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Forward Movement



TAKE FLIGHT COACHING

Committed to your Clarity, Possibility, and Action

Character Leaves A Lasting Impression

Many of us are concerned about what other people think of us. A large part of our energy is focused toward trying to appeal to others. We spend much of our time trying to perfect how we present ourselves. We talk about how we can have more charisma to attract and influence people. Subconsciously we think, "If I'm going to attract people and be liked by them, I need to develop charisma in my life." This is a common thought because of our society's focus on image, yet there is something deeper that really attracts people. Character.

Character is the most important aspect of relationship, not charisma. Character embodies who you really are. Abraham Lincoln said, "Character is like a tree and reputation like a shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing." In other words, a man's reputation is what other people think of him; his character is what he really is. If you have charisma without character, it's only a matter of time before people find you out. Charisma may attract, but character sustains.

**Character is like the roots of a tree
— it lies below the surface,
yet it's crucial.**

Without character you cannot maintain meaningful relationships, and without relationships your ability to succeed is cut short.

So what is it about character that really makes a difference?

1. Character sets you apart

There was a time when people who lacked integrity stood out from the crowd. Now the opposite is true--charisma can make people stand out for a moment, but character can set them apart for a lifetime. In order to win respect, one must build a solid foundation of character. Just as no solid building can be erected on a weak foundation, so no lasting reputation worthy of respect can be built on weak character.



2. Character creates trust

One of the common questions we ask those around us is; "Can I trust you?" We want to know; are they going to do what they say? And every one around you is, in one way or another, wondering that about you. Character is the ability to be what you say. Real relationships function on the basis of trust. If you compromise trust, then you will lose your relational stability.

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Character Leaves A Lasting Impression *Continued...*

3. Character promotes excellence

The person with the underlying success factor of good character will often perform to his fullest potential and be excellent in whatever he undertakes; while the person with outstanding talent but who is weak in character will usually fail to live up to his potential and often will not achieve even average performance. Excellence, like character, is not a singular act, but formed by decisions; you are what you repeatedly do. Excellent character is simply excellent habits long continued.

4. Character creates lasting impact

Charisma, by its nature, doesn't last long or extend very far. It's like a flash of gunpowder. It produces a quick, blinding light, but then it's gone. The only thing left is smoke. Character, on the other hand, is more like a bonfire. Its effects are long-lasting. It produces warmth and light, and as it continues to burn it gets hotter and burns brighter.

5. Character adds value

Albert Einstein said, "Try not to become a person of success, but rather try to become a person of value." If you will think about what you ought to do for other people, your character will take care of itself. Character is built by caring for others, and character is lost when we only care about ourselves.

If you're going to relate to people, you probably have some measure of both charisma and character. The question is which one are you relying on? The answer can be found in your response to this great question, "As time goes by in your relationships, does it get easier or harder to relate?" You see having a great personality can open doors, but only character can keep them open.

Without character relationships become hard to sustain. You constantly have to perform to get people to notice you; however with character, as time goes by, your relationships strengthen and continue to grow. Best of all, the ones who do come to enjoy your fire stay with you a lot longer than the ones who only want to see a show.

Character; so hard to develop, so easy to lose. It is both the strength by which we succeed and the weakness by which we fail. Character is not something that, once attained, is permanent. Character building is a life-long task. The hope is that today you can build your character.

Jim Rohn writes, "Character is not something you were born with and can't change like your fingerprint. In fact, because you weren't born with it, it is something that you must take responsibility for creating. I don't believe that adversity by itself builds character and I certainly don't think that success erodes it. Character is built by how you respond to what happens in your life. Whether it's winning every game or losing every game. Getting rich or dealing with hard times. You build character out of certain qualities that you must create and diligently nurture within yourself. Just like you would plant and water a seed or gather wood and build a campfire. You've got to look for those things in your heart and in your gut. You've got to dig deep in order to find them."

Be more concerned with your character than your reputation. Your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are. Your reputation is in the hands of others - that's what a reputation is. While you can't control what other people think about you, you can control your character.



A business card for James Warrick, Take Flight Coaching. The card features a photo of James Warrick on the left. The text on the card includes: James Warrick, 503.313.3100, james@takeflightcoaching.org, 1000 NE 122nd Ave, Portland, OR 97230. The right side of the card has the text TAKE FLIGHT COACHING, a silhouette of an eagle in flight, and the tagline Clarity. Possibility. Action.

Watering Your Roots

Recently one of the people that I coach made a great statement. I asked her at the end of our conversation what was significant to her about our coaching call. She said, "I used to spend a lot of time watering the leaves of my life, and now I am watering my roots."

WE ARE ON THE WEB!

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