

Introduction

“The Chinese bard Li Bai used the butterfly in the eighth century A.D. to evoke the *limits of human perception* in these verses about the fourth-century B.C. philosopher Zhuangzi:

*Zhuangzi in dream became a butterfly,
And the butterfly became Zhuangzi at waking.
Which was the real — the butterfly or the man?
Who can tell the end of the endless changes of things?
...So must rank and riches vanish.
You know it, still you toil and toil, — what for?”*

— By Ted Scheinman, senior editor for Smithsonian Magazine from *Flights of Fancy*
NOTE: Li Bai, the self-taught medieval genius, remains China’s abiding titan of classical poetry.

After writing and publishing fifteen books and over one-hundred articles in the self-help genre — all based on our research and actual life experiences — and now finding ourselves beyond what many would consider retirement age, we “stumbled” upon what we believe is the *profound* and *perceptive* power of the word “success.” Profound in its *philosophical* nature and *perceptive* in the qualities that it bestows.

The word “success,” just like most common nouns, addresses “*classes*” of things, people and places, and not specific things, specific people, and specific places.

However, in today’s English language, the word “success,” in its most used vernacular, does address a specific class of “people” and judges their “performance” in life. The verdict is usually characterized by their wins or their failures. As framed so well by John C. Maxwell, “*The difference between average people and achieving people is their perception of and response to failure.*”

Then, from this perspective, it occurred to us that millions, if not billions, of “successes” within humanity are revealed every day, even though it is difficult to know the exact number.

Nevertheless, the United Nations estimates that over 350,000 babies are born every day. According to the Education Data Initiative, in 2021, an average of over 11 million students graduated from college each day, and the United Network of Organ Sharing recently announced that transplant hospitals worked to perform a recorded 3,817 heart transplants across the United States alone in 2023.

Of course, giving birth to new life, graduating from college, and extending life with an organ transplant are just three of millions of global feats that most would label as significant “successes.”

Over the past forty years, we both have accumulated many accomplishments, achievements, awards, accolades, financial gains, and even a few moments of fame.

In our first published book titled, *“Living a Richer Life: Getting the Most Out of Life’s Gifts and Circumstances,”* we defined such “successes” as the result of living a “*richer life*”, with richer life, being defined as “*a life full of good decisions, financial security, great relationships, loving family memories and a feeling of completeness.*”

However, at our current stage in life, we have begun to view our, “*accomplishments, achievements, awards, accolades, financial gains, and even our few moments of fame*” as not just what others think of our “success,” but as *consequences* of a level of motivation combined with a structured pattern of *thought* and *action*. Our recent “stumble” upon how we now view the word “success” and its *profound* and *perceptive* power was *personally* and *professionally* fortunate, and has two dimensions.

The first dimension is that it ignited our journalistic curiosity and research into what people across the globe “perceive” as “successes” in their life at this point of the 21st century, and what they believe were the *primary motivators* associated with the human determination to obtain their “success” within the society they call home.

The second is the opportunity for us to learn, gather, and share with readers the various deductions and conclusions of this fresh research and analysis.

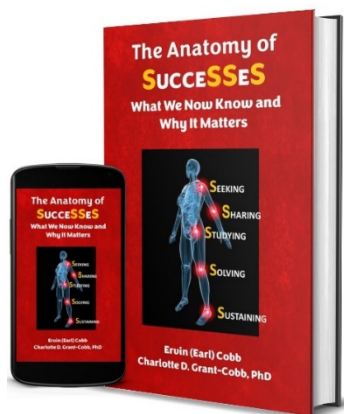
Our goal in this book is to both highlight in a simple, yet thought provocative manner, what most people today believe are the *primary motivators* embedded within the “anatomy” or “structure” of the millions of “successes” that occur globally every day, and *why it matters* within today’s global society.

If you participated and contributed to this wealth of insight, we offer our sincere thanks.

If you were not able to contribute and are simply curious about “*what most people believe today*” and “*why it matters,*” it is our hope that with the publishing of this book your thirst for answers will be fully quenched.

The Anatomy of Successes: What We Now Know and Why It Matters

Ervin (Earl) Cobb and Charlotte D. Grant-Cobb, PhD



THE GOAL OF THE NEW BOOK

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Ervin (Earl) Cobb and Charlotte D. Grant-Cobb, PhD

The Cobbs are widely recognized as two of the nation’s *rising-stars* among *Self-Improvement*, *Leadership*, and *Professional Development* authors, lecturers and speakers.

The collective seriousness and wit of their work has been described as perfect for “those seeking personal growth, change and life enrichment but not quite ready for Dr. Phil.”

Together, they have authored 15 published books and over 100 published articles in the *Leadership*, *Project Management*, *Professional Development* and *Self-Help* genres.

Their earlier books include *Until I Change* (July 2002), *Living a Richer Life: Getting the Most out of Life's Gifts and Circumstances* (August 2010 & June 2014), *Focused Leadership: A 10-Step Approach to Leading and Winning When it Matters* (November 2011), *Transition* (November 2014), and *Navigating the Life Enrichment Model* (October 2010).

Their newest books include, *The Official Leadership Checklist and Diary for Project Management Professionals* (May 2017), *Driving Ultimate Project Performance: Transforming from Project Manager to Project Leader* (May 2018), "Leadership Front and Center: A Decade of Thoughts and Tutelage" (October 2019), "Situations and Leadership: Short Stories and Lifelong Lessons" (October 2020), "Why Is It So Hard: Becoming a People Person in the Post COVID-19 Era" (2021), and "Living a More Thoughtful Life: Thinkable Thoughts and Relevant Reflections" (2022).

They are both graduates of *Arizona State University*, and currently reside in Savannah, Georgia.

For more information regarding the ongoing "Success Survey" or the pre-release of this book contact: connie@richerlifellc.com at RICHER Press.

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