best way to appreciate a person who took you in for the first few months of your arrival is not telling immigration on him. Make a big deal of every token of goodness shown you by anybody. Show sincere appreciation and your benefactor and many more people will be encouraged to extend good gesture towards you.

Build your life on positive values and you will have a long time basking in the euphoria of success. If you could make it to this place, am positive you can make it in this place. Be good.