

## Being Responsible Can be A Loaded Concept That May Need Scrutiny And Require Updating

If we are willing to take a close look at responsibility, it may occur to us that there are many different ways to address and define it. Giving the subject some thought could bring a breath of fresh air into our stale concepts and automatic behavior patterns.

Most of us think a responsible person is one who takes on a job and follows through with it in a way that reflects integrity. We have grown up being told that we need to be responsible and that it is a characteristic that needs to be honored and developed with serious intent.

However, through the years most of us have run into people who are Responsible with a capital "R" and not all of our experiences with them have been positive. That kind of responsibility can blossom into full-time bossiness and a scowling countenance that has little appeal.

Another way to consider being responsible is to use it as a tool for discernment. Sometimes slowing down is responsible and sometimes taking a closer look before we leap qualifies, as well. We can make wiser choices when we look at people, places and things, including situations and opportunities, with a jaundiced eye.

A good way to take a closer look at our level of personal responsibility is to notice how often we are late and what we might be able to do to clean up that area of our lives. Many of us are always on time or can give a good reason why we're not. If so, how often do we opt to explain ourselves instead of arranging our lives in a responsible way? It can get to be a habit and not be seen for what it is by the person perpetrating the fraud.

When we read something or attend a lecture, are we too willing to take everything on face value or do we assume the responsibility for deciding for ourselves whether it makes sense or not? If we ask questions, is it to get attention or to get more information to base a decision on regarding accepting or rejecting an idea?

We need to look at how we "hold others able" when assessing our attitudes toward responsibility. Do we do too much for those who need to learn to do for themselves? That's often a sneaky way to hide self-aggrandizement. Can we delegate and back off? Can we supervise and train others and not get puffed up? It's an art form for most of us to learn to be responsible and still know how and when to pass the job on to others with grace.

Being responsible isn't always shouldering the load. Sometimes it's saying no and meaning it. Part of being a mature adult is creating a healthy attitude toward giving our selves rest and leisure. Responsible doesn't need to mean pushing ourselves until we drop. Searching for, finding and maintaining balance is something we need to accept the responsibility for, as well.

Why not take a look at the concepts we are carrying around about responsibility and see if they need to be reframed? We usually expand when we are willing to do that.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

### About the Author

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