



The Mantra of
Success

**Success is not final,
failure is not fatal: It
is the courage to
continue that counts**

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Charles Dickens' classic book, *A Tale of Two Cities* set in the tumultuous times of the French Revolution, begins with the immortal words, "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity-----" This about sums up the very essence of the meaning of life. Success and failure, happiness and sadness, joy and grief are two sides of the same coin. If you are experiencing one, it can't be long before you experience the diametrically opposite.

So it makes sense to hang in there if things aren't great and be humble when they are, for the situation could change any time. Having this kind of an equanimous approach toward life ensures that one doesn't experience violent upheavals in one's life. If one is able to live life the way one plays a sport or a game, one could truly live well.

Like in a game you play with passion to beat the opponent and give it all, yet at the end of the game you shake hands with the opponent irrespective of who won. If you are the victor you savor the victory till the next match and if you happen to be the loser you reflect upon your weaknesses and wait for the next match to try and get even.

What you don't do is let the competitive spirit you display on the playfield, turn to rancour off it. That is how life should be lived. Try your best to achieve your desired objective, but

don't strut about like there can never be anyone like you and if you have failed, don't imagine that you are doomed with no chance of redemption.

It is this never-say-die spirit that makes sporting encounters in games like cricket and football sometimes till the very end. That is why it is said that cricket is a lot like life and football a beautiful game! There are these glorious up and downs during the course of a game that makes it so wonderfully exciting. So it is with life. Learn to take the rough with the smooth, and life will be an incredible experience.

However what happens in real life is that success often makes us complacent, which in turn makes us inevitably suffer reverses, which we are just not prepared to handle. Likewise failure often breaks us to the extent that we give up just when things are about to turn a corner! This is often the tragedy of our lives.

If only we always could understand that no success is indefinite and no failure final, we would truly experience life for what a gift it is. If you could temper the joy of success with a dose of realism and understand that failure will not kill you but make you stronger, you would emerge a winner irrespective of whether you fail or succeed in your endeavors. Failure it is rightly said is the stepping stone to success and in any case what does not kill you is good for you.

In the Second World War time was Germany had attacked and defeated Czechoslovakia, Poland, France and Russia and were knocking on the doors of Britain. Doubtless Hitler thought that it was a matter of time before his ambition of world domination became a reality. But he hadn't reckoned with stubborn Winston Churchill and the doughty Russians, who slowly, but resolutely turned the tide back and with the Americans throwing in their lot with the Allies after the attack on Pearl Harbor, it was only a matter of time before Germany and its Axis allies were completely routed.

Yet from the ashes of the defeat of the Second World War Germany and Japan rose to be major industrialized powers now, but this time with a decidedly pacifist agenda. Life is a funny thing and it pans out in the most unexpected of ways. When Gandhi was thrown off a train by a racist ticket checker in South Africa despite holding a valid ticket, he did

not sit and mop. Instead he set in motion a chain of events which led to the complete dismantling of the mighty British Empire on which the sun would never set.

Whatever be your situation in life you would do well to remember that it is not permanent. So it makes sense to not dwell too much on your situation and instead focus on what is important to you. If you are doing very well in your life, instead of worrying about what will happen after retirement, it would be a better idea if you could prepare yourself for freelancing or consulting options when the time came.

If on the other hand you are a youngster who has not been able to find his or her dream job, just redouble your effort. Maybe you need to undergo some extra training to improve your options. Whatever you do, should be with a view to extracting the best out of the present situation-good or bad.

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