

# Pearson to Person: From failure comes success

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Successful people refuse to quit and learn from their mistakes, says Gina Mollicone-Long, businesswoman, motivational speaker and author of *The Secret of Successful Failing*.

**Photograph by:** Handout, The Windsor Star

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Look hard enough behind the scenes at success, and you'll find some failure.

Look at the Mom who battled again and again till she won proper treatment of her disadvantaged son; look at the athlete who finally earned her way onto an Olympic team; look at the entrepreneur who expanded his business in a dwindling economy, and you'll find some failure.

Look at some of the greats — Oprah Winfrey, Bill Gates, Barack Obama — and you'll find some failure.

I'm impressed with all the successful failures.

Failure should not be a four-letter word.

The main difference between those who succeed and those who don't is that successful people use failure as a learning tool, not a brick wall.

They learn from their mistakes. They don't quit.

Just ask Gina Mollicone-Long, businesswoman, motivational speaker and author of *The Secret of Successful Failing*.

"The first thing you have to realize about failure is that it indicates you're at a point of growth," said Windsor native Mollicone-Long. "We typically look at failure as proof that we weren't adequate. But

failure signals a point at which you can either grow or retreat. So you have to look at failure as an opportunity, even if the opportunity hasn't yet presented itself."

Mollicone-Long returned to Windsor on the weekend, when she and fellow Kennedy Collegiate grads attended a 20th high school reunion — a time when people surely reflect on failure and success.

A time which stirs up anxiety.

Yet she lists "failure" as the last thing people should worry about.

You can't always control your circumstances, but you can control your perceptions. And everyone has something in their life that has gone well — and which they should focus on.

Same goes for Windsor, even though the 38-year-old mother of six- and seven-year-old children now runs her own business in Toronto.

Mollicone-Long considers her hometown on the brink of something new, something exciting, something better.

She thinks it's simply a matter of the city reinventing itself.

That's not to say times aren't hard.

Mollicone-Long, who worked on the line at Chrysler for two summers, knows everyone in Windsor feels the auto industry crunch. But she notes that the city has always come through before, and predicts it will again.

"I know job losses can be very hard," she said. "But growth points are rarely enjoyable experiences. So while people need to mourn their loss, at some point they have to do something to keep going."

So adversity can set the stage for triumph. But you must add equal parts pluck and hard work.

Failure's just a stepping stone to success.

cpearson@thestar

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