

Integrity in a Game of Baseball

Imagine a game of baseball for a minute. We see the pitcher with the ball in her hand. She gets in position, and then begins to raise her arm for the pitch. We see her concentrate, the ball in her hand, her arm slightly raised. She thinks for a second, remembering all of her practice, all of the coaching she has received. She pulls her arm back, and shifts her weight onto her back leg. She turns her shoulders, plants her front foot, and whips the ball over her head. She hears the voice of her coach in her head – follow through, always follow through – and so as she releases the ball, she allows her hand to follow the ball, moving forward until the energy is dissipated somewhere near her ankles.

This last step, the follow through, is one of the most important parts of her pitch. It does not matter how perfect the rest of her technique is; if she does not have the follow through, her pitching is inadequate. The follow through gives her the consistency to succeed, and takes the stress off of her arm so that she can continue pitching for the rest of the game.

Integrity is this follow through. In politics, business, and one's daily relationships and interactions, integrity is the part of a person's character that makes them follow through with their promises and responsibilities, even when it may be easier to not do so. If a person lacks integrity, it does not matter what that person says, or what they promise to do. If there is no follow through, these words, regardless of how good they may seem, are completely meaningless, and negate any value there may have been in the original speech.

One of the largest issues that is facing the world today is a lack of integrity. There are many politicians who in order to win elections and appease advocacy groups promise so much more than they know they can follow through and deliver. There are business owners, who do

not protect and promote the welfare of their employees, and instead cut corners and do not pay a fair wage. It is hard to know whom to trust, and so people must show their integrity to the world, and wear it openly, so to speak, on their sleeves. A person who is always honest, and always follows through on little things, that is someone who has integrity, and can be trusted to be a leader.

Integrity can be shown by any person in any situation. It is the politician who promises lower taxes, more benefits for those who need them, and better health care, and actually follows through. It is the high school student who is home by curfew. It is the father who makes his child support payments. It is the business owner who gives his employees the promised raises and bonuses. It is every person who makes commitments, who makes promises, and makes the effort to follow through and do as promised. Every person has the opportunity and obligation to show integrity in a world where it is often so lacking.