

Chapter One

More Than Meets The Eye

Note To The Teacher

How often do we as adults confuse someone's personality (how they present themselves to others) with their character (their morals and ethics)? Do you ever catch yourself saying, "He seemed like such a nice person," or, "I never thought she would do that"? Yes, even as adults we can mistake a pleasant personality for a positive character. If this can occur to us as adults, how much more likely can it occur to our children?

It is a known fact that at the onset of adolescence, children begin to seek acceptance outside of the family unit and identify more with their friends. It is this need to belong and to be accepted by their peers that often puts children in a vulnerable position. Too often our children arrive at this most crucial point in their lives ill-prepared to be cautious about their friends and those they associate with. At times like these, they are less likely to choose people with a positive moral character with whom to build strong, lasting friendships, opting rather to get close to those who offer only fun and excitement. This makes them susceptible to negative peer pressure and risk taking behaviors.

In this first chapter, students will understand how character and personality are developed and that there is a clear distinction between the two. Because we are known by the company we keep, it is imperative that we not only teach children to build a positive character, but to surround themselves with peers who value a positive character, as well. By teaching children to choose friends based on compatible personality and positive character we are, in effect, providing them with the skills to build mutually positive relationships that will support their growth, development and mental outlook.

Other concepts that will be covered in this chapter are:

- What morality is.
- Everyone's ability to develop positive character.

As educators and role models, we have the opportunity to fully prepare our students for the future by providing them with academic skills and character education. This combination will ensure that they are not only capable of being whatever they want to be, but that they will also be responsible people who have respect for themselves and for others.

Lesson Plan

More Than Meets The Eye

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn what character is and how it is developed. Students will also learn that there is a clear distinction between character and personality.

MATERIALS

- R Teacher's Manual Audio Lessons cassette
- R Cassette player
- R Students' handbook

PROCEDURE

1. Inform students that they will begin studying from *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*. This program will encourage the development of positive moral character. Explain to students that during the course of this program, they will also learn that developing a positive moral character is the first step towards accepting themselves and others, controlling their behavior, respecting society and the environment, and making responsible choices.

2. Tell students that today they will learn what character is and how it is developed. They will also learn how to distinguish between personality and character.

Explain to students that everyone has character. How character is developed in each person is a process that begins before birth and continues throughout his or her life. Have students turn to **pages 3-4** in their handbooks. Choose students to read the sections entitled, "**Introduction**" and "**Character... Everyone Has It But Where Does It Come From?**" Emphasize that it is the combination of genetics, education, experiences, influences and values that develops our character.

3. Explain to students that values are principles or qualities that we consider important. Although values in general are not

standardized but varied, based upon what the individual deems important, there are certain values that are internalized by all people. These are called **moral values**. Have students read and discuss the sections entitled, **“Values”** and **“Morals...What Do They Have To Do With My Character?”** found on **pages 6-9** of their handbooks. Stress that moral values play a key role in the development of a positive character.

4. Explain to students another critical aspect where morals must be applied is in regards to the possessions and property of others, because of the value people place on their possessions. Have students read the sections, **“What’s Mine Is Mine, What’s Yours Is Yours”** on **pages 10-12** and **“Here’s Something Else To Think About”** on **pages 12-13**. Explain to them that when we behave morally towards the possessions of others by respecting their right of ownership, it shows respect and a willingness to live peaceably with them. Tell them that having moral values towards people and their possessions is a critical factor of demonstrating positive character traits that will lead to peaceful relations.

5. Explain to students that factual knowledge and experience, coupled with the values one possesses, aid in producing both negative and positive character traits that will influence one’s behavior. Choose students to read the sections entitled, **“The Positive Side Of Character”** and **“What Is A Negative Character?”** found on **pages 14-16, 19-20** of their handbooks. Compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages between the positive and negative qualities of character, for example, honest versus dishonest, responsible versus irresponsible. Explain to students that most people have both negative and positive character traits. However, the key to being a person of integrity is to accentuate their positive traits while first acknowledging and then eliminating their negative traits. Help students to realize that a positive moral character is advantageous and should be recognized by everyone as beneficial.

6. Have students do the exercise on **page 22**. Encourage students to use this activity as a guide for changing unwanted behaviors.

7. Inform students that now that they understand what character is, and how it is developed, they can compare character to personality. Guide class discussion by asking students the following question: What qualities do you see in others that would encourage you to get to know that person? *(Answers will vary but may include friendly, nice, humorous, easy going, kind, outgoing, athletic and so on).*

Emphasize that these are all personality traits. Have students turn to

pages 23-24 in their handbooks and read, “**What Is Personality?**” Allow students time to identify personality traits and record their answers in the spaces provided.

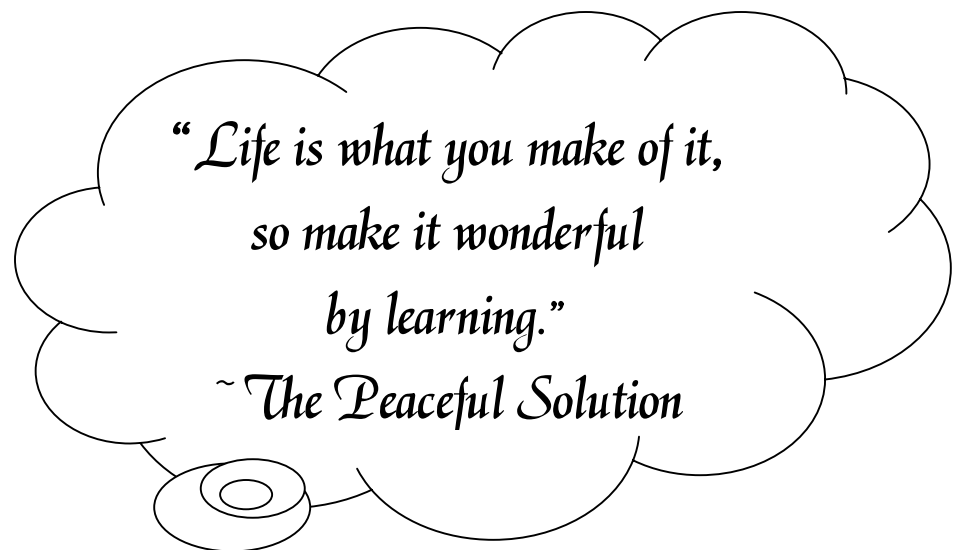
8. Stress that positive character guides our decisions to choose behaviors that demonstrate care and concern for others and ourselves. Personality, on the other hand, is how we present ourselves to others. Choose students to read the article entitled, “**Character Versus Personality,**” found on page 25 of their handbooks. Then, have students read the scenario on page 26 and answer the questions. Guide class feedback by discussing their answers. Stress that character dictates moral beliefs whereas personality is the primary means by which we socialize and seek acceptance.

9. Explain to students that there are no guarantees that because two people share similar personality traits that they will have the same values and character traits. Guide class discussion by asking the following questions:

- a. What are the dangers or drawbacks of choosing friends based only on personality? (Answers will vary but may include that some of the dangers are that the values and beliefs may hinder my ability to make the right choices in life. Their character might also influence me to participate in the negative hobbies or extracurricular activities that they do.)
- b. What are the dangers of continuing a friendship with someone who exhibits negative character traits but has an appealing personality? (Answers should include: some of the dangers are that their values and beliefs may hinder my ability to make the right choices in life. Their character might also influence me to participate in the negative hobbies or extracurricular activities that they do.)

Allow students to listen to the poem entitled, “**More Than Meets The Eye**” on page 27 of their handbooks. Stress that it is important to take the time to know someone in order to determine his or her character.

10. Conclude the lesson by encouraging students to appreciate and value the positive character and personality traits within themselves and others. Remind them that who we are depends more upon our character than our personality, and that we must be persistent in developing positive character traits.



Note To The Student

There are some subjects you learn just so you can pass your next test and then there are some you learn for life. *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* teaches you lessons that you will benefit from as you grow. The information contained in this book will give you an opportunity to explore some of the things that are important to you and make you who you are. In other words, you will learn about your character. As you study this unit on character, you will be able to gather essential facts that will guide you to make right choices that will, in turn, help you develop a positive, moral character.

A Few Sad Facts Of Life

In a way, it's sad that we live in a society that puts so much emphasis on what people look like on the outside. You know, whether they are popular, pretty, cute, athletic, tall, short or fat, as if those are the things that really matter. It's even sadder that we sometimes feel forced to spend so much time fixing, molding and changing our outside appearances, the way we dress, speak and walk, just to fit in and be like everyone else. The saddest fact of all is that, in the long run, changing the outside, just to fit in, without improving who we are on the inside, has caused many disappointments, lost friendships and created bad scenes.

In case you're wondering what a "bad scene" is, it's the 1,000,000 teen pregnancies a year, the 25,000 teens who are diagnosed HIV positive every year, in the United States alone, the thousands more who die in drunk driving accidents and the hundreds of thousands of teenagers who have to suffer through the divorce of their parents.

A Road Less Traveled

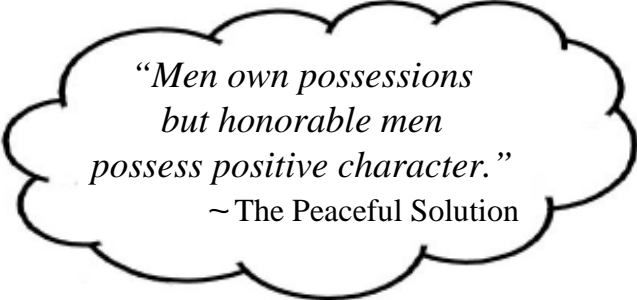
Here's what it all boils down to: You don't have to go this route. You can take a road less traveled. Now it may not be the most popular road or the road that your friends are taking, but, here is another fact. Life is about making choices. The choices you make, the ones that could save your life, will be based on your development of a positive character and the only way to develop a positive character is to start paying attention to what's going on, on the inside. So along with keeping up your appearances you must keep working to develop a positive, morally justifiable character. In order to avoid those "bad scenes" we talked about, you have to start building a positive character and start making choices that are decided ahead of time and are consistently responsible, respectful and honest and that's just to name a few.

This introductory unit of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* will lay a foundation of moral character development that can remain with you for a lifetime. Within these pages lay a wealth of knowledge, facts and techniques that will prepare you to reach your full moral potential. So pay very close attention in this class. What you will learn in the next several weeks, you can use for the rest of your life. Just remember, your character is what makes you who you are. It will determine what you will stand for and what you will fall for. If you stand on a positive character, you won't regret it.

We believe that the principles contained in this book, when applied to your everyday life, will bring you such abundant living, you will be forever appreciative. Now it is up to you—take hold of the principles that bring success and never let anyone deter you from its path.



No one is too young to choose the right path.



*“Men own possessions
but honorable men
possess positive character.”*
~ The Peaceful Solution

Chapter One

More Than Meets The Eye

Introduction

Have you ever heard someone say, “Oh him? Yeah, he’s a real character.” What do you think that means? In fact, what does it mean to have character? In *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* you will learn what character is and why it is so important that each person strives to develop a positive character.

Everyone has character. Character is what helps each and every person to determine what is right and wrong. A person’s character consists of patterns of behavior that are considered either positive or negative. Your character reflects who you are on the inside; it goes beyond what the casual eye can see. Knowing about your character will enable you to understand why you think and act the way you do. Knowing how to identify a positive character in others will help you build strong, positive relationships.

Sometimes a person’s character can be mistaken for their personality. Although they can be confused, character and personality are two very different concepts. We need both character and personality to interact and function within our society.

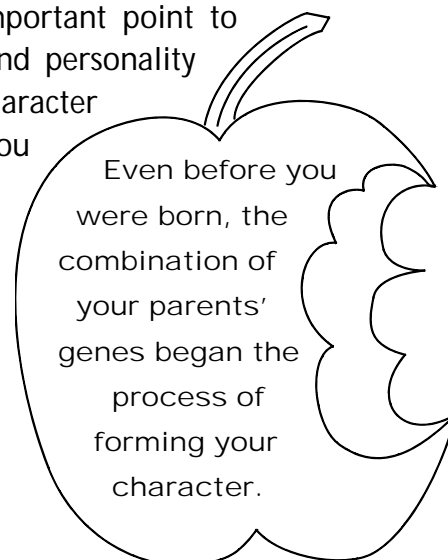
Character...Everyone Has It But Where Does It Come From?

Our character defines what is important to us, what we believe in and how we treat others, just as clearly as our faces and voices define who we are physically. In fact, our character is an integral part of who we are. Whether the character we have is positive or negative depends upon many different factors. These factors include genetics, family values, influences, experiences, choices and environment. Together they help to mold and shape our character.

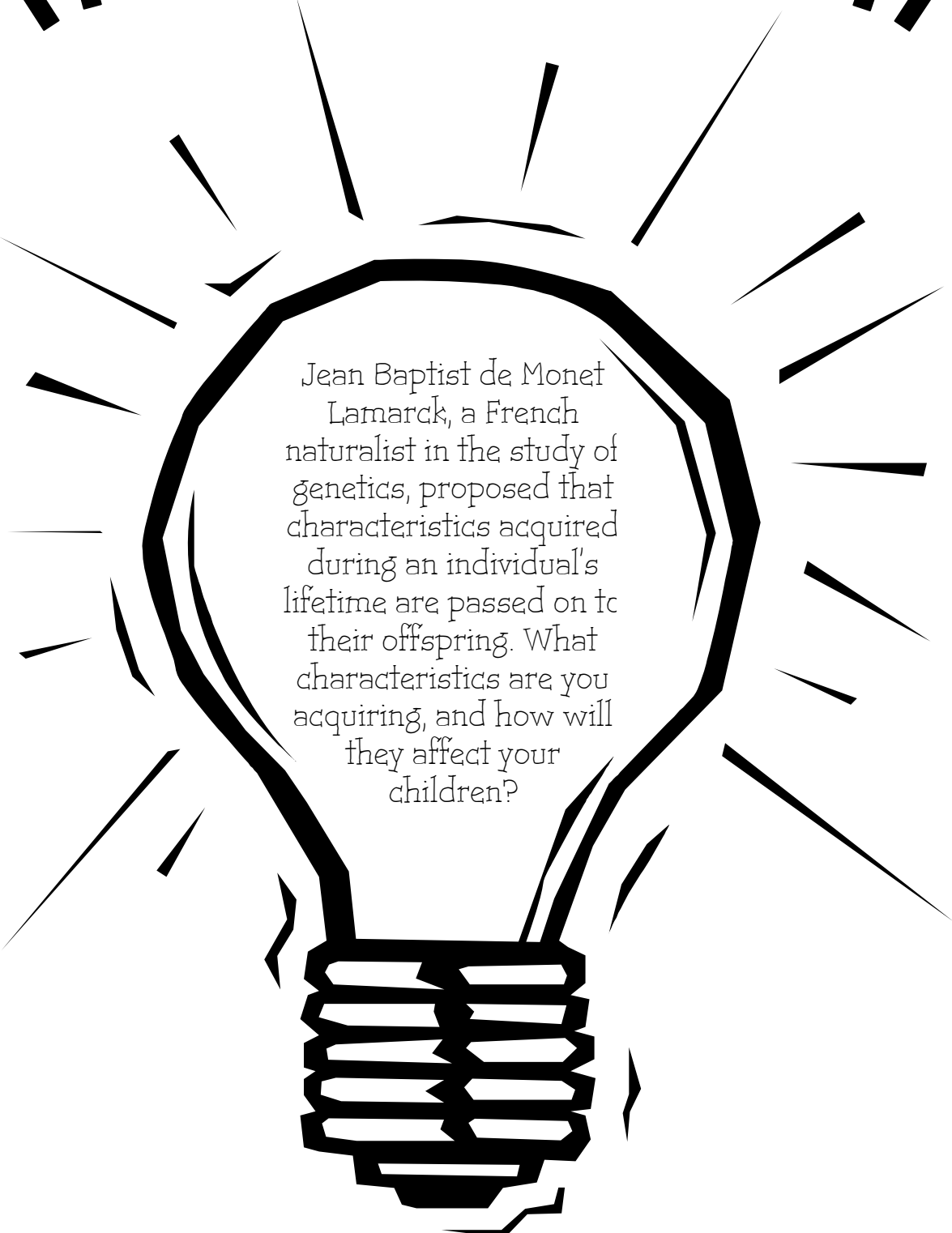
Through the study of genetics, science now knows that in addition to traits such as eye, hair, and skin color, individuals also inherit intelligence, musical abilities and specific behavioral patterns. These behavioral patterns make up what is known as your character and personality. Some traits like skin and eye color depend solely upon the shared genetic information from both of your parents. These are called fixed traits, because once determined genetically, your environment cannot change them. On the other hand, how your character and personality develop is not only based on your heredity but also on your environment.

Both environment and what you have inherited, are powerful tools that shape you into who you are. For example, if someone who is born with the ability to be very intelligent or to have great musical talent is never stimulated to learn or has no access to a musical instrument, he will never realize his potential in these areas. Your character is developed in much the same way. The important point to remember though is that your character and personality are not fixed like your skin or eye color. Character and personality can change and develop as you experience and learn new things.

**Take a bite
out of this:**



THINK ABOUT IT



Jean Baptiste de Monet
Lamarck, a French
naturalist in the study of
genetics, proposed that
characteristics acquired
during an individual's
lifetime are passed on to
their offspring. What
characteristics are you
acquiring, and how will
they affect your
children?

The next most important factor in helping to develop your character is called:

Values

Values are what you believe in, or feel strongly about, and they also play a key role in developing your character. The sum total of everything you value becomes your value system. As you mature and grow, your parents share their values with you, just like their parents shared their values with them. The things they care about and consider as important are for the most part the same things you care about. Of course, as you interact with people other than your parents, you will adopt other values as well.

Family members, babysitters, teachers and others all help to shape your character by sharing their values with you. For instance, your parents may not like gardening, but your aunt who lives in the country loves to garden. While visiting her for the summer, you begin to appreciate and value gardening.



There are as many different types of values as there are people. No two people are alike, not even members of the same family. Based upon experiences and interactions, we come to value different things. For example, some people value a college education; some a trade or career. Others value staying at home and raising a family. Some value sports, while others value art.

What we value can also be affected by our culture and religion. In some cultures there is value placed upon female modesty. In other words, women choose to dress in garments that do not show their form, while in other cultures there is value placed upon objects of art and

physical beauty. If you live in an environment with a lot of crime, your safety and the safety of your family will become an important value. Even though there are many different factors affecting what we value, we can be sure that all values help to shape our character.

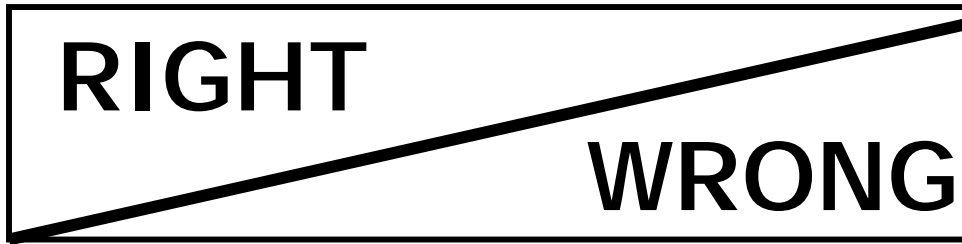
Chew On This

**Value what is
positive in
yourself and
others.**



Morals... What Do They Have To Do With My Character?

Regardless of culture, religion, or environment, there are some values that all people share. They are called moral values. A moral value is like a line that divides wrong behavior from right behavior. People from all walks of life, young or old, big or small, rich or poor, share some of the same basic concepts of moral values.



Morality Can Be Divided Into Three Basic Categories:

- Behavior and attitude towards all life (human, animal and plant)
- Behavior and attitude towards possessions and property
- Behavior and attitude towards the environment

Moral principles in regards to human life means acknowledging and accepting that life is valuable and all people have the potential to contribute to society. When you have a moral attitude towards others you accept and appreciate that they have the right to live in peace, safety and security. You can demonstrate a moral attitude by being respectful towards all people. This means not taking advantage of others, but rather showing them care and concern.

An immoral attitude towards life consists of behaviors that devalue, belittle, hurt and take from others both emotionally and physically. Behaviors that include name-calling, teasing, bullying and discriminating cause others to feel inferior and disregard their worth as human beings. Physically hurting others includes being aggressive and violent towards them. It also consists of behaviors such as violating (as in rape), killing, kidnapping or murdering.

Those who have an immoral attitude towards human life often direct acts of cruelty towards those who are weaker or unable to defend themselves, as in the case of abuse towards children or the elderly. Every year, countless children are physically, emotionally and sexually abused. This abuse results in lifelong emotional scars, permanent physical injuries and in some cases, death. Abuse towards the elderly also involves physical,

emotional and sexual abuse. Age, senility and dependency, usually upon the abuser himself, hinder an accurate count of the number of elderly who are abused each year.

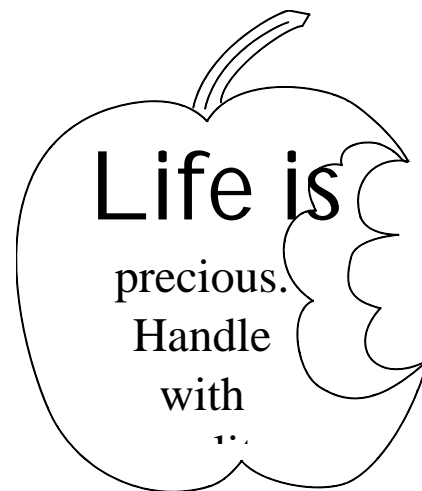
Did you know that in addition to showing this attitude towards others, individuals could also display this same attitude towards themselves? Choices that involve risk-taking behaviors such as premarital sex and drug and alcohol abuse are examples of ways in which millions of people devalue their own lives. These behaviors are the leading causes of sexually transmitted diseases, degeneration of the mind and health, and dangerous driving practices, all of which can lead to death. Self-mutilation, which is to willfully cut one's own body, and suicide are additional ways in which an individual disregards the value of his own life.

Moral principles can also be applied to the environment and how we care for it. We need air, water, plants and animals to survive, and all of these things make up our environment. When everyone does their part to care for our environment by not polluting the earth or using harsh man-made chemicals that contaminate our atmosphere and water, we are demonstrating regard for all life.

Within our lifetime, the responsibility to our planet and its resources will define our concern for future generations.

In addition to this, we can also display a moral attitude towards animals by treating them kindly and not condoning any form of animal cruelty. Animal cruelty disregards the fact that every animal has a purpose that benefits mankind, the earth and the food supply. They must be kept alive, in addition, we need to watch out for their health. Every year, animals are neglected, abused, tortured and killed for sport rather than for food. There have been numerous studies done that show that many serial killers engaged in immoral acts towards animals by torturing and dismembering them prior to murdering human beings.

**TAKE A BITE
OUT OF THIS**



WHAT'S MINE IS MINE, WHAT'S YOURS IS YOURS

Behaving morally in regards to the possessions and property of others means to recognize that everyone owns things and values what they own. What one person values, another may not, but it is still necessary to respect the possessions of others, just as you would want your belongings respected. Did you know that you have rights concerning what belongs to you? This is called the right of ownership. This means that you have the authority to make decisions about what you own. You also have the right to enjoy what you own without the fear that it could be stolen. Recognizing this moral concept means accepting that everyone else has authority and rights of ownership over his or her

possessions as well. Respecting others rights benefits you, as well as them.

Can you recall a time when you made a decision about something you owned and your decision was not accepted? Did your friends or family members try to pressure you into changing your mind? How did it make you feel? Have you ever done this to someone else? This has caused many problems, even between friends. So, what's the answer to the problem?



*Accept decisions
others make
concerning their
belongings.
chant*

You can behave morally in regards to ownership by asking permission before touching or using someone's belongings. But asking alone is not enough. You must also accept the response, even if it is "no", and see the need for yourself to have the same right to say "no" at any time you choose. Authority over one's possessions means you have the right to decide who uses your possessions, when they are used and how they are used. Not being able to accept someone's decision about their belongings usually creates conflicts and hurt feelings.

Did you know you also have to be moral about how you get the things you want? Here's the bottom line, unless something is legally and honestly obtained, it does not belong to you. There are many legal and honest ways to obtain the things you want. For example, you can work for it and save your earnings.

If you are a minor and you are unable to work at a job, you can earn money by doing chores, such as raking leaves, mowing lawns, shoveling snow or baby-sitting. Other ways to acquire things legally and honestly are to have them awarded to you, as in the case of having excelled in school, through inheritance or as a gift.

A moral person recognizes that the rights of ownership are extended towards items that are lost. Lost items still belong to the owner and the owner is therefore entitled to have his property returned. That old adage, "Finder's Keepers, Loser's Weepers," is not displaying a moral attitude. Think about it for a minute. If your belongings were lost, wouldn't you want someone to return them to you? A great attitude is to always treat the other person, as you would like the other person to treat you.

An immoral attitude towards the belongings of others results in misunderstandings and hostilities. For example, you saved all summer to buy a bike. On the first day you got it your brother took it for a spin

STRAIGHT



Think About It!
If you take someone's belongings without permission, you haven't borrowed, you have stolen.
To borrow means you have the owner's consent to use his belonging for an agreed amount of time.

around the block without first asking you. Since you were unaware that he had taken your bike, you assumed it was stolen. Frantically, you called the police and reported the bike stolen.



Because this simple moral principle is ignored, crimes such as theft, burglary and grand larceny are rampant in our society. Not only can ignoring this moral principle lead to theft, it can also lead to murder. There are many news stories that show that during the process of a robbery or "hold up," people are often killed.

Here's Something Else To Think About

A moral attitude, in regards to the belongings of others, means not damaging, destroying, or vandalizing another's property. Vandalism means to purposely or willfully destroy anything that belongs to another. Stop and imagine something that you really love. Now imagine waking up one morning and seeing it destroyed, knowing someone did it purposely. How would that make you feel? Would you feel angry, disappointed, shocked, or resentful? Thousands of people experience these feelings every year when others destroy their mailboxes, write

graffiti on the walls of their homes and businesses or run over their flowerbeds and decorations.

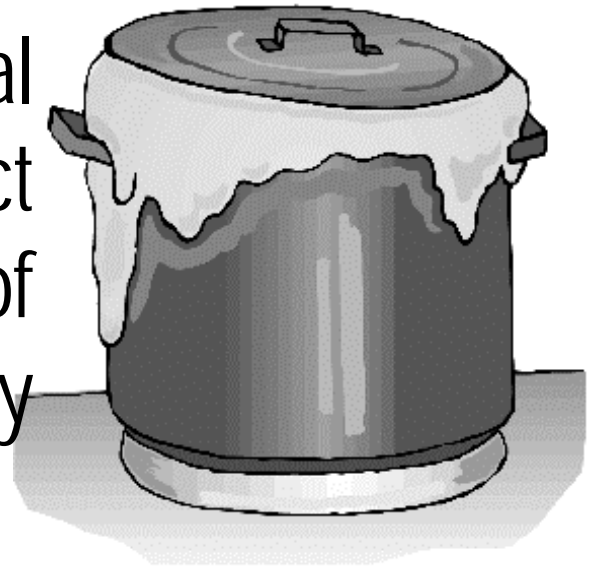
Aside from being cruel, vandalism is against the law. Many who choose this kind of behavior end up in jail or spend countless hours doing community service. Hey, destroying something that doesn't belong to you is not fun, is not right and is definitely not cool. It only leads to retaliation, retaliation and more retaliation.

Retaliation

*To return like for like, especially harm for harm.
To pay back (an injury) in kind.*

What It All Boils Down To...

You have a moral obligation to respect the possessions of others, not destroy them.



Having morals is an important way to define your character. Moral values set boundaries that help you to demonstrate appropriate behavior towards others. In other words, when a person has moral values, he tries to distinguish between right and wrong and make choices that are respectful and thoughtful of others, according to his ability.

Your character is a combination of the moral values that you are being taught, as well as values that include work ethics, education, hobbies, and so on. In addition to values, your interactions with others and their influences have also helped to mold and shape your character, making you into the person you are today.

The Positive Side Of Character

Your character is made up of many different qualities. They are called character traits. Character traits can be either positive or negative based upon your values, what you have been taught, your choices and your experiences. The key to having moral character is to develop positive character traits. When you demonstrate these traits on a consistent basis, you will be known as a person of integrity. People who have moral character show by their actions and attitude that they care about themselves and others.

Become familiar with these words that describe moral character traits and strive to develop them within yourself.

Positive Character Traits

1. **Educated**—Getting all the facts and making sure they are correct before making a decision.

For example, your friends offer you some glue to sniff. You had already been researching it and know how damaging that can be to your brain. You tell them “no” and warn them of the dangers as well.

2. **Respectful**—To value others as important as yourself and to allow that to show through your actions and attitudes.

For example, your principal directs you to go to class, even though you had a permission slip to go to the nurse’s station. You try to explain but he says, “No back-talk.” You say respectfully, “Yes, sir,” and follow his directions anyway.

3. **Patient**—Demonstrating self-control and remaining calm through setbacks.

Being patient means not complaining, especially when you have the most to complain about. For example, your father promised to take you camping, but work kept interfering with the trip; you handled it without getting upset.

4. **Honest/Trustworthy**—Being fair, sincere and straightforward.

For example, you were playing in the house and mistakenly broke your mother’s new vase. No one saw you break it, but you told her the truth anyway.

5. **Humble**—Not being proud or arrogant.

A humble person will not argue, dispute nor disobey set rules. For

example, the bathroom rule is “Clean up after yourself when you use the bathroom.” You don’t like to clean the bathroom, but you obey.

6. Thankful—*To be conscious of the benefits that you have received.*

Thankful people find joy in what they have instead of worrying or being upset about what they don’t have. For example, George really wanted a brand name pair of shoes, however his mother could not afford it. She did however, buy him the best shoes that she could afford. George told his mother thank you. Even though he did not get the pair he wanted, he appreciated the shoes he got.

7. Forgiving—*To refrain from holding anger or resentment towards someone who has wronged you.*

For example, your classmate laughed at you when you tripped. Rather than get upset with her or try to get even, you forgive her and laugh with her.

8. Steadfast/ Persistent—*You are determined not to give up or change what you have set out to accomplish.*

For example, Martha was determined to stop assisting Alicia in stealing school supplies at the mall. Martha had already explained to Alicia that stealing was wrong; so when Alicia came to pick Martha up, she said “no” and encouraged Alicia not to go either.

9. Self-Control—*Not yielding to impulsive thoughts and actions.*

For example, you saw your sister’s letter on her dresser and really wanted to read it. But because you chose to respect her privacy, you decided not to touch it.

How many of these character traits do you recognize in yourself? How many do you recognize in your family members and friends? When you possess these traits you can feel positive about yourself and your ability to interact with others in a meaningful and caring way. In like manner, when people around you exhibit these same positive character traits and treat you accordingly, *you* feel appreciated and respected. In essence, this is The Peaceful Solution. By simply interacting and communicating using these positive character traits, we can avoid hurting and devaluing each other.

If you find that you are lacking any of these positive character traits, then work hard to develop them. You can develop a character trait by first valuing it as important. Begin by evaluating why that character trait is important to you as an individual and how it can benefit yourself and others. For example, let’s say you need to develop the character trait of

being thankful. The first step is to consider why you should be thankful. Being thankful means you can appreciate what you have. People who are not thankful often feel dissatisfied with what they have and become envious of others.

Next, list all the things you have to be thankful for. Don't forget to include things such as food, clothing, a place to live, your health and so on. Often these things are taken for granted, and we forget to be thankful for them. Then make another list of how being thankful can affect the people you interact with everyday. A thankful person is a bright and optimistic person. He or she encourages and motivates others to be thankful.

You can use these same steps to develop any character trait that you are lacking. Developing positive character traits takes commitment, dedication and determination. Changing yourself from the inside is not always easy, but is well worth the effort.

Let's take a closer look at two positive character traits: honesty and responsibility.

Honesty

Someone who is honest is going to be trusted to tell the truth, even when they do something wrong. Sometimes other people, even your friends, can pressure you to do something that is dishonest. A friend who truly cares about you, however, will encourage you to make an honest choice. For example, a true friend would encourage you not to cheat on a test or steal something from a store. A true friend would always be honest with you.

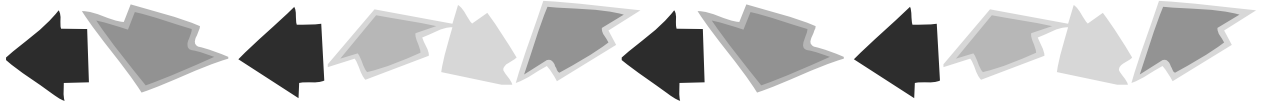
When you are honest, you will be trusted and you can avoid conflicts with others. Your example will help others to make honest choices. You will be honest with the possessions of others, too, always remembering to ask permission before touching, using, borrowing or taking something that belongs to them. When you are known as an honest person who will not be persuaded to do something that brings harm to yourself or others, people will trust you with more responsibility.

Responsibility

Being responsible is another trait you should want to make part of your character. Being responsible means to be accountable and answerable for your actions. You will be known as a reliable person, someone others can count on. Someone who is irresponsible is unreliable. For example, such a person is always late when you plan to meet them, or they may not even show up at all. When they say they will return something they borrow, they may return it damaged or in worse condition than when you lent it and usually they are late in returning it to you, if they somehow don't lose it along the way. This can leave you feeling frustrated and hesitant to ask this person to do something for you again or to loan them anything.

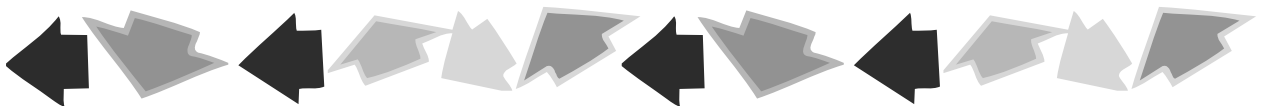
Responsible people are given more important duties because people know they can be counted on to do a job. They also receive more privileges. For instance, if you are responsible with your chores, you may be given permission to take on more jobs, allowing you to earn more money. Or, because you are so responsible at baby-sitting your younger brother and sister, your parents may allow you to obtain something you have desired for a long time.

These are just a few of many valuable, moral principles you have at your disposal. Strive to make them all a part of your moral character development. Remember this, basing your decision on facts, not emotions, is important to building true moral character. When you gather all the facts, you are able to make a better decision than when you have only a portion of the facts.



The end result of internalizing positive character traits that can be clearly seen in your actions and attitudes is called:

INTEGRITY



What Is A Negative Character?

Negative character traits define who you are just as clearly as positive traits. They too, are a combination of values, environment and experiences. However, unlike positive character traits, negative traits can lead to behaviors that could cause hatred, violence and even wars. If you treat someone dishonestly, or show a lack of compassion, you are saying that you do not care about that person. If that person also has a negative character and responds to you in a disrespectful, or aggressive way, then you have what is known as a conflict. A conflict that exists without a peaceful solution will result in hatred and violence. Here is another example; let's say someone who is dishonest steals money from someone who is unforgiving. The person who was stolen from will try to retaliate against the one who stole from him. This too, can result in hatred and violence. Below are a few negative character traits. Become familiar with them so you can eliminate these traits from your character if you recognize them in yourself.

Negative Character Traits

1. **Uneducated**—*Making a decision without getting all the facts.*
For example, your friends offer you some glue to sniff. You ask, "Won't that mess with my head?" Your friend replies, "Nah, it's safe and just makes you high." Without any further investigation, you agree.
2. **Dishonest**—*To maliciously lie, cheat or steal.*
For example, you saw Paula take Marco's dictionary without asking his permission. But when he asked about it, you said you had no idea because you just don't like Marco.
3. **Revengeful/Unforgiving**—*To want to get even or get back at someone; results from not being able to forgive.*
For example, Sally lent Jen her new pen, but Jen lost it. Jen did apologize to Sally and offered to buy her a new pen, but Sally did not accept Jen's apology. As soon as Jen got a new pen Sally took Jen's pen when she wasn't looking and broke it.
4. **Unreliable**—*When someone cannot be depended upon.*
For example, Jill had promised to assist you on your math

**"Negative character is the root of all the hate, violence and war we see in the world around us."
~The Peaceful Solution**

project on two previous occasions, but never showed up. So when she volunteered to give you a ride to the library, you nicely refused.

5. **Impatient**—*To be restless or short-tempered and easily aggravated.*
People who are impatient are not willing to wait. They want everything right away and become frustrated when their desires are not met.

6. **Aggressive**—*Capable of violent physical or verbal outburst.*
Carlos stepped on Rick's new shoes by mistake. Instead of waiting for Carlos to apologize, Rick immediately cursed him and pushed him against the wall.

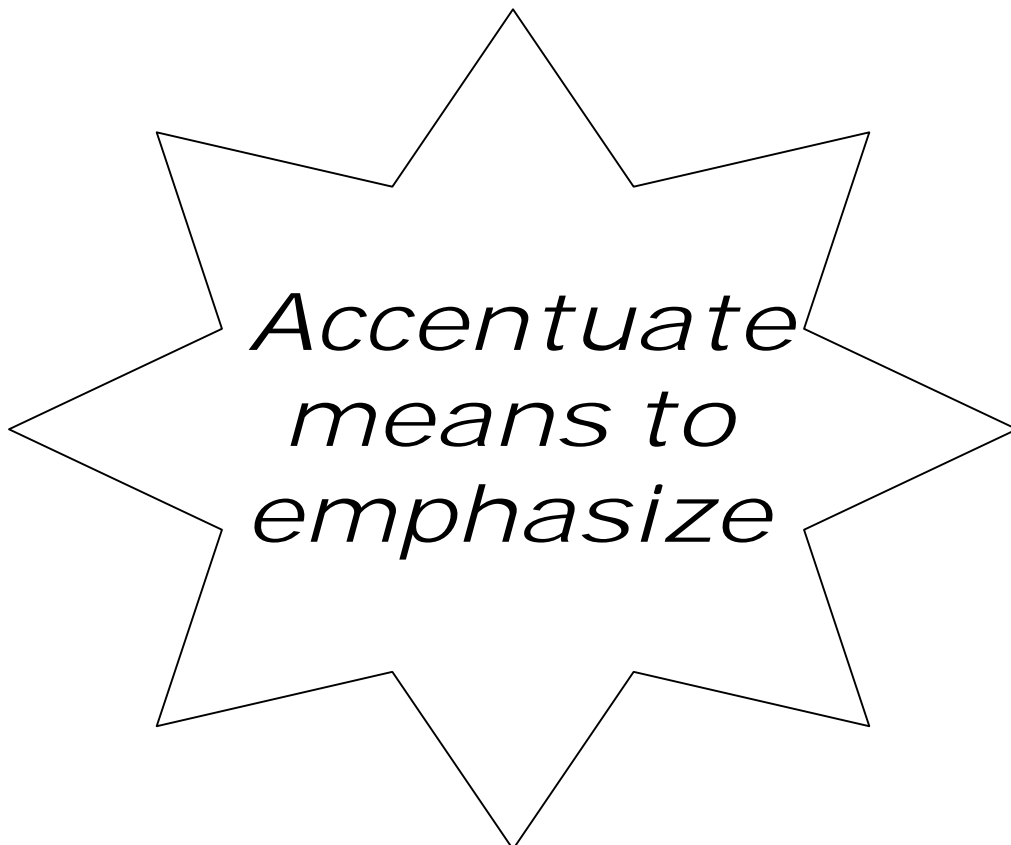
7. **Disrespectful**—*Lacking care or concern for someone or something.*
For example, your dad told you it was time to do your chores. You got mad, went to your room and slammed the door.

8. **Hateful**—*An intense emotion that results in extreme dislike and hostility. Hate is derived from fear, anger or perceived injury.*
For example, some people are raised to believe that people who have a different skin color should be hated.

Don't Accentuate The Negative

Kee in mind that nobody's character is completely negative and devoid of all positive character traits. Yet, most people do have some negative traits that they need to eliminate from their character. For example, someone can be a compassionate person, always looking for ways to help others, but is usually late for most functions and events. Or, he can be an honest person, but very impatient. Do these examples remind you of anyone you know? Do they remind you of yourself?

Not accentuating negative character traits means first realizing that there are some aspects of your character that need changing, then focusing on doing just the opposite of the behavior you want to change. For example, if you have difficulty being on time, you may try going to bed earlier and setting your alarm clock half an hour earlier than you normally wake up. You might even borrow a few books from the library on time management. The point is to focus on improving your character by eliminating the negative and accentuating the positive.



On the spaces below write down five things on the left that you want to improve about your character. On the right side write down what changes you will need to make in order to successfully change those negative traits into positive ones.

What I Would Like To Change

For example: I want to stop being aggressive.

What I Can Do To Change

For example: I will practice self-control, be patient with others, not touch something without permission or speak harshly.

What Is Personality?

Because it is so easy to confuse personality and character it is important to explore what is meant by personality. Personality is made up of behavioral traits that are unique to each individual. Personality is the process you choose in how you govern your feelings, attitudes and preferences. It is the basis by which you choose to interact with others. For example, when you first meet someone, you notice if they smile when they say hello. You may also notice if they are humorous, serious, outgoing or shy. Other aspects of your personality include such things as your preference for foods, colors and hobbies. Do you eat things for taste only or do you choose foods that are healthy? Do you like loud, bright colors or do you like quiet, softer colors? Do you choose hobbies for fun only or do you choose them for exercise or education?

Most people choose their friends based upon compatible personalities. In other words, during the course of a casual conversation two people discover that they both have the same goals. These shared likes will usually motivate them to get to know each other better.

The following is a list of common personality traits. Circle the ones that best describe you and put a check next to the personality traits you look for in others.

talkative	personable	carefree	careful
outgoing	serious	organized	lazy
funny	sophisticated	sloppy	pleasant
adventurous	spoiled	sweet	intelligent
clever	down to earth	affectionate	modest
humorous	conceited	careless	easy going
quiet	friendly	thoughtful	shy
sarcastic	boring	timid	conscientious

Keep in mind that what you do in your spare time, such as hobbies, are also part of your personality.

On the lines below list at least three things you like to do.

Write three hobbies that you do not do, but admire in others.

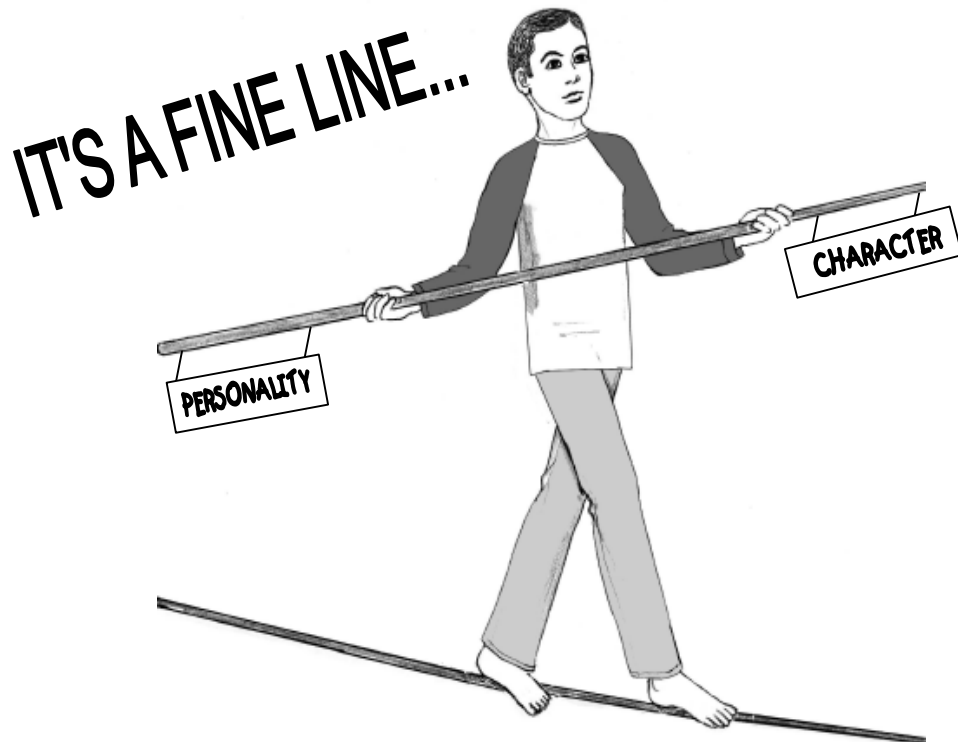
What can you conclude? Do you value the same personality traits in others that you have? Or do people with opposite likes and dislikes appeal to you? Record your findings on the lines below.

Character Versus Personality

It is important to distinguish between an appealing personality and a positive character. Keep in mind that personality is what we notice right away when we meet someone. It is how we present ourselves to others. In fact, if we meet someone who appeals to us, after only one conversation we think to ourselves, "Oh, he or she seems like a nice person."

Character, on the other hand, is what helps you to determine what is right and wrong. Character defines the way you treat yourself and the way you treat others. It dictates your moral and ethical beliefs. It is not as easy to recognize a person's character, as it is to recognize their personality. Many times, true character is hidden behind a fictitious personality.

Take the time to learn about a person's character regardless of their personality. For example, two people might appear to have similar personality traits but have very different character traits. Or they may have opposite personalities and have very similar character traits. True friendships should be based not only on compatible personalities, but more so on positive moral character. So, be aware of not only the personality of someone you associate with, but his or her character as well.



Kelly And Pam

Read the following scenario about two friends who had similar personalities, but very different characters.

Kelly and Pamela are both in the band. Both girls enjoy pizza and chocolate ice cream. They share many other similar personality traits as well. For example, they both like to draw, swim and watch educational shows.

After band practice they usually stop at the mini-mart on their way home. On this particular day, they both bought drinks and a snack. Kelly received the correct change from the \$5.00 bill she gave the clerk, but Pamela received more change than she was supposed to.

After leaving the store Pamela told Kelly that the clerk gave her back too much change.

"You can't keep that money," Kelly said, in a shocked whisper. "The clerk might get into trouble and lose her job. Plus, you will be stealing if you keep it."

"This isn't stealing," replied Pamela. "She gave it to me. It's not my fault she's careless."

Kelly did not convince Pamela that she was wrong but she did show her true friendship by pointing out to Pamela what would be the right thing to do.



Answer the following questions.

1. What were some of Pamela and Kelly's shared personality traits?

2. Did the two girls have similar character traits? Explain your answer.

3. Using your list of positive character traits, what traits best describe Kelly's character? _____

4. What negative traits should Pamela eliminate from her character? _____

5. How do you think Kelly should handle the situation? _____

Listen to the following poem.

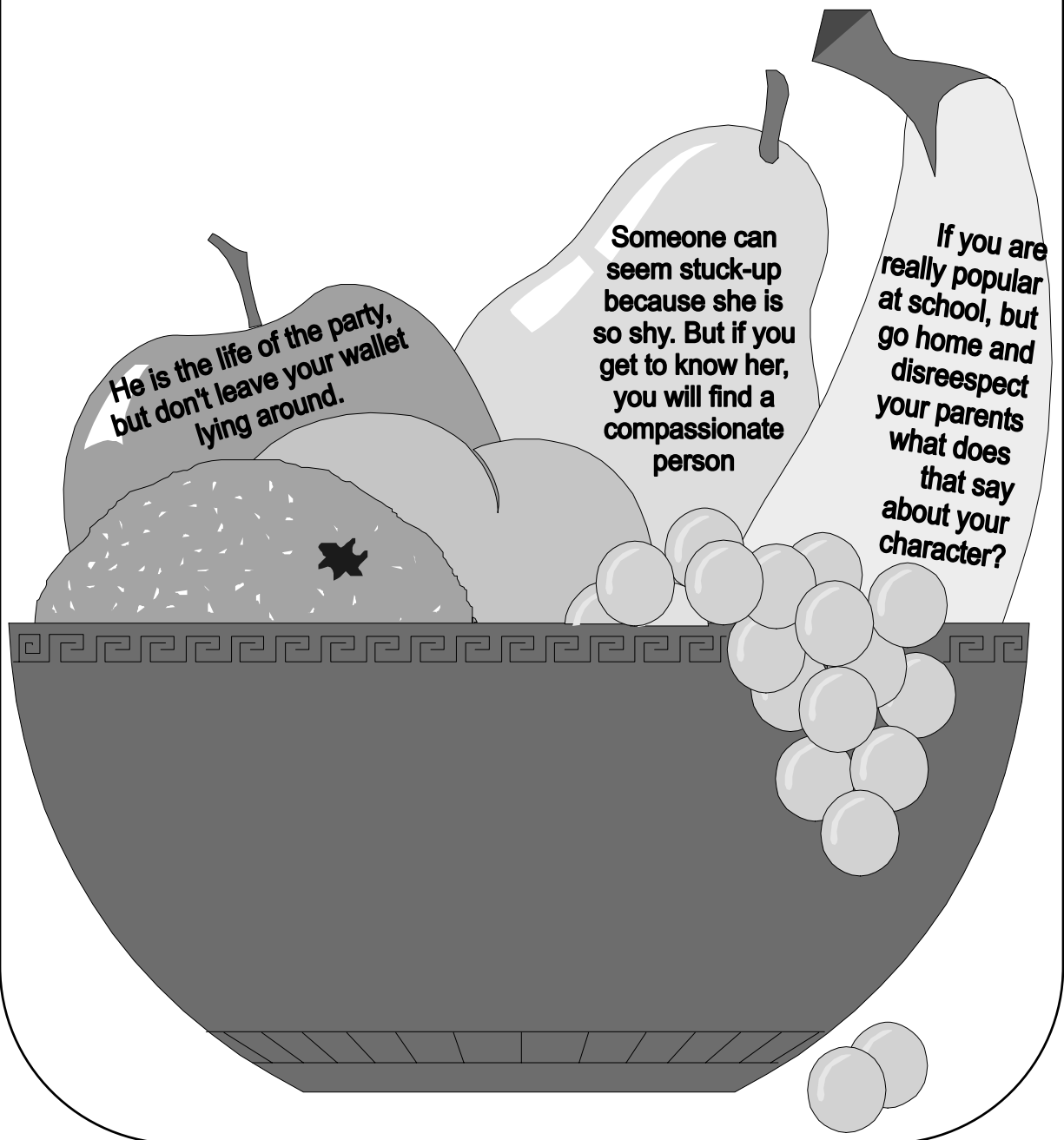
Poem: More Than Meets The Eye

He seemed so kind, he seemed so nice,
But his personality did not suffice.
A positive character he did lack,
Smiling in your face while stabbing you in the back.
His smiles, jokes and playful grin
Almost hid the negative character within.
He spoke in a pleasant way,
But his friends he did betray.
With a devious mind and deceptive thought,
He chose to steal what he hadn't bought.
From someone he knew, who called him a friend
He stole from him again and again.

Until one day, his friend did say,
"I don't want you here, now go away.
You stole while you smiled at me.
With your behavior I disagree.
I thought I knew you,
I thought we were tight,
But your negative character,
Is just not right."



FOOD FOR THOUGHT



He is the life of the party,
but don't leave your wallet
lying around.

Someone can
seem stuck-up
because she is
so shy. But if you
get to know her,
you will find a
compassionate
person

If you are
really popular
at school, but
go home and
disrespect
your parents
what does
that say
about your
character?

Here are a few things to think about...

Disciplined—*Using self-control to behave in a proper way.* For example, you want to get straight A's this semester so you decide to cut out all other after-school activities and concentrate only on studying.

Compassionate—*To care about the needs of others.* If you see that someone feels down or sad, you care enough to try and help. For example, your friend lost her wallet. You forgo your plans and help her look for it.

Responsible/Reliable—*Always doing what is necessary to complete the task; can be depended on.* For example, your parents have an emergency and must leave the house urgently. They are not worried about leaving you with your younger siblings, because they know they can depend on you to care for them while they are gone.

Merciful—*To show leniency or tolerance even when others have behaved in a manner that deserves a consequence.* For example, your brother carelessly left his skates on the

steps. Not realizing they were there, you trip and fall. Your mother was ready to ground him for a week, but instead you say, " Mom I'm alright. I know he didn't mean it. Maybe now that he sees how dangerous it is, he'll remember to put them away." She relents from grounding him.

Courageous—*The act of doing what needs to be done even when you are afraid.* For example, the school bully is picking on a classmate that is much smaller than he is. Even though you are afraid he will turn his negative attention upon you, you stand up and say in a firm voice, "If you don't stop, I'll get the principal."

Envious—*To resent what someone has, while at the same time wanting what they possess.* An envious person is also unthankful. Envy can lead to hate, jealousy, anger, and hostility. Bob was envious of Daniel because he was popular and athletic. Bob wanted to be popular as well, so he began spreading vicious rumors about Daniel.

"Observing someone's actions reveals his or her true character."

~ The Peaceful Solution

What I Have Learned

R My character is a combination of values that I have gathered since birth.

R Some values are called moral values because they clearly define the right way to behave and are common to all people.

R When I behave in a way that is caring and considerate towards others and myself, I am displaying positive character traits.

R I can become a person of integrity when I consistently practice and demonstrate my moral character traits.

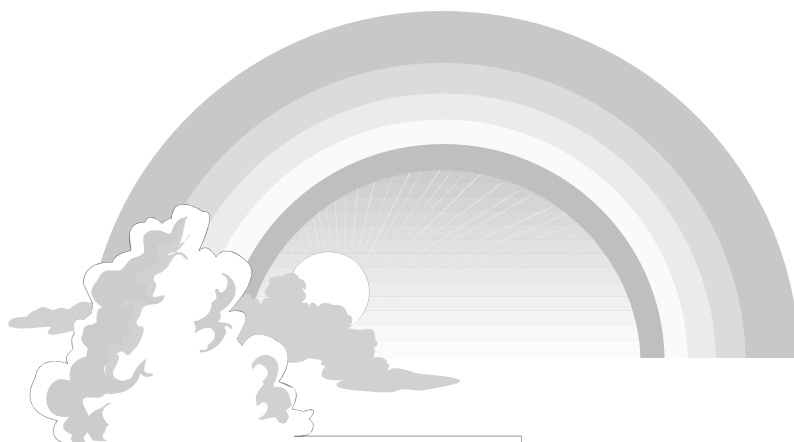
R Personality is what makes me a unique individual. It is a sum total of my likes and dislikes, attitudes and preferences.

R Personality is important in terms of how I interact with others and how they interact with me.

R Personality does not determine the “true colors” of someone’s character.

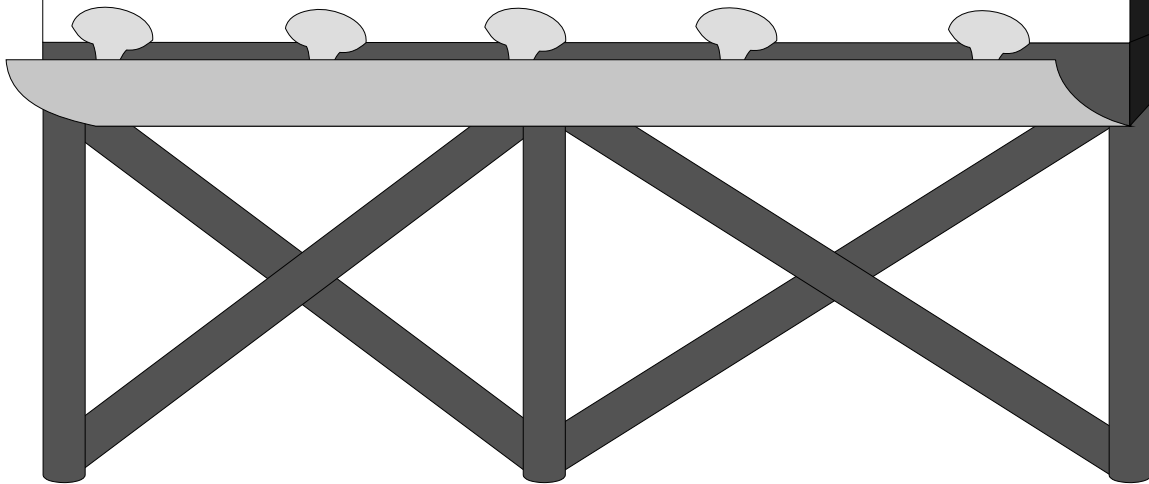
R I must be ready to determine, based on each and every situation, if moral character traits are being modeled or not.

R Ultimately, it is character, not personality, that should define who I am and who I associate with.



Enrichment Activities

1. Develop a skit where the actors will need to express both personality and character traits. As the scenes unfold, identify where character and personality are expressed.
2. Create a family tree of character traits. Identify and trace any obvious character or personality traits as far back as possible. Could these family traits be genetic or learned? How do you determine that?
3. Group work: Form groups of three to four. Use a popular television show or movie to discuss what personality and character traits the main actors and actresses display. One member is to summarize what the group discussed.
4. Do “**Just For Fun**” activities on pages 32-33.



Just For Fun

Activity #1



Unscramble each word and write it on the line.

1. gnivigrof _____
2. aadefsstt _____
3. tetapin _____
4. cleftupser _____
5. osehtn _____
6. pocitismit _____
7. yhtrowsurt _____
8. goesaruocu _____
9. lramo _____
10. tsorviuu _____
11. icremluf _____
12. bailerel _____
13. ebmlhu _____
14. orugenes _____
15. etanoissapmoc _____
16. cddenilpisi _____
17. lakfnuth _____
18. elbisnopser _____
19. suticnsioince _____
20. fcrelua _____

compassionate
courageous
disciplined
forgiving
moral

generous
honest
humble
merciful
conscientious

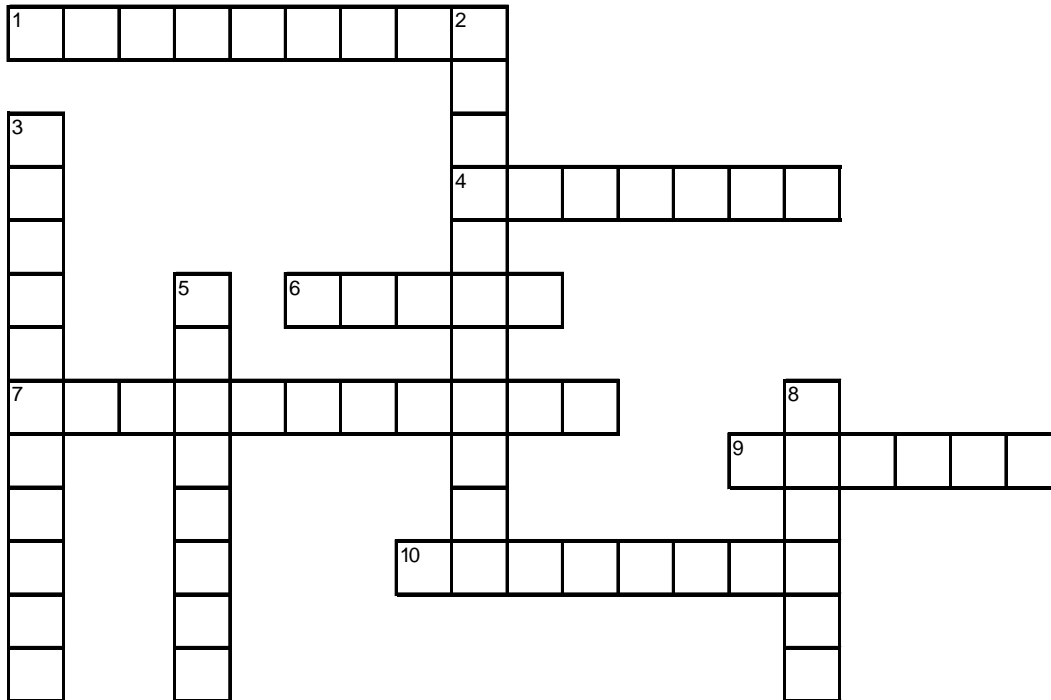
optimistic
patient
reliable
respectful
careful

responsible
steadfast
thankful
trustworthy
virtuous

Just For Fun

Activity #2

 Use the clues to complete the puzzle. 



ACROSS

- Genetics, influences, experiences, etc. help shape our _____.
- Being calm and using self-control during a set back is being _____.
- Character helps people determine right from _____.
- Sometimes a person's character is confused with his _____.
- Some values that are common to all people are called _____.
- Always accentuate the positive and eliminate the _____.

DOWN

- Always doing what is necessary to complete a task is _____.
- Using self-control to behave in a certain way is being _____.
- A person's character can be either negative or _____.
- Being fair, straight forward and sincere is to be _____.



Answer Key

Lesson One

Page 26—Kelly And Pam Scenario

Answers will vary but may include:

1. They both were in the band, enjoyed pizza and chocolate ice cream.
2. No, one desired stealing, but the other didn't.
3. Honest, trustworthy, disciplined, thoughtful, intelligent, etc.
4. Dishonest, unreliable, etc.
5. She should continue to explain to her the error in stealing and the consequences that could occur.

Page 32—Just For Fun—Activity #1

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. forgiving | 11. merciful |
| 2. steadfast | 12. reliable |
| 3. patient | 13. humble |
| 4. respectful | 14. generous |
| 5. honest | 15. compassionate |
| 6. optimistic | 16. disciplined |
| 7. trustworthy | 17. thankful |
| 8. courageous | 18. responsible |
| 9. moral | 19. conscientious |
| 10. virtuous | 20. careful |

Page 33—Just For Fun—Activity #2

1 C H A R A C T E R								2 R			
								E			
								S			
3 D									4 P A T I E N T		
I									O		
S	5 P	6 W R O N G									
C	O									S	
I	7 P E R S O N A L I T Y							8 H			
L	I									9 M O R A L S	
I	T									N	
N	I	10 N E G A T I V E									
E	V									S	
D	E									T	