

Adlai's Core Ideas: CARE

Adlai E. Stevenson II understood that if any progress is to be made in the world, each of us must be personally motivated and care about societal issues.

A thoughtful statesman, his interests weren't solely intellectual. **Ideas needed to be translated into action.** A true "liberal,"¹ Stevenson favored gradual reforms and an appreciation of different points of view. He also argued that the private sector alone could not solve societal ills; government had a major role to play in social issues.

4 ways Adlai put this core value into action — CARE:

- Promote liberal policies.
- Put ideas into action.
- Reform government.
- Promote education to sustain democracy.

CARE: Promote liberal¹ policies.

Adlai Stevenson's values were "liberal," meaning he favored progress and reform, the protection of civil liberties, and broad-minded tolerance of differences.

Stevenson was the leading voice of liberalism in America from 1952 to 1965. He was no ideal dreamer, but he believed in humankind's capacity for decency and compassion. And he believed that government could play an indispensable role in fostering decency and compassion between individuals and nations.

CARE: Put ideas into action.

Adlai Stevenson believed people should be involved in society. Don't just talk — put your ideas to work in a manner consistent with your beliefs.

Whether in or out of government, Stevenson spent his adult life engaged in the issues of the day. He was not afraid to support controversial or unpopular ideas. He was one of the first political figures to dare criticize the anti-communist bullying of Senator Joseph McCarthy. He also remained a strong supporter of the UN, even when such views proved unpopular.

CARE: Reform government.

Adlai Stevenson believed government should be honest and democratic. And when failing in these, it should be gradually reformed.

During Stevenson's time, Illinois was known as one of the most corrupt states. Elected governor in 1948, he earned a national reputation as a reformer during his one term in office. He worked hard to remove politics from state hiring practices. He expanded the civil service system. He increased the professionalism of the state workforce.

CARE: Promote education to sustain democracy.

Adlai Stevenson believed democracy could not exist without an educated citizenry.

To Stevenson, free and public education was the foundation of democracy, "the most American thing about America."² He believed education helped citizens make informed choices and be actively involved in their government.

During the Cold War, he saw the promise of free and open education as one of the free market West's great advantages over the communist East.

We travel together, passengers on a little space ship, dependent upon its vulnerable reserves of air and soil, all committed for our safety to its security and peace,

*preserved from annihilation only by the care, the work, and I will say the love we
give our fragile craft.*
— *Adlai E. Stevenson II*

FOOTNOTES:

¹ **Liberal** political views favor progress and reform, the protection of civil liberties, and broad-minded tolerance of differences.

John F. Kennedy described Liberals by their views and actions, "...if by a "Liberal" they mean someone who looks ahead and not behind, someone who welcomes new ideas without rigid reactions, someone who cares about the welfare of the people — their health, their housing, their schools, their jobs, their civil rights, and their civil liberties — someone who believes we can break through the stalemate and suspicions that grip us in our policies abroad, if that is what they mean by a "Liberal," then I'm proud to say I'm a "Liberal."

—**John F. Kennedy, Acceptance Speech of the New York Liberal Party Nomination**
September 14, 1960

² In his address to the Citizens' School Committee, Chicago, 1948, Stevenson said, "the most American thing about America is the free common school system."