9 Things You Simply Must Do to Succeed in Love & Life
A Psychologist probes the mystery of why some lives really work and others don't
by Dr. Henry Cloud

déjà vu People

By carefully observing people who gave him a certain "deja vu" feeling when he first met them, Dr. Henry Cloud made a remarkable discovery. No, he hadn't actually met these people before, but he had encountered their particular ways of handling life. And the common denominator with these individuals who practiced these "ways" was they were all successful!

They all...
• Had healthy relationships
• Reached their goals
• Did not repeat the same mistakes
• Were in control of their lives
• Felt a sense of purpose

Dr. Cloud then decided to do something that was not the focus of his clinical training: investigate why successful people's lives were working, rather than trying to uncover what was broken in a person and trying to fix it. He learned that personal growth is not only about getting healthy, but also about the principles successful people invariably practice.

If you follow these nine principles, you can achieve great results in your work, your relationships, and other areas of your life. Best of all, these principles are not limited to the chosen few who are born with money, brains, or great talent. They're available to anyone who wants to transform average relationships and uncertain hopes into vibrant and achievable dreams.

Ever wonder why some people keep getting what they want out of life, and others don't? What's the difference between those who reach their goals over and over and those locked in survival mode?

Dr. Henry Cloud connects the dots, helping you discover "ways" of behaving and responding to situations that successful individuals (he calls "deja vu people") have in common.

Principle #1: Dig It Up
What lies deep inside is where the real life is...
Successful people spend time listening to it, looking for it, digging it up and "outing" it. This principle is based on us looking inside ourselves for our dreams and aspirations. Once we find them, we need to begin to take action in order to realize our dreams.
Choice of attention to pay attention to this and ignore that – is to the inner life, what choice of action is to the outer. In both cases a man is responsible for his choice and must accept the consequences whatever they may be. -W.H. Auden
Principle #2: Pull The Tooth
déjà vu People get rid of bad stuff. Period. Sometimes quickly, sometimes through a process, but they get rid of it. They get it out of their hair, off their plate, out of their souls and out of their lives. People who demonstrate this principle do not allow negative things to take up space and time in their lives. They remove the negative thing and fill it with something positive that will lead them to success.
Do you have a tooth that needs to be pulled?
Something nagging and nudging you to take action?

Principle #3: Play the Movie
“[Successful]...people rarely take an action without considering its future implications.” Many people think about the future when making large decisions. The successful person thinks about the future not only with large decisions but in small ones also. They think about future implications on a consistent basis. What sets successful people apart is not just that they look at the future of every decision, but they take actions to control and impact the future as much as possible in the direction they desire to go.

Principle #4: Do Something
“[Successful people]...tend to call on themselves as the first source to correct difficult situations. It does not matter whether they think they are to blame or not. Even if someone else is at fault, they will ask themselves, What can I do to make things better? Whether the answer lies in confronting other people or asking for help, the common theme for successful people is to do something that is a positive step in resolving the issue. They take action and make good things happen.

Principle #5: Act Like an Ant
“They achieved their goals by taking tiny steps over time.” Cloud shares that he learned this principle by watching ants. As he watched ants he realized that “They achieved their goals by taking tiny steps over time.” Successful people take one step at a time. They are consistently moving forward and not looking backwards. This principle also necessitates the concept of perseverance.

Principle #6: Hate Well
“Basically, we are defined in part by what we love and what we hate.” When people tell us what they love and what they hate we learn a lot about that person and who they are. Successful people move away from those things they hate which helps us to understand who they are and how they will behave. “Character is in part formed by what we hate, because we move to be different from whatever that is.”

Principle #7: Don’t Play Fair
“Here’s all you have to do to ruin every relationship in your life: Play Fair. If you play fair, you will ruin all of them. Some may go pretty quickly, others may take longer. But in the end, you will succeed. Play fair and all your relationships will be ruined.” This principle discusses the characteristic of not treating others as they treat you.
That may be fair, but it is not productive in building healthy and long relationships. This principle can be summed up by saying, “Give back better than you are given.”

**Principle #8: Be Humble**
Cloud describes humility as, “...to just be who he or she really is, a human being like everyone else, avoiding the need to be more than that.”
Humble people tend to be givers of themselves. They also accept failures in their life and learn from them.
Ezra Taft Benson says, “Pride is concerned with who is right. Humility is concerned with what is right.”

**Principle #9: Upset the Right People**
Successful people are “very loving and feel deeply the pain or distress that their decisions cause others...”
Yet successful people “do not make decisions based on the fear of other people’s reactions.” They are willing to make tough decisions based on principle and not to how others will react to the decision.
“What you should do, and what someone’s response is going to be, are two different issues.”

12 Strategies for Implementing the 9 Principles in our Lives
What you can actually do...

1. **Do not “go it alone”**. Find people to help you become successful by encouraging, supporting, and holding you accountable.
2. **Receive Wisdom.** Seek wisdom from those who have already been where you want to go. Read, research, take a class, hang out with others who do things well.
3. **Receive feedback and Correction.** If you had it all to together, you would already be there. So get comfortable with the fact that there are things about yourself and your ways that need correction.
4. **Find Models.** Surround yourself with successful people and watch and learn how they are doing it.
5. **Review Your Patterns.** Don’t allow past patterns of failing to repeat themselves.
6. **Deal With Impediments.** Get help. By resolving fears and hurts, you will find more freedom to execute the nine things.
7. **Add Structure.** Add the structure from the outside. Make a decision to join a structured program and join it or follow it.
8. **Practice, Practice, Practice and Fail.** This is a process. Don’t expect to have it all now. Learn from failures and persevere.
9. **Change Your Beliefs.** Banish false beliefs about your capacity by listening to how you talk to yourself. Then change each negative into a positive and talk back to those debilitating old beliefs as you hear them come up in your head.
10. **Quarantine Your Weaknesses.** Learn your triggers and make sure you are protected from them. Otherwise, they will lead you into the same failure you knew before.
11. **“Put your vision and goals on paper.”** Write out where you want to get to and how you are going to do it.
12. **Pray, Pray, Pray.** Practice parallel consciousness – asking for help and guidance every step of the way.