

The Finer— and Finest—Things in Life



By Chris Widener

In America, we have a saying: the finer things in life. These are the things that most people talk about when they are speaking of things of high quality. In fact, much of that which propels people to pursue success, particularly financial success, is the desire to participate in the finer things in life.

Let's face it, increased finances enable us to do more things and enjoy things that we otherwise would not be able to afford. And we should consider that a blessing.

I am at a stage where my wife and I, and our kids, can enjoy some of the finer things in life. It hasn't always been that way. I think sometimes it is best to have to go years of getting by so that we appreciate more fully the finer things in life when we are able to experience them. I am thankful for where I am.

Who can argue against the beauty of a fine painting? Who doesn't love the smell and feel of leather furniture? Who doesn't enjoy driving a well-

engineered car? Who doesn't dream of the softness and warmth of a Cashmere sweater? Who doesn't like a nice watch that can be passed on to your son or daughter someday? All of these are common symbols of the finer things in life, and indeed

they are.

There is only one possible pitfall that I have found in the pursuit of the finer things in life. It is common that many fall into this trap. It is this: while pursuing the finer things in life, we often become so engrained, so focused in the pursuit, that we do not experience the finest things in life.

You see, for the most part, the finer things in life, as commonly defined, cost money. And usually it takes a lot of time working to make the kind of money that enables us to experience the finer things in life. And in the pursuit of the money to enjoy the finer things in life, we are spending so much time that we are missing regular opportunities to enjoy the finest things in life.

Let me tell you of a recent experience.

When my son was 9, I took him down to see some spring training baseball in Phoenix, Arizona. This was our second trip down together and we hope to make it an annual tradition. We popped down just for three days to see three games.

The first game we saw was against the California Angels in their spring training facility in Tempe. There we sat waiting for the game to start. Now let me assure you, this was not an experience of the finer things in life. It was actually a little chilly out, though the sun was shining. We were sitting on relatively hard seats, and my cuisine consisted of peanuts and a diet-Pepsi. Hmmmmm.

But do you know what I found myself thinking? 'There is no place else in the world I would rather be right now.'

I was spending time with my boy, doing something we would both enjoy, and creating memories that will never go away. This, my friends, was one of the finest things in life.

What are the finest things of life in my book? Here are a few. You can



see where I am going and name a few yourself.

- ✓ Reading a novel just for the fun of it;
- ✓ A casual stroll along the beach with nowhere to go;
- ✓ An extra half-hour at the coffee shop, catching up with friends and actually tasting the great flavour of a cup of coffee, rather than rushing it;
- ✓ A game of crazy eights with my kids;
- ✓ A quiet evening out with my wife;
- ✓ A Saturday afternoon sleeping on the couch in front of the fire;

and the list goes on...

Are you taking enough time to stop and taste the finest things in life? Or are you so bent on getting to a point where you can experience the finer things in life?

I have a saying that 'good is the enemy of the best'. Sometimes the finer things of life get in the way of the finest things in life. Sometimes we settle for the finer things in life when we could be enjoying the finest things in life.

A credit card company produced a series of advertisements that went something like this (describing a vacation): Airline tickets: \$1500. Hotel room: \$1200. The smile on her face: Priceless.

We can always put a value on the finer things in life, and I would encourage you to enjoy them if you can. But the finest things in life are priceless. You can put no value or price tag on them. It is a mandate that we take the time to enjoy them.

Take some time this week to live up to the old saying: Stop and smell the roses. You will never regret it.

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Inside Life, Issue 17
