

How to Celebrate a Success

Believe it or not, many people have a hard time celebrating their success. Let's say you have a huge project coming up at work. You've spent months working on the project: developing ideas, creating content, getting other people enthused about what you're doing. The whole time you're working on this project, you're thinking that if it fails it will be all your fault. You're ready to take the fall if this doesn't work out because you completely own what you're doing.



Finally the day comes when it launches and you do even better than you'd hoped you would. It worked! But you don't celebrate. Sure, if it failed it would be all your fault, but now that it went well you start saying things like, "oh it's no big deal," or "it wasn't me, it was everyone who helped."

Why do we do this to ourselves? Why can't we just say, "I DID A GREAT JOB!" and be proud of our hard work? Some people have no problem celebrating themselves but others really struggle with doing so. Why?

People who have a hard time celebrating their success tend to be Type-A, overachievers. They never feel like their work is done because nothing they do is ever quite good enough. They seek perfection and they always want to keep looking to the next step. In addition, they tend to fear celebrating any success because, what if you fail tomorrow?

It's tiring, thinking this way. Sure, the anxiety-ridden need for achievement can be helpful in that it can make you work harder to further your goals, but it also lends itself to mental breakdowns. No one can push, push, and push with zero relaxing or celebration without cracking under the pressure at some point.

If you're an overachiever who's more focused on the next project than celebrating and relishing in what you've already accomplished, there's one thing you can do that will help switch your mindset and get you to really feel and celebrate your success: go back in time.

Imagine that you are yourself six months ago, one year ago or five years ago depending on the length of your project. If you knew then that you would have published that book, launched that prototype or gotten that promotion, how would you feel? You probably would have been ecstatic! Your success over that time period wasn't just a demonstration of you either having or not having the ability to achieve something; it demonstrated growth in your abilities. Looking back and seeing how far you've come is essential to feeling proud of your success and also realizing that any future failures can't take away that growth.

Once you've switched your mindset, there are other things you can do to make the celebration even more enjoyable. Share your success with friends and family outside of work. Keep in mind, however, that they may not understand just how great your accomplishment was, so don't let your own happiness be dependent on their reaction. You can also treat yourself to something, such as a massage, new clothes, or a fancy dinner or remind yourself to celebrate by writing a message on your mirror or changing your phone background to a "congrats!" type of message.

Lastly, take a mental break by taking a day or a week off, depending on what you can do, and not allowing yourself to even think about work. Bask in your success and remind yourself that you can start on the next project tomorrow. You really do deserve it.