

INTEGRITY

(in-TEH-grit-ee)



It can sometimes be very difficult to know the difference between right and wrong, good and bad. One person's "right" might be another person's "wrong". As as a Black Sash in training, you must be careful not to forcefully impose our values and opinions on to other people. Even though we may be trying to do the best we can, we might discover that someone else's best is completely different than ours. This is okay. Each human being on the planet has a completely different way of thinking than we do.

The way we view the world or "see things" is called a "paradigm" [pair-a-dime]. A paradigm is the pair of glasses with which we see the world. Have you ever heard the phrase "You never truly know someone until you've walked a mile in their shoes."? What does this phrase mean?

You might think we understand a situation until a new piece of information is thrown at you. This new information may completely change how we understand the situation. This experience is called a "paradigm shift". Read the following story taken from Stephen Covey's "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People."

"I remember a paradigm shift I experienced one morning on a subway in New York. People were sitting quietly – some reading newspapers, some lost in thought, some resting with their eyes closed. It was a calm, peaceful scene.

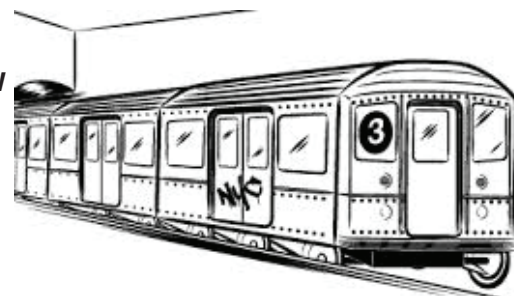
Then suddenly, a man and his children entered the subway. The children were so loud and rambunctious that instantly the whole climate changed.

The man sat down next to me and closed his eyes, apparently oblivious to the situation. The children were yelling back and forth, throwing things, even grabbing people's papers. It was very disturbing. And yet, the man sitting next to me did nothing.

It was difficult not to feel irritated. I could not believe that he could be so insensitive as to let his children run wild like that and do nothing about it, taking no responsibility at all. It was easy to see that everyone else on the subway felt irritated, too. So finally, with what I felt was unusual patience and restraint, I turned to him and said, "Sir, your children are really disturbing a lot of people. I wonder if you couldn't control them a little more?"

The man lifted his gaze as if to come to a consciousness of the situation for the first time and said softly, "Oh, you're right. I guess I should do something about it. We just came from the hospital where their mother died about an hour ago. I don't know what to think, and I guess they don't know how to handle it either."

Can you imagine what I felt at that moment? My paradigm shifted. Suddenly I saw things differently, and because I saw differently, I thought differently, I felt differently, I behaved differently. My irritation vanished. I didn't have to worry about controlling my attitude or my behaviour; my heart was filled with the man's pain. Feelings of sympathy and compassion flowed freely. "Your wife just died? Oh, I'm so sorry! Can you tell me about it? What can I do to help?" Everything changed in an instant. "



What was important to the narrator before he found out that the man's wife had died?

...What was important to him after?

As you seek to understand others, it helps you clarify our understanding of our truest selves. When we seek to understand others before trying to have them understand us, it creates balance and PEACE in the world. However, when we impose or force our own viewpoints on others, it creates conflict and contention, sometimes leading to WAR.

Learning how to truly listen and understand is one of the best ways to ensure that you are doing the best you can, or showing integrity to yourself, as well as maintaining the integrity of your relationships.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT IS ON THE BACK ---->

INTEGRITY ASSIGNMENT #2

NAME: _____

Complete the assignment to earn 1 homework stripe on your belt.



This symbol is called the Yin Yang. In Chinese Philosophy it represents how things that may seem like opposites often are complementary and make up a whole, and how one may give rise to the other. For instance, shadows cannot exist without light. The left side cannot exist without a right side. In Kung Fu, Yin and Yang often represent two opposites: ATTACK and DEFENSE, or sometimes PUSH and PULL. The best Kung Fu makes use of BOTH elements within each movement to make a COMPLETE system.

1. IDENTIFY a single step from one of our forms and how it has an element of both ATTACK and DEFENSE. Prepare to DEMONSTRATE this movement during Leadership circle and be able to DESCRIBE how the movement has both Attack and Defense at the same time. If you need help, ask a higher ranking student at an appropriate time throughout the week.

Have you ever heard the phrase "You have to take the good with the bad."? On the surface, some things seem REALLY GOOD or REALLY BAD, but there is almost always an element of GOOD AND BAD in every situation. To master the concept of patience understanding, you must wait before jumping to conclusions, or judging a person or thing as GOOD or BAD, BETTER or WORSE.

This is a famous story called, "The Zen Master Says "We'll See.":

On his sixteenth birthday a boy gets a horse as a present. All of the people in the village say, "Oh, how wonderful!"

The Zen master says, "We'll see."

One day, the boy is riding and gets thrown off the horse and hurts his leg. He's no longer able to walk, so all of the villagers say, "How terrible!"

The Zen master says, "We'll see."

Some time passes and the village goes to war. All of the other young men get sent off to fight, but this boy can't fight because of his leg injury. All of the villagers say, "How wonderful!"

The Zen master says, "We'll see."

2. Describe a time when you believed something was going to be one way, and how it turned out to be different than what you thought. It can be about meeting a new person, going to a new place, trying a new activity, or something that happened to you.

3. How did this experience change the way you saw things afterwards?
