

Is

honesty

*the best policy ?*

Ng Kei Ian

Since our childhood, we have been taught the importance of honesty and sincerity. We are constantly reminded to be honest to our parents, brothers, sisters, teachers, classmates and friends. But why is being honest so important? Is honesty always the best policy?

Honesty is essential in interpersonal relationships. Mutual honesty builds trust in a relationship. Without mutual trust, there is no real relationship. How would you feel if nobody believed you? There is no denying that dishonest people have to pay a high price. I dare say that dishonest people are very often affected by feelings of loneliness, isolation, frustration, anger and discontent. It is said that extramarital affairs are one of the main causes of rising divorce rates. This implies that marriages cannot be maintained without honesty.

Honesty is essential in doing business. Several months ago, the relationship between mainland China and Hong Kong was tense because of the shortage of baby formula. Stocks of baby formula have become alarmingly scarce in Hong Kong because of

the activity of the grey market traders and people from the mainland. But what is the root of this problem?

In my opinion, it is all because of dishonesty. There have been reports since 2008 that dishonest baby formula manufacturers in mainland China have produced tainted milk powder unsafe for babies. The milk scandal once again raised concerns about food safety and political corruption in China. The crisis of confidence in baby formula results in parents from the mainland coming to Hong Kong and Macao to buy milk products.

To sum up, honesty is the best policy. Both the people and government should be honest. Thanks to trust and sincerity, our society can be developed and there will be love between us. Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, once said, "Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom." An honest person is a wise person because he gives people a capable and trustworthy impression. An honest and sincere person gains respect and approval in the society. Sincerity is always the first step of having a respectable and happy life.