



The Crisis Planner

Keeping Your Commitments

A few words on commitment.

I committed to placing flags at the National Cemetery this past Saturday Morning with CERT. Saturday dawned cold, dark, and rainy. I thought for a moment of pulling the covers over my head and going back to sleep.

Then I thought about the men and women that we were remembering and honoring with these flags and how they committed their very lives so that I might be free.



- They served in the cold, rain, mud, snow, and searing heat.
- They walked miles carrying heavy packs and weapons.
- They missed meals.
- They didn't sleep.
- They suffered from disease and injury.
- They knew fear I can only imagine.
- They tended to the injured and carried their dead and dying brothers and sisters so that they would not be left behind and never be forgotten.

In those thoughts I leaped from my bed, got dressed, and drove the 26 miles to Calverton in the pouring rain. There I joined with families, scouts, fire departments, American Legions, other civic, religious, and social groups and my fellow CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) members as within one hour we decorated the thousands of graves at Calverton National Cemetery.

The same event occurred in 131 National Cemeteries in 39 states.

Looking over the sea of gravestones and the flags lovingly placed I said Thank You to God and these brave men and women.

Driving home feeling a little cold and wet, I was grateful for the reminder today of the importance of keeping my commitments...

Keeping commitments to ourselves and others defines us as people.

How many different commitments do we make?

We commit our time, money, talent, and love to ourselves, others, organizations, friends, and family. We mark things on our calendars or put things on our to-do lists. We have deadlines to meet. We set goals for ourselves. We make New Years Resolutions. We set up appointments for social and business meetings. We commit to Love and Honor our spouse in



both good times and bad. We commit to being a parent and raising our children. We commit to the work we do, to be on time, do what we are paid to do, and to do our best.

How well do you keep the commitments you make?

- Are you always missing your deadlines because you did not do the work you promised to do?
- Is the desire or need for perfection interfering with your ability to say the job is done and that it is good enough, causing you to let others down?
- Do you find yourself canceling one commitment on your calendar because you got a better offer and the time conflicted?
- Do you make excuses for not doing what you said you would?
- Do you make up “White Lies” to get you out of a commitment you wish you had not made?

When we fail to keep our commitments, we are failing ourselves and others that were counting on us.

How can we be better at keeping our commitments?

- Keep everything on one calendar. I love the calendar on my phone. Everything goes right there when I commit to doing something.
- If you are not sure you can attend a meeting because there is a potential conflict do not make the commitment until you are sure the time is clear.
- Remind yourself that everything takes longer than you think to complete and build in extra time when setting a deadline for completion.
- There ARE real life interruptions that cannot be anticipated. Inform others that are counting on you that there has been an emergency. Don't just leave them hanging. When possible, find someone to complete the task or fill in for you. We have many forms of communication: text, phone, email, message.
- Avoid overcommitting your time as this will only put undo stress on you and result in failure to do what you promised.

It's not always easy to keep our commitments. I know I thought about not following through with driving out to Calverton on Saturday. It was, after all, Saturday. It was cold and rainy. It was early in the morning. I really just wanted to go back to sleep. There would be many people there to complete the task. They would not have missed me.

Truth is, I would have missed me!

I had made a commitment to myself and to CERT. I reminded myself of how good it would feel when I placed those flags to honor our fallen heroes who committed their very lives for you and me.

I am so glad I honored my commitment this day.

I make every effort to honor the commitments I make in my life because it is an important part of who I am, how I feel about myself, and how others see me. When others know you are true to your word there is a trust between you that is priceless. Besides, it just feels good when you do what you said you would do...



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