



TRUE HUMILITY, ביטול, IS THE ROOT VIRTUE OF ALL VIRTUES.

Humility is not a set of skills that one can learn with practice. It is not something that others can try to convince one to start doing. It is not something that can be taught. It is a mindset, an attitude. It's about seeing the world differently, it's about seeing one's role in this world through the lens of service to others and beyond oneself.

We often confuse humility with timidity. Humility is not about self-abasement or self-denigration.

Perhaps the best way to understand humility is to look at the relationship between the word ביטול humble and the antonym גאווה pride or arrogance.

Pride and arrogance is having an over-high opinion of yourself. Arrogance makes people do the most insane things all for the sake of protecting, hiding, or propping themselves up. Maybe even an exaggerated or egotistical self-esteem. It's about having overdelight in one's achievements. Arrogant people have something to prove. They are not content with who they are and feel the need to assert themselves, to convince people that they are who they wish they could be. Their problem rests in the perception of themselves; the pride is merely the symptom.

Humility is defined as "the noble choice to forgo your status, deploy your resources or use your influence for the good of others before yourself." Humility is all about maintaining our pride about who we are, about our achievements, about our worth – but without arrogance. It's about a quiet confidence without the need for a meretricious selling of our wares. It's about being content to let others discover the layers of our talents without having to boast about them. It's a lack of arrogance, not a lack of aggressiveness in the pursuit of achievement.

An interesting dichotomy is that, often, the higher people rise, the more they have accomplished, the higher the humility index. **Those who achieve the most brag the least, and the more secure they are in themselves, the more humble they are.**

"TO BE HUMBLE IS TO HAVE A CONSCIOUS AND USE IT. To understand our shortcomings and be comfortable in our limitations and defects knowing that what we give is for the best for others." – John Dickson in *Humilitas: A Lost Key to Life, Love and Leadership*.

"HUMILITY ISN'T ABOUT THINKING LESS OF YOURSELF BUT THINKING OF YOURSELF" – C.S. Lewis

Humility is a meta-virtue. It crosses into an array of principles. For example, we can safely declare that **there cannot be authenticity without humility.** Why? Because, there is always a time in a person's journey when one will be in a situation of not having all the answers. Admitting this and seeking others' input requires some humility.

Another mark of a person who practices humility is his or her treatment of others. **Humble people treat everyone with respect regardless of position,** even those who (seemingly) can be of absolutely no use to them.

HUMILITY IS THE KEY TO SECURITY, HOPE AND CONFIDENCE.

BENEFITS OF PRACTICING HUMILITY

- Humility improves relationships across all levels.
- Humility reduces anxiety.
- Humility encourages more openness, vulnerability and trying new things.
- Humility opens a window to your higher self.
- Humility enhances one's self-confidence.
- Most importantly, people feel more comfortable around truly humble people. They have no airs about them, they laugh at themselves. They are good listeners, and truly listen and are curious about others.

GENUINE HUMILITY

- **Humility fosters the courage to set aside personal gain for the good of others.** When ego rules, decisions become about improving personal position. A humble person sees others as inherently valuable. Proud people are focused on themselves. Humble people are others-focused.
- **Humility enhances the candor to be honest with others and change course if necessary.** A humble person separates themselves from their accomplishments. When their accomplishments receive criticism, for them that's not the same as receiving personal criticism. Proud people might be tempted to hide their weaknesses, humble people are open about their weaknesses.
- **Humility is the character to respond charitably when attacked.** A humble person doesn't derive their identity from his accomplishments, thus they are able to deal with criticism with ease and grace. Rather than trying to deflect it or resort to revenge or a counterattack, they simply own the truth of the criticism—if there is any—and discard the rest.
- **Humility allows for one to constantly grow.** Because they are willing to learn from their mistakes, they constantly grow. They recognize that as a human, they will make mistakes, and that their self worth is not in perfection. Proud people have all the right answers. Humble people ask the right questions—of themselves and others. **Since they choose open-mindedness and curiosity over protecting their point of view, they are willing to try new things.**

HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS ON PRACTICING HUMILITY:

- **Just stop talking and allow the other person to be in the limelight.** There are times when swallowing one's pride is particularly difficult and any intentions of humility fly out the window, as we get engaged in a contest of perfection, each side seeking to look good. If you find yourself in such no-win situations, consider developing some strategies to ensure that the circumstances don't lead you to lose your grace. Try this sometimes: just stop talking and allow the other person to be in the limelight. There is something very liberating in this strategy.
- **Say, "You are right".** These three magical words that will produce much peace.
- **You don't need to correct others.** Catch yourself if you benignly slip into over preaching or coaching without permission. Reflect: is your zeal to impose your point of view overtaking discretion? Is your correction of others reflective of your own needs?
- **Ask: "How am I doing?"** Seek others' input on how you are showing up. It takes humility to ask such a question. And even more humility to consider the answer.
- **Tell yourself: "A mistake is a learning experience."** What can I learn here?

"DON'T BE SO HUMBLE, YOU'RE NOT THAT GREAT."

– Golda Meir

WHEN WE LIVE WITH HUMILITY, WE ...

... spend more time in that wonderful space of the beginner's mind, willing to learn from what others have to offer.
 ... move away from pushing into allowing, from insecure to secure, from seeking approval to seeking enlightenment.
 ... forget about being perfect and we enjoy being in the moment.

WHAT IS NOT HUMILITY?
THE HUMBLEBRAG

The humblebrag is a brag clumsily couched in falsely humble phraseology. It's people trying to come off like they aren't bragging. It's people not being honest about their intention. The Humblebrag highlights the chasm between authentic humility and faux humility. It underscores the idea that our pride has a way of leaking out, despite our efforts to disguise it in seemingly humble language.