

Food For Thought:

You Don't Have To Be an Action Hero to Take Action

What holds us back from making the difference we could in the world? Sometimes it seems to us that we simply aren't up to the task. We believe that a hero, to quote the [Wikipedia](#), must be someone who "possesses abilities or character far greater than that of a typical person, which enable him or her to perform some truly extraordinary, beneficial deed." Listed with that definition are examples of champions both mythic and historical: Hercules and Gandhi; Robin Hood and Joan of Arc; Luke Skywalker and Nelson Mandela.

The images we hold of these icons are those of people larger than life. Their accomplishments are so breathtaking, their abilities so superior, that we cannot picture ourselves in their league. But Gandhi was a lawyer from a middle-class family who barely passed his college exams. Joan of Arc was a teenaged farm girl. Nelson Mandela ran away from home, was thrown out of college, and was fired from his first job.

Heroes are not just people like us; heroes *are* us, with the same ordinary beginnings and all of our faults, mistakes, handicaps, emotional baggage, and personal entanglements. But despite all of those obstacles – or perhaps because of them – heroes somehow find a way to make a difference in the lives of others.

Is it possible that the main difference between a hero and a person with good intentions is that the hero turns those intentions into action? It's been my experience that action typically leads to more action. Once you take the initiative to move in a particular direction, you often set in motion a series of events that could not have begun without that first act. A phone call leads to a meeting; the meeting spawns a letter; the letter prompts someone else to send out a group e-mail; the e-mail provokes a dozen replies; and the next thing you know, you've started a movement.

It doesn't always happen that way, of course. Sometimes it takes many calls, meetings, letters and e-mails for your intentions to translate into significant results. But if that is to be the case, isn't it even more reason to start taking action now on the change you want to see?

Every great hero's journey began with one simple act. And at the time they took that step, none of them were extraordinary people. It was taking action on their dreams, beliefs, and passions that *made* them extraordinary.

Posted by C.J. Hayden on Sunday, March 05, 2006 | How to Be a Hero Website:
<http://www.howtobecomeahero.com/labels/hero%20stories.htm>