

For Sale: Dreams, Success, And Everything You Want

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I write about how we can lead more productive and purposeful lives at www.constantrenewal.com. Follow me for stories on self-improvement and personal growth.



There are plenty of people who will tell you that you can have anything you want. And guess what?

They're right. What they usually don't mention is that there's a catch to it: a hefty price tag accompanies your loftiest goals and wildest dreams.

It's not a secret. All of us have heard that there's no free lunch in this world, or some other variant of it. We don't mention this because it's

something we take for granted.

And yet, there remains this disconnect. Most of us don't seem to realize the true cost of what we want. Like oblivious shoppers, we put items into our wishlist without looking at the price tag. Sometimes we lie to ourselves about its cost.

The Hidden Price Tag

One of the wonders about modern day commerce is that you don't have to pay for something in full. Instead, you can pay in installments over months or even years. Everything seems cheap when you just have to forgo a cup of coffee every month.

But the cost adds up. The same demands over a long period of time can cause a huge strain if you are unprepared to bear its weight. All of a sudden, your dreams, success, and everything else you wanted seem like a horrible bargain. You realize that you got more than what you asked for.

The price of being a successful entrepreneur? Working without a stable paycheck, putting in 80 hour weeks, and living with the anxiety that you just might be the fool everyone made you out to be.

The price of being a great writer? Staring at a blank sheet for hours, struggling with inadequacy, and worrying about being rejected by your readers and publishers.

The price of having a happy family? Staying loyal to your partner, taking up a well-paying job you hate, and putting the needs of everyone else above yours. All this, even on your worst day.

The price of having that great body? Waking up at 5 in the morning to get a workout, avoiding your local fast food restaurant, and preparing your own meals: because everything else is either bad for you or too expensive.

The price of having something you want? Having to subordinate all your other desires, putting in blood, sweat and tears into your endeavor, without the slightest guarantee that all this will pay off.

Put in more concrete terms, these are the sacrifices that everyone has to make. People pay for their dreams and goals through installments: they see only the relatively small down payment they need to make. As a result, when they realize they are unable to pay the price, they are forced to default on their dreams.

Your ability to obtain what you want in life hinges on two things: awareness of its cost and your willingness to pay the price. Everything else is secondary.

There should be no delusions: something cannot be had for nothing. The idea of being successful can be sheer ecstasy, but it is merely a pipe dream until its fruition. You will have to suffer either the pain of discipline, or the pain of regret.

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No Discounts

The good news is that everything is for sale. You can have anything you want.

The bad news is that life offers no discounts. There is no shortcut or a way around the toll keeper. There will be a price to pay, depending on the item you want. Some involve giving up years of your time; others require you to put your life on the line. The rewards that life offers are great, but it does not come cheap.

But here's something you already know — you can afford it no matter how expensive it seems.

You just got to be willing to pay the price.

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