

# Chapter One

## Character... My Foundation

### Note To The Teacher

**A**s human beings, we have a natural tendency to gravitate to others based on personality traits or mannerisms. People who appear joyful, friendly, approachable and caring are likely to make friends quicker than those who are shy, withdrawn or simply quiet. Although these qualities have their advantages, using them as the basis for forming relationships can be devastating if these persons do not have a sound character to support their personality.

In this first chapter, we discuss character and personality and examine the fundamental differences between the two. It is imperative that we teach our young adults, especially as they mature and become more independent, how to develop positive character within themselves and recognize positive character in others.

We live in a society where greater emphasis is placed on acquiring material possessions, status, popularity and physical attraction than on the development of positive moral character traits like compassion and respect. Consequently, our children are more likely to be impressed with qualities and behaviors that pertain to personality rather than character. We are therefore faced with a generation of children who are more likely to engage in risk taking behavior, stealing, or exacting revenge against authority and peers in order to improve their status among their friends and to fit in and be accepted.

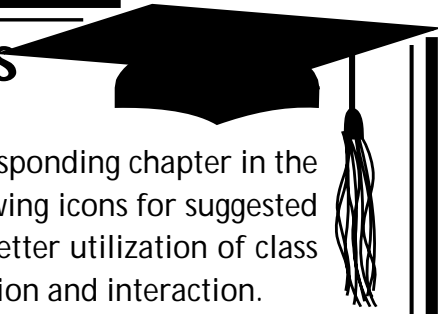
As role models and educators, we must make it a priority to give our students the knowledge they need to avoid misjudging others to their own detriment. By emphasizing the importance of character and its development, we will teach our youth the value of acquiring traits that uphold moral principles and the benefits of acquiring friends who uphold these same beliefs.

Other concepts explored in this chapter are:

- Moral principles as they relate to life, possessions and the environment.
- The importance of recognizing and prioritizing values with the aim of developing a positive character.
- Recognizing established patterns of behavior in order to determine character.

It is our goal to help students to understand the difference between personality and character. In this way, they can avoid putting their trust in those who can mislead them into making poor choices. We also hope that students will learn that positive character is the foundation of a successful life.

# Teacher Tips



1. Carefully preview the lesson plan and corresponding chapter in the handbook for Lesson One. Look for the following icons for suggested teacher tips. These suggestions can facilitate better utilization of class time and will result in more stimulating discussion and interaction.

Written exercise can be assigned for homework.

Reading can be assigned for homework.

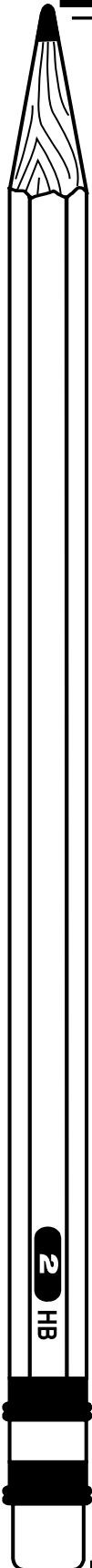
! This activity can be modified into an interactive session where students are divided into small groups and allowed to brainstorm and discuss ideas.

Scenarios can be dramatized for a more interactive activity.

2. To ensure greater comprehension of the text, assign the following key words for vocabulary. Definitions can be found in the glossary.

aggression	assumption	attitude
behavior	character	communicate
condone	cultural	environment
ethical	humane	inaccurate
incarceration	influences	inherent
integrity	interact	moral
personality	possession	principle
prioritize	propensity	rights
tendency	valuable	

**Related Subjects:** *Behavioral Science, English, Language Arts, Writing, and Drama.*



# Lesson Plan

## Character... My Foundation

### PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn what character is and how it is developed. They will also learn the difference between character and personality.

### MATERIALS

- R Students' handbooks
- R 2 Paper bags
- R Scissors

**Note:** Allow students to complete the “**Chapter One Student Pre-Assessment Form**” found on page 3 prior to beginning this lesson.

### PROCEDURE

1. Introduce *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* to the class. Inform students that they will be studying from the Character Unit of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* for the next five weeks. Guide class feedback by asking students why is it important to learn about character? Take as many answers as time permits then tell students that character education will teach them to:
  - a. Recognize the difference between right and wrong behavior.
  - b. Improve their decision-making skills.
  - c. Improve the quality of their lives by becoming better persons and motivating others to do the same.

Explain to students that in order to understand how to develop positive character they need to learn about personality as well because personality and character can be easily confused.

2. Tell students that in today's lesson they will focus on how character and personality are developed and the fundamental differences between the two. Have the class turn to the sections entitled "**Introduction**" and "**What's The Difference**" on pages 5-11 in their handbooks. Call on students to read the text. Test class comprehension by asking students the following questions:

- a. What is the fundamental difference between character and personality? (*Character is the means by which we distinguish between right and wrong and personality is the combination of our personal preferences and social skills.*)
- b. What is morality and why does it play an important role in all human interactions? (*Answers should include: Morals are principles or beliefs that govern the way people think and behave. They help us understand that whether people are members of the same family, or from different nations all human beings should be treated with respect and no one should bring harm to them or destroy their possessions.*)

Tell students that the combination of personality and character makes each person unique.

3. Tell students that, in addition to moral principles, other factors help to shape both character and personality. Have the class turn to the section entitled "**In Addition To Morals**" found on page 12 and choose students to read the subsections on heredity, values and environment. ◊ Allow time for students to complete the accompanying exercise after each section.

4. Explain to students that character is made up of specific traits that can be categorized as positive or negative. Negative traits, such as aggression and retaliation can result in poor interaction, as well as harm to oneself and others. In contrast, positive traits such as honesty and respect support moral principles. Have students brainstorm additional character traits and categorize them as positive or negative. Ideas can be recorded on the board. After the brainstorming activity, have the class turn to the sections entitled "**The Building Blocks Of Character**" and "**Positive Character Traits**" found on pages 19-20. Allow students time to review the positive character traits as listed in the chart with the list on the board. ◊ The activities on pages 21-24 can be assigned as homework.

5. Have the class turn to the section entitled "**Negative Character Traits**" found on page 25. Students can compare their list of negative traits as

recorded on the board with this chart. } Have students complete the scenarios on **pages 26-27** individually, or they can be dramatized for a more interactive activity. Remind students that having these traits as a part of their character can result in hurt feelings, poor communication and physical aggression.

6. Tell students that a person's character develops one choice at a time. Their choices determine their character. People make both positive and negative choices, so their character is a combination of both positive and negative traits. Stress that anyone can take steps to eliminate negative traits from his or her character. Have the class turn to the sections entitled **"Here's The Bottom Line"** and **"It's A Matter Of Choice"** found on **pages 28-29** and choose students to read the text.

**Note:** Prior to this activity make a copy of **page n** of the *Teacher's Manual*, separate positive and negative traits and put into respective bags labeled positive and negative.

7. **Activity #1—And The Results Are...**: Divide the class into groups of three or four students. Instruct students to pick a trait from each bag. Have students turn to **page 30** in their handbooks and follow the instructions given in the text. Allow time for each group to determine the best answer and record their findings in their handbooks.

Summarize group activity by emphasizing that choices build character, which in turn leads to rewards or consequences.

8. Inform students that now that they have a better understanding of character, they can focus on understanding what personality is. Reiterate that personality is the sum of our likes, dislikes and attitude. Have the class turn to **page 31** and choose students to read the section entitled **"How Does Character Compare To Personality."** Have students complete the accompanying exercise and share with the class some of their personality traits and the type of personality they like in others.

9. Emphasize to students that although we may gravitate towards certain people because of their personalities we must also be aware of their character. Together, character and personality paint a

complete picture of who we are. Have the class turn to **pages 34-35** to the sections entitled **“Looking Beyond Personality”** and **“I Have A Question.”**

10. Guide class discussion by asking students to identify some of the drawbacks of choosing friends based solely on personality. *(Answers will vary but could include: personality alone will not give any indication of someone’s character. Someone could be personable and comical but dishonest; or someone could be shy and quiet, but also responsible and caring.)* Emphasize that only through observing someone’s response to moral issues can they gain insight into that person’s character.

11. Tell students that the combination of character and personality play a vital role in achieving and maintaining a successful life. Take a brief poll as to what your students regard as success. *(Answers will vary, but may include a prestigious career, wealth, and fame.)* Tell students that success that is based solely on personality and excludes a positive moral character can be unstable. Guide class discussion by asking the following questions:

- a. How can someone who has achieved success as a banker be affected by a dishonest character?
- b. How can someone who has achieved a successful career as a basketball player be affected by an aggressive or violent character?

Have the class turn to the section entitled **“Putting It All Together”** on **page 36** and choose a student to read the text. CCE The accompanying article entitled **“Why Character Counts”** and **“Understanding The Main Point”** on **page 37** can be assigned as homework. Emphasize the main point mentioned in the article, that character is developed by the choices we make about how we treat others and their belongings as well as how we treat ourselves.

12. Conclude the lesson by having students take turns reading the section entitled **“What I Have Learned”** found on **page 39**. Reemphasize that both character and personality shape who we are as individuals and how we interact with others. Encourage students to strive to develop positive character in order to reach their full potential and succeed in life.

**Note:** Allow students to complete the **“Chapter One Student Post-Assessment Form,”** found on **page 51** upon completion of this lesson

**Benchmark:**

- Understands the difference between character and personality.
- Knows positive and negative character traits.
- Understands the importance of developing positive moral character.

Cut on the dotted line. Put each category of traits in separate bags. Have each group member choose one trait from each bag.

Positive	Negative
Responsible	Inconsiderate
Reliable	Deceitful
Honest	Revengeful
Determined	Dishonest
Patient	Envious
Loyal	Selfish
Forgiving	Hateful
Humble	Without Compassion
Optimistic	Disrespectful
Respectful	Aggressive
Generous	Disloyal
Thankful	Impatient

# Note To The Student

**Y**ou are about to embark on a journey, a journey that will take you from childhood to adulthood. Are you ready? Do you have everything you will need to carry you through the most important years of your life? In fact, have you even considered *what* you will need? Certainly an education will benefit you in the years to come. If that were not the case you would not have been in school since the age of five. For many people a high school diploma is only the tip of the iceberg. College, graduate school and for some a Ph.D., constitute a well-rounded education that prepares you for a career in the future. In addition to the math, English, science, social studies and writing courses, have you ever considered what else you will need to be successful? Here at *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Incorporated*, we prove that no education is complete if it does not include instruction on how to develop a positive character. Let's face it. In your many years of schooling there will be subjects that you will take that you will not use every day. Character, on the other hand, is one subject you will use every day for the rest of your life and will aid your success in any field.

The information contained in this book will help you to gain greater insight into who you are on the inside, how to evaluate what is important to you, and how to improve yourself and your interactions with others. In other words, you will learn about your character and the important role it plays in your journey to adulthood and your success as an adult.



## A Few Sad Facts Of Life



**I**n a way, it is sad that we live in a society that puts so much emphasis on what people are like on the outside, whether they are popular, pretty, cute, athletic, tall, short or fat, as if those are the only things that matter. It is even sadder that we sometimes feel forced to spend so much time trying to change to fit the latest trends that, while popular, may not be beneficial for us. And here is the saddest fact of all, 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 bad scenes. Just in case you're wondering what a "bad scene" is, it is the thousands of preadolescent and adolescent males and females who become involved with drugs every year, the 1,000,000 teen pregnancies a year, the 25,000 teens who are diagnosed HIV positive every year in the United States

alone, not to mention the thousands more who die in drunk driving accidents.

## The Road Less Traveled

**H**ere's what it all boils down to. You, yes you, do not 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 let's face the challenges. All of us do not want to risk contracting HIV or any of the other 125 STDs out there. All of us do not desire to use drugs or abuse alcohol by getting drunk. 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 is taking place on the inside. Stop feeling like you have to join the sick, dying or dead. Along with all of your other preparations for adulthood, you must also prepare to develop and maintain a positive character. In order to avoid those "bad scenes" we talked about, you must start making choices that show a positive character, being consistent, responsible, respectful, and honest, just to name a few. So really pay 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 or will not yield to.



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### Student Pre-Assessment

Select the choices below that most accurately answer the question.

1. Put a "c" on the lines by the words that describe character or a "p" on the lines by the words that describe personality.

____friendly	____shy	____modest	____optimistic
____humble	____outgoing	____humorous	____impatient
____relaxed	____bold	____honest	____talented
____aggressive	____envious	____respectful	____responsible
____compassionate	____practical	____affectionate	____indifferent

2. If you had to choose a friend who is honest over one who is fun to be with, which would you choose?

\_\_\_\_\_honest friend                      \_\_\_\_\_fun friend

3. Which of the following definitions best defines responsibility?

\_\_\_\_a. When you are determined not to give up or change what you have set out to accomplish.

\_\_\_\_b. Not yielding to impulsive thoughts and actions.

\_\_\_\_c. Always doing what is necessary to complete the task.

4. Most people's character consists of a combination of both positive and negative traits.

\_\_\_\_\_True

\_\_\_\_\_False

5. A person of integrity can best be described as someone who practices:

\_\_\_\_a. Inherited positive traits such as intelligence and optimism.

\_\_\_\_b. Positive, moral character in all his interactions.

\_\_\_\_c. Some positive and negative character traits. After all no one is perfect.

"Your character and personality make you the unique individual that you are." ~*The Peaceful Solution*

# Chapter One

## Character... My Foundation

### Introduction

**H**ow often can you recall using the following statements or similar ones, to describe people you know or have recently met? "He's cool, but I wouldn't trust him." "I've only spoken with her once, but she seems really nice." Simple statements like these describe a very complex combination of behavior known as character and personality. Together with physical features, character and personality help to make each person a unique individual.

In this first chapter of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, you will learn what character is and the importance of developing a positive character. You will see that character plays an important role in the life of the individual and society as a whole. You will explore how character and personality are developed and why it is essential that you learn to distinguish between the two. Although there is a clear distinction between character and personality, the two can be easily confused and often personality is used to describe character. When people are unclear about the differences between character and personality they can make assumptions about each other that are inaccurate.

Understanding the importance of a positive character, how to obtain it and the difference between character and personality are steps toward achieving true success in developing a positive moral character.

# What's The Difference?

**C**haracter is the combination of morals and beliefs that dictates how we treat others, our environment and ourselves. It is the basis on which our every thought, action, and decision is derived, and it is the means by which we distinguish between right and wrong. Personality is the combination of your personal preferences, attitude, likes and dislikes and social skills. For instance, the type of music you like to listen to, whether you like art or football as well as countless other qualities make up your personality. The process by which your character and personality is formed is similar in many ways. Some of these similarities include traits inherited from your parents, how and where you were raised, and experiences that have influenced you.

## The Importance Of Morals To Character

One of the key factors that separates and distinguishes character from personality is called moral principles. In general, moral or ethical principles are universal. In other words, people from all over the world would agree with them and uphold them. Morals refer to principles or beliefs that govern the way people think and behave. Moral principles clearly separate what is right from wrong and they are the foundation of character.

## Morality Can Be Divided Into Three Basic Categories

1. Behavior and attitude towards all life.
2. Behavior and attitude towards possessions and property.
3. Behavior and attitude towards the environment.

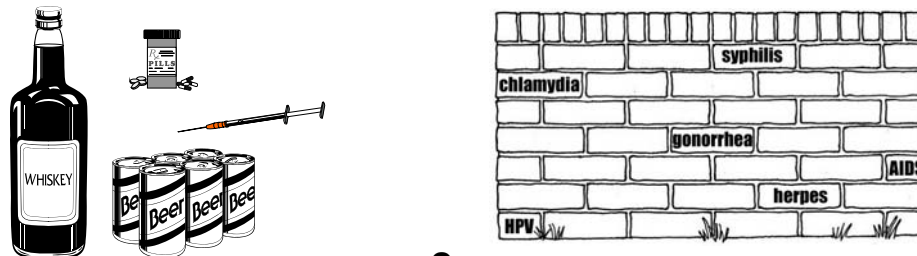
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**Moral principles, in regards to human life, means acknowledging and accepting that life is valuable and that all people have the potential to contribute to society.** When you have a moral attitude towards others you accept and appreciate that everyone has 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. Instead, you would treat them with care and concern.

An immoral attitude towards life consists of behavior that devalues, belittles and hurts others both emotionally and physically. Behavior that includes name-calling, teasing, bullying and prejudice, causes others to feel inferior. Physically hurting others includes being aggressive and violent to the point of even murdering someone. It also consists of behavior that violates, such as rape.

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

Did you know that in addition to displaying an immoral attitude towards others, individuals could also display this same attitude towards themselves? Choices that involve risk-taking behaviors such as premarital sex, unsafe driving habits, and drug and alcohol abuse are examples of ways in which millions of people devalue their own lives. This type of behavior is the leading cause of sexually transmitted diseases, degeneration of the mind and health and also death. Self-mutilation, which is willfully cutting one's own body, and suicide are additional ways in which individuals disregard the value of their own lives.



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**Behaving morally regarding the possessions/property of others means to recognize that everyone owns things and that there are inherent rights of ownership.** Simply put, this means that you have authority to make decisions concerning your belongings. You also have the right to have possessions without fear that another person would take your belongings without your permission. Recognizing this moral concept means accepting that everyone else has authority and rights of ownership

concerning his or her possessions as well.

You can behave morally in respect to ownership by asking permission before touching or using someone's belongings. This shows respect to that person and his right of ownership; but asking alone is not enough. You must also accept his response, even if his answer is no. Authority over your possessions means you have the right to decide who uses your belongings, when it is used and how it is used. Not being able to accept someone's decision about his belongings shows disrespect, causes hurt feelings and can lead to conflicts.

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?

A moral outlook about possessions also includes *how* you acquire the things you want. Keep in mind that unless something is legally obtained, it does not belong to you. There are many legal ways to obtain the things you want in life. For example, you can work for it and save your earnings.

If you are a minor and are unable to work legally, you can earn money by doing chores such as raking leaves, mowing lawns, shoveling snow or baby-sitting. Other legal ways to acquire things are through an inheritance, or as a gift.

A moral person recognizes that the rights of ownership are also extended towards items that are lost. Therefore, lost items still belong to the owner and the owner is entitled to have his property returned. That old adage about **"finders keepers,**



**losers 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?

An immoral attitude in regards to the belongings of others means to steal, damage, or destroy another's property. Remember a stolen item never belongs to the person who stole it. For an item to be rightfully yours it must be obtained legally. When you acquire your possessions legally you are free to use them and enjoy them without fear or guilt.

An immoral attitude towards the belongings of others results in misunderstandings and hostilities. For example, you saved all summer to buy a used car. The first day you brought it home your brother takes your car for a spin around the block without first asking you. Since you were unaware that he had taken your car, you assume it was stolen. Frantic, you call the police and report the car stolen.

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



Because this simple moral principle is ignored, crimes such as thefts, burglaries, and grand larceny are rampant in our society. Not only can ignoring this moral principle lead to thefts, 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. Consider the following article:

### **Teen Arrested In Ice-Cream Truck Killing**

A 16-year-old boy has been arrested in the Friday shooting of an ice-cream truck driver in English Woods, Cincinnati. Homicide investigators said Sunday police did not identify the suspect because of his age, but have charged him with aggravated murder and aggravated robbery. Police said they would release more information on the arrest this morning. Floyd Kilpatrick, 51, was fatally shot in his truck about 9:30 p.m. at the corner of Bleeker Lane and Knob Court, police said.

[Enquirer.com/editions/2001/03/26/loc\\_teen\\_arrested\\_in](http://Enquirer.com/editions/2001/03/26/loc_teen_arrested_in)

Here is something else to consider. Although it may seem awkward to accept the concept of ownership in regards to people, it is a fact that children belong to their parents or guardians. This is why there are laws against the removal of children from their homes without the permission of their parents. This is called kidnapping and it is a serious offense that carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

Did you know that running away from home is also against the law? That's right; minors cannot legally remove themselves from the authority of their parents or guardians. Here is one more thing to consider. A person's body also belongs to them. They have authority over their bodies. Laws against rape attest to this simple fact. Rape steals an individual's authority over his or her body. It demoralizes and devalues, leaving permanent psychological and emotional scars.

When children make decisions to do certain things with other children or secretly with adults, a great deal of harm takes place including unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and horrible memories that can cause mental illness.

Keep in mind that character is based on morality. Having moral principles will ensure that you can make positive decisions that will show respect to others and yourself. As you will see later on in this chapter, moral principles are what separates a positive character from a negative one.



**Moral principles can also be applied to the environment and how we care for it.** We need air, water, plants and animals to survive. These and more make up our environment. When we all do our part to care for our environment by not polluting the earth, or using harsh man-made chemicals that contaminate our water supply and atmosphere, we are demonstrating respect and consideration for all life, human, animal and plant. Treating our planet and its resources responsibly now shows our concern for future generations.

In addition to this, we can also display a moral attitude towards animals by treating them humanely and not condoning any form of animal cruelty. Animal cruelty disregards the fact that animals have a purpose and they have a right to life. To condone animal cruelty or abuse for sport does not regard the value of animals. Numerous studies show that many serial killers first engaged in immoral acts toward animals by torturing and dismembering them.



**"Life is precious. Handle with morality."**

“You can inherit character traits, but ultimately your character is what you make of it.” ~The Peaceful Solution

## **In Addition To Morals...**

**N**ow that you know the difference between character and personality, let us explore some of the factors that shape personality which play an integral role in the further development of character.

### **Heredity**

Before you were born, the combination of your parents' genes started forming your physical traits, such as the color of your eyes, skin and hair. Did you know that genetics is also responsible for the behavioral similarities you share with your parents and other family members? Has anyone ever told you that you act just like another family member? Have you ever noticed similar behavioral traits between your friends and their families?

Both positive and negative behavioral traits can be inherited, for example, humor and aggression. But unlike physical traits that are fixed and cannot be changed, behavioral traits can be altered. Inheriting negative qualities like aggression for instance, does not mean you have to accept that as a permanent part of your character. Obviously, no one is a carbon copy of his or her parents or other family members. Each person, as he matures, becomes capable of making decisions that can alter his character. Therefore, each person can develop behavioral traits that are independent of the traits he has inherited.

Inherited behavioral traits, such as aggression can be altered by choices, the environment, and influences that are present in an individual's life. For example, a child who has a propensity for aggression can be trained to control his thoughts and actions to avoid acting aggressively.

CCE **Answer the following question.**

What behavioral trait (s) do you share with other family members?

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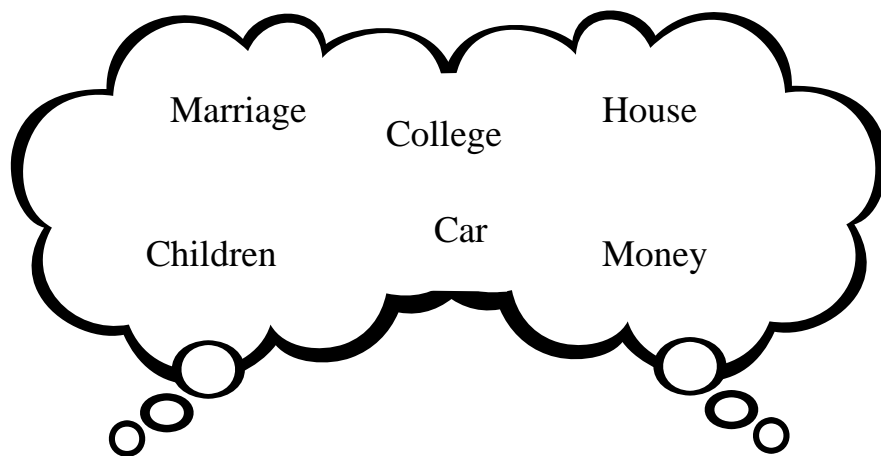
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# Values

**Y**our values are the principles or qualities that you consider to be important or worthwhile. They also play a key role in the formation of your character and personality. There are many different types of values. Some values pertain to how you think and behave. These are moral values. Other values pertain to what you want to accomplish in life (education, fame, wealth), and what you consider beautiful. There are also personal values such as hygiene and appearance, as well as music and art.

What you value comes from several sources. Your first and most influential teachers were your parents. They have been sharing their values with you from the moment you were born. The things your parents considered important are what you have been taught to value. Baby-sitters, teachers, friends, and the media have also played a key role in influencing your values.

The sum of your values is called your value system. Your value system is the means by which you rank or prioritize the things that are important to you. How you prioritize your values is the basis by which many of your decisions are made. For example, if you rank education as your most important value, when faced with a choice to study for an exam or to spend time with your friends, you would choose to study.

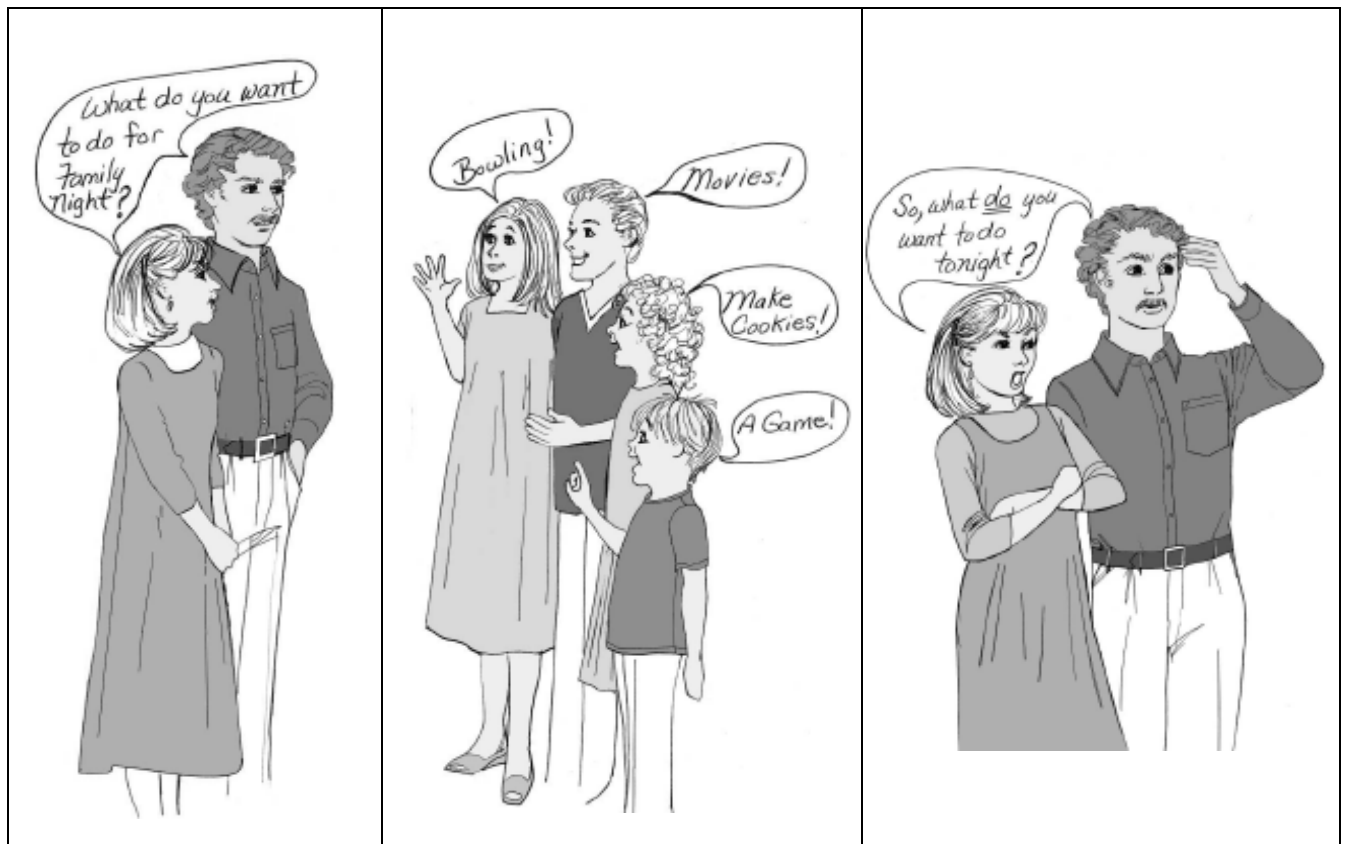


Think About It.  
What Do You Value?



Just as no two people are exactly alike, no two people have the same system of values. Even members of the same family may have different values. For example, you may value staying at home and reading while your brother may value going to the library. Your sister may value going to college, whereas, you value going to a trade school.

The most important thing to remember about your values is that they can change based on your experiences, influences and environment. Therefore, periodically evaluate the things that are important to you. Ask yourself if what you are valuing will support your positive growth and character development. For example, if yielding to peer pressure just to be popular is more important to you than maintaining positive character where you'll respect others and treat them fairly, then you need to stop and re-prioritize your values. Remember, values help you to make choices. It is a fact that people who make popularity their top priority, in order to fit in and be accepted, can be easily pressured into negative behavior. So be careful of how you rank your values.



## C Ranking Your Values

Read the following list of values and rank them from 1-20 based on your preference.

<b>Clothes</b>	
<b>Family</b>	
<b>Jewelry</b>	
<b>Education</b>	
<b>Fun (movies, music, video games)</b>	
<b>Friends/Friendships</b>	
<b>Religion</b>	
<b>Life</b>	
<b>Sports</b>	
<b>Individualism (making your own decisions)</b>	
<b>Health</b>	
<b>Career/Work</b>	
<b>Attractiveness</b>	
<b>Being accepted and liked by my peers</b>	
<b>Fairness/Honesty</b>	
<b>Marriage</b>	
<b>Money</b>	
<b>College</b>	
<b>Positive Moral Character</b>	
<b>Privacy</b>	

So how did you do? By prioritizing your values you have gained insight into your system of values. For instance, there is nothing wrong with ranking friends and friendships as important, but if you choose to be immoral, that is, to engage in premarital sex or take drugs, in order to keep your friends or be accepted by new friends, then you are negatively affecting your character. So be careful that you are not influenced to prioritize your values in a manner that would adversely affect your positive moral development.

Another key role that values play in the formation of your character is in determining how you achieve or pursue the things that are important

to you. Those who value money and wealth with moral principles will work, save and invest in order to gain the wealth they value. Those with immoral principles will choose dishonest ways such as theft, embezzlement or fraud to achieve their wealth.

Many people value children and raising a family. Those with moral principles will marry and start a family. If they cannot have children they will consider adoption. On the other hand, people who lack moral principles have been known to steal other people's children or to adopt illegally.

**Read the following article about a woman who chose to pursue her values without positive moral principles.**

**Abilene, Texas** – A woman snatched a month-old baby from a van in a store parking lot Tuesday and drove away as the child's horrified mother held on desperately to the getaway vehicle.

The abduction occurred about 4:30 p.m. at a Super Wal-Mart. The mother had just placed her three children, including a 2-and a 6-year old, into the family van and was returning a shopping cart to a storage area about 10 feet away. She then saw her infant girl taken from the van and placed into a car. The mother started screaming and trying to get the woman to stop. The mother got there in time to grab onto the car and was dragged about 30 to 40 feet as the car sped away. She was later treated for cuts and bruises. Police said the suspect, Paula Lynn Roach, 24, was being held on a charge of aggravated kidnapping.

# Environment

In addition to your inherited behavioral traits and your values, environment also plays a key role in the development of your character. The combination of your family, how your home life is structured, your culture, customs, and your community help to shape your environment.



Culture can be described as the total of shared attitudes, beliefs and behavior that distinguish one group of people from another. There are many different cultural indicators such as food, music, clothing and even sports. For example, the Italian culture is well known for their pastas and pizzas. The Caribbean culture is known for Calypso and Reggae music. The American culture is known for baseball, apple pie and hot dogs.

Customs or traditions are established practices that are accepted by a group of people and are passed down from one generation to the next. For example, in many cultures there is a custom of passing down a piece of jewelry to a woman on her wedding day.

Both culture and customs play a significant role in determining how your home life is structured and what you have been taught to value. In some cultures, children are raised in an environment, where respect, obedience and a strong work ethic are practiced. In other cultures, women are taught to value dressing modestly. They wear clothes that do not reveal their form or shape, and there is a strict adherence to a specific code of behavior. In addition to this, some cultures forbid customs such as dating, and marriages are prearranged. In other cultures, dating is accepted and individuals are free to choose their mates on their own. All of these customs help to shape what you value and hence, shape your character.

Another important aspect of your environment is the community where you live, and your involvement with members of that community. These factors can affect your moral development because they can influence the type of character and personality you develop. Studies show that children who have little or no adult supervision and live in areas with high rates of crime, gang activity, drug use and drug trafficking are more likely to become involved with gangs, experiment with drugs and view drug trafficking as a viable source of income.

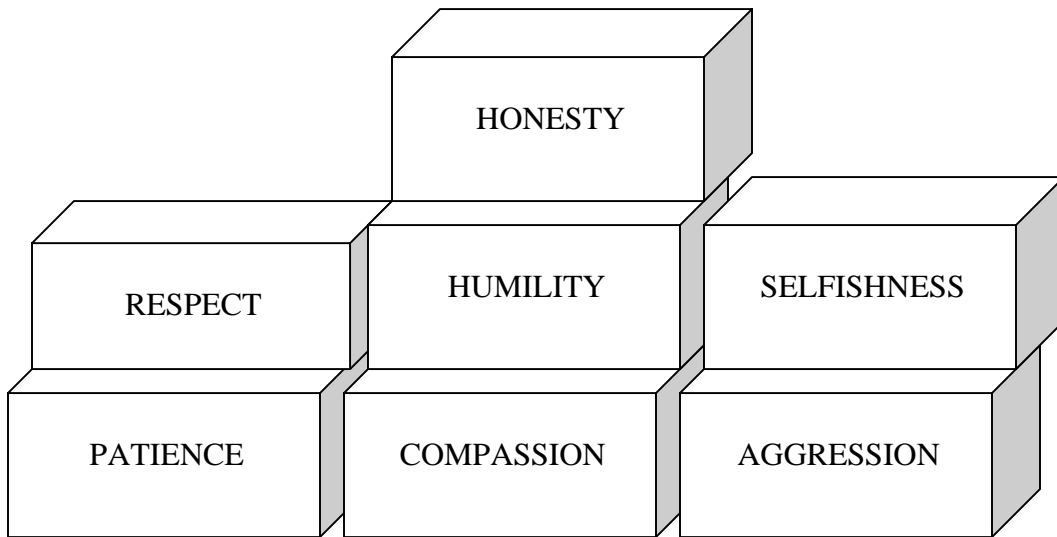
As important as culture, customs, and community are in the formation and development of your character, one of the most important influences in your environment comes from your parents. Parents have one of the most important jobs on our planet. They are responsible for raising a child from a state of dependency to an independent, self-sufficient, productive member of our society. Parents are also responsible for teaching children how to make moral decisions that will show respect for all life. Parents who provide a safe environment and meet the physical needs of their children as well as consistently display moral principles are more likely to have children who also develop positive moral principles regarding themselves and others.

In contrast, in environments where parents are abusive and moral principles are not upheld, the development of one's character can be seriously compromised. Homes, where there is physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse, prevent children from growing up in safety. In these homes there is so much fear, resentment and violence that it becomes difficult to grow and develop in a positive way. Studies have proven that children from abusive homes are more likely to be abusive to their own children.

**C Answer the following questions.**

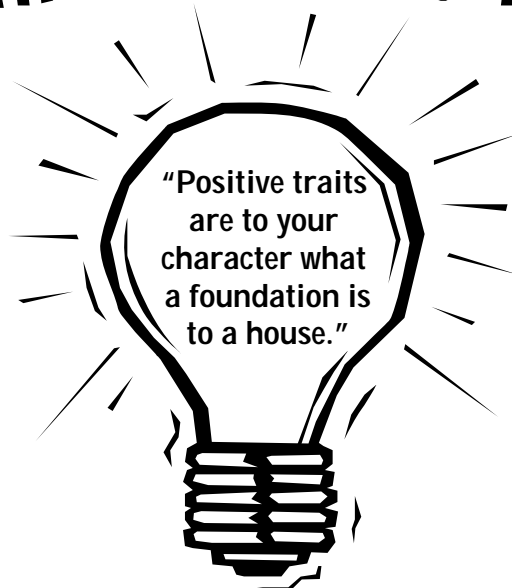
1. What are some cultural or family customs you practice? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Explain the significance your parents have had in your life. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Identify some moral principles that your parents have taught you to value. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# The Building Blocks Of Character



The combination of your moral principles, values, environment and influences are interwoven to make up your character. Your character consists of traits that are similar to building blocks and can be categorized as either positive or negative. Positive traits are beneficial and advantageous to yourself and others. They support and uphold moral principles that govern your behavior. For instance, honesty, compassion, and respect are just a few of these positive traits.

## THINK ABOUT IT



## C Positive Character Traits

The following is a list of positive character traits. Read them carefully. Check column A if they are part of your character. Check column B if you would like to develop these traits.

Positive Trait	Definition	A	B
Educated	Getting all the facts and making sure they are correct before making a decision.		
Responsible	Always doing what is necessary to complete the task.		
Reliable	Can be depended on in word and deed.		
Honest/Trustworthy	Being fair, straightforward, sincere and keeping your promises.		
Patient	Demonstrating self-control and remaining calm through setbacks.		
Steadfast/Persistent	When you are determined not to give up or change what you have set out to accomplish.		
Courageous	The act of doing what needs to be done even when you are afraid.		
Disciplined	Using self-control to behave in a proper way.		
Respectful	To value others as important as yourself and to allow that to show through your actions and attitudes.		
Compassionate	To care about the needs of others.		
Merciful	To show leniency or tolerance even when others have behaved in a manner where they deserved to be given a consequence.		
Forgiving	To refrain from holding anger or resentment towards someone who has wronged you.		
Generous	When you are kind enough to give of what you have in order to help someone else. This also includes giving of your time.		
Humble	Not proud or arrogant.		
Optimistic	The ability to look on the bright side of things, and to find what is positive in a situation or event; to anticipate the best possible outcome.		
Thankful	To be appreciative of the benefits that you have received.		
Considerate	Having regard for another's feelings.		
Modesty	Not given to conceit. Showing decency in behaviors, dress and speech.		
Loyalty	Sincerity, faithfulness, devotion and a commitment to a person or cause.		
Self-control	Not yielding to impulsive thoughts and actions.		
Decisive	Able to come to a decision, make up one's mind and remain firm on the matter.		

An individual who has developed these positive traits and consistently maintains them in his or her interactions with others is a person of **integrity**. All of these traits help to build a positive character and promote moral principles.

**C Take a closer look at the following traits, then answer the questions that follow.**

1. **Humility**—A humble person is willing to learn and accept correction. Accepting correction may not be the easiest thing to do, especially if the person who is correcting you insults you or uses a mean tone of voice. Without a humble attitude you can become resentful, argumentative or rebellious. A humble person accepts correction, regardless of how it is given, with a positive attitude. He or she avoids arguing or becoming hostile because it can make the situation worse. The next time your parents, teachers, or even friends correct you on your choices or behavior don't get upset. Instead, take the time to listen and try to see your behavior from their viewpoint. By taking the time to listen and respectfully consider what you are being told, you are showing humility.

Remember, when you are asked to have a humble attitude, in essence you are being encouraged to be willing and open to improve yourself. Always know that your actions can be better and your thought processes can be improved.

a. Identify two areas in your life where the trait of humility can be beneficial? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. Name three ways you can be a more humble person?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. **Loyalty**—The ability to faithfully commit oneself to a person or cause is important to the development of a positive character. When you are loyal to a cause you are willing to stand firm on your beliefs, you will also put sincere effort into promoting its success. However, you must be careful that, in an effort to fit in, you are not misguided or deceived about *what* and *who* you should be loyal to. For example, every year thousands of children become members of gangs. They are loyal to gang rules even if

these rules promote hatred, aggression, theft and violence. So, be careful. There are many things you can be loyal to. In developing a positive character, commit yourself to being loyal to moral principles.

- a. List three ways being loyal to upholding moral principles can benefit you. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. **Patience/Self-Control**—A patient person is able to wait calmly and without complaining for the things they value and want. Patience also extends to how you treat others, especially if they are antagonistic or hostile. In many ways patience and self-control go hand in hand. To maintain your composure or delay gratification requires you to avoid acting impulsively. Calm, careful consideration of a situation before acting, particularly out of anger or frustration, is the mark of a person who has self-control *and* is patient.

- a. Describe a time when you used both self-control and patience to handle a situation appropriately, or in retrospect describe a situation that occurred where using self-control and patience would have enabled you to handle it appropriately. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. **Steadfastness/Persistence**—A steadfast person has the strength, willpower, and determination not to give up once a positive decision, goal or purpose has been established. A person who is steadfast will apply consistent effort to accomplish any task they have set out to do regardless of setbacks. For example, a person who is determined to develop a positive character will consistently uphold moral principles even when confronted with negative peer pressure.

**Which one of the following best describes your future goal(s)? Check as many as apply.**

- |                               |                                    |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ___ Graduate from high school | ___ Pursue a career in sports      |
| ___ Attend college            | ___ Get a job                      |
| ___ Go to trade school        | ___ Get married and start a family |
| ___ Go to graduate school     | ___ other _____                    |

a. How can steadfastness and persistence help you to achieve the goals that you have indicated?

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5. **Forgiveness**—Forgiving others when they have hurt your feelings or even physically harmed you is probably one of the most difficult things you will ever do. To develop a moral character you must learn to remove all thoughts of anger, hatred, resentment and ill will against anyone who has physically or emotionally harmed you. Did you know that if you refuse to forgive someone for a wrongdoing, you will eventually cause harm to yourself? You can become so absorbed in reliving the incident that caused you hurt that you could miss out on the joys that life can offer. A forgiving person can learn from his experiences and use them to benefit his life or the lives of others.

**Read the following excerpt from the book *Unlimited Power, A Black Choice*, by Anthony Robbins.**

Joseph McClendon had been riding his motorcycle in the early hours of a cold winter morning when his bike broke down. Having no other choice, he pulled into a closed gas station to try and repair his bike. As he was making the repairs, a truck pulled into the gas station and from it proceeded three white men. Thinking that they would offer a hand, Mr. McClendon was glad to see them. However, his relief soon turned to fear as they stumbled from the truck drunk and calling him derogatory names. Amidst their drunken slurs the men began to punch, hit and kick Mr. McClendon for no other reason than he was black. Mr. McClendon survived the injuries he sustained that night, but the men were never apprehended.

Eventually Mr. McClendon was able to return to work. However, he soon realized that although the incident was over and his physical injuries were healing he was allowing the memories of that night to affect his life. He writes, “Outside, I was happy and ambitious by most people’s standards, but inside, I was completely steeped in the memory of what had occurred to me. I was angry, bitter and extremely sarcastic...Despite an upbringing that stressed fairness and harmony I felt the seeds of prejudice germinating in my own gut. It sickened

me to see what I was becoming. For the first time in my life, I found myself reacting to color and culture instead of character...I hated who I was becoming with all my heart. I was guilty of the very process that caused those men to attack me viciously without cause. I didn’t want that event to shape the rest of my life. I didn’t want to live the rest of my days filled with self-doubt and vengeance.”

Mr. McClendon sought the help of his friend Anthony Robbins to learn the steps to forgiveness and letting go of the past. Learning to let go of the past was like a new lease on life for Mr. McClendon. He regained control of his life and stopped allowing emotions like hatred, anger and retaliation to affect his relationships. Today, Mr. McClendon has become a lecturer on the power of positive thoughts, attitude and letting go of the past. No longer does his life revolve around that cold winter night when he was viciously beaten for no other reason than his skin color. He now uses his experience to teach others that there is power in forgiveness.

a. How did Mr. McClendon's experience change his character?

\_\_\_\_\_

b. How did learning to forgive change Mr. McClendon's life? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. **Reliability**—A reliable person can be counted on to uphold both written and verbal agreements. An agreement is anything you have said that you would do. In other words, an agreement is a promise and can either be verbalized or written, as in a contract. People who are reliable are also trusted and respected. Others know they can depend on and put their full assurance in them.

a. Identify someone in your life who you consider reliable. In what way is that person reliable? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

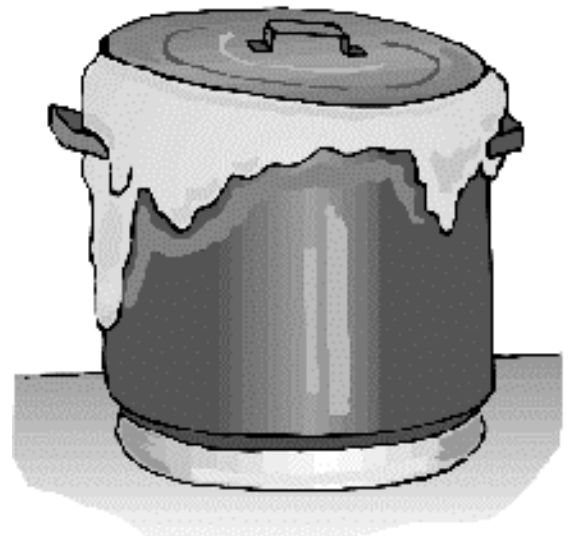
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## Here's what it all boils down to...

Becoming a person of integrity means incorporating positive traits into your character. By using these traits on a daily basis, you will build and strengthen your relationships with your parents, teachers and peers.



# Negative Character Traits

In contrast to the positive, beneficial character traits we just reviewed, negative character traits such as hatefulness, aggression, and disrespect are harmful to the individual and those around him. These traits promote immoral principles that negatively affect others and their possessions.

**The following is a list of negative character traits. Become familiar with them in order to eliminate them from your character.**

Uneducated	Making a decision without getting all the facts.
Inconsiderate	Thoughtless or insensitive towards the feelings and needs of others.
Indifferent/Unconcerned	Uncaring and unsympathetic.
Envious	To resent what someone has, at the same time wanting what he or she possesses.
Impatient	To be restless or short-tempered and easily aggravated.
Uncompassionate	A lack of concern for the needs of others.
Hateful	An intense emotion that results in extreme dislike and hostility. Hate is derived from fear, anger, or perceived injury.
Unforgiving	Unable to forgive others for wrongdoings. Cold-hearted.
Revengeful	To seek retaliation or to desire to get even.
Deceitful	To purposely mislead.
Disrespectful	Lacking courtesy, esteem or honor.
Aggressive	Hostile, violent behavior that can be both physical and verbal.
Unreliable	Cannot be depended on.
Disloyal	Unfaithful and uncommitted to a person or cause. Treacherous and deceitful.
Dishonest/Untrustworthy	Unable to be trusted.
Pessimistic	Unable to see the positive side of a situation. Always thinking negatively.
Indecisive	Unable to commit to a decision.
Irresponsible	Not completing duties or tasks. Not accountable for one's actions.
Arrogant	Proud, overbearing, not humble.

} Take a closer look at the following traits. Then read the scenarios that follow. Explain how, if no one intervenes, each negative trait could lead to disaster.

1. **Unforgiving / Revengeful**—An unforgiving attitude causes the person to focus on emotional pain that results from a real or imagined wrong. A lack of forgiveness leads to anger, hate and bitterness. If left unchecked, it can lead to retaliation or revenge. A revengeful person stores hurt feelings and seeks an opportunity to strike back and inflict pain and suffering on the offender. When people take revenge, they risk hurting others as well—not only the person they are targeting but also those who are not directly involved.

### Scenario

Justin made Billy's life miserable. Billy was short for his age, wore glasses and was about 30 pounds overweight. Not one school day went by that Justin did not push Billy or fail to remind him that he was a fat geek. Instead of asking his parents, teachers or guidance counselor for ways to deal with the situation, Billy stored his anger and resentment. Eventually, Billy began to plan ways to get even with Justin.

If Billy was to retaliate against Justin, what could be some of the possible consequences? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. **Disrespectful**—There are many ways that people are disrespectful to each other in our society. One common form of disrespect is through disobedience to authority figures. Disobedience is to willfully oppose what has been deemed proper and acceptable. This could be in regards to speech, dress, attitude and behavior.

### Scenario

Valerie was failing her classes because she was not turning in her homework on time. Her parents told her that she would not be

allowed to go out with friends until she made up the work she had missed. Valerie argued and yelled at her parents, telling them that they were unfair.

Later that evening Valerie left the house without her parents' knowledge or permission.

What consequences could Valerie's choice lead to? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. Irresponsible/Untrustworthy**—Irresponsible people often do not fulfill their obligations or duties, nor do they accept accountability for their actions. As a result, an irresponsible person is also untrustworthy. It is difficult to trust someone when they leave their duties unfinished or do them poorly. Those who are irresponsible often blame others or find excuses to justify their poor choices.

**Scenario**

Michael was asked to look after his 6-year-old brother. After his parents left, Michael's friends called and invited him to the mall. "I'm baby-sitting," Michael responded, but after thinking about it, he said, "but I could bring him along." While at the mall Michael and his friends were having so much fun that Michael soon forgot all about his little brother. When it was time to go home his brother was nowhere to be found.

What consequences could Michael's irresponsible choice lead to?

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# Here's the bottom line...

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**A**lthough character traits can be divided into negative and positive, most people's character consists of a combination of both. The average person's character is not exclusively positive or negative. For example, someone might be honest but may have a very bad temper, or he can be generous, but frequently late for school, work, or other functions.

Keep in mind that negative traits, if left unchecked, could lead to negative consequences such as hurt feelings, anger and conflict. Additional consequences could be regrets, physical harm, incarceration, and even death. For example, thousands of people die every year because of reckless, irresponsible driving.

The qualities that determine your character are based upon the choices you make. It is up to you to recognize that these choices will, over time, establish a pattern of behavior. A pattern shows that you have developed a tendency to act in a specific way. The important thing to remember is that each choice you make concerning how you treat yourself, others, and the environment determines the traits that you will develop.

# IT'S A MATTER OF CHOICE

**T**he development of your character can be compared to making a sandwich. By layering one ingredient after another, bread, mayonnaise, meat, cheese and one more piece of bread you can make a perfect sandwich. With character, it is the layers of behavioral choices that will determine a trait. One choice after another about how you treat others, yourself and the environment will either build a positive character or a negative one. For instance, if you continuously choose to betray another's confidence, then you will develop a pattern of not being able to keep a secret. Eventually, people will consider you as untrustworthy. On the other hand, if you consistently have a positive attitude, even when things are not going your way and are willing to put forth an effort to find solutions to problems, you will be establishing a behavioral pattern that will develop into the character trait of optimism.

Over time choices, whether negative or positive, will develop into specific character traits. By recognizing that these choices, especially the way you interact with others, can lead to specific behavior, you will be better able to develop a positive moral character.



**“Your character, like a sandwich,  
is built one layer  
at a time.”**

# Activity #1

## AND THE RESULTS ARE...

Complete the questions below and report to the class your findings.

What positive trait was your group assigned?

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How could this trait become a part of someone's character? \_\_\_\_\_

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What rewards could result from developing this positive trait? \_\_\_\_\_

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What negative trait was your group assigned?

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How could this trait become a part of someone's character? \_\_\_\_\_

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What consequences could result from developing this negative trait? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Example of a positive trait: Decisive

Someone could learn to be decisive by learning how to distinguish positive choices from negative ones, taking the initiative based on what he knows to be right, following through on his decisions, or being accountable for the choices made.

The rewards would include having the satisfaction of knowing he can make a right choice, building the reputation of being reliable and dependable, and bearing the mark of a leader.

# How Does Character Compare To Personality?

**N**ow that you have learned what character is and how it is developed, let's look at personality. Personality is what accounts for our individuality. Keep in mind that your personality style is made up of many different qualities, some of which are inherited, while others are learned. For example, have you ever noticed how even very young children can be very outgoing and outspoken, while others are very shy? These personality traits are inherited. On the other hand, people who spend time together can begin exhibiting similar mannerisms, likes and dislikes. The music you like best, the foods you like to eat, even what you like to do in your spare time are choices that help to define your personality. Many of these choices will be based on learned behavior.



Personality also helps us to relate to others and it is the basis by which we interact. When you initially meet someone you can either be attracted to or repelled by his personality. Consider for a moment what you notice about someone when you are first introduced. Is it their smile or choice in clothes? Does he seem cheerful and kind? Did you start a conversation and realize that you had many things in common, or was it simply his mannerisms that seemed appealing? After your first meeting, did you think to yourself, "He seemed like a really nice person"?

Personality is the combination of qualities in others that help us determine what type of relationship we are inclined to pursue. We may be automatically drawn to others with personalities that are compatible with ours. But what can personality tell us about someone's character? The fact that someone is comical and likes the color blue does not indicate if this person will uphold moral principles by respecting others and caring for their property.

Keep in mind that the combination of both personality and character paints an accurate picture of who we are and what we stand for. Individuals may have similar personalities, but opposite moral principles. For example, you and your next-door neighbor both like swimming, barbecues and playing Monopoly. However, the other day you saw him take a pack of gum from the gas station. When you confronted him he nonchalantly said, "What's the big deal? It's just a pack of gum, they won't go bankrupt." You were surprised at his answer, because stealing is something you would never do. Here is another example of how personality and character can be different. Both you and your friend may be honest, responsible and considerate but whereas you like the color blue, she likes green. Whereas you are more laid-back, she is really adventurous.

So just what is your personality style and what personality traits do you prefer in others? Take the following evaluation to find out.

**Read the following list of personality traits and circle the ones that best describe your personality. Check the ones that best describe the personality traits that you want in your friends.**

### COMMON PERSONALITY TRAITS

Funny	Personable	Thoughtless	Careless	Bold	Lovable
Adventurous	Quiet	Cute	Down to earth	Adorable	Conceited
Humorous	Rude	Pleasant	Amusing	Appealing	Sweet
Sarcastic	Kind	Intelligent	Clever	Smart	Affectionate
Talkative	Outgoing	Modest	Nice	Spiteful	Boring
Serious	Organized	Cunning	Sly	Nonchalant	Friendly
Sophisticated	Sloppy	Timid	Crafty	Cool	Agreeable
Spoiled	Attractive	Talented	Competitive	Laid back	Shy
Cheerful	Thoughtful	Sneaky	Malicious	Comical	Hardworking

1. What did you learn about your own personality and the personality traits that you prefer in others? Do you choose friends who have the same or different personalities? Use the lines below to explain your answers.

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2. Along with the personality traits that you prefer in a friend, what character traits do you want in a friend and why? Use the lines below to explain your answer.

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**“Real friends have positive character.”**

**~The Peaceful Solution**

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## **Looking Beyond Personality**

**W**hat did you learn about your personality? What did you learn about the type of people you like to be around? Friends can exert a great deal of influence on each other, so it is important to remember that in developing a positive character you should choose friends, who in addition to having compatible personalities, also have positive values and morals.

There are two major drawbacks in choosing friends based only on personality. First, you can be influenced to take on their negative character traits, when their true character is revealed, it can be a disappointment and shock to know that someone you cared about was not a person of integrity. Second, by choosing friends based only on personality you could overlook someone's positive character traits. For example, Patty is the new girl at school. She is very quiet and shy. She is also timid and walks with her head down, afraid of any eye contact. You, however, are adventurous and bold. People who are quiet and timid bore you, so you ignore the new girl. But, if you had taken the time to get to know her you would have realized that Patty could be a great friend because she is a generous, patient and compassionate person.

# **HERE'S SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT**

*“Look for what a person really is  
on the inside, not just the outside.”*

*~ The Peaceful Solution*

## I have a question...

**"Now that I understand the difference between character and personality, how do I learn to look beyond personality to determine if someone has a positive moral character?"**



You can gain insight into someone's character by observing the way he or she responds when faced with a moral choice. For example, someone who is honest will not steal. You will see this person consistently asking permission before taking or touching the belongings of others, returning lost items and being truthful in their responses. Consistency in positive choices and behavior plays an important role in determining character. Remember, demonstrating moral behavior over a period of time establishes a pattern that can be used to determine someone's character. The important thing to remember is to be cautious and alert to behavior that could indicate negative qualities.

At the same time, do not dismiss someone whose personality may not be similar to yours. Take time to get to know him or her. You might be surprised to discover a great new friend. Have you ever met someone who seemed odd at first, but when you got to know that person you found out that he or she was okay after all? It is important not to prejudge someone based on personality alone. When you take the time to communicate and interact positively with others, you will be better able to determine the quality of their character.

## A COLD HARD FACT

We may think of ourselves in a certain manner, talk about ourselves in a certain manner, but what will determine our character are our actions. The truth is, actions speak louder than words.

# Putting It All Together

The combination of character and personality forms a foundation for the type of life you will lead and what you will accomplish. As you mature, keep in mind that although personality may be the first thing that attracts people together, in the long run, it is character that will matter most of all. Whether you lead a life filled with regrets because of poor choices or a life that is rewarding and successful, is entirely based upon your character and the choices you make.

CE Read the following article about character and personality in regards to success.

## Why Character Counts

*Without it, you'll never truly succeed.*

By Stephen R. Covey

### What Really Matters

Today, it is out of vogue to speak in terms of character. But there is no more essential aspect of any person. Character is made up of those principles and values that give your life direction, meaning and depth. They include such traits as integrity, honesty, courage, fairness and generosity, which arise from the hard choices we have to make in life. So wrong is simply in doing wrong, not in getting caught.

Yet some people wonder if our inner values matter anymore. Many have come to believe that the only things we need for success are talent, energy and personality. But history has taught us that over the long haul, who we are is more important than who we appear to be.

During the nation's first century and a half, almost everything in the literature of success and self-help focused on what could be called the character ethic. Such eminent figures as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson made clear their belief that we can only experience true success and contentment by making character the bedrock (foundation) of our lives.

After we moved into the industrial age and after World War I, the basic view of success shifted to what we could call the personality ethic. Success became more a function of ...skills and techniques that, at least on the

surface, lubricate the process of human interaction. Rather than struggle with thorny issues of right and wrong, we turned to making things run smoothly.

With a value system based solely on skill and personality, we find heroes in athletes, musicians and in powerful business executives. But despite the admiration we feel for these achievers, we shouldn't necessarily look upon them as role models. While skill is certainly needed for success, it can never guarantee contentment and fulfillment. These come from developing character.

### From The Inside Out

You can begin to build character at any age. The key is learning how to look within—to work inside out.

With the inside-out approach, private victories precede public victories. These private victories are simply promises you make to yourself and others and then keep.

Day by day, as you make and keep increasingly challenging promises, you will be making deposits in your "character account." What begins as great effort will eventually become habit. And as you get into the habit of building character in the smaller areas in your life, your ability to develop character strength in more important spheres will grow.

*Readers Digest, January 1999*

# Understanding The Main Point

C Test your comprehension and answer the following questions.

1. Explain why personality alone cannot guarantee personal success.

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2. What do you think the writer of this article meant by a “character account?”

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3. How does the concept of “wrong is simply in doing wrong, not in getting caught,” relate to developing a positive character?

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***“A great personality without a positive moral character is like building a beautiful house on a bed of quicksand.”*** 36

# C H A R A C T E R

Character is more than just a nine-letter word. It defines who you are and what type of future you will have. To help you remember the importance of character read the following acronym.

Compassion: Compassion shows care and consideration.

Humility: Be humble. You don't have to be right all the time.

Accountability: Be willing to admit when you have made a mistake.

Respectful: Be respectful towards yourself and others.

Always: Always maintain a positive character.

Courageous: Stand up for what is right even when you stand alone.

Thankful: Show appreciation for the things you have.

Ethical: Ethical or moral choices show concern for others.

Responsible: Responsible people are reliable.

"A successful life is not necessarily measured by wealth or the accumulation of materialistic things. True success comes with maintaining a positive character. How you treat yourself and others is the true measure of success."

~The Peaceful Solution

# What I Have Learned

y Morality is the key factor in developing a positive character. Morality can be divided into three categories: behavior and attitude towards all life, the environment, and the property of others.

y There is a clear distinction between character and personality. Character is based on my moral principles. Personality on the other hand, is the sum total of my likes and dislikes.

y My character is at the root of all my choices and actions, it is what separates positive from negative behavior.

y Developing a positive character includes choosing friends with compatible personalities and most importantly positive moral character.

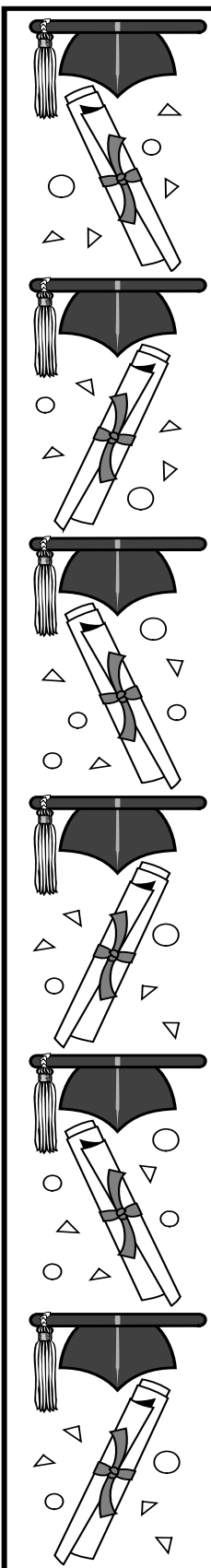
y Personality and character can be influenced by environment, values, inherited traits and other influences in a person's life.

y Negative traits like aggression can be altered by a person's influences and the choices he makes.

y I have learned to develop a positive moral character based on sound moral principles and to choose friends who do the same. This then gives me the foundation of a peaceful life where I am able to make decisions and choices that will bring no harm to others, but show respect to all life.

# Test Your Knowledge

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is the means by which we distinguish between right and wrong.
2. Personality is the combination of your personal preferences, attitude, \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Moral principles regarding human life are based on the fact that life is \_\_\_\_\_ and all people have the potential to contribute to society.
4. Behaving morally in regards to the possessions and property of others means to recognize that everyone owns things and that there are \_\_\_\_\_ in regards to what is owned.
5. The combination of your moral principles, values, environment and \_\_\_\_\_ makes up your character.
6. Negative traits promote immoral principles that \_\_\_\_\_ others and their possessions.
7. Although character traits can be divided into negative and positive, most people's character consists of a \_\_\_\_\_.
8. An individual who has developed positive traits and consistently maintains them is a person of \_\_\_\_\_.
9. The combination of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ determines the life we lead and what we accomplish.
10. Take the time to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ with others to determine the quality of their character.



## Enrichment Activities

1. Write an essay about a time you may have been misled by someone's personality, where, when the individual's true character was revealed you were disappointed, or you were pleasantly surprised.
2. Have a discussion about character and personality in literature. Research and write an essay about an individual in real life whose personality was deceptive, for example, Ted Bundy, David Berkowitz (Son of Sam).
3. Read the narrative entitled "**Juan's Choice**" in the Additional Reading section found on page 42. Answer the questions that follow, then discuss the answers as a class.

# Additional Reading

## Juan's Choice

**Read the following narrative to learn why you should never compromise your positive character to pursue your values.**

The dark blue Mustang pulled slowly up to the curb and parked in front of the Marlboro Projects. The boom of the bass shook the windshield and even though the windows were up, the words of the rap song that thundered from the oversized speakers located in the trunk were clearly audible. The driver and his passenger rolled down the windows and scanned the sidewalk and entrance to building 122. Finally, they both got out of the car and leaned back against the vehicle with their arms folded across their chests. Heavy gold necklaces and rings with diamonds glittered in the sunlight as they continued to scan the area, all the while bobbing their heads to the bass of the rap song.

Juan Rodriguez had spent the last half hour at the park with his little brother Manuel. It wasn't much of a park. There was only one usable swing, the monkey bars and a broken teeter totter, but it was the only park that the Marlboro Projects had. In the evenings it was where the drug deals went down. In fact, Marlboro had been on the six o'clock news twice in the past month. The first time, for a major drug bust and two weeks after that a fourteen-year-old boy was fatally stabbed in a turf war between two neighboring gangs. As they returned from the park Juan listened to Manuel chatter on about the first grade, his teacher and all the new friends he had made.

Stepping off the sidewalk and onto the lawn, Juan took the shortcut that led to his building. So many other people had taken the path as a shortcut, that grass no longer grew there. He, his mother and Manuel had lived in apartment 13E, building 122, for the past four years. After the divorce, his mother had no choice but to get a rent subsidized apartment in the projects. When they first moved, Juan was twelve and Manny, as everyone called him, was only two years old. Back then; his mom had explained that it was only a temporary move. Soon she would have enough money saved to get out of the ghetto and move to Queens. But between the rent, food, day care for Manny and bus fare, she had very little left to save at the end of the week. After four years they were no closer to moving to Queens than when they had first moved to the projects.

During that time, Juan had watched as his mother aged prematurely. Although she was only 39, her hair had already begun to turn gray and fine lines had appeared around her eyes. One day, he overheard her telling his aunt on the phone that she felt like a failure because her marriage had ended in divorce and she was forced to raise her children in the projects. It was then that Juan decided he had to do something to help his mother, but at sixteen he was still too young to work.

On his way home from school the day before, he had been approached by two men who offered him a way to make some quick cash and what he hoped would turn out to be his family's one-way ticket out of the projects.

As he approached the building he heard the boom of the bass and saw the two men he had spoken to the day before leaning on a blue Mustang. Even from a distance they looked really tough, and for a moment Juan wondered if he was making a big mistake. He knew that what he was getting into was wrong, but he reasoned that he only wanted to make enough money to help his mother move to a better place.

Even from where they were standing they recognized him right away. The taller of the two waved him over and shouted, "Yo man, let me holler at you for a minute."

Again, Juan felt a twinge of fear and considered just telling them that he had changed his mind. Instead he shouted back, "Yeah, I'll be there in a minute." Walking Manny to the door he instructed him to stand in the hallway to wait for him.

"But I want to stay with you," said Manny in a sad voice.

"No, go inside and wait for me. Juan answered ruffling Manny's hair. "But don't get on the elevator. Just wait for me over by the mailboxes. I have some business to take care of."

"But," said Manny trying to get Juan to change his mind.

"You heard what I said," replied Juan cutting him off.

At this point Manuel knew better than to argue. Sulking, he walked into the building and waited by the mailboxes for his brother.

As Juan walked over to the car he tried to appear nonchalant. As if making deals with drug dealers was something he did everyday. But the truth was, he was quaking inside. As he came up to them he said, "Yo, wuz up?"

The bigger of the two men whose street name was Big Will answered, "Nothing man. Just chillin. Yo, you down with what we talked about?"

Looking into their faces Juan saw only his reflection in their dark sunglasses. Not being able to see their eyes put him at a disadvantage. Nervously, he stammered a reply. "Y-y-yeah, I thought about it. I ain't gonna get caught

am I? Cause, I don't wanna go to jail. I just need some money."

Moe, the smaller of the two, half grinned, then answered, "What you scared fo' little man? You see us in jail? We ain't ever been to jail. Ain't that right, Big Will?" Big Will slowly nodded his head, and Juan wondered if he was agreeing with Moe or keeping time with the music that was still blaring from the car. "Besides," continued Moe, "you get caught, we gonna lose our money. And we ain't about losing money. You know what I'm sayin? So, don't sweat it man. You're safe."

Juan thought for a while, then nervously he said, "All right, I'll do it."

"Now you talking, little man," said Big Will. "You got a locker at school?"

With a puzzled look on his face, Juan answered, "Yes."

"Then gimme the number. Tomorrow after 7<sup>th</sup> period you'll have a little package waitin' for you. Do exactly as we tell you, and we'll both be gettin paid."

Skeptically, Juan asked, "You mean you're gonna put it in my locker at school?"

"You ain't gonna chicken out on us are you?" asked Moe with a hard edge to his voice.

Realizing the men were getting annoyed with him, Juan reiterated that he would go through with the deal. Before they drove off, Moe casually told him that if he went back on his word they knew where he lived.

As Juan walked back to his building, his heart pounded in his chest, and although it was a cool fall day he was sweating as if it was the middle of summer.

As he entered the building, the smell of urine and stale smoke filled his nostrils. Graffiti covered the walls and elevator doors. Gum, candy wrappers and cigarette butts littered the floor. As usual, someone had broken the single bulb in the ceiling light and the small waiting area was dim. Kids would sometimes use the bulbs for target practice. Manny was standing over by the long rows of mailboxes against the wall. He looked small and scared and Juan instantly regretted having asked Manny to wait by himself.

"Who was that you were talking to?" Manuel asked as he walked over to Juan. Then before Juan could answer he continued, "Are they your new friends from school?"

"Yeah, I guess you could say that," Juan responded in a gruff voice. In spite of his doubts about the decision he had made, he had to smile at

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"Yeah, I guess you could say that," Juan responded in a gruff voice. In spite of his doubts about the decision he had made, he had to smile at

his little brother's innocent questions.

By the time he got Manny his snack and helped him with his homework, his mother came home from work. As usual, she was tired and worn out.

"Hey Ma," Manny called from the kitchen table. Before she could take her key out of the lock and bolt the door behind her, he began telling her all about his day.

Putting her bag and keys on the table by the door, Mrs. Rodriguez walked into the kitchen and gave Manny a hug. Turning to Juan she said, "Thank you for being such a great brother to Manny. Once again the train broke down. We were stuck at Utica Avenue for about half an hour. I thought I would never get home."

"It's okay, Ma," replied Juan. "I'm sorry you got stuck on the train again."

Juan felt guilty talking to his mother as if everything was okay. He knew how disappointed she would be if she found out that he was planning to sell drugs. She had often said that her whole life revolved around him and Manny. Because she knew how dangerous growing up in the projects was, she had often spoken to them at length about not getting involved in gangs, drugs or drinking.

"Juan, Juan?"

Suddenly Juan realized that his mother was calling him. Shaking his head he answered, "Ah, yeah Mom. I'm sorry I didn't hear you."

"Are you okay?" his mother asked with a puzzled expression.

"I'm fine Mom, do you want me to help you make dinner?" Juan asked.

Mrs. Rodriguez still had a concerned look on her face, but told Juan to do his homework instead. After dinner and chores Juan finally went to bed, but couldn't fall asleep for hours. He knew he had made a bad choice, but didn't know how to get out of it. Turning down Big Will and Moe now would be considered going back on his word, and like Moe said, he knew where Juan lived. Juan knew that he would be putting his mother and Manny's life in danger if he backed out now. Around 4 o'clock he drifted off to sleep. He dreamed of being handcuffed and led away from his mother and brother.

Two months had gone by since Juan first opened his locker after 7<sup>th</sup> period to see a small package wrapped in brown paper labeled with a downtown address. Juan knew that it was now up to him to drop it off, and then pick up an envelope with the cash at a separate location. He was afraid and felt trapped. Putting the package in the bottom of his

backpack and his loose-leaf binder on top, he tried to concoct an excuse to tell Moe and Big Will, as to why he wanted to quit. The excuse would have to be believable or they could try to hurt him.

Since nothing came to mind, he made the drop and then picked up the cash. Taking the F train over to Flatbush Avenue he located the building where he was to leave the envelope with the money. The building was so rundown on the outside that it was hard to believe that people lived there. He had to take the stairs to get to the second floor because the elevator was out of order. The door marked 203 was halfway down the hall. Sliding the envelope under the door as he had been instructed to do, he felt a small measure of relief, but his anxiety still did not fade.

Since then, he had made several more drops to different locations in the city. Some were in really run down areas and others were in wealthy upscale neighborhoods. He still felt anxious, afraid, and worst of all, guilty. Although he put every dollar towards moving out of the projects, he took no joy in the money he was saving. He knew that his mother would rather live the rest of her life in the Marlboro Projects than use drug money. Oftentimes, the weight of his guilt was more than he could bear. At those times, he would isolate himself in his room explaining to Manny that he had a headache or wasn't feeling well. His mother was very concerned and kept asking him what was wrong, but he couldn't bring himself to tell her. Not only was his relationship between his mother and brother falling apart, but so too was his schoolwork. Sometimes he would have to skip 8<sup>th</sup> period in order to make the drop and still get home on time. He knew he could not continue like this for much longer.

Friday afternoon after he got out of school, Moe and Big Will were parked across the street from the bus stop. As soon as Juan saw them he knew that they were there to speak to him. Crossing the street he wondered why they were there and then decided that he would tell them that he wanted out.

"Wuz up, little man," Big Will said as Juan walked up to the driver's window. "Get in we need to holler at ya for a minute." Although his voice sounded pleasant, Juan could not tell if the tone of his voice matched his true feelings, because as usual, he was wearing dark sunglasses. Once he was seated in the back seat of the Mustang, Big Will pulled away from the curb and Moe turned around and handed him a package.

"Yo man, we couldn't get this to you the usual way, so we had to make a personal delivery. We'll drop you off at the subway, you know the routine."

Finding his courage and his voice Juan replied, "Yeah, okay. But this is going to be my last drop." There was a long pause. Then Big Will

and Moe looked at each other.

"What you tryin to say? We ain't payin you enough?" asked Big Will, glancing into the rearview mirror.

His voice quivering, Juan replied, "Nah, it ain't that."

"It ain't what?" interrupted Moe with a hostile tone of voice.

Juan knew that if he continued these men could hurt him, but he had to get out of this. So he tried again, "It's just that I want to get out before my mom finds out. I have to cut classes and my guidance counselor will contact her and then they'll want to know why I'm cutting classes. So I was thinking that maybe you could find somebody else before it turns into a big problem."

Again the two men were silent. Then Big Will spoke, "Yeah, I see what you sayin. We'll think about it, but you are going to make this drop today."

"Yeah sure." By this time they had arrived at the subway station. Stepping out of the car, Juan realized that his knees were weak. As he walked down the steps to catch the A train he nervously wondered when they would let him know if they were going to let him walk. He hoped that this would be the last drop he ever made.

He got off the train at 53<sup>rd</sup> and Lexington Avenue and walked two blocks on Lexington before turning on to Stanwyck Street. As he turned on to Stanwyck he saw three police cars parked in front of the building he was going to. He quickly turned around and walked back the way he had come. Not knowing what else to do, he went back to the subway and caught the A train, then transferred to the F train. He had no way of contacting Big Will or Moe. He knew that once they found out he didn't make the drop, they would contact him.

Somehow he remembered to pick up Manny from the after school program at school. All the way home Manny chattered about his art project. He felt sure that it would win the contest at school.

"Could you help me finish painting it tonight? If you help me I know I'll win." Without waiting for Juan to answer Manny continued, "The prize is two tickets to Coney Island to see the Aquarium. I would ask Mom to go, but she'll probably be too tired. So will you take me Juan? Mom will let you."

Smiling in spite of his worries, Juan replied, "Manny, you haven't won yet, and yes, I'll help you. If you don't win, I'll still take you to Coney Island to see the Aquarium."

When they arrived at the apartment, Juan placed his bag with the undelivered package still in it, inside his closet. He tried not to think about the fact that he had brought drugs into his home. He got Manny

his snack and then started his chores. By six o'clock when his mom still hadn't gotten home, Juan figured that there was a delay with the trains. Manny reminded him that he was going to help him with his art project.

"Do you still have your paints?" Manny asked Juan.

Just as Juan was about to answer the phone rang. As he ran to get it, not thinking, he told Manny that his paints were in a bag in his closet.

The caller was Mrs. Rodriguez. She called to let Juan know that she was going to be really late. She had missed the train and because of rush hour the other trains were too full to let anyone else on. She would have to wait until rush hour was over before there would be a train with enough room for her to get on. She also asked Juan to get dinner started.

Hanging up the phone, Juan went straight to the kitchen. He took the pan with the chicken and potatoes out of the refrigerator and put it in the oven as his mother had instructed him. When the phone rang, he thought that it was Big Will or Moe wanting to know why he hadn't delivered the package. Although Juan had never given them his phone number he had no doubt that they could get it if they wanted to. Lost in his thoughts, he didn't realize that Manny still hadn't returned with the paints.

The phone rang again. This time it was his aunt. She asked if his mother was home. Juan told her she was delayed, but would take a message. After he wrote the message down, his aunt asked how Manny was doing. It was then that Juan realized that Manny had been looking for the paints for quite some time. He hurriedly told his aunt that Manny was fine and quickly hung up the phone.

"Manny," called Juan as he hurried to his room, but Manny didn't answer. Suddenly Juan recalled telling Manny that the paints were in a bag in his closet, but so too were the drugs. What if... Juan couldn't bear the thought. When he reached his bedroom door, he wanted to call out Manny's name again, but his mouth was so dry that he couldn't speak. With trembling hands he reached out and turned the doorknob. Slowly the door swung open. Juan gasped. Manny was laying face down next to the closet. The open bag of cocaine had spilled on to the floor. Traces of the white powder were on his hands and face.

Juan sank to his knees. Still unable to speak, he crawled over to where Manny lay. "Manny" he whispered. "Oh please, please Manny don't die."

Cradling Manny's lifeless body against his chest Juan whispered over and over again, "I'm sorry Manny, I'm sorry."

Mrs. Rodriguez finally caught the 7:05 train. She had been waiting for a train for almost an hour. On any other day she would have been

tired and discouraged, but not today. While at work she had received a call from the Housing Authority. She had filled out an application almost three years ago to get special financial assistance for low-income housing. When she had filled out the application the caseworker had warned her that it would be a long wait. But with patience she and her boys would someday live in a quiet neighborhood. Finally that day had arrived. When she spoke to Juan earlier she purposely left out the great news. She wanted to surprise them.

After getting off the train she stopped at the bakery on the corner to buy a treat for the boys. They were going to celebrate moving out of the projects and into a home of their own. Opening the door to 13E, Mrs. Rodriguez was surprised at how quiet it was. Usually the TV would be on and Manny would run to the door to greet her.

"Manny, Juan," she called as she bolted the door behind her and placed her keys on the table by the door.

"Where are you guys? I have a surprise for you." She called as she walked down the hallway towards Juan's room.

**Answer the following questions.**

1. What were some of Juan's positive character traits? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What were Juan's values? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. How else could Juan have tried to help his mother? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What is the moral of this narrative? \_\_\_\_\_

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# Chapter One

## Character... My Foundation

### Student Post-Assessment

Select the choices below that most accurately answer the question.

1. Put a "c" on the lines by the words that describe character or a "p" on the lines by the words that describe personality.

____friendly	____shy	____modest	____optimistic
____humble	____outgoing	____humorous	____impatient
____relaxed	____bold	____honest	____talented
____aggressive	____envious	____respectful	____responsible
____compassionate	____practical	____affectionate	____indifferent

2. If you had to choose a friend who is honest over one who is fun to be with, which would you choose?

\_\_\_\_\_honest friend                      \_\_\_\_\_fun friend

3. Which of the following definitions best defines responsibility?

\_\_\_\_a. When you are determined not to give up or change what you have set out to accomplish.

\_\_\_\_b. Not yielding to impulsive thoughts and actions.

\_\_\_\_c. Always doing what is necessary to complete the task.

4. Most people's character consists of a combination of both positive and negative traits.

\_\_\_\_\_True

\_\_\_\_\_False

5. A person of integrity can best be described as someone who practices:

\_\_\_\_a. Inherited positive traits such as intelligence and optimism.

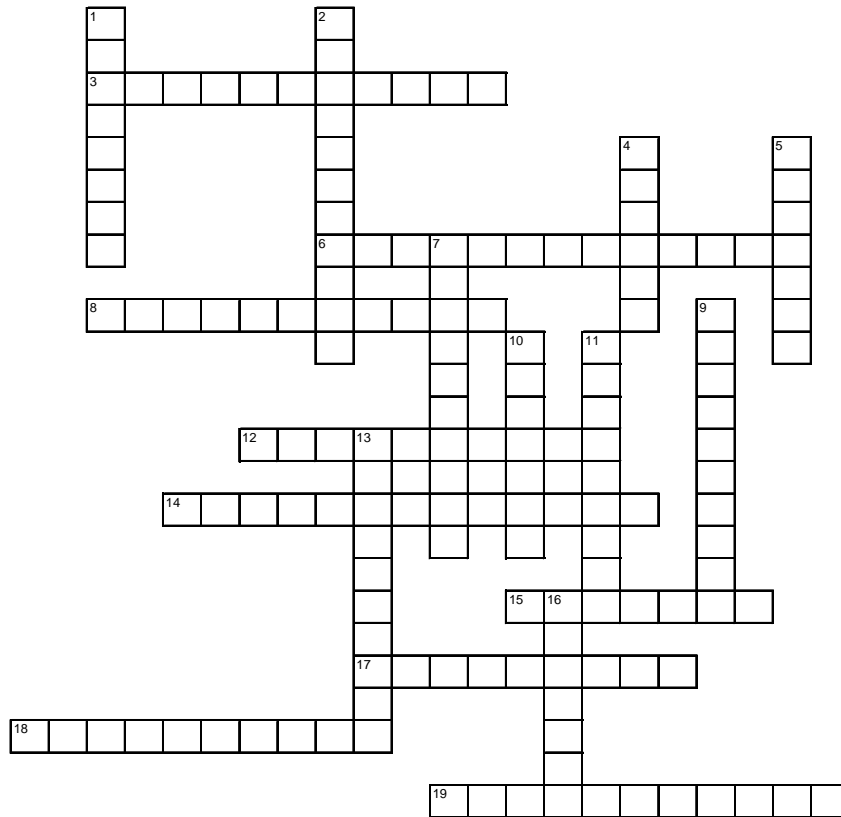
\_\_\_\_b. Positive, moral character in all his interactions.

\_\_\_\_c. Some positive and negative character traits. After all no one is perfect.

# Just For Fun

## Activity #1— Answer Key

Use the clues below to fill in the boxes.



### Across

3. Always doing what is necessary to complete the task.
6. Thoughtless or insensitive towards the feelings and needs of others.
8. Have regards for another's feelings.
12. Hostile violent behavior that can be both physical and verbal.
14. To care about the needs of others.
15. To be greedy or self-centered.
17. To refrain from holding anger or resentment towards someone who has wronged you.
18. To seek retaliation or to desire to get even.
19. Dependable and assured reliance.

### Down

1. To show leniency or tolerance even when others have behaved in a manner where they deserved to be given a consequence.
2. Using self-control to behave in a proper way.
4. Being fair, straightforward and sincere.
5. An intense emotion that results in extreme dislike and hostility.
7. To anticipate the best possible outcome.
9. The act of doing what needs to be done even when you are afraid.
10. Demonstrating self-control and remaining calm through setbacks.
11. To purposely mislead.
13. To value others as important as yourself.
16. To resent what someone has, while at the same time wanting what they possess.

# Just For Fun

## Activity #2— Answer Key

Find the hidden words.

A	E	V	I	T	I	T	E	P	M	O	C	A	B	C	L
T	F	G	C	O	N	C	E	I	T	E	D	F	E	A	D
H	U	F	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	Z	D	N
O	N	R	E	D	E	T	N	E	L	A	T	Y	R	O	O
U	N	I	Y	C	X	W	V	U	T	S	A	S	D	R	N
G	Y	E	Z	Q	T	W	E	R	E	T	L	C	E	A	C
H	E	N	T	H	I	I	U	D	G	Y	K	I	T	B	H
T	V	D	N	O	U	P	O	N	L	K	A	T	A	L	A
L	I	L	E	G	S	M	I	N	H	J	T	S	C	E	L
E	T	Y	G	F	U	R	O	D	A	S	I	A	I	A	A
S	C	N	I	B	O	V	C	R	X	T	V	C	T	Z	N
S	A	M	L	B	I	M	N	B	O	V	E	R	S	C	T
D	R	S	L	O	V	A	B	L	E	U	A	A	I	Z	X
F	T	G	E	G	E	G	H	J	K	L	S	S	H	Y	P
R	T	T	T	U	D	T	N	A	S	A	E	L	P	I	O
Q	A	A	N	C	O	M	I	C	A	L	R	F	O	V	T
M	N	H	I	Y	M	A	L	I	C	I	O	U	S	B	G

adorable  
affectionate  
attractive  
boring  
comical  
competitive  
conceited  
devious

friendly  
funny  
humorous  
intelligent  
lazy  
lovable  
malicious  
modest

nonchalant  
pleasant  
sarcastic  
shy  
sophisticated  
talented  
talkative  
thoughtless

# Answer Key

## CHAPTER ONE

### Page 12

Answers will vary but may include: soft-spoken, funny, sensitive, outgoing, or gets angry easily.

obligations, his choice endangered his brother's life. His brother could be kidnapped, molested, even murdered.

### Page 18

1. Answers may include: My family eats together and has yearly family reunions.
2. Answers may include: My parents taught me the value of education and encouraged me to work hard.
3. Answers may include: My parents taught me to have respect for others, to be responsible and honest.

### Page 33

1. Answers will vary.
2. Answers may include: A great choice of a friend would be one who would treat you with respect and would influence you and encourage you to make positive choices that would not be detrimental to your life, nor your goal of attaining positive character.

### Pages 21-24

1. a. Answers may include: When accepting correction from those in authority such as parents, teachers or employers; and when in a conflict.  
b. Answers may include: By not arguing or talking back; when given instructions, follow through with them; by not boasting or bragging.
2. a. Answers may include: It can prevent me from being negatively influenced, it will help build a positive character, it will enable me to build a positive reputation that shows I can be trusted.
3. a. Answers will vary.
4. a. Answers will vary but may include: I can remain focused amidst distractions that are contrary to my goals.
5. a. Before Mr. McClendon was attacked he was tolerant of others. After the attack he became distrustful, vengeful and full of hate.  
b. Answers may include: By learning to forgive, he was able to let go of the past; he regained control of his life and stopped allowing hatred, anger and retaliation to affect his relationships.
6. a. Answers will vary.

### Page 37

1. Personal success must be a combination of personality and character. People who rely on personality without character will eventually make choices that will cost them friendships, trust, respect, jobs, and possibly even their freedom (as in a jail or prison sentence) or their lives.
2. The term "character account" likens building one's character to a bank account. Just as you would deposit money to make your bank account grow, so too should you make choices that support moral principles. By doing so you will make your positive character traits grow.
3. Someone with a positive character will make positive choices even when there is no one around.

### Pages 26-27

1. Billy could bring a weapon to school to scare Justin, or he could actually use the weapon at school. In which case, Billy would put the lives of many people in jeopardy. His choice could lead to a prison sentence for the rest of his life.
2. Going out alone at night, especially without a parent's knowledge and permission, could result in several consequences. She could be grounded, and lose the trust of her parents. She could also be kidnapped, raped or murdered.
3. Because Michael valued hanging out with his friends more than fulfilling his responsibilities and

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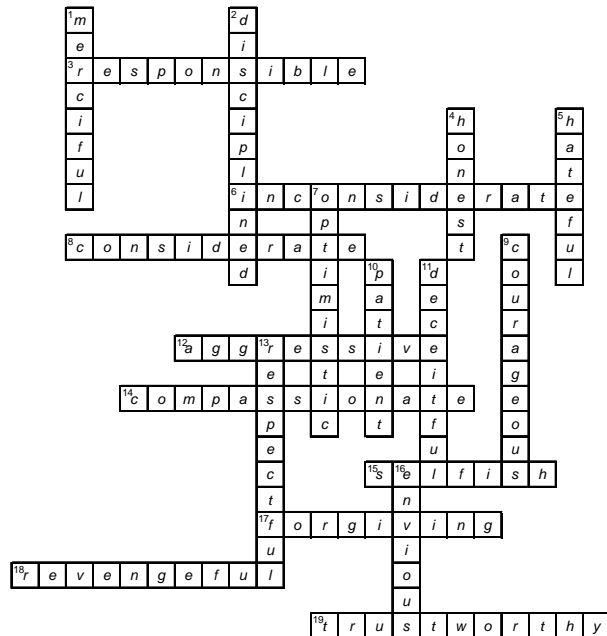
1. character
2. likes and dislikes
3. valuable
4. inherit rights
5. influences
6. negatively affect
7. combination of both
8. integrity
9. character, personality
10. communicate, interact positively

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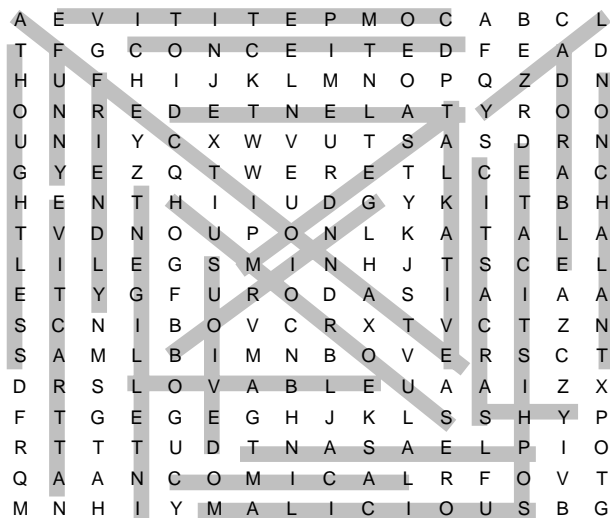
1. Juan was caring, compassionate, respectful and considerate. This is evident because he took care of his brother and wanted to help his mother.
2. Juan valued his family and the health and well-being of his mother. He also valued money.
3. Juan could have helped his mother by continuing to take care of his brother and by doing well in school.

4. The moral of the story is that you should never pursue your values by compromising your character and doing something that is wrong or illegal.

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# Chapter One

## Character... My Foundation

### Student Pre & Post-Assessment

Select the choices below that most accurately answer the question.

1. Put a "c" on the lines by the words that describe character or a "p" on the lines by the words that describe personality.

<u>p</u> friendly	<u>p</u> shy	<u>c</u> modest	<u>c</u> optimistic
<u>p</u> humble	<u>p</u> outgoing	<u>p</u> humorous	<u>c</u> impatient
<u>c</u> relaxed	<u>c</u> bold	<u>c</u> honest	<u>p</u> talented
<u>c</u> aggressive	<u>p</u> envious	<u>c</u> respectful	<u>p</u> responsible
<u>c</u> compassionate	<u>n</u> practical	<u>c</u> affectionate	<u>n</u> indifferent

2. If you had to choose a friend who is honest over one who is fun to be with, which would you choose?

\_\_\_\_\_honest friend                      \_\_\_\_\_fun friend

3. Which of the following definitions best defines responsibility?
- ☐ a. When you are determined not to give up or change what you have set out to accomplish.
- ☐ b. Not yielding to impulsive thoughts and actions.
- ☒ c. Always doing what is necessary to complete the task.

4. Most people's character consists of a combination of both positive and negative traits.

     True                           False

5. A person of integrity can best be described as someone who practices:
- ☐ a. Inherited positive traits such as intelligence and optimism.
- ☒ b. Positive, moral character in all his interactions.
- ☐ c. Some positive and negative character traits. After all no one is perfect.