To Become Wealthy

As a kid, I always wanted to become wealthy. I knew if I could achieve this, I would be able to consider myself successful. At the time, I had no worries and felt my happiness would be based on whether I could fulfill all my needs and wants. My simple philosophy of that time was if I was rich, I would definitely be content with my life.

My father always stressed his belief that happiness includes much more than money. I can remember him lecturing me about how money does not make an individual happy; other things in life such as: health, family, friends, and memorable experiences make a person genuinely happy. At this time in my life, I took what my dad said for granted and did not give any thought to his words. All I could see was the great life my cousins had because they had everything a kid ever dreamed of.

At a young age, I noticed society was extremely materialistic. The media seemed to portray the wealthy as happy people who add value to our society. My opinions did not change; in high school I still sought a career that would eventually yield a high salary. I still felt that the possibility of living life from paycheck to paycheck would automatically translate into my unhappiness. However, things changed when I decided to take an internship in the accounting department for the summer after my second year of college.

Starting the first day on the job in the accounting department, I found myself extremely bored. I was forced to do monotonous work, such as audit eight thousand travel and expense reports for a potential duplicate. In addition, I had to relocate away from friends and family in order to accept the position. I was earning the money I always wanted; however, I noticed that having money to spend when you are by yourself was not satisfying.

I began to think back to what my dad always said. After a few months in the job, I truly realized that money does not bring happiness. A more satisfying experience for me would have been doing an ordinary summer job for far less money. For me to understand that concept, it took an experience as painful as this one. I often contemplated how much money it would take me to do this as my everyday job. I concluded, whatever the salary for this position I would never be capable of fulfilling a happy life and making a career out of this job.

As I looked forward to the summer to draw to a close, I truly comprehended the meaning of my dad’s words. Contrary to my prior beliefs, I firmly believe through experience that money cannot make a person happy. The term "wealth" is a broad term, and I believe the key to happiness is to become wealthy in great memories, friends, family, and health. This I believe.

The narrator heard what his father used to say, but did not...

1. ...believe him.
2. ...agree with him.
3. ...understand him.
4. ...think over his words.