

LESSON 30: INTEGRITY AND BUILDING TRUST

Vocabulary Word:

Integrity — The quality of honesty, having strong moral principles, and adhering to ethical standards in one’s actions and decisions.

Lesson Content:

Viktor Frankl exemplified remarkable integrity during his time as a prisoner in German concentration camps during World War II. Despite enduring immense suffering and witnessing unimaginable atrocities, Frankl demonstrated an unwavering commitment to his principles and values, serving as a beacon of integrity in the darkest circumstances.

Officer Wilson passed me a book about Viktor Frankl when I was locked in solitary before sentencing. I had been confined in solitary for several months while I awaited judicial proceedings. Since it was my first experience in prison, the solitude saddened me. When I read the book about Viktor Frankl, a renowned psychiatrist, I remember feeling as if I had a model for how I wanted to emerge from prison—regardless of the sentence length I would receive.

Dr. Frankl refused to compromise his beliefs or distort the truth, even when faced with extreme coercion or threats. His integrity, manifested through his unwavering honesty and authenticity, inspired anyone who read his story. His honesty extended to his interactions with anyone he met. Regardless of what atrocities he endured, he remained steadfast in upholding the dignity and humanity of others, offering support and compassion amidst the dehumanizing conditions.

Dr. Frankl wrote about the importance of developing meaning and purpose in life, regardless of external circumstances. Despite the immense despair and hopelessness surrounding him, he refused to succumb to despair. Instead, he dedicated himself to finding meaning while going through unimaginable suffering. His pursuit of purpose provided solace and encouraged others to hold onto their humanity and strive for something greater.



Dr. Frankl's integrity shone through his resilience and determination to remain faithful to his values. He refused to participate in or condone acts of cruelty, even if it meant endangering his life. In the face of dehumanization and the constant threat of death, he maintained his ethical stance, refusing to compromise his integrity for personal gain or survival.

Understanding the concept of integrity is essential for personal development, particularly for people in prison.

Honesty and Authenticity:

Integrity begins with being honest with oneself and others. It involves living aligned with our values and principles, being true to who we are, and representing ourselves honestly to the world. We build trust and credibility in our interactions by embracing honesty and authenticity. Dr. Viktor Frankl's writing is one of the reasons we begin our course with the module on defining success—we have to know who we are and what we aspire to become if we want to succeed.

Ethical Decision Making:

Integrity guides ethical decision-making processes. It involves considering the moral implications of our choices and striving to do what is right, even when faced with difficult situations or temptations. Individuals with integrity prioritize ethical behavior and uphold moral standards.

Consistency and Reliability:

We demonstrate integrity through consistency and reliability in our words and actions. As Gandhi wrote, we must keep everything we think, say, and do in harmony. We must follow through on commitments, keep promises, and be dependable. By practicing consistency and reliability, we build a reputation of trustworthiness and earn the respect of others.



Accountability and Responsibility:

Integrity involves taking accountability for our actions and accepting responsibility for the consequences they may bring. It means owning up to mistakes, learning from them, and making amends when necessary. Individuals with integrity understand the impact of their choices and strive to make things right.

Building Trust and Character:

Integrity plays a vital role in building trust and character. It fosters healthy and meaningful relationships, both personally and professionally. By embodying integrity, we inspire others and create an environment of respect, openness, and trust.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES: IN ONE HOUR, ANSWER AS YOU DEEM APPROPRIATE.

How do you understand the concept of integrity?

Why is integrity important for personal growth and development, particularly during imprisonment?

Share an example of a situation in prison where acting with integrity helped you maintain your values and contributed to your personal growth.

How can living with integrity help you prepare for a successful life after release?

What strategies can you employ to cultivate and demonstrate integrity during your imprisonment?

Activity:

Reflect on a situation in which you faced a moral dilemma or had to make a difficult decision. Write about how acting with integrity influenced your choices and the outcomes that followed.



Discuss the lessons you learned and how they contribute to your personal growth.

Identify three personal values that are important to you. Describe how you align your actions with these values to live with integrity. Consider possible challenges and strategies to overcome them.

Remember, integrity is the foundation of personal growth and character development. By living with honesty, ethical principles, and accountability, you build trust, strengthen relationships, and pave the way for success. Embrace the power of integrity during your time in prison and carry it as a guiding principle in all areas of your life.



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