Oprah Winfrey; a Renaissance woman

Speech of Tribute
by
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“The big secret in life / is that there is no big secret. Whatever your goal, / you can get there if you’re willing to work.” This quote is one that was spoken by one of the most extraordinary woman of our time / who with patience and grace worked for what she has and what she stands for. Oprah Winfrey is one of the most successful and charitable women in history. Despite the many struggles that Oprah faced as a child, / she followed her dreams teaching the world the values that guided her life and her passion. She showed the world what it meant to be determined, to be charitable, and to be successful. These values guided not only her life, they have been values that we all can find a part of in order to make our own dreams come true. /

The first value that Oprah has taught us is determination. She began her broadcasting career in Nashville, Tennessee while still attending high school, soon becoming the youngest African American female to anchor a news program for WTVF-TV radio. Soon there after she transferred to another news program located in Baltimore, Maryland as a co-anchor for the Six O’Clock News. Oprah then continued her career in the broadcasting world, becoming the co-host for People Are Talking. Soon after Oprah had only begun to skim the horizon of broadcasting, she was offered a job in Chicago, Illinois as host of their morning talk show, AM Chicago. Within a year the morning broadcast became the number one local talk show, / expanded to an hour long set, / and was renamed The Oprah Winfrey Show. After 13 years of extremely hard work, / dedication, / and determination Oprah was on top of her career thus far hosting the highest rated talk show in television history. The Oprah Winfrey Show remained the number one day time talk show for 18 consecutive seasons, with an estimated 30 million viewers a week broadcasted internationally in 111 countries. Without Oprah’s determination, / she would not have become as successful as she remains today. In addition to her determination to fulfill her dreams, Oprah is also known for her charitable actions. /

Charity has become a huge part of what Oprah stands for and believes in. She has been the founder for many programs including The Oprah Winfrey Foundation, which
supports education and the empowerment of women, children and families. She believes that education is the door to freedom. The Oprah Winfrey Scholars Program gives students scholarships that are determined to use their education to give back to their community, much as Oprah has. Oprah’s Angels Network is a public charity which currently has risen over $27 million dollars with 100% of audience donations allotted for non-profit organizations across the world. In addition to her humanitarian foundations she also has a personal commitment to protecting children from child abusers which in 1993, created “Oprah’s Bill,” that was passed into law. Her dedication to helping others and her determination both influence the final value that she holds deep in her heart: success.

Success is clearly an understatement when describing this Renaissance woman. She has truly changed what it means to be successful. Not only has she been the host of the most successful day time talk show, but she has created her own production company, Harpo Productions, is the co-founder of Oxygen Media, introduced one of the leading woman’s publications, *O, The Oprah Magazine*, received an Academy Award for acting, won the National Associations of Broadcasters-Distinguished Service Award, was one of *Time Magazine*’s 100 most influential people in the world, received the Association of American Publishers Award in 2003, was given the Bob Hope Humanitarian Award, was inducted into the Broadcasting and Cable Hall of Fame, won the 50th Anniversary Gold Medal for the National Book Foundation, as well as receiving the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences-Lifetime Achievement Award amongst many other honors. As Colin Powell once stated, “There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.” She truly knows the meaning of being successful.

Whether she was changing the world of broadcasting with her determination, or giving back to her community with all of her charitable actions, or redefining the word success with all of her awards and achievements, Oprah Winfrey is truly one of the greatest women to ever live, leading by values that not only guide her life, but ones that guide mine and hopefully yours as well. I don’t think she could have said it any better, “It doesn’t matter who you are, where you from. The ability to triumph begins with you. Always.”
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