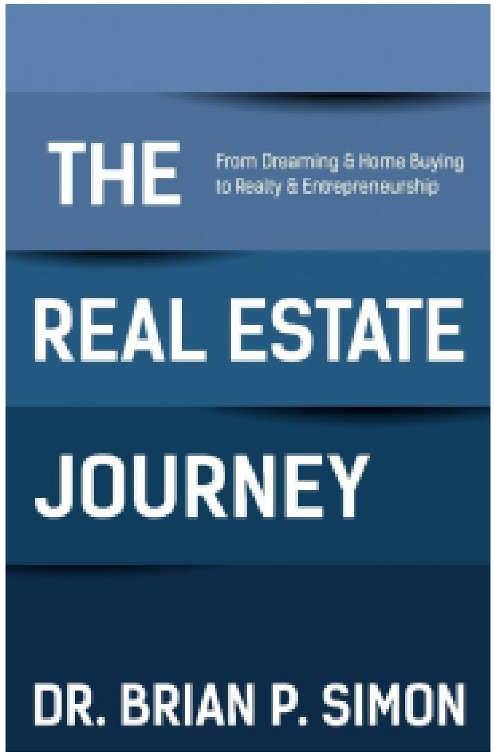
New Book Shows The Principles Of Financial Success – And How To Succeed In Real Estate – As An Entrepreneur, Real Estate Agent or Home Owner



Can real estate – owning it, selling it, working in it – change your life the way it has for preacher-turned real estate entrepreneur, Dr. Brian P. Simon?

A new book shows how all facets of real estate can spur wealth, success, and fulfillment, ***The Real Estate Journey: From Dreaming and Home Buying to Realty and Entrepreneurship*** (Morgan James Publishing, October 15, Trade Paper, 156 pages, $17.95, ISBN: 978-1-64279-362-8).

"Anyone can grow wealth with real estate, via one aspect or another," claims Dr. Simon, who owns multiple real estate–related businesses, including construction, mortgage, and realty.

"Succeeding as an entrepreneur and real estate investor has much to do with the mind game and emotional endurance," he says.

There are scores of useful insights, tips, and strategies in his book, including pointers on:

- How to be a prosperous entrepreneur.
- How to buy your first home profitably.
- What it takes to be a great real estate agent.
- Why real estate is the best investment.
- What it takes to manage your finances properly.

The Real Estate Journey dives into the multiple facets of real estate on both the personal and professional level to help readers succeed in unpacking their real estate dream, serving as a guide for those who want to get started on achieving their goals.

Dr. Simon also talks about what it takes for entrepreneurs to succeed:

- How to overcome dream busters.
- How you can cultivate the power of belief in yourself.
- The skills needed to succeed in business.
- How to turn your dream into a S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time specific) goal.
- How to overcome risks by embracing them and not avoiding them.
- The financial aptitudes that must be developed.

A serial entrepreneur the past 17 years, Dr. Simon honed his communication and leadership skills as a leadership coach and adjunct professor at Regent University School of Divinity.

For those struggling with believing that real estate is a viable option for building wealth, Dr. Simon offers reassurance that once people connect with their ambition, unpacking their dream and claiming their piece of the pie is simple with the guide and principles he supplies. With authentic leadership, Dr. Simon shares a realistic outlook for entrepreneurs by sharing his own failures and successes and invites real estate agents, every day investors, and entrepreneurial spirits alike to spread their entrepreneurial wings and fly.

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Dr. Brian P. Simon
Biography

Dr. Brian P. Simon is a serial entrepreneur, specializing in real estate marketing, advertising, land acquisition, new construction, and mortgage advisory. He is also the author of a new book, ***The Real Estate Journey: From Dreaming and Home Buying to Realty and Entrepreneurship***. (Morgan James Publishing, October 15, 2019)).

Dr. Simon, who also owns a title company, Lender's Title, a full-service branding studio, Simon Studios, a real estate firm, Fit Realty, and a home-building company, Custom Homes of Virginia, now helps others embrace the entrepreneurial spirit and shows them how to be successful at whatever passion they pursue.

His business leadership and communication skills were honed while serving as the academic dean at Tidewater Bible College, an adjunct professor at Regent University School of Divinity, and as an ordained minister.

He earned a Bachelor of Science from Fairmont State University, majoring in business management. His Master of Arts in church history and doctrine was earned at Regent University. His doctorate in ministry with an emphasis on leadership training was earned at Regent University, as well.

He resides in Suffolk, Virginia with his family. For more information, please consult: www.briansimon.com.

Dr. Brian P. Simon

Q&A

The Real Estate Journey

1. **What inspired you to write *The Real Estate Journey: From Dreaming & Home Buying to Realty & Entrepreneurship*?** Portions of the book I initially began writing for real estate agents at my brokerage, Fit Realty. In the last 12 years, I have seen so many agents get inspired into entrepreneurship. I have watched many with great talent come in and make a boat load of money in their first full year in full-time real estate, but by the middle of the second year they began crashing, either because they did not understand the raw grit and endurance/mind game or because they lacked very essential core business philosophies, which I have attempted to weave into the book. Also, I started thinking and came to the realization that nearly every person I have spent time with over the last 10 years has been sparked into entrepreneurship. It was our time together that helped to strengthen the fire of a dream they had, but they lacked the confidence to pursue it. I wanted to help create a guideline for that. Lastly, my childhood friend, John Garvin, was transferred by the military and lived near me for a couple of years prior to me writing the book. Dr. Garvin, who is currently a professor at West Point, and I spent a ton of time catching up over those couple years that he was stationed here, and he began pushing me to write the book to help spark other people's dreams.

2. **Your book, in part, discusses why real estate is a viable wealth option. Why is real estate a favorite investment vehicle?** The awareness of how simple it can be to retire well as a result of owning rental property was instilled into my life as a young man by my father. Also, Kenton, my home building partner, and I learned quickly that "a builder is only as good as his land" as we jumped headfirst into the industry as young, naïve and foolish dreamers. That began the pronged journey of seeing all of the many ways in which money is made by various parties, starting from the land to a finished residential home. I have watched a lot of people with very little, if any, money accumulate storage units, rentals, multifamily homes, real estate wholesaling, and/or real estate agency over time. The cheapest real estate education available is to get a simple real estate license and help a few folks make their dreams come true. Beginning there, serving others in property purchase, will help make the journey into property investment much safer than when they are led to go it alone. Bottom line: you make money when you buy, not when you sell. Buy the property at the right price and you lock in your equity. Each time property trades hands, whether raw land, residential or multifamily, there are large chunks of money moving hands.

3. **You are a serial entrepreneur, having started over 10 successful businesses. What advice do you have for those who seek to create a profitable business?** First, try to only focus on getting one business (the one you believe will succeed the most) and push it into true success with money in the bank, a solid structure, and systems being executed before diving into another business. Second, decide what problem you want to solve. Many years ago, in my early twenties, I accepted the reality that people had constant problems, and if I could solve those problems I would get paid and others would appreciate having their problems solved. Plumbers solve plumbing problems; car salespeople solve car problems; nail technicians solve finger and toenail problems; military men
and women solve war and peace problems; real estate agents solve home buying, selling, and rental problems. I later learned that if you solve problems but don't have time to keep solving them, you can hire someone else to do it. That's how a business system perpetuates itself: solve

a commonly experienced problem, empower leaders and managers to solve that problem, and then pick a new problem to solve. I love solving problems.

4. **You provide some strategies for managing finances while on the entrepreneurial journey. Can you share some of those tips with us?** Yes, here are some tips:

   • Plan ahead – I like to plan five to ten years ahead. It comes very natural to me. • Create a budget – Get honest with yourself about how much debt you have, how much money you make, and how much money you need to afford the lifestyle you want to live. • Save – Make sure you save enough to pay your taxes, for investing, for a rainy day, for college accounts, and for vacations/luxury purchases.

   • Invest – There are a ton of ways to invest, including index funds, certificate of deposits, annuities, and of course, real estate.

   • Allocate your income – Take your income into account to get a complete picture of your budget. Think long-term and allocate wisely.

   • Increase your income – Get creative. Use your talents to work a side hustle. Sell items online. Or, get involved in real estate, and learn how to increase your sales.

5. **How does one create a "vision of success"?** Great achievers have a habit. They see themselves living the life of their dreams. They imagine already having what they want. Teach yourself to visualize yourself succeeding. See the light at the end of the tunnel before even starting. Create an inner dialog of success and allow yourself to already feel the feelings of achievement.

6. **How does one turn a dream into a goal?** To turn your dream into a goal, it needs to be SMART! It needs to be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Specific. Specific, meaning not broad. Measurable, meaning you need to be able to tell when you have accomplished the goal. Attainable, meaning it cannot be lofty or unachievable. Relevant, meaning it should be important to you and reference your values. Time-Specific, meaning it is not open-ended.

7. **You were a teacher and an academic dean at a Bible College. How did faith shape your views on business and wealth?** As I mention in the book, it was during my time at YWAM that I embraced the concept of the father heart of God. The core of that has remained at the center of my strength to get up and fight another day regardless of how bad things may get along the way. Whether my businesses succeed or fail, I know ultimately that my father God will give me the strength and wisdom to rebuild. While at Regent getting my master's degree in church history and doctrine, I fell in love with some of the great biblical warriors, including the Davids, Sampson, and Joseph. They all struggled and made huge mistakes, yet they got up and did great things. Business is a little bit like old testament warfare to me; business is my way to be a fighter, a warrior. Most call it competition. To me, business is personal. It *does* matter. I fight for my companies as a whole as aggressively as I would fight in hand-to-hand combat, old testament style, donkey bone in hand, let's slay our enemies. Biblically speaking, failure is part of every successful person that God honored by having them mentioned in the scriptures. Failure is part of an entrepreneur's journey, but most don't want to accept that reality.

8. **What traits do many entrepreneurs share? What aptitudes are needed?** Key aptitudes that entrepreneurs should have include perseverance, self-assurance, creativity, tolerance for ambiguity, an attitude towards failure, action-oriented, and, most importantly, flexibility. "Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be broken." This is a must and takes time to develop.

Our world is rapidly changing, and businesses must stay on their toes at all times. There are times to be as stubborn as an old mule, but there are many more times that an entrepreneur must remain flexible.

9. **On the subject of home ownership, you say, there's "no perfect spouse, no perfect house." So how should one decide which home to buy?** First find a real estate agent you can trust. Then find the home and neighborhood that meet your needs. Make the most of your real estate agent, as they can help educate you on what to look for and what to avoid, and they can provide you with reliable references for other experts you'll need along the way, such as inspectors and lenders. View as many houses in your price range and in your targeted location as you possibly can. Talk to friends and family about their real estate experiences, and really listen. People can pass on invaluable advice and recommend good professionals in the trade. Keep the faith that you'll find the right house for you. Wherever you go, keep an eye out for properties. The perfect house may just pop up and surprise you when you least expect it. However, don't forget: no perfect spouse, no perfect house! There is no such thing as a perfect house. Trust that the house you choose will be a great next step for you in this season of your life. Lastly, use your agent to negotiate to get the best price

10. **What are some of the key steps that home buyers need to be aware of?** Don't choose just any real estate agent. If your region has new homes, be sure that you explore both new and re-sale homes. Decide in advance whether you are buying this house primarily as an investment or primarily because it suits your family. Do you want to buy a home you can make $100,000 profit over two to four years or do you want to buy a home because it will make you happy while you raise your family, use it for a tax write-off, and make a small profit in a few years? That core decision will swing you one way or the other on the final decision. But either way, make sure that you get all of the necessary home inspections and that you shop for homeowners' insurance to protect your new home, Remember the time you take when buying a home is a good investment. The time you invest will pay you back 100-fold during your lifespan, and what you can leave in knowledge and assets to your children or a favorite charity will help you and others make more money over the long haul.

11. **You also have a chapter about people who want to become real estate agents. Who would make for a good real estate agent?** Humorously, I spent tons of money on education. I have two undergraduate degrees in business and marketing, a master's degree in church history and doctrine, and a doctoral degree. How many of those degrees did I need to become a real estate agent and start making over $100,000 a year? Zero. I needed a one to two-month long class from my house and then to take a state test and bam, done. Whether you're a millennial or a baby boomer, attaining your real estate license and receiving some quality training at the brokerage you choose is an education and experience that will help you build a base of knowledge so you yourself can build wealth in real estate investments long-term. In my last year at Regent, I had a new wife and a baby on the way. A friend from church, who later became my first broker, asked me, "Brian, do you really want to pack up your pregnant wife and move to a random city to teach and make $40,000 to $50,000 a year with a bunch of rules and corporate structure? Or, would you rather use your passion for teaching and investing into people on top of your awesome sales and speaking gift?" He told me he had been an agent for 15 years and never made less than $100,000 a year. My wife and I talked and prayed about it, and I made a 100% all-in decision, put in notice to stop teaching modular classes at Regent University, and dove full-time, full force in. I have never regretted it. That said, anyone with a decided heart could make a good real estate agent.

12. **Budgeting one's finances can be hard, especially if you have a lot of expenses. What do you recommend for people seeking to balance their checkbook?** The first, most important thing I have found that helps my partners and I is hard but simple. What is the truth of the matter? What are the the real facts? When the facts are clear, the answers become obvious. Lay out all of your debts, incomes, and interest rates. Start by fully unpacking the real facts of your situation. It's likely going to be really overwhelming, but it will be worth it. When times are tight or you want to really ramp up your savings, ask yourself what do I really need to maintain the lifestyle I can live with and/or what am I spending money on that I my family and I can live without. Saying yes to one thing is saying no to something else. There are worksheets included in my book that help with this, but, after you get honest with yourself, I would recommend paying off your debts with the highest interest rates first.

13. **How does one balance living a good personal life, having a family, and being successful financially?** I have struggled with this personally from the beginning, seeking and experimenting with popular teachings such as don't bring your work home with you, or protect your spouse from what happens at the office (i.e. money is being lost or bad things go down with staff or agents at our company), and/or time blocking where you turn off the phone and just spend time with family. Most of the popular teachings do not seem to work for me. Ultimately, I have gone a bit more organic. I remain generally a workaholic, but I'm also a family-aholic. My family knows I'm both, and we all roll with it. I bring my work home with me on occasion in full force, and my children and wife and I will discuss and learn from my crazy business ride. Other times, I lock it in a safe inside to never discuss. I focus on the quality time, the snuggles, the movie time, and any lunch or dinner, whether 20 minutes or a full weekend day. I work and monitor the needs of my companies from morning to night, while at the same time set the phone to the side and focus on what matters. My wife and I at the core always remind ourselves and each other that when she married me she thought I was going to be a broke-ass preacher, and she loved me then. So, if my risky businesses were to dive, ultimately our family unit and our friendship would help us walk that out if it were to ever arrive.

14. What are some positive affirmations that you call upon to give you guidance and strength?

• I dare to boldly stay true to my dreams and not allow every thought that floats through my head, nor my emotions, stop me from dreaming, planning, and acting on my goals and dreams.

• I dare to push through the emotions and pain of walking through what feels like chaos as I battle to achieve my dreams and goals. Fear will not control me. I will do it afraid! • I will no longer blame my failures on my family, friends, or those who have hurt me and held me back. I am the only one to answer for my life. The past is the past and I must turn from the mistakes of the past and focus on planting good seeds into my future daily, and with never ending, yet balanced, efforts. I will embrace my lessons and learn from my highs and my lows.

• Activity Does Not Equal Productivity, I will focus on productivity.

• Today, regardless of the setbacks and unmet expectations, I will, at my core, hold to a Hopeful Expectation of Good.

• I dare to dream of a new season of my life. Seasons change, and so must I.

15. **How does one develop an action plan to become an entrepreneur?** Increase your potential. Meaning increase your business knowledge. Learn about your field. Develop a strategy. A good

strategist is creative; they'll put together what they know to solve a problem. The keys to creativity are your knowledge base and your problem-solving skills. Study the environment: You need to develop a sensitivity to business trends. Sell yourself. An entrepreneur is at times the person who pours gasoline on himself so that others come around to watch him burn. Build a strong relationship with a trusted attorney and get proper insurance coverage. You cannot imagine the situations you will need both of these things to help protect you.

An Action Plan To Be An Entrepreneur

Serial entrepreneur Dr. Brian P. Simon shares insightful guidance for those looking to live their passion and be a successful entrepreneur. Here are some steps one can take to turn a dream into a business, according to his book, ***The Real Estate Journey.***

1. **Call upon key personal traits**, including courage, curiosity, patience, discipline, and flexibility.

2. **Nurture major business skills** in communication, computers, decision-making, problem solving, organization, and in being a people person with a vision.

3. **Explore the key aptitudes of perseverance, creativity, self-assurance, tolerance** for ambiguity, and an attitude toward failure. Rather than view failure as a catastrophe, learn what to avoid the next time around.

4. **Be action-oriented.** Don't put difficult tasks off. Be ready to tackle any objective, any time.

5. **Increase your potential by growing your level of business knowledge**. Read publications, talk to business owners, and search the Internet for getting an education of current business trends and the skills needed to succeed.

6. **Sell yourself--always.** An entrepreneur is at times the person who pours gasoline on himself so that others come around to watch him burn. When you start a business and only get paid when sales or transactions happen, you must sell yourself.

7. **Build a strong relationship with a banker**. Regardless of the type of business you start, you can be assured that a good banker will bring you value and vice versa.

8. **Build a strong relationship with a trusted attorney** once you are financially able to.

9. **Surround yourself with good people and lead them**. Having people who possess clear, strong gifts is the only way you can compensate for your weaknesses. The most successful people are those who manage to make the transition from being a doer to being a manager and a leader.

10. **Stop saying you don't, can't, or won't.** It's not enough for you to say, "I have this great idea, but I don't have any money, so I'm not going to do it," or "I have money saved up, but I don't want to risk it." Taking a risk is a must in life. Entrepreneurs must evaluate the risk and be willing to step out on a limb. Investing blood, sweat, and tears, in the game to potentially make money is a real risk. You may potentially lose money as well. That is just as real.

The 6 Traits Of Successful Real Estate Agents

Dr. Brian P. Simon has had a successful career in all aspects of real estate, from construction and land acquisition to mortgages, sales, and real estate agenting. In his new book, ***The Real Estate Journey****,* he explains what it takes to be a successful real estate agent.

"Real estate agents must be confident, positive, and able to take things in stride," says Dr. Simon.

"Perhaps after purchasing your first home, learning so much about the process and making your own dream come true, you might be interested in becoming an agent and helping others find their home," he writes. "This is in fact why many people decide to become real estate agents. They are, essentially, dreamers helping dreamers."

<u>Here are six key traits that those who hope to succeed as real estate agents must have:</u>

1. **<u>Confidence</u>:** Act and speak with confidence People need to believe in you so start believing in yourself. Maintain a positive attitude, stay informed, exude energy, and practice doing the things you'll need to do to win people over. Stop the negative self-talk and embrace a belief in yourself.

2. **<u>Build Others Up</u>:** Make others feel good. Praise them, compliment their strengths, and show an appreciation for their interests and skills.

3. **<u>Listen To Your Client</u>:** To earn the trust and confidence of your clients, you have to have a clear understanding of their needs. Listen carefully to them.

4. **<u>Don't Make Promises You Can't Keep</u>:** Don't speak without knowing the facts and don't overstate your abilities or mislead a client. Stay one step ahead of your clients and show them you are working hard – and wisely – for them. Be their advisor and always stay in contact.

5. **<u>Know What The Client Wants and Needs</u>:** Be careful to know what your client wants – their budget, their desires, their needs. Will the house meet their age, lifestyle, and future challenges? Are they financially qualified? What expectations do they operate under? What were their past experiences like?

6. **<u>Have A Great Listing</u>:** Does the public listing of your property showcase its strengths? Is it priced right? Did you identify its unique features? Does it visually show well? Do you understand current market conditions and does the listing take them into account?

"Becoming and succeeding as a real estate agent can truly be a fun, challenging, and rewarding long-term career," writes Dr. Simon. "It can serve as a full-time or part-time job, or you can work as a referral-only agent. Succeeding as a real estate agent really comes down to working hard, building momentum, and then leveraging your time through others and technology."

7 Things To Consider When Buying Your First Home

"I believe real estate is hands down the best investment there is," proclaims real estate expert Dr. Brian P. Simon.

In his new book, ***The Real Estate Journey***, he shares dozens of pointers for those buying their first home.

"Despite the potential stress involved," he says, "many people find the prospect of looking for a new house thrilling."

Here are seven strategies for making the initial home purchase a successful one:

1. **Take the emotion out of buying your first home.** Know which repairs are expensive, what's just cosmetic, and don't let any one thing stand in your way of evaluating a potential purchase. Approach it with a level head. Leave your emotions at home and view homes through an objective lens. The caveat is to remember that one day you may want to sell your home. Take into consideration that what you like, a future home buyer may not. Obviously, you want to make your home your own, but you must also think about resale value as you make your remodeling decisions.

2. **Put your fears aside**. Sure you'll fear over-paying, buying the wrong property, working with agents, missing out, or buying just before a market crash. Do your research and buy with your head, not your heart. Ask good questions, do your research, and act on information, not fear.

3. **Understand the pros-cons of buying** a re-sale home vs. a newly constructed spec home vs. a custom-built house. It all depends on your budget, time, needs, and whether what you want already exists.

4. **Understand the value of a property as a home owner:** Check multiple sources on pricing and find reliable comparables to get a sense of market value. Consider a property's location, size, age, amenities, property type, and limitations for expansion or renovation. Is it near the things you need – work, school, parks, restaurants, healthcare facilities, etc.?

5. **Follow the steps to buying a home**, beginning with finding a good real estate agent, establishing what you can afford to spend, knowing what you want to spend, securing funding, searching for the right home loan, and understanding your right as a buyer.

6. **Look for programs in your state to help you** buy your home. Many states have a housing finance authority that offers a variety of programs for first-time home buyers. These programs often offer down-payment assistance and affordable fixed-income mortgage rates.

7. **Negotiate the best price.** Everything is negotiable. Understand the market forces at play, understand your backup options, and consult with your agent on how to best proceed.

The Real Estate Journey

Selected Excerpts

Conceive and Believe to Achieve

A dream is an unrefined hope, an aspiration, a what if, an imagined thing you might do or experience someday. Dreams are cost-free. You can think about them without making any commitment or taking any steps to do them. A dream is not a goal. Goals are specific future targets that we are committed to becoming or accomplishing in an action-oriented, time-specific way. One of the hardest parts of achieving dreams and goals is overcoming the mental barrier, realizing that you really can achieve this, and understanding that it's not as big as it appears.

Dream from the Heart

Your imagination is the place to begin. Imagination is the catalyst of possibility. Creativity is born into the DNA of every human walking this earth. The life you want to live can only be imagined by you and can only be created by you. No matter how sad, uninspired, or difficult your life is right now, you can imagine living a life with higher potentials and possibilities than the one you are living right now. Dare to play with your imagination. Dare to wonder what life could be like if you were in control of making it happen. You have the ability to paint a new life. You're the canvas, the paint, the paint brush, and the painter of your own life. Set aside some time to reconnect with your heart's dream. What have you put on the back burner that you can bring into your painting? What are the dreams you have for yourself? Not for your spouse, your family, or anyone else. What are YOUR dreams?

Create a Vision of Success

Great achievers have a habit. They see themselves living the life of their dreams. They imagine already having what they want. Teach yourself to visualize yourself succeeding. See the light at the end of the tunnel before even starting. Create an inner dialog of success and allow yourself to already feel the feelings of achievement.

Let Yourself Shift for Higher Value

There is no way that dreams can ever become reality if we aren't willing to let go of what is of lesser value in our current lives. It doesn't mean that we don't still appreciate those things and that we didn't grow from having them in our lives. It just means that sometimes, in order to make space for higher value in our lives, there are activities and people that must be let go.

It Takes Work

Do not massage the numbers when you add up the time it'll take to accomplish your goal. If it seems like it'll take longer than you first thought, give yourself permission to alter the timeline so your goals remain realistic and achievable. Sometimes things take longer than they initially appear, but don't get discouraged. Important goals take time!

Principles That Work

Business is about honor in relationships. However, don’t misunderstand: Relationships are necessary, but insufficient within themselves. You must also have a competitively priced product and a unique approach to how you provide your service. You must figure out a way to distinctly promote your product. Just as most people won’t buy from someone they don’t trust no matter how good the products are, neither would they continue to buy inferior products from a friend.

Give to Get

To succeed in business, you must first think of giving, not taking. If you give your customer value in products and service, you’ll get repeat business. If you take care of your employees, they’ll value their jobs and take good care of your customers. If you pay your vendors on time, they’ll expedite a rush order for you. The principle of reciprocity is so basic to relationships that even an enemy is likely to shake your hand if you reach out.

Stick to Good Habits

In the end, it’s virtually important for aspiring entrepreneurs to remember this: whether you have great talents or little talents, great wealth or no wealth, if you continue creating and maintaining good daily, weekly, and yearly habits, you will be successful. Success is defined as the ongoing accomplishment of worthwhile goals. One of those goals may be to raise a family. This doesn’t have an end point, but can have incremental accomplishments along the way, year over year, month over month. Don’t wear yourself out to become rich. Show discretion and choose to embrace the journey of today, not waiting to enjoy life only when you reach some perceived goal you have in mind.