

Preparing for the Little Things

Little things make the difference. Most people are prepared for the big things, but few people prepare themselves for the little things. A short prayer I say every once in a while is:

“Lord bring on the elephants, these gnats are killing me. Just give me some large dragons to slay, these little nuisances are driving me crazy.”

Look at the calls for service of a law enforcement agency. Barricaded gunmen, bank robberies, and major accidents are routinely handled with confidence and often life-saving successes. The barking dog, the neighborhood arguments, and the property line disputes often create long-lasting arguments that result in feuds and future police problems. Maintaining an orderly society for our cities and counties is a major peace-keeping responsibility. Maybe *peace officer* is the correct title not *law enforcement officers*.

If little things make the difference, how does one prepare to succeed in accomplishing the little things? We know about contingency plans for major events, disasters, parades, and visits by the President of the United States, but what contingency plans can you have for the little things?

I think preparation for the little things is getting back to basics. In football it is the blocking, tackling, and handoffs. In peace keeping, it is the listening skills, the courtesy we practice, the smile, the wave, the daily effort to become a better, more well-rounded individual. If we practice and prepare our everyday skills, the little things can be accomplished at a high level.

Our training needs to focus on the little things as well as the big events. People who do the little things well will usually succeed when confronted with major events. Critique your performance on the little things and you'll always get better.