

Responsibility

Booker T. Washington said, "Few things help an individual more than to place responsibility upon him and to let him know that you trust him."

Responsibility is the "contract" we hold ourselves to as a measurement of our performance. Without responsibility, there is little opportunity to be held accountable for our actions, to deliver on our promises, or to follow through on our tasks. Without the belief that others will act responsibly there is little trust between individuals, groups or societies.

In recent years we have watched as leader after leader, idol after idol, role model after role model slipped through the fine fabric of personal accountability, avoiding their responsibility, only to flaunt this ability in public. The net affect of this behavior has been a steady erosion of character in the home, the community and the workplace; an erosion we can ill afford.

What's wrong with taking responsibility? Absolutely nothing. After all, from a very early age, responsibility is the one thing we demand as a sign of maturity. But responsibility without accountability is like a tennis game with no net or court. Without boundaries we tend to drift and our actions become meaningless.

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Recent events have more than amply demonstrated how the character of a society can be measured by responsible actions. Every day we are moved by those graceful and brave neighbors who assume and hold their responsibility in the highest regard and delivered on the ultimate sacrifice with immeasurable dignity and without question. Our world, though drastically altered, is still a better place to live in because of these positive actions we have witnessed.

So what can you do to help restore the weakened link of responsibility? Be responsible!

Own up to your obligations. That means taking charge of your commitments and making every effort to deliver fully on your obligations. When you fall short or make a mistake own up to it, correct it and move forward. When you achieve greatness be sure to appreciate and reward those who made your success possible. When you enjoy success in wealth and position understand the obligation you have to return this fortune to those less fortunate but still worthy. Responsibility without commitment is just an empty promise.

Responsibility + Commitment = Positive Action

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This behavior is as essential to the growth and development of a business or organization as it is to an individual. The performance of a responsibility is a positive action that is, in and of itself, its own reward. When we behave in a responsible way, we bring honor into our lives, into our society, and into the consciousness of every individual and institution we touch.

I truly believe that acting responsibly can and will make a difference, not only in your life, but in many others as well. So much return for so little effort. So be bright, be enthusiastic and be intentioned. Find a way to be responsible every day and in every way.

And that's The Don E. Smith Experience.