

The Importance of Leaving a Legacy by Jim Rohn

There are four areas concerning leaving a legacy that I consider to be fundamental: a life well-lived, principles to live by, the importance of a spiritual legacy and an impact legacy and a financial legacy. Today I would like to share on a life well-lived.

You know, I have had an amazing life. I have traveled the world. I have shared my heart with so many wonderful people. I have been fortunate enough to make a great living and enjoy the fruit of my work. I have met thousands of people who are dedicated to personal development and self-growth. I have made it my life's pursuit to teach others the philosophies and actions that would help them achieve greatness and personal fulfillment in their own lives.

Being aware of this has made me even more clear on my goal of living well and teaching others to do the same. Our One-Year Plan of Success is designed to help others achieve all of their dreams and is part of one of the legacies I want to leave behind.

Leaving a legacy for others to follow is part of what drives me. I followed others who had gone before me; they left a legacy for me. Now I am making sure that those who come after me will have a trail to follow as well. You see, leaving a legacy is important.

Think about those who left a legacy for us to follow and for you specifically: your parents, your grandparents, your aunts and uncles, your schoolteachers, your coaches, your neighbors where you grew up.

There are literally thousands of men and women who lived in a way that affects our lives today. And yes, the list goes on from there as well. These are the people who we knew, who we lived with, and who shaped us deeply, for good and for bad in some cases.

You see, a legacy can be anywhere on the continuum, from very bad to very good. It all depends on how we live our lives. How we live our lives is critically important.

Why is leaving a legacy important? Here are a few reasons:

The legacy we leave is part of the ongoing foundations of life. Those who came before leave us the world we live in. Those who will come after will have only what we leave them. We are stewards of this world, and we have a calling on our lives to leave it better than how we found it, even if it seems like such a small part.

Legacies have raw power for good and for bad. There are people who have changed the world for good, people who have opened up new worlds for millions of others, people who have spurred others onto new heights. And there are people who have caused massive destruction for countless millions, people who left a wake of pain behind them wherever they went.

There are parents who have blessed their children with greatness and other parents who have ruined their children's fragile minds and hearts. What we do affects others. Our lives have the power to create good or purvey evil. It is important that we choose to do good.

It is an act of responsibility to leave a legacy. Because of the power of our lives and the legacies we leave, it is a great responsibility to choose to leave a positive legacy. All good men and women must take responsibility to create legacies that will take the next generation to a level we could only imagine. I truly believe that part of what makes us good and honorable people is to have a foundational part of our lives based on the goal of leaving a legacy.

Purposefully leaving a legacy for others breaks the downward pull of selfishness that can be inherent in us. When we strive to leave a legacy, we are acting with a selflessness that can only be good for us. Yes, I suppose someone could work hard to earn money so that when he or she dies, a building is named after them, but that is not the kind of legacy we are talking about. We are talking about legacies that make life better for those who come after us, not about our own fame or recognition, but about helping others. After all, we won't be around to watch our legacy. To build that which will last beyond us is selfless, and living with that in mind breaks the power of selfishness that tries so desperately to ingrain itself in our lives.

It also keeps us focused on the big picture. Legacy building is "big picture." It keeps us focused on the long-

term and gives us values that we can judge our actions by. When we are acting based on selfishness, personal expediency and the like, we are "small picture"—whatever is pragmatic right now. When we are building a life that will give for many years, we are "big picture." Ask yourself: How does this action affect my overall goals? How will this affect people in the years to come?