

Billionaire Shares His Success Secret

Bill Bartmann is well qualified to talk about what it takes to be successful. He is a billionaire, about the 25th richest man in the world and has earned the accolade of "Entrepreneur of the Year". However, life for Bill Bartmann started out very differently.

Bartmann was one of eight children. His parents were uneducated and so could not command well-paying jobs. He describes having to move frequently and even being turned out of dwellings because they were deemed not fit for human habitation.

He has been homeless and was once part of a travelling carnival. He's a former high school dropout. He was a teenage alcoholic and a member of a teenage gang called known as the Manor Boys. He was also the smallest member weighing in at just 98lbs. This didn't stop him from picking fights with the 'big' boys. In some ways it's a trait that has stuck with him - not so much picking fights - but there's audaciousness to many of his business ventures that leave many wide-eyed with wonder.

He truly understands the concept of risk and reward. A big risk can result in a huge pay-off, but if it backfires it can leave a large dent in your pocket and bank balance. Bill Bartmann has experienced both extremes. He has been a pauper, a millionaire, bankrupt and a billionaire.

It just shows that it's not your circumstances that make an individual wealthy. It's your mindset. He could lose everything today and tomorrow he would simply start to rebuild his fortune.

In a recent interview for Virtual Seminar Week, Alex Mandosian asked Bill Bartmann what was in his view the key to success. Bartmann replied that he could sum up the key to success to just one thing, something which he had identified at a young age. I held my breath. This is what he said,

"All the successful people I knew in life had high self-esteem and all the losers had low self-esteem."

Why was I expecting this billionaire to say something different, more profound maybe? We often complicate things unnecessarily. The truth is often very simple and staring us in the face as is beautifully and humorously illustrated in Russell Conwell's Acres of Diamonds.

Also to quote Harv Ecker,

"You can have the greatest business strategies in the world but if you don't have the mindset to go along with them you won't use them."

Our self-image drives everything that we do and our self-image is inexorably linked to our self-esteem and self-confidence. Improve your self-esteem and improvements in your life will naturally follow. Having a high self-esteem is indeed the key to success.

When Bartmann was growing up his self-esteem was low. He gives credit to his childhood sweetheart, Kathy, for opening his eyes to this fact. It is as Barbara D'Angelis says,

"Until you're aware of what you're doing you have no choice but to continue doing it."

However, at age 17, Bartmann was not aware that he continually put himself down until one night he was driving with Kathy, just 14 at the time, at his side when she suddenly slapped the dashboard and said,

"Pull over! Stop the car! Let me out!"

Shocked, he obliged. She told him that she never wanted to see him again. She told him that she loved him but that he was always putting himself down. She had had enough.

He was stunned. He had no idea. He loved this young girl and he did not want to lose her. He pleaded with her explaining that it was a habit he did unconsciously. He said he would change. She relented and agreed to stay. While change wasn't easy the alternative didn't bear contemplating. He steadily built his self-esteem. He took the GED exam and put himself through college and law school.

Kathy has been by his side ever since, eventually becoming Bartmann's wife; they've been married now for 33 years. And, as further testament to her how savvy she is, she is his business partner, has been on the cover of Forbes and has been individually listed in the Forbes 400 wealthiest people in

America. As you can tell Mrs Bartmann deserves a story of her own but back to Mr Bartmann.

It takes a diamond-hard resolve, an iron-clad self-esteem to endure the ups and downs that he has experienced and earn the respect that he has garnered from individuals as diverse as Mother Theresa, Mohammed Ali and Clarence Thomas (U.S. Supreme Court Justice).

Sure he's been tested. He's had his self-doubts, even bouts of depression - he wouldn't be human otherwise. However, when your self esteem is strong and when you are clear about your core values - the things you stand for and what you are unwilling to compromise on - then you bounce back from these lows. And each time you bounce back just a little bit higher.

Again, reinforcing the role that self-esteem or self-image plays in our ability to grow, one just needs to take a look at the content of Bartmann's seminars. He doesn't teach people about the stock market, real estate or any other way to generate income. His seminars take a different approach, a more fundamental approach. He knows and appreciates the importance of self-esteem and the powerful tools he teaches are equable applicable to life as they are to business.

He promises "no tear-jerking or any tugging at your emotions". Yet, how can you not be emotionally moved by his story and is it not by allowing ourselves to be swept away by the emotional charge of this "rags to riches" tale that gives us hope that we too can achieve great success in our lives?

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