



Finally, the Moment of Truth (Part 3 of 3)

Why is the concept of the *moment of truth* so important? Why should you care? It is a very important concept because it is manifested everyday in our daily lives, and whether we realize it or not, it does occur with consequences—minor or often major consequences. Furthermore, we should care because major consequences may directly reshape our degree of self-respect or the level of respect that we receive from others.

After many years of physical and emotional abuse of his wife, a controlling husband pledges to change his ways, only to face another situation when he's on the verge of assaulting his wife yet again. After weeks or months of being unfaithful, a cheating spouse faces yet another

opportunity to fulfill his or her selfish desires, knowing fully well the very essence of the marital promises that he or she made years earlier. These scenarios and many more depict examples of *moments of truth* that many people face often.

Moment of Truth (Recalled)

A Moment of Truth is a point in time when expectations meet reality and facts.

So what happens after a *moment of truth* when we are held accountable for the outcome of an event (or situation) that we have thoughtfully crafted or influenced, and the reality falls far short of expectations? If we are fortunate, little or nothing happens; on the other hand, if we are not so fortunate, we are held accountable for our actions in a variety of ways, including complete disrespect. At times like this it is important to understand and learn from the experience; otherwise, we stand doomed to repeat it!

Now to the conclusion of our story of the family learning of the content of the last will of their late father. The half-sister sat there in a trance staring at the executor's lips as he read the statement in the will. The words sounded just the way her father would have expressed them. They pierced through her like a knife—they were the exact same words that she had expressed in anger when she and her father had engaged in that argument on that fateful weekend.

Her father had accused her of exercising poor judgment with respect to some business affairs that he had entrusted her with. He had sought her explanation and wanted to use the opportunity to show her other—better—ways that she could have handled the situation. Knowing her daughter as well as he did, he had felt a paramount need to ensure that certain family values were upheld and that she fully understood the important of these values. However, she had taken the confrontation personally and had chosen to push back against her father. Their verbal exchange had become heated and strong words were exchanged. Her step-mother had tried to intervene to diffuse the



escalating tension, but she—the half-sister—retreated momentarily only to return to challenge her father again.

In the heat of the verbal exchange her father had cautioned her to be careful about her choice of words—after all he was still her father. She recalled the caution as the memory of the event continued to flash through her mind. She continued her verbal assault when her father calmly stated, “Don’t make me cut you off my will. You do realize I am an old man and I do not deserve this type of behavior from you.”

She had heard her father’s renewed caution, but she continued her assault. At this time her step-mother intervened again pleading with her to calm down and be respectful toward her father; but, it was of no use. Her anger had reached a flash point where her step-mother’s intervention had been perceived as a show of support for her father. She was determined to defend herself against the dual-front confronting her. Her father once again repeated his caution, “Don’t make me cut you off my will. I expect better of you.”

And then she stopped. She promptly left the room vividly upset. Her father, still calm, seemed relieved that the situation was diffused. Her step-mother was still concerned, but let out a sigh of relief. The event of the afternoon had turned out unlike the way any of them had anticipated. And then the unthinkable happened. She—the half-sister—soon returned to the room composed and somewhat relaxed. She walked up to her father and promptly said, “Dad, I am sorry you feel this way. Take me off your will if you wish. I don’t need anything from you.” And then she left her father’s house.

For weeks those parting words had haunted her father. Mary, the half-sister, subsequently received numerous calls from her step-mother, half-siblings, and other family members urging her to return to her father and apologize for her hurtful remark; however, Mary was not able to overcome her pride.

These memories flashed through her mind in perfect sequence. The events of that day were unforgettable. And then the phone began to ring. She promptly snapped out of her trance. The executor paused for a few seconds awaiting an acknowledgment to continue; the oldest daughter urged him to carry on after the phone stopped ringing. He pressed on, saying “And for you Mary, I honor your wish — ‘*Take me off your will if you wish. I don’t need anything from you.*’ And so it shall be.”

And so it was—the moment of truth!

(Reader views welcome: ektimis@ntaiwo.com)

Cheers and thank you – N. Taiwo