

Andrew Carnegie's Idea

By: Gary Burleson

Andrew Carnegie had an idea. He was the richest man in America in the early part of the twentieth century. A time when America was exploding with cities, roads, industry, factories, electricity, aeronautics, communications, skyscrapers, ships, and unprecedented growth, and Andrew Carnegie had an idea. It's said, and it's true, it only takes an idea to change the world. The world was changing rapidly and exponentially. By the time Andrew Carnegie had made his fortune he had seen much growth. He was fortunate, but not endowed. At least he wasn't endowed with rich relatives or massive support. No, Andrew Carnegie rose to the top on his own merit because he thought. He envisioned ways and means and he pursued his vision with a passion and an obsession. Nothing distracted him from his goal of producing affordable steel, with which to build railroads, bridges and skyscrapers. He was going to become wealthy, and he accomplished that.

By the time he made his hundreds of millions of dollars, he had seen men succeed wildly, and he had seen them fail terribly. He had seen far too many more fail than succeed. Men who struggled all their lives; spending their entire time struggling to "make it" in a land of unlimited, abounding opportunities. It had to grieve him to see so many in this condition, only to live a short time more after figuring it out, or feel so worn out that they couldn't enjoy the fruits of their labors. This is why he chose to help mankind with his idea. He knew education was key, but not academic education. The knowledge of HOW one succeeds, and that quickly and easily, as a young man who would have the time and energy to enjoy the success.

Andrew Carnegie meets Napoleon Hill

He began interviewing men, sharing his idea, hoping someone would catch his vision - see his idea. After a few hundred potentials, there was an unawares magazine article writer who came to interview him. Unbeknownst to this gentleman, Andrew Carnegie had his agenda also. He was going to be interviewing the interviewer for his idea. What was intended to be a three hours interview turned into a three day session, at the end of which Mr. Carnegie pitched the young Napoleon Hill his idea. Namely this, spend the next twenty years of his life researching and studying the most successful men of that time to discover their secrets of success. Men like Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, Harvey Firestone, and John D. Rockefeller, Wilbur Wright, Charles Schwab, Alexander Graham Bell. In order to develop a philosophy that the common man, who has neither the time, the resources, nor the inclination to discover on his own, could read, study, learn and apply the knowledge of the ways of success.

Andrew Carnegie wanted to help men who later in life wouldn't have to look back and say, "I wish I knew then what I know now, I'd be so much better off," or "I'd be so much more successful," or "I'd be so much more happy." It's not uncommon that men and women say this to themselves, or even out loud, because of regrets, or wishes gone awry, or dreams unaccomplished or unfulfilled. He had seen so much of that in the land of abundant opportunities. It had to grieve his heart.

Young Napoleon Hill accepted his challenge, and to do it without pay. He had to have some skin in this project. It couldn't be a paid position, or it might become just a job. Mr. Carnegie did help with introductions and explanations of what was going on, but it was Napoleon who had to find the answers and formulate the philosophy.

Napoleon Hill began studying these giants of success, to discovered the secret of success, and formulated it into a legible philosophy. He studied 500 of the most successful men of his time, and many more thousand men who failed. He had to understand how men succeed as well as why men fail. His work was bound into 17 volumes called The Law of Success first published in 1927. These books were taught all across the country in workshops, speeches, courses, and were sold in bookstores and read by millions of people. They helped many many people achieve success, thus fulfilling Andrew Carnegie's dream. Unfortunately Mr. Carnegie did not live long enough to see the finished product, but I'm confident he knew Napoleon would finish the work. Napoleon continued studying successful men, as well as failures, and wrote many more volumes over the decades. The one he is most famous for is Think and Grow Rich published in 1937, selling over 100 million copies worldwide and translated into over 80 languages. It remains on the New York Times best selling business books' list. It has been in print for 80 years, as of this writing, and has been credited with more accolades about how it has helped so many achieve success - more than any other self-help book.

How This Idea Applies to You

This is what I want you to know, young reader, that **your dreams are attainable and achievable**. They are! And as Napoleon Hill was known to have coined, "Whatever the mind can conceive and believe it can achieve." You have to believe! Believing in yourself and your ideas, is a very important piece of the success puzzle.

This chapter is going to be one of many that follow about what you should know NOW in order to succeed, and not fail or struggle to learn, at an early age. You don't want to be like so many older adults who look back with regrets saying, "I wish I had known then what I know now, I'd be so much more better off."

There are so many things to know. Napoleon boiled his philosophy of personal achievement down to 17 principles. Those are fundamental. But there is so much more to know if you truly want to be happy and successful.

I'm going to attempt to cover some of the principles in this brief chapter - information that is fundamental to success and happiness. Principles around relationships. We all have multiple and varied relationships. We have a relationship with ourselves, relationships with money, relationships with other people, and different kinds of relationships with others. We are all in relationships, so it is imperative we know how to listen, communicate and connect. There are three principles. Or as I like to call them, pieces of the success puzzle. I'll explain later. When we can do those things effectively and in a positive manner, we will be well on our way to having a successful, fulfilling, meaningful and abundant life.

Most of the self-help or personal development books written after Think and Grow Rich were rooted in its concepts. Many personal development gurus will attribute their expertise to the reading of one or more of Napoleon's books. And much of their accolades go to Think and Grow Rich.

Many words have been written about what a person should or should not do on the topic of succeeding in life and business. Much of it is very good, beneficial and needed. There are numerous books one can read to grow and change, which is the essence of personal development and succeeding. If you're not growing, you're decaying - figuratively speaking. If you're not moving forward, you're moving backwards. Always be learning. Adopt the habit of reading and become a lifelong learner, another piece of the success puzzle. One very important thing I want you to know is that no matter what you've been told, no matter what you think in your mind, no matter what anybody says, **your dreams are attainable and achievable.**

Napoleon Hill's maxim "Whatever the mind can conceive and believe it can achieve" has helped millions believe in themselves, their thoughts, their dreams, and their ambitions. Belief is the key. Acting on those thoughts is essential, and following the Napoleon Hill Philosophy of Personal Achievement and Science of Success is most beneficial in fulfilling those dreams and goals. But let me tell you this, it all starts with your **state of mind**. I believe that is THE secret Napoleon refers to in Think and Grow Rich. It must be a **positive state of mind**, confident in itself, and acting on those thoughts.

My Journey to Success

Indulge me as I share my story. If you are starting out in life, or starting over in life, as I was ten years ago, my transformation may be inspirational or encouraging. I grew up in a construction family. My father was a builder/developer and he started me sweeping floors, pulling nails, and cleaning up work sites when I was 12 years old. I worked every summer on a job site, until high school graduation, and then started full time, digging, shoveling, hoisting, hammering, and raking. If you've done any work in construction, you know what I'm talking about. Can you relate when I say, I didn't like it that much, especially when it was really cold outside or muddy? Construction as a career just fell into my lap even though I didn't particularly want to do it. So when I was 20 I decided to start my own lawn mowing business. I had all of the tools, a push mower, a weed eater, rakes, a truck and trailer. All I needed was a riding mower, or so I thought, and my dad had a really nice one. After asking him if I could use it, of course he said NO in no uncertain terms. My idea was crushed. I had no one to mastermind with to help me devise a plan B. Because if I had really wanted to, and had had a very strong desire, nothing would have prevented me from achieving my goal. I would have figured out a way to make it happen. So my dream became a fleeting one, and I continued in construction. My hopes of having my own business and getting out of construction vanished. If it had been written down, studied and implemented with faith and

confidence, it could have and would have materialized. I just needed faith and confidence and a mastermind buddy who could encourage me and help me strategize. You know I'm right. If you are reading this, are you in the very same dilemma right now? Read on.

Next came the time I thought about becoming a professional photographer. I had enjoyed photography as a hobby while in the Army, and had taken a professional course on photography techniques. The name for my new business would be Home Sweet Home Photography. Having the best camera equipment going, all I needed was portable lighting and a portable back drop, that I could have purchased. But, I was told there wasn't any money to be made doing that, and that I needed to do something like building houses to earn some "real money". That dream was stolen also. My dad, as a builder, said he would help me get started building residential houses, and he did. I obtained a general contractor's license and built 13 homes over a period of three and a half years. At the end of which time, I was so stressed out, living in a constant state of anger and frustration that my marriage ended in divorce. It was a dark time in my life. You see I had drifted into this career. It wasn't what I really wanted to do, having never liked construction. I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do, except I wanted to be an entrepreneur.

After getting involved in network marketing, I saw something exciting and possibly liberating to provide the lifestyle that I wanted. But it was also frustrating; it wasn't working. I realized one day, people needed more than a business model. I had to offer personal development, a change of mind and thinking. That is when my involvement began with Bob Proctor's Life Success Consulting program to become a Life Coach. Bob highly recommends reading Think and Grow Rich, and to start mastermind groups studying that book. I began to do that by holding many group studies, tele-

conference calls, and meet-ups for many years. I must have read the book two or three dozen times.

I began to realize that I loved talking to people about how they could take possession of their minds, to dream, plan and pursue their dreams. I recall one day walking away from a job. I was carrying my tool bags thinking to myself, "Gary, you've earned your income with a hammer and a nail for the last thirty years." I didn't want to continue on that path. I said to myself, "I want my income to come from a microphone and an ink pen". That is precisely what I began to do. That's when I got involved with Bob Proctor's organization, and began holding Think and Grow Rich mastermind groups and ultimately became a Napoleon Hill Foundation Certified Instructor. I have been on a ten-year quest to become an author, speaker and consultant, and now that's what I do thanks to the many people who have helped me along the way, especially my wife Julienne, who is an incredible wife and who has an incredible story herself that she wrote about in her best-selling book Surviving Camp Inca, how she endured a 5-year incarceration in an Ecuadorian prison. And my father, who even though he stole many of my dreams, he only wanted the best for me, and left me with a source of income. When I was still working with my father, we developed a mini storage facility together, and today that is an additional source of income to me, and something I can leave to my children.

My dreams and goals began to change ever so slowly. Instead of speaking to network marketing groups and businesses about Napoleon Hill and his philosophy, the Lord put on my heart to get involved in a jail ministry. I felt that the men in jail had lost all hope in themselves and in a bright future, and I could offer a difference for their lives. Together with the Lord and the FOCUS prison ministry, we are making a big difference in many men's lives. Please consider donating or supporting The FOCUS Prison Ministry in your charitable giving. You can find them online at <https://www.focustn.org> . It is a very worth while charity.

So, you see, I'm not unlike a majority of people who start out in life doing the thing that falls into their lap, and I'm not unlike many who decide to start over and remake themselves at a later date. Today I do what I love, and am earning income from it as well helping young adults realize that their dreams are attainable and achievable. If they will only believe and apply the principles that Napoleon Hill wrote about in all of his books. Many people can attest to that very fact.

The Success Puzzle

I was a drifter, with no purpose, no guidance, no support, no vision for my life. Life was happening to me. I guess I'm responsible for this maxim, "Don't let life happen to you, make life happen for you." Be proactive in your future. There are many, many pieces to the success puzzle and it's very difficult to assemble it if you don't have a vivid image of what it is you want or what you'd like. Here I'd like to describe what a success puzzle is. The success puzzle is an illustration of a concept. The concept is this. We think in images. If I ask you to describe a house or a car, you'll begin to paint a picture of that house or car in my mind so I know exactly what you're talking about. The same goes for your life's ambitions, dreams and goals. You must have a clear, vivid and explicit image to describe if you will succeed. Just like assembling a puzzle you look at the image on the box cover each time you pick up a piece of the puzzle to see where it fits into the puzzle. There are numerous pieces of a puzzle just like there are numerous concepts, principles and things to know in order to succeed in your life, business or relationships. It all begins though with a clear image. Imagine trying to assemble a puzzle that the image on the box cover was blurred or out of focus. It would be very frustrating if not darn near impossible to assemble. Most of us would despair, throw up our hands and quit. Which is what a lot of people do after "trying". You see determination, commitment, perseverance, thought, learning from mistakes, budgeting

time, money and resources are only the beginning pieces of the success puzzle, which is why many people would be better off beginning with a mentor or a coach. If you would like to talk about your dreams and aspirations and how they are achievable and attainable, then please contact me through my website <http://yoursuccesspuzzle.com>. You can have an advisor and confidant for your life's ambitions. You can do whatever your mind can conceive if you believe, and not let anyone steal your dreams. And when you are 40 or 50, you won't look back and say to yourself, "Damn, I wish I knew then what I know now, I'd be so much further along in life."