

I

Q: What is a hero?

A: What does it mean to be a hero?

The hero aspires to three things:
the clarity to see what is required of them;
the courage to accept what is required of them;
the capacity to discharge what is required of them.
Clarity, courage, capacity.

Three categories of hero:
the unlikely, or occasional, hero;
the everyday, or ordinary, hero;
the superhero.

The occasional (or unlikely) hero is one who responds honorably to an unlikely & unexpected event: they rise to an occasion, to a challenge, when it presents itself.

The unlikely hero is called unlikely because their heroism is unreliable: the next time a challenge presents itself, they may not be able to respond heroically. That is, their heroism is externally driven. The challenge comes from the outside.

The ordinary, everyday hero is reliably, repeatably & responsibly heroic on an ongoing basis. Although this category of hero is described as ordinary, such heroism is already extraordinary. The world continues to turn because of the heroism of ordinary heroes.

The superhero is one who directs the way the world runs. The superhero holds the overview of their particular field of endeavor. They hold the overview of the whole of their undertaking. They see the operation of all departments, on all floors, in all the offices of their corporation.

Not every corporation is fortunate enough to have a superhero.

Note: the heroism of the ordinary & super heroes is internally driven. Their heroism grows from a sense of interior challenge & necessity.

II

Q. How do we become a hero?

A. Practice!

We practice acts of heroism. Two approaches: the extensive & the intensive approaches.

The extensive: the hero does what is possible for them – plus 10%. This gradually extends the parameters of our competence. We begin with what is possible, and move gradually towards the impossible. The intensive: to undertake an act of quality. A third approach is extensive-intensive: we undertake acts of quality on a regular basis.

III

Q. What is an act of quality?

A. An act of quality follows the injunction: honor necessity, honor sufficiency.

Honor necessity is the Rule of Quality.

Honor sufficiency is the Rule of Quantity.

When we honor necessity, we do what is required of us; regardless of like & dislike, and personal interest.

When we honor sufficiency, we use the right amount of the right kind of energy necessary to do the job, to discharge the function. We address the economy, ecology & efficiency of the energy supply: the quality, quantity & intensity of energy needed to do the job. The aim is to do as little as possible, and as much as is necessary.

Attention. In practice, an act of quality is governed by the quality of our attention. So, an important part of practicing acts of quality is practicing the attention.

IV

Q. Why is an act of quality important?

A. Because this is how we transform our sorry world, one small act at a time.

The first principle is: Quality is ungovernable by number.

So, a small act of quality is as big as a big act of quality. In the Gospels, we have the Parable of The Widow's Mite. In the World of Quantity, her donation was worthless. In the World of Quality, she gave all that she had.

The second principle is: Quality spreads.

An act of quality moves out & into the world, and has effect in ways we'll never know. We will never see the results & repercussions of an act of quality; although we may be confident that Right Action will have Just Consequence.

From "Robert Fripp's Diary"

Purgatory Camp Caravan Royalston MA

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