Being Humble

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Humility is not something that comes naturally to most, especially in today’s busy competitive society. Every day, people see others taking advantage of a situation trying to get ahead or make themselves look good and it really doesn’t do anything for them. A humble person is someone who does not boast or try to impress themselves on you. They are generally quiet, meek and typically not self serving. This is a good set of attributes to be seen but is a very difficult trait to be known for since being humble involves so many behaviors in our lives and is really the opposite of the way most people are living their lives.

**Question your own Humility**

- Do you take an opportunity to claim credit for things that you are involved in?
- Do you like to be right and to prove what you know?
- Maybe you think your job role is more important than the next person or that you are smarter than them?
- Are you capable of handling things on your own without help from others?
- Are you proud of your accomplishments or do you ever brag about things you do or can do?

If you answered YES to ANY of these questions maybe you are not as humble as you think. I’m going to explore humility in my next couple of articles to help anyone learn to be more humble. Often we can recognize a humble person by related character traits. They are generally calm, courteous, polite, subdued and modest in their behavior and attitudes. A humble attitude is never pompous, proud or arrogant and a humble person does not attempt to belittle others or make themselves look good in comparison. Humble people are easily liked, very approachable and easy to get along with.

**Being Humble**

This short series is about recognizing, understanding and being humble and how a person can learn this in their day to day activities. It takes some effort to be humble which I’ll explore in my next article about [How to be more humble?](http://LearnThis.ca). And the 3rd article in this series I’ll explore why [someone should bother learning to be more humble](http://LearnThis.ca) and what some of the advantages are. Take a moment to think about what being humble means to you and think about the questions above for yourself and for other people you work or live closely with. What is it about a humble attitude...
that you like and want to learn? I’ll leave you with this which outlines clearly a major point of humility.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing: it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. Ephesians 2:8-9

Thank you Readers!!!

Now that we’ve explored what it means to be humble and some of the attributes to recognize a humble person, this article has some specific actions anyone can learn to be more humble.

Thank Others

Make sure you take every opportunity you have to thank others for what they do and what they help you with. People don’t accomplish anything on their own and it always takes help from others. Thank them for this help. Whether its your boss, spouse, friends, or stranger, thank others for whatever you can. Being humble in other’s eyes means you don’t claim your own accomplishments, and instead, thank others for how they helped, what they did, how they encouraged or supported you, etc. There are always things to thank others for. Find someone each day and thank them for something. That said, I want to thank each of YOU for reading and supporting this site, it wouldn’t exist without you!

Redirect Praise

Redirecting praise is useful to be more humble and modest. If you don’t accept praise outright and instead, redirect it to others who helped you, trained you or even allowed you to do something, you pass on that praise to others without taking the credit directly. Accepting praise doesn’t really make a person less humble, but down playing your significance or importance on something certainly makes you more humble. Knowing and sharing the fact that you were not the reason for some accomplishment goes a long ways in the eyes of others. This is especially important in work groups and it drastically reduces the risk of anyone thinking you take all the
credit. If you deflect or redirect all praise and credit given you to others involved and truly believe the fact that you weren’t that significant, you further develop a humble attitude.

**You Don’t Have to Be Right**

A humble person never tries to outdo someone else and make themselves look better or smarter. This includes having to be right. When you try to prove you are right, or even when you say something simple like "I know", you are showing dominance over the other person. Instead of wanting to be right, even if you know something already, simple say, "Interesting, thanks for that." A humble person knows only one thing, that they are NOT always right! If you have an idea to present or a solution to offer, don’t try to convince others that it’s the right solution. Say something like, "I have a suggestion, although I’m not sure it’s the right thing to do, since I’m often wrong, which is to [blah blah]…" Make an effort to being humble using these types of suggestions so you don’t come across to others as always having to be right.

**It Wasn’t You Who Got You Here**

People are constantly striving for success and they often feel very proud of themselves for getting to where they are at. Humble people are not proud and know that they didn’t get themselves here. They know that others helped them, encouraged them and assisted them to get to where they are now. If you recognize this and always see how others help you out, you can be more humble by sharing that fact and not taking credit yourself. This is similar to the first one on the list, where it’s important to thank others.

**Don’t Be First**

First is not necessarily a bad thing, however being first can come across as competitive, self-promoting or demoting of others. None of those things are common for a humble person. In a group or workplace, if you don’t be first to speak, participate or get involved, you give others a chance to be first. This can be very humbling for several reasons. You may see that others have better or smarter ideas than you had in the first place, you’re not the only one capable of the task or message and that you aren’t necessarily needed as much as you would like to think you are. These are very humbling realizations so if want to learn to be more humble, next time you have a chance to be first, don’t!

**Appreciate Everything**

So many things around us are not our doing, we often forget to see our own insignificance since we get so focused on our own lives and accomplishments. Well to be humble, its importance to recognize and appreciate all the wonderful things around us. Appreciate the place you live, the health, wealth and happiness you experience or have opportunity for. Appreciating things adds greatly to a person’s humility and knowing that we have so much to be thankful for builds on many of the other items in this list. Look around in nature and at the beauty of life sometime and just take it in for a few moments. Think of the world and the awesome creation that God has
provided you, and it’s impossible NOT to be humbled. Show this appreciation in your life and spirit and it will certainly help you be more humble.

**Listen More Than You Speak**

Similar to the item above, "Don’t Be First" it applies to listening in a more broad sense. Listening more than you speak can be very powerful and if you use this you can learn many things about others and practice humility in how you respond. It gives you time to think and provides time for others to share their own opinions. Listening more can be very respectful to others, and you can learn a lot more by listening to others than you can by speaking.

**Don’t Judge Others**

Last but not least, a very important aspect of being humble is to not judge others. Judgment is a dangerous thing and you can’t stay open minded, receptive to ideas, empathetic or appreciative of others if you are judging them or their ideas. Everyone is different and have different ideas and when you judge those, you are really showing that you have some overseeing significance or power to make a judgment call, which you certainly don’t if you want to be a humble person. So, to be more humble, practice leaving others to show themselves over time and to let their ideas play out without judgment. Definitely, make an effort not to express judgment and don’t talk about people behind their backs. This is just another form of judgment and shows dominance, so don’t judge others, and you will be more humble.

> Better is a person of humble standing who nevertheless has a servant, than one who pretends to be somebody important yet has no food. *Proverbs 12:9*

I hope this list is helpful and that each of you can take some of these steps to being more humble. I know that writing and researching this has been a bit humbling for myself, since I know I don’t do all of these things. I obviously have my work cut out for me. My next and last article in this series is going to look at Being Humble: Why Bother?. I hope you will come back and read why I think being humble is important and what it is useful for. I’d love to hear any other tips and ideas you may have for this list of action steps to be more humble, if so, please comment them below!
Why Bother Learning to be Humble?

This article is going to look at why someone would bother to learn to be humble. What are the advantages and reasons to being humble in your career and life.

First of all, the traits of a humble person are highly valued and seen positively. This is for various reasons and I’ve separated those into three main categories here.

**Humble Leadership**

I started out planning this article by looking specifically at humble leadership and as I thought more about being humble, I realized, it is so much bigger than that, which is is why it grew into a short series and why there are several categories now in this article. As for the leadership angle however, being humble is a very attractive trait of many leaders and is often named as one of the most important leadership qualities. Leaders need the ability to recognize others, show appreciation to others, never take credit and to always take the blame for the benefit of a team. These go hand in hand with being humble so it's easy to understand why humble leaders are easily respected.

If you look through the list of action steps from part 2, you can see that by listening, not judging, showing appreciation, giving credit and thanking others are things to be more humble, these are also all important leadership traits. Leadership is not power and so it doesn’t need showmanship, authority or dominance to lead others. What it takes, is influence, and influence is achieved by having the ability and motivation to make an impact at a personal, social and structural level.

So, if you are looking to be a better leader, learning to be a humble one can make a significant different in how others see you, follow you and with the influence you have.

**A Humble Character**

Being humble is not only effective to be a leader, but it is also useful for developing your overall character. Being humble will help you to focus on others instead of yourself which is a very noble character trait and will be liked by all who experience or see it. When people see how you respond to others and don’t attempt to overshadow them or dominate them in any way, you will
make yourself far more approachable. This can lead to many great things but will likely have the biggest positive impact on how easily or quickly you build relationships. People generally don’t develop bad first impressions of someone who is humble and its generally easier for a humble person to earn the respect of others.

Think about your first impressions of someone who is showy, pompous, or arrogant when you meet them. Is it easier of harder for that person to earn your respect than a humble person? What do you think of someone when they take credit or make themselves look good at the expense of others? It's not really a valuable character trait to have.

**Humble Spirituality**

I find that being humble is so much easier in the presence of God. I find that I’m just naturally more humble when talking with people about spiritual topics. I’m not sure exactly why this is, maybe its because I really know nothing, am more careful to not judge others or ideas, or simply find God to be rather overwhelming. In any case, I know that Jesus lived a very humble life and there are many things to be learned from Him in how to be more humble. These spiritual thoughts provide a great sense of inner peace to me and is a strong reason why I want to learn to be more humble.

*And whoever exalts himself will be humbled , and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.*  
*Matthew 23:12*