

Plan for Success-Not Failure

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

When I was younger, there was a restaurant on Telegraph Road in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, that used to offer people a percentage off the price of their meals equal to a person's age, on the person's birthday each year. So, on your 25th birthday, for instance, you would get a 25% discount on your meal. On your 50th birthday, you would get a 50% discount on your meal.

Not surprisingly, this particular restaurant was extremely popular with older people on their birthdays. In fact, elderly people came from all over town on their birthdays each year. I don't mean to be crass, but it sort of felt like eating in a nursing home. There would be wheelchairs, walkers, and so forth scattered all over the dining room and in line. The hostesses in the restaurant always had to speak loudly to people when they came in. Sometimes the elderly people would doze off at their tables. The place was always packed. My father used to take me to the restaurant occasionally, and every evening I was ever there, the restaurant was quite crowded with elderly people who were celebrating their birthdays.

One time we visited my grandmother the day after her birthday and she declared that she had been to this restaurant with several friends the evening before to celebrate her birthday, and that she had gotten a massive discount on her dinner, since she was so old. Because the restaurant kept giving discounts that increased the older a person got, it made getting older a little more fun.

"I wonder if they would actually give you money back when you are 101, or if the meal is just free on your 100th birthday?" I asked her.

"I will let you know when I turn 101," she said. She was quite serious, and after making this statement, she went about her business.

While my grandmother did not live to be 101, she lived well into her 90s and I remember being very impressed with her when she said she "would let me know." She had shown great spirit and made it clear that she was making plans to live, rather than making plans to die, as many elderly people do. She was in her late 80s when she said this to me, and I knew that she had every intention of moving forward into her 90s with ease and vigor. My grandmother was out and about every day, working outside of the house and being quite active with friends, going places, and doing things. She enjoyed life and she planned on continuing to do so.

I would like to contrast my grandmother with some other people I have known throughout the years. I have known people who retired and then died within a year or two. The husband of a woman I know had worked for General Motors in an auto plant. He retired at the age of 65. Up until the time he retired, he had been very responsible, someone most people would look up to. After he retired, though, he became very depressed and felt like he had no purpose, as if his life were over. He sat on the roof of their small house in Warren, Michigan, drinking at least a case of beer a day for around nine months, and soon he was dead. He died, I think, because he had planned to die.

I have known numerous people throughout their lives that say things like:

- *I'm washed up.*
- *No one likes me.*
- *I could never do that.*
- *That is not something I could do.*
- *I am not good at that sort of thing.*
- *I am going to fail.*
- *I am going to die by the time I am 35.*
- *My mother got that disease and I am probably going to get it too.*

When people make statements like this, they are essentially "planning to fail" or planning for some other negative outcome. When you plan to fail, you are putting yourself in a place wherein success is unlikely, if not impossible. It is as simple as that. When you plan to succeed, your odds of succeeding are far greater.

When you are getting ready to move into a new house, you will typically make all sorts of preparations for the house before you even move in.

- You may know that you are going to need a bed for an extra bedroom you now have. You may know that you are going to need sheets for the bed.
- You may know that you are going to need a chair in a certain area where there is empty space.
- You may know that rooms need to be repainted.
- You may know that the house needs a new dishwasher.
- You may know that you are going to need drapes in certain rooms.

Whenever I have seen a couple getting ready to buy a new house, most of the time they go out and start looking for all of these things weeks before they even move into the new house. Why? Because they are planning. They are not living in the house yet; however, they believe they soon will be, so they start making plans for their new life.

Have you ever gone and test-driven a car you were interested in? The only times I ever test-drove cars was before I could afford the cars I was test-driving. I went out and test-drove the most ridiculous cars I could find. Then I started planning and

doing what I needed to in order to purchase one of them. Seriously planning to achieve or obtain something makes all the difference. When I was growing up, the people I primarily saw driving my dream car back then, a Porsche 911, were old men. When I was in my early 20s I went and test-drove one. The cars were around \$70,000 at the time. I decided that I would own one in a few years, and within a few short years, I ended up buying the exact same model I had test-driven. I did this before I even had a full-time job. I simply planned on having the car, and then I made it happen.

A car is just a piece of metal, though, and it has little to do with who you are. A house is just a structure. Houses and cars are material things. The most important concept is your self-concept, *who you are and who you are going to become*. Are you planning to succeed in your life and to reach your full potential, or are you planning to fail?

You need to plan your life and your career around succeeding. Instead of making plans to fail, to be average and so forth, make plans to succeed and to be the absolute best at everything you can possibly be.

- If you are not living up to your potential, start making plans to fully realize that potential.
- If you are having financial problems, start making plans to become rich.
- If you are having relationship problems, start making plans to have a great relationship.
- If you are sick, start making plans to be well.
- If you are depressed, start making plans to be happy.

The most important thing you can do for yourself is to consistently plan to be happy and not sad. Successful and not unsuccessful. Satisfied and fulfilled, not unfulfilled. *Alive and not dead*.

It is just as easy to make plans to succeed as it is to make plans to fail, but it is a lot more fun and rewarding. You need to do everything you can to ensure that you are planning for the best things in your life, instead of planning for the worst things.

Several years ago, I purchased a lot of very expensive exercise equipment. I was not in good shape at the time. I could not really afford the exercise equipment at the time either, and it was a bit of a financial stretch for me. *Why did I buy all of this equipment?* I purchased it because I was planning on becoming healthy and fit. Moreover, I knew that there was no way that I would let all of this expensive equipment sit around without being used. Because the equipment was there, I used it, and this has made a major difference in the quality of my life.

I am not saying you need to run out and purchase exercise equipment in order to be healthy or happy. This was just something that worked for me. What you should definitely do, though, is make your own plans to be healthy. Planning to be healthy and to be well is something that can make a giant difference in your life and career.

Have you had negative things happen to you? Have you heard people say negative things about you? Do not allow these things to take hold of you and determine who you are, and what you think you are capable of achieving. Instead, you need to think forward and think of positive, inspiring things. Plan for being the person you want to be, not the person others may have called you, for reasons having more to do with them than you. You should never agree with those negative voices. Only agree with positive voices. Plan for health, success, and happiness.

What would have happened to the people below if they had simply given up and had not planned for great things in their lives?

The vice president of Columbia Pictures told this actor that he was never going to make it in the business. The actor? - *Harrison Ford*

His first book was rejected by 12 publishing houses and 16 agents. - *John Grisham*

A band was turned down by a recording company that said, "We don't like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out" - The recording company was talking about *The Beatles*.

This person was told by his father that he would amount to nothing, and that he would be a disgrace to himself and his family. - *Charles Darwin*

This man was told by a music teacher, "As a composer he is hopeless." - *Beethoven*

This vocalist was told that "He couldn't sing at all." - *Enrico Caruso*

This visionary was fired from a newspaper because he "lacked imagination and had no original ideas" - *Walt Disney*

This author was told by publishers that "anthologies don't sell" and that the book was "too positive." The book was rejected a total of 140 times. The book? *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. It now has 65 different titles and has sold more than 80 million copies all over the world.

This young man was told by a teacher he was "too stupid to learn anything." - *Thomas Edison*

This man failed the sixth grade. - *Winston Churchill*

He wasn't able to speak until he was almost 4 years old, and his teachers said he would "never amount to much." - *Albert Einstein*

This man did poorly in school and failed at running the family farm. - *Isaac Newton*

This person was not allowed to wait on customers in the store where he worked, because "he didn't have enough sense." - *F. W. Woolworth*

This person was cut from the high school basketball team, went home, locked himself in his room, and cried. - *Michael Jordan*

Producers told her she was "unattractive" and could not act. - *Marilyn Monroe*

This book was rejected 18 times before it was published. It then sold more than a million copies the first year. The book was *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach.

This woman auditioned for *All My Children* and got rejected - *Julia Roberts*

This author received 30 rejections and he threw this book in the trash. Luckily his wife fished it out of the refuse and encouraged her husband to resubmit the manuscript. The book was *Carrie* - the author was *Stephen King*

http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/1163465/inspirational_stories_of_famous_failures_pg2_pg2.html?cat=9

I have heard different versions of stories like this many, many times. These sorts of stories are inspirational because they show that success often has more to do with planning to achieve something great, than simply trying once, then giving up

after listening to others' negative opinions. Nothing is more important than having incredible faith in what we can achieve, and then preparing to do great things.

Maybe you have failed at certain things before. Plan to succeed the next time. Maybe your family members have a history of getting some horrible disease when they reach a certain age. Plan to be the one who does not get the disease.

Whatever it is, the best possible thing you can do is plan for the very best outcome.

THE LESSON

Plan to be happy rather than sad, and plan for greatness rather than simply attempting once and giving up in the face of failure. Plan to overcome negative trends or precedents in your life. Plan for the best possible outcome, and ignore the negative voices of others in favor of positive, inspirational messages.

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