

[Drive](https://www.flickr.com/photos/abesselink/52578283870)  The noise can be deafening. It surrounds us on a daily basis. Be it on social media or out in the real world (or some combination thereof), we are constantly exposed to how success is defined within our culture. It never seems to end; every grade, every performance, every opinion, every judgment reflects on your success - or so we are taught to believe. Even if you think you can avoid its grasp, much of our lives are spent having success defined for us - and rarely on our own terms.

When you get down to the root of it all, some simple truisms seem to exist in our culture. We are led to believe that there is one path to success. We are led to believe there is always better, usually on the other side of the fence. And worst of all, we are led to believe we are never enough.

We all experience ups and downs in life. Nobody is immune, but many refuse to embrace the peace contained within this elemental truth. Our experiences serve as signposts on the highway of life. A sub-par performance or a low exam grade isn't a reflection of your implicit value, and it isn't a failure. As Abraham Lincoln once said, there is no failure - only opportunity. These moments are just an opportunity to measure where you are in reference to where you are going.

But there's one thing that is often forgotten: you're the driver. Stephen Covey once called it response-ability - the ability to respond to those ups and downs. Don't try so hard to avoid the bumps that you run off the road completely. Don't spend all your time looking in the rearview mirror when there is a road immediately ahead of you. If there is something obstructing your path, don't swerve - ease off and redirect. It might just require pulling off to the side of the road to reflect for a moment. Or two.

Above all else ♦ You. Are. Enough.

You are unique - so there is only one person qualified to define your success: you. You drive your own car, you set your own path, you measure yourself. Nobody can walk in your shoes, and nobody has your unique skills. Putting religious and philosophical themes aside, there is but one judge in the grand scheme of reality. Ourselves.

Sadly, many of us won't truly embrace this until we have some life experience behind us when we have been down the road a few miles. We don't truly give ourselves the grace to be the one that defines our success. When we're closer to the end than the beginning, we may be less compelled to allow the judgments of others to define our success. When time is limited, we embrace what time really means to us.

If only we knew early in life that we are the only ones who can truly define our own success, we'd all be much happier. More importantly, we'd all enjoy the drive, the wind in our hair, and be present in the moment.

My life, decisions, benchmarks, journey, definition of success ♦ and ultimately, drive.

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