



Living Above the Land of Excuses

Lesson Content

There's nothing quite so appealing as a good excuse when you've blown it! It sounds like a perfectly logical thing to do. No one likes to pay the price for missing an assignment, making an error, or not getting their chores done. But have you ever stopped to think how excuses make you sound? There are two reasons why people like to hide behind lame excuses: 1) They're trying to escape the consequences they actually deserve; or 2) They want to maintain the illusion of being perfect, even though everyone watching knows the real truth.

Let's look at it this way. With every action taken and every word spoken we choose between living "below the line" of responsibility, in the land of excuses - or living "above the line" of responsibility where we take personal ownership. When we learn that those are the only two options, and one of them makes us sound weak, life actually gets easier.

When we're below the line we usually offer statements like:
"It's no big deal." - "It's not my fault." - "It's so & so's fault." - "No one told me."

When we live above the line we follow three steps:
We see things honestly, without lying to ourselves or others.
We confess it and own it. ("Sorry, my bad - I could have done that better.")
We take the steps to correct it or prevent it from happening again.

Life is full of opportunities to play the blame game, but just imagine what life would be like if everyone lived above the line and refused to stoop into the land of excuses. What would your life look like if you were to make that choice?

LEARNING OBJECTIVE:
Student will know the difference between excuses and personal responsibility and demonstrate examples.

INSTRUCTIONS:
Distribute the handout to students after viewing the video.

DISCUSSION:

- Why does living consistently above the land of excuses take courage and self-discipline?
- What forces are at work that make it tempting to offer excuses for poor performances and mistakes?
- Which lessons from past weeks have provided insights that can help you master this concept?

Living Above the Land of Excuses Worksheet

Use the space below to reflect on your commitment to live above the line.

1

Why is it hard to avoid making excuses. Why don't people "own up" to their mistakes?

Personal Responsibility
(Shared answer)

2

Describe the situations where you find it most challenging to own and admit your mistakes.

Land of Excuses
(Private answer)