CHARACTER COUNTS! SM

Being responsible requires us to recognize that what we do and what we do not do matters, and that we are morally responsible for the consequences (whether good or bad) of our choices.

Former President, Harry Truman, said, "The Buck Stops Here". We can't blame things on other people or circumstances. We have to take responsibility for our actions.

Sources: Jospehson Institute of Ethics, Marina del Rey, CA

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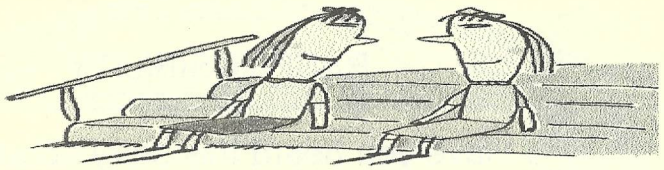
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RESPONSIBILITY

Have you heard this story about 4 people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody? Well, it seems there was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when actually Nobody asked Anybody.

--Author Unknown

Responsibility means that you will do what you are supposed to do; you will persevere or keep on trying. You will always do your best, use self control, be self-disciplined. Responsible people think before they act and carefully consider the consequences. You will be accountable for your choices.



Life is full of choices, and being responsible means being in charge of our choices and our lives. We make choices everyday. We decide to get out of bed in the morning, to brush our teeth, to eat a healthy breakfast. We make choices all day long. Think of the choices you make as a scale hanging in the balance. "My choice" is what tips the scale. *(which ever way it tips!)*



Remember, those choices you make are "yours". They are not mine or the neighbor's down the street. **You** are the only one who is responsible for your choices. You are the one who will deal with the consequences, whether good or bad.

We are responsible for our attitude, according to Charles Swindoll. He said, "The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life.

Attitude to me, is more important than the past, circumstances,failures, success, than what other people think, say or do.

I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it.And so it is with you!"

We ***can*** change our attitude.

A responsibility is a commitment you make to yourself or others.

Do you sometimes hate having to do your jobs? Do you wish you could always play, shop, have fun? A good attitude makes all the difference! A good attitude makes responsibility fun!

If someone has entrusted you with a responsibility (job), it means that they feel they can count on you to do something right and on time.

Remember, there are two ways to get to the top of an oak tree; grab the first limb and climb, or find a good healthy acorn, and sit on it and wait. Responsibility tells us it's time to get off the Acorn!

Choosing not to choose is a choice.

According to Michael Josephson, CHARACTER COUNTS! founder, "We can't choose whether we are good looking, smart or athletic. We can't choose our parents or the circumstances in which we grow up. But all of us can choose how to deal with the things that happen to us in life. From these choices, our character is formed."

Do work that you (and others) will be proud of.

"It's your life, your one and only life--so take excellence very personally."

--Scott Johnson

SELF-CONTROL

Take charge of your own life and accept the responsibilities that go along with it.



Set realistic goals for yourself. Everyone is different. These are goals especially for you. It's OK to stretch for a goal but not to break yourself.

Keep a positive outlook. Do you look for the silver lining or just the dark spots in those clouds? Is the glass half empty or half full. **YOU** decide your outlook on life.

Be self-disciplined with your health, emotions, time and money. (If you are a diabetic, don't eat sugar) Spend your money or food stamps wisely so they will last. Responsible people don't talk too long-- holding another person hostage.

Self-control means you will act out of reason, not anger, fear, or revenge.

Be self reliant. Don't expect others to do things for you that you can do for yourself. Responsible people, to the extent that they can, provide for themselves and "pay their own way".

This center section is your discussion guide, Use if after you have read the outside section. Then give each participant a brochure to take home.



Responsibility means
being accountable for what we do
and who we are!

Responsibility has four parts.

1. Do your Duty
2. Be Accountable
3. Pursue Excellence
4. Exercise Self-Control

DUTY

Duty comes from the moral and legal obligations in our lives. Lets look at where these come from and some examples of each.



Laws--what society says you must do (pay taxes, stop at red lights, drive the speed limit)

Contracts--what you formally promise to do, orally or in writing (make car payments, rental agreements, credit card payments)

Commitments--what you **say** you will do (show up at a meeting, go to work every day & be on time)

Job Responsibilities--what you are expected to do (work steadily, be on time)

Relationship Obligations--moral duties of loyalty and caring necessary to maintain healthy relationships (parent-child, child-parent, employer-employee) This means putting the needs of others ahead of your own.

Ethical Principles--trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship (doing something not because you have the right to do it, but because it is the **right** thing to do!)

Religious Doctrine--notions of duty, virtue and sin.

ACCOUNTABILITY

You must accept responsibility for the consequences (whether good or bad) of your choices, not only what you do, but what you don't do.

You must think long-term (think ahead! anticipate!--this includes budgeting your money)

You must do what you can to make things better (everyone has something to contribute, we all contribute in different ways)

Set a good example (everyone is capable of doing this, use the six pillars to help!)

Don't make excuses or blame others for what you do or what you fail to do.

PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE



If you pursue something you are trying to "catch" or obtain it. The word "excellence" the "very best".

In pursuing excellence it is your duty to do your best. This is a standard of measuring you against yourself and no one else. When you have finished something **you** know if it is **your** best or not.

Persevering (keep on keeping on) means to keep on trying to do or be your best. Isn't that why we say, "practice makes perfect"? Most of us don't get it right the first time we try.

In the pursuit of excellence you must always "be prepared", just like the Boy Scouts. If someone is picking you up at 1:00 p.m., be ready. Don't wait until one o'clock to comb your hair, go to the bathroom, or find the book you are supposed to take with you.)

In pursuing excellence a person must be diligent. That means they are careful and steady. (the family made a diligent search for the lost boy)

You have to work hard in the pursuit of excellence, but hard work pays big dividends.