



The Most Important Thing You Can Have Is Faith

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

Several years ago I was practicing law, and over Christmas I went home to Michigan from Los Angeles for a one week vacation. At the time, I was also a law professor and I had brought a stack of papers to grade with me. For several days I read paper after paper. After about a day, it occurred to me I was unhappy with my life. I was unhappy with my job. I did not like where my life was headed and what my career was like. At the time I was making a very good living and doing everything I thought I should be doing. But I was not happy.

For the next few nights I had a lot of difficulty sleeping. Then I made a decision. What was making me unhappy was not just my job but the practice of law. I did not want to be an attorney anymore. I simply did not want to do this.

I had gotten married just a few months before. I had also bought a house around the same time with a pretty decent-sized mortgage. By all appearances, my life was on the right track for someone in his late 20s. I had done everything I thought was right up until that point in my life. But my job did not make me happy. I did not like the constant confrontation. I did not like where I worked at the time. I did not feel my talents were being utilized as much as they could be. I knew this was simply something I did not want to do any longer.

I went back to work on January 3rd and gave my two weeks notice. I knew this was not what I wanted and I simply needed to have faith that everything would work out. I had no savings to speak of and my wife was not earning very much money. I needed to trust that everything would work out – although at the time I had no idea what was going to happen. I knew deep down, however, that if I was happy I would do much better in my life than if I wasn't.

Your ultimate resource in your [job search](#) and in your life is faith. Faith is the most important thing in the world. Faith is what enables you to move forward and [find a new job](#), to get into a new relationship, to move to a new city, to start a new life, and to take chances. Similarly, a lack of faith causes people to feel trapped in bad relationships and never leave them, work in jobs they hate, and stay in circumstances which do not make them happy. The most important and forward-looking thing you can do is have faith.

Similarly, the worst thing you can do is spend time around people who shake the faith you have in yourself. When we are driving, we have faith the cars across the median will not cross over and hit us. We have faith when we are walking down the street we will not get shot. We have faith when we get home at night, our spouse will still be there. We have faith our children will always love us. When you get on an airplane, you generally have faith the plane will take off and land safely. You should. Statistically, you are 10 times more likely to get hit by lightning than die in an airplane crash. Nevertheless, after September 11 numerous people became afraid of flying. The goal of the terrorists was to shake our faith in our daily lives and, for many, it worked. Is there anyone around you who shakes your faith?

Faith gives people the will to live even when it looks like there is no reason to go on. I remember when I was a young boy my stepfather had to undergo a surgery that lasted almost 36 hours to remove all sorts of cancer from his body. The surgeons said before they took him there was a 99 percent chance he would die in surgery. Before he went into surgery, he told my mother he would be fine and not to worry. When he came out of surgery, the surgeons said the only thing that kept him alive was his faith and without it he never would have survived. I have heard others tell stories about faith like this before. Faith is something that is real and makes a giant difference in peoples lives. It can change your life, too.

Faith is the key that opens the doors of possibility. If you had faith that you could do anything, what would you do? Would you walk right up and talk to your dream mate? Would you embark on a new career? What would you do if you knew you could not fail? If you knew you could not fail, you could do anything in the world. I once saw the most ridiculous thing and it stuck with me. For years I used to go by a certain man's house in Detroit to seal his asphalt. The man was a printer who did the same job day after day, and he did not seem particularly enthusiastic about it. After six or so years of working for him, I went by his doorway and saw him wearing a Hawaiian shirt and sunglasses – not the sort of blue-collar outfit he usually wore.

"What are you doing?" I asked him.

"I sold my printing business, sold my house, and bought a deli in the Bahamas. I'm leaving tomorrow," he told me.

Now that's faith – taking control of your life, following your heart, and doing what you want to do.

It is far better to make mistakes and fail than it is to not try something. You are almost always better off taking steps in the direction of the life you want than not taking any steps at all. You will always be better off from having learned lessons and exercised your faith.

The most important characteristic of any leader is faith, specifically faith that they can bring the people they are leading the result they are seeking. The greatest business minds have mastered the art of having faith. For example, when Bill Gates was at Harvard, he decided he no longer wanted to go to school. He was more interested in computers. Having faith and nothing more, he dropped out of school, found someone who had invented a computer but had no operating system for it, and purchased the rights to the DOS program. He knew making a computer work would create profound results, and he had faith in the future. He ended up becoming one of the richest men in the world and changing the world through his contributions.

When Sam Walton opened his first Wal-Mart, it was a disaster. One of the first days he was open, he had a watermelon sale and stacked hundreds of watermelons in front of the store. It was so hot, however, that all of the watermelons were exploding, and when people pulled up to the store it looked like there had been a mass murder. Nonetheless, Walton had faith in his idea and pursued it.

It is not just businesses which require faith, however. It is you. You need to have faith in who you can become. You need to

have faith that you will get the job you want and live the life you want. You need to have faith in your future. There is something remarkable about the power of faith: the power of faith changes everything. Faith is not logical. You cannot live your life with logic alone. Faith is what drives people to do things when they have no idea what the end result will be. When you have faith you act because you know the universe will take care of you. You do not act because you are certain of the result.

There are lots of people who live their lives certain of the results they will achieve. Not much ever happens with these sorts of people. They never even come close to reaching their full potential. You can live your life with certainty but, if you do, you will never know how fulfilled you can possibly be and how much you can achieve.

The present is not the future. Faith is what gives us a future that is different from the present we have today. Step into the future and decide what you want from it. Once you have decided what you want from the future, it is important you have faith and set about going after your dreams. You need to put yourself on the line. You need to see a better tomorrow.

After quitting my job, I still did not know what I was going to do. My law firm told me to stick around for three months and look for another job because they did not think it sounded rational for me to just leave. So this is what I did. I went out and interviewed with other law firms, but I did not take any jobs because I was not interested in practicing law. I spoke with recruiters while I was looking for a job, and the more I spoke with them, the more their jobs looked interesting to me. What ended up happening, of course, was that I chose to start recruiting.

I remember about three months after I began recruiting a few of my wife's friends were at the house. At the time, my wife had started to think I was insane. I had left a job paying over \$150,000 a year and was now running a recruiting business out of our family room. The problem was the business was not doing all that well. In fact, I had scarcely gotten any candidates interviews and had been at it for three months. In addition, I had hardly any money left. I had taken out a home equity loan during my final weeks of practicing law and this money was almost gone. I had long ago maxed out my credit cards. My wife's family used to call her and she would walk out to the front lawn to talk on the phone. We had only been married a few months at that point, and I think she thought she must have made a real mistake. In all fairness, she had signed up to be married to a lawyer, and that was not what was going on at the moment.

In a manner that implied some concern, a couple of my wife's friends walked up to my desk and asked me how I was doing. I started telling them about how I had recently gotten a new candidate and how wonderful the candidate was. I told them I was in the middle of putting together a long letter about the candidate and the more I learned about the candidate, the more impressed I was. The funniest thing happened after I told them about the candidate. I was sitting there with probably 10 Diet Coke cans spread across my desk and piles of paper on the floor. I had not shaved in a couple of days, and I was very involved in the work I was doing. I remember I looked away for a second and, when I looked back, one of my wife's friends was looking at the other friend with his finger pointed at his head moving it around in circles like I was crazy. I must have looked crazy. Everyone thought I was crazy for pursuing my dream like this. But I had faith.

The entire basis of Christianity, Islam, and most major religions of the world is faith. The greatest accomplishments in the world are achieved when people have faith. When you have faith in yourself and faith in an idea, anything at all is possible.

One of the most exciting places in the world is Disneyland. There is an institute there where employees can take classes and learn about the founding of the company. The story of the founding of Disneyland is one of the greatest stories of the power of faith there is. According to one account:

With Disneyland, Walt Disney envisioned a place where parents and children could go to enjoy themselves and see fantasy become real. Disappointed with the quality of amusement parks he visited with his children, Disney wanted his park to be clean, well-organized, and family-friendly. He first planned to build the park on a lot in Burbank, but he soon realized that he needed more space, so he bought an orange grove in Anaheim, California.

No one thought his idea would work. He was advised by other amusement park officers the park was doomed to failure. He could not convince financiers to invest in the park because his dreams offered "too little collateral." Even his brother, who handled the studio's finances, refused to spend company funds on the project.

In spite of the opposition, Disney refused to give up. He cashed in his life insurance policy and sold his family home to raise the \$11 million required for the park's [construction](#). When more money was needed, he signed a contract with the American Broadcasting Company to air a weekly show in exchange for ABC's investment in the park. He bet every penny on the success of the park and remained determined to make it a reality. Driven by his zeal, construction of the park began July 21, 1954, and it opened almost exactly a year later, on July 17, 1955.

It appeared the doomsayers had been right. Opening day was a disaster. Worse, there was national TV coverage. Tickets were counterfeited, resulting in 28,000 guests instead of the 11,000 invited. Rides broke under the stress of [operation](#). [Plumbers](#) were on strike, so bathrooms and drinking fountains were not working. The asphalt roads, having been poured the night before, were still soft and trapped ladies' high-heeled shoes.

Disney was not swayed by the park's disastrous opening. He fixed the problems and continued to plan and build better attractions. He continuously found new ideas that kept people coming back for more. After 10 years, more than 50 million people had visited Disneyland, and today it remains a national attraction. More than that, as historian Larry Schweikart has observed, "Disneyland set the standard by which future parks were judged." Against all odds, Walt Disney had built an amusement park that had become an amazing success. (Source: <http://www.mackinac.org/article.aspx?ID=7164>)

When you have faith in yourself the impossible can happen. Disney, for example, has left behind a huge and lasting legacy with Disneyland and his company. He put his faith and mind behind the power of an idea and stuck with it. Faith is what changes the world, and faith can change your life as well. The more you believe in something and the more faith you have in it, the more your mind will attract similar thoughts. These similar thoughts will build upon each other, get stronger and stronger, and get you closer to what you are seeking. This is the power of faith.

Your life and your future begin with thoughts. Faith is the most important thing you can have. When you have faith you can do absolutely anything. Regardless of what is going on in your career, or your life, you need to have faith.

After four months of recruiting, I still had not made a single placement. My credit cards were maxed out, my home equity loan was maxed out, and my wife was beyond freaked out. One Monday morning, I answered the phone and it was a law firm. They told me they were making an offer to one of my candidates. The next day the same thing happened and on Thursday and Friday it happened again.

In less than one week I had made four placements and the business was up and running. It was one of the most wonderful

weeks of my life and really taught me the power of faith. When you believe in yourself and what you can do, anything is possible. You need to start believing in what you can do right now.

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