

# Avoiding The Bear Trap of Success!

Because it can lead to narcissism and the inner degeneration of complacency, success always puts future success at greater risk. Warren Buffet once observed, **“A fat wallet is the enemy of superior investment results.”** As the fatness of the wallet tends to produce hubris in the investor, success can sedate our minds against the need for constant reality testing.

Unchecked, success can breed arrogance, insensitivity, unwarranted optimism, and willful blindness. Your track record beguiles you into believing that you can replicate the success of the past with even less effort. Indeed, the longer the track record of success, the thicker the complacency, the narrower the perception, and the more unfounded your confidence in the future.

Success is prone to dismiss feedback, disconfirming evidence, and alternative points of view. You stop listening. You start distorting. And then you begin to suffer the effects of isolation. As the theologian, Neal A. Maxwell once put it, **“Isolation is such a poor friend.”**

Fortunately, you can resist the bear trap of success and the reality distortion field it brings. Start by asking yourself these 10 questions:

1. Am I emotionally advanced beyond needing to hear myself talk?
2. Do I solicit honest and unvarnished feedback?
3. Do I respect only high achievers or do I recognize that insight and answers can come from some of the most unlikely people?
4. Do I let people debate issues on their merits or do opinions bow to rank?
5. Do I give people permission to challenge me?
6. Do I catalyze both explanatory and exploratory inquiry with penetrating questions?
7. Do I increase the tolerance for candor with humility and emotional intelligence?
8. Do I demonstrate the vulnerability of being wrong?
9. Do I listen with the intent to comprehend?
10. Do I hold my opinions lightly enough to change them when the data changes?



Note #19