

# initiative

a message from Joe Kreuz. 10.29.98

**in i tia tive**                    *n* 1. The power or ability to begin or to follow through energetically with a plan or task; enterprise and determination. 2. A beginning or introductory step; an opening move: *took the initiative in trying to solve the problem*. 3. Without prompting or direction from others; on one's own initiative.

**Mary Grace** gave me a book by Elbert Hubbard, which I read on a recent trip to Charlotte. Hubbard, an American author who believed in rugged individualism, wrote the inspirational essay, "A Message To Garcia", in 1899. I hope this excerpt plants a seed; "Hubbard's insights gave me clarity."

Elbert Hubbard founded the Roycrofters and the Roycroft Campus in East Aurora, New York

**initiative:**                    The world bestows its big prizes, both in money and honors, for but one thing, and that is initiative. What is initiative? I'll tell you, **it is doing the right thing without being told.**

**told once:**                    But next to doing the thing without being told is to do it when you are told once. But their pay is not always in proportion.

**told twice:**                    Next there are those who never do a thing until they are told twice; such get no honors and small pay.

**just lazy:**                    Next, there are those who do the right thing only when necessity kicks them from behind, and these get indifference instead of honors, and a pittance for pay. This kind spends most of its time polishing a bench with a hard luck story.

**ignorance:**                    Then, still lower down in the scale than this, we have the fellow who will not do the right thing even when someone goes along to show him how and stays to see that he does it: he is always out of a job, and receives the contempt that he deserves, unless he happens to have a rich Pa, in which case Destiny patiently awaits around the corner with a stuffed club.

**To which class do you belong?**