

A photograph of a rock climber silhouetted against a clear blue sky, climbing a steep, dark rock face. The climber is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the image, with a rope extending upwards. The background is a solid blue sky, and the rock face is dark and textured.

# STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- ◆ **Taking Care of Yourself**
- ◆ **The 11th Commandment**
- ◆ **Don't Tolerate, Be Happy**
- ◆ **The Blessing in Adversity**
- ◆ **One Step at a Time**
- ◆ **Live the Dream**

**By Michael E. Angier**

*“There is only one success—to be able  
to spend your life in your own way.”*

—Christopher Morley

This booklet is a sampling of what you'll find in the complete eBook . The book contains over 75 short stories and articles intended to teach and inspire. To order your copy, fill out the order form on the back inside cover. Or order online on our website.

*Practical, Time-Saving, Income-Enhancing Ideas  
for Pennies a Day.*

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## INTRODUCTION



*Strategies for Success* offers a collection of short, simple, insightful concepts that have been proven to work. This booklet is a sampling of what you'll find in the book—a lick of the ice cream cone, if you will. Please see the order form in the back to order the book.

Some chapters will remind you of something you already know. Others will introduce new ideas you can use to accomplish more and experience less frustration—in short, have your life work better. Some will simply entertain. As you read, you'll find these proven principles of success and achievement sinking into your consciousness and positively impacting your life and even the lives of those around you.

Don't allow the simplicity of these concepts to take away from their power. Sift through these pages with an open mind and let the stories do their work. Take what you need and leave the rest.

## QUOTES

If you like the inspirational quotes scattered throughout this booklet, you'll love the quotes library at Success Networks' web site. It has thousands of quotations collected by the author over the last 20 years. It's also free.

Go to [www.successnet.org](http://www.successnet.org) and click on "Success Quotes". You'll also find a free Windows Success Quotes screen saver.

*“When your self-worth goes up, your net worth goes up with it.”*

—Mark Victor Hansen

*“Health is the first wealth.”*

—unknown

*“Every person is the creation of himself, the image of his own thinking and believing. As individuals think and believe, so they are.”*

—Claude Bristol

## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

*It's Not a Selfish Act.*



I WAS JUST GETTING COMFORTABLE and dozing off, trying to ignore the all-too-familiar preflight instructions from the flight attendant as we taxied to the end of the runway. But I found myself listening anyway. What struck me was the part about donning our own oxygen masks before assisting anyone else in putting on theirs. It made total sense, of course. While you selflessly help another, you could easily pass out from lack of oxygen and be of no help to anyone.

It's something I've learned before, but seem to have to relearn over and over in different circumstances; to help others, you have to take care of yourself. I originally recognized this in my family. I had often put everyone else first and didn't take care of my own needs. I falsely believed that if I did something for myself, I was taking something away from others. In fact, what happened was that I had less of me to give.

A few years ago, I had to take a hard look at what kind of support I was giving my staff. Things had been extremely hectic. We'd recently added new people and we were taking over new office space. I hadn't seen the inside of my health club in two months and had been working 70-hour weeks for several weeks straight. I was trying to do everything myself and wasn't asking for help. I was sapping my creative energy and contributing to the tension in the office. I thought that what I was doing was best for my company and the people who depended on me. My intentions were good, but the results weren't.

By stepping back, taking the time to exercise,

delegating more and spending some time to myself, I became more resourceful, easier to get along with and more productive. There seemed to be even more time available and work was definitely more fun.

It's important that we look for ways to nurture ourselves. I keep a list in my planner of ways to indulge myself—things like going to a movie, getting a massage, taking myself out to breakfast, skiing or sailing during the week and so on.

What are some ways that you can take better care of yourself? Here are some key methods:

**Take Time to Yourself.** This is so very important. You need the time for revitalizing the spirit. Don't neglect this.

**Pay Yourself First.** There will always be bills to pay. Get in the habit of making things like a savings deposit a priority and doing it off the top rather than trying to make it after everyone else is paid. This is a super prosperity consciousness builder.

**Exercise.** This is one of the easiest things to let slide, either because we don't feel we have the time or that we just aren't worth it. You will actually have *more* time, or at least more productive time, if you see this activity as a must-do.

Only you know what special treatment is best for you, but the ideas mentioned above should get you started.

Our society doesn't give much recognition for being self-indulgent, but being there for others requires that we take excellent care of ourselves.

Young children are great at knowing and asking for what they want. Of course, they usually do it incessantly. They're not yet concerned about appearing selfish. But in our attempts to teach our children generosity and unselfishness, we

*“Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you.”*

—Carl Sandburg

*“Today, you have 100% of your life left.”*

—Tom Hopkins

*“Don’t be afraid to take a big step. You can’t cross a chasm in two small jumps.”*

–David Lloyd George, PM of Great Britain

*“A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.”*

–Lao-tzu, Tao-te Ching

*“Make your life an exclamation, not an explanation.”*

–unknown

sometimes make them feel guilty for staying true to their own needs.

As grown-ups, we often choose to do things for others that we really don’t want to do because we fear being criticized as selfish or uncaring. Acting out of duty or obligation isn’t the answer. It usually leaves us feeling resentful. We need to do those things that revitalize us and give us the energy and clarity to be supportive of others. From this space we can offer our best.

I’m also convinced that people respect us more for valuing ourselves. Think about the people you know who always say yes to everything and everybody. Do you respect them? Now think of those who are selfish and self-respecting enough to not try and please everyone. Do you think less of them? I don’t. They may not do all the things that I would like them to do, but I respect them. What I’ve found is that people tend to treat you about as well as you treat yourself. When you value yourself, people tend to value *you* more.

You owe it to yourself and those you love to take good care of your most valuable resource—*you!*

THE 11<sup>th</sup>  
COMMANDMENT:  
*“Thou Shalt Not Should on  
Thyself (or others).”*



I’VE SPENT FAR TOO MANY years of my life caring too much about what other people thought. I was a magnet for people telling me what to do. And I let them “should” on me—a lot. As a result, I made some very poor decisions based upon “expert” advice that was totally contrary to what I knew in my heart was the right thing to do.

When someone I cared about would give me advice, I’d feel bad if I didn’t follow their recommendation. Maybe I just didn’t trust myself enough to follow my heart—or didn’t know how. I found it easy to feel guilty about what I did or didn’t do—simply because it didn’t match the views of others I respected.

Most everyone has an opinion about what you should do. It takes a strong resolve to become clear and stay true to your inner guidance system. It’s one of the toughest things to learn.

I had to become aware that guilt was literally running my life. It took several years and some painful mistakes to overcome this disease of the mind, but I did. Somehow, I believed that I wasn’t a good person if I didn’t please people.

Like everyone, I’ve made mistakes and sometimes even hurt people I didn’t intend to. But I’ve hurt myself and others far more by trying to *please* people than by not. Herbert Bayard Swope said, “I cannot give you a formula for success, but I can give you a formula for failure which is: Try to please everybody.” Staying true to

*“I have met  
the enemy;  
and it is the  
eyes of  
other people.”*  
—Ben Franklin

*“You are your  
own authority.  
Choose not to be  
affected by the  
negative opinions  
or attitudes of  
others.”*  
—unknown

***“When the freedom they wished for most was freedom from responsibility, then Athens ceased to be free and was never free again.”***

–Edith Hamilton,  
historian

***“A ‘should’ is a ‘have to’ with no teeth; it is dead energy.”***

–Ruth Ross

***“Just because someone is a travel agent for guilt trips doesn’t mean we have to buy their tickets.”***

–Michael Angier

yourself isn’t easy, but I think it’s the only way to live.

Many people feel shame for no reason other than the misplaced opinion of others. They feel bad because of mistakes they’ve made and because of the “shoulds” of others. Feeling bad doesn’t accomplish anything. Guilt has no virtue. Operating out of obligation and guilt lacks integrity. Don’t do it.

I’m not saying that you should (there’s that word again) totally disregard the information and advice put to you. I’m simply suggesting that you evaluate the information, listen carefully to your heart and do what you think is right. Just because someone is a travel agent for guilt trips doesn’t mean we have to buy their tickets.

No one can walk in your shoes. No one can live your life. Ultimately, it’s you who must answer to how you have lived. We all need to learn the art of correction without invalidation—to see our errors, learn from them and move on—without self-condemnation.

If you feel remorse about something you’ve done or failed to do, take action. If you can make amends, do so. If you can’t, forgive yourself and move on. Vow not to make the same mistake again. If God can forgive you (most religions teach that He does), then you can forgive yourself.



## DON'T TOLERATE, BE HAPPY



I WAS DRIVING TO A MEETING ONE MORNING on a gorgeous spring day. I89 from Burlington, Vermont to Waterbury is one of the most beautiful stretches of interstate highways in the country. I was thinking about what a great state and great country I live in. I was thinking how much I love my life and I was feeling pretty good.

Only a few years prior, my life wasn't so great. I won't go into all the sad details, but I wasn't happy. Today, I am. As I drove through the Green Mountains along the Winooski River, I began to ask myself what was the difference.

I make more money, sure. I have a great relationship with my wife and family, yes. I'm in good health, I love what I do, I have fewer debts—check, check, check.

*All* of these things contribute to my happiness, but what stood out for me was my unwillingness to tolerate things that previously I had accepted. I now expect more and better things in my life, and I don't settle for things that I used to settle for.

Example: The car I'm driving is dependable. It's not new. It's not fancy. But it works. It runs, and I own it. It wasn't long ago that I put up with vehicles that were troublesome. Today, I'd simply get rid of one that didn't meet my needs.

Another: Someone recently spoke to me in a way that I found inappropriate. Time was when I would just accept it, maybe even get into it with them in a similar temper. This time, I told this individual that I no longer allowed people to talk to me in that fashion and ended the conversation. Furthermore, I informed them that this type

*“A happy person is not a person in a certain set of circumstances, but rather a person with a certain set of attitudes.”*

—Hugh Downs

*“We act as though comfort and luxury were the chief requirements of life, when all that we need to make us happy is something to be enthusiastic about.”*

—Charles Kingsley

*“Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.”*

–Abraham Lincoln

*“The minute you settle for less than you deserve, you get even less than you settled for.”*

–Maureen Dowd

of exchange—if continued—would seriously damage our relationship.

We train people how to treat us, and in this case I put her on notice that the way she was speaking to me was unacceptable. Perhaps I just value myself more than I used to.

I share this with you not to brag about how well I’m doing, but to encourage you to value *yourself* more—to tolerate less and to upgrade your life. It’s easier than you might think.

It starts with becoming aware of the things you put up with that take away from your peace and sap your energy. All the little things that individually don’t seem like much but when added together create stress and stop you from experiencing your true bliss.

By resolving and eliminating each little aggravation, you clear the way for creativity. You open yourself to more of what life has to offer.

## THE BLESSING IN ADVERSITY



WHEN I WAS ABOUT FIVE years old, I lived with my family in Enterprise, Alabama for a few months while my father attended an advanced aviation course at nearby Fort Rucker.

What makes Enterprise, Alabama especially memorable is a strange monument they have in the middle of town. You can't miss it. In fact, you have to drive around it because it sits right in the middle of the road. The monument is a statue to the boll weevil.

It's probably the only monument in the world erected in honor of an insect. It certainly wasn't done because of its aesthetic value—the boll weevil is a particularly ugly-looking creature. Surprisingly, it was erected because of the devastation the boll weevil caused to the cotton crops of the surrounding area!

Why did they honor this pest? Well, had it not been for the boll weevil, the local economy would have continued its unhealthy dependence on its one-crop, one-product economy. Until then, everything depended entirely on cotton. When the boll weevil came, the farmers and all the other businesses that were reliant on the cotton farmers were forced to recognize the need to diversify.

In the long run, they saw that the boll weevil had, in fact, done them a favor by destroying their crops. No longer were their eggs all in one "cotton basket." They started raising hogs, peanuts and other cash crops, and the entire area was better off for it.

I think it is to those southern farmers' great credit that they were able to see this "adversity" for what it really was—a great blessing. Too often,

*"There is no  
education like  
adversity."*

—Benjamin Disraeli

*"You'll never find  
a better sparring  
partner than  
adversity."*

—Walt Schmidt

*"Every adversity  
carries with it the  
seed of an equal  
or greater  
benefit."*

—Napoleon Hill

*"Adversity is the  
first path of  
truth."*

—Lord Byron

*"Adversity reveals  
genius; prosperity  
conceals it."*

—Horace

*“The pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist, the opportunity in every difficulty.”*

–Winston Churchill

*“You can always tell the size of a man’s character by the size of the problems that get him down.”*

–unknown

*“Do not fear the winds of adversity. Remember: A kite rises against the wind rather than with it.”*

–unknown

we see difficult times as something to avoid—something only to endure. We usually don’t see the benefit until much later—if at all.

If we look back at the things in our lives that were the most trying, the most painful and frustrating, we have to admit that there was value in it (if you can’t see this, you’re probably too close to the situation).

Our lives are far more enjoyable (certainly more instructional) if we view each thing that happens to us as just that—a happening. Remember, it’s not what happens *to* us, but our *response* to what happens to us that makes the difference in the quality of our lives. I believe that everything that happens can be a lesson, every adversity can be a blessing. The following story illustrates this well.

Anthony Burgess discovered he had a brain tumor and only six months to live when he was 40 years old. He was distressed that he had nothing to leave his wife who was soon to become a widow. He decided to write—something he’d always wanted to do. The potential royalty from a book was the only thing he could think of doing to leave any kind of financial security for his family.

By the end of the first year and with no certainty that he would ever be published, he finished five novels. But he *did not die*. His cancer went into remission and then disappeared altogether.

In his long and full life, Anthony Burgess went on to write more than seventy books. Without the death sentence from cancer, he might not have written anything.

Next time things don’t seem to be going the way you want, ask yourself what the *positive* aspect is. What’s the benefit in the adversity? You’ll have greater enjoyment and learn more in the process.

## ONE STEP AT A TIME



NOT LONG AGO, I was helping my son with his homework. He was having a hard time, not because it was too difficult, but because he was overwhelmed. He saw the whole project as being more than he could do and his brain had shut down. The size of the task had defeated him.

It's something I think we can all relate to.

Often, I'm faced with a long list of projects I want to complete. All of them interesting, all of them important. And all of them together appear impossible to accomplish. I struggle with which ones should take priority.

Sometimes, while working on one, I think perhaps I should be working on another. When I do this, my energy is fragmented and my creativity is cramped. The joy of the work seeps away.

In wanting to be more productive, we sometimes resort to multi-tasking, where we attempt to do more than one thing at a time. This can sometimes be effective. But the fact of the matter is, we can only *think* about one thing at a time. We can switch back and forth pretty fast, but we can only hold one thought in our minds in any given nanosecond.

Whenever we feel overwhelmed—and it's a bit of an art to notice it when this occurs—we need to practice a principle that Alcoholics Anonymous has used with great success: One Step at a Time. It really is the *only* way to get anything done.

If you tend to be a “Big Picture” kind of person, you may have even more difficulty with this step-by-step practice. It takes discipline, but you can do it.

In the situation with my son, I decided to do a pattern interrupt. I asked him if he knew how

*“Inch by inch, life's a cinch. Yard by yard, life is hard.”*

—Dr. Robert Schuller

*“Behold the turtle: He only makes progress when he sticks his neck out.”*

—James Bryant Conant

*“A focused mind is one of the most powerful forces in the universe.”*

—unknown

*“Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other one thing.”*

–Abraham Lincoln

*“Consider the postage stamp, my son. It secures success through its ability to stick to one thing till it gets there.”*

–Josh Billings

*“The more I want to get something done, the less I call it work.”*

–Richard Bach

to eat an elephant. He looked at me warily, and perhaps with a bit of dread and said, “Noooo.”

“You eat an elephant one bite at a time,” I said.

I spent several minutes explaining to him how much easier things are when you break them down into manageable chunks. Even though a bit skeptical, he was open to changing his perspective.

It worked. He was able to focus on only the task at hand and eventually complete his entire assignment.

It’s a concept we all know about, but we need to remind ourselves from time to time.

Here are four suggestions on how to overcome your overwhelm:

1. Write down the things you need to accomplish. Define each result you want to achieve. Committing things to paper always makes them clearer—and more manageable.

Complicated projects need to be broken down into smaller components.

2. Decide which projects you’re going to work on first. Number them in order of importance. Be decisive here and stick with it. Andrew Carnegie, the great steel magnate, is reported to have paid a consultant \$25,000 for this one idea (he admitted later he would have paid even more).

3. Brainstorm ideas on how you can get your objectives accomplished. Ask yourself who can help you. Look for innovative ways to get the job done. There are more than you can imagine.

4. Put all your energy into the first item on your list. Don’t think about the others. And then, enjoy the process.

The old cliché, “Yard by yard, life is hard but inch by inch, life’s a cinch,” is really true.

## LIVE THE DREAM



I'VE ALWAYS BEEN FASCINATED by dreamers. And making dreams come true for myself and others is what my life is about.

When I was in my teens, I started to think seriously about where I wanted my life to go. Like many young people I had visions of doing something significant. I also knew that most people abandon their dreams. So I promised myself that I would never give up trying, no matter what difficulties might come.

And the difficult times did come—some of them more painful than I could have imagined—but I kept my promise. I've never given up. I've been blown out of the sky several times, but I've always been able to put things back together and lumber down the runway to bluer skies.

My greatest fear had always been that I might reach the end of my life and feel that I hadn't fulfilled my purpose—that I hadn't made a lasting difference in the world. I no longer have this fear, but I'm still driven to make the most of my talents, my experiences and my resources.

During my 25 years of personal development research, I've seen many people—good people, hard-working people, talented people—not experience the success they deserved. They weren't failing, they were just no longer willing to go for the best that's within them. They had good intentions, but somewhere along the line they got disheartened and gave up on themselves—they let their dreams slip away.

It was out of my commitment and this concern, as well as my own failings, that I started Success Net. What I try to do with my writing

*“Success is the accumulation of successful days.”*

*“If you appreciate what you already have, you'll find yourself having even more to appreciate.”*

*“A successful day: to learn something new; to laugh at least ten times; to lift someone up; to make progress on a worthy goal; to practice peace and patience; to do something nice for yourself and another; to appreciate and be grateful for all your blessings.”*

*“Hold fast to dreams for if dreams die, life is like a broken-winged bird that cannot fly.”*

—Langston Hughes

*“When we realize one dream, sometimes a deeper dream reveals itself. At other times a parallel dream appears. The one that scares the hell out of you is probably it.”*

—Peter McWilliams

and with this network is to coach people to be their best—personally and professionally. No professional athlete would consider competing without a coach. And yet, few people have a coach for the game of life. Coaches challenge and motivate the player. A good coach will help the athlete develop a game plan and create accountability for following that plan.

And we all need a game plan—a plan for a balanced, value-driven, principle-centered life. I believe that happiness is a result of continually striving toward worthwhile objectives while also enjoying and appreciating what is here and now. It’s a paradoxical balance struck between what I call “inspirational dissatisfaction” and contentment.

By investing the time and energy to get clear on our values and life purpose, by defining and articulating what we really want from all areas of our life, and then consistently acting on our objectives, we will live a successful life. This kind of work isn’t easy. It requires deep thinking and honest soul-searching. It’s not something you do in an afternoon. It demands constant focus and attention. Unless you’re the architect of your life, you’re at the affect of everything and everyone you encounter. It’s something with which we all need help.

My passion is helping people discover, develop and fulfill their dreams. In the process, I fulfill my own. I take great joy in supporting people and organizations to consistently create excellence. To participate in the development and realization of a dream is, for me, to walk on holy ground. By living our dreams, we give birth to things that never would have been, but more importantly, we become more of who we are in the process.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



MICHAEL ANGIER is the founder and president of Success Networks International, an association dedicated to helping people become more knowledgeable, prosperous and effective. He's a father, husband, writer, speaker, entrepreneur, coach and student.

He's the publisher and editor of *Success Strategies™* as well as *Success Digest™*—publications of ideas, information and inspiration. He was formerly the publisher of *Creating Excellence*—a magazine subtitled Vermont's Journal for People in Growing Businesses.

Michael's passion is human potential. He believes fervently in the indomitable human spirit and revels in helping people succeed in all aspects of their lives.

As a young boy, he started reading biographies of famous people and was fascinated by their lives and their contributions to the world. Over the past 25 years, Michael has devoted himself to the science of individual achievement and has been an ardent student of the principles of success. He's taught seminars and conducted workshops on goal setting, motivation and personal development in both the United States and Canada.

Michael has a deep faith and belief in a Higher Power and Presence, which he chooses to call God. He feels there are three things essential to living a fulfilling and successful life: a purpose to live for, a self to live with and a faith to live by.

Michael is married to Dawn Angier—his partner, best friend, mentor, teacher, student and confidant. They live in South Burlington, Vermont and have six children. He enjoys tennis, sailing, traveling, reading and helping people realize their dreams.



*“If you practice the habits of success, you'll make success a habit.”*

*“Be careful not to confuse being rich with living a rich life. Being rich (financially) is a worthy goal, but living a rich life should be our primary mission.*

*And this comes from having who we become, not what we achieve, being our main objective.”*

—Michael Angier

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## WHAT IS SUCCESS NET?

SUCCESS NET is an international association of people committed to operating at their best—to creating excellence in every aspect of their lives and every part of their respective organizations. Its mission is to inform, inspire and empower people to be their best—personally and professionally.

We help people develop the skills, knowledge, belief and passion necessary to achieve their dreams. Success Net is dedicated to helping people become more knowledgeable, prosperous and effective.

You can expect much more from us than subscriptions to our publications; we provide a complete membership package directed at making your road to success easier and more fun. Our commitment is to double the value of your membership and double your market value every two years. Everything we do is with that intention in mind.

### **Who Joins?**

People from all walks of life become members: Small business owners, managers, employees who want to move up in the organization, parents, students and homemakers. Anyone who wants to maximize their potential, improve the quality of their lives and make a lasting difference in the world. In short, Success Net is for great people who want to become even better. We also offer corporate membership programs.

### **Financial Independence**

One of our primary objectives is to encourage and support our members in becoming and remaining debt free. And after that, to develop complete financial independence. This kind of freedom is within everyone's reach in only a few short years.

### **Free Membership**

You may become a member simply by sending us your name and email address. Enroll online at <http://www.SuccessNet.org>

You need not send any money. There is no risk and no obligation. We offer several valuable reports and special bonuses just for enrolling as a member.

*“Michael wants to help you operate at your personal and professional best. I learn a lot from him. You can, too.”*

—Burt Dubin, Personal Achievement Institute, Kingman, AZ

*“Just wanted to tell you again how much your writing means to me. You really have a way to inspire me. Your debt-free stuff has really gotten me going.”*

—Jeff Dowling, coach and business owner, Flemington, NJ

*“... your words are great soul food. Thank you for sharing your insights and those of others—for helping many of us to take a breath, smell the flowers and to remember what is truly important in our short time on earth! I appreciate you!”*

—Kathy Duley, Competitive Edge Training, Plattsburg, NY

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*Information and Inspiration to Help Great People  
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