



# THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **August 18, 2023**

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Have a Great Weekend!

"To win the moment, you have to be in the moment." -Tim Kight

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## The Assistant Chief's Desk

How do you measure success? Achieving success can often feel like grasping for the wind. Just when you think you have it, you open your hand to find that it is gone. This past week I had the opportunity to serve as a Team Leader with the Mighty Oaks Foundation. The Mighty Oaks Foundation has both men's and woman's programs that provide peer-to-peer resiliency and recovery training. The programs serve as the catalyst to assist our Nation's military and first responders in dealing with challenges related to the struggles of daily life and the symptoms of post-traumatic stress (PTS). Many who attend the program feel like they have failed. I like Winston Churchill's perspective when he said that "success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."

The idea that failure isn't fatal is a theme during the week, but the participants are warned that while failure isn't fatal, failure to change may be. I attended the program several years ago and I have had the opportunity to serve as a Team Leader in the men's program for the past two years. I am always encouraged by the growth during the week of the program as the attendees work to unpack the burdens that have weighed them down. These burdens are described as the challenges we face personally and professionally. Challenges experienced in life that we stuff deep down in a "ruck sack" that we then carry around. They are experiences, trauma, and failures that are never shared with anyone else. The participants often feel like they are alone in their experience.

Many show up wearing a mask that hides their true struggles. My job during the week is to help them remove the mask so they can be authentic and share the challenges that they have buried deep in their "ruck sack". While we seek to create an environment where the participants are comfortable sharing their experiences, the goal is to remain connected and provide tools for when they return home. As they work through the week, many get anxious about their return. A significant portion of the program is to help them move away from behaviors that have damaged relationships personally and professionally. One of the tools they are given that many ignore is called a Legacy Plan. It is a plan to define and measure success for when they return. It's a plan to help them change their legacy.

So, how do you measure success? If you look to Merriam-Webster, you will find that it is defined as "one that succeeds" or a "degree or measure of succeeding". That doesn't seem very helpful. If you read further, Merriam-Webster also defines success as "the attainment of wealth, favor, or eminence." So, if you don't have money, favor, or a position of prominence in the community, are you a failure? I would say no. While none of these are bad, I would caution anyone who is looking to these definitions to measure their own success. These are achievements that have no defined measurement. These measurements are used to compare ourselves to others. This comparison leads to pride, pride leads to jealousy, and jealousy leads to a lack of contentment. There will always be someone who has received

### **Upcoming Events:**

Aug 21: Train the Trainer

Aug 22:

Aug 23: Response Plan Meeting

Aug 24: BC Written Test & Yavapai County Fire Chief's Meeting

### **Board Meeting:**

Aug 28: Administration  
CAFMA – 1700-1830

more favor, has more wealth, and has achieved greater prominence. If we always measure our own success by those around us, we will live a life unfulfilled. Consider the response John D. Rockefeller gave when he was asked, how much money is enough. He replied, "just a little bit more." At the peak of his wealth, Rockefeller had a net worth of about 1% of the entire US economy. He owned 90% of all the oil & gas industry at that time. Bill Gates and Warren Buffett look like paupers in comparison to Rockefeller, yet he still wanted more. Rockefeller became a slave to pursuing more, to which he was never satisfied.

So how do we become successful? I would argue that success is about maximizing our personal potential by setting attainable goals. Even goals that may be simple. I like retired baseball player Alex Rodriguez's response when asked about his goals in an upcoming season. He had just completed one of the best statistical seasons in baseball. When he responded he didn't talk about being the MVP or winning the world series. He didn't measure his success with goals that may be out of reach because of factors he could not control. Instead, he said "My only goal is to learn how to play one entire game in the present." Consider this in relation to your career goals. It is important to remember that we don't always have control. We can put ourselves at the threshold of opportunity, but we cannot control whether the door opens, allowing us to step through.

As I help participants in the Mighty Oaks Program fill out their Legacy Plan, we focus on attainable goals that are measurable. This should sound familiar because our evaluations follow the same format. In their Legacy Plan, the first question they must answer is "What are you fighting for". What do they want to achieve when they return home. The next process is to identify strategies to achieve this goal. The focus of this section is to identify actions that are specific and measurable. It becomes a measurement of success.

I would encourage everyone not to settle for the status quo. I have encouraged my own children to aim high in their pursuits while maintaining a level of self-awareness where they are setting realistic goals and working to achieve them. If one door closes, move on to the next and continue moving forward. Our self-worth cannot be wrapped up in what we achieve or what we attain because there will never be enough. Success is not a destination but a journey. Consider the words of Viktor Frankl who survived the Holocaust after being sent to the Theresienstadt concentration camp with his family. He wrote:

"Don't aim at success. The more you aim at it and make it a target, the more you are going to miss it. For success, like happiness, cannot be pursued; it must ensue, and it only does so as the unintended side effect of one's personal dedication to a cause greater than oneself or as the by-product of one's surrender to a person other than oneself. Happiness must happen, and the same holds for success: you have to let it happen by not caring about it. I want you to listen to what your conscience commands you to do and go on to carry it out to the best of your knowledge. Then you will live to see that in the long-run success will follow you precisely because you had forgotten to think about it"

Life has been described as vaporous, here today, gone tomorrow. Find enjoyment in today so you do not lose tomorrow. Work hard this week and search for the good in all that you do. Spread joy with a heart that is oriented toward contentment and hope. Do this in your conversations and your attitude whether at work or at home because while misery loves company, joy is contagious. Take care of yourselves, your family, as well as your crew and show up to every incident with the right uniform, the right PPE, and the right attitude. We are called to bring calm into the chaos and when we can control nothing else around us, we can always control our attitude and effort. Thank you for all the work that you do to serve our community.

Have a great week.

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