



It is really astonishing how the Lord works in such mysterious and punctual ways. Taking a break from my studies at the University of California, Irvine, I decided to visit my sister and catch a flight to Washington, D.C. Our visit was short yet timeless, as we spent three days catching up on our career progress, while laughing and reliving the old times.

Though my trip was short, the experience was inundated with the Lord's blessings, as I departed onto my return flight home at the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. Aboard my flight back to Los Angeles, California, I was seated next to a stranger, who soon after become a friend, or to me, a blessing. His name was David Neils, the Founder and Director of the *International Telementor Program*, an electronic academic-based mentoring company that pairs a wide range of industry professionals with students to encourage and enhance the students' skills, in pursuit of successful career goals and aspirations.

It was made apparent that my seat assignment next to Mr. Neils was not only fortunate, but meant-to-be. Prior to my trip to Washington, D.C., I had been under a lot of mental stress, as I was in the middle of my fourth year at the University of California, Irvine, and preparing my resume and portfolio to accompany my soon to be bachelors degree from the university. Juggling three campus leadership roles, one full-time job, an internship, and a full class schedule, I had reached a mental break down. Taking time off to visit my older sister, who I have always looked up to for advice and encouragement, I had expected a weekend of sipping wine and consuming large amounts of cheese puffs, but God had something else in mind. During our three-hour flight, as the thought of returning to school built knots of dread in my stomach, Mr. Neils kindly asked me, "So what do you want to do with your degree?" and I replied, "Well, I want to be a journalist, specifically sports broadcast, but I know the industry is very

competitive, so I'm trying to strengthen my resume and portfolio as much as possible." The conversation continued on for the whole flight, as Mr. Neils altered my perspective on the self-promoting and academically credible approach to success and enlightened me on the importance of networking and professional outreach. I am speaking for many when I say that in academic institutions, it is prescribed that the best way to land a job post-college is to have straight A's, a killer resume, and recognizable interview skills. In other words, if you can't "talk the talk" through your interview, or "walk the walk" through your relatable work experience, you will not land a job over the competition. To my dismay, Mr. Neils reassured me that this illusion is so very incorrect yet globally abutted.

I have come to realize that helping someone means helping everyone, in that it does not do any good to go through life alone, because true success is meant to be shared, and to be rich without anyone to share it with, is to be poor in happiness. Success is a multifaceted, personal concept, but there is one facet that remains consistent and, to me, remains one of the strongest-- build and maintain meaningful relationships. I attended a career seminar on campus where there were five company representatives organized to help students receive an inside-look in the different facets of journalism. It was a great seminar, and a great concept. I made a great connection with one of the representatives for NBC News, and have now made an even stronger point to maintain that relationship with her months later. One of the questions I asked her was how she landed a role with a top news broadcast company. She told me that she just so happen to have a friend that was working in the video department, and was willing to give her resume to the network director. Wow! What a nice friend, right? Granted she worked her behind off once she scored an entry-level position, but for that friend to believe in her and seek joy out of seeing her talent and efforts flourish is my definition of success. At the beginning of the seminar, all of the students had to introduce themselves, "Hi, I'm Paris. I'm a fourth year Literary Journalism student, and I am a Anteater Television reporter." At the end of the seminar, a second year student grabbed my attention and asked how I got involved with Anteater TV and wanted advice on how and

when to apply for opening positions. This brought a smile to my face, because it was a polite way of her saying "You are my idea of someone that has obtained a level of success, and I want that. Can you help me have that too?" I gave her all the information I could in that moment, and gave her my email, because her success is my success, and maintaining that care and that win-win relationship only promotes success, and makes it that much stronger, not just as an achievement of goals but as an achievement of happiness for everyone.

I am now inspired to live by the idea of creating professional relationships that promote a win-win outcome. This ideology of helping each other, instead of competing against each other, is all part an altruistic means of success, that I am so grateful to have learned. If students knew of how beneficial this new idea of success would be on their stressful and isolated lives, their efforts towards happiness and their ever-changing idea of a dream job, would not feel so wasteful and unseen. To have a network that reinforces your skills, guides your efforts, and gives you an inside look at the different facets of your industry goals, *that* is the true path to success and happiness, and to me, a real blessing.