

## ABCs of Wisdom – H –Humility

We are not a nation that rewards or even respects humility. And yet humility is considered a virtue.

We love Garrison Keillor's words about his fictitious town of Wobegon where "all the women are strong, the men good-looking and all the children are above average" – no humility there.

Humility, a trait of the wise, is the quality of the insightful. They know how little they know and aren't arrogant.

A few famous people come to mind like Pope Francis, Warren Buffett, Jose Mujica, Uruguay's former president, Joyce Banda, first female president of Malawi. Dutch Prime Minister, Mark Rutte.

You probably don't know some of these people. Jose Mujica, for example, after being elected in 2009, donated all his money to charity and shunned the opulent presidential mansion to live a life of simplicity in a farm with his wife.

Joyce Banda, another example, let go of a presidential jet and sixty Mercedes in order to uplift the financial predicament of her country. Mark Rutte cycles to work everyday and also teaches in a school once a week.

Among the rich and famous who are considered to be humble in spite of their fame include: Will Smith, Leonardo DiCaprio, Johnny Depp, Keanu Reeves, Tom Hanks and Selena Gomez. I would also include Oprah in that list as she is often quoted to say "we are all 99.9% the same." Eisenhower, a general and a president, was also considered a humble man.

Most buy into the myth that if you are humble you are weak. Not so. Dr. Robert Hogan, an American psychologist, known for his innovations as an international authority on personality assessment and leadership in organizational effectiveness, states that humility and confidence together make for good leaders. Humility requires that you see yourself accurately, appreciate input from others, and are willing to accept new ideas from them.

Being humble doesn't mean you have no ambition. It does mean you use your position for the family, group, organization or country you serve.

Our actions in the United States demonstrate that we have more respect for winning than taking a place of humility.

Mother Teresa comes to mind as one of the few humble people we have come to honor and she had something to say on this subject.

Mother Teresa kept a list of ways to cultivate humility for the sisters in her care.

1. Speak as little as possible about yourself.
2. Keep busy with your own affairs and not those of others.
3. Avoid curiosity (she is referring to wanting to know things that should not concern you.)
4. Do not interfere in the affairs of others.
5. Accept small irritations with good humor.
6. Do not dwell on the faults of others.
7. Accept censures even if unmerited.
8. Give in to the will of others.
9. Accept insults and injuries.
10. Accept contempt, being forgotten and disregarded.
11. Be courteous and delicate even when provoked by someone.
12. Do not seek to be admired and loved.
13. Do not protect yourself behind your own dignity.

14. Give in, in discussions, even when you are right.
15. Choose always the more difficult task.

What a challenge she presents for all of us.

If you are truly humble – do you know it?

True humility is not thinking less of yourself;  
it is thinking of yourself less. – C.S. Lewis