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BEARDEN'S TIPS ON ACCOUNTABILITY

Mental Choices & Physical Responses The Power of Perspective

CONCEPTS

Here are three of the premises on which I base my approach to the topic of accountability:

In the real world, setbacks are inevitable – Things just don't always work out the way we'd hoped; the people, situations & circumstances we encounter will not always be consistent with our expectations. Fair enough so far?

We always make choices about the setbacks we encounter – Our responses to setbacks, the things we do when we encounter them, are examples of the physical choices we make. But those physical choices are preceded by—even determined by—the mental choices we make. Remember that; we'll come back to it.

The mental choices we make about the setbacks we encounter are influenced more by our perspective than they are by the setbacks themselves – Different people have different mental & physical responses to identical sets of circumstances; they make different choices about the same setbacks.

Based on those premises, we can see that our mental responses to setbacks are especially powerful, since they are the bases for our physical responses. And our perspectives are the "tools" we use for making those powerful mental choices.

When asked, most people use phrases like "point of view" or words like "outlook" to describe perspective. Both make reference to the visual, the things that are looked at.

Here's how I would define perspective:

The place in mind from where we look for, and assign meanings to, the things we see (or encounter)

THEORY TO PRACTICE

Here are some suggestions for recognizing the perspectives you're using and the choices you make using them:

- I've suggested that perspective is the place in mind from where we look for—and assign meanings to—the things we encounter.
- 2. So here's a question: What does it mean to be 60? What meaning do you assign to that chronological age?
- 3. Would you agree that the meaning people assign to "being 60" will be determined pretty much by where they're "looking at 60 from"?:
- 4. How do you think my teenage daughter would respond to that question? What would she say that it "means to be 60?" Here are some words and phrases I would expect from her:
 - "Old!
 - "Don't set any long-term goals"
 - "More things you can't do than you can
- 5. How do you think my 86-year-old uncle would respond? What would he say that it "means to be 60?" Here are some words and phrases I would expect from him:
 - "Young"
 - "Sweet bird of youth"
 - "What I would give to be 60 again!"
- 6. The same number, used in the same context, being viewed by two people at the same time; and those two people assign totally opposite meanings.
- The meanings they assign are based far more on their perspectives than on the number itself. The number doesn't mean anything until they assign those meanings.
- This same principle applies to setbacks; different people respond differently, and those differences are based in large part to the perspectives they use for processing those setbacks.

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