

The Responsibility Factor

As we embrace 2022, I believe that the big game changer in the science of success is personal responsibility. When we look at personal mastery, what I call the science of replicable success, I believe that people who take personal responsibility for key aspects of their lives have a greater chance of goal attainment. A lot of children are growing up into adults who don't take responsibility for their lives because they were never given such responsibility in the first place. *1 Cor 13:11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.* One of the marks of adulthood is taking responsibility. At some point, we must realise that we are responsible for our lives and God has given us everything we need for life and godliness. This is going to be a year of taking responsibility. It might be challenging to do so, but it is only when we start taking responsibility that we start truly living with dignity. We shift into adulthood. The reality is that success is not going to be handed to you on a silver platter. *Gal 6:5 for each one should carry their own load.* Find out what your load is in this life, and then carry it. *2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.*

You must take personal responsibility. You cannot change the circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself. Jim Rohn

What needs to change in you in order for this year to be like no other year?

When someone takes personal responsibility they can identify with most of these statements:

- I am accountable for my actions.
- I create my own life.
- I can shape my mood.
- I choose how I respond. "If you realize that you have created your current conditions, then you can uncreate them and re-create them at will." W. Clement Stone.
- Happiness is a choice. I am not a victim.
- I am not destroyed by my experiences but by the stories I tell myself about my experiences.
- I have the courage to accept the consequences of my actions, my decisions and my mistakes. *Prov 28:13 Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.*
- I will stop blaming or complaining. When you blame someone else or something else you deny yourself the power to change. This was Cain's issue. He didn't take responsibility, played the victim, resentment developed and the resentment turned into bitterness. *Gen 4:6-7 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 7 If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it."*

- I don't take things personally.
- In most aspects of my life, I have the power to choose.

Jack Canfield stated, *"If you want to be successful, you have to take 100% responsibility for everything that you experience in your life. This includes the level of your achievements, the results you produce, the quality of your relationships, the state of your health and physical fitness, your income, your debts, your feelings — everything!... most of us have been conditioned to blame something outside of ourselves for the parts of our life we don't like."*

Of course there are things in life that are beyond our control, but we are responsible for our attitude when faced with those hardships. Starting to take responsibility for your life is a major shift. It is not always going to be easy. It will involve being honest with people in order to correct their current perception. What does that look like? It means that you are responsible for initiating difficult conversations. You are responsible for being transparent about your strengths and weaknesses instead of projecting an ideal image of yourself. It will involve facing things. Facing yourself, facing your work and facing others.

I would like us to focus on Five L's of personal responsibility. Discuss these with others and examine the ones you need to work on:

1. **Lead** – You are responsible to lead. It might just be with your children. You are responsible to teach them, discipline them and give them the necessary tools to do what they need to do. The people you care about the most, what do they need from you that only you can give? Give them that. They are watching you. Don't cause them to stumble. To whom has God called you?
2. **Let Go** – You are responsible to let go. Life is too short for you to hold grudges. Remember that for the most part, people don't do things to you, they do things for themselves. Stop playing the victim. Worrying about others' behaviour is one of the biggest time wasters. You are responsible for what has mindshare. Letting go means getting rid of stinking thinking. You are responsible for your thoughts. Each time you think certain thoughts ask yourself, "Is this helping me or harming me? Is this contributing to my life or contaminating my life? What else could be true?"

Phil 4:8

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Stop saying, "The devil made me do it and God understands, because of what they did to me."

3. **Level Up** – You are responsible to level up. To level up is to increase something in order to remove disparity. In what aspects of your life are you functioning below par? Remember this is based on your calling, not on comparisons with others around you.

Eph 4:1

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

In gaming, levelling up means “to gain enough points in a game to enable a player to go up to a higher level.” At what level are you supposed to be operating? Don’t compare yourself with others but compare yourself to your potential. Think of your calling. Think of your responsibilities. In what areas of your life do you need to level up? Is it in how you love your spouse? Is it in prayer? Is it in your time management? Levelling up is your responsibility. Stop saying, “When they stop doing this to me then I will start...” Don’t base your attitude, values and behaviour on how others treat you. Just do what you see the Father doing like Jesus modelled for us.

4. **Learn** – You are responsible for what you learn. Learning is the acquisition of knowledge with a resultant behavioural and attitudinal change. God has blessed you with a mind and the capacity to study. Take responsibility for what you know and don’t know. Ignorance is not bliss. What do you want to master?

2 Tim 2:15

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

The scary thing about learning and knowing a lot is that more is expected of us. Are you ready to put into practice that which you learn about? There is responsibility that comes with learning and growth.

Luke 12:48

But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

James 4:17

If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.

5. Leave a legacy – Usually when you reach a certain age you begin to think differently. Often there is a shift in values. You no longer think short-term. You want to leave a mark. You want to impact lives. Relationships begin to really matter. It is your responsibility to figure out what your “IT” is and to pour yourself into it. Why were you born? Most people are known only for what they are average at. One of the keys to leaving a legacy is learning how to function from your high leverage activities. Some of the questions to answer on this journey are:

- For what do you receive the most complements?
- For what are you the GO TO person?
- What comes to you easily where others seem to struggle?
- What do you do that is high impact yet requires relatively little effort on your part?
- What do you get so absorbed doing that you lose track of time?
- If I were to phone you at 2am and ask you to do this you would quite happily do it without complaining or grumbling.

Leaving a legacy involves excelling at what you have been called to do, and also imparting this greatness to others.

Ps 78:6

so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children.

Ps 112:1-2

¹Praise the Lord. Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who find great delight in his commands. ²Their children will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.

God has called us to have a vision for the next generation. Jonathan Edwards had a great influence on the great awakening in the 1700s. Jonathan and Sarah Edwards had 11 children that grew to adulthood and they would include them in bible study discussions. Elizabeth Dodds records a study done by A. E. Winship in 1900 in which he lists a few of the accomplishments of the 1,400 Edwards descendants he was able to find:

- 100 lawyers and a dean of a law school
- 80 holders of public office
- 66 physicians and a dean of a medical school
- 65 professors of colleges and universities
- 30 judges
- 13 college presidents
- 3 mayors of large cities

3 governors of states

3 United States senators

1 controller of the United States Treasury

1 Vice President of the United States

You are responsible to make your life count. Here are some reflection questions:

In what aspects of your life do you need to take responsibility? What does that look like?

Where or to whom do you typically assign blame?

In what areas have you become powerless or lived from a place of victim-stance?