Responsible Christmas

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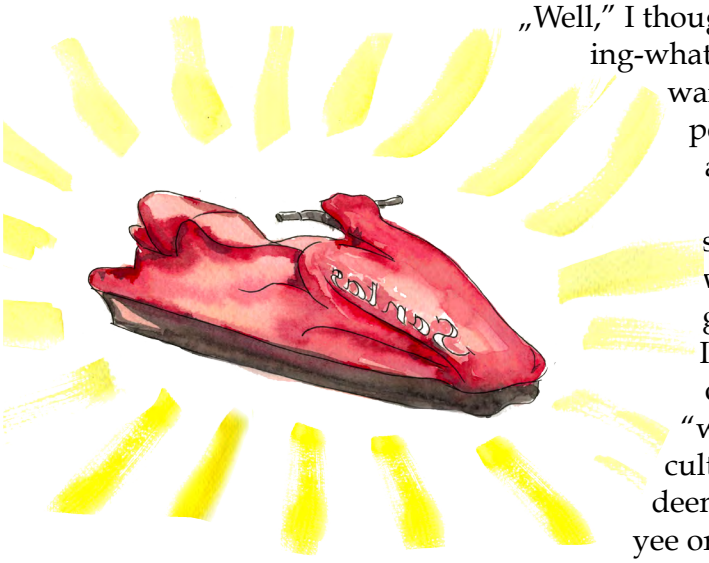
Santa Claus has been doing his job for quite some time now. You can imagine that he has lived through quite a long list of changes. And these last years have been particularly stressful. You know, digitisation and stuff like that. I was all the more surprised when I recently met him, and he seemed very relaxed. Of course I wanted to know why. He told me the following:

Even I, Santa Claus, get presents. Last year someone gave me Christopher Avery's book: *The Responsibility Process*. At once I thought. "This must be something terrific, if it teaches the elves how to take on more responsibility. Things will be much less stressful for me." But to my surprise, that is just not how it works. Taking on more responsibility always starts with ourselves, just the same as it seems to be with leadership. Ninety-five percent of it is self-leadership... But to get back to The Responsibility Process™: it describes a series of mental states we all go through on our way to full responsibility. And it always start with a problem. According to Christopher a problem is something that is standing in our way to get what we want. I'd best give you an example, because I actually had a problem: the large sleigh was gone! At once it leapt to mymind that one of the elves was certainly taking a ride with his elf wife. "This rascal!" I thought. "He left me standing here with-out a sleigh." So I blamed someone else for my problem. This first mental state The Responsibility





Process™ calls Lay Blame . The downer about this state is, that I believe I am powerless and can't do anything: it is the elf that has to act. So in this state I might indeed get sore, no more Mr. "Ho, ho, ho".
Then I thought this through. "All of us here at the North Pole have so much to do. It just happens, that you park the sleigh at the wrong place in the chaos, or you don't tie up the reindeer neatly. Nothing can be done about it. That's just the way it is." This state is called Justify. Now, the culprit is not another person, but rather the situation; the circumstances or the system are to blame. This isn't much better, though since when we are a victim of circumstance we still believe we can't do anything. And while I was pondering the inconveniences of life at at the North Pole, another thought popped up. "Wait! Probably it was me, old fool that I am, who parked the sleigh elsewhere and now I can't remember where. Maybe in front of the bar last eve? And even if it was not me, but one of the elves who took it: Who hired him? Who always fails to make clear what the elves are allowed to do and are not allowed to do?" This state of The Responsibility Process™ is called Shame, where we believe that the whole mess is our own fault. In fact, in our world this state is often regarded as responsible behaviour. "Yes, he made a mistake, but see how much he is ashamed. He is taking all the responsibility on his own shoulders!" But to be ashamed does not really solve the problem, does it?



„Well," I thought, "now I need to install one of these GPS-locating-whatsits on the sleigh, although I hated the idea. I really want the sleigh to remain as true to the original as possible. And I have to send out a search party. Quite a nuisance. Not only because it is embarrassing for me," (oh, back to Shame?) "but also because it is such an effort and I'll have to explain to everybody what to do." This state is called Obligation . What's great about this state is that finally the action begins. It's a pity though, that it is so draining to act out of obligation. In obligation we come from a place of "we have to" and not that we want to. Again, in our culture, we take this for responsible behaviour. It is deemed heroic: you don't want to, but as a good employee or boss, you do, what has to be done.
I wanted to get to the state of responsibility. Christopher Avery says that this is the state where we take ownership of our abilities and our power, to create, choose and attract our world. In fact I could install this GPS-locating-whatsits not because I had to, but because I wanted to. I didn't though, thus I pondered on. I thought back to the original problem. Did I really want to take the large sleigh? This one is dedicated to Christmas Eve and I want it to last for many holidays to come, as true to the original as possible. Instead, I decided that in the future it will rest in the garage for eleven months and I will buy one of



those new one-horse open sleighs with integrated GPS-locating-whatsits for my errands here at the North Pole.
In regard to the sleigh search, I decided that I don't mind if the elves are going to make fun of me. I asked on our WhatsApp group if someone knew where the sleigh was - and one of the elves promptly knew. Problem resolved. And for the remaining problems, like some things are not changing here and me becoming a better leader, I want to take responsibility for these, too. I know now that it starts with me.
I am looking forward to being more and more often free, powerful and at choice. And I have learned that it is simply human that I (and others) sometimes get stuck in one of the other states. For Christopher Avery I came up with a special Christmas present, but I can't tell you what it is: I want it to be a surprise.
Wow! The Responsibility Process™ has set some things in motion for Santa Claus. We practice it, too, and we can highly recommend it. Don't worry. You learn a lot of useful tips for what to do when you get stuck once again in one of the lower states. For example, the three keys to Responsibility are: Intention, Awareness and Confront .
In 2018 we want to act as much as possible from the state of responsibility. Then we are free, powerful and at choice.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year in 2018!

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