



5 PRINCIPLES of personal discipline

RICHARD CONWAY SHARES SOME LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAYS FROM A RECENT AUCKLAND AUDIENCE WITH **WARREN RUSTAND** – A MAN WHO HAS SPENT A LIFETIME LEARNING AND ENGAGING WITH EXCEPTIONAL PEOPLE.

In September I had the pleasure of listening to Warren Rustand speak to a small audience of entrepreneurs in Auckland.

Warren is a remarkable individual. Among his many accolades, he is a former NBA basketball player; he served as the appointment secretary to US president Gerald Ford; he has been the CEO or chairman of 17 companies; and he served on the board of directors for 50 public, private and not-for-profit organisations.

He also has six children, and is still going strong and keeping up with his grand-kids. All this at the ripe old age of 76!

There was a huge number of takeaways from his two-hour talk, far more than I could fit into this column. However, I've decided to focus on a small area of his talk – his view on the 5 principles of greatness and leadership.

1 Commit to personal discipline

The most valuable resource is time, yet we use it frivolously. Every morning, Warren wakes up and spends the first ten minutes reflecting and feeling grateful, the next ten minutes reading something inspirational, and another ten minutes writing in his journal. He then proceeds to do 30 minutes of exercise.

He splits his day into four buckets and attributes a percentage of his day to each: family, business, personal and community.

Interestingly, a lot of successful entrepreneurs I have met or heard speak have very similar habits and also keep a journal (such as Tim Ferriss). They feel that starting the day by writing something positive helps put them in a good frame of mind for the rest of the day. By doing this, they are also able to leave a poignant and personal legacy for their children.



WARREN RUSTAND

Warren also keeps himself fit and agile, because he wants to be sure that when one of his children asks him to do something physical, he won't be forced to let them down. He will always – health provided – say 'yes' to his kids no matter what they ask him to do: run a marathon, trek through the forest, go skiing, and so on.

2 Live with purpose, every day

In 1926, Charles Lindbergh made the first solo transatlantic flight. In doing so, he set a standard that has allowed aviation to flourish. He landed near Paris, and whilst speaking to the press he made a very interesting observation. He said, "We live today actually, in our dreams of yesterday, and by so living today we live to dream again."

Successful people have got to where they are because they have lived and played out their dreams of yesterday. Dreaming, thinking and envisioning the future is extremely important when it comes to our trajectory in life.

With this in mind, Warren stressed the importance of having a personal vision statement that actually means something to you. One such statement that resonated with him and a lot of the audience were the words of David O. McKay:

"No worldly success can compensate for failure in the home."

3 Act with intent

Strategy is everything. If the strategy is wrong, the execution does not matter. Intentionality really matters. Life is not a set of random events or chance; it's premeditated by our thoughts and actions. Success is not guaranteed, it is earned.

Our past experiences allow us to shape and decide our future actions. You need to actually make a conscious decision to think about what you do every day, in order to maximise your chance of success.

4 Make conscious choices

We can be whatever we want to be. We can choose to be happy when others around us are sad. Life is about our mindset, and our ability to plot a course. When you set a clear course, then nothing can stand in your way. Life is about the choices we make in the time that we have.

This idea really resonates with me and ties in with a talk I had with Debra Searle. She has a whole toolset around 'choosing your attitude' (an amazing lady – if you're interested in her toolset you can find it online).

5 Have a cause greater than yourself

Warren came across as a religious man (I am not). However, I loved his profound view on how you can measure someone's character: Character is how we treat those who cannot help us and cannot hurt us. If someone has absolutely no power to influence us in any way, we have the choice as to whether we help them or not, and it is our character, rather than an external influence, that dictates that decision.

In the words of Rabbi Harold Kushner: "Our souls are not hungry for fame, comfort, wealth, or power. Our souls are hungry for meaning, for the sense that we have figured out how to live so that our lives matter, so that the world will be at least a little bit different for our having passed through it."

What was clear from Warren's words is that despite his success, he is an extremely down to earth, humble and empathetic man. He has spent a lifetime learning and engaging with exceptional people, like Nelson Mandela and multiple US presidents.

Now, he feels that he is at a stage in life where he has a personal obligation to impart his knowledge, and share his experience with those that seek it.

I look forward to visiting his ranch next time I am in America! **NZB**



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