Leaving a Legacy

Jim Rohn’s Twelfth Pillar of Success: Part Two
Hello, and welcome to Week 49 of The Jim Rohn One-Year Success Plan. We hope your week is going well.

Have you ever thought about the Golden Rule? Sure, everyone knows the words by heart, but stop for a moment and really think about what it says. It says that despite how people treat us, we should treat them the way they want to be treated—not the way they deserve (or the way we think they deserve).

How many times have you “risen above” your feelings and gone out of your way to treat someone with kindness when you didn’t think they deserved it, only to find out later that there were some extenuating circumstances causing that person to act in a negative way? I’m sure you can think of numerous examples where people have done that for you in your life. For such a small phrase, it is so very powerful if we will internalize and live out of those simple instructions.

This week’s topic of principles to live by that Jim and Chris will discuss goes hand in hand with the Golden Rule. It is so key to not only leave a lasting, impactful legacy, but also a life well-lived. These are the basics, the fundamentals, the values that if a person were to live by them, they could not but help to leave a powerful legacy of who they were and touch lives along their journey.

As we near the completion of our one-year success plan journey, we continue to receive some great feedback from members (a little piece of our legacy).

We have enjoyed hearing from you throughout this past year. I encourage you to view some of the testimonials for yourself by clicking The One-Year Success Plan link on our website. May they give you inspiration and encouragement as you complete the course this month.

Enjoy the lesson!

Kyle Wilson

“The world around you is an out-picturing of the world within you. The images you dwell upon affect your thoughts, feelings and behavior.”

—Brian Tracy
Leaving a Legacy

JIM ROHN’S 12TH PILLAR OF SUCCESS: LEAVING A LEGACY, PART TWO—PRINCIPLES TO LIVE BY

Hello, Jim Rohn here. This month we focus on leaving a legacy. Here is an overview of the month.

1. A Life Well-Lived. This month’s first week covered the importance of leaving a legacy of a life well-lived. We learned how our lives impact all those who follow us, and we introduced the topics we will review later in the month.

2. Principles to Live By. Today we will cover key principles to live by that will help you leave a legacy. These will be the foundations of a life that leaves an impact on others. The principles we live by are the basis for the kind of legacy we will leave behind. We will also begin our how-tos by looking at how to leave a relational legacy. All of life is based on relationships, and we choose what direction those relationships go. We can live our lives in such a way that when we are gone, people are impacted by the relational legacy we left behind.

3. The Importance of a Spiritual Legacy and an Impact Legacy. Week Three will cover both how to leave a spiritual legacy as well as how to leave an “impact legacy.” The core of who we are as individuals is spiritual. We were created with the intention of relating to God through our spiritual life. One of the greatest gifts we can leave behind is a spiritual example and legacy. We will also talk about how to leave a life legacy that impacts people. There are those who live on this earth and then just disappear, leaving little more than a trace. And then there are others who, through their legacy, live on in others for years to come. We will talk about how to be the latter.

4. Financial Legacy. In Week Four, we will look at leaving a business legacy, a financial legacy and a family legacy. We will see how the businesses we operate have a deeper impact than we might have imagined. We will talk about establishing a strong financial base that will provide for others long term. We will also look at one of the most important aspects of legacy, those we touch most deeply: our family.

So let’s talk about this week’s topics!

Leaving a Legacy – Principles to Live By

You know me, I am a philosopher. I love principles. Yes, actions are great, and I talk about them regularly, but the important stuff is what lies underneath—the principles.

Here are what I consider to be the principles that we must commit to if we are to leave the legacy we desire:

1. Life is best lived in service to others. This doesn’t mean that we do not strive for the best for ourselves. It does mean, however, that in all things we serve other people, including our family, co-workers and friends.

2. Consider others’ interests as important as your own. Much of the world suffers simply because people consider only their own interests. People are looking out for No. 1, but the way to leave a legacy is to also look out for others.

3. Love your neighbor, even if you don’t like him. It is interesting that Jesus told us to love others but never tells us to like them. Liking people has to do with emotions. Loving people has to do with actions. And what you will find is that when you love people and do good by them, you will more often than not begin to like them.
4. **Maintain integrity at all costs.** There are very few things you take to the grave with you. The No. 1 thing is your reputation and good name. When people remember you, you want them to think, “She was the most honest person I knew. What integrity.” There are always going to be temptations to cut corners and break your integrity. Do not do it. Do what is right all of the time, no matter what the cost.

5. **You must risk in order to gain.** In just about every area of life, you must risk in order to gain the reward. In love, you must risk rejection in order to ask that person out for the first time. In investing, you must place your capital at risk in the market in order to receive the prize of a growing bank account. When we risk, we gain. And when we gain, we have more to leave for others.

6. **You reap what you sow.** In fact, you always reap more than you sow—you plant a seed and reap a bushel. What you give you get. What you put into the ground then grows out of the ground. If you give love, you will receive love. If you give time, you will gain time. It is one of the truest laws of the universe. Decide what you want out of life, and then begin to sow it.

7. **Hard work is never a waste.** No one will say, “It is too bad he was such a good, hard worker.” But if you aren’t, they will surely say, “It’s too bad he was so lazy—he could have been so much more!” Hard work will leave a grand legacy. Give it your all on your trip around the earth. You will do a lot of good and leave a terrific legacy.

8. **Don’t give up when you fail.** Imagine what legacies would have never existed if someone had given up. How many thriving businesses would have been shut down if they quit at their first failure? Everyone fails—it is a fact of life. But those who succeed are those who do not give up when they fail. They keep going and build a successful life—and a legacy.

9. **Don’t ever stop in your pursuit of a legacy.** Many people have accomplished tremendous things later on in life. There is never a time to stop in your pursuit of a legacy. Sometimes older people will say, “I am 65. I’ll never change.” That won’t build a great life! No, there is always time to do more and achieve more, to help more and serve more, to teach more and to learn more. Keep going and growing that legacy!

These are core principles to live by if you want to become the kind of person who leaves a lasting legacy.

Next, Chris will talk about a relational legacy.

Until next week, let’s do something remarkable!

*Jim Rohn*

“Spiritual values transcend the material artifacts that we can touch and see. They take us into the realm of beauty, inspiration and love.”

—*Nido Qubein*
Hi there, Chris Widener here. This week I want to talk with you about the legacy we leave in our relationships. Relationships are at the very core of our existence here, and they’re something we deal with every day of our lives and on every level of our lives. We have very superficial relationships with many people, such as merchants we may meet as we go about our lives, and relationships that we consider intimate, like the ones we experience with our immediate family and spouses.

Relationships provide us with both the most positive as well as the most negative experiences in our lives. There are those who, though they may never achieve fame or fortune in this world, will be remembered very highly by all who came in contact with them. Their funerals will overflow with people they have touched.

The pain and joy that can surface as children remember their deceased parents is determined by the lives those parents lived and how well they maintained relationships with their children.

What it all comes down to is the ability to maintain healthy relationships.

I want to share with you the key components of establishing relationships that will allow you to leave a fantastic relational legacy.

Be Purposeful. People are busy and time flies. Put these two together, and you have a recipe for disaster in the relationship department. Pretty soon, you and your best friends have had months go by between times spent together. In order to have quality relationships, we have to be purposeful. This is especially true with couples, and even more so for couples with small children. They need to be very purposeful in making sure they spend quality time together communicating and enjoying one another.

Be Proactive. This is the opposite of reactive. Reactive is when your spouse says, “We never spend any time together,” and you respond by saying, “OK, we will this week.” It would be to sit down at the beginning of each month or week and schedule the time, or better yet, have a weekly “date night.” The key is to take control and schedule your relationships. Otherwise, they will get away from you.

Be Disciplined. Yes, it takes discipline to regularly invest in maintaining healthy relationships. This means the monthly lunch with a friend. It means the yearly hunting trip with friends from high school. It means cutting out of work early to go to your child’s game. It means disciplining yourself to work harder during the day in order to leave at a set time so you can eat dinner with your family. All of these are acts of discipline. Just as we have to discipline ourselves in other areas of our lives—like exercising for health or investing for wealth—we have to discipline ourselves into actions that will produce strong and healthy relationships.

Value People Above Possessions, Schedules and Achievements. The sooner we realize that we leave behind all of our stuff when we die, the sooner we will be able to focus on that which matters most: relationships. Don’t get me wrong, though. I am not saying that we shouldn’t do our best to become successful financially or that we shouldn’t enjoy material possessions. What I am saying is that should be secondary to healthy relationships. I can’t imagine someone on their deathbed saying, “I wish I would have left an estate of $10 million instead of $5 million.” No, people get to the ends of their lives and wish they would have invested more in their relationships.

Be Loving. I don’t mean to be guided by emotional feelings of “love.” Feelings come and go. This is what I mean when I say loving: to always act in such a way as to do what is best for the other person. Love is not feelings, but actions. When we say that we love someone, we mean that we are committed to their best interests. If we are lucky, those commitments are coupled with strong emotional bonds as well.
**Be Forgiving.** The fact is this: Where there are people, mistakes will be made. I don’t care if you are the nicest guy on earth (or married to him), you will have some breakdowns in your relationship on occasion. That is the nature of being human. Other people will fail you, and you will fail people.

And when this happens, we must face a decision: Will we let the relationship remain broken or will we learn to forgive? An analogy might be in order. A relationship is like building a house. It has to have a strong foundation. That is where you start. Then it must be built step by step until it is finished. During the building process, there may be times when a beam falls or the 2-by-4-inch wood studs break. The builder has a decision to make. Will he repair the building or let it go? If he chooses to let it go, the house will be weak and eventually fall into disrepair. Unfortunately, too many people let their relationships break and do not repair them by practicing forgiveness. People who leave successful relationships behind them practice the art of forgiveness.

**Follow the Golden Rule.** The golden rule of life is, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” What is most interesting about this is that Christ was the first religious leader to say this in a positive way. Before Jesus, other leaders had said, “Don’t do to others what you don’t want them to do to you.” Relationships are about being proactive and doing for others.

When we wake up each day with the goal to follow the Golden Rule and do good in people’s lives, we set ourselves on a course that will allow us to build a strong relational legacy.

Think of how you want to be remembered, and then live in such a way that you will be. If you want to be remembered as kind, then be kind. If you want to be remembered as strong, then be strong. If you want to be remembered as friendly, then be friendly. If you want to be remembered as forgiving and patient, then be forgiving and patient. What you do and how you act will add up to how you will be remembered.

It is possible to leave a wonderful relational legacy. If you follow the principles above, you will surely do so.

Have a great week!

*Chris Widener*
Questions for Reflection

Q. Which of the principles that Jim wrote about are you strongest in? Weakest?

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Q. Have you stopped or given up in any area of your life? Why? Are there areas you are slowing down in?

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Q. How disciplined would you say you are, as it relates to your relationships?

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Q. How well would you say you follow the Golden Rule? Give an example.

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1. Think of someone who you haven’t called for a while but whose relationship you value. Pick up the phone and call them. If they are local, take them out for a meal. Write your plans here.

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2. Think of someone who you need to forgive... or be forgiven by. Take some time this week and begin the process. Again, pick up the phone and call. Write comments here.

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3. Haven’t been home to see your family in a while? Take out your calendar and schedule your next trip home. Put it in your calendar. Write your plans here.

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“They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel.”
—Carl W. Buechner
Week 49

REVIEW OF BRIAN TRACY’S CD FIFTEEN
21 Qualities of Self-Made Millionaires
✦ Communication—the Master Skill to Powerful Relationships
✦ Your Ability to Communicate
✦ Three Parts of a Conversation
✦ Four Basic Personality Styles
✦ Asking Questions
✦ Good Listening Skills

A Look Forward

This week we will be listening to CD 16 of Brian Tracy’s Success Mastery Academy.
✦ Achieving Success in Family and Business
✦ Balance Between Family and Work
✦ Investing Your Time
✦ The Key to Balance
✦ Being with Your Family
✦ Seven Roles for the 21st Century

Notes for CD 16 from Brian Tracy’s Success Mastery Academy:

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