

David R. Hawkins, M.D., Ph.D.

the best-selling author of *Power vs. Force*

SUCCESS

IS FOR

YOU

Using Heart-Centered Power Principles for Lasting
Abundance and Fulfillment

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Lasting Abundance and Fulfillment**

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FOREWORD

It was with complete serendipity that I first learned about Dr. David R. Hawkins. It was 2004; my wife and I were visiting Wales, where we met a new friend who immediately launched into a discussion about spirituality.

At one point our friend asked what spiritual books I liked to read. I said that I was drawn to an internal spiritual path, and while books played an important part in that development, I was not currently reading much on the subject. She replied that the only spiritual author she would recommend was a man named Dr. David R. Hawkins.

A month or so later, a copy of *Power vs. Force* arrived in my mailbox; shortly thereafter, my friend and I met in Sedona, Arizona, to attend one of Dr. Hawkins's lectures. He spoke for just over an hour before taking a break, and I immediately made my way outside and wept. They were tears of gratitude, to be sure.

The next several years passed quickly for my wife and me, between growing our business and raising five sons—however, we made time to attend Dr. Hawkins's lectures and eventually volunteered to help in any way

possible. Once he reached his 80s, his lecture schedule slowed, but a life-enhancing message always came through when he spoke.

It was heartbreaking when “Doc” passed. He was and is a gift from God for me and thousands of others. And then in 2015, I learned that Doc had left an unpublished manuscript entitled *Success Is for You*. As a lifelong entrepreneur, I have certainly experienced both success and failure and could not wait to read what Doc had to say on the subject.

Many years ago, when I had a company called Illuminations, I worked with a wonderful man who was instrumental in building Starbucks from a small company into a global brand. One day he told me a story about the importance of living a “one-hat life.” He said that most people you meet wear many hats: one at work, another at home, and yet another in their spiritual life. He learned that people are at their best when they know who they are and have one clear set of values that equally apply to all of life’s activities.

Dr. Hawkins’s body of work helps us to discover our one hat—that is, who we are—and to provide a context for all of life’s experiences. In the pages of this newly discovered book, he weaves his understanding of life into practical and immutable observations about universal principles and the distinctions between perception and essence.

To those who are familiar with Doc’s work, you will love how *Success Is for You* weaves what you already know into the world of business and success. You will smile at his stories, including the one about the restaurant that insists on serving only raspberry vinaigrette salad

dressing, even though the customer simply wants the familiar Thousand Island or bleu cheese.

On the other hand, if you are unfamiliar with Dr. Hawkins, this book serves as a perfect introduction, providing profound insights that allow you to focus on and achieve that which you desire.

To those who already have a business, Doc explains that there is only one customer we serve and why. Or if you intend to start a business one day, this book is an invaluable resource—read it first, and then keep it handy.

Upon receiving the manuscript, I decided to read it and apply the principles myself. Immediately, I was reminded of those qualities that have brought the greatest satisfaction in my work life. I also discovered places where I was stuck and subsequently found freedom.

Several months later, I was feeling quite stressed about work, and my wife suggested that I connect again with Doc's manuscript. Honestly, in the moment her suggestion was irritating, but the following day I picked it up and reread a section. Immediately, the stress passed. I decided to move *Success Is for You* to a permanent spot on my desk.

Think of this book as a primer for business and life. It was written by a humble man who achieved greatness; a brilliant man who channeled his gifts into helping others, building a world-renowned medical practice in the process; and, moreover, a spiritual man who saw in you all that you were in this very moment.

I am eternally grateful to have met Dr. Hawkins and humbled to be asked to write these words. If you are reading them, my prayer is that this may be that serendipitous moment when you are introduced, or reintroduced,

to an eternal message of possibility and kindness that will serve you forever.

— **Wally Arnold**
Founder of Popcornopolis
Founder of Illuminations
Santa Monica, California, 2015



PREFACE

Who among us would not like to be successful? How many people do we know who aspire to mediocrity, or worse, to fail intentionally? Likely no one. If everyone wants to be successful, then why do so few people attain true success in our world? In this book, Dr. David R. Hawkins explores these issues and offers pragmatic guidelines that direct us to the source of real success—a way of being in the world.

This manuscript was originally drafted in 1991. Since then, almost everything in our world has changed technologically. The proliferation of the Internet's availability worldwide has made many earlier information systems obsolete. Nevertheless, we will discover that the basic principles for building success remain much the same. Dr. Hawkins encourages us to try these timeless principles for ourselves.

Readers will see that Dr. Hawkins draws on his personal experience as a World War II veteran, businessman, psychiatrist, and scientist to illustrate the points he wishes to make. Some of the examples he uses naturally reflect earlier time periods in his life. (How many movie theaters currently use answering machines?) Still,

the points he makes are not lost, despite their references to things that more recent technology eclipses. The combination of his humor and unpretentious communication style makes us feel a part of the journey he lays out before us.

Throughout Dr. Hawkins's life, he was a man committed to loving others, reducing unnecessary suffering, and promoting others' success. What he accomplished in his lifetime—which was quite sizable—was a consequence of who he was and a reflection of the integrity with which he conducted himself. He was successful in virtually everything he undertook. Consequently, the principles he outlined in this book were born of personal experiences across many decades of his life and numerous ventures; they have been proven effective. Like most super successful people, Dr. Hawkins was humble, approachable, kind, generous, compassionate, loving, joyful, humorous, and supportive of life in all of its expressions. To be in his presence was an immeasurable gift.

It is from a grateful heart that this book is offered to all who truly wish to be successful.

— **Donna L. Robinson, Ph.D.**
Editor



INTRODUCTION

The Road to Fame and Fortune

I'm pleased as punch that you bought this book. Why? Because my joy in life is delighting and watching people prosper, grow, flourish, and become successful. The secret of my own success is yours.

Most books on the topic of success are written as "how-to" manuals. In this world there are three levels of existence: There is "having," there is "doing," and there is "being." Lots of people will tell us to "do," but not how to "have" out of "being." Once we become successful—which has nothing to do with fame and fortune, but is actually a level of awareness—"having" is the automatic consequence.

All of the men and women we see out there frantically struggling for success are on the level of wanting to "have." They think that the way to get something is to desire it, and then work like crazy for it. The only reason they "do" is so they can "have." People can wear

themselves out year after year in the marketplace at this level of awareness; they may or may not achieve a modicum of success.

What is success? Well, I'm not impressed by the millions that others have made. I'm impressed by the millions that they haven't made.

To be rich and famous is so easy. It's such a snap that it's painful to watch all the people out there in the world struggling, suffering, and sacrificing fruitlessly, going around in circles when the path they're following is certain to lead to failure.

We can tell the instant a new business opens up whether it's going to make it or not. The earmarks of failure are there already. Wrong place, wrong location, wrong name, wrong motivation, wrong product, wrong time, wrong image, wrong attitude, wrong employees, wrong colors, wrong design, wrong ambience, wrong music, lousy food, poor service, long waits, inferior quality, shoddy packaging, and on top of that, the worst mistake of all: the obvious intent to only serve one's own selfish interest and exploit the public for personal gain without providing any needed service to their lives.

We have observed all of the above at the restaurant we won't go back to, the store we avoid, the employees who were obnoxious, the business transactions that were perfunctory, and the places where we made purchases because they were the only ones available.

We can learn a lot from others' examples. We're going to do just that—not only to see what the facts are in the case, but what the *principles* are. This book is about principles. It's about essences. It's about focusing with absolute precision.



When I was in clinical practice there was a short period of time when I had to do “spinal taps.” These consisted of inserting a needle between the vertebrae in the lower spine and extracting a few drops of spinal fluid for examination under a microscope. I had past experience in a state hospital where I had to do them on every new admission; I’d actually done thousands over the years. In private practice I started charging \$100 per spinal tap. When a patient complained about why I charged that much when it only took a few minutes, I stated the facts: “It was \$5 for putting in the needle and \$95 to know exactly where to put it.” He laughed and said, “Yeah, Doc, I get it.”

To “get it” means capacity. It means to have the capacity to demonstrate, execute, manifest, produce, materialize, and make it happen in the world. Lots of people are full of good ideas, but nothing happens in their lives. They don’t have the power to make it happen.

Please notice the word *power*. This is going to be a word of great import to us, the central secret behind all that we discuss. The real difference between “having,” “doing,” and “being” is power. We are going to examine power, find out what it is, and learn that it is the secret ingredient that “makes it happen.”

Twelve people have the same idea, but only one makes it happen. What is the difference? We’ve all had the experience of hearing the same advice from several people. Suddenly, one special person says it to us and *zingo!* We have it. The usual explanation was that we weren’t “ready yet.” The truth is that a person who has real power makes us ready. They have enough power to overcome all of our resistances, our considerations, our delays, our procrastinations, our indecisions, our

doubts, our confusion, our ifs, ands, or buts—and make it just plain obvious to us. When we get through listening to a person of power, we have the inner feeling that we always knew that, which is correct. We always knew that, but a person of power has the capacity to make us conscious of what is already within our own minds, but in a different context. It's the context of "aha."

The "aha" experience is indicative of a jumbo level of power. When we "get" something, we get it because its voltage has just increased. This is indicated intuitively by the image of a lightbulb going on over a person's head. Light is power and energy. All of the energy on this planet, whatever its manifestation, came here via light. The power is in the light.

Within this book there is enough power to get us off the runway. In fact, there is enough power to get us off a couple of dozen runways. Fame and fortune are already in existence within us, and all we have to do is discover them. Now, how can this be? Because to read these words, we have to be conscious. To be conscious, we have to be alive. The secret of certain success is part and parcel of the energy of life itself; therefore, it exists within us.

Let's look at an example of the differences between "having," "doing," and "being." There was an intelligent, successful, professional man who didn't learn how to dance until he was 50 years old. Before that, he would mechanically get out there on the dance floor. Awkwardly, self-consciously, and with great difficulty, he would push himself around to music when he was dragged out to do so. He took endless dancing lessons, yet he still couldn't dance, nor did he experience the joy and relaxed happiness that he saw on the faces of others.

In the '60s, disco music came along and freestyle dancing, which was spontaneous, became popular. Well, if the fox-trot was intimidating, to get out there on the dance floor and just "let it all hang out" was even more impossible for him. (He never could jitterbug either.)

One day he was at a social affair where they were playing rock music. He avoided getting near the dance floor for fear of getting dragged out there by some eager woman. At that point, someone he knew came up to him and said, "Come on, you can dance." He said, "No, I can't. I've tried; I just can't do it."

She knew that he had just finished a whole course of lessons on disco dancing at the local dance studio, and the results had been nil. She laughed and said, "I'll show you how." Then she said the magic words: "Don't look at your feet. Forget about your feet; look at my face. Just move your body the way I move my body, and forget about your legs and feet. They will automatically go in the right place."

He started to focus intensely on her expressions and the way she held her body. He took her advice and forgot about his legs and feet. Sure enough, as he got into her attitude, he found himself dancing! Honestly, there was nothing to it. It was effortless. He didn't even think about it. It simply began to happen "of its own." He began to dance as though he had always known how. It was automatic. It was joyous. He felt free as a bird. Suddenly, he got so high he could hardly believe it. He felt a surge of joy, liberation, and energy. He danced his head off that night!

All of the inner pain of those years of suppressed and frustrated longing to "be that way" now was over, and he made up for lost time. He went to the disco every night,

rarely getting to bed until three in the morning. This went on for several years; he just couldn't stop dancing. To the amazement of everyone, he got along on three or four hours of sleep a night and still accomplished as much as ever during the day. He was, you might say, getting a free ride on the increase in energy, which was really manifesting as joy.

The man's friend was not a dancing teacher, but she did in a matter of seconds what all of the professionals couldn't do over the years. Within that example is the secret of the book: to transmit to us how to dance so that it's automatic and effortless. Fame and fortune are like that; they are effortless. They're joyful. They just happen as the result of us "getting it." Now that the man knew how to dance, he let it happen. He was a nonvisual person, but as he was dancing, certain patterns would arrive within his mind, along with ways to move his hands and his body. This kind of thing had never happened to him before.

He also discovered the secret behind "Sufi dancing." He noticed that the more he danced, the more energy he had. He would go to discos with a whole group of people and wear the women out one by one; they would leave the dance floor exhausted. The longer he danced, the more power and energy he had. He was tireless. The only reason he went home was because they closed the disco. He could have kept on dancing all night long. The inner power was "limitless."

He found that as he danced, his body would hit a certain inner balance as if it were moving around an invisible center. It was as though he was balanced exactly like a top. Once a top starts it spins effortlessly; that's the way he danced. Not only did it take no energy,

his energy increased. Actually, he could dance for hours and perhaps even endlessly that way. He maybe just had to stop to eat or go to the bathroom—he didn't know because sometimes he danced for many hours and the inner experience never changed.

This man used to go dancing practically every night with a group of people. One of them would frequently be the woman he danced with that first time. They got to be well known in the major discos in town. The owners were always eager for them to be there—they would let them in for no charge and cater to them. The crowd would stand around having drinks, trying to get up the courage to start dancing. We know how it is—the first couple on the dance floor. Everyone's reluctant to be the only one out there. Well, the owner of the disco would nod to this man and woman, and they would effortlessly glide onto the dance floor in a state of joy. The state of high joy seemed to affect everyone in the whole place. Suddenly it was as though the lights on a stage had come on brightly. The audience would watch for a while because, frankly, the couple was indeed super.

There are no intermediate stages in fame and fortune. The minute we get it, we've got it. Expressing it and watching it happen in the world are merely the consequences of what has already happened. Success is what happens "out there" as a consequence of what already has happened "in here." We already have one of the greatest secrets: *The source of fame and success is "in here" and not "out there!"*

We see why all the futile scrambling after success is guaranteed to fail. Such individuals are searching in the wrong place. They're looking "out there" when it's not "out there" in the first place. When they look

around they see the symbols of success that others have out there—the stretch limos, the fancy addresses, the extravagant clothes, the right clubs—and conclude that those are the things to strive for. Yet the inner secret of success is delight. We start the snowball rolling, and then we sit back and watch it increase in size as it gains its own momentum.



At this point I want everyone to stop trying to become a success. I want you to throw away all the “how to become a success” books. I want you to become a friendly person. It’s outrageous that we can make more money in this world by just being friendly than we can ever make striving for success. That’s the only thing I’m asking from you at this point: Be friendly and have an open mind. Having an open mind is part of being friendly, isn’t it? Part of being friendly is giving the other person a chance to be heard. If you’re willing to do that, you don’t have a problem.

When I was a kid I would go to camp every year, and every year I would be a pollywog. I was scared to swim; I didn’t know how. Despite all of the swimming lessons, I stayed a pollywog. One day I was visiting some friends at the lake in Wisconsin, and we were out on their little sailboat. We started some horseplay, as kids do, and the next thing I knew, the three of them picked me up and threw me overboard. For a few seconds I flailed around frantically, and then the magic moment arrived. All of a sudden, I lay on my back, kicked my feet, and started doing the reverse breaststroke. My God, there was nothing to it! All I had to do was float and paddle along easily. It was effortless. It was joyous. I went from pollywog

to dolphin. I could do every swimming stroke: I found myself automatically doing the breaststroke, then I went into the Australian crawl, and then I went into the back crawl. After that I became an expert swimmer. Real success is like being a cork in the water, which rises of its own buoyancy and not by frantic effort.

The purpose of this book is for you to “get” the inner conviction and certainty that you can make money and become successful and famous if you wish. Fame and fortune, once we have the formula, are just a matter of getting around to it, and that’s the way it’s going to be for you. All of the expensive weekend business conferences and consciousness trips and how-to conventions that you’ve attended have contributed to your knowledge. Having facts and know-how, however, does not guarantee success. There are other factors involved.

It is these other secret factors that we are going to explore in this book.



CHAPTER 1

GETTING THE BANANAS

In a well-known experiment, a monkey was put in a cage and bananas were placed outside the cage on the opposite side from the door, just beyond his reach. Once the monkey spotted the bananas, the door was opened. What happened was that the monkey stretched his arm between the bars. He struggled and practically dislocated his shoulder, frantically trying to grasp that which was just beyond his reach. He could struggle there for hours, weeks, or months, and it was always going to be just beyond his reach. To get the bananas, he had to turn his back on them and walk through the open door.

We know that the minute he got that “aha” and saw the open door, success was automatic. It’s only the manifestation of what had already happened. The minute the monkey saw the open door, in effect he already had the bananas. He could have and eat as many bananas as he could hold. Fame and success are exactly like that—they happen the instant we see something. Success is the automatic expression of what has already happened.

What the world considers fame and success are merely the symbols and the outer representations of what has already “happened.”

The difficulty is that the world confuses “out there” with “in here.” It thinks the money, the success, the stretch limos, and all that goes with success are the causes instead of the effects. So people, like monkeys, strive to reach the bananas. If we look around us, we’ll see millions struggling year in and year out to reach the bananas, and we have an inkling as to why. Fame and success, like happiness, cannot be sought directly. Happiness cannot be achieved by struggle; it is the automatic consequence of an inner sense of delight, joy, and satisfaction. Happiness automatically comes from being a certain kind of a person and being a certain way in the world and about life. A truly happy person is happy no matter what. I’ve been happy rich, and I’ve been happy poor. I’ve been happy single, and I’ve been happy married. I’ve been happy as a student, and I’ve been happy as a teacher.

The source of joy is in every moment; it is totally independent of “out there.” Fame and success are exactly like that. They cannot help but happen. Once we start a snowball rolling, it automatically goes downhill. We don’t have to do another thing about it. The precision and the balance are effortless. Power is effortless; it is grace, poise, ease, confidence, certainty. What the world relies on mistakenly is force.

The greatest baseball hitters of all time were not known for having huge muscles. In fact, there are millions of men with bigger biceps and shoulders than the star players of all time. If force could do it, everyone would be successful. If we look around the marketplace,

we'll see that everyone is forcing themselves to the max. Power is something else. The momentum of the bat hits the momentum of the ball with such precision that it is *the impact* that propels the winning ball.



Let's look at one of the great principles with which we are going to work: *the difference between force and power*. To know the difference is crucial.

In World War II, the Germans assembled the greatest military force of its time. Adolf Hitler, who relied on force, ended up insane, suicidal, disgraced, dead, anathema to the human race, and brought defeat to the whole country. Force may create the illusion of success for a period of time—but, as in the case of every celebrity who kills themselves, apparently the symbols of success are not what success really is.

What is the source of power? Power is something that we own within ourselves. When Winston Churchill catalyzed the will of the British people, he manifested power. Consequently, Hitler's forces ran into power; when force meets power, it always loses.

Let's take another example where the principle is even more clearly delineated. That was in the meeting of the power of Mahatma Gandhi against the force of the British Empire. At the time of impact in this encounter, the British Empire was the greatest force the world had seen. It ruled two-thirds of the earth, yet was brought to its knees by a 90-pound "shrimp" who was disparaged by their system as "colored." If we understood the difference between force and power, we could have predicted the fall of the British Empire just from that understanding. Mahatma Gandhi was coming from a principle of

universal truth—the equality of all men by virtue of the quality of their creation. These are the same principles that empower the Constitution of the United States. A universal principle is unlimited power.

The British Empire was motivated by self-interest, which was limited. It was not concerned with the good of all mankind, or serving life, or any other universal principle of great power. Instead it only cared about serving its own interests. When self-limited force, as impressive as it was in the British Empire, met the unlimited power of the will of Mahatma Gandhi—which solidified, unified, and catalyzed the will of the Indian people—the defeat of the British Empire was inevitable. The political events and all that is listed in the history books are merely the consequences; they are not the cause.

Our first really major secret is to reverse the world's understanding of cause and effect. Cause, which is power, is “in here.” What we see “out there” is merely the consequence. It is automatic. It can't help but happen because of the universal laws of life. The world envies the wrong thing when it envies the consequence. It tries to imitate, but doesn't know *what* to imitate. For it to work in our own lives we have to imitate the cause, not the effect. Having bananas is the consequence, the result. It's the “out there” of success, which merely knows what's “in here.”

Once we have the secret of success, which is an “aha” experience of finding the open door, we can amuse ourselves with either manifesting it or not in the world as it pleases us. Once we've achieved inner mastery, we don't have to prove it anymore. A real karate expert doesn't go out into the street looking for fights. On the contrary, if a tough guy approaches him, he kids him out of it. He

uses a dozen ways to avoid an encounter because he has absolute certainty and inner knowingness of his capacity. His assailant doesn't know it, but he could break his neck in one single blow.

Like the martial arts, success is effortless. It is grace. It is ease. It is poise. It is precision. It is focus. It is putting one's finger on the exact center and essence. It is not confusing cause and effect . . . that's the difference. One secret of knowing whether we've achieved this or not is the presence of joy. If we're tired and burned out at the end of the day, then it's from the monkey business of trying to grab the bananas. When we invent a better product, the world beats a path to our door. There's no need to knock our brains out.

How long does it take to succeed? It takes exactly one split second. Although it may take time, for instance, to read these words, the actual "getting it" takes only a split second. At some as-yet-unknown instant, the door opens and the person has the inner experience of having always known.

Once the man I mentioned earlier in the book started to dance, he discovered that he already knew how. Psychologically, neurologically, anatomically, what happened? Was it that his left brain connected with his right brain? The door opened between them? The right brain, which is like an analog computer and connected with knowing everything, was not connected with the left brain, which is like a digital computer—limited, but capable of linear data processing. Left-brain dancing is a pain in the neck, awkward, dull, exhausting, and joyless.

The left brain exhausts itself, and will exhaust us, striving for the bananas. It gets just enough of a grip on the bananas to keep struggling. In a way it's unfortunate

if the monkey reaches one banana out of the bunch, because now he's a real goner. Having once had that experience, he's going to be certain that the way he gets the bananas is by straining against the bars. He's going to be run by that program the rest of his days.

Now we understand the state of world and why it is the way it is. It would be a very lucky monkey indeed if he struggles and falls down exhausted, and in his exhausted state he looks out the door and a light goes on for him. Most of the world has gotten just enough of the bananas to permanently trap themselves right where they are. Therefore, in the world of real success, there is no competition.

I want to pound that idea home: *In the world of real success, there is no competition.* When we hit the top of anything, there is no competition there. There are very few at the top of the pyramid. For those at the top, the world is their oyster. What's the problem? If someone has the best restaurant in town, they don't have to struggle for success. It's automatic. People are lined up outside the door.

If someone is the best mechanic in town, are they going to have trouble finding jobs? No. Every garage in town is going to offer them the opportunity to work for them because they, by this time, have developed a following of customers. There was a mechanic in the small town where I lived who could get a job at practically any garage in town. He had a huge following. Wherever he went, the customers went. He was the best, and everyone knew it.

People use any excuse to avoid facing the basic issues involved here. They'll ask, "How can I be a success in the world when I don't have any education? I'm only a waiter." Okay, let's look at waiters. I knew some back

east who were headwaiters in some of the country's most famous clubs. I remember standing outside talking to one of them one night at two in the morning when a big stretch limo pulled up to the curb. I thought it must be the owner's. Much to my surprise, the headwaiter got in and rode off in it. It was his limo! The owner had gone home hours earlier.

That headwaiter made \$100,000 a year. So, if you're going to be a waiter, then be the best waiter the world has ever seen. Treat all of the customers as though they are royalty, and your success is guaranteed. We can see the headwaiter's success is coming out of "the way he is with people." Sure, he has to know the mechanics of his job; that's a given. The difference here is totally one of attitude. It's one of energy, of motive; it's one of coming from power.

The poor waiter comes from greed—he's always stretching for the bananas. A real headwaiter doesn't have to worry about money at all, does he? He gives. He manifests excellence. If we manifest excellence in the world, we don't have to worry about money at all. The world will seek us out. We won't have to look for jobs. Other companies will constantly be calling us and pestering us because we've got what they want; we've got know-how. Once we know how to be truly successful in any single area of life, we can become as successful in any other area of life if we so choose and if it so pleases us. The technique is exactly the same.

Edith Piaf was one of the greatest entertainers the world has ever seen. She was the only performer I ever saw who brought a tough New York nightclub audience to its knees. When she sang, there wasn't a dry eye in the room. She had the whole audience in the palm of

her hand. She had the power—the power to turn us on, thrill us, captivate us, and reawaken our inner emotional experiences long forgotten. Nobody even understood her words; she sang in French.

The secret of all successful people is that they have “it.” The purpose of this book is to discover what that “it” is. Some people have “it,” but they don’t know they have “it.” They’re unconscious and unaware. We all know people who have great gifts in some area. If we ask them how they do it, they’ll tell us they don’t know how they do it; they just do it. As far as they’re concerned, there isn’t any other way to be. It’s simply the way they are.



The reason the how-to books fail to achieve their goals is because they’re trying to describe left-brain style. They include the mechanics of moving from cause and effect, but they still haven’t put their finger on cause.

I once did a booking for an organization, and their representative was worried that we weren’t going to sell all the seats in the theater. If it wasn’t going to be 100 percent successful, I wouldn’t have done it in the first place. I told the person to relax, although I knew that he couldn’t. Sure enough, the theater was standing room only and a smashing success. Why not?

Whatever we do from the space of inner knowing is certain before it even happens. When we’re on the right track, we have that absolute inner certainty of knowing, and the outcome is already obvious to us. The Empire State Building already existed from the moment there was agreement about uniting behind the concept of erecting the tallest building in the world (at that time).

That concept, that agreement, that idea, that vision, and that excitement had within it the power to mobilize thousands of workers and millions of dollars, and to become world famous and one of New York's top attractions. The assembling of all the monies from the bank, the workers, the engineers, the architects, and the building materials was only the effect within the world, which was mobilized, organized, and concretized by the power behind it.

One thing we notice about the laws of physics and the laws of the universe is that force always creates counterforce. Right there we've got why we get exhausted. If we look at it, we can see that *no force is possible without a counterforce*. Nothing can press against something unless there is something to resist it. If there is no resistance, there is no pressure. Movement results in the delicate balance between these two forces. The propulsion power of the jet engine comes from the lifting power of the vacuum created by the airspeed at the top of the surface of the wings of the airplane against the resistance of the air in the atmosphere. Speed is the difference between these two forces; therefore, force results in counterforce.

The secret of power is that there is no resistance to power! There is the Greek legend of Sisyphus trying to roll the rock up the side of the hill against the force of gravity. The movement of the rock is the mathematically calculable difference between the upward force of muscle strength and the downward force of gravity. If the first exceeds the second, the rock moves up the hill. If the balance is reversed, the rock moves downhill. Trying to climb the ladder of success and get to the pinnacle by force is playing the Sisyphus game. All he ever got out of it was a bad case of hemorrhoids. Of course we all know

the real end of Sisyphus's story. He started drinking heavily and using a lot of drugs, and died of an overdose.

A lot of the world goes that way, doesn't it? They had that flash of apparent success and then missed the boat. They seemed to have it but really didn't. Why imitate them? We're not interested in looking at things in cross sections only, but rather in longitudinal sections. Proof of success is how it comes out in the end. To fly through the air and then go down the tubes is not the way we want to go. Yet most do that in the world, don't they? They can't wait to read all the silly tabloids so that they can buy the same dress or pants, the same kind of car, go to the same restaurants, drop the same names, and try to get in the same paper as those they read about. Futile, isn't it?

Power doesn't come from facts, positions, or having anything "out there." Power comes from an inner position relative to those things. If we look at it, we'll see that there's no power in any of the facts of the world. It was only how we reacted to those facts, how we felt about them, and how they affected us that gave them power. It was our whole attitude about it that determined the experience. Loud music is annoying to some people and exhilarating to others. Quality is not "out there," but within ourselves; therefore, success is a way of being with things. It's a set of attitudes. It's a style. It's an intention to be correctly motivated and to hold the appropriate vision. These factors will automatically guarantee success. We don't have to do anything about it.

If we have the right attitude, everyone is going to seek us out. Everyone will want to be with us. Everyone will clamor to come to our parties. We'll stop worrying whether people are going to come to the party, as most

hosts and hostesses do. We'll know that the opposite is true: unless we keep them out, the place is going to be mobbed.

I'll grant that we've obtained some bananas already. What I'm concerned about is that we don't have bunches of them. If we live on a tropical island of endless banana trees, there's really no point in storing them. If we collected bananas or secretly hid them someplace, the whole village would think we were crazy. Once we get what this book is about and look around, we'll be highly amused. All these people are hoarding their bananas while we meander through the banana trees. We'll also see how sad it is. All the thirsty people sitting in a pool of water, all the loveless people surrounded by love, all the poor people surrounded by money, all the failures surrounded by success, all those who are at the end of their rope surrounded by opportunity . . . the only thing is that they just can't see it.

It is set in legend that the Buddha passed on enlightenment without saying a word to his follower Mahakasyapa. At that great moment in history, Buddha silently handed him a flower, and in that moment, Mahakasyapa became enlightened. There was no striving, trying, practicing, or straining for enlightenment. There was none of that left-brain stuff. It was a sudden "aha," completely and totally an "experience."

The Buddha came from the knowing certainty that Mahakasyapa was already enlightened but didn't realize it. Now, we don't know whether after Mahakasyapa "got it" he went out and bought himself a stretch limo or not, but it is obvious from the story that it would have been immaterial. If he thought it served some purpose in the world, I'm sure he would have purchased one. The

telltale proof of what has happened is that when we have it all, we don't *need* anything.

This brings us to looking at the whole predicament, blockade, and obstacle of "need." Need by its very essence is a denial of the truth about ourselves. It is stating that we don't know something, when in truth we actually do; we're just not connected with it. Once we have everything, we don't need anything. Once we have the formula, we don't need to execute it—we are, however, totally free to do so if we wish.

No matter how much we strain and move our eyeballs around, we can't see the back of our heads. Seeing the back of our heads comes from a totally different principle; it requires a mirror. That's the purpose of the world. The world is merely a mirror in which we can see the back of our heads. What we see as our personal world is the reflection of the principles we've been holding on the level of cause, which is within our own minds. Success comes about automatically from knowing where to look. Not *what* to look for, but *where* to look. We do not look at what we have, nor at what we do, but at what we are. Once we find within ourselves what we've been searching for, we won't have to bother looking "out there."

The closest connection between things in the unconscious mind, strangely, is the 180-degree opposite. We get the answers to a lot of problems if we merely turn around the cart and horse. If we can suspend for an instant our belief systems about cause and effect and presume for the sake of the exercise that they are reversed, the answers will reveal themselves in an instant. We get that "aha" feeling. Freud first noticed this in his book on dreams back at the turn of the 20th century: One of the

mechanisms of the unconscious mind was to disguise a thing as its opposite. Flipping the coin is one of the secrets of success.



Well, we've strained our minds so far with what sounds like theory. Theory sounds like it might be mystical, or psychological, or theoretical, or existential, or some other term that our minds are labeling it. The reason this is happening is resistance. Our left brain wants to continue to run things and be in charge. It doesn't want to hear that it is supposed to be merely the servant of something greater. It doesn't want us to discover it. It wants us to think that it's the only side of the coin.

I'm telling you, there are two sides, and the left brain doesn't want us to know about that. That's natural. That's okay. So to satisfy it, we will conclude this chapter with practical examples. The examples will satisfy the left brain's need for information and to be convinced.

In the meantime, what I'm really conveying here is the basic principle behind all the examples. The left brain can't resist that, so we'll finesse it. Not that the left brain doesn't have its function of great importance; we don't want to put it down. The left brain executes what the whole person knows.

Lack of success comes from holding propositions as an "either-or" instead of a "both." In the everyday world of competition and success, it means to stop having enemies or competitors and to stop holding them that way. Instead, we must start holding them as pacers and sources of inspiration. If it wasn't for the pacers, the greyhounds wouldn't run to their maximum potential. Look at what we used to think of as enemies

and competitors as merely sources of inspiration. What they're challenging is within us—not us against them. The karate champions didn't master their opponents at all. They only mastered themselves.

Give up competing with anyone. The competitors are merely examples of what can be, and are therefore energy sources. At the end of any great war, the opposing commanders congratulate each other, don't they? A champion and a worthy opponent treat each other with honor and respect. They address each other as generals. We can't own that which is great within ourselves unless we learn to recognize it in others. After the trial, the lawyers shake hands and often go for dinner together. The boxing champions thank each other. A real champion like Joe Lewis knew that without the top-notch performance of his opponent, he couldn't possibly be a star. Those who look like our enemies, opponents, or competitors are actually our inspiration to become a star.

To envy someone is to say that we haven't got it and we hate them because they have it. We think it's "out there." We've got to stop that this instant. They have merely discovered it in themselves. All we've got to do is the same thing in ourselves. There are all kinds of books telling us the keys to success are self-confidence, a winning attitude, and the like. These are all *consequences*. These are the effects of those attitudes; they are not the cause. When we have the keys to success, we're going to be confident, smiling, generous, extroverted, capable, and good communicators.





CHAPTER 2

THE ANATOMY OF SUCCESS

To discover the principles involved in success, let's take a typical business and tear it apart. Let's look at one with which you may be familiar and have had a lot of experience in your own life. That way we can go through this exercise together with the absolute certainty that you're getting the point I'm trying to make instantly.

I have noticed that some restaurants are smashingly successful, whereas others fold by the dozen. The failure rate of new businesses is a well-known 50 percent. Of the remaining 50 percent, a large portion is really struggling to survive. They make it, but nobody's particularly happy. Out of a dozen restaurants, the likelihood is that not more than one will become a four-star, sought-out, famous eatery. Obviously the owners can write their own ticket anywhere, as can the top chefs. Top chefs who love what they're doing throw themselves

completely and totally into it. They are eager to learn and to share what they have learned with others. Their motivations are to please us, serve us, satisfy us, make us happy, and to make our evening a success.

The great and successful dance bands, the ones at the top (that even the public doesn't really know about) are bands like the one led by Lester Lanin. There was no event of importance among the social-registry crowd that didn't have the music of Lester Lanin. It was *de rigueur*. Everyone vied to get his orchestra; his band was booked for years in advance. One of the secrets of his incredible success was he played music that pleased listeners, that brought out the best in them. He didn't play to impress himself or to show off.

When we listen to many other bands and orchestras, we can see why they are total failures. They're there to impress themselves with what they can play. They haven't the slightest interest in the audience's dancing or entertainment. Just watch. They play a waltz and suddenly the dance floor is crowded—everyone gets up to waltz. Then, to our utter amazement, they never play another waltz the rest of the evening. Of course not. What they want to play is their repertoire. They want to show off their versatility. They want to play a fast rumba that loses half the audience right there. They want to go into some progressive jazz, which clears the dance floor altogether. They then want do some cutesy solos and a few weird numbers that frankly would be better left unplayed. It's creative, no doubt, but socially disastrous. It's the wrong principle and wrong motive, as it reflects self-interest and an unloving attitude, and is un-supportive of life as it is represented by the joy and the good-natured pleasure of the crowd. They're not interested in

pleasing the crowd; they're interested in being stars. In trying to reach the bananas, they miss them.

I knew a man who was a very successful musician. He later had his own dance band and made a living throughout the Depression. I'll tell you, when the crowd all got up and loved to hear a slow waltz, he played lots of them. He'd say to me, "This is a waltzing crowd; let's go." He would trot out every waltz until everyone was happy and satisfied. If someone else liked the polka, well, he'd polka their heads off all night. He didn't have some kind of formula that he had to demonstrate, which meant that he had to play one different kind of music after another. How many people out there want to rumba? Try a few places and see.

The principle here is one of observation and responsiveness. How many times have we gone back to the same restaurant and asked for the same thing, only to be told they don't have it any longer? How unconscious and unresponsive can they get? We say to them, "Do you have espresso?" "No." Or they give us the usual, "The espresso machine is broken." If anybody wants to make a million, go into the espresso machine-fixing business. I once found a town in which one out of three restaurants that advertised espresso told me that their machine was broken.

If people keep coming back into the same restaurant asking, "Do you have diet soda?" and the staff keeps telling them no, they have the key to failure: *Be deaf, unresponsive, and unobservant. Make it a practice never to please the customers, and be vainly and pridefully resistant to any ideas they might propose.*

In a town where I lived, I asked for ginger ale in practically all of the restaurants—I mean restaurants with

big service bars. In some restaurants I'd asked dozens of times. More than 50 percent told me repeatedly that they didn't have ginger ale. Now, can you imagine having a well-stocked bar and not having ginger ale? They always said they had 7UP. So what? I didn't want 7UP. I wanted ginger ale.

After a while we get resentful, right? These people don't care about us, it's obvious. They don't care if we ever have ginger ale. They have no intention of ever pleasing us whatsoever. They are self-satisfied. As far as they're concerned, they've got it made because they're turning a profit. No matter what it might be, they feel they have nothing to learn. From their perspective they've already arrived at success. They've sold out at some miserable little level. So they make \$100,000 a year, big deal. To successful people, \$100,000 a year is peanuts. It's nothing at all. I have hundreds of ideas, each one of which is worth \$100,000. So what?

I don't care how much money they make, these places are failures. The reason they survive is because they are there. If it's the only Mexican restaurant in town, of course people who love Mexican food are going to go there. Why are they going there? Because there isn't any other place to go. That's success? Phooey. You can have it.

I've had the outrageous experience of having dinner in a restaurant and being told that they don't have butter. I asked the waitress, "What is the stuff that I'm putting on my bread? It tastes horrible." She replied, "It's sweet butter." I don't like sweet butter; it's horrid. It tastes like grease to me. I want real butter. She told me, "We only have sweet butter." I'd like to know *why* they don't have butter. What's wrong with these people? Are they

unconscious? Are they oblivious? Are they uneducated? The answer is yes, to any and all of those questions.

I looked at the face of the owner of this restaurant, which was busy. After all, tour buses went by there—certainly there was guaranteed business from a tour bus. I saw no happiness at all. I saw no joy. I didn't see any radiance of aliveness and enthusiasm for life. I saw a sourpuss. It looked to me like he had a chronic ulcer and got migraines. I didn't care how much money this guy had in the bank. This guy had settled for satisfaction. He thought that satisfaction was happiness.



Happiness is one thing; satisfaction is another. One can get satisfaction from plunging the dagger into someone's heart and twisting it—that's satisfaction. It's unlikely, however, that this will result in one having a happy life. Happiness in life is the way of holding success. It's a whole way of being with it. It's a way of knowing how it occurred. When we got an "A" grade in school because we cheated, was there happiness? Was there success? Was there joy? Was it worth it? On a certain level, I guess, yeah, we survived. We got through it. We passed. But there was no genuine increase in self-esteem or anything out of which success is made, such as self-confidence, enthusiasm, and the joy of inner mastery. On the other hand, if we studied for an exam and got an "A," we felt pure joy. It's because it was legitimate. It was genuine. It was real. We knew that we were manifesting our own power.

The symbols of success in the world can be like that. An "A" because we imitate that which works on a perfunctory level is not what we mean by success. Money

is not important; it's whether it is part of our happiness. Most wouldn't believe that money makes people miserable. But we all know people for whom that's true. Because of money, they live in fear, vanity, pride, paranoia, arrogance, and nastiness. They're held in contempt by others. Some of them are pitiful.

A good example of this is what happens to winners of big lotteries. The statistics in the five-year follow-ups are disastrous: A high percentage of them go bankrupt. A number commit suicide. The divorce rate is astronomical. Misery, suffering, and unhappiness are the typical rules; they were blown away and destroyed. The same happens with fame and celebrity status: To some people it is oppressive, and to others it is a source of joy. Some people hide from autograph hounds, and other people love them. What's the difference? There are some people whose success we enjoy in the world, and there are others whom we hold in contempt for their success.

If a person is truly successful, we notice that we admire them *as a person*. What we admire is not what they have, not even what they do, although that may be interesting too. Rather, it's who they *are* that impresses us. We want to connect with who they are because we know that they have "it." Unconsciously we're hoping that "it" will rub off on us. If we hang out with them, will we get some of that "it"? That's the basis of the old quote "money rubs off." It isn't the money that rubs off; it's the knowing how to manifest money that rubs off on others.

One can give money to those who don't know that principle; however, they will probably be broke all over again. I learned that in the Navy during World War II. On payday we would shoot craps. The same guys would

always lose and the same guys would always win. Pouring money into poor people doesn't work. Having money is just a manifestation of an inner attitude. Poverty is in your head; it's not in your checkbook.

It has been said that success destroys many people. That is a misunderstanding. True success causes one's life to flourish; false success causes it to eventually destruct. The difference between the two is the principle upon which it was based. The difference between getting an "A" because we know the subject and an "A" because we had crib notes is all the difference in the world.

Confidence comes from knowing that we have what's necessary within ourselves. Consequently, it goes with us wherever we are. *Success is going to happen no matter where we are dropped in the world.* Put me in a strange town with no money or possessions, and I guarantee within one year I'll have a successful enterprise. Why? Because I carry the formula in my head. It isn't "out there," it's "in here."

This is a point I make repeatedly. The information in this book is shared in a spiraling fashion and not in a straight, linear, "start here" approach. By constantly circling over the same territory, we get it by sheer familiarity. We don't have to memorize it. By the time we're finished, we'll own it. It's ours just by sheer familiarity. It's going to be so obvious, we're going to say, "Why, we always knew that."

That's what this kind of learning involves. It's a matter of looking in a different direction. It's all the monkey has to do, isn't it? Stop looking at bananas. Instead, look at the open door. It's a snap. It's a 180-degree turn. It's the flip side of the coin. It's the easiest thing in the world. It's effortless. For the monkey to get free, what

does he have to do? All he has to do is fall down and look. To some lucky monkeys in the world, including the first time this happened to me, that's just the way it went. I reached the point of maximum exhaustion from trying to reach through the bars and gave up. I fell to the floor exhausted, and I completely and totally surrendered. The answer stood right there so glaringly, so obviously, like the nose on my face.



Let's get back to the restaurant. Let's collect all these experiences at one place, and what I'm driving at will become obvious. First of all, the business has a name that is unique. I'm sure it pleases the vanity of the owner. We'll have to make up a long, fancy French name, such as *La Roulade de la Mer Fantastique*. Now I'm sure this impresses the owner, except nobody can pronounce it. I know a lot of businesses that have failed because they have weird names, especially in a foreign language. We're always embarrassed to ask for them because we're sure we're mispronouncing their name. Barrier one.

The next thing to do is to not give an address and make sure not to have a street number on the building. It would be hard to find. That's failure ploy number two. Big businesses do this all the time.

Here's an example. Pick up any object in the house, something likeable, and look at the manufacturer stamp. It will say, for instance: WILSON, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS. I suppose this brief communication pleases their vanity; everyone in the world must know who Wilson of Chicago is. But to be frank, other than their own little vanity audience, I don't know who Wilson of Chicago is and neither does anyone else. If I like their product and want

to get more of it, I have to go through a lengthy process of finding out how to do so. If I call information, the telephone operator doesn't want to give me the address; she says she can only provide phone numbers. So that means I have to call Wilson of Chicago, go through their impersonal operator, be put on hold, and probably be disconnected, which means I have to call back.

I have now spent time and energy just trying to get ahold of some business that I'm dying to spend my money at and make rich. They've set up so many barriers, I wonder how they survive. Think how great it would be if they said: WILSON METALS (that at least tells us what they do), 2960 THIRD AVENUE, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, and their phone number. If they would do me this little favor, I can easily help increase their profits and their business. I'd see that they went through the process of another person approaching them and imagined what it's like to experience that process from beginning to end.

After searching out the restaurant with the unspeakable name, hidden behind the undisclosed address, we go through the perfunctory routine of the frozen-faced hostess or her false smile. We go through her putting our names on a waiting list or whatever the routine is. We may get obviously shunted to the bar, where they hope to get as much money as possible out of us for drinks before they reluctantly give us seats at tables, which, if we duck back to the men's room, we'll see are sitting there empty.

Now the next thing that happens is that the men's room or ladies' room is filthy. It smells. It's disgusting and a mess. The old saying goes, "Like the bathroom, like the kitchen." Already our appetite is diminished. We picture the cooks going to the bathroom here where

there's no soap or towels. Images of germs arise in our heads, or the flash that we might get dysentery in this restaurant.

Even if the restrooms are clean, they're not attractive at all. They reflect that whole puritan attitude about bathrooms being unmentionable or functional necessities, instead of an opportunity for creative interior design. Don't forget, the owners are expressing their level of caring, expertise, and creativity via the customers' bathroom experience. The bathroom decor establishes beyond all doubt the restaurant's or business's class! The lousy bathroom is a stunning presentation to us of the owners' indifference to their customers' comfort, welfare, and safety, as well as the distant interest in the quality of our overall experience of encountering us and our business.

That brings us to a whole other principle. All transactions are taking place within the field we can call "quality of experience." To be successful, people must focus on the quality of the customers' experiences; not on selling them, not on getting their money, not on closing the deal, not on beating them, but on *the quality of their experiences*. When encountering such a business, we leave them enthused. One hallmark of success is that it is shared. If success is not being shared by others, then only the symbols of success are present. We know this from our own experiences. There are places that we share with friends because being there was a great experience.

How this great experience was expressed or manifested in a given instance varies from situation to situation. That's not really what's important—what's important is that we had a great experience. For instance, I always shopped at Bashas' supermarket. Why did I do

this? Because Eddie Basha, who was the president of the company, wrote personal letters to all his customers and published them in the newspaper. He expressed that he cared. He hired the handicapped. He seemed to have no employee turnover whatsoever. His employees were outrageously friendly. They boggled my mind. How could they stand there on their feet all day? They must have been tired, dealing with literally hundreds and hundreds of people, yet they did not become sour, bitter, pessimistic, impolite, or calloused. How did all those employees stay so genuinely friendly? Well, I guess Bashas' had "it."

The other thing was, in the front of the store, there was convenience for the customers. There were tables where people could sit, talk with their friends, and read the paper. Nobody hassled them. Nobody hustled them. Nobody tried to sell them anything. Bashas' just provided a little community get-together space with no profit motive involved. Other stores had no such tables or chairs. Every square inch was stuffed with shelves where they were trying to make a profit.

Did Eddie Basha take a loss on the number of square feet he had assigned as a get-together area? Of course not. Also, he had a whole balcony where people could get things in the bakery or the deli and go and sit, take as much time as they wanted, eat, look over the passing scene, and sort of sidewalk café it. In the bakery, it even said, "Baked with love." Of course, the washrooms were right there. In addition, all kinds of convenience machines, copy machines, wastebaskets, and other amenities were there and had only to do with comfort. It was all there for the customers' pleasure.

So what is the sum total of all of this? What Bashas' provided was a friendly, warm, loving community

experience. What happened, if others were anything like me, was that people developed a loyalty. I didn't care how many competitive supermarkets opened up in town. I didn't care if their prices would save me a few pennies. What Eddie Basha captured me with was . . . goodwill.

Success is the automatic consequence of goodwill. If someone were to imitate what Eddie Basha did and think that thereby they'd also become a success, they'd be fooling themselves altogether. This success was coming from the way he was. It was obvious he would be a success no matter what he did. His customers felt included in his experience. We felt like we were sharing it. We felt like we were part of it. We almost felt like he was part of our larger family. The power was in the attitude of goodwill and intention of motive.

Let's compare that to visiting the nearest motor vehicle department. It's obvious that no one particularly cares about us there. The furniture is gray, unattractive, steel, and cold. The attitude of the clerk is one of annoyance, irritation, and even contempt. We're forced to wait in long lines under grimy circumstances. It's a lousy experience. Everyone hates going to the motor vehicle department, but we go there because we have to. Given an option, none of us would go there. It has no *power of attraction*.

This brings us to the next principle. We can see that with force people exhaust themselves trying to get things. With attraction, the universe brings people to their feet. We might say that power is like a magnetic field: There are some people whose fields repel us, and there are other people whose fields attract us. When we go to particular places or parties, there are certain

people whom we look forward to seeing. If we ran into them, we'd feel like we got energized. Yet there are other people whom we walk on the other side of the street to avoid, because after we meet them we feel drained.

So the question we ask ourselves is: *How do we make other people feel?* Filling out a long application form, standing in a long line, going to lousy toilets, sitting on uncomfortable chairs, and parking cars in the blazing sun with no provision for shade does not make people feel good.

That brings us to the entrance of the restaurant. Is there a canopy? Other than the aesthetic decor, which totally changes the energy of the place and attracts a different crowd (I will guarantee this), a canopy provides for the comfort of the customers. If we get all dressed up to go to a restaurant for dinner, who wants to walk in the rain? If it is a restaurant that warrants it, valet parking should be available—not mandatory, but available. I know lots of people who used to avoid certain discos because the valet parking was mandatory. I'm sure the owner thought he was squeezing a few more bucks out of the customers, but he was actually turning them away in droves. Everyone on some intuitive level gets the motive. They aren't fooling anyone. The same valet will either represent the owners' consideration for our convenience or their greed to squeeze another buck out of us. We know the difference on some unconscious level.

As we go inside the restaurant, decor, lighting, and music hit us with the whole atmosphere. This is a whole book in itself. The total lack of consciousness in this field is staggering to consider. The music is too loud. It's progressive jazz or it's heavy metal. Plus, it never stops. Research shows that people need to have relief

periodically from music, and those who have studied it program in periods of silence. Those who are unconscious leave the music tuned to some terrible station, or they unconsciously put on some tape that they like. Owners should forget the tape that they like and pick the music their customers like.

There was an Italian restaurant in town where the owner must have been a fan of early rock 'n' roll and that whole era. The music was an abomination. I never once went to that restaurant where the crowd I was with did not comment on how terrible the music was. This guy loved it; everyone else hated it. What kind of music do people expect at an Italian restaurant? We want to hear Verdi, Italian street songs, something quiet and subdued, so we can have a conversation, or so the wait-staff can hear our orders.

Acoustics are all-important, and owners of most restaurants must be deaf indeed. Sounds bounce back and forth and reverberate; hard surfaces amplify them. There's nothing wrong with a din if owners have created a din because that's the kind of atmosphere they want in their business. What I'm talking about is oppressive din. We want to have a business discussion or a romantic conversation, and the acoustics are horrible. Plus the vibration of the air-conditioning system and the sound of the high-speed exhaust fans in the kitchen add to the problem. Sound is one of our major senses. It is the same for smell. How much does it cost to create a nice smell in a business? Practically nothing.

Color and decor is a whole other subject. The thing that impresses us is that it was either treated as important or not, not necessarily whether we agree with the style. Rather, the amount of energy that was put into