



This one is personal. It's ANZAC DAY as I write. For my foreign subscribers, Anzac stands for "Australian & New Zealand Army Corps". Today on both sides of the Tasman Sea, we pause to reflect on the sacrifices that our service people continue to make; since our troops first embarked on that heroic but disastrous assault on Gallipoli Beach in 1915. The futility of that military campaign underlined the enormity of the personal sacrifices made that day. That same futility means that I admire them more for their sacrifice and commitment than their deeds. Each year in growing numbers, we pledge; "Lest We Forget." Indeed, that generation, many born in the 19th century, came from pioneering stock. They grew up quick and hard and the duty they did for their country, translated (for those who returned) to the duty they did for their companies and families. As Simon Sinek put it; "they were known as the greatest generation." The notion of Lest We Forget is a noble one but my concern is how we live and how we behave either side of April 25th. That to me, pays more tribute to their legacy than a public holiday does. Our society has diversified in those intervening 102 years. Diversity is an essential element to evolution. It broadens the gene and talent pools. Bringing differences to the table assures innovative approaches, broad knowledge bases, lateral thought and experience. So - now we are "at the table" together. Our concern should be; what leaves the table? What factor musters all this essential diversity into a unified action plan that impacts each and every one of us in the most constructive positive way possible.....and does justice to the legacy of our fallen? I suggest that the answer is in our BELIEF. Belief is the glue that binds us as social animals. Without it, diversity becomes division. A unified vision for the future relies on mutually held beliefs and standards. At a National level it could be our Constitution. At a Corporate level, perhaps our mission statement, at a community level, the laws and by-laws of the land and at a family level - rules. But it's at the *personal level* where individual commitment contributes to the collective culture of the family, platoon, team, community, company or nation that we can *really do justice* to the ideals we pause to remember this day. War is horrible but can be a crucible to galvanise action for the greater good. Let's learn THAT lesson. I suggest that the way to do it is *not* to make more rules and laws because they are only as strong as the consequences for breaking them. The way relies on accountability. Personal accountability and then community accountability. I have observed that any group is only as strong as what it is willing to tolerate. Therefore folks, my Anzac Day message is a simple one. Take ownership. Be present in the moment. Pause to consider whether what you're about to do or say is the way you want to be remembered. Have goals and dreams because they represent the potentials you wouldn't have if our veterans hadn't won them for you. Be accountable to yourself and you'll never have to make excuses. Even when you fail, it'll be due to a reason - not an excuse. Set an example and *only then*, expect accountability from others. Don't endorse filth or cruelty. Remember that minorities are usually noisy. Be tolerant of their belief but judge their behaviour. Use better words. If you're miserable or depressed, read history and you'll discover how lucky you are to be born where and when you were. Don't mistake information for entertainment because the media will confuse you and pervert history to suit whatever agenda currently rates. Be a perpetual student regardless of your age or station. The opposite of evolution is devolution and stagnation is the turning point. It's why empires crumble and underdogs win. In short - stay alert. We call this action 'vigilance'. It's been said that the price of freedom is to be eternally vigilant. It's also the price of excellence. The act of being vigilant can't happen without a conscious decision to adhere to standards. Do these things and the ghosts of our fallen will look down on us all and know that their sacrifice was not made in vain.