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# INTEGRITY

by  
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Dog



## INTEGRITY

**Demonstrating high moral principles or standards. What you do when you think nobody is watching.**

The third trait of Iditarod is “I” for Integrity. Throughout the race, mushers demonstrate high moral principles or standards. Integrity applies to what you do when you think nobody is watching. It’s like an iceberg; integrity is the largest part of the iceberg that’s hidden under water rather than the smaller visible portion that’s above water.

In Iditarod Classics, Lew Freedman shares a story told by Kathy Halverson that demonstrates integrity. Kathy was in the leading group of rookie mushers traveling between Ophir and Iditarod when they came upon Mike Madden who had fallen off his sled but wasn’t getting up. Kathy and the others realized the fellow was very sick. They built a fire, and put him in some warm clothing and sleeping bags. Two of the mushers in the group, went on ahead to Iditarod to get help. Kathy knew it was

necessary to keep the sick competitor warm and hydrated. In the 30 below temperatures with only toothpick size trees for firewood, it was a challenge. At first, the Mike willingly took a few sips of water and ate a little bread but soon he became delirious and refused to eat or drink.

Finally, 18 hours later a helicopter arrived. The doctor who came in with the chopper told Mike that his friends had saved his life. Kathy’s hopes and dreams of being the first rookie to finish the race and earn the honor of being rookie of the year dissolved in the 18 hours she cared for the sick musher. Kathy says, “I sleep better at night knowing that I helped save the life of a fellow musher rather than having selfish reason for not stopping to help. What we did and the feeling we have means more to us than the rookie-of-the-year



award.” Mike was sick from Salmonella Poisoning. Fully recovered, he was at the finish line with tears in his eyes to thank the people who helped him. The Iditarod Trail Committee created the Good Samaritan Award to present to the mushers who helped Mike.