

Accepting Personal Responsibility

Are You Traveling on The Highway to Success or The Boulevard to Failure?

By Paul J. Meyer

Most people are traveling the wide smooth road. Can you guess which one that is? Are YOU on it?

The popular thing to conclude in today's society is that if you aren't getting what you want out of life, it must be someone else's fault. The idea that you have any personal responsibility in the process has literally never occurred to far too many people.

In fact, during the last 30 years I've observed the concepts of individual freedom, initiative, and personal responsibility have all but become obsolete in the vast majority of people's minds. Self-reliance and self-motivation are simply being bred out of people at an alarming rate.

Whose job is it to supply your needs?

Many now look to the government as the provider of what they need. And if you are the least bit savvy about what has happened to our Social Security system alone, you are aware there is no safe "lock box" of funds that have been set aside to support you when you are older. All the funds being collected today are being used up along the way!

If you were able to save and invest for your own future, rather than the government handling things, you would be light years ahead monetarily as you approached your golden years. Having the government take a portion of your money and invest it for you is like receiving a blood transfusion by taking the blood out of your left arm and spilling half of it as it is on the way to your right arm!

In addition to wanting the government to supply their needs, people insist the companies they work for supply their health care, their life insurance, a pension, and a guaranteed income. Raises are expected periodically even if their performance is poor. And should there be any talk of "letting them go," certain government agencies can step in and cry, "discrimination."

Whatever happened to self-reliance?

Somewhere along the way, a majority of people began to believe that their life was someone else's job. Values of self-accomplishment and self-determination were relegated to the dusty pages of the "way it used to be." Instead of becoming self-reliant, it has become easier to put all our energies into:

- Blaming others
- Reliving past failures
- Repeating past mistakes

"While you may not be able to change the whole world, you can change yourself; and in that process, lead a more fulfilling and dynamic life."

The truth is that your present life is no one else's fault but yours! True, sometimes circumstances can be presented that are not of our doing, but how we *respond* to those circumstances are entirely our decision.

And understanding your past failures, acknowledging your negative conditions, and admitting your weaknesses have only one purpose. They are merely indicators of where you need to start now on your journey to success.

They only become significant *if* you fail to learn from them.

Whose hands hold the answer?

The answer is in your hands and no one else's. Your willingness to step up to the plate and take responsibility for your own life is the way out and the way up. As the

great philosopher Plato said, "Take charge of your life. You can do with it what you will."

If you don't, you will live a meager life at best. No government, no company, no other person is going to provide you with enough for a good life. You'll merely scrape by, and in the process, you'll have no self-esteem, no sense of accomplishment, and few of the material goods that make life more satisfying.

Only YOU are responsible for what you can become! Only you can decide if you want to continue on The Boulevard to Failure, the road traveled by most as it is wide and smooth and requires minimum effort and provides little satisfaction.

Or you can travel The Highway to Success which is often uphill, rocky, and bumpy. The Success Highway demands you grow, learn, and apply yourself. You have to use your initiative, your imagination, and your determination to set and attain goals. You have to be willing to learn:

- Who you are
- Where you are going
- How you are going to get there

But, oh the rewards! So worth the journey! So worth the effort! The only true freedom stems from your willingness to be, become, have, and achieve. While you may not be able to change the whole world, you can change yourself; and in that process, lead a more fulfilling and dynamic life.

In the words of George Elliot, "It's never too late to be what you might have been." It's all up to YOU!

Paul J. Meyer, best-selling *New York Times* author and founder of the Success Motivation Institute has written 24 full-length programs plus numerous books on attitude, motivation, goal setting, management, leadership, and time management. In his inspirational CD, *Accepting Personal Responsibility*, available at www.pauljmeyer.com, Paul explains how taking charge of your own life can steer you off the Boulevard of Failure and place you full speed ahead on the Highway to Success!

