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Horizons

Overcome Setbacks, Aim for the Moon!



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“India is on the moon” jubilantly proclaimed Dr. Sreedhara Panicker Somanath, Chairman of India’s Space Research Organization (ISRO).

India made history on August 23, 2023 by being the first nation on

earth to land its Vikram Lander near the South pole of moon. The Chandrayaan-3 mission is no ordinary fete, which is a model for each and every one who aspires for success. This mission became success after the failed Chandrayaan-2 in 2019. Learning from mistakes is an important lesson from Chandrayaan-2.

When the mission failed, the nation as a family stood with ISRO. This is an important lesson for all of us in the regular family. When a family member fails and more importantly, young students do not get into careers or degrees of dream choice, friends and family members have to stand with them and motivate them to choose alternate paths or try again to succeed. There are so many lessons for life behind the monumental success story of August 23, 2023.

Different Pathways for Success

“Determination, Grit and Mindset,” are the words that slide on the billboard of my son’s school Hutchinson Middle School in Lubbock, Texas. Showcasing the importance of positive traits to teenagers on a daily basis is an enabler for success. In sports, wins and losses are common and coaches advice not only to athletes, but also to their parents and family that “Don’t hold wins and losses” One cannot be winning and losing all times. The above motivation phrase oft quoted in sports arena is important one for all of us to imbibe.

Right from young age children have to be taught that it is up to them to make it to the goal post, they wish to reach. Along the way there will definitely be road blocks, which should not defer them. Like we take detour if there are construction and accidents, we should always have Plans B or C if Plan A do not succeed. Such strategies are important success pathways in life.



Professor Ernest Smith of Texas Tech University is a native of Jamaica who chased his dreams to be a scientist in environmental field by leaving Jamaica in 1981 to the United States to pursue higher studies. The trials and difficulties he had encountered has shaped him to be a person who he is now by understanding the holistic picture of life said Ernest Smith.

“I am not sure we can totally overcome failures. But you should never give up. At the same time, you must set alternative options. So, if plan A does not go as predetermined you must adopt and adjust to working with the alternative,” stated Ernest Smith.

Mirza Khyum’s life story is a model that highlights how to overcome stress encountered in younger age while he was growing up in Bangladesh. Having to care fulltime for his ailing mother for 4 years, he sacrificed his education and career

Prof Ernest Smith

for six years. Always hoping for a brighter future, never gave up his

ambition to have a determined future. This August, Mirza graduated his master's at Texas Tech University by conducting research on the aspects of face mask as life saver.

Speaking from his own experience, Mirza stated, "A forward-looking attitude is highly important in life as it drives goal setting, adaptability, motivation, innovation, and personal growth. It fosters a positive outlook, prepares you for challenges, aids in time management, and contributes to long-term happiness."

Trials are Stepping Stones

Testing times are the phases of life everyone encounters in their life journey. It is easy to advice in such scenarios to rely on one's own confidence. It is easier said than done. Life lessons and success stories from real life are motivators when we are down. That is the reason schools and colleges highlight the successes of their alumni, which is an important act of motivation. In almost all cases, textbook lessons alone would have not steered these people to success. Adapting to the situations, riding out tides on the way to success are important life lessons, which successful alumni have to offer to the future generation.



Models to Creep On

Schools and college alumni, family members and community are a few places we can see and learn to grow. Two such role models are highlighted here as a way to showcase how these successful people have not only relied on their self attributes, but also seized opportunities to climb up the ladder.

Humbly admitting the help, he achieved in Jamaica from his family, Dr. Smith added, "I have had two mentors in Jamaica that provided a framework to follow, and I have absorbed those and live with those till today."

As a way of helping youngsters, Mirza advises, "Strengths in young people that are needed to overcome barriers include resilience, adaptability, determination, creativity, and a growth mindset. Resilience helps them bounce back from setbacks, while adaptability enables them to navigate changing situations. Additionally, strong communication skills, a support network, and a positive attitude contribute to their ability to overcome barriers effectively." Like Dr. Smith and Mr. Khyum hailing from developing economies amidst stressful situations can serve as real life examples.

Mirza Khyum

Keeping Eyes and Ears Open

Looking at how these humble people succeeded, it is important that we seek knowledge, whether they are academic, life lessons or practical by always looking around. Effective outreach and communication with the community and stakeholders are important. Never be afraid of interacting or ask questions but do them politely.

In my question to Dr. Ernest Smith on how to achieve success, he replied, "There is no blueprint for success. It depends on a lot of variables. You can set success in different frames. 1) Family; 2) Social; 3) Professional; 4) Personal etc. Then you have to determine if you are evaluating your success from a personal point of view or through the eyes of the environment that you are in."

Acknowledging his parents for the support he received early on, Mirza states, "Be grateful to the help we receive from others." Every day is a new and beautiful beginning. There are so many avenues out there, and by being out and about we have lot of pathways to be successful.

Moon was once a longshot. Today, four nations have claimed their rights in the far-reaching space. Aiming big and making efforts will lead to success.