

# SEEDING GREATNESS IN EVERY SITUATION

## DENIS WAITLEY SHARES A DIFFERENT TAKE ON FAILURE AND SUCCESS

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**M**OTIVATION guru Denis Waitley served in the American navy after graduation, but quickly discovered that his passion lay in developing people and helping them realise their capabilities and potential.

After obtaining his degree at the US Naval Academy, Waitley completed a doctorate in human behaviour and began his journey of inspiring and empowering others.

While he is best known for his 1995 book, *The Psychology of Winning*, Waitley also produced the preceding audio programme of the same name in 1978, which has sold over 100 million copies to date. Waitley has also authored 16 books and recorded a series of bestselling audio programmes.

Despite his incredible success, the renowned author and speaker believes that it's in the study of failure that we find the keys to success – and he advises us that we should be less fearful of failure if we're to be able to understand and learn from it.

**“Quality of life is not money – quality of life is where you are, what kind of environment you're in, who you're with, and what you're giving back after you've gained all this significance in life.”**

Appearing on *The Leaderonomics Show* with chief executive officer of Leaderonomics, Roshan Thiran, Waitley insists that “failure is the fertiliser of success”. Just as fertiliser is not



appealing in and of itself, no one likes failure: it doesn't smell good and no one wants to roll around in it. However, it is something that can nurture us in a way that enhances our development and growth.

“Failure is a learning experience, a temporary inconvenience – but failure is consistent with people who win: there never was a winner who didn't lose along the way,” says Waitley.

When it comes to success, he offers the wise insight that “success isn't a place you arrive at – you're always under construction”. Success is a process, not a status, and we should “never fall in love” with the notion of success but rather, enjoy it while it lasts.

There's something to be admired about those who enjoy outstanding successes in their field, and yet remain authentic and grounded. In this open and frank conversation with Thiran, Waitley revealed that the idea of “planting shade trees” for future generations keeps him going strong; despite his renown, he has a genuine desire to stay engaged and continue to provide value for as many people as he can.

Commenting on what makes for a quality life, he advises: “Quality of life is not money – quality of life is where you are, what kind of environment you're in, who you're with, and what you're giving back after you've gained all this significance in life. In fact, you should gain significance by your own insignificance.”

Such is Waitley's hunger for giving back as much as he can that he revealed on *The Leaderonomics Show* that he has no plans to leave his children any financial inheritance. He insists that it's “more important what you leave in your children, rather than what you leave to them.”

One particularly powerful point made in the interview is Waitley's belief that parents who leave their estates to their children, albeit with noble intentions, may actually be doing them a disservice.

“There are so many people who build up a huge estate then give it to their children. What they say is, ‘I don't want my children to do what I had to do’ – but you're then giving them entitlement, but no empowerment.”

For one of America's most respected thought leaders, it's more important to build a solid foundation for the younger

### DENIS WAITLEY'S TOP 5 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Read biographies of successful people
2. Live in your imagination
3. It doesn't matter what has happened to you – it's how you take it and what you make of it
4. Having belief in your potential is more important than waiting for your performance
5. Whatever you want to be, be in it doing it – if you really want to succeed, bin the excuses

generations, a foundation on which they can work to build and shape their own future.

Waitley's philosophy of treating others with kindness and respect has helped drive him towards the successes he has enjoyed throughout his career to date. His humility and sincerity is something that radiates from a man who sees himself as just another human being trying to do his best for the benefit of others.

“I'm as good as the best but no better than the rest,” he says.

“I treat everyone equally, no matter if they're a taxi driver or transport executive, waitress or food service executive – everyone's as good as me, I'm as good as them.”

Waitley is as humble as he is inspiring, and his appearance on *The Leaderonomics Show* is an interview not to be missed by anyone who might be on the lookout for an ideal role model to emulate along their own path to success.



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To watch our interview with Waitley on *The Leaderonomics Show*, head over to [www.leaderonomics.com/channel/tls](http://www.leaderonomics.com/channel/tls) or scan the QR code below:



■ Sandy Clarke is a freelance writer who, like Denis Waitley, loves to learn from the stories of others. To connect with Sandy, you can follow him on Twitter @RealsClarke



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