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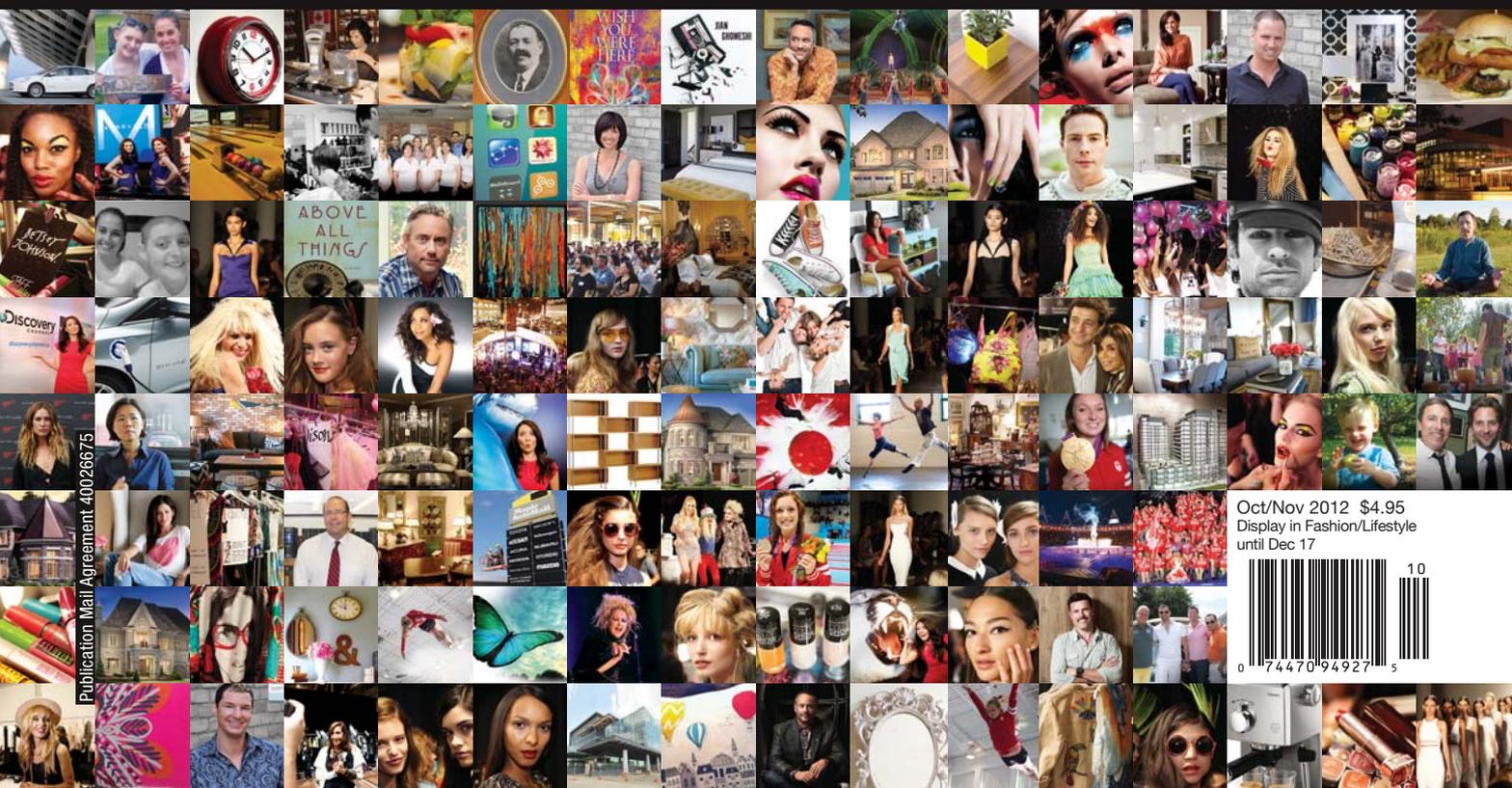
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MEASURE OF SUCCESS

W. Brett Wilson turns over a new leaf in *Redefining Success*

Written By W. Brett Wilson

Decades ago, the Bhutanese government developed the concept of Gross National Happiness (GNH), which measures the vitality and well-being of its population and encourages economic growth balanced by other priorities, such as the country's spiritual values.

The idea of GNH captured my imagination while I was travelling through Bhutan last summer as it's in such sharp contrast to our traditional Western thinking. We tend to measure success against material goals rather than focusing on what we *really* value. My own story is a familiar one: I spent years working around the clock in pursuit of "success." My single-minded pursuit of wealth and power got me what I thought I wanted, but I eventually lost what really mattered to me. I was facing cancer, a failing marriage and barely-there relationships with my kids. That's why I actively encourage people to think hard about how they truly define success.

I've come to realize that if you measure success based on pursuit of that big bank account, nice house and corner office, you might find the end result somewhat hollow. But if you measure success based on real wealth — family time, friendships and your own health — you might suddenly



Photo By Jason Stang

begin to feel much richer than you thought possible.

Material wealth still left me with the vague feeling that I had the capacity for something more — and "more" didn't mean more deals. One of the best ways I know to find real and lasting significance in life is to enrich the lives of others. Ironically, I now spend almost as much time giving money away as I did earning it.

Over the years I have helped with numerous events that have raised tens of millions of dollars for worthy causes. I have invited groups of friends and their children with me to build houses in northern Mexico through a program organized by Youth With A Mission. I've already made the trip nine times — the last trip was in September



Photo By Heather Fritz Photography

2011 — with a group of 63 people. Together, we built three homes over a weekend. In addition to the impact we have on the Mexican families we support, it's a powerful time of team bonding and personal growth for all participants.

It really is impossible to give without receiving much more in return. Making this journey multiple times has been an incredible opportunity in my life, and the lives of my friends, partners and children. I would urge everyone to take the time to experience the impact of this kind of work. At some point in your life, get together with friends committed to making a difference, and go to any corner of your world that needs help. Build a home. Bring some supplies. Teach a skill. Do anything. You may not be able to help everyone, but often the smallest thing you can do will still make a big difference in the life of someone. And that is one of the best ways I know to measure your success. ©

**W. BRETT WILSON
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W. Brett Wilson is one of Canada's most successful businessmen and innovative philanthropists. His book, *Redefining Success*, is available this November from Penguin Books. @WBrettWilson
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