



Stanford eCorner

Respond to Your Calling

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Often one person's actions one can impact the course for many. Former California State Senator Jackie Speier talks about the importance of standing up for a purpose when your passion is strong. She illustrates this idea by discussing what drove the people who initiated stem cell research and those who stood up against drunk driving. She insists that life requires one to step up when the mission is genuine.



Transcript

One of my favorite sayings is one by some one who said, who's anonymous, who said that, "There is something for each of us to do and if we do not do it, it will not get done." Kind of a heavy thought if you think about it. There is something for each of us to do that if we do not do it, it will not get done. Let me give you a couple of examples. One is woman who lost her daughter to a drunk driver. So, what did she do with her life? What did she do that no one else could do? She founded an organization called Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Her name, Candy Lightner. Because she did what she did, she transformed the way this country looks at driving and drinking. What was tolerated before, what was a slap on the hands before is now time in county jail or state prison. Another example very close to home, he's probably been a speaker here, a father of a young child with diabetes. He wants his son to grow up and not be compromised because of his diabetic condition.

So, what does he do? The one thing that he was called to do? He qualifies an initiative for the ballot and asked all Californians, "Are you willing to put up a \$3 billion bond measure for stem cell research in California?" His name, Robert Klein. He succeeded. All of us said yes, overwhelmingly said yes. And because of that one person's actions we are now going to be spending \$3 billion on research that would probably find the cure to things like Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, diabetes because he stepped up.