

The Goose and the Golden Egg

creating balance in your life to become successful, happy and fulfilled

The most successful, happy and fulfilled people live their life in harmony with the natural law of balance. These people are neither totally goal oriented nor solely process oriented. They are high achievers and also appreciate the process of achieving their goals.

Aesop's fable of the goose and the golden egg nicely illustrates this point.

Once, there was a poor farmer who was struggling to feed his family and himself.

One day, when the poor farmer was collecting eggs for breakfast he discovered a golden egg under one of his geese. Of a suspicious character, he thought it was a trick. He decided to throw the egg aside.

After finishing his duties that day he decided to take a second look at the golden egg. He entered the barn, picked it up and felt the weight of the egg. It was much heavier than the other eggs.

The following day the farmer took the egg to town to have it appraised. The goldsmith was amazed and told the farmer that the egg was pure gold! The farmer rejoiced over his newfound riches.

The next morning he collected another golden egg. This time it was even larger and heavier. He had the egg appraised and once again it was pure gold.

The following days the farmer found eggs, larger and larger, heavier and heavier. With his growing riches he became greedier and greedier.

After breakfast the following day, he wanted another golden egg. He went into the barn to collect more gold but the goose had not laid another egg. The farmer was disappointed and came back an hour later. There was still no egg and the farmer became furious. He wanted his gold, he needed his gold and he had to have his gold.

The farmer decided to kill the goose to get all the gold from the inside of it at once. He opened the goose up, only to find that it was empty.¹

This story shows the natural law of balance. If you live life focusing solely on the golden egg you will neglect the goose. Similarly if you only focus on the goose without intention of collecting the golden egg you will lose your ability to take care of yourself and the goose.²

The story of the goose and the golden egg is closely related to health. In today's high stress society it is important to maintain a healthy body. We work long hours and sometimes push our bodies to the limits. This is not a problem as long as we take care of our bodies, exercise, eat well and sleep. However many of us only focus on our capacity to produce without creating the physical foundation to maintain that capacity. A pattern like this is highly destructive to our bodies and minds. If there is no balance, the golden egg will slowly disappear as our physique deteriorates. On the other hand, some of us exercise three hours a day, eat healthily and sleep well but focus too much on the process of being healthy, while

¹ Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, 1997, p. 52

² Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, 1997, p. 54

neglecting goals and ambitions. In this case they spend their life taking care of the goose but not finding the golden egg.

By exercising a few days a week, skipping junk food and making sure we sleep well we give our bodies the ability to achieve success. Do not neglect your body if you want it to perform for you!

Sometimes we focus solely on the golden egg of relationships. Our goal for the relationship is our benefits, needs and wants. We forget kindness and love, the goose, and focus solely on what we need and what we want, the golden egg. A lack of balance in the relationship is thus created. Focus changes from giving to receiving. We start manipulating each other to give as little as possible and receive as much as possible. This way we slowly starve the relationship in our ambition to receive but not to give.³

We can turn this around by changing the relationship into a win/win situation. If we focus more on giving we end up receiving more. It is nature's irony that in order to receive you must first give.

In all facets of life it is important for us maintain a healthy balance between the goose and the golden egg. For us to become even more successful, happy and fulfilled it is vital to focus on both the golden egg and the goose. If you are not living the life that you deserve, you might be living a life of imbalance. Why not give balance a try?

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