

ACADEMY SCHOLARS LIFE SKILLS 5 : COPING WITH SUCCESS AND FAILURE

- **EXPLORING THE IDEAS:**

We all want to be successful in life, but what does that phrase mean ?

*How do you see “success” ?

HOW CAN WE MEASURE “SUCCESS” ?

Is it by considering someone’s

Wealth ?

Power ?

Fame ?

Possessions ?

Or what else ?

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF A SUCCESSFUL PERSON ?

* What do you know of Mother Theresa of Calcutta? Or of Eric Liddell ?
Were they successful ?

* So is success only measured in terms of worldly riches and materialism ?

* Are there other measuring methods ?

WHAT ABOUT:

- Personal happiness or inner peace or purpose for living ?
- A contribution to society ?
- Appreciation by those who know us of the sort of life we live ?

SO HOW DO MOST PEOPLE LOOK ON “SUCCESS” ? Consider two fictional stories !

- **FICTIONAL STORY ONE :**

Mark is the Managing Director of his own thriving company. He is wealthy, which is not surprising as the company has grown to an annual turnover now exceeding £15 million, and with annual profits of over £1million.

Taking the company forward takes up most of Mark's time, but there are rewards. He lives in a magnificent 6-bedroomed house, with two double garages and a large private gardens. He enjoys breaks in the holiday home in Corfu, drives a brand new 7-series BMW, and his future seems secure. He is, to all who see him, a most successful businessman.

- **FICTIONAL STORY TWO :**

Simon is a student at University. He told a fellow student:

“My dad hardly knows me. Ever since I can remember, dad has been too busy at work. He was always building his business. I guess it was mum who was left to bring up us kids, - me, my sister and brother. Mum used to go on about how dad’s business had taken over dad’s life. She suffered, too. She had no one to talk to, no one to be with. We kids felt mum was quite depressed. Dad used to say she never understood his job and his need to build the business, but perhaps he never knew just what work was doing to mum and to all of us as a family. We were not a happy family. True, we lived in a posh house and never went short of money, but we weren’t a happy family. We weren’t close, weren’t friends together. In fact, it is nice being a student and to get away from it all.”

READ the above, and think about these fictional stories.

What are your thoughts on Mark’s achievements and lifestyle ?

Is it attractive or inspirational to you ?

What are benefits of Mark’s success and his liabilities ?

What about Simon’s conversation ? Any comments there ?

“Happy are those who dream dreams, and are willing to pay the price of making them come true”: Any comments with reference to Mark and his family? If a dream is to become reality , there might always be a cost! What was this cost in Mark’s family?

- **FICTIONAL INSIGHT :**

SIMON IS THE SON OF MARK.

THESE TWO STORIES ARE TWO SIDES OF THE SAME SITUATION.

ANY COMMENTS AS YOU PUT THESE TWO STORIES TOGETHER ?

SO WHAT IS SUCCESS? IN WHAT WAYS IS MARK SUCCESSFUL ?

DOES SIMON THINK HIS DAD IS SUCCESSFUL ?

WHAT MIGHT SIMON LEARN FROM HIS BACKGROUND ?

ANY OTHER COMMENTS ON THESE STORIES?

- **GENERAL THOUGHTS ON PERSPECTIVES ON LIFE:**

Please read and think about the following statements in turn.

- 1) **“What you put into life is really more important than what you take out of it”**
- 2) **“The sort of person you are is far more important than the sort of things you own”**
- 3) **“You will learn more about yourself, and your friends, in the tough and difficult times of life than you will in the times of success and achievement.”**
- 4) **“Life will bring all of us both success and failure. What is important is that we treat each wisely and learn from both.”**

WHAT ARE THE DANGERS YOU MAY FACE WHICH COME FROM “SUCCESS” ?

WHAT DANGERS MAY YOU FACE WHICH ARISE FROM “FAILURE”?

WHAT ARE THE “POSITIVES” WHICH CAN COME FROM “FAILURE” ?

- **LOOKING AT SO-CALLED “FAILURE” :**

In sport, as in life, there are many examples of those who turn round apparent disappointments, who learn from the difficult situation that has worked against them.

Being “released” is one such disappointment.

Look at people like David Platt, Peter Beardsley, Robbie Savage, among many. All faced a “down” which helped them to look forward!

What else disappoints in football ?

HOW CAN THE HARD TIMES BECOME A LEARNING TIME, A POSITIVE TIME, FOR US ? THINK BOTH IN FOOTBALL and in LIFE generally!

What are the hard times in life ?

Bereavement?

Break up of an established relationship ?

Job security threatened ?

Health worries ?

Money worries ?

Acknowledging addiction or abuse ?

Loneliness ?

Change of location and distance from friends ?

HOW MIGHT WE LEARN MORE ABOUT LIFE, ABOUT OURSELVES, IN THESE SITUATIONS ?

WHY MUST WE LEARN IN THE DIFFICULT TIMES ?

IF WE DO SO, HARD TIMES, FAILURE TIMES CAN BECOME IMPORTANT AND POSITIVE FOR US.

*Any comments ?

- **AMBITION, REALISM, SACRIFICE AND MATURITY:**

What about AMBITION ?

Is it good to have hopes, aspirations, ambitions? Do we all need dreams ? Consider Martin Luther King : "I have a dream..."

For us, where does reality, and wisdom come into all this?

"Ambition without reality can be painful and dangerous".....ANY COMMENT?

Do we need to develop.....wise ambition...realistic hopes...achievable goals ???

HOW DO WE DO THIS , in sport, and in life generally ?

What about SACRIFICE ?

Consider the place of sacrifice in the search for success?

*“Was the businessman Mark a success in the business world because he sacrificed his family responsibilities to take his company forward ?

If such sacrifice was needed, how could it have been better dealt with?” Can you be ambitious or focussed for yourself and also considerate to others ?

* “What may a sportsman need to sacrifice in order to be successful ?”

* “Is there a place for the idea of sacrifice in a culture that says “you go to get what you want to get” ?” Sacrifice seems a foreign idea at times in our culture ?

What about MATURITY ?

Think again about becoming “whole people”.

We are : SOCIAL PHYSICAL INTELLECTUAL EMOTIONAL and SPIRITUAL beings.

Perhaps if we are to become mature in life, to learn from life's good, successful times *and* the times of failure, the hard times, we need to look again at the “wholeness” of life.

Maturity and character come from learning from all that life brings to us, both the good and the bad. It seems that the development of a mature character, the development of a wholeness both comes from the ups and downs of life, and helps us cope with those things, too.

In life, as in football, LEARN FROM YOUR SUCCESSES AND YOUR FAILURES, and so see both as helpful.

