

SUCCESS STORIES

What is success? Is it proving that you're the best? Or simply being good enough? Or is it being rich and famous? ^a _____

Winning an Olympic medal

Who's more successful—a bronze medal winner or a silver medal winner? The answer is obvious: silver, because second place is higher than third place. Here's a different question: ^b _____

When Chinese swimmer Fu Yuanhui won a bronze medal in the Rio Olympics in 2016, she was obviously delighted. "I was that fast? I am so happy!" Images of her reaction quickly spread across the internet. Something similar happened with photos of American gymnast McKayla Maroney's reaction to her silver medal in London in 2012, but for a different reason: she was clearly disappointed.

In fact, research at Cornell University found that in general, bronze medal winners are happier than silver medal winners. Why? It may be because silver medalists think, "I didn't get a gold medal" and feel unsuccessful. ^c _____

Staying at home with the kids

A photo exhibition by Swedish photographer Johan Bävman has gotten people thinking about parenting roles before and now, and what it means to be a success. Bävman's images of 45 stay-at-home dads aren't of smiling, happy families, but of real life: one father cleaning the floor with a baby on his back, another trying to comfort his crying daughter. Bävman, who is himself a father, shows us that staying home with your kids—for both mothers and fathers—is one way to be successful. ^d _____



McKayla Maroney hides her silver medal while Fu Yuanhui happily shows her bronze.

Getting rich

A researcher at Harvard Business School studied the connection between financial success and happiness. He talked to 2,000 rich and powerful people and found that fewer than half of them felt satisfied. Almost all of them said they would need two or three times more money to feel completely happy. Why do people who have millions of dollars not feel completely successful? Probably because they know that there's someone who has even more money. Another researcher discovered that financial success could bring happiness—but only up to a point (see the graph below). ^e _____



What is success?

We've looked at three faces of success in this article. What can we conclude? Perhaps that success isn't one thing and that it isn't final. And also that the success you dream of may not feel like success when you finally get it.

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2 Read the article on page 25 quickly. Number these topics (a–d) in the order that the article discusses them (1–4).

- a _____ A project showing photos of parents
- b _____ Rich people and happiness
- c _____ What we've learned about success
- d _____ Feelings of failure among top athletes

4 Put the numbers of the sentences (1–5) in the correct place in the article (a–e).

- 1 Which of the two athletes feels more successful?
- 2 Being a parent is very challenging, but also one of life's great pleasures.
- 3 While you're thinking about what success means to you, let's take a look at some stories of success.
- 4 Bronze medalists think, "I didn't come in fourth place, so I got a medal" and feel happy.
- 5 This may mean we need to question the idea that more money will always lead to more happiness.