



**BE GREAT
DO GOOD**

ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY | BGDG - E.06

Those of us who are parents would know that a big part of our role is to help our children learn how to take personal responsibility for their actions. As a child matures towards adulthood, they develop a growing awareness of their agency - their ability to affect change through intentional, decisive actions. As we mature, we progress from being oblivious about our impact on the world, to being able to carefully distil from purposeful reflection what we can learn about ourselves from any given situation. Instead of merely shirking responsibility or constantly playing the victim card and becoming bitter and fearful, we are able to take stock, learn the lessons that need to be learnt, and then grow from the experience. As John C. Maxwell wrote, "The greatest day in your life and mine is when we take total responsibility for our attitudes. That's the day we truly grow up."

Reflection Questions

1. Can you think of a time in your childhood when you were given real responsibility for the first time? Perhaps it was your first paid job, getting your driver's licence etc. What was that feeling like? What were the positive and negative emotions associated with that experience?
2. Think now about your business journey. Can you remember a time when the weight of responsibility of your business hit you in a particularly vivid way? Maybe it was a big promotion, or being handed a budget that was significantly larger than you had ever been responsible for. Or maybe you were reprimanded for a costly mistake that you made, or failing to meet KPIs. In what ways are your professional responsibilities a joy/privilege, and in what ways are they a burden?
3. Andrew shared about a particular area of his work (finances) that he at the time chose not to take responsibility for, due to a lack of natural competency in that area. It was a decision that ended up costing him dearly! As Andrew said, "I let it happen because I took the responsibility away". Can you think of an aspect of your business that you may have put into the "too hard basket", which upon reflection may require more of your focus and attention? How might you now, like Andrew, take proactive steps to fill in any knowledge/experience gaps so that what was once an area of weakness can become an area of strength?

Faith vs Fear

Both Andrew and Pete spoke at length about the importance and role of faith (spelt R-I-S-K). As it turns out, fear and faith are actually two sides of the same coin. They both ask the same question - “what if this happens tomorrow?” - the only difference being that one answers the question *negatively* with dread, and the other *positively* with hope. Fear focuses on what we stand to *lose*, but faith focuses on what we stand to *gain*. As Pete so aptly put it: “to truly expand and grow, we must take ultimate responsibility of our emotional landscape, consciously choosing faith over fear at every turn and opportunity”.

Reflection Questions

1. Fear causes us to stop in our tracks or to move backwards, but faith acts as a propellant to continually push us forward into our purpose. Andrew encouraged us to keep moving forward, and to just keep taking steps. Indeed, it's much easier to redirect someone with forward momentum, than to get someone going from a stationary position! As you consider the next 90 days in your business plan, what are the key "roadblocks of fear" that are creating inertia? Can you name them?
2. You can live life with either a green light or a red light mentality. A green light mentality assumes that you have permission to "go" until someone tells you to stop. A red light mentality assumes that you have to "stop" and "wait" until someone gives you permission to go. Which approach is a more accurate description of your natural posture? Where do you think that mindset/attitude may have originated from?
3. Though some of us have a greater appetite for risk than others, in the heat of the moment the instinctive response more often than not is to withdraw in fear and choose the path of least resistance. The response of faith doesn't come naturally for most of us, and that is because it requires a part of us that isn't merely carnal but draws upon a deeper, spiritual part of our being. Can you think of some ways that you can intentionally grow not only your risk appetite but your "faith appetite"? Are there certain people, environments, resources etc. that have helped you to nurture and cultivate your "faith muscle"?

The Object of our Faith

As Andrew shared about his own approach to faith, it was clear that he wasn't talking about faith in himself or his own ability. To the contrary, he acknowledged that it's not his own skill and capability that has been the primary contributor to his business success, but God. In his words, "God has given us the power to create wealth". And yet, there is an interesting tension here between God's *sovereignty* (His power over all things) and our *responsibility*. The presence of one doesn't preclude the other - both can be true simultaneously.

Reflection Question

1. Prayer is powerful because it vividly declares and expresses the reality that it is God - and not us - who is in ultimate control. It places us in a posture of humility and dependence. Have you ever experienced the power of prayer, not just in your personal life but in your professional life as well?
 - a. If so, share with your group about times that you have seen God answer your prayers about your business.
 - b. If not, spend some time thinking about how you could incorporate prayer into your work in a meaningful way - e.g. at the start of each day, at the conclusion of each project etc.

The Freedom of Forgiveness

In the Bible, there is a quote that says: “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you” (Ephesians 4:32). Ultimately, the way that we are going to be able to move past bitterness and resentment when we experience betrayal or disappointment from others is by releasing them into the freedom of forgiveness. Marianne Williamson said, “unforgiveness is like drinking poison yourself and waiting for the other person to die”.

Practical Exercise

As you think about the different friendships, relationships etc that may have experienced strain throughout the course of your business journey, is there anyone that comes to mind who you may need to forgive? If you feel comfortable, spend a few moments now in prayer asking God to help you forgive them for the ways in which they may have wronged you.

To be clear: this process doesn't excuse or validate any wrong behaviour, but it does set you free from allowing that person's actions to continually impede on your growth and development. It breaks the cycle of hurting people going on to hurt others.

Stephen Covey summarises this topic well for us: “I am not a product of my circumstances. I am a product of my decisions.” May this be your declaration today and everyday, as you continue on the journey of being great and doing good - both in your personal and professional lives.