

## News & Announcements

### Study Skills for Term One

A few study tips to get you started:

- ▶ Set goals
- ▶ Attend all classes
- ▶ Ask questions in class
- ▶ Organize & stay organized
- ▶ Do your homework every night
- ▶ Set aside time to review
- ▶ Look ahead to upcoming topics
- ▶ Make up quizzes for yourself
- ▶ Schedule in extra study time
- ▶ Build confidence in your ability to do well
- ▶ Ask for help when you need it

### STR in the Community

Claremont Secondary invited STR to talk with peer tutors about Effective Listening September 2010.

STR runs workshops for middle school and high school level students, parents and teachers.

#### Workshop Topics Include:

- ▶ Study Skills for Parents
- ▶ Study Skills for Students
- ▶ Exam Preparation
- ▶ Memory Techniques

If you are interested in hosting a talk by Smart Tutor Referrals, please contact us.

### STR's Values

STR has built a solid foundation in Victoria through working from its core values: honesty; professionalism; respect; positive vision; building learning confidence, individual ability and contribution; and positive support of students, families & teachers.

## Accepting Responsibility for Your Learning

by Dahlia Miller

*"Life is like a game of cards. The hand that is dealt you is determinism; the way you play it is free will."*

Jawaharlal Nehru (1889 - 1964)

Who is responsible for your future? Who is responsible for your success? You are! While there are definitely supporting players, you are the leading actor and the director of your life. You can choose to learn, to grow, to be a leader or not. It's really up to you.

Caveat: Taking responsibility is a wide topic. Here we'll focus on accepting responsibility for our own learning.

### Just What Is 'Responsibility'?

One way to think about responsibility is seeing it as our ability to respond to things (i.e. response-ability). This is our ability to express our free will through action. It's how we interact with the world around us – something happens and we respond. If we want to change how things are, we can be pro-active rather than re-active. This requires taking a look at each situation as it arises and deciding our most appropriate response to it. This is how we became 'response-able'. Meaning, we choose our responses; we aren't just tossed about by the waves of circumstance.

We're all different people, so how you respond to a situation may very well be different from how I respond to it. We all have different emotional responses and different thoughts, and we will all likely have a slightly different take on the best way to deal with or respond to a situation. Even how capable we think we are of responding will be different. But we can still all enable ourselves to respond. We can all be response-able.

To be response-able, we take action in some way after consideration; we don't just sit back all the time to see how things play out. We become more response-able through practice, success, modeling, and experimentation with different responses to our actions. To experiment, we try a response and see what happens. Based on the reactions to our actions, we can do the same thing again in future or try something different.

But that's not all there is to it. Responsibility is not just about our ability to come up with creative and appropriate responses to situations. It's also about consistent follow-through. It's about

giving people a reason to trust that you will do what you say you will because you have a track record for doing what needs to be done when it needs to be done.

Other people's versions of you are made up of the sum total of how you act, talk and generally behave around them (filtered through their own concepts of course).

It helps if we feel that others are open and receptive to our responses. But really, despite others' willingness, or unwillingness, to accept our actions, we still need to be pro-active rather than re-active (as long as we are considering the safety, health and feelings of others). Our circumstances will change eventually if we practise having different responses.

Really, who else can assume responsibility for you? Whose responsibility is your education? Your future? Your success? Your choices in life? We need to accept the authority for our own choices. Our education, our success, our future – these are all things that we need to create for ourselves.

This type of approach requires us to be active participants in our lives – not passive recipients. It's not enough to criticize the TV for its poor quality programming; we need to turn it off.

Sure we have all at some point in our life looked to 'shift the blame' or point a finger at others. But how far does this really fly? We can cry, blame, complain, or make excuses, but ultimately these responses make success harder to achieve. And they don't really make the current situation feel or actually be any better, do they?

If we believe that we have free will, we'll recognize that we have choices. Everything is a series of choices. It's up to us whether we engage or not. So even if someone is not being so supportive or even seems to be blocking your progress, you are still responsible for how you respond. Knowing you need to eat it, what kind of cake will you make with the ingredients in front of you?

Being responsible doesn't mean you can never make mistakes, or that you're bad if you do. It does mean accepting the consequences of your actions without shifting blame. And when we do make mistakes, we can look for another way to do things next time. (Not just set up a victim-mentality for the rest of our days.)

## About Us

We provide **1-on-1, in-home tutorial support** throughout Victoria, Saanich and Sooke.

STR was established in Victoria, BC in 2002 and has built a solid reputation for creativity and professionalism.

**With over 50 tutors**, we are able to find the best match for each student. Our tutors are certified teachers and professionals, all carefully screened. After talking with each student to learn more about the details of his or her learning history and needs, **we chose a tutor specifically to match the needs and learning styles of each student.**

**Our goal is** to enhance students' skills and to cultivate learning confidence through support that is truly individualized: matched specifically to each student's needs, recognizing each student's unique talents and abilities.

*We support families in education.*

For more information and resources, visit us on-line at:

[www.SmartTutorReferrals.com](http://www.SmartTutorReferrals.com)

## Contact Us

### Registration:

Dahlia Miller  
Director/Owner  
250-544-1588  
[dahlia@SmartTutorReferrals.com](mailto:dahlia@SmartTutorReferrals.com)

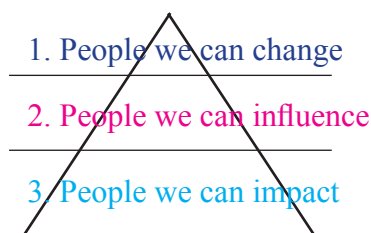
### Mailing Address:

2011 Courser Drive  
Sidney, BC  
V8L 2N5

[www.SmartTutorReferrals.com](http://www.SmartTutorReferrals.com)

## What Are We Responsible for?

Stepen Covey divides the people in the world into three categories:



Group 3, the people you can impact, is the people around you in the world. They see your choices and may decide to model some of their behaviours after yours or not. Group 2 is your family and friends. You can make direct suggestions to them and they can choose to follow your advice or not. Group 1 is comprised of the one and only person you can change: you.

Lots of people talk about change, but they often are talking about how others ought to change. Few people talk about changing themselves, and even fewer people actually follow through on changing. Yet this is the only way – no one else can make you believe something or change your attitudes – only you can. So, no one else is responsible for your beliefs, attitudes, emotional responses or actions – only you are.

Being responsible for our learning, means taking responsibility for our:

- ▶ homework (bringing it home, doing it, handing it in, meeting deadlines)
- ▶ academic choices (studying for tests, reviewing, paying attention in class, having all the supplies we need)
- ▶ support sought (asking questions, selecting a supportive peer group, getting extra assistance)
- ▶ attitude (believing in ourselves, being willing to learn)
- ▶ interactions with others (adjusting our tone of voice and body language)
- ▶ confidence (celebrating successes, rewarding effort, recognizing or ability and growth)
- ▶ growth (being willing to take on new and exciting challenges, learning from mistakes)

## Why Be Responsible?

Amazing things can happen when we step into the driver's seat in our lives:

- ▶ we gain wisdom through experience
- ▶ we gain confidence
- ▶ we feel more comfortable with our future
- ▶ we become leaders
- ▶ we give others space to grow when we do what we say we'll do

Taking responsibility makes a lot possible in our lives.

## How Can We Take Responsibility for Our Learning?

A wise man created a simple formula for taking responsibility for our learning:

- ▶ If we don't understand, ask.
- ▶ If we don't know, learn.
- ▶ If we make a mistake, correct it.

Is it really that simple? Well, it can be.

If we want to take responsibility for our learning, we really need to step forward and 'take it'. If we're young, we can watch and learn from others, then try things for ourselves. The same goes for when we're older, but maybe we can come up with some new ideas on our own.

It's sometimes scary and not easy to be responsible. We all fear the unknown, and we'd all sometimes like to just step back and let others do everything for us. But if we allow fear or immaturity to rule our choices, then how will we grow? Our challenges are opportunities for us to be successful in the face of challenge.

Try new approaches – experiment with life.

Here's an approach to experiment with: don't offer excuses, ever, unless an explanation is requested. Instead just say sorry and say what you'll do now or next time to avoid the same problem.

Finally, a few simple steps to creating success:

- ▶ engage
- ▶ trust yourself
- ▶ do the work
- ▶ celebrate

*"Man is not the creature of circumstances. Circumstances are the creature of man."*  
Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881)