ACCESS/DENIAL

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What determines the success of an individual?   Is it economic status, culture, spirituality, education, race, opportunity, motivation, or even luck? What? Pondering the question, I look deeper into success' fundamental dynamics to two components: Access and Denial. While the two components factor greatly into the spectrum of why one reaches his or her definition of success, much has to do with mindset—which is a key and perhaps primary gauge for how far we enable ourselves to climb. Unfortunately, mindset is developed through one's exposure; and in today's society, speaking from an inner-city perspective, mindsets are being polluted, diluted, limited and destroyed, making Access and Denial self-limiting and self-imposed, respectively.

We have to consider the individual perceptions of what success is. To some, success is the ability to hand a Platinum card to their children, while to others, it may be recognition for having the largest and busiest fruit stand at the corner market, which enables their family to have meat for that day. However due to other types of mindsets, sadly, "success" equates to merely that of "survival" by any means, which appears to be the mode for those whose mindsets do not include a set of core values, nurtured from the cradle on, which include spiritual growth and development, a solid ethics base and care and concern for others.

Within just about every neighborhood, older schools have been replaced by the new. But it's not the look of a structure that develops the mind of a child, it's the quality of its content. *My children could attend school in a mole hole—just provide the proper lighting, temperature, nutrition, books, instruction, and most importantly, <u>an environment conducive to learning</u>.* Seemingly today, however, (*depending upon where parents are purvey to send their child[ren]—* as newly imposed restrictions on 'where' they attend have been enforced, separating our children— *once again*), teachers are so busy addressing the varied and ever-mounting issues disrupting the flow of instruction (*as several kids are ADHD, have emotional issues, have health*

issues such as severe asthma, requiring much of an instructor's time and energy away from instruction—time not given back, removing quality), students trying to gain knowledge have very little instruction time. Subsequently, children who *do* have the capacity to learn, who *have* a home support system set up to promote what has been taught in school, have very little opportunity to learn as much as they should have in any given day. Hence: ACCESS LIMITED. (PONDER POINT: Given these facts, is there an agenda? New district separation clauses force and enforce limits to where our children may attend school. ACCESS/DENIAL.)

But let us look at the *PRIMARY* source of where the mindset is developed. Oh yes, *the FAMILY*. Let us not overlook the fact that responsibility lies upon each parent to provide the shelter, safety, security, nutrition, love, and empowerment to enable that child to thrive outside of the home. Unfortunately today, there are so many key elements missing from the home dynamic that children's mindsets never have an opportunity to develop to the point of having the ability to spawn a desire to thrive. Despite having access (to what, a new building?)*,* these youth do not know that there are other platforms of living on which their feet may touch, given the dismal existence within the home structure from cradle on, which fail to impart key character-building fundamentals necessary to prepare them for the world. Yes, the family—what is happening here? Single-parent homes may indeed be one problem, but not the core problem. In my view, and from my experience, there has to be a value system in place to help direct the socio-psychological paths of people, so that they fit within groups and have a mutual respect for others, early on. This system comes in the form of allowing children the opportunity to learn the gospel, i.e., the church. This forum, in addition to a family already established in good moral values, allows one to learn, with age-appropriate subjects, how to regard others in this journey, why, and what happens when they do not.   Without a foundation which includes the regard for others, one cannot raise a child within an environment that encourages him or her to treat others kindly, to speak properly, to listen, to appreciate and enjoy (even) the art of learning… No, without a value system in place, mothers, their 'boyfriends', persons living within the home cannot nurture a child in ways which will prepare him or her to thrive.   Sadly instead, there is confusion, anger, hostility, belittling, nonstop music beats and vile lyrics pounding from the walls every second of the day and night, poor diet, lack of hygiene provision,

sleep deprivation, exposure to crime and violence, sexual videos, drugs and alcoholism, smoke, incest, and physical abuse.

Children from these homes carry an unprecedented amount of baggage when they arrive to schools. It is no mystery why many children are having difficulty, or are misfits in the classroom today—their parents simply are not raising their young; after delivery, seemingly, there is a 'get yours because I'm getting mine' mentality, where the parent, typically young or older and on some form of street or prescribed drug, takes upon the role begrudgingly, literally doing the lease necessary in the child's life as possible, as the child is viewed as a burden, a mere ticket to help plot out a means for which they (the adults) may achieve their definition of success—in these cases, possibly self preservation, survival. How can we expect parents to impart morals, values to their own children? What used to be "normal" is not even a memory for many of the parents, as many never had opportunity to experience what I and readers of this article may know and understand, and therefore transfer to our own children. More detrimental, the opinions of some living outside of town, along with several government officials, agencies, etc., with perceptions that 'all' families living within the inner-city, or requiring one or more forms of aid from the state (however temporary and/or due to unavoidable circumstances), are incapable of setting and attaining goals beyond the standard of 'getting by', and running households similar to those described herein, bypassing, even barring individuals therein from access to means of propelling themselves forward—individuals who may indeed hold keys to helping turn around the economy for their families and others. Those false perceptions slow that family's ability to realize success. Are they (are "we") victims of the socio-logistic dilemma which paralyzes our ability to taste a piece of the pie, due only to residential locale and the assumptions that "all" families within a community are of the same mold? (ACCESS/DENIAL.)

Our society has been somewhat of an enabler, making survival easier in many regards, to the degree that success may be, to some, synonymous to "getting over". This mutant definition becomes a detriment to society when values sway from the need to push to survive to that of devising systems enabling the continuum for such. Herein lays yet another very scary and destructive phenomenon: there has been a shift in and to the meaning of success in our

society—becoming "super rich and famous"; and if one cannot achieve it, they then do what society enables. This spans from lying on a government form to receive insurance benefits, to white collar crimes, scams, identity theft and fraud in the millions (like the AIG retirement insurance fraud uncovered which settled this year [2012] for $725 million). The lust for this mutant form of success has several people losing sight of how integrity should be factored in to achieving it. To some, this entails the creation of a new life in effort to survive. More daunting is that in cases, this life needn't be a healthy one; those slain to the effects their actions have on others may even deem it "ideal" to create a life with "special needs" as to help guarantee the "success" of the individual seeking to achieve it—at the expense of a precious human life.

It's all in the mindset. And it all initiates from the home environment, the home experience. You must provide a child with a palate full of positive colors, the easel and the brush. In our society youth and adults alike must have ACCESS to the ability to CORRECT mindsets. Youth must have ACCESS to peaceful, positive environments. The one's who do, and whose mindsets are at risk due to DENIAL due to being categorized, must have ACCESS to schools and activities enabling them to thrive in SAFE atmospheres, alongside students of various other cultural backgrounds, whose parents desire and expect same. Parents who do not control the atmosphere within their homes, allowing instead anything to go, need to stop being in DENIAL that they are failing their children, failing their futures. They need to be held accountable for the part they are playing in the demise of their child. And public decision makers need to enable real ACCESS and stop DENIAL to opportunities, due to one's residential locale. Without a change, if society keeps on denying children (and their parents) access to training on what is right and wrong, our society will become a primitive society, killing just to survive. (Look at what's happening in Haiti. ACCESS/DENIAL)

[End.]

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