

Proverbs Tell How to Succeed in Life

Now, the VOA Special English program Words and Their Stories.

Today we explain more popular proverbs. A proverb is a short, well known saying that expresses a common truth or belief. Proverbs are popular around the world.

Many listeners have sent us their favorite proverbs. They give advice about how to live.

We begin with two popular proverbs about staying healthy by eating good food: One is an apple a day keeps the doctor away. Another is you are what you eat.

Several proverbs about birds also give advice. You may have heard this one: The early bird catches the worm. This means a person who gets up early, or acts quickly, has the best chance of success.

Another famous proverb is a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. This means you should not risk losing something you have by seeking something that is not guaranteed.

Here is another piece of advice: Do not count your chickens before they are hatched. In other words, you should not think too much about some future event before it really happens.

Another proverb warns do not put all your eggs in one basket. This means you should not put all of your resources together in one place because you could risk losing everything at one time. Many Americans learned this the hard way by investing all their money in stock shares, which then lost value.

Another proverb says a fool and his money are soon parted. This means someone who acts unwisely with money will lose it.

Here is more advice: If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. Also, never put off until tomorrow what you can do today.

You might learn that haste makes waste if you do something so fast, resulting in mistakes. Most people would agree with this proverb: honesty is the best policy.

Yet another proverb advises us not to be concerned about something bad that you cannot change. It says there is no use crying over spilled milk.

Do you agree with the proverb that children should be seen and not heard?

Maybe you have told your children that hard work never hurt anyone. But other people say that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. They believe it is not wise to spend all your time working and never having fun.

Finally, here is one of our favorite proverbs: People who live in glass houses should not throw stones. This means you should not criticize other people unless you are perfect yourself.

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