



Personal Integrity... How Do You Measure Up?

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Recently I have begun to question the lack of personal integrity I see in the people around me, to the point where I wonder if many people even realize what having personal integrity means.

In my parents day, having integrity meant that you could do a deal by 'shaking on it' rather than having lawyers draw up iron clad contracts. Giving your word would guarantee that what you said you were going to do got done without the receiver ever having to question it.

When I talk to people about this subject they often answer with why should they bother adhering to professional or personal standards if no one else will? Well, my intent here is not to paint everyone with the same brush but instead ask the question "How do you measure up?"

Does it really matter if your coworker is spending all their time making personal phone calls or surfing the Internet, are you not still accountable to both your employer and yourself for how you spend your time? Sure it might not be fair and they might be getting away with it but how are you going to feel if you adopt their unproductive and unethical habits?

If you are not paying your bills on time does this really hurt your integrity? Of course it does! You made a contract with a credit card company, mortgage company, family member, etc to pay back the money you borrowed by a certain time and in a specific way. If you are not living up to that commitment you may feel like it is not a big deal. Not only will it ruin your credit score and your reputation it is costing you something much more personal, your commitment to yourself and your word.

in•teg•ri•ty
noun - possession of firm principles: the quality of possessing and steadfastly adhering to high moral principles or professional standards

If you were acting in complete integrity right now how would that show up in your life?

Personal/social life:

- Pay all my bills on time
- Be considerate of others
- Do what I say I am going to do, when I said I would do it
- No gossiping
- Meet my commitments (don't become over committed)

Business life:

- No gossiping
- Not spending time at work on the Internet surfing or doing personal business
- Don't make too many personal calls
- Be honest in dealings with others including work colleagues, clients etc.

Some people say that we are making progress in the world with technological advances, more trips to discover outer space and living a better quality life than our parents and our grandparents, but does that have to be at the exclusion of our personal integrity and how we interact with the world around us? I believe in the 'power of one' and know that for every one person who lacks professionalism, values and a strong code of conduct there are others out there who are willing to stand up for what they believe in and do the right thing whether people are watching or not.

If you feel you have not been living with personal integrity it is never too late. Only you have the power to make the changes necessary. Take stock of where you are not living the way you know you should and take steps to change this now.

"Remember, people will judge you by your actions, not your intentions. You may have a heart of gold - but so does a hard-boiled egg" - Anonymous ⚡