

*My*  
Philosophy  
*for*  
Successful  
Living

Jim Rohn

*With an Introduction by*  
Vic Johnson  
Founder of [AsAManThinketh.net](http://AsAManThinketh.net)

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# **My Philosophy For Successful Living**

**Jim Rohn**

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## Foreword

### by Vic Johnson

My great friend, Bill Rosselle, introduced me to Jim Rohn in the 1990's through a tape set that he loaned me. Needless to say, my life hasn't been the same since.

Like so many others experienced, it was Jim's simple wisdom that always spoke to me so strongly. And having had the privilege to spend some time with Jim personally, it was the kind of wisdom he lived. Unlike so many of the so-called heroes of today, this hero — an icon of the grandest sort — walked his talk.

I once calculated the time he would have to spend to travel, prepare and speak to the more than 6,000 audiences and 4 million hungry souls worldwide that he reached; and I concluded that he literally gave his adult life to help others find that “day that turns your life around.”

I was almost 50 years old by the time I met Jim, but he's one of those kind of people that you feel like you've known your whole life. There was nothing apparently pretentious about him. He felt no need to impress.

I have Kyle Wilson, who was the Founder and President of Jim Rohn International, to thank for the relationship. Kyle also made it possible for me to speak at Jim's event as well as Jim speaking at several of ours. It was some of the highest points of my life when we spoke together at our Claim Your Power Now event in Dallas and he appeared again at our Claim Your Power Now event in Atlanta.

But I will always cherish above those, the interview I got to do with him for our Goals2Go TV show. We recorded it on the first day (I think it was the second show I did that day) and I was fighting a major cold, nervous and excited all at the same time. But he was Jim. Acting like the guy who had spoken to 6,000 audiences, it was just another day at the shop to him. And that, along with his quiet encouragement, put me at ease.

Even today I listen to Jim's audios and it's like he's standing there sharing that "Idaho farm boy wisdom" with me. I've met very few people in my life who could put life in the simple perspectives that Jim could.

They don't make 'em like Jim anymore. And I hope you'll enjoy this book that we put together from Jim's comments at our Dallas event.

# Introduction

## Emerging From Your Cocoon

For nearly 50 wonderful years, I have been in the business of sharing ideas. In that time, several facts have become glaringly obvious. For example, we all want a great deal. This factor holds true no matter what we buy. However, often the most important purchases that we make are not with our dollars, but with our time. This is a fact that many forget, but I always keep this concept firmly fixed in my mind when making presentations.

I have had thousands of people attend my presentations in locations all over the world, ranging from Malaysia and Singapore to Mexico, Russia and Korea. Yet, I have never lost sight of what I see as my two key responsibilities. First and foremost, I want people to always feel as though they absolutely received value for the money that they spent. I want every participant to walk out of one of my presentations saying, “I certainly got my money’s worth!”

My second goal in my presentations as well as in this book is that everyone feels that they not only got their money’s worth, but also used their time wisely. I want every reader to feel as though the time they spent with this book was time very well spent.

The bottom line is that time is more precious than money. You can always get more money, but you can’t get more time. When you spend a day doing something, you have one less day to spend in another way. You can’t exactly “earn” that day back later. This means that you always need to spend your time wisely and get the best value for your time that you can.

When you take the time to learn, as you are doing now with this book, you are investing in you and your future. The reason for this is that one good idea can effectively change your entire life. Stop and think about that for a moment. One good idea can transform your whole future, ranging from your health to your finances to your relationships.



Ideas are funny in that they tend to have resonating effects. In this way, it is almost impossible to calculate what an idea is worth. This is why when you buy a book you are not buying the ideas. The publisher simply can't charge for the ideas. They can only charge for the book. Determining what to charge for the ideas would be impossible. After all, you might make a million dollars from a book that only cost you \$9.95, that's just how ideas work. And that's what makes ideas so grand.

Another remarkable fact about ideas and concepts is that you never know when or where you are going to find that resonating idea that radiates out and changes everything for you and your life. The early Christians, for example, were instructed that they should never miss the assembly because that's where they may get inspiration, nourishment and ideas. Important moments can come from the harmonious and unexpected alignment of the right speaker, the right book, and the right idea meeting at the very moment that you are in the right frame of mind to hear it.

The bottom line is that you will never know when that moment will arrive and change your life in the process. Viewed from another perspective, the knowledge and inspiration you need to transform your life may not come all at once, but instead in pieces as part of a process. I have seen this in my seminars where people have received different answers to their questions at different seminars.

Both the written word and the spoken word are what we use to convey those priceless ideas that can change our lives. This is why we should all engage in the sharing of ideas. Ideas are knowledge. When we share knowledge in the written or verbal form, amazing things can happen. When one person conveys knowledge to another person, two things happen. The first is a transformation of the person who listens to a presentation or reads a book or article, but another transformation takes place as well, namely in the speaker or author.

Over the years, it became increasingly obvious to me that when I inspired others, I too became inspired. In this way, there was a remarkable and empowering feedback loop of inspiration that is infectious, inspirational and never ending.

All human beings have the ability to transform like a caterpillar emerging from its cocoon and taking to the sky. This is the essence of personal development: taking information in, becoming inspired by it and allowing yourself to be transformed and, in turn, inspire others as well. Seeing what you can become and what you can help others become is the major challenge in life.

# Chapter 1

## The American Economic Ladder and Girl Scout Cookies

I learned an interesting economics axiom when I was 25 years old. Essentially, this axiom stated that we get paid for bringing value to the marketplace. The general idea is that no matter who you are, if you bring value to the marketplace, you will be rewarded. This is how the marketplace works. I began my self-education when I was 25, and by the time I was 31 or so, I was a millionaire. I feel that it was due, in part, to the fact that I had embraced this concept wholeheartedly.

Keep the truth about the marketplace in mind. The marketplace isn't some mysterious, unknowable place full of confusion. Instead, the marketplace is comprised of people. But this was just the beginning of my discovery. I learned a two-part, life changing fact. Number one, you will be paid for what you bring to the marketplace, and number two you get paid for what you become.

If you become a leader, a supervisor or an entrepreneur, you will get paid for that contribution. As I mentioned above, you get paid for what you bring and you get paid for what you become. It is important to remember that companies, with the exception of monopolies, will usually continue to improve their products. In a similar fashion, you need to remember that you are your own product. Realizing this fact and embracing it is the essence of personal development.

Once I understood the possibilities of personal development, I literally found it difficult to sleep. In fact, for the first year I hardly slept at all. For at that point, I understood a powerful fact: formal education gets you a job, but self-education is what makes you rich!

The importance of self-education and investing in your own personal development is something that you won't learn about in high school or even

college. However, I can't stress enough that this is a critical aspect of success.

Let me give you a bit more background about my personal story. I quit school when I was 19 believing that I was smart enough to land a job. Soon after I started a family, however, the money just wasn't there.

The realization that I had to make a change came when I was 25. One day I heard the best sales pitch ever and I wanted to buy the product that was being sold. In this case, believe it or not, the great sales pitch was from a Girl Scout and the product was a \$2 box of cookies. The problem was I didn't have the \$2 to spare. I told her that we already had all the Girl Scout cookies we could eat. I felt horrible lying to a Girl Scout about buying a \$2 box of cookies! At that moment I knew something had to change.

Determined to make that change, I began the process of finding a mentor who would help me transform my life. It was not just a process of finding a way to become wealthy, but a process about developing a philosophy of living and learning how to bring a unique and valuable service to the marketplace.

I found my mentor who promptly began deciphering and debunking all my flawed thinking. He pointed out that my approach from ages 19-25 had simply not worked. He also told me that I desperately needed to abandon my excuses, such as "taxes are too high", and encouraged me to forego my list of excuses. His advice was to list out all of my excuses and then rip that list to shreds. Then get a new piece of paper and put one word on it - "me."

The answer to my problem was to deal with what was within me. He explained to me that the answer to solving my problems wasn't to be found by listing out the obstacles both real and perceived in the outside world, but instead by noticing the obstacles in my own thinking and approach.

This shift in perspective sparked my journey. One of the lessons I learned was that each individual's personal income is determined primarily by his or her philosophy. If you refine and change your philosophy, then everything around you will change as well. This, of course, includes your income. This strategy works and it's amazing!

There is a good reason for the fact that just about everyone wants to come to America and that reason is our amazing Economic Ladder. The American Economic Ladder ranges from people earning a few thousand dollars a year to hundreds of millions! But how can you go from making a few thousand dollars a year to making a few million. That is, well, the Million Dollar Question isn't it? The answer, once again is philosophy.

You could wait for the government to raise the minimum wage, thus adopting what could be considered a philosophy of governmental intervention. However, you will never become a top-earner if you are depending on that to happen. Nor can you depend upon the company you are working for to do it either.

You can try a philosophy of demand where you demand more money from your employer. This might increase your earnings. But will you really become a millionaire in the process? No. Even if you band together with other workers and go on strike, you will never become a top-earner using the philosophy of collective confrontation either. None of these philosophies or approaches will help you achieve your end goal. They just don't work.

It is quite possible in America to become wealthy, but only if you have the correct philosophy. What does work then? What works is the fourth philosophy, which I like to call the philosophy of performance and productivity. With this philosophy, you do what is necessary to improve yourself and your capabilities. You learn to do more and be more.

If you use the Philosophy of Performance and Productivity, the whole economic scale belongs to you, as you have opened up new possibilities for yourself. If you are working for a company you will be more valuable and you will earn more, move up the ladder, have more money and that, in turn, will open up additional opportunities for you. This is potentially a never-ending cycle of benefit. You can go as far as you want to go because the possibilities are endless, especially in America.

If you think doing this is hard in America, think again. The average worker in Bangladesh earns about \$200 per year! If you are walking around with the distorted idea that succeeding in America is too hard, then you have the

wrong philosophy. That means you need to undergo a process of self-education.

Another misconception is that you can't dramatically increase what you are earning. This also is just wrong. In America, there are people earning \$5 per hour. However, you don't have to look very hard to find people earning \$50 per hour. Keep looking, and you will soon find those earning \$500 per hour, such as a high-powered attorney. You see, it is all about bringing the right goods to the marketplace. And this Prosperity Ladder doesn't end there, but, in fact, just keeps going up. Part of your self-education is to realize that there are possibilities and that they are all around you!

So remember, your income is determined by your ability to wish, envision and re-imagine yourself and your possibilities. The Economic Ladder of America doesn't restrict anyone. In America, you can own as much real estate as you want, as many cars as you want, and as many boats as you want.

Here is the core of the philosophy. It all boils down to this: if you work hard on your job, you make a living. If you work hard on yourself, you can make a fortune. What is the reason for this truth? Success is not something you pursue. Success is something that you attract by becoming an attractive person. The way that you become rich is not by wishing your life were easier, but instead by focusing on making yourself better.