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## THE

## Success

## Principles

Jack Canfield

**YOU HAVE TO GIVE UP COMPLAINING**

*The man who complains about the way the ball bounces is likely the one who dropped it.*

LOU HOLTZ

The only coach in NCAA history to lead six different college teams to postseason bowl games, and winner of a national championship and “coach of the year” honors; now an football analyst

Let’s take a moment to really look at complaining. In order to complain about something or someone, you have to believe that something better exists. You have to have a reference point of something you prefer that you are not willing to take responsibility for creating. Let’s look at that more closely.

If you didn’t believe there was something better possible-more money, a bigger house, a more fulfilling job, more fun, a more loving partner-you couldn’t complain. So you have this image of something better and you know you would prefer it, but you are unwilling to take the risks *required to create it*. Complaining is an ineffective response to an event that does not produce better outcome.

Think about this . . . people only complain about things they can do something about. We don’t complain about the things we have no power over. Have you ever heard anyone complain about gravity? No, never. Have you ever seen an elderly person all bent over with age walking slowly down the street with the aid of a walker complaining about gravity? Of course not.

But why not? If it weren’t for gravity, people wouldn’t fall down the stairs, planes wouldn’t fall out of the sky, and we wouldn’t break any dishes. But nobody complains about it. And the reason is because gravity just exists. There is nothing anyone can do about gravity, so we just accept it. We know that complaining will not change it, so we don’t complain about it. In fact, because it just is, we use gravity to our advantage. We build aqueducts down mountainsides to carry water to us. And we use drains to take away our waste.

Even more interesting is that we choose to play with gravity, to have fun with it. Almost every sport we play uses gravity. We ski, skydive, high jump, thro discus and the javelin, play basketball, and golf-all of which require gravity.

The circumstances you complain about are all situations you can change-but you have chosen not to. You can get a better job, find a more

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF SUCCESS

Loving partner, make more money move to where the jobs are, live in a nicer house, and eat healthier food. But all of these things would require you to change.

Refer to this list on page 11. You could:

Learn to cook healthier food.

Say no in the face of peer pressure.

Quit and find a better job.

Take the time to conduct due diligence.

Trust your own gut feelings.

Go back to school to pursue your dream.

Take better care of your possessions.

Reach out for help.

Ask others to assist you.

Take a self-development class.

Sell or give away the dogs.

But why don’t you simply do those things? It’s because they involve risks. You run the risk of being unemployed, left alone, or ridiculed and judged by others. You run the risk of failure, confrontation, or being wrong. You run the risk of your mother, your neighbors, or your spouse disapproving of you. Making a change might take effort, money, and time. It might be uncomfortable, difficult, or confusing. And so, to avoid risking any of those uncomfortable feelings and experiences, you stay put and complain about it.

As I stated before, complaining means you have a reference point for something better that you are unwilling to take the risk of creating. Either accept that you are making the choice to stay where you are, take responsibility for your choice, and stop complaining . . . or . . . take the risk of doing something new and different to create your life exactly the way you want it.

If you want to get from where you are to where you want to be, of course you’re going to have to take that risk.

So make the decision to stop complaining, to stop spending time with complainers, and get on with creating the life of your dreams.

Pete Carroll, the coach of the NFL Seattle Seahawks football team, which won the 2014 Super Bowl, has three rules for his team :(1)ALWAYS protect the team; (2) No whining, no complaining, and no excuses and (3) be early. These are the rules of a Super Bowl championship team. They are worth adapting.

Jack Canfield

THE $2: 00 GAME

Here’s an exercise you can do in your home or in your office. Its one we do in ours and in our seminars. Find a large jar or a fishbowl and label it No BLAMING, No COMPLAINTS, No EXCUSES. Every time you or someone in your group catches themselves blaming someone else, complaining about something, or making an excuse for their lack of results, the offender has to put $2.00 in the jar-not as punishment, but as a technique to deepen everyone’s awareness that these behaviors have a cost.

YOU’ARE COMPLAINING TO THE WRONG PERSON

Have you ever noticed that people almost always complain to the wrong person-to someone who can’t do anything about their complaint? They go to work and complain about their spouse; then they come home and complain to their spouse about the people at work. Why? Because it’s easier; it’s less risky. It takes courage to tell your spouse that you are not happy with the way things are at home. It takes courage to ask for a behavioral change. It also takes courage to ask your boss to plan better so that you don’t end up working every weekend. But only your boss can do anything about that. Your spouse can’t.

Learn to replace complaining with making requests and taking action that will achieve your desired outcomes. That is what successful people do. That is what works. If you find yourself in a situation you don’t like, either work to make it better or leave. Do something to change it or get the heck out. Agree to work on the relationship or get a divorce. Work to improve working conditions or find a new job. Either way, you will get a change. As the old adage says, “don’t just sit there (and complain), do something.” And remember, it’s up to you to make the change, to do something different. The world doesn’t owe you anything. You have to create it.

YOU EITHER CREATE OR ALLOW

EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS TO YOU

To be powerful, you need to take the position that you create or allow everything that happens to you. By *create*, I mean that you directly cause something to happen by your actions or inactions. If you walk up to a man in a bar who is bigger than you and has obviously been drinking for a long