

The Deck Umbrella Incident (DUI) - My Personal Story of Accountability - by: Dave Smith, Convergint

This is my quick story of how I employed the strategies I learned in the "Totally Accountable" Workshop hosted by Mike Scott:

My wife had just cleaned and rearranged the back deck and it looked great. We were leaving to go eat and the wind was blowing so I started to unwind the umbrella on the table as it might blow away. She stopped me and said "don't worry about that, the winds not bad and she was going to sit under it when we got back". Sometime in the night, the wind did as predicted and uplifted the umbrella, shattering the large glass deck table into thousands of tiny glass shards landing on the upper and lower decks.

When we saw this I immediately reacted and blamed her for not letting me take down the umbrella as this could have been avoided. I was upset as now I had to clean up this mess quickly so the dogs and kids would not get cut or track it in. She was also upset that she didn't heed my warning.

As I was vacuuming up the thousands of shards of glass, I had a lot of time to think. I thought about the class I had just taken on Accountability and so I pointed the finger at myself and asked, "What was my part in this situation". Here is what I thought of:

- This could have happened any day or time as the wind is unpredictable and we leave the umbrella open a lot.*
- What if this had happened when the kids and dogs were on the decks or neighbors were over?*
- Had I tightened down the screws in the base to hold the umbrella to prevent this from happening?*
- The table was old and did not have a plastic insert where the umbrella comes up through the table. Should I have replaced when it was removed?*

Additional bonus: this motivated me to get in the backyard and clean up some things and it was a mini-workout that I needed.

So basically, I did have Accountability in this situation and ultimately decided that it was ok that it happened when it did, as no one was hurt, and we can replace a table.

I asked my wife to sit down and I apologized for overreacting before I had analyzed any Accountability I had, and she was thankful for this (and surprised) and I also shared the info I had learned from the class. We were immediately able to get past any negativity and enjoy the day.

I want to thank Sean, Greg and Brian for sending me to this class. Also, thanks to Mike Scott for his great teaching and engaging skills.

In my opinion, this "Totally Accountable" workshop should be taught in high schools and colleges for early life lessons and probably in counselling sessions as it is easy to understand, and everyone should have these skills.

Thanks again for the workshop and I look forward to implementing the skills I learned and continuing to utilize them in the workplace and home life.