

**Personal Pledge 32**  
**by Larry Elder**

1. There is no excuse for lack of effort.
2. Although I may be unhappy with my circumstances, and although racism and sexism and other "isms" exist, I know that things are better now than ever, and the future is even brighter.
3. While I may be unhappy with my circumstances, I have the power to change and improve my life. I refuse to be a victim.
4. Others may have been blessed with more money, better connections, a better home environment, and even better looks, but I can succeed through hard work, perseverance, and education.
5. I may be a product of a single- or no-parent household, but I will not hold anyone responsible for my present, or allow anyone to interfere with my future. Others succeed under conditions far worse than mine.
6. Some schools and teachers are better than others, but my level of effort, dedication, curiosity, and willingness to grow determine what I learn.
7. Ambition is the key to growth.
8. I will set apart some time each day to think about where I want to go, and how I intend to get there. A goal without a plan is just a wish.
9. "Luck" is what happens when preparation meets opportunity.
10. If suitable role models are not nearby, I will seek them out.
11. A role model is someone who, through hard work and a positive outlook, has achieved.
12. A role model may be a parent, relative, friend, church member, judge, doctor, attorney, businessperson, or someone I've read about in the newspaper or seen on the local news.
13. I will contact role models and seek their advice, guidance, and counsel. People remember when they were my age and are eager to help.
14. I will seek out recommended magazines, articles, books, biographies, videos, and motivational and how-to books, and use them for education and motivation.
15. The light is always green. You cannot go full speed with one foot on the brake.

16. I am always "in school," and I will not waste my summer by failing to read about and speak to people who can inspire me.
17. I will avoid friendship with people who do not share my goals and commitments. Nonsupportive relationships waste time and energy.
18. I will not seek immediate results, as I understand life is a journey and not a destination.
19. I will read a newspaper each day.
20. I will entertain myself in ways that challenge and expand my mind. As someone said, a mind once expanded never returns to its original size.
21. I will pay attention to my diet and overall fitness, as they are the keys to a healthy and productive body and an enthusiastic mind.
22. Drugs are stupid. People who believe in drugs don't believe in themselves.
23. I understand that jobs of the future require more preparation and training than ever, and I am determined to obtain the necessary background.
24. A well-rounded, competent student studies math and science.
25. People are not born "deficient in mathematical ability." Through hard work and dedication, the subject can be mastered.
26. It is essential that I learn to speak and write standard English. This is not "acting white," but acting smart.
27. A strong vocabulary is the key to communication, and I will read books on vocabulary enrichment.
28. I expect sometimes to be teased, even ridiculed. This will not stop me; it will only make me stronger and more determined.
29. I control my body and will not create a child until I am spiritually, psychologically, educationally, and financially capable of assuming this awesome responsibility.
30. Life is difficult. I expect setbacks and will learn from them. Struggle creates strength.
31. Every day is precious, and one without growth is squandered.
32. There is only one me, and I'm it!