



"Successful otherwise" redefining the whole concept of success

Adrianna Huffington: 30/07/2013

Good day from London. No, I'm not there to bring the royal baby, although I offered to look after George to Kate catches a few hours of sleep. Actually, I'm here on the occasion of the first conference in the UK the concept of "Succeeding otherwise: redefining success beyond money and power," to be held today.

The conference, headed by the *Huffington Post UK*, aims to discuss a more sustainable definition of success that includes the well-being, wisdom, and our ability to be amazed and to be charitable.

This is the first international edition of our conference on the concept of "Succeeding otherwise" the event has been launched in New York in June. (Such a conference is viewable live here, you can read the best quotes and ideas to remember here, and here's the first speech I held on the subject at the graduation ceremony of the University of Smith.)

What prompted me to organize such events is the following observation: it is becoming increasingly clear that the current model, in which success is equivalent to the work overload, overwork, lack of sleep, never see his family, to be connected by e-mail 24h/24, to exhaustion, does not work. It does not work for women. It does not work for men. It does not work for the companies or any of the companies where the model is dominant or the planet.

At the same time this system collapses, there is an awareness-supported by scientific evidence increasingly numerous and overwhelming benefits to-use tools such as respect and meditation to reduce stress and improve our health and well-being.

This is the perfect time to start to redefine success to bring it more in line with what really makes us happy. And that is why we keep more events like today, so that people can hear, learn from each other, exchange ideas and actually begin to incorporate more healthy habits and restructure the way we live life everyday.

Why do we call it "women's conference" when clearly we all win redefine success? Because the current definition of success, that the business and burnout are an honor and manhood, was largely created by men symbol. And since women are still on the sidelines in many areas of work, they help to maintain the status quo. Yet women are the ones who are able to manage both their pro life and personal life. It is therefore reasonable to assume that women are best placed to bring a more comprehensive idea of what constitutes success.

But as we said at the conference in New York, we want to open the conversation to everyone. This is a women's conference, which includes many good men. Today, participants in the debate are:

Philippa Brown, CEO of Omnicom Media Group, Roisin Donnelly, marketing director of P & G Megha Mittal, Chairman and CEO of Escada, James Muthana YogaAt.com Founder, Rich Pierson, co- founder of Headspace, Cilla Snowball, CEO of AMV BBDO, and Mark Williams, Professor of Clinical Psychology and Director of the Oxford Mindfulness Centre at Oxford University.

And you can also take part in the conversation.

Why give an international dimension to this debate? Because even though the United States has undoubtedly contributed to the definition of full-through-the success, this is clearly a global phenomenon. At a meeting held a few days ago with the editors of our international editions of the *Huffington Post* , we've heard stories about the specific ways in which this skewed vision of success is evident in each of the countries represented, and on how to fight to restore balance in their lives.

In terms of where we are today, Winston Churchill said a famous phrase stating that the United States and the United Kingdom are "two nations divided by a common language."And we could add a common problem of stress and *burnout* . Contrary to the stereotype that the British would respond to pressure with a scathing cynicism, a patented phlegm or an invitation to tea to forget the stress has the same effect here in the United States. Here are just a few examples:

- Some eight million men, women and children in the UK suffer from anxiety, costing nearly 10 billion pounds each year.
- Since May 2012, admissions to the hospital for stress increased 7% over the past year, reaching 6370.
- Stress and depression have resulted in a loss of 10 million working days a year ago.
- Over the same period, the stress was responsible for 40% of all work-related illnesses.

- Nearly one in five adults in the UK suffers from anxiety and depression.
- The British are those who receive fewer days of paid vacation and holidays in Europe.
- From 2009 to 2012, the annual costs of sleeping pills for national health services increased by nearly 50 million pounds.
- In 2011, over 45 million antidepressants were prescribed, up 9% over the previous year.
- Health Services (NHS) spent over 270 million for antidepressants in 2011, an increase of 23% in one year.

In fact, this epidemic of depression is a global phenomenon. According to the WHO, more than 350 million people worldwide currently suffer from depression. In the United States, antidepressant prescriptions rose 400% since 1988. In the UK, this is an increase of 495% since 1991. In Europe, from 1995 to 2009, the antidepressants increased by nearly 20% per year use.

Also in Germany, the site of our next international edition, which is scheduled for launch in October, stress and burnout affect. More than 40% of German employees say their work has become more stressful over the past two years. And in 2011, Germany lost 59 million days of work due to psychological illness, an increase of over 80% in 15 years.

The German Labour Minister Ursula von der Leyen said that the *burn-out* cost the country up to 10 billion euros per year. "Nothing is more expensive than sending a good employee to retire at age 45 because of exhaustion, she said. Such cases are not exceptions. This is a trend against which we must something. "

The French, it is not surprising, have a philosophical approach to the problem. In an article in the *Huffington Post* , the Belgian philosopher Pascal Chabot said the *burn-out* that it is "a disease of civilization" and says that it is symptomatic of our modern times. "It is not just an individual disorder that affects some people ill-suited to the system, or too committed, or not knowing (or can not) put limits on their investment professional, he writes, it is also a disorder mirror reflecting some excessive values of our society. "

The Italians have their own answers to the problem. I especially like their tradition called the *retort* , a moment in the afternoon when the shops, restaurants and offices closed. They also have an evening stroll, the *passeggiata* , a time when we cut the vagaries of the day.

Italy has also created one of the strongest movements in the push against our equation for success including speed and *burnout* . In 1989 the movement *Slow Food* was launched to push the expansion of fast food, focusing on local production, sustainability, and food as a social act of personal contacts. Since then the movement has expanded and now includes the Slow Travel, Slow Design and Slow Cities.

"This is not a declaration of war against the speed, writes Carl Honoré, author of *Slow Manual*. speed has helped to shape our world in a wonderful and liberating. But, he adds, it may a turn as idôlaterie. "

Thus, awareness of the problem as well as the struggle to find the solutions are in full swing across Europe. And I am eager to hear what our speakers have to say today. One of the participants that I met last year at Davos which I offered the book to all those who work at *Huff Post : Mindfulness: A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in a Frantic World* (French: Meditation in full consciousness: A practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world), this is Mark Williams, professor of psychology at Oxford and ordained pastor in the Anglican Church. I find his own description of his book particularly useful:

"This is a book that discusses how you can find peace and fulfillment in a hectic world and troubled as the latter Or rather, it is a book that discusses how to rediscover, because there are deep wells of peace and fullness at the bottom of everyone, no matter how great the feeling of being trapped and helpless they are waiting to be. released from their cages. "

"Meditation, writes Williams, can have profound effects on virtually all aspects of our health and well-being. It *boosts* the immune system, improves memory and physical endurance and reduces depression and anxiety.

"You would be amazed, he writes, the level of happiness and joy that can be achieved even with toddlers changes in how you live your life." And indeed, meditation takes time, but as he notes, "the fullness of meditation frees up more space than is necessary to carry out the practice."

But mindfulness meditation frees more than time. It frees us from a very limited view of what success defined only by two measures: money and power. It frees us from the perpetual and destructive design of fight or flight. That can be found if one goes down the hamster wheel, this is according to William, "a kind of happiness and peace you feel in the bones and promotes a love of deep and authentic life seeping into everything you do and helping to overcome the worst things that life brings you with a lot more skill."

Although some do not would imagine the British political leaders as inclined to meditation, the practice has been adopted by some prominent politicians. The Foreign Minister William Hague told the *Times* he meditated for 30 years. The Deputy Prime Minister and leader of the Liberal Democrat Party Nick Clegg said finding practice 'extremely useful to face the stress of ordinary life "One of the interesting uses of meditation has been described by Andrew Jones, a teacher in the. Hertfordshire. He cites a study by the UCLA showing that meditation reduces aggression and bad behavior in children, Jones writes that many schools

in the United Kingdom, including his own, have established a "quiet time" of 10 or 15 minutes during the day. Though the program was the most popular original side, students have gradually joined, including those belonging to the program especially developed for children.

Other personalities taking part in the debate: Rich Pierson. He is the co-founder of Headspace, application of meditation presented as "the first subscription mental gym in the world." The application has attracted unsolicited such as Emma Watson and Gwyneth Paltrow sponsors. When Pierson came to speak to our editors international leader last Friday, he told us at the beginning of the launch of Headspace his father had trouble understanding his new project. "He just could not understand," said Pierson. But later, Pierson found a way to break through. His father plays golf, so Pierson told him that meditation would reduce disability. It was a success, his father began to meditate and his disability has diminished!

In an interview with *Huffington Post UK*, Pierson described the beneficial effects of meditation. "You learn to respond more effectively in the moment," he said, which in turn allows you to take life as it comes. This really is the deepest and most technical brutally simple '.

He also gave some tips for taking the time to disconnect:

- I have moments of the day when I completely dodge technology.
- I do not have my phone or my laptop in my room.
- I do not check e-mails until I get to work.
- I never look at my emails when I'm on leave.

And even as an entrepreneur in the new technologies, it is wary of how we left dominate our lives. "I sincerely believe that in 10 years we will see the technology in the same light that we see cigarette today, and people will say: 'But what we did not care?'" She obviously has an important role to play in our modern world, but there is no doubt that it is unbalanced.

And so, as Pierson, the *Huffington Post* plans to use technology to help us to face all these forces whose technology itself, which can cause us to lose balance. Both in the U.S. edition in other international editions, we will seek to redefine success and place in the center of our discussions.

Europe, like the United States, is facing major challenges that our political system does not seem able to resolve yet. The concept of "Successful otherwise" is not a substitute for taking responsibility and large-scale changes that American citizens and European law. But political leaders more in tune with their own wisdom are more likely to make better decisions, which can of course make a world of difference in our individual lives.

Our current and possible definition of success is a global problem and will require a global response. I hope you will join the conversation and you tell us how you redefine success in your own life and in your corner of the world.
