

# AFFILIATE LAUNCHES

## MADE SIMPLE with Matt McWilliams

### The 5 Most Important Lessons Learned in 2015

If you're anything like me and read more than a few blogs, you've endured a month-long series of year-in-review posts. So here is another one. :)

When I looked back on the year that was, I realized that it was a year of ups and downs, wild successes and miserable failures, excitement and boredom. In other words, it was just like any other year. It was a microcosm of life itself.

What else should we expect?

The truth is, in most regards, 2015 was my best year ever (thanks, Michael Hyatt!). In others, it was more of a struggle, but I know without a doubt that those things will improve in the coming year.

In a moment, I'll share the lessons I learned in 2015, but first here's a quick snapshot of the year that was for me personally:

- We completely changed our business.
- It exploded (in a good way).
- Our four-year old daughter can officially read and write better than I can.
- Our son was born.
- My wife and I celebrated our 7th anniversary.
- Christmas.

Hey, I said it would be a *quick* snapshot.

Now for the part that matters to you.

#### 5 Lessons from 2015

##### 1. Saying "YES" to one thing always means saying "NO" to something else.

I technically already knew this one, but it was a theme of 2015.

What I noticed about the most successful people we work with is that they have the discipline to say "no" to good in order to say "yes" to great. They know that saying "yes" to one thing always means they are saying "no" to something else.

The key is saying "yes" only to great opportunities.

[shareable cite="Warren Buffett" text="The difference b/w successful people & very successful people is very successful people say no to almost everything."]The difference between successful people and very successful people is that very successful people say no to almost everything.[/shareable]

## **2. Meditation is not weird.**

Prior to this year, I'd never meditated (intentionally) in my entire life.

I thought it was woo-woo weird and that to do so, I'd have to give up meat, live in a commune, and only listen to Yanni. Boy, was I wrong.

I started meditating more and more throughout the year and found that it brings peace and calmness to me. Plus, I am more focused throughout the day.

Try it!

[shareable cite="SAINT FRANCIS DE SALES"]Half an hour's meditation each day is essential, except when you are busy. Then a full hour is needed.[/shareable]

## **3. Goals should be set in every area of your life.**

In 2014, I set some big goals...for our business. Nothing else.

And they worked. We tripled our income and that was awesome (again, thanks to Michael Hyatt for his *5 Days to Your Best Year* course).

But this past year, I set them with my wife. Now, life tends to throw some curves and we didn't hit all of them, but the *process* of setting them together was powerful. I was able to rediscover and focus on what is *really* important to me (my wife, our children, my health, my spiritual walk).

When we started doing the exercises in Michael's course together and setting our goals, none of the first six goals had anything to do with business or money. That showed me what is truly important in life.

[shareable cite="ZIG ZIGLAR"]What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals.[/shareable]

## **4. I learn more by being ignorant.**

I had the amazing privilege this year to interview a truly inspiring man, Itay Talgam.

He recently released a book called *The Ignorant Maestro*. A must-read book with a central theme:

You learn more and get more from your team by being ignorant. At the very least this means not thinking you are the smartest person in the room. This means asking good questions, letting others think for themselves, and allowing them to make mistakes (yes, even costly ones).

The most dangerous position to be in is when you are the smartest person in the room. There is no growth when that happens.

It's the breeding ground for stagnation, self-centeredness, and pride. It kills creativity, destroys morale, and puts an end to innovation. It's the precursor to boredom, the downfall of your business or ambitious pursuit, and signals the end of your development.

Your greatest asset is your ignorance.

When you embrace it, you grow.

You empower others.

You discover hidden talents.

Embrace your ignorance.

[shareable cite="Joseph Jacotot"] An ignorant can teach another ignorant what he does not know himself. -Joseph Jacotot[/shareable]

## **5. We all have an amazing story...and we need to share it.**

My friend Jeff Goins released an amazing book this year called *The Art of Work*.

You should go buy it right now and skip to Chapter Five because it's all about me. Kidding...sort of. You really should read it.

When he first interviewed me for the book, we weren't friends at all. In fact, we barely knew each other. So, when we first talked, my story went like this:

- I'm awesome.
- I make good money.
- Please like me.

OK, that is a rudimentary summation, but you get the idea. After we spoke, however, this is what he wrote to me:

You know, in reviewing the first email you sent me and then relistening to the audio from our interview yesterday, something struck me.

Your original email talked a lot about how you started making a living, and a good living, at doing what you love. Money, it seemed, was an important part of that equation. Now, don't get me wrong; I think a lot of good can be done with money. But it didn't seem like that great of a story. Still, I was curious to talk to you more.

Then when you told me you were fired four different times, and each time you failed your way a little bit more to your calling, I thought, "Now THAT'S the story."

Anyway, just one dude's opinion, but if you aren't focusing on that when you tell your story, you might try it. There's a lot of power to it, especially given the amount of failure and rejection you faced, and how God was using all that stuff to get you to where you are now.

Yeah, it's cool that you make a good living, really cool. And it's even cooler that you have a heart to be generous. But what will give people hope, and I again pardon my being so bold

in sharing this, is that there is humanity to the story. That you failed and still somehow succeeded.

That's the kind of hope people need. It's the kind that I need.

I never *knew* I had a story. But I do.

And so do you.

Your story is beautiful.

Your story is powerful.

Your story is necessary to others.

Tell it.

[shareable cite="JEFF GOINS"]You can't find your passion if you don't push through pain.[/shareable]

What was the biggest lesson you learned this year?