



How to Do the Right Thing

“Character is doing the right thing when nobody's looking. There are too many people who think that the only thing that's right is to get by, and the only thing that's wrong is to get caught.”

J. C. Watts

Some decisions you make aren't terribly important. For example, you might decide to have coffee instead of tea. But other decisions may involve a choice between right and wrong, and sometimes it's not easy to know what to do.

When somebody makes a decision to not do the right thing do you think it is intentional? Most of us know the difference between the right thing and the wrong thing in most situations, the challenge is to decide and act. How do we make the decision to actually do the right thing? For the most part, we have a conversation with ourselves. Many times we know in our guts what the right thing to do is. In such cases it's often best to act on that inner realization, it can be easier to talk yourself out of it.

When the right course of action isn't apparent, stop and think. Ask yourself these questions about your possible alternatives in the situation you are experiencing:

- What does my conscience—that "little voice" inside my head—say about it?
- Would my behaviour hurt anyone—including me?
- Is it fair to all parties? Would it violate the Golden Rule? (How would I feel if somebody did it to me?)
- Have I ever been told that it's wrong?
- What would others I respect say about it?
- Would I be proud to tell my child or partner about my actions?
- When I look back will I have regrets?

If you have the opportunity and time, seek the counsel of a trusted and objective friend, companion or advisor.

“Real integrity is doing the right thing, knowing that nobody's going to know whether you did it or not.”

Oprah Winfrey