



The Mantra of  
Success

## Lessons to learn in life

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Lessons to learn in life They say that it is pointless to argue with a fool, as he will reduce the conversation to his level and win because he has practice in that sort of a thing! Then there is that fable about a donkey who thought that the sound of its baying was the most beautiful sound that there ever was and everybody else sounded so ridiculous. When others protested that its own baying was the most horrendous sound ever the donkey refused to believe them. In exasperation someone took it to a cave where it was hoped the echo of its own baying would convince the donkey that it indeed sounded horrible. But the donkey mistook the echo to be the sound its companion was making while speaking and found that to be horrible. This was because there was a slight time lag between when it bayed and the sound of echo coming back to him! No amount of convincing it that it was its own sound that it heard as an echo helped and the donkey became even more insufferable as it now had proof that others sounded much worse than its hoarse baying.

The same it is with trying to convince a fool that they are one. Instead they will turn on the Good Samaritan who was trying to drill some sense into them and make them feel sorry that they ever tried. Now you don't want to be associating with such a person for that will prove to be a soul destroying experience. Your best intentions will be misunderstood and

none of your favors will be acknowledged. What's more there is nothing you will learn in their company. Instead you will spend half your time getting them out of sticky situations. It's not for nothing that they say, "Fools gladly rush in, where angels fear to tread."

The thing is that a person is a fool not when he or she does something wrong out of innocence or lack of knowledge, but out of conceit and a sense of innate superiority over everyone else. Such a person has a faulty moral compass and any amount of council or advice will be met with disdain. It is far better to advise those who benefit from it. Of course there is no question of learning something from a fool for they will surely put you on the path of self-destruction.

If one associates with a fool, some of their qualities are sure to rub off on you for it is inevitable that you will be impacted by anyone you spend a lot of time with. Not only will you imbibe inappropriate traits, others will take you to be the same kind of person as the fool, and you will become socially unpopular. It's not for nothing that they say that a man is known by the company he keeps. Likewise don't they always advise youngsters to choose one's friends carefully?

A fool will teach one to never take advice even if it is well intentioned. Instead they will convince you that you are the wisest yourself and everyone else is a fool! A fool never likes to lose an argument, takes offence at real and perceived slights and is forever ready to start a quarrel. Now if one were to get influenced to start behaving like that, one would descend on a downward spiral leading very quickly to one's doom.

One would imagine that one rarely encounters fools of the intensely soul destroying types, but one actually comes across them in all walks of life. One sees a fool in the car driver who drives rashly putting himself and others at risk; in the office colleague who will back bite and lie behind your back, no matter how many times you ask him not to; the irksome relative who is always complaining and cribbing and making everyone's life miserable and in the cantankerous neighbor who gets into fights with everyone.

What one needs to do when confronted with such characters is to not let them dilute your focus and move you away from what is important in life. If somebody on the road is irritating you with their driving, try not to engage with them and focus on getting home to

your family on time. If at office somebody is constantly trying to steal your thunder take steps to distance yourself from the person, so that they don't get the chance to do so.

In any case it is always a great idea to put as much distance between yourself and a fool as is possible. Moreover in times of crisis you would rather be in the company of a competent friend than a foolish one. The people who don't gladly suffer fools are right in taking that decision. It is far better to anticipate trouble and take steps to ward it off, than to first get into trouble and then find a way out.

For instance if you were to hire a driver to take you on a long road trip by car you would avoid hiring an alcoholic and rather go with sensible driver with a fine safety record. Similarly in the journey of life you would be well advised to associate with people who have a reputation of being sensible and intelligent rather than foolish and immature.

The former would help you acquire the necessary life skills that will help you in your life ahead while the latter could imperil your life with their ill conceived notions. One should avoid people who imagine that they are always right, always shirk responsibility and are quick to put blame on everybody but themselves, for these are your archetypal fools. These should be avoided like the plague for no matter how intelligent or articulate they may appear, they are up to no good and would cause immense harm to you.

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