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**Responsibility**

**By Dr. P.C. Simon**

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Responsibility  
by  
Dr. P.C.Simon  
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Most of us do not want to take responsibility for our decisions or deeds. So, what do we do? We consult others and ask, "What do you think I should do?" Then we can blame the other person for our decision. This is one way of manipulating others to take responsibility for our actions.

Wayne Dyer in his book, *Erroneous Zones*, gives a few good examples how a patient tries to influence his psychiatrist to advise him to do this or that so that he could mentally put the blame on his psychiatrist for his failures.

When you take responsibility, you have to give up your favourite villains like elders, parents and friends who impose their suggestions on you, people who impose their ideas on you and people who put you down by saying "Oh no, you can't do it. You are not educated enough. You do not have enough money. You do not have enough experience. You are too old, etc."

We have to take responsibility for our own actions and even for what happens to us, even if it is a rear end collision. If we are fat, depressed, inadequate, it is our fatness, depression and inadequacy and not anyone else's. The possession is ours. Only we can get rid of them. They are inside us. Should we not take responsibility for the blinders we are wearing, our tensions, our perceptions, our beliefs and our prejudices? What others have done to us is minor compared to what we have done to ourselves. If we want to grow, we have to take responsibility for what we are doing. Intellectualizing can impair our emotional functioning.

## Responsibility

When we get angry, we blame others for our anger. That makes us feel better. Then we don't have to admit that these bad feelings and thoughts are part of ourselves. I am good. It is you who are bad.

Think of a person you hate most in the world. Conjure him up. Feel how disgusted you are in his presence and how you want to get away from him. Get all your feelings about him out. Do you hate him because he is a double dealer, dishonest, dirty, crooked, a cheat, mean, cruel, disloyal, always angry, gossips about you, cheap, drinks too much, and lazy.

Think about a person who knows more about you than anyone else. If there is no such person, invent one. This person knows all the embarrassing things you have done. He has the goods on you, the real dope and all your secrets. What are the worst things he can say about you? Think about it and write it

down.

Now take all the things you hate about yourself and compare them with what you hate about the person you loathed. How much of this list overlaps? Can it be that both the lists are virtually the same person? What you are protecting yourself from in both instances is facing the parts of yourself that you hate in others, what you fear or lack in yourself. You feel more comfortable seeing your faults as belonging to someone else. Which parts of the list have nothing at all to do with you?

No matter how many forces there may be which influence your life, there is always that part over which you have control. You can increase that control if you decide what it is that you want out of your learning, work, or play. You will be more powerful and less likely to be a victim. You will not be easily seduced into exchanging your birthright for a mess of pottage. You will no longer be vulnerable to being sold a bill of goods by a passing stranger. It is your life, not hers or his or theirs. It is yours.

Frank Crane said, "Responsibility is the thing that people dread most of all. Yet it is the one thing in the world that develops us, gives us manhood, womanhood, and fibre." John Dewey said, "There can be no stable and balanced development of mind apart from the assumption of responsibility" "Responsibility walks hand in hand with capacity and power" (Josiah Holland).

To escape responsibility, we ascribe all personal qualities to heredity and environment. Another cop out is "I can't help it. It is my nature. It is my make-up. I have been doing it every since I was a child, I can't change now. An old dog cannot be taught new tricks.

Your belief systems, your preconceived ideas are like blinders. You are responsible for your blinders. If you wear them red, you see danger where you look.

For all our actions, we had our choice. When we make a choice, we have to accept the responsibility for that choice.

Some try to make you angry, but making yourself angry is your choice. You do not have to react to something someone says or does. I am not saying that you will not get angry if prodded but I can say that you do not have to give that person the power to control your emotions. Your emotions are yours

## Responsibility

and not for others to manipulate. The best way to avoid being manipulated is to recognize the act of others to manipulate us.

For example, someone might cut right in front of you and get you upset, the more it happens to you, the more you get upset. Why? Because your resistance to people cutting in front of you is creating a force which will cause its actualization. When you stop resisting, such actions will happen less frequently. It might happen but one thing is certain, you will not be upset and therefore may not even notice it happening.

The story of Zachias is typical. He was a dwarf and did not want to be seen by Jesus because he was a tax collector. It was customary that tax collectors grabbed more than the stipulated tax and pocketed the excess. This is immoral and Zachias knew it. So, he did not want to be seen by Jesus. Therefore, he did not come to the front of the crowd. He got into the tree and hid himself among its branches but he was afraid, "Will Jesus see me?" What happened? When Jesus, who was walking along noticing the needs of the people thronging to him, reached the tree, he looked up and said, "Zachias, come down. I will dine with you tonight."

Job said the same thing, namely "The thing I feared most has come upon me." Zachias' agitation, his desire to see Jesus and his fear that Jesus would see him was actually causing the very air to literally vibrate. So we are creating these negative events by concentrating on them. Therefore, take responsibility.

In "The Autobiography of a Yogi", we read that Yogananda left his door open for the thief to walk in and take the cabbages away from under the cot where they were hidden. The thief did not take the money on top of the cot because Yogananda was more concerned about the cabbages. His thought prodded the thief toward the cabbages.

My paternal family is known to be intolerant, impatient, easily provoked and explosive. My mother used to tease my father saying, "I can make you set fire to the house right now." He recognized what she meant and would reply, "I am not such a fool as to be manipulated by you." So, recognize your weakness. Do not fall for manipulation,

Even when our car is hit from behind, we have to take responsibility. If we had watched, we would have known that the one following us was too close and we should not apply brakes suddenly or we should warn him of that possibility by applying the brakes momentarily and releasing them.

Whatever happens to us happens because we make it happen.

If we are sick, over sleep, dream a bad dream, quarrel with our girlfriend or boyfriend, we make these things happen. In fact, there are no accidents. Take responsibility for what happens to you.

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Dr. Simon is a retired research microbiologist, philanthropist, philosopher and author. Among his publications is the Missing Piece to Paradise and the Philosopher's Notebook  
<http://www.buymybook.com/buy/authorinfo.asp?id=1572X1802Y1> visit his website at

<http://www.interchange.ubc.ca/psimon/book2.htm>

## **Take Responsibility for Reshaping Your Life**

**By Jackie Stanley**

We say we want to eat better, feel better, and look better. But in order to make our goals materialize, we have to take responsibility for what we want by taking the appropriate actions. Here are three simple steps to help you turn your healthy goals into concrete accomplishments:

**Step One: Blame No One.** Pointing fingers at the fast food industry, the media or your mother is not going to move you one step closer to reaching your goals. Blame invariably inspires guilt and reproach, so that when we start out blaming others, before we know it we are faulting ourselves. There is no time for that. Besides, the minute you blame something or someone for the shape of your life, you are denying yourself the opportunity to take the action you need to transform your circumstances. It isn't a question of whose fault it is that you are where you are today. The point is to shoulder the responsibility for moving your life in a more positive direction.

**Step Two: Expect Nothing.** Taking responsibility for your life is its own reward. We should do so because it is the mature, grown-up thing to do. A willingness to be accountable for our choices and actions is what it means to be an adult. Because there are no guarantees in life, if you decide to begin making your health a priority, don't expect your family to support you or that your blood pressure will be lowered. An ongoing healthy lifestyle is not about trying to slim down so you can fit into your swimsuit by summer or about living to be 100. It is about saying, "I am going to take care of myself because as far as I know this is the only body I am going to get, and it makes sense that I should respect and care for it."

**Step Three: Do Something.** Responsibility demands action. Until you do something about the shape of your life, nothing is going to change. And here's the kicker: because it is your life and you are responsible for the way it looks, only you can decide what you must do. So, take stock of your life and do what you can do to improve it. If you have been sitting around, get up. If you can't run, then walk. When you fall down, take a minute to gather yourself, and then get up and continue with your plan of action. Because in the final analysis, how much we weigh is not a fraction as important as taking responsibility for our lives by doing what we can to make them healthier and happier.

Jackie Stanley is the author of a series of personal wellness and weight loss journals titled *Lettuce is Not Enough*.

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