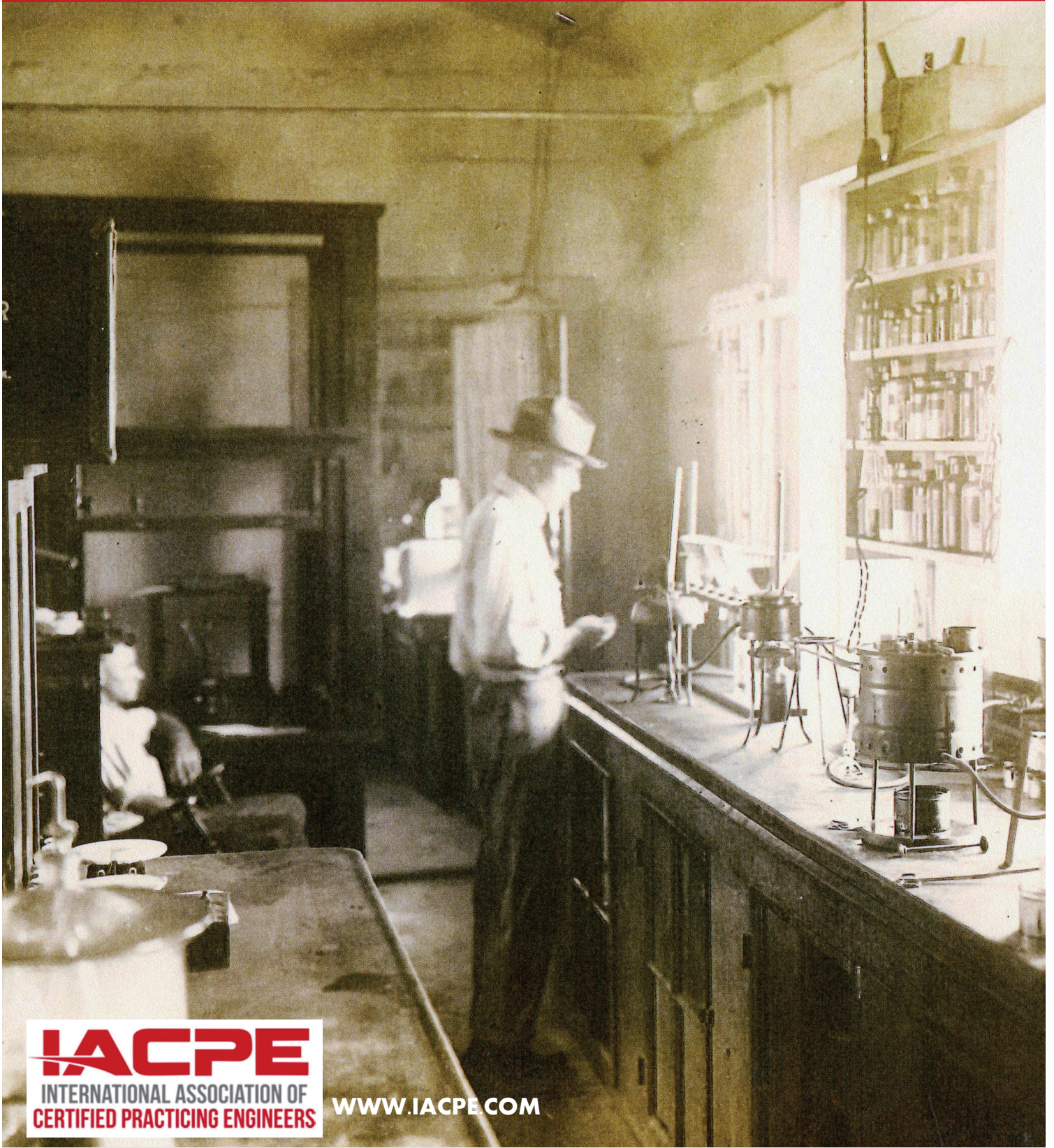


# ENGINEERING PRACTICE

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# Approaching Seventy – What is Success

Karl Kolmetz

I will soon have lived three score and ten years. The average life expectancy in USA is seventy-six years. My parents lived to 87 and 90, so I am hoping I have a few more years left. I am trying to plan so that may have a few more good years.



My father's grandmother was Della Victoria Strickland Jenkins. She was born on 18 Oct 1866 and died on 9 July 1945. She is buried at Pleasant Grove Methodist Church, Washington Co, Florida. That is all I know about her. I wish I knew a few stories, but I do not.

Here is a picture of Victoria and her grandchildren. I know of only one person in the picture that is still alive today – the small girl in the front with the flower in her hair is my father's sister Bertha, she is 90 years old this year. My father is standing fourth from the left with black hair looking down. In the early years of his life, he was always looking down in the pictures. Later he would always hold his head up high to over correct.

Her daughter, my grandmother, Mittie Jenkins was a caring loving person who raised her children to be hard working and respectful. Her first husband died in the 1919 flu, but she survived, so I have some inherited flu resistance. She later married John Kolmetz and here I am today.



Every Christmas I received a gift from my grandmother even though she had many grandchildren. I remember going to her house at Christmas. There was no electricity, running water, she had a well and a hand pump in the yard. We would sleep in front of the fireplace under blankets. Northwest Florida in December can be cold.

Here is Mittie and her sons, with my father's head raised.



Since I have no bad stories of Della Victoria, she probably was a good person. I have many bad stories of the other ancestors. I do know her daughter was a good person. I



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know my father better and he was a mixture of the good and bad, just like you and I am. My success today is in part because of the goodness of Della Victoria, Mittie and my parents. I have six siblings, and all are different, all have achieved different levels of success even with common backgrounds.

What is a good definition of success - Real Success Has at least four parts

Health

Friendships

Family

Giving Back

Health

1. You will not be successful or wealthy without maintaining your health.
2. Maintaining your health does not require major knowledge, but it is difficult to accomplish; eat healthily and exercise. For many people, both are hard to maintain.
3. Many people bring poor health to themselves by living wicked lives – you cannot escape the consequences of your actions. The bible says you reap what you sow.
4. You need to understand what your personality and work are to keep your health even with addictive and destructive personalities.

Friendship

1. Remember the most valuable antiques are dear old friends - H Jackson Brown
2. A friend of mine's child died. I asked my dad, what should I say to him? My dad answered – you do not have to say anything, just go stand by his side.
3. You will move in the direction of the people you associate with. You need to associate yourself with the kind of people that you would like to become.
4. The friends you have will form you as you go through life, make good friends, and keep them the rest of your life.

Family

1. Success is that you are seventy years old, and all your siblings will still speak to you – many family members to not speak to one another in their old age.
2. Communication is important – during both the good and the tough times. Some people often find it hard to put their feelings

into words and just knowing that someone is listening can be enough.

Stable Financially

Having enough money so that you can make the decisions that you want to make about.

Health

Friendships

Family

Giving Back

Giving Back

1. The happiest people are not those receiving more but giving more.
2. When you pray, do you pray to be blessed, or that you may be the one giving the blessing.

One hundred years from now there will probably be no one with living memories of you. The good news and bad news are the good that you have done will be forgotten, and the bad that you have done will mostly be forgotten. Bad seems to always live a lot longer than the good. So why should we try to do good, in 100 years no one will really know.

Today our success was developed by those who worked before us, so that we might have a better life. We have no real memories of their lives and struggles. Our success today is because of their struggles and effort to build better lives.

Our lives and struggles will also be forgotten. So why do we then try to do good? Each of us has the capacity to do good and evil and if our deeds will be forgotten why make the effort to do good? Why strive to be successful? It takes a certain type of personality to be successful and make our world a better place despite no real acknowledgment.

Each of us can be successful, ordinary or a failure, based on the choices we make in life. Most people are happy to take credit for their successes but remember that we also must take credit for our failures. You call always tell a tree by the fruit it produces – what fruit are you producing?

There are many people that are very happy just to float through life with no real efforts to be successful and they get the results one would expect. Many people think I am lucky to be where I am. I worked a full-time job and went to night school eleven years – so maybe I am not lucky just hard working. If you work and go to school, you will be lucky also.

There are people that are born with addictive personalities and live lives of torment until they realize that alcohol and drugs are their enemy. I had a friend with a large alcohol problem get pulled over for drunk driving, I was thinking the answer to the problem was to quit drinking. Their solution was that I need to quit driving. The alcohol had a powerful hold on her.

I like freedoms, but I believe that alcohol and drugs should be strictly controlled due to the damage that I have seen from my family members. I had two uncles that I rarely saw sober. I knew the addictive personality was in my family, so I tried to stay away from alcohol and drugs. Many people fail this test and lead lives of missed opportunities. Many do not have the capacity to resist this temptation, as high as 10% of the population. My seventy years on the earth says that we should make it harder to obtain alcohol and drugs.

Almost everyone at seventy knows they could have been better and accomplished more – this might be the normal human condition. But even at 70 we can try to accomplish good for the next generation. Freedom, prosperity, and happiness are not values, they're not a map, they're not even principles. They may be the fruits of a successful society, but they're not its roots. No good tree bears bad fruit and to restore the fruit we must first attend to the roots. The true roots, the foundation stones of a civilization are not freedom, prosperity, and happiness, but the pursuit of good deeds, hard work, and truth in action.

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