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TIPS ON LIVING ETHICALLY (A STRUGGLE)

l. FEEDBACK:
Find someone who is not afraid to give you feedback. Make sure they have a sense of ethics.

2. INFORMATION:
Read diverse media publications to inform yourself.

3. SELF-AWARENESS:
Monitor yourself. Don't assume you will do the right thing. Think of all the rationalizations
(for ex:, "Everybody does it," "It's for their own food," I had no choice," "Just doing my job").

4. ALTERNATIVES AVAILABLE.
Have alternatives to your job or leadership position so you have an option to leave if necessary.

5.   ENDS AND MEANS CONNECTED:
Remember the ends **rarely** justify the means.   As important, "we become what we do."

6. FORGIVENESS:
Work on being able to forgive. But you don't need to forget, however. Indeed, in many circumstances
you need to remember for your own survival, physical or otherwise.

7. HUMOR:
Try to have a sense of humor about yourself and your organization. Desperation leads to unethical
behavior. Humor helps you to keep things in perspective.

8. ETHICAL IMAGINATION:
Try to develop moral or ethical imagination, that is, try to imagine how things <u>ought</u> to be.
Rememberthat "What is" is not necessarily "what ought" to be.

9. HOPE:
Focus on hope. Even in a prison, one has a choice of focus: *"Two people looked out through prison bars.*
The one saw mud, the other stars."

Remember

"*Ethical leadership (includes followers) grows out of*
*the **daily** living or practice of ethical behavior."*
--G. Perreault

and

"*In an unethical world, one can still live an ethical life."*
(You can maintain your own integrity. If others treat you badly, you do not have to
respond in kind; you can maintain your own integrity and treat them with respect.)
--G. Perreault

and

"In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of
our decisions on the next seven generations."
--from the Great Law of the Iroquois confederacy

WHY BE ETHICAL*

MOTIVATIONS FOR BEING ETHICAL VARY. SOME OF THEM ARE THE FOLLOWING:

     l. FEAR OF PUNISHMENT

     2. RECEIVE REWARD
        EX: Promotion; good reputation, trust of employees.

     3. BE SEEN AS A GOOD PERSON

     4. TO PLEASE SOMEONE

     5. BECAUSE ONE'S MINISTER OR RABBI SAID SO

     6. FITS ONE'S RELIGIOUS OR SPIRITUAL VALUES

     7. TO UPHOLD A LAW

     8. IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO.
        (This may require breaking a law.)

* EXCEPT FOR #8, THESE CAN BE MOTIVATIONS FOR UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR ALSO.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. IS IT LEGAL? (also need #2)

2. IS IT ETHICAL?
   IS IT FAIR TO ALL CONCERNED
   IN BOTH THE SHORT TERM AND LONG TERM?

3. AM I DECEIVING MYSELF? (CHECK YOUR RATIONALIZATIONS !)
   (A "rationalization" is a way to deceive yourself; it is an excuse you give yourself when you are
   doing something wrong but you want to think it is right. It is a lie to yourself without knowing you are lying.

4. ARE THERE FACTORS THAT MAY CONSCIOUSLY OR UNCONSCIOUSLY AFFECT MY DECISION?
   EXAMPLE: Conflicts of interest

5. ARE THERE ELEMENTS OF THE PROCESS OR DECISION THAT I AM KEEPING SECRET?
   IF SO, IS THERE A COMPELLING JUSTIFICATION FOR DOING SO?

6. WOULD IT MATTER IF IT WAS IN THE NEWSPAPER TOMORROW?
   This question assumes ethical awareness on the part of the newspaper audience.

7. HOW WOULD I FEEL ABOUT MYSELF LATER?
   HOWEVER, this question is of limited usefulness. It would not work if one was ethically incompetent
   on the topic, was using self-deception, or was a sociopath or a psychopath. In all these instances,
   you could feel good about yourself because you would not think what you did was wrong.

SENATOR LEWIS WAS A VOICE, NOT AN ECHO

"Cowardice asks the question,
"Is it safe?"
"Vanity asks the question,
"Is it popular?"
"Expediency asks the question,
"Is it politic?"
"But conscience asks the question,
"Is it right?

Martin Luther King, Jr.

From the grave of B. Robert Lewis, 1931-1979. Senator Lewis was
the first known African-American to serve in the Minnesota Senate.
Source: Patricia Habeck, MSU Summer 1991 Final, p. 5