



The Golden Spiral of Success



When we feel like we belong, we have the right mind set for learning, and when we learn, we have something to contribute to others. And when we contribute to others, guess what? We feel more connected and our sense of belonging rises, continuing upward into a spiral that is sometimes called the *Golden Spiral of Success* because not only does your self-esteem go up, but as the cycle continues you actually become more successful in all areas of your life: with friends, family, school, work, community, you name it. When your self-esteem is based on belonging, learning, and contributing instead of money, awards, popularity, grades, and other external rewards, you have a solid foundation to meet the challenges of the world.

Of course, the Golden Spiral of Success doesn't just appear one day in the bottom of your cereal box. You have to build it one attitude and action at a time. How many of the following statements can you say truthfully about yourself?

BELONGING	LEARNING	CONTRIBUTING
<p><u>“I am lovable.”</u></p> <p>“I have friends.”</p> <p>“I get along with others.”</p> <p>“I am loved.”</p> <p>“I matter.”</p>	<p><u>“I am capable.”</u></p> <p>“I learn from my mistakes.”</p> <p>“I am improving.”</p> <p>“I have dreams and talents.”</p> <p>“I can do good work.”</p>	<p><u>“I have a lot to give.”</u></p> <p>“Others need me.”</p> <p>“I like to pitch in.”</p> <p>“I like to give back.”</p> <p>“Your happiness matters to me.”</p>

3 GOOD REASONS WHY RESPONSIBILITY IS WORTH THE EFFORT

1. **Group success:** When members of a group behave responsibly, the entire group runs better and is more likely to succeed.
2. **Personal improvement:** When you accept responsibility for your choices, you learn from your mistakes and improve.
3. **More freedom:** When you behave responsibly, it demonstrates that you can handle the freedom you've been given and are ready for more. In other words, you earn more freedom.

*freedom and responsibility:
two sides of the same coin*



If you want a better feeling for how that last point works—how you could earn freedom by behaving responsibly—imagine* a coin with the word “Freedom” on one side and “Responsibility” on the other. These two concepts are truly “two sides of the same coin.” Teens who make good choices and behave responsibly tend to end up with more freedom and privileges than those who don’t.

* Or you can get a real one from your group leader if you’re participating in a *Teens in Action* or *Families in Action* program.

how to build responsibility

We’ve established that behaving responsibly will pay off. Now it’s up to you to make it happen. Building responsibility is not something you can do all at once. You have to be on the lookout for opportunities. A few guidelines:

Make friends with your mistakes. Don’t be afraid to admit you’re wrong. Instead, own up to your mistakes, apologize if necessary and, when possible, make amends. Then think