



# The Punk Edition

Dynamic Designs for Education and Change

Energy. Excellence. Tenacity

"For an effervescent life, keep your thoughts fearless, your emotions constructive and your actions venturesome..."

## What is Success?

What does 'success' mean for you? Is it different from where you consider yourself to be now? What does it include? Discount? Look like? Feel like? What is around you when you imagine your highest version of success? Who is there with you?

As a culture, we support a very narrow definition of success. In fact, it is often purely categorized in terms of financial gain or gross net worth. We fantasize about having a bigger house, nicer things, a faster car, being able to holiday in exotic places and pay others to do the things we don't like to do.

**We Spend Money to Make us Feel Better about Working so Hard.**

Yet in the pursuit of such items and this 'lifestyle' we often work so hard

that we spend our money trying to energise or reward ourselves into getting up and doing it all over again the following week. We work hard to save money



to go on holidays from our everyday lives. We 'reward' ourselves with items we don't need simply to make working so hard worthwhile.

Having increasing amounts of money is an incredibly limited and limiting way to view success. Money, while allowing us to have access to some things in life, can limit or impede our quality of life greatly if we focus on this as the primary gain or destination.

**Money is One Piece of the Puzzle.**

Consider money as a part of the ecology of our lives. We

need many things for a fulfilling and worthwhile life. Yet money- just one piece of the puzzle- has been so over-glamorized and so over-emphasized

in our society.

What about when we work so hard that our health suffers? Nice long healthy

walks in fresh air and sunshine are no longer part of our routine and our bodies begin to soften while our arteries harden.

What about when we give all the juice from our 'nice jug' to others during the day and arrive home depleted, with very little to give those we claim to love the most?

What about when we travel so much that our families begin to operate without us?

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## Defining Your Version of Success

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### Special Events

Is your team functioning as well as it could? Want to see shared definitions of success? Want to see people drawing on their strengths and appreciating those of others? Want a positive vibe? A new and fresh approach? It might be time to invest in some Team Coaching!

Take the opportunity to get your team ready for performance by together identifying what has not worked in the past (behaviourally) and co-authoring new ways to get things done in an emotionally intelligent, team enhancing, flexible structure!

**Contact PunkPD today to find out how!**

### Exclusive Offers!

For the month of September, engage in **FIVE** PunkPD coaching experiences for only \$500. Payment plans available.

It's the perfect time to activate the life you love!!!

## What is Success? Defining a Successful life for Ourselves.

What about when we are so tired on a Friday night that we don't invest in our friendships or relationships?

What about the loss of energy and vitality we often feel when we engage in all of the above but have nothing left over for ourselves? We look in the mirror and know that there is something missing on the inside.

What about the messages about success we are subliminally sending to our kids? Is the grades or the learning that we count? The winning or the participating? Not just for them, but what do they see us as valuing for ourselves?

What about when we work with or for people who deplete our energy? Squash our ideas or make us feel uncomfortable about our strengths, passions or creativity? Sometimes people can expose themselves to these types of environments for so long that they forget they ever had strengths. They have been so culturally washed out of them.

### Where Does the Money Go?

Often, when we earn more money, a strange phenomena occurs. We simply spend more of it so that we don't notice the increase. Our wants and needs become bigger and fill the gap and we continue to feel as broke or as in need of money as we did before.

I have watched someone close to me do this their entire lives. Motor bikes, airplanes, houses, convertibles... It was never enough and "I can't because I'm broke" remains the mantra to this day. This person is only broke in terms of the relationships they have chosen to dismiss along the way in pursuit of more, shinier and faster things. As Cyndi Lauper sings, 'money changes everything.'

Is the extra room on the house, the job title prestige or the extra gadgets worth missing out on other things? Is it worth losing our health, limiting our social lives, feeling a lack of connection to others and or feeling an ache on the inside? And if this doesn't apply to us, maybe we see this in our partner or someone close to us?

I've often heard people say, 'oh, if only I had more

money.' But the reality is that lack of money is often used as an unconscious excuse. It often comes down to a question of commitment to the thing in question—how hard one is willing to work or how much one is willing to exchange for something else—rather than a lack of money in the bank.

*As time progressed, my definition of success evolved. I now define success as taking risks, showing up, being authentic (which means vulnerable at times) and continually growing and learning. But if I am ever feeling particularly hard-done-by in life, I stop and ask myself if I could go and buy margarine right now. The answer is always yes and it always makes me smile...*

### Money is Easy to Count.

Money is an easy attribute to make overly important. It is easily quantifiable and easily transferable into tangible things. What is less quantifiable and less tangible, and therefore also less socially rewarded and recognized, are things like joy, connection, gratitude and fulfillment. When we meet new people we do not stop to ask; "how fulfilled are you? Are you feeling connected to those you love?" No. We ask, "What do you do?"

When we are working towards something, it is important to stop and ask, whose goal is this? Is this really mine? Or have I been conditioned to want this? Do I actually want to be a Director, or a CEO, or have I been taught that 'climbing the corporate ladder' is what we do? Is what I really want actually a life of significance and I have incorrectly attributed that to a job title or salary?

Maybe a life of significance actually looks very different if we stop to unpack it. This is why many people work their whole lives to rise to the top, only to get there and still feel empty or numb on the inside.

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## What is Success? Defining a Successful Life for Ourselves.

Additionally, rising to success often brings up images of ladders or climbs. We commonly envisage a steady climb and rise to the life that we desire. But a ladder only goes up or down. There is no room for play, for growth in other areas, or for life's little surprising segues. Why not view success as playing on a jungle gym, or free-falling from a rope-swing! These images allow for so much more deviation, play and joyfulness.

### Margarine and Success.

I remember when I was in my late teens. My father moved back to Canberra after a long hiatus and I was so excited to invite him to dinner at my apartment. I had lived there since I was 16 and through various creative endeavors (like framing pieces of wrapping paper as artwork and using hand-me-down pink curtains as lounge covers) , I had my place looking pretty nice in my opinion. At the time I was studying at uni and was working four jobs. I had this recipe for what I called 'ever-lasting soup' that was super cheap and I used to eat

it endlessly. My friends and I still recall the taste of this soup, decades later!

I primped the house and squeezed money so tightly the fortnight that my dad was coming so that I could buy margarine. I know this doesn't

sound like a big deal but I was so proud! I

walked my father into the apartment, sat him down at the table to a meal of minute steak, mash potato and bread rolls...WITH MARGARINE! Dad said down at the table and began to eat. "Look Dad, didn't you see it?" I said motioning proudly to my tub of Flora on the table. "See what kid?" he asked, glancing over the table several times. "The Margarine. We have Margarine for our bread!!!" He nodded, shrugged and continued eating his meal, which to him was an ordinary, probably sub-par meal. Yet I will never forget that feeling of being able to have margarine that night. To have had something special to share with my guest. I won't forget

how it felt to liberally smear my bread roll in that goey, yellow goodness. I felt like the richest person in the world.

Margarine became my starting definition of success. If I had margarine in my fridge for me, and better yet to give to the people I loved, I was wealthy! I never forgot how happy that small tub of margarine made me and how its presence was completely lost on my father, so used to being able to buy what he wanted. I never lost that sense of gratitude for the beautiful, small things that make such a difference to our lives if we stop to notice them.

As time progressed, my definition of success evolved. I now define success as taking risks, showing up, being authentic (which means vulnerable at times) and continually growing and learning. But if I am ever feeling particularly hard-done-by in life, I stop and ask myself if I could go and buy margarine right now. The answer is always yes and it always makes me smile...

### Defining Success for Ourselves.

Drowning out the 'shoulds', 'ought to's', and judgments of others and the greater culture we are a part of as a whole is not an easy thing to do. It takes time to redefine, unpack and sort out what is really meaningful to us. But if money and 'things' were really it, why is anxiety and depression at epidemic levels in our society? Lack of connection to others, to nature and to meaning are profound illnesses that many of us suffer from. Some of us have become so used to them being missing we do not even notice the impact any more. We just register a dull ache from time to time.

When we know what success looks like for us, who is with us, what is around us and what it feels like, it is easier to move towards it in a conscious and purposeful way. Until then, we search for meaning in money, titles, careers, awards or other things that may or may not be really what drives us.

Take the time to ask yourself the questions or seek out a quality coach to partner on this with you. After all, as Arnold H. Glasow said, "success is simple. Do what's right, the right way, at the right time." The question is, what is right for you???

*A life of significance can look very different from how we were taught it looks...  
What does it look like for you?*

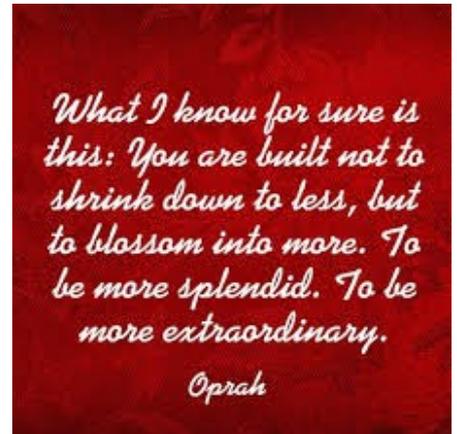
## What is Success? Resources, Reading and Audio Books!

I have been embracing a concept I heard Tony Robbins use once: NET Time! It means No Extra Time. It's when you do two things at once, thus cancelling out having to use any extra time to complete one of the tasks. And I am loving combining my daily exercise with audio books! Loving it!

I used to only listen to music while exercising, using the beats of the music to collaborate and enhance my movements. I always thought that listening to someone speak would slow this down. Yet I have not found this to be true in practice. I find it calming and energizing all at once and being a self-confessed nerd and knowledge junkie, and loving how much extra time this gives me to learn each day. For me it means an extra hour of 'nerd time' while I exercise.

Currently, I am moving between a few audio books to keep things spicy!

I have listened to **Oprah Winfrey's What I Know For Sure** many times. I enjoy the simple but expressive language, the stories she gives behind her truths and the voices and impersonations she does. This remains one of my favourite audio books!



I am also listening to **Amy Cuddy's 'Presence.'** This is a very long book and I am only about half way through.



Amy is a Harvard researcher who was made famous with her TED talk video which I often refer to. Here it is in case you haven't seen it! It's well worth a look into how we can change our physiology to alter our neurology! ([https://www.ted.com/talks/amy\\_cuddy\\_your\\_body\\_language\\_shapes\\_who\\_you\\_are?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are?language=en)). I am enjoying her audio book as she goes into a lot of research around Imposter Syndrome, Mindfulness and gives a lot of real-life examples and stories to illustrate the findings. I also find her tone reasonably static and find myself wondering into my thoughts sometimes, so I have had to replay a few chapters!!!

In this same vein, I have to admit that I have tried repeatedly to listen to **Eckhart Tolle's The Power of Now**. But I have done so unsuccessfully, maybe because I have never tried it while exercising! Most often this has been on an airplane and I find myself drifting off to sleep! His voice is so slow and soothing and monotone that I don't think I have ever made it through a whole chapter. It is still on my list though and surely I can't fall asleep while hiking or working a cross-trainer...right?? Try this audio-book if you have a high-tolerance for dulcet tones!



**'The moment we begin to laugh at our problems we change chemically'**

Dr Richard Bandler  
[www.nlpifetraining.com](http://www.nlpifetraining.com)

NERD ALERT! I am also reading a variety of books on Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) and the Meta-Programs we run unconsciously! These have been a great enhancement to my studies in NLP! What I have loved the most about these articles and books is unpacking the notion of our 'personality'. Seeing 'personality' not as a fixed thing or entity, but as a flexible yet programmed set of behavioural and thought patterns. It has enabled me to more thoroughly understand how behaviors become fixed and what people really mean when they say, 'It's just my personality.' What we mean is, 'it's just the way I have learned to respond to this!' And if we learnt one way, we can most definitely learn others!



Abby Elizabeth Rees is PunkPDs Principal Consultant, a self-confessed 'education junkie', University Lecturer, Education and Empowerment Writer, Behaviour and Change Specialist, Executive Meta-Coach and artistic thinker.

Energy, Excellence and Tenacity capture Abby's drive and personality.

Thriving on new challenges to design for education and change, Abby leads with a level of energy that earned her the nickname '240' (240 Volt) from her former colleagues. With the tenacity of a Rottweiler, Abby lives and breathes her design projects, providing her clients with a commitment to excellence that is unparalleled. Abby has a lively personal presence, strong interpersonal skills and uses a wide range of innovative and inventive techniques. With rich experience in facilitating diverse groups, Abby has delivered a range of corporate training and developed education, change and communication tools to meet individual needs.

In addition to being recognised with numerous National and International awards for her work, Abby embodies the cliché of 'life-long-learning' and has achieved:

Masters of Educational Leadership

Sustainable Leadership Fellowship Scholarship

New York Un-School of Disruptive Design

Bachelor of Education: Inclusive Education

Graduate Certificate in Public Relations

Executive Meta-Coach Accreditation (ACMC-P)

Neuro-Linguistic Programming Practitioner

HBDI Accredited Practitioner

Graduate Studies in Narrative Therapy and Ethics in the Helping Professions



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*Coaching at a higher level for success and transformation*

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