

The Art of Giving

The key is to decide that you will become a giver, and not merely a taker. You will choose to leave something behind in this world and not merely try to get something out of it.

by **Chris Widener**

1194 words | 4 pages



In the pursuit of the life we dream of, this journey we are on for successful living, the focus is usually on figuring out what it is exactly that we want and then setting ourselves on course for going and getting it.

***This is very important:
Know what you want
to get for your life and then
pursue it.***

But there is another aspect of achieving the life you dream of that seems on the surface to actually be counter-productive to getting the life you want, yet is imperative to the successful life. It is giving.

Giving - of yourself, your time, your money, your energy - is something that takes us from simply being successful people in the traditional sense of the term, to being people who lead successful lives.

***Giving is what makes us fully
human. It is the essence of what
we are, people who are here on
earth together, not simply people
who hope to clamor to the top of
the pile in the survival of the
fittest.***

Yes, pursue your life and your success with wild abandon; be responsible for yourself and take ownership of your life, realizing that you cannot be responsible for others, but also allow yourself to become a giving person.

Giving is also what allows us to accomplish things far beyond ourselves; and that is part of what living the life of our dreams is all about, right?

Accomplishing great things through ourselves - and others!

How do we do that? Here are some ideas:

Make your giving purposeful. Give to people and organizations that fulfill purposes that you believe in. This way, they feel good, you feel good, and the work you believe in gets done.

Giving purposefully will give you the ability to know that your giving is doing something great.

Make your giving proactive. Take control of your giving. When we control our giving it becomes proactive rather than reactive. We know that we are doing what we want to do rather than what others may manipulate us to do. We can avoid a lot of the wondering about validity that comes when we give out of reaction. Giving proactively will give you a lot of peace of mind.

Make your giving methodical. Every month my wife and I write out our charity checks before any other checks. We do that on purpose to keep our hearts in the right place. Every month, month in and month out, year after year, we go about our giving. Our goal is to give away \$1,000,000 by the end of our lives (and we may have to even readjust that goal as time goes by since we set it when we were only 24 years old and we are well on our way to that goal.)

This isn't done by giving big chunks from time to time. It is accomplished by checks each and every month, methodically.

Giving methodically allows you to build up larger gifts over time.

Make your giving generous. Don't be a tightwad! Loosen up the purse strings a bit. Think of your giving in regard to how you can be generous, not how you can cover your charitable bases. I have found that it isn't the extra money given to charity that breaks people. It is usually mismanagement. And at the end of your life you will most likely not know the difference financially, though you will in your heart. Making your giving generous allows you to give even greater amounts over time.

Make your giving increasing. Don't just give the same amount from year to year - increase your giving. I think there are two good times to readjust your giving: The first of the year and any time your income goes up. Bump your giving up then, if you can. This will keep you on pace with your giving goals and you will notice the increase less from your bottom line. Make your giving increasing and your giving will keep pace with your income.

Make your giving from the heart. Don't just let your giving be a mind issue. Let it be a heart issue. This is what gives us our humanity.

What causes make your eyes tear up? What causes really mean something to your heart when you are honest with yourself? Start giving to these causes! Let your checkbook be a reflection of your heart! Make your giving from the heart and you will allow your heart to grow.

(Sometimes) Make your giving spontaneous. Sometimes... Allow yourself to be spontaneous with your giving. Do allow yourself to react sometimes. Will you get taken advantage of? Yes, sometimes. But you will also be doing something within yourself that will keep you from becoming cynical. Sometimes, as life has been good to you and you find yourself blessed, let yourself be the blessing to someone else. Make your giving spontaneous (sometimes) and you will battle the disease of cynicism about charity that can creep in.

These are just a few ideas that you can implement right now to begin the art of giving in your life. The key is to decide that you will become a giver, and not merely a taker. You will choose to leave something behind in this world and not merely try to get something out of it.

And as we all commit to that, our world will be a better place and we can all live the lives that we dream of.



Chris Widener is an example of how anyone can overcome any odds to achieve a successful life and help others achieve the same. Chris has overcome many obstacles... living through his father dying suddenly when he was four, being sent away from his family to live with relatives at age nine and becoming involved with drugs and alcohol by the age of twelve. Chris overcame those obstacles and has for the last ten years worked with some of the most financially successful families in America, helping them to achieve both personally and professionally. Now he can do the same for you!