

Integrity – Luis O. '10 (Lake's)

Today I'm here to talk about integrity.

First of all, a few days ago when I had this task thrown at me, I realized I didn't actually know what integrity meant—I mean, I knew it was a value like not lying or something like that, but I wasn't exactly sure. So I turned to Valentine and asked him,

-Hey Val, do you know what integrity really means?

-Well, of course...I mean, I'm Valentine.

-Yeah, so what is it?

-What do you mean...what is it? Everyone knows what integrity is, its about morals and...you know.

-Right...

So there I was having to write a speech on something I didn't understand. And naturally, after Valentine's epic failure to explain the concept, I turned to the dictionary hoping it would help set things straight...
hmm little did I know....

As it turns out, apparently Mr. Webster wasn't so sure about what it meant either, and to make up for it, he just threw in a bunch of big words that read something like this: "Integrity is a firm adherence to a code of especially moral values."

So what did I have? Well, seemingly, it had something to do with morals and values and doing what's right.

Next step, I went on the Internet: And there I found a lot of stuff, mostly garbage, but also something that proved quite useful: quotes... some were good and some not so good. But I decided to share them with you anyway and hope that like me, you find they help you grasp the principle of integrity.

“Integrity is doing the right thing, even if nobody is watching.”

“Integrity is what we do, what we say, and what we say we do”

“Integrity is telling yourself the truth.”

“Integrity is not a conditional word. It doesn't blow in the wind or change with the weather. It is your inner image of yourself, and if you look in there and see a man who won't cheat, then you know he never will.”

After all these quotes, I think I was able to come up with my own definition of integrity: Integrity is debt you owe to yourself. It's about holding your own beliefs not only when things are going well, but also in the toughest circumstances. It is about not caring what the rest may think in order to pursuit a noble goal.

Earlier today, my friends delighted you by singing "The General": a song that portrays a man who, after having a revelation, decides to abide by his principles which urge him to make a decision that costs him everything he has, but gains him a far more valuable asset: Integrity.

Finally, I'd like to leave you with a great quote from Winston Churchill: A man does what he must – in spite of personal consequences, in spite of obstacles and dangers and pressures – and that is the basis of all human morality.

Thank you.