

Redefining Success

W. Brett Wilson

Portfolio Penguin, paperback
256 pp, \$32.00, 978-0-670-06694-0

Reviewed by David E. White

“...unconditional love and acceptance some days carried me more than they could ever know.”

How often do you read language like this in a book purporting to hold the secrets to success? This is a deep place, vulnerable and real. Wilson goes there, often.

While acknowledging the role and impact of guts, determination, opportunity, networks and the like, through *Redefining Success* Wilson reveals how stumbling through misplaced priorities, setbacks and mistakes in all aspects of life contribute to learning, and therefore who a person may become.

Where does he go with all this learning; what is the ultimate outcome? Wilson is clear, “That balancing and pursuing one’s life passions within a clearly defined set of priorities is the key to living a life you can become very proud of.”

Wilson states that the goal for writing this book is “to inspire people to consider thinking, acting and living with a renewed commitment to a set of basic life principles.”

“In short,” writes Wilson, “I believe that if people are really a going to find meaning and relevant success, they have to begin by carefully defining what they mean by the term.”

What he does through *Redefining Success; Still Making Mistakes* is provide a rich tapestry of real life experiences through which the reader may relate and be inspired to discover and articulate their own principles.

In the opening pages, Wilson states that, “material or financial success (or celebrity) does not lead to happiness, a fact that should be beyond doubt or question,” and further that “true internal happiness really does point the way to success in life and business.”

In coming to understand Wilson’s perspective, you may conclude that the concept of success, as Wilson is defining it, is simple. While it may indeed be simple, it is not necessarily easy, for as Wilson suggests, “It takes work and commitment to live by a set of core values.”

Readers may be intrigued, as I was, by the insertion of many pages of artistic portrait photography, accompanied by prose. By example:

“Here is a man who dreams of great swaths circling wheat fields, who dreams of lucid and crystal lakes, who dreams of restless dance of movement. Here is a man who has energy to wait...direct and unflinching: this is what you get.”



Again, no surprise for those who have had the privilege of interacting with Wilson, for he lives courageously in a what you see is what you get vulnerability, which seems to be integrally woven into his core value of integrity and honesty.

This core value is also woven through his writing. Beginning with the perspective of a wealth-obsessed world, he moves on to highlight the importance of making wise choices, quoting a line from Harry Potter: “Men are not known by their abilities, but rather by their choices.” Wilson highlights the importance of choices regarding health, family, friends, education, career and community, arriving at the most important choice being a foundation of integrity.

“When it comes to integrity,” writes Wilson, “It’s a matter of deciding up front what you are prepared to do, and not do. If you want your behaviour to be a source of inspiration for your kids, to continue to earn and deserve the respect of friends, colleagues, competitors and clients, and go to sleep at night knowing that you’ve done right by the people around you, then it pays to make a commitment to living a life of integrity, based on lasting principles.”

Redefining Success; Still Making Mistakes is a must read for all who have made business their life’s work. It is also relevant to any who are looking for real life experience and insights from someone who has lived a very full life. It may assist them in making a difference within their own life, living it as if on purpose, discovering fullness in promise, and leading with heart. ■