



What is Availability?

Availability means literally "to add strength and worth to another." If you are available to help another, you contribute to his value. He "avails" himself of the help you offer, benefiting his agenda and products.

A person showing availability can keep his own priorities and responsibilities intact, but set them aside for another's priorities. It is especially important to do this for those in authority over us.

When members of a group make themselves available to each other, it provides a sense of connectedness and mutual supportiveness, creating a "life-giving flow" of teamwork.

A person who demonstrates availability has learned to:

- be flexible and to change plans and priorities when a need arises.
- be prepared to be of service, unusual solutions are required.
- use initiative to recognize a need and to lend a hand even when not asked.
- be joyful in showing availability, not doing so just out of duty.
- put aside personal rights to serve others.

When individuals make themselves available to one another, the group functions as a "well-oiled machine."

Blocks to the "life-giving flow" of availability!

- Having the attitude - "It's not my assigned task. I can only do my job!"
- Not keeping communication open so that you or others cannot let co-workers know of the need for help.
- Being too set in your own plans with tunnel vision and no flexibility.
- Helping others grudgingly rather than joyfully.
- Overscheduling your own life so that there is no space left to be flexible and available to help others.

Parents - [Click here](#) for "Tips for Parents" in Teaching availability to your children.

Check out the [Just for Kids](#) pages for an animal analogy and a biographic sketch illustrating availability.

Availability vs. Self-centeredness

"Making my own schedule and priorities secondary to the wishes of those I serve."

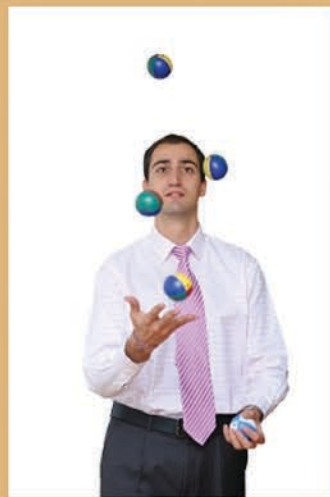
I will:

- " Put others ahead of myself.
- " Find a way to help, not a way to hide.
- " Be ready when I'm called.
- " Be glad for the chance to serve.
- " Check with the right person before I make commitments.

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Questions to Discuss

1. How can you prepare to better serve those in authority over you?
2. How can you make yourself available to those around you in the group (work, family, club, or community) you are part of?
3. What personal rights and priorities might you have to set aside to do so?
4. How can you handle a situation where the priorities of an authority need to override a request for help from another source?

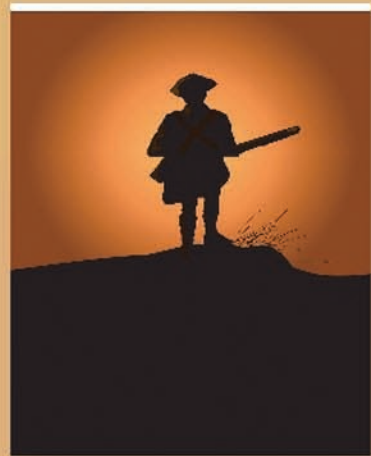


"Availability is a juggling act."
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Minute Men

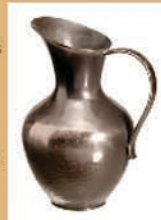
"[They are] to be ready at a minutes warning with a fortnight's provision and ammunition." The American settlers had learned availability in their need to be ready to quickly protect their villages from Indian invasion. This prepared them later to put aside their personal comfort and safety to be ready when the British soldiers threatened their towns.

It was their readiness and availability that enabled the colonists to win the battle at Concord and finally, the American Revolution.



Hero of Availability

Molly Ludwig made herself available sacrificially to the Revolutionary troops to help in whatever practical ways she could. She met a big need she saw by bringing pitchers of water to cool the soldiers who were collapsing under the intense heat of summer battles. Hence her nickname-Molly Pitcher!



What does availability look like?

- Rearranging your schedule to be able to take a friend to catch a plane.
- Staying up late to listen to your daughter talk about a problem
- Putting aside plans to watch a ballgame to help your wife get ready for a party.
- Delaying a planned week of hunting with friends in order to help your elderly mom with repairs at her house.
- Ending a phone call with a friend to help your child with a homework problem.