

Someone to Learn From #1 The first 2 are more in the public eye. Number 3 doesn't have the public celebrity but is very successful. There is something worth learning: You don't have to be a celebrity to be very successful and happy.

Oprah Winfrey: Most people know Oprah as one of the most iconic faces on TV as well as one of the richest and most successful women in the world. Oprah faced a hard road to get to that position, however, enduring a rough and often abusive childhood as well as numerous career setbacks including being fired from her job as a television reporter because she was "unfit for tv."

J. K. Rowling: Rowling may be rolling in a lot of Harry Potter dough today, but before she published the series of novels she was nearly penniless, severely depressed, divorced, trying to raise a child on her own while attending school and writing a novel. Rowling went from depending on welfare to survive to being one of the richest women in the world in a span of only five years through her hard work and determination.

The speech that J.K Rowling, the creator of the Harry Potter series, gave at Harvard University in 2008 is insightful and inspiring. She said, "Ultimately, we all have to decide for ourselves what constitutes failure, but the world is quite eager to give you a set of criteria if you let it... I'm not going to stand here and tell you that failure is fun. That period of my life was a dark one... You may never fail on the scale that I did, but some failure in life is inevitable, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all – in which case, you fail by default." Forbes has since named Rowling the first person to become a U.S. dollar billionaire by writing books.

Ursula M. Burns was raised by a single mom in a housing project in New York City. Sherose from rags to riches via respect for her Mother's values, hard work, a bent for science and math and trust in herself.

Olga (Ms. Burn's mother) was a single parent with three children. She did laundry and cleaned for a doctor down the street as well as taking care of other people's children in order to support her clan. She had high expectations of her kids and didn't hesitate to let them know about them. Some of her favorite sayings, according to Burns were:

"Where you are is not who you are,"

"Don't act like you're from the gutter because you live in a place that's really close to the gutter."

"Be good people"

"Be successful- You have to give more than you take away from the world. "

"You have to learn and you have to be curious"

"You have to perform at your best."

" You have to worry about the things you can control."

"Don't become a victim."

Burns graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering, then went on to earn a Master's degree as well. During college, she landed an internship with Xerox and was hired on permanently after graduating.

In 2009, Burns became CEO, and in 2010, became Chairwoman as well as remaining CEO. She was the first black woman to be CEO of a fortune 500 company and the first to take over from another female CEO. In 2010, her compensation package, as chairwoman and CEO of Xerox, was more than thirteen million dollars.

A combination of talent, values, persistence, hard work and trust in herself and her voice helped Ursula rise to the top.

You can read more at:

<http://www.familymoneyvalues.com/index.php/explore-wealth-lifestyles/184-rags-to-riches-the-millionaire-story-of-ursula-m-burns>

This handout is available from <http://www.anndarrow.com>