

13 KEY VIRTUES

of

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

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Benjamin Franklin, when a young man, resolved to give himself the "habits of virtue" that would lead to success by making a game out of self-improvement.

Thus, Franklin wrote 13 key virtues in a notebook, one to a page, and checked off each instance in the day when he failed in one of them. He would focus on one virtue per week, and would complete the list four times a year.

This Franklin did every year until he had developed the habit of the virtues. And as he noted, "success" demands a "will" that is strong enough to go against inclination and to achieve an objective.

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Benjamin Franklin's 13 key virtues:

- 1) **Temperance** - Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.
- 2) **Silence** - Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.
- 3) **Order** - Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.
- 4) **Resolution** - Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.
- 5) **Frugality** - Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e. waste nothing.
- 6) **Industry** - Lose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.
- 7) **Sincerity** - Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly; and, if [when] you speak, speak accordingly.
- 8) **Justice** - Wrong none by doing injuries or omitting the benefits that are your duty.
- 9) **Moderation** - Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.
- 10) **Cleanliness** - Tolerate no uncleanness in body, in clothes, or habitation.
- 11) **Tranquillity** - Be not disturbed at trifles or at accidents common or unavoidable.

12) **Chastity** - Rarely use venery [sexual indulgence] but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.

13) **Imitate Jesus and Socrates.**

End

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